

# Journal of the New Bern Historical Society



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**JOURNAL OF THE NEW BERN HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

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The JOURNAL OF THE NEW BERN HISTORICAL SOCIETY is a quarterly publication of the New Bern Historical Society, a nonprofit 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 28560)

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## HISTORICAL PROFILE: MINNETTE CHAPMAN DUFFY

Jim Gunn

"On Thursday evening, April 19, 1923, nineteen people met at the home of Dr. and Mrs. Richard N. Duffy, corner Johnson and Craven Streets, for the purpose of organizing a local branch of the North Carolina Historical Society. Mrs. Duffy, who had been the prime mover in calling the meeting, acted as temporary chairman. The following officers were elected:

President-	Mr. R. A. Nunn
First Vice-Pres.-	Mrs. R. N. Duffy
Second Vice-Pres.-	Mrs. John Dunn. . . ."

1

These minutes of the first meeting of the New Bern Historical Society serve to introduce us to Minnette Chapman Duffy, a dynamic lady who served the historical movement in New Bern for nearly 30 years. Her enthusiasm and devotion to the preservation of local history carried many others along, and we can with certainty credit much of the continuing widespread interest in preserving our history to the pioneer work which she initiated.

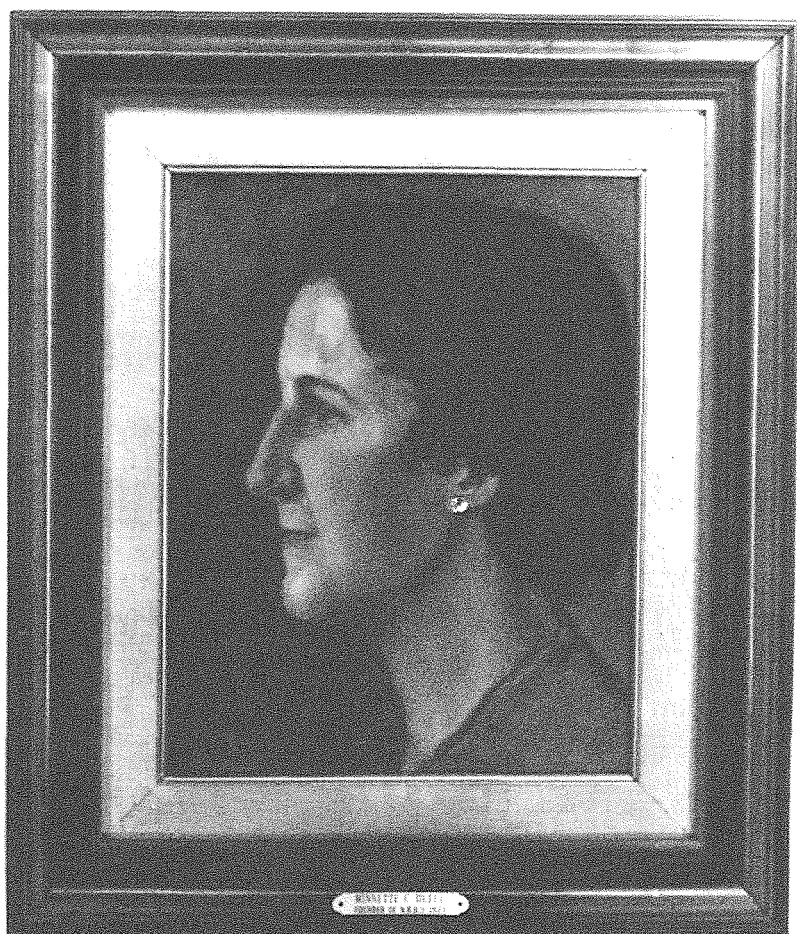
The fine portrait of Mrs. Duffy, now prominently displayed in the Historical Society offices, exhibits a profile with a look of clear-eyed and determined character, apparently seeking a vision of another segment of New Bern's historical past. Painted by Minnette Duffy Bickel, Mrs. Duffy's daughter, it was presented to the Society almost 40 years ago. For most of that time it has hung in the Attmore-Oliver House, but the new location

enables greater numbers of people to view the portrait and pay tribute to the most influential founder of the Society.

Oddly this concerned lady was not a native of New Bern, having been born and raised in Knoxville, Tennessee. The "young lady from Tennessee", Miss Minnette Chapman was only 25 years old when Dr. Richard N. Duffy brought her to New Bern as his bride in 1907.<sup>2</sup> The Duffy family had long been well-known residents of New Bern, and apparently the new member of the family quickly entered into the social life of the city. By 1914 she had become chairman of the City Beautiful Club and was directing a drive to raise \$2000 for a drinking fountain patterned after a fountain in Berne, Switzerland.<sup>3</sup> Involvement with the "City Beautiful" movement brought her in contact with the history of New Bern, and her interest was more than casual. There is nothing on record to say when Minnette Duffy began attempts to form a Historical Society, but there were obviously many others with similar concerns, and by 1923 she was able to gather 19 people in her home for the Society's first meeting.

When R. A. Nunn had taken the chair on that evening nearly 70 years ago, he stated, ". . . that the aim of the Society as he understood it was to preserve for future generations the wealth of historical material to be found here in New Bern". Minnette Duffy took the forefront in the attempt to fulfill this ambitious ideal. She began developing and initiating programs and projects for the Society, and in 1926 became president. At the same meeting, a multi-volume set of books entitled the HISTORY OF THE DE GRAFFENRIED FAMILY was presented to the New Bern Public Library.

Under Minnette Duffy's inspiring leadership, the Society began laying plans for a gigantic celebration of New Bern's heritage. Governor O. Max Gardner granted a Special Commission to Mrs.



MINNETTE CHAPMAN DUFFY

Duffy giving her the privilege ". . . to do all such things as are necessary. . ." to organize the event. Three years later, after some exasperating delays the "New Bern Historical Pageant" took place on June 11, 1929. Governor Gardner arrived in the city by stagecoach and was welcomed on the steps of the Stanly House by Mayor Tolson. Following the Governor's reception a parade with floats depicting events and personages in New Bern and North Carolina history passed through the downtown streets. During the afternoon 14 old homes were opened to the public by their owners, and an enormous tea party was held under the 700-year-old cypress tree in Mrs. Smallwood's waterfront garden on East Front Street. A pageant of events in local history took place at Kafer Park, followed by a grand ball in a large tobacco warehouse with a representative of Berne, Switzerland, as honored guest.<sup>4</sup>

For her part in masterminding the entire performance Mrs. Duffy received the "First Annual Gold Medal Award for the citizen of the community performing outstanding service to the public", from the Rotary Club of New Bern for the year 1929. The glowing citation accompanying the Medal reads in part,

. . . For her vision of a Pageant. . . For her long-continued pursuit of an ideal under delays, disappointments and discouragements. For her genius of friendship which attracted those whose aid was requisite. . . For her power of organization and executive ability . . . For her courage in attempting a great task and bringing it to a glorious conclusion. <sup>5</sup> . For her gift to the community . . . .

