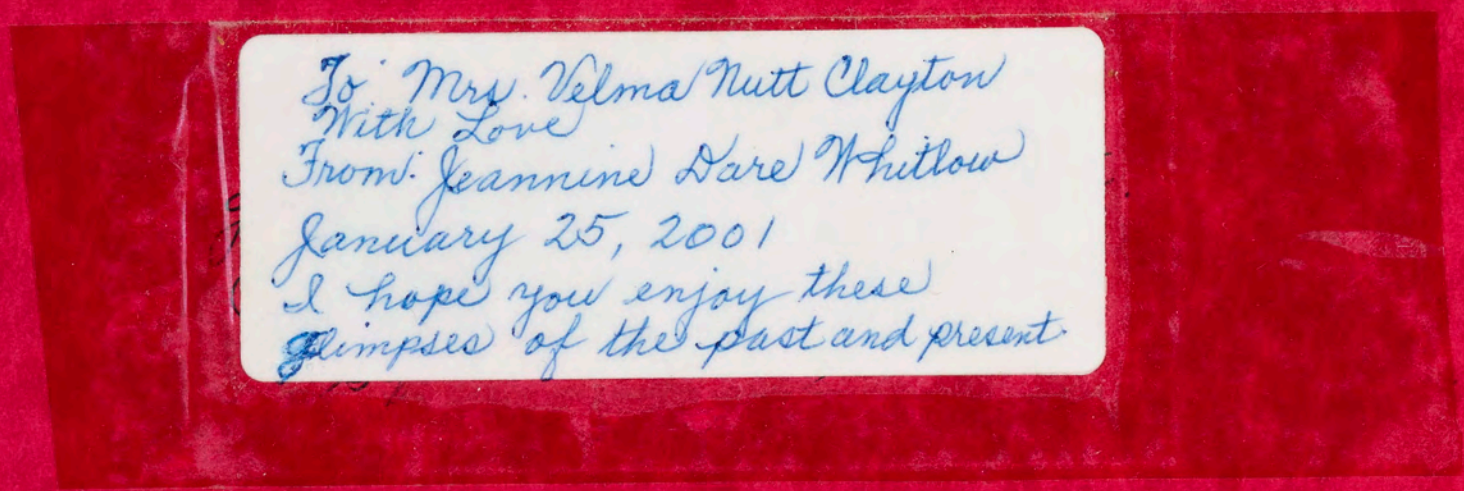
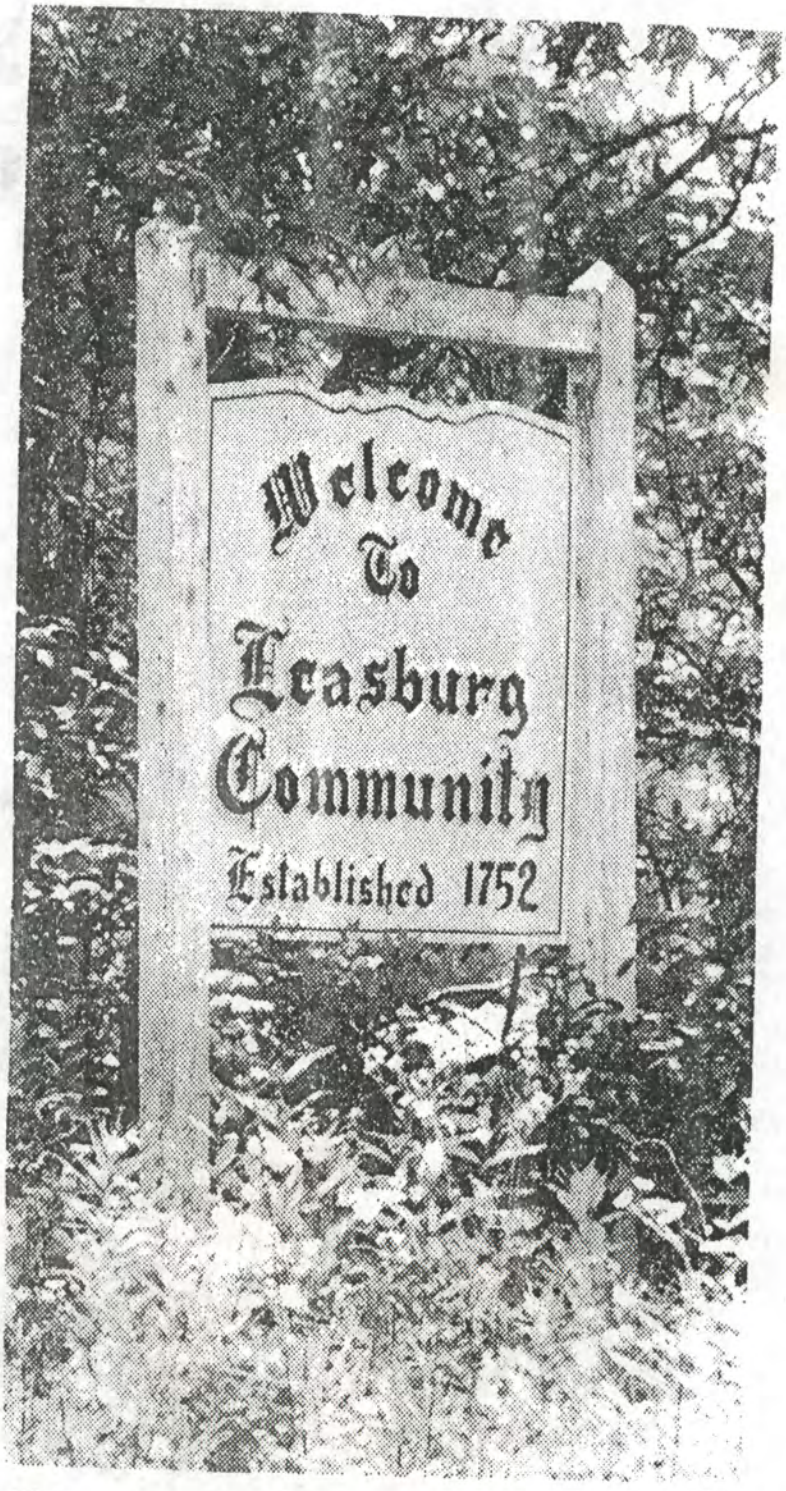
History, Stories, Pictures of Leasburg, N.C. and its People---

