Journal of the New Bern Historical Society

Vol. XIII, No. 1 May 2000

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JOURNAL OF THE NEW BERN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The *Journal of the New Bern Historical Society* is a semiannual publication of the New Bern Historical Society, a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of the rich heritage of New Bern. Articles, letters, photographs, and memorabilia relevant to the history of New Bern and Craven County may be submitted to the editor for review. (Post Office Box 119, New Bern, North Carolina 28563 or nbhistoricalsoc@coastalnet.com).

GROWING UP IN NEW BERN IN THE TWENTIES AND THIRTIES

Mary B. Brigham

Last year I read *Memories of New Bern* and was fascinated by the picture it presented of our town. I have wanted to write something similar for our *Journal* ever since. I am fortunate to have friends who grew up in New Bern in the twenties and thirties, and they have graciously answered my questions on some of the topics I wanted to know about. This article is not a definitive one. Other people have certainly had different experiences. However, I do feel this report shows some of the delights of growing up in a small town—a town where one's life revolved around family, church, school, and friends. Each participant, all women, began by telling about her family, where she lived, what her father did, and something about her family life. Then, as now, families were of utmost importance.

Elizabeth Dail Brothers (Lib) was born in Oriental but was brought to New Bern at 16 months because her father and grandfather, successful storekeepers here, decided that New Bern was the place to be. Unfortunately, her grandfather died shortly after moving, and her father left the grocery business. He ultimately became special agent for the Norfolk and Southern Railway. In this capacity his family had the privilege of riding in the president's car upon occasion. They would travel to Kinston or Morehead City. When the circus came to town, they would meet the train in Goldsboro. They lived in Riverside, not too far from the river, and while she did not have to walk "five miles through snowdrifts" to get to school at the Academy Green, she and her friends did walk everyday. They used

to meet at her house and cut through the railroad property. When the weather was really nasty, her father would take them in the family car, an old Hudson. Lib said she really did like school, most of the time. However, one day a friend talked her into skipping. They walked to a nearby restaurant for something to drink. The two were talking and enjoying themselves when Lib's father came through the door. Lib wanted to die on the spot. That was the last time she was ever inclined to skip school.

Elizabeth Taylor Hodges, another Lib, lived on Metcalf Street before moving the 700 block of Broad Street where she was a neighbor to two other long-time residents, Betty Wylie and Charles Barker. Her father was John R. Taylor, a familiar figure in New Bern and its activities. He was in the insurance business. Lib also walked to school. She remembers that she was almost always late as she stopped to talk with friends. One day, probably in desperation, her teacher sent her to the superintendent. Going to the superintendent was one of those occurrences one wanted to avoid at all costs. Stories of what could happen made every youngster tremble with fear. However, there was no avoiding this. She had to go, so go she did. The superintendent, who probably had weightier matters on his mind, stared at her and told her not to be late again. She does not remember that his warning helped. When she was asked what she did in bad weather, she replied that her friend's father sent Dewey Horne to fetch the daughter and her friends home. She also remembers that Dewey Horne was the first person to be buried in New Bern Memorial Cemetery. She has looked for his grave, but has not been able to find it.

She remembers that the youngsters had a custom of going up to friends at recess and saying "Give me H's". This meant the friend was to share what she had with you and you shared with her. One day, one of the children's mothers, whether to play a trick on her daughter's friends or to discourage this custom, did something different. When the friends said "Give me H's" the daughter will-

ingly brought out a luscious bit of chocolate. The girls were thrilled; this was special. At least it was until they bit in and discovered it was soap with a bitter chocolate coating. You may be sure the concoction was quickly spit out! When she was in the fifth grade, she became very anemic. Her doctor prescribed shots of arsenic. This caused her to grow more quickly than her classmates. Because of her new height she was cast as the toy maker's wife in the school operetta. She does not remember what the operetta was about, but she does remember that Charles Barker played the part of a string bean. This was the ditty they sang: "The biggest, biggest bean, growing in the garden green."

Betty Bunting Wylie was one of those who lived on Broad Street. Her father was in the lumber business. She remembers Broad as a beautiful two-lane bricked street with trees arching overhead. It was in the 50s that the street was widened to feed into the new bridge over the Neuse. The trees, to everyone's sorrow, were cut down. She, too, walked to school. She particularly remembers Mrs. Charles Turner in fifth grade. Betty recalls that if the class were good, Mrs. Turner would read a story of an opera every afternoon. She insists that she and her classmates learned to appreciate opera from these stories. Betty also mentions walking to the teacher's home on Hancock Street, next to the Gulf Station, where Mrs. Turner would play the piano for the class so they could sing.

Elsie Stallings Morris grew up in Bridgeton, though she now lives in Trent Woods. Her father was in the plumbing supply business. She went to school in Bridgeton, but came to New Bern for high school.

Isabelle Lawrence Prior was not born in New Bern. She came from Statesville via Virginia. Her father was in insurance with Metropolitan Life. He served two terms as mayor of New Bern. At first the family lived on Metcalf Street across from the Taylors, but then found a home in Riverside near Lib Dail. Isabelle was one of the girls who cut through the train yard going to school, coming home

for lunch and back again. She said that she and friends would sometimes go down George Street especially if the weather was threatening. One neighbor drove his daughter to school, but would never pick them up. She has never forgotten this. The children had one hour for lunch. When they came to school in the morning or returned from lunch, they stayed off the school grounds usually sitting on the steps of the Pepsi Cola plant, which is now a parking lot across from the Masonic Building. When they heard the school bell, they would run as fast as they could. However, if you ran into the school building you would be given demerits. There were people in the hall watching for the miscreants.

There were three streetcar lines in New Bern at this time. One ran to Riverside up Metcalf in front of the Lawrence's home. One ran to Ghent stopping at Spencer. The third ran down Pollock. The lines met at Pollock and Metcalf. In the summer the cars were open-sided the better to catch the breeze. Isabelle does not remember the cost of a ticket, but does remember that you could transfer from one line to another.

Church, like school, was a regular occurrence for these youngsters. Lib Brothers attended the Baptist Church, but, now and then, joined friends at Christ Episcopal Church. In the Baptist Church dancing was considered sinful. Therefore, her parents did not permit her to attend dances. However, her uncle used to take her and her friends to dances at Atlantic Beach. The place had big bands there periodically. Some of the girls' current boyfriends would come and meet the girls there. How her parents felt about this: she explained that they certainly knew, but since they were not directly involved it did not bother them. Another explanation might be that they did not feel all that strongly about dancing.

Elsie Morris has been a Methodist for as long as she can remember and attended the Bridgeton church and all of its functions. Betty Wylie, too, has been a Methodist always. Her grandfather was one of the people on the

building committee for Centenary United Methodist Church. Families tended to sit in the same pew week after week. Betty's family was no exception. Another family sat nearby. This family had a young son who was not above flirting with the young lady in the nearby pew. She apparently encouraged him, for they were ultimately married. These were Betty's parents. This church was very active in the community. For years the women served the Rotary lunch. As soon as the young girls were considered capable, they also helped with all church dinners.

Lib Hodges's father was very involved in the building of Broad Street Christian Church, so this is where she attended until she moved to Centenary some years later. When she was at Broad Street Christian, she was teacher for a group of nine-year-olds. She was twelve. She also sang in the choir joining her father. She remembers that one time the church had a retired minister from Lexington. He was unmarried. Her family frequently invited him for tea and sandwiches. He always seemed so hungry.

Isabelle Prior was also a member of Centenary for a time and remarked, as did Betty, that everyone had a special pew. When asked how the congregation coped with the heat, as there was no air conditioning, she explained that there were fans—the paper kind. These were supplied by local funeral homes and remained in the pews. When the family moved to Riverside, she attended Riverside Methodist Church. There was a Miss Brown, a leader in Epworth League (now termed Methodist Youth Fellowship or MYF). She was quite talented at putting on plays and programs. Sometimes the youngsters traveled to churches in other cities to present their programs.

Sunday was a special day. There was no running or hollering, i. e., no wild games. The day was to be spent quietly reading or perhaps playing board games as Flinch, Rook, checkers, or dominos. Of course, all stores were closed.

