



LOWER CAPE FEAR HISTORICAL SOCIETY, Inc. BULLETIN

Volume I, Number 2

Wilmington, N. C.

February, 1958

The accompanying illustration shows the Dram Tree, a suggested emblem of the Society; a sketch of another proposed emblem is being prepared.

MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

The present attempts of The Lower Cape Fear Historical Society, Inc., and The Southeastern North Carolina Beach Association to save what remains of the once great bastion of Fort Fisher and its chain of earthen works which withstood two assaults until the weak garrison of Confederates surrendered in January, 1865 to a combined assault of Union land and sea forces, brings up again the efforts of earlier organizations to protect the historical site, on the Cape Fear River and the Atlantic Ocean in New Hanover County.

The Reverend Andrew J. Howell, pastor, at that time of the Winter Park Presbyterian Church and Chairman of the New Hanover County Historical Commission, with Louis T. Moore, presently serving as Chairman of the Commission, met on March 17, 1931 and formed the Fort Fisher Preservation Society for the purpose of seeking beach erosion aid and fostering public interest in the old fort.

Among those attending the first meeting, and signing the constitution were Addison Hewlett, Sr., chairman of the New Hanover County Board of Commissioners; J. E. L. Wade, Commissioner of Public Works for the City of Wilmington and its present Mayor; Eric Norden, representing the Board of Directors of the directors of the Wilmington Rotary Club; Frank G. Harriss, Chairman of the Civic Relations Committee and representing the Wilmington Exchange Club; C. M. Murrin, President of the Port City Real Estate Company; J. W. Winner, a resident of the Fort Fisher beach area and member of the Holy Manuel Society of St. Mary's Church.

Others were Mrs. Eugene Philyaw, President and representative of the United Daughters of the Confederacy; Mrs. Thomas J. Gause, President of the American Legion Auxiliary; Mrs. C. Wayne Spencer, representative and regent of the Daughters of the American Revolution; Mrs. R. S. McClelland, of the executive committee of the American Legion Auxiliary; Mrs. T. E. Sprunt, Chairman of the Cape Fear Chapter of the U. D. C., and also of the North Division of

the organization; Mrs. W. B. Cooper, Fort Fisher Committee of the Cape Fear Chapter of the U. D. C.

Others included Mayor Walter H. Blair; W. Louis Fisher, L. C. Robertson, President of the Wilmington Lions Club; H. A. Huggins, President of the Wilmington Chamber of Commerce; Frank H. Bailey and R. S. McClelland, commanding officers of the local militia units and R. W. Clawson, retired journalist.

The Reverend Mr. Howell was chosen by this group as president of the Association and worked tirelessly until his death on the project of restoring as much of the old Confederate Fort as possible.

Not only will the restoration of the fort preserve a rich historical site, through the proper beach erosion program, but will provide for visitors to Southeastern North Carolina an opportunity to be properly informed of the importance of the fort, which guarded the last great Confederate Port, Wilmington, through which General Robert Edward Lee's "thin gray line" was provided the necessary supplies that enabled them to battle the hordes of Yankee invaders until completely exhausted and overcome by overwhelming machines of war and manpower.

As Mayor of the City of Wilmington and one of the original founders of the Fort Fisher Preservation Society I am honored to be a member of the historical society and the beach association which now are attempting to preserve and restore this old fort for posterity.

I, therefore, call upon all lovers of our rich tradition and heritage to support the efforts of these two organizations that our great, historic old Fort may be preserved and restored, and I likewise commend the efforts of those who are carrying on this great work at the present time.

