

The Connector

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

Winter, 2003

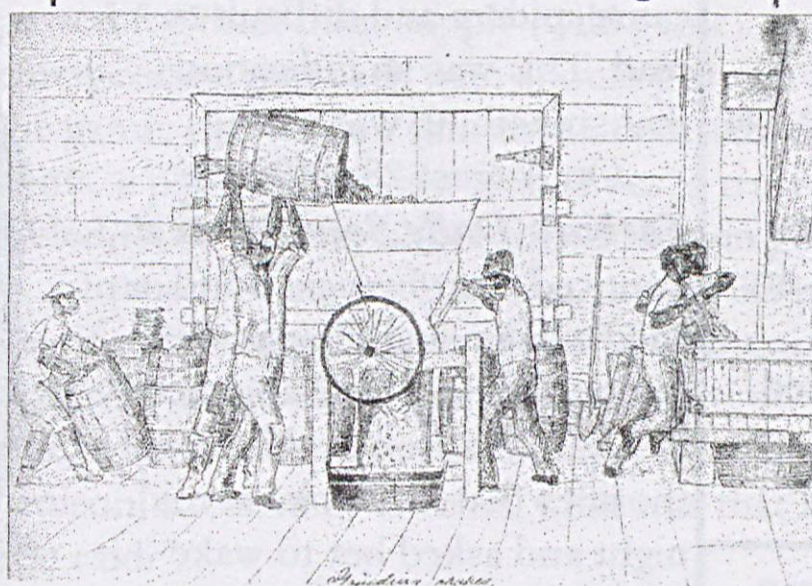
Billie Jo Matthews & Peggy Strickland, Co-Editors Volume 7 Number 1

Medoc Vineyards and Winery

Medoc Mountain, an ancient ridge in western Halifax Co., NC between the once thriving communities of Brinkleyville and Ringwood, is the unlikely location for what was once a highly productive vineyard and winery. Established in the early 1830s by Sydney Weller, it led the way as, by 1840, NC became the largest wine producer in the United States. By the time the winery burned in 1906, the vineyard encompassed 85 acres of grapes and the capacity of the wine cellars had reached 150,000 gallons.

Sidney Weller was a noted farmer and educator. Born in

Orange Co., NY in 1791, ill-health brought Weller to Halifax Co. in 1827. He and his wife, Elizabeth McCarrel of Pennsylvania, built a school, Brinkleyville Academy, near Medoc Mountain. The school accommodated about 20 students, both male and female. Although the



From Sketches in North Carolina USA 1872-1878

exact location of the academy is no longer known, advertisements placed it "one mile south of the Brinkleyville Post office, five miles north of Farmwell Grove Academy, and twenty miles equally distant between Halifax and Warrenton." Mrs. Weller taught "sewing, working on muslin, and marking, with spelling, reading, writing, arithmetic, grammar and other useful and ornamental branches of female education." Sidney Weller, determined to apply scientific principles to farming, purchased 400 acres of supposedly useless farmland. By 1830 he had planted his first grape vines—the native scuppernongs—and by 1835 had

SEE MEDOC, PAGE 5

Early Lotteries For Schools

In the 18th and the early part of the 19th century, it was common in NC, as in other states, for the Legislature to grant schools the right to raise funds for building and other purposes by means of lotteries. The University of NC was assisted in this way several times.

The following act, passed by the General Assembly in 1797, show how these lotteries were conducted:

"AN ACT to authorize the trustees of the Pittsburgh Academy to

raise the sum of seven hundred dollars, by way of lottery.

"Whereas, The trustees of the academy aforesaid have represented to this General Assembly that the raising of the above sum of seven hundred dollars would be of great benefit to said institution: "I. Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of North Carolina, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of

SEE LOTTERY, PAGE 7

Destructive Storm

MAY 30, 1898—HALIFAX CO.

NC—Monday afternoon about 3:30 o'clock a most terrible and destructive hail-and-wind-storm passed across the county. It struck near Halifax and came down the river, sweeping everything to within two or three miles of this area.

A few miles from Halifax the storm became terrific. Hours after the storm hail stones were found in drifts as large as walnuts and hen eggs; and it was said that they fell nearly as large as goose eggs, and fully as large as apples.

At Tillery, the storm was so sev-

SEE STORM, PAGE 6



Tar River Connections
Genealogical Society

Census Workshop Saturday March 29, 2003

Braswell Library in Rocky Mount, NC with speakers Ann Basnight and Timothy W. Rackley. For additional information contact

Tar River Connections

PO Box 8764

email: trcgs@braswell-library.org

Rocky Mount, NC 27804

QUERY GUIDELINES

1. Members may submit three queries annually to the address below. A fee of \$5.00 must accompany each query submitted by a non-member.
2. The query should be in the form of a typed or printed letter (easy on the eyes!) and should include a time frame and as much pertinent information as possible.
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 all that you know pertaining to the question you are asking.
5. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Don't expect a miracle!!

Tar River Connections Genealogical Society

PO Box 8764

Rocky Mount, NC 27804

Internet

www.braswell-library.org/gene.htm

e-mail: trcgs@braswell-library.org

Annual Dues - \$15.00

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The Connector-Published Quarterly
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Mysterious Death

BY MONICA FLEMING

Francis Bond was the son of **Lewis Bond**, a furniture maker who came to **Tarboro** in the early 1800s. [See "MESDA", *The Connector* Winter, 2002] Lewis had a very successful factory which he passed on to Francis who continued to operate it. It took up two city blocks in **Tarboro**. Francis Bonds' diary or business journal has survived. It provides a fascinating look at the past.

The journal reveals that Bond rented out a lot of property and was engaged in a lot of businesses. His wife had a millinery shop. An ad in a **Raleigh** paper indicated that she had made clothes for **Queen Victoria**. Francis kept up with his wife's business in his journal. When someone had a dress made, he recorded the details, what kind of fabric, etc.

There are many details for the late 1880s. But in the middle of 1890, the handwriting in the journal began to change drastically. It became spidery and difficult to read. This was an indication that something was wrong.

On August 28, 1890 the **Tarboro Daily Southerner** announced that Francis Bond, an aged citizen, had disappeared. No one knew what happened to him. Mrs Bond told the authorities that he awoke at midnight and asked her to wake him again at 2 a.m. to take his medicine. When she awoke later, thinking it was time to administer the medicine, she went into her husband's room, but he told her he had already taken it. When she woke up at about 5 in the morning, Francis Bond was gone. His clothes were still hanging on the chair as they had been when he went to bed.

The search for the missing man began immediately, but not a trace was found. It soon became known all over town that Mr. Bond was missing. They searched for him for days. One woman said she thought she heard a splash in the river. They dragged the river. Nothing. The following week, the body of Mr. Bond was found in **Little Washington, Beaufort Co., NC**. It had floated all the way down the **Tar River**. It had taken a week to get down there.

There was now no doubt that he was gone, but question was how and why. Some said he wandered out in the middle of the night and fell in the river. Some said he could have been sleep walking. Some said he had been quite sick. The doctor apparently had been treating him for some illness. But in any case, his body was found, in his night shirt, so it wasn't as if he was going off somewhere.

When they found his body, it was swollen to immense proportion—too

SEE DEATH, PAGE 7



Search and Research

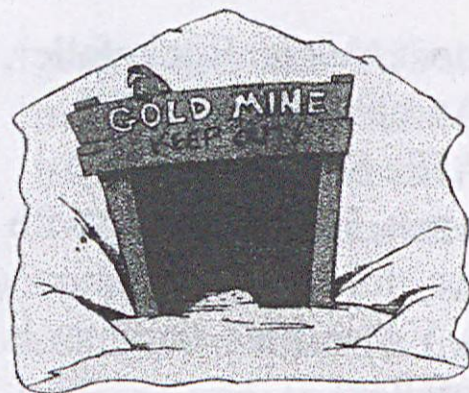
The Formation of New Hanover County

BY WILLIAM DOUB BENNETT,
TRC MEMBER

All published reference to the formation of **New Hanover County** state that it was formed from **Craven County**. This is based on the extensive research done by **Dr. David L. Corbett** and published in *The Formation of the North Carolina Counties 1663-1943*. Dr. Corbett has, for good reason, been honored for preparing this volume which has proved most useful for both historians and genealogists.

However, as in nearly all volumes concerning North Carolina history, an error creeps into the work. Such is the case when Dr. Corbett attributed the formation of New Hanover Co. from Craven Co, when, in fact, it was formed from Carteret. When the Executive Council met on the 14th of June, 1722, they approved a petition from "the Inhabitants of Core Sound" for the formation of a new precinct [present day county] but delayed establishing the bounds of the new precinct until a later date. At the meeting of the Executive Council on August 8, 1722, they defined the bounds of the new precinct, Carteret, as "shall be and include all the Lands lying on the said Sound Bogue Sound and the Rivers and Creeks running into them including all the

SEE SEARCH, PAGE 4



Gold Fever

One of the early physicians in Warrenton, **Warren Co., NC** was **Dr. Philip C. Pope** who came from VA to settle in Warren Co. In 1846, Dr. Pope became fed up with the tedious humdrum of a physician and thought to change his life. He sold his office with his library, his instruments, and his good will.

In the great gold fever, Doctor Pope determined to join the adventurers, and being of a sociable nature he wanted some of the county people to join him. He therefore issued a circular for people to come to a public meeting to consider his plans. Quite a crowd attended the meeting, for the Doctor was a fine speaker, and being much enthused himself, he aroused others.

He soon had some twenty-five or thirty volunteers to join his party. In advising them of the necessary things for the land journey he said, from the **Missouri River** near **Omaha**, they would probably have some encounter with the **Indians**, and that they would have to rely on the country through which they passed for their meat supply (wild game). It would be necessary, to meet both emergencies, that each man should provide himself with a bowie knife to skin the game, also a coon skin cap, a deer skin coat and vest, two pairs of corduroy pants, a pair of thick cow skin shoes, a trusty rifle, powder and balls, and, he added, "I should say about fifty dollars in gold."

On mentioning his last item, one of his most enthusiastic volunteers, "**Harry Tom**" **Haithcock**, a huntsman who could hit a squirrel's eye any time with his rifle, whose larder was never empty of wild fowl and venison, exclaimed "Doctor, what was that last thing you said?"

The Doctor repeated, "Well, I think fifty dollars in gold will carry us through to the gold fields."

Whereupon Haithcock said, "Well, that lets me out. If I had fifty dollars in gold, old Warren would be good enough for me."



How the Place Got Its Name

Chocowinity is the name of a **Beaufort Co.** town, and one translation from **Tuscaroran** is "fish from many waters." Or perhaps the original word for the town was Chocowinekee, meaning "smoking stumps."

The store that **Henry Venters** and his father owned and operated in **Pitt Co.** sold more colorful calico cloth than any other store around. Its reputation as the county calico capital suggested the name given to the post office and the community: **Calico**.

Vance County's community of **Cokesbury** is at the head of **Rocky Branch**. The Cokesbury name itself is a combination of the last names of two **Methodist** bishops: **Thomas Coke** (1747-1814) and **Francis Asbury** (1745-1816).

[Taken from *Talking Turkey And Other Stories of North Carolina's Oddly Named Places* by Jamie Cox, 2000]

Rockefeller Connections in Halifax County, NC.