When asked about what they did in their spare time, they all mentioned swimming except for Isabelle who did

not care for swimming. Lib Brothers and her brother Milton would go out in his boat on the Neuse. They would dive from the railroad bridge. She mentioned that sometimes her brother and a friend of his would push her from the boat making her swim to shore. If she ever pushed them, she did not say.

Lib Hodges was one of the youngsters who frequented Albert Crabtree's (Crabby) clubhouse on the Trent. It was here that she learned to play tennis, to swim, and to play Michigan. Her home on Broad Street had a screened side porch. In the hot summer evenings, she and her friends played Michigan all evening long. At the end of the evening her mother often made lemonade and served cookies. The Trent River at Crabby's was not the only place she swam. She and a friend would sometimes pack a sandwich and walk out to New Bern Country Club to spend the day swimming and visiting with other friends.

Elsie Morris also swam in the Neuse, but on the Bridgeton side. There was a beach there that everyone went to in the summer. She met the man she ultimately married at this beach, however, that was some years later.

Lib Brothers stated that, actually, she did not have a lot of free time as she spent so much time with her music. She had begun piano lessons as a young child and practiced at least two hours a day. Sometimes, it took mother's insistence, but usually she practiced willingly. She played the piano for the young peoples' services and also for school assemblies. At this time, her tastes ran to jazz, while the principal's taste was much more conservative. She explained that in her junior year she tried out for one of the main parts in the play. She lost the part to another girl and while she did have a part, it was not the same. In her senior year she was asked to play for the production and so did not try out for anything.

Movies came to New Bern in 1906 at the Masonic Theatre and in 1911 at the Athens Theatre, which was built for movies. Saturday matinees figured prominently in the

entertainment calendar for these girls. As was true for a long, long time, the matinee featured a serial, usually cowboys. One needed to return each week to discover what had happened to the hero who had always been left in a life-threatening situation. Naturally, you attended if at all possible. All your friends were there. Saturday matinees were ten cents. Evening shows cost more. Lib Hodges said that her sister's friends usually had her buy the tickets for the Masonic Theatre when they went to the evening show as she was younger and could get children's prices. You paid as an adult when you were 12. Isabelle remembers the serial "Perils of Pauline." She loved it, even if she does not remember anything much about it. She mentions that her free time was limited as she and her sister were expected to help their mother in the house. She did not mind the cleaning, but absolutely did not care for the cooking. Unfortunately, her mother had a heart attack while still a young woman. Isabelle and her sister had to help in the care of her. She does remember one fun thing. She and her friend loved dill pickles. A real treat was to go to Miss Mamie Sadler's store to fish a pickle out of the barrel, get some cheese tidbits and to go sit on Mrs. Heath's steps.

Hearing of Miss Mamie Sadler's store reminded Lib Brothers and her brother of another story. This one involved their dog Tige. It seemed that when she and Marvin would go to the store for their candy bars, Tige often went with them. One day it occurred to them that if Tige could snitch the candy, they would not have to pay for it. They spent some hours teaching Tige how to grab a bar and walk away. Finally, they decided he was ready and they walked to the store. They stood on the corner by the mailbox while Tige went in. Success, out he came with the prize in his mouth. They were elated. However, it did not take Miss Sadler long to see what was happening and she phoned the children's mother. Mrs. Dail told her to put the candy on her tab; she would deal with the children. The practice had to stop. The two did stop, but apparently

Tige liked the arrangement and continued in his bad habit. Lib thinks he was sharing with some of the neighborhood dogs as they used to hang around. They ultimately had to keep Tige in the yard.

Birthdays have always been special. Lib Brothers tells that her birthdays were often spent at the movies with friends. Afterwards they would go to Pinnix Drug Store, which had a soda fountain. Pinnix was just up the street from the Masonic Theatre. Her mother would have arranged for the girls to have any refreshment they desired, sodas, sundaes, soft drinks, candy bars, cheesy crackers. A special ending for a special day.

As I heard these stories, I was pleased with so much dailiness. There was a love of family, an appreciation of friends. Home, school, and church bound their times and lives. It probably seemed as if these times could go on forever, that nothing would change. Yet there were changes in their lives even then. They lived through hurricanes, fires, the depression and illnesses. But no one dwelt on these matters. They accepted what had happened and went on. Most of these girls went away to school, and they all married. Some lived away from New Bern for a large part of their lives. Yet they all returned home. Did they find the New Bern of their childhood? How could they? New Bern had changed and is still changing.

We have gone from a mostly agricultural economy to an economy dependent upon the military and tourism. We drive down familiar streets and see unfamiliar buildings. We have new roads, new bridges, and new overpasses. One needs a street map to get around. But if we go to the Academy Green we can imagine the children hurrying to school. We can walk on Metcalf Street and picture the youngsters playing kick the can, or go to Riverside and look at the Neuse visualizing those kids diving off the railroad bridge. And how about the Saturday matinees? Many of us can remember these where we lived. We can remember going to the beach, street games, reading, or playing on the porch. We had problems, too,

but as these girls did, we surmounted them. We remember the good times, and that is how it was for them and how it should be for us.

SOURCES

Watson, Alan D. *A History of New Bern and Craven County.* New Bern, N. C.: Tryon Palace Commission, 1987.

Wilson, Emily Herring. *Memories of New Bern.* New Bern, N. C.: New Bern Historical Society Foundation, Inc., 1995.

My very special thanks to

Elizabeth (Lib) Dail Brothers
Elizabeth (Lib) Taylor Hodges
Elsie Stallings Morris
Isabelle Lawrence Prior
Betty Bunting Wylie

As they told me the stories of their childhood, they caused me to remember stories of my own childhood. Thanks for the memories.

HATTERAS AND WILLIS SLANE

Margaret Cox

Willis Slane, Jr., could be described by many who worked with him and folks who knew him as their friend, as an intractable and unrelenting man. But he was a man of big dreams and determination.

Slane was a WWII Army Air Corps pilot and veteran of many risky missions over the "Hump" from China to India during the war.

A successful textile manufacturer, Slane, for leisure, enjoyed angling and boating at Cape Hatteras. In May 1959, while beached at the Hatteras Marlin Club, Slane had commented to his friends that someone would one day come up with a boat that could take on the wild waters of Hatteras. His friends encouraged him that he was the one who could do it. He could build a fiberglass boat that could take the unruly waters. That was the start of Slane's plans to build a fiberglass boat that could take on the rough seas.

Fiberglass was considered fine material for runabouts and bathtubs, but not boats, making the task of financial backing more difficult. Slane's friends offered capital to the idea, and so Slane was set to sell his idea to the public.

A friend of Slane, Don Mucklow (co-owner of the Crystaliner Corporation), had shown Slane a new 27-foot fiberglass boat powered with a Corvette engine. The boat did so well in the water that Slane persuaded Mucklow to engineer a boat for his new company. Hatteras was born!

High Point, North Carolina, became the site for the manufacture of Slane's fiberglass boats. His first boat was built for his own personal use. He wanted a 41-foot sport-

BUILT IN NEW BERN, THIS 53-FOOT MOTOR YACHT WENT IN THE WATER IN 1969. Hatteras Yachts photo.

fisherman that would handle well in the rough waters. After four months of production, his team of naval architect Jack Hargrave, fiberglass expert Don Mucklow, and a small crew, Slane's boat was completed in March 1960 and christened "Knit Wits."

Today Hatteras is recognized as the world leader in engineering and construction of luxury fiberglass yachts. Unfortunately Willis Slane, Jr., died in 1965 and did not have the pleasure of seeing his small company grow into one of the largest yacht builders in the world.

In 1969 Hatteras purchased 95 acres in New Bern to construct a second manufacturing site. High Point remained the corporate headquarters and constructed the 32-foot and 52-foot yachts while the New Bern plant would build 53-foot and larger yachts.

In 1998 Hatteras moved its corporate headquarters to New Bern and closed the doors to the High Point facility.