In 1935 Minnette Duffy saw the Stanly House, one of New Bern's most historic and stately homes, converted for use as the Public Library

after years of effort on her part and that of many other concerned residents. During the Second World War in 1943 she took charge of the New Bern Garden Club's rebuilding of Judge William Gaston's law office to be used as Garden Club headquarters. Her dedication to historical restoration and other contributions to the historical community both in New Bern and in the state brought her another honor in 1949: the Cannon Award for "outstanding work toward the preservation of antiquities".

For over 20 years, since the founding of the Historical Society, Mrs. Duffy, along with many members of the New Bern and the North Carolina Historical Societies had dreamed of rebuilding colonial Governor Tryon's palace. Finally in 1945 the state, as a result of considerable pressure, appointed a commission to take charge of the project. Governor R. Gregg Cherry signed the documents appointing Minnette<sup>6</sup> Duffy as one of the members of the commission. Regrettably she would not live to see the result of nearly 30 years of constant striving. On October 2, 1951, Minnette Chapman Duffy died at her home in New Bern. The cause was not stated, but one could surmise that her enormous store of energy had finally run its course after 69 intensely active years. Her husband, Dr. Richard N. Duffy, a well-loved local physician, survived her and died in 1953.

The story does not end here however, for in 1953 the community staged a tribute to Mrs. Duffy. Directed by Mrs. Claude B. Foy, the unique memorial was produced by the New Bern Little Theater. During the evening her portrait which now graces the Historical Society offices was presented. As a further contribution to the history of New Bern, a finely embossed Italian leather-covered scrapbook entitled "New Bern in Historical Review" was presented to the Tryon Palace Commission archives in 1955. The beautiful volume is a record of the Pageant of

1929 as told in a great number of articles and photographs which appeared at the time. The presentation was made by Minnette Duffy Bickel and Sophia Duffy Macon, daughters of Mrs. Minnette Duffy.<sup>8</sup>

The saga of Mrs. Duffy's many accomplishments is told briefly here, but it would be a marvelous tribute if some day the life of the "young lady from Tennessee" could be more fully explored.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup>New Bern Historical Society, Minutes of the First Meeting, April 19, 1923.

<sup>2</sup>Obituary, Minnette Chapman Duffy, New Bern, October 3, 1951. New Bern-Craven County Public Library.

<sup>3</sup>"Club Women of North Carolina, Mrs. Richard Duffy." Unidentified newspaper, February 21, 1914. New Bern-Craven County Public Library.

<sup>4</sup>Newspaper reports (various), June 1929.

<sup>5</sup>Rotary Club of New Bern, "First Annual Gold Medal Award", 1910.

<sup>6</sup>Letter and commission appointment from Governor R. Gregg Cherry to Mrs. Richard N. Duffy, October 26, 1945. New Bern-Craven County Public Library.

<sup>7</sup>Obituary, Minnette Chapman Duffy.

<sup>8</sup>Boesel, Minnette Bickel, "Chronology of Life of Minnette Chapman Duffy" (Working draft), 1985. New Bern-Craven County Public Library.



## GUARDING THE CAROLINA COAST

Mary Osborne Conover

When the nation built its first 10 Coast Guard cutters, they were sailing vessels, and the 10 cost a total of \$10,000.

In the late 1970's for 13 cutters of the BEAR class, the government budgeted \$800 million. The final two of these sleek 270-foot vessels with state-of-the-art electronics are to be commissioned on the Coast Guard's 200th birthday--August 4, 1990--in Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

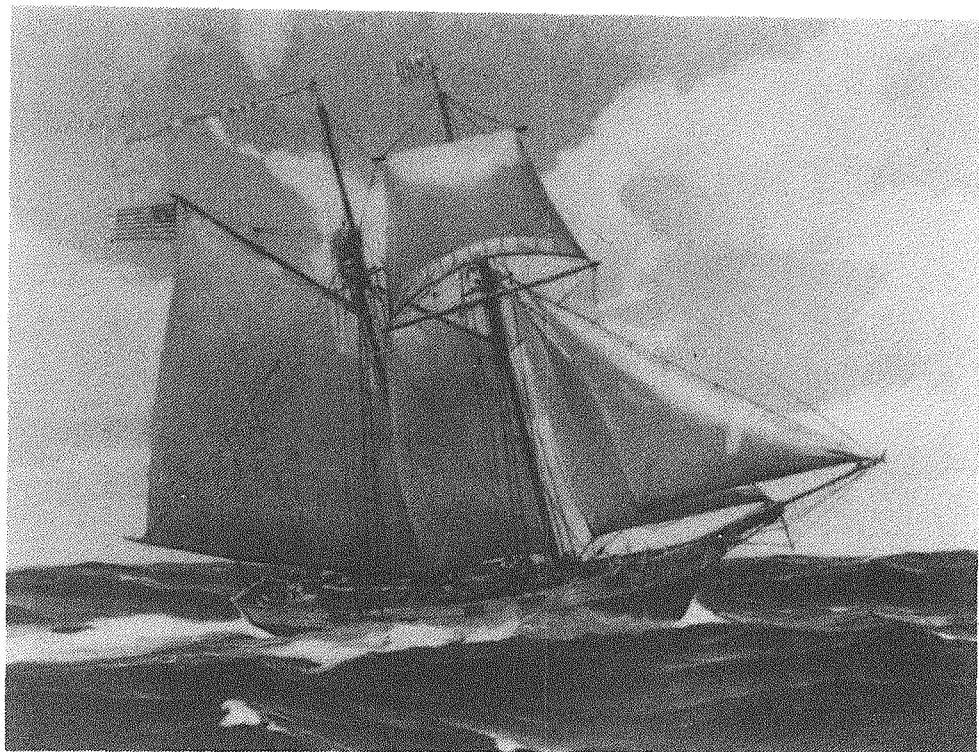
Aside from scoring a trivia point or having relevance for an active or retired Coast Guardsman, why might such statistics interest this JOURNAL?

Because one of the original 10 cutters, the DILIGENCE, was commissioned in New Bern.

On April 23, 1790, Alexander Hamilton, Secretary of the Treasury, presented Congress a bill calling for the establishment of the United States Revenue Marine to protect the revenue and prevent smuggling.

Congress passed Hamilton's Revenue Cutter bill on August 4, 1790, and empowered the President of the United States "to cause to be built and equipped, so many boats or cutters, not exceeding ten, as may be necessary to be employed for the protection of the revenue, expense whereof shall not exceed ten thousand dollars, which shall be paid out of the duties on goods, wares and merchandise imported into the United States, and on the tonnage of ships or vessels".

Loss of lives was another concern of the



ARTIST'S CONCEPTION OF THE MASSACHUSETTS, SISTER SHIP TO THE DILIGENCE.

federal government. After years of shipwrecks with attendant losses of life, Congress in 1844 acknowledged a federal responsibility for life-saving. Interest grew and by 1854 there were 137 lifeboat stations manned by volunteers along the coasts. In 1871 full-time crews were employed, and in 1878 Congress created the United States Lifesaving Service to work closely with the Revenue Cutter Service.

Because of the treacherous coastline of North Carolina, residents of the Outer Banks had been frequently called upon to rescue vessels in trouble along the shores. The Lifesaving Service at Ocracoke was organized in 1874 as it was in many other coastal communities during the same decade.