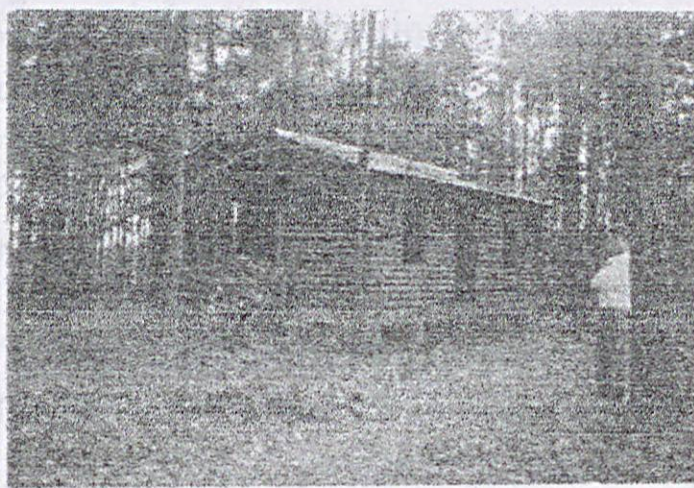
BY JUDITH ALLISON "JILL" KIRKLAND

The restoration of **Colonial Williamsburg** was primarily the work of the **Rockefeller** family of **New York**. It began with **Dr. Goodwin**, Rector of **Bruton Parish Church** in **Williamsburg**. **Dr. Goodwin** was responsible for having the **Bruton Parish Church** restored. Inspired with that accomplishment, he looked for someone who would be willing to restore the entire city of **Williamsburg**. About 1927, **Mr. Goodwin** made contact with **Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr.** on several occasions and finally persuaded him to fund the restoration. **Mr. Rockefeller**, remaining anonymous in those early days, cabled money to **Dr. Goodwin** in order for him to buy the properties in the town. **Dr. Goodwin** bought several million dollars worth of property before **Mr. Rockefeller's** association with the project became known.

The **Rockefellers** have connections, by marriage, in **Aurelian Springs** in **Halifax Co., NC**. The father of **Dori Liles Rockefeller**, former wife of **Stephen Clark Rockefeller** and daughter-in-law of

Vice President **Nelson Rockefeller**, was from **Aurelian Springs**. **Ed Liles** and **Affie Selene Glasgow Liles** had a son, **Harry**, along with several other children. **Harry** moved to **Norfolk, VA** and his daughter is **Dori Rockefeller**.

Dori Liles Rockefeller, before her marriage, attended **Louisburg College** and received her undergraduate degree in **NC**. She became a teacher. She later received a Master's Degree from **Columbia University** in **NY** and continued her career in education. **Mrs. Rockefeller** is also



Reconstructed Glasgow Cabin

related to the **Dickens, Green** and **Butts** families of **Halifax County**.

Judith Allison "Jill" Kirkland, a member of **TRC**, left **North Carolina** to work at **Colonial Williamsburg** in the 1970s. There she discovered that the **Kirklands** who were in early **Williamsburg** were part of her family. She also learned that she and **Dori Rockefeller** had a connection. **Jill's** great grandmother was a **Glasgow** from **Aurelian**

CONNECTOR

Springs, and first cousin to **Affie Selene Glasgow Liles**, grandmother of **Dori Rockefeller**.

Dori Rockefeller's great grandmother was **Rebecca Butts Glasgow**. **Jill Kirkland's** great grandmother, **Mollie Glasgow Kirkland**, used to tell of visiting with her Aunt **Rebecca** and her husband, **Samuel Andrew Jackson "Jack" Glasgow**. **Jack's** oldest brother, **Isaac Glasgow**, was **Jill Kirkland's** great great grandfather. His daughter **Mollie Elizabeth Glasgow** married **George Henry Kirkland**. They moved from **Halifax Co** to near **Leggett, Edgecombe Co, NC** about 1910.

The **Jack Glasgow** family owned what is now the campus of **North West Halifax High School**. About 1985, the boys in the **Future Farmers Association**, under the guidance of agriculture teacher **Mack Edwards** reconstructed the **Glasgow's** small cabin behind the school. The original cabin was torn down when the property was sold to the school system. Although not authentic in its restoration, it gives an idea of the conditions under which the **Glasgow** family lived. There is also a graveyard near the little cabin. The tombstone of **Jack Glasgow**, a confederate veteran, is in the burying ground.



SEARCH, CONT. FROM PAGE 3

Settlements to the Southward thereof until there shall be a further division of other countys or precincts."¹

This resolution further defined **Craven Precinct** as consisting of "the Settlements upon **Neuse Trent** and their Branches including **Bear River**."² This restricted **Craven Pre-**

cinct to the lands drained by the **Neuse River**. Further proof that **New Hanover Precinct** was formed from **Carteret Precinct** is found from a detailed search of the surviving records of **Craven** and **Carteret Precincts** for the period from 1722 to 1730. There is no reference to the **Cape Fear** area for this period in the

surviving records of **Craven Precinct**. There are numerous deeds for land in the **Cape Fear** area to be found in the **Deed Books** of **Carteret Precinct** for this period.

1. *The Colonial Records of North Carolina (Second Series) Volume VII, p. 114, 115.*
2. *Ibid.*

MEDOC, CONT. FROM P. 1
 established **Weller's Vineyard**. Weller, besides being an educator and a farmer, was a prodigious writer. He contributed numerous articles to farming publications of that day advocating, among other things, the cultivation of grapes using native plants. He exhibited his grapes at NC's **State Fair** in 1853 and it was reported that they were 4" around. Besides producing a highly acclaimed wine known as **Weller's Halifax**, he is also credited with making the first champagne from

To the Public.

"SIDNEY WELLER, Post Master at Brinkleyville, Halifax County, N. C.—dealer in Seeds, Fruit and Ornamental Trees, Grape Vines, (choicest kinds for American culture,) Wines, (pure juice of the grape unadulterated with spirits or otherwise,) Silk Worm Eggs, Sewing Silk, Feeding Frames, Piedmontese Reels, &c. &c.

Prompt attention given to letters, orders, and cash remittances.

Entertainment for travellers and visitors at his establishment.

Farmer's Advocate, Sept. 16, 1841

the scuppernong grape.

Weller developed what is known as the **American System** of grape culture in which the vines were spaced far apart and grown on large scaffolds. With this method, he was able to produce twice as many grapes as the French who planted vines close together and pruned them heavily. He marketed his vines and by 1836, an advertisement claimed "20 kinds and 50 varieties of the vine." Always aware of the value of being known, the Weller Vineyards welcomed visitors, charging them 50¢ admission and offering entertainment and all the

grapes they wanted in return. Picnicking on beautiful Medoc Mountain was a favorite activity.

Weller experimented with a variety of crops. One unsuccessful project was an effort to introduce the silk industry to the US. He began to grow and sell mulberry trees to feed the silkworms. There was a great deal of interest and the sale of the trees was successful. However, raising the silkworms was a different matter. They became diseased and died before they spun their cocoons, and Weller was forced to sell part of his land to settle his debts in connection with this venture.

Sydney Weller—farmer, wine-maker, writer, and educator—was also the Brinkleyville postmaster from 1830 to 1846, and a **Methodist** minister. He often preached and wrote against the evils of drunkenness.

Weller died in 1854 and was buried in the family cemetery in the vineyards. His sons were John H, Joseph McCarrel, Howard W. and Mirzah. John was instrumental in carrying on the vineyards and caring for his mother and sisters.

Charles Garrett had left Edgecombe Co. in 1849 to join in the search for **California** gold. Since he had no companions with whom to make the trek across the country, he went to New York from where he

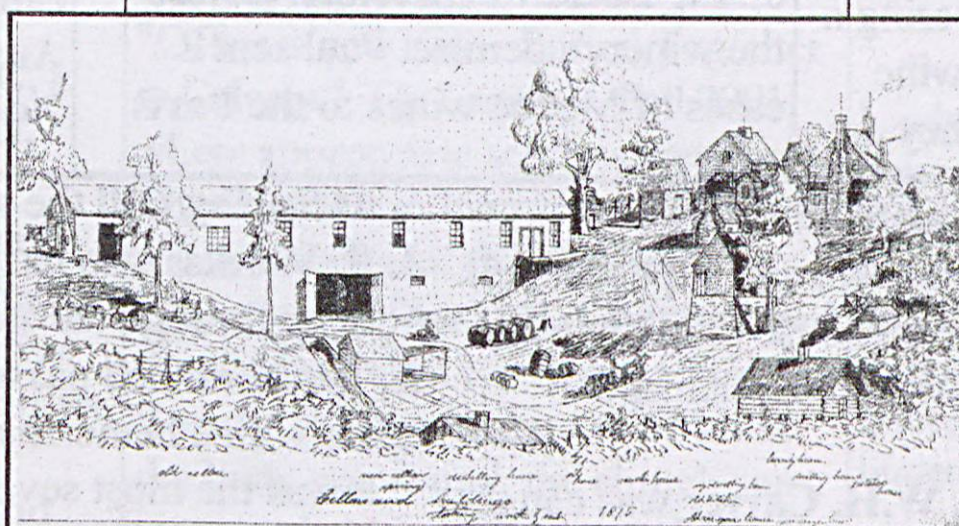


Part of Vineyard and Cellars/1875
 From *Sketches in North Carolina USA*

planned to sail around **Cape Horn**. In the meantime, he found a job with a clothing company, and the owner persuaded him to remain in NY. After a short time, the owner retired and sold the business to 19 year old Garrett. In 1851, he married **Mary Susan Sugg**, also from Edgecombe Co.. Charles was a natural businessman and his company thrived. By 1860, he was worth millions. At the beginning of the **Civil War**, fearing that his business would be confiscated, Charles deeded it to his partners and returned to NC where **Gov. Zebulon Vance** put him in charge of clothing the NC troops. He returned to NY after the war, but was advised to turn to farming when his health began to fail. This led to his entry into the wine business.

Weller's Vineyard was sold to **Charles W. Garrett** and his two brothers, **Francis** and **Joseph**, natives of **Edgecombe Co.**, NC in 1867. They had become interested when they were served Weller wine in a favorite **New York** restaurant. Charles and the Garrett descendants operated the business until the winery burned in 1906. Prohibition was enacted 2 years later and the wine business soon disappeared.

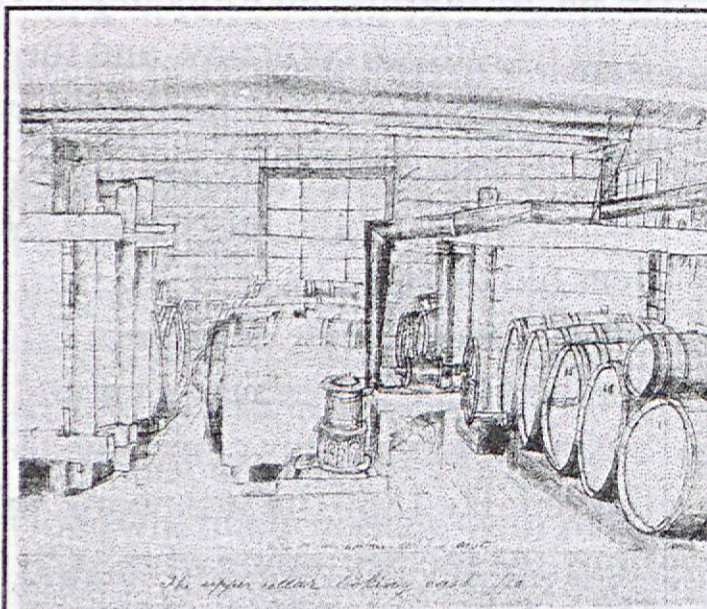
SEE MEDOC, PAGE 6



Cellars and Buildings, including distilling house, outhouse, smoke house, etc.—1875

MEDOC, CONT. FROM P. 5

The price the Garrett brothers paid for the Weller property was \$30,000 and a tract of land in **Nash Co.** This was a huge sum of money so soon after the devastating Civil War. Charles Garrett immediately began building his new business. At the time of his death in 1886, the Medoc Vineyard was the largest east of the **Rocky Mountains**, with 85 acres in grapes. The Medoc Cellars could



Upper Celler

From Sketches in North Carolina USA

hold 150,000 gallons of wine in 2,000 gallon casks. An article in the *Roanoke News*, July 9, 1891 describes the cellars: "They are built in the shape of a T and are situated in a little valley formed by two hills into the sides of which two ends of the cellars are built. They are three stories high and in the first and second stories are the large casks in two great rows from one end of the building to the other, each bearing a label showing the variety of wine and the date of its vintage. They are

so large that a man can easily stand upright in any of them ..."

