Journal of the New Bern Historical Society

Vol. XVI, No. 1 May 2003

TABLE OF CONTENTS

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@cconnect.net).

FROM NEW BEDFORD TO NEW BERN

Donald Ransone Taylor

On Monday, August 25, 1862, Rufus A. Soule, his best friend Savoy Hathaway, and his cousin George Dunham joined the New Bedford City Guards. Soule and Hathaway were assigned to Company E of the Third Regiment. They were allowed to return home to get their affairs in order and tend to family matters.

They reported to Camp Joe Hooker in Lakeville, Massachusetts, on September 18, 1862. Five days later they were mustered into the United States service for a nine-month enlistment. A month of camp life was before them as they prepared for deployment in the South. Leaving Camp Hooker for Boston on October 22, they boarded the steamer *Merrimack*. Other soldiers were aboard the *Mississippi*. At five o'clock on the morning of October 23, a Thursday, the ships left Boston harbor bound for Morehead City, North Carolina. Arriving at 11 o'clock on Sunday morning at the wharf in Morehead City, members of the 44th Regiment proceeded to New Bern (or Newbern as they called it) 36 miles away. Rufus and his Regiment remained at Morehead City to unload the steamer.

Through a diary and 65 letters dutifully written to his wife Susan, Rufus Soule gives a picture of the life of a Union soldier stationed in and around New Bern during the Civil War. Various aspects of that life as revealed by the letters will be presented in this article.

Born on March 16, 1839, Rufus Albertson Soule was the son of Thomas and Margaret Albertson Dunham Soule of New Bedford, Massachusetts. Educated in the public schools of his hometown, Rufus showed initiative and drive as he progressed from newspaper carrier, to mercan-

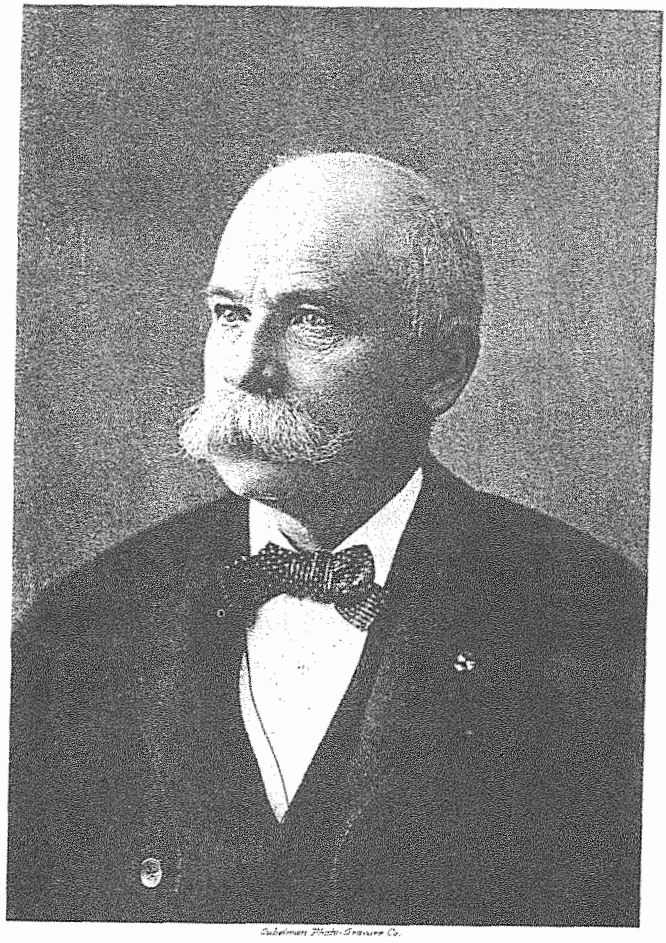
tile clerk, to express messenger, to clerk in the shoe store owned by Savoy Hathaway's father. It was from this employment that he left to join the New Bedford City Guards.

While some of the activities Rufus experienced during his nine-month enlistment will be covered using his diary and letters, it is interesting to trace the life and times of Rufus A. Soule after June 22, 1863, when he mustered out of the service at Camp Joe Hooker. It is assumed Rufus returned to the shoe store soon after his return, but in 1865 he and Savoy formed the firm of Hathaway and Soule for the manufacture of shoes. In the years which followed Soule became President of the Soule Mill and City Manufacturing dealing in cotton goods. He was a member of the Board of Trade and had various banking interests in New Bedford. Active in the Masonic orders he was also a member of various civic organizations

In 1869 Rufus A. Soule was elected to the New Bedford Common Council. He served as president in 1874 and left the Council in 1875. As a representative to the General Court in 1878-79, Soule served on its railroad committee. In 1896 he broadened his political arena and was elected to the Senate of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, where he served until 1905. For two years he was President of the Senate.

Upon leaving the Senate at age 66, Soule became Collector of the Port of New Bedford from 1905 until his death on January 9, 1913.

On August 28, 1860, Soule married Susan C. Nesmith, daughter of Carver and Eleanor Williams Nesmith. As he went off to war, Rufus left Susan and their daughter Margaret, affectionately referred to as Maggie in the letters. After the war two more children were born to the couple, a daughter Lois, and a son Rufus A. Soule, Jr., who became a cloth broker in New York. Margaret married Dr. Gary Hough, and Lois married Alexander T. Smith. The 65 letters and the diary are now in the possession of Lois Soule Smith's granddaughter Priscilla Smith McTeigue of White Plains, New York. Appreciation is expressed to Mrs.



Rufus Albertson Soule
March 16, 1839-January 9, 1913
Family photo.

McTeigue for allowing me to transcribe the letters and use them in the article that follows. Appreciation is also expressed to my son David L. Taylor, who transcribed the diary and whose knowledge of the Civil War has been of great assistance to me.

LIFE AT CAMP

From shoe merchant to soldier represented a vast change in the life of Rufus A. Soule. References to life at camp in letters to his wife Susan give a vivid picture of some of the changes he experienced. The first letters, written from Camp Joe Hooker in or near Lakeville, Massachusetts, inform Susan of the first changes he experiences. But life at camp in the New Bern area will be the focus of this article.

In the *Evening Standard* of June 17, 1863, an account is given of the return of the Third Regiment Massachusetts Volunteer Militia and quotes *The Fall River News* with a sketch of the service performed by the regiment. A small brochure was printed and distributed to those attending the homecoming in New Bedford. This document has been used to verify some of the dates of the Soule letters.

The Third Regiment left Boston aboard the steamer *Merrimack* and landed at the port of Morehead City, North Carolina, in October 1862. Soule writes to his wife

> Here I am in N. Carolina on board the Steamer in which we arrived well and in good spirits. . . . The place at which we are laying is directly opposite Beaufort which is distant about two miles. From this place the railroad runs direct to Newbern which is distant about thirty six miles.

He would later take a train through Newport and to New Bern where he would camp with his regiment.

Susan C. Nesmith Soule
March 11, 1839-February 18, 1921
Family photo taken October 17, 1919.

"Yesterday was the first day I had washed my face and hands since we left camp. We got ashore and went about a quarter of a mile to get fresh water to wash in." Once located in New Bern, Soule uses his Sundays for letter writing. He writes

> This is my second Sunday in N. Carolina and I am sitting in my tent having just come in from inspection. . . . We do not have so much time to ourselves as we did in Camp Hooker in fact nearly all of our time is taken up, either with drills cleaning muskets or other duties. . . . I should like it better if we were not so much crowded in our tents ther are eighteen of us in a tent and when we have our clothing knapsacks and guns and equipment and ourselves in them we are about filled up.