Hatteras was purchased by Genmar Industries of Minneapolis, Minnesota, in 1985. Genmar, Hatteras's parent company, owns other boat-building companies such as Ranger Bass Boats, Carver, Lund, Larson, and Cajun Bass Boats.

The Hatteras manufacturing site in New Bern is equipped to handle all orders from its customers. Its volume allows it to be the boating industry tech leader. Design, development, and manufacturing are the biggest differences between Hatteras and other manufacturers. Hatteras prides itself on detail.

Hatteras Yachts is celebrating its fortieth anniversary this year and is proud to be the world's leading builder of premier crafts. The legacy of Hatteras is their passion, creativity, determination, spirit, pride, and integrity.

For more information on Hatteras Yachts and tours, call 252-633-3010, Ext. 459, or visit their Web site at www.hatterasyachts.com.

CALLAGHAN McCARTHY HOLLOWELL AND THE LIBERTY SHIP FURNIFOLD M. SIMMONS

WORLD WAR II

Callaghan McCarthy Hollowell

Note from Dr. Joseph Patterson: Callie Hollowell was an 85-year-old man who lived in New Jersey. He was raised as a boy on Short Street (now Linden Street) in New Bern. Mitchell and Ernest were younger brothers, Isabelle, his older sister. He was named after Mayor Callaghan McCarthy and was baptized in First Presbyterian Church by the Reverend James N. Summerell. Later he sat in church behind Mr. and Mrs. E. K. Bishop and would shake Mr. Bishop's shoulder when he fell asleep. He went to New Bern High School where he was on the debating team with James Dawson and Albert Suskin. He delivered telegrams in downtown New Bern. When 19 years of age he moved away. He died soon after writing these letters. Callie was a great source of information for the Memories program. His memory of the town was prodigious and detailed; his love of the place, without parallel.

Furnifold McLendel Simmons (1854-1940) lived in New Bern and served as U. S. Senator for North Carolina 1901-1930. The Liberty Ship Furnifold M. Simmons was named after him. I learned that Callie Hollowell had served on the Furnifold M. Simmons and asked him to give me an account of this episode. It took him weeks to accomplish it because of poor health. Here is his story.

[Late 1993 or early 1994]

Dear Joe,

You asked me about the Purple Heart. Merchant Seamen never got medals. They did give out a little pin "U. S. Merchant Marine." Also, if you got torpedoed, you got a pin with "Torpedoed" on it. They also gave us bars or ribbons. I received the Mid-East Mediterranean, Atlantic, and South Pacific bars.

It was only about three years ago that we were recognized as Veterans. But a Senator showed the facts: The highest number of casualties was in the Marine Corps; number two was the Merchant Marines—over the Army and all the other branches. Some used the argument that we were highly paid. I don't know about the officers as I was only a CPO, but I made $110 a month plus $15 when in the firing zone—not out at sea where the subs were nor the North Atlantic. Most of us were over the age and could have made real money in shipyards, etc. It surely was not for the money. Further, we had to furnish our own gear including boots and foul weather gear. But it does not matter now. . . . I doubt if there are more than a couple thousand left all over the country. I am sorry that I took so long but I am still having trouble with my fingers (just plain OLD AGE!).

Happy sailing to you, Alice
& family,
Callie (Signed)

☆☆☆☆

S. S. FURNIFOLD SIMMONS

March 1994

Dear Joe:

Having been in the service, you understand it was "Hurry up and wait and everything Top Secret." When all these events occurred, I knew nothing, but I am telling you what I found out later. When I got orders to report to this ship, I saw it was a Liberty, but no names were shown. I had never sailed a Liberty although I had heard all about them. At first Seamen were worried as being production line and welded. They were afraid it or they would crack up under strain, BUT how wrong they were. During war times Plimsoll marks were ignored and most freighters carried about 25 per cent more than they could have in peacetime. Also no names, just numbers. Anyway I went aboard and checked in with the Mate on watch, stored my gear and went to the wheelhouse to see what type of steering they had--gyro or not. Imagine my surprise when I saw this brass plate with the name Furnifold M. Simmons, Wilmington, N. C. I went down and told the Mate how I had known the Senator and his family.

He said they had been on a long voyage all over the Indian Ocean at different ports, the last being Tasmania. They had a mixed cargo but a lot of bulk tea. Some of the tea had spilled and got into the bilge so they had to remove the rose boxes (trap doors) and clean the swollen tea so they could keep the bilge pumped.

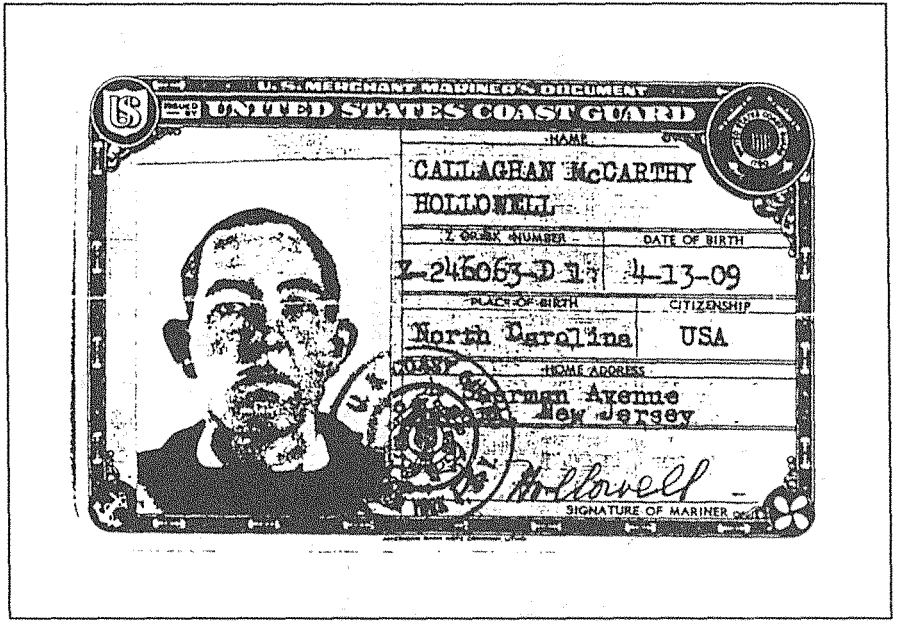
We went down the bay from Baltimore to the Army docks and loaded--cases of small arms ammo for ballast, the most of the five hatches or holds with rations and jeeps, also some other Army supplies. We then went down the bay and out to around Diamond Shoals (Torpedo Junction). We formed with about 37 ships and about half dozen LSTs (Landing Ship Tank). We had an easy trip

over. The Liberties could only make about 72 revs or 12 knots, but they were reliable. Those old up-and-down engines set the pace.

The LSTs left us at the Canary Islands—why, I never knew. I imagine to get set for the invasion. We arrived at the Rock, then we knew—Mediterranean. And it was HOT with subs, U-boats, magnetic mines, timed bombs, etc. I heard that we lost 17 ships. At Oran, Africa, we went in but left at once while the convoy continued. They were going to Malta and Adriatic and East Italy. But as for us, we became a part of the 45th. General Rommel and his fast Panzer were driving the British across North Africa, but the 45th stopped them just after they had got through the Kasserine pass. They drove Rommel back and out of the country but with heavy losses. So we became part of them. We carried supplies where needed. (There may have been others that were also helping.) We were at Oran, Algiers, Tunis, Bizerte, or where[ever] needed.

The Army drove the enemy out of Africa, then out of Sicily. Palermo was a tough one, but the 45th kept going on and took Naples. We left Bizerte with a few slightly wounded soldiers and a Medic with some hospital equipment and caught up with the 45th at Naples. The harbor was ruined with only one pier left—number 8. The engineers made docks over the sunken ships. Ours was a hospital ship on her side, and I was told that there were several nurses trapped below—some said as many as 25 to 50. Anyway we unloaded and went out to the anchorage to wait. Now for the strange thing. We were anchored and swinging with the tide, and then where we had been about two hours before, there was a terrific explosion. If the tide had not moved us we would have got it right under us, but all it did was break all of our electric bulbs, plates, AND nerves. All were repaired real quick.

