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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@connect.net)

CHRIST CHURCH: THE CIVIL WAR YEARS

Richard Lore and James Findley Junior

Those of us who are privileged to live in New Bern become accustomed to the quiet beauty of Christ Church and most often give the old church and its stately grounds only a passing glance as we go by. One effective method to renew your appreciation of the beauty of this old church is to simply watch the reaction of tourists as they stroll by on Pollock or Middle Street. They pause and admire the church for what seems an eternity to us; they talk to each other, and then begin to explore the grounds and the church's interior. In a town filled with beautiful homes, churches, parks, and even a Royal Governor's Palace, no other structure seems to elicit more admiration.

The history of Christ Church reflects the long history of New Bern. The parish was established in 1750 and the first church in town was erected on the current grounds in 1750. For more than 250 years, the members of this church and its long line of distinguished ministers have influenced the development of New Bern in myriad ways. It is, of course, equally important to appreciate the past contributions of other denominations to New Bern's history. One simply cannot acquire a complete perspective on our region's history without knowledge of the religious backgrounds of those who built the city.

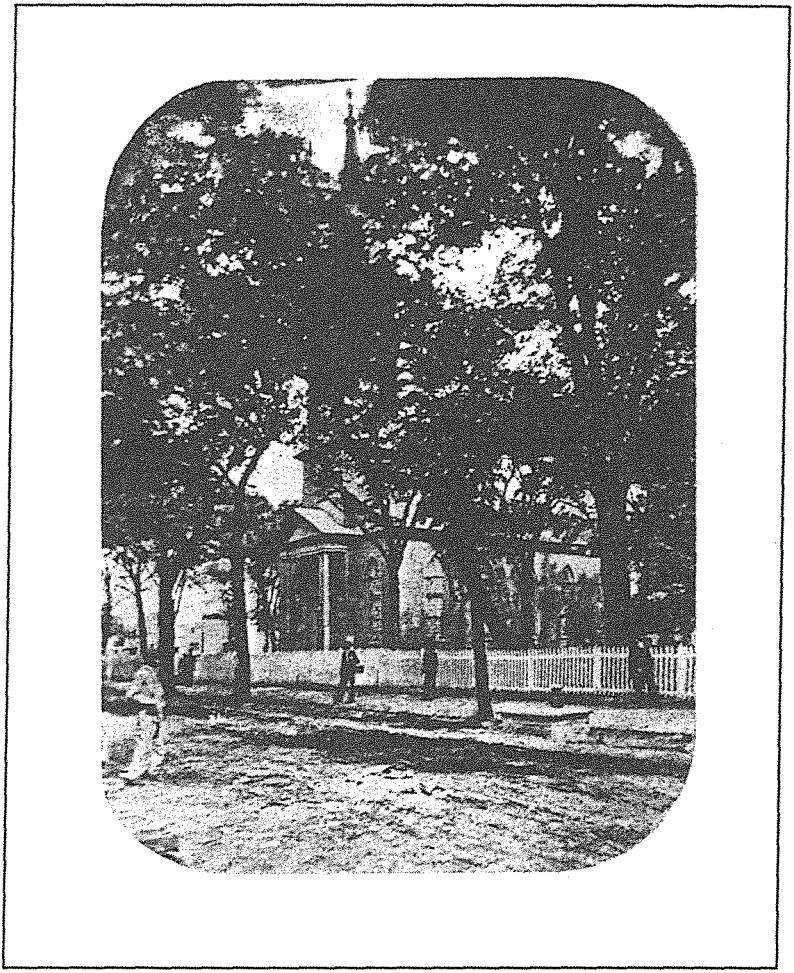
Missing: The History of Christ Church During the Civil War.

Miss Gertrude Carraway's definitive book, *Crown of Life*, is by far the best single source on the rich history of Christ Church. Other shorter histories of the church are

also useful (Roberts, 1911). Curiously, virtually no information is available on what is certainly the most perilous and tumultuous period of the church's existence. Carraway's detailed account ends abruptly with the Union occupation of New Bern in early 1862, with only a brief summary of the early war years and then begins again in 1865 at the close of the Civil War. Similarly, there are no vestry minutes available for this period nor was the church register maintained. Lacking a church register, we have no record of membership, baptisms, confirmations, births, deaths, and marriages within the church during the Civil War. Was Christ Church simply boarded up and abandoned during the Civil War? Or perhaps used as a bowling alley, billiards hall, or theatre for the presentation of minstrels for the amusement of Union troops stationed in New Bern?

New Berne Newspapers

We will be examining several diaries of Civil War soldiers who served in New Bern during the Civil War, but by far the best single source of information on Christ Church during this period can be found in the pages of the newspapers of that time. Accordingly, our account relies heavily on the newspapers published in New Bern during the occupation by Federal forces. The paper was, of course, strongly pro-Union. Editor during most of this period was Corporal George Mills Joy, an enlisted man who had an extensive background in newspaper work. Hereafter, reference will be made to the earlier paper entitled *The New Berne Progress* or, after a name change, *The North Carolina Times*. Publication of these newspapers was frequently interrupted by military operations, numerous copies are missing, and many of those that did survive to be microfilmed are in poor condition. Sadly, only three daily issues of New Bern newspapers survive from the entire year of 1863. Still, they present a unique and vivid record of what life was like in occupied New Bern during the Civil War.



Christ Church remained virtually unchanged throughout the Civil War, but a fire consumed everything but the massive brick walls in 1871. N. C. Division of Archives and History photo.

The Confederate Period: The Reverend Mr. Watson Saves the Gifts of King George II

Ironically, the minister of Christ Church at the beginning of North-South hostilities was a born and bred New Yorker. The Reverend Alfred Augustin Watson grew up a Presbyterian in New York City, but at the age of 23, he came south to serve as a tutor for the children of Josiah Collins of Somerset Plantation in Washington County, North Carolina. Shortly after moving to North Carolina, Mr. Watson joined the Episcopal Church. After religious training at the General Theological Seminary in New York, he came back to North Carolina to serve as priest in several Episcopal churches in the northeastern part of this state. Mr. Watson was called to be rector of Christ Church in 1858 but resigned this position to become regimental chaplain of the 2nd North Carolina Infantry shortly after the war began. Prior to leaving to serve as chaplain, Mr. Watson had the foresight to remove the silver communion service that had been presented to the church by King George II in 1752. Initially, these treasured artifacts were kept in Wilmington, North Carolina. When Federal forces captured Wilmington, they were hidden in Fayetteville. After the war, they were returned to Christ Church where they remain to this day. No doubt, these priceless artifacts would have been lost or stolen during the turmoil of the war years had Mr. Watson not taken such decisive action (Carraway, Roberts).

Christ Church: The Civil War Setting

Certainly the streets and sidewalks adjacent to Christ Church during Civil War would have carried as much traffic and passersby then as they do now. The post office was located in a large wooden building on the northeast corner of Pollock and Craven streets (where City Hall stands today). Receiving mail and care packages from home was a singular joy for the homesick soldiers stationed here. Simi-

larly, thousands of letters were written to the homefolks from New Bern every week. *The New Berne Progress* of January 3, 1863, reported a total of 37,954 letters posted from New Bern during a single week. Later that month, the same paper (January 21, 1863) notes that 66,279 pieces of mail left via steamer for the North.

In the immediate vicinity of the church, one could buy a remarkable array of consumer goods including the latest in fashionable clothes and imported wines, brandies, and champagnes. To satisfy the sweet tooth of thousands of young soldiers, one could visit the bakery across Pollock Street from Christ Church operated by Moses Minziesheimer and purchase fresh pies and cakes. Most likely it was this bakery, located where Baxter's Jewelry Store is now, that burned in January 1871. Embers from this fire landed on the roof of Christ Church and consumed everything but the massive brick walls of the structure. Summerfield & Company, advertised as the "first candy manufactory in New Berne" was located adjacent to Christ Church on Pollock Street in the area where the bust of Baron DeGraffenreid is now displayed. Summerfield's offered freshly made gumdrops, chocolate creams, stick candies, and other candies to order (*North Carolina Times*, April 2, 1864). As editor George Joy noted, "It does one good to promenade through the streets of our beautiful city. . . . New Berne is the New Haven of North Carolina" (*North Carolina Times*, April 2, 1864). Union soldiers enjoyed visiting downtown New Bern to partake of the offerings of North Carolina's second largest city to relieve the monotony of the dreary life in the outlying military camps.

