

# The Connector

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

Fall 2006

Peggy Strickland & Billie Jo Matthews, Co-Editors Volume 10 Number 4

## LEARNING TO FLY FOR UNCLE SAM.

Warren County Boy Writes Of  
His Experiences Since Joining the  
Aviation Corps.

Fairfield, Ohio  
September 1, 1917

If you will allow me space I will give you a few of the facts about the aviation training camps, along with a bit of my experience since leaving home May 15th.

On the opening of the officers training camp at Fort Oglethorpe I was accepted to try my ability as a commissioned officer for the new

army. We had been in camp about thirty days when there was a call for those who wished to unite themselves with the aviation branch of the army. I felt that this was my opportunity so I signed up at once—three others in my company signing with me.



Lunch in the trenches at Fort Oglethorpe, GA about 1917.

<http://www.firstwordwar.com/>

One week afterwards we were called for physical examination. This was some examination. Every organ of our bodies together with every muscle, bone and nerve were subjected to a most trying test. About five days after the examination, those of us who had been successful were ordered to report at Atlanta, Georgia, to attend a Ground School of Aviation.

On July 2nd, we arrived at the Georgia school of technology [Georgia Tech]. ... We lived in the dormitories, ate in the mess hall, and were instructed in the class rooms by the most competent instructors. As we did not have the objects of

[CONNELL, CONT. ON PAGE 6]

## A Fish Story

"We are informed that the Steamer *Greenville*, on her trip up the river, on Friday last, struck what seemed to be a log, but which afterwards proved to be a sturgeon, cutting him in two about three feet from the tail. Capt. [W.A.] Parvin, of the *R. L. Myers*, which went up behind the *Greenville*, discovered the fish floating head down and spouting blood from the stump of his tail. With the aid of cotton hooks ..., the crew secured the prize and enjoyed fresh sturgeon the remainder of the trip."

The steamship *R. L. Myers* and her captain, W.A. Parvin, were frequently mentioned in the *Eastern*

*Reflector*, a Greenville, Pitt Co., NC paper.

Capt. Parvin sailed on several steamships. On 10/9/1889, the *Reflector* said: "We were glad to shake

[MYERS, CONT. ON PAGE 5]

ANGLEAS'S  
Henderson, N.C.,  
FINE SHOES,  
HATS  
GENTS FURNISHING  
GOODS.

[The Graphic, Ridgeway, Warren Co., NC,  
7/17/1890.]

## Remembering Smells and Shopping in Rocky Mount

BY WILLIS BOICE WALKER

First, the smell of coal smoke that came from hand fired steam engines, factories, and homes. It lingered and was always evident. However, since the air was much cleaner and purer, it presented fewer problems than it does today in its contaminated condition.

A smell like ham meat frying told us that oil mills were processing cotton seed, making cotton seed meal and cotton hulls as fertilizer and feed for cattle. The odor of fresh baked loaf bread told us we

[SMELLS, CONT. ON P. 7]



## 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](http://www.braswell-library.org/gene.htm)

#### —e-mail—

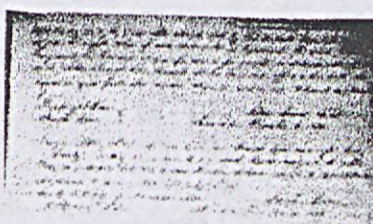
[trcgs@braswell-library.org](mailto:trcgs@braswell-library.org)

**Annual Dues - \$15.00**

#### 2006 Officers

Mae Frazier, President  
Linda Cockrell, President-Elect  
Jim Stallings, Secretary/Trea.  
Billie Jo Matthews, Peggy  
Strickland, Newsletter Editors  
Directors: Gene Viverette,  
Roy Edwards, Fairy B. Williams

*The Connector*-Published Quarterly  
Membership & Surnames-Annually



## Search and Research Terms Found in Deeds

FROM A LIST BY MARGARET HOFFMAN

The following are words and phrases as they were used in early deeds:

1. *Natural love and affection*: the affection one naturally feels toward those who are closely allied to him, and (is) a good consideration in a deed
2. *Love, goodwill, and affection*: the consideration usually stated in a deed of gift to a friend who is not naturally closely allied to the grantor, often expressed in conjunction with some such token purchase sum as 5 shillings.
3. *Mansion house*: includes the dwelling-house and also all buildings with the curtilage (farmyard or ground on which they sit), such as a dairy house, stable, sheepfold, poultry house, barn, storehouse, byre, etc. though not under the same roof nor contiguous with the dwelling-house.
4. *Messuage*: dwelling-house, and has been taken to include the adjacent buildings attached to it as well as the curtilage (yard, or ground on which they sit), garden, and orchard.
5. *Tenement*: everything of permanent value which may be held, such as lands and inheritances, rents and profits. The word by itself, without other circumstances, is insufficient to pass the fee.
6. *Timber*: trees fit to be used in the building of ships or houses. Trees too small to mill for lumber, or fit only for firewood, are not timber.
7. *Woods and underwoods*: uncleared land on which a great number of forest trees naturally grow and the smaller trees and bushes growing among them, including both timber trees and firewood.
8. *Watercourse*: stream of water flowing in a definite channel, having a bed and sides or banks, and discharging itself into some other stream or body of water. The flow of water may be intermittent depending upon the season, so long as the channel is there. The landowner had use of the water running through the watercourse on his land, but owned none that he did not draw off and take possession of in order to satisfy his needs.
9. *To him, his heirs, and assigns forever*: these are the effective words required to convey property in fee simple. Omitting the word "forever," as in a lease, did not convey the property in fee simple.
10. *Fee*: the estate one has in the land. (1) *fee simple* is an estate vested in a person and that person's heirs forever; (2) *fee-tail* is an estate limited to a particular class of heirs; (3) *determinable fee* is an estate with a qualification upon it which is determined when that qualification comes to an end, as when, in some deeds of gift, land is deeded to a son and his heirs by his father and reverts to the father upon the death of the grantee; (4) *qualified fee* is an estate in the property given to a person and certain of his heirs, as when, in some deeds of gift, property is conveyed to a son-in-law of the grantor for life then to the first child of the marriage, and upon failure of that child, to revert to the grantor or otherwise to be disposed of as specified by the deed.
11. *Give*: three elements are necessary to complete the act of giving: (1) offer; (2) acceptance; and (3) delivery. Gifts by deed took effect when the deed was delivered, not when it was drawn or dated.

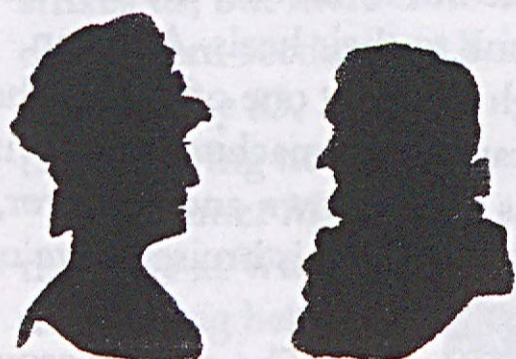


## Readers Choice

### Local Color



*The Bridgers and Lee Families and Their Many Relatives*, Compiled by Carolyn Lee Bridgers Jackson, TN Valley Publishing, 1997



Silhouette of  
Abigail (Cogdell) Bridgers.

Silhouette of John Bridgers.

**Bizzell, Braswell, Cogdell, Cosby, Cox, Crawford, Donelson, Finlayson, Flowers, Grantham, Howell, Jackson, Johnson, Kennedy, Lamb, Lawing, McKnight, Nelms, Overman, Patrick, Permenter, Pike, Rose, Sims, Snipes, Stallings, Stimpson, Tyner, Wilson** and others.

This book was recently acquired for the history-genealogical room at Braswell Memorial Library in Rocky Mount, NC. It is certainly worth spending time in checking out the above names found in the early records of eastern NC.

**John Bridgers**, born before 1748 and died by 1797, received a land grant in **Dobbs Co, NC** in 1768. "This was 148 acres between the **Neuse** and **Little River** on both sides of **Burden's Branch** joining Bridgers own corner—**Philip Pearce, Nicholas Tyner** and **Matthew Rayford**". John married Abigail Cogdell about 1770. The Cogdell family was then living in **Butte County** having moved from **Carteret Co., NC**.

John and Abigail's marriage is just the beginning of the story which expands to family in areas

[CONT ON PAGE 7]

## BEACHEY IN FINE FLIGHT

Great Success of the Aviator Yesterday—[May 3, 1911]

MANY THOUSANDS SAW IT

Flew All Over east Durham and Landed in the Park

THRILLING STUNT IN THE AIR

Aviator Descended to Heads of Outside Robbers, Scattered Them  
Perfect Day of It

Under perfect skies and in almost a dead calm, Mr. Lincoln Beachey yesterday flew his Curtiss bi-plane in half a dozen circuits of the East Durham [Durham Co., NC] park and landed on the postage stamp area without real harm to his machine.

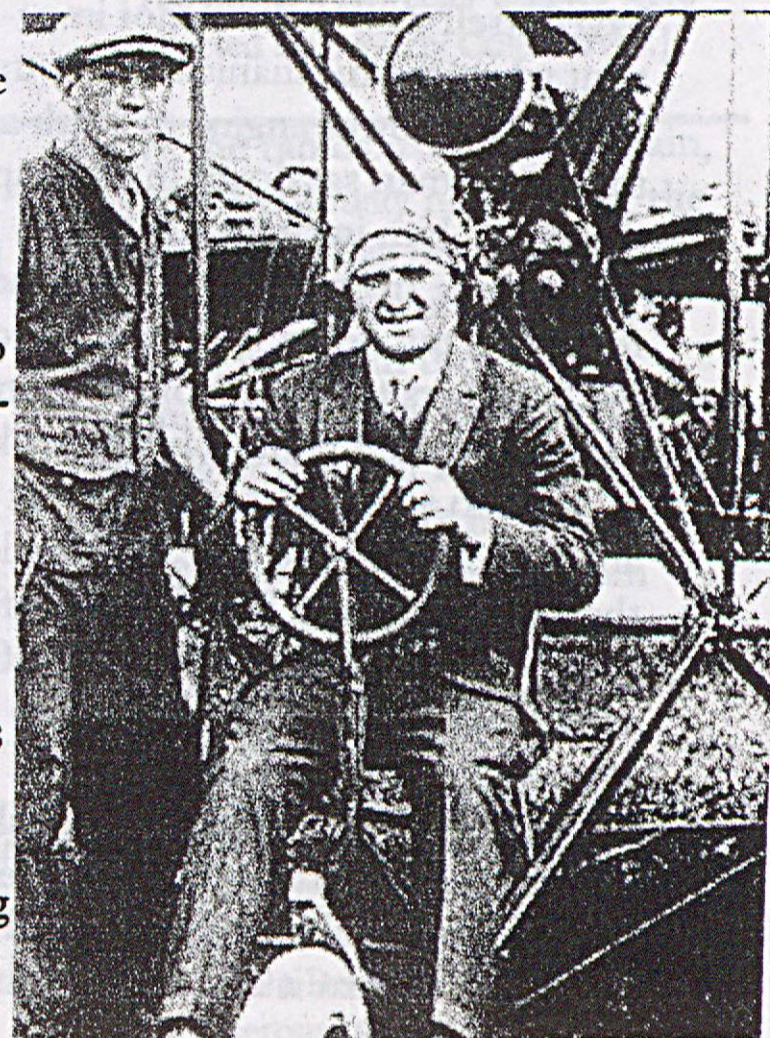
There was a crowd of perhaps eight thousand, but only twenty-five per cent went inside. Long before the aviator arose from the earth, the non-paying elements\* banked on the side of the car line and chose the crest of the place for a view. It was a fine one from the ocular standpoint and it wasn't a good day for moralizing. The crowd on the inside began to envy those on the outside, even as the summer bird in the cage does the fowl on the exterior, or as John Webster declared those inside matrimony did those on the outside. The workmen begun to tear down the fence for a starting point and there was many a kick from the grandstand. It was to be deprived of the pleasure of seeing Mr. Beachey mount the air.

But it wasn't. It takes a few feet for a starter. When the mechanics turned the paddle that kicked up more dust than seven automobiles on dirt roads, the machine bucked and they had to hold it. They turned it and went to the center fence of the park. Then they tore down Uncle Richard Wright's pet and started the pretty buzzard from the other side.