It was terrible weather—cold rain with snow in the higher elevations. So the 45th and the 34th or 37th could not make much advancement on the road to Rome. So the 5th Army decided to make a new beachhead at Anzio-



CALLIE HOLLOWELL'S U. S. MERCHANT MARINER'S ID CARD.

Nettuno. We went back to pier number 8 this time and loaded mostly rations and headed in convoy to Anzio. All the stevedores were Army AND BLACK, and those boys knew how to do it. They could load or unload a 5-hatch freight in 36 hours, and I think faster at Anzio. It was a hell on earth. With that so-called Anzio Express every once in a while and the 88s we never anchored and, being a large ship, we unloaded on LCTs (Landing Craft Tank) or DUKWS or Ducks as most of the men called them. Small ships could get in near but not us.

We just kept moving about every 15 minutes so they could not get the range. Our battle ships were farther, shooting over us. That is where I got the piece of shell burst on the lower left shoulder. I had on so much fowl weather gear plus pea jacket that all I got was a bruise. As I told you, soon as it cooled I put it in my pocket for my wife. The good Lord was with me or I should say US. I know those boys got us unloaded real fast.

We went back to Naples at anchorage. After about a week we started to get soldiers aboard, and it was rough as you can put up a tent on steel decks OR COOK. And it was cold and rainy. Our Captain arranged with the Major with his men (about 300) to join forces. Their cooks helped in our galley, and everyone took turns sleeping wherever you could. But we all considered ourselves buddies. NEVER ONE WORD OR PROBLEM. The only thing was they had to build wooden latrines over the sides of the ship and saltwater showers. After a couple weeks we joined a convoy for the invasion of southern France. We landed at Blue Beach, which included Marseilles. It was a piece of cake. The people were starving as that is the flower country. Normandy was the breadbasket and the enemy was paying top dollar so the south of France suffered. Our boys were 45 miles inland the first day. We had smudge pots out expecting planes, but I only saw one—a bomber that was hit and trying to get to crash land on shore. Between the British pom-poms and our ships, a plane did not have a chance.

After about a week we left and stopped off at Corsica to pick up about 100 Italians who were stranded there. They were hungry and filthy, but they did have a band and they gave us a concert almost every day. But our ship smelled to high heavens. We returned to Naples and picked up about 500 prisoners--mostly kids and a few old men, Polish and others. We did not know what country they came from. One thing, they were not soldiers; they were forced to fight. One boy I met spoke English, and he told me that all he wanted was to get back to high school. They were very orderly and caused no trouble. We headed for Norfolk, and one of them came down with what we thought, or at least the Captain thought, was yellow jaundice. Anyway we had no doctor, so under full speed a destroyer pulled about 50 yards off our beam and shot a line to us, and we secured it. Then they sent across a wire basket, and we strapped him in it and they pulled him over. They had a doctor aboard, but we never knew whether he had that or something else. We kept full speed all the time.

We arrived in Norfolk, and the Army took over the prisoners. The Simmons went into dry dock for a fumigation and overhaul.

To my knowledge, I never saw her again. They were building the new Victory ships, so they turned over a lot of the Liberties to Allies. I saw a number of them under other flags, especially Greek, but also other Allies.

I will say, and I think most deep-water sailors would agree, that the Liberties were the workhorses of our transportation. Without them, we could not have got the supplies over for the Normandy invasion plus many other things they accomplished. I know this, we had what we called a checkerboard crew but never any problems. She sure did her share, and SHE WAS A HAPPY SHIP.

Sincerely,
Callie

HISTORY OF THE M. V. FURNIFOLD M. SIMMONS

Courtesy of David Brown, Navy Department Library

1943. Christened, Wilmington, N. C. by 14-year-old Ella McLendel Meadows.

Service as merchant vessel of the United States until

1946. Transferred to Danish flag. Carried in Lloyds as Ellen Maersk until

1947. Transferred to Norwegian flag. Carried in Lloyds as Hada County until

1952. Transferred to Liberian flag. Carried in Lloyds as Comet until

1970. Presumed scrapped.

PAPERS OF DR. LATHAM HAVE STORY OF YELLOW FEVER HERE

Epidemic Killed More of Federal Men Than Battle

Details Related in Account Which Seems Only One Existing

Editor's Note: Fred M. Latham copied the following information from the New Bern, N. C. *Sun Journal,* dated Tuesday, March 13, 1962. Punctuation has been revised for smoother text flow. Reprinted by permission.

Found with the papers of the late Dr. Joseph R. Latham, long a leading New Bern physician and surgeon, is what seems to be the only comprehensive and accurate account of the yellow fever epidemic here at the time of the War Between the States. The epidemic accounted for more deaths than did the Battle of New Bern. There is nothing to indicate whether or not Dr. Latham gathered the facts and wrote the account himself, or whether he was able to find the record elsewhere and to prepare the typewritten copy which was found with his papers. It is as follows:

In the history of the rebellion, no city which has been captured and occupied by our forces situated in as far North as New Berne, North Carolina, has been visited by a sweeping pestilence as completely decimating as the late terrible scourge of Yellow Fever.

In proportion to the population of our city, and taking into consideration the number of those who, for personal safety visited the Northern states, the epidemic September and October 1864 stands unparalleled in its fearful fatality.

long term of years that no apprehension of disease was exhibited, and least of all an epidemic infection so appalling in its ravages, and respecting neither rank, age, sex or the native born, as the one with which we have been identified, and through which, with all its attending terrors a merciful Providence has permitted a few of us to pass. The Yellow Fever in Norfolk, Virginia, in 1856 did not approach that of our experience in its malignant type and character. Fifty-two years ago, New Berne was afflicted with a visitation similar to the one of which we write, but by no means as vindictive in its fury, or as extensive in its direful mortality. Of the origin of that pestilence the historians of that time declare that it was introduced here by a trading vessel from one of the Spanish West world at that time being an extensive one. Of the immediate cause to which the late epidemic owes its origin, we can only allude briefly in this present narrow limit

Among the maladies and diseases which the human race stand most in dread of, none are more feared than those which spring from specific infectious poisons.

Eminent medical men have been divided in their opinions concerning the nature of these influences which tend to produce contagion, but the greater number of them are satisfied that Yellow Fever can only be generated from miasma and paludal malaria, the same which produces intermittent and remittent fevers.

Other physicians maintain that the inhaling of the spores of fungi will superinduce similar results; but the subject is one which depends so entirely on scientific research for any satisfactory elucidation, that we must be content in referring the reader to the most approved authors for a more complete acquaintance with this topic.

Our Medical Director Dr. D. W. Hand and Associate Surgeons have decided that malaria was the cause of the late devastating destruction of human life in this city.

When the disease first made its appearance in our midst, no alarm was manifested by our citizens, as it was believed to be one of simply an ordinary bilious character,

and termed in everyday parlance "Malignant bilious fever."

The first attacked by the insidious foe were John A. Taylor, W. Vanderbeck, Sutler 158 N. Y. Volunteers, Lieut. Johnson of the Ambulance Corps., Capt. Wm. Holden, A. Q. M., and Chas. Hoskins, late of the Provost Marshal's office under Capt. J. W. Denny.

Mr. Taylor was the first victim, and deserves particular mention. A young man whose character was without the slightest reproach, and universally esteemed by all who had the pleasure of knowing him, he was one of the proprietors of the principal drugstore in the city, and by energy and unrelaxing industry had succeeded in amassing a handsome independence, by dealing in naval stores apart from his regular business. His demise was deeply regretted by the community, but it did not give rise to any conjecture, being as it were, the pioneer case. Mr. William Vanderbeck was one of the most popular businessmen of the community, open hearted and generous to a fault, and a man of incredible perseverance.

He had the peculiar faculty of making everyone his friend, and "None knew him but to praise." His illness was of some duration, but at no time did he manifest the slightest fear that it might be fatal, struggling with this disease, and even leaving his chamber declaring that he would soon be well. But in vain he tried to rally his drooping spirits, and sank into death's embrace.