(Note: Rufus is not much on punctuation—commas are practically unknown, and periods are rare. His spelling is generally good. For fear of losing the flavor of his writing I hesitate to correct that spelling or add punctuation except in extreme cases. DRT)

> I today bought a ½ lb of butter for 15 cts so I am going to have some bread and butter. Cheese is 20 cts per pound and they have small sized pies about as large as a small saucer which they sell for 5 cts. Gingerbread about half as large as a bakers loaf for 5 cts and boiled sweet potatoes good size one 2 for 5 cts and other things about the same proportion so you see things are but little dearer than they are at home except apples they are about three times the price they are at home.

"They" in the second sentence quoted above could be local merchants in New Bern or the sutler who is in camp. Soule likes this man and feels he deals fairly with the men.

Soule writes at the top of each letter "Camp Rich-

mond, Newbern" then the date. He writes in some detail about his daily routine.

> We had inspection this morning (Sunday) and each company was marched out on the parade ground fully equipped and our guns cartridge and cap boxes inspected and then we unslung our knapsacks and laid them open on the ground and then the Captain went through and looked into each knapsack and then we were marched back to our quarters and about 11 ock we had to take up our tents and give our things a good airing and then we had dinner and since dinner I have been washing my stockings towel &c but my larger things I shall be obliged to get one of the darkie women that infest our camp to wash out.

"Ock" is Soule's standard version for "o'clock"—he never writes it out entirely. The reference to the "darkie women" is one of several in the letters.

Camp Richmond was located on the outskirts of New Bern, for Soule writes of two in his company, John W. Pierce and Simeon Potter, "went down to the Newbern hospital today. . . neither of them are in immediate danger that I know of." Two companies from the Third Regiment were sent to Newport guarding the railroad between Newbern and Morehead City.

The arrival of mail was a highlight of camp life. The soldiers knew when mail was going out and they sought to get their letters written before the mail departed. But the arrival of mail was something very special. On Sunday, November 16, 1862, Soule writes to Susan, "You cannot immageing [imagine] how much pleased I was to receive it" (a letter written November 6 and 7 by Susan). He continues

> There has been two or three mails arrived here since we arrived and as I did not expect a letter so soon I did not feel disappointed but if I had not received one

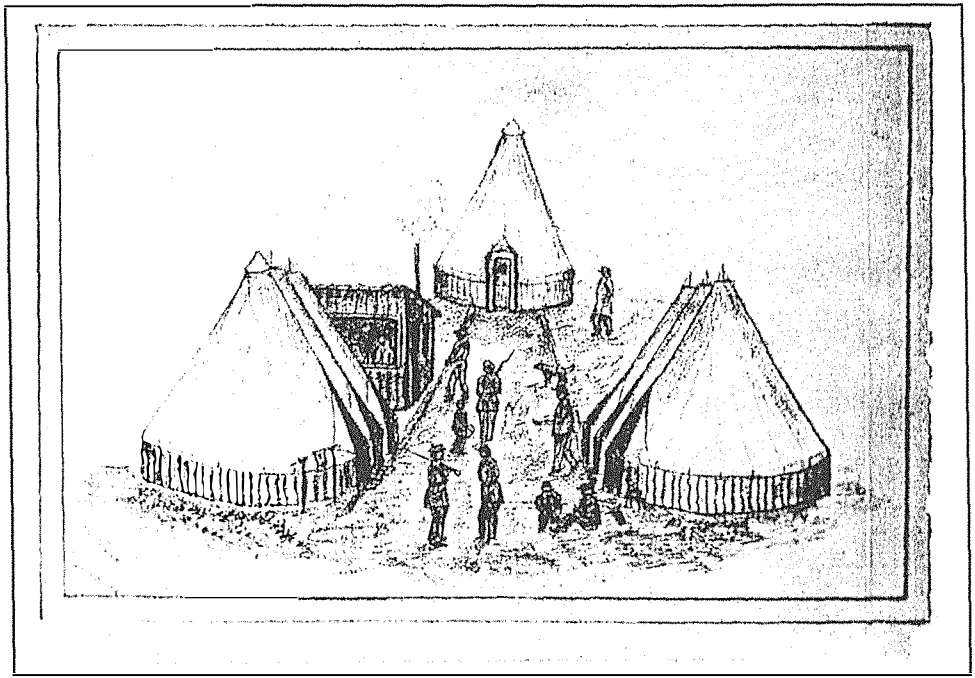
this morning I should have fel[t] like crying but I received one and a good one at that for which I am very thankful and do try and write often even if you have to let some other things go. When I commenced this letter I had only received one from you but I had a pass to go down town and when I returned I found another and a paper they all came in one mail but when they got a few assorted out they sent them to the companies the mail was very large and I believe they are not all given out yet.

Rufus Soule was very good about reporting on the life of his friend Savoy Hathaway. In this letter of November 16 he reports

> Savoy Hathaway has received nothing from home since he has been out here and today he is feeling very bad and I know how to pity him for I began to feel bad when the letters began to be distributed for fear I should not receive one and was I glad when they called my name you may believe.

In his letters to Susan, Rufus answered the questions she wrote to him in her letters. She was as anxious to know about his life in New Bern as he was in the goings-on in New Bedford.

> You ask how I fare[.] I answer very well for a soldier[.] We have enough to eat. . . not that it is just such as I would like at home. We have corn beef often and fresh beef once in a while. We have rations of beans twice a week but the cook only cooks them once as the ration is small and there is not enough to make it any oftener. We have not had any soft bread for nearly a fortnight but just as soon as they receive hops from the North we are to have it.
>
> We were called up in line Friday and were mustered



Quarters of Co. E (New Bedford City Guards) 3rd Regiment Massachusetts Volunteer Militia at New Bern, N. C., 1863. Family contributed print.

> for pay but as mustering for pay and paying are two different things there is no knowing when we shall get it. We do not have a great deal of time to ourselves as there is so much extra duty beside drilling such as cleaning muskets and buttons &c.

On November 18, 1862, Rufus told of his duties "on police." They brought in wood which had been cut the day before for use by the cooks. He writes further, "Things are pretty lively around here now. There are four regiments right around us and they all drill reight out in front of our camp." The regiments were the 10th Connecticut, 3rd, 44th, and 46th Massachusetts. He then tells of the vital role played by the sutlers attached to the various regiments.

> They may talk as much as are a mind to about sutlers but they are a regular institution with us. I trade mostly with the 10th Conn sutler. They keep nearly every thing—butter, cheese, apples, and in fact, nearly everything which a soldier needs. The only draw back is that they charge nearly double the price for things that they do North.

Money or the lack thereof was a source of worry for Rufus. In his letter of November 18, Rufus writes,

> I was glad to hear that you had got your state aid so that I know that you are not short of money[.] As for me I have got the $5.00 that I sold my overcoat for and a dollar besides.

In many of his letters to Susan, Rufus asks, "Give my love to all my friends and relatives, there are too many to name but I mean all." He often includes those at the shoe store where he was employed before his enlistment. Writing was at times cut short. "I must close now as I have got to wash a handkerchief and a pair of stockings but the rest

I put out." Locals did the laundry for some of the soldiers.