There were hundreds skeptical enough to believe that there could be no flight. So good a politician and authority on wind as Alderman Carpenter doubted it. "Why I can take a palm leaf fan and make more wind than that thing," the alderman said to as wise a man as Professor Jule Warren. The professor laughed. He had seen that paddle spin around at the rate of two thousand a minute.

There wasn't much preliminary. There was a great deal of waiting, but no showing off. The lecture was not given and the machine was standing ready for flight from 2:30 to the end. It was a hopeless looking thing to the untutored. Mr. Beachey

[BEACHEY, CONT. ON P. 4]





# [BEACHEY, CONT. FROM P. 3]

walked almost incognito over the field, putting on no airs and looking less the daring human hawk than half a dozen men one might pick out. One likes that man. He talks just enough to keep one from calling him an oyster, and little enough to keep anybody from calling him a fool. He is modest to diffidence, doesn't cuss especially well and has the nicest sort of a wife. He is a credit to the high flying business. Mr. Beachey didn't let anybody know who he was until he took his seat.

One expected to see him dress up in Matt Henson furs, Dock Cook britches and Peary headlights. He did none of those arctic stunts.

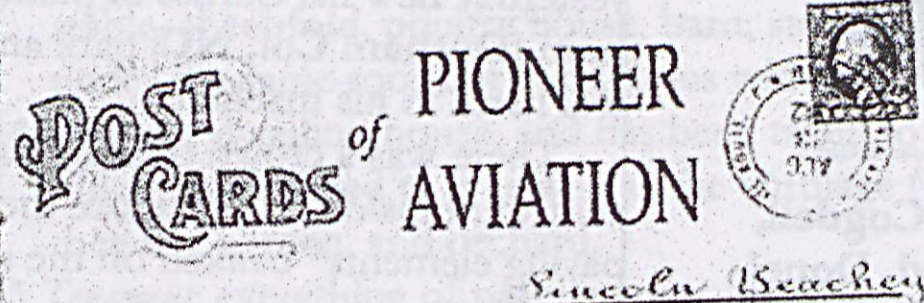
True he disports a diamond almost as big as his gasoline engine, but he wore nice citizen's clothes and put on a cap. That was all he needed while flying through the frigid air at sixty odd miles an hour.

During the tearing down the cars continued to come and deposit their crowd—mainly on the outside. But there was a good one inside. It behaved itself well and was not impatient when the mechanics put the sixty horse power engine to work and the young man sat down in the trap that holds him in perfect balance.

He came from the outside of the fence and ran down the line toward the bleachers to the left of the grandstand. It looked perilously much like a bump into some obstacle. But just about the third base line, the ship left the earth and arose quickly to a safe height. In a moment he was out of view from the grandstand but he soon circled the park and flew towards the north. It was a spectacular, a thrilling flight. The machine sailed without perceptible swerving until he was ready to turn it and as it did the



slight spiral, people trembled. He sailed and sailed until he reached the great army of patriots on the outside. He was eight hundred feet in the air then but in ten seconds he shot to the earth like a hungry hen hawk reaching for an unripe gosling. There was an instantaneous stampede. The barn roof, which had been confiscated by the crowd, a minute later to be paid for at ten cents a head, was almost depopulated. Children fell off like rats. The machine plunged downward and a big fat woman ran over one of the city's popular citizens. Mr. Bea-



chey laughed. He was then nearly close enough to pull off a hat, but he turned and shot upward like a rocket, falling again like its stick and then back. That was one of the most daring things. It frightened Mr. Bauter, the chief mechanic, who declared that he had never seen such a dive from such an altitude. Mrs. Beachey called him down after he landed. She told him there wasn't any need of making her a widow unnecessarily. The danger lay largely in the dip that was likely to have stopped the engine and to have carried the machine so close to the earth that it couldn't rise again.

The return to normal height was easy, however, and at a mean altitude of seven or eight hundred feet, he sailed perhaps half a dozen times, going about a mile in length twice. He was up eleven or twelve minutes, making as many miles as he spent minutes in the air.

Mr. Beachey directed his machine to the south of the grandstand and came into the grounds at great speed. He dipped low and waved for a land-

ing. Everybody cleared the way. Near the place where he left the earth, he struck it going easily sixty miles an hour. The landing was so easy that one could not hear it, but the force was so great that it tore up a tire. The patriots on the outside, carried away with the demonstration, broke through the palings and came on the field. They were about to meet the machine but it traveled too fast and they took to their heels. As it ran through the gate, one of the mechanics caught the machine to stop it. He was jerked down and run over,

but his bruises were not severe.

The outside crowd poured in the park. And this probably broke up the second flight. The running into the crowd got the nerve of the promoters and the park was too small. Mr. Beachey was under contract for only one flight and the worst kicker could not have opposed the one that he did make.

So far as Mr. Beachey and his clever manager, Mr. Frank Helbat have any record, this is the first flight from and return to a baseball park ever made by an aeroplane. ...A bigger park would have given a second flight.

Neither the mechanics nor the aviator made money on the event. There was no way to reach the crowd that chose the outside. There was no big amount of loss, of course, but men who take chances like this generally take good money. ...

*\*There was a 25¢ charge to watch the air show. Beachey was angry at the number of people who were watching from outside the field without paying.*

**Lincoln Beachey**

Lincoln Beachey (1887-1915), whose air show in Durham in May 1911 was one of the earliest, was a

[BEACHEY, CONT. ON P. 5]



**[MYERS, CONT. FROM PAGE 1]** hands with Capt. Bill Parvin the other day. It sounds like old times to hear the chime of his steamer, the *Beaufort* on the Tar again. He is a clever captain." Later, on 11/27/89: "Capt. W. A. Parvin of the Str. *Beaufort* sent us four cotton blossoms Monday. Very late for blooms, it strikes us, but there is no telling what our eastern section can bring forth."

On May 23, 1894, the following news: "The steamer *Myers* is on the ways at Washington undergoing her annual overhauling and repainting, and the steamer *Greenville* is making her trips. Capt. Bill Parvin, the veteran Master, is in charge with his fund of good humor and courteousness as exhaustless as ever."

The following story about Capt. Parvin appeared on 6/6/1894.

### "Three Weigh 584

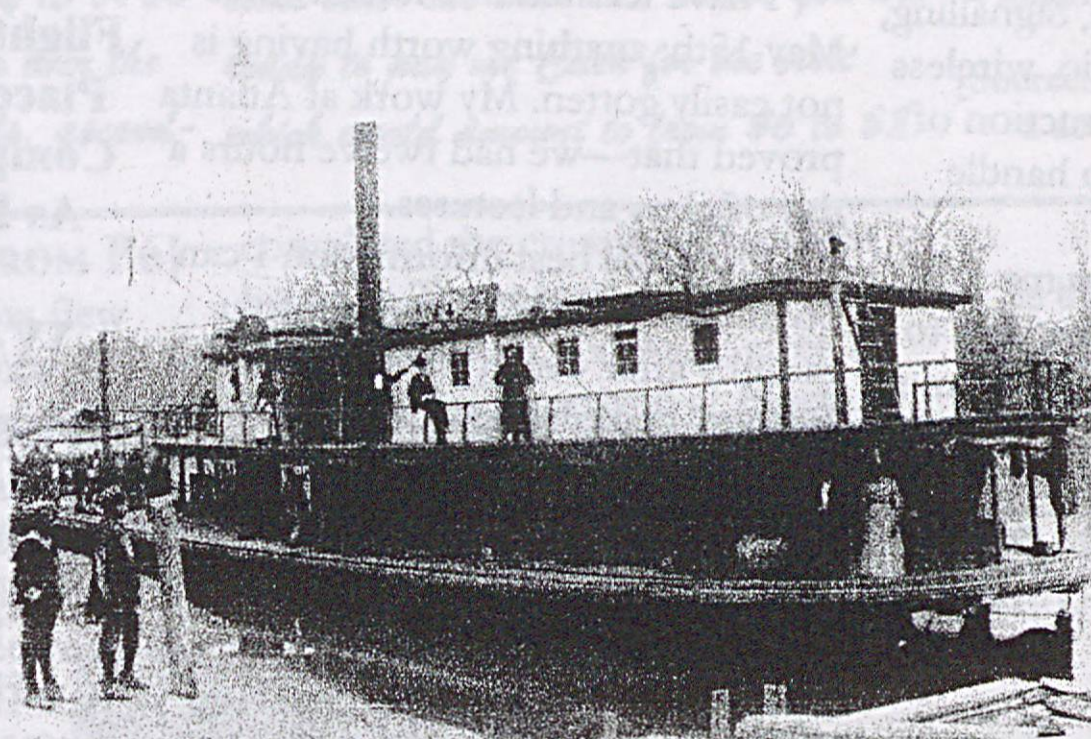
Capt. Bill Parvin, master of the steamer *Myers*, was whiling away some leisure time around the depot the other evening waiting for the train to come in. He had two of his

little (?) boys along with him, and just for the fun of the thing, they tried the scales standing on the platform. The youngest, **Dave**, only reaches up in the neighborhood of 6 feet 2 and had just sufficiently recovered from a spell of sickness to return to work, but all the same he pushed the pointer down to 179 pounds. Young Bill is not so much for height, being hardly more than 5 feet 10, but when

165 pounds, which isn't any sorry summer figure. Its not an every day occurrence that you just happen to run up with three members of one family whose combined summer weight is 584 pounds. The Captain says some of girls are almost as good at weighing as those boys."

Finally, 11/7/1889: "The Old Dominion S. S. Co., now requires all the officers in their passenger service to wear uniform. Capt. W. A. Parvin, the clever commander of the steamer *Myers*, was up town today for the first time in uniform, and his host of friends were greeting him with a regular Admiral's salute. The sleeves of the Captain's coat are ornamented with five gold stripes, each stripe indicating five years' service, showing that he has been in the continuous service of the Old Dominion Co. for a quarter of a century. **Mr. Carty**, engineer of the *Myers*, also has five stripes on his sleeve, having been at his post twenty-five years."

[The *Eastern Reflector* articles were collected by Beverly Cole Parvin.]



**R.L. Myers, Contributed by TRC member Harry Moore**

he stepped on the scales, the pointer wheeled around to 240 pounds and stayed there until he got off. The captain himself might not be called more than an average man in either height or weight, but he pulled down

out—an hour and 48 minutes. When he glided to the ground the barograph aboard the plane showed that he had reached a height of 11,578 feet.

His flight over **Niagara Falls** took place on June 27, 1911, just a few weeks after he performed in Durham. "He took off into a drizzle and flew over the lower falls, then sailed high above the **American Falls**, finally circling back to the Canadian side and plunging down the deep gorge. He took his plane under the span of the 'Honeymoon Bridge,' through the narrowest part of the gorge, not more than 20 feet

above the rapids. As he rose again, he came perilously near hitting the side of the cliff as he struggled for altitude, but finally made it over, dripping wet from the spray.

Lincoln Beachey died while performing at the **San Francisco Exposition** in 1915. As he was completing a vertical dive from 3,500 feet over the bay, his plane's wings broke off and he drowned. He was just 28 years old.

[Taken from a story by Tom Bost n the *Durham Morning Herald*, May 4, 1911; *First to Fly*, by Thomas Parramore; and several internet sources. A Google search for "Lincoln Beachey" will provide numerous interesting sites.]

**[BEACHEY, CONT. FROM P. 4]** pioneer aviator and one of the first of the "daredevil" pilots. While other pilots wore leather coats, helmets, and boots, Beachey was stylish in a suit, starched collar and huge diamond stickpin, and his checkered golf cap worn backwards.

Beachey's name was associated with the most daring of stunts. In **Chicago** he raced a train and let his wheels touch the top of the moving train as it passed underneath.

At the 1911 **Chicago Air Meet**, he filled his tanks with fuel, then pointed the plane's nose skyward and kept going until the fuel ran



## [CONNELL, CONT. FROM P1]

of our real study before us [airplanes], it was much more difficult for us to understand the lectures, text books, and drawings. However, we managed to pass a rigid examination on the following subjects:

Construction, care and rigging of Aeroplanes, the particles of Gas, engines, the theory of cross country and general flying, meteorology, astronomy, photography, aerial observation, reconnaissance, Signalling, bombs and bombing, radio, wireless telegraphy, and the construction of machine guns and how to handle them efficiently.

The most difficult for me was wireless telegraphy. The test was to receive eight words a minute from a light, twelve from the wireless buzz and deliver them from a key. ...

