

The Connector

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

Summer, 2005

Billie Jo Matthews & Peggy Strickland, Co-Editors

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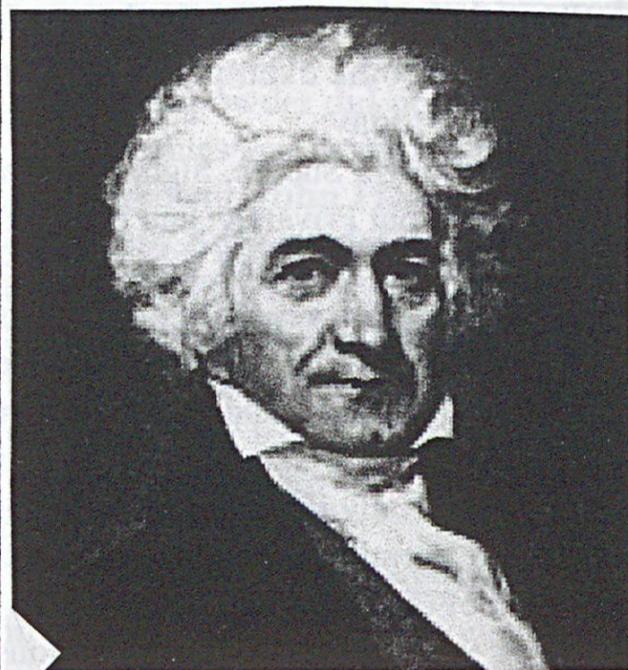
Napoleon Of The Turf

William Ransom Johnson, son of Marmaduke Johnson, was born at Warrenton, Warren Co., NC in 1782. According to the narrative accompanying a 2004 exhibition of equine memorabilia at Huntington Library in San Marino, CA, Johnson "played a bigger role in the development of the Thoroughbred in America than any other individual." He was America's first great horseman.

By the time he was 21 years old, Johnson was well known for his way with horses. During the racing seasons of 1807-08, he started horses in 63 races and won 61 of them. This earned him the title "Napoleon of the Turf."

William Johnson married Mary Evans, daughter of Dr. George Evans of Chesterfield Co, VA. The

young couple lived on a large plantation on the southern edge of Warren-



Wm. Johnson had thick white hair from an early age. He was described by his black jockey, Charles Stewart, "My master was the picture of a fine old gen'leman; he was a fair-looking man, with thick white hair, and eyes that just' snapped fire at you... "

ton with "the Halifax Stage Road running between his home and the town." It was here that the first race-track in Warrenton was laid out and maintained by William and his father. It ran a quarter mile from the gate of the Johnson house straight north. It was later extended into a three-quarter mile curve and was used for racing and training for many years.

One of the most famous horses associated with William Johnson was *Sir Archie*. [See "Sir Archie—Fastest Horse of His Time," *The Connector*, Spring 1999] Johnson watched three-year-old *Sir Archie* race in 1808. Although *Sir Archie* was suffering from distemper and lost his race, Johnson saw his potential and bought him on the spot, paying \$1500.

The next year, fully recovered, *Sir Archie* ran in 5 races. His last occurred

SEE NAPOLEON, PAGE 5

To be LET,

by the subscriber, for three years, nine months, or yearly. A TAVERN, in Halifax town, North Carolina, known by the name of the Crown Tavern, lying on the main street, ... the following improvements, viz. A large commodious house, with four rooms below and three above, one of which is made use of for a ball room, or mason's lodge, a good kitchen, stable, dairy, smoke house, and a good tradesman's shop, lying on the main street. The lots are well paled in, and a good garden to the said improvements. I have plenty of exceeding good house and kitchen furniture, which I would dispose of to the person inclining to rent the same, and

give a reasonable time of credit. The terms may be known by applying to the subscriber, living on the premises.

DANIEL LOVELL.

[*Virginia Gazette* 9/5/1766]

Fire Destroys Seven Stores.

Springhope [Nash Co, NC], Special. —Fire at 3 o'clock Friday morning destroyed the postoffice and seven store buildings in the heart of the town. The loss is about \$4,000. The buildings were all of wood and an eyesore to the town. No insurance was carried on the property.

[*The Enfield Progress*, 9/25/1908]

Herbert & Co.,

Dealers in

DRY GOODS, GROCERIES, BOOTS, SHOES, HATS, CAPS, READY-MADE CLOTHING AND GENERAL MERCHANDISE

BATTLEBORO, N.C.

We are now offering our stock at low prices, many goods for less than they can be bought North.

Parties wishing to buy, will do well to call on us.

Highest cash price paid for Cotton.

[*Battleboro Progress*, Jan. 2, 1880]

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.

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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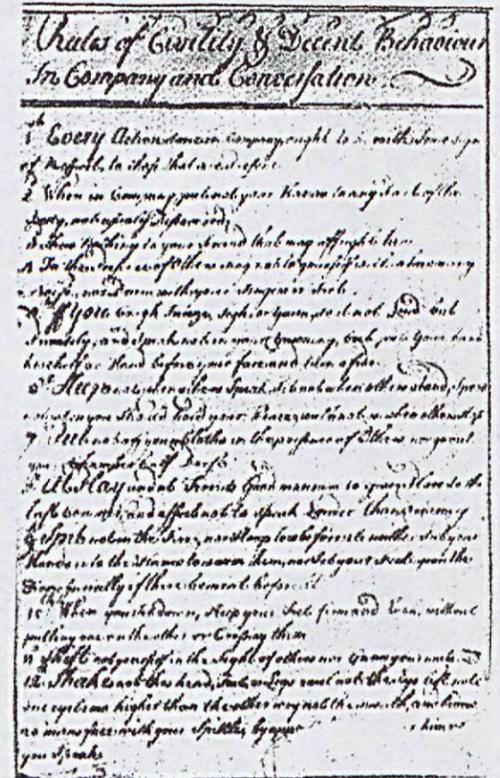
Mind Your Manners

Rules of Civility & Decent Behaviour In Company and Conversation, which originated in France in the 1600s, contained 110 rules of behavior which were

guidelines in the days of **George Washington**. When he was about 16, he copied them all into a book which remains with his papers in the **Library of Congress**.

Although the wording seems stilted today, it is obvious from Washington's life that these rules had a tremendous effect on his character. The following are some examples which are still applicable today:

1. If You Cough, Sneeze, Sigh, or Yawn, do it not Loud but Privately; and Speak not in your Yawning, but put Your handkerchief or Hand before your face and turn aside.
2. Spit not in the Fire, nor Stoop low before it neither Put your Hands into the Flames to warm them, nor Set your Feet upon the Fire especially if there be meat before it.
3. Kill no Vermin as Fleas, lice ticks &c in the Sight of Others, if you See any filth or thick Spittle put your foot Dexterously upon it if it be upon the Cloths of your Companions, Put it off privately, and if it be upon your own Cloths return Thanks to him who puts it off.
4. Being Set at meat Scratch not neither Spit Cough or blow your Nose except there's a Necessity for it.
5. Cleanse not your teeth with the Table Cloth Napkin Fork or Knife but if Others do it let it be done with a Pick Tooth.



From Geo. Washington's copy of
Rules of Civility & Decent Behavior...

IMPORTANT NOTICE!

Beginning in January, **Braswell Memorial Library** will offer a series of programs about **World War I**. In connection with that project, **Tar River Connections** and Traci Thompson, History/Genealogy Librarian, will be collecting World War I photographs. She hopes to build a collection that will be valuable to researchers in the future.

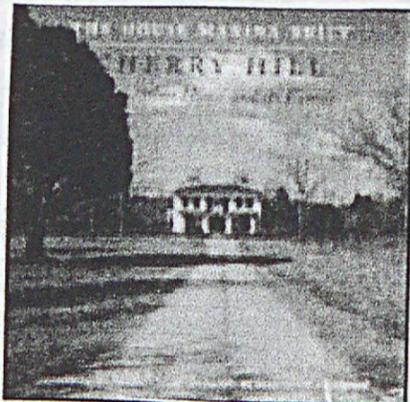
Please search your attic or other likely places, and if you have any photographs you would be willing to share, please contact Traci about them. She will copy and digitize them so they will be available on the computer.

Traci's e-mail address is: tthompson@braswell-library.org

Readers Choice Local Color



The House Marina Built: Cherry Hill, A Plantation House and its Family By Catherine W. Bisher – Photography, Elizabeth Matheson



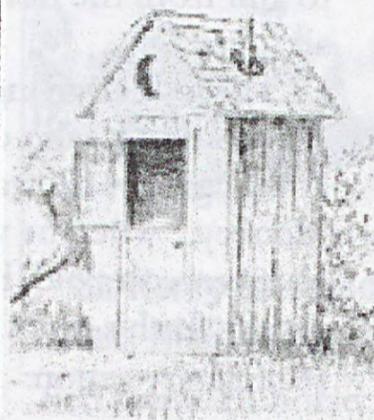
Warren County in eastern NC was noted for large plantations. The southeastern section encompassing Shocco Creek and Fishing Creek flourished with plantation society prior to the Civil War. This was due in part to tobacco being the money crop, and slave labor. In 1860 half of the county's population owned slaves.

Two families, the Williams and Alstons, were among the most prominent, and it seems most fitting that Mariana Priscilla Williams Alston (1810-1897) built the last of these plantation homes. What is most unusual is that Mariana was a middle-aged widow with 3 sons when she dared to tackle this feat. Her husband, George Washington Alston, died in 1849 at the age of 48.

Mariana was determined to carry out the plans to build a new home in spite of her husband's death. The 'winds of war' were evident, but this determined widow managed the plantation, and raised enough money to build her home while caring for her family. Mariana lived there until her death at age 87. She was a formidable southern

SEE LOCAL, PAGE 4

Waste Not, Want Not



During the latter part of the Civil War, the South was desperate for large supplies of saltpeter, which is combined with charcoal and sulfur to make gunpowder. However, saltpeter was difficult to come by. Early in the war, gunpowder was one of the things brought in by ships running the blockade. [See "Surrender of Fort Macon," *The Connector*, Spring 2004] However, as the war progressed, the Union managed to sink or capture many of the ships that ran the blockade, and that source of gunpowder did not suffice.

Manure piles and cave dirt, rich in bat guano, were two sources for the necessary ingredient. John Harrelson, an agent of the Confederate Ordinance and Mining Bureau, devised an unusual method of increasing the supply of saltpeter. Mr. Harrelson placed the following ad in the *Selma, AL Sentinel*:

"The ladies of Selma are respectfully requested to preserve the chamber lye collected about their premises for the purpose of making nitre. A barrel will be sent around daily to collect it."

These poems were soon penned by soldiers on both sides. The Southern version:

An appeal to John Harrelson

John Harrelson, John Harrelson, you are a wretched creature,
You've added to this war a new and awful feature,
You'd have us think while every man is bound to be a fighter,
The ladies, bless their pretty dears, should save their p— for nitre.