On Wednesday, November 26, Rufus wrote, "Tomorrow is Thanksgiven and the company are trying to get up some sort of dinner suitable for the occasion and I hope they will succeed." At the end of a note added on the 27th, Rufus wrote,

> We are to have quite a dinner today[.] The company bought 6 turkeys 6 Geese and 6 Chickens[.] [T]he only trouble is that they have to be stewed as Bullard (the cook) says he cannot roast them as he has not room. They cost the company with a little flour $19.00. In my next letter I will let you know what kind of a dinner we have.

A few days later he wrote to Susan, "We had a nice dinner for Thanksgiven And the regiment was relieved from duty except those on guard and it was my luck to be on guard." Generally Rufus had no serious complaints about the food.

> Blessings never come singly and to prove it I will state that there was no regular mail arrived for three weeks and now we have had two only a day apart in both of which I have received seven letter[s].

Rufus and Susan numbered their letters to each other, and at times the numbers get out of order. Never very mushy in his letters, Rufus will occasionally write to Susan in endearing terms as in, "Remember one thing Susie that you are in my thoughts all the time and Maggie."

On December 22 Rufus writes,

> I am once more in Newbern in our old quarters after an absence of eleven days during which time we have made the hardest march ever made in this section of the country in this present war.

The destination of this march was "a picket station known as Bachelors Creek. Cos. E & F are here together. Co G is about half a mile from us[.] We are on the railroad which runs between Newbern and Kingston[.]" Rufus gives his impression of the situation

> The ammunition was being hurried up for the Artillery. Soon we came in sight of a house from which was flying a red flag[,] the hospital badge. . . the wounded went past us some drawn in Ambulance and those able to walk on foot to the hospital which was in our rear.

He advised Susan that she would probably learn more of the battle from the accounts in the northern newspapers.

On December 28, Rufus wrote from Bachelors near New Bern (which Rufus spells "Bachelers") that he had gotten paid--$18.60. He promised to send some home as soon as he decided on the amount and best way to send it.

> I am rather tired today as I was on guard duty last night and it rained so hard that we could not sleep a bit as we had no shelter. If I [k]new when Uncle Sam would pay again I should know how much to send[.] It takes some money to get along with as it is hard work living entirely on salt junk and hard bread when there is a sutler handy.

He finally decided $15.00 would be sent to Mr. Hathaway for Susan's use.

> You ask me if I was frightened well perhaps I was a little but I had no idea of hacking out and I will say that I stood it much better than I had any idea I should[.] Our regiment done everything we were called upon to do and there was scarcely a case of flinching in our regiment.

Throughout his letters, Rufus Soule writes to his wife Susan some details of his life at camp in eastern North Carolina.

> Our regiment has gone on brigade drill[.] They go over the other side of the Trent river near the camp of the 23d Mass regiment[.] It is about three miles from our camp,

he writes on January 9, 1863. In the same letter he writes,

> We are going to have fried oysters to night for supper for our squad. We contributed and then sent one of our number down to the city to buy oysters and Bullard is going to cook them for us.

He comments on the weather, "This morning it was real cool and we had a little bit of a hail storm but it cleared off about noon and this afternoon it is quite pleasant though rather cool."

Brigades were reorganized from time to time. On January 20, 1863, Rufus writes in his letter

> We are in the 5th Division of the 18th Army Corps under the command of General Price[.] Then we are in the 2nd brigade of the 5th division[.] Our brigade is commanded by Colonel Jordan acting brigadier. . . . The following are the regiments in our brigade 3 & 8th Mass. 132nd & 15th N. York. Our company has had white gloves bought for us from the company fund and yesterday we appeared out in them for the first time. . . didn't we look nice[.]

Soule moved from Camp Richmond to Camp Jourdan in early February 1863. In writing about the changeable weather he is enduring he writes,

> It then cleared off cool or rather cold For last night

was the coldest night we have had yet[.] It would do credit to Massachusetts[.] We kept a fire nearly all night in our tent and so managed to keep nearly comfortable.

Of the new camp he reports, "Our camp is very prettily located[.] We are on what is called the Trent road near the city and right to the left of Fort Totten."

In his February 5, 1863, letter home, he writes a little about New Bern.

> You say in your letter that I have never written any thing about the city of Newbern or of the ladies. I know very little of the city I know of no place that looks much like it. It is quite prettly laid out and the streets are mostly of good width[.] None of the streets are paved as stones in this part of the country are rarities and as a consequence mud is plenty after a rain. A large portion of the houses are not inhabited that is by citizens but those that were vacated are now mostly occupied by troups[.] All the commanders of brigades have houses in the city. Nearly all of the business now done in the city is of a military character. There are a large number of army wagons moving constantly through the city carr[y]ing supplies for the different camps[.] You have no idea of the labor there is in connection with an army of this size.

He continues,

> In going through the city you will hardly meet a person not connected with the army except darkies and now they are enlisting them. You meet very few of the old inhabitants. There are but very few white ladies in the city[.] Nearly all there is are Northern ladies as the boys have it "Officers wives alias Baltimore fancy ladies" although there are a great many officers ladies here. They ride round on horseback and look

very pretty[,] always of course accompanied by their husbands. I saw riding out in a carriage a few days since two of the sisters of Mercy they are here as nurses in the hospitals. They look funny enough with there big white linen collars. A young looking lady attracks about as much attention here as any great event in the north.

When we are on guard in the night we or at least I always think of home take a cold wet night from 11 to 1 and it makes one think of his warm bed at home and then thinks of the friends there and then comes a homesick feeling which must be shaken off so take one or two runs up and down the beat and then count the weeks you have got to stay and so wear away the weary two hours.

At Camp Jourdan, Soule reports he and Savoy "have got our bunks done" and they slept in them for the first time on the night of February 9. Rufus always reported that he was in good health. He also reported to Susan on the rare occasions he attended a prayer meeting. Letters from home meant a lot as he reports in a letter of February 12, 1863, "Yesterday was a great day in camp a very large and late mail arrived from the North. . . . I have eight letters. . . ."

The distance from home did not prevent Rufus Soule from giving advice to his wife on raising their daughter Maggie. "I am afraid you are getting Maggie to stand on her feet to young"

On March 11, 1863, Rufus writes Susan, "Here we are once more in camp after another one of those delightful excursion into the country to search for rebs." On that excursion,

We marched this day about 20 miles and went into camp on McDaniels plantation about 10 oclk. Made my coffee and turned in and slept as sound as I should

No. 42

Camp Jourdan Newbern Apr. 2/63

Dear Susan

I have nothing in particular to write but commence with the same old story of guard tomorrow.

Our Colonel was so well pleased with the arch on the front of our company street that he wanted our Sergeant to superintend building one in front of the street which leads to his tent and one in front of his tent. The company volunteered to do it and so yesterday we were excused from drill for that purpose and the result was that an arch was built which will be hard to beat. Savory was one of the chief fugleers. The Colonel was very much pleased with it indeed. Heavy firing was heard yesterday afternoon and it is reported that the rebels have attacked Little Washington

Excerpt from Letter no.42, Camp Jourdan, New Bern, April 2, 1863, continuing on following pages.

Another member of company F arrived here last night. He came as a messinger. His name is Dexter and he is from Mattapoisett. He looks tough and Randy and reports the company all well. A mail is expected hourly and I am very anxious for it to arrive. A mail is a great thing for us soldiers if it were not for that we should all get the blues. I have been doing up my mending this morning I believe you would laugh if you could examine some of my clothes where I have fixed them up ~~mended them~~. We have got to be in line at ten o'clk for some purpose or other whether it is a review or wether we are going to have the fast day proclamation read to us I don't know. But I presume I shall find out. I shall have to stop now as I have got to black my boots and brush up generally. But will write more when we get dismissed.