Many Tar Heels might be surprised to learn that the Coast Guard did not originate in our state, but if North Carolinians did not invent coastal lifesaving, they served to perfect the techniques of coastal lifesaving stations and were the "saviors of many shipwrecked victims".

A number of families in Dare, Currituck, Hyde, and Carteret counties have supplied the Coast Guard with experts in lifesaving since the nineteenth century. The monthly income of enlisted or retired men in the U. S. Coast Guard has been a mainstay in the local economy. The family names of Midgett, Meekings, Quidley, Gaskill, and Beacham, among others, have dominated the crew lists for years.

The Revenue Cutter Service and the Lifesaving Service were merged by Act of Congress on January 30, 1915, and became the United States Coast Guard. The new service was made a part of the military forces of the United States. The Lighthouse Service was transferred into the Coast Guard in 1939, and the Bureau of Marine Inspection and Navigation in 1942. Dating its birth from the passage by Congress of the bill authorizing the Revenue Marine, the Coast Guard thus celebrates its bicentennial in 1990.

Of the initial fleet of 10 small cutters, two were assigned the coasts of Massachusetts (including Maine) and New Hampshire, two were to patrol the Chesapeake, and there was one each for Long Island Sound, New York City, the Bay of Delaware, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia.

North Carolina's Revenue Cutter DILIGENCE was built on the banks of the Pamlico River at Washington in Beaufort County, under the supervision of Nathan Keais, Collector of Customs, in 1791.

The following February, the DILIGENCE was taken down the Pamlico River, through Pamlico Sound, and up the Neuse River to New Bern. Here she was fitted out, commissioned, and stationed under the supervision of John Daves, Collector of Customs, in late June or early July 1792.

On the southern tour which brought him to New Bern and Wilmington in 1791, President George Washington selected Captain William Cooke of Wilmington to command the DILIGENCE, and in October 1792 the revenue cutter was transferred to Wilmington, where she was stationed until September 18, 1798, under the supervision of James Read, Collector of Customs. Replaced then by a second DILIGENCE, the first was auctioned for \$310 on November 5, 1798.

In the course of her brief active life, the original DILIGENCE under Captain Cooke figured in the first major event in Coast Guard history: the seizure in May 1793 of over \$35,000 worth of gold from privateer François Henri Hervieux, master of le Vaninqueur de la Bastille, when he attempted to land his vessel near Brunswick, North Carolina.

In December 1989 the North Carolina Highway Historical Marker Advisory Committee approved a proposal for a marker at the intersection of East Front Street and Tryon Palace Drive in New Bern commemorating the U. S. Revenue Cutter DILIGENCE and acknowledging her significance to

the city. The sign when erected should have this inscription:

#### USRC DILIGENCE

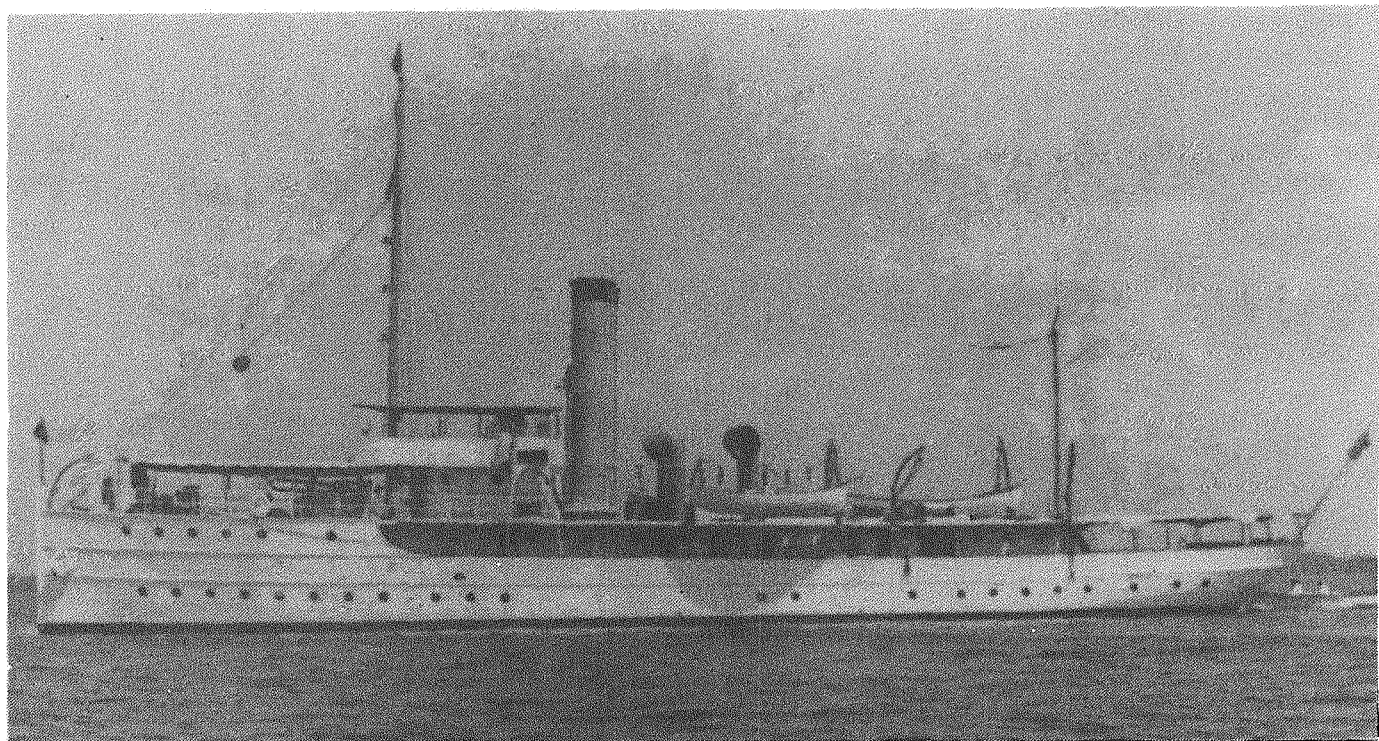
U. S. Revenue Cutter built  
in N. C., 1791. Ship was  
commissioned in 1791 by  
Revenue Marine (now U. S.  
Coast Guard),  $\frac{1}{4}$  mi. W.

The location of the historic marker on U. S. Highway 70 Business at the foot of the Trent River bridge is a tribute to the persistence of Rear Admiral Edwin H. Daniels, Sr., U. S. C. G. (Ret.), a resident of New Bern and Chairman of the North Carolina Coast Guard Bicentennial Celebration Committee.

Second of three generations of a Coast Guard family long resident in eastern North Carolina, Daniels deserves credit, too, for an historical marker commemorating the U. S. Coast Guard Cutter PAMLICO, a part of the New Bern community for the nearly 40 years she was docked here at the foot of Pollock Street on the Neuse River.

Built in Wilmington, Delaware, in 1907, the PAMLICO was shortly patrolling the rivers and sounds of eastern North Carolina. Though it has been said by older New Bernians she seldom left her dock, the cutter was considered an asset to the community, figuring frequently in its affairs.