Peace be to his ashes! A man to whom none were more thoroughly and better known, upright in all his friendships and his dealings punctilious in his honor, and firm in his friendship. We have none too many men of his caliber, and the memory of William Vanderbeck will be fondly cherished when other names have been lost in oblivion.

Lieut. Johnson died previous to Mr. Vanderbeck and his death was generally supposed to have proceeded from congestive fever. Capt. Wm. Holden, acting Chief Quartermaster suffered long and severely, and for some days

his life was entirely despaired of, but he passed through the dreadful ordeal to the infinite joy of a legion of friends in the community at large. The Captain has since been entertained with a perusal of obituary notices of himself, published in Northern papers, and at least has learned what men did say of him believing him dead, and knows full well the record he would have left behind him had he "shuffled of his mortal coil", and how a people will remember those who achieve enduring popularity. We are proud to chronicle the return of the Captain to New Berne completely restored to health.

During the illness of Capt. Holden the disease assumed a bolder and more threatening aspect, breaking out in the Post Commissary's and carrying off the detail clerks. George Penniman of the 23d Mass. Regiment, Reuben De Luce of the 25th Mass. Regiment, Thomas G. Grier of the 11th Penn. Regiment. Lieut. William O. Brown and F. Wellington of the 25th Mass. Regiment survived, but most were saved miraculously.

The commissary depot was situated at the foot of Craven Street, contiguous to the wharf. In the Summer, the old dock, which had been there for many years, (and in which many a bark from the West Indies had discharged her valuable freights in times gone by like the rich argosies of old) was filled up, and the present large and commodious one completed in its stead. Subsequently heavy rains left an accumulation of water under the adjacent storehouse which, having no outlet to the river became stagnant, and created the contagion from which the epidemic arose. The appearance of New Berne at this time was somber in the extreme. With the fading shades of each evening the kindled fires at every corner emitting heavy columns of the densest and blackest smoke enveloped the city in a funeral pall, and the death angel flapped his wings o'er the dwellings. Still the fever had not yet assumed the proportions of an epidemic. The order came from the Medical Director Dr. D. W. Hand to the Chief Provost Marshal, to destroy the wooden buildings on Cra-

ven Street Wharf, which concealed the cellars in which standing pools were green mantled in their miasmatic robes.

It was no easy task to burn down those storehouses within their circumscribed limits, and not include the neighboring tenements; for by the most guarded vigilance, active firemen, and excellent management, could the duty be accomplished. An hour's rain on that day deluged the roofs and afforded a most effectual safeguard and assurance against the encroachment of the fire. At 3 o'clock p. m., the Chief Provost Marshal Major H. T. Lawson and his deputies came to the ground and immediately the work of disembowelment commenced, and in a space of time all the commissary stores were removed to a place of security and the torch applied.

Major Lawson during the conflagration exerted himself with super human effort in his endeavor to prevent the flames from spreading, drenched in water and exposed long after dark to the noxious night air. Twice did an adjoining warehouse become the prey of the devouring element, but the perseverance of the firemen succeeded, and none but the buildings designated by the Medical Director were destroyed. It was almost beyond belief that a fire of such magnitude should have been controlled in so masterly a manner, and the Provost Marshal in the hour of his triumph, sealed his fate, and fell before the pestilence. Major Henry T. Lawson of the 2nd Mass. Artillery, Chief Provost Marshal of New Berne, was a brave soldier and a conscientious gentleman. He was universally loved, winning enduring friends by the urbanity of his manners and amiability.

In the distribution of justice he was strict but impartial. In the performance of onerous duties he was faithful and exact, jealous of his good name, with the delicate sensibility that men of honor pride themselves upon.

He was prominent in his humility, and inflexible in purpose. We shall never forget the scene of the execution of six deserters when the unfortunate men, seated on their

coffins, with bandaged eyes close forever from the world bade adieu to the Provost Marshal, their unwilling executioner. The tremulous grasp of the final adieu, as he passed slowly and sorrowfully from man to man receiving from each, parting keepsakes for relatives from whom their ignominious end could not be concealed, while a deluge of tears coursed his manly cheeks, choking his utterance, and rendering him almost unable to pronounce the orders for each to be shot to death with musketry. But the stern necessity of military discipline fortified his heart, and the soldier triumphed over the man. Alas! Little thought he on the fatal day how soon he would follow the doomed culprits to eternity's mansion, wasted by a pernicious fever! Major Lawson will always be remembered in New Berne and by his comrades in arms; and the deep anxiety manifested by all classes of the community during his illness was followed by universal mourning at his decease. There have been but few men in exalted positions that have commanded more admiration than the late Provost Marshal. Major Lawson served with distinguished honor during the Peninsula Campaign.

Lieut. Col. Walter S. Poor of the 2nd N. C. Regiment succeeded Major Lawson as Chief Provost Marshal, and through the pernicious season, as a member of the Board of Health, contributed greatly towards the restoration of the health of the City, and will always be remembered with fervent gratitude.

Col. Poor is most ably assisted in his position by the Deputy Provost Marshal, Lieut. John Walker, of the 132nd N. Y. Infantry. Lieut. Walker's amiability and rare social qualities, combined with the courteous bearing and strict discipline of the soldier, will ever preserve to him a legion of friends.

Previous to the death of Major Lawson, Charles Weigand, merchant; Joseph Beetzkes, boot and shoe dealer; J. Breen, merchant tailor; Cipher, on Pollock Street, were stricken down, and the daily average of deaths at this time was about six or eight, the mortality rapidly increasing, so

that in one week from the death of these persons the interments each day reach the number of 20 to 25. And a flight of the citizens commenced. James Bryan, Esq., a lawyer of eminent ability and who resided in the North during the war, was only just returned to New Berne to engage in the business of his profession, and expired after a brief illness—his wife soon after following him.

And now the pestilence fully established itself as an epidemic, and raged with fearful fatality among the native families; in some instances, not a few, entire households were carried off, leaving not one member to tell the tale. We know where the Provost Guard of the 15th Conn. Regiment performed the last duties to the dead prior to the sepulture.

By the tenth of October, the city was well nigh vacated. Nearly all the business houses closed. Those that remained open were the stores of William L. Poalk, auctioneer and commission merchant, Pollock Street; R. Berry, Middle Street; J. Patterson, foot of Pollock Street; W. Ames, South Front Street; Luther W. Holmes, corner of Craven and South Front streets; Andrew Collins, Craven Street; F. Tomlinson, Craven Street; J. McCormick, merchant tailor, Pollock Street.

The fifteenth of October saw the city a dismal blank.

"Deserted and drear, with howling winds and croaks of the bier."

While the Yellow Fever held undisputed sway, and the destroyer reigned supreme a restless tyrant, there assembled a little band of courageous and devoted men drawn together by the most sacred impulse which can inspire the human heart. They, forming the phalanx of "Good Samaritans," pledged their lives and all for the great purpose of administering comfort to the sick and the last sad offices of the dead. They presented truly a noble front, and their record is now given to the world. They stand alone and conspicuous in their deeds and career; and their names should be preserved in an immortality of fame. Self-sacrificing men, men who had ties that bound

them to this earth as strong as any ties of those who had been the recipients of their ministrations. In a time that paled the stoutest hearts they shrank not, but heroically faced death and its terrors; the first and foremost was William L. Poalk, the mainspring, and the head, the mover and the originator of the never to be forgotten "Dead Corps." This is a roster of them:

William L. Poalk, John Jones, Henry S. Mandeville, Curtis Pecford, William P. Moore, Jr. (who sacrificed their lives), James P. Allen, W. P. Ketcham, C. H. Alexander, G. G. Manning, and S. Kahn, as they appear in bold relief.