JAMES E. L. WADE, Mayor
City of Wilmington.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The period since the last bulletin has been marked by significant progress. The meeting of October twenty-third was well attended, and the program, dealing with the National Park Service, with particular reference to the Moore's Creek Battleground was most interesting. The adoption of the amended bylaws greatly facilitates the operations of the Society. It will be recalled that, at the suggestion of Mr. Louis T. Moore, the Society instructed its Board of Directors to find a fireproof place for the growing collection of valuable archives now in the possession of the Society. This task was referred to a committee headed by Mr. Julien Martin, and Mr. Martin, with the cooperation of Mr. R. L. Black,

Register of Deeds, secured from the County Commissioners a space in the vault of the Register of Deeds, where they will be safe and available for reference. The Society is indebted to Mr. Martin, Mr. Black, and the Commissioners for this excellent solution of the problem.

All committees have been active, and the Board members most faithful in attending meetings. A number of important projects are in the planning stage, and will be reported to the Society in due course. Your President bespeaks your continued interest and cooperation in the tasks that confront us.

B. FRANK HALL, President.

DIRECTORS

Dr. B. Frank Hall.....	President
Henry J. MacMillan.....	Vice-President
Mrs. Ida B. Kellam.....	Secretary
Ludlow P. Strong.....	Treasurer
Winston Broadfoot.....	Julien Martin
Miss Caroline D. Flanner.....	Mrs. Boyd Quarles
Davis Howes.....	

COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

Antiquities.....	Dr. C. B. Davis
Bulletin.....	Miss Caroline D. Flanner
Finance.....	E. L. White
Historic Sites.....	Mrs. Eric Norden
Membership.....	Rev. H. H. Hilton
Program.....	Duncan Randall

In Memoriam

PAUL HENDREN

Vice-Admiral, U. S. Navy (Retired)

MEMBERSHIP

Total number joined to February 7.....	349
Dues paid for 1957-1958.....	316

NEW MEMBERS

340.....	Mrs. Stephen Provost (Regular)
341.....	Stephen Provost (Regular)
342.....	Miss Frances Formy-Duval (Regular)
343.....	William A. Hurst (Regular)
344.....	Mrs. A. D. Hurst (Regular)
345.....	Mrs. W. H. Grant (Regular)
346.....	Henry B. McKoy (Sustaining)
347.....	Col. Owen H. Kenan (Regular)
348.....	David Morgan (Regular)
349.....	W. K. Rhodes (Regular)

DUES

Dues are payable in May. Article II, Sec. 3 of the Bylaws reads: "Dues are payable at the annual meeting. Members failing to pay their dues by the end of the calendar year shall be dropped from the rolls."

EMBLEM

Shortly after the establishment of the Lower Cape Fear Historical Society, Inc., it was suggested that we use as an emblem a picture of the old Dram Tree. Accordingly a picture of the tree appeared on the Society's Handbook, issued in November, 1956, and on the first issue of the Bulletin, October, 1957, but the Dram Tree never was officially adopted as the emblem of the Society. On November 24, 1957, the Board of Directors, feeling that it would be preferable to use a symbol rather than a picture, requested Mr. Henry J. MacMillan to draft a symbol. Mr. MacMillan now is working on a draft of the emblem, using the seals of the City of Wilmington and of the State of North Carolina, surrounded by a cartouche.

NEXT MEETING

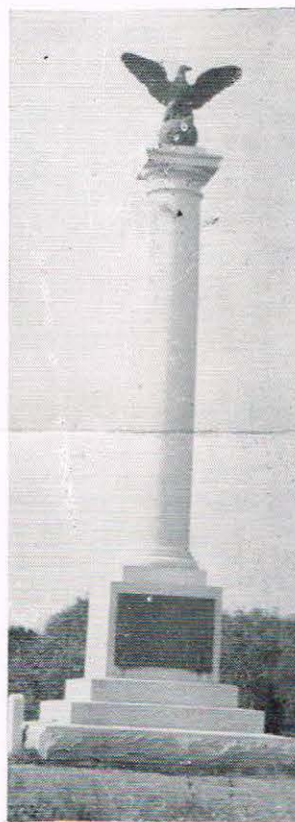
On Wednesday, February 19, 1958, Col. Harry Brown, Director of Hurricane Rehabilitation for the State of North Carolina, and Mr. W. S. Tarlton, Supt. of Historic Sites, State Dept. of Archives and History, will give a joint program on Fort Fisher, with especial emphasis on the steps now necessary to secure the fort site from further erosion.