In 1910, for example, sailors from the PAMLICO joined in a bicentennial celebration of the founding of New Bern. Coincidental with the State Firemen's Convention which attracted 76 companies from 32 cities and towns, the July 25-30 birthday party had a crowded calendar of tournaments and competitions, boat races, parades, pageants, and illuminated tableaux. Among the most popular of horse-drawn floats in the many long and colorful parades was a "cutter" filled with sailors from the PAMLICO



U. S. C. G. CUTTER PAMLICO, USUALLY DOCKED AT THE FOOT OF POLLOCK STREET, WAS A NEW BERN LANDMARK.

wearing dress whites.

The cutter herself had a white hull except during World War II when she received a coat of wartime gray. The PAMLICO was docked in New Bern until 1947 when she was decommissioned, sold, and reportedly converted into a barge. Though it is doubtful she any longer exists, she has a successor of the same name, and at least one former crewman has achieved international fame.

The new PAMLICO is a 160-foot construction tender, and the former crewman is Alex Haley, author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning ROOTS. Haley served aboard the PAMLICO after enlisting in the Coast Guard as a 17-year-old messboy in 1939.

When the Coast Guard celebrates its 200th anniversary in New Bern this year, our citizens can take pride in that we as North Carolinians have contributed to this part of the military forces of our country even before it became known as the Coast Guard. Through the Life-saving Service, our state has participated in and worked with the Coast Guard. Through the waterfront docks, our city has provided a home for Coast Guard cutters and personnel.

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## HERBERT WOODLEY SIMPSON, ARCHITECT

Barbara W. Howlett

Although he is listed in city directories as casket maker, funeral director, and embalmer, New Bernians know Herbert Woodley Simpson as the premier architect and builder of fine buildings in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Over 30 structures are known to have been designed by Simpson, and still more show enough of his style to be attributed to him. A son of John Archibald Simpson, he was born in 1870 and left his mark not only in New Bern, but in Beaufort, Greenville, and Kinston among other North Carolina cities.

Simpson came by his interest in architecture naturally. His father, listed as a casket maker and carpenter, was a house builder as well. In 1888 Herbert Simpson wrote to W. Claude Frederic in Baltimore seeking the chance to study architecture with him. Frederic replied that, while he had had several students, there were none in his office at that time and, "If you have a talent for Designing, Sketching &c--undoubtedly Architecture is the best Profession for you to enter as it is the least crowded of the Professions: But unless you have the above talent you will be throwing your time away, and all the Geometry &c in the world will be of no use to you".

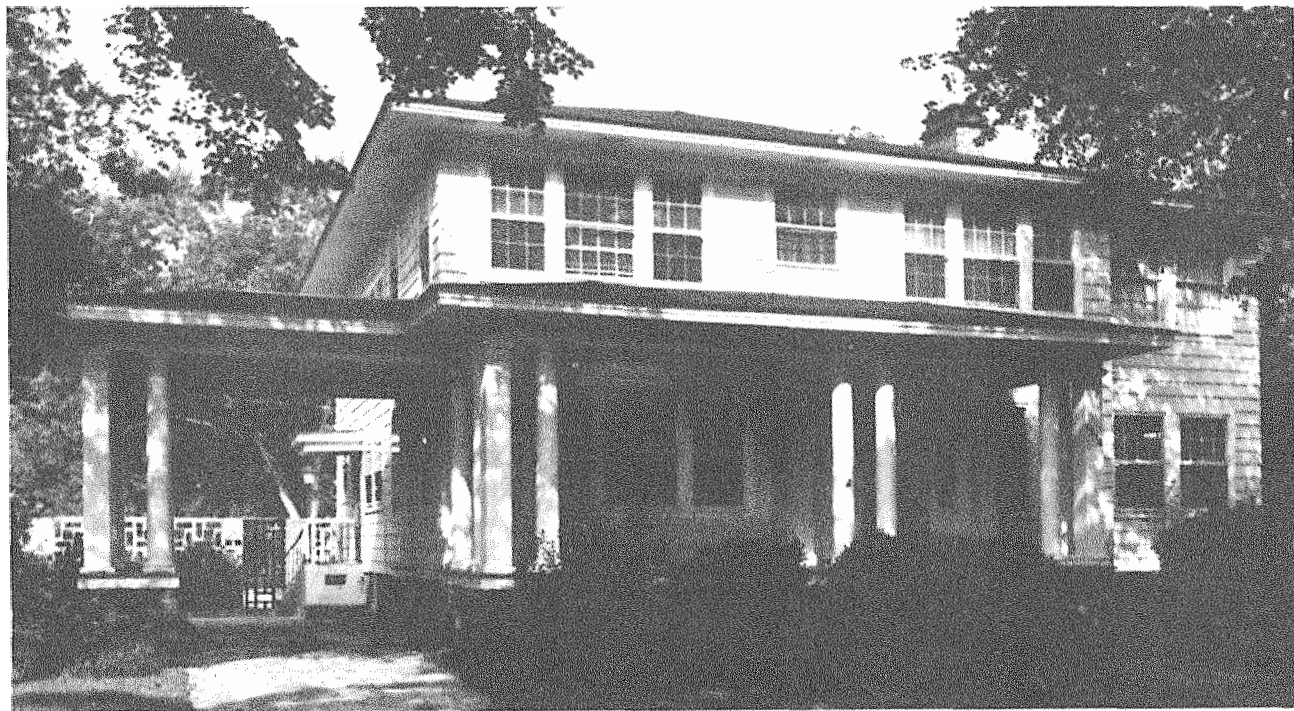
Evidently they decided Herbert had the ability to design and sketch because a receipt for \$50.00 for the first session's tuition "October 1st, 1888 to April 1st, next ensuing" was issued September 25, 1888. Payment for the second term was accepted May 3, 1889. A note

written March 20, 1890, from Mr. Frederic to Simpson states, "I am pleased to have this opportunity of expressing the good opinion I have of you. While in my office you were always careful & painstaking in work & courteous to myself & clients".

Upon completion of his studies, Simpson was offered employment by Beaver & Offmeister, Architects, in Knoxville, Tennessee. Pay for a 9-hour day was to be \$18.00 a week until he had proved himself (a month suggested). Meals could be had nearby for \$12.00 to \$20.00 a month.

By 1891 Simpson was back in New Bern and beginning the practice of his profession in his home town. The first documented Herbert Woodley Simpson house was the Christ Church Rectory, ca. 1893. This structure was demolished in the 1940's, but photographs show the Queen Anne influence and picturesque roofline still seen in several Simpson houses including another early one attributed to Simpson, the John R. B. Carraway House at 207 Broad Street, ca. 1891-93.