John Harrelson, John Harrelson, where did you get this notion,
To send your barrel around the town to gather up this lotion,
We thought the girls had work enough in making shirts and kissing,
But you have put the pretty dears to patriotic p—ing,

John Harrelson, John Harrelson, do pray invent a neater
And somewhat less immodest mode of making your saltpeter,
For 'tis an awful idea, John, gunpowdery and cranky,
That when a lady lifts her skirt, she's killing off a Yankee.

The Yankee version soon followed:

John Harrelson, John Harrelson, we've read in song and story,
How a women's tears through all the years have moistened fields of glory,
But never was it told before, how, 'mid such scenes of slaughter,
Your Southern beauties dried their tears and went to making water.

No wonder that your boys are brave, who couldn't be a fighter,
If every time he shot a gun he used his sweetheart's nitre?
And, vice-versa, what could make a Yankee soldier sadder,
Than dodging bullets fired by a pretty woman's bladder.

These poems were discovered by Professor E. B. Smith in the Francis Blair papers in the Library of Congress.

[Submitted by Hiram Perkinson, TRC member.]

[See "Peter Monkeys" on page 4]

Peter Monkeys

"To manufacture [gun] powder it takes half a pound of saltpeter, one-fourth pound of sulphur, and one-fourth pound of charcoal to make one pound of powder. Put all in a mortar and beat it up together and pour in water until it is thick dough, then grain and glaze, and you have **Confederate powder**."

During the **Civil War**, both armies needed huge supplies of gunpowder, or black powder, for their cannon and muskets. The South, isolated by the northern blockade, formed the **Confederate Mining and Nitre Bureau** to find sources of nitrate. One of the sources was cave dirt that contained thousands of years' accumulation of bat droppings, or guano.

The dirt from the cave was placed in large bins and water was poured slowly over the dirt. As the water ran through the dirt, it collected nitrate. The nitrate enriched water was then collected in troughs or buckets beneath the bins. Wood ashes were added to provide potassium. The water was allowed to evaporate leaving saltpeter.

The process was simple, but it required considerable manpower. Experiments on the dirt from **Sinnett Cave** in **West Virginia** showed that six pounds of cave dirt produced enough nitrate for one musket round. That made the process extremely labor intensive. It would not have been feasible had the need for the gunpowder not been so critical.

Saltpeter mining was done by men of military age until Gen. **Robert E. Lee** ordered that those men serve in the army. The use of slaves was suggested, but the Confederate Nitre Bureau eventually proposed that free blacks or boys too young for conscription be assigned the arduous task of digging in the caves. Then, if the operation was raided by Union forces, only the equipment would be lost, not the valuable manpower.

The boys engaged in saltpeter mining were called "Peter Monkeys," probably adapted from the term "Powder Monkeys" used for boys who carried powder from the magazine to the firing deck on ships.

The boys worked in the caves from dawn to dark. The only light was from candles or burning splinters of pitch. "The dust and dirt in the air often caused lung problems, and the



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weight of the bags often caused joint and back problems, and frequently hernias. Much of the movement was in confined spaces, and much of the distance to be traveled to and from the dirt site was bent over or by crawling on all fours."

The last surviving Confederate soldier in **Virginia**, **John Salling**, who died in 1959 at the age of 112, was a "Peter Monkey," when he was only fourteen years old. He received no pay for his work. He did not see military action.

[Sources: www.groups.msn.com/2ndUSCav/gunpowder.msnw; <http://www.milhistory.com>, "Confederate Boys and Peter Monkeys" by R. Lee Hadden; "Vanishing American," by A. G. Robertson, *Nat. Speleological Society News*, 1954, V 12.]



John Salling

LOCAL, CONT. FROM PAGE 3

lady with strength and determination.

Her home, **Cherry Hill**, still exists today and has been restored in all its glory. Family papers identify that the mansion was built in the Greek Revival-Italianate style by carpenter **John A. Waddell**, associate of **Jacob W. Holt**. Satisfied with his work Marina wrote, "I have no trouble about it. The Carpenter finds everything."

The Cherry Hill Historical Foundation, Inc. of Warrenton, NC is in charge of the restored plantation mansion "as a site for cultural events that serve the larger community". This delightful book may be purchased from the Preservation NC Store, 220 Fayetteville St Mall, Suite 300, P.O. Box 27644, Raleigh, NC 27611-7644. (\$22.42 + 7% sales tax) All profits go to the support of Cherry Hill and the concert series. Slave names connected with this family are listed in Appendix 3 of the book.

Hurricanes

Many Tar River area historical structures were damaged by **Hurricane Floyd** in 1999. They include **Elgin** in **Warren Co**, **St. Luke's AME Zion Church** in **Halifax Co**, **Laurel Mill** in **Franklin Co**, **Matthewson House** and **Bricks School** in **Edgecombe Co**.

Mr. Jay Barnes, author of the book "North Carolina's Hurricane History", will present a program by the same name at the library on Thursday, August 18 at 7:00 p.m.

Come one come all!

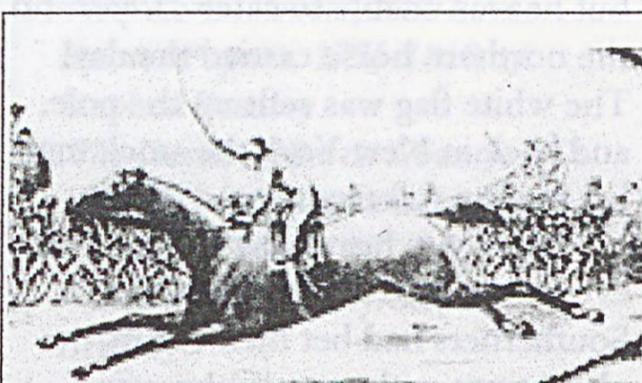
NAPOLEON, CONT. FROM P. 1 at Scotland Neck, Halifax Co, NC. Gen. Carney's colt *Blank*, was the only horse who would face him. Johnson had written to a friend; "I would match Sir Archie against any horse for \$5,000 or \$10,000, four mile heats, being satisfied that he is the best horse I have ever seen." *Sir Archie* won the race against *Blank*. This was the end of Sir Archie's racing career. After only 4 wins, no one was willing to challenge him. Johnson sold the champion to **William R. Davie** for an unheard of sum of \$5,000 and *Archie* spent the rest of his life fathering horses who would carry on the grand tradition of racing..

Move to Virginia

In 1817, Johnson moved from Warren Co. to **Oaklands** in Chesterfield Co., VA, the former home of his father-in-law. Over the gate to Oaklands was a sign that read, "There is nothing so good for the inside of a man as the outside of a horse."

In VA, Johnson settled down to train his two *Sir Archie* fillies, *Vanity* and *Reality*, his chief hopes for the spring season. It turned out to be a bad season for the Napoleon of the Turf. *Reality* lost to *Timoleon* on a muddy track after a week of rain. At the same track, *Vanity* slipped and fell, somersaulting and breaking her neck. After losing on the muddy track, *Realty*, became a champion, perhaps equal to Sir Archie according to Johnson. Nobody wanted to try their horses against *Realty* and other horses sired by *Sir Archie*.

In 1822, *American Eclipse* defeated an injured Virginia horse, *Sir Charles*, at the newly constructed **Union Course in Long Island, NY**. Angered by the cheering for *Eclipse* and dismayed by the loss by the southern horse, William Johnson challenged **Cornelius W. Van Ranst**, *American Eclipse's* owner, to a race between *Eclipse* and an unspeci-



Sir Henry as depicted on an 1823 scarf, NMR collection, Sarasota, NY.

fied southern horse. The race was to take place the following spring. The stakes were high—a \$20,000 purse to the first horse to win 2 four-mile heats. It was to be the first national sporting event in America.

During the fall and winter, Johnson and his partners scoured the south for horses capable of defeating *Eclipse*, and spent the winter training them. In May, 1823, Johnson and his horses made the trip north from **Petersburg, VA** to Long Island's Union Course. Hotels, taverns, and boarding houses were jammed.

Race Day

On May 27, 1823, there was great excitement at Union Course race-track, which was packed with an enormous crowd—more than 60,000 according to the estimates, at least 20,000 of whom had traveled from the south. It was the largest gathering ever to watch a sporting event. Congress had adjourned for the day and most of its members were in the crowd. Vice President **Daniel D. Tompkins**, future President **Andrew Jackson**, and former Vice President **Aaron Burr** were also in attendance.

On the day of the race, Johnson was ill—either too much drink or bad food—and was not able to attend. He had brought five horses with him to Union Course—four of them sired by *Sir Archie*, and the fifth his grandson. He was not required to name his entry until the last minute. From his bed, he made his choice—*Sir Henry*, a son of *Sir Archie* belonging to **Lemuel Long**.

Sir Henry's jockey was to be **John Walden**. Fans expected *Eclipse* to be ridden by **Samuel Purdy**, his usual jockey, but Purdy and Van Ranst had reportedly quarreled and **Billy Crafts** was chosen to take his place.

The crowd roared as the two horses were walked less than a quarter of a mile to the starting post. *Sir Henry*, a 4-year-old, carried 108 lbs. *American Eclipse*, a nine year old, was required to carry 126 pounds. The race would be timed by split-second chronometers specially imported for the event.

The *Richmond Enquirer* described the scene: "The hour of starting soon arrived, but such was the immense crowd upon the course in solid column, for near a quarter of [a] mile both right and left of the judges' box, that some minutes were taken up by the officers in clearing it." The crowd fell silent as they waited for the starting signal.

At the boom of the drum, the two contenders broke from the pole, *Sir Henry* setting "a killing pace," running away from *Eclipse*. They continued for the first mile, the second, with *Eclipse* trying to close the gape. On the third mile, Crafts began to strike *Eclipse* with his whip and dash in his spurs, trying to push *Eclipse* ahead. As it was later reported, "Crafts continued to make free use of the whip; his right hand in so doing was necessarily disengaged from the bridle, his arm often raised high in the air, his body thrown abroad, and his seat loose and unsteady; not having the strength to hold and gather his horse with one hand and at the same time keep his proper position; in order to acquire a greater purchase, he had thrown his body quite back to the cantle of the saddle, stuck his feet forward by way of bracing himself with the aid of the stirrups, and in this style he was belaboring his horse..."

NAPOLEON, CONT. ON P. 6

NAPOLEON, CONT. FROM P. 5

As the two horses thundered down the stretch, *Sir Henry* was leading by a length and a half. The badly cut *Eclipse* chased *Henry* into the final quarter, gaining only slightly as the final post drew near. *Sir Henry* was the winner, the first time *Eclipse* had ever been beaten. The time was 7:37, the fastest 4-mile heat ever run on an American track.

