

The Connector

Newsletter of the Tar River Connections Genealogical Society
Preserving the Past ... for the Future

Winter 2008

Peggy Strickland & Billie Jo Matthews, Co-Editors

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Francis Marion Drake Iowa Frontiersman, Civil War General, Railroad Magnate, Governor, Philanthropist— with Nash County, NC Roots

The highway that leads into tiny **Drakesville, Iowa** passes a sign that reads "Gateway to Lake Wapello." No such sign and no paved road greeted **John Adams Drake** and his wife, **Harriet J. O'Neal Drake**, when they arrived at the tract of **Davis Co.** land in 1846. Undeterred by the hardships, John founded the town of **Drakesville** where he farmed and established several businesses including the town's first bank. He and Harriet raised their 14 children there,

including the second oldest, **Francis Marion Drake**, who was born in 1830. It is Francis Marion Drake who is the subject of this account.

The Drake family's roots can be found in **Nash County, NC**. John Adams Drake's parents, **Benjamin**

and **Celia Thayer Drake**, resided there and it was from there that John and Harriet immigrated to **Illinois**. In 1837 John Drake moved his family to **Fort Madison** in Iowa and then to **Davis Co.**

Francis Marion Drake, like other early pioneers of the west, had little opportunity for formal education. This did not prevent him from achieving a highly successful and rewarding life.

Great Adventure

In 1852, during the excitement of the gold rush, Francis Drake, a young man of 22, led an ox-train across the plains from **Omaha, Nebraska** to **Sacramento, CA**. The train consisted of six ox teams, sixteen men and one boy.

SEE DRAKE ON PAGE 4



Curious Axes Tarboro, NC

BY JOSEPH BLOUNT CHESHIRE



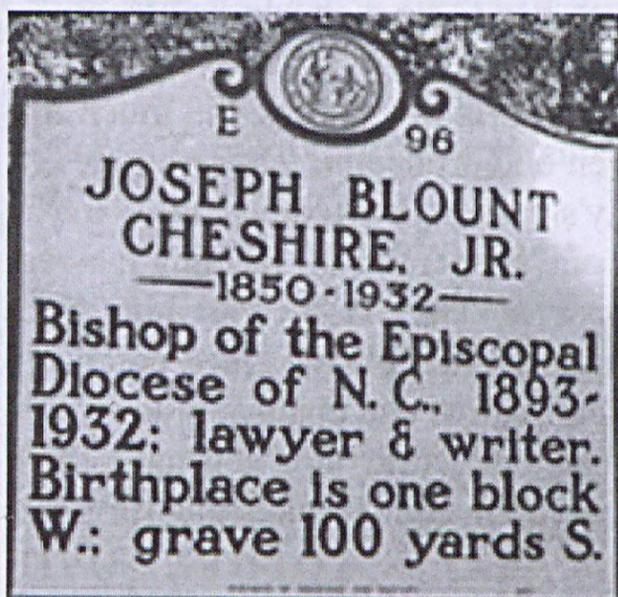
There lay about the woodhouse and yard of my grandfather's place a number of old axes, such as I have never seen elsewhere. They had a very light blade, much like the blade of a grubbing-hoe. They had a round eye for the helve, not oblong, as is the eye of the grubbing-hoe.

They excited no interest at the time, because they were as familiar to me as the ordinary heavy axe. But after I grew up and never saw any others like them, though in old

illustrated books I have seen pictures of the same kind of axe, I happened to ask my father if he remembered those curious old axes.

He said he remembered them; that they were English axes. These particular ones had come from the

SEE AXE ON PAGE 7



Divorce

According to her first petition for a divorce, **Winefred "Winney" Chappell Manning** became acquainted with **Eli Manning** of **Edgecombe County, N.C.** in 1805. They were married in March 1805 and lived together until July 1806. At that time, Winney left Eli "under a belief (founded on repeated declarations both public and private) that said Eli intended to put her to death, abusing her with the most unjust & unfounded suspicions of incontinency." Winney further stated that "(and it is not deny'd by the sd. Eli ...) that he the sd. Eli is absolutely impotent & by

SEE DIVORCE, PAGE 8

Query Guidelines

- 1 Members may submit three queries annually to the address or e-mail below.
- 2 The query should include a time frame and as much pertinent information as you have.
- 3 Queries should concern someone who has resided in the following counties: Person, Granville, Vance, Franklin, Nash, Edgecombe, Pitt, Beaufort, or adjacent counties linked to the Tar River by streams and creeks.
- 4 Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope for reply by mail.

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The Connector—Published Quarterly

Cotton Picking Comparisons

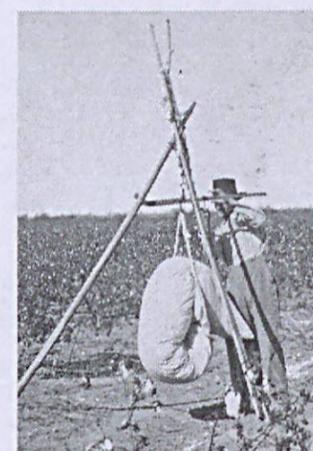
BY BOICE WALKER



Over the years machinery has been the catalyst for changing the life styles of all of us. One of the most notable is the cycle of planting, housing and marketing cotton. During the man and mule era it

began with cutting the previous stalks, disking, breaking ground, harrowing, or smoothing, running rows, sowing fertilizer, listing up the row, planting the seed, side harrowing, chopping or thinning, siding and splitting middles, top dressing, laying by and hilling up. During blooming season most farmers used a hand applied application of boll weevil poison. This amounted to almost twenty times per row to this point, but there were right at ninety days to prepare for picking time.

First someone had to go into the woods and pick out a slender sapling about twenty feet long with a diameter of close to three inches so it could dry by picking time. With two by fours a two-legged horse or fulcrum for lifting and weighing the tied up sheets of cotton was built. This was done by placing a counter weight scale between the horse and the sheet of cotton. A weight called a pea was moved in and out until you got a perfect balance. The numbers on the scale gave you a fool proof weight.



The cotton sheets were made by washing burlap bags from fertilizer and sewing them together to form an eight foot square. The pickers' bags were made by sewing two burlap bags end to end and adding a shoulder strap that was used for pulling it up and down the rows. Each picker had his or her own sheet for dumping his bag on. Most good pickers were capable of picking two hundred pounds per day.

Since the gin used a suction pipe to suck the cotton from the wagons the sheets were untied and dumped into a wagon especially designed to hold the loose cotton. The wagons were weighed before and after unloading and usually the ginner kept the seed as his pay. A 500 pound bale of cotton was considered the average or standard, and was held together with woven burlap and steel bands with a die stamped tag that made it almost impossible to alter its identity or official weight, which by the way, had to be man handled from the wagon or storage or whatever until it was sold.

All of this varies so much from the cycle today that there is not even one procedure that resembles itself in the old days. First of all, today's tractors, with their multi-row attachments, cover an acre of ground in one swipe. No-till farming has reached the point that it is now a science. Picking is done with a multi-row picker that travels about ten miles per hour and unloads into a compactor with the flip of a switch. The compactor forms and ejects a multi-ton bale that is loaded by conveyor on a gin-bound truck. This is usually the last time the grower sees his cotton. The young farmer takes this for granted. The old timer realizes and

COTTON, CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

Hardships of War Time Economy in Clothing

World War I brought about great changes in daily life for the American woman. She was "told just how much flour she must save, and how many pounds of sugar her household consumption must be cut. She ... had 'meatless' and 'wheatless' days brought to her attention. She [was] guided through a maze of wheat and meat substitutes by literature unlimited, and by recipes from many sources. ... But what of the restrictions and substitutions necessary in other commodities--in fuel, in clothing, in fabrics for the home? ..."

Women's Wear issued rules for the makers of women's garments: "No garment is to contain more than from three to four and a half yards of material, the amount depending upon the width of the goods. But unfortunately, "women show no signs of upholding the wishes of the Government, but rush to get the very fabrics which it has asked them to conserve."

Wool was especially a problem. "The use of the animals for meat and the reduction of flocks because of the high cost of feed have lessened the amount of wool produced. The severity of last winter killed many animals and injured both the quality and quantity of wool on those that survived." In addition, we were no longer receiving wool from England. At the same time, "the demands for equipping army and navy have greatly increased our total needs for wool."

The following rules were proposed:

1. "We must have fewer changes.
2. We must remodel where possible; I do not mean "where convenient," but where possible.

ECONOMY, CONT. ON P. 8

A School Boy's Letter to his Mother

A youngster attending school in Paducah has written to his mother the following characteristic letter:

DEAR MOTHER: I got another licking yesterday, but I had on three pair o' pants, and it didn't hurt much. I was licked because I put six pins in Mr. _____'s chair. I knew they would not stick him, and I made a bet they would not. Mr. _____ was so mean and hard that the pins would not go in. I won the bet. ... He [Zack] is a good dog, and I'm training him to bite old "Hardsides," as we call him, some night when he comes home after dark. He is often out after dark, and, if Zack is as good after him as he is after cats, I won't get any more. Zack and I killed three cats on Sunday though I was at Sunday school and church all day, and it wasn't a good day for cats, either. This makes the third licking I have got this week. One was because I had a bottle of milk in my room, and the other was because I wrote a composition that old Hardsides didn't like. ... Send me some more of them pies. I made a good trade with some of them. If you will send me five dollars, I will stop all my bad habits, except cursing and swearing, and chewing and drinking, and one or two others. You had better make the trade. Give my love to Julia, and tell her to send me that little fiddle I left in the old trunk.

Your affectionate son.

BILLIE

[*Battleboro Advance*, 7/26/1872]



**Norman Rockwell Illustration
for *Tom Sawyer***

Washington, Beaufort Co. Fire Department—1916

The Washington Fire Department had one paid fireman and 4 stations in 1916. The station at City Hall on North Market Street had 44 men, 4 horses and an automobile truck with a 40-gallon chemical tank. It also had a hose wagon, a 3rd class Silsby steamer, a hook and ladder truck, 2,500 feet of 2 1/2" hose and 500 feet of 3/4" hose.

The station on North Pierce Street had 14 men, a hose wagon, and 500 ft of 2 1/2" hose. The station, on West 5th Street, had 30 Negro men, 2 hose reels, and 1,000 ft 2 1/2" hose. The station on East 8th Street had 15 men, an automobile



**Washington Fire Department steamer
decorated for parade, courtesy
www.beaufort-county.com**

hose wagon, and 500 ft of 2 1/2" hose.

There was a Gamewell electric fire alarm system with 31 boxes. The population of Washington at that time was 8,000.

[<http://www.legeros.com/history/then-now/1-down-east/>]

DRAKE, CONT. FROM P. 4

wounded and left him on the field. They didn't know Drake, however. He survived though he was confined to his bed for six months. At the end of that time, he was only able to walk with the aid of crutches, but he returned to the battlefield to lead his troops. He continued to serve until the close of the war and was mustered out as Brigadier General.