One humorous Civil War article in the local paper indicates how long lawyers' jokes have been around:

> In the old church yard surrounding the Episcopal Church in this city is a tombstone erected to the "memory of an honest lawyer." When this fact becomes generally known, the city will be the Mecca of lawyers seeking the resting place of this solitary in-

stance in their profession, in order to do homage. (*Newberne Progress*, July 12, 1862)

This old tombstone is still there and some would argue that the reputation of lawyers has not changed appreciably during the ensuing years. Hence, if we were to advertise this honest lawyer's final resting place on the grounds of Christ Church, perhaps it could become another city tourist attraction.

Christ Church: The Early Years of Union Occupation

Union regimental histories and the letters and diaries of individual Union soldiers provide some information on what happened in Christ Church during the long Union occupation of New Bern. They clearly reveal that many of the occupation troops attended church regularly. Every regiment (700-1200 men) on both sides had a full-time chaplain and something of a religious revival occurred in many units during the war. Indeed, in some units, what amounts to a religious revival seemed to have been prompted by military service so far from home. For example, the diary of Joseph Kittinger, 23rd Massachusetts Independent Battery, contains the following entry for February 15, 1863:

> After review and inspection this forenoon I attended church at the Episcopal (church). Sermon was a good one, but the preliminary services were rather too tedious to suit my fancy. Text--Luke, V chap, 28 verse.

Kittinger was certainly eclectic in his choice of services and often attended as many as three church services on the same Sunday. On May 15, 1864, he attended services at the Presbyterian Church in the morning, then heard Chaplain James preach a sermon in the afternoon (location not reported), and finished the day with evening services at the Methodist Church. He also attended Catholic and Bap-

tist services with some regularity during his stay in New Bern (Kittinger).

The recently published diary of Private Henry Clapp also provides some insights into the role of Christ Church during the occupation years. Clapp was a member of the 44th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment. This regiment signed on strictly for nine months of active duty. Hence, the members of this unit were considered "Sunday" or "Jim Dandy" soldiers fit only for rearguard duty by those more experienced volunteer regiments committed to three years or more of active service. Moreover, many of the men in the 44th were Harvard graduates, including Clapp. The college degrees of these men did not endear them to the hardened veterans who took a dim view of the utility of all that book learning in combat. Private Clapp's detailed description of Christ Church and the initial service he attended there in an entry dated November 26, 1862, is particularly noteworthy:

> To day the weather is clear, cool, and sunshiney--Something like one of our late October days. This morning I went down to the town of Newbern (we are encamped just outside the town) to Church with a squad of forty men of our company. A beautiful Episcopal Church of dark brick, quite old and standing in the midst of a time-consecrated church-yard. Inside, the church was pretty though not in perfect taste. The pews and almost all of the woodwork was of a light buff color. The roof was dark blue and did not contrast very well with the buff of the pieces (I don't know what they are called) which ran partly across it from the sides--taken altogether however it was a very pleasing church architecturally, though these effects were hardly to be mentioned in comparison with the pleasure I received in joining in our dear service. When the first notes of the organ filled the air I could feel the tears start into my eyes and was half ashamed of my weekness [sic]. The clergyman's name and po-

NEW GOODS.

C. P. LOOMIS. South Front Street,
Has just received a large and desirable stock of
Staple and Fancy Dry Goods,
Consisting in part of
Spring Prints and
De Laines, Challies,
Barages, Alpaccas, Poplins,
Plain and Fancy Silk, Sheetings,
Shirtings, Stripes, Ticks, Checks, Summer Stuffs, Cassimeres, &c.,

ALSO,
MILLINERY GOODS, LADIES AND MISSES HATS, &c.

The stock of Clothing, Hats, Caps, Boots and Shoes is full and complete, and will be sold at very low prices. Dealers and others are invited to examine the stock, at
29 tf C. B. DIBBLE'S Old Stand.

NIBLO'S GARDEN RE-OPENED.

This favorite resort, has been at last revived, as an Ice Cream Saloon for Ladies and Gentlemen.

The locality of the house, and the accommodation it affords, being on East Front Street, where all can enjoy the benefits of every *Northern Breeze* during the summer season, that New Berne affords, renders *this* the *most acceptable* resort for those wishing to enjoy the luxuries of the summer season.

Competent waiters always in attendance.

A bakery is connected with the Garden, and all orders for Ice Creams, Cakes and Confectionery will be promptly attended to.
51tf R. F. HERBERT & CO.

GREEN AND BLACK TEAS, at
L. MERRIFIELD & CO.,
33tf 19 Pollock Street.

THE RAM Has not yet paid us a visit, but *Lamb's* Tongues, Pigs Feet, Tripe, Bologna Sausage, Dried Beef, etc., etc., can be had at
PERKINS'S
tf 31 Cor. Broad and Middle Sts.

While the Confederacy suffered from chronic shortages of most every necessity, New Bern stores advertised an amazing array of luxury goods including candies, ice cream, imported liquors and

E. S. YOUNG & CO.,

SUCCESSORS TO

WOOD & YOUNG,

Would respectfully inform the residents of this vicinity that they keep constantly on hand and complete assortment of

GOLD AND SILVER WAMCHES,
CHAINS, GOLD KETS,
PLAIN, ORNAMENTAL and SEAL RINGS,
LOCKETS, A No. 1 PLATED FORKS,
KNIVES, SPOONS,
NAPKIN'S RINGS,
GOLD PENS, BASES,
SPECTACLES,
GUARDS, LADIES' GILT BUCKLES, &c.

—ALSO—

The only regular assortment of MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS to be found in this place comprising, FRENCH and GERMAN Accordeons Flutinas Violins:.

VIOLIN BOWS,	FLUTES,
VIOLIN CASES	FIFES,
GUITARS,	BUGLERS,
GUITAR CASES,	TAIL PIECES,
HARMONICAS,	BRIDGES,
FIFE MOUTH PIECES,	SCREWS,
BANJOS,	PINS,
TAMBORINES,	REEDS,

and STRINGS of all kinds and from the best manufactories,

Highest cash paid for OLD GOLD and SILVER, Second Handed Watches, &c.

Fine Watch repairing done by the most skillful workmen and satisfaction guaranteed.

Tendering our sincere thankks to our patrons for their past favors we respectfully solicit a continuance of the same at the old stand of

WOOD & YOUNG,
No. 16, Pollock Street,
One door from Craven St.

New Berne, Feb. 17, 1865. 12tf.

clothing in the local paper. A variety of clubs, associations, eating establishments and theatrical productions also made life easier for the Union troops. *North Carolina Times*, 1864-1865 issues.

sition I do not know. He was a fine looking elderly gentleman with white hair and long beard. He preached an excellent simple discourse very much to the purpose on the text "Enter ye in the strait gate." The choir was composed of several men & one lady--but did not chant. The organist was a very fine player indeed. He came from the 5th Rhode-Island Reg't. The congregation was composed almost entirely of soldiers (officers and men) but there were several ladies present--the wives of officers I presume. It was very refreshing to have a *white* lady near to me again. Little Miss Foster, the General's daughter, has appeared with her father at reviews and inspections, but she sits on her horse at a distance. (Barden).

Father Rouse Adopts Christ Church

The "elderly gentleman" who preached the sermon enjoyed by Private Clapp was almost certainly Father John Hill Rouse, an ordained Episcopal clergyman. Despite his "white hair and long beard" Father Rouse was no more than 57 years old when he first arrived in New Bern sometime in the middle of 1862 to serve as a military chaplain. Father Rouse was apparently a modest but energetic minister of the Gospel. Unfortunately, we know virtually nothing about Father Rouse. A search of the National Episcopal Archives in Austin, Texas, provides no information on his background or his activities after the war. Apparently, John Hill Rouse was born in 1807 in Connecticut and served many years as rector in the Parish of Rochdale, Massachusetts. When the war began he took leave of this parish to serve as Post Chaplain for all of New Bern. After the war Rouse served as a clergyman in Leicester, Massachusetts, in 1870 (Barden).

Shortly after Chaplain Rouse arrived in New Bern, General Foster appointed him to be both the Post Chaplain and as the chaplain of the military hospital in New Bern. Hence, his responsibilities went far beyond that of the

typical regimental chaplain. He apparently worked tirelessly and effectively throughout the devastating yellow fever epidemic in New Bern during the autumn of 1864 and was still serving in New Bern as a chaplain during the closing months of the war in 1865. Colonel John Whitford's wonderful and informal history of New Bern pays tribute to the dedication and heroism of Father Rouse during the height of the Epidemic:

> The silent solemn travel of hearse after hearse, with no accompanying friend, save the zealous, fearless minister of God leading the way. An Episcopal minister affectionately called "Father Rouse" by soldiers and citizens--a fearless and good man loved by all.... (Whitford 321).