Mrs. Velma R. Clayton

(From the Collection of Jeannene D. Patterson January 25, 2001.)


To: Mrs. Velma Nutt Clayton
With Love
From: Jeannine Dare Whitlow
January 25, 2001
I hope you enjoy these
glimpses of the past and present

2010.26



The first Welcome to Leasburg sign. Painted by Mrs. Mary E. Stanfield Rittenbury in the late 1950s or early 1960s.

LITTLE VILLAGE 'MONG THE HILLS
LEASBURG, N. C.

Oh, little village 'mong the hills,
So quiet, free from din.
By many, sheltered here in youth,
It has deserted been.
The lure of the big world outside,
Was too strong to resist.
They fancied if they stayed on here,
They merely would exist.

What little worth while could achieve
In this restricted sphere,
Small chance to win a name or wealth,
The things the world holds dear;
And so these sons, ambitious grown,
From this small village went
To found new homes in distant fields,
On enterprise intent.

And some succeeded in their aim,
The "pot of gold" some found;
Some honor won in places high;
Some e'en became renowned.
But whether prosperous or not-
The victims of earth's ill-
Oh, never once forgotten was
This village 'mong the hills.

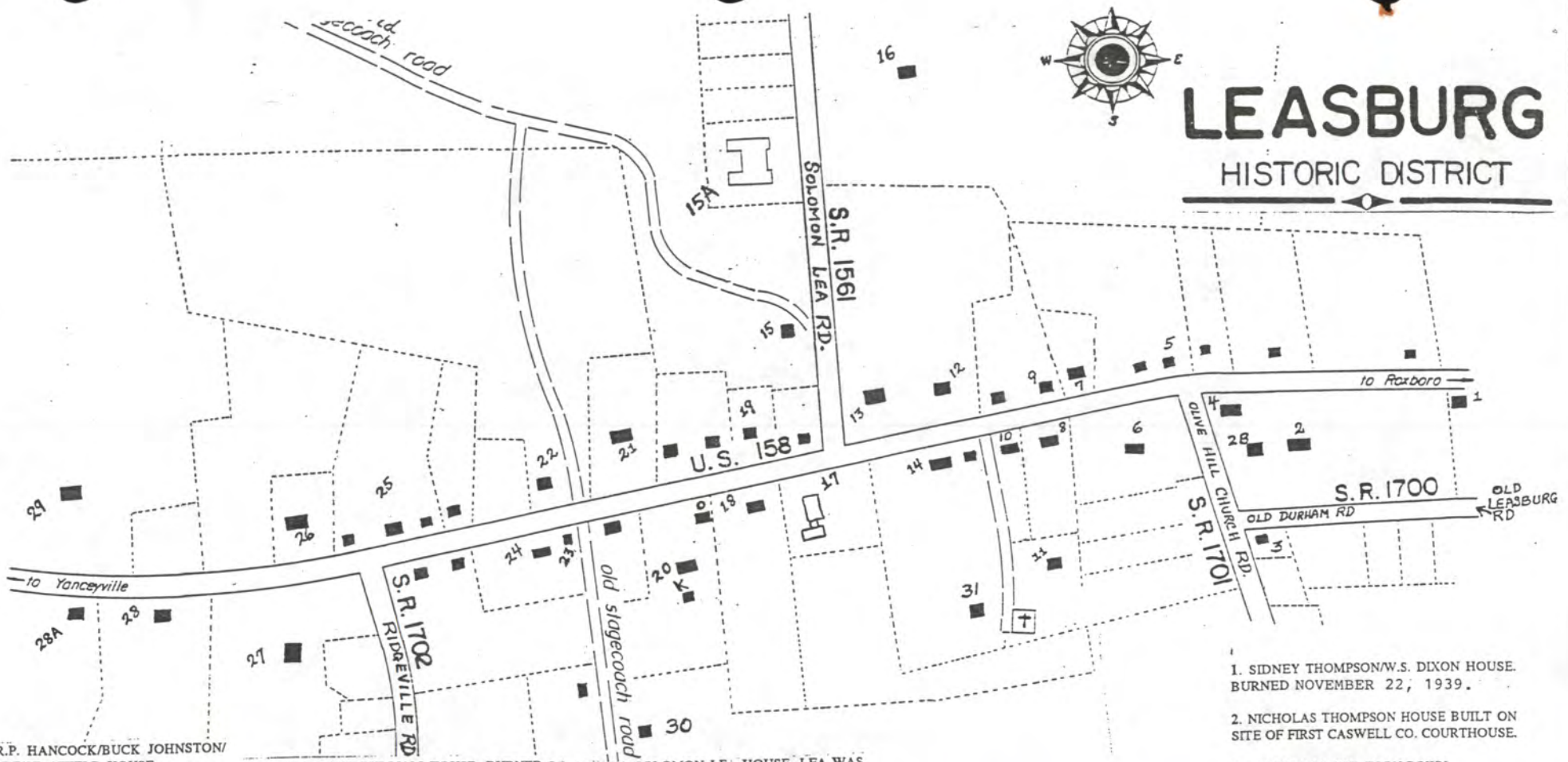
And what of those who here remained?
What did they lose or gain?
Life here was one of quietness,
Free from nerve-racking strain.
And though no fortunes big were made;
Acquired enormous wealth,
There was abundance; also was
Enjoyed the best of health.

This little village, country like
Is very, very old;
Almost two centuries old as has
Been often said and told;
But still 'tis much the same--the same
Old place we used to know.
The church bell rings! To services
Its worthy people go.

I love this village 'mong the hills-
My good fore fathers' home-
And oh, I'm never satisfied,
When far from it I roam.
I yearn so for familiar sights,
I can't contented be,
Until I get back home again,
These hills once more to see.

By Miss Wilhelmina Lea, Born Nov. 9, 1843, Died June 23, 1936,
Daughter of Solomon and Sophia (Ainger) Lea.