After the War

After leaving the service Drake's wounds hampered his physical activity and he turned to the practice of law, especially criminal law. He practiced law for about six years, but his main interest was in railroads. He became involved in the promotion of railroad enterprises in Iowa, Indiana and Illinois. He was president of the Iowa Southern RR for several years and later headed (1882-98) the Indiana, Illinois & Iowa. He was a director of the Keokuk and Western Railroad. He eventually built and largely controlled five railroads.

Drake University

George T. Carpenter came to Iowa as a teacher and preacher affiliated with the Disciples of Christ Church. He wanted to start a university in Des Moines. He had the support of the Church, but he needed more funding. Carpenter had married Henrietta Drake, sister of Francis Marion Drake and in 1881, he telegraphed Drake, asking him for his help in establishing the new school.

Drake wired back the following message: "I can and will do it. I will give you \$20,000. Go ahead." The pledge of \$20,000 is equivalent to about \$375,000 in today's money. In exchange, the trustees agreed to name the institution in Drake's honor. By the time he died, Drake had donated more than \$215,000 to the University — about \$4.5 million in 2005 dollars.

In 1843, at the age of 12, Francis

Drake was baptized in the Mississippi River in an opening cut in the ice at Fort Madison, Iowa. Throughout his life, he was a generous supporter of the Disciples of Christ Church. He was responsible for the building of scores of churches throughout Iowa as well as a large contributor to all kinds of missionary work.

In Centerville, Iowa, where he made his home, Drake purchased a site and built a magnificent library. He also made provision with the city for its maintenance.



Centerville, Iowa Public Library

Politics

In 1895 Francis Drake was elected Governor of Iowa by an overwhelming majority, having received the largest vote ever cast in the State for that office. Two years later, as he climbed the granite steps of the capital during a rain storm, he slipped and fell, re-injuring the thigh bone where he had been wounded at Marks's Mill during the war. On the advice of his physicians, he declined a second term as Governor.

Francis Marion Drake died of diabetes in November 1903. He was buried in Oakland Cemetery in Centerville, Iowa.

[Sources: *Churches of Christ*, ed. by John T. Brown, 1904; *Biographical Sketches of Distinguished Officers of the Army and Navy*, by Lewis Randolph Hamersly;

xroyvision.com.au;
rootsweb.com/~iaachs2/

44.GovernorDrake.pdf;
choose.drake.edu/admissions/news/news_story.asp?iNewsID=527&strBack=/admissions/default.asp;
and others]



Drake Genealogy

1. **Richard Drake** and his brothers, **John** and **Thomas**, emigrated from **England** about the year 1713 and settled in the county of the **Isle of Wight, VA**. Richard and his wife **Margaret**, had 8 sons and 3 daughters, all but 2 of whom died in **North Carolina**.
2. One of Richard's sons was **Matthew**. Matthew settled in **Nash County, N. C.** and married **Ann Arrington**. They had 3 sons and 7 daughters. Three of Matthew's brothers also settled in Nash Co.: **Nathaniel, William, and Edmund**.
3. One of Matthew's sons was **James**. James married **Hartwell Hodges**. He had a run-in with the Tories about 1778. The story, "Tories Attack Drake Homeplace," appeared in *The Connector*, Fall 1997.
4. One of James's sons was **Benjamin**. Benjamin, married **Celia Thayer**.
5. One of Benjamin's sons was **John Adams**. John married **Harriet J. O'Neal**. They went to Illinois before 1830.
6. One of John Adams Drake's sons was **Francis Marion Drake**, subject of this story. He married **Mary Jane Lord**. They had seven children: **George Hamilton, Frank Elsworth, John Adams, Harriet Amelia (Milla), Jennie, Eva, and Mary**.

The Wreck of the *Yankee Blade*

On September 30, 1854, the *Yankee Blade*, a 285 foot paddle wheel steamer left for Panama with nearly 1,000 passengers—many of them homeward bound prospectors. In her hold was \$153,000 in California gold nuggets and dust.

Several boats sailed out of the Golden Gate at the same misty hour that the *Yankee Blade* weighed anchor. One in particular, the *Sonora*, was in competition with the *Yankee Blade*. Bets were freely laid, fog or no fog, that the *Yankee Blade* would be the first into Panama. Almost immediately she outstripped her competitors and took the lead. As she disappeared through the Gate, some gambler made a \$5,000 bet that she would be the first ship into Panama.

The *Blade* was well ahead as the ship neared Point Arguello, west of Santa Barbara. They had been traveling in fog for some time, but Captain Randall did not reduce speed, believing he was a safe distance from the rocky and inhospitable coastline.

An undetected current carried the ship closer to shore than anyone realized. It piled up on the hidden reefs of Point Arguello and sank in deep water. Accounts vary as to how many people were lost. Some say 800, some say 300, and others say only a few.

A passenger described it this way: "... met Captain Randall, who invited me to go to the salon and drink with him. ... While we were talking, our ship went upon the rocks, without one moments warning to the crowd

of human beings upon her deck, who rushed out of the cabins to the open deck in the wildest alarm, with reason to; for there we were fixed—fairly impaled upon sharp rocks, in the midst of foaming breakers; and the fog so thick that we could not see the high rocky shore a mile distant. In fact, so dense was the fog, that we could see nothing beyond the deck but mist and water. It was a time for alarm, and a scene of terrible confusion."

Clarence Burton, who was a child on board the ship when it sank later wrote this account: "Early during the evening of the same day she was wrecked on a rock near Point Concepcion, west of Santa Barbara.

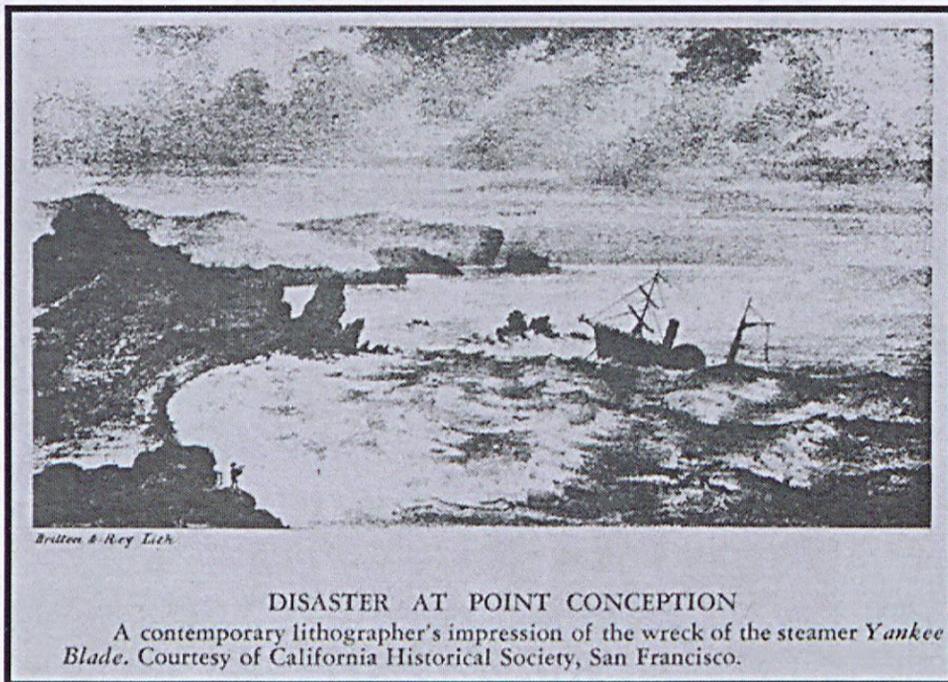
its perch into deep water and disappeared. In addition to its passengers, the vessel carried a large amount of gold that returning miners were taking back to their Eastern homes. Nearly all of it was lost. My father and mother -- Dr. Charles S. Burton, and Mrs. Burton -- my elder brother and myself constituted our family, and we were all saved. My people who reached the land found only a broken coast; but they managed to live on whatever they were able to pick up on the shore and what floated to them from the wreck. They thus subsisted for ten days, when they were taken back by this same old tug, *Goliath*, on her return trip to San Francisco. ..."

C. F. Spearman, another passenger, wrote an account of the wreck many years later. This is from his account: "...About one o'clock the Second day we saw a ship anchor about one half mile away They sent their life boats to help us. We all got off by dark. It was a ship that ran from San Diego to San Francisco they took us to San Diego the third day.

"San Diego was a Mexican town. All the houses were of mud it had a Hotel that was run by an American. We had

been three days with-out Anything to eat except one cracker and a Small piece of Salt Fish. There was a butcher Shop where we landed. The boys soon cleaned it out. We went down town and Soon cleaned the town out of all they had to eat. Before night the Mexicans in the Country heard of us and brought in what they had to eat to feed us with. The next day we had an oversupply Such as it was we staid there about ten days. ..."

[Sources: www.cawreckdivers.org/Wrecks/YankeeBlade.htm;
www.sandiegohistory.org/journal/59april/yankee.htm;
www.mms.gov/omm/pacific/kids/goldwrecks.htm]



DISASTER AT POINT CONCEPTION
A contemporary lithographer's impression of the wreck of the steamer *Yankee Blade*. Courtesy of California Historical Society, San Francisco.

There were more than 900 passengers on board, and many of them were drowned. In the early evening, in response to alarm bells and signals, the tug *Goliath* came alongside and took off as many of the passengers as she could carry. Those of the remainder who could do so reached the mainland in the ship's boats. One boat, commanded by the second mate, capsized in the surf and eighteen of its passengers were drowned.

"Half of the *Yankee Blade* cracked off and sank out of sight before 9 o'clock that night; but the other half remained on the rock until 2 o'clock next morning, when it, too, slid off

Visiting My Grandparents

BY CLARENCE JONES

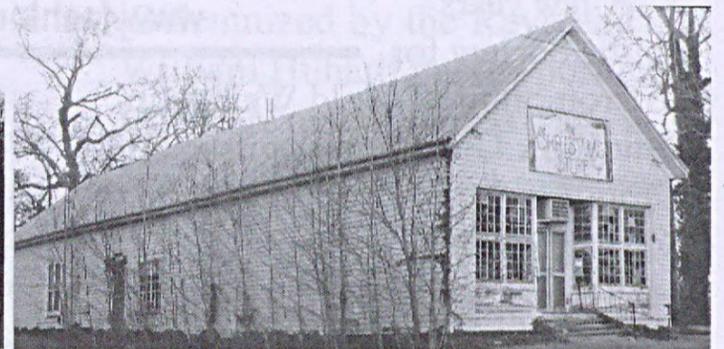
In my very early age, about 4 years old [1919], my family lived in **Spring Hope, [Nash Co.] N. C.** and my grandparents lived at **Westry's Siding**— a distance of about 20 miles— with their son **Robert "Bob" Pullen**, his wife **Carrie**, and their children **Zorah, Myrtle, Virginia, Mary Rue, Elease and Paralee**.