High praise indeed from a man like Colonel Whitford who served so valiantly in the Confederate Army.

As a reward for his long and untiring service in New Bern, his men presented Father Rouse with a fine saddle horse in January of 1865 (*North Carolina Times*, January 14, 1865). As we shall see, Father Rouse adopted Christ Church as his own and served as minister, caretaker, and protector of the church throughout most of the three-year Federal occupation of New Bern. From the beginning Father Rouse maintained the church and grounds in good order. At one point the local newspaper reported that improvements should be made to the ancient cemetery around the Episcopal Church. The churchyard is overgrown with brush and sprouts and its appearance needs improvement (*North Carolina Times*, April 22, 1864). Again that same year, Father Rouse announced in the local paper that "all persons are positively forbidden to throw bottles or other trumpery into the yard at Christ Church" (*North Carolina Times*, September 20, 1864). In the closing month of the Civil War, Rouse forcefully repeated his appeal:

> The church building and grounds of Christ Church on

Pollock Street were committed to the charge of the undersigned by special order from the Commanding General more than two years since, and appreciating the responsibility of the trust, I respectfully request that, hereafter, no person turn his cows or horses into the sacred and beautiful yard of said church--as it was never intended and must not be used as a cattle pasture,--and all persons are hereby forbidden to throw old bottles or any other trumpery within the enclosure.

J. Hill Rouse
Chaplain, USA (*North Carolina Times*, April 7, 1865)

Fires were a constant threat in New Bern. Virtually all the stores surrounding Christ Church were made of wood and heated with wood-burning stoves. In late November, 1864, the church itself was almost consumed by a major fire that destroyed 20 buildings on Middle Street just opposite the church. In a desperate attempt to control the fire, firefighters used explosives to demolish stores in the path of the fire in order to create a firebreak. The concussion from the blast knocked down the elegant wooden picket fence on the Middle Street side of the church and blew out all the windows on the west side of Christ Church (*North Carolina Times*, November 26, 1864).

Less than a week later, carpenters were already at work repairing the church (*North Carolina Times*, December 2, 1864) and by early February 1865, the repairs to Christ Church had been completed.

Our own Father Rouse will once more be at home in his favorite church. During the brief rebuilding period he had occupied the pulpit at First Presbyterian Church (*North Carolina Times*, February 7, 1865).

We do not know who did the extensive repair work on the

church or who paid the bill. Most likely, volunteer Union soldiers did the work using military supplies from the extensive inventory kept in New Bern by the occupation forces.

Christ Church now honors all former ministers by displaying their portraits or photographs in the reception area of the church. But there is no mention of Father Rouse's service. The period 1862-1865 is blank. Colonel Whitford's closing comments on this man are ironically prophetic:

> How does all this courage and benefit to mankind (of Father Rouse) compare with storming a fortress or capturing a ship, yet one has the glamour to attract and have raised to it monuments of stone and brass, and to pass down in history while the other fades away almost in the hour of occurrence. (Whitford 322)

Surely, Father Rouse's enormous contributions to Christ Church and New Bern merit recognition. There is also a very practical reason for acquiring more information on Father Rouse. As a trained minister in the church, it is likely that he maintained some kind of church registry of births, deaths, and marriages during his ministry at Christ Church. If so, these records may still exist and their discovery would add valuable perspective to our knowledge of church history.

Christ Church Serves Throughout the Union Occupation

Church services began in New Bern on the Sunday after Union forces captured New Bern. By order of Commanding General Ambrose Burnside, all churches in New Bern were opened on March 16, 1862, in order to give thanks for the Union victory that occurred two days earlier. Thereafter, Union Chaplains held regular Sunday services. Initially, services began on Sunday at 3 o'clock in the afternoon in order not to interfere with morning drill.

Later, morning services were held, beginning at 10 o'clock.

Prior to the Civil War, many church pews were either purchased or rented by individual families. Apparently, this practice changed during Father Rouse's tenure. A brief note in the *North Carolina Times* (February 7, 1865) states that the seats in the church are all free, "except some half dozen reserved for the commanding general and a few other persons." The same edition of the newspaper reports that Father Rouse is fully recovered from his recent illness and "will once more be at home in his favorite church."

In the absence of a church registry during the occupation, we have no idea how many marriages, funerals, and baptisms occurred in the church, but the newspaper record suggests that they did occur with some regularity. However, only unusual marriages--at least in the eyes of the newspaper editor--made the local paper. Chaplain Rouse married a "Yankee man and New Berne woman" (*North Carolina Times*, July 16, 1864). The history of the 27th Massachusetts reports the 1863 marriage of two former slaves in the church. The couple already had 15 children. One of the couple's sons was also married at the same time in the church (Derby 216).

According to another regimental history, Christ Church sponsored a large Sunday school class for poor white children during the Civil War. Major Russell Sturgis of the 45th Massachusetts was the superintendent of the school. Sturgis described the pupils as mostly barefooted and many were lacking outside garments (Mann). Sturgis was also an active lay reader in the church during his stay in New Bern.

Possibly, the largest and most elaborate funeral held in Christ Church during the Civil War years was given in honor of Captain C. W. Flusser of the United States Navy. Captain Flusser was the daring commanding officer of the *Miami*, one of the largest of the Union gunboats patrolling the waters of eastern North Carolina. Flusser was well known for his courage and his accomplishments in warfare at sea. On his last mission, he attacked the formidable

Confederate ironclad ram *Albemarle* at point blank range near Plymouth, North Carolina. Closing with the enemy at flank speed, he pulled the lanyard of his most lethal cannon, a ten-inch Parrot rifle loaded with a 100-pound high-explosive shell. Unfortunately for Flusser, the fuse on the shell was set too long and the projectile bounced off the sloping sides of the *Albemarle* and ricocheted back in a long arc to land on the deck of the *Miami* close to him. Captain Flusser was killed instantly.

Flusser's body was returned to New Bern, and the heroic Captain received a state funeral at Christ Church on Saturday, April 23, 1864. The details of Captain Flusser's funeral appeared in the next edition of the *North Carolina Times*, April 27, 1864. The nineteenth-century language of the piece captures the spirit of the occasion:

> "THE FUNERAL OF CAPTAIN C. W. FLUSSER. On Saturday last, solemn funeral services were held over the remains of this gallant and heroic officer. At 12 o'clock, all licensed traders closed their places of business and united in a tribute to respect one whose memory will ever be green in the hearts of his associates. A procession was formed at the Navy Hospital, composed of an escort comprising detachments from the 17th Mass. Infantry and the 2d Mass. Heavy Artillery with the Artillery band the whole being under the command of Major S. C. Oliver. Directly following the escort came the hearse, sailors, officers of the Navy and of the Army. Nearly every officer whose duties would permit was present.
>
> Attending the remains of Captain Flusser as Pall Bearers were . . . [Long list of dignitaries and ranking officers]. The mournful cortege moved from the Navy Hospital at 12 M (Midday), passing through East Front and Pollock to the Episcopal Church, where services were held and a sermon appropriate for the occasion, preached by Chaplain Rouse. After the ser-

> vices at the church, the procession reformed and moved through Pollock, Middle, Broad and George Streets to the Army and Navy burying ground, where the remains were deposited in the narrow house appointed for all the living. Vollies [sic] were fired over his grave, and there he rests until the final reveille.

At this point in the funeral description, a long poem in honor of Captain Flusser was inserted and then the funeral's description continued:

> On the route of the procession, we noticed that T. L. Merrill & Co. draped their store on Pollock Street with the habiliments of mourning in honor of departed worth, and L. Merrifield & Co., displayed a beautiful flag, clad with sable weeds. On the church spire floated the Stars and Stripes at half mast, placed there by Thos. Davidson assisted by Richard Berry. The whole affair was well conducted and peculiarly gratifying to the friends of the deceased. May his many virtues be cherished, and his noble self sacrificing example serve to stimulate all in the duties of the hour.