By the early twentieth century Simpson was New Bern's most prolific architect. The highly successful lumber business and Mr. Simpson made a fine combination, and two of his most spectacular homes were designed and built for the Messrs. Blades of the Blades Lumber Company. The extraordinary Neo-Classical Revival style James B. Blades House, later the Hotel Queen Anne, on Broad Street has unfortunately been demolished, but the elaborate Queen Anne/Colonial Revival William B. Blades House at 602 Middle Street survives as an example of the early part of New Bern's second "gilded age" and the peak of Simpson's execution of the Queen Anne style. Among the surviving examples of Simpson's impressive Neo-Classical houses are the Larry I. Moore House at 511 East Front Street, the Coor-Bishop House at 501 East Front Street, and the Charles S. Hollister House at 614 Craven Street. The latter two are total



TURNBULL HOUSE ON NATIONAL AVENUE, RIVERSIDE, DESIGNED BY H. W. SIMPSON. Photo by Conway.

remodellings of older dwellings.

Simpson did not confine himself to residential structures: he designed public buildings as well including several churches. Romanesque Revival Centenary Methodist Church was designed by Charles Granville Jones of New York City working with Simpson, who used some of the features of this church when he did Jarvis Memorial Methodist Church in Greenville. Simpson was the architect for the almost-twin Neo-Classical temple form First Church of Christ Scientist and Temple Chester B'nai Sholom, both on Middle Street. In St. Cyprian's Episcopal Church he used an early twentieth-century Gothic Revival style.

The New Bern Graded School (Moses Griffin Building) built by Simpson in 1904 and enlarged in 1908 is gone now, but it was the first local example of the twentieth-century use of Georgian Revival architecture.

Simpson also built several commercial buildings in New Bern. The Pepsi-Cola Factory and the Gaston House Hotel are no longer standing, but the Dunn Building (248-250 Craven Street), New Bern Iron Works (202-204 Craven Street), the S. Coplon Building (215-219 Middle Street), the City Water and Light Plant (First Street), and the Athens Theater (414 Pollock Street) remain.

The Athens Theater was an elegant building inside and out. While the interior has been stripped, the exterior is in the process of being uncovered and returned to its former appearance. Now called the Saax Bradbury Playhouse, it continues to furnish a place for live theater in New Bern.

Herbert Woodley Simpson was obviously a busy architect and builder. He was also a family man. He and his wife Helen had two children: a son John Archibald (named for Herbert's father) and a daughter. He was a member of Centenary Methodist Church and St. John's Lodge No. 3,

receiving a commendation, along with members of the building committee, from the latter for his "architectural knowledge and ability" which "enabled him to beautifully re-construct our building".

Simpson left New Bern in the mid-1920's to join his son at work in Norfolk, Virginia, where he was every bit as busy as he had been in North Carolina.

Herbert Woodley Simpson died in Norfolk in October 1945. His body was brought home to New Bern and buried here with full Masonic rites.

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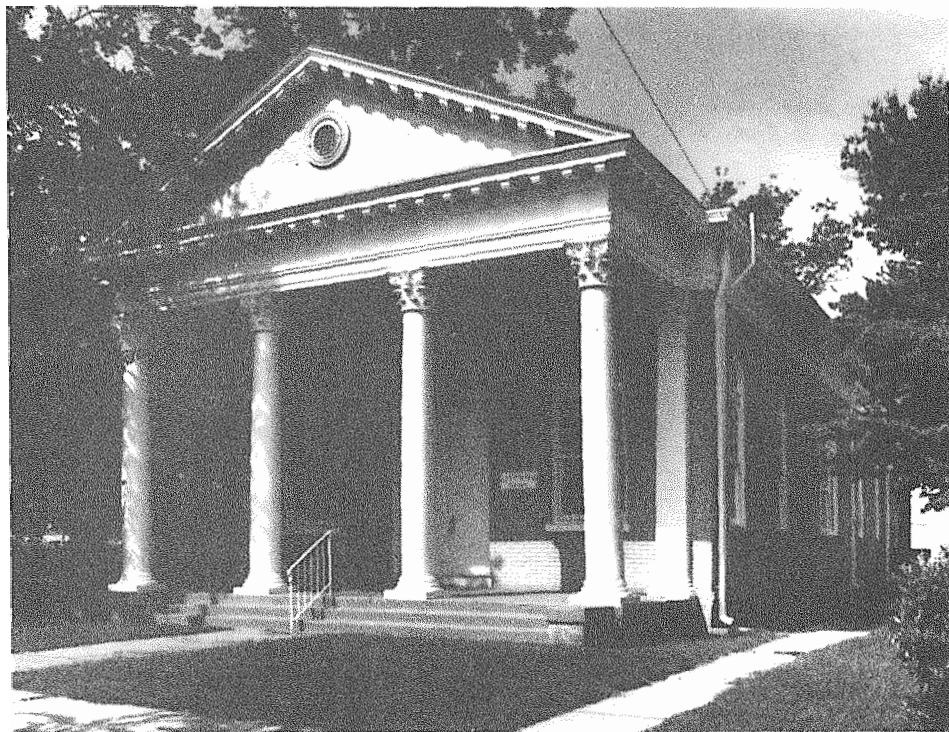
The author wishes to thank Peter Sandbeck for sharing notes and information.

## TEMPLE B'NAI SHOLOM

Mary Baker

Although there may have been Jewish people in New Bern prior to 1790, the first documented case is the death of a rabbi, Jacob Abroc, in that year. By 1840 there were several Jewish merchants living in the town, and by 1850 there was another rabbi. By the late 1800's there were 18 to 20 Jewish families living in New Bern. These people, feeling the need for a local place of worship, organized Temple Chester B'nai Sholom. In 1894 the trustees of this temple, M. Hahn, M. H. Sultan, C. Reizenstein, H. Dannenberg, and O. Marks, bought a lot on Middle Street. Herbert Woodley Simpson, who had recently designed the nearby First Church of Christ, Scientist, was asked to prepare plans for the temple. Meanwhile, services were held on the second floor of a building on the corner of Broad and Hancock, later in another second floor room on Broad Street, and finally on the second floor of one of the stores on Middle Street, about where O. Marks is now located.

In 1908 the firm of Rhodes and Underwood, New Bern builders, was awarded the contract to build the new structure. Peter Sandbeck, in his book *THE HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE OF NEW BERN AND CRAVEN COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA* states that "with the customary efficiency of contracting of the period, the new synagogue was completed in just four months". *THE SUN* of September 1, 1908, carried this account: "The lights in the Jewish Synagogue were turned on last night for the first time. The new House of Worship is a handsome structure. It is in the process of being



TEMPLE B'NAI SHOLOM AS IT STANDS ON MIDDLE STREET. Photo by Conway.

decorated with ferns, plants and potted flowers. The occasion is the Josepthal-Sultan nuptials, which will be celebrated tomorrow afternoon". An edition of September 27, 1908, carried the following announcement: "Today the Jews of this city are celebrating New Year's Day, a Jewish holiday, by closing their places of business and attending services in the new Synagogue".

For a brief period the new temple was served by lay leaders. In 1909 the congregation hired Rabbi Harry A. Merfeld at a salary of \$900 a year. He served until 1912. From 1912 until 1953 the congregation had no permanent rabbi, but during much of that time Max Goldman took care of the religious needs of the community. Student rabbis from Hebrew Union College held services during High Holy Days. In 1953 the congregation secured the services of Dr. Jerome G. Tolochko, rabbi of Temple Israel in Kinston. Services in New Bern were conducted on Tuesday evenings to accommodate the rabbi's schedule. The present rabbi, David Rose, also comes from Kinston, and services are held on the second and fourth Tuesdays.

