

The Connector

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

Winter, 2002

Billie Jo Matthews & Peggy Strickland, Co-Editors Volume 6 Number 1

Tar River Steel Bridge Adequate

It is ordered by the Board that permission be and the same is hereby given to carry over the Steel Bridge over **Tar River at Rocky Mount Mills** the monument ordered by **R.H. Ricks** to be erected at the Park at the Falls, upon the carrying out of the provisions of the following letter:

VIRGINIA BRIDGE & IRON CO.
Charlotte, N.C.
May 17th, 1916

Rocky Mount Mills
Rocky Mount, N.C.

Gentlemen:

... Upon investigation of the **Rocky Mount Mills River Bridge**, the writer finds that the steel work is amply strong to carry the 20-ton monument if same is

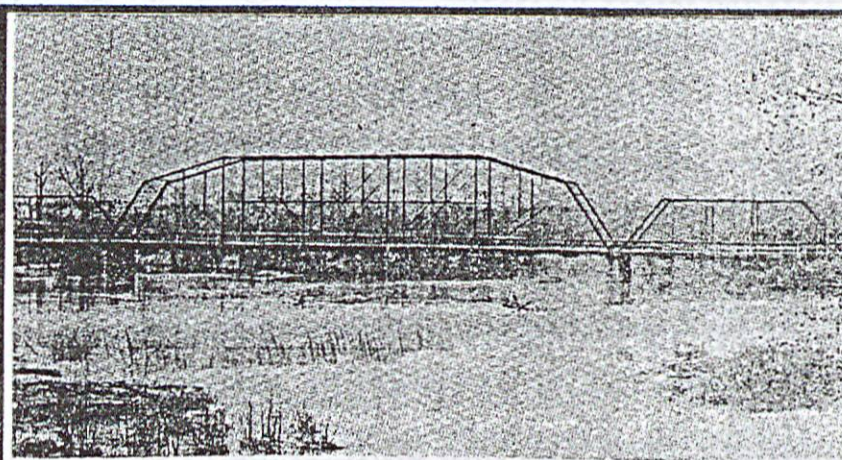
placed on trucks spaced 21' center to center, the wheels of each truck spaced approximately 6' apart transversely. We do not consider the wooden stringers sufficiently strong, and timber should be provided, arranged to carry the load from floor-beam to floor-beam. In pulling the load, a rope should be used of sufficient length to keep the teams far

enough of the lead so that the weight of the teams and the monument will not come on any one space at the same time. We would suggest that you have a man go over the bridge and carefully adjust any loose bolts or turnbuckles that may be found. There is a bottom lateral missing in the 80' span on the far side of the river and it is important that this lateral be put in place.

If the foregoing method, which the writer outlined to Mr. **W.B. Rose**, is followed out, we believe it will be perfectly safe to transport the monument over the bridge.

Yours very truly,

E. E. Hanks
Consulting Engineer



Original steel truss highway bridge over Tar River, torn down in 1936

[Taken from Nash Co. Commissioners' Minutes, June 5, 1916.]

Tar River Rambler As I Remember Rocky Mount

BY LOUISE FULLER

Modern Rocky Mount grew up around the railroad tracks which separate **Nash and Edgecombe Counties**. But this was not the first Rocky Mount. The first Rocky Mount was a couple of miles west at the **Falls of the Tar**. This part of the country was part of **Lord Granville's** grant from the **Lord Proprietors** and in order to get a piece of it, our ancestors secured a "Granville Grant." As early as 1739, a man named **William Bryan** had bought land on the Tar River near what is

now **Spring Hope**, but actually, it was 1744 when the Lord Proprietors got the land. Surprisingly, with so much land available, the grants were for relatively small amounts—175, 200, 250 acres.

See Rambler, Page 6



**J.M. DIXON
ROCKY
MOUNT &
TARBORO,
N.C.**

Half pint strap
sided flask
found recently.

What or who
was J.M. Dixon?

Singular Phenomenon

"A wonder to mortal man as it regards the human body, The 13th day of November 1833 was the day that brought sum few individuals to pray that was said never tried to pray before in ther life maid sum thing that the world was going to be to an end— On the Ackount of the stars shutting & blasing and fawling from the sky."

The above handwritten description of **Halley's Comet**, poor spelling and all, appeared on the front flyleaf of *Geography* [1821], a book in the rare book collection of Hugh

See Halley, Page 9

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: Turn1104@aol.com

Annual Dues - \$15.00

2001 Officers

Arda Daniel, President

Fairy Bunn Williams, Pres. Elect

Jim Stallings, Secretary

Helen Sharpe, Treasurer

Billie Jo Matthews, Peggy Strick-

land, Newsletter Editors

Directors: Louise Fuller, Hiram

Perkinson, Reese Ferrell

The Connector-Published Quarterly
Membership & Surnames-Annually

Edgecombe Native, Revolutionary Hero

Elijah and Hannah Harrington [Arrington] Clark[e]

Living wasn't easy in Edgecombe Co, NC in the early 1770s. In fact, **Elijah Clark[e]**, son of **Elizabeth Darden** who was a niece of **George Washington**, and his wife, **Hannah Harrington [Arrington]**, were so discouraged they pulled up stakes in 1771 and moved with their small children to **Grindal Shoal** on the **Pacolet River** in **Craven Co., SC**. About 2 years later, they moved on into upper **Georgia**, settling in an area later known as "**Hornet's Nest**," a few miles from **Fort Heard**. The courageous couple must have been desperate, for Elijah was about 40 when they reached GA, far past his prime. He couldn't read or write and was forced to borrow money in order to buy 150 acres of land. Hannah was 37 and they had 4 small children between the ages of 2 and 7.

In 1774, Clarke signed a petition against **Tory** activities in the area. He was elected captain of the local militia, and was wounded in a battle with the **Cherokee** in 1776. By 1778, he was a lieutenant colonel in the state troops and was wounded again in an unsuccessful invasion of **East Florida**.

During the **American Revolution** Lt. Col. Clarke served with **Andrew Pickens**, playing a major role in defeating 600 **Loyalists** at **Kettle Creek** in 1779. During this time, Hannah spent winter evenings spinning, weaving and sewing. She made a dozen fine ruffled shirts for her handsome husband, and, particularly anxious that they not be stolen by **Tories**, she packed them in a box and buried them in the smoke-house. Raiders came and, having learned of the fancy shirts, stole them from their hiding place.



Trouble for Hannah

In 1780, GA and most of SC came under British control. After an unsuccessful attack upon **Augusta**, Elijah became a fugitive. Hannah was turned out of their home which was burned to the ground. Only a patchwork quilt made by the Clark daughters, **Sarah** and **Betsy**, was saved. Hannah rode away on the only remaining horse with the quilt across the saddle. She encountered a party of **Tory** soldiers who tried to confiscate the quilt, but Hannah, still angry over the loss of Elijah's shirts, was determined not to give up the quilt. The **Tories** fired at her, wounding the horse, but Hannah held her own, and one **Tory** said, "Such a brave woman deserves to go in peace." The men rode away empty handed.

After the destruction of his home, Elijah fled, leading more than 500 refugees to present-day TN to escape **Indians** and **Loyalists**. He and about

See Clark, Page 5



ORAL
HISTORY
PROJECT

Nash County Arts Council

Rizzin' the Chitlins

TOLD BY BERNICE SILLS BRITT OF
CASTALIA

When my father was going to kill hogs, the neighbors would come to help. We would always kill on the coldest day. The ladies would have the wash pots for cleaning the chitlins out in the middle of the field. They called it rizzin' the chitlins.

When the chitlins were ready for cleaning, the men would take them out to the wash pot. They were smelling all over the place. When it was time to move the chitlin from the wash pot to the big, tin tub, the ladies or maybe children would pour water and flush out all that was in the intestines. Then they would turn them over to the second tub. A couple of ladies would wash them in that water. They'd have three or four waters, washing, until they got ready to soak them. They had to soak for several days. You couldn't eat them right away. And you must turn them and change the soaking water until it was time to cook them.

When it was time to cook them, my mother would boil them and then she would take them out and put them in the oven in a pan, batter a little batter on them, and let them brown. They were the best!

SEE RELATED ARTICLE,
"RAZORBACKS IN NASH"
ON PAGE 20

The Army Mule



It is well documented that both sides in the Civil War recognized the invaluable service of the lowly mule. But while a horse could be counted on for any kind of service, his half-brother, the mule, "was more particular as to the kind of service he performed. Like a great many *bipeds* that entered the army, he preferred to do military duty in the safe rear... If he found himself under fire at the front, he was wont to make a stir in his neighborhood until he got out of such inhospitable surroundings." This made the mule unfit for service near the front lines and left him to draw the wagons. Mules soon



A SIX-MULE TEAM



MULE EATING AN OVERCOAT

replaced horses in wagon trains—six mules replacing four horses.

Mules could endure the hardships of hard usage, bad feed, and general neglect. When food was short, drivers were known to cut branches for their refreshment. "One m.d. (mule driver) tells of having his army overcoat partly eaten by one of his team—actually chewed and swallowed."

Stubborn as a mule

The mule has a mind of his own. "He may go along all right, or, if he is tricky, he may suddenly pause, bracing his forefeet and settling down on his hind ones, as if he had suddenly happened to think of the girl he left behind. ... But the driver! Well, if at that moment he was off his guard, he would get off without previous preparation, as a man sometimes sits down on ice ..."

The m.d. enforced his orders with the *Black Snake*. It was not unusual to see a six-mule team get so entangled that unharnessing them seemed inevitable; but "the appearance of the driver with his black wand would change the scene as if by magic. ... The ears of the mule seemed to be the development through which his reasoning faculties could be most quickly and surely reached, and one or two cracks of the whip on or near these little monuments, accompanied by the driver's very expressive ejaculation in the mule tongue, which I can only describe as a kind of cross between an unearthly screech and a groan, had the effect to disentangle them unaided, and make them stand as if at a 'present' to their master. ..."

"The propulsive power of the mule-driver was increased many fold by the almost unlimited stock of profanity with which he greeted the sensitive ears of his muleship when the latter was stubborn. I have seen mules, ... jump into their collars ... with the utmost determination to do their whole duty when one of these Gatling guns of curses opened fire upon them. ..." [The m.d. has been given] credit for being able to swear a mule-team out of the mud when



DISMOUNTED

SEE MULES, PAGE 5

Bath: Early NC Center

The tiny Beaufort Co. town of Bath has an illustrious early history. It was the first incorporated town (1705) in NC and the main port in the early 1700s. It was the seat of government under 3 proprietary governors, **Daniels, Cary, and Eden** and an important commercial center. The first north-south post road went through Bath. **John Lawson**, the renowned explorer and historian, built a house there in 1704. The first public library in the state was located at Bath. And, of course, **Edward Teach, or Blackbeard**, hid out in Bath. [See "Blackbeard: Tar River Connection?" in *The Connector*, Winter 1998]

Early settlers reached the area in the 1690s. In 1704, 60 acres was transferred from **David Perkins** to John Lawson, **Joel Martin, Sr.**, and **Simon Alderson, Sr.**, to lay out the town of Bath. The town boasted a population of 25 after the first year, and 12 houses had been built on the 30 shilling lots by 1708. Population had increased to about 50, including Gov. Thomas Cary and **Christopher Gale**, the first chief justice. A 15 ft. square house constructed of rough wood was typical. There was a pen for cattle and horses on the town commons and merchants did business from their homes.

Little cash in Bath

The colonies were expected to enrich their patrons in England, and consequently, there was little cash in the colonies. Merchants in Bath were forced to rely on bartering for the molasses, sugar, cocoa and other supplies that arrived on ships from England, the **West Indies**, and **New England**. Twenty-two products, including furs, deerskins and other hides, wheat, ships masts, barrel staves, tobacco, resin, turpentine, gum and tars, drugs, pork, peas, and Indian corn were rated for exchange. In 1709, Lawson described the loading of these and other items on ships headed for Madiera and the East Indies.