I graduated from the ground school at Atlanta on August 20th, and was ordered to report at the **Fairfield Flying Ground**

without delay. I had expected to go home but this pleasure had to be foregone, because "without delay" means as quick as possible with the War Department. I arrived at Fairfield on August 22nd, went up to headquarters and signed up for duty.

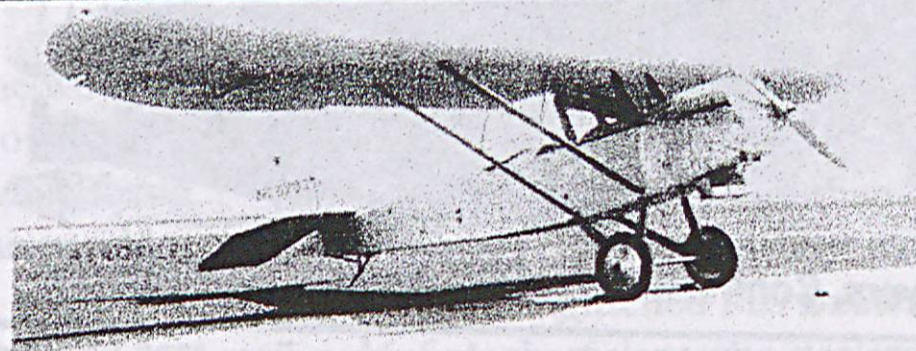
The next morning I was assigned to a trainer. The first day you are not allowed to touch the controls; the second day you are allowed to place your hands and feet upon them; the third day you are allowed to operate them; the fourth day you take the driver's seat and do the best you can. There are two coach pits in all of the training machines, each having a set of controls. After a student has successfully flown for three hundred minutes [6 hours!], he is

sent out alone. This is as far as I have gotten.

There are two units here with fifty machines in each unit. The flying field is two miles long and one mile wide. If a machine makes a bum landing and gets pretty well torn up, it is run into the hangers and brought out in a few hours as good as new. The flying field is on the car line from **Dayton to Springfield**, eight miles from Dayton.

I have learned one lesson since May 15th: anything worth having is not easily gotten. My work at Atlanta proved that—we had twelve hours a day of class and lectures.

From the best information I can obtain, we will be here about four months after which we will go to **France**, completing our course under French instructors. Then I for



**Trainer** The Standard J-1 monoplane was an Army trainer used in World War I. Dayton-Wright, Fisher Body Works, and Wright Martin all built it.

one hope to be prepared to effectively protect the honor of our country.

I wish to say to the parents and friends of the young men who are in the different branches of national service: Do not make it harder for them by writing them sad letters; brace up and cheer them. If the worst comes their lives will not have been spent in vain.

Respectfully yours,  
—SAMUEL M. CONNELL

On account of severity of weather, the cadets were ordered to **Houston** where Connell passed the R.M.A. (Reserved Military Aviation) test. He was then sent to **Gunter Field, Lake Charles, LA.** According to the *Warrenton Record* on 4/23/1918,

"He is 21 years old, and is making a good record."

The *Record* carried another article about the young aviator on 7/23/1918.

## TO FLY ACROSS ATLANTIC OCEAN

**LIEUT. S.M. CONNELL,  
WARREN BOY, ONE OF  
GROUP**

**Flight Across Atlantic To Take Place As Soon As Training Is Completed; This Honor comes As Reward of Flying Merit.**

We take pleasure in publishing the following from the *New York Times* in reference to the practice flight of the seven aviators who, at an early date, are to fly across the **Atlantic**. One of the seven birdmen is First Lieutenant **Sam Martin Connell**, ... People back home will watch with deep interest this [attempt] to bring the Continent within 25 hours of America.

### *New York Times* Story

The *New York Times* story tells of 7 volunteers from the First Provisional Wing preparing to fly the first fleet of bombers across the **Atlantic**. They did early training by flying from **Minsola, Long Island to Philadelphia** in battle formation. Soon after they took off, they circled and formed into the "flying goose" formation. This was the first time the aviators had flown long distances in battle formation.

"A secondary object of the flight was to enable aerial observers in the planes to pick out sites for landing fields for the **New York to Washington** aerial mail, so that the machines may have clear places to land when they have engine trouble."

[CONNELL, CONT. ON PAGE 7]



# Don't Call Me!



The report is that Mr. Osborne Wollard has gravel. ...Well I prescribe for a patient suffering from gravel hot formentations of water as hot as can be borne, short of scalding, be applied and renewed every 15 or 20 minutes, across the loins, or over the lower front part of the bowels, ascend-

ing to the situation of the pain. Also give a teaspoonful of the mixture sent every hour until relieved. When relieved, take a good dose of Castor oil & when the operation is over, live prudently for 8 or 10 days. If, after you have tried these means, you are not relieved, and you wish a Physician to visit you, I advise you to send for some other one than me, unless you are ready to pay me Cash for the visit which would amount to from \$6 to \$8.

I advise you, however, if you have occasion to send for a Physician, to apply to John Myers, and consider him the next best in this place.

J<sup>r</sup> Norcom [Norcom]

Jan'y 1st 1846

Osborn Wollard is listed in the 1820 Census in Beaufort Co., NC. John Myers is listed in the 1860 census in Washington, Beaufort Co., NC.

[Source: Julia Condit, TRC member, who is a descendant of Osborn Wollard or Woolard.]

## [CONNELL, CONT. FROM P6]

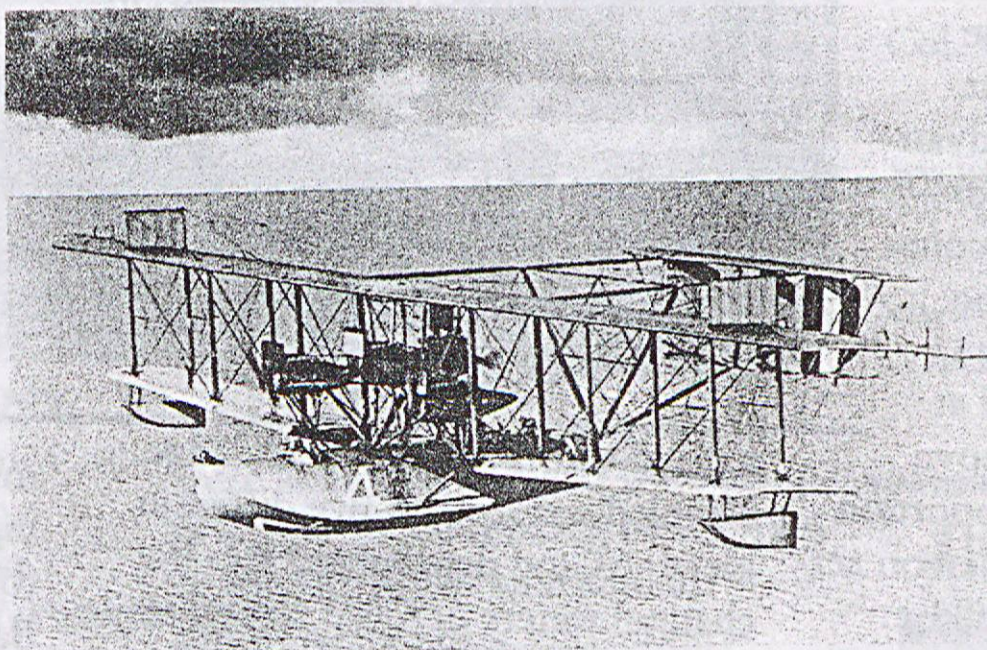
"The planes the aviators flew were all American-built and equipped with Liberty motors."

The aviators were: Lt. L.S. Reitenbaugh, in command; Capt. A.J. Boyreven, a French pilot; J.P. Boyd, S. M. Connell, H.C. King, M.B. Kellcher, J.H. Pearson, and H.C. Garratt.

### Flight Didn't Happen!

Apparently, the planned flight across the Atlantic never took place. The picture on the right shows the first aircraft, an NC-4, to fly the Atlantic. Three NC-4s started across the Atlantic in May 1919 headed for Europe, but only the NC-4 piloted by LCDR. A. C. Read

completed the crossing. The flight began at Trepassey, New Foundland on May 16, 1919 and after 17 hours the NC-4 arrived at Horta, Azores. Ten days later it completed the flight arriving at Plymouth, England on May 26, 1919.



## Does anyone know?

Is this Samuel Martin Connell the same Brig. Gen. Samuel Connell who served in World War II?

[Samuel M. Connell, s/o W.A. Connell of Warren Plains, Warren Co., NC, joined H Company about 1912 when he was 15. He later requested a discharge from the home company in order to pursue his interest in aviation. He attended Officer Training Camp at Fort Oglethorpe in GA. He described his aviator training in these articles published in the *Warrenton Record*, 9/17/17, 4/23/18 and 7/23/18. in 1918. An article describing the first flight across the Atlantic is at <http://history.acusd.edu/gen/ww2/timeline/firstflight.html>]

## [SMELLS, CONT. FROM P. 6]

were in south Rocky Mount. The wafting aroma of baking bread is the most stirring appetizer nature has.

The blended odor of tobacco warehouses, processing plants, and curing and drying operations presented seasonal sensations that meant an air of prosperity, plenty and wealth prevailed overall.

The tobacco operations set the season for holiday shopping and lay-aways that were very popular at that

time. Christmas shopping was made easy with the stores on Main Street staying open until 9:00 p.m. or later.

"One Dollar Down & One Dollar A Week" was the popular come on. Credit checks were opinions after a few questions. Chance or gamble—you had to be psychic, or gifted prophetically. The people considered good risks were either full-time mill or railroad employees. Most everything else was seasonal, or depended on the weather.

[LOCAL, CONT FROM P. 2] <sup>3</sup> which include the following counties: Beaufort, Bertie, Burke, Craven, Dobbs, Duplin, Edgecombe, Franklin, Granville, Lincoln, Nash, Northampton, Robeson, Rutherford, Wake and Wayne.

This book is a "MUST" for genealogists researching in eastern North Carolina.





## Salt—Worth Its Weight in Gold?

Salt was an essential commodity for our colonial ancestors. It was the primary preservative for meat and fish. It was also essential for the health of horses and livestock. During the **American Revolution**, part of the British strategy was to limit the colonies' access to salt and **North Carolina** was seldom able to acquire sufficient salt for its needs.

Records of **Pitt County, NC** illustrate some of the efforts made to deal with the shortage. The following is in the record of Dec. 17, 1774:

"Whereas there is many complaints that the Trading Vessels and others have raised the price of Salt, occasioned by the scarcity of the article, which is contrary to the resolution of the **Continental Congress** that traders are not to take an advantage of the scarcity of Goods—the committee therefore recommend that salt should not be sold for more than three shillings four pence per bushel at **Gorham's landing** and above and below that place in proportion with freight and loss; any person acting contrary to the same will be deemed an enemy to his country."

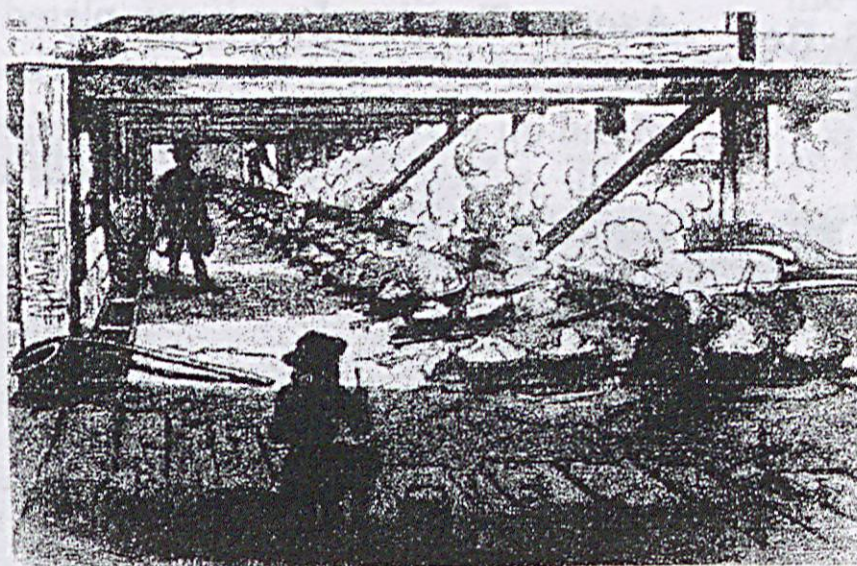
In Feb. 1776, the Committee of Pitt County authorized its agent, **Thomas Wolfenden** to sell salt in "small parcels at five shillings per bushel to each family according to their present necessity." Wolfenden was also given discretionary powers to administer an oath to any person or persons whom he suspected of applying for larger amounts than needed for their immediate needs. Other counties took similar steps to control the limited supplies of salt.