In order to relay the results of each heat to **New York City** as quickly as possible, a system of signals was arranged. If *Eclipse* won a heat, then a white flag would be run up atop a nearby bakery, but if the southern entry were to win a heat, a black flag would be flown. The sight of a black flag on Long Island induced panic in the city, and produced dire consequences on **Wall Street**, where the bottom fell out of the stock market. *Sir Henry* became the immediate favorite with odds of 3 to 1.

After a half hour rest, the horses went to the post for the second heat. Samuel Purdy replaced Billy Craft on *Eclipse*. For the first three miles, *Sir Henry* led, but at the start of the fourth mile, the northern horse passed on the inside, and drew away from *Sir Henry* to win by two lengths. An observer wrote: "...As they passed up the stretch, the shouting, clapping of hands, waving of handkerchiefs, long and loud applause sent forth by the *Eclipse* party exceeded all description; it seemed to roll along the track as the horses advanced, resembling the loud and reiterated shout of contending armies..."

For the third heat, the southern camp changed riders, putting **Arthur Taylor** on *Sir Henry*. Taylor was told to let *Eclipse* have the early lead, and save his own mount for the stretch drive. Both horses were tired, but Purdy managed to take and hold the lead, riding hard and straining *Sir Henry* to keep up. On the last turn, Taylor pushed *Henry* to gain the lead,

but he was unable to catch *Eclipse* and the northern horse carried the day! The white flag was sent up the pole, and back in New York the stock market made a full recovery.

There was heavy wagering on the event—over \$200,000—and some Southerners had bet their entire plantations without even knowing which horse Johnson would choose to run. Several Southerners, having lost their plantations, committed suicide on the spot, and the financial impact of the loss was felt for some time.

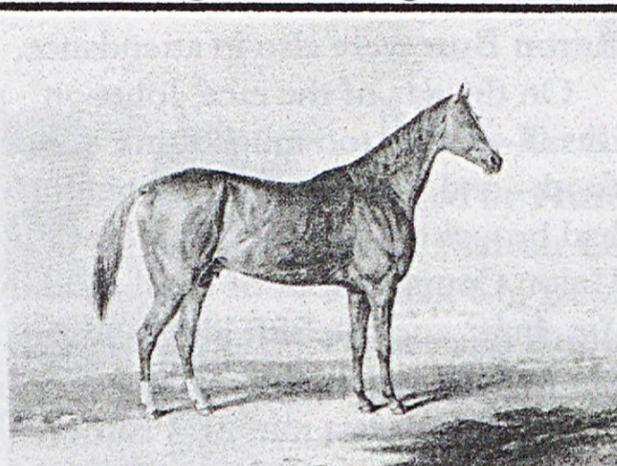
John Randolph bemoaned, "A plate of lobsters cost the South the championship of the turf."

The next day, Johnson had recovered from his indisposition. He wrote to **John C. Stevens**: "... I will run the horse *Henry* against the horse *Eclipse* at **Washington City** ... for any sum from twenty to fifty thousand dollars" His offer was refused, however, and *Eclipse* did not race again. Johnson later became the owner of *Eclipse* and used him in his southern breeding program.

Boston challenges Fashion

A second great horse race between northern and southern breeders took place at the Union Course in 1842. Johnson challenged **James Long** of Washington to run his mare, **Fashion**, four-mile heats against Johnson's horse, **Boston**, for \$20,000 a side.

Boston was foaled in **Henrico Co, VA**. One night at a card game in



Boston, Engraving done c. 1840-50.
www.huntington.org/

Boston, Mass, a **Richmond** attorney, **John Wickham**, unable to pay his gaming debts, gave **Nathaniel Rives** a colt which Rives named *Boston* for the game in which he had beaten Wickham. The unruly colt was soon acquired and trained by Johnson. *Boston* became one of the most famous racehorses of his day. Even today his career of 45 starts and 40 wins, with earnings of \$51,700, is impressive.

On the day of the highly publicized match between *Fashion* and *Boston*, there was a crowd of between fifty and seventy thousand people including 40 U.S. Congressmen. Surprisingly, *Fashion* won the race in two heats, the first in a record time of 7:32 1/2.

The two losses at Union Course were among the few suffered by William Ransom Johnson, Napoleon of the Turf, during his 49 year career. Over the years, horses owned and trained by William Johnson, often the offspring of *Sir Archie*, continued to dominate in racing, in the north and in the south.

William Ransom Johnson died February 10, 1849 at **Mobile AL**. He was inducted into the National Museum of Racing's Trainer Hall of Fame in **Saratoga Springs, NY** in 1989 where he was credited with training 20 champions.

[Sources: *Life and Times of Sir Archie*, by Elizabeth Blanchard and Manly Wade Welman; "The North-South Races" by Nancy Struna, *Journal of Sport History*, Summer, 1981; *Sketches of Old Warrenton* by Lizzie Montgomery; "International Match Racing," *The Legacy of the Horse*, International Museum of the Horse, Lexington, KY; *Racing in America 1844-1865*, John Harvey, 1944; <http://www.earlyrepublic.net/octo/octo-07.htm>; Speech to the NC Thoroughbred Breeders Assn, March 2002, by William Preston Mangum II]

Coming in *The Connector*, Fall 2005, the story of Charles Stewart, Johnson's black jockey.

Braswell Memorial Library

Local History Collection Acquisitions

BY TRACI THOMPSON



Our collection of Stephen Bradley's books is now complete. Stop by and browse! Also, special thanks again to Mr. William Bennett, TRC member, who donated many of our new titles.

Note: many of these titles are multi-volume sets.

1. *Records of Estates, Halifax County, NC: 1868-1909* by Stephen Bradley and David Gammon
2. *Halifax County, NC Court Minutes: 1784-1797* by Stephen Bradley
3. *The Deeds of Halifax County, NC: 1758-1817* by Stephen Bradley
4. *Hyde County, NC County Court Minutes: 1756-1797* by Weynette Parks Haun
5. *Chowan County, NC Court Minutes: 1749-1754* by Weynette Parks Haun
6. *Webb Family Tree* by Josephine Webb
7. *Craven County, NC: Deeds, Wills, Inventories, 1737-1812* by Stephen Bradley
8. *Franklin County, NC Loose Estates Papers: 1777-1825* by Stephen Bradley
9. *Early Records of NC From the Secretary of State Papers: 1665-1798* by Stephen Bradley
(This is a wonderful series containing early wills, administrations, deeds, inventories, court records, estate papers, etc. Very useful if your ancestors were in this state in the early 18th century, as such records of that era were filed in the Secretary of State papers and not the county courthouses. Bradley's abstracts are more detailed than other, similar publications.)
10. *The Deeds of Sussex County, Virginia, 1779-1792* by Stephen Bradley
11. *New Bern District, NC: Loose Estates Papers, 1775-1810* by Stephen Bradley
12. *The Deeds of Bertie County, NC: 1757-1794* by Stephen Bradley
13. *Franklin County, NC Original Wills: 1780-1900* by Stephen Bradley
14. *Registration of Slaves to Work in the Great Dismal Swamp, Gates County, NC: 1847-1861* by Raymond Parker Fouts
15. *Processioner's Records: Chowan County, NC, 1755-1808* by Raymond Parker Fouts
16. *The 1800 and 1810 Federal Censuses, Franklin County, NC* by Stephen Bradley
17. *The 1850 Federal Census, Franklin County, NC* by Stephen Bradley
18. *Franklin County, NC Tax Lists, 1785-1810* by Stephen Bradley
19. *Franklin County, NC Marriage Bonds, 1779-1868* by Stephen Bradley
20. *NC Home Guard Examinations, 1863-1864* by Stephen Bradley
21. *NC Militia and Home Guard Records* by Stephen Bradley
(If you have an ancestor who served in the Civil War, but you can't find him as a member of the regular state troops, try these sources - he might have served in the Home Guard, due to health problems or some other reason.)
22. *The 1902-1908 Voter Registration Lists, Franklin County, NC* by Stephen Bradley
23. *The 1830 Federal Census, Franklin County, NC* by Stephen Bradley
24. *The 1902 Voter Registration Lists, Halifax County, NC* by Stephen Bradley
25. *The 1902-1908 Voter Registration Lists, Wilson County, NC* by Stephen Bradley
26. *Franklin County, NC Loose Estates Papers: 1777-1825* by Stephen Bradley
27. *Edenton District, NC Loose Estates Papers: 1756-1806* by Stephen Bradley
28. *Northampton County, NC 1850 Census* by Stephen Bradley
29. *Edgecombe County, NC Appointments of Administrators, Executors, and Guardians, 1868-1915* by Stephen Bradley
30. *Tyrrell County, NC Estate Records, 1734-1800* by Stephen Bradley
31. *The Wills of Tyrrell County, NC: 1729-1900* by Stephen Bradley
32. *The 1850 Federal Census, Bertie County, NC* by Stephen Bradley
33. *The Deeds of Northampton County, NC: 1759-1787* by Stephen Bradley
34. *Halifax County, NC Voters and Scholars, 1839-1862* by Stephen Bradley
35. *Surry County, VA Court Records: 1652-1751* by Weynette Parks Haun
36. *Surry County, NC Wills, 1771-1827* by Jo White Linn
37. *Rowan County, NC Tax Lists, 1757-1800* by Jo White Linn
38. *Abstracts of the Minutes of the Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, Rowan County, NC: 1753-1789* by Jo White Linn
39. *The 1850 Census of Rowan County, NC* by Jo White Linn
40. *Abstracts of the Deeds of Rowan County, NC: 1753-1785* by Jo White Linn
41. *Abstracts of Wills and Estates of Rowan County, NC: 1753-1805* by Jo White Linn
42. *Orange County, NC County Court Minutes: 1752-1793* by Weynette Parks Haun
43. *Johnston County, NC Abstracts: Deed Books, 1759-1799* by Weynette Parks Haun
44. *NC Court of Claims, Record of Patents Granted (Secretary of State's Papers), 1740-1775* by Weynette Parks Haun
45. *Johnston County, NC Land Warrants, Surveys, & Miscellaneous Land Papers, 1737-1899* by Weynette Parks Haun
46. *Granville County, NC Tax Lists, 1760-1764* by Stephen Bradley

CONFEDERATE VETERANS.

THEY HAVE A PLEAS- ANT TIME IN 1889.

The wearers of the gray were out in very full numbers today.

There were not as many as people expected. This is due to the fact that the soldiers are not here. It is probable that not more than 700 men enlisted from this county, if so many. Whatever this number was, hundreds have passed over the "great divide." The SOUTHERNER thinks that only 400 or 500 of the heroes of '65 are with us now.

As the eastern horizon blushed at the approach of the god of day, **George Williams** run up the Stars and Stripes over the **Edgecombe Guards Armory**. Then he hung out of every window other banners. One was tattered and torn with age and service.

It was a flag presented to the Mexican volunteers by the ladies of **Tarboro** forty years ago. Miss **Sarah Howard** made the presentation speech.

It is of blue; in the centre is an eagle in gilt; on a scroll above and

below are "Presented by the ladies." "Go our hearts are with you."