LEASBURG
HISTORIC DISTRICT



1. SIDNEY THOMPSON/W.S. DIXON HOUSE. BURNED NOVEMBER 22, 1939.

2. NICHOLAS THOMPSON HOUSE BUILT ON SITE OF FIRST CASWELL CO. COURTHOUSE.

3. TERRELL HOUSE. TORN DOWN.

4. P.T. 1809 TAVERN/HOLDEN'S HOTEL. TORN DOWN.

5. JEFFERSONWHITFIELD/W.R. HAMBRICK STORE. TORN DOWN.

6. William Archer Lea, Benj.F.Stanfield, DR. JACOB THOMPSON/BOSHAMER/ALBERT & JOSIE WADE & ROBERT H. CROWDER, SR.

7. W.R. HAMBRICK/REV.MARCUS THOMAS/ AND FRANK P. DIXON HOUSE.TORN DOWN.

8. CULBRETH?/SALLY HOUSE. TORN DOWN.

9. CULBRETH'S BUGGY SHOP. TORN DOWN.

10. HAMBRICK/HEDGEPATH/MRS. NANNIE STEPHENS HOUSE.

11. OLD BRICK ACADEMY, A BOARDING SCHOOL FOR MALES (1835). TORN DOWN. COMMUNITY CEMETERY NOW ON SITE.

12. BUCK PAYLOR/H.T. CONNALLY STORE. TORN DOWN IN 1950s.

13. DR. J.A.STANFIELD/H.T.CONNALLY HOUSE.

14. JOHN HAMBRICK/WALTER CONNALLY HOUSE.

15. REV. SOLOMON LEA HOUSE. LEA WAS FIRST PRESIDENT OF GREENSBORO COLLEGE, 1845-1847, AND FOUNDER OF SOMERVILLE FEMALE INSTITUTE.

15A. SOMERVILLE FEMALE INSTITIUTE, 1848-1892. SOLOMON LEA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BUILT ON APPROXIMATE SITE OF SOMERVILLE INSTITUTE.

16. JAMES LEA/B.GREEN PULLIAM/AND ROBERT I. NEWMAN HOUSE.

17. METHODIST CHURCH. FRAME CHURCH REPLACED BY BRICK BUILDING, 1953.

18. OLD METHODIST PARSONAGE.

19. W. J. PULLIAM'S STORE.

20.FULLER/WJ PULLIAM HOUSE. BURNED 1960s OR EARLY 1970s. NEW HOME ON SITE. OLD OFFICE STILL STANDS IN FRONT AND OLD KITCHEN, BEHIND HOUSE.

21. ADDISON LEA/JOHN C. WILKERSON/ WALTER L. THOMAS /JOE SMITH HOUSE.

22. W. L .THOMAS/S. P. NEWMAN STORE. TORN DOWN IN 1940s.

23. J.T.BRADSHER STORE. MOVED TO NEW SITE THEN BURNED EARLY 1970s.

24. JAMES MALONE/J. T. BRADSHER/AND JOHN W. STEPHENS HOUSE.

25. ADDIE STEPHENS/ASHLEY BRIGGS HOUSE.

26. LEA/R.P. HANCOCK/BUCK JOHNSTON/ WILL WADE/STANFIELD HOUSE.

27. BAYNES/JEFFERSON WHITFIELD/WILL WADE/S. P. NEWMAN HOUSE.

28. BENJAMIN F.STANFIELD, SR., HOUSE.

28A.OLD KITCHEN WHICH STOOD BEHIND BEN F. STANFIELD HOUSE.

29.GABRIEL LEA/BUCK PAYLOR/VINCENT MORTON/VOSS M. STEPHENS HOUSE.

30. WILLIAM LEA HOUSE. BURNED ABOUT 1935. "BILLY" LEA, BORN IN 1776, WAS THE FATHER OF SOLOMON LEA.

31. R.P.HANCOCK AND PAYLOR TOBACCO FACTORY. TORN DOWN IN 1940s.

EARLY DESCRIPTION OF LEASBURG

Note: This description is given entering Leasburg from the east side on Hwy 158. To follow the line of travel described, and to locate the homes still standing, turn left off Hwy 158 onto Old Leasburg Road, #1180, a narrow dirt road from the Person Co. side, parallel to Hwy 158. This was once the main road into Leasburg before Hwy 158 was built. After passing the George N. Thompson home, turn right onto Olive Hill Church Rd. and then turn left back onto Hwy 158 heading west.

The author of these mid-1800s reminiscences is not known. Reprinted, from an earlier Roxboro, N.C. newspaper, the article appeared in THE COURIER-TIMES newspaper in the 1980s or 1990s. It was signed only "Sis".)