The vineyard and winery was a self-sustaining operation. There was a windmill to pump water to the winery. Two large silos and a steam mill were located at the vineyards. Numerous craftsmen such as blacksmiths, coppersmiths, coopers and carpenters were employed. Supplies such as bottles and bottle covers came from as far away as **Germany**. The company even had phone lines run from Enfield to Medoc.

After Charles Garrett's death the vineyard and winery continued under the leadership of his son-in-law, **Henry Spooner Harrison**. **Paul Garrett**, Charles's nephew, did not get along well with Harrison and left the area to pursue a career selling wines—including the Medoc brands—and tobacco products. He returned to NC and began what became a highly successful wine distributing company, **Garrett & Co.**, in **Littleton, NC**. He later moved to **Weldon** and opened a bottling plant on **Chockoyotte Creek**. A small town grew up around the plant, but it no longer exists.

Eventually, Paul Garrett gained control of the Medoc vineyards and wine business, although Spooner Harrison and other members of the Weller and Garrett families served on the Board of Directors. Before the winery's demise, Paul sent 2 cases of Medoc wines to the **Paris**

Exposition where the French jury awarded it a medal.

WINES IN WOOD.

	PER GAL.
White Imperial Scuppernong (sweet).....	\$1 25
Red " " "	1 25
Catawba, sweet,	1 25
Blackberry, sweet,	1 00
Blackberry Cordial,	1 50
Mish, sweet,	1 25
Sacramental, sweet,	1 25
Port,	1 25
Sherry,	1 25

We warrant the above Wines not to turn sour on draught; no charge for package if ordered by the barrel; if in less quantity than the barrel, \$1.00 for each package will be charged.

Our Dry Wines in Wood are the same prices as the Sweet, but we cannot guarantee them not to turn sour on draught, and if ordered in wood are sent always at purchaser's risk. No light Dry Wines, either Native or Foreign, will keep on draught, hence should always be ordered in bottles.

[Sketches by Mortimer O. Heath have been compiled by H.G. Jones into a book, *Sketches in North Carolina USA, 1872 to 1878*. You may purchase the book from Historical Publications Section (N), N.C. Office of Archives and History, 4622 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-4622]

STORM, CONT. FROM P. 1

ere it unroofed **Hale Brothers'** store and exposed their goods, and unroofed the old warehouse of the railroad company and crashed windows and did damage to buildings generally.

At **Tillery** the son of **Mr. W.H. Carter** was caught in the storm, his horse ran away with him, and after the storm was over he was found badly mangled. There were fears that he would die.

At **Spring Hill** the storm was especially severe. **Mr. J. R. Weeks**, who has been troubled with heart disease, bore up through the storm as well as any others, but after the storm had passed and the hail had ceased he was taken with a hemorrhage, and died in a short while.

It was the most severe storm ever known in this section, and it wrought great destruction, devastating everything on its track. It is impossible to estimate the loss.

LOTTERY, CONT. FROM P. 1

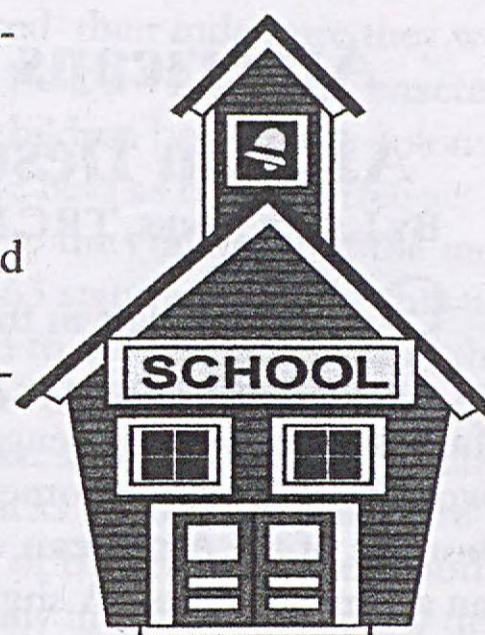
the State of North Carolina, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same, That the trustees of the academy aforesaid shall have leave to raise by way of lottery the sum aforesaid, and that **John Ramsey, James Taylor, Charles Chalmers, John Henderson, James Bradley, John Dabney, and William Warden** shall be, and they are hereby, appointed commissioners for the purpose of opening and completing a scheme of a lottery calculated to raise the sum aforesaid, in the following manner:

3,500 tickets at two dollars each, is	\$7,000
1 Prize of four hundred dollars is	\$400
2 Prizes of one hundred dollars is	.200
4 Do. of fifty dollars is200
8 Do. of thirty-five dollars is280
18 Do. of twenty-five dollars is450
200 Do. of ten dollars is2000
490 Do. of three dollars is1,470
400 Do. of five dollars is2,000
1,123 Prizes\$7,000
2,377 Blanks	
3,500 Tickets at two dollars each is	\$7,000

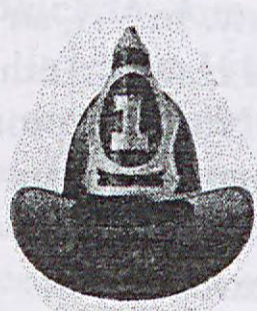
"And the said commissioners, or a majority of them, shall be managers of said lottery, and shall be accountable for the prizes and profits thereof.

"II. And be it further enacted, That when three-fourths of the said tickets are sold, that the drawing of the said lottery shall commence, under the management of the said commissioners, they giving thirty days' notice in the Fayetteville Gazette.

"III. And be it further enacted, That all prizes shall be paid in four weeks after the drawing is finished upon demand of a possessor of a fortunate ticket, which prize shall be subject to a deduction of ten percent.; and if such prize is not demanded within six months after the drawing is finished, of which public notice shall be given in some public paper in this State, the same shall be considered as relinquished for the benefit of said academy, and the produce of said lottery shall be vested in the trustees aforesaid."



Hook & Ladder Company



According to notice given in the *Southerner* last week a goodly number of the members of the **Tarboro Hook and Ladder**

Company met at the Court House, on Friday night for the purpose of electing officers, and transacting other important business.

The following officers were elected for the ensuing term of twelve months. **WM. BIGGS**, Foreman. **C. J. AUSTIN**, Assistant Foreman. **J. G. CHARLES**, Secretary. **J. J. WHITE**, Treasurer. **S. T. W. JONES**, Steward.

After some discussion, participated in by several of the members, it was resolved to appoint a new Committee for the purpose of consulting the property holders of the Town, and soliciting from each a certain amount to provide the company with efficient

apparatus.

This Committee consists of the following gentlemen, viz: **C. J. Austin, T. W. Toler and Geo. T. Terrell.**
[Tarboro Southerner, Jan. 12, 1871]



DEATH, CONT. FROM P. 2

large for a coffin—or even for clothes. They wrapped him in a sail cloth and brought him back home. A large procession followed him to the **Calvary Episcopal Church** [See "Officers and Kin—Buried Together at Calvary," *The Connector*, Fall 2001] where appropriate services were held. The interesting thing is, Mr. Bond was a member of the **Methodist Church**. But **Rev. J. B. Cheshire** had the service in the Episcopal Church. Because the circumstances of when the body was found, the church service was held in the evening. The scene was solemn and impressive. Night had fallen. The funeral cortege

reached the burial grounds across from the church. There was a full moon shining large over the deep shadows. By the light of the lamp, Rev. Cheshire, conducted the funeral services. The stillness was solemn, broken only by the earnest utterance of the minister and the hoot of the night owl. The sad rites were soon over and the man who probably never bore any ill feelings any time in his life was laid to rest. This is the only person I have found who was buried after dark in Tarboro.

(Based on the deterioration in his handwriting, Mr. Bond may have lead poisoning, which would have been logical as his work as a cabinet maker put him in contact with lead. His obituary states that, because there was no proof of how he died, the Methodist Minister refused to bury him. That is why he was buried by Rev. Cheshire.)

[Taken from a TRC program presented by Monica Fleming]

Americans of African Descent

BY LARRY JONES, TRC MEMBER

On a hot day late in the month of August 1619, while the people of Jamestown, VA were engaged in the work of establishing homes on the borders of the American wilderness, an alarm was raised. A ship, flying a Dutch flag, was coming in with the tide. This was one of the most interesting ships in the history of America, for among the articles of merchandise that were offered were twenty human beings brought from the coast of Africa—probably the first slave trader to visit the North American coast.

Although the ship's name has been lost beyond recovery, there is an old record containing the names of some of the slaves she brought. As **Lerone Bennet**, in *Before the Mayflower*, says, "She came out of a violent storm with a story no one believed, a name no one recorded and a past no one investigated. Thieves and pirates manned her. Her captain was a mystery man named **Jope**, her pilot an **Englishman** named **Marmaduke**, her cargo an assortment of Africans with sonorous **Spanish** names—**Antoney**, **Isabella**, **Pedro**." Thus, a year

before the arrival of the **Mayflower**, 113 years before the birth of **George Washington**, 244 years before the signing of the **Emancipation Proclamation**, African-Americans sailed into our history.

John Rolfe, in his records, said the captain of the mystery ship offered to exchange his cargo for "vitells". The deal was made and Antoney, Isabella, Pedro and seventeen other Africans left the ship; black America began. Antoney married Isabella and their child was born in 1623 or 1624. This child, **William**, was baptized in the **Church of England**, and thus began the study of genealogy in Black America, although, in fact, African genealogy existed thousands of years before this, carried mainly through oral history and recognized by naming patterns.

Antoney, Isabella, Pedro and the other seventeen Africans who arrived at Jamestown in 1619 were not legally slaves. They came, as did most of the early **Europeans**, under duress or pressure and were "indentured servants". They were listed as servants in the 1623 and 1624 censuses. When their indentured service expired, Africans were assigned land, just as were the Europeans. In 1624 there were 23 Africans in the VA colony—11 mal-

es, 10 females and 2 children—living in six different settlements.

Many first generation Africans in America entered with Spanish names—**Antonio**, which became Antoney or Anthony, **Michalea**, **Couchaxello**, **Mingo**, **Pedro**, **Francisco**, **Jibina**, **Maria**, **Wortello**, **Tomara**, **Angola**, and **Tony Kongo**. They soon discarded their African and Spanish names, adopting English given names but no surnames. This practice of adopting an English name was, and still is, widespread for immigrants.

Africans came to America from different backgrounds and experiences after 1619. Some came from Spain, **Portugal**, England and the **West Indies**. Many were **Christians**. The first ship from Africa arrived in 1629. Although they were often victims of piracy, many were regular immigrants.

Anthony Johnson came to America in about 1621 from England. He worked out his indenture and started accumulating property. In VA, an abstract of a 1651 deed reads: "Anthony Johnson, 250 acres. **Northampton Co.**, 24 July 1651. At great Naswattock Cr., ... Trans. Of 5 pers[ons]: **Tho. Bemrose**, **Peter Bughby**, **Antho. Cripps**, **Jno Gessorra**, **Richard Johnson**. Some of



Mary Jane Westray, b. 3 Mar 1870, Nash Co., NC, d/o Viney Westray; d. 22 Nov 1950, Nash Co., NC



Mingo Mills, s/o David Mills & Louise Spears, b/ ca 1858, Nash Co., NC; d. 29 Jul 1923, Nash Co., NC



Elizabeth Wilkins, b. ca 1854, Nash Co., NC, d/o Jarrott Wilkins and Susan Mills

these servants were white. Johnson's family established one of America's first black communities. Later, in 1652, **John Johnson**, probably Anthony's son, imported eleven persons, mostly white males and females and received head rights for 550 acres adjacent to Anthony Johnson. In 1654 Richard Johnson imported two white indentured servants, **Wm. Ames** and **Wm Vicent** and received head rights for 100 acres also adjacent to the land of John Johnson and Anthony Johnson.