. . . . It is now nearly dinner time and as I have used up all my items I must close. By the way word has been received that the people at home think the 3d regiment has not done much. All I have to say that the 3d regiment has obeyed promptly every order and while we have been in dangerous positions we have been fortunate and had none killed and but few wounded.
All I have to say to any one who finds fault with us let them do as we have placed themselves at the disposal of the government and I for one will give them praise for that. Hoping to soon receive word that you have got rid of your cold I will close

From your Husband
Rufus A. Soule

> if I had been on the best bed in the city of New Bedford.

Part of the troops "made a dash up to Trenton distant about eight miles." Rufus's regiment and one section of Battery H were to stay behind with the baggage. After a raid by some of the troops on Jacksonville, the army prepared to return to New Bern. Also in the letter of March 11 is a note, "I enclose a part of a flower which I got on Youngs plantation." He must have realized Susan would have no flowers blooming in New Bedford on March 11. He added, "On the march the fruit trees we saw were in full bloom." As spring came to eastern North Carolina, Rufus wrote on April 12, 1863, "It is a warm pleasant day warm enough for June."

Rufus keeps Susan abreast of his activities during March and April and on May 14, 1863, he heads his letter "On picket near Camp Gully" and explains in the letter,

> There are four companies of our regiment doing picket duty. Cos. C, E, F, and D. Company C are on what is called the Red House station about two miles from us on another road. Companies D & F are on the same road with us about a mile nearer Newbern and we are almost three quarters of a mile from Deep Gully. . . . The worst thing about this picket business is the confounded snakes[,] Musquitoes and other vermin.

His letter of May 17 was written at Pine Tree Picket Station near New Bern, but by May 24 he was back at Camp Jourdan complaining about the hot weather as June approached.

The letters Rufus wrote in late May and early June are full of rumors about their upcoming departure from North Carolina and return to Massachusetts as the end of their nine-month enlistment draws nigh. One rumor had them leaving on June 14, another on June 15. On May 30, 1863,

he wrote, "To day is Saturday to morrow is the last day of the month if nothing happens I shall probably see you in less than four weeks and perhaps not much over three." On June 3 he wrote, "This warm weather wears on us and we are losing flesh" and estimates the men have lost an average of ten pounds each. He writes of plans in New Bern for a reception for the New Bedford Companies. Captain Haws, anxious to return home, says he will stand for very little speech making at the reception.

According to the reprint of the newspaper account, Companies A, C, E, F, G, H, and K of the Third Regiment embarked from Morehead City aboard the steamer *S. R. Spaulding* on June 11, and Companies B, D, and I with the sick, left New Bern aboard the steamer *S. L. Tilley*. Four days later they landed at Boston harbor amid proper pomp and circumstance.

The Soule letters contain a great deal of information, and only the highlights are presented in this article. There are many aspects of life in and around New Bern not touched upon by Rufus Soule, and this is regrettable. But we are grateful to his family who preserved these letters for us to study and enjoy.

MOSES GRIFFIN

Julie Hipps

Moses Griffin lived alone. A man with few friends, he never married. But the legacy of Moses Griffin, a loner, touched the lives of many poor, orphan girls. A tall, gaunt man with "unusually long arms and swinging gate," Griffin sported thick red hair, a freckled "eagle face," and gray eyes.[1] Born in 1753 and a lifetime resident of Craven County, Moses inherited property from Solomon Griffin, his father. Solomon, a farmer and landowner, divided his estate among his four children: Alie (Ally), Solomon, Jesse, and Moses.

Wounded at the Battle of Alamance in 1771, Griffin served in the colonial militia. Despite his service in the War of Regulation, Griffin preferred a quiet life. He socialized infrequently and maintained only business relationships with his attorneys and bankers. With little formal education, Moses Griffin ran successful mercantile and real estate businesses and accumulated extensive property holdings in New Bern. A plantation owner, Griffin guarded his privacy and cautioned trespassers:

> All persons are forwarned from trespassing on my plantation called the BLUEROCK on Trent River, about five miles from Newbern as they will otherwise be prosecuted to the utmost rigor of the law. MOSES GRIFFIN.[2]

---

[1]John D. Whitford, "The Home Story of a Walking Stick--Early History of the Biblical Recorder and Baptist Church at New Bern, N.C., Told in Every Day Talk" (Typescript, [ca. 1900]), 214.

[2] *North Carolina Gazette*, New Bern, January 2, 1793.

Griffin also owned and occupied a small, one story frame house in town.

Living frugally, investing his profits wisely, and avoiding social interaction, Moses Griffin earned the reputation as an eccentric miser. In 1816, shad, in plentiful supply, sold for seven and a half cents apiece. Griffin took advantage of the low price and feasted on his favorite fish. Evidently Griffin gorged himself and, struck with "collie," died from indigestion and heart failure. Griffin had signed his will on September 13, 1807, and, in the will, he requested a decent burial "without any funeral pomp."[3] Interred at Cedar Grove Cemetery under a marble slab a few feet east of the Simpson vault, his stone reads: "Founder of Moses Griffin's Free School."

In his will, probated in June of 1816, Griffin bequeathed to his minor nephew Frederick Wallace, $100 per year for three years, for education expenses. The will allowed Frederick, at the age of 21, to inherit his Negro girl Jenny, and his Negro fellow Toney, and $200 at the age of 25. Griffin also provided for his slaves June, Dick, and Mingo to hire out and earn wages to be applied toward the purchase of their freedom. The will mandated that Griffin's slave Emperor hire out yearly for ten years, turning his wages over to the estate, and then hire out for seven more years, saving a portion of these earnings for the purchase of his freedom.

Griffin appointed five executors: Edward Graham, William Gaston, John Devereaux, Francis Hawks, and John Oliver, all held in high esteem by New Bern's business, church, and social community. He directed the five managers to invest estate funds in bank shares or to lend it out at interest. With ample investment returns, Griffin instructed his trustees to purchase two acres of land in a convenient and healthy place near New Bern and oversee the construction of a story-and-a-half brick house, 30 feet long and 20 feet wide. Griffin allowed for a large space on

[3]Moses Griffin, 1807, Craven County Wills.

the first floor suitable for a schoolroom and finishing of the rest in a "plain manner fit for the accommodations of indigent scholars which house shall be called Griffin's Free School."[4]

Griffin's will detailed the employment of a proper schoolmaster and the school's purpose: to teach and educate

> as many orphan children or the children of such other poor and indigent persons as are unable to accomplish it with their own means, and who in the judgment of my trustees are best entitled to the benefit of this donation."[5]

Griffin's frugal nature survived his death as it permeates his will. Consistently he cautioned his trustees to proceed with his specific requirements for the school "only as financing allowed." Griffin intended that the school not only educate the children, but also provide housing, clothing, and sustenance. He expected the students, at age 14, to enter into an apprenticeship bond for training in a trade or occupation. Griffin did not overlook compensation for the schoolmaster who

> may be able to afford to board the indigent scholars upon more moderate terms than any other person in consequence of his having the use of the house and the two acres of grounds rent free, during the time he may be continued in the employment, and in consequence also of his having the privilege of taking twenty five other scholars besides the indigent ones, for whose tuition he make terms with their parents or friends.[6]

---

[4]Ibid.
[5]Ibid.
[6]Ibid.