Many other military funerals were held in Christ Church during this period. One of the last was the ceremony honoring the death of Captain Hubbard of the 12th New York Calvary who was killed during the closing days of the war (*North Carolina Times*, April 11, 1865). When the news of Lee's surrender reached New Bern, the city was the scene of great rejoicing. An impromptu parade with bands playing rapidly became a town-wide celebration with open bars, and "an indiscriminate getting tight ensued." Shortly thereafter, Christ Church was filled to overflowing with people mourning the death of Abraham Lincoln (*North Carolina Times*, April 18, 1865). A huge crowd gathered at Christ Church to grieve over the untimely death of "our beloved president." All ranks including the commanding general were present at Lincoln's memorial service in the

old church building (*North Carolina Times*, April 25, 1865).

Obviously, the contributions of Christ Church, its ministers, and parishioners did not stop with the military occupation of New Bern by Union forces. Although the northern ministers who served the church and the Yankee soldiers who attended Christ Church may have differed radically in their political philosophy from their immediate predecessors, they still gained comfort, inspiration and solace from grand old Christ Church. Almost 150 years later, the sectional wounds of that terrible conflict have healed and we can take pride in the long years of uninterrupted service provided by the church. We also owe a debt of gratitude to those same men who cherished and protected Christ Church during those three years of sacrifice and turmoil.

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DEDICATION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors dedicate this article to the memory of Father John Hill Rouse. We are most grateful for the editorial assistance of The Reverend Mr. Edward Sharp, retired rector of Christ Church.

NEW BERN'S YELLOW FEVER EPIDEMIC OF 1864

Donald Ransone Taylor

A few years back, Mrs. Elizabeth Nunn Duffy gave to the New Bern Historical Society a small booklet of 39 pages entitled *The Great Epidemic in New Berne and Vicinity, September and October, 1864,* by one who passed through it, W. S. Benjamin. The booklet was printed and published in New Bern in 1865 by George Mills Joy. I want to share parts of the story with you.

W. S. Benjamin, about whom I could find nothing, writes that the epidemic in New Bern "stands unparalleled in its fearful fatality." At its outbreak the fever was referred to as a "malignant bilious fever." Dr. D. W. Hand was the Medical Director of the Military District of New Berne during the epidemic. The first attacked were John A. Taylor; W. Vanderbeek, Sutler 158th New York Volunteers; Lieut. Johnson of the Ambulance Corps.; Capt. Wm. Holden, A. Q. M., and Charles Hoskins, late of the Chief Provost Marshal's office, under Capt. J. W. Denny.

John A. Taylor was the first to die from the fever. Taylor was one of the proprietors of the principal drug store in the city and amassed "a handsome independence" dealing in naval stores. Lieut. Johnson died before William Vanderbeek. So ill was Capt. Wm. Holden that obituaries had been written for him in Northern papers which he was able to peruse after he passed through the crisis phase of the fever and was on the road to recovery.

Soldiers from Massachusetts and Pennsylvania working at the Post Commissary were stricken next. Benjamin writes that the Commissary Depot was located 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 storehouses, which, having no outlet to the river, became stagnant, and created the malaria 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 its dwellings; still the fever had not yet assumed the character of an epidemic.

Here we learn something of the layout of New Bern, its new dock and storehouses, as well as catch the flow of Benjamin's 1865 writing style.

Dr. Hand ordered the burning of the wooden storehouses on Craven Street Wharf. The fear of igniting adjacent "tenements" was reduced somewhat by an afternoon rain which "deluged the roofs." At 3:00 p. m. Chief Provost Marshal, Major H. T. Lawson, 2d Massachusetts Artillery, and his deputies came to the site, moved all commissary stores "to a place of security," and lit the torch. It was almost beyond belief, Benjamin wrote, that a fire of such magnitude, so masterly controlled, destroyed not a single building designated by the Medical Director to be saved.

Benjamin describes Major Lawson as

> a brave soldier, and a conscientious high-toned gentleman. He was universally beloved, winning enduring friends by the urbanity of his manners and amiability. In distribution of justice he was strict, but impartial, and in the performance of onerous duties, faithful and exact, jealous of his good name, with that

delicate sensibility "which men of honor pride themselves so much upon."

Among those onerous duties was presiding over the execution of six deserters. Lawson was not to escape the epidemic, for Benjamin duly notes his death in October 1864.

Lieut. Col. Walter S. Poor of the 2d North Carolina Regiment, succeeded Major Lawson as Chief Provost Marshal, assisted by Deputy Provost Marshal Lieut. John Walker of the 132d New York Infantry. Both officers were admired by their men and local citizens alike.

Probably in September 1863 the following merchants were stricken with the fever: Charles Weigand, merchant; Joseph Boetzkes, boot and shoe dealer; J. Breen, merchant tailor; and "Cipher, on Pollock Street." The daily average of deaths increased from six to eight, interments ranged from 20 to 25 per week, and the "general flight of the citizens commenced." James Bryan, Esq., a lawyer of eminent ability who had resided in the North during the war and recently returned to New Bern to resume his law practice, died after a brief illness. His wife died soon thereafter.

Benjamin writes that now the pestilence had fully established itself as an epidemic. Entire households were wiped out. By October 10, 1863, the city was "well nigh vacated." Nearly all businesses had closed, but among those remaining open were William L. Poalk, auctioneer and commission merchant, on Pollock Street; S. Kahn, corner of Pollock and Middle; T. L. Merrill & Co., 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 Street; Andrew Collins, Craven Street; F. Tomlinson, Craven Street; and J. McCormick, merchant tailor, Pollock Street. "The 15th of October saw the city a dismal blank, ..."

"The Dead Corps," who buried the dead, was under the command of Chief Provost Marshal William L. Poalk, assisted by John Jones, Henry S. Mandeville, Curtis Peckford, and William P. Moore, Jr., "who sacrificed their

lives," Benjamin notes. Evidently those surviving the detail were James P. Allen, W. P. Ketcham, C. H. Alexander, G. G. Manning, and S. Kahn. Benjamin's account refers to the one accompanying the hearses as they went through the city, "the same venerable pastor, the Rev. Father Rouse."

The physicians administering to the victims of the yellow fever epidemic were not untouched by the fever themselves. Benjamin writes that Dr. Wilson of the Navy died. Dr. Hendricks, Surgeon in charge of Foster Hospital, came down with the fever causing the transfer of Surgeon P. B. Rice of the 132d New York Infantry from the Bachelor's Creek Outposts of New Berne to the city. Benjamin writes that when Rice arrived in New Bern the pestilence was at its height and the hospitals were crowded to excess. Dr. L. Groniger assisted Dr. Rice

Two conductors "on the Railroad," Mr. Silas Covill and Mr. Wheeler, died of the fever. Mr. Samuel Holman, conductor of the Bachelor's Creek train contracted the fever also but recovered. Mr. Cornelius Kane was the first engineer of the railroad running from Morehead City to New Bern. Kane had brought his wife and two daughters to live in New Bern. His death from the fever left them alone.

Dr. Sitler's patients numbered 400 and included Luther W. Holmes among the deceased. Holmes had come to New Bern as a member of the 44th Massachusetts Volunteers, and after that regiment's term of service expired, he accepted a clerkship with Mr. Charles Hunt, who had been the Sutler of the 44th Massachusetts. Hunt established his business on South Front Street. In the summer of 1862 Hunt sold out to Mr. Wallace Ames, his partner. Holmes continued working for Mr. Ames until 1864 when he leased the building at the corner of Craven and South Front streets and opened his own business.

By the end of October the epidemic was running rampart in Beaufort, particularly in the Treasury Department there. Among the casualties were David Heaton, Super-

vising Special Agent of the Treasury Department, Mr. Henry T. Conkling, and Mr. William P. Blakeslee. Conkling was a corporal in the 81st Regiment New York whose term of service would have been completed a few days after his death. Another who died at this time was Captain Charles A. Lyons of the 1st North Carolina Volunteers.

There was an exchange of both doctors and victims of the fever between New Bern, Beaufort, and Fort Monroe in Virginia. Two more doctors died during this October period—Dr. Bellangee and Dr. Grannigan of the 99th New York Volunteers. Dr. Rice was appointed President of the Board of Health, and New Bern was subjected to a most thorough cleansing. Benjamin writes, "from the quantity of lime strewn about, one might have easily imagined a snow storm." Through the efforts of Rice and Dr. Hand, the Medical Director, November saw the abatement of the epidemic.

Among those who died, however, was Mr. Charles A. S. Perkins, merchant at the corner of Broad and Middle Streets. Perkins had been publisher and editor of the *Plymouth Rock* in Massachusetts as well as Postmaster, appointed by President Buchanan. He came to New Bern as 1st Lieutenant of Co. B, Standish Guards, 3d Massachusetts Regiment. His brother Lucien, who had been Adjutant of the 3d Massachusetts Infantry, also fell victim to the fever. Two other merchants, C. W. Giddings of the firm S. Blagge & Co. and John Elkins of Carver & Elkins left New Bern hoping to travel to New York. Quarantined at Fort Monroe, both died.