Trade was hampered by the danger of land travel. The **Pamlico Road** from **Albemarle Sound** to the **Tar-Pamlico River** passed through dark swamps and unmarked forests and required the use of canoes, boats and ferries. Once travelers reached Bath, they could refresh themselves at **Duncan's Inn** or continue to **Core Point** where they could travel across the Tar-Pamlico River at a cost of 10 shillings for the traveler and his horse.

Court days were times of great activity. The town

was filled with government officials, litigants, and on-lookers. The arrival of a ship from overseas was also cause for celebration. Farmers brought grain to be ground and often made their way to **Thomas Harding's** shipyard to exchange news and gossip.

Bath was spared the worst of the two bloody conflicts that hit eastern NC in the early 1700s: **Cary's Rebellion** and the **Tuscarora Indian War**. [See "Friends Movement (Quakerism) ...", *The Connector*, Fall 1999 and "Tuscarora Indians Massacre Settlers", *The Connector*, Winter 2001] It continued to flourish until around the 1750s. However, in 1746, although as many as 28 ships entered its port, Bath didn't have the clout to be named the state capital. Also, the population began to shift more to the west and to deeper ports along the coast. It lost a bitter fight to remain the county seat which was moved to **Washington** about 1785. The little town never regained its prominence.

Several significant historic sites remain in Bath today. The **Palmer-Marsh House**, one of the oldest houses in NC, was built by



Palmer-Marsh House, ca 1744

Michael Coutanch, a French merchant about 1744.

SEE BATH, PAGE 8

BATH, January 10, 1778

TO be rented immediately for one year or longer, at the option of the tenant, the large and commodious house where subscriber now lives, with the out houses, buildings and many other necessary improvements, together with the plantation of 3000 acres, 300 of which are cleared and in good order for cropping, the premises being well known requires no particular description here. Any person desirous to treat for the same may apply to Messrs Thomas and Titus Ogden, merchants in Newbern, or to me at Bath. ...

WILLIAM PALMER

When Col. Palmer moved to New Bern to serve Governor Tryon he gave his home in Bath, 15 slaves, and 250 acres of land to his son, William. At the outbreak of the Revolutionary War, his remaining holdings were confiscated by the State. He made claim to the British government and was granted a settlement and a lifetime pension for himself and his wife. He was the only Loyalist to receive such a payment in Beaufort Co.

MULES, CONT. FROM PAGE 3
it could not be moved by any other process."

The mule was not to be trusted, even when appearing honest and affectionate. "His reputation as a kicker is worldwide. He was the Mugwump of the service. ... For example, a cook picked up a large and respectable looking mule, to whom, with a cook's usual foresight and ambition, he attached all the paraphernalia of the cook-house together with his own personal belongings, and settled himself down proudly on his back among them. ..." The mule appeared serene until "arriving in the middle of the pontoon bridge

upon which the army was crossing, from some unexplained reason—



DUMPED INTO THE RIVER

perhaps because, on looking into the water, he saw himself as others saw him—the mule lifted up his voice in one of those soul-harrowing brays, for which he is famous—or infamous and, lifting his hind legs aloft in the next moment tossed his entire burden of cook and cookhouse into the river ... "



Usually there was a mule, heavily laden with the implements of the cook-house—often with nothing to be seen but head and tail—bringing up the rear. Sometimes these strong-minded creatures, in crossing a stream would decide to lie down, all encumbered as they were, right in the middle, and down they would settle in spite of the ludicrous opposition and pathetic protests of the convoy. ... There was no redress or

relief to be had until his muleship got ready to move, which was generally after every ounce of his burden had been stripped off and placed on terra firma."

"The question frequently raised among old soldiers is, What became of all the army mules? ..." No one remembers having seen a dead mule. One old soldier remembered "having once seen, on the march, the *four* hoofs of a mule—those and nothing more; and the conclusion that he arrived at was that the mule, in a fit of temper, had kicked off his hoofs and gone up. Another soldier, a mule-driver, remembers seeing a mule-team which had run off the corduroy road into a mire of quicksand. The wagon had settled down till its body rested in the mire, but nothing of the team was visible save the ear-tips of the off pole mule."

[Taken from *Hard Tack and Coffee*, by John D. Billings, illustrated by Charles W. Reid, 1887]

BRASWELL MEMORIAL LIBRARY ACQUISITIONS

1. *Tennessee Land Entries*, by A.B. Pruitt, 7 Vols.
2. *Glasgow Land Fraud Papers*, by A.B. Pruitt, 5 Vols.
3. *Granville County NC Cemeteries, Vol. 1*, Compiled by Granville Co. Genealogical Society, 2001. Donated by Bettie Arthur.
4. Nash Co. Microfilm: *Marriage Bonds Abstracts; Marriage Bonds, 1777-1868*, 2 reels; *Record of Marriages, 1851-1857; Marriage Register, 1872-1944*, 2 reels; *Index to Vital Statistics, Births, 1913-1960*, 3 reels; *Maps & Plats, 1937-1960; Index to Vital Statistics, Deaths, 1913-1944; Guardian Accounts, 1820-1867*, 2 reels.

[CLARK, CONT. FROM P. 2]

30 followers began employing guerrilla tactics and inflicted considerable damage on the British. During this time, Hannah refused to remain in safety while her husband fought the enemy. She moved from fort to fort, from camp to camp, cheering him and doing all she could for his comfort." When Elijah was wounded at Augusta, Hannah rode 50 miles with a servant and 2 small children, twins, to reach his side. It has been said that Hannah did everything for the cause of Independence except actually carry a gun and fight.

In 1781, Elijah Clarke led the final successful battle of Augusta, and a year later, the British withdrew, ending the war in GA. He was given the plantation of Thomas Waters, a no-

torious Tory, and a number of other grants. When he eventually retired, he had achieved the rank of Brigadier General. Hannah had become known as the "Heroine of Hornet's Nest."

Elijah Clarke died one day after George Washington in 1799. Hannah lived to be 90. **Clarke County, GA**, which was created in 1801, was named for the Revolutionary hero.

North Carolina did not forget her native son. **Webb Garrison**, in *A Treasury of Carolina Tales*, writes that the NC legislature awarded Elijah Clarke \$30,444, possibly the largest bonus of any Revolutionary leader.



RAMBLER, CONT. FROM P. 1

As more settlers moved in, they began to gravitate toward the Falls, since the river provided the main means of transportation and a reliable source of food. There were people like **Joseph Goodson** who, though he didn't stay long, left his name on **Goodson's Falls** which

was just below the dam and is mentioned in several early patents and deeds. Other settlers who arrived in 1744 included **John Bunn, Henry Horn, George Wimberly, and Isaac Ricks**. As usually happens, people move where other people are, and by 1818, the area around the Falls was well settled and was called **Rocky Mount**. There

is now a plaque set in a rock, identifying this early settlement. At that time, the river was the line which separated Nash and Edgecombe Counties and the settlement was on the Nash Co. side. There was the old **Primitive Baptist Church** which had been there since 1756 and which drew people from the surrounding area. **Lafayette** also had visited.

But there was a problem. The **Rocky Mount (or Battle) Mill** was across the river on the Edgecombe Co. side of the river. Tar River, while a great resource, was not easy to cross, and it became a great divide. Every time a bridge was built, the river would flood and away went the bridge. Another big event in the history of Rocky Mount was the coming of the **Wilmington and Weldon Railroad** in 1838. It was

about 2 miles east of the early settlement. The final track, connecting **Wilmington and Weldon** was laid in 1840. The difficulty in crossing the river and the coming of the railroad caused the center of growth to move from the old settlement at the Falls to the railroad. People began to build stores on both sides of the rail-

shoeing establishments. The most popular place in town was **Parker's Well**, which was in front of one of the hotels. People gathered there to water their horses, and themselves as well. The street was called **Railroad Street** at that time, rather than **Main Street** as it is known today.

Soon there were 6 churches in town and 10 bars. Times were good.

A **Methodist Church** and its cemetery stood on **Church Street** on the land now occupied by **Braswell Memorial Library**. Before the library was built, there was a wave of gossip one day. "They moved the cemetery last night." "What cemetery?" "The cemetery where the Methodist Church was." The city had bought land for a cemetery in 1898,

where **Pineview Cemetery** is today. That's where they moved the graves from the Methodist Church.

My people lived on Church Street, just a block south of the library. There was a group of 5 houses where the same families lived for many years. In later years, the neighbors, **Miss Annie Sorsby** and **Mrs. Nannie Harper**, would tell me the gossip along the street.

There was a one-story house that sat way off the road. There were 12 steps leading up to the front door because of the full basement underneath. We used to have picnics and Easter egg hunts there. There is a warehouse there now. **Mr. Billy Gay** owned all the land at that end of town. When he died, he gave the land where the library is now to

RAMBLER CONT. PAGE 7



Franklin Street, looking north, Rocky Mount, NC, ca 1905

Courtesy of the N.C. Division of Archives and History

road. The first wooden stores didn't last long, but remnants of the second wave of brick buildings still remain. The first brick store was built by **Col. John E. Lindsey**, my great grandfather, who lived at **Benvenue** in a house that still stands today.

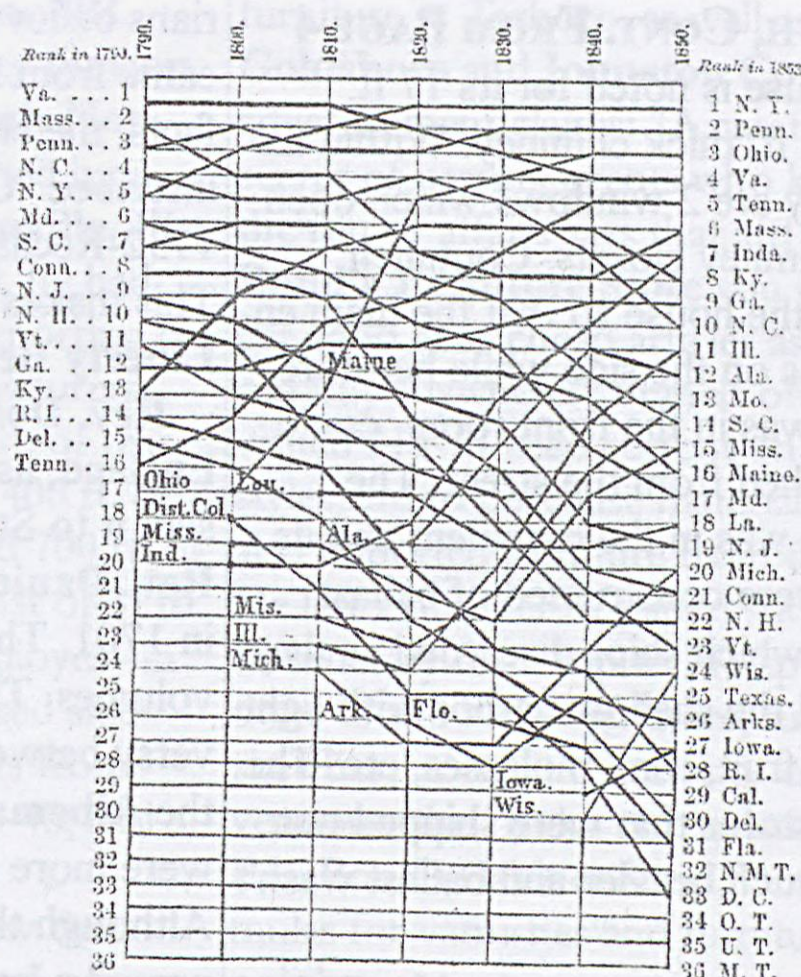
Rocky Mount Depot

The depot was located several blocks north of its present location, and the town was called **Rocky Mount Depot**. Boarding houses and small hotels sprang up. The depot was moved a little bit south, and finally to its present location. After the **Civil War**, the word Depot was dropped from the name and it became just Rocky Mount.