In colonial times, there was little distinction between black and white servants. They ran away together, played together and revolted together. They mated and married creating a sizeable mixed population. There were, of course, prejudices, but it was largely English class prejudice, which was dealt out without regard to race, creed or color. Black and white were not used to describe people; rather they were generally referred to as Christians, **Moors**, Englishmen, or **Blackamoors**.

It was in 1660 that economic forces worldwide—the demand for sugar and tobacco—tilted the colonies toward slavery. Indentured servitude could have continued for black and white servants; they could have both been slaves; there could have

been a free work force of **Indians**, whites, blacks or perhaps Indian slavery and a free work force of immigrants. However, recognized governments protected whites plus they could blend into the crowd. Indians were on their own ground and knew where to go to escape and were thought to be sickly. Africans didn't have these disadvantages. They were inexpensive—an African bought for life cost about the same as an English or **Irish** servant for seven years. They were strong and they were visible. They could run away like their white servant brothers and sisters, but they could not blend into the crowd. Virginia and **Maryland** led the way in building the institution of slavery on the color of one's skin. Laws were enacted forbidding intermarriage and making blacks slaves for life. This was the great divide between black and white America. Virginia enacted laws recognizing slavery in 1661 and Maryland in 1663. With the chartering of the **Royal African Company** in 1672 the shipment of slaves accelerated as fast as kernels of popcorn burst over heat. Africans and Europeans were lining their treasuries from the lucrative trade in human flesh.

The 1661 statute in VA did not affect blacks already there. If they had

completed their indenture they were free. In 1662 a VA law was enacted stating children born in the colony would be held as bond or free according to the condition of the mother. A 1663 statute was more drastic. It intended to enslave all blacks in the colony, even though some were already free, and to confer slave status to all blacks born in the colony regardless of the status of their mother. It was only in 1681 that the law declared that children born of free black women and black children of white women would be free. It was not until the **Emancipation Proclamation** in 1863 and the **Thirteenth Amendment** in 1865 that all blacks again attained the status of freemen.

Blacks were in **North Carolina** from the beginning. VA planters brought slaves with them. In 1663 original settlers were offered 20 acres for every black man slave and 10 acres for every black woman slave brought into the colony. Twenty years later the black and white population were equal. By 1824, there were three times as many blacks as whites. As their number grew, so did restrictions by law. In 1715 NC enacted its first slave code: restrictions on movement, carrying of guns or swords; runaways could be killed; miscegenation discouraged. If a white indentured woman had a bastard child by a Negro, mulatto or Indian father, she had her term extended two years. Marriage was forbidden between any white man or woman with any Negro, mulatto or Indian man or woman. If slaves were manumitted they had to leave the province within six months or be sold back into slavery for five years. However, slavery in NC was never as important as it was in VA and SC. 73% of families in NC had no slaves in 1850 and most of the slaveholders had less than 10 slaves.



Delia Jones, d/o Sterling Jones & Harriett Chavis, b. Jun 1860, Granville Co., NC; d. 5 Jul 1938, Nash Co., NC



Monroe Mills, s/o David Mills & Louisa Spears, b. 4 Sept 1860, Nash Co., NC; d. 15 Feb 1947, Nash Co., NC

SEE AMERICAN, CONT. PAGE 15

The Birth of the *Albemarle*

It was early 1863 and the War was not going well for the South. Authority had finally been given for the construction of the ironclad *Albemarle*. [See "Ironclad

Scrap Not Wasted", *The Connector*, Summer, 1999.] The unlikely site chosen for the work of building her was a

cornfield at **Edwards' Ferry**—soon known as **Edwards' Ferry Shipyard**—on the **Roanoke River**. It was 20 miles below **Halifax, Halifax Co.**

and six miles from

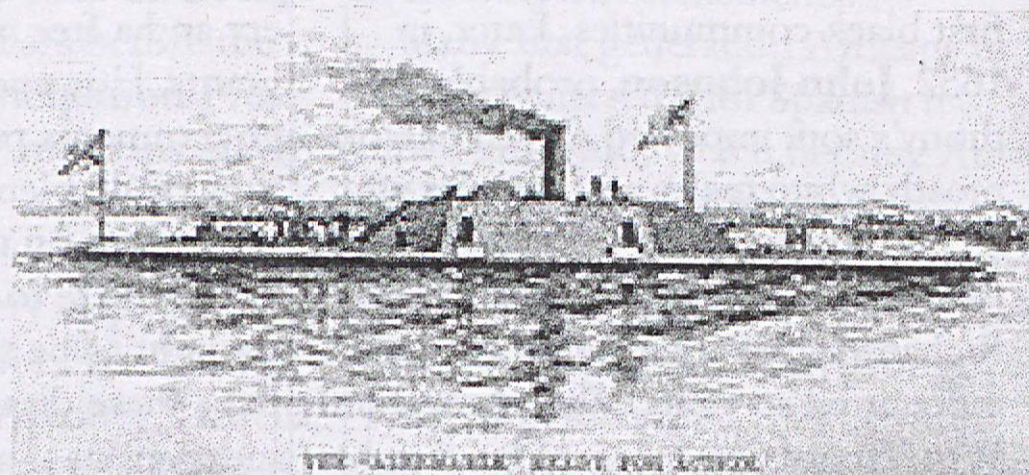
Scotland Neck, also in **Halifax Co.**, at a point out of danger from the river floods, and where there was abundant timber and labor at hand.

The ship was planned by **John E. Porter** who had designed the *Virginia*. Remembering the *Virginia's* clumsiness and deep draft, Porter specified a simpler, smaller, more maneuverable vessel. She was to be a simple a flat-bottomed boat, sharp at both ends. The specifications called for it to be no more than 153 feet long and 45 beam, with a draft of 8 feet.

The building of the vessel was undertaken under the most discouraging circumstances. There was no ship-

yard at Edwards' Ferry; the timber had to be cut in the woods and sawn at the site, workmen were scarce, there was no machine shop, and iron was almost unobtainable. But these obstacles were all to be overcome.

The job of building the *Albemarle* was given to **Gilbert Elliott**, a youth of 19, and 34 year old **Peter Evans Smith**, son of **William Ruffin Smith** who



19th Century engraving of *Albemarle* "ready for action"

owned the plantation at Edwards' Ferry. Every step that was taken had to be painstakingly worked out by the builders. There was no standardized blueprint to guide them, and most of it came out of the heads of Elliott and Smith. The work was heart breakingly slow.

Elliott and Smith turned the cornfield into a shipyard. Sawmills were installed to cut the logs into the huge timbers needed for the hull, which was then sheathed with four inch planks. For lack of oakum, cotton was used for caulking. On the deck was a sturdy slope-walled chamber 80 feet long, also of massive timbers. The plans were for her to be outfitted with twin boilers with two 200 horsepower engines and two stern propellers. This would not allow for great speed, but for the armored hulk, it was enough to do the job!

The design called for the deck and deck house to be covered with two layers of iron plates. These plates were milled from railroad irons in the **Tredegar Iron Works at Richmond, VA**. Forges were set up along the river bank to hammer out the armor plate, steel fittings and gun swivels. But installing the iron plates became a problem. The drills used at that time took 20 minutes to bore a hole through the armor. Peter Smith, a mechanical wizard, invented the now familiar twist drill which could do the job in 4 minutes.

Each side of the armor-plated deck house was pierced with two gun ports. Another port opened forward and yet another aft. She was armed with two rifled nine-inch **Brooke** guns on pivot carriages, so placed and fitted that each could fire toward the end or to either side.

Finally, at the *Albemarle's* prow, a pointed ram of solid oak was bolted. The ram was also faced with iron that came to an axe-like edge. This iron-plated battleship, combining impenetrable armor with a nose which would enable it to plow its way through the wooden

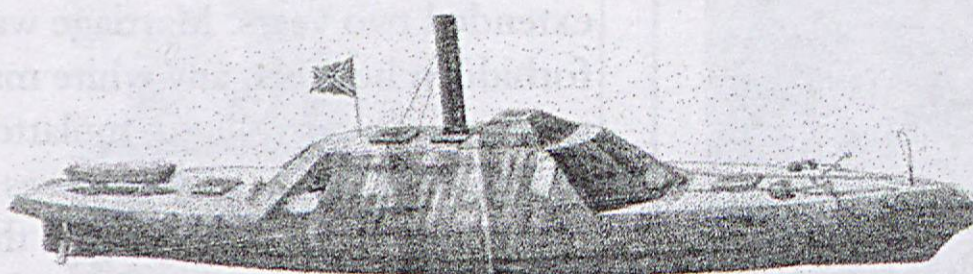
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11

RAM ALBEMARLE

Noted Confederate ironclad was built near this spot, 1863-64. Aided in capture of Plymouth, April, 1864.

US 258/561 at Roanoke River bridge north of Scotland Neck.

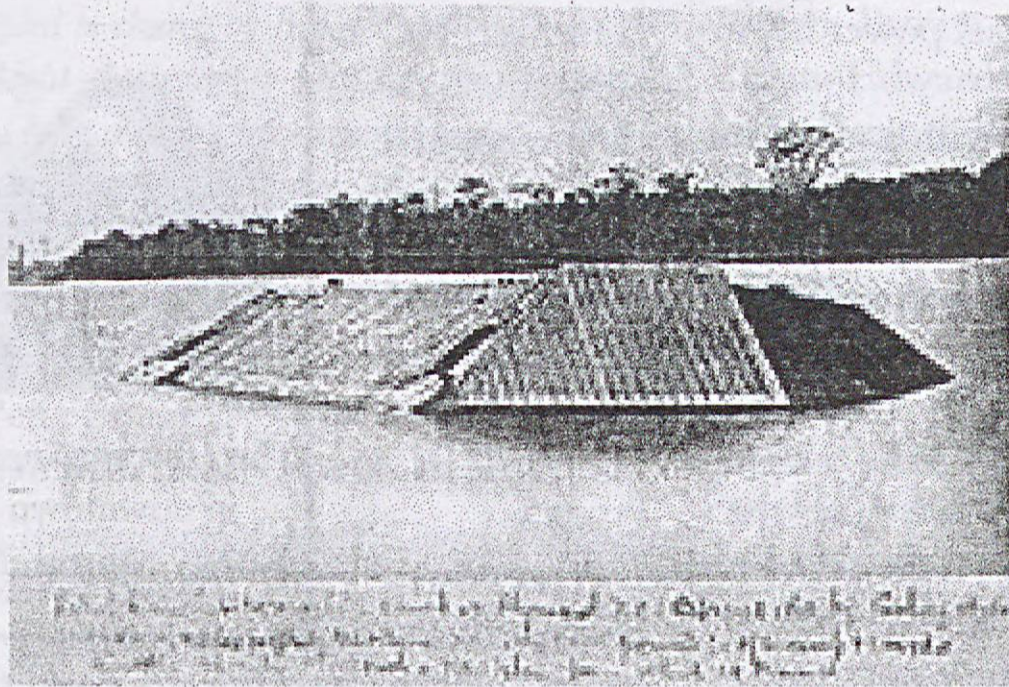


yard at Edwards' Ferry; the timber had to be cut in the woods and sawn at the site, workmen were scarce, there was no machine shop, and iron was almost unobtainable. But these obstacles were all to be overcome.

The job of building the *Albemarle* was given to **Gilbert Elliott**, a youth of 19, and 34 year old **Peter Evans Smith**, son of **William Ruffin Smith** who

fighting craft of the enemy, would be a formidable weapon for the **Confederacy**.

To facilitate this extensive project, a navy yard was established half a mile below Halifax, consisting of a hospital, drug store, supply storeroom, commissary, etc. A number of marines formed the guard. **Capt. Julius Guthrie**, an experienced NC officer of the old navy, was in command, and **Robert H. Daniel** was the naval storekeeper, furnishing what was necessary for the construction of the vessel.