In his prose, Benjamin writes of many other victims of the epidemic, giving details not only of their lives in New Bern but in the cities and/or army units from whence they came. He also includes lists; for example, the 67 members of the 15th Regiment Connecticut Infantry who served as Provost Guards who laid out bodies and prepared them for interment. Other lists contain the dates of the deaths of New Bern's citizens. Even these lists reveal the sufferings of many families; for instance, on October 12, 1864, Gideon

Carraway died. On October 13 Mrs. Gideon Carraway succumbed, to be followed by their child on October 15. Benjamin also published lists of victims carried by the *North Carolina Times* in its November 26, 1864, edition. From the lists in this newspaper, Benjamin estimated the number of deaths during the epidemic to be about 1300.

As he closes his booklet, W. S. Benjamin writes

> Our task is o'er. Let us hope that a returning fall may not bring with it a renewal of the epidemic, but that we may be permitted to escape it, and that a merciful Providence will vouchsafe to us the blessings of health and prosperity, with the termination of the rebellion.

He fulfilled his mission of giving an account of New Bern's Yellow Fever Epidemic.

NEW BERN'S ATLANTIC AND NORTH CAROLINA RAILROAD: MILITARY JURISDICTION, 1862-1865

Julie Hipps

The story of the Atlantic and North Carolina Railroad complemented the greater saga of New Bern's growth and development. Early nineteenth-century North Carolinians relied upon rivers and rutted mud roads for inland transportation, and railroad advocates launched their campaign for a statewide rail system in 1828. Two decades later, their perseverance reached fruition with inaugural railroad construction. New Bernians deliberated railroad potential for almost 30 years before 97 miles of Atlantic and North Carolina Railroad track finally linked Morehead City, New Bern, Kinston, and Goldsboro on April 29, 1858. Ensuing festivities highlighted the town's social season, as locals eagerly expected efficient railroad services to spur economic revitalization. Four years later, in the midst of rejuvenated manufacturing, burgeoning business, civic pride and optimism, General Ambrose Burnside and his Union troops invaded eastern North Carolina, captured New Bern, and quashed the town's rosy future.

For the first time, railroads determined military strategy. Accordingly, Burnside immediately ordered soldiers to secure the Atlantic and North Carolina line to Beaufort. Retreating Confederates deliberately immobilized their captors when they burned the Trent River Bridge, and disgruntled Union soldiers suffered the five-hour handcar trek to Beaufort. In June 1862, thanks to the newly reconstructed bridge, the New Bern-Beaufort line reopened as a military railroad, and

> all the town rushed to the wharves, and there was a veritable locomotive with cars, kicking and shrieking like mad, through from Beaufort. This gave great pleasure to the citizens.

The *Weekly Progress* remarked that

> Bales, Hamilton & Co., were the first private parties that shipped goods over the road since the re-opening, sending an invoice to New Port Barracks. We hope that this re-opening of the roads will make a new era in its prosperity (June 14, 1862).

Military priorities contravened the editor's optimistic expectations. Formerly a bustling antebellum port, New Bern now languished, subjected to blockade and government regulation. Commerce and mercantile trade faltered, as the military commandeered the rail line to New Bern's closest open port, Morehead City.

The United States Military Railroad scheduled daily two-hour runs between New Bern and Morehead City, departing New Bern at 9:00 a. m., with four stops en route. Passengers boarded the Morehead City train at 2:00 p. m. to disembark in New Bern at 4:00 p. m. Adhering to protocol, the military specified that

> (1) no officer, soldier, or civilian, will be allowed to enter the cars at either terminus of the Road (New Bern or Morehead City), without having obtained a proper transportation ticket, (2) officers and enlisted men will obtain passage on all regular trains, upon presentation of orders signed by the commanding officer of the Post at which they are stationed, or the commanding officer of the District. Civilians must be provided with passes from the Provost Marshal before purchasing tickets, (3) a sufficient number of employees will be in attendance to receive and deliver Freight, and no other persons will be permitted to enter any car con-

taining Freight for any purpose whatever, and (4) no person will be allowed to ride on the Engine or Tender, without a special pass for that purpose (*North Carolina Times*, September 6, 1864).

Confederates controlled the Kinston-Goldsboro tracks and Federals, called the Department of North Carolina, controlled the New Bern-Morehead City track, rendering the New Bern-Kinston portion a virtual no-man's-land. Union forces seized the 17-mile New Bern-Kinston interval on December 14, 1862. To the Yankee's chagrin, Atlantic and North Carolina crews dismantled the tracks and pilfered the iron rails. These crafty marauders sold their bounty to the Confederate Navy Department. The navy, in turn, converted the rails to plate for ironclad vessels. Goldsboro Confederates evacuated in March 1865, opening the Kinston-Goldsboro segment to Union annexation and relinquishing the entire line to Federal jurisdiction.

In summer 1862 General John G. Foster replaced General Burnside. Foster readily acclimated to his new post. He promptly requisitioned northern reinforcements, and appropriated every spare minute to indoctrinating and drilling freshman regiments. A competent engineer, Foster refurbished extant Confederate garrisons and initiated supplementary fort construction. Foster organized reconnaissance excursions and dispatched armored trains to patrol Atlantic and North Carolina tracks, meanwhile wayward enlisted men ransacked and plundered the countryside.

The Atlantic and North Carolina Railroad retrogressed under the Department of North Carolina. From the onset, frustrations and obstacles hindered quartermaster administration. Atlantic and North Carolina stockholders, anticipating New Bern's surrender, sequestered essential company documents, six locomotives, 57 cars, and sundry equipment in Greensboro. The vexed quartermaster ferreted out four old locomotives and cars. In June 1862, he negotiated steamer transport to New Bern, sacrificing two

engines to a Cape Hatteras squall. Undaunted, the army eventually enlarged its railway fleet to 60 cars.

Problematic security troubled Federal railroad administrators. The Department of North Carolina governed only a few eastern North Carolina towns and jockeyed with Confederates over adjacent hinterlands. Federal units secured an outpost network of camps, picket stations, and blockhouses to safeguard rails, key bridges, and roads. The army mitigated tight railroad security as wartime priorities siphoned enlisted men away from guard duty, and the unprotected railroad succumbed to rampant vandalism and pillaging. Stymied, the Department of North Carolina resorted to waterway transport for troops and supplies. Maritime transit compounded quartermaster worries. Railroad administrators found shallow draft vessels few and far between, and the army's shipping expenditures exceeded rail payments by 25 percent. Eastern North Carolina's Commander, Major John Peck, preferred railroads to steamships but lacked spare manpower for railroad security. Combat strategy diverted Confederates from eastern North Carolina, and now unimpeded, the United States Military Railroad resumed business.

Human resources debilitated the Atlantic and North Carolina's temporary custodians. Inadequate and inferior personnel, coupled with lax and derelict officers, marred the railroad. Military recruiters competed with the railroad for cheap black labor, and lucrative naval store businesses enticed conductors and engineers and eroded the line's technical and managerial foundation. Prostrated, the quartermaster, forgiving negligence and shoddy workmanship, overlooked rotten crossties, hazardous bridges, and substandard water tanks.

General Sherman's imminent North Carolina incursion shifted 1865 railroad priorities. Conveniently positioned on General Lee's major supply line, three intersecting railroad lines linked Goldsboro with New Bern and Wilmington, and Sherman pinpointed Goldsboro as a resupply base. General Grant accommodated Sherman's di-

rective by assigning General John Schofield to North Carolina. In February 1865, Schofield ordered General Palmer to rebuild the Atlantic and North Carolina as he proceeded west from New Bern to Goldsboro. Palmer requisitioned manpower and equipment and then stalled, balking at his seemingly impossible task. Tentatively Palmer assigned crews to cut timber for crossties and build water tanks, loading platforms, and new sidings. Impatient with dawdling, Schofield replaced Palmer with General Jacob Cox.

Cox wasted no time in advancing to Kinston and overhauling the railroad. Maneuvering around supply wagon deficits, Cox planned to repair rickety bridges and replace rails confiscated by Confederates. He mobilized Colonel William Wright's railroad construction corps, and they serviced approximately 235 miles of North Carolina railroad, re-laid 30 million rails, and constructed 12 bridges, as well as water tanks, ancillary structures, wharves, and platforms. From February to June 1865, Wright's corps installed 111,100 crossties and spent $950,000 on North Carolina railroads.