At the close of his will, Moses Griffin clearly affirmed his intention that the trustees appropriate funds and profits from his estate, first to the payment of his debts, funeral expenses, legacies, and bequeaths, and then to the Free School. Nevertheless, in 1818-1820, relatives of Moses Griffin attempted to break the will, claiming the fortune as next of kin. John Lewis Taylor, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of North Carolina and former New Bern resident, upheld the trust.[7] The executors incorporated the school in 1833 and purchased a tract of land on George Street northwest of Cedar Grove Cemetery. In 1835 construction of the schoolhouse commenced. The Griffin School, built by New Bernian Hardy B. Lane, featured stylish Greek Revival elements: low hip roof, prominent classical cornices, and studied symmetry. A block modillion cornice and brownstone trim embellished the five bay wide building. Fine building materials such as "hard Baltimore brick," the best for a damp climate, and a "well put on" tin roof account for the $11,000 construction cost.[8]

One by one the original trustees died. In 1838, only Devereaux remained. His son Thomas Pollock Devereaux and his grandson John Devereaux II assumed responsibility for the trust in 1840 and purchased four adjoining lots. Later George Attmore and William H. Oliver acted as controlling trustees. Under the guidance of the trustees, the Griffin estate flourished, however, some of Moses Griffin's plans did not come to fruition. Because boys had access to various trades, the trustees decided to educate only poor girls. Rather than hiring a headmaster as Griffin specified, the trustees selected Arete Ellis as headmistress.

Arete Ellis, daughter of George Ellis, New Bern Representative to the State House of Commons (1800-1801) and Amaryllis Sitgreaves Ellis, sister of Judge John Sitgreaves, never married and dedicated her life to the school. She

---

[7]*New Bern Spectator*, August 16, 1828.

[8]Peter B. Sandbeck, *The Historic Architecture of New Bern and Craven County, North Carolina* (New Bern: Tryon Palace Commission, 1988), 112.

followed strict rules and regulations as she cared for 20 girls. Under her direction the school provided housing, clothing, a proper diet, and medical treatment for the girls. Arete Ellis conducted classes not only in reading, writing, mathematics, but also in sewing, weaving, knitting, spinning, cooking, milking, housework, and gardening. The day began with three hours of schoolwork, with the afternoon dedicated to more domestic pursuits when the girls made their own clothes and performed housekeeping chores. Ellis instructed the girls in the Bible, religion, and morality. Before bed, she led the girls in prayer, according to the Episcopal *Book of Common Prayer.* Weather permitting, Ellis, her girls, and her Saint Bernard, combed nearby woods in search of wildflowers. Occasionally Ellis allowed social gatherings and cotillions, where she offered grab-bag prizes. On Sundays, Ellis accompanied the girls, decked in white uniforms in summer and blue in winter, to Christ Episcopal Church, where she sponsored many of her students in baptism.

Eventually Christ Church absorbed and controlled the school. Ellis maintained an alliance to the church, as did William Nassau Hawks, a former Griffin School teacher and church rector. Griffin, according to the will, intended for the school to be co-ed, non-sectarian, and directed by a headmaster. Yet only girls attended the school, the church assumed the direction and operation of the school, and the trustees hired a headmistress. The trustees fulfilled Griffin's financial goals. Financially stable in 1861 at the dawn of the Civil War, the Griffin Free School fund claimed $60,000 or more in bank stock.

On March 14, 1862, the Yankee forces, under the command of General Ambrose Burnside, and the Confederate defenders confronted each other in the Battle of New Bern. Locals prepared several train cars for speedy evacuation should the Yankees prevail. With their belongings and children piled into a train car, New Bern citizens made ready for a hasty exit. When the Confederates capitulated, the waiting train pulled away with soldiers and

civilians escaping from the front, leaving one or two uncoupled train cars and 60 New Bernians behind. Arete Ellis tended to stranded people sheltered at the Griffin School. The stragglers later departed for safer regions. During the war the school closed, and the pupils, placed in local homes, attended classes held in the west wing at Tryon Palace and in a makeshift classroom in the back of All Saints Chapel on Pollock Street.

After the war Thomas and John Devereaux reluctantly continued as trustees. In 1868 Thomas died, and John made a second application to the court for relief from his responsibilities. Subsequently George Attmore and William H. Oliver served as trustees, and William's daughter Mary Taylor Oliver succeeded Arete Ellis as headmistress. The Olivers, members of Christ Episcopal Church, continued the association between the church and the school.

The Griffin School also assumed a role in the history of the New Bern Academy and the New Bern Graded School. In the spring of 1882, when New Bernians considered the formation of a free graded school, the *New Bern Journal* published opinions on both sides of the issue. Supporters claimed that a graded school would improve and provide a uniform education for all New Bern children and bring education in New Bern to the level of education in Raleigh, Goldsboro, and Wilson. The opponents worried about the intermingling of children from all strata of society and increased taxes. Mary Bayard Clarke, objecting to the inclusiveness and cost of a graded school, questioned the necessity of educating all children beyond the basics of reading, writing, and arithmetic. The *Journal* argued for curtailing expenses by consolidating funds from the New Bern Academy, the Griffin School, the Peabody Fund, and by charging tuition in the higher grades. Meanwhile the New Bern Academy struggled financially. The trustees battled to revive the school, and after careful consideration, deemed the school no longer fiscally viable. On August 8, 1882, the trustees agreed to manage a graded school subsidized by $900 generated by the lease of Acad-

emy property, $2,000 from the Educational Association, $1,000 from the Craven County Educational Fund, and $500 from the Moses Griffin Fund. The New Bern Graded School, incorporated into the City School System in 1899, opened on October 2, 1882.

In 1908 the Griffin School closed and the property was sold. At the final accounting on May 4, 1908, the remaining Griffin School assets of $4,500 transferred to New Bern Graded Schools. The building then served as a knitting factory and Stewarts Sanatorium; later the county held game, fish, and oyster fairs on the property. The Griffin School building, constructed in 1835, burned in the Great Fire of 1922.

Confronting a growing student population in 1908, School Board members considered two options: build a new school or expand an existing building constructed in 1904. The Board voted to double the size of the 1904 building with the addition of three classrooms, two labs, a library, chapel, principal's office, and auditorium, financed with funds from the Griffin estate. William H. Oliver, board member and former trustee of the Griffin estate, objected to this plan. He advocated for the construction of a new building on an open space on the Academy Green, at the corner of Hancock and New streets. Only a separate building in a prominent location, Oliver contended, could suffice as a proper monument to Moses Griffin, whose estate provided $10,000 of the construction costs. Expansion of the 1904 building proceeded, despite Oliver's remonstrations. The enlarged building, renamed the "Moses Griffin Building," functioned as the high school. A marble plaque in the front hall of the high school recognized Moses Griffin with the words:

> "In Memorandiam. Moses Griffin died in 1816. In grateful Remembrance of his Generous Provision for the Education of the children of New Bern, N. C. Hunc Meminisse Juvabit. 1904-09." Translated literally, the epitaph means: "The man should always be

Kept Fresh in Our Remembrance."[9]

The Moses Griffin Building, remodeled and enlarged in 1930, served as an elementary school in the 1950s. The Historic New Bern Foundation, in the 1970s, abandoned plans to restore the building, and it suffered demolition in 1980.

Moses Griffin obviously believed in the consequences of education. In his will he provided for not only the education of his nephew, but also for the housing, nourishment, care, and education of orphans. The legacy continued in the New Bern Graded School and the Moses Griffin Building on the Academy Green. He deserves to be remembered as a champion and advocate for the education of all children and as an investor in the future.