The *Albemarle*, photographed by W.B. Rose for A.J. Smith of New Bern, NC in 1864. The picture was taken from the wharf at Plymouth, NC, with the swamp and woods opposite the town in the background.

The enemy was aware of the new ship being built in the Halifax Co. cornfield. On June 3, 1863, Lt. **Flusser**, commander of the US steamer *Miami*, in **Albemarle Sound**, advised **Rear-Adm. S.P. Lee**, USN, of the construction. The US Navy Dept. several times called attention to the construction of the vessel, and advised that, as the US ships could not reach her on account of the shallowness of the water, a land force be sent to burn her, but this advice was ignored.

And so, unmolested, Elliott and Smith pressed the work day and night, to finish her. It took twelve months of unceasing labor with a force averaging 200 men, few of whom were skilled mechanics, but all working with a single end in view—to finish the *Albemarle*.

Edwards' Ferry

Edwards' Ferry was operated by Edwards family for 3 generations until it was sold to **Thomas Hunt** in 1822. Hunt in turn sold it to **William Ruffin Smith** in 1836. Smith's son, **Peter Evans Smith** was in control of the ferry and the adjacent plantation during the Civil War.

CONNECTOR



Captain James Wallace Cooke, Confederate States Navy, (18??-1869)

But wait—she wasn't quite finished. By April, 1863, with the vessel only partially completed, a combined movement against the **Federal** forces at **Plymouth, Washington Co., NC** was planned. In mid-April, **General Hoke**, commander of the Confederate land forces, visited the ship. **James W. Cooke**, born and reared in **Beaufort**, was her captain, and he promised to have her at Plymouth by the 18th to assist the army.

Workmen were still at work; the engine had not been tried, nor the crew drilled. Cooke had, however, an excellent executive officer in the brave **Lieut. F. M. Roby**. The pilot was North Carolinian **John Luck**, and Elliott was to be a volunteer aide.

The *Albemarle* was launched even though only one side was completely armored. **Miss Mary Spotswood** broke a bottle of wine over her prow and officially named her the *Albemarle*. The builders loaded the remaining iron aboard. As she churned along, the blacksmiths worked feverishly on a deck almost awash, spiking the armour on to her sloping decks.

The *Albemarle* lumbered downsteam on a river swollen high by spring rains to do her job of terrorizing the Yankees for a season before **Lieutenant Cushing** poked a torpedo under her and blew her up.

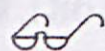
[See the Spring Issue of *The Connector* for the rest of the story of the Confederate Ironclad, *Albemarle*.]

CSS Albemarle Returns to River

Local history buffs in Plymouth, NC have built and launched a replica of the Confederate gunboat. *Albemarle*, in the Roanoke River. The 63-foot replica is a gray, low-slung vessel with a battleship profile. Its wood and fiberglass exterior was crafted to look like the iron plates that covered the original ship. The top hides large pontoons and a cockpit where operators steer with a ship's wheel-type steering mechanism, run an outboard motor, and fire mock cannons.

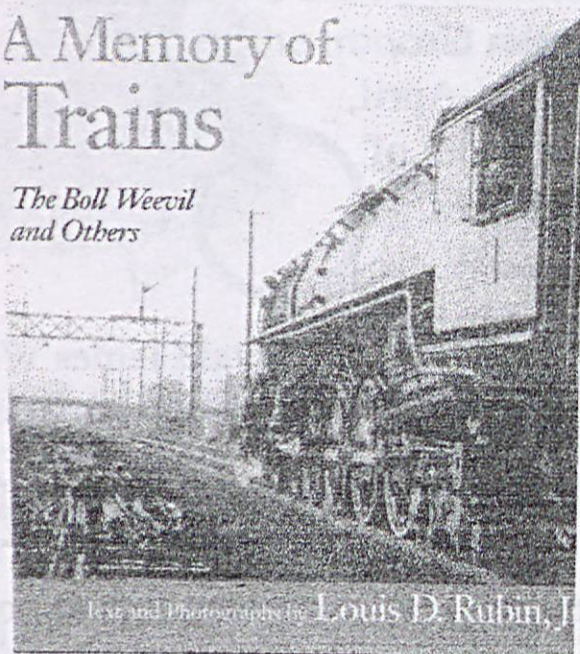
Readers Choice

Local Color



A Memory of Trains

The Boll Weevil and Others



A Memory of Trains, The Boll Weevil and Others, by Louis D. Rubin, Jr., 2000. "All the machinery was on the outside, and when they came pounding along the rails, drive wheels turning, drive rods stroking, pistons

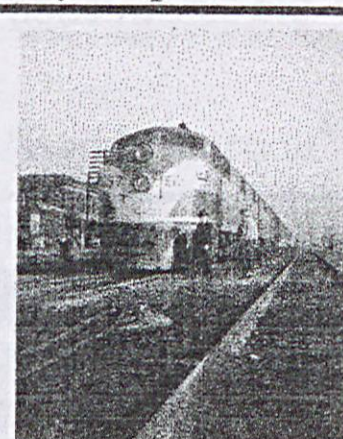
exploding with sound and fury and sending a swirling cloud of bituminous coal smoke overhead, the earth shook." Louis D. Rubin, Jr. began his love affair with trains during WWII as he rode between Fort Benning and his home in Richmond, VA on the Seaboard Air Line's Silver Meteor. He continued his travels taking the photographs that form a visual railroad history as the age of steam ends and diesel power begins its rise.

The book begins with a narrative describing Rubin's journey—a combination of history and personal experience. He tells of waiting for trains between the double sets of tracks with his old \$10 35mm Argus camera. You can hear with him the telegraph receivers clicking away behind the ticket counter as the train draws near, or imagine the vibration of an approaching train as he places his ear against a shiny rail. You see the pair of deer, frightened by the noise of the

train, as they "raced along beside the locomotive for a half-mile, vaulting gracefully over wire fences before finally bearing off into the woods."

The remainder of the book consists of 100 photographs taken by Rubin through the mid-1950s. There is ACL locomotive No. 149, a 1906 Baldwin 0-6-0 switch engine. Turn a few pages and you find the oddly shaped Seaboard station in Hamlet, NC in 1950. And do you recognize the Lima-built 2-6-6-6 articulated Mallet at the water tower in the Roanoke, Va yards in 1947?

You don't have to be a train lover to enjoy the story and the nostalgic photographs.



The Havana Special in downtown Rocky Mount, NC

Education in Edgecombe County in 1811



"The progress of learning for twenty-five years back has been slow, and perhaps has not more than kept pace with the population, till within these two or three years. The people now manifest some disposition to diffuse learning, perhaps from their finding the means of

obtaining it more accessible now than heretofore. The custom at the public schools, and in some towns, among those who are desirous of intellectual improvement, has found its way here. ...

Some attempts have been made to procure libraries, but this, for some of the above reasons, was never effected, except by a society that was in existence about fifteen years ago. On the dissolution of that body the books were scattered abroad, or divided among those who contributed to the establishment. The agricultural society has appropriated a sum of money to procure an

agricultural library. Some donations are made of books for this purpose. ...

It is believed that about two-thirds of the people generally can read, and one-half of the males write their names, but not more than one-third of the women can write. The girls not at school are learning and are very desirous to write; it is deemed a more important accomplishment in that sex among the common people now than formerly. ...

There are seventeen county schools in the county, at which there are about four hundred scholars; nothing more is attempted to be taught in them than the elements of reading, writing, and arithmetic, and but few of the teachers are qualified to do justice to those. ...fifty years ago there was not more than one or two schools in the whole county. For want of an academy in this county several have been sent to those in the adjacent ones, viz, at Westrayville and Vine Hill. It is in contemplation to establish an academy at Mount Prospect, in this county, and we can not account for the delay otherwise than from the general indifference with which learning is still viewed."

[From an 1811 article in the *Raleigh Star*, written by Jeremiah Battle, M.D. In 1811, Dr. Battle was a practicing physician in Tarborough, Edgecombe County, NC.]

Sandy Creek Baptist Meeting House

Franklin County, NC—Names and excerpts from minutes

2nd in a series — 1792-1817



*H*ester, slave, July 21, 1792 belonging to Prosley Nelms to be cited at next conference by Bro. Stephen Smart.

Queary [Query] presented to church by Bro. Rich. Webb. Is it Right According to Scripture for A woman to have a voice in the church or not. Laid over till next conference.

Bro. H. Hunt and Bro. Lancaster sent by church to conference in Dobbs County, Oct. 1792.

Peter Smart, 1792

Jemimah Yearborough, Sept. 1793

Representatives sent to Church Meeting in Martin County.

Elizabeth Cary, Jan 11, 1794, from David Carron's Church

Lewis Mason, 8 Sept 1798

John Pembleton, 28 Sept 1799

May 9, 1801, member Charged with Departing from the truth.

Moses Bennett, Nov. 13, 1802

Jordan Denson, Jan. 8, 1803, Clerk

John Davis, 1803

Rebikah Pinnion, 1803

Sophia Young, 1803

Molly Wester, 1803

Hellon Brown, 1803

Salley Robins, 1803

Salley Vinson, 1803

Elizabeth Cunningham, 1803

George & Eleanor Sims, 1804

Salley Davis & Priscilla Davis, 1804

Nancy Gant & Betsy Hill, 1804

Patsy Davis, 1804

Richard Hill, 1804

John Pemberton, 1804

Wm. Ozmore from Wm Garner's Church in Greensville County, 1804

Polley Copidge, 1805

Peggy Watkins (Walker), 1805

Nancy Davis, 1805

Ruthy Kirby, 1805

Betty (Polley) Weaver, 1805

Elias Nelms, 1805

James Harper, 1805

Eliza Jonson, 1805

Betty Franklin, 1805

Nanny Brantley, 1805

John Brown, 1805

William Brown, 1805

Miriam Edwards, 1805

Salley Person, 1805

Elisha Ham, 1805

Mersy Webb, 1805

Salley Webb, 1806

Nancy Hale, 1806

Polley Ball, 1806

Elizabeth Davis, 1806

Priscilla Sandford, 1807

Robert S. Thomas, 1807

James Harper, 1807

Lloyd Johnson, 1807

Robert Young, 1808

Major Wm Williams, 1808

Mary Wesham, 1808

Celia Gillam, 1808

Amy Brown, 1809

Green Walker, wife Peggy, & Quenny Walker were dismissed from this church at their request in 1809.

[There were many dismissals from the church as people moved to other areas.]

Elizabeth Laurance, 1809

Willis Bartholomew, 1811

Durhim Hill, 1811

Negro Bosi, 1811

Patsey Thomas, 1812

Rebeccah Ham by letter from Log Meeting House, Nash Co, NC, 1812

Lyddia Hill, 1813

Nancy Thomas, 1814

Kinshey Hill, 1814

Betsey P. Hill now Betsey Vinion applyd through her Father for a letter of dismissal and it was granted, 1815.

Frankey Thomas, 1815

Patsey Dainald, 1816

William Boon, 1816

William Brown, 1816

Polley Brantly, 1816

Rebeckah Wood, 1817

Patsey Hill, 1817

Martha Hill, 1817

Nancy Gant, 1817

Next Conference to be held at the Falls of the Tar River, 1817

In 1817 an man was accused of taking God's name in vain. He responded that he wished all of (a certain family) in hell which he confest. The individual was therefore cut off from the fellowship of this Church By Excommunication (excommunication) and no Longer considered one amongst us. Sabbath Breaking and Drunkenness remain as problems for some Church members, also having base born children (out of wedlock).

One member was cited for dealing unfaithfully with another, and two

Women were cited for being in a state of Contention.