The spectacle was witnessed throughout the woeful period by the few that remained in our midst of the soul sickening and heart-rending devastation of the merciless contagion. The solemn silent travel of the hearse after hearse, with no accompaniment save the fearless zealous minister of God, leading the way, and under the grand canopy of Heaven's erubescent sky pronouncing the solitary service o'er the departed. Wend your way through the empty streets of the crushed city and whom do you meet? None save here and there an officer hurrying rapidly along as though conscious of the peril. There turning the corner of Middle and Broad streets, is one who has just been seized by the fever, trembling convulsively from head to foot, his pallid visage hidden beneath the collar of his coat. Young man, speed thee homeward, the saffron hue will soon o'er cloud thy face; the avenger has marked you for his own. The morning sun may see thee enshrined in thy winding sheet. Hark! Not the slightest sound disturbs the oppressive, the dreadful silence. Oh, where are all the people? Is there none in the town to tread the public ways? Are all gone? Is the town completely deserted? Are all the houses vacant?

Plague-smitten New Berne, a grievous time is on thee truly! Hark! Again! There's a tramp along yonder pavement—some members of the Dead Corps on their way to

an afflicted mansion. They reach the threshold; they pause for awhile and determinedly then they enter. They are almost certain to breathe the poisonous air within, and yet they falter not. When all else has abandoned them, these ministering spirits hover around the prostrate forms, soothing their anguish, and ardently essaying to mitigate their unutterable pain, amid the stifling effluvia of the infection. See how tenderly the head is supported and how kindly these philanthropists proffer sustenance and comforts hand in hand with potent sympathy.

Retrace your footsteps to your own domicile, and again you encounter a procession of hearses, the same venerable pastor, the Reverend Father Rouse, its single attendant—the ideal Christian, the beau ideal of God's noblest work.

(Still eulogizing the old priest) A benison on thee thou worthy man you meet the shivering blast each moment undismayed; those funeral rites which you repeat over so many hundreds, we trust may not be repeated over you until you have attained the greenest old age, full of years and honor. Thy true existence is not begun; thy glorious course will then be complete.

How you have borne up through many weeks of constant service in thy holy calling, exposed to the epidemic's fury, no mortal knows, but you shall rest embalmed in the memories of those whose kindred you have blessed, and in the annals of these awful days we will chronicle thee in grateful voice.

Notwithstanding the multifarious duties of the Medical Director Surgeon D. W. Hand, the number of his patients was so large that it seems wonderful that he should have been able to attend them at all hours of the day and of the night, deprived of rest and still not become exhausted. So frequent were the calls on him that it was impossible for him to answer half. On him also devolved the duties of Medical Purveyor, a very responsible and arduous position involving as it does the distribution of the medical supplies to every regiment and hospital in North

Carolina, and undertaken by him in the absence of Surgeon E. V. Morong the regular purveyor. Dr. Wilson of the Navy died in the early part of the epidemic, and doctor in charge of the Foster Hospital was interrupted in his administration by an attack of the disease. Surgeon P. B. Rice of the 132nd N. Y. Infantry, stationed at Bachelor's Creek outposts of New Berne, succeeded him.

When Dr. Rice came to the city, the pestilence was at its height and the hospitals were crowded to excess. The great success in his reports to the Medical Director [noted] a remarkably clean bill of health each month, presenting indisputable evidence of his consummate skill and that of his experienced and learned Assistant Surgeon Dr. L. Grininger.

At the time Dr. Rice took charge of the Foster Hospital, Mr. Silas Covill, one of the conductors of the hospital, and Mr. Wheeler, a conductor on the railroad also died. Mr. Samuel Holman, conductor of the Batchelor's Creek train was prostrated with the fever—but subsequently recovered to receive the congratulations of his host of friends.

Mr. Cornelius Kane was the first engineer of the road and ran the first train from Morehead City to New Berne, after General Burnside occupied it, and had been on constant duty ever since. During his sojourn in North Carolina he had established for himself an enviable character. He had removed with his family here to New Berne and considered himself permanently located with us. His demise leaves a wife and two children alone in the world to mourn his irreparable loss with the sincere regret of all who had been connected with him. Andy Kane, also connected with the railroad, died at Beaufort.

John S. Mateer, formerly of the Government Sash and Blind Factory, and who had seen service during the war also fell. He was an honest man, and when we say that, we need not strive to add to his praise.

Dr. Sitler's patients numbered more than 400; and the scenes which he was called upon to pass through defy de-

scription. We should deem this little work quite incomplete if we suffered ourselves to omit some of the incidents that are a part and parcel of this history; but throughout the epidemic no death occurred which struck a more promising young man and carried deeper sorrow to his family circle than the decease of Luther W. Holmes who was attended by Dr. Sitler.

Mr. Holmes came to New Berne with the 44th Mass. Regiment and after the regiment's term of service expired in the city as a merchant on South Front Street, and in the summer of 1862 was succeeded in the business of his house by Mr. Wallace Ames, his partner. Mr. Holmes continued at the establishment in Mr. Ames's employ until 1864 when he leased the building at the corner of Craven and South Front streets and commenced business on his own account. He had been a faithful and devoted clerk throughout his apprenticeship and by strict frugality amassed a sufficient sum to place himself on a footing with the merchants of this city. He was the example of a self-made man and pursued a steady career, full of lofty aim and characterized by the most undeviating rectitude. His prospects were uncommonly bright, and his anticipations eager, but in the bloom of his youth he was cut down—and we mourn his loss with bowed down hearts. May he rest in eternal peace.

By the third of October, the pestilence was making great havoc in Beaufort and broke out in the Treasury Department, greedy in its terrible ravages for shining marks. Col. David Heaton, supervising special agent for the Treasury was obliged to succumb to the disease. At the critical point of his illness it was fully believed that he would be added to the list of mortality; but after a confinement of ten days, and by the untiring devotion of Dr. Memminger, who was constantly with him through his sickness—the unspeakable joy of his family and friends, he arose and was once more upon his feet.

The Colonel's son James Horton [Heaton?] through Dr. Memminger's efforts also escaped. But we have to

note the death of Mr. Henry T. Conklin and Mr. William P. Blakeslee, clerks of the Treasury Department, and who were universally esteemed for their blameless characters and high social positions. In the stations of the Department they were highly prized by Col. Heaton and will be long remembered by those who were associated with them. Mr. Conklin was a Corporal; Mr. Blakeslee, Esq., was a Special Agent of the Treasury Department.

We would refer in this connection to the valuable services of Dr. Memminger throughout the whole pernicious season; and the community and the Government may heartily congratulate themselves that a gentleman like Col. Heaton, who was so closely identified with their interests and distinguished himself in the administration of the sixth Special Agency of the United States Treasury, has been spared among us to continue--the accomplished gentleman, valuable citizen and uncompromising patriot.

Dr. Bellanee found his grave at Morehead City; and Dr. Brannigan, Assistant Surgeon of the 99th N. Y. Volunteers, who was on duty in New Berne, perished about the same time. Their names can never be forgotten, although no towering monument emblazons them. They and Dr. Wilson will live in letters of light in New Bern's history. Dr. P. B. Rice was then appointed President of the Board of Health, which consisted of himself, Lieut. Col. Poor, and others. The city was subjected to the most thorough cleansing, and from the quantity of lime strewn about, one might easily have imagined a snow storm. To the indefatigable exertions of the Medical Director Dr. Hand and to Surgeon Rice may we justly ascribe the early abatement of the epidemic in November, and they richly deserve the lasting gratitude of the community.

In continuing our melancholy duty we must pay a tribute to the memory of Mr. Charles A. S. Perkins, merchant, with his brother Lucien Perkins at the corner of Broad and Middle streets. Mr. Perkins had been at home on a visit to his family and returned with them to find the Yellow Fever existing. His brothers William and Lucien

were first in the grasp of the merciless enemy. Day and night found him at their bedside, and in all probability he nobly sacrificed his own life in obedience to the prompting of fraternal affection and solicitude. In an obituary of the death of Lucien and Charles it is said,

> Few individuals have been more intimately known and beloved throughout the country for all these genial and social qualities that draw to themselves the spontaneous friendship and good will of all who come within the sphere of their influence. For many years Charles was Publisher and Editor of the *Plymouth Rock*, and during President Buchanan's administration, was the able and efficient postmaster of the town. For his duty's sake he volunteered his services and went to New Berne as first Lieutenant of Co. B of the Standish Guards in the 3d Massachusetts Regiment.
>
> He gave himself entirely to the faithful performance of his duty and devoted his whole time and energy to the comfort of his men, who idolized him. He might have escaped the pestilence but for his devotion to his brothers. But a mysterious Providence ordered otherwise, and an untimely death cut him off in the prime of life and usefulness.