From time to time, mostly in the spring of the year when the weather had warmed up quite a bit, my mother would take me and my brother **Walter** (Duck was his nickname), bundle us up, board the train, **A. C. L.** at the station in Spring Hope, and travel to Westry's Siding where we were met by Zorah on a wagon and carried up to his house about a mile from the Siding.

At my grandmother's house they cooked on a Majestic wood stove that had a warming closet at the top where food could be stored and could stay warm for quite a long time. I remember so well what I wanted when we arrived at her house was one of her warm biscuits. I thought they were the best I had ever tasted and of course all we children had to have one.

We had what we called a play time when we were there and my grandmother and all we children played a game called "Grandmama sent me to you. What must I do? Do as I do."

Grandma would start it off making some kind of sentence and you had to guess what it was that she was doing. When that child guessed what it was it would be his turn to do as grandma had done and so on and on till everyone had had a chance at "Grandmama sent me to you. What must I do? Do as I do."



Westry Siding — 2008

When it was time for bed I had a fear of sleeping in an upstairs bedroom as I had always lived in a one-story house. The fear was that when I lay down to sleep, which was on a pallet, that I would have a fear of rolling down the stairs and sometimes it was hard for me to get to sleep. But I would think of the good times we would have the next day and that would lull me to sleep.

Sometimes, in the course of our visit, my mother, grandmother, grandfather, Uncle Bob, Aunt Carrie and all we children would gather on the front porch and have a Sing-A-Long. I thought it was the sweetest music that I had ever heard. My Uncle Bob had the deepest bass voice and all the rest filled in the other parts and we just had a grand time together.

Another happy and pleasant memory was when my brother Edward, named after our grandfather, used to sit down at the piano and play many favorite old hymns and also popular love songs and all the family would join in.

My mother and father were members of singing groups that would meet at each other's houses and join in a sing-a-long. They sang mostly gospel songs which were very beautiful. They would sing sometimes without music and also *with* music. These occasions were just a few of the happy memories that we enjoyed together.

[Submitted by Foy Pullen, TRC member and cousin of Clarence Jones]

AXE, CONT. FROM P. 1

cargoes of prizes taken by the privateer "Snap-Dragon" in the War of 1812. The "Snap-Dragon" (Captain **Otway Burns**), of which my grandfather [**Theophilus Parker**] was part owner, sailed out of **Newbern** in the War of 1812. Upon its making port with a number of prizes, my grandfather was notified, and went down to look after his interests. When the cargoes were sold under the proceedings in the Court of Admiralty, these axes proved to be unsalable, and he took

them at some nominal price and brought them to **Tarborough, [Edgecombe Co., NC]** where they were used in ditching, splitting lightwood, and such light work.

Our ordinary axe my father said he considered the greatest of American inventions, since it would seem hardly possible to have felled the forests of the new world with the light and ineffective English axe.

[Taken from *Nonnulla; Memories, Stories, Traditions, More or Less Authentic*, by Joseph Blount Cheshire, Jr., 1930.]



DIED.

On the 2d inst. at his late residence in Nash county, Mr. *Dempsey Taylor*, aged 71 years—leaving behind him five children, and a large circle of friends and acquaintances to bemoan their irreparable loss.

Let hope dry up the mourner's eye,
For God hath said, we all must die.
Communicated.

[*Tarboro Free Press* 4/12/1845]

ECONOMY, CONT. FROM P. 3

3. We must avoid extremes in style, as these necessitate frequent change.
4. We must buy durable stuffs, and wear them 'to a finish.'
5. We must set worthy standards, and live up to them fearlessly."

"The fear of public opinion" makes it difficult to economize. "Prevailing high school fashions, which overdress the students and detract from the youthful charm of the wearers, are a glaring example of the 'follow-the-leader' type of dressing. In the United States we have not learned to select clothing from any standpoint except a whimsical fancy.

"A few years ago the Society for the Promotion of Child Welfare in New York City in one of its exhibits distributed a small pamphlet entitled, 'What was the Matter with Mary's Last Dress?' In this the following questions were asked: 'Did it fade? Did it shrink badly? Did it go to pieces when rubbed on the washing board? Did it look like linen--smooth and glossy at first, and then, after washing, look coarse, and open, and dull? Did it spot when Mary was caught in the rain? Was it more cotton than wool, in spite of the salesman's assurance that it was all wool? Do you really want to know about all these things before buying Mary's next dress or coat or underwear?'"

"The wise shopper may ask herself questions something like these when making her purchases:

1. Is this material what it is represented to be? If adulterated, how?

Does this interfere with its usefulness to me?

2. If colored, are the colors suitable to the purpose, and fast to light and washing, Are the decorations lasting,?

3. Is the appearance enhanced by filling or by deceptive finishing?

"The intelligent shopper will know how much she has to spend, and never spend more. She will know the quantity of material necessary, instead of depending upon the judgment of the saleswoman. She will

know which stores specialize in certain things. She will know that one good garment is better than two poor ones, and that simple clothes, though not always the cheapest at first cost, wear longer and

look attractive always. She will avoid bargains, except where training and experience guarantee good judgment. Good, standard fabrics must command a fair price.

"By thus bringing definite knowledge, a trained judgment, and simple taste to bear upon the problem of providing the fabrics of the household, the mistress of the average home may give very material aid in our national program of conservation and still keep her family *well clad*."

[The article, "Economy in Clothing," by Martha H. French, appeared in the East Carolina Teachers Training School Magazine, *Training School Quarterly*, 1918. It is included in UNC's Documenting the American South at

<http://docsouth.unc.edu/wwi/french/m>

1915



1917



www.fashion-era.com

DIVORCE, CONT. FROM P. 1

nature rendered a useless man as a husband; and disagreeable & unpleasant as that may appear to a young & healthy woman, yet, that is, compared with the consequences, but trifling; for haunted by the well founded belief of his own impotency, he suspects your Petr. Winney of illicit connection with every man, both white & black that may have seen her; and hurried off by this wild imagination [sic], he the sd. Eli seeks to torment the sd. Winney yr. Petr. By the most refined & strident cruelty"

Petitioner Eli Manning noted that due to the above circumstances, he too prayed for a divorce.

The Committee of Divorce and Alimony ruled that the petition should be rejected and the House and Senate concurred.

Second Petition

In a second petition for divorce, Winefred Chappell Manning states that much to "her surprise and mortification, she found that she had been imposed on & entrapped [sic] by a man that was really & absolutely impotent"

According to the petition, Eli executed every species of cruelty on Winefred. She prayed for relief by asking the legislature to pass an act authorizing a divorce from Eli.

In an enclosure dated November 1805, **Martin Co., NC**, Eli Manning accepted his incapacity and cheerfully gave his consent to his wife Winefred's prayer for a divorce.

A report from the Committee of Divorce and Alimony stated that "the lamentable deficiency of the man, his inability to perform one of the essential undertakings on the part of the husband, the indispensable requisite to conjugal happiness, could not be guarded against or detected by the means in the power of a modest and virtuous woman."

The divorce passed 12/17/1806.

Pam's Corner

—:§:—

DIED.

In this place, on Monday last, after a lingering illness, Mr. **Weeks P. Hadley**, in the 42nd year of his age.

At his residence in **Nash county**, on the night of the 25th ult. In the 56th year of his age, **Capt. Francis Drake**, leaving an affectionate wife and eight children to lament their loss, and deeply regretted by an extensive circle of relatives and devoted friends. Also, on the 8th ult. **William Drake, Esq.** in the 61st year of his age, in whose death his neighbors and the county generally have sustained a great loss. Also, at his residence in **Alabama, Gregg W. Drake**, formerly of Nash county, on the 3rd of June, in the 31st year of his age, leaving an affectionate wife and four young children to deplore their irreparable loss. He removed from his native home (Nash county, N.C.) last fall, in search of a more fruitful soil' but he has been taken from his friends in the prime of life. The only regret manifested in dying, was parting with his affectionate wife and children, which displays an evidence of great goodness of heart. Besides his own dear family he has left an extensive circle of friends and relatives to mourn his departure.

Ral. Reg.

[Tarboro Press, 8/18/1838]

Rocky Mount To Rebuild Post Office

Congressman Kerr announced today that proceedings to acquire additional land for rebuilding and enlarging the post office building in **Rocky Mount** had been perfected

sufficiently in order that this work might begin by the first of August.

Plans and specifications are being prepared by the Post Office and Treasury departments and the congressman is assured that when this building is enlarged and completed it will be a most attractive and most useful public building and will meet the needs of the city of Rocky Mount and federal government activities for many years.

Congressman Kerr ranks next to the chairman on the committee on public buildings and grounds.

[The Daily Southerner, 6/24/1937]

[This column is contributed by Pam Edmondson, TRC member.]

Braswell Memorial Library

Local History/Genealogy Collection Acquisitions



1. *Atlantic Coast Line Railroad Album* by Albert Langley, Jr.
2. *Johnson-Lee Families South of the Neuse* by Ruth Creech and Rebecca Owens
3. *A to Zax: A Comprehensive Dictionary for Genealogists and Historians* by Barbara Jean Evans
4. *Virginia Slave Births Index, 1853-1865 Volume 1: A-C* edited by Leslie Morales (from documents found in the Alexandria, VA Library's Local History/Special Collections)
5. *Slave Ancestral Research: It's Something Else* by Mary Fears
6. *Boykin: Wilson, Johnston, Wayne, Nash Counties, NC 1785-1995* by B.J. Bunn, Jr.
7. *Bunn North Carolina Records* by B.J. Bunn, Jr. (Records gra-

ciously provided by the late Mr. Bunn's daughter, Susan Lucas.)

8. *Roster of the War of 1812: Southside Virginia* by James Douthat
9. *North Carolina Oath of Allegiance, 1778: Granville District* by Mountain Press
10. *Shareholders in the London Company, 1615-1623* by Mountain Press
11. *Albemarle County, NC Quit Rents in Arrears, 1729-1732* by Mountain Press
12. *1702 Public Officers of Virginia* by Mountain Press
13. *Public Officers of Virginia, 1680* by Mountain Press
14. *Surry County, Virginia Marriage Bonds, 1772-1791* by Mountain Press
15. *1714 Public Officers of Virginia* by Mountain Press
16. *Isle of Wight County, Virginia Records: Births, 1716-1755; Marriages, 1785-1786*
[Solemnized by the Reverend William Hubard in Newport Parish] by Mountain Press

COTTON, CONT FROM P. 2

appreciates the labor saving, time saving new tools and methods at our disposal today. So, in the cotton growing area of the Tar River and its tributaries, King Cotton has returned. Cotton is king again.