March, 1911.....Ruminating and pondering over the past, my thoughts naturally turn to dear old Leasburg, where I spent most of my school days. What a change forty-nine or fifty years have wrought. Almost all who lived there then are dead or have moved away. I will begin on the east end of town and go on up and see the changes. Well, just after crossing Cobb Creek, on the right was (1.) Mrs. Sidney Thompson and family. They are all gone. Mr. W. S. Dixon now owns the place and makes it his home.

The next dwelling on the same side, was (2.) Lawyer G. N. Thompson's; he is gone, but his widow and children occupy the old home. Next on the left a man by the name of (3.) Terrell, who made furniture. He didn't live there long, the old house is nearly gone. On the right where (4.) William Stanfield (Col.) now lives, was Mrs. Holden's Hotel. On same side of street was (5.) Jeff. Whitfield's Store afterwards owned and used by W. R. Hambrick but not used now. Opposite the old store (6.) Dr. Jacob Thompson lived. The Dr. was young then, and hadn't lived there very long. A Mr. Boshamer lived there before. Mr. Al Wade owns it now and resides there.

Over across the street where (7.) Rev. M. C. Thomas lives, was built many years later, by W. R. Hambrick, who made it his home for several years. We will cross the street again to the left and view the remains of the (8.) old Culbreth residence. They kept Hotel and Mrs. Culbreth sold confectioneries. (9.) Mr. Culbreth's buggy shop was right across from the dwelling where he did all kinds of repairing. Part of the old house is still standing, but the old shop is gone long ago.West of Culbreths on the left a (10.) Mr. Hedgepath lived. He didn't stay there many years. Then the place went from one to another 'til now Mrs. Nannie Stephens owns the place and lives there. A little southwest from Mrs. Stephens was the old Blacksmith shop. We children used to stop at the door and think it great fun to see "Uncle Watt" beat the red-hot iron and make the sparks fly. A few yards south of the old shop was (11.) the old "Brick Academy" where the male school was taught. The Academy was on the edge of the Cemetery. It is all gone. Not a sign of it is there. I think there are graves where the Academy stood. It makes one sad to see how fast the cemetery is filling up.

Now we will go back to Main Street. On the right was (12.) Mr. Buck Paylor's Store, now owned and run by H. T. Connally. Next on the right was (13.) Dr. (J.A.) Stanfield's residence. Mrs. Stanfield was a great lover of flowers and had a great many. Mr. H. T. Connally owns the place now and lives there with his family. Right opposite Mr. Connally's, (14.) Mr. John Hambrick lived. Afterwards, Dr. Stanfield made it into a store and sold goods there for a while. Then it was made into a dwelling again and now Mr. Walter Connally lives there.

Now we will turn the corner and go toward the Academy *(Somerville Female Institute)* , the dear old place where I spent so many happy hours. The school was taught by Rev. Solomon Lea and his daughters; Mrs. Lea, teaching the music class.

On the left as you go to the Academy (**15A.**) *(Somerville Female Institute),* was the dwelling of (**15.**) Rev. Solomon Lea, with several outhouses for the girl boarders to stay in. The school was a flourishing one in those days. They came from all over the country far and near and many had to board. A daughter and son of Rev. Solomon Lea still occupy the old home.