Wright, Cox, and Schofield prioritized haste and short-term military objectives over permanent, long-term railroad renovation. The Union army's makeshift trestle and lattice bridges barely lasted through the war, and the Trent River Bridge held up for only four years. Department workers fashioned crossties out of logs flattened on one side, if at all, and they opted for soft pine rather than oak or other decay resistant hardwoods. Consequently, Atlantic and North Carolina Railroad crews inherited rotted crossties when the line reverted to private ownership.

Headlines announced, "Victory! The Confederacy Busted!" when news of Lee's surrender to Grant reached New Bern in early April 1865, and sparked a weeklong ruckus. Union sympathizers paraded in decorated vehicles, waving flags and enjoying alcoholic refreshments.

> The whole city became aglow with enthusiasm and excitement. Flags were spread to the breeze, the bars

were opened, and an indiscriminate getting tight ensued. An impromptu procession was formed, consisting of a few carts with a barouche, and the fandango commenced. From one end of the city to the other they drove, and at every stopping place proceeded to "smile" until they had smiled themselves pretty well drunk.... Through the streets this motley crowd proceeded, enjoying themselves to the fullest extent, and affording infinite amusement to a merry throng of bystanders (*North Carolina Daily Times*, April 14 and 18, 1865).

As the vanquished Confederacy licked its wounds, President Andrew Johnson directed "reconstruction" of the errant South, and Radical Reconstruction formalized the Republican Party. Democrats characterized Republicans as blacks, scalawags, and carpetbaggers, and Unionists congregated in New Bern, the former Federal stronghold. Although Reconstruction lingered in North Carolina for two years, the military managed local railroads only until fall 1865.

In July 1865, Colonel Joseph Boyd, Chief Quartermaster for the Department of North Carolina, replaced Colonel Wright as the military railroad's chief engineer and general superintendent. Under interim military management, the Atlantic and North Carolina collected the regular pre-war fares for private passengers, freight, military personnel, and supplies. Military bureaucrats disregarded pre-war ownership, meshed the various lines, economized at every opportunity, and exacerbated latent chaos, ineptitude, and disarray.

Slipshod handling wreaked havoc on ordnance and ammunition shipments. Negotiating worn track, unsecured guns and caissons dislodged, cleared the train, and littered railway sidings. Uncoupled cars, loaded with ammunition, joined the abandoned cargo strewn along the Atlantic and North Carolina line. Military rail personnel commensurately disregarded private freight and expected

civilians to sort through piles of cargo dumped in New Bern. Rampant damage, theft, and loss compelled circumspect merchants to travel in boxcars alongside their orders. Inefficiency and misconduct plagued the military railroad, as inadequately supervised intermittent guards contributed to the plunder. Railroad administrators employed infantry officers from nearby regiments as conductors. These inexperienced, untrained, irresponsible, and often "grossly drunk" (Price, "Military Railroad" 261) conductors neglected to collect fares, bypassed protocol, and crowded freight trains with passengers.

Corruption and dishonesty beleaguered military railroad bureaucracy. For example, the Superintendent of Military Railroad, a civilian, remained on quartermaster payroll for four months after United States Military Railroads superseded the post. In addition to granting free passage, military railroad employees embezzled proceeds from unauthorized transactions. Conductors pocketed freight and passenger fare, and only a fraction of collected revenue reached government coffers. Amidst fraudulency and malfeasance, General Boyd prioritized net income over maintenance and repair. With his eye on the bottom line, Boyd intentionally sacrificed equipment for short-term profits, and planned to immediately reinstate original ownership at the onset of railroad failure. This policy not only curtailed performance and efficacy, it eventually transferred maintenance and repair costs to original proprietors.

The military relinquished the Wilmington and Weldon line on August 27, 1865. Hoping to recoup wartime government investments and maximize net returns, Boyd prolonged his tenure over the Atlantic and North Carolina. Loyal to regional railroad policy, the Quartermaster General nixed Boyd's intransigence. Boyd schemed to postpone reinstatement, as he embarked upon a 30-day vacation and tabled all business transactions until his return. His furlough intentionally coincided with fall harvest. Prior to his departure, he specifically detailed extra

crews and trains to accommodate additional agricultural cargo. Satisfied with his progress in milking all potential proceeds from the line, Boyd restored the Atlantic and North Carolina to shareholders on October 23 and 24, 1865, and effectively closed the book on the United States Military Railroad in New Bern.

The Department of North Carolina relinquished a feeble and deteriorated line, with an ambiguous destiny. Cursory and provisional repairs met immediate military requirements but failed to sustain the road. Shoddy and careless workmanship beset temporary bridges, crossties and railroad structures; only replacement rails survived military administration. The army's short-term profit goals and deliberate neglect exacerbated the Atlantic and North Carolina's tenuous financial position. Reinstated Atlantic and North Carolina owners sought compensation, but the Federal legislature refused, arguing that army repairs and rails offset any retributions. The military sapped the Atlantic and North Carolina of its former vitality and rendered the railroad worn and crumbling. The pivotal Atlantic and North Carolina now faced a bleak future, thanks to the Union army's self-serving policies.

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BOOK REVIEW

Lee's Last Major General: Bryan Grimes of North Carolina, T. Harrell Allen. (Mason City, Iowa: Savas Publishing Co., 1999. v, 347, ill. maps. $24.95)

Not far from New Bern is a place called Grimesland. If you take the left onto Route 33 from Route 17 North at Chocowinity, down the road you will see signs that take you on a loop road to the right. There you will see an old farmhouse with a long low porch set well back from the road. This is the plantation house for which the area (one can hardly call it a town) Grimesland was named. The story of this place and the family that owned it is inextricably woven into the life of Bryan Grimes, Jr., the last confirmed Major General of Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia, who was born in that house. The book is based largely on the letters that Bryan Grimes wrote to family members during his life and especially during the period of the War Between the States.

The Grimes family has lived in eastern North Carolina for centuries having settled in North Carolina in 1760. The first of the Grimes family came to "the colonies" in 1660 from England. William and his wife Anne settled in Norfolk County, Virginia. One of his four sons, Demsie, moved to North Carolina in 1760, married Penelope Coffield, and settled in Edgecombe County. He purchased several farms on the Tar River in Pitt County combining them into a large plantation he called Avon. Demsie signed the Pitt County Resolution and Declaration of Rights on July 1, 1775.

His son William, born March 1766, served as a 13-year-old private in the 10th Regiment of the Continental

Army in 1779. After the war, William acquired several farms near Avon and called the tract "Grimesland." In 1790 William married Anne Bryan, daughter of Col. Joseph Bryan of Craven County. By age 21 William was the tax collector of Pitt County. He also served as a representative of the county in the House of Commons for the session 1793-94. William died in 1797, a young 31, leaving a four-year-old son, Bryan.

That son married Nancy Grist in 1815, daughter of General Richard Grist. Only three of their six children survived to adulthood: Susan, William, and Bryan, Jr. Nancy died only four months after Bryan's birth. The elder Bryan remarried in 1831 to Lucy Olivia Blount, with whom he had more children, including John Gray Blount Grimes, who would serve with Bryan during the Civil War.

The importance of education was impressed early on the Grimes boys, William and Bryan, Jr. William attended the University of North Carolina for two years then transferred to Princeton, where he graduated. Bryan graduated from the University of North Carolina after attending an academy in Washington, North Carolina, and then the Bingham School in Hillsboro. It was at Bingham that Bryan met James Johnston Pettigrew, who would be a classmate at the University as well as a fellow general of North Carolina troops during the war.

William had suffered an accident as a young man that left him deaf in one ear and suffering from constant vertigo, so much so that he employed a cane for the rest of his life. This may have contributed to his apparent shyness; Bryan, on the other hand, was more at ease socially. Following graduation, he started in his chosen role as agriculturist, working the property that his father gave him, as had his elder brother. In April of 1851, Bryan married Elizabeth Hilliard Davis, daughter of Dr. Thomas Davis of Franklin County. In October of the same year, Bryan's father gave the couple the house he had built in 1818, which is still occupied by family. Elizabeth gave birth to their first child in January 1852, a son who did not survive in-

fancy. A second child, Bettie, followed the next year. A third child was born in June of 1854, a daughter Nancy, who lived only three months. In 1857 another son, named for his father, was born. Eight months later, Elizabeth died, leaving Bryan to care for two very young children, Bettie and Bryan, III.