Rocky Mount began to grow as people came to town to work on the railroad. All kinds of businesses were started—most of them practical, such as livery stables and horse

Importance of North Carolina in Genealogical Research

The diagram on the right shows the population of the States and Territories each ten years from 1790 to 1850. In the first column, the states are listed in their relative rank. **Virginia** was the most populous; **Tennessee** was the least populous; **North Carolina** ranked 4th and continued in that position until 1820. Many North Carolina families helped populate Tennessee, Kentucky, Georgia, Mississippi, Alabama, Indiana, and the southwest states. By 1850 North Carolina was the 10th most populous. No wonder so many people come to the Tar Heel State seeking their ancestors.

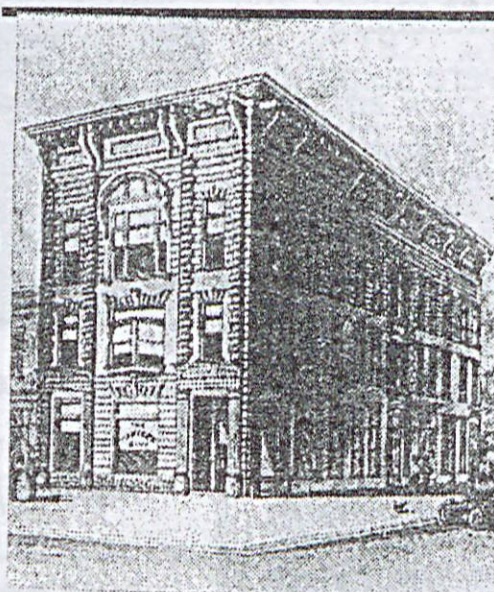


[Submitted by Louise Fuller, TRC Director]

RAMBLER, CONT. FROM P. 6 the Methodist Church. My grandfather bought the old Gay home. My grandmother died in 1886, the year my father was born, so he never had a mother. **Miss Lou Gay from Whitakers** became the housekeeper and she stayed for many years. My father went to the old school on **Nash and Hammond Streets**, the first school in Rocky Mount.

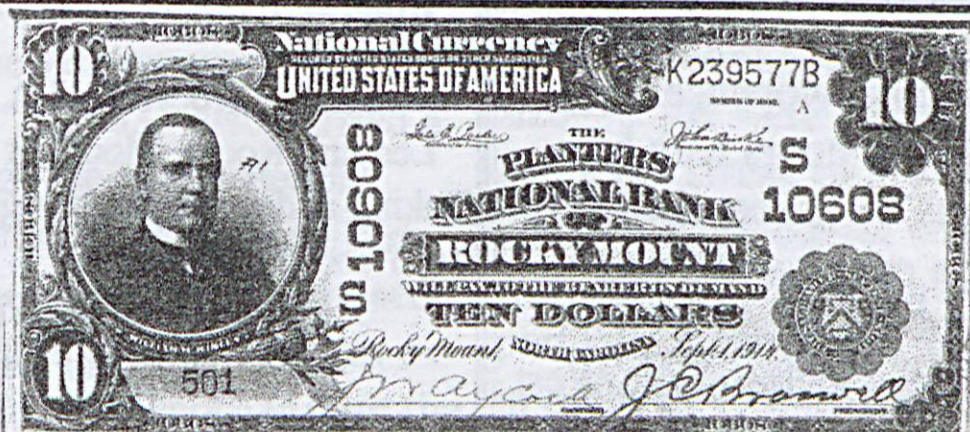
Along the street there were many interesting people. **Miss Annie Sorsby** told me that if I wanted to know what was going on in the neighborhood, I should get at a second story window and look out the back and read the

clothes line. You could tell who was home and who was not. You could tell if a new baby had come by the diapers on the line. If the pants were hung up at a crazy angle, you knew the man hung them up and not the wife!



PLANTERS BANK BUILDING

Mr. Sorsby married a widow who had 3 **Williford** children: **Priscilla, Hugh and William**. Then they had two **Sorsby** children. They had their big meals in the day time and at night, the **Sorsbys** and the **Matthews** (my family) pooled their leftovers and ate together. They were like kinfolks.



Planters National Bank of Rocky Mount \$10 Note, 9/1/1914
Courtesy of the N.C. Division of Archives and History

Mr. Sorsby had his hardware store where **Planter's Bank** is now. In

1902, **Planters Bank** wanted to build a new building there, and they tore down the big old store and built a store next door to it. My **Daddy** bought it from **Mr. Sorsby**.

Outdoors at Brookside

Mr. Sorsby loved to go hunting and fishing. There was a place about 5 miles out in the country called **Brookside** where all the men in the neighborhood would go fishing and hunting together. They loved to go out and cook meals and spend the weekends in the woods. My father went with them.

Down the street on the corner of **Sunset and Church Streets**, there was an old 2-story house painted an awful shade of green. That was **Uncle Alf Arrington's** house. He married my grandmother's sister, **Florence Lindsey**. They had a son and a few years later, **Florence** died. The little boy would cry and **Uncle Alf** would say, "Shhh, Shhh, I'll get you another mother." And he did! He got married twice after that and had children by each wife.

[From the October 2001 TRC program presented by Louise Fuller.]

BATH, CONT. FROM PAGE 4

The house is noted for its 17 ft. wide, 4 ft. thick chimney. Within the chimney are 2 windows which open into chimney closets. Coutanch placed the house so that the main entrance is on the side while his store, which was in the front room, could be reached from the street. The kitchen was in the basement and its walls were constructed of ballast stones which ships discarded as they entered the shallow harbor with light weight fruit, rum, molasses, etc. The naval stores that were shipped out were much heavier and ballast wasn't needed.

The house was acquired by **Robert Palmer, Esq.** about 1764 when he came from **Scotland** to become the **Surveyor-General** of NC and **Collector** in the Port of Bath. As the revolutionary movement gained momentum, Palmer reeturned to England, leaving his holdings to his son, **William**. In 1802, the house was acquired by brothers **Jonathan** and **Daniel Marsh**, ship owners and merchants from **Rhode Island**. The family cemetery is behind the house. The oldest headstone is that of **Mrs. Mary Evans** who died in 1758 at the age of 19. The stone of **William T. Marsh**, who was mortally wounded in the **Battle of Antietam**, sadly states, "he breathed his last eight days ... in the home of strangers who yet soothed his final hours with their sympathy and kindness."

St. Thomas Church is the state's oldest remaining church. It was started in 1734 during the tenure of **Rev. John Garzia** who served there for 4 years without pay. By error, the church was built in the middle of **Craven Street**. The town sold the street to the church for \$25. Histo-

rians believe the brick for the church came from England. Among its artifacts, the church has a bell which is inscribed "Cast in England in 1732-Recast in New York in 1872." This makes it 18 years older than the **Liberty Bell**.

Rev. Doctor Thomas Bray, of England, assembled a library and sent it to St. Thomas Church with **Rev. Daniel Brett** who delivered it in 1701. The library contained 1,050 volumes. This gift aroused controversy between Bath and the people of the **Albemarle** region who felt they were more deserving of the library. Although the General Assembly passed a law and established a commission to protect the library, which remained in Bath, it eventually disappeared and only one volume remains.

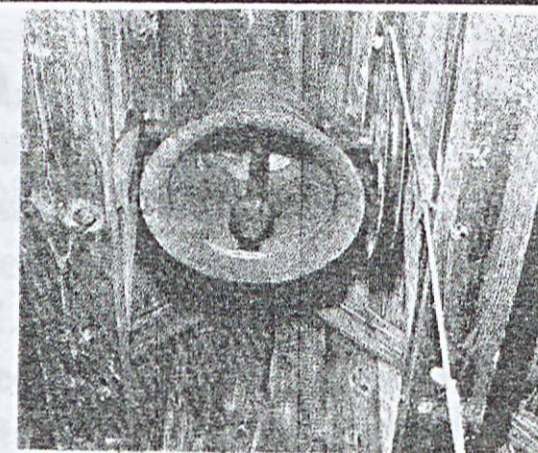
Buzzard's Hotel, named for its owner, was built about 1740. At the time it was built, the court decided the rates an inkeeper could charge. "Breakfast and supper were sixpence each; dinner was one shilling; over-



BUZZARD'S HOTEL, ca 1740

night lodging with a bed, but rarely a private room, cost twopence; stabling a horse for 24 hours with hay and fodder was six pence; shelled Indian corn for a mount was two pence a quart; New England rum was ten shillings a gallon while West Indian rum was sixteen shillings."

The **Bonner House**, built on the



Queen Anne's Bell

site of **Lawson's 1704 house**, dates to the early 18th century. "Joseph Bonner bought the house in 1830 and it remained in the Bonner family until it was acquired as a part of **Historic Bath**." It boasts a loom which was found in the attic when the house was restored and is believed to be original to the house. It has been put in working order and can be seen in the reconstructed kitchen building.

[Taken from *Colonial Bath, North Carolina's Oldest Town* by Kenneth F. and Blanche Marsh, 1966]



W. & W. Rail Road Comp'y



Office Chief Engineer & Superintendent.

Wilmington, N.C. July 20, 1860.

A PASSENGER AND FREIGHT TRAIN will be placed on the **Tarboro' Branch** of this Road, on the first day of August next, to make daily trips between **Rocky Mount** and **Tarboro'**:

Leaving **Tarboro'** at 7 A.M.

Leaving **Rocky Mount** at 1:30 P.M.

Taking and delivering freight at **Hartsboro'** and **Tarboro'**.

S.L. FREMONT,
Chief Eng. and Sup't

July 20, 1860

[Submitted by Bob Cooke]

Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts

Lewis Bond, Early Local Craftsman

The Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts in Winston Salem, NC has become a repository for furniture made by southern craftsmen before 1820. MESDA is also assembling a data base of eastern NC craftsmen, according to Sally Gant, Education Director. At the August, 2001 meeting of TRC, Sally discussed the museum's search for examples of furniture made in the South and showed slides of various pieces, including a desk made by Lewis Bond (b. c1895?-d. 1858) of



Walnut desk by Lewis Bond, 1815

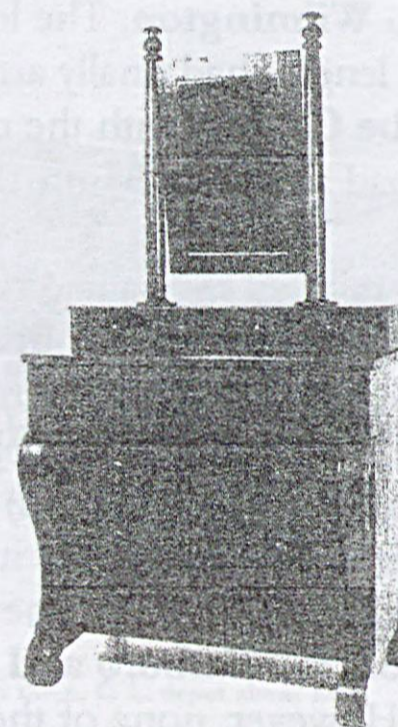
Tarboro, Edgecombe Co, NC.

Lewis Bond (m1 Sidney Nelson Bond, m2 Mary Elizabeth Norman Bond) is first identified by a signed desk made in Greenville, Pitt Co., NC in 1815. By 1820, he had set up shop in Tarboro, reporting on the 1820 census of manufacturers that he annually used 250 ft. of mahogany, 300 ft. of walnut, 400 ft. of birch, 200 ft. of maple, and 700 ft. of pine, at a total materials cost of \$110. At that time, he had 2 employees—a man and a boy. He produced sideboards from \$50-\$90, desks from \$25-\$30, bureaus from \$28-45, and "various other articles."

Apprentice records show that Lewis Bond trained at least 5 others in cabinetmaking: William Randolph, James Redmond, Daniel Redmond, Robert W. Gwaltney, and Henry Snode Little. Bond's account book of 1830-31 indicates that he produced 70 articles of furniture, including coffins, china presses, dining tables, sideboards, and bedsteads. In an 1827 ad, he said he would "execute his work faithfully, of good materials, and in New-York or English Style, ..." He also offered "Rush-bottom & Stool Chairs, ... large Window Glass, ... Sacking and Cot bottoms, best Copal varnish, and sundry articles of Hardware ..."