SOURCES

Carraway, Gertrude S. *Crown of Life: History of Christ Church, New Bern, N. C.* New Bern, N. C.: Owen G. Dunn, 1940; reprint.

Gadski, Mary Ellen. *The History of the New Bern Academy.* New Bern, N. C.: Tryon Palace Commission, 1986.

Griffin, Moses. Will, 1807, Craven County Courthouse.

New Bern Spectator, August 16, 1828.

North Carolina Gazette, New Bern, January 2, 1793.

Sandbeck, Peter B. *The Historic Architecture of New Bern and Craven County, North Carolina.* New Bern, N. C.: The Tryon Palace Commission, 1988.

Whitford, John D., Col. "The Home Story of a Walking Stick--Early History of the Biblical Recorder and Baptist Church at New Bern, N. C., (Typescript, ca. 1900).

[9]Mary Ellen Gadski, *The History of the New Bern Academy* (New Bern: Tryon Palace Commission, 1986), 219.

FINALLY, A PERMANENT HOME

Gordon N. Ruckart

This story is about a house that tried for years to find a home. The house is called the Bright House in Peter Sandbeck's book *The Historic Architecture of New Bern and Craven County, North Carolina.* The house is located now at 514 Craven Street in New Bern.

Life began for this house circa 1790 on the southeast corner of Broad and Bern streets. The lot was owned by William Carruthers in 1744, then by James Stevenson, who sold it to Thomas Graves in 1757. Graves gave the lot to his daughter Mary, who had married James Bright, a member of the House of Commons representing Lenoir County. The house was built by James and Mary Bright, who occupied the house until about 1800. Subsequent owners included John Daves, Phillip and Hannah Ryal, Henry, James, and Alexander Douglas, and in 1852 by members of the Bishop family.

Sometime between 1882 and 1908, the house was moved from its corner lot to a narrow lot around the corner on Broad Street. It became a rental property under ownership of the Bishops and then the Smallwood family, and by 1966 it was in deteriorated condition and sitting on property owned by the Raleigh Diocese of the Catholic Church. Called "an historical gem worth saving" by then New Bern Historical Society President Junius W. Davis, Jr., preservation activist Dr. Charles Hall Ashford persuaded the Rt. Reverend Vincent S. Waters of the Diocese to deed the house to the Society to prevent its being torn down.

So from the lot on Broad and Bern the house by 1908 had been picked up and moved to a lot on Broad Street. In 1967, L. R. Thomas & Sons was contracted by the New

Bern Historical Society to restore the house, and the first action taken in 1971 was to move it to a lot owned by the Society behind the Attmore-Oliver House. New foundation and new end chimneys (built on the outside whereas the originals were interior) were made of salvaged old brick. Move number two, home number three.

The Historical Society soon discovered it could not afford to finish the restoration and agreed to sell the house to Dr. and Mrs. W. F. Evans in 1972. The sale stipulated that the Evanses would restore the house. By then, if the Bright House could have talked, we can imagine it would have been heard saying, "Where oh where will I go next?"

It just so happened that the Evanses had come into possession of a lot on Craven Street that had been given to them by Miss Mary Louise Waters. We must digress here to tell the story of the Anchor Apartments.

Miss Waters and the Anchor Apartments

Quoting from a column called "Through the Looking Glass" in *The New Bern Mirror* dated April 25, 1969:

> New Bernians who knew Mary Louise Waters, and thousands of them did, either liked her for her frankness and the courage of her convictions, or found the strongly opinionated spinster thoroughly obnoxious.

"Doc" Evans tells the story of how she would sit on her second-floor porch and throw pebbles, which she kept in a small pasteboard box, at those people she particularly disliked.

Sisters Florence Bryan Waters and Mary Louise Waters bought their lot at 514 Craven Street from Thomas G. and Harriette Lane Hyman on September 8, 1928. On July 3, 1929, Florence conveyed the property to Mary Louise. The deed does not mention a structure on the lot except for the stable at the southeast corner. (The lot was part of the original corner property at 520 Craven Street; the stable,

which was flattened by Hurricane Bertha, was the original stable of the Jerkins-Richardson House). The two-story frame dwelling at 514 Craven Street had been there as early as 1904 when it first appeared on the Sanborn Insurance Maps. A narrow structure probably with a hall on the north side, the house, under Miss Waters, was extended forward, by enclosing the front porch, and enlarged into a five-apartment building she named the Anchor Apartments. She placed a huge iron anchor in the front yard.

The most astounding event during Miss Waters's residency on Craven Street was her very public spat with the Horners, owners of the house next-door, and the subsequent owner Isabel Bryan Jordan. This house is the Richardson House at 516 Craven. One story told is that Jordan and Waters would sit on their second-floor porches and throw rocks at each other and, in the evenings, would shine lights in each other's faces. About the same time, Waters was complaining to the city that her neighbor on the other side Caleb Bradham, Jr., had constructed a downspout in such a way that water poured onto her lot. It is safe to say that Miss Waters had her friends and her enemies.

But the biggest problem Miss Waters had with the owner of the Richardson House was a wood fence and staircase built by Milton and Dorothy Horner, who had owned the property the 10 years before selling to Jordan. The staircase reached the second floor of the house, probably for an upstairs rental unit. Waters complained to the city that the structure was built so close to her house as to present a fire hazard. Mr. A. A. Kafer, the city building inspector at the time (1952-1953), agreed. As a result, Miss Waters had a concrete block wall built between her and Jordan that reached to her roofline! Whether one called it a "spite" wall or a wall against a fire hazard, "The Wall" was the talk of the town as was, of course, its builder.

"Doc" and Margaret Hawkins Evans, who at the time lived two doors away at 520 Craven, helped the dear lady

If only walls could talk, we might learn the real reasons the owner built this wall between herself and her neighbor. Photo contributed by W. F. Evans.

Waters in her declining days until her death in 1969. Her will revealed she had left her 514 Craven Street property to the Evanses, who had the Waters lot cleared except for the stable.

The Bright House on the Move Again

In November of 1972, the Bright House came to 514 Craven Street. It was picked up, carted down Pollock Street to Hancock Street to New Street to Craven Street, and positioned as it had been originally, perpendicular to the street. Ah, third move, fourth and final home.

The Evanses began their restoration in February 1973 under contract with William R. Turbeville of Bridgeton. In the process, workers discovered fire damage they dated to the turn of the century. Further investigation of the fire determined that as a young boy, John R. Taylor, Sr., accidentally caused the fire while using a special lamp in his photography dark room. New work from 1973 included the replacement of the stair banister and an added rear room. The Bright House retains its gambrel form and full-width front porch.

"Doc" Evans lived alone in the house after his wife's death in 1994, but health problems forced him to move to Berne Village in 2001. He sold his beloved house to John "Mac" and Joan McClellan, who have since made the house their home with Joan's artistic stenciling and choice of colors and, of course, Mac's energetic upkeep. The Bright House is just one of the many New Bern houses resting in places different from their original building sites. Who knows, Craven Street may still be welcoming this in the next century.