The reverse side is the same with this change in the motto: "**Edgecombe Volunteers.**" "Go, our hearts are with you."

Many arrived early. The promptness taught a quarter of a century ago is with the soldier yet. He will not be late at roll call.

The first man the reporter beheld this morning when he made his rounds was Lieutenant **Flemming**, who was the first man in the county to volunteer for the war.

As a souvenir the SOUTHERNER presented each veteran with a strip of ribbon, on which was printed "1889," "Veterans Reunion," "August 15th," "Compliments of the SOUTHERNER."

In honor of the day the court adjourned after a brief session till half past three o'clock.

At 10 o'clock the Edgecombe Guards who had met to do honor to the occasion with colors flying and drums beating marched for the fair grounds, then without order, but orderly, the veterans followed.

At the Fair grounds the meeting was called to order in the grand stand. Four fifths of the seats were filled.

Chairman **Williams** called the meeting to order and introduced **Col. Jno. L. Bridgers**, to welcome them. He did it well. He praised the soldiers and paid a glowing tribute to the

North Carolina soldiers, more of whom surrendered at **Appomattox** than any other State.

When he spoke of **Henry L. Wyatt** as being the first man killed, Lieut. **Fleming** corrected the speaker by informing him that the first man killed was from somewhere about **Marlboro**.

The SOUTHERNER when an opportunity presents itself will get the Lieutenant to go into detail about this historical discovery.

The speaker felicitously lauded the soldiers of Edgecombe. He was frequently and loudly applauded.

V.B. Sharpe responded by introducing **H.C. Bourne**, who pleasantly reproved Mr. **Bridgers** for calling him a Veteran. After a little pleasantry, he then paid a glowing tribute to the **Confederate** soldiers. He again earned the right to be styled "the silver tongued" orator.

A letter of regret from **Col. L.D. Stark** and **Col. T.M. Parker**, of **Norfolk**, was read. Business engagements prevented their attendance. **Col. Parker's** will be published.

Gen. W.R. Cox was introduced, and spoke for ten or fifteen minutes. Of course his theme was the soldier, but he was eloquent over it. It was with anecdote. It waxed a very good speech, and was much appreciated.

[VETS, CONT. ON PAGE 9]



Veterans on Town Common, Tarboro, ca. 1910. Photo by S.R. Alley [See "Alley & Winstead,..." *The Connector*, Spring 2005]

[VETS, CONT. FROM PAGE 8]

The crowd was much larger than anyone expected. It was estimated variously from 500 to 800.

The dinner was excellent. Theophilus Pitt is the best caterer in the 96 counties.

In the afternoon the Edgecombe Guards did some drilling and firing, and were much complimented by those who had seen real war.

S.R. Alley was out and took a photograph of the vets drawn up in line on the race track.

The Tarboro brass band furnished music for the occasion.

[Daily Southerner, Tarboro, NC, August 15, 1889]

THE CALLINACEOUS ENCOUNTER AT ROCKY MOUNT.

Full Report of the fight—Mason Scores Nine; Tisdale, Three.

Thursday last ended the big cocking main at Rocky Mount between John Tisdale, of Nash, and J.W. Mason, of Edgecombe. ... Early on Thursday the field of battle was alive with the lovers of this sort of sport. About 10 A.M. the battle commenced. Betting soon began to run high. It was interesting to a looker-on to see with what eager interest the friends of each side shouted and cheered as they saw an extra "pass" made by their favorite at his adversary.

These cocks are mostly of the Nick Arrington stock. J.G. Arrington, Esq., son of the



Pitt County Native Dies in Mexico

Shem (Shim, Shinn) Tyson, born 13 Mar 1823 in Pitt County, NC, served in the Mexican War and died in Saltillo, Mexico on 8 Oct 1847. The Company Muster Roll on the left describes Tyson as being 5'10" with a florid complexion, blue eyes and having dark hair. The Company Muster Roll on the right shows that he died of chronic diarrhea.

[Submitted by Tyson Ashlock, TRC member. The National Archives records for Tyson are in the files at Braswell Memorial Library, Rocky Mount, NC.]

Regimental Descriptive Book form for Shem Tyson, Co. B, 1 Reg't N. C. Vols. (Mexican War). Includes fields for Age (23), height (5 feet 10 inches), complexion (florid), eyes (blue), hair (dark), where born (Pitt, NC), occupation (farmer), and enlistment date (Jan 30, 1847).

Company Muster Roll form for Shem Tyson, Co. B, 1 Reg't North Carolina Vols. (Mexican War). Includes fields for date (Sept 9 Oct, 1847), stoppage (\$100), and remarks (Died at Saltillo Oct 8, 1847).

late Nick Arrington, is now raising the pure stock for which he obtained the medal at the Centennial. His were the best on exhibition. We never saw more beautiful birds than were shown by both sides in this contest. John Tisdale has had an experience of over thirty years with game chickens and when he enters a cock you may depend on his being a good one. J.W. Mason, though a young man, handles a game cock like a veteran. Over a

thousand dollars changed hands during the three days' main.

On Wednesday an exciting dog fight took place in the cock-pit between Billy Osborn's dog "Billy" and Louis Hines' (col'd) "Ratler." The latter whipped.



[Tarboro Southerner, Jan. 22, 1880]

TARBORO SOUTHERNER Editor, Dossey Battle

Dossey Battle assumed the editorial reins of the *Tarboro Southerner* in

September 1875. While he continued in this position for only six years, he left a legacy that was well recognized at that time. He was elected president of the NC Press Association 3 times.

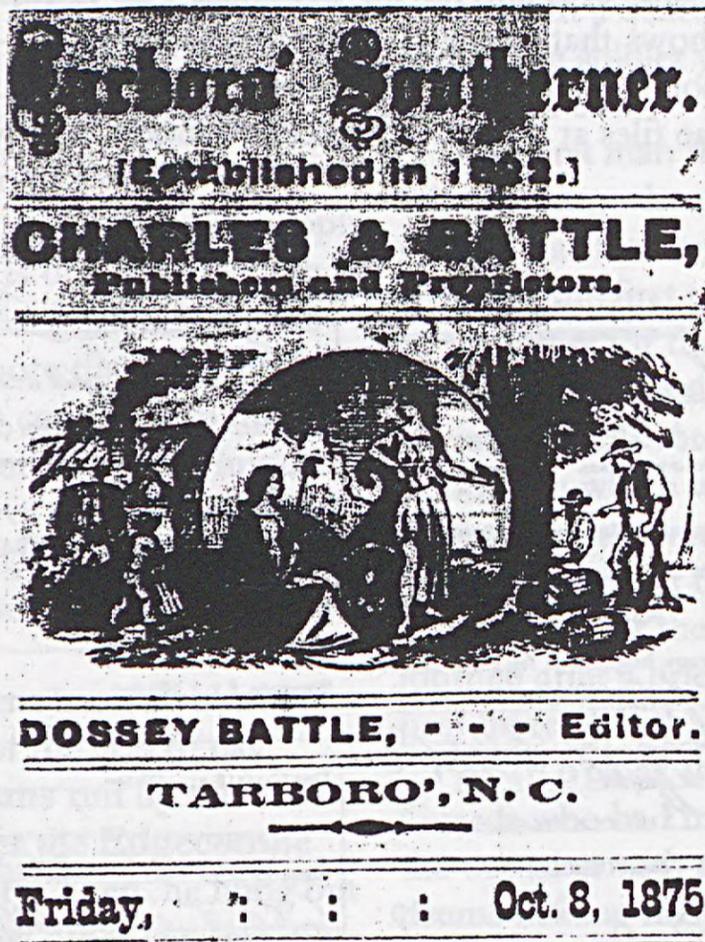
From the beginning, Battle's goal was to keep his readers abreast of the news of the local area:

Edgecombe, Nash, Pitt, Martin, Wilson, Franklin and Beaufort Counties. One of his strategies was to pay for contributed stories. The following is his published pay scale: "Murder, 20 cents; assault with razor, 15 cents; assault with other deadly weapons, 10 cents; rape, 20 cents; assault with intent, 15 cents; arson and burglary, 15 cents; accidents, with death ensuing, 20 cents; accidents otherwise, 10 cents; big snake stories, 32½ cents; big rat stories, 32½ cents; all other marvels, 10 cents." Take particular note of the stories that paid the highest premium!

In his first editorial Battle noted: "It has been impiously observed that no man can be a Christian and edit a secular newspaper, tame a shrew, or be an orderly sergeant for a military company. I see no reason for this if the editor should adopt the motto,

'Be Sure You Are Right; Then Go Ahead'; there can be no necessity for falling by the wayside."

The new editor was well received by his fellow editors. The *Rocky Mount Mail* said: "... As a writer he



is most graceful, spicy and pungent, bold, fearless and intelligent. He can make a patron fighting mad, and then pat him on the shoulder and talk so soothingly and pleasantly, that he will regret having taken offense at anything he could say or do. ..." The *Petersburg Index-Appeal* wrote: "... We prophesy that such a poignant

pen will soon leave its shining trail along the track of North Carolina politics ..."

The *Daily Charlotte Observer* noted; "...no novice to the ink slinging business ... facile and brilliant writer ... We must not omit the fact that while in the trenches around **Petersburg [VA]**, Mr. Battle wrote a thrilling romance entitled, 'The Scarlet Scavenger or the secret Son of a Gun,' which, unfortunately, was never published. ..."

Battle continued as editor of *SOUTHERNER* until Dec. 1881 when he sold his interest in the paper to **Frank Powell**.

Early Life

Dossey Battle was born in **Rocky Mount** in 1842, the son of **Benjamin Dossey Battle** and the grandson of **Joel Battle**. He left the Universi-

CONNECTOR

ty of NC in 1861 at age 18 and enlisted in the NC Volunteers. He served through the Civil War and became an aide-de-camp to **Gen. Wm. Gaston Lewis**. [See "General Wounded..." *The Connector*, Spring 2005]

After the war, Battle read law under his uncle, **Judge William R. Battle**. He practiced law in Rocky Mount before joining *The Southerner*..

Mary Clark Bell Battle

Battle and **Mary Clark Bell**, b. 12/15/1849 and daughter of **Joseph Nash Bell** and **Ann Elizabeth Alexander**, were married in **Washington, NC** on Sept. 28, 1876.

In 1873, Mary Bell graduated from **Cooper Union Art School** in **New York City**. *

The couple had 3 children who survived infancy: **Dossey Battle II**, **Helene Battle Willingham** and **Richard Battle**.

Mary Bell Battle died in 1929 and her obituary mentions her "many friends in North Carolina and the South where she was well known." It has been said that, while Dossey was an editor and an attorney, Mary was proficient portrait painter.

After the SOUTHERNER

After leaving the *Southerner*, Battle returned to his first love, the practice of law.