(See Part 1—The Connector, Fall 2002)

Braswell Memorial Library Acquisitions



1. *Turning Memories into Memoirs* by Denis Ledoux
2. *Cherokee Proud* by Tony Mack McClure
3. *The Everything Family Tree Book* by William G. Hartley
4. *Genealogy Online for Dummies* by Matthew L. Helm
5. *Black Roots* by Tony Burroughs
6. *Warren County Heritage—North Carolina, Vol. I 2002* by the Warren County Heritage Book Committee, donated by TRC member Mrs. Judith Kirkland
7. Collection donated by TRC member William D. Bennett [being cataloged]
8. Collection donated by TRC member W. Bennett Barnes [being cataloged]



ORAL
HISTORY
PROJECT

Nash County Arts Council

Play Places

TOLD BY JUANITA BLOODWORTH HOWELL, TRC MEMBER

In the 1930s there were numerous ditches throughout **Rocky Mount**. They drained water from low land and diverted it to the **Tar River**. Many were open or only partially covered. One of these open ditches ran behind our backyard and bordered our garden and cow pasture. This was a favorite play place in my neighborhood. You could always find a playmate on the ditch bank.

We hung a rope on a tree branch over the ditch and played "Tarzan," swinging from one side to the other. We dug steps down one side of the bank and up the other. We made ourselves a camp stove by digging a hole into the side of the bank and a smoke hole from the top. We baked potatoes in it. When they were done, the skins were black and hard, but we ate them anyway.

We tied fatback to a string and dropped it into craw-

fish holes, trying to catch crawfish. We sometimes dared each other to jump across the ditch in hazardous places. Of course, we explored the dark, covered part of the ditch which ran under the street. The only light came from the gates in the gutter where water drained from the street. You were real brave if you could crawl through the whole covered section, a distance of about two blocks.

There were real perils associated with the ditch. There was the time when my brother and I were jumping across and he pushed me. I fell on a rock and broke my arm. I wore a cast nearly all summer. One night my mother went to check on my brother who was camping, and she fell into the ditch and got a terrible case of poison oak.

We also played in vacant lots where we could fly kites, build camps, and play ball. One time, **Mr. Croom**, a volunteer fireman and dry cleaning plant owner, made us a place to pole vault in the lot next to his house. He took the time to haul wood shavings and put them in the landing area, and he supervised us when we played there.

Guns and Ammunition
Stoves and Heaters
Enamel and Tinware,
Nails, Paints and Oils
Buggy and Wagon
Harness, Buggy Robes,
Horse Blankets, Edge
Tools, Belting,
Farm Implements
Rope, etc.

**J. S. Gorham
Hardware Co.**

DEALERS IN

BUILDING MATERIAL, FARM IMPLEMENTS

Hardware

150 South Washington St.

Phone 234

Fire Threatens Tarboro

FIRE IN TOWN—THE WHOLE PLACE THREATENED—PARTICULARS, ETC.—About ten o'clock on Monday last, an alarm of fire was raised, and rushing to the Street we observed a dense volume of smoke pouring from the out houses connected with the residence of Mrs. **M.L. Mabry**, near the bridge. In a few moments a large crowd had assembled, which under the direction of the **Hook and Ladder Company**, which was promptly on the ground, commenced herculean efforts to save the surrounding buildings.

By this time the flames had acquired an immense headway, engulfing two houses, and placing in eminent danger the residence of Mrs. Mabry and the **Store of Messrs. Brown, Daniel & Co.**, which were only saved after the greatest difficulty.—Several other out houses were torn to pieces preventing the extension of the fire in the direction of the Street. Fortunately the wind was blowing strongly westward.

Everybody worked most manfully, but we desire that the efforts of the colored people should be particularly known.—Large numbers of them were speedily at the fire and we have never seen better service done than was performed by them on that occasion.

The fire was finally suppressed, with a loss probably of about Five Hundred dollars upon which we understand there was no insurance, the policy having expired but a short time since.

[Tarboro' Southerner, Jan. 12, 1871]

Recommended Web Site

HELEN SHARPE, SITE SEEKER

www.itd.nps.gov/cwss/index.html

A data base of over 5,000,000 **Civil War** soldiers' names entered from records that are indexed to many millions of other documents about **Union** and **Confederate** soldiers maintained by the **National Archives and Records Administration**.

Early College In Rocky Mount?

ROCKY MOUNT—THE COLLEGE—We have often of late been induced to congratulate **Rocky Mount** upon its rising prospects and general appearance of prosperity everywhere visible. This feeling is shared by all who have witnessed the contrast of a year back.

A correspondent of the *Norfolk Journal* speaks thusly of our flourishing neighbor, and the **College** lately opened there.

"Your correspondent passed a few hours very pleasantly in **Rocky Mount** a few days since; met several friends from whom we learned that trade was good. **Rocky Mount** has some twenty-six stores, four physicians, and **Dr. Thorp** has an ele-

gantly arranged drug store. Several promising young lawyers have offices in the town. Among the number **B.H. Bunn, Esq.**, and **Capt. Sam T. Williams** are associated in the practice, having offices in **Rocky Mount** and **Battleboro**. Both gentlemen are men of fine legal attainments and will undoubtedly be highly successful in their chosen and honored calling.

The College recently chartered by the Legislature has a male and female department, and offers unsurpassed educational advantages, and situated in such a healthy, refined and wealthy portion of the State, is bound to become an educational institution second to but few in the State. **C.G. Davenport, M.S.** is the competent and efficient president of the faculty and professor of English literature, science and mathematics.

A.J. Ellington, A.B., professor of ancient and modern languages, and other chairs will be added as matriculates enter. Such an institution is needed in **Eastern Carolina**, and we hope this one will be sustained by an appreciative, intelligent people.

[Can anyone help identify this College by name?]

[*Tarboro Southerner*, February 8, 1872]

CUCUMBER WOOD PUMPS PLUMMER, LEWIS & Co HARDWARE DEALERS,

Sell Blatchley's Original Genuine Cucumber Pumps at

\$9.00, and upwards,

According to Depth of Well. These Pumps have been in use twenty years and given entire satisfaction.

PLUMMER, LEWIS & Co. have sold over two hundred Pumps, and they have all given complete satisfaction and have pleased every purchaser.

Every Pump guaranteed to give entire satisfaction and to please. If not, the money will be promptly refunded. We sell no inferior Pumps.

Call and examine certificates of purchasers. These certificates are given by gentlemen that you all know well.
Tarboro, July 29th, 1872-lm.

AMERICAN, CONT. FROM PAGE 9

Prior to 1790 it is almost impossible to know how many blacks were free and how many were slaves. However, according to the 1790 census, NC counted more than 5,000 free colored people. Where did this free color population come from? Children born of free black parents, mulatto children born of white servants or free white women, children of free black and Indian mixed parentage, and manumitted slaves. The offspring of white men by slave women were slaves according to law; however, it is known that their lot was made easier by their fathers and wills show benevolence to these offspring. Marriages were still occurring among white and free blacks in the late 1770s. It was not until 1830 that these marriages were declared null and void.

By 1860, the slave population in NC was 331,059. **Nash Co.** had between 500 and 700 free people of color in 1860, a majority identified as mulatto and the rest as black. The equal number of females and males lived in 175 households of various compositions. They were laborers, farmers, turpentine workers, coopers, carpenters, ditchers, mullers, distillers, shoe makers, stone masons, and waggoners. At the same time—in the 1860 census of **Nash Co.**—there were about 3932 slaves with 350 slaveholders. The average number of slaves was 11. The top 10 slave owners owned 657 of these slaves, about 17% of

the total. They were **Joshua Watson, 106; A.H. Arrington, 84; Sally Bunting, 80; Grey Sills, 70; Elijah B. Hilliard, 65; Thomas W. Avent, 59; Benja. W. Dunn, 57; Turner P. Westray, 53.** These slaveholders were located in the **Ricks, Collins and Arrington** districts of **Nash Co.**



Wm. T. Jones

b. 5 mar 1858

Granville Co., NC
s/o **Sterling Jones**
& **Harriet Chavis**
d. 11 May, 1923,
Nash Co., NC

Mary Hedgepeth

b. ca 1858

Granville Co., NC
d/o **Jesse Hedgepeth**
& **Emiline Bookram**

Captain John H. Thorpe

During the early 1900s, **Captain John H. Thorpe** and his wife, "**Miss Sallie**," were a familiar sight as the drove around **Rocky Mount** in their trap [a light 2-wheel carriage with springs] and pony. They were both



Capt. John H. Thorpe

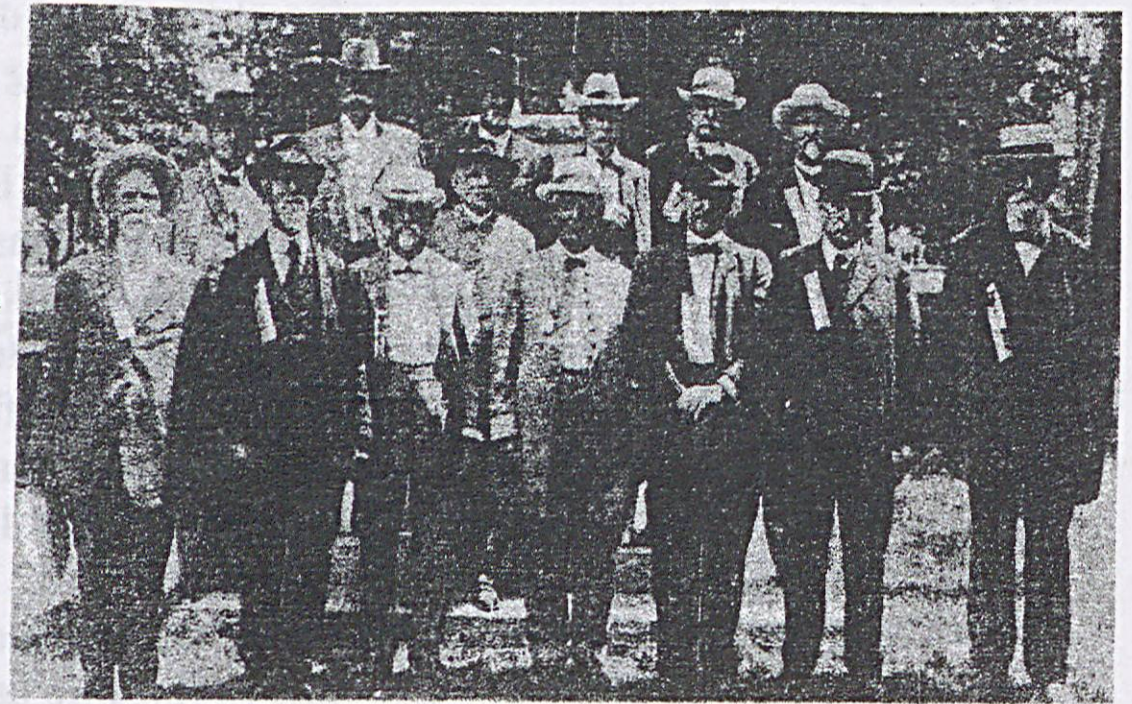
of small stature and made a charming couple. But Capt. Thorpe had not yet finished his final task.

It was more than 60 years after the close of the **War Between The States**, and Captain Thorpe was in his eighties, when he undertook the project of gathering and correlating **Nash Co.** records for his *Roster of Nash County Confederate Soldiers*. His friend and comrade, **Robert H.**

Ricks, had propositioned him about doing the book and fi-

nanced its publication.

About the same time, **Lewis Dowd** had been collecting records of **Edgecombe Co.** soldiers and those records were compiled and made ready for press by **Frederick Phillips**. The two rolls are combined in *Nash County Confederate Soldiers—Edgecombe County Roster*. Combining the two lists, Nash and Edgecombe, was a happy thought, as the records of many local families cross



Nash and Edgecombe Civil War Veterans

county lines. This book has become more valuable with the passing of time.

Captain Thorpe was the son of **John Thorpe** (1814-1883) and **Virginia Wood Thorpe** (1818-1892). He was born in 1840 and died in Rocky Mount in 1933. He was Captain of **Company A, 47th N.C. Regt., CSA**. His wife, **Sallie Elizabeth Bunn Thorpe**, was born in 1843 and died in 1924. They are buried in the **Thorp-Thorpe** plot in **Pineview Cemetery**, Rocky Mount. It is interesting to note that the entire family graveyard on the early Thorpe homesite, one mile north of the city, in use from 1808 until 1943, was removed to Pineview in 1948.