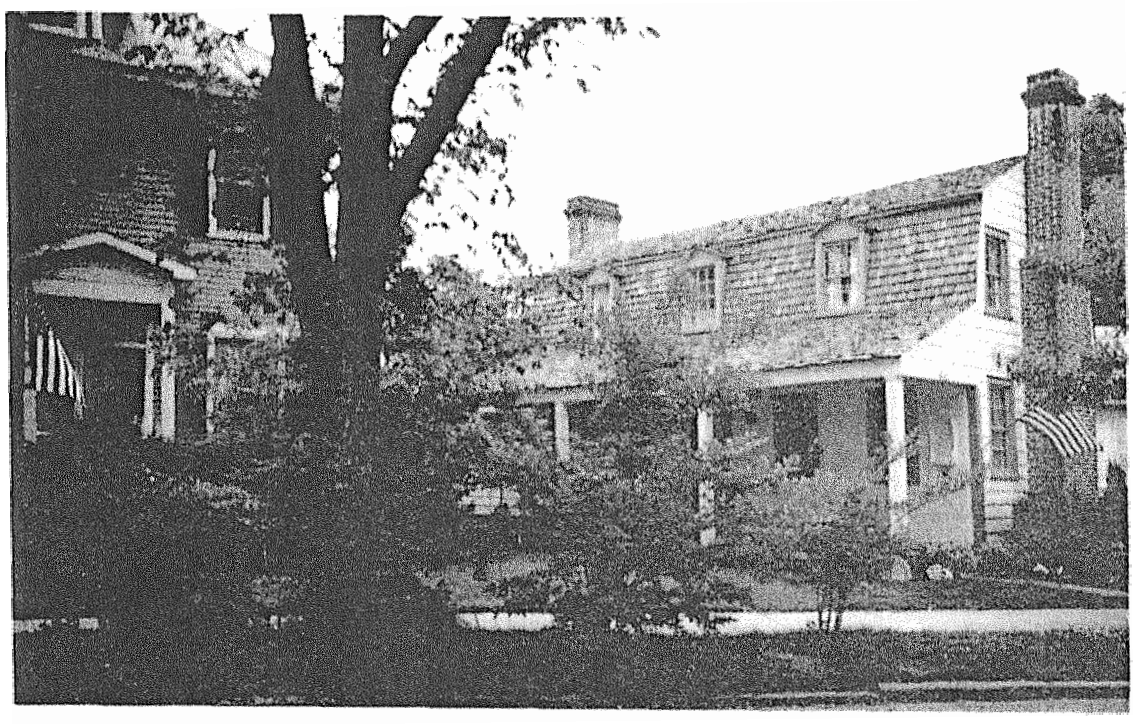
SOURCES

Sanborn Map Company. "New Bern, North Carolina." New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1898, 1904, 1908, 1913, 1924, 1931, and 1948 update.

Sandbeck, Peter B. *The Historic Architecture of New Bern and Craven County, North Carolina*. New Bern, N. C.: The Tryon Palace Commission, 1988.

"Through the Looking Glass." *The New Bern Mirror*, April 25, 1969.

Personal interviews with W. F. and Margaret Hawkins Evans and John and Joan McClellan.



The Bright House is now happily settled at 514 Craven Street next to the Richardson House minus its original front porch and added second-floor porch and staircase. Photo by VHJ.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH RECREATION CENTER

Mary Brigham

At the time of the Second World War, eastern North Carolina had a number of military installations, and it is quite understandable that, when Cherry Point Marine Air Station was opened in 1941, local churches would be interested in doing all they could for the servicemen. In February 1942, the Presbyterian Synod of North Carolina passed a resolution asking for churches in Raleigh, Charlotte, and New Bern to open their doors. It was up to the local churches to comply, as they had to find the expenses for light, heat, water, and refreshments. The Synod would, however, pay for a hostess/director/chaperone/mother confessor to be in place whenever the doors were open.

First Presbyterian Church of New Bern was happy to provide a "home away from home" and began gathering items here and there that the servicemen might need or want. Members of the congregation loaned sofas, rocking chairs, floor lamps, and two ping-pong tables. These were arranged in the Session House, the building to the east of the sanctuary. The hours were Friday afternoons and nights; Saturday hours were 11:00 A. M. until bedtime. On Sunday the center was open after church service until evening when the men had to be back in barracks. On Saturday evening before the men left, many of them helped the sexton move the furniture so that Sunday School classes could be held the next morning. Of course, then the sofas, chairs, lamps, etc., were once more arranged for the men. It often happened that a few men spent Saturday night. The church borrowed some cots for them to use, and

The Session House at First Presbyterian Church became a "home away from home" for servicemen during World War II. Photo by VHJ.

they had to share a small bath. In a room off to one side, there were books, magazines, and writing materials.

Growing boys need their food and most of these men were still growing boys. The kitchen was always open with food available--coffee and iced tea, and sandwiches, naturally. Tuna salad, pimiento cheese, ham, tomato and lettuce and a favorite, cheese, chopped bell peppers and chopped onion were on hand. The women of the congregation kept the kitchen supplied with cakes and cookies.

Contrary to USOs, there were no dances. However, college girls were invited to come help hostess. Several young women met their future husbands this way. Frances Bell, a young lady of New Bern and one of the hostesses, met Charles Harold Francis at the Recreation Center. They married and raised a family here in New Bern. How wonderful it is to hear these stories about a part of New Bern that should not be forgotten. It would be interesting to know how many other New Bern ladies married servicemen at the time and which ones still live in or have families in New Bern.

The woman chosen as hostess to oversee this center had to be a special person: warm-hearted, loving, accepting but still with an eye for the organizational end. Such a woman was Sarah Hollister Marriner.

Sarah Marriner, or Sazie as she was called by just about everyone, was born January 23, 1895. The Hollisters were a well-known New Bern family. Her great grandfather William Hollister had built the Hollister home on the corner of Broad and George streets. This house is now a part of the Tryon Palace Complex. Although unfurnished, it is used for craft demonstrations and workshops. Sazie, however, was born in her parents' home at 614 Craven Street. She was the fourth of eight children, six girls and two boys. Her brother William was a doctor who was sent by the church as a medical missionary to Korea.

Sazie went to grade school and high school in New Bern. She married Thomas Johnston Marriner, who was in the wholesale grocery business and ultimately settled

across the street and up a short distance from her parents' house. They had one child, Mary Bryan Marriner. Unfortunately Mr. Marriner had a stroke and died in 1941 after a lengthy illness.

Sazie had worked during the depression years as a caseworker for the county. She became an interviewer for the Trent Court housing project when it opened around 1940. When the Synod requested that churches open their doors, First Presbyterian Church immediately appointed Mrs. Sarah Marriner to supervise recreational activities for servicemen. Her salary of $100 per month plus car expenses was paid by the Synod.

Those who knew her were in complete agreement with the appointment. She was warm, caring, and loving. She had an outgoing personality and was friendly to everyone. She was young enough to have fun with the men, or to help them have fun, yet she was mature enough to give an ear to "her boys," most of whom were away from home for the first time and missed their families. Her daughter Mary Bryan Marriner McCotter describes her as a real musician, one who played from the heart giving feeling to the melody. The boys often asked her to play the piano for them, and they would sing. One Italian boy always asked for "Paper Doll." Sunday afternoon was hymn sing. This was not scheduled; it just happened. The boys would all join in whether they were Catholics, Protestants, or Jews. This time probably made them feel closer to home.

There are no figures as to how many servicemen came to the Recreation Center. Rough estimates put the number at about 80-90 for a weekend. Many, of course, came back weekend after weekend, drawn by Sazie's sweet smile and her ringing invitation to return the next week.

SOURCES

Smith, John Murphy. *The History of the First Presbyterian Church of New Bern*. New Bern, N. C.: Griffin and Tilghman Printers, Inc., 1988.

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

Personal interviews with Mary Bryan Marriner McCotter and Frances Bell Francis.

DUELING SERENADES

Charles K. McCotter, Jr.