A committee was established to look into salt production. The first works erected on the seashore that could furnish fifty tons of "good merchantable ground or blown salt" would receive 750 pounds. On April 24, 1776, **Waightstill Avery, William Thompson, Robert Williams** and **Richard Blackledge** were authorized to draw upon the public treasury to establish salt works in the province.

### The Salt Works

The plan was to evaporate water, leaving the salt. Richard Blackledge decided to evaporate the water in pans by using fire. He set to work to build a salt work.

On July 11, 1776, the Council of State ordered that 500 pounds be ad-



Early Salt Works

vanced to Blackledge. Blackledge sampled water from five different locations and determined that the channel waters of **Core Creek** made the best salt. "Collecting iron pots from as far away as **Bath, Beaufort Co, NC**, he began to obtain salt by the boiling process." About Aug. 1st, he got a peck of salt out of thirty two gallons of water. This salt proved to be of satisfactory quality.

At the end of 1776, it was reported to the legislature that Blackledge had purchased fifteen acres of land at the mouth of Core Creek. He had built a salt pond, a proper furnace and installed three kettles. A loan and subsidy were granted to him to continue the work. In turn, Black-

ledge agreed to buy woodland for fuel, to enlarge his works, and build a warehouse to hold 1,000 bushels.

In 1777, Blackledge died, possibly from the effects of alcoholism, and his executors were released from his contract from the state on Dec. 12, 1777, on condition that they deliver to the state within three months, 1,000 bushels of salt made by the works. The works continued to operate throughout the Revolution, and were of considerable importance in relieving the shortage during this period..

### More About Richard Blackledge

Richard Blackledge was a native of **New Bern, Craven Co, NC**, but he lived in **Washington, Beaufort Co., NC**, for several years. He was a brilliant lawyer and one of the first commissioners of the town of Washington. He also represented Beaufort county in the Legislature.

Blackledge married **Louisa Blount**, daughter of Colonel **Jacob Blount**, and sister of **John Gray Blount**. After their marriage they lived in **Tarborough, Edgecombe Co, NC**. Prior to the ceremony, a marriage settlement was made by which her property, consisting of a house and two lots in that town "situated on **Saint George** and **Saint Andrew** and **Granville Sts.**" were conveyed to her brother, **Gov. William Blount**, in case of her death without children. The document is signed by Judge **Samuel Spencer**. In *History of Edgecombe County, NC*, by Turner and Bridgers, the house is described as the place where **George Washington**, on his visit to the State in 1791, was entertained "at the beautiful residence overlooking **Tar River**, belonging at the time to Maj. **Reading Blount**."

[*Pitt County Potpourri*, by John G. Duncan]



# Revolutionary General, Hardy Murfree

The story of James Murphy appeared in the Spring 2006 *Connector*. [See "Is It Murphy, Murfree, or Murphree?"] Another Murfree of interest to people with northeastern NC roots is **Hardy Murfree**. Hardy Murfree was born at **Murfree's Landing** (now **Murfreesboro**) on June 5, 1752. He was the son of **William** and **Mary Moore Murfree** who had previously resided in **Nansemond County, VA**. William Murfree was at the NC Congress at **Halifax** in 1776.

Hardy Murfree was in the 2nd regiment of the Continental line of NC during the **Revolutionary War**. Early in the war his regiment served under **George Washington** and took part in the re-capture of **Stony Point, NY**.

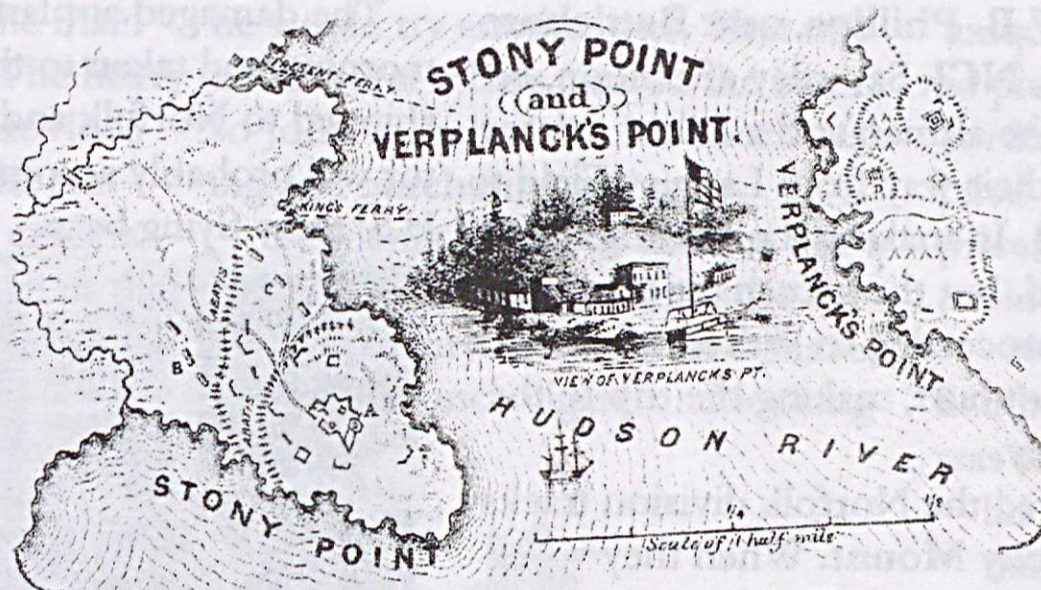
## Battle for Stony Point, NY

In May 1779, **British Gen. Clinton** captured the forts at **Stony Point, NY** and **Verplanck** just across the **Hudson River**. Washington, realizing the need for a morale booster, decided that re-taking the forts would provide a spark. He and **Gen. "Mad" Anthony Wayne** devised a plan for a three-pronged midnight attack which was implemented on July 15, 1779.

During the dark of night three columns of continental soldiers, 1200 men in all, converged on the fort. Hardy Murfree, commanding the NC battalion, was stationed in front of the fort while larger forces were positioned silently to the north and south of the fort. Murfree's men

were to fire on the enemy to distract them from the two storming columns, with the sound of the firing providing the signal to the larger forces to begin the assault. The plan worked to perfection.

The British inside the fort scrambled in the darkness, certain that the main body of the attack was coming from Murfree's troops. Gen. Wayne's troops entered the inner



works of the fort from the south. By the time **Col. Butler** entered from the north, Wayne's men were there to greet him. The British were captured from behind as they fired uselessly on Murfree's men.

The battle lasted less than an hour. Fifteen **American** soldiers were killed and 83 were wounded. Of the redcoats, 63 were killed, 74 were wounded and 543 were taken prisoner. [A fascinating description of the battle can be found at: <http://www.space.edu/library-research/battles/studer.htm>]

Hardy Murfree was later transferred to the south. He helped carry **Gen. Francis Nash**, for whom **Nash Co, NC** is named, from the battlefield when he was mortally wounded at **Germantown, PA**.

## More About Hardy Murfree

Murfree married **Sally Brickell**, daughter of **Mathias Brickell**, in 1780. After the war Col. Murfree "was found busy with his plantation" on the banks of **Meherrin River**, near **Murfreesboro, Hertford Co., NC**. He laid out the town of Mur-

freesboro on his father's land in 1787. At his father's request, the new town was named **Murfreesboro**, in honor of Hardy Murfree's distinguished service to his country during the Revolutionary War. His wife died in 1802 and in 1807 he moved with his family and his slaves to **Tennessee** to claim over 3,000 acres of land which had been granted to him for service in the Revolution. He settled

on **Murfree's Fork** of the **West Harpeth River** in **Williamson Co, TN**.

Col. Murfree died in Tennessee in 1809. Just as the town of **Murfreesboro, NC**, was named for him, so was the town of **Murfreesboro TN**, which was laid out as the state capital of Tennessee in 1811.

**Murfreesboro, AK**, was founded in 1830 by descendants of Col. Hardy Murfree.

[Notable Men of Alabama;  
[www.wsu.edu/~cambelld/amlit/murfree.htm](http://www.wsu.edu/~cambelld/amlit/murfree.htm);  
[www.space.edu/libraryresearch/battles/studer.htm](http://www.space.edu/libraryresearch/battles/studer.htm)  
[www.geocities.com/Heartland/Ranch/7943/index2.html](http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Ranch/7943/index2.html); [www.famousamericans.net/hardy\\_murfree/](http://www.famousamericans.net/hardy_murfree/); and others]

## Jack Pippen Dead.



Jack Pippen, the best known member of our canine population, was found dead near the railroad in front of **I.T. Wood & Company's** warehouse Thursday morning. It is supposed that Jack, being hard of hearing and blind in one eye, walked too close to the track and was hit by a passing train. Jack received Christian burial at the hands of his master, **Mr. F.L. Pippen**, and was laid to rest under the shadows of the big oak in Mr. Pippen's yard.

[The Enfield Progress, 8/21/1908]

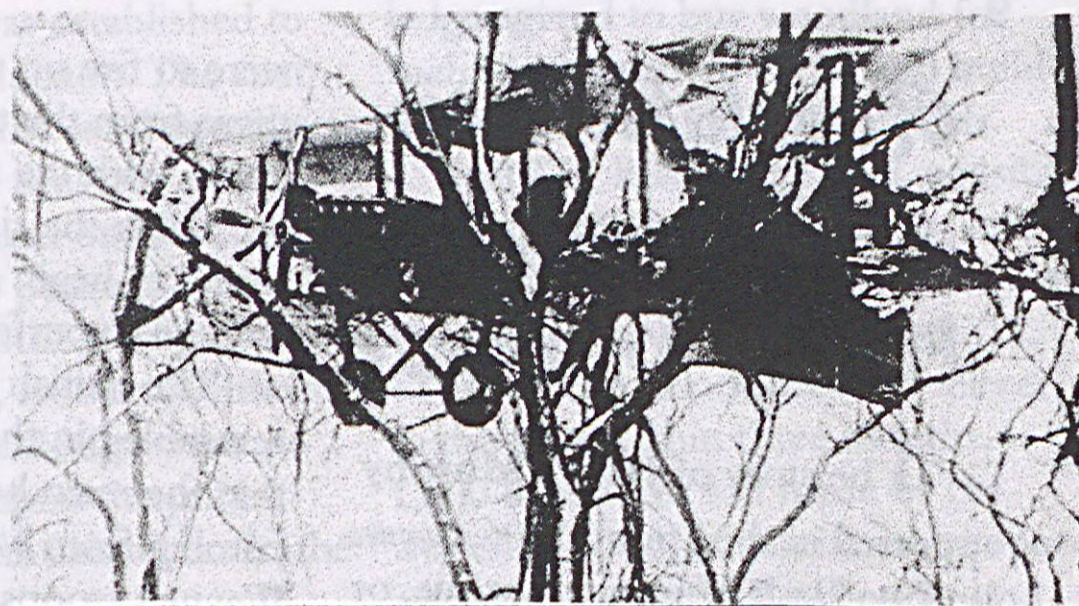


## AVIATOR FORCED TO STOP AT BATTLEBORO

Young Airman From Langley Field On Way To Wilson [in 1919]

A flying lieutenant from Langley Field, Va., whose name has not been learned, was forced to land in a corn field on the farm of Mr. W.B. Phillips, near Battleboro [Nash/ Edgecombe Co, NC], Saturday afternoon, because of engine trouble. The airman and a fellow aviator in another plane were on their way from Langley Field to Wilson [Wilson Co, NC]. In making the landing the plane was slightly damaged, but the lieutenant escaped injury. The other airman proceeded to Wilson after ascertaining his comrade was not hurt, making the trip to the Wilson county capital safely.

The two airmen followed the Norfolk division tracks from Langley Field to Rocky Mount. When they reached the city they took the wrong course, following the northbound tracks of the Atlantic Coast Line, instead of going south to Wilson. As the two flyers passed over the city headed north they created much excitement, large crowds watching them. When they had proceeded as far as Enfield [Halifax Co., NC] they realized they were going in the wrong direction, and turned back. When they neared Battleboro engine trouble developed in one plane and the aviator was forced to make the landing. The other airman circled about until he got the signal that all was well, and then proceeded on to Wilson. He passed over the city late Saturday afternoon.