Francis L. Bond (b. 1820-d. 1890), son of Lewis, also produced

furniture in Tarboro, as well as in Goldsboro and Johnston Co. An advertisement claims: "A careful observer of passing events who keeps the run of affairs says that a[t] F.L. Bond's Furniture Store you may get good & as cheap articles as you can buy anywhere." Francis often visited NY to keep current on the styles and to purchase materials. He also imported furniture from there. He left a number of papers including an itinerary for a trip to NY, petitions to the NC Legislature, furniture sketches, notes and drawings of inventions, the "Rules & regulation for F.L. Bond's Cabinet Shop," and formulas for varnishes and furniture polish.



Chest of Drawers, by Francis Bond, 1839

HALLEY, CONT. FROM P. 1 Johnston. The book once belonged to Nathan P. Daniel, an early merchant at Stantonsburg on Contentnea Creek in southeastern Wilson County. The *Tarborough Free Press*, Nov. 15, 1833, also carried a description of the phenomenon:

"Early Wednesday morning last, several of our citizens were roused from their slumber to witness an extraordinary phenomenon. It bore the resemblance of stars "shooting

madly from their spheres," and in such numbers in some directions as to resemble flakes of snow—commencing about two hours before day and continuing until broad daylight. They did not appear to be all one size—some were larger than others, and left a streak of fire behind them which was visible for some time. It was not confined to any particular part of the firmament, but extended in every direction. This singular, and so far as we have heard, unprecedented circumstance, has set most of

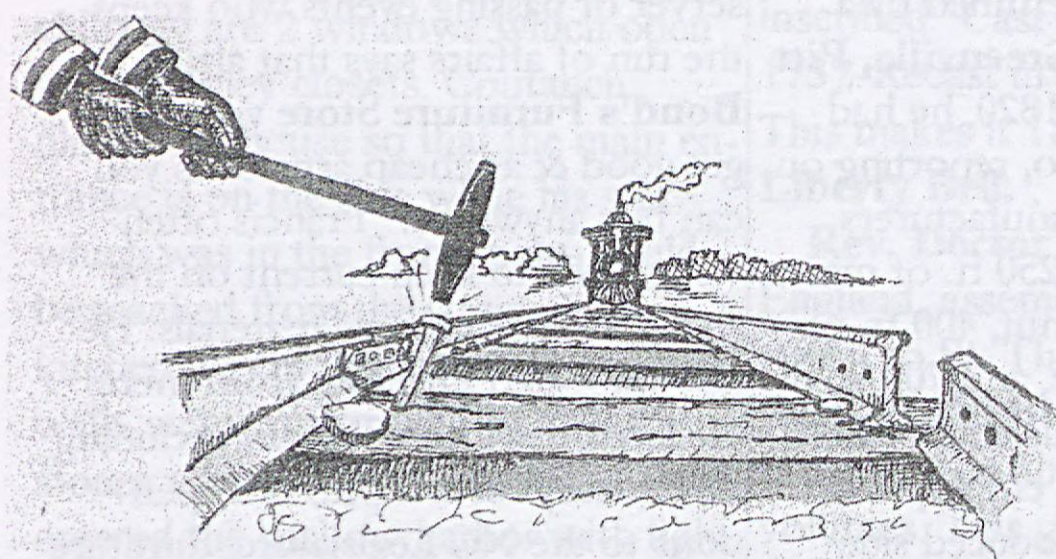
our people *wondering*, and excited in no small degree the fears of the superstitious."

[From Halley's Comet," an article by Hugh Johnston]



The Tarboro Branch Line

By BOB COOKE



Picture from *East Carolina Railway* by Capt. Henry Bridgers

The first bales of cotton, 99 of them, were sent over the **Tarboro** branch of the **Wilmington and Weldon** railroad in August, 1860. Most of the cotton (73 bales) went north to **Petersburg, VA** while the remainder went to **Wilmington**. The long-hoped for railroad, 18 miles in length, had finally arrived, connecting the **Edgecombe Co.** seat with the main line of the **Wilmington** road at **Rocky Mount**. It had been a long time coming!

As the railroad mania had swept through the country in the 1830s, **North Carolina** was no exception. That decade saw the incorporation of several roads, including the **Wilmington and Weldon**, the **Raleigh and Gaston**, and later (in the 1840s) the **North Carolina** road. **Edgecombe County** had its share of plans for railroads as well; in 1831, it was the **Tarboro and Hamilton**. By 1852, the **Tarboro and Enfield** road was discussed. However, none of these reached fruition.

It was not until the late 1850s, when railroads and steamboats were in fierce competition for passengers, that a line from **Rocky Mount** to **Tarboro** was examined by the Directors of the **W&W**. They realized the need for a waterborn-connection to compete with that of the **Norfolk** lines.

The President of the **W&W** at that time was **William S. Ashe**, who was not only a consummate politician, but also an astute businessman. The year 1858 had been a disappointing one for the company. It had barely recovered from the economic downturn from the prior year when "through travel," whereby a passenger could purchase a ticket in **NY** and go all the way down the eastern seaboard to **FL** had fallen apart. In addition, steamboat lines had lowered their rates drastically and had siphoned customers from the railroads.

Ashe had already begun regular freight runs, by

steamer, between **Wilmington** and **NY** and now looked at other ways to increase revenue. He had several options; one was to build a line from **Enfield, NC** to **Suffolk, VA**. Another was to purchase a controlling interest in the **Seaboard and Roanoke** road, which ran from **Weldon, NC** to **Portsmouth, VA**. A third alternative was to build a track from **Rocky Mount**, on the main line, to the town of **Tarboro**, on the **Tar River**. This would give Ashe what he sought, "an independent outlet to the **Chesapeake Bay** and the Ocean."

In 1859, a survey was done, with the cost initially estimated at \$125,000. It was felt there would be enough interest from the citizens along the proposed route to cover that amount, but initial subscriptions were slow in coming. It was not until the Board of Directors sweetened the pot a little by allowing contributors to become full-fledged stockholders in the **W&W** and by giving them additional dividends, that the books began to fill up. One of the earliest backers of the branch was **Robert R. Bridgers**, a state legislator from **Tarboro**, who would, in 1865, become President of the railroad. It is interesting to note that **Bridgers** owned but one share, \$100 worth, of **W&W** stock, but invested \$6,000 in the **Tarboro** line. Other major contributors, with fifty shares each, were **Bridgers'** brother, **John, William S. Battle** and **J.J.W. Powell**. All were from **Tarboro** as were most of the other investors, but **Raleigh, Wilmington** and **Petersburg** were represented also. There were 1,243 shares subscribed to, which, if all subscribers paid up, amounted to \$124,300.

Branch Road Completed in 1860

Work commenced with the survey, as contracts were sought for the grading and laying of the rails. Late in 1859, a contract for the work was awarded to a local **Tarboro** company, **Bissett & Birchett**, and advertisements were placed for the hiring of laborers. At its peak, there were about one hundred and sixty workers., many likely slave laborers hired out to the railroad by their owners.

The **W&W** Company did not make the same mistake made when the main line was constructed. The first rails laid then were "strap" rail, which wore out quickly and required replacement within 5 or 6 years. They now used the new "T" rail, which could hold up for a longer period. The rails for the new road came from England, in 3 shipments, totaling almost 1,000 tons. This would indicate a light 30-pound rail, common for the time. It would support the light motive power then in use, but would later require replacement as locomotive engines became more powerful (and heavier!)

It was hoped that the work could be completed by

BRANCH, CONT. NEXT PAGE

July 4th, 1860 in time for a double celebration. In March the *Tarboro Southerner* reported: "We had the pleasure of seeing **S.L. Fremont, Esq.** and **Mr. H. Macrae** in our town, ... from whom we learned that the work on our **Branch Rail** road was satisfactorily progressing, and sanguine hopes are entertained of completing it to this town by the 1st July next."

First Train Arrives in Tarboro

It was not to be. The first train, with conductor **R.A. Watson**, ran to Tarboro on August 1, where it was greeted by local agent **Theo. O'Berry** and a crowd of well-wishers. There was still a lot of work to be done. The bridge across the Tar River was not finished and the depot buildings still awaited the carpenter's hammer. The lack of a bridge delayed the laying of the track on the other side of the river, where it was to be extended for a few miles, and later the outbreak of the Civil War would render such exertions vain. Indeed, it is likely that any rail that had been placed across the river was taken up and used on the main line, as those rails wore out under the wartime strain.

The trains that ran over the Branch were combination passenger and freight trains. The engine with its tender, passenger and boxcars rolled out of the Rocky Mount depot at 7 a.m., with a stop at **Hartsboro (Heartsease)**, and continued on to Tarboro. Trains ran about 20 mph and, depending on the amount of freight to be picked up, the trip was usually a short one. Another train, which left at 7 p.m., carried the **U.S. mail**, every day except Sunday.

Branch Road in War Time

The Tarboro line was expected to pay for itself as well as increase revenue for the company. As the net profit in its first months was \$1,239, that proved to be the case. The road would also prove to be a boon for the **Confederate** war effort, as it was a brand new road and would stand up to the demands of heavy military traffic. As there were **Federal** raiding parties sent out from **New Bern** on several occasions during the war, the road was used to shuttle soldiers to and from the danger. In July, 1863, a contingent of the **Tenth Regiment** was aboard a train on the Branch line, returning from a false report of a **Yankee** raid. "When half the distance from Tarboro to Rocky Mount, the breaking of an axle of the tender caused a terrible accident, which would have proved fatal indeed but for the promptness and cool courage of **Mr. James Knight**, one of the oldest and most experienced engineers of the [road], who was in charge of the train"

Instead of jumping from the cab, as many engineers would have done, "Captain" Knight stayed with the en-

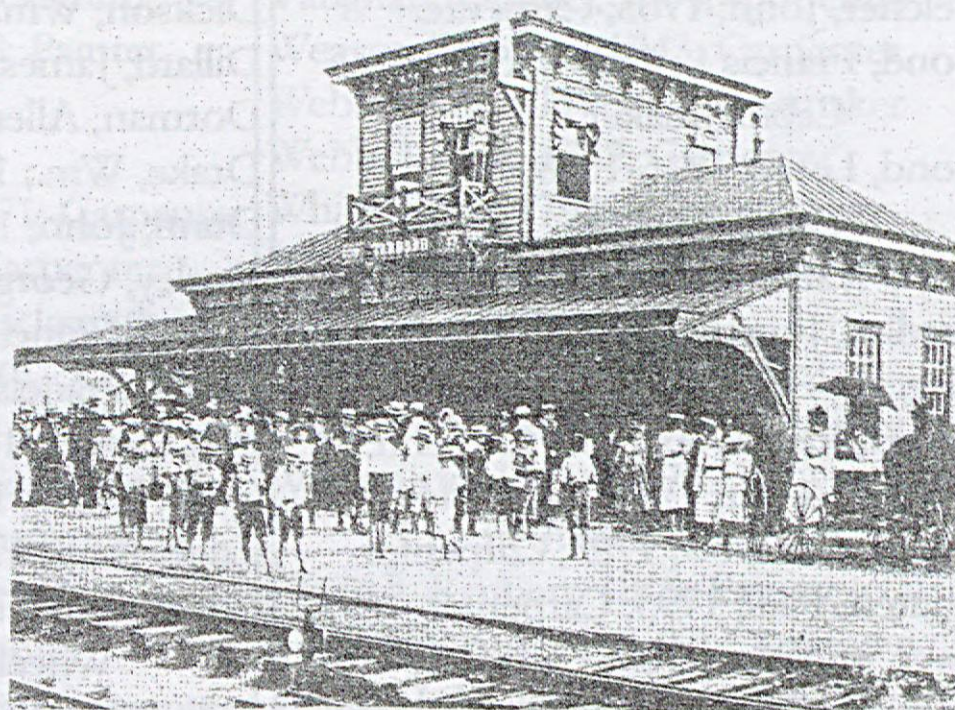
gine, throwing the gear into reverse. The engine and several flatcars loaded with troops went off the track, but miraculously, no one was killed, although many were severely injured. Within minutes, the mail train from Tarboro appeared and halted. The conductor insisted on the importance of the mail and refused to take any of the wounded aboard. It was only when Knight reasoned with the man (and probably told him that the soldiers would only seize the train if he continued to refuse their pleas) that he relented and allowed the wounded to be brought back to Tarboro, where medical assistance from the Confederate hospital was obtained.