It was in 1954 that a kitchen and classrooms were added to the rear of the building. In 1956 the temple was completely renovated and a new heating system was added. Air conditioning was also added at this time. A rededication service was held October 7, 1957, and a fiftieth anniversary service and celebration was held in January of 1959.

When the temple was first organized it was given the name of Temple Chester B'nai Sholom. There is no record regarding the choice of this name, however there is an uncorroborated story that one man gave a sum of money toward the building of the temple in memory of his son who had died. This might be born out by the name as it translates Chester, son of Sholom. Whether true or not, Chester has been dropped from the name for many years now and the temple is called



Temple B'nai Sholom.

The ladies of the temple organized under the name of Sisterhood soon after the organization of the temple. Unfortunately there are no records of these early years. Nevertheless, the Sisterhood is credited with raising the money needed to furnish the original temple. These women were also the ones who saw the need for the classrooms and kitchen, and they were the ones who did the teaching, under the direction of the rabbi. Eventually, they added Hadassah work and changed their name to Sisterhood-Hadassah.

The building, standing on Middle Street across from the old St. Paul's Catholic Church, is in the Neo-Classic style, rectangular with a pedimented portico. There are four pillars across the front porch. The centered double door has a tablet above it with the ten commandments. The door is flanked by identical 12 over 12 arch headed windows. Inside there is a small entrance vestibule and beyond that the main area for worship. At the far end is the ark containing the Torahs in beautifully embroidered covers. The doors of the ark are of clear glass embellished with golden designs, including the Star of David, the menorah, and tablets containing the ten commandments. At either side is a seven-branched candelabrum also gold toned. Overhead is a ruby glass lamp, the eternal light. The carpeting echoes this red color as do the seats. Over the seating area are two ornate plaster chandeliers. Four windows here are identical to the ones on the front. The middle windows on either side are double windows. All are of green, blue, and amber glass. The light of the setting sun pouring through these diverse colors reflects around the room giving a very special feeling.

The outside has recently undergone a renovation accomplished with the help of a Kellenberger grant. On April 16, 1908, THE SUN

reported, "The structure will be built of light press brick at a cost of \$5000. From plans and specifications, the house of worship will be a creditable building". At this time Temple B'nai Sholom looks much like the temple as originally constructed in 1908. It is indeed a "creditable building".

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The author wishes to express special thanks to Mrs. Ethel Elden and Mrs. Isabelle Vatz for their help in providing information for this article.

**THE IMPACT OF THE LUMBERING INDUSTRY ON THE  
ECONOMY OF NEW BERN AND CRAVEN COUNTY  
1710-1988**

Virginia Kirwan

Early in its history as a Swiss Colony under Baron Christoph de Graffenried, New Bern became involved in the production of timber products and in their exportation to the West Indies. The landgrave had provided a blockhouse at the junction of Mill Creek and the Trent River to protect the colony, while farther up Mill Creek he had constructed a gristmill and a sawmill. In 1733 William Wilson built a sawmill on Brices Creek. Barrel staves and naval stores were exported by the settlers in return for molasses, rum, and salt from the islands.

Before the Revolutionary War North Carolina led all other colonies in the production and export of naval stores. In 1764 records show that within the year 30,043 barrels of tar, 3,303 barrels of turpentine, 3,721 barrels of pitch, 1,279 barrels of spirits of turpentine, and 619 barrels of rosin were exported from the port of New Bern. The timber market flourished as sawmills produced sawn lumber, shingles, staves, and heading. That same year James Davis, publisher, advertised for "a person understanding a sawmill"--also for "a millwright to construct a sawmill".

Lumber products continued to be a staple export of Craven County through the port of New Bern in 1771. Pine, walnut, cypress, cedar, and red, white, and black oak were processed at sawmills and shipped out to be used in construction, shipbuilding, or in the manufacture of

finished wooden products.

During the years of the Revolutionary War shipping served as a valuable aid to the colonial cause. Emphasis of the efforts of privateers was upon providing supplies to the Continental Army. Naval stores ranked high on the list of these most necessary supplies.

The War of 1812 brought New Bern's port activities to a halt as the British paralyzed trade by imposing and enforcing a blockade.

The windmill, which many thought might serve as an alternate source of energy for New Bern's sawmills, had little chance to prove its worth because its 1819 debut coincided with the introduction of steam power to turn the wheels of industry at Naested's Union Steam Mill. Despite the advantage which steam power had to offer, New Bern's economy fell to a low ebb between 1820 and 1840. Victims of severe conflagrations in the past, many New Bernians looked upon fire as an ever-present threat to the survival of the community, deeming the use of steam for power a hazard too dangerous to chance. The Eagle Steam Mill which went into operation in 1833 was one exception to the skepticism which surrounded the use of steam as a source of energy. Fifteen years later the Union Point Steam Factory opened and produced sashes, blinds, and doors for local and export trade. The names of Samuel Radcliffe, James A. Bryan, Daniel Stimson, and Wade and Howard were associated with steam-operated mills.

George Bishop's Steam Variety Works became operative in 1850, adding sashes, blinds, doors, window and door frames and casings to the naval stores, lumber, and other wood products being exported from New Bern.

North Carolina's pre-Civil War economy was supported in no small measure by shipbuilding as well as by the previously mentioned naval stores and wood products. Thomas Sparrow was the best known of New Bern's early shipbuilders. Five of

the 26 ships built in North Carolina in 1841 were the products of New Bern shipyards. By 1850 New Bern had increased its ratio to eight of 33 of the state's shipbuilding enterprises. However, shipbuilding as an industry declined after 1855.

Sixty-eight Craven County manufacturing establishments in 1860 employed 302 workers with an annual output of \$706,144. Thirty-seven of these businesses produced turpentine, while 10 marketed distilled turpentine. Roughly speaking, these figures tell us that two-thirds of the businesses accounted for 75 percent of Craven's manufactures output that year. If sawn lumber and rosin were to be included, the resulting portion would rise to 85 percent. Hence, the impact of lumbering and affiliated businesses in pre-Civil War Craven County is clearly evident.

Two steam powered mills in New Bern produced 1,900,000 board feet of lumber in 1860. Forest industries were well-developed during this era, with slaves undergirding forestry as they did agriculture.

With the advent of the Civil War business and industry came to a standstill. New Bern fell to the Union forces in 1862 and thereafter became the seat of the Union offensive for the remainder of the war. During the latter years of the conflict Governor Edward Stanly, under military regulation, granted permission for shiploads of pine lumber to be exported to the West Indies. This action not only instilled confidence in New Bernians, but it encouraged ship owners to repair their craft. Trade in contraband items was forbidden.

Economic recovery following the cessation of hostilities was slow and difficult. The focus of manufacturing in 1867-1870 was again on naval stores and on wood products. Four steam mills shipped lumber regularly to Norfolk, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York.