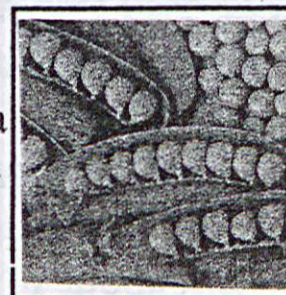
Captain Thorpe was the last survivor of the **Bethel Heroes**.

What Did the Yankees Drop?

During the **Civil War**, when **Rebecca Butts** was a girl, a troop of **Yankee** soldiers showed up at the Butts farm near **Aurelian Springs, Halifax Co., NC**. Of course, everyone was terrified, not knowing what these enemies might do. They all ran as fast as they could go to hide in the nearby woods. From their hiding places, they watched as the men dismounted and walked round the yard. They saw several soldiers reach into their pockets and pull out something and throw it on the ground. Then the men made their way to the peanut

field and started pulling up the peanuts.

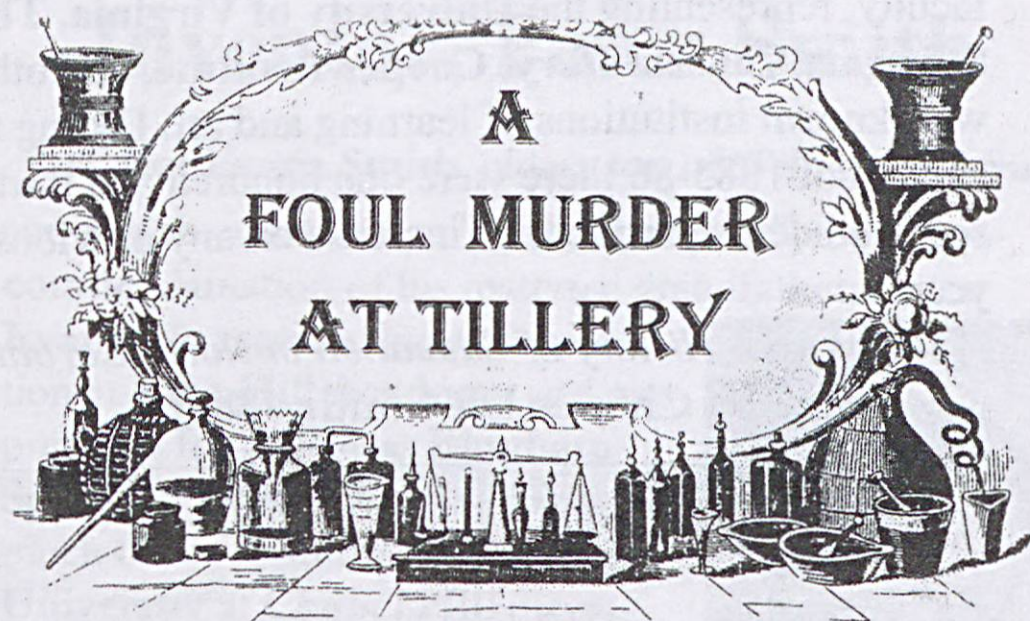
After a while, the Yankees had had enough peanuts and they rode off. Everyone hurried from the woods, and the first thing they did was look to see what the soldiers had thrown on the ground. Lo and behold, it was green peas of a type that was unknown around Aurelian Springs. They gathered up the peas and the next spring, they planted them. They had a good crop and the peas were good! They called them "**Yankee**" peas. Everybody loved them. From then on, for many years, people around Aurelian Springs had a crop of delicious **Yankee** peas.



And now, for the rest of the story. Years later, after **Rebecca Butts** had grown up, married **Samuel Andrew Jackson "Jack" Glasgow**, and had a family of 14 children, her daughter, **Affie Selene Glasgow**, who later married **Ed Liles**, was getting ready to plant the **Yankee** peas. She set the peas down on a stump while she worked a little more in the garden before putting the peas in the ground. When she turned around to get them, she discovered that a chicken had eaten the peas. What to do?

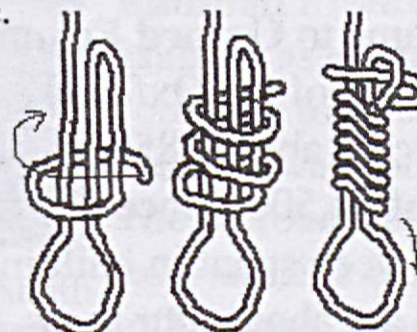
Well, believe it or not, the Glasgow family had delicious fried chicken for supper that night. And the next day, **Affie** planted her peas.

[Told by **Effie Perry** of **Garner, NC**, daughter of **Affie Liles**.]



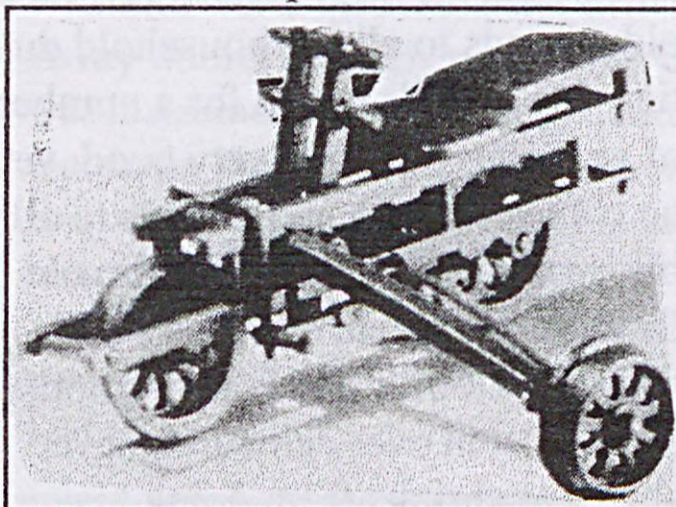
SEPTEMBER 13, 1883—TILLERY'S—One of the most hellish and blood-curdling murders of the day was committed at Tillery's Station ten miles from Scotland Neck about three weeks ago and first came to light last Friday. About three weeks since the wife of one **Enoch Brown** was missing. Inquiry was made of Brown as to her

whereabouts and he said that she had gone to see her people, who lives some distance from that place, he and she having both come from **Petersburg [VA]** a short time since. One little circumstance added to another aroused suspicion and the people around suspected foul play began to look for the body, which was found on last Friday, buried in a manure heap, with her throat cut almost from ear to ear. The scoundrel, **Enoch**, was immediately arrested and to the surprise of all acknowledged the atrocious crime. He was taken to **Halifax** jail on Monday morning, where we hope he will remain chained down until he meets his just deserts at the end of a rope.



COURTING MACHINE

MARCH 25, 1897—TILLERY—The North Carolina Lumber Company has just purchased a light railroad velocipede and there was



immediately a rush of swains who have sweethearts in **Scotland Neck** and other nearby towns, anxious to secure the use of it for Sunday next. Some young lady will probably be very much surprised to see a curious looking machine, painted bright red come sailing along the railroad track some Sunday and deposit a slick looking young man at her front door. He can stay later than usual now as he can beat out the best horse in the county.

Coach & Gig MANUFACTORY.

THE Subscriber respectfully informs his customers and the public in general, that he has just returned from New York, with a **General and Fashionable assortment of ARTICLES**

IN HIS LINE OF BUSINESS

Some of which have never before been offered for sale in this market, as they are entirely new articles, selected by himself out of a large establishment at Newark. He has also for sale, large glass—gig and wagon whips and twigs—moroco, of various colors—patent leather—sand paper—laces, of various colors, and tassels—silver and brass mouldings—gold leaf—and a general assortment of paints, varnishes, oils &c.

Springs of every description furnished—coach wrenchers and steps, and a variety of other articles too tedious to mention.

Repairs, of every description, executed with neatness and despatch.

He has also on hand one or two *Gigs, &c.* to hire out.

ISAAC R. BRADY

[Tarboro Southerner, Jan. 29, 1833]

CONNECTOR

PLUMMER, LEWIS & CO.
OPPOSITE THE COURT HOUSE,
TARBORO, N. C.
WILL KEEP A FULL STOCK OF

HARDWARE,
CUTLERY, TIN WARE,

Cooking & Heating Stoves
Carriage Materials,

Consisting of HUBS, RIMS, SPOKES, AXLES, SPRINGS, BOLTS, ENAMELED CLOTH, ENAMELED LEATHER, PAT. DASH LEATHER, &c.
FARMERS WILL FIND A GOOD STOCK OF AMES AND ROWLANDS

SPADES & SHOVELS
Manure Forks, Drags, &c.

Carpenters and Builders will find a choice assortment of **Locks, Hinges, Screws, &c.** Also a good stock of

TOOLS AND FILES

Undertakers will

FIND A GOOD ASSORTMENT OF
COFFIN HANDLES, SCREWS,
TACKS & ORNAMENTS, at low prices.

30 KEES assorted OLD DOMINION NAILS now in store—bought direct from the MANUFACTORY.

Blacksmith's will find a good stock of **BELLOWS, ANVILS, SCREW PLATES, HORSE SHOES and NAILS.**

We shall have a full stock of **AXES**—these will be WARRANTED to the trade—and which we will sell Wholesale and Retail at low prices.
Our House will have the advantage of the experience of **PLUMMER, YOUNG & CO.**, whose reputation is well known both in Virginia and North Carolina.
We have the exclusive AGENCY for this and surrounding counties for the Sale of the Celebrated

Wild Cucumber Wood Pumps.

PLUMMER, YOUNG & CO. have sold over 250 of them and warranted every PUMP to give satisfaction or return the money, and have never sold one that has not elicited the highest praise. They are simple in construction, easy to work, durable and cheap. Send for Circular and Price List to
PLUMMER, LEWIS & CO.,
Opposite Court House, Tarboro, N. C.

Call at the New Hardware Store

Opposite Court House and see the working of the Celebrated **APPLE PARING, CORING and SLICING MACHINE**, Also the Pat. **LIGHTNING PEACH PAPER**. Also examine the **TIN FRUIT CANS** which are the cheapest and best now in use, and just in the season for Fruit, Tomatoes, Vegetables, &c. Parties using these cans will never use glass or stone again.

PLUMMER, LEWIS & CO.

Oxford Female Seminary

The seat of this seminary is **Oxford, Granville County**, in the northern part of the State.

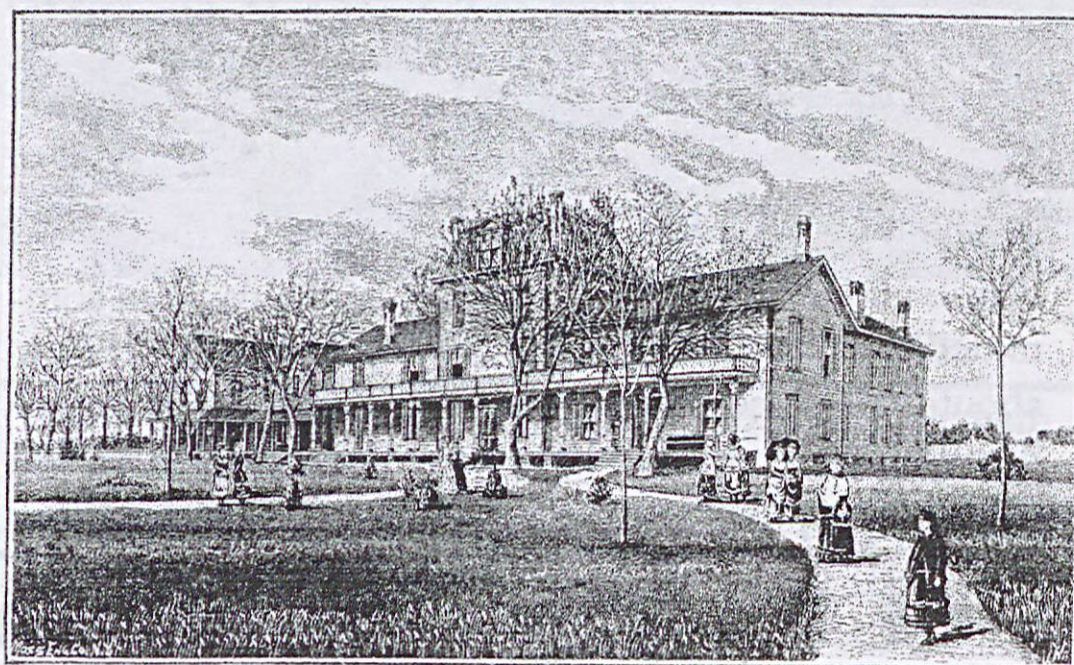
This institution is the continuation of the **Raleigh Female Seminary**, which was established in **Raleigh**, about 1870, by the **Rev. William Royall, D.D.**, now a professor in **Wake Forest College**, and one of the most learned men in the State. After the resignation of Dr. Royall, **Prof. F.P. Hobgood** became president, and in 1880 he moved the institution to Oxford, changing the name to **Oxford Female Seminary**.