After the war, the W&W was in desperate straits financially. Control of the road left local stockholders' hands and was taken over by different interests. The W&W would rebound and, led by Robert Bridges, would become the **Atlantic Coast Line**.

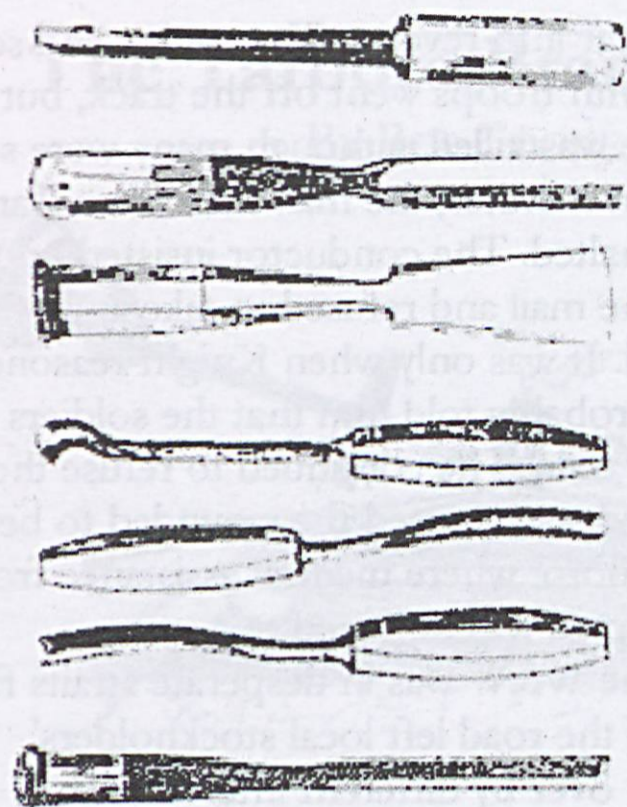
[See List of Subscribers to Stock, Page 17]



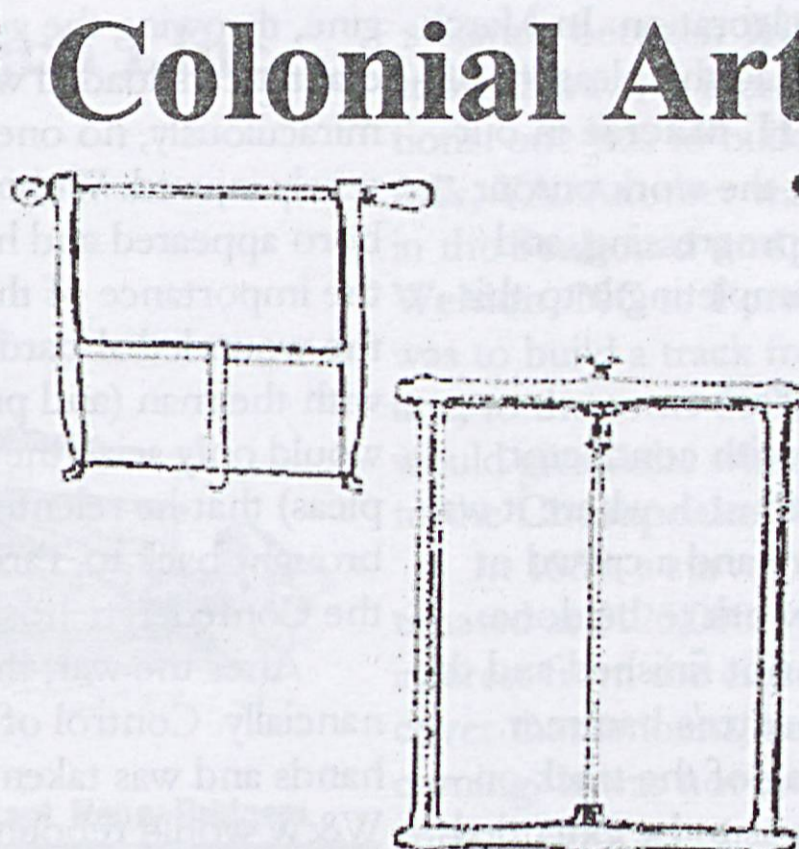
Both courtesy Mabrey Bass, Jr.
Scenes around the A. C. L. depot about 1895



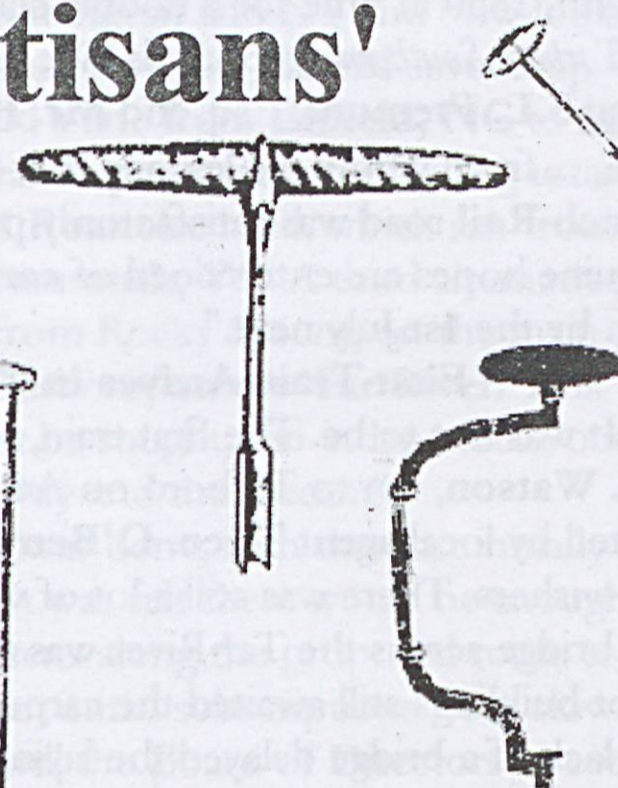
Taken from East Carolina Railway by Capt. Henry C. Bridges



Chisels, Bruzzes and Gouges



Bow Saw & Fellow Saw



Augers, Gimlets & Braces

Colonial Artisans'

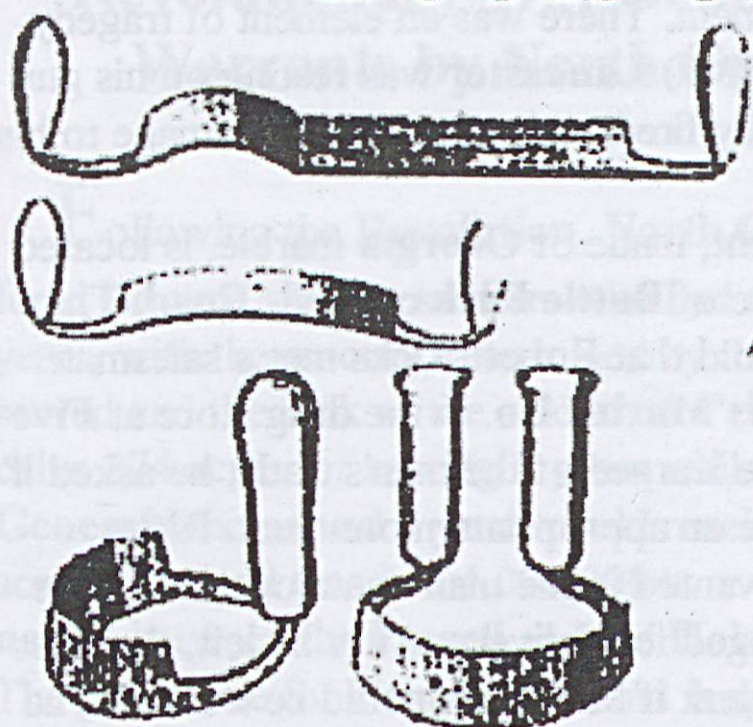
Early Edgecombe

Allen (Slave); 1818; Carpenter
 Allen, David; 1773; Wheelwright
 Alsobrook, Jos; 1790-1805;
 Chairmaker
 Andrews, Benj; 1764; Wheelwright
 Andrews, Jesse; 1811; Master builder
 Archer, William; 1791; Silversmith
 Balfour, Wm; 1793-1800;
 Cabinetmaker
 Barnes Britain; 1780; Turner
 Batchelor, Alex; 1789; Carpenter
 Batchelor, Wm; 1789; Carpenter
 Belcher, George; 1749; Carpenter
 Belcher, John; 1765; Carpenter
 Bond, Francis L; 1836-1839;
 Cabinetmaker
 Bond, Lewis; 1815-1858;
 Cabinetmaker
 Boyl, Watson; 1798; Carpenter
 Bradley, Jonathan; 1799; Wheelwright
 Briggs, Benj; 1783; Carpenter
 Briggs, Joel; 1780-1783; Carpenter
 Briggs, Joyner; 1783; Carpenter
 Briggs, Matthew; 1783; Carpenter
 Bunten, Paul; 1793; Carpenter
 Cane, William; 1763; Carpenter
 Carlile, Robert; 1808; Wheelwright
 Carlisle, Joseph; 1819; Chairmaker
 Cary, John R.; 1815; Carpenter
 Clark, Henry; 1773; Wheelwright

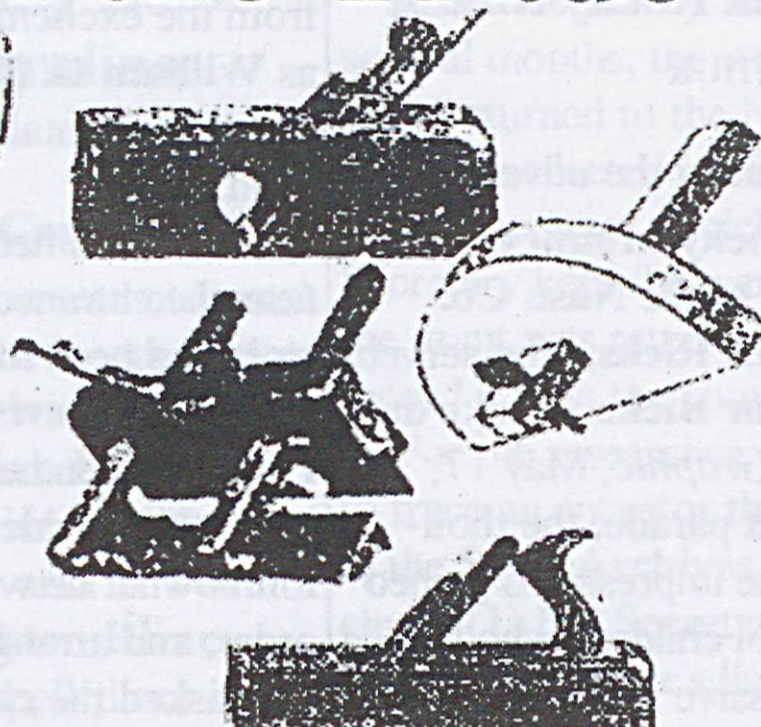
Clerk, John; 1742; Carpenter
 Coleman, Stephen; 1784; Carpenter
 Connor, James; 1750; Surveyor
 Cooper, Thomas; 1793; Carpenter
 Cravey, James; 1769; Brass Founder
 Crockat, William; 1814-1815' Coach
 Trimmer/Silver Plater
 Crowell, Edward; 1747; Carpenter
 Crowell, John; 1736; Joiner
 Daniel; 1805; Joiner
 Darnel, James; 1783; Silversmith
 Deaver, Thomas; 1793-1799;
 Carpenter
 Dickson, Wm.; 1796; Turner
 Dillard, James; 1799; Cabinetmaker
 Dorman, Allen; 1788; Carpenter
 Drake, Wm.; 1783; Silversmith
 Dunn, John; 1793; Joiner
 Durley, George W.; 1819; Carpenter
 Duval, Francis; 1810; Carpenter
 Duval, Francis; 1810; Chairmaker
 Ealy (Slave); 1800; Carpenter
 Edge, James; 1783; Wheelwright
 Edge, John; 1787; Turner
 Edwards, Ethelred; 1897;
 Wheelwright
 Faill, John; 1733; Cabinetmaker
 Farmer, Joseph; 1794; Chairmaker
 Gainer, John; 1790; Cabinetmaker
 Garland, Joseph; 1749; Carpenter