An unusual duel occurred during the third battle of New Bern. During the evening of February 2, 1864, the Confederate band and the Union band engaged in a musical serenade and sparring of their own. The dueling serenades are described in Chapter XII, pp. 194-195 in the *History of the Fifth Regiment of Rhode Island Heavy Artillery*

> Again preparations were made to pass another night under arms, and quiet settled down upon both friend and foe. Nothing occurred to attract attention until about eight o'clock, when a rebel band, which had been brought well down on the railroad, began to play "Bonnie Blue Flag," and followed it with other tunes. Colonel Sisson said, "Well, well, if they serenade us by day with shell, and with music at night, we must not be outdone in gallantry." So the fine band of the Second Massachusetts Heavy Artillery was brought out to the top of the great traverse in Fort Totten, when it replied with "Rally Round the Flag," and other patriotic airs. Just as the rebel band commenced "Dixie" in their best style, Lieutenant Gladding, commanding Company F in Fort Rowan, thought the serenade would not be complete unless he joined in with some music of his own. He had been busy preparing for it in the meantime by loading and training his "pet," the one hundred-pounder Parrot, on the spot where he thought the rebel band was stationed. When the strains of "Dixie" reached him he fired, and with the explosion of the shell, the rebel tune stopped short, never to go again in front of New Berne.

For a brief, fleeting interlude, the two opposing sides serenaded and entertained each other, providing a moment of peace in the eye of the storm.

SOURCE

History of the Fifth Regiment of Rhode Island Heavy Artillery, During Three Years and a Half of Service in North Carolina, January 1862 - June 1865. Compiled under the supervision of John K. Burlingame. Providence: Snow & Farnham, Printers and Publishers, 1892.

BOOK REVIEW

Long Ago and Far Away: James Taylor, His Life and Music, by Timothy White. (London: Omnibus Press, 2001. 389 pp. $21.00)

Rarely does one find a new book, which illuminates the early history of New Bern and one of its leading commercial families. Stranger still, these insights come in a modern biography of a popular singer/songwriter James Taylor. James and his musical siblings are direct descendants of New Bern's Isaac Taylor, and their family ancestral home at 228 Craven Street remains a visible link to their illustrious ancestor.

I have often wondered why Isaac Taylor emigrated to New Bern from Scotland in 1790, and how he acquired, by 1792, the wealth and skills to construct New Bern's first Federal brick building. And how did this 27-year-old Scotsman become a town commissioner, plantation owner, and secretary of the Masonic lodge within a few years of his arrival? The first three chapters give us some answers to these questions, particularly to Isaac's well to do seafaring family background in Montrose, Scotland. But the narrative leaves other questions unanswered and in Chapter Four, jumps to the Civil War disruption of the family.

Isaac Taylor was born in 1763, into a large merchant family, the sixth of nine children. His father was a linen exporter and an older brother and a cousin were sugar merchants in Jamaica and Antigua. Isaac and a younger brother John "decided to depart Montrose for the well known Scottish settlement of New Bern, NC" in their own brig.

In 1700 New Bern was the capital and a rapidly growing shipping port benefiting from trade unrestricted by

political turmoil. By 1791 "Isaac Taylor's Cheap Store" was established on Middle Street, selling imported goods, such as dry goods from New York and rum and spices from the West Indies. In September a devastating fire swept through the packed wooden buildings on South Front and Craven streets, "consuming all the houses on the East side of Craven St". Shortly thereafter, Isaac bought a lot on Craven Street and began construction of his fire-proof brick mansion. By 1793 Isaac Taylor's new store on Craven Street was advertising a variety of goods in the *North Carolina Gazette.*

For those readers familiar with Patrick O'Brian's incredibly detailed historic novels, a delightful convergence of fact and fiction is related in Chapter Three. The HMS *Surprise,* featured in the novels, actually captured Taylor's ship the *Rainbow* in 1799. Further, Isaac Taylor's shipping is mentioned in the novel *The Wine Dark Sea.*

Isaac Taylor's interest in building coincided with New Bern's civic pride in its new Federal buildings. He was instrumental in locating and constructing the Masonic hall, the Presbyterian Church, and the Attmore-Oliver House at 513 Broad Street. After enlarging and renovating the house, he presented it to his daughter Mary and son-in-law George Attmore as a belated wedding gift.

Chapter Four, "Hard Times", details the impact the Civil War had on the Attmore and Taylor families. Particularly interesting are events relating to Mary Attmore and Mrs. Alexander Taylor, the "Prison mother" in New Bern. Some of the items displayed in the Historical Society collection relate to these people and their family's disruptions.

After the war the Attmore family and the Taylor sisters stayed on in New Bern, while the second and third generations of the Taylors went inland to start over in Morganton in Burke County. Isaac Taylor's early impact on New Bern gradually faded, and his Glenburnie plantation was sold and became Glenburnie Park on the Neuse River.

Third generation Isaac M. Taylor and his son Alex, and grandson Isaac M. Taylor II, grew up, married and prospered in western North Carolina. Their story is told rich in detail focusing on family tragedy, alcoholism, and related incidents. These chapters attempt to develop the author's premise that James Taylor's 30 years of song writing had its roots in family tradition and tragedy.

The author Timothy White, a former editor of *Billboard Magazine* and a friend of the Taylor family, goes to extraordinary lengths to link James Taylor's contemporary songs to his ancestor's seafaring past. But that link is tenuous at best. Indeed, the subsequent chapters show that the Civil War, trans-generational alcoholism, and a series of disruptive family events served to isolate James's generation from his ancestors. That his melancholy songs reflect contemporary family turmoil, not ancestral events, seems to be lost on the author.

James Taylor was raised near Chapel Hill, the second son of Dr. Isaac M. Taylor II of Morganton, and Trudy Woodward Taylor of Boston, Massachusetts. Dr. Taylor was an ambitious, talented, career-centered father who was often absent from his young family and who had his expectations for his children. He chose to spend two years in Antarctica as chief medical officer during the Navy's Operation Deepfreeze. The author gives some fascinating details of life there during the long Antarctic winter.

On his return, he took a faculty position at the UNC Medical School, and he and Trudy became politically active in the early desegregation efforts on campus. James and his parents took part in civil rights marches, and the family actively supported Terry Sanford's run for governor on an anti-segregation platform. Trudy Taylor exposed her children to musical talent by arranging the UNC concert series and inviting the guest artists to stay at their home. All the five children showed early musical talent, with James playing the 'cello and his siblings playing piano, dulcimer, and violin. Although James was invited to play 'cello as a student guest with the North Carolina Sym-

phony, the family enjoyed playing together at home and writing musical jingles.

In the 1950s folk music increasingly captured the imagination of young musicians, and North Carolina, with its rich mountain music culture, was no exception. As the author explores the early careers of Joan Baez, Dave Guard of the Kingston Trio, and the Seegers, it becomes clear that the remainder of this work is chiefly devoted to the contemporary and musical influences on James Taylor's early career.

James's personal struggles with heroin and his father are revealed in considerable detail, as are the events of his early career, such as the first song he wrote at age 14, his quiet, soul-searching performances, and first recording contract arranged by Paul McCartney in London. The last third of the book details James's musical success along with his struggles with substance abuse, the musical careers of his siblings, and his first wife Carly Simon. Each song he composed is analyzed for its deeper meaning and its relevance to James's current turmoil. The conclusion finds James more content and fulfilled, a musical celebrity whose two grown children have begun their own musical careers and whose links to New Bern indeed seem "long ago and far away."

Paul E. Switzer