Willis Boice Walker

100,000 BRICK
For Sale.

\$7. PER 1000 AT THE KILN.

T.P. BRASWELL,
Battleboro, N.C.

[Battleboro Progress, Jan. 2, 1880]

Torpedoes in the Civil War

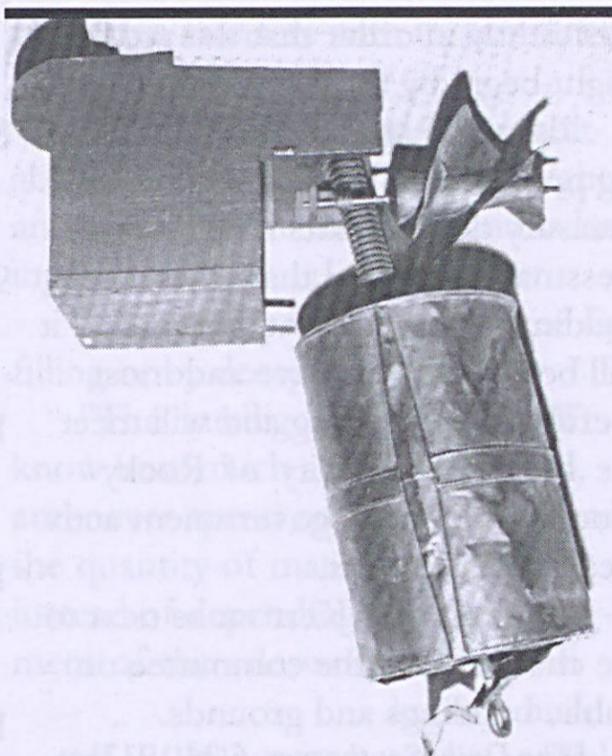
Faced with a small navy with few warships, the Confederacy relied on a few heavily-armored rams and ingenious *infernal machines* for inland water and coastal defense. The *infernal machines* were called *torpedoes* at that time. Now we know them as mines.

Matthew F. Maury was the first to successfully experiment with torpedoes. He enlisted the assistance of several naval officers including Isaac Newton Brown, Hunter Davidson, and Beverly Kennon. In October 1862, the Confederate Congress passed a law creating a secret service organization, the Navy's Submarine Battery Service and the Army's Torpedo Bureau.

Throughout the war, mines were used extensively in the navigable rivers and bays along the eastern coastline. They were invaluable in the protection of coastal cities like Wilmington, NC and Charleston, SC, keeping the blockading ships out



Brooke Swaying Torpedo. Attributed to Confederate artillery genius, John Brooke, this torpedo consisted of a cone topped by a dome, made of either tin or copper. It had a universal joint attached to an anchor that allowed it to sway with the current while remaining under the waterline.



Drift Percussion Propeller Torpedo. This torpedo was formed of sheet metal with a float at the top. It was released upstream to float on the current toward enemy ships. When the torpedo ran up against an enemy ship the current of the water caused the propeller to turn. After a few revolutions, the striker was released exploding the torpedo.

of the harbors while allowing the blockade runners to get in. They were responsible for keeping some Confederate ports from being taken until the very end of the war. It is estimated that torpedoes were responsible for the destruction or disabling of about 40 Union vessels.

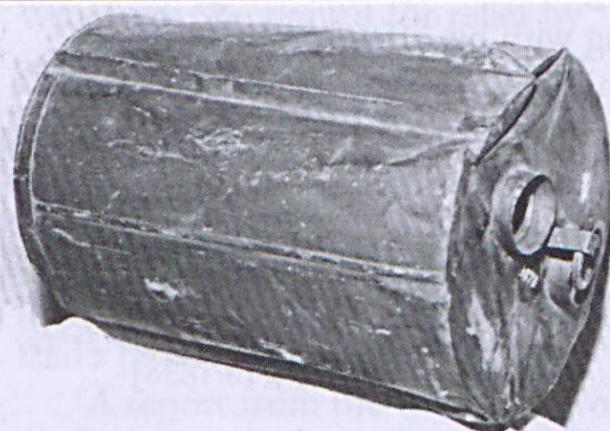
The South developed an almost endless array of the explosive devices. Hundreds of thousands of them were used. Most were anchored in stationary positions, or carried into action on long poles or spars by warships. The torpedoes could be detonated by friction devices, and some were electrically detonated. They cost little to produce, but were deadly.

The first armed warship to be sunk by a mine was the *USS Cairo*, on December 12, 1862. The mine, inexpensive but effective, was probably nothing more than a five gallon jug filled with gunpowder anchored

in the Yazoo River in Mississippi. Insulated wires ran from the mine to shore, where a soldier watched and waited. As the *Cairo* moved through the muddy water the Confederate soldier hit a plunger completing the circuit on a galvanic battery. The electrical impulse raced through the wires and detonated the mine.

Fifteen year old George Yost, a member of the *Cairo's* crew, described the explosion: "...just as we were training on the battery we were struck by a torpedo, which exploded under our starboard bow, a few feet from the center and some 35 or 40 feet from the bow proper just under our provision store room, which crushed in the bottom of the boat so that the water rushed in like the roar of Niagara. In five minutes the hold was full of water and the forward part of the gunboat was flooded ... One of our heaviest bow guns had been dismantled by the force of the explosion injuring three men. "Executive Officer Hiram K. Hazlett and the writer were the last two persons to leave the sinking vessel which we did by jumping into the 'dingey' which was manned by two

TORPEDOES, CONT. ON P. 12



Floating Metal Case Torpedo. The torpedo was filled with powder and then sealed with a friction primer inside. The primer pull was attached to a wire through a box on the side of the casing. The box was filled with beeswax and tallow for waterproofing. When the trigger line was pulled, the wire attached to the friction primer pulled and fired the torpedo.

Sinking of the *Otsego*. In the Roanoke River

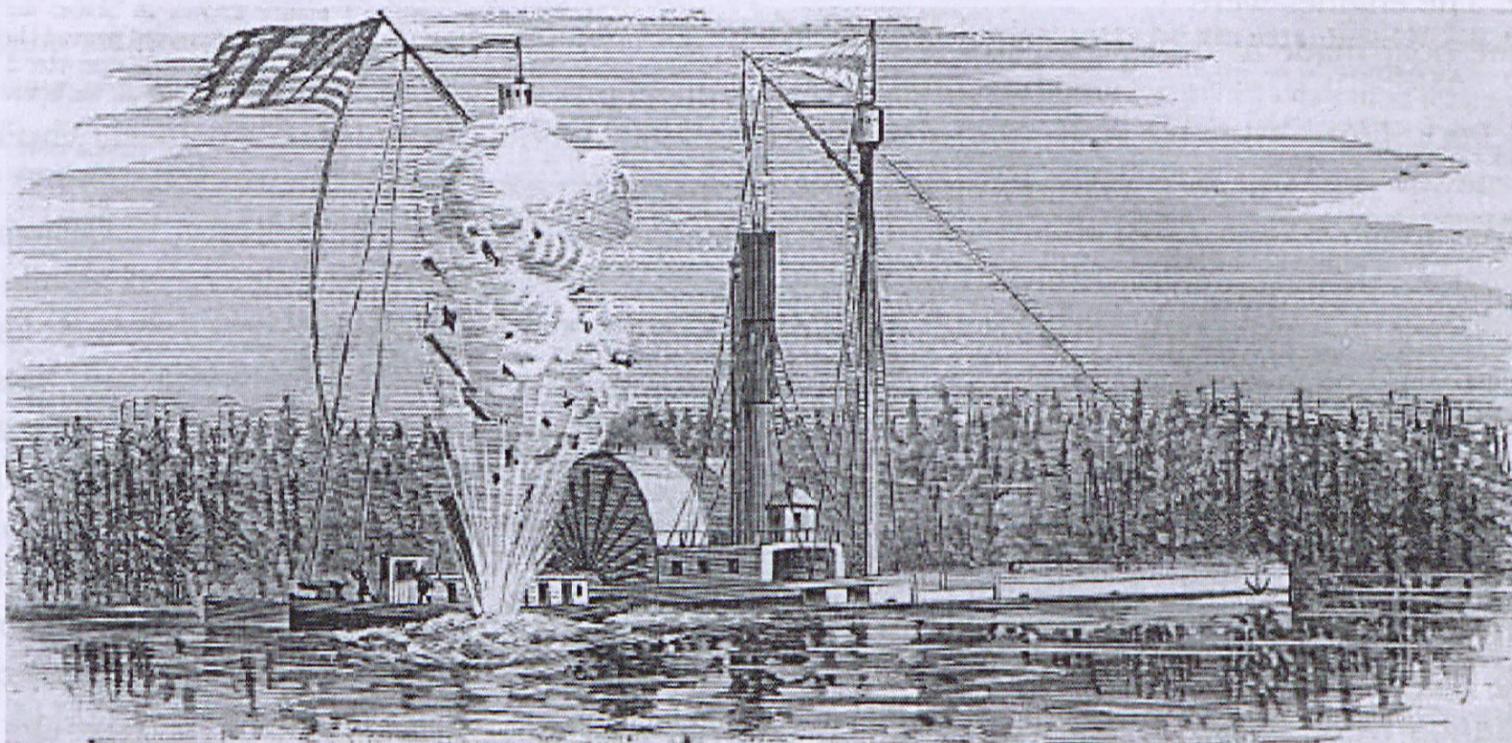
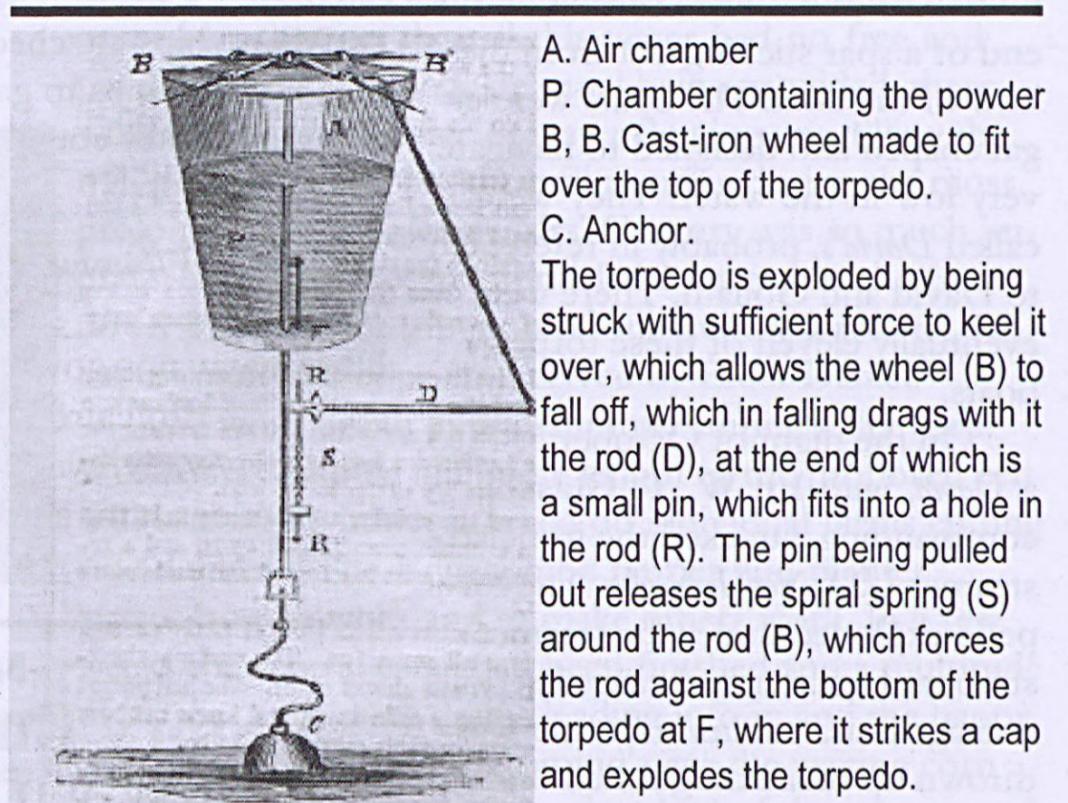
HARPER'S WEEKLY JAN. 21, 1865