Up in a grove of large oaks, a little northeast of the Academy,*(Somerville Female Institute)* lived (**16.**) Mr. Green Pulliam with his family. Mr. Bob Newman lives there now. Now we will retrace our steps back to Main Street again. On the left a little distance from the street stands (**17.**) the Methodist Church, with a beautiful lawn on the front. Next on the same side is (**18.**) the parsonage, the home of the preacher. Kingsberry, I think, was on the circuit at that time. Norman just having left. Across from the parsonage is the store of (**19.**) W. J. Pulliam, but it was not there in the early sixties. Where (**20.**) Mr. W. J. Pulliam now lives was the home of R. John Fuller and his two sisters, Mary Ann and Lizzie. Across from there on the right (**21.**). Mr. John Wilkerson lived. Mr. W. L. Thomas lives there now. (**22.**) Mr. Thomas' Store was built since then and (**23.**) J. T. Bradsher's Store was, too. Opposite W. L. Thomas' Store, (**24.**) Mr. Malone lived with his family. Now owned and occupied by J. T. Bradsher's widow and children. On the right a little farther up, (**25.**) Mr. Addie Stephens lives. His house was not built then. On the same side was the home of (**26.**) Mr. Bob Hancock. Afterwards owned and occupied by Mr. Buck Johnson. Mr. Will Wade lives there now. Up in a nice grove on the left is the home of (**27.**) Mr. Pink Newman. Mr. Jefferson Whitfield used to live there. Next on the left in another nice grove, (**28.**) Mr. Ben Stanfield lived. He was the father to the Mr. Ben F. Stanfield who lives there now and grandfather of Brother Ben E. Stanfield, the preacher. Opposite on the right, (**29.**) Mr. Buck Paylor lived. Mrs. Vince Morton now owns and resides there. Now we will go back and turn the corner at J. T. Bradsher's Store and go down to the old homeplace of (**30.**) Mr. Billy Lea, father of Rev. Solomon Lea. I suppose Leasburg was named for the Lea family who were among the first to settle there. Mr. Billy Lea was an old man when he died being something over ninety.

He must have been a very active man for one of his age. I can remember seeing him ride horseback not many years before he died. (He was 97 when he died. JDW)

I have written right much about Leasburg and I am afraid this will find its way into the waste basket. But I must say Leasburg has always been a nice little town and is yet. Nowhere on earth do nicer people live than in and around Leasburg. --SIS--

(**Note**: The person who wrote this description is not known. It was copied from a Roxboro, N.C., newspaper published in 1911 and reprinted in another edition many years later. I have numbered each building to correspond with the attached numbered map I made of historic houses in the village.

See AN INVENTORY OF HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE, CASWELL COUNTY, for pictures, descriptions and approximate dates of existing structures of these and other Caswell County buildings. Jeannine D. Whitlow)

MORE ABOUT THE BUILDINGS IN THE EARLY DESCRIPTION OF LEASBURG

1. This home, built by Sidney Thompson, later owned by Will S. Dixon, Sr., was a very fine home.(See details in Will Dixon's "The Leasburg I Knew"). Richard Duncan bought the farm, but the house burned Nov. 22, 1939, before the family of Phillip Ramsey, (tenants) moved out. Close to the site, Duncan then built the small stucco house he and his family lived in many years. Doretha Paylor rents it. Husband, Herbert, double amputee, is in nursing home.

2. Nicholas Thompson, father of Attorney George N. Thompson, built this house he named "Liberty Hall," before 1810 on site of the first Caswell Couny Courthouse at Leasburg before Person Co. was formed in 1792. Caswell County's Seat was moved to Yanceyville and Roxboro was the new Person County Seat. The last Nicholas Thompson descendant to live here, Miss Ella Thompson, died Jan. 18, 1970. House was sold to Carolyn Thomas. She did remodeling and repairing. Her son, James Upchurch lived there next, then Guy and Margaret Hill. The Hills sold it to Dwight and Susan Bellinger of Hillsborough, N. C. A pantry door in the house came out of the old Caswell Co. Courthouse as did some materials used in the little law office which stands to the west side facing the house. Jacob Thompson, born 5-15-1810, upstairs over the dining room, moved to Mississippi, got into politics, was Secretary of the Interior 1857-1861 in Buchanan's administration. During the Civil War, he was a Confederate spy in Canada.

3. Terrell house. House is gone and the site of it is no longer remembered.

4. William Stanfield dwelling and Holden's Hotel, was a two-story building with "P.T. 1809" inscribed on a brick in each of the east and west chimneys. Originally, a Tavern, it was on Hwy 158 behind the Nicholas Thompson house. Carolyn Thomas sold it about 1978 to be torn down and moved. Materials from it were seen later in a 1982 issue of THE COUNTRY ALMANAC magazine showing mantelpieces being used in new homes.

5. Jefferson Whitfield's Store. This building is gone now, but it was located on the east side of Janie Wade Graves' house. Her son, Bobby Graves, now owns the property. Hank and Terry Davis lived in the house that was built west of the store, but other renters live there in 2000. After Whitfield no longer operated his store, the Hambricks ran it and had a drug store there before they moved to Roxboro and opened Hambrick & Austin Drug Store.