Lucian Perkins was adjutant of the 3d Mass. Regiment, a man of fine address and superior abilities, whose death darkens the gloom and shrouds the hearts of his parents.

In the Post Office, first Mr. Bryant died, the general delivery clerk. Then Robert --------; and matters in that department were paralyzed in such degree that the mails could be neither assorted nor made up.

Of those who left New Berne and were placed in Quarantine at Fortress Monroe, the following will be remembered: C. W. Giddings of the firm of S. Blagge and Company, John Elkins of Carver and Elkins. Both of these

gentlemen took their departure during the incipient stage of the pestilence, confident that they would reach New York in safety, but the seeds of the disease had been too thoroughly implanted into their systems, and the destroyer's work was accomplished only too well and too soon.

It was evident that Mr. Elkins was a sufferer; he was buoyant with hope, but the fears of his friends were realized and Messrs. Giddings and Elkins help to swell the total of estimable men who have gone from us in this month of sorrow.

Col. T. J. Emory of the 17th Mass. Volunteers, and acting Brigadier General commanding the sub-district of Beaufort, was a gentleman of most admirable address and a perfect soldier. His obituary has been so excellently written that all we could add would be but a simple repetition, but there was an incident connected with his death that we must allude to. On the night previous, in the midst of a black and furious storm, his favorite hounds as though partaking of the melancholy spirit of the time had drawn to the spot a legion of confederate dogs, rendering the night terribly hideous with their frantic howling. All efforts to disperse them proved entirely futile; and in their demoniac rage they coursed the street to picture with dismal horror as the Colonel's spirit passed away. His obituary was published in the *Army and Navy Journal* and was a just tribute to the brave soldier and true man.

John B. Thompson of the firm Thompson and Haysden was most active among the sick through the whole time, giving his whole attention to the dying.

Mrs. B. F. Wright, the devoted wife of Dr. Wright, was a most exemplary lady. During her illness she was carefully watched and devotedly attended by Mrs. George Bodine, who worked with sisterly devotion. Mrs. Bodine deserves a faithful record for her sincere and disinterested attention to suffering humanity, for she chose rather to remain with the afflicted than to flee to security.

Who will not remember Archie Duncan, the light-

hearted Archie? Mr. Duncan, notwithstanding a physical defect that rendered him quite a cripple, was one of the most active members of the Fire Department. His genial nature overflowed with the milk of human kindness. In a long and successful career of business, he sustained an irreproachable character and was known by everyone and respected as a man of true integrity. Peace to his ashes.

No death palsied the public mind more than that of Mrs. Chas. Bellois, the lovely and accomplished wife of the Quartermaster of the 132d N. Y. Infantry stationed at Batchelor's Creek. Lieut. Bellois had been appointed temporarily as the successor of Lieut. Brown and was in turn assailed; his devoted wife remaining with him for his sake and, subsequently to his recovery, herself succumbed.

It is such afflictions as these which ardent hope for happiness in the future, plans of domestic bliss, schemes and projects for mutual delight—all vanish and the world becomes a terrible blank. Mrs. Bellois was a lady of uncommon beauty and the idol of her husband, possessing personal attractions and charms of mind which rendered her the envy of her sex, and the undisguised admiration of all. She will never be forgotten by those who had the pleasure of knowing her, and we may never see her counterpart here. Her fairy form, angelic smile, and indescribable beauty made her too beatific for this world, and the Almighty took her for Himself. In the last moments she was surrounded by a circle of sorrowing friends; among them were the A. A. General Capt. J. A. Judson and Surgeon P. B. Rice. The arrangements for Mrs. Bellois's funeral were entirely directed by Capt. Judson, whose sympathy for her bereaved husband was altogether worthy of his generous disposition and noble heart.

Almost simultaneously with the death of Mrs. Bellois, the wife of Lieut. Pearce, Acting Ordnance Officer, also departed this life. A lady whose exit from this world following so closely as it did upon that of the former lady added another cloud to the dreadful gloom of the time. One soul following another into the realms of the un-

known world, pulses ceasing and eyes closing as they enter upon the great threshold of eternity, yielding up this world and disappearing like dying waves along the shore.

See that dreary dilapidated old tenement, so frail that it seems that the slightest breath would topple it down, windows long since bereft of their glass, and the whole aspect of the building picturing complete destitution and want. In that vacant chamber of the upper floor, prostrated on a ragged mattress, and surrounded by filth and rubbish lies a female form. The iron hand of the disease is upon her, with no one near her to give her that needful aid in the time of her great distress except one untiring and devoted friend. See how tenderly he bends over her in her misery, and imprints a kiss upon parched lips. With what passionate fondness he attempts to alleviate her suffering, and how carefully and kindly she is removed from the old building to a comfortable and quiet abode—and he smoothes her heated brow, with his trembling hand she exclaims "Oh how good you are to me! I will never forget it." Day after day and week after week the same recovery, and ever ready to administer to her necessities. Through such scenes of trial does he follow her. Devotion and affection ripen into the deepest and most passionate love--she is the idol of his heart, absorbs his whole soul and becomes a part of his very existence, his chief hope of the future. And when health returned and her beauty bloomed again and she was arrayed in fine apparel, wicked ones, evil tempters beguiled her, deluged her mind with rivers of deadly poison, and seduced her from the happy rectitude which had shed a spotless luster on her name—she forgot the beloved friend whom she had sworn never to dessert, never to grieve his trusting spirit, or to prove false to him, nor to break his yearning heart. But she yielded to the alluring words of those whose paths lead down to destruction; she descended from her honorable career down, down degradation and shame.

In the ever-varying changes of his life, the hand of an Infinite Power is manifest in bereavements, which see all

we have to live for in this world taken from us. Father, mother and all, and one pleads in anguish to be called away also, the terrible vanity of life is then manifest. Many such withering experiences did New Berne behold during the reign of terror.

A brick mansion on the waterside stands out like a cenotaph. Within its walls are hidden histories of the memorable past chapters of the Gaston House written in enduring light. Where are the busy throngs that were won to cluster about its portals? Fled! All but a few trusty ones fled from before the scythe of the destroyer! The register of this house since it was conducted by its present liberal proprietor Samuel C. Fisher Esq. exhibits many names who were honored by his princely generosity, proceeding from a heart as kind and noble as his purse was free, and ever ready to succor the needy and the worthy. When the panic held sway over the city, the Gaston House remained open, and, when in turn the Yellow Fever reached it, firm and undismayed was Edward G. McAlpin, the worthy superintendent of the hotel. Through all this great depression he never rested and day after day was by the side of the dying, sacrificing his comfort, and encountering fearful risks with the spirit of the true philanthropist.

The first death there was that of Algerron S. Sawyer, who was born at Hollis, Maine, and came to New Berne in February 1862 as a clerk to T. L. Merrill and Company, and was afterward admitted as partner of the house. Mr. Sawyer had no enemies, but was loved by all; of a particularly lively temperament and happy disposition his society was always courted, more especially by the ladies, and his demise is deeply and universally deplored. Throughout the whole siege Mr. McAlpin was conspicuous and preeminent in his untiring devotion, and he should be gratefully remembered for all time. Although recovering from an attack himself, he was faithful to the last, and lives today among us as a sincere friend and one upon whom the world may set its seal in humble admiration of a man.

Chas. C. Lawrence, formerly of the 44th Mass. Regi-

ment came to New Berne to establish himself in business and married a charming young girl. A great favorite he was among a host of friends, by whom he was fostered during his illness, but after nine weeks of sickness with typhoid fever, the Yellow Fever set in, and he too must be added to the list of the lamented dead, and one more to agonized hearts. Mr. James Hervey, formerly Captain in the First N. C. Regiment, died about the same time. Mr. Hervey was purser on the steamer Massasoit, Capt. Crane.