Dec. 9, 1864: *U.S.S. Otsego*, Lieutenant Commander Arnold, sank in the Roanoke River near Jamesville, Martin Co., NC, after striking two torpedoes in quick succession. Double-ender *Otsego*, along with *U.S.S. Wyalusing*, Lieutenant Commander English, *Valley City*, Acting Master John A. J. Brooks, and tugs *Belle* and *Bazely*, had formed an expedition to capture Rainbow Bluff, on the Roanoke River, and the Confederate ram rumored to be building at Halifax, NC. Commander Macomb anchored his squadron at Jamesville to await the arrival of cooperating troops, and *Otsego* struck two torpedoes while anchoring. *Bazely*, coming alongside to lend assistance, also struck a torpedo and sank instantly. Lieutenant Commander Arnold and part of his crew remained on board the sunken *Otsego* to cover that portion of the river with her guns above water on the hurricane deck, and the rest of the group slowly moved upriver, dragging for torpedoes, to commence the attack on Rainbow Bluff.

Dec. 20, 1864: Boats from *U.S.S. Chicopee*, *Valley City*, and *Wyalusing* under the command of Commander Macomb on an expedition to engage Confederate troops at Rainbow Bluff, NC, were fired upon while dragging for torpedoes, seven miles below the Bluff. Macomb then put out skirmishers to clear the banks, but made only slow progress against

the Southern force along the river. After the destruction of *U.S.S. Otsego* and *Bazely* the Union gunboats moved laboriously up the tortuous river, dragging for torpedoes in small boats and being harassed by Confederate riflemen. As many as 40 torpedoes were found in some bends of the river. Union troops intending to operate with the gunboats were delayed. By the time they were ready to advance on Rainbow Bluff, the Confederate garrison there had been strongly reinforced. Torpedoes in the river, batteries along the banks below that point, and the difficulty of navigating the river forced abandonment of the operation. The wrecks of *Otsego* and *Bazely* were destroyed to prevent their falling into Confederate hands on 25 December. The expedition got back to Plymouth, Washington Co., NC three days later.

[www.historycentral.com]



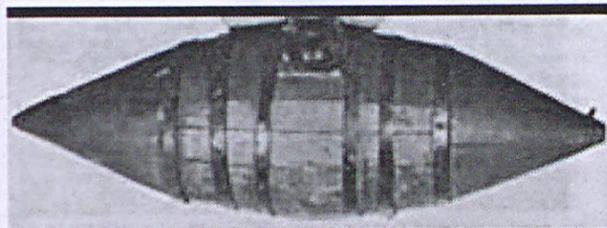
WRECK OF THE "OTSEGO," AND THE EXPLOSION OF THE TUG "BAZLEY" IN THE ROANOKE RIVER, DECEMBER 10, 1864.

TORPEDOES, FROM P. 10

sailors, and awaited us at the stern. ... We moved off just in time to escape being swallowed up in the seething caldron of foaming water. ... Nothing of the *Cairo* could be seen 12 minutes after the first explosion, excepting the smoke stacks, and the flag staff from which still floated the flag above the troubled waters."

Beginning about 1863, the Confederacy went a step further and built a fleet of torpedo boats intended to sink Federal blockade ships by detonating explosives against the ships' hulls. The mines were carried on the end of a spar sticking out from the bow of the boat. The boats were cigar shaped and designed to navigate very low in the water. They were called *David's*, probably in reference to David and Goliath. There were eventually eleven of these torpedo boats.

On the night of October 5, 1863, a *David*, with **Lt. W. T. Glassell** commanding, attacked the ironclad steamer *USS New Ironsides*. The torpedo exploded under the steamer's starboard quarter and caused serious damage but a column of water was thrown up that extinguished the *David's* boiler fire. The engines were restarted and the boat made it to safety.



Keg Torpedo: It was a 5-gallon beer keg, coated with tar and resin and filled with gunpowder. Air was left inside to make it float and they were held in place by an anchor. Thousands were made and used along the south Atlantic coast and at Mobile Bay, AL.

The Federal troops used several methods to remove the threat of the torpedoes. They first tried shooting at them. Since early torpedoes were made of glass demijohns they were easily broken by gunfire.

As soon as it became evident that some mines were being detonated from shore, small boats were put out ahead of large ships to look for lines and when they were found, they were cut and the mine pulled out of the water. Occasionally, Union commanders forced Confederate operators to disarm torpedoes or to show them where the torpedoes were located.

Many ships attached large nets ahead of the ships to gather in the torpedoes. They could then be disarmed on shore.

[http://www.infernal-machines.com/_sgg/m4_1.htm;
<http://www.nps.gov/archive/vick/cairo/cairo.htm>;
<http://www.civilwarhome.com/torpedoes.htm>; and others]

A Story Emerges WORLD WAR II VETERAN REMEMBERED

On Nov. 29, 2007, Traci Thompson, Local History /Genealogy Librarian at **Braswell Memorial Library**, received an e-mail from **Jean Louis Vijgen** of the **Netherlands**. He had recently adopted the grave of **Captain James Grantham** who was killed on Jan. 10, 1945 in the **Battle of the Bulge** and is buried in **Belgium** at the American War Cemetery of Henri-Chapelle in **Hombourg**. Capt. Grantham was from **Nash County, NC** and Vijgen and was looking for more information about him.

Jean Louis Vijgen and his father, **Rob**, have adopted the graves of 8 American soldiers buried in Belgium. They are trying to learn more about the men buried so far from home, which leads us to Captain James Grantham.

Using the library's resources, Thompson was able to uncover more information about Captain Grantham and his family. His obituary in the *Rocky Mount Evening Telegram* revealed that Captain Grantham earned a Purple Heart for his sacrifice and that he had a wife and baby daughter.

Vital records sources showed that Grantham's widow remarried a **Cozart** in **Wilson County, NC**. Following this clue, Thompson contacted the Wilson County Public Library and learned of a Mrs. Cozart, who just happened to live down the street from the library. This turned out to be Captain Grantham's widow! Now in her 90s, Mrs. Cozart, formerly **Gretchen Jones Grantham**, was delighted to hear about the man in the Netherlands who was interested in honoring her former husband's memory. Mrs. Cozart related her experience of a recent trip to Belgium to visit Battle of the Bulge sites and Captain Grantham's grave, and her memories of those dark days of war.

Census records revealed that Captain Grantham's father was **Elonzo Bowden Grantham**, who came to Nash County around 1900 from the **Greene County, N.C.** area. A lawyer in **Nashville**, he eventually moved his family and practice to **Rocky Mount**.

City directories and other sources showed that daughter **Elizabeth** became a teacher and taught at the **Rocky Mount Mill School**, and later at the **Bassett School**. She lived all her life in Rocky Mount, and is buried in **Pineview Cemetery**, along with her parents.

GRANTHAM, CONT. ON P. 20

Mrs. Gregory and the Conetoe Swamp Canal

Conetoe Swamp, on the lower border of Edgecombe Co., NC emptied its superfluous waters into the Tar River, "some distance below the town of Tarborough, near the line between Pitt and Edgecombe counties." The land was virtually flat and the flow of water was sluggish, leaving the adjacent land swampy and too wet for cultivation. "My mother told me that in her childhood the story went, that the Edgecombe militia, who ran away from the **Battle of Guilford Court House**, did not stop until they got to Conetoe Swamp."

In the early 1800s, Edgecombe Co. residents were known for their self-reliance and they were notoriously slow to join together in any enterprise. But owners of swampy land in

the lower end of the county came to realize that they were allowing acres of rich land to go uncultivated when, with a little cooperation, they might be brought to good use. A



"Carolina Swamp" by American land-

plan was devised "whereby labor and money should be contributed by the proprietors of these lands for the purpose of cutting a large central canal from the head of the Swamp throughout its whole extent to its entrance into Tar River. Each landowner, whose land would drain into this central canal, was to subscribe so much money, and so many days' labor ... as should be considered equivalent to the benefits coming to him; and then each should cut such lateral smaller canals and ditches emptying into the great canal, as might be needed for the proper draining of his own fields."

Elder **John Daniel** was a leader in securing the promise of money and labor from the landowners. "One of those whom he had to interest was the keeper of the old Tarborough Tavern, **Mrs. Gregory**, a picturesque character, prominent in the life of the community, a woman of strength and intelligence, among the best known and most forceful of the inhabitants of the town. She owned the land where Conetoe Swamp emptied into

Tar River; and across the mouth of its sluggish stream she had erected a dam, and had thus created a small water-power, and had a grist mill to grind the corn of the neighborhood. Receiving its supply of water from so extensive an area, this stream usually supplied a good head of water for the limited operations of the country mill. In very extended summer droughts, however, the great swamp took up so much water in its spongy depths, that the stream would sometimes fall so low that the mill would be idle for days, and perhaps for weeks."

"In representing the great benefits to be derived from the proposed canal, Elder Daniel impressed upon Mrs. Gregory the special advantage of having always an abundant supply of water in her mill-pond. In the most prolonged drought, when the mill-pond would be for weeks at its lowest point, there was abundance of water held up in the swamp. The lack of water in the mill-pond was caused by the fact that all this water had no free and proper outlet. An adequate canal being provided, there would be an abundance of water flowing out, filling the mill-pond and keeping the mill running during the most prolonged summer heats. Mrs. Gregory was so much impressed by this presentation of the case that she put down a money contribution of one hundred dollars, the largest cash subscription received by Elder Daniel."