As the longleaf pine forests began to disappear around 1880, the naval stores industry dwindled. However, extensive lumber operations in Craven involved "harvesting" the remaining hardwoods and softwoods. James Bryan offered for sale 50,000 acres of timberland in Craven, Carteret, and Jones Counties. Bryan also leased James City waterfront property to lumber companies and to the S. and H. Gray Company which made single-ply wooden plates.

The year 1890 saw the purchase of woodland in Craven County by the Blades Lumber Company. At the same time the Goldsboro Lumber Company bought timberland and built steam sawmills in Dover. More than 100,000,000 board feet of lumber were shipped from New Bern in 1891. Lumber and lumber-related industries ranked higher than other businesses in 1893. At that time 12 saw and planing mills in New Bern produced several hundred thousand board feet of lumber daily. Two large shingle mills and two barrel factories satisfied the needs of an agricultural society in a rural area.

Throughout the years the transportation of lumber and other goods from their sources to New Bern was a matter of great concern. The roads were poor. The ferries were unreliable. The bridges were inadequate. The Neuse and Trent Rivers were crowded with rafts of logs being towed to sawmills by tugs. Barges and other vessels were docked at mill wharves, waiting to carry lumber away. City of New Bern directories published prior to 1900 carried advertisements of mills operated by Bishop, Congdon, Cutler, Ellis, Radcliffe, Stimson, and others. The Ellis Coal and Wood Yard at Union Point advertised its wares as did the New Bern Building Supply Company. By 1900 lumber mills were being operated by among others: The Blades Lumber Company (operators of seven mills), John L. Roper Lumber Company, Pine Lumber Company, W. W. Munger, Broadus and Ives, J. S.

Basnight, S. E. Sullivan, Lokey and Cannon, and B. S. Hearn and Company.

During the first quarter of the twentieth century manufacturing in the New Bern area was again dominated by lumber and lumber products such as boxes, barrels, wooden handles, and veneers. The 1937 New Bern City Directory added these names to the ever-growing list of lumber business enterprises: Bridgeton, Ferguson Brothers, Hanks, Rowland, Slater, and the Taylor W. Granville Mill. The 1940 statistics reveal the presence of seven sawmills, four planing mills, and two veneer mills in the vicinity of New Bern.

Croatan National Forest was established in 1936, embracing 156,584 acres in Craven, Carteret, and Jones Counties for the purpose of conducting scientific experiments in restoring cutover and burned areas to timber productivity. The forest is home to many varieties of game.

The lumbering industry complied with the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 by establishing a minimum wage and a maximum workweek.

In the 1950's the manufacture of wood products retained its lead over all others in its impact on New Bern's economy. This time the building of furniture received credit for the greatest increase in employment.

In December of 1969 the Weyerhaeuser Company began the operation of a kraft market pulp mill in New Bern. This new mill uses both pine and other soft and hardwoods. The uniformity of pulp quality is monitored and controlled by an IBM computer.

Ever conscious of the environment, air and water protection equipment accounted for approximately 12.5 percent of the \$50,000,000 which the Weyerhaeuser Company spent in building the facility. The plant produces 250,000 tons of pulp annually. The market is worldwide.

A sawmill built on the New Bern site produces building studs and dimensional lumber

for the building trades.

From the standpoint of focus, the New Bern facility serves as the hub for the Weyerhaeuser Company's North Carolina operations which represent about 10 percent of their worldwide effort. Four hundred workers are employed at the New Bern plant.

Weyerhaeuser owns 600,000 acres of timberland in North Carolina, 60 percent of which has been replanted, using 650 to 750 trees per acre. The company grows its own seedlings from genetically improved seeds in a nursery at Washington in neighboring Beaufort County where approximately 40,000 trees are produced each year. Since only about 25 percent of this annual yield is needed each year, the remainder is offered for sale to other companies and to interested landowners. Land owned and leased by the company is managed on a 35-year rotation plan, with about 15,000 acres harvested annually. Weyerhaeuser also buys timber from independent loggers.

If one were to observe timber being brought to the Weyerhaeuser plant for sale, a name likely to appear on the side of a rig is that of the Gerald L. Anderson Logging Corporation of Bridgeton. Gerald Anderson, a native of Craven County and a former Weyerhaeuser employee, left the company in 1962 at which time he established his own business "from scratch". Anderson is a third-generation logger. His granddad and his father both were seasoned timbermen.

Keen business acumen combined with consistency, initiative, and innovation make Gerald Anderson's story an example of the success of the free enterprise system. His fleet of diesel-powered, long-trailer trucks are well-maintained. His facility is outfitted with sophisticated equipment which is also well cared for. He is always in search of the safest and most efficient way to accomplish the "next to impossible" task.



Anderson owns some woodland which he has replanted, but the bulk of his business is in contract cutting. He attributes much of his success in meeting a \$500,000 annual payroll to his ability in merchandizing--the talent of separating lumber according to grade. This skill his granddad John Anderson instilled in him many years ago.

Fifty-one of ninety-seven businesses in New Bern were affiliates of the lumber and wood industries in 1977.

Total sales of the forestry industry in Craven County during 1986 amounted to \$7,869,746. Their sales in 1987 yielded \$21,185,000. The latest figures available (1988) reveal that Craven County had 333,000 acres of timberland and that total sales of the forest industry, amounting to \$17,244,711, ranked third in income county-wide. Truly, lumbering remains a powerful force in New Bern's economy!

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## OF GROULIES AND GHOSTIES

Audrey Mellevold

Milton once wrote, "Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth / Unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep". For generations residents of New Bern and its surrounding areas have encountered scores of spirited sprites.

The Isaac Taylor House, constructed in 1792 by Mr. Taylor who was a planter, merchant, and ship owner, was often the scene of a woeful and wan face that silently stared out one of the downstairs windows. Some feared it to be the ghost of Miss Frances Taylor, a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Isaac Taylor. Miss Fanny, it was said by superstitious citizens, would "get 'em" if they didn't watch out. But alas, poor Fanny had indeed suffered a severe and searing shock. She had planned to wed Mr. Lewis Cannon who having "drunk tea in perfect health set off for a walk and dropt dead in the street". Upon learning the news of his death Fanny fainted. Poor, pathetic Miss Fanny without a doubt was bewitched, bothered, and bewildered.

Prior to the time it was moved to its present site, tales were told of spirits that stalked about the John Wright Stanly House. In the dark of night neighbors heard loud noises like that of chandeliers falling from the ceiling. Could this have been the ghost of Richard Dobbs Spaight warning his descendants then living in the Stanly House to vacate the premises? Spaight, the ex-Governor, had been killed by Congressman Stanly in a political duel in 1802.

Though the Bryan-Ashford House was reputedly

the scene of ghostly minuet dancers on the second floor ballroom in recent years, there have been many other stories of unaccountable occurrences. A long-time resident of the mansion, Miss Sadie Eaton, recalled that she and her mother had returned from church one evening when she was about 16. Her mother told her to stay downstairs. The mother went upstairs, and later reprimanded the girl for not remaining downstairs as she had been told. When the girl insisted she had not moved from her chair, her mother paled. Several months later the mother described the following experience to her family doctor: "While I was upstairs in my bedroom, unlighted except for moonlight, I distinctly heard Sadie coming up the stairs. She entered my room and went to my bureau, leaning over it with her head in her hands. She was so quiet and strange looking that I finally said, 'Well, why don't you say something?' To my astonishment, nobody was there. Sadie declared she had not been out of her chair. The only explanation I can make is that it must have been my daughter, Lily, who died of diptheria a few years ago."