He was elected judge of the eastern Criminal District of NC in 1896. His district was wide-spread including **Mecklenburg, Robeson, New Hanover, Wilson, Craven, Halifax, Edgecombe** and **Nash counties**.

Dossey Battle died 3/ 28/1900.

[Sources: "Dossey Battle, Attorney ..." by B.M. Bass, Jr., *Rocky Mount Evening Telegram*, March 19, 1967; *The Battle Book* by Herbert B. Battle, 1930]

Dossey Battle, Editor

[From the *Tarboro Southerner*]

RELIGION.—

City readers, you don't know anything about it. Your conventional bosom has never palpitated with half the subdued ecstasies of the country church goer. He rises with the Sabbath sun, devotes half-hour to rubbing and polishing the coat of his plow horse. Then he indulges in a shave. The last mite of dust and defilement is studiously brushed from his Sunday-go-to-meeting suit. There is not tardiness here. Unlike his city cousin, he waits not the second bell.

For every five who enter upon the Lenten season with humility, four others do so with a headache.



Women & Matrimony.—

One handsome girl in a drygoods store will make every man in town feel like buying his wife a new dress.

Matrimony is raging in some parts of the state. So are measles and hog cholera.

LIFE IN GENERAL.—

Henry Crenshaw's 42-pound possum contained grease enough to soak an acre of taters and still leave enough to make heartburn for every male and female resident of Tarboro.

Trouble is like dogs. The smaller they are, the more annoying.

To avoid colds in the spring, stick to your flannels until they stick to you.

To prevent your nose from bleeding, keep it out of other people's business.

Farming.—

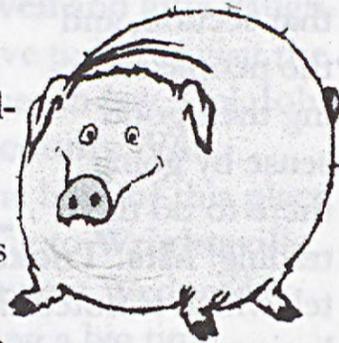
Cotton once was called the king
And produced the Georgia crack-
er.

But now we've got a better thing
The glorious bright tobacco.

Judge Watts'

1,600-pound pig will be at the **Weldon** Fair. If you pinched his tail it takes five minutes for the sensation to be conveyed to his nerve center.

"He's a baby," the judge said. It has been wondered how the judge finds law and lard consistent.



AN XMAS PRESENT.—

We have been often called amiable, but never wise. Well, we have not been called wise yet, but the thing was broadly intimated when **Mrs. J. W. Lloyd** presented the proprietors of the *SOUTHERNER* with a huge owl.

We bow with becoming modesty, and thank Mrs. L. for the compliment. But she will please send us a recipe how to manage the varmint. He won't set type, but will set still all day, and indulges in making 'pi' at night. He now and then utters in a faint whisper, something like, "who, who, who are ye!" One of these gentle notes uttered in our office scared a mule off the bridge a quarter mile distant, and frightened away fourteen delinquent subscribers with "back pay" in their pockets. He has swallowed our most expert and vigorous scissors, taking them for a lizard, and clawed up a new pile of exchanges. As Pyrrhus said of the Romans, a few such victories and we are undone. He now pines and moans under a cabbage in the back garden.

THE COLD SNAP—SUFFERING AND JUDGE HOWARD'S PHILANTHROPY.—

The suffering reported all over the country, from **Maine** to **Mexico**, from the biting cold, hail and snow storm visited the poor of **Tarboro** heavily and distressingly. A considerable proportion of laborers have no regular employment, but depend on odd jobs to keep the wolf from their doors. The snow on the ground kept them out of employment until they were out of food, wood and money. We heard of many instances of women and children (colored) about literally freezing. They were without wood and the means of buying any. Southern houses are not constructed to meet the requirements of zero weather. Six stick loads of wood jumped from fifty cents to a dollar and scarce at that. At this juncture, **Judge Howard**, as large hearted a philanthropist as exists in **America**, put four double team wagons to hauling wood for the poor and delivering it at their doors gratuitously, thus saving life and suffering of many shivering wretches. Judge Howard is of the exalted sort of alms givers, who never let their left hand know what their right doeth, and we learned of this through his grateful beneficiaries. Verily he should have his reward.



PRESERVED PAIRS.—

Like the measles, marrying breaks out here and there, out of all sort of tune with rhyme or reason. Unlike the wind, you can calculate pretty safely whence it cometh and whither it goeth; but why it should break out all at once, and about in spots, is unknown to all things save the "lucky-bone" of the goose.

On Wednesday evening, September 3rd, Mr. **L. Vinson, Jr.**, and Miss **Dora Garrett**, daughter of **F.M. Garrett**, M.D., were married in the Episcopal church at **Ringwood**, [**Halifax Co, NC**] Rev. **A.S. Smith** officiating.

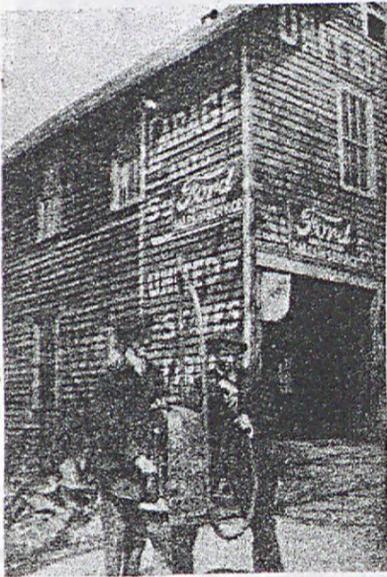
BATTLE, CONT. ON PAGE 14]

Franklinton Franklin Co., NC

We confess to real pleasure at the improvement of this place. Most of our towns

are going ahead, and Franklinton is behind none of them. Surrounded by one of the finest sections in the State, and containing some of the best people in it, clever, hospitable, and energetic,

there is no reason why she should not grow and that rapidly. There are several general merchandizing stores—Messrs Henley and Ward, W. S. Mallory, H. S. Furman, Thomas and Scott, Henry Sherrod, I. G. Stanton, W.H. Mitchell, W.H. and J.S. Joyner, J.P. Massenberg, and P.S. Long. There are two others, whose names we can't call. Dr. J.B. Clifton has a fine drug store there, under the management of Capt. Craven Williams, which we are gratified to know is doing very well. Our young friends Joseph A. and William Kearney are building a large and convenient store, which they will open soon. Mr. H.S. Furman contemplates re-arranging and enlarging his store, to accommodate his increasing business. Messrs. Henley and Ward have already much enlarged their store. Mr. Balley Williamson has a fine tannery in successful operation. There are several fine grist and flour mills near there. Tobacco factories are quite numerous about and near Franklinton, up towards and in the Granville section, where an article



Franklinton Armory after conversion to garage.

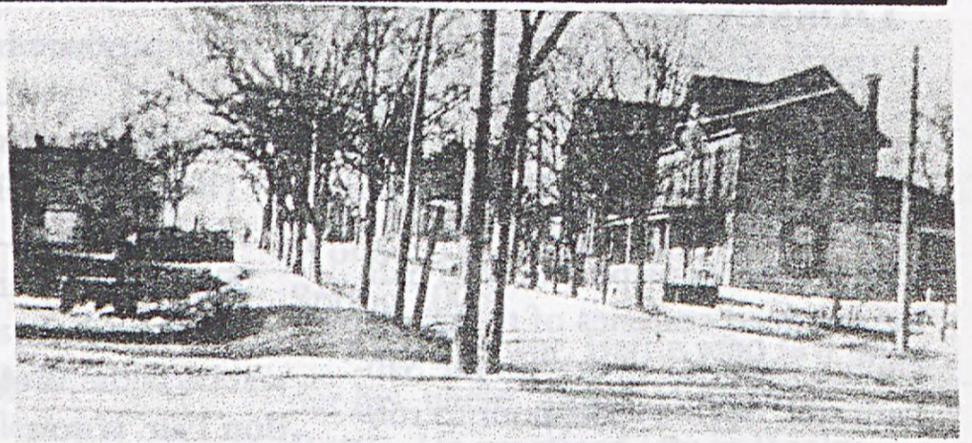
equal to the best is raised. This is quite a source of revenue to Franklinton, it being the shipping point for all that section, and the people showing their good sense by going there to do their

trading. Mrs. Tucker keeps the hotel, which is noted far beyond the limits of our State for its superior management. Every where we go, we hear of this popular hotel, and its excellent manageress. We know that all that can be said of it is richly deserved. There are two churches, the Methodist and Baptist. Services in both regularly, we believe. Rev. Paul J. Carraway is pastor of the first, and is a most popular and excellent minister. We have failed to learn the pastor of the Baptist church. Maj. B.F. Bullcock Jr., has his law office here. Doctors B.F. Green, J.H. Moss, and --- Winston are the practicing physicians.



Franklin Co. Jail

we are surprised that her citizens have not held out inducements for tobaccoists to manufacture tobacco in the town instead of up in the country. Backed up by Franklin county, as a cotton county, and Granville as a tobacco section, with several cotton and tobacco factories in the town Franklinton would become one of the most important places in the State. It is already the shipping point for both of these sections. Now we suggest to the business men of that



Mason Street, from Main Street

place, and they are behind none in shrewd business tact, to build houses suitable for tobacco factories, and convert Capt. Williams' grist mill into a cotton factory, and in a very few years their thriving little town will be five hundred to a thousand per cent better off and wealthier than at present. The way is clear for Franklinton to become an extensive place, if she will.

[Franklin Courier, April 12, 1872]



Don't Use It Up!

Joel Battle who built the cotton mills at Rocky Mount, NC in 1818 left a large family. The entire interest was eventually acquired by his sons, William H. Battle, Benj. Dossey Battle, and Columbus C. Battle.

One family anecdote about the estate survived. The grist mill adjacent to the cotton mill is said to have been allotted to Laura Battle, later Mrs. Charles Phillips, who was then still a child. One morning she was found in tears and upon being questioned replied that so many people were using her mill they would wear it out before she could grow up and enjoy it.



[Battle Book by Herbert Bemerton Battle, 1930, p. 179]

All About Whitakers

Nash & Edgecombe Co, NC



Mr. J.R.

Bradley is quite sick with fever.

Dr. W.H.

Whitehead, of Battleboro and

Dr. J.C. Braswell, of this

place are attending him. His son, Robert, who has been sick is well again.

Mrs. D.W. Bullock and baby, will leave in a few days for Buffalo Springs.

Miss Mattie Garrett formerly of this place, but now of Rocky Mount, [Warren Co] where she had gone to spend the summer, her health being bad. Her sisters, Miss Lula Garrett and Mrs. S.P. Hilliard are with her.

Our much beloved Christian gentleman, the Rev. Mr. Callahan, Pastor of the M.E. church of this

place, left for Battleboro today to assist the pastor of that place in a protracted meeting. If good preaching is required to cause the ungodly to forsake their ways, the meeting will certainly be a grand success.