The work began in mid-summer during a dry spell. Workers assembled along the length of the proposed central canal while others worked on individual farms cutting side ditches. "The Edgecombe farmer and planter ... knows how to work and to make others work. In a few weeks the central canal had been finished and a multitude of smaller subsidiary drains leading into it; and the happy owners saw already in their mind's eye the waving corn and the snowy cotton, taking the place of the cypress and reeds, the vines and the thorns, which for ages had covered these lands."

"And into Mrs. Gregory's mill-pond poured the abundant waters released from the spongy soil of the wide swamp. The great over-shot wheel of the mill turned steadily; the mill-stones hummed a low monotonous song; over the dam the superfluous water poured into the river. All that good brother Daniel had promised had been performed. At the end of one of the longest of summer droughts there was abundant water to keep the mill steadily at work."

"The drought continued for some while after the completion of the main work on the Canal. There was some subsidence of the water in the mill-pond, but the night's intermission in the grinding allowed full time to repair the day's waste. It was now getting to be late in

GREGORY, CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

GREGORY, FROM PAGE 13

September. There were signs of rain. It began gently in the forenoon, hardly more than a light drizzle. In the afternoon it increased; soon after nightfall it was raining heavily. The miller looked out. The dam was pouring an increasing stream into the river. But he felt no anxiety. Never within memory had the dam failed to hold against all the water coming out of Conetoe Swamp. He went to bed in his house on the rising ground back of the mill; and he fell asleep hearing the increasing rain pounding on his roof."

"But in the morning the miller looked out upon a changed scene. Dam, mill, and all connected with them, had disappeared. The rain had ceased before daylight, and a full and rapid stream of dark water poured through the remains of the broken dam into the swollen river."

"It is said that for many years after this, Elder John Daniel did not venture up the Main Street of Tarborough—which has for its real name on the old maps of the town,

St. George's Street,—as far as Mrs. Gregory's Tavern. When business made it imperative that he should visit the parts beyond, he prudently made a detour, and by a back street reached his destination. Few cared to face Mrs. Gregory when she thought she had a grievance."

[*Nonnulla: Memories, Stories, Traditions, ...*, by Joseph Blount Cheshire, 1930]

"The Bryan House, formerly Mrs. Gregory's Hotel, was the major hotel in Tarboro from the 1830s until it burned in 1897. The dining room also served as the ballroom, with music provided by Frank Johnson's band. Prior to the War Between the States, the hotel hosted monthly dances. Mrs. Gregory had begun the hotel as a tavern for travelers and a boarding house for new residents. A frugal businesswoman, she invested her profits, expanded the hotel, and operated a gristmill in the Conetoe community."

[*Echoes of Edgecombe County*, by Monika S. Fleming, 1999]

Boy Scouts

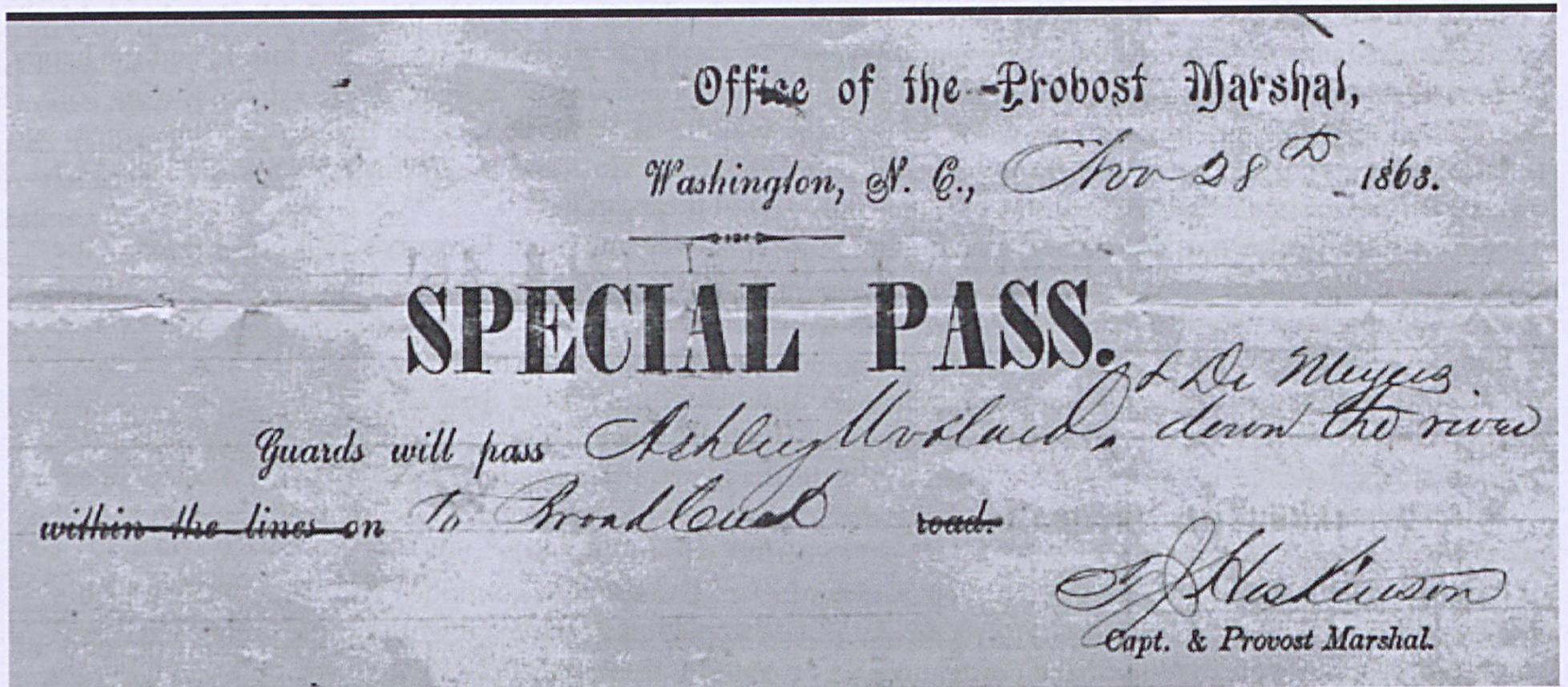
A few of the promoters of the movement met in the Mayor's office last night and perfected the temporary organization. The following were named as Advisory Board: **O.P. Dickinson**, President' **Asa Bishop**, chairman; **Maj. T.S. Pace**, Secretary; **W.L. Banks**, Treasurer; **Chas. L. Coon**, **Jno. D. Gold**, **H. D. Brown**, **Capt. G.K. Freeman**, Scout Master

Boys between the ages of 10 and 18 inclusive are eligible as active members; all over 18 are eligible as honorary or contributing members. An admission fee of 25 cents will be charged active members. All other members will contribute whatever they desire to help forward the movement.

A meeting will be held in the City Hall next Monday night Parents, come and bring your boys. Boys, come and bring your parents. Old Scouts, we need you as well as the young scouts.

O. P. Dickinson, President

[*Wilson Times*, 11/25/1913]



A Special Pass dated 11/28/1863, allowing Ashley Woolard and Dr. Meyers to travel down the [Tar/Pamlico] river to Broad Creek [western Beaufort Co., NC]. Ashley Woolard is an ancestor of Julia Condit, TRC member, who submitted the copy of the pass.

My Grandpa— John Adams Lang

AS TOLD BY GRANDSON,
CONNOR EAGLES

John Adams Lang enlisted in the *Marlboro Guards* on April 20, 1861 at Marlboro, Pitt Co., NC. He was just 18 and weighed only 111 pounds. The *Marlboro Guards* soon made up Co. E of the 27th Regiment of Cooke's Brigade of A.P. Hill's Corps.

Grandpa said as a boy the nearest he ever got to any *store bought* candy was to stand and look at a glass chewing gum jar filled with red streaked candy on the top shelf in a store, far out of a boy's reach.

He resolved that if he ever had the money he would buy all the candy he could eat at one time!

After enlisting he soon found his way down to **Wilmington, New Hanover County, NC** where he was paid \$11 in Confederate paper money for one month's services in the Army. This was his first chance to satisfy the craving for candy. He went to a candy kitchen and spent the \$11 for extra large sticks of lemon candy. He said he had an armful. Back to camp he went, and he and his comrades had all the *store bought* candy they could eat.

Grandpa soon found himself going down in **SC** below **Charleston**. They were *foraging* for supplies—that is, gathering up all available food, feed, etc., that could be spared. They soon came to **Pocataligo**. I thought this quite a name and wanted to know about it. It seems the Indians had turtle races; and in order to hurry the turtles, with a sharp stick

they said, "Poke his tail he go," from which came Pocataligo. Then farther down was **Coosahatchie**. ...

Grandpa spent one winter on the **Blue Ridge** and along the **Shenandoah Valley**. He told about the warm camp fires from the hickory and oak wood, the wonderful pastures and fat cattle. He never tired of talking of the loveliness and beauty of the Shenandoah Valley. ...

Then there was the time the soldiers, for a change, were enjoying the *luxury* of a ride on a freight train in the mountains. They were loaded in box cars. Fortunately the train was slow. All of a sudden there was a weakness in the track, and car after car tumbled off the track and over on the mountainside. Luckily all escaped with a good scare and a few bruises. ...

Captain Graham of Co. G., 27th Reg., said he had often wondered about the reported bloody tracks made by some of **George Washington's** barefooted troops at **Valley Forge** during that awful winter. But in a forced march on frozen ground, in snow and sleet, he saw troops in the 27th Reg. with worn out shoes and virtually bare feet leave blood prints behind. At this particular time **Gen. Cooke** rode ahead to the camp and had camp fires built so the cold and suffering troops could warm up. It was a most cheerful and welcome sight to the foot-weary soldiers. I could understand something of why

Grandpa and his comrades loved Gen. Cooke so. ...

Company E suffered heavily during the four years of war. There were only 17 men including officers left to be paroled. Among them was Uncle **Bob Lang**, who was a corporal. The 27th reg. had only 117 men and officers left, a pitiful skeleton of four years ago. The men were tired, hungry, ragged, but their spirits were not broken. **Grant's** terms were reasonable.

Grandpa was not present at the surrender, and so was not among the parolees. He was not too far away guarding meager supplies. When he heard of the surrender, he said, "I threw my musket down and started the long walk home." He had to sleep in the open, but for four years he had become hardened to that. He had to beg food when so often there was none. For instance, he was in **Nash Co.** going to **Wilson**. It was 10:00, and he had had no breakfast. He saw a girl beside the road at a spring house, washing clothes.