Gay, Abner; 1807; Wheelwright
 George (Slave); 1816; Bricklayer
 Gore, Richard; 1767; Carpenter
 Grantham, Jesse; 1803; Carpenter
 Gray, Benj.; 1805; Carpenter
 Green, James; 1747; Bricklayer
 Grimes, Wm. L.; 1807-08; Coach or
 Riding Chairmaker
 Hodge, Anthony; 1808; Coachmaker
 Hodges, Anthony; 1811; Coach or
 Riding Chairmaker
 Horn, Hardy; 1807; Carpenter
 Humphrey, Benj; 1794; Carpenter
 Jenkins, James; 1733; Joiner
 Jenkins, Thomas; 1733; Joiner
 Jewell, Thomas; 1793; Carpenter
 Johnson, John; 1769; Wheelwright
 Johnson, Joshua; 1765; Carpenter
 Jones, John; 1789; Carpenter
 Jones, Wallis; 1742; Carpenter
 Kelley, John; 1775; Carpenter
 Knight, Jesse; 1816; Carpenter
 Lawrence, Jeremiah; 1815; Carpenter
 Lee, James; 1810-12; Carpenter
 Lee, Stephen; 1793-94; Carpenter
 Long, William; 1804; Carpenter
 Lowry, Thomas; 1784-88; Carpenter
 Manning, Joel; 1818; Painter
 Marks, Thomas; 1804; Carpenter

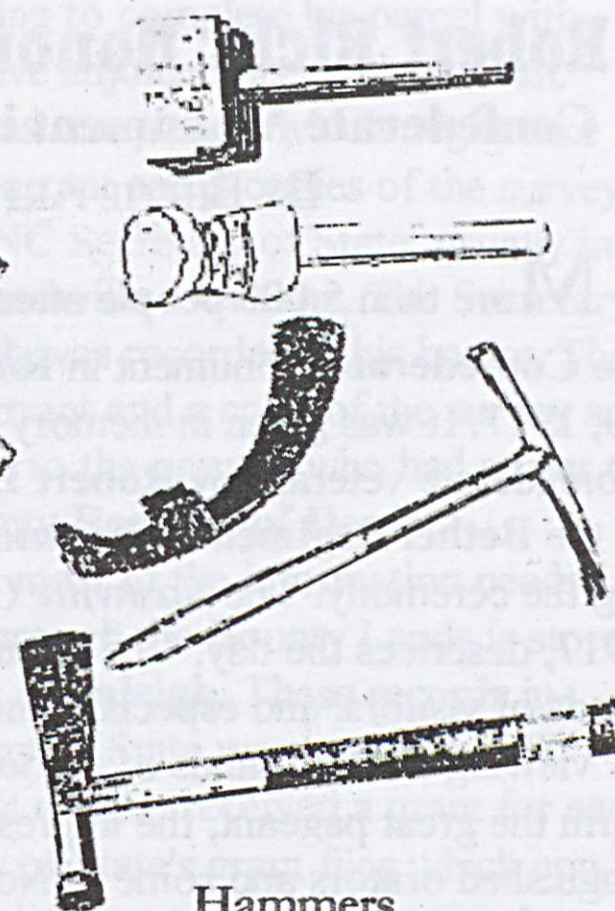
Tools of the Trade



Draw Knives and Spokes Shaves



Planes



Hammers

County Craftsmen

Maud, Daniel; 1795; Carpenter
 McWilliams & Grimes; 1807; Coach
 or Riding Chairmaker
 McWilliams, George; 1817-20; Coach
 or riding chairmaker
 Moore, Alfred; 1817; Wheelwright
 Moore, Joseph; 1750; Silversmith
 Morgan, John; 1803; Carpenter
 Mosley, David; 1808; Carpenter
 Moses (Slave); 1818; Blacksmith
 Newton, Philip; 1793; Carpenter
 Norris, Robert; 1810; Carpenter
 Owen, Charles; 1793; Carpenter
 Palmer, Francis; 1763; Carpenter
 Parker, John; 1782; Carpenter
 Parker, Michael; 1803; Carpenter
 Parker, Weeks; 1814-1844;
 Cabinetmaker
 Parker, Willis; 1819; Chairmaker
 Pass, John Hunt; 1795; Carpenter
 Payton, John Wood; 1810;
 Cabinetmaker
 Pender, Josiah Solomon; 1842-1860;
 Artist
 Perry, Patrick Keef; 1810-12;
 Carpenter
 Pinder, Ridley; 1797-98;
 Cabinetmaker
 Pitman, Briton; 1796; Turner
 Pitman, Thomas; 1793; Carpenter

Pitts, Walter; 1755; Carpenter
 Pope, Thomas; 1758; Carpenter,
 Wheelwright
 Price, Benj; 1799; Carpenter
 Price, Mack; 1797; Carpenter
 Proctor, Jesse; 1783-87; Wheelwright
 Prosser, James; 1780; Turner
 Purkins, Wm.; 1757; Carpenter
 Randolph, Wm.; 1821; Cabinetmaker
 Rawlings, Benj.; 1738; Surveyor
 Register, Wm.; 1764; Wheelwright
 Reilley, John; 1808; Wheelwright
 Riche, Richard; 1756; Carpenter
 Roberts, Wm.; 1755; Blacksmith
 Robinson, Malachi; 1818; Painter
 Ross, John; 1788-1805;
 Cabinetmaker
 Sandeford, Tomkins; 1771; Carpenter
 Sannet, Richard; 1794; Carpenter
 Scoggins, John; 1756; Blacksmith
 Simmons, James E.; 1850;
 Cabinetmaker
 Simpson, James; 1810; Carpenter
 Simpson, Wm.; 1810; Chairmaker
 Smith, Basil; 1816; Carpenter
 Smith, Basil; 1804; Carpenter
 Smith, Lawrence; 1789-92; Carpenter
 Smith, Radford; 1784; Carpenter
 Spell, George; 1772; Turner
 Spicer, William; 1748; Carpenter

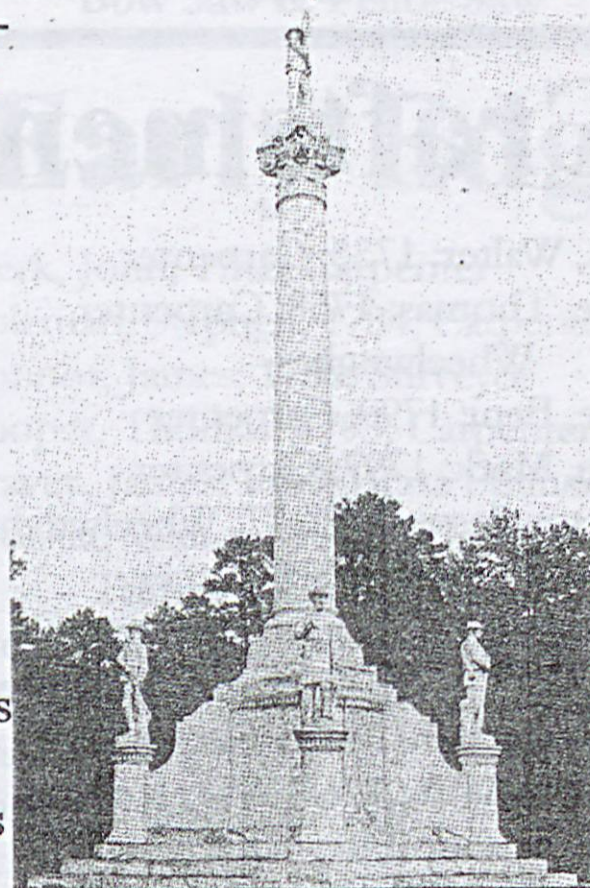
Stephenson, Francis; 1794; Carpenter
 Stewart, Wm.; 1799-1810;
 Cabinetmaker
 Stokes, Wm.; 1791; Turner
 Sumner, John; 1790-97; Turner,
 Cabinetmaker, Chairmaker
 Taylor, James; 1769; Wheelwright
 Thigpen, Reuben; 1810; Carpenter
 Turner, James; 1792; Carpenter
 Turner, John; 1798-1800;
 Cabinetmaker
 Uvale, Wm.; 1743; Blacksmith
 Varden, John; 1817; Cabinetmaker
 Vaughan, Lemuel; 1804; Carpenter
 Weaver, Stephen; 1743; Carpenter
 Webb, James; 1798; Cabinetmaker
 Webb, Josiah; 1782; Carpenter
 White, Wm.; 1793; Cabinetmaker
 Whitehouse, John; 1791; Silversmith
 Williams, Howell;
 Williams, Leon; 1774; Carpenter
 Williams, William; 1767; Carpenter
 Williamson, Henry; 1793;
 Cabinetmaker
 Worrell, Reuben; 1818; Painter
 York, Edward; 1805-07; Carpenter
 Young, John; 1757; Carpenter

Robert Ricks Honors Comrades Confederate Monument in Rocky Mount

BY BETTIE ARTHUR

More than 5,000 people attended the unveiling of the Confederate monument in Rocky Mount on May 10, 1917. It was given in memory of the Nash Co. Confederate veterans by Robert H. Ricks, who served in the Bethel Regiment. Governor Bickett spoke during the ceremony. The *Nashville Graphic*, May 17, 1917, describes the day: "the great parade, the thousands of visitors, and especially the impressions gained by viewing the thousands of school children who helped form the great pageant, the impressive speeches by distinguished orators and some of North Carolina's most gifted daughters; the patriotic songs rendered and the soul-stirring and inspiring music rendered by the Second Regiment band." Many veterans were in attendance.

Mary Needham provided this first hand account: "I was in grammar school. All the schools closed and the students marched from Edgemont School [later Gorham School, now the Judicial Center]. All the girls wore middy blouse outfits and the boys wore outfits similar to the veterans. There was much pageantry and music. Several young ladies sang solos. All the students carried flowers to be strewn around the



monument." During the day guns were fired on both sides of the Tar River. Several young ladies fainted from the excitement. There was an element of tragedy as William H. (Bill) Lancaster was resting on his gun and it accidentally fired, doing permanent damage to his hand.

The monument, made of Georgia marble, is located near the entrance of Battle Park on Falls Road. The story has been told that Robert Ricks met a salesman with the Roberts Marble Co. in the drug store at Five Points. When he learned of the man's trade, he asked if he could provide an appropriate monument. Ricks found what he wanted in the man's catalog, placed the order, and arranged for delivery. After he left, the salesman asked the clerk if Mr. Ricks could be trusted. The clerk replied, "If Mr. Ricks ordered it, I would recommend your shipping it."

In 1921, nineteen trees were planted around the monument. Each tree had a marker with a man's name, rank and the name of the person giving the tree. These were: Lt. John Manning Battle, Wm. L. Braswell, Claudy G. Champion, W.R. Coleman, W.C. Culpepper, Parrot F. Daniels, William A. Jordan, Roscoe Dwight Matthews, James C. Moses (Moss), Homer Stonewall Proctor, Capt. Gray Sills, Fred Skipper, Henry W. Swanson, James B. Vester, Edward Pitt, John N. Wilder, C.L. Barnes (Charles L. Merton), _____ Deans, _____ Williams.

Rocky Mount Underground

In its earliest days, the Five Points and the cemetery areas of Rocky Mount were a swamp drained by Cowlick or Horne's Creek. Richard Horne had a patent of 640 acres near its mouth on Tar River in 1743. On the south, Rocky Mount lies on the edge of Cokey Swamp which drains into Town Creek. The ditch at Braswell Park, between the old and the new Braswell Memorial Library, was known as Ricks'

Branch or Dupree's Branch and in the early 1900s, before the streets were paved, was deep enough to swim in.