In 1860, seeking solace in travel after his father's death in March, Bryan Grimes went to Europe. Following the election of Abraham Lincoln, Bryan returned to North Carolina. The mood of the country had changed dramatically while he had been away. After going to Charleston with the hope of witnessing history, Grimes traveled to Montgomery, Alabama, then to Florida and then up the Mississippi to Tennessee. Finally arriving home in May of 1861, he discovered that he had been nominated as a delegate to the state convention on secession. On May 20, 1861, North Carolina voted unanimously to secede. Bryan Grimes requested an appointment and was granted that of major in the 4th Regiment of North Carolina State Troops by Governor John Ellis.

Colonel of the 4th was George B. Anderson, a graduate of the class of 1852 of the U. S. Military Academy. Given several other choices of regiments, Grimes elected to serve under Anderson, because

> I felt deficiency of a knowledge of military tactics, and Colonel . . . Anderson . . . was Colonel of the 4th Infantry, whilst the others were officered by inexperienced civilians like myself, and I preferred a subordinate position with an efficient officer to higher rank with officers without experience.

The first serious battle for Bryan Grimes was that of Seven Pines (known also as Fair Oaks), May 31, 1862. He went into battle as a major and came out a lieutenant colonel after having his horse killed under him and being rescued by his men dragging the dead beast off his leg. Once again on his feet, Major Grimes gathered up the regimental

flag that had fallen with its third color-bearer and led a charge that removed the enemy from a redoubt. These were only the first of several close calls that Bryan Grimes was to experience during the war.

Being detailed to escort Federal prisoners and arms to Richmond, the 4th North Carolina managed to miss most of the action of the Seven Days' Battles, much to the chagrin of both Grimes and General Anderson. Grimes was in Richmond until July when he was sent to Raleigh to recover from an attack of typhoid fever. Returning to the Army of Northern Virginia (ANV), Grimes missed the action at Second Manassas and the trouncing of General John Pope. He almost missed the action leading to the Battle of Sharpsburg (Antietam) when he was kicked in the leg by a horse, seriously injuring him. Nevertheless, he was unwilling to be sidelined and fought bravely at South Mountain, but wound up being sent to the hospital by his Anderson. It was at Sharpsburg, fighting in the "Bloody Lane," that Brig. General G. B. Anderson received the wound that was to prove fatal after amputation in Raleigh.

It was following the return to Virginia that General Lee reorganized his army with Longstreet and Jackson each heading a corps, and the 4th North Carolina under General D. H. Hill, in Jackson's Second Corps. Stephen Dodson Ramseur, a West Point graduate from North Carolina was chosen to replace Brig. General Anderson, which disgruntled Grimes, who felt that he was ready to be promoted. With time, Grimes and Ramseur would become close friends.

The book considers all the battles in which Bryan Grimes fought, and of particular interest were those of Chancellorsville and Gettysburg, where the 4th North Carolina troops did good service. Just before the spring campaign opened in 1863, six-year-old Bryan Grimes died of scarlet fever, and his grieving father went to North Carolina to arrange for the burial. While in Raleigh with his brother William, Grimes visited once again Charlotte Emily Bryan, whom he had met several years earlier. Thus

began their courtship; he was 35 and she was 23.

The description of the Chancellorsville battle with the wounding of "Stonewall" Jackson is of particular interest for the part that Ramseur's brigade played in the battle, losing more men than any other brigade. Both Grimes and Ramseur were wounded. Following the death of Jackson, General Lee reorganized his army again, this time dividing it into three corps. General Robert Rodes's division with Ramseur's brigade remained in the second corps now under General Richard Ewell.

At Gettysburg the Second Corps was busily engaged on the first day of the three-day battle and served as the rearguard during the withdrawal of the ANV. During the battle the 4th Regiment and Ramseur's brigade were actively involved and did noble work once again. On the retreat, Brig. General J. J. Pettigrew was mortally wounded; Grimes had lost another valued friend

Back on southern soil, the North Carolinians in the army denounced the Peace Meetings being fostered by William Holden, editor of the Raleigh *Standard* newspaper, and the Heroes of America. Servicemen held their own meetings, passing resolutions condemning Holden and the peace meetings. Grimes was active in holding some meetings and was appointed President of a general convention of North Carolina regiment representatives. Resolutions were passed, and a committee was formed to produce an address to the people of the state. The soldiers were

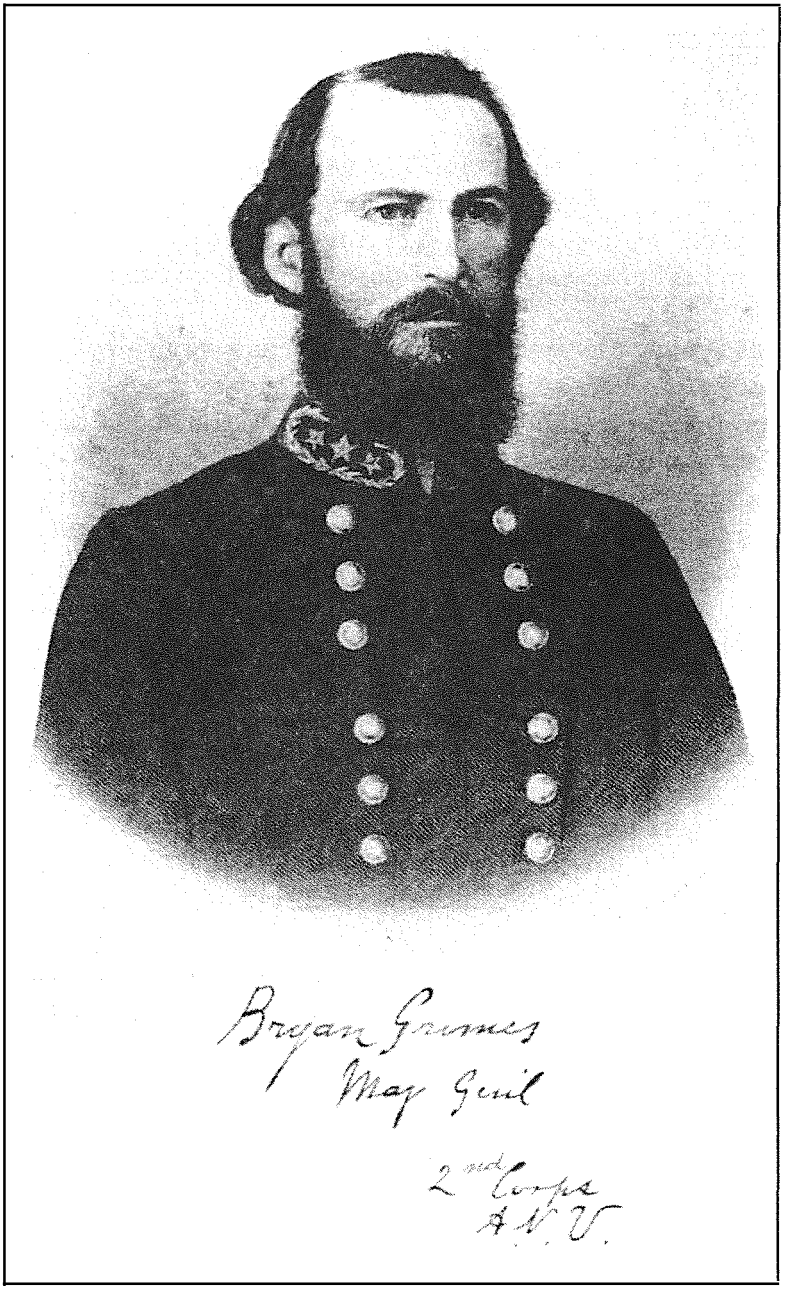
> appealing to the good and the patriotic to rise in their might and put down the small (as we believe) but treasonable faction in their midst, whose machinations we have more trouble to resist than the power of our enemies.

A tragic example of the influence of Holden's writings was given. During the winter of 1864, the problem of desertion had become a serious one, and Grimes was required to execute three men from his regiment for the

crime. One of them, James King of Company E, told a lieutenant with the Provost Marshall's office, "the reading of Holden's paper has brought me to this"; a sad commentary.