A list here of the dead of the 15th Conn. Regiment. This regiment rendered the most effectual service in laying out bodies and preparing them for interment. In several families where all who died were females the Provost Guard was called upon. The extreme of Capt. Septimus Smith in the performance of his duties as Officer of the Day was noted. He was a gentleman of unblemished character and refinement of mind. He and his brother officers and the members of the regiment will be remembered with sincere regret by the citizens of New Berne. In the early part of October the 15th [Conn.] was relieved from provost duty by the colored troops and retired from town to their barracks at the fortifications. Lieut. Hathaway, a meritorious young officer on the staff of General Palmer, commanding the District of North Carolina, also departed this life.

THE RIVER AND THE BRIDGE

Joseph Patterson, Jr.

Before man came the river was there
Before the Indian with his canoe
Before others with their boats and bridges
It was there
Awesome in its beauty and majesty
Flowing silently to the sound and sea
A gift from God in all its glory

Now comes a new and mighty bridge to join its shores
Soaring above the Neuse like a sea gull in the breeze
A thing of beauty, fading to infinity on the distant shore
Its curves and arches a symphony of symmetry
Golden in the sunlight
Mystic in the moonlight
Majestic in its power
A tribute to the mind and might of modern man

In silence the bridge speaks to the river, the people and the land

"I am the connector to your present and your past
And the gateway to your future
I bring together what you were and are and will become

"I will return tranquility to old New Bern
And open doors for you which have been closed before
I will bring new people and new times to your shores
The beauty of your places will return
The things which you hold dear I will enhance
The vibrance of your place has brought me here

I join your way of life and walk the path with you"

The river waves a greeting to the bridge above
And murmurs, "I welcome you to my land and to my people
Together we will help them prosper in peace and happiness
This is my place which I share now with you"

With awe and wonder the people gaze at the bridge and river
And see them as gifts, one from God and one from man
See the frozen energy of one and the moving strength of the other
Shining together as the dawn of a bright new day

And the river flows on to the sea

Note: The above poem was written in celebration of the Neuse River Bridge. Author Dr. Joseph Patterson, Jr., presented a framed copy of the poem to Gov. Jim Hunt at the dedication of the bridge on November 5, 1999. Several members of the Society have requested that it be published in the *Journal*.

BOOK REVIEW

Butter Beans to Blackberries: Recipes from the Southern Garden, by Ronni Lundy. (New York: North Point Press, 1999. 347pp. $31.00.)

My wife considers my attempt to review a cookbook about as appropriate as her reviewing a treatise on fifteenth-century Polish poetry. Neither of us would know a thing about the topic being reviewed. True, I admit to not being able to cook but I most surely love to eat, and Mama and her three sisters were master cooks of traditional Southern dishes. These girls grew up so far back in the swamps of Hyde County that Mama was grown before she saw her first electric light.

Mama raised a big garden, kept chickens and ducks, canned pears and figs from our own trees, and foraged for wild berries, persimmons, poke, wild mustard, and mushrooms. She was a master pie and cake maker and could cook the best cornbread you ever ate--none of this modern hush puppy junk for her. Yes, hush puppies are a modern food. Now folks who come here from Minnesota think they are getting the real thing when the waitress sets down a basket of hush puppies and those little pats of margarine. But ask any Southerner over 60 if her mama ever made hush puppies. The answer will invariably be something like, "Now that I think about it, no she didn't." Truth is, hush puppies are a modern and very greasy abomination passed off on us by restaurants because they are cheap and fast and easy to prepare.

I looked at a number of recent cookbooks that purport to be definitive sources of Southern cooking. Amazon, the Internet bookstore, lists more than 50 recent books on traditional Southern cooking, and I suspect that it would not

be difficult to find many more. Ronni Lundy's entertaining book entitled *Butter Beans to Blackberries: Recipes from the Southern Garden* seemed to best fit my biases. For example, Ms. Lundy defends the Southern preference for vegetables cooked until they are properly done. According to her point of view, our so-called overcooked vegetables are more flavorsome, digestible, and nutritious. She also makes a strong case for the Southerner's preference for bourbon mixed with ginger ale as well as our taste for fried apple and peach pies. She advises against the use of bottled lemon and lime juice. Finally, she dismisses the bland and worthless vegetable zucchini and praises the appeal of out traditional yellow crookneck and pattypan squash. I could run off with a woman like this.

Another appealing feature of this book involves the message that there is no single Southern cuisine. Like Southern accents, traditional food preferences in the South change in subtle ways about every 60 miles or so. In Craven County traditional bean soup is often made with huge dry lima beans. (An excellent version of this soup is made at the Country Biscuit Restaurant on Broad Street.) But in Halifax County, where I grew up, nobody ever made soup with beans this large. Similarly, the preparation of even a simple food like slaw (coleslaw, if you like) varies markedly even within the confines of eastern North Carolina. The book excels in providing examples of traditional regional specialties such as collards with cornmeal dumplings (our own coastal North Carolina), Kentucky colcannon (cooked kale or cabbage and onions mixed with mashed potatoes), and classic apple stack cake (southern Appalachians).

Lundy's book contains 24 chapters that vary in length. Each chapter is organized around a particular food or food family. For example, there are separate chapters on crowder peas; cucumbers and melons; corn; grits; roots; Irish potatoes; sweet potatoes; and figs, plums, and scuppernongs. The latter chapter should be most useful in eastern North Carolina because both figs and scuppernong grapes

thrive in our moderate climate. Sadly, the number of homegrown fig trees and grape arbors seems to have decreased sharply in this area during the last 25 years. As a consequence, very few local people now produce homemade fig preserves or scuppernong jelly. The loss of these regional delicacies is unfortunate; nothing matches the taste of fig preserves served with hot biscuits or scuppernong grapes picked fresh off the vine.

The strength of the book as a work strictly devoted to traditional Southern cooking is a bit diluted by the occasional insertion of what might be called "new-age" Southern recipes. In the chapter entitled "Bell Peppers" we are given the recipe for "Jose's hush puppies stuffed with shrimp provencal." Or in the chapter on grits, she mentions the chef at a fancy Charlottesville, Virginia, restaurant who "sometimes seasons his exquisite fried grits cakes with foie gras, or serves them as a gateau, layered with portobellos." There are several restaurants in New Bern and Morehead City that do similar exotic things with plain old grits and that's fine. But nobody's Southern grandmamma ever prepared such concoctions.

In discussing many of her recipes, Lundy sometimes refers to the use of an exotic or hard-to-find ingredient. She tells you not to worry and references a mail-order source for the ingredient. Thus, if you need greasy or creasy beans, a section entitled "Things to Order" at the back of the book will refer you to Berea College in Kentucky. Want the most perfect ginger ale to go with your bourbon? She provides the toll-free number and mailing address of the Blenheim Bottlers or Hamer, South Carolina. The book also includes a list of interesting places to eat in the South. In North Carolina, Bum's Restaurant in nearby Ayden is mentioned. She also lists the Fearrington House Restaurant in Pittsboro as a good place to eat. I have eaten in the latter establishment only once, and that was years ago. The food was excellent at this very upscale restaurant, but it by no means represents the kind of "down home" cooking you can enjoy at Bum's. A short

section of her book provides a select list of farmer's markets in the South. Curiously, of the four markets that the author found attractive in North Carolina, the Raleigh Farmer's Market did not make her list.

Lundy's book contains very little information on the traditional preparation of meat, poultry or fish dishes in the South. After all, the subtitle of her book is "Recipes from a Southern Garden." She also does not include a chapter on nuts in Southern cuisine. Hence, all the good things that our ancestors did with pecans and walnuts are absent. But these omissions seem necessary in order to do justice to the wonderful array of Southern vegetables, fruits, and berries consumed by our ancestors. For too long, the prevailing opinion among many historians was that Southerners ate mostly a stark and monotonous diet of meat, meal, and molasses. The meat was almost exclusively pork, and of course "meal" referred to cornmeal. Ms. Lundy's interesting and quirky—stuffed hush puppies are quirky—book suggests that Southerners enjoyed a much more varied diet than commonly thought and that we would do well to honor and maintain our food traditions.

Richard Lore