W.T. Braswell and little daughter, Maggie, leave today to visit the family of his father-in-law, Col. John P—, of Sussex county, Va.

Several of the boys of this place contemplate going to Wrightsville on the excursion next Wednesday. They are expecting a big time.

V.W. Lane left Monday for Richmond in the interest of his large lumber business. He says there is the biggest boom in lumber now that has been in many years.

Mr. Land is the largest peanut raiser in Edgecombe. he reports the crop poor, having a large vine but not fruiting well.

I was shown a few days ago some fine tobacco raised and recently cured on Dr. Walter Brodie's Rocky Point farm in Nash, by his manager, Joseph Peel. he has twenty-five acres planted in tobacco this year, and expects a handsome return. He is run-

ning four or five barns, curing it, and is making beautiful cures, as are all of his neighbors.

J.M. Cutchin has a very sick child.

J.C. Flanner, of Halifax county, will soon erect here, a gin house, with capacity for all the cotton which may be brought him. He also speaks of adding a rim and spoke factory.

W.S. Knight is anxiously waiting for the first bale of new cotton.

It is reported here that all the federal appointments made in this section were upon the recommendation of Gen. L.G. Estese, and that all of them will have to go like he did. I very much hope, and the feeling is shared by our entire community, that this post office will be made an exception. [The fact that Gen. Estese secured an appointment will not cause a removal. Ed.]

I am informed that E.B. Hilliard, near Gold Rock [Nash Co.], has three barns of tobacco for which he was offered \$1200.

Mrs. M. W. Edmonds returned last week from a visit to her mother. [Tarboro Southerner, Aug. 22, 1889]

DEATH OF H. H. PERRY

A letter received by Mrs. L. H. Massenburg from Wm. E. Massenburg gives the sad intelligence of the death on the 14th Inst. of Hugh H. Perry of Harrison county, Texas.

Mr. Perry was a native of Franklin and has many relatives now living in this county. When he was quite young, his father, Levin Perry, moved with the family to Texas, but the war found Hugh at school in this State, and though only seventeen years of age he entered the army and was at the first battle fought at Big Bethel. He afterwards became a Lieutenant in company B. of the 47th Regiment and there was no braver or truer soldier in the Confederate Army than this soldier boy. He was greatly beloved in the Regiment and those of his comrades who survive will receive with sad hearts the tidings of his death. In that fearful charge on Cemetery Heights, at Gettysburg, on the 3rd day of July 1863, when within about seventy-five yards of the famous Rock Wall, he was severely wounded in the knee, but he

escaped capture and was brought to the home of his uncle, J. J. Davis, in this village, where he suffered intensely from his wounds for many months. Though disabled and discharged from military duty, when Sherman's army invaded North Carolina, he, with a number of others, procured horses and tendered their services to Gen'l. Jos. E. Johnson, in March 1865, while the Confederate Army was in Johnston county. It is believed that these were the very last volunteers who, of their own accord, entered the army.

In 1866 he married Mary C. Massenburg of this county. He leaves a wife and five children to mourn the loss of a devoted husband and father. Kind and affectionate, true and faithful, brave and generous, but higher and above all, a Christian, with faith firmly anchored on the "Rock of Ages," he has passed from earth to a brighter world. May the Heavenly Father bless his bereaved wife and children and give them strength to bear their great loss.

[Franklin Times, July 24, 1879 - Page 2, Column 3. Submitted by Janet Sadowski, TRC member.]

Dossey Battle Attorney

FROM *NONNULA*
BY JOSEPH CHESHIRE



My old friend and kinsman, **Dossey Battle**, at one time a judge in one of the criminal courts of the State, practised Law for a number of years in **Tarborough [Edgecombe Co., NC]**, where I was also a young lawyer. He was a man of considerable ability and had a fine vein of humor.

He was applied to by a Negro to defend him in an indictment for stealing a sheep. The Negro had a foolish, idiotic manner and appeared to be but half-witted. As a matter of fact he was not at all a fool, and perhaps he purposely exaggerated his peculiar manner. He had belonged before 1865 to a member of the Battle family, and he was well known to Dossey Battle.

There seemed to be a plain case against the Negro, and Mr. Battle told him that a lawyer could do nothing for him. "But," said he, "if you will pay me a fee of ten dollars, I will advise you how you may get off when

you are tried." The fellow said he had not so much money, but that if Mr. Battle would give him such advice as would enable him to escape conviction, he would certainly raise the money somehow and pay him. This he affirmed with great protestations of good faith.

There upon he received the following advice and instructions.

"When they call you up in court,"

said the lawyer,

"they

will tell you

to stand up

and hold up

your right

hand. Then

they will

read some-

thing to you

and ask you,

if you are

'Guilty or not Guilty.' When they do

this and tell you to answer, you must

bleat like a sheep—'Baa-Baa.' Just

stick to that. Don't say anything but

'Baa-Baa.' They will threaten you.

Perhaps they may put you in gaol for

a few days. But do not say another

word, but 'Baa-Baa.' Stick to that, and

I believe it will get you off."

With this plan of defense he dis-



missed his sable client and left him to conduct his own case.

The Negro took the sage advice of his counsel learned in the law.

When arraigned, and called on to

plead, his only reply was "Baa! Baa!"

The courthouse was crowded with

spectators, who laughed and could

hardly be restrained, as the combined

efforts of the solicitor and the judge

failed to elicit any other reply than

"Baa! Baa!"

Finally the judge ordered the sher-

iff to remove the prisoner and turn

him loose. "This Court has no time to

waste upon fools and idiots, who

have not enough sense to answer a

question."

As the Negro passed by Mr.

Battle's office after the sheriff had re-

leased him, Mr. Battle called him in

and congratulated him on the success

of his defense. "Now," he asked,

"where is my ten dollars? Remember

your promise." The Negro looked

stupidly at him and remained silent.

"Where is my ten dollars?" demanded

the lawyer.

"Baa, Baa," replied his very sensible client!

In justice to Dossey Battle I must

say he enjoyed so greatly telling this

story that he did not regret the loss of

the ten dollars!

Granville Deed

Granville Co Deed Book C
pages 591 & 592. **Joseph Fuller** to
Shemuel Kearne 10 November
1758, for 30 pounds, 200 acres
which was granted to **Anthony
Rackley** 20 April 1745 and by him
deed to Fuller 23 March 1747, land
on **Cedar Creek**.

Timothy Kearney acquired the
house on this land in the 1990s,
fixed up the house, and now
lives in the Shemuel Kearney house.

I will send a map of the location to
anyone who is interested.

Tim Rackley

Trackley@triad.rr.com

[BATTLE, CONT. FROM PAGE 11]

When Cupid twines his tender vines

Round loving hearts and true,

He seldom fits his bridal bits

On nobler ship or crew.

Gentle Dora, love's restorer,

Queen of a happy home!

To keep your love, be the same dove,

As when you were alone.

Married in **Nashville, Nash
county**, on the 10th inst., Mr. **Red-
mond Wells**, aged 71 years and Miss
Lizzie Williams, aged 18.

When we see December's snows

Falling on tropical dells,

We smile to see the 'world as it goes,'

And whisper soft, "It is Wells."

Love, the urchin, on mischief bent,

An octogenarian to try,

"Say, of the feeling doest ever re-

pent?"

Answered, "Try some one older

than I."

[Source: *Tarboro Southerner*, Sept.

1875—Dec. 1881]

The Evolution of Footwear!

What did our ancestors wear to keep their feet warm and dry? Inside, they may have worn soft shoes, or slippers. When it was warm, they might have gone barefoot, especially the children. Most of them probably stuck with what they knew from their original homes, such as wooden clogs, usually with leather uppers. It didn't take long for those on the frontier to learn that **Indian** moccasins were practical and easy to make, and for many, they became the footwear of choice.



Very early inventories differentiate between shoes and boots. A man may have had a pair of boots and a pair of shoes, but only rarely more than one pair of each. Boots were footwear that reached above the ankle, often calf- or knee-high.

Another difference between shoes and boots was that shoes had fasteners. Shoe laces appeared about 1800. Before that the shoes were fastened by straps and buckles. Buckles were apparently easily broken or lost and many people had more pairs of buckles than shoes.

Shoes and buckles appear in many drawings and paintings. "Thus, we know that shoe buckles also could have a decorative component, ranging from simple scrol-ling on the metalwork ... to paste jewels on a shoe buckle



belonging to a society gentleman or lady.... [On an] illustration to an old English book of children's songs... the lady of the house appears in the doorway wearing soft slippers. Her two

children have shoes with buckles. The old woman ... is standing on the cobbled street. She is wearing shoes with buckles, but attached to the shoes are metal rings that elevate her shoes above the cobblestones (and the water, mud, and sewage commonly found on city streets). These rings are called 'pattens' and were often attached to shoes and clogs in early **America**. "

"Both shoes and boots were manufactured by a cord-wainer (leatherworker) or shoemaker. Shoemakers formed shoes by shaping leather around a wooden "last." Each last was a different size. Lastmaking was considered a separate trade from shoemaking, as were the tanners and curriers who prepared the leather. Early footwear wasn't particularly shaped to the foot. In fact, even custom footwear didn't come in left and right! It would be made to general length and width, but both shoes were

just alike. Shoes specifically for left and right feet were mass-produced in the mid-1800s."

Since shoes and boots were frequently repaired, it was necessary to have the proper supplies on hand.

In the *Colonial Williamsburg Journal*, in "Footprints on the Past,"

D. A. Saguto (Colonial Williamsburg's master boot and shoemaker) writes that "The earliest surviving list of recommended apparel for the would-be **Virginian** was written for servants going to **Smyth's** Plantation in 1618. On it are three pairs of shoes and repair supplies--soles, thread, awls, pitch, and rosin--worth 1.5 times all other articles of regular clothing combined."



Stockings were not always available, but when they were, they were usually knitted wool. They were simple tubes, rather than being shaped to the foot; consequently, they bagged. They were held up by garters. They were also sometimes colorful—often blue or red.

[Taken from an article in *Ancestry Daily News* by Patricia Law Hatcher, CG, FASG, who is a professional genealogist. Copyright 2005, MyFamily.com, Inc. Submitted by Jim Stallings, TRC member.]



New Tool for Historians and Genealogists at the Library!

Braswell Memorial Library's Local History

Room has a new tool that promises to be helpful to researchers both near and far. It is a scanner, but instead of paper pages, it scans microfilm pages or sections. You can then create a TIFF, JPG, or PDF image and e-mail it to yourself or someone else, or you can save the image to a disk or a memory stick. This works for all microfilm available at the library including census records and newspapers.

If you are out of the area and need an obituary or other record on microfilm, the Local History Librarian can now scan the record and e-mail it to you instead of mailing it the traditional way. The result is faster turn-around time and happier genealogists! Please come by the library and see our new addition. The librarian will be glad to show you how it works.