The damaged airplane was packed on a wagon this morning and taken to the station at Battleboro to be shipped to Norfolk and then to Langley Field. The aviator will probably accompany the plane back to the great U.S. army flying base.



Many people from the city went to Mr. Phillips' farm yesterday to see the plane, but because permission for trespassing was refused they were disappointed.

[Rocky Mount Evening Telegram, 7/14/1919]

## CALICO KING OF NEAR LOUISBURG

Several accounts of large families are going the rounds of the papers, and not to be behind in such matters, the following is the Franklin County record: **Calico King**, a colored man living near here, aged 55, is the father of thirty-six children. He has been married three times, and his last wife is thirty-one years old, and is the



mother of fifteen children. There is one other family in the county, also colored, which but for the above would be moderately large, but as they have only twenty-six children (only four being boys), the name will not be given.

[News & Observer, Raleigh, 8/25/1891]

## LAND FOR RENT OR LEASE.

I have six one-horse Farms for Rent or Lease.  
**T. P. BRASWELL,**  
Battleboro, N.C.

[Battleboro Progress, Jan. 2, 1880]



# The Great Impersonator (By Accident)

BY WILLIS BOICE WALKER

Back in the 1930s the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad and the city of Rocky Mount, NC collaborated to plant shade trees and place benches along the tracks parallel to the main streets that bordered them. The heavy foliage of the catalpa trees provided two benefits—shade from the sun and an umbrella to shed the cinders from the coal fired steam engines that either got in your eye or dirtied your white shirt.

This sets the scene for a most unusual story.

John A. Proctor, aged 75 or so, before social security benefits were available, was unemployed and down on his fortunes. He whiled away many hours sitting on one of the benches watching traffic, trains and people.

John, an ex-bartender, liked a little snort once in a while. On one occasion, he decided to risk writing a bogus check to a local

grocer, Mr. Wade Woodley, whose store on Tarboro Street was just around the corner from the ABC store on Washington Street.

A few days later John went back to Mr. Woodley's store to pick up his bad check. When he asked Mr. Woodley about the check on J.A. Proctor, he was told that everything was fine. The check had cleared through Peoples Bank. Well, John, being the opportunist he was, decided he would try another one. That one and several others cleared the bank, so John branched out his check cashing and purchasing activities.

Suddenly John was dressed like a Philadelphia lawyer, visiting the barber shop every morning for a shave, smoking 10 inch cigars, and looking

like Bernard Baruch sitting on a park bench.

About this time, one of the executives of China American Tobacco Company joined John on one of the benches. John was more than willing to share information about his imaginary capital gains in the Florida and South American produce markets.

He explained that he owned thousands of acres and employed a profit sharing agreement. He also shared his unique practice of training monkeys to pick the fruit and coconuts. According to John's story, the profits piled up, and the only reason to hold prices at a profitable level was to avoid hurting other growers.

Now, only an ex-bartender, who had heard plenty of stories, and who was feeling no pain, could pull out of his wild imagination such a tale as this. It was good while it lasted, but like all good tales, it had to end.

It ended when the real J.A. Proctor, from Dortches, Nash Co., NC, discovered where his money had gone.

And by the way, John was cleared, since he had actually done no wrong, and the bank reimbursed the account of Mr. J. Arthur Proctor.



## A CARD,

LOUISBURG, OCT. 11TH 1873.

Editor Courier:—In an article in your paper of the 10th, signed by "A Tax Payer," there is this statement: "In examining the tax list for this year I find that an overcharge from two to five cents has been made against every tax payer of this county."

Your correspondent is certainly in error at this point. The tax list which was made out by myself, was made out correctly. There is no overcharge against any one, and I am ready to have my conduct in this matter inves-

tigated.

I am informed that the tax list was copied into a book by a gentleman of this place for the convenience of the Sheriff in collecting the taxes in which book the entries were made as stated by your correspondent.

The Sheriff, however, I was informed, on account of the errors as stated above does not use said book in collecting the taxes, but has a correct copy of the tax list which he uses for that purpose.

Please do me the Justice to publish this card in this weeks paper.

Very Respectfully,

J.B. Tucker, Register of Deeds

[Franklin Courier, October 24, 1873]

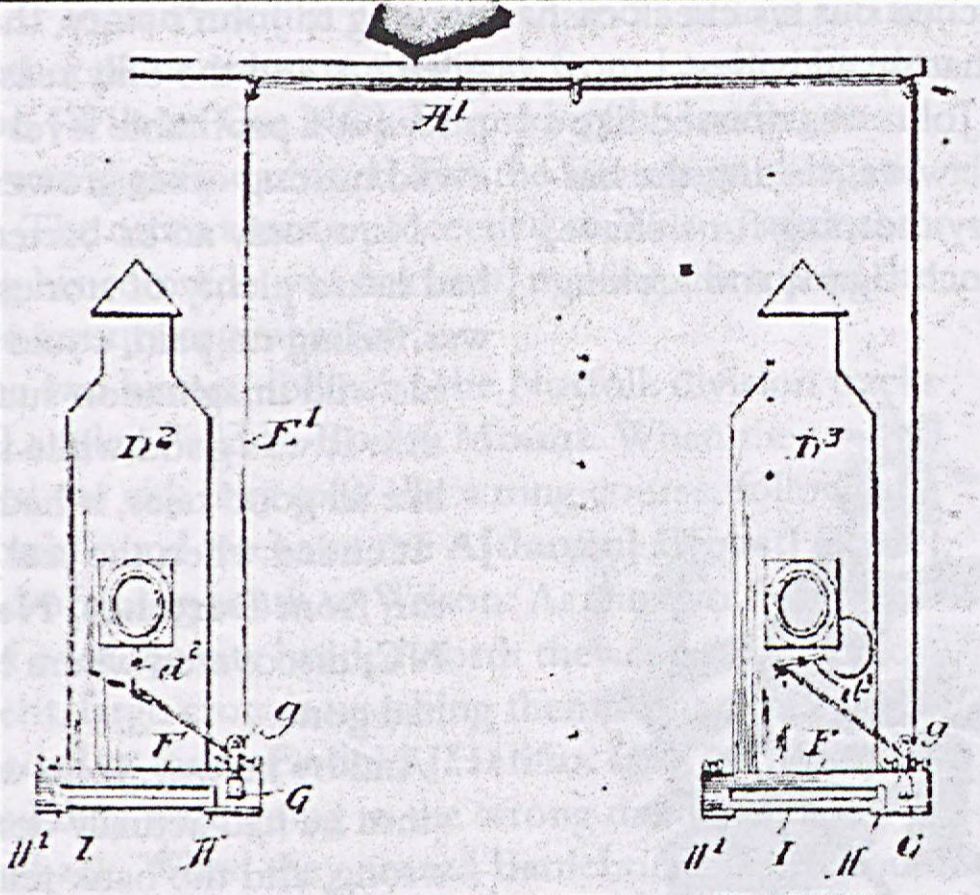


1895 Cartoon



## Motion Picture Machine ~ Shutter Operating Attachment

**J**ames Ellison Singleton was a/the projectionist for the movie theater in **Washington, [Beaufort Co.] North Carolina** in the late 1910s and 1920s. He and White invented a device that would automatically change from one projector to another, if you were fortunate to have two projectors in the theater. The "Singleton-White device" was advertised through a flyer for sale. It was probably sold around 1918-19.



**SINGLETON-WHITE**  
Shutter Operating Attachment For Twin Motion Picture  
Machines

Patented June 20, 1917. Serial No. 100,000

With This Attachment Your Operator Can Make a Perfect Change WITHOUT THE AID OF ANYONE.

It Is The Only Attachment of Its Kind That Not Only Helps To Make a Perfect Continuous Picture, But It SAVES LABOR AND EXPENSE.

It Is Simple and Easy To Operate. Nothing Whatever To Get Out Of Fix. The Purchase Price Being The Only Cost You Have To Contend With When You Own A SINGLETON-WHITE CHANGER.

It Is Worth Several Hundred Dollars a Year To The Small Exhibitor and Is Worth Much More To The Large Exhibitor.

In Fact No Exhibitor Operating With Two Machines Can Afford To Be Without A SINGLETON-WHITE CHANGER.

FOR SALE BY  
**SINGLETON & WHITE.**  
GREENVILLE, N. C.

Don't Fail To Ask About Singleton-White Film Clear

[Posted by Robert Ellison Singleton, grandson of James Ellison Singleton at Singleton web site, <http://www.geocities.com/~ncsingletons/>]

## HOW TO PREPARE FOR A FLOGGING

**G**eo. S.—, late a lieutenant in the U.S. army, and a native of this county, was one of the most eccentric fellows in the world. When a boy, having incurred the displeasure of his father, the latter called him to an account; and after examining him as to the why and wherefore of his misconduct, resolve on applying the rod, now more fashionably called 'hickory.'

But that the punishment might have the more salutary effect, instead of inflicting it immediately, he gave the culprit time to chew the bitter cud of repentance, made ten times more bitter by the anticipation of what was to follow.

'George,' said he, 'you may go for the present, but prepare yourself early to-morrow morning, for the most severe flogging you ever had.'

Geo. retired, and the next morning bright and early, appeared before his father to undergo the execution of his sentence. 'Take off your coat George,' was the stern command. off went the coat, and the father standing with the well-prepared hickory in his hand, observed that his son's back, from one extremity to the other, appeared unusually protuberant.

'What have you got on your back,' said he.

'My jacket,' replied the boy.

'Well, what have you got under it?' demanded the father.

'A leather apron, four double,' replied the lad.

'A leather apron, have you indeed! And what's that for?'

'Why, pa,' said the youngster with a grave countenance, 'you told me to prepare for a flogging, and I got as well prepared as I could.'

The angry father now turned away to hide a laugh, and the boy escaped a flogging by being so well prepared for it.

[Halifax Minerva, 3/29/1829]





## HONOR ROLL FOR THE CITY SCHOOLS

### List Pupils from Three City Schools Making Honors for Past Month

The honor roll for the **Rocky Mount** graded schools for the month ending January 90, 1920, has just been compiled by the teachers of the various schools and made public. The complete list, which includes the **West, East and Edgemont** schools, is as follows:

#### West School.

First grade, Miss **Bessie McDearman** and Miss **Patty Arrington**, teachers—**Mary Alice Batts, Ruth Williams, Clayton Moore, Murle Morgan.**

Second grade, Miss **Martha Darden**, teacher—**Julia Batts, J.D. Winstead.**

Second grade, Miss **Martha Ward**, teacher—**Betsy Ann Hamilton, Mary Elizabeth Clark, Edward Spruill.**

Third grade, Miss **Julia Montgomery**, teacher—**Ruth Allen, Elizabeth Bulluck, Samuel Breen.**

Fourth grade, Mrs. **R.L. Hart**, teacher—**Elizabeth Whitehead, Rosa Coit Moore.**

Fifth grade, Miss **Bertha Barker**, teacher—**Josephine Battle, William Bobbitt.**

Sixth grade, Miss **Embra Morton**, teacher—**Annabelle Allen, Lillian Braswell, Margaret Jordan, Bowden Grantham.**

Seventh grade Mrs. **H.K. Hayes**, teacher—**Mary L. McDearman, Frances Jenkins, Beatrice Wilmoughby, Altermise Boyd, Louis Kincheloe, Joe Bobbitt.**

#### East School

First grade, Mrs. **Charlotte Thorpe**, teacher—**Gertrude Pully, Iris Robbins, Ruth Williamson,**