Members of the Southeastern North Carolina Beach Association will be invited to attend. The speakers will be introduced by Mr. Louis T. Moore, Chairman of the New Hanover County Historical Commission.

In accordance with the provisions of the Bylaws, Articles III and V, a Nominating Committee will be elected to present a slate of officers and Directors for 1958-1959 at the annual meeting in May.

NOTICE OF THE MEETING

Please keep this Bulletin, as no further notice of the meeting will be mailed to you.



Monument Commemorating the Battle of Fort Fisher erected by the United Daughters of the Confederacy, June 2, 1932.

PLACE AND TIME OF MEETINGS

Wilmington College — 8:00 P. M.

Open to the public. Suggestions regarding meetings will be welcomed by the Program Chairman.

INSCRIPTION ON STONE MARKER AT FORT FISHER, NEW HANOVER COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA. PLACED IN 1921 BY THE NEW HANOVER HISTORICAL COMMISSION.

"Here stood the headquarters of Fort Fisher. The construction of the Fort began in the summer of 1862 under the direction of Colonel William Lamb, Commandant, who with General W. H. C. Whiting and Major James Reilly served until the Fort was captured on January 15, 1865. Each of the bombardments by the Federal Fleet of December 24-25, 1864, and January 13-15, 1865 was heavier than any other naval demonstration in the history of the world. In the January attack were engaged 58 warships which landed with attendant transports an Army of about 10,000 men.

Fort Fisher protected against Federal opposition, a large and important foreign trade in war supplies, necessary to the existence of the Confederacy.

Near this point stood a flagstaff of Fort Fisher which was shattered by a Federal shell on December 24, 1864. A new staff was erected and private Christopher C. Bland, of the 36th North Carolina Regiment volunteered during the heavy bombardment to replace the flag. It was again shot down and Bland once more climbed the staff and attached the colors.

Erected 1921."

GIFTS

Gifts have been received since the meeting of October 23, 1957, from (1) Col. William Green deRosset: Letter written by Mrs. Catherine Douglass (deRosset) Meares (Mrs. Gaston Meares), March 28, 1865, describing the evacuation and occupation of Wilmington; (2) Henry J. MacMillan: Books, pamphlets, newspaper clippings and a pencil sketch; (3) Julien Martin: Original grant dated March 23, 1794 to Robert Brodie of South Carolina, and a picture of Woodrow Wilson as a young man.

ROSE O'NEAL GREENHOW — 1816(?) - 1864



Rose O'Neal Greenhow and daughter Rose

Probably the best biography of Mrs. Greenhow is: "REBEL ROSE, Life of Rose O'Neal Greenhow, Confederate Spy", by Ishbel Ross; published by Harper & Brothers, New York, 1954.*

According to this book, Mrs. Greenhow was born about 1816, in Port Tobacco, Md. Her father, John O'Neale, a planter, was killed in 1817. In her early teens, Rose O'Neal (she dropped the final "e" from her father's name), was taken to nearby Washington where her aunt, Mrs. H. V. Hill ran a fashionable boarding house patronized by John C. Calhoun, Henry Clay, Daniel Webster and many other prominent men. Association with such men was ideal training for the life of political intrigue she was to lead. Rose O'Neal became a protegee of Dolly Madison also, and knew Presidents Jackson, Van Buren, Polk and Buchanan well. In 1835 she married Robert Greenhow, a lawyer from Virginia, who served as translator, librarian and interpreter in the State Department from 1828-1848, after which he went to Mexico to help determine the boundary lines involved in various land claims. In Mexico City Mrs. Greenhow became involved in a land-grabbing scandal. The Greenhows later went to California, Mrs. Greenhow serving as one of the drivers on the long cross-country trip. Robert Greenhow died in February, 1854, and Mrs. Greenhow, in Washington, divided her interests between her four daughters and politics. Immediately after the outbreak of the Civil War she became an official agent of the Confederacy, and as a prominent hostess secured from high and low alike, information regarding the plans and equipment of the Union Army. Data supplied by her figured largely in the First Battle of Manassas (or Bull Run). She was thanked personally by Jefferson Davis and General Beauregard. On August 23, 1861, Mrs. Greenhow was arrested as a spy and confined first in her aunt's home, and later in the Old Capitol Prison with the most degraded of women prisoners.