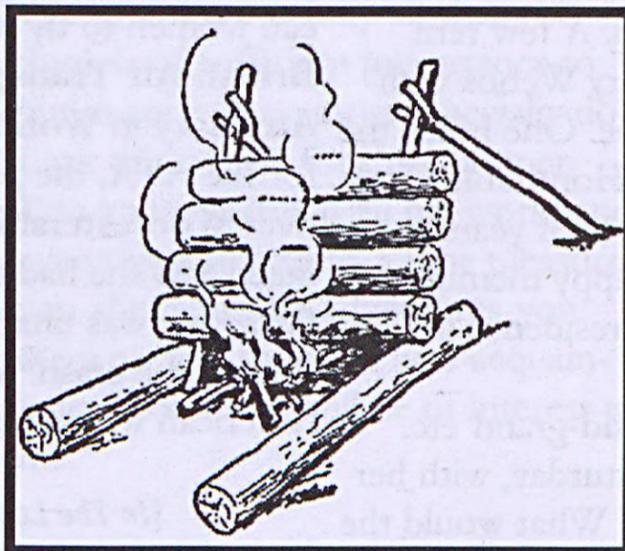
"Is there any chance to get something to eat?" he asked.

She replied, "We have nothing but some cool buttermilk. You may have all of that you want and be welcome."

Grandpa always said he could not drink milk, but he was so hungry that he said he'd try a glass. She poured it, and he closed his eyes and drank it down. She offered more, but he said, "I think I can make it to Wilson on that," and he did.

At last he arrived home.... He found his sister, Jane, whose husband lost his life in the war, with four little boys. He said, "They could hardly make it," so he lived with them and helped them until they were large enough to get along.

[From *The Lang, Joyner, Williams Families of NC* by Laura Foster Renard, 1974, available at the ECU Library]



OLD TIMES BACK YONDER

Mary Webb Road Horseback to Granville County 150 years ago.

Descendant First NC Licensed Female Pilot

BY W. J. WEBB

[*The Oxford Public Ledger*, 6/22/1934]

A little over 150 years ago **Mary Webb** rode horseback from her old home in **Essex Co., VA** to make her home with her children who had moved to this county [**Granville**]. Her daughter, Mary Webb, had married **Samuel Smith** and had settled near **Grassy Creek**; **William** had established his home near **Shoofly**; and **John** was further up Grassy Creek, above **Oak Hill**.

Granville Co., NC then was sparsely settled—a few homes along the rivers and creeks. **Oxford** was hardly a village—just a small wooden court house, one store and maybe one or two homes. There was probably a wayside inn where stage coaches stopped in passing. The few roads were mere wagon trails. Most of the traveling was on horseback. William Webb lived at Shoofly but he and family saddled over to Grassy Creek to church. Probably the only school in the county was the one taught by Reverend **Henry Patillo**, near where is now the town of **Stovall**. Only a few churches had been established. Most of the county was in forests, but settlers were coming in from **Virginia** and the eastern part of this state. Of course no railroads or Democratic primaries; neither had sales tax or beer been invented. Just plain old-fashioned hard work and hard liquor.

This old Mary Webb had spent her declining years in Granville. We find her will here in the court house. Her old family bible is now in Oxford, with birth and death record of her children. Her descendents have been as sands of the sea, going west, south and still further as this great country of ours has developed. A few remnants may still be found hereabouts. Mary Webbs without number have handed down her name. One holds the reins over her henpecked husband, our Honorable Clerk of Court; one has been teaching a number of years at Stovall. One fine girl of her name is a happy member of the **Oxford Orphanage** class, with her residence in Cottage No. 1.

Now we have one of her grand-grand-grand etc. daughters coming into Granville next Saturday, with her sidesaddle strapped on a flying machine. What would the

old grandmother say if she could see this **Mary Webb (Nicholson)** carrying on such capers? Suppose she could get up in the thing and cavort over the county now. The town of Oxford, spreading beneath her with the two orphanages at the ends, the miles and miles of splendid roads, the numberless farm homes, churches—and the big school buildings. Railroads and Democratic primaries, and the immense throngs of people moving hither and thither at the great Twenty Fourth. She would notice these and other wonderful things, the automobiles would carry her mind back to the weary old carriage in which the old slave carriage driver used to carry her from place to place as she visited her sons and daughters in the old times back yonder. After seeing all these new-fangled things of the present I wonder if she would be FOR or AGAIN the Sales tax. In the days of her youth the wim-men had a way of busting up tea boxes and casting the contents into the sea if anybody tried to tie any sales tax to any article.

We are glad to see Mary Webb back again. Here's hoping she will pilot that machine careful and not make a mess of things.

Mary Webb Nicholson

Mary Webb Nicholson became North Carolina's first female licensed pilot in 1929. Born in **Greensboro** in 1905, Mary developed a love of flying when she took her first plane ride in 1927. In 1931, only two years after receiving her license, she set a state altitude record, flying a 45-horsepower Curtiss-Wright Junior to 15,200 ft.

Mary Webb Nicholson moved to **New York City** in 1937. In 1942, she moved to **England** and became one of 25 American women to fly with the **British Air Transport**

Auxiliary in World War II. In May of 1943, while flying for the ATA, the propeller flew off Nicholson's plane over **Worcestershire County, England**. The engine failed and she had to make an emergency landing on a farm. She was unable to avoid hitting a barn and did not survive the crash. Mary Webb Nicholson was the only American woman in the ATA to lose her life in the war.



Sincerely
Mary Nicholson

A Visit to Enfield

TAKEN FROM THE DIARY OF
SUSAN BRADFORD EPPES
LATER PUBLISHED AS *THROUGH
SOME EVENTFUL YEARS*

February 9, 1857: John Robinson's Circus is coming to Tallahassee [FL]. I hope we can go. The posters are pasted all over town. Frances is begging to go.

March 4, 1857: We went to that circus and we took the measles, the black measles, which the doctors say is the very worst kind. People are dying with it in every direction for, as Father says, a circus is like a magnet and draws from all sides. There have been three deaths on Pine Hill Plantation and five on the Horse-Shoe.

March 25th: My birthday came and went and nobody thought of it, not even I, myself. There was so much else to think of and so much else to do. This is the year 1857 and I am eleven years old. There has been so much trouble that we have not been to Live Oak in a long time. Grandpa has been often to see us though and he says we must spend this next summer with him at Enfield, [Halifax Co., NC]. Father and Mother have consented and I know we will feel better to go to him and try to forget. So, we are planning to go in July. Father does not think he can leave home before that time.

May 29, 1857: We are really going to North Carolina and Father is going with us this time. It is almost too good to be true. There is one cloud in my sky. Mother says we must take Frances with us that she may see her mother and grandmother. Now, Frances is very bad and nobody likes her very much, I have grown fond of her. Mother says we always love the child who gives us the most trouble and all the family laugh at me about "my objectionable

little maid," as they call her but she will not be any trouble after we get to Enfield, for Aunt Amy and Ann will have her all the time with them. Aunt Robinson says we must keep on at school until the Friday before we leave. I am glad of that but it is hard to think of your lessons when so many pleasant thoughts are coming to your mind. She is going with us and Sister Mag says she is thankful the lessons are not to be continued all summer. But Sister Mag is a grown young lady now and does not study any more; she sings and plays a great deal and I love to hear her, she has such a sweet voice.

June 30th, 1857: The rainy season is certainly with us. It has rained nearly every day for ten days and tomorrow we start for Enfield. The roads through Georgia are never very good in wet weather because there are so many little streams everywhere.

July 16, 1857: ENFIELD, North Carolina. -- We have been here more than a week and this is the first time I have thought of you, my diary. Before we left home I let Brother Junius read a few pages of these records and he says I write correctly but I do not tell of events in a way to make them clear to those, who, in future years may read them. "But Brother Junius," I said, "I am not writing for the future, but for myself, and I understand."

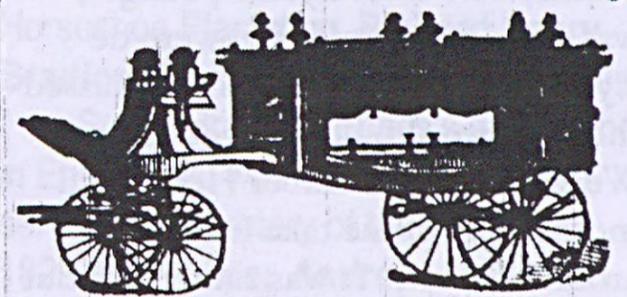
"Yes," he answered, "you think so, but it may be as I say, so I want you to write out fully all that you think is of sufficient importance to put in your diary; most especially do I ask this of you for this summer. You know Mattie is all my world and everything you write, all the pleasures you share, all the adventures you meet up with, and the new acquaintances you make will be of interest to me."

So I have promised to do my best. We left home on the 1st of July. The clouds were black, and before we reached Duncansville the rain was pouring down; we reached the river in safety but the road was under water all the way. The rain had come to be just a mist by this time and the river was so high it was impossible to ford it as we usually did. An old man had a flat-boat there and said he could take us over. Father said it looked doubtful but there was no other way to get across. There were two baggage wagons, three carriages and a double buggy and it took five trips across to get us all to the other side. The ferry-man was old and thin, his hair was long and white and blew about in the wind. He wore neither hat nor shoes and as he poled us across he sang: "Jesus wept, and well He might, To see the sinner take his flight."

Brother Junius thought this was poor comfort and Aunt Robinson

EPPES, CONT. ON P. 18

H. A. DRAPER,



UNDERTAKER,
HENDERSON, N. C.

I carry a full stock of fine

BURIAL CASES

of every description—Mahogany, Rosewood, Walnut, Cloth Covered, Metallic and Zinc Lined—all styles, sizes and prices. Also nice line of burial robes. I have the

FINEST HEARSE

East of Raleigh. Personal attention given to all burials where services are required.

Cabinet making in all its branches. Office desks, book cases, tables, &c., made to order on short notice. Upholstering, repairing, &c. My motto is the very best work at the very lowest living price always. Give me a trial. Work room in the old Watkins building, near E. G. Davis' store.

H. A. DRAPER,
Henderson, N. C.

nov. 10 - p.

EPPES, CONT. FROM P. 17

looked severe and said he was a wicked old man. Once on the other side we made better time but there was rain all the way. Not a hard, washing down-pour, as it had been, but enough to be disagreeable. That night we had to seek shelter and we were fortunate in finding a clean, new house. Only one room, to be sure, and there were fourteen white people in our party, but Mrs. Morgan was most accommodating and she was well-paid for her trouble.

Next morning we made a very early start and reached **Albany** that night. We thought our troubles were at an end when we boarded the train, but not so, a few miles from **Macon** there had been a wash-out and the train turned on its side and frightened us half to death. The smoky little lights all went out and the lanterns of the trainmen were the only lights to be seen. Frances took that time to be just as bad as she could be and that is pretty trying. Now she is almost as old as I am and dear little Mattie, who is five years younger, was as good as gold. We were delayed several hours and so we missed the train we should have gone on. We stayed at the Lanier House and mother let Fannie take us walking around the city. It was rather wet but pleasant in spite of that. Father and mother could not go with us because they had company. I do believe they know people wherever they go.