In the same old house a friend once spent the night with Sam Eaton, Sadie's brother. Returning late from a party the guest removed his shoes and quietly climbed the stairs. As he passed Mr. Eaton's room, he heard an eerie noise followed by loud gongs. Recalling that the house was supposedly haunted, he screamed, dropped his shoes and ran to Sam's room where, fully dressed, he jumped into bed! His host quietly informed him that before striking 12 the grandfather clock on the stairway always made a peculiar loud sound.

A small child visiting in the Bryan-Ashford House restlessly called for her grandmother. When the grandmother appeared, the child could only cry out, "Lady, lady". Upon being questioned, the little girl would only say, "I

saw a lady--white like sugar".

When William Gaskins built his house at 702 East Front Street, he was a carpenter who wore work clothes with suspenders. The people now living in the house awakened one morning at 3:00 a. m. and thought a light was lit on the second floor. The light turned out to be an "apparition" of a man--a transparent man wearing khaki work clothes with suspenders. Only one person in the family saw the man, but since then the cupboard doors are heard to open and close--usually when the members of the household are upstairs. Is it possible that Mr. Gaskins is curious about the present-day carpentry done in his house? In addition to the moving doors, pennies, some dating from the 1800's, appear in the fireplace. Pennies from heaven?

At the nearby Marine Corps Air Station at Cherry Point several servicemen have met and talked to an apparition known as Miss Mary, a tiny white-haired elderly lady dressed in a long-sleeved calico dress. Legend has it that an elderly woman was forced to leave her home after her husband's death. They had been chicken farmers. Local history describes chicken farms where the marine base now stands. Miss Mary had been seen about once every six months, as recently as the 1960's, returning to the scene of her home--now the large military installation.

The Denby-Primrose House at 318 Craven Street has its share of specter-haunted yarns. It is said a slave was hanged from the rear kitchen of the house resulting in the story that the transitional Federal/Greek revival house was haunted. A happier tale claims a slave supposedly owned by the Custis family, hid in the attic of the house for several days after deciding to run away. He finally found passage on a sailing vessel heading north where it is said he became a famous preacher and author.

The late John Holland told a polemic parrot

parody of the former Clark House also on Craven Street. Late one evening in 1921, as he kept watch in the house following the death of Dr. J. D. Clark, he grew sleepy and decided to put more coals on the fire. From where he sat he could look across the hall and see the coffin holding Dr. Clark's body. Just after dropping the coals, he heard loud chattering which seemed to come from the room where the coffin rested. Stealthily he walked to the door to see if the corpse had come to life. There was no ghostly specter to be seen, but again he heard more chatter. He could see a white object on the floor. Cautiously Holland lifted the cloth covering it and to his utter astonishment found Dr. Clark's parrot in its cage. The bird had been wakened by the loud noise of the coals dropping on the fire. Holland thought he heard the bird say, "Get it from Kress". More likely he was singing, "I ain't got no body".

And so the eerie tales of specters and disembodied spirits go on and on, but in the words of an old Scottish prayer, "From ghoulies and ghosties and long-leggety beasties And things that go bump in the night, Good Lord, deliver us!"

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## BOOK REVIEW

NORTH CAROLINA--A HISTORY, by William S. Powell. (Chapel Hill, N. C.: University of North Carolina Press. Reprinted 1988 with additions to the first edition, originally printed 1977 by W. W. Norton, New York. Illustrations and bibliography. 231 pp. Paper, \$9.25.)

Originally published as a Bicentennial project, part of a 51-volume series covering every state in the Union, this book is a high quality updated reprint now available at a remarkably low price. The author is Professor Emeritus of history at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and thus is well qualified academically and by experience to relate four centuries of North Carolina history. A reviewer frequently approaches a book written by an academic historian with a fear of being bored by endless recitations of well-researched facts that seem to be drained of actual life. After the first few paragraphs, any trepidation which I may have had was eliminated by Professor Powell's lucid and very readable treatment of the subject. The text is as enjoyable as many romantic novels or detective thrillers and of course a good deal more informative.

Presenting a comprehensive history starting with sixteenth century explorations of English, French, and Spanish adventurers searching the treacherous coasts of North America for a passage to the Orient up to the present day is an intimidating task. The author plunges into his subject quickly with unerring skills, and the final result enables the reader to grasp the turmoil and triumphs that have made the North

Carolina we know today. Little that has helped shape the state is overlooked in this tidy volume. It will be of greatest interest to newcomers now resident in the state and to those outside the state who do not have the good fortune to live here. However, it should not be overlooked by those native born, and as a quick and easy reference it would be a useful addition to any library. Almost anyone with an interest in the history of "the Old North State" can benefit from this concise work and come away with a greater understanding of what North Carolina has been and is now. Events both great and small are simply explained and placed in context of the times and the different causes which generated them. Regional and geographical variations are also recognized in the events where they played a part.

On two occasions, a century apart, North Carolina has faced the grim realities of armed conflict on its soil. On both occasions, during the revolutionary war and the civil war, the population was not unanimous in its sympathies. Brother did fight against brother, groups from similar ethnic backgrounds fought on both sides, and from these experiences emerged a diversity of thought and action which is evident even now within the state. While the use of weapons is seldom encountered in the political struggles of today, debates centering on courses of action hinge on word wars of considerable heat. The author's philosophical approach is based on how much of this diversity began in armed conflict and continues to the present day.

Incidents illustrating the resolution of differing opinions form the main text of the book, and most are told in brief anecdotal stories. Yet the thread of continuity is never lost; each occurrence is related to another in a way that the overall view is never far away. Some of the earliest debates began when state borders were being laid out, and each of the



former colonies along the Atlantic seaboard tried to claim as much land as possible from their neighbor states. In fact, Virginia and Georgia both tried "land grabs", and the matter was not resolved until the 1820's. With borders reaching nearly 500 miles inland, geography has also entered into the diversity of opinion within the state: seldom have dwellers of the coastal plain seen eye to eye with the woodsmen of the mountainous areas. Those resident in the piedmont have often found fault with the other two groups. Incidents to illustrate these regional differences are liberally used throughout the book.

The breadth of historical events which are covered is almost unlimited, an example being the precedent-setting Bayard versus Singleton case, in which land claims resulting from the revolutionary war established that the courts could adjudicate on legislative actions. The final decision became a fundamental principle of American constitutional law. Even more controversial subjects, such as the beginnings of the Ku Klux Klan in North Carolina, are explained in the context of the post civil war political scene. Education, agriculture, health care, political parties, civil rights, industry, and legislation are all a part of the broader picture covered by Professor Powell. For anyone who wishes to grasp a wide, easily absorbed history of North Carolina, I can recommend this book highly.

Jim Gunn