Mrs. Greenhow's arrest first was announced by her daughter Rose who climbed a tree and screamed: "Mama has been arrested!" This daughter lived in the jail with her mother and was subject to all its rules and regulations. The only trial given Mrs. Greenhow was a hearing before General

John Adams Dix, Provost marshal, in March, 1862, on a charge of aiding the enemy with military information. After the hearing, it was ordered that Mrs. Greenhow be sent South, and in June 1862 she left Old Capitol Prison and was taken first to Baltimore, and then after several days, escorted by General Dix to Fortress Monroe where she was set free after promising not to return north during "the present hostilities." She was welcomed to Virginia by Col. W. S. Ashe. Jefferson Davis called upon her on her arrival in Richmond and thanked her for her services at Manassas; and on August 1, sent her through Judah P. Benjamin \$2,500 as an acknowledgment of her valuable and patriotic services to the cause of the Confederacy. On August 4, 1863, Mrs. Greenhow saw General W. H. C. Whiting in Wilmington, and the next day sailed from Wilmington on *The Phantom* to solicit help for the Confederacy from European Governments. She carried with her letters from Jefferson Davis to the Confederate Commissioners in Europe: John Slidell and James M. Mason, and many other documents. From Bermuda Mrs. Greenhow sent back information to Jefferson Davis, and at his request she sailed from Bermuda (accompanied by her daughter Rose) to England in a British man-of-war. She was received by the Emperor of France but France and Great Britain had decided against giving any help to the Confederacy. (Little Rose Greenhow, youngest of the four daughters of Robert and Rose O'Neal Greenhow, was placed in the Convent of The Sacred Heart, near Paris, where she remained until about 1871. A brief marriage to William Penn Duvall ended in divorce. After a few years "Little Rose" returned to France, became deeply religious, and led a retired life). In England Mrs. Greenhow's book: *My Imprisonment and the First Year of Abolition Rule* was published in November 1863 by Richard Bentley, and she became a celebrity, and a friend of Thomas Carlyle, Lord Palmerston and many other notables, and was received at Court by Queen Victoria. During Mrs. Greenhow's stay in England she returned to the faith of her childhood—the Roman Catholic Church from which she had been alienated for many years. In London she worked with Commander Matthew Fontaine Maury in the Society for Obtaining the Cessation of Hostilities in America. This Society was organized by Lord Wharncliffe "to promote the cause of Southern independence" and included many prominent British Parliamentarians of both parties. In her last days in London Mrs. Greenhow reached two important decisions; one to marry Lord Granville, and the other, to return to Richmond, taking with her, in gold, over \$2,000, the profits from the sale of her book, supplies for the Confederacy and much information for Jefferson Davis.

Rose O'Neal Greenhow sailed for Wilmington via Halifax from Greenock in *The Condor*, on August 10, 1864. The captain of the ship was then known as Samuel S. Ridge, but he was in reality Augustus Charles Hobart-Hampden, younger son of the Earl of Buckinghamshire "a winner of the Victoria Cross in the Crimean War, a favorite of Queen Victoria, skipper of her yacht and one of the highest ranking officers in the British Navy." At Halifax they took on board another Confederate agent, James B. Holcombe, and a Lieutenant Wilson, and on Sept. 24, *The Condor* sailed from Halifax for Wilmington. M. M. Jackson, U. S. Consul at Halifax notified Seward that *The Condor* was en route for Wilmington, carrying supplies for the Confederacy. Acting Rear Admiral S. P. Lee, Commander of the North Atlantic Blockading

*In her Acknowledgments Miss Ross thanks many Wilmington people, including Mrs. Gertrude J. Howell, Harry Hayden, Julien Dwight Martin, and Louis T. Moore.