The buildings of the Oxford Female Seminary, which were erected about 1850, were remodeled in 1880 at a cost of \$4,500. Since that time about \$5,000 additional have been spent in building and repairs. The school grounds are about four acres, beautifully laid out.

The course of study comprises a preparatory and a collegiate department. There are nine teachers in the

CONNECTOR
faculty, representing the **University of Virginia**, **The Stuttgart Conservatory**, **Cooper Institute**, and other well-known institutions of learning and art. During the session of 1885-86 there were one hundred and thirty-seven students enrolled, an increase on any previous year.

[Taken from *History of Education in North Carolina* by Charles Lee Smith, 1888]



A Letter Home

Tempie Person was the daughter of **Thomas Person** for whom **Person County** was named. Tempie was a student at the **Louisburg Female Academy** in 1854 when she wrote the following letter to her sister, **Harriet**: "*I will now tell you something about our room and our room mates. There is five beds in our room so ten girls will stay in it. There is eight girls in here now and there is two Miss Whitakers coming and they will stay in our room.... There is four large beds and one trundle bed. Three beds sit on one side and two on the other and a water stand and table and a desk with shelves and all has a shelf apiece, and trunks sitting all around. ... Our room is very large. We stay in the room over the parlor. Mr. Ray hasn't got but three rooms for girls to stay in. He has got nineteen boarders.... You said you wanted to know how many girls was in our class but there is so many I*

don't hardly know. But I believe there is 25 or 30 and I think he has got 50 scholars. ... We have just got up from the table and never eat half enough. They had hogshhead and greens, beef, potatoes, and bread, and you know that was a sorry dinner."

[Taken from *Louisburg College Echoes* by George-Anne Willard: 1988]

Biographical Sketches of some of the Oldest Citizens of our County

The Franklin Courier
January 8, 1875

Marshall Baker

Mr. Baker, one of the oldest men in our county, and one of the most peaceable, quite, straight forward, upright old gentlemen, that we know of, was born in **Galloway's District**, January 2nd 1798, which makes him

77 years old. He has raised 9 children, and has now 14 grand children, all living in this and **Wake county**. His excellent wife with whom he has lived in happiness for nearly half century, is now 73 years old, attends to all her household duties. Mr Baker's health for a number of years has not been very good, yet he comes to town and attends to all his own business. He is a plain old fashion gentleman and every body speaks well of him. He is promptly at his post at every election, never shirks or shrinks from doing his duty. May many more long years be added to his life and happier than those that have past.

[Contributed by TRC member, Pam Jeans]

DIED

In this county on Tuesday last, very suddenly, **Mr. John Williams**, (son of Thomas,) aged about 40 years. He was apparently in good health on Monday — in the night he was attacked with the quinsy, and died in a few hours.

[Tarborough Press, Jan. 12, 1839]

Inventor, Peter Smith

Peter Evans Smith, oldest son of William and Susan Smith, was born at "Piney Prospect", the Edgecombe plantation of his maternal grandfather, Peter Evans. He received his early education at Vine Hill Academy and was prepared for college at Bingham School in Orange Co. He spent much of his freshman year at the University at Chapel Hill playing the flute or violin under the Davie poplar and taking daguerreotypes.

Smith married Rebecca Norfleet Hill, the daughter of Whitmel John Hill of "Kenmore" near Scotland Neck, Halifax Co., NC, on Dec. 22, 1852. They had 7 children, but only 3, Lena, Rebecca and Nan, reached maturity.

After his marriage Peter's father gave him a plantation on the Roanoke River. He built a fine house on the property which he called "Sunnyside." Two slaves were sent north to be trained as carpenters to execute the elaborate interior woodwork of walnut. The house was finished on the eve of the Civil War; furnishings were purchased in NY only half of which was ever delivered. The house burned about 1870.

Smith was a quartermaster officer in the Confederate Army during the early part of the Civil War. In 1863, he was instrumental in the construction of the gunship *Albemarle*. [See *The Birth of the Albemarle*, Page 10] When the War ended, Smith turned his inventive talents to peaceful pursuits.

In 1871 he invented a cotton planter which was superseded by later models because, in his design, the seed had to be wet. A sulkey plow followed in 1871. His most

significant invention was the buoy lighted by electricity which was patented in the US and England. Later inventions were a spark arrester for the smoke stack of the woodburning locomotive then in use, patented in 1885; a self-coupling device for railroad coaches; and a form of railroad switch. He also invented a method of shrinking iron tires upon carriage wheels.



Peter Evans and Rebecca Norfleet Hill Smith

As Scotland Neck was 20 miles from the nearest railroad, Smith offered his services free of charge to the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad to survey a road from Halifax as an incentive to the company to build a branch line. The line was complete in 1880. The railroad later hired him to carry the line from Scotland Neck to Kinston, Washington and

other eastern points.

Early in life Peter Smith became deaf, as did his daughter, Lena. In his later years he was run over by a negro driving a cart and sustained a broken leg. He narrowly escaped injury around the turn of the century when, while driving near "Magnolia" a tornado passed through. He drove his horse and surrey into a deep ditch and escaped injury.

Peter Evans Smith died Oct. 14, 1905. In a biographical sketch of Smith in *History of Halifax County*, Allen wrote: "After the Civil War, he lived quietly and unpretentiously at his home in Scotland Neck, working at his trade as a mechanic. He had his shops in Old Clarks-ville, and, in addition to his regular work in that line, he mended clocks, watches, locks, and guns for his neighbors free of charge. His genius, which in more populous centers might have brought him fame and fortune, was expended unsparingly in the interests of his friends almost without pay."

Letters Remaining in the Post Office at Tarborough— April 1, 1806.

James Adams, George Brownrigg, David Bullock, Sally Ballard, Edward Cobb, Thomas Carer, Starling Diggs, Exum Drake, John Edmundson, Joseph Farmer, John George, Nancy Goodwin, Lazrus Gardner,

Dempsey Gray, Isaac Harden, Francis Knight, Exum Lewis, Esq., Figures Lewis, Elizabeth Lewis, James Lancaster, Micajah Petteway, Frederick Phillips, Esq., John Pickering, David Pender, Samuel Ruffin, Elijzh Roberson, James Staunton, William Spear, Enos Tart, Esq., Joseph Taylor, David Winstead, William Wilkinson.

JOHN G. L. SCHENCK. PM

[NC Journal, Halifax, Apr 21, 1806]

Too Old to Hang!

James Mercer of Person county, was tried for the murder of his son in law John Gaitley, and sentenced to be hung. In consideration of the advanced age of this man, being in his 84th year, the Jury, as well as the respectable citizens in and about Hillsborough, signed a memorial addressed to the Governor, and we are pleased to learn that his Excellency has granted a pardon.

[NC Journal, Oct. 27, 1806]

Miss Prymm on Babies.

BY WINNIE

Of all created human critters, said Miss Priscillar Prymm, emphatically, I *dew* despise a baby! I used to reckon a snake about the most hateful; but a body knows in ginerall where to look for snakes, and how to keep clear of 'em, whereas there's no gitting out of the way of a baby. Go where you will, in town or country, on land or sea, you find the bestifierous little critters; and as for street cars and steamboats, anybody'd think they were made for their special accommodation. If I was a railroad president, or a steamboat company, I'd have "babies" as well as "ladies" cars; and the wonder to me is that it hasn't been done before this; 'twould pay, sure.

The first thing a baby does is to holler, and it hollers till it's old enough to use its hands and feet as well as its voice, and then the mischief it does do is beyond kalkilation. Why, I've had my ink bottle upset on my newest carpet; and my best chany tea set, with the yaller rosebuds on 'em knocked of the table—leastways a plate and two cups; and my "Book of Beautiful Extracts" (that was given me by Portifield Grubbs before he took to keeping company with that bold minx Arathusy Wilson) torn to atoms almost! And all by a baby, or leastwise by a variety of 'em, for they're alike as a basket of peas. And what's more aggravatin' of all is the foolish mothers excusin' the "Little darlin's" on the score of "cutting their teeth," or "being so remarkably precocious," or something else equally interesting. I've always noticed that whatever badness a baby is guilty of it's always set down by its mother to either its teeth or its smartness.

I wonder what the worrying little varmints are made for, and why nature couldn't hev sent folks into the world already grown up, or at least old enough to be of some use. Now of what earthly use is a baby, I should like to know? A little shapeless lump of flesh and blood, with its bald head lolloping on one side, and its two goggle eyes staring at nothing, and its flabby fists catching at everything in its way, crying at everything sensible and grinning at everything foolish. And what nonsense mothers do talk to their babies! Why, 'twas only just now I heard Mrs. Simmons, next door, chattering out the back stoop to that baldheaded monkey of hers. "Mudder's ownny darlin' itty piggy-wiggy! Is he hoongry?

Den he sall hab one tacker for eaty. One nicey ticey itty bitty tacker." And then there's how some folks dress their babies. All smothered up in satin, and feathers, and laces; and furs, for all the world like a milliner's figger head. I declare to goodness that I sometimes feel a sort of pity for 'em, just as when I see an organ-grinder's money sewed up in a milingitary coat and trowsers with

a wooden sword by his side showing off to a grinning crowd in the streets; and which of the two is most laffable I'm sure it's hard to tell.

"Innocents," indeed! Jest as if they don't know the badness they're about, and don't mean to dew it! Why I've seen 'em kick, and screech, and bite, and scratch, and pull people's hair like young grizzlies; and to this day you can't convince me that Miss Jones's baby didn't mean it when the little wretch grabbed hold

of my new curls as I was purtendin' to kiss it afore Deacon Peabody (the week after poor, dear Miss Peabody departed this life, it was), and pull the hull of 'em right off afore his face, comb and all! If it hadn't a'been for *that* I might hev—but ahem! All that I can now say is that I'm truly re'jiced I'm not likely to be pestered out of my life with one of the ugly, dirty, good-for-nothin', little varmints. Of all the troubles and trials of this mortal state and vale of tears, deliver me from a *baby*!

[From the *Tarboro Southerner*, July 11, 1872]

SCRAPS.

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A miserable, wretched, old bachelor of **Tarboro** was puffing around a few days since, and among other sayings about the fairer portion of creation asserted, "After all, a woman's heart is the sweetest thing in the world—it's a perfect honey combe—full of sells."

He was immediately "went for" and has been complaining of the headache ever since.

It is not considered prudent to tell his name just now, for fear of further damages.

SOME CHICKENS.—A.B. Estes, of Granville county, shipped at **Ridgeway** on Tuesday last, five Chickens of the **Brahma** breed, that weighed 100 pounds.

[*Tarboro Southerner*, Feb. 8, 1872]