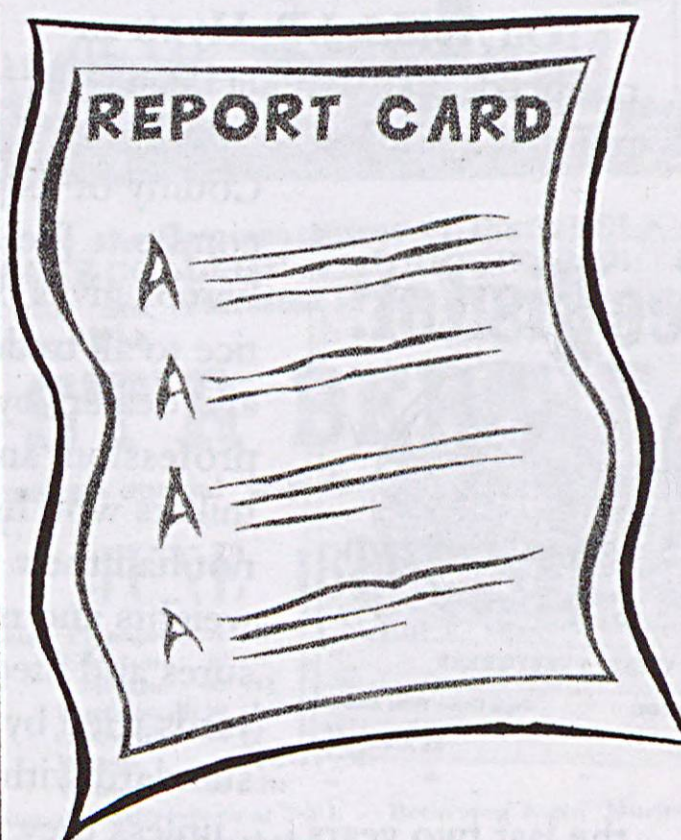
**Marshall Garris, Lewis P. Lane, Jr., Andrew J. Daughtridge.**

Second grade, Miss **Mary Lee Shine**, teacher—**Rebecca Knight, Dorothy Joyner, Edna Arrington, Ivan Price, Robert Womble.**

Second grade, Mrs. **J.A. Speight**, teacher—**Elizabeth Bass.**

Third grade, Miss **Addie Paris**, teacher—**Margaret Bunn, Eva Groom, Sylvia Hoffman, Lelia Perkins, Turner Bunn, Jr., William Melvin, William Dunning, James Shine.**

Fourth grade, Miss **Bessie Owen**, teacher—**Sara Fligel, Mary S. Ray, Kenneth McGowan.**



Fifth grade, Miss **Clyde Shore**, teacher—**Pattie Lyon Moore, Myrtle Lough, Joe Savage, Richard Mallison.**

Sixth grade, Miss **Helen Tomlinson**, teacher—**Thurman Boyette.**

Seventh grade, Miss **Minnie G. Gray**, teacher—**Cecelia August, Janet Simpson, Dorothy Dunning, Corrinne Pitt, Margaret Burnette, Lucille Robbins.**

#### Edgemont School.

First grade, Miss **Mabel Murchison**, teacher—**Elizabeth Bonham, Gertrude Epperson, Fern Lewis, Lorine Price, Elizabeth Turnage, William Coleman, Walter Fountain.**

## CONNECTOR

Second grade, Mrs. **W. S. Thomas**, teacher—**Hazel Daughtridge, Retha Johnson, Eleanor Moore, Helen Parker, Thelma Pate, Ruby Williams, Robbie Allen, Mary Av-ent, Mary Ruggles Baker, Jane Frances Robbins, Lucy Paddison, Charles Clark.**

Third grade, Miss **Lula Fountain**, teacher—**Thelma Quigley, Irene Sutton, Gladys Taylor, Leslie Williams, George Lee Corbin, John Hoggard, Braxton Kea, William Moore, Wilson Robbins.**

Fourth grade, Miss **Susie Parker**, teacher—**Helen Herring, Hazel Guy.**

Fifth grade, Miss **Maude Anderson**, teacher—**Grace Lewis, Edward Melton.**

Seventh grade, Mrs. **R.A. Creech**, teacher—**Pauline Waskey, Vivian Wallace, Daisy Ruffin.**

Eighth grade, Miss **Mary Dosier**, teacher—**Edgar Joyner, Braxton Dozier.**

Ninth grade, Miss **Elsie Newton**, teacher—**Annie Watson.**

Tenth grade: Miss **Bell Doub**, teacher—**Mary Moore.**

Eleventh grade, Mr. **John M. Shields**, teacher—**Emma Lancaster, Florence Winstead, Maxine Taylor.**

[Rocky Mount Evening Telegram, 1/2/1920]

## Local Items

The first law of gravity—never laugh at your own jokes.



The bar room wags now, instead of saying, "Let's take a drink," substitute "Let's liquidate."

[Franklin Courier, October 24, 1873]



## Edgecombe County in 1852

FROM AN ARTICLE BY HUGH  
BUCKNER JOHNSTON

The temperance argument was reopened in *The Southerner* on March 13, 1852 when "A Ditcher" felt impelled to publish a lengthy reply to a "gentleman drummer Sherman" who had been so bold as to support public temperance in an earlier letter to the Editor. On April 3, Editor **George Howard** gave a favorable report on the temperance lecture given by **John B. Odom**—lasting some 1½ hours!—in the local

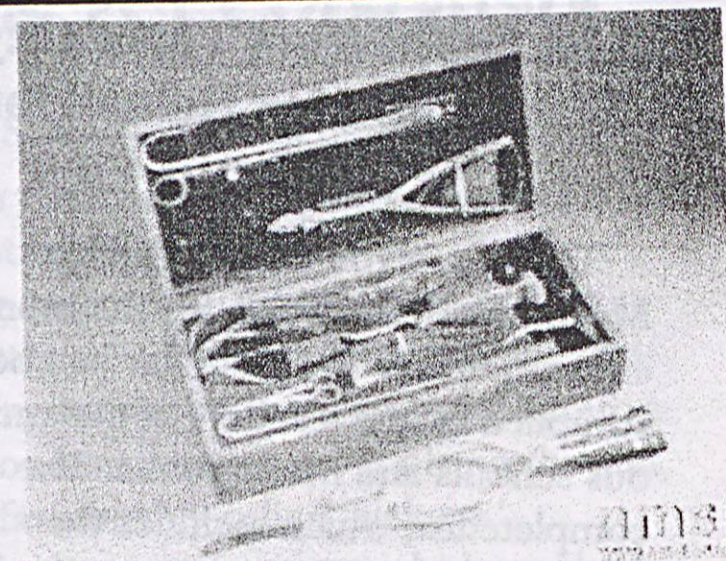
*The Southerner* carried several articles on agriculture, including a letter written by **Jesse H. Powell** of **Battleboro** on April 3. Its title was "Agricultural Improvement in Edgecombe..."

A notice on March 13 stated that Elder **Blount Cooper** would preach at the **Meadow Church** on May 5 at **Autrey's Creek** on May 6, and "at the residence of the late **Pernetta [Pitt] Bridgers**" on May 7. Mrs. Bridgers was the widow of the **Britton Bridgers** and had died in December of 1851, not far east of **Upper Town Creek Baptist Church** where she was a member.

On April 3, **J.B. Hyatt** announced that "having been appointed Standard Keeper for the County of Edgecombe... [he] hereby gives notice to all traders and dealers by profession, and millers who have not had their weights and measures and Steel-yards tried by the standard within

the last two years, ... unless they bring forward their weights and measures to be tried, on or before the 15th day of next month, he will proceed to enforce the law by instituting suits for the penalties."

*The Southerner* reported on March 6, that eighteen prominent citizens had bought and presented Dr. **Wil-**

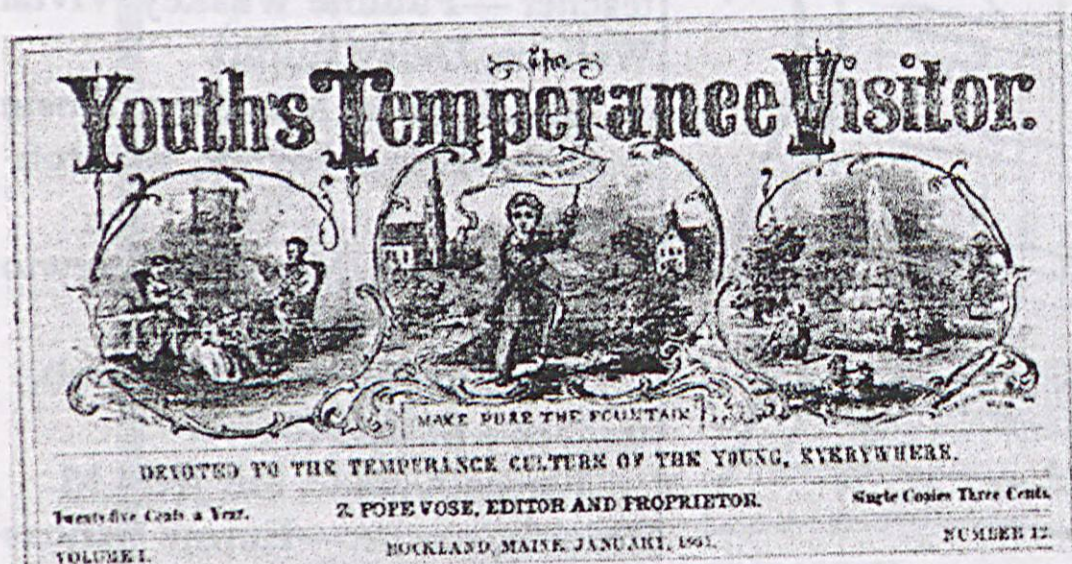


1850s Obstetrical Instruments

**liam George Thomas** a case of Obstetrical Instruments for his new practice in **Wilmington, NC**.

Businesses were often reorganized. On April 10, it was reported that the firm of **Pender & Bridgers** had been dissolved by **Robert H. Pender** (older brother of Gen. **William Dorsey Pender**) and **John L. Bridgers**. The March 6 paper announced that **N. Mathewson & Robert Fleet** had ended their partnership and that the business would be "conducted hereafter by **Nathan Mathewson**, who will visit the North in a few days to purchase a large assortment of Goods suitable for the approaching season."

[Contributed by Pam Edmondson, TRC member]



Baptist church.

On April 17 the readers were informed that the **Pitt Co. Agricultural Society** had been formed on March 27. A detailed account of a Whig meeting at **Tarboro** was reported on April 10.

## Overseers

On February 8, 1785, the **Edgecombe county Court** appointed **John Stringer** Overseer of Roads in the place of **Peter Stephenson**, **Joseph Barnes, Sr.**, in the place of **Britain Barnes**, and **William Ellis** in the place of **William Amason**.

On February 10, 1885, **George Brownrigg** was appointed Overseer

of the Road in the room of **John Spell** decd.

["Old Reporter," Rocky Mount Evening Telegram, 3/7/1960]

**LOST** on the Street—Breast Pin. Large Brown Cameo with white figures set in gold band. Finder will return to **C.E. McGwigan**.

[The Enfield Progress, 8/21/1908]

## ADVERTISEMENTS FOR SALE.

A 52 inch, rubber tire, Columbia bicycle, nearly new, for sale; cost \$65 when new, will sell at a low price.

Apply at this office.

[The Graphic, Ridgeway, Warren Co., NC, 7/17/1890.]



# The Bertie

About 1870, brothers **Wilbur F. and Edward Solon Askew** and partner **C.T. Harden** built the small steamer **Kalula** which traveled a tri-weekly route on the **Cashie River** between **Windsor [Bertie Co, NC]** and **Plymouth [Washington Co, NC]**.

The partners soon realized that a larger boat was needed. **Capt. L. Thrower** designed and built the **Bertie**. While the boat was being built in NC, **E.H. Frazier and Co. in Baltimore, MD** was manufacturing a steam

engine and boiler at a cost of \$900. In a letter to his father, **Zephaniah Askew**, Wilbur described the vessel: "... we are going to have quite a nice Boat this time she has a beautifull model and will have a very powerfull machinery ... a large Boiler having a four foot Furnace the Boat is bound to run we are putting her up with the best of timber that can be had all of Cabins will be Junipir and her bottom select Pine cleare of Knots Capt Thrower ... says that he is going to Steam her down the Cashie before the last day of Sept but I dout it..."

The ship was launched on Nov. 26, 1872—before her engine and boiler were installed, as was customary with steamboats. In another letter to his father, Zephaniah, Wilbur Askew described it: "... she went in as pretty as heart could wish, she did not strain herself at all we got the Engine & Boiler in to day she has a beautifull set on the water & I think it will be very near Christmas when we get on the line there was a greate many people to see her launched ..."