Squadron at Beaufort, N. C., was ordered to stop her, and **The Nippon** sighted her just off Cape Fear Oct. 1 and gave chase. Although unconscious of being pursued, the pilot who was taking **The Condor** up the Cape Fear River mistook a wreck for a Federal gunboat, swerved, and grounded **The Condor** on the New Inlet Bar, only a couple of hundred yards from Fort Fisher. Having sighted **The Nippon**, the commander of **The Condor** signalled for help, and the guns of Fort Fisher responded, whereupon the Commander of **The Nippon**, Edmund Kemble, retired.

The Condor was settling into the sandbar, but rocking and straining in a furious storm, waves breaking across the decks. Mrs. Greenhow, frantic at the thought of possible capture and return to a Northern prison demanded that she, Mr. Holcombe, and Lieutenant Wilson be taken ashore in a small boat. The captain convinced the men that they were much safer aboard, protected by the guns of Fort Fisher, than they would be on the water in a small boat, but Mrs. Greenhow alternately persuaded and raged until the Captain ordered the pilot to take her ashore with the two men and her dispatch bags. Almost immediately the boat was capsized, and Mrs. Greenhow, weighted down with her heavy reticule and gold, some of which was sewn into her clothing, sank at once, and never was seen alive again. Both men were rescued. Mrs. Greenhow's body washed ashore, was

recognized and carried to the home of Col. William Lamb, Commander of Fort Fisher and then into Wilmington where it lay in state at the Seamen's Bethel on the southwest corner of Dock and Front Streets. Her funeral took place from St. Thomas Catholic Church on Oct. 2, 1864, the Rev. Dr. James A. Corcoran officiating. She was buried with full military honors in Oakdale Cemetery, Wilmington. The Ladies Memorial Association (founded by Mrs. A. J. deRosset of Wilmington) forerunner of The United Daughters of the Confederacy with which it subsequently merged, erected a white marble cross over her grave. The inscription on her tombstone reads:

"MRS. ROSE O'N. GREENHOW

A Bearer
Of Dispatches
to the
Confederate Government
Erected by the Ladies
Memorial Association."

Miss Ross concluded "Rebel Rose" . . . "Rose had fulfilled her destiny in many different ways — as a beauty, a wit, a patriot, a spy, an affectionate wife and mother, a siren, a scholar, a writer, but first and to the end, a woman who had 'used every capacity with which God had endowed her' in support of the Confederacy. Her death had the epic touch in which she herself would have glorified."—Ed.

SAFEKEEPING OF RECORDS

Space for safekeeping of the records of the Society in a locked file in the vaults of the Court House has been secured through the efforts of Mr. Julien Martin and the cooperation of the Register of Deeds and the City Council. Our Mayor, The Honorable James E. L. Wade, himself a charter member of the Society, and an active and highly successful member of the Membership Committee has been most helpful. We thank him for all his contributions, including his article in this issue of the Bulletin.

JOINING THE SOCIETY

Please remember to tell your friends that The Lower Cape Fear Historical Society, Inc., is open to all interested in the history and welfare of North Carolina. No especial invitation to join is necessary. The signing of an application card is not requisite. Anyone wishing to join may do so by sending a check or money order (or giving cash) to any director. There are four classes of paid memberships: Regular, \$2.00 per year; Contributing, \$5.00 per year; Sustaining, \$10.00

per year, and Life, \$100 paid once. It is suggested that if anyone offers to pay any member, the member take the money, giving the applicant his personal receipt, and then send the money to our Treasurer or Secretary. On receipt of money by the Treasurer or Secretary, a Membership card will be mailed the new member.