When we left Macon we thought we would get to Enfield the next morning, but it was an awful spell of weather and we made many stops, we were six days on the road and when we reached grandpa's we found him almost wild with grief, because **Dr. Holland**, who was on the opposite side of the river when we were considering whether to risk the old ferry-man or not, had reached Enfield the day before and had told it

that he was sure, if we attempted to cross we were drowned. Everything was in readiness for us and a few hours' rest made us all new again. It is delightful here and all the kinsfolk are just fine. I do love kinsfolk.

September 6, 1857: Little Diary, I am afraid you stand a poor showing here, where there is so much going on, but I can write when I get back to Florida and use my eyes and ears while I am skipping around in this exciting fashion. We are at **Shocco Springs**, in **Warren County, North Carolina**. It is a lovely place; there are five hundred people here, the manager says. There are more than usual because there is to be a tournament next week and after that a fancy ball. It will be fine and we children are looking forward to it all as eagerly as the grown people. **Mrs. Brown-lee's** pretty niece, **Miss Winslow**, is going as a shepherdess and she has borrowed my brown leghorn hat to wear.

There are a number of nice children here, **Cora** and **Valentine Jordan**, from **Charleston**; the **Stanford** boys from **Petersburg**, and a lot of others, including those of our party, **Theora**, **Eliza** and **John Branch**, of **Enfield**; my little step-uncles, who are no older than I am, and Mattie and I. The grown people talk of nothing but the ball and we follow suit.

September 10th: Well, the tournament is over! The knights were not as prettily dressed as those in Tallahassee, but the riding was good and they had the ball but I have been a bad girl and the worst of it is I still think I was right. Of course mother is right but I cannot see it yet. It was this way, the girls I play with had agreed that we would wear white dresses to the ball. I did not think mother would care and I did not have a chance to ask her, for she was visiting Uncle **Washington Branch**

and Aunt **Julia**. The morning of the tournament I put on a rose-colored lawn and was on my way out of the room when mother called me back.

"Susie," she said, "take off that dress and put on the white one with the white ribbons."

"Oh, mother," I said, "please let me wear this, I want to wear that pretty white dress to the ball tonight."

She made me change my dress and I cried and was ugly about it. I know that was wrong and I will not say one word but I was unhappy all day. That night all the girls had on white dresses but me. My dress was a gold-colored silk tissue, trimmed with lace and grandma talked to me and told me my dress was far handsomer than any little girl there had on, but grandma does not understand. I do not care to have prettier or nicer things than others have, I only want to be like the rest.

The Fairchild children in Mrs. Sherwood's books always tried to remember all the bad things they did and prayed about them constantly. Maybe this is not the way I ought to feel but I shall try to forget this trouble and I shall be such a good child that mother will forget, too.

September 12th: We are at Enfield once more. This morning grandpa

EPPS, CONT. ON PAGE 19

CASH! CASH!! CASH!!!

WILL be given for likely young Negroes, on application to either of the subscribers.

J. H. SIMMONS,
G. W. BARNES.

July 8, 1830.

19—tf

THE PERSON,

Who took from, Mr. WILLIAM M. WEST's during the cock fight, (through mistake, it is believed) a new black mounted gig-harness, will please return it to Messrs Womble Litchford, at whose shop, the harness that was left, will be found.

August 5, 1830.

23—tf

EPPES, FROM P. 18

called me to get my bonnet and go to ride with him. When I was little I rode on a pillow in front of him but now I am so big I ride on a horse by myself. I rode Betsy Trotwood this morning. We went to the apple orchard. The apples had ripened up amazingly while we were gone. We rode down by the spring, where I had never been before and we stopped under a tree loaded with beautiful red apples and grandpa said, "These are queer apples, examine them and see if you can find out why they are queer?"

I looked and at least a dozen apples had my name on them in white on the red skin. It was so wonderful and I could hardly believe grandpa had written on these apples with a piece of tallow and then covered the place with a strip of cloth. I was so pleased and I am just as proud as can be. Haven't I got the dearest grandpa? Father is going to **New York** tomorrow. He will take Sister Mag and Sister Mart and Cousin Lizzie and Miss **Hennie Winchester** who is Grandma's niece. I want to go with him but Mother thinks I would be in the way. She says when I am eighteen she will take me to New York herself and buy me all the things a young lady should have. I wish I was going now though, for Father is taking them to **Niagara** and **Saratoga** and they will stop quite a while in New York City and see all the sights. We are going to **Old Point Comfort**.

September 15th: I am glad I did not beg to go with father and the girls. Old Point Comfort is a most interesting place. **Fortress Monroe**, with its moat is not like anything I ever saw before, the general commanding is an old friend of Grandpa's and he lets us look over the fort and see so many things. The officers' quarters are inside the fort, the men

are drilled nearby and they have a splendid band.

We are stopping at the **Hygeia Hotel**, the ball-room is very large and every night the band plays and the enormous room is filled with dancers. There are no children here, so we do not dance but sit quietly by Mother and Grandma and look on.

Professor DeBow, of *DeBow's Review* is here. Grandpa says he is a very brilliant man. ...

September 20th: Father has come back from New York. They did not stay as long as we expected. I am so glad to see him but sorry to leave Old Point Comfort. We have had a fine time here. Grandma has taught me to swim and I have been out to the rip-raps. (I hope that is spelled right) it is a kind of lighthouse but not like the one at St. Marks; they say it is built up from the bottom with stones and the waves lash around it all day long.

September 22nd: We came over to **Portsmouth** yesterday on a large steamer. We reached here in the afternoon and as soon as the hotel people recognized Grandpa they sent large trays filled with delicious things to eat as a compliment to him. I forgot to tell that the people everywhere know Grandpa and show him so much attention.

We had hardly finished eating when a waiter came with a letter, on a tray. It was an invitation to our party to visit the man-of-war "Pennsylvania". We went and had a glorious time. The Stars and Stripes were flying and the band playing when the small boat we were in drew up to the vessel's side. At a word from the captain, they began to play, "All hail to the Chief." Father says that is because Grandpa was once Secretary of the Navy.

The Captain had his men show us all over the vessel we drank some water, which had been in the casks

for twenty years, we saw the shining weapons which hung ready for use and we felt very proud of this great ship. The captain invited us to come aboard after supper and have a dance and the young ladies in the party would have liked it but Grandpa did not accept.

I am writing this on the train for Enfield and must stop to see the **Roanoke River**.

September 30th: We have seen many places this summer; we have met many new kinspeople and now we must think of going home. ... I am sorry to say goodbye to all these dear ones and most especially Grandpa, but it will be nice to get home again.

The Bradford brothers of **Leon Co., FL** came from Halifax Co., NC near Enfield. **Thomas Bradford** founded Walnut Hill Plantation. Dr. **William Bradford** established Edgewood Plantation. **Henry B. Bradford** lived further south near his brother, Thomas. Dr. **Edward Bradford** founded Pine Hill Plantation and, later, Horseshoe Plantation. **Richard Henry Bradford** founded Water Oak Plantation.

Susan Bradford Eppes's grandfather in Enfield, NC was **John Branch** who served as Secretary of the Navy from 1829-1831 under **Andrew Jackson**. John Branch resigned as Secretary in 1831 in the mid-1830s, he moved to Leon County, Florida, where he lived for much of the next fifteen years on his plantation, **Live Oak**. He returned to NC in the early 1850s and remained there until his death in 1863

Ball and Party at Shocco Springs.
 There will be a Ball and Party at Shocco Springs on Tuesday and Wednesday, the 10th and 11th of August next. There will be fine Music in attendance.
 ANN JOHNSON.
 Warren County, July 14. 58
 Star and Standard.

LOCAL AFFAIRS

Thorne's Comedy Co. will be in Rocky Mount in about two weeks. Due notice will be given. This is an excellent troupe, and we bespeak for them a crowded house.

Mr. Henry Trevathan, who for some time past has wielded the yard stick behind Capt. Guion's counters, is going to leave us, and Mr. Joyner from Va. fills the vacancy.

Rocky Mount has a Brass Band of 12 members, made up of the elite of the place. They have secured the services of a teacher and are progressing rapidly. You must "toot" up boys, or we'll beat you.

The officers and teachers of the Sunday School gave the pupils a Christmas Tree on Wednesday night, Xmas eve. The "big children" as well as the little ones, enjoyed themselves.

FOR RENT.

My Store-home at Hilliardston, N. C. Old Stand, Good location. Terms moderate. Address, W.L. Thorp.

Our sanctum has been made bright this week, by the sunny smiles, and rippling laughter of several of the "fairer sex." Come again ladies, your visits are like rays of sunshine, and give zest to our work.

About eight of our young men will join the Brass Band here, making a total of about 14 members. They are young men of talent, and with this accession we'll have a splendid band.

[The Battleboro Progress, Jan. 2, 1880]

Dies in Belgium



JAMES GRANTHAM

Capt. Grantham Killed In Action

Local Officer Served With 84th Infantry

Captain James E. Grantham, 32, husband of Mrs. Gretchen Jones Grantham of Tarboro, was killed in action on January 10, the War Department has notified his wife.

Veteran of 18 months in the South Pacific, Capt. Grantham was

serving with the 84th Infantry Division at the time of his death. He had been in the European Theater since September of last year.

Capt. Grantham, a reserve officer, was first called into active service in February, 1942, and after a few months of training at Fort Benning, Ga., was sent to the Pacific area in May of the same year. He served on Guadalcanal and other islands and wore two battle stars on his Pacific campaign ribbon.

During his tour of duty he contracted a tropical disease and was returned to the United States in September, 1943, for hospitalization. After being treated at McCloskey General Hospital in Temple, Texas, he was stationed at Camp Claiborne, La., until he was sent into combat in the European theater.

Son of the late Mr. and Mrs. E. B. Grantham, Capt Grantham was a native of Rocky Mount and was educated in the city schools. He was graduated from North Carolina State College in Raleigh, and prior to entering the service was affiliated with Brewer Paint and Wall Paper Company here.

He is survived by his wife and six-weeks-old daughter, Gretchen Gene; two brothers, Commander Bowden Grantham, USN, who is in command of a destroyer in the Pacific area and Britton Grantham of Charlotte; and one sister, Miss Elizabeth Grantham of Rocky Mount.

GRANTHAM, FROM P. 12

Directories, articles, and other sources revealed that son Britton (Britt) Grantham relocated to Florida and became an artist.

Newspaper articles chronicled the life of son Elonzo Bowden Grantham, Jr., who became a high-ranking Naval officer, commanding

two destroyers and earning the Bronze Star and Navy Cross during World War II. He later served as an aide to President Harry S. Truman.

Obituaries published around the nation record his tragic suicide in 1985.