The **Bertie** was often mentioned in the local newspaper, the **Windsor Albemarle Times**. The following appeared on 9/18/1874: "The Cashie being a navigable stream is a high way. No one has a right to impede its navigation by cutting trees, limbs etc., so as to block up the river. Certain parties in the last ten days have cut thirteen trees which have fallen in the River. This would be bad enough at any point on the stream, but when it hap-

pens in the narrows within eight miles of Windsor it becomes an intolerable nuisance. The owners of the steamer **Bertie** desire to warn all parties that if this practice is continued they will have the guilty ones dealt with according to law."

The **Bertie** was once used for a getaway as related in this 12/4/1874 article: "There is in jail in Windsor, a youngster named **Ranse Roulhac**, ... whose talent at stealing amounts to a rare gift. He it was who broke into **Sheriff Bell's** store and stole the money. He is only ten years old and is about the size of a quart jug. It turns out that he stole several bags of corn from Bell and sold

them to **Fager**, while sundry people saw him at it and was by his lying fooled out of their eyesight. Having got Bell's money he left on the Steamer **Bertie** to attend the circus at Plymouth. Going on down he exhibited his roll of money and that led to his detection.-- When caught and overhauled he confessed the crime and charged that **Frank Watson** was in it with him. Frank proved an alibi. This little rooster is in jail where he can flap his wings and crow as much as he pleases."

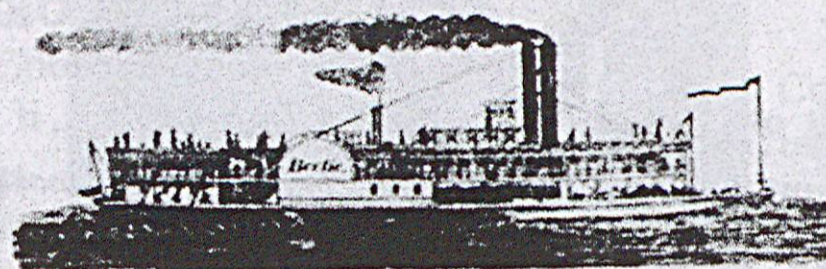
The **Bertie** carried both freight and mail. Securing the mail contract was not always a sure thing as indicated by this letter from Wilbur Askew to his father on 4/29/1878: "I am on my way home from **Washington [Beaufort Co, NC]** I got

out of my trouble with the Inspectors and have managed to get the mail by the 15th of May, however I want this kept a profound secret as I want to take Old Bell by surprise, he has treated me meaner than I thought one human could treat another."

Wilbur managed to outsmart Bell again in 1879: "I have been off for a few days about this mail contract and am glad to state to you that I have succeeded in getting the contract for the balance of the term ending July 1st 1880. I have the papers now in my pocket and will take charge of the mail to-night when I get to Plymouth. I guess Old Bell will feel Kind of Billious to morrow morning when I arrive in Windsor with the mail."

[BERTIE, CONT. ON P. 16]

## EXCURSION.



Go to the Commencement of the **WESLEYAN FEMALE COLLEGE** at **MURFREESBORO N. C.** all who are interested in pretty girls, music and flowers. The

### ST'R BERTIE

will make a special trip for the occasion on **TUESDAY,**

**JUNE 16TH. 1874:**

Touching Plymouth at 6	A. M.	Fare for the Round Trip	\$5.00
" Edenton at 8	"	"	3.00
" Colerain at 10	"	"	2.00
" Harrellsville at 11:30	"	"	2.50
" Gatesville at 12	M.	"	2.00
" Wynn at 12:20 P. M.	"	"	2.00
" Winton at 1:30	"	"	1.50

Arriving at Murfreesboro at 3:30. Thursday morning at 6 o'clock. Returning leave Murfreesboro

**W. F. ASKEW,**  
Captain.



## Politicians

A 1868 Greenville, Pitt Co., NC paper described local office-holders: "Senator **D.J. Rick** was an ironical sour caustic cuss from New York; Representatives **Byron Laflin**, a political adventurer and bloated rum sucker from New York and **Richard Short**, alias "**Dick Strik-**



### [BERTIE, CONT. FROM P. 15]

The *Bertie* often sponsored excursions to **Murfreesboro [Hertford Co, NC]** and **Plymouth**. The following was reported in the *Windsor Public Ledger* on 4/25/1888: "From Wind-

sor to **Terrapin Point Fishery** and return for half a dollar. This announcement filled the steamer *Bertie* on

Wednesday morning of last week with as jolly and good natured a crowd of excursionists as ever trod a deck. It is a beastly hour, four o'clock, to get up to take a boat. But two things reconciled us to the effort. The first was that we were to spend the night at the **American House** [a large fancy hotel in Windsor with **J. R. Moody, Prop.**] where our few hours of sleep were bound to be comfortable and there was absolute certainty of not being left. The second was the fact that it was the *Bertie* we were going on and the simple thought of the attention of its gallant crew did much to reconcile us to the loss of our 'forty winks.' At 4:30 the *Bertie* broke anchor and began its descent of our

serpentine river. ... Our first stop was at **Austin**, where we hoped to see our entertaining correspondent **S. B. K.**, but we were informed that he was up the track hitching Fager's turtle to a train



### OFFICE OF STEAMER BERTIE.

ROUTE: WINDSOR AND PLYMOUTH, N. C.  
EVERY MONDAY, WEDNESDAY AND FRIDAY.

of logs, the locomotive being temporarily disabled. At **Clover Grass** Capt. **John Williams** is just getting ready for fishing. **Sans Souci**, ... holds its own. At 9:30 we reached **Plymouth** and the excursionists took the town. **Plymouth** changes occasionally, when a fire comes along and burns part of it up. We met several of the prominent businessmen there, **Hoenthal, J. Norman, Melton Norman, Hampton, Brinkley, Butler, Piercey, Welch** of the *Monitor* and others. We ... left [Plymouth] at 10, ... Our first stop was but a short run to the celebrated **Terrapin Point fishery**, run by **Mr. Jas. B. Nicholls**. We took dinner here - at least we ate it here — we took it from

**lin**," an apostate from **Nash County**; Sheriff **John Foley**, a flat footed Irishman from **Cork**; Superior Court Clerk, **Clavin Cox**, who is acknowledged by his own party to be the meanest man in the county; Register of Deeds **Charles Snead**, a dirty radical from **Nash County**; and Treasurer **Bill Smith**, an imported carpetbagger. If hell had been raked over with a fine tooth comb, another set of such scalawags could not be found."

["Incident at Carney's" by Roger Kammerer, *Greenville Times*, Jan. 6-19, 1993]

## The Lot and Houses

IN the town of **Warrenton**, known as the **EX-CHANGE COFFEE HOUSE** will be offered for sale, at public auction, on Monday the 1st day of **Warren County Court**, if not previously disposed of.

[*Roanoke Advocate*, Halifax, NC, 8/6/1830]

home. ... **Philip Perry** keeps books at the Point...and one or two, it might have been a half a dozen, of our girls nearly devoured him. At 2 o'clock we steamed for the light house, reached **Plymouth**, took on freight and soda water and put for home, and at 9 o'clock reached **Windsor**. Spent a delightful day and will go again when the *Bertie* excurts that way. ...

The *Bertie* was grounded on 11/28/1888. Its final disposition is unknown.

[Askew Family Papers, Special Collections Department, J. Y. Joyner Library, East Carolina University, Greenville, North Carolina, USA; "The Windsor Story-

### CASHIE STEAM NAVIGATION COMPANY, STEAMER BERTIE, CAPT. W. F. ASKEW.

Steamer leaves Windsor 5 a. m. daily except Sunday.

Steamer arrives at Plymouth 10 a. m. daily except Sunday.

Returning leaves Plymouth on arrival of steamer Plymouth.

Connects with all lines running to Plymouth.

R. W. ASKEW, Agent.

*Edenton Albemarle Enquirer*, 15 July 1886



## John Chavis, Early 19th Century Teacher and Minister

**J**ohn Chavis, a free black man born about 1763 in **Granville Co., NC**, was a **Presbyterian** minister and a teacher to both blacks and whites. He taught children from many prominent NC families such as **Mangum, Manly, Henderson, Horner, Enloe** and **Hargrove**. Some of his most successful students included **Charles Manley**, who became governor of NC; **Abram Rencher**, minister to **Portugal** and Governor of **New Mexico**; and Mr. **James H. Horner**, founder of the **Horner School**.

Little is known of Chavis's early life, but it is believed that he was an indentured servant to **Halifax [NC]** lawyer **James Milner**. At age 15, Chavis enlisted in the **5th VA Reg.** and served for three years during the **Revolutionary War**. His commander certified in 1783 that Chavis had "faithfully fulfilled his duties and is thereby entitled to all immunities granted to three-year soldiers." On a 1789 **Mecklenburg Co., VA** tax list, he has property consisting of a single horse. Also in 1789, he was employed by **Robert Greenwood's** estate as tutor to Greenwood's orphans.

John Chavis was probably the best educated black man before the **Civil War**. He attended **Washington Academy**, a Presbyterian institution which later became **Washington and Lee University**, "...where he went through a regular course of Academical studies." In September 1792, he entered **College of New Jersey**—later **Princeton**—where he studied for the Presbyterian ministry with financial assistance from the Leslie Fund. **John Witherspoon**, president of the college, conducted private classes for students studying for the ministry and probably taught Chavis in those sessions.

Chavis was licensed to preach about 1800. He was given a horse and money for lodging and served as a Presbyterian missionary to slaves in **MD, VA, and NC** between 1801 and 1807. His services were also attended by whites among whom he had many friends.

In NC, John Chavis was best known for his teaching. He moved to **Raleigh [Wake Co, NC]** about 1807 and announced the opening of a school in 1808. His

school served both black and white students. White students attended during the day, paying \$2.50 a quarter. Black students attended in the evening at a cost of \$1.75. Chavis's school moved around, depending on where he found the most support. He taught in **Wake, Granville, Orange, and Chatham** counties for 20 years. White students were said to have boarded sometimes in the Chavis's home in order to attend his school.

While Chavis was teaching, he continued preaching, until 1832. After the **Nat Turner** insurrection, blacks were no longer allowed to preach or teach and Chavis's primary source of income was cut off. However, he and his wife were given \$50 a year until Chavis's death in 1838 by the **Orange Co, Presbytery**. Mrs. Chavis continued to receive assistance until 1842.



John Chavis by Richard Weaver

**George Wortham**, a **Granville Co.** lawyer, wrote in 1883: "I have heard him read and explain the scriptures to my father's family and slaves repeatedly. His English was remarkably pure, ... his manner was impressive, his explanations clear and concise, and his views, as I then thought and still think, entirely orthodox. ... He had a small but select library of theological works, in which were to be found the works of Flavel, Buxton, Boston, and others. I have now two volumes of *Dwight's Theology* which were formerly in his possession. He was said by his old pupils to have been a good Latin and a fair Greek scholar. ... I learned from my father that he preached frequently many years ago at **Shiloh, Nutbush, and Island Creek churches** to the whites."

Chavis and Senator **Willie P. Mangum** were friends for many years, and Chavis wrote often to Mangum, frequently criticizing Mangum's politics. In particular, Chavis disliked President **Andrew Jackson**. In one letter, he wrote: "I am very anxious respecting the presidency. I am very fearful that Mr. [William H.] Crawford will not be elected. ... There is much rumor abroad that you will not be elected again because you support the election of Mr. Crawford." In May 1826: "I am teaching school where I did last year and should you be traveling this road I shall thank you to call on me."

Chavis was opposed to amendments to the constitution "because once a beginning is made to amend the Constitution away goes the best of human compacts."

[CHAVIS, CONT. ON PAGE 19]



## Woodlawn Nash Co., NC

After her marriage on Nov. 20th, 1878, a young bride from Pitt Co. came to live on a large plantation in Nash Co. She was **Martha Olivia King** and she married **William Robert Winstead**, owner of the property. The plantation, which encompassed about 1,000 acres, was known as **Woodlawn** because of its native woodland and majestic oaks. It was located about three miles from the tiny village of **Rocky Mount**.

More than one road led to Woodlawn, but the main entrance was by way of **Nashville Road** [now **Nashville Highway**], and the three-quarter mile avenue, through wooded forest, led to a typical southern manor house with long porches, front and rear, for comfortable living in summer and plenty of big rocking chairs for family and friends. It was ideal for neighborly visiting, and perfect for snapping beans and shelling peas.

The house had its ample kitchen, detached from the house, but with a latticed walk-way from the manor house. There was a huge fireplace with pot hooks hanging in the chimney and numerous pots swinging from them.