As Rocky Mount grew up around the depot before the Civil War, large canals were dug to drain the area. These canals are mentioned frequently in deeds of that day. On March 18, 1851, Gray Armstrong sold to W.E. and C.W. Spicer for \$1200 a lot at Rocky Mount Depot on which a saloon was erected, "beginning along a ditch to the mouth of another ditch."

A well-known saloon named Hunter's stood on the site of May & Gorham's Drug Store and was

approached by a bridge over the canal. One evening several citizens were playing cards in the saloon and indulging freely in the bottle at the same time. A water moccasin crawled in from the ditch and for a while passed unnoticed, no one caring to admit that his potations had carried him to the point of seeing snakes. However, there was a general rout when the snake started up the chair of one of the card players.

Toward 1890 these canals began to be replaced by large culverts.

[Taken From "I'm Thinking," by An Old Reporter, *Evening Telegram*, Sept. 28, 1955]

Search & Research

Revolutionary War Bounty Land Warrants by North Carolina

BY DR. BRUCE PRUITT

Following the Revolution, North Carolina offered Bounty Land to soldiers who had served at least 2 years, with the amount determined by the length of time served and the rank of the soldier. A **Private** might receive 274 acres for serving 3 years while a **Brigadier General** who served 7 years could receive 12,000 acres. The land was in a 4,000,000 acre area of Tennessee between the **Powell** and the **Holston Rivers**. The procedure for claiming the land is spelled out in Chapter 3 of the 1783 laws: (1) apply to **Secretary of State** for a warrant; (2) take the warrant to TN and find vacant land; (3) record the "location" of the land in the **Nashville, TN** office; (4) have the land surveyed; (5) grant issued by NC Secretary of State; and (6) the state pays the surveyor in "rights" to land for himself. This means the soldier received the land with no cost or fees.

Beginning Oct. 11, 1784, the state issued 6,360 warrants to veterans of the war. These warrants mention the name and, usually, the rank of each former soldier along with the number of acres. It does not, however, describe the land or show the company and regiment in which the soldier served. Most warrants were issued to soldiers who requested them and who appear on the muster roll. However, a few were issued when a former officer requested the warrants based on the officer's own muster roll. Most of the latter warrants are probably correct; however, the researcher should be wary of such statements signed by **John Medearis** or **Gee Bradley** or warrants involving **William Terrell**, **Stockley Donelson**, and a few others, as they were not always legitimate. The warrants were often sold one or more times because some veterans, particularly privates, didn't want to move to TN. There was fraud involved in some of these sales and the researcher needs to scrutinize the transactions carefully.

When warrantees reached TN, they were allowed to find vacant land anywhere in the military district, sometimes assisted by a surveyor who would later survey the property. The location was recorded in the military land office in Nashville and the descriptions are usually vague. As was almost certain to happen, there was sometimes an overlap of two claims which resulted in

the later claimant having to complete his parcel with land that might not have adjoined his original claim.

Once the survey was completed, which might take several months, the warrant and 2 copies of the survey were returned to the NC Secretary of State, usually in batches collected in Nashville over time. The Secretary issued the grant, which was recorded in his books. The Secretary kept the warrant and a copy of the survey and the grant was returned to the grantee who had a year to record it with the county **Register of Deeds**.

For the researcher, most of the information needed to trace an ancestor through the Bounty Lands is stored at the **State Archives in Raleigh**. These records include: (1) NC Secretary of State warrant book; (2) Secretary of State's list of who received a grant for each warrant; (3) Secretary of State's grant files which contain loose warrants and surveys along with some letters about grants and other items; (4) reports of 2 Boards of Inquiry and a book about a fraud trial in which 5 men were tried; (5) legislative papers which contain laws and reports; (6) Governor's papers which contain letters to the governor by people involved in the bounty warrants; (7) estate files for some of the people involved; and (8) petitions for bounty land warrants. The **Southern Historical Collection at Chapel Hill** has a small collection of loose warrants and other papers.

[Braswell Memorial Library has recently acquired Dr. Pruitt's 7 volume *Tennessee Land Entries* and his 5 volume *Glasgow Land Fraud Papers*.]



(Form E)	Raleigh and Gaston Railroad Co.,
	Littleton Depot, Feb 6 th 1871
RECEIVED of	J. R. B. Reid
	1 Bale of Cotton
410	in good order
Marked	J. R. Reid
To be sent to	Petersburg
	E. J. Johnston, Agent.
Raleigh & Gaston Railroad Receipt J. R. B. Reid, 410 lb. Bale of Cotton To be sent to Petersburg, VA	

Travel in the Early Days — Tar River Highway

In the infant days of the settlement of the Tar River Basin, hardy folk inched into the interior by the river and creek highways. Most of the first comers traveled up the Pamticough [Pamlico] Sound and River and made homes in the lower portion of the Tar's basin. John Lawson visited the upper reaches of the Tar at the turn of the 18th century. Passing through present day Edgecombe and Pitt Counties, he commented on the thickness of the Indian [Tuscarora] towns and plantations. Below what is now Greenville [Pitt Co], he noted "the long, ragged moss on the trees, which we have not seen for 600 miles."

The pioneers gradually moved upriver; not even the bloody Tuscarora War stopped them. [See "Tuscarora Indian Massacre", *The Connector*, Winter, 2001.] In 1707, Robert Kingman was granted 500 acres at "the Fork of the Pamticough" near what is now Washington in Beaufort Co. In 1714, Lewis Duvall was the first settler to patent land in what is now Pitt Co. Other early settlers included Edward Salter, Lewis Duvall, George Moye, John Simpson, James Gorham, Capt. John Spier, John Hardee, Thomas Tyson, Robert Williams, James Thigpen, Thomas Elliott, Paul Palmer, James Anderson, Francis Branch, Samuel Spruill, James Long, Thomas Hawkins, William Burgiss, and William Arrenton.

From the beginning, pioneers exported their products down river. Some of the most important were tar, naval stores, lumber, tobacco and provisions. [See "Tar and Turpentine", *The Connector*, Winter, 1998]

Tobacco was an extremely important commodity. In 1735, more than 1,000 hogsheads were floated downstream. But even at this early time, so much inferior tobacco was being shipped as "good" tobacco that the assembly authorized the establishment of warehouses for its inspection—one at Bath and another at Red Banks. Later inspection places included Spier's Tavern, Grist's, Tranter's Creek, Chocowinity, Congleton's Blount's Creek, Mill's, Salter's, Durham Creek, and South Dividing Creek.

The tobacco inspectors were well paid at £40 and money and trade followed the inspectors. Handling tobacco became big business and farmers who grew it and others involved in its processing and trade prospered. The weed was even used as currency during the Revolution. As trade flourished, more wharves were built to facilitate the shipment of goods downstream. However,

the good times didn't last. The value of tobacco decreased after the Revolution—England was no longer a buyer—and Tar River Basin farmers turned to cotton.

The government recognized the Tar's value as a transportation artery and, in 1743, commissioners were appointed "to make, mend, and repair all bridges, cuts, and water courses." Appointed to tend the north side of the river were Seth Pilkington, George Moye, Sr., William Mace, John Burney, and James Barrow. The south side commissioners were Edward Salter, Thomas Tyson and John Hardee. In 1752, the job was altered to include clearing rivers and creeks for navigation.

Nearly all travel was by water, and most families owned some kind of boat. Canoes were popular and many were equipped with oars, sails, and even awnings. The transportation of livestock and goods from one plantation to another or to market required scows, flatboats and perriaugers.

Although the General Assembly in 1764 gave county courts full power to appoint and settle ferries, lay out public roads and build bridges, the counties could not fulfill their duties and roads remained poor until well into the 1800s. Diaries and journals of various early travelers take note of the unsatisfactory roads, as well as the inferior inn accommodations.

Places along the river took their names from a variety of sources and Edgecombe, Pitt, and Beaufort names were typical. Churches gave names to places like Chapel Spring where the first Church of England Chapel was built in Edgecombe Co. The seine holes where planters caught shad, herring, rock and sturgeon gave names to Pope's Hole, Collins' Hole, Crockett's Hole, Toole's Hole, and Dickens' Hole. Shiloh, part of Lawrence Toole's plantation in the 1700s, was a major stopping place in later days. In 1756, a warehouse for the inspection of tobacco was built at Tarboro, an important shipping point. Below Tarboro was Staton Landing where large quantities of freight were taken from boats and loaded on wagons to be carried to upper Edgecombe. Old Sparta has been referred to as "the first place settled on the river," and just a little downstream was Carr's Landing, a part of the Bracebridge Hall plantation.

Further down the river were Penny Hill, named for a "free woman of color" who sold tobacco; Dupree's Landing; Falkland, also known as Tobacco Patch, Williams Landing or Pillsboro; Bensborough, home

SEE RIVER, PAGE 19

What was the Punishment? Common Law

Our early laws were taken from England's common law, much of which was barbaric. When the NC Constitutions was adopted, there were more than 50 offenses punishable by death—including burning at the stake! Every county had its pillory, stocks and whipping post. The ducking stool was used occasionally for those convicted of being "scolds."

Common punishments included branding, ear cropping, tongue slitting, and other such forms of mutilation. Judge Archibald D. Murphey, father of our public school system, was subjected to imprisonment for inability to pay his debts! "Forty lashes, well laid on" was often the punishment for women as well as men. "Convicts were herded into county prisons where they lived under conditions of indescribable filth, and where there was not even any provision made for heating their prisons until after the close of the Civil War."

It was not until 1911 that married women were placed on the same footing as unmarried women. Before that, a married woman could not enter into a contract,

and a common clause was "shall not apply to infants, idiots, lunatics and married women." Before the Civil War, a man had the legal right to inflict corporal punishment on his wife as long as the switch he used was no larger than his thumb—and some husbands had extra big thumbs!

In the middle 1800s, an act was passed making it a felony to possess a copy of Hinton Rowan Helper's book, *The Impending Crisis*, in which he advocated the abolition of slavery. A minister convicted under this law managed to avoid imprisonment only by forfeiting his bail and fleeing to the north. In 1875, there were still 17 offenses punishable by death. The defendant was not allowed to testify in his own behalf as everyone knew he would commit perjury. The only alternatives in a murder trial were murder in the first degree or not guilty. This led to many verdicts of "not guilty" because jurors were not willing to sentence some defendants to death.

[From "The Old Common Law" by R.C. Lawrence, *State Magazine*]



How Big?