Mexican War Volunteer



"It was an electric shock. The old man sprang to his feet, his face flushed, his features set, and every nerve in his body tingling. His voice was no longer feeble. It rang out like a trumpet's call as he then and there announced his determination to resign his seat and hasten home, raise a company and go to the front." The scene, described by Judge **George Howard** and **Henry T. Clark** of Edgecombe Co, was the NC Senate floor in 1846. The chief player was the 55-year old **Edgecombe Co. Senator, Louis Dicken Wilson**, who had been accused by a younger colleague of voting for the **Mexican War** only because he was too old to fight.

Wilson returned to his home county and began recruiting volunteers. In early January 1847, he was elected Captain of **Company A, First Edgecombe Volunteers**



US Soldiers in Mexico

Regiment, which was the first to offer its services to Gov. **William Graham**. The volunteers met at **Toisnot Depot**, later renamed **Wilson**, to partake of a barbecue dinner and arrange plans..." and the next day, they left for **Fort Johnston**, near **Wilmington, NC** where they were mustered into the **US Army** and given a brief period of military training.

Meanwhile, Wilson and several other officers returned to **Tarboro** where they were treated to a splendid dinner at **Pender's Hotel** on January 9. On Jan. 18, there was a huge celebration at which a beautiful silk banner, made by the hometown ladies, was presented to Wilson for the **Edgecombe Volunteers**. Miss **Sarah E. Howard**,

presenter of the flag, said, "Your fathers waged war against the haughty Britons and the lion of **England** has twice crouched before the Eagle of our country. ... You are now engaged in a contest with the perfidious Mexicans and the flag of '76 is the flag of '46."

On Feb. 22, the Edgecombe troops left from **Smithville** on the schooner **E.S. POWELL**. They sang the following song penned by one of the men:

"With Wilson for our leader
We'll fight like heroes brave
We'll either conquer all our foes
Or fill the soldier's grave."

In Mexico

On March 3, 1847, President **James K. Polk** named Wilson Colonel of the **12th Regiment of the United States Infantry**. In early August, his command of 850 was scheduled to leave **Vera Cruz** and proceed towards **Mexico City** as the guard for a train of supplies intended for **General Winfield Scott's** army; but Colonel Wilson was stricken with the dreaded yellow fever and died on August 12, 1847.

A notice of the August 13th military funeral stated: "The escort for his funeral will be commanded by the Lieutenant Colonel, and consist of

the 1st U. S. infantry, stationed in the city. The funeral will take place at 5 o'clock p.m. tomorrow, to which all the U. S. navy, citizens and strangers are respectfully invited to attend."



U.S. troops land south of Vera Cruz.

Louis Wilson's body was returned to **Edgecombe Co.** in Feb. 1848 for burial in the cemetery of **Calvary Church**. **Martha Williams**, a 14 year old **Tarboro** girl, de-

scribed the funeral in a letter to her brother in Mexico: "... The remains of our late Colonel Wilson were deposited in the Court House for nearly three weeks before he was buried. Saturday before last was the day appointed for the burial but there was a large snow so it was postponed until last Saturday. They all formed the procession at the residence of the Col. Mr. And Mrs. **Owens** and Mr. **Brook's** scholars were dressed in white, a piece of black tied to their left arm. ...

"I have never seen so long a procession in all my life as it was. When the first of the procession reached the churchyard the last was about Mr. **McNair's** store. They had **Frank Johnson's** band here to play as it marched. It was said there were the rise of four thousand people in town that day. "

"Mr. Owens did not deliver his discourse before it commenced raining and he stopped. Some of the girls did not go to the grave it was so wet and raining...."

Wilson's body was later moved from **Calvary Cemetery** to a graveyard in the country. In 1850, a

WILSON, CONT. ON PAGE 17

WILSON, CONT. FROM P. 16

monument was erected in his memory on the lawn of the Court House. In 1904, both Wilson's body and the monument were moved to the **Tarboro Town Common**.

Gift to the Poor

Wilson had never married, but a nephew, **James "Jim Crust" Battle**, and a niece, orphans dependent on Wilson, lived in his home in Tarborough. After his death, a diligent search among his valuable papers failed to turn up a will. It seemed that he had died intestate.

It was naturally assumed that his nephew and niece, being his nearest of kin and domesticated in his family, would be the chief beneficiaries of his will. "Finally, in a lower drawer, among papers and miscellaneous articles of no especial value, there was found a ... 'holograph will,' i.e., a will written throughout by the testator himself with his own hand, and signed as his will." Surprisingly, the holographic will left Wilson's entire estate to be used for the benefit of the "Poor of Edgecombe County."

The will, if found among his valuable papers, was legal in NC. However, Wilson's will seemed not to pass the test as it was found in an open drawer, not with his other valuables. This meant Wilson's nephew and niece would inherit.

Of course the town of Tarboro was abuzz about the will. James Battle, who was not too intelligent, eventually understood that if the paper, which gave the whole of his uncle's estate away from him and his sister, had been found in the top drawer of the desk, it would have been valid, and the poor of the



county would have inherited. Since it was found in the lower drawer, he and his sister would inherit.

Though he was slow to understand, he was not lacking in conscience. As soon as he understood the situation, he revealed that he had looked through his uncle's valuable papers for a will, and he had found it in the top drawer. However, in his disappointment when he understood that the property did not come to him, he threw it into the lower drawer, unaware that his actions invalidated the will. Based on his testimony, the will was probated as Wilson had intended.

As so often happens, the Edgecombe Co. poor did not receive the benefits of the entire bequest. As noted in an article by the late **Hugh B. Johnston** of **Wilson Co.**, "About \$12,000 were properly utilized, \$10,000 lost by unsound investments, and \$18,000 enjoyed by certain officials during the period of Southern Reconstruction."

A Life of Service

Louis Dicken Wilson was born



The Grove

May 12, 1789, the son of **William** and **Elizabeth Dicken Wilson**. The Wilsons owned a plantation, the **Grove**, south of **Tar River** in Edgecombe County. Louis Wilson attended the local Academy. In 1807, he moved to **Washington, Beaufort Co., NC** to work as a bookkeeper in a counting house and study law. He returned to Tarboro where he served

as a Notary Public and as Justice of the Peace. He was elected to the General Assembly in 1814 where he served until 1819. Wilson was elected to the state senate in 1820, but defeated by **Hardy Flowers** the next year. Elected again in 1824, he served until 1833 when Mr. Flowers again defeated him. During this time, he supported the early public school movement, advocating the education of free blacks.

Wilson was re-elected to the senate in 1838 and continued to serve until he volunteered for service in the Mexican War in 1846.

Wilson's Memory Honored

The town of Wilson was incorporated and named in the memory of Louis D. Wilson on January 29, 1849. In 1855, **Wilson County**, formed from Edgecombe, **Nash**, **Johnston** and **Wayne** counties, was also named for Louis D. Wilson.

[Sources: *Southern Historical News*, Vol. 11, No. 19-NC "Wilson Named for Mexican war Veteran," submitted by Virginia Roberson, TRC member; *Wilson's History* at www.wilsonnc.org; "Louis D. Wilson, Mexican War Martyr," by Gaston Lichtenstein, 1911.]



Local Items

ARRIVALS AT GREEN'S HOTEL THIS WEEK.—**J.S. Hargrove**, Norfolk [VA]; **W. J. Wilborn**, Trinity College [Durham Co], **J.J. Jones**, John Jones, [of] Laurel, [Franklin Co]; **J.E. Thomas**, **B. D. Egerton**, **Henry Mann**, [of] Franklin.

An ingenious arrangement of ropes and pulleys has been invented by which a cradle, a churn, a rocking chair and a fan are all kept in operation at the same time, while the operator is left at liberty to sew or read.

[*Franklin Courier*, August 29, 1873]

Tar River Connections in Tennessee

Obituaries

Jonathan K. T. Smith has abstracted obituaries from several Tennessee newspapers: *The Western Methodist*, 1833-1834; *Southwestern Christian Advocate*, 1838-1846; *Nashville Christian Advocate*, 1847-1861, 1869-1873, 1885-1919, 1929; *Christian Advocate*, 1874-1884; and *Nashville Daily American*, 1876. The information can be found at:

<http://www.tngenweb.org/records/davidson/>

Information has been culled from those records about individuals with connections to the **Tar River** area. Excerpts from these records will be printed from time to time.

The editors of *The Connector* solicit your help in expanding our information base about people who left northeastern **North Carolina**. If you have an ancestor with ties to this area, we would like to add your information to our files. Please send obituaries, biographies, family trees, &c to: Tar River Connections, PO Box 8764, Rocky Mount, NC 27804.

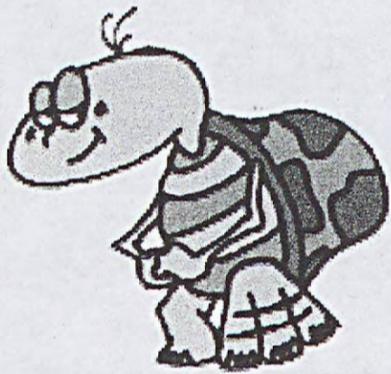
1. **WILLIAM G. WYNNS** born **Beaufort Co., N.C.**, Jan. 31, 1810; married **S. E. Atkins**, Sept. 10, 1838; moved to Tenn., 1815; died June 21, 1845
2. **MARY ANN JONES** wife of **Simon J. Jones**; daughter of **Simon** and **Mary Nobles**; born **Pitt Co., N.C.**, Feb. 16, 1809; died Feb. 1, 1844; eight children.
3. **ALLEY M. NEELY** wife of Rev. **Thomas J. Neely**, daughter of **Shadrach** and **Grizza Collins** born **Edgecombe Co., N.C.**, Feb. 13, 1804; died in the Methodist parsonage, **Brownsville, Tenn.**, May 8, 1839.
4. **NANCY WILLIAMSON** wife of **Robert Williamson**; born **Nash County, North Carolina**, June 13, 1810 moved with her widowed mother to Ga., later to Ala., where in **Wilcox County** she died April 8, 1846; six children.
5. **NANCY FREEMAN** born **Franklin Co., N.C.**, 1768; joined Methodist Church, 1791; moved to **Wilson Co., Tenn.**, 1807 and afterwards to **Haywood Co., Tenn.** where she died August 27, 1839.
6. **JOHN POTTER SMITH** died Sept. 5, 1854 near **Murfreesboro, Tenn.**; s/o **Benjamin** and **Ann Smith**; born **Williamsboro, N.C.** [now **Vance Co, NC**] June