### History of the Plantation

**David McDaniel** and his wife, **Celest Dortch**, had inherited the plantation that became Woodlawn from her father, **John Dortch**. They sold it in 1850 to **Joshua Thaddeus Watson**, and he left it to his son, **Thomas Blount Watson**, who lost it after the Civil War.

**David Williams Winstead** bought the plantation and gave it to his son, **William Robert**, in 1870. William Robert lived there as a bachelor until his marriage to Martha.

Martha Olivia King was the daughter of Col. **William May King** (b. 1833) and his wife, **Almeta**, daughter of **Howell** and **Delphia (Newton) Peebles**.



Woodlawn As It Looked In Its Early Days

Martha King Winstead was descended paternally from Maj. **Benjamin May**, who served in the Revolution, and **Samuel Vines**, who served in the War of 1812.

### Winstead Family

The young couple settled down at Woodlawn and soon had the joyous shouts of young boys and girls about the premises. Six children had arrived to bless the couple: 1) **Rosa** [b. 8/26/1879, d. 12/8/1947] md. **Reading Dempsey Bulluck** [b. 3/9/1865, d. 8/9/1943, s/o **David W.** and **Margaret Routh Bullock**]; 2) **Iva** md **William Vance Gupton**, 7/21/1908; 3) **Hamner**; 4) **Robert**; 5) **Almeta** md Dr. **James Delaney Carlton**; and 6) **Elizabeth**.

### Changes to the House

As the Winstead family grew several rooms were added to Woodlawn. The detached kitchen was moved away, and became a tenant's home; the latticed walkway was removed. A new kitchen and long porch were built.

A school had been built for the Winstead children, and a governess taught them. The governess was Mrs. **Ophelia** who taught them the three R's, music, and prepared them for higher education.

In the early 1890s William Winstead's health began to fail. Dr. **George Wimberley**, a young physician in Rocky Mount [about 750 inhabitants by that time], sent him to **Philadelphia** to an eminent physician who told him to go home and put his house in order.

Winstead, who lived about two years, guided Martha in the management of the farm until his death on 1/4/1894. As was usual at that time, the Winsteds had selected a spot not far from the house for a burial ground. It was in the orchard—a beautiful spot in the spring. Martha was laid to rest there in 1932, beside William Robert. They were later moved to **Pineview Cemetery** in Rocky Mount.

### Martha, Career Woman

There was a depression a few years after William Winstead's death. Cotton fell to 4¢ a pound and many farmers lost their farms. Martha Winstead had to find a way to support her family. About that time, 1899, the old **Woodard Hotel** came up for lease. Martha was a good cook, and she felt that running the hotel might be the solution to her financial problems. Some of the children were about ready for college, and the others could attend the **University School** in Rocky Mount. So she moved to town and began her career, catering to the appetites of the traveling public and regular local boarders. She was very successful. Her hotel became so famous that traveling men would plan their itineraries so as to wind up in

[WOODLAWN CONT. ON P. 19]



## Father, Trust Me!

Chapel Hill, May, 18<sup>th</sup> 1839

Dear Father

The astonishment with which I met, in the perusal of your letter, induces me to write to you immediately. I find in your letter, that I am accused of neglecting my studies, and also of disorder, both of which charges, I deny, and can prove at any time to be false, by those to whom I recite and also by my whole class. I have consulted Governor [David] Swain concerning the affair, and he says, that he knows nothing against me. As to being disorderly, I am very certain, how that originated; some three or four weeks ago Swain was absent from the hill, and one evening at prayers, something took place, which created a great laughter, and Old [Elisha] Mitchell, (to be smart) got up, and spoke very harshly, and in return, nearly every fellow in college commenced stamping; and those whom he did not see, he reported on suspicion. The honors were distributed among the senior class this morn-

ing, and as usual with great partiality. [Alpheus] Jones & [John Alexander] Malsby, who were entitled to the first honor, have both met with injustice. Jones, I suppose, has not missed more than three words this session, and Malsby has done equally as well, though Jones being a member of the Dialectic society, gets first, and Malsby, because he is a member of the Philanthropic society gets only second. Various acts of partiality have thus been conferred on the Dialectic Society, and daily observation proves to me, that the Faculty are a set of rascals. I hope when you receive this, that you will have no further doubts as to the dissolute course which, some of the Faculty would have you believe, I have been pursuing.

I still remain your faithful Son  
J Perry.

Joshua Perry of Louisburg, Franklin County, NC, entered the University of North Carolina in 1838 and joined the Philanthropic Society.

### [CHAVIS, CONT. FROM PAGE 17]

In March 1828, Chavis wrote: "... Please to give my best respects to Mrs. Mangum and tell her that I am the same old two and sixpence towards her and her children, and that she need not think it strange that I should say that her children will never be taught the Theory of the English Language unless I teach them. I say so still. I learnt my Theory from *Lindley Murray's Spelling Book* which no other Teacher in this part of the country Teaches but myself and I think it preferable to the English Grammar. I wish you to make this statement to **Colonel Horner** and tell him that I want his daughter **Juliana** for the same purpose."

John Chavis died in June, 1838.

The Oxford Torchlight writer of a September 28, 1880 story in the *Oxford Torchlight* recalled having "seen him when a short time before his death several of his white pupils, prominent gentlemen, called to see him. Chavis was then advanced in years, his white hair forming a strange contrast to his ebony face .... His manners were dignified yet respectful and entirely unassuming

and his conversation sprightly and interesting."

[*"John Chavis, Black Educator,"* NC Supplement to *Raleigh News and Observer*, July 1985; *John Chavis, Antebellum Negro Preacher and Teacher* by Stephen B. Weeks, © UNC; *Up From Slavery: A Documentary History of Negro Education*, compiled by Rudolph Lewis]

### [WOODLAWN CONT. FROM P. 18]

Rocky Mount for the weekend. Hot biscuits with homemade butter or ham gravy, and genuine country ham made those who once enjoyed a meal want to return for another.

Martha Winstead became a well know figure in Rocky Mount. She was active in support of the projects that were important to her and was never at a loss for words when her voice was needed. She was a tower of strength—courageous and resourceful.

[Source: "Suburbia Claims An Old Nash County Plantation," by Ruth Smith Williams, *Evening Telegram*, 2/13/196

## CONNECTOR

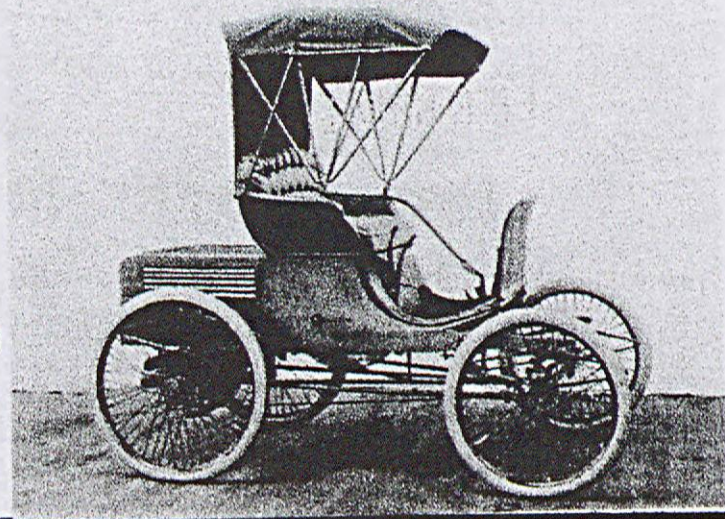
He appears to have left the University in January 1840 without a degree.

[From the University of NC *Documenting the American South Collection*, "True and Candid Compositions: The Lives and Writings of Antebellum Students at the University of North Carolina" at <http://docsouth>.

## Automobile is sold

CLEVELAND, April 1, 1898—The first recorded sale of an automobile took place here today. Alexander Winton, the inventor of the car that bears his name, sold an auto to Robert Allison of Port Carbon, Pa. The price was \$1,000.

The vehicle will travel at a speed of 10 miles an hour, according to Winton. It has a gasoline engine and has room for two passengers.





# GONE, BUT NOT FORGOTTEN!

[FROM TENNESSEE OBITUARIES COLLECTED  
BY JONATHAN K. T. SMITH]



1. **CALEB BRASSFIELD** born Granville Co., N.C., March 10, 1799; died Weakley Co., Tenn., Dec. 19, 1846; active Methodist layman.
2. **NANCY D. SENSABAUGH** wife of, Michael Sensabaugh born Franklin Co., N.C., Feb. 22, 1817; died Decatur, Ala., Nov. 25, 1846..
3. Colonel **BENJAMIN SHERROD** born Halifax Co., N.C.; educated at William and Mary College; had lived in Georgia but the last 20 years had lived

- near Courtland, Alabama; died Feb. 24, 1847 in the 71st year of his age. During the War of 1812 he was a supply contractor for the U. S. Army
4. **ELIZABETH HUBBARD** wife of Joseph Hubbard; born Person Co., N.C., Feb. 7, 1785; married Dec. 1, 1807; died DeSoto Co., Miss., Aug. 13, 1847; wife and mother (one child being Rev. B. H. Hubbard).
  5. **MARINA C. PETTWAY** daughter of Harry and Lucy Williams, Warren Co., No. Carolina, died Wilson Co., Ala., July 28, 1882 a few days after her 74th birthday.
  6. **WILLIAM MCGREGOR** born Nash Co., N.C. Nov. 1, 1800; died Nov. 10, 1873; md Elizabeth B. Harper, May 14, 1831 (she died Dec. 30, 1862); surviving were 4 children.
  7. **CATHERINE HICKS ROSS** daughter of John and Polly Hicks, born Granville County, North Carolina, Feb. 8, 1819; died Paris, Tenn., Nov. 10, 1895; married, as her third husband, W. R. Ross, August 2, 1866.

[Contributed by Tim Rackley, TRC member.]

## BARBER SHOP.

Having opened a first class Shaving, Haircutting and Shampooing saloon [sic], I Respectfully solicit Warrenton and vicinity. Polite barbers, sharp razors, plenty of Bayrum and a Clean Towel for every customer. Respectfully,

Henry Harris

MRS. T. M. CASERLEY,  
Warrenton, N. C.

A new lot Hat, Flowers and Embroideries this week at Mrs. Caserley's. Prices reduced. Give me a call. Now is the time to buy. New Ruching and Laces in Vandyke points. New Slides and buckles for dresses.

## A SHAVE, SIR?

When you come to Henderson [Vance Co., NC] and want a smooth shave call on Henry Dunston the Fashionable Barber. A good shave at a low price. A stylish hair cut cheap. Office in Burwell Hall. William Long, formerly of Warrenton, is now assisting me and will be glad to serve his former patrons.

[The Graphic, Ridgeway, Warren Co., NC,

## CONNECTOR

# Help for the Orphans!

## Grand Entertainment at Orphan Asylum.

Thursday Night, June 21st, 1877.

## GOV. VANCE TO BE PRESENT.

THE LADIES OF OXFORD WILL REPEAT, AT THE ABOVE PLACE AND TIME, for the exclusive benefit of the Orphans, their VARIED AND ATTRACTIVE ENTERTAINMENT, together with many new and interesting features, embracing Dazzling Fairy Plays, Pantomimes, Statuary, Tableaux, Vocal and Instrumental Music, &c., &c.

This Entertainment was received with unbounded applause at its late rendition, and the Managers have added much that will increase its beauty and interest.

His Excellency, Gov. Z. B. VANCE,

has accepted an invitation to be present and is expected to address the audience on that occasion. The veritable MRS. LARLEY will again introduce her

## FAR-FAMED WAX-WORKS,

Having lately procured many valuable additions to her wonderful collection. The Programme is one of the richest and most varied in character ever presented to this public, abounding in everything calculated to please the eye, delight the ear and instruct the understanding.

ICE CREAM, CAKE and other delicacies will be for sale at the close of the Entertainment.

## COME ONE! COME ALL!

Don't forget that GOV. VANCE will be present. Let everybody come and, while securing for yourselves a fund of amusement, aid in sustaining a great charitable institution.

Remember, Thursday Night, June 21st, 1877!

The Masonic Fraternity of the County commemorate their Anniversary at the Asylum, on the following day—Friday, June 22d.

Admission to Entertainment. . . . . 25 Cents.

Tickets can be procured at the different Stores in Oxford.

Davis, Blackwell & Co., Job Printers, Durham, N. C.