TAR RIVER AREA SUBSCRIBERS TO THE STOCK IN THE

TARBORO' BRANCH RAIL ROAD

Benjamin Batts	Erastus Cherry	W T Gay	James F Jenkins	Wm D Mercer	James Stallings
Wm. G. Baggs & Co,	S T Cherry	Patsey D Gray	Lewis Joyner	Joohn Norfleet	William J Staton
Batgtle Bryan	C C Cherry	Hoskins & Bowditch	J W Jones	R Norfleet	Henry L Staton
H B Bryan	James Carney	William Harrell	Joshua Killebrew	Thos Norfleet	Elizabeth Shurley
J K Bullock	P P Clements	J A Hicks	James W Knight	Thomas Oberly	F J Stewart
Rain Y Co	Henry B Cherry	Jessee Harrell	Coffield King	W M Pippin	R A Savage
Gray S Brown	Wright Carney	David Hinton	C B Killebrew	Flavius A Pippin	J R Thigpen
William S Battle	William R Cox	G W Hammond	Jno W Knight	J W Pippin	William Thigpen
Thos P Braswell	A J Cotton	Almon Hart	Peter E Knight	Joseph H Pippin	William A Thigpen
B T Bochover	Mrs L P Cotton	Joseph H Hyman	John Knight, Jr	W W Parker	A M Thigpen
Kemp P Battle	Henry T Clark	Geo Howard	Jno A Knight	W E Pope	James Thigpen
Brown & McLean	R Chapman	Spencer L Hart	James L Long	Bennett P Pitt	Jordan Thigpen
R R Bridgers	W R Cherry	Brectain Howell	J L Lyon	J J W Powell	Kenneth Thigpen
David Barlow	Eaton Cobb	P Hanneburg	John H Leigh	R H Pender	Wright Wiggins
D W Bullock	L S Dunn	J L Horne	James R Legget	David Pender	R S Williams
J H Baker	C L Dicken	C H Jenkins	Whit P Lloyd	N J Pittman	John T Worrell
Gray Bryan	John L Dancey	Jno D Jenkins	Josh W Lloyd	Robert S Pitt	D Williams
Ethelred M Bryan	J H Daniel, Sr	W A Jones	Joseph J Lawrence	J L Pippin	A J M Whitehead
James L Battle	Richard Dunn	J M Jenkins	J S Loyd	Wm D Roberts & Co	R D Wimberly
John L Bridgers	R H Dicken	Calvin Jones	B T Lyon	James Reddick	Mayo Worsley
B B Barron	J A Englehard	F H Jenkins	W F Lewis	J M Robinson	Orren Williams
Elisha Cromwell	Peter Forbes	M G Jones	Dr Josiah Lawrence	W B Ricks	Mathew Weddell
David Cobb	W J Founvan	W H Johnson	John Lawrence	James M Redmond	Mrs E C Williams
			William S Long	Jesse Stancill	J A Williams
			Robert Lancaster	Lemuel L Savage	G W Whitfield
			Benj Mayo	Moses Smith	Wm Worsley, Jr
			Hugh McNair	William Simmons	John Warren
			John R Mercer	John F Speight	
			Jesse Mercer	James B Staton	

Tarboro Soldier Writes of WWI Action

A Rest Camp In France

Nov. 14th, 1918

My dear Mother and Father:

I have just sent you a cablegram today: "OVER THE TOP LAST SATURDAY WELL HAPPY RESTING" which I hope reached you by Sunday. And I am the happiest person in the world that I was able to send you such a message. We went over the top the morning of Nov. 9th under the screen of a heavy fog & we advanced 2 kilos before we came under enemy shell fire and machine gun fire, and from then on it was hell personified. Now I know what war is and its horrors, but more than that, I know that there is a God! Will you believe it when I say that old Co G came through without a casualty? Why, it's like a dream for we were all so close to death—just as close as one can imagine. Wish I could tell you in detail of the whole affair. I think I had best wait until I see you. No danger of my forgetting any part of those 2 days and nights.

Going back to where we were under enemy barrage—we advanced steadily and calmly. I think the world of my men for not a single man hesitated or disobeyed orders when I gave the signals to move forward. They moved right along with me like old timers and fortunately every halt we made we had excellent cover of little folds in the terrain, and it seemed that we moved at the right moment every time for no sooner than we advanced 25 or 50 yds, shells would fall just where we had been.

Well, the day was dark and night came on before 5 o'clock. We had moved forward in all about 4 kilometers and were close on the German emplacements. Under cover of darkness we "dug in" out there in NO MAN'S Land, and I'll never forget that cold night. Lt. Alexander's and my platoon were the 2 front line platoons to form the outpost for the night. We expected the Boche to send over patrols on us, but they didn't. About 4 A.M. Nov 10th we rec'd orders to move back 300 yds to a certain village. That was Sunday morning, and I had orders to occupy the

trench just outside this village and connect up with 2 platoons of another Co who held the right part of this trench system. So the OLD THIRD Platoon remained there all day Sunday without anything to eat. We were without food from Friday night until Sunday night. Much to my surprise a carrying party got to us Sunday night with Hot chow and shortly afterwards we were relieved by Capt. Drayton's Co. (he was my Lt at Oglethorpe training camp), and we rec'd orders to retire to the village; from there we hiked in a round about way to a neighboring front (all night forced march) where we were to support another battalion. We all expected to go driving that morning Nov. 11th but orders reached us just in time—to the effect that we remain in the dugouts in that village (Watronville) until 11 o'clock—owing to the fact that hostilities would cease at that time.

It was hard to believe, but sure enough at 11 o'clock Nov 11th all firing ceased. What a strange feeling it was to experience such a Calm after a raging Storm a few minutes before! Shortly afterwards we retired to where our rolling kitchens were. Such a sharp contrast it was—the night of the 10th and the morning of the 11th we could not have any lights not even cigarettes and after 11 o'clock the 11th there were dozens of bon-fires lighting the skies all around, and everybody was rejoicing.

Speaking of that night we spent out in No Man's Land, gee I'll never forget a minute of it, I was wet and so cold that from my waist down was almost numb. A heavy frost fell on us, and when I got up at 4 A.M. my raincoat

SEE LETTER, PAGE 19



Elmer Pittman, Wilson, NC left and James D. Hinton, Rocky Mount, NC right, on World War I tank at Fort Jackson, SC, ca 1917.

Picture Courtesy of NC Division of Archives and History

RIVER, CONT. FROM P. 16 of the Atkinson family [See A Step Back in Time", *The Connector*, Summer, 1997 and "Pitt, Edgecombe and Nash Counties in Dire Straits—Mrs. Atkinson Pleads for Help...", *The Connector*, Summer 1998]; **Center Bluff**, from where 13,000 bales of cotton were shipped in one year; **Reeves Landing, Bluebanks; Randles Barn; and Slaughter House Point**. Greenville, called by **George Washington** "a trifling place" was an important port along the Tar. [See "Geo. Washington's Southern Tour", *The Connector*, Spring, 1999.] Below it lay Red-banks; **Barber's Landing** and **John Simpson's Landing**. The river widened at **Great Bend**, lead-

ing to **Six Forks of the Tar** and **Washington**.

[Taken from "In Old Edgecombe," *Daily*

Southerner, Tarboro, NC, June 23, 1967 and "Tar River Winds ..." *News and Observer* [Raleigh], Dec. 7, 1967]



Tar River at Rocky Mount Mills, Island on left

LETTER, CONT. FROM PAGE 18

(trench coat) was as stiff as a piece of ice and all my equipment white with frost. O'Brien, my runner, slept in a hole with me. I dare say every man offered up a prayer of some kind that night, and the prayers of you loved ones helped too.

During the battle that day (9th) my mind was on the game but once while we remained in one position for 15 minutes (it seemed like days) and the shells were dropping so close I thought of Kipling's verse "Lord, God of hosts, be with us yet lest we forget, lest we forget"; that and one of my own prayers were on my lips. Machine gun bullets sizzled so close that they tore up the ground within a foot of the shell hole in which I was. It was some sensation. And the high explosive shells came with a noise as tho they were going to drop right on us and before we could enjoy the good feeling of hearing it burst some little distance away another one would come to counter act that good feeling. All my men were in the best spirits and after each shell burst close would hello to me to know if I was ok and vice versa. And after all we came out ok.

Capt Bill and I are together still. It is rather remark-

able that he, Alexander, Oats, and myself have been together in same company since Aug 19th 1917, and I hope to stay with him the remainder of my army career. He is truly a prince and loved and admired by all his men.

Wish I could tell you some things I have heard that came indirectly from prisoners etc. but I can't. But be assured that the war is over and that the Germans are only too glad to quit. They know what the American Spirit is now, and I trust that the cause for humanity for which we fought will bring good fruit. I hope to see a beautiful and constructive reaction after the war.

In Mother's letter of the 25th Oct which was rec'd today she spoke of the time when she would have all her family together again. Well, Mother dear, you won't have any trouble keeping me with you for awhile at least. I have three grand vivid pictures in my mind HELL, HEAVEN, and the third I will call the "RETURN" and I have the most beautiful picture of my return to you and my loved ones.

Well, I must be closing for this time.

Address APO 791

Your only son, Watson

[Letter from Watson Smoot of Tarboro, NC]

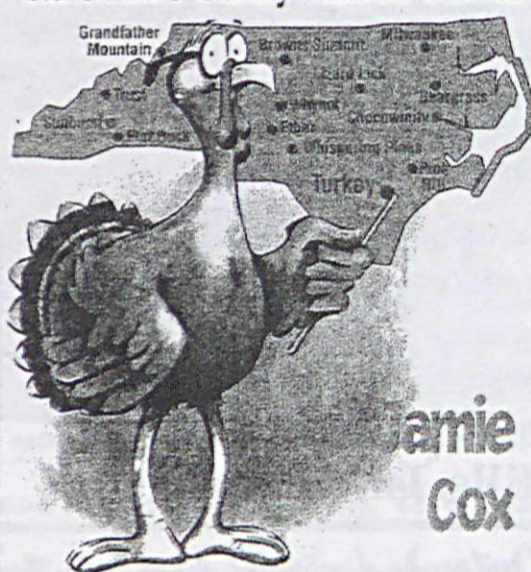
Reader's Choice

Local Color

Talking Turkey and Other Stories of North Carolina's Oddly Named Places by Jamie Cox, 2000.

Talking Turkey

And Other Stories of North Carolina's Oddly Named Places



What's in a name or as the author puts it, "No-one can accuse North Carolinians of being shy or stingy about identifying our own.....When we name a place, we just flat out up and call it like it is." Such was the case of **Dumpling Town** in **Halifax County**, and **Pigbasket Creek** in **Nash County** covered in earlier issues of *The Connector*.

Jamie Cox has whetted the appetite of the reader and makes you want to check out these places. The early settlers that had a hand in naming these intriguing places might have been one of your ancestors.

Elm City, Wilson County was originally given the Indian name **Toisnot** meaning "tarry not".

Black Jack, Pitt County derived its name from the Blackjack oaks that grew around a church when a worker repairing the roof threw his hatchet at one of the trees, someone suggested, "Why not call this place Blackjack?"

Aurora, Beaufort County was

once called **Betty Town**. Was the name changed because of a former county newspaper, the *Aurora Borealis*, or because the **Reverend W. H. Cunningham** wanted the town to be a "new light in the east." You choose?

Alert, Franklin County took its name from a statement made by **Thomas D. Farrow** the first postmaster. "Folks around here are honest, God-fearing and alert...."

Need More, Granville County appeared on an 1887 atlas. This may have been the original name of **Creedmore**.

Frog Level, Pitt County may have been just the place for frogs and fine people. (*The State Magazine*, March 1979)

Shakerag District, Person County took its name from a militia captain calling out to his men with shabby clothing to "Fall up in a lump". An 1887 newspaper account concerning this captain, **William (Stocker Bill) Daniel**, claims his last command of the day was to "repair to the liquor stand".

The list of unusual place names goes on and on. Take the time to peruse the entire book and enjoy.

Dynamite and Hogs Don't Mix: Razorbacks in Nash

By L. S. INSCOE

A razorback hog is about the toughest animal that ever ran on four legs; tougher than a bear, a wolf, or a wildcat. A razorback is really a wild boar. He gets his name from the coarse bristles along his back which raise on end when he is disturbed. And **Nash County** had a few at one time.

Back about 1900, a farmer was

clearing a new ground—grubbing up the stumps laboriously by hand. A county demonstration agent came by and showed him how easily and cheaply

the stumps could be removed by use of dynamite. The farmer was delighted. He went to the store and bought dynamite, fuse and caps. Coming home, he dug a hole by a big white oak stump, set a charge of dynamite under it, lighted the fuse, and went to his house for supper. The fuse went out, but by that time the farmer was busy at something else, so he decided to wait until next morning to light it again.

Next morning, early, the farmer's razorback hog got up and went foraging. He found that stick of dynamite and ate it. Then he saw the farmer about the barn lot and hustled up to see if he could steal a little corn from the mule's breakfast. He got into the mule's stall and made for the feed trough. Naturally, the mule kicked at him, and for the first and last time in his life, connected. The dynamite went off.

A neighbor heard the explosion and hurried over. He found the owner leaning over the fence of his barn lot, viewing the ruins. The neighbor heaved a sympathetic sign. "It looks pretty bad, friend," he said, "pretty bad."

"Yes," said the victim, "it is bad. Killed my mule, wrecked my barn, broke every window out of the side of my house, and, brother, I've got an awfully sick hog!"