- 2, 1827; moved to **Murfreesboro** in 1833; md **America Johnson** in 1850; joined Presbyterian Church, Feb. 1846.
7. **BENJAMIN H. WORTHAM** born **Warren Co., N.C.**; lived for years in **Granville Co., N.C.**; died **Maury Co., Tenn.**, Dec. 11, 1847 in the 69th year of his age. Presbyterian; husband and father (12 children).
8. **JOSEPH BLOUNT LITTLEJOHN** died **Fayette Co., Tenn.**, Jan. 2, 1852, pneumonia; s/o **William** and **Sarah Littlejohn**; born **Edenton [Chowan Co], N.C.**, Oct. 4, 1776; graduated from **Princeton College, N. J.**, Oct. 4, 1796; in 1800 accompanied **General Davis** as secretary of the legation to negotiate a treaty with France; studied law in **Halifax, N.C.** and was licensed to practice law, June 1801; md **Ann Maria Jones** d/o **William Jones** of **Halifax, N.C.**, May 17, 1804; settled in **Granville Co., N.C.**; joined MEC 1811; moved to **Fayette Co., Tenn.** in 1828; md, secondly, **Mrs. Sneed** of **Lagrange, Tenn.**, Jan. 10, 1843; long an active MECS layman.
9. Colonel **THOMAS SHAW** born **Halifax Co., N.C.**; moved to **Robertson Co., Tenn.**, 1805; a brother **William Shaw**, mentioned; died November 1839
10. **PATIENCE W. SOUTHALL** widow of Rev. **Daniel Southall** (died Oct. 15, 1830), **Virginia Conference**; daughter of **Colonel John Branch, Halifax Co., N.C.** She married Sept. 15, 1810. She continued to live in **Halifax County** until 1841 when she spent time with her children in **Florida, Miss.** and **Nashville**; she died at "Rose Mount" the residence of her son, **J. J. B. Southall**, **Nashville**, June 27, 1846.
11. Dr. **W. WOMBLE** born **Edgecombe Co., N.C.**, Mar. 15, 1800; licensed to preach in Methodist Church Dec. 22, 1832; died **Shelby Co., Tenn.**, July 17, 1842. Moved to the latter county in 1836.
12. Reverend **THOMAS LOGAN DOUGLASS** died near **Franklin, Tenn.**, April 9, 1843; born **Parsol [Person?] Co., N.C.**, 1781; licensed to preach in Methodist Church, 1800; labored in the **Virginia** and **Tennessee** conferences
13. **EVAND RICHARDS** born **Northampton Co., N.C.**, 1777; moved to **Madison Co., Ala.**, 1815. Methodist. Died March 20, 1843; pneumonia
14. **BENJAMIN C. RANSOM** born **Franklin Co., N.C.**, May 1777; died **Rutherford Co., Tenn.**, Oct. 22, 1844.

[Source: <http://www.tngenweb.org/records/davidson/>
Submitted by TRC member Tim Rackley]

Turtle Soup, Anyone?

One day I was walking home to the farm from school, and **Julian Rhodes,**



my third sister's son, then about nine years, was with me; when we got to **Toisnot Swamp [Wilson Co, NC],** where there were two long railroad bridges, we saw a negro coming up the embankment from the water below; he had in his hands two turtles.

We asked him how he caught them. He said, "On hooks."

"What kind of hooks?"

"Large fish hooks," and he showed us one that he had in his pocket.

What did he put on the hooks? "Frogs."

On the way going home Julian and I talked the matter over, and came to the conclusion that we must have some hooks. When we got home we told our story to the whole family and embellished it the best that we could, trying to enlist enough sympathy with our plan to get the hooks. At last father said, "I will get the hooks for you."

My father not only got the hooks for us, but he put the hooks on the lines and put some lead on, too, to help sink the hooks. He showed us how to put the frogs on the hooks, by hooking them through the back. He also told us to put our lines in places so that we would not forget where they were, but to tie them under the water so that others would not see them and rob our hooks.

This we did in the morning as we went on to school. In the afternoon we were so anxious to reap the fruits of our planning that we ran nearly all the way to the swamp. The first day

we got two turtles out of the six hooks that we set. We did not know how to get the hooks out of the turtles' mouths, for they had swallowed the frogs, hooks and all. So we carried our trophies in pride and jubilation to the farm. Everyone in the family were highly pleased; for stewed turtle with some parsley put in for flavoring certainly does make an appetizing breakfast.

Our good luck followed us for some time, and we had got up quite a reputation as fishermen. The enthusiasm was dying out a little, for we no longer ran in our eagerness to get to our hooks, but went along more like workmen on their way to work.

One day when we had lifted nearly all of our hooks without finding a turtle, we came to one of the hooks that seemed to be hanging onto something down under the water; We could pull the hook up a part of the way, and then there would be a pull on the line like there was a strong spring working against us. We could not pull the hook out of the water. Julian and I both had a trial at it, and we were about to leave it, when I thought of one more way.

I cut a pole with a fork at the top. With this pole I straddled the line with the fork, and, keeping the line taut, followed it down in the water, trying on each side of the line to dislodge the hook. At last, I felt the object on the hook giving way, and I was drawing the hook with what I thought to be a large turtle to the surface, when quicker than words can tell it a large copper bellied moccasin came out of the water with the hook in his mouth. He was at least one inch in diameter and three and a half to four feet long. My hands were so near his head I was afraid that he would bite me. I was so excited I really did not know what I was doing; but to save myself I grabbed him about the neck with my left hand.

CONNECTOR

The snake was busy, too. He tried to turn his head to reach my hand with his mouth, but he did not have enough free neck to do so. He did the next best thing that he could—he brought his long wet body out of the water and threw it upon my shoulder and around my neck. I had already got out my big jack-knife and opened it with my teeth. With this I commenced to cut off his head. Two or three pulls of the sharp edge on his throat and his head was off, and I felt the body relax. I dropped my knife, took both hands and unwound the nasty, slimy, scaly body from around my neck and threw it off with that strength born of panic, and got out of the swamp as quick as my legs could carry me.

Julian was ahead of me, for as soon as he saw the snake he made a bolt to get away. He must have fallen in the water, for he was wet all over. We sat down on the railroad, and after breathing hard for a while became calm. Then my fighting qualities came to my rescue, so I went back, got my knife and the snake and brought him up on the railroad. Julian held the body while I pulled the skin off. We carried the skin home, and stuffed it with wheat bran, and this snake skin was hanging in my room when we moved away in 1868.

[From *Tributes to My Father and Mother and Some Stories of My Life*, by Jesse Mercer Battle, 1911]

\$100.00
REWARD

We offer one hundred dollars reward for any case of pneumonia in any family where they use Goose Grease as directed. If you ever know or hear of any such case, please inform us and we will pay them the reward.

GOOSE GREASE LINIMENT CO.
Greensboro, N. C.

[Enfield Progress, 8/14/1908]

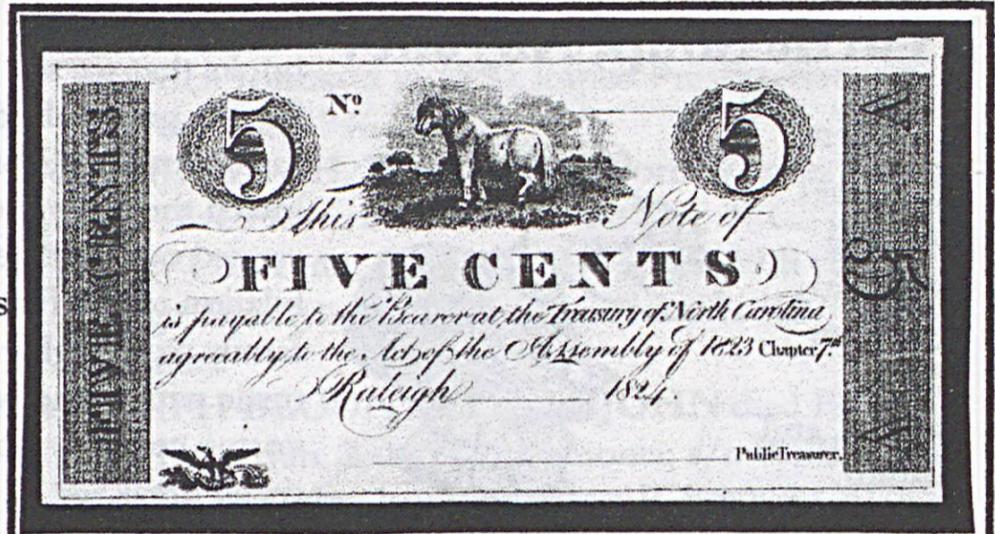
H. Morris & Bros., DRY GOODS, CLOTHING ETC.

Among the extensive establishments which have attracted our notice in Tarboro [Edgecombe Co., NC], none deserve more favorable consideration than its palace dry goods emporium. The house was founded in 1869, doing business on the same stand it still occupies. In 1868, when this handsome new brick block was erected Messrs. **Morris** judiciously moved into it taking possession of two stores . . . In the one store which might be called the ladies half, we find a splendid array of staple dry goods from the oldest foreign and domestic looms, **French** silks and satins, cashmeres, ladies' dolmans and cloaks, latest novelties in **American** and imported notions, white goods and hosiery, laces, embroideries, etc., also boots and shoes in all styles to fit every size of foot. In the gentlemen's store is a full line of men's, youth's and boys' clothing in the latest and most fashionable styles, gentlemen's furnishing goods, boots, shoes and brogans of all descriptions, hats and caps in a great variety. The store is a favorite resort in town and without reflecting upon others we shall say they carry a line of goods equal to any house in the State. The stock averages some \$20,000, is well arranged and displayed to advantage on the numerous shelves and tables . . . admirably adapted in every way to the convenience and expedition of business and at all times present a live and busy aspect. Four polite clerks are employed. The trade, not confined to this county alone, runs up annually some \$60,000. The house has branch stores in **Greenville [Pitt Co, NC]** and **Washington [Beaufort Co., NC]**. The partners resident in Tarboro, Messrs. H. & J. are counted among the most enterprising men here. They are natives of **New York City**, and came south immediately after the war.

The senior, Mr. H., the founder of the business, ran a store in **Richmond [VA]**, moving to North Carolina in 1869. He belongs to the **Masons, Knights of Honor**, the **I.O.B.B.'s** and other orders. With an existence of nearly twenty years this firm can look back on its career with just pride. Not only do they command the best trade in their line of this wealthy county, but they have been painstaking in having their customers satisfied and have introduced to the people here lines of fine goods they formerly knew nothing of.

The Morris Bros. are also partners in the well known firm, **D. Lichenstein & Co.**, of Tarboro', Greenville and Washington.

[*Historical and Descriptive Review of the State of North Carolina*, 2d Vol., 1885]



A rare 1824 NC Treasury note. It illustrates the use of the horse as a symbol of prosperity. Courtesy of the North Carolina Collection, UNC-Chapel Hill.

For Sale!

We are now distributors of Joan Howell Waddell's Nash County census transcriptions. The following are available:

Nash County, North Carolina 1860 Census \$25.00
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These transcriptions are indexed and include population, mortality, agriculture, etc. schedules (also including slave schedule for 1860.)

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Other Items Available:

(See Spring Issue of *The Connector* for descriptions)

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