In September of 1863, Bryan Grimes married the plump and pretty Charlotte Bryan in Raleigh's Christ Church. He was also asked to run for a Congressional seat from his home district, but before the elections, he wrote to the voters of the Congressional district withdrawing his candidacy. He preferred to stay in active service with the hopes that "peace and our independence is secured." At about this same time, General Ramseur returned to North Carolina to get married; once again these two men had commonality of interest. Just before Christmas, Charlotte went to visit her husband in winter quarters, and "General Ramseur and his wife boarded at the same place with us, and we found them very pleasant and agreeable," she wrote. North Carolina Governor Zebulon Vance, also visited the ANV that winter, making speeches and reviewing the troops. While Charlotte was visiting, Grimes's strict interpretation of military requirements once again landed him in court, this time with his regimental surgeon John F. Schaffner. The Surgeon was acquitted of charges.

With a new Federal general, U. S. Grant, to lead their troops, the Union opened the offensive on May 4, 1864. The most dramatic part of this campaign for the 4th North Carolina regiment was at the infamous "Mule Shoe" during the battle for Spotsylvania and is described in detail. According to an officer of the 2nd North Carolina, the fighting that day at the "Bloody Angle" was "the crowning glory of the career of Ramseur's brigade." It was during this battle that Brig. General Junius Daniel, another good friend of Grimes, was mortally wounded. General Rodes promoted Col. Grimes as temporary commander of Daniel's Brigade, composed of the 32nd, 43rd, 45th, and 53rd regiments from North Carolina. This promotion became permanent in June, but the 4th regiment was not included in Grimes's new command, much to his disappointment.



Major General Bryan Grimes
1828-1880
N. C. Division of Archives and History photo.

Col. William R. Cox had been promoted to Brig. General commanding that regiment along with others. Jubal Early was promoted to take the place of Richard Ewell, commander of the Second Corps. Shortly thereafter, Early and his troops were sent to the Valley of Virginia to counter Union General David Hunter's attacks on the "bread basket" of the ANV. Early performed well against Hunter, but failed against General Philip Sheridan and his overwhelming numbers.

In September at Winchester, General Robert Rodes was killed in battle, and the Yankees ran Early's troops through the town. Ramseur was promoted to replace Rodes. At Fisher's Hill things went from bad to worse with the troops breaking and running for their lives, while Bryan Grimes had another of his miraculous escapes from danger. Losing the fourth horse shot from under him, he mounted an artillery horse to make an escape. His letters to Charlotte at this time indicate how close he was to becoming demoralized.

The following month Grimes became a new father, a boy named for him, and Ramseur also became a father within days. But the joy of each new father was not to last. At the battle of Cedar Creek, October 19, Ramseur was mortally wounded, senior Brig. General Cullen Battle also sustained a wound, and Brig. General Grimes assumed temporary command. A more desperate time to take the reins could not be imagined, as the troops were surrounded on three sides and being forced back. Eventually, the troops broke and ran; the third time routed in a month. To add to the disappointment and upset, Grimes received a letter at New Market the next day that his new baby son had died. The letter he wrote in response is most touching and remarks also that his friend Ramseur had been wounded and was in enemy hands.

With the end of the work in the Valley of Virginia, General Grimes and his troops returned to take part in the siege of Petersburg and Richmond in December 1864. Once again he had a winter visit from his wife, who wrote of the

several times that the troops were called out requiring her husband's leaving her with friends. After the battle at Hatcher's Run February 5-7, General Grimes sent his wife back to Raleigh. It was simply too dangerous for her to stay longer. Thus she was not with him to celebrate his promotion to Major General on February 28, 1865.

With W. T. Sherman's army approaching North Carolina, General Grimes was worried about his family there and suggested to Charlotte that she join him in Petersburg should Raleigh be attacked. "You can judge for yourself whether it is better to have all the risks with me or stay and take your chances."

The beginning of the end, with the abortive attack on Fort Stedman, then the mauling at Five Forks, and finally the attack on Fort Mahone (Battery 29), pressed Lee's long, thin, gray line to the breaking point. Orders were sent April 2, to evacuate the lines at dark. Grimes's division was the rearguard and covered the wagon trains, which were lagging badly because of the condition of the roads and the animals. At Sayler's Creek the Federals attacked and drove the troops across the creek, with Grimes jumping in the creek on his horse and riding through it and a hail of bullets to the other side. Fortunately, the day was darkening and the Federals elected to end the attack with General Grimes and his men holding the opposite shore of the creek. Ewell's and Anderson's troops were not so fortunate, and most of them were captured.

On the morning of April 9 Grimes's division was on the far side of the village of Appomattox facing an unknown number of Federal troops. Generals J. B. Gordon and Fitz Lee agreed that the Union soldiers had to be driven off, so Lee took his cavalry troopers around to the left to get behind them and Gordon turned over two divisions for Grimes to lead. The movement was successful and the way was opened. When Grimes sent a message to General Gordon "the Lynchburg road was open for the escape of the wagons," he received a surprising response: he was to withdraw his command immediately. Believing

the order was in error, Grimes kept his men where they were and sent more messages to Gordon, who continued to return messages telling Grimes to fall back. Finally Gordon sent a repeat message and one from General Lee, and Grimes reluctantly withdrew his men, not so easily done as said. It was then that the North Carolina troops earned the "last at Appottamox" sobriquet, when they fired the last volley of the war.

Following the sad surrender, Grimes and a few comrades from North Carolina started walking and riding home. The scenes on the way were heart-rending. At last on April 16, Grimes rode into Raleigh where Charlotte was "delighted to see him under any conditions," but he was miserable about the surrender and depressed concerning the future. Grimes had no clothes, no money, and no prospects for the future. Fortunately, his brother William was able to assist Bryan and Charlotte in starting over. Once Lincoln was killed, the Union troops in Raleigh made the lives of the former Confederates miserable. "We were living in a 'Reign of Terror,'" recalled Charlotte. It wasn't until the fall of 1865 that Grimes was ready to return to "Grimesland." Charlotte stayed in Raleigh with her parents as she was expecting a child. Bryan went to New Bern where he met a former Yankee C. W. Smith, who wanted to lease his plantation. Grimes drove a hard bargain and received payment in gold. He bought a house in Raleigh on New Bern Avenue and took the Oath of Amnesty in October. In February of 1866, Charlotte gave birth to a boy who seemed to have given his parents something to look forward to.

When Smith's lease expired, Grimes decided to return to the plantation. There was much to do and since Charlotte was expecting again, Bryan went back and forth to Raleigh and worked hard to get the plantation ready for planting and the house ready for living. Finally in late 1870, Charlotte and the children moved to Grimesland to stay. Six more children were born there. The General was reportedly a proud and indulgent father.

Grimesland plantation house, built in 1818 and given to Bryan by his father in 1851, is still in use as a residence. T. Harrell Allen photo.

In the most ironic and tragic part of the book, after having gone through the War almost unscathed, Bryan Grimes was gunned down at Bear Creek on his way home from Washington in August of 1880. The author has done quite a research job in attempting to find out what happened and how, and also why. It appears that the killing had political as well as personal overtones. Grimes had quarreled with the Paramore brothers over the property between their lands. This argument was followed by the burning of a millhouse, and the death of some of Grimes's livestock after drinking from a poisoned well. The Paramores left Pitt County the day after the killing. It took many more weeks before an arrest was made, but finally late in September William Parker was arrested and held for the murder of Bryan Grimes.

The description of the trial, which ended in a mistrial, is exceptionally interesting as the dirty tricks of the lead defense attorney are detailed. The defense lawyers were politically well connected; the trial judge kept a diary of the trial and made some interesting notes regarding the situation in which he states, "I am fast losing faith in Republics and the people." It was necessary to move the second trial to Martin County. The upshot of the second trial, the machinations of the defense lawyers, and the efforts of General Grimes's 20-year-old son, John Bryan (who would later become secretary of state for North Carolina) to vindicate his father's death, make for fascinating reading.

One of the few men who became a major general without having either a military or political background, Bryan Grimes had long deserved a biography, having fought in more battles than some of the other North Carolina generals who were killed during the war and others who blew their own horns afterwards. He modestly did not write about the war after its conclusion, but returned home to try to rebuild both his life and that of his state. He assisted his Alma Mater in its rebuilding efforts and became a University Trustee. And he was particularly devoted to his wife and children.

If indeed, as Heraclitus believed, "character is destiny," then the life and death of Bryan Grimes was a shining example of the truth of this saying. Perhaps the most telling comment about Bryan Grimes came from a man whom he considered an enemy. William Holden is reported as stating that Bryan Grimes was "the bravest man that ever went [to the Civil War] from North Carolina."

Lynda de Nijs