6. House of William Archer Lea, (1786-1843), was built about 1810. Mr. Lea, great uncle of Solomon Lea, lived there until his death. Ben F. Stanfield lived in it the next 20 years, then Dr. Jacob Thompson, Civil War surgeon, the next 50 years. It was bought by James Albert and Josephine P. Wade in the early 1900s. After Al Wade died in 1943 and his wife, "Miss" Josie, in 1955, it was sold at public auction for $2,500 to William C. Ham of Martinsville, Va., who removed all of the ornate interior woodwork, chair railing, staircases, flooring, fine mantelpieces, (one carved with an eagle and 23 stars), and even one exterior chimney, all of which he transported to Martinsville, Va., to go into a home he was building. Robert Crowder, Sr., bought the house about 1958 and rebuilt the interior to make it liveable, but not back to its original grandeur. Mr. Ham had almost stripped it. Once, it was a very tall house, having a basement, two full floors above and an attic one could stand up in. Before the Wades owned it, the roof had been lowered some, but out of necessity it was lowered to one and a half stories after Mr. Ham removed staircases and materials that made up the upper stories. Robbie, son of Robert Crowder, Sr., now lives there with his family.

7. Rev. M.C. Thomas' house was torn down in late 1980s or early 1990s. Located between Josephine Allen's house and Bobby Graves' east of it, only the front steps remain. After Frank P. Dixon's death, it was rented out. Jesse Slaughter, Solomon Lea School principal, lived there briefly in the late 1930s or early 1940s.

8. The Culbreth residence might have been the Lex Sally house or one nearby. If it was the Sally house, ruins can still be seen in front of Willie Smith's house. and **9.** The Culbreth Buggy Shop was probably across the road in vicinity of Connally's Store.

10. The Hedgepath house is the little house with the front porch removed, also owned by Willie Smith. It stands on the corner of Hwy 158 and the Leasburg Community Cemetery road. Oral tradition says that the Captain of the Leasburg Grays, John Turner Hambrick, lived here with his family. This house is believed to have been built before 1810. For a while the Leasburg Post Office was located in this house. William Hambrick served as postmaster from Jan. 30, 1882 until his daughter became postmaster and served from 1893 until 1900. His granddaughter, Mary Stanfield Rittenbury, was postmaster from about 1960 to 1965.

11. Old Brick Academy for Boys was on the site of the Leasburg Community Cemetery. When the grave was being dug for Mrs. Voss Stephens, (nee Annie Dixon), a brick wall was struck which was believed to be some of the foundation of the Academy. No outward ruins are visible showing where it stood. The earliest marked graves in the cemetery of William Lea and Betsey Darby are dated 1806 as their date of death.

12. Buck Paylor's Store and H. T. Connally's Store. This store, built about the middle 1800s was torn down by Nathan Seamster in the 1960s. He salvaged and sold many of the sturdy materials in it, which included some huge beams. Some of the Connally's Store fixtures donated to the museum in Greensboro, N. C. are on display there. The steps from Hwy 158 up the steep incline to the store are overgrown but can still be seen if one looks closely.

13. Dr. Josiah Asbury Stanfield's and H. T. Connally's home. After H. T. Connally's daughter, Mildred, died this house was sold to Carlton and Jennie Kimbro. They restored it and adapted it to a more modern-day use. The Kimbros sold it to James Lamberth who lived there about 9 years. The Craig Hoxie family bought it in 1994 and live there now. The house and grounds are surrounded by a wrought iron fence. The antebellum kitchen and a log smokehouse still stand behind the house.

14. Dr. Stanfield's Store and John Hambrick house. Robert W. and Mary Owen Newman Fuller now own this house. It was owned and occupied many years by the family of Walter E. Connally, and his wife, Eugenia Underwood Connally, who was a school-teacher. Their only surviving son, Julian Connally, sold the house to the Fullers after his parents' deaths.

15. Rev. Solomon Lea house. Solomon Lea was the first president of Greensboro College from 1845 to 1847. He resigned that position and came back to Leasburg where he founded the Somerville Female Institute which was in operation from 1848 to 1892. This is the site of that Institute and the grounds on which dormitories stood to house some of the young ladies who came from all over the South to attend it. When the first Confederate troops left Leasburg to enter the Civil War May 1, 1861, there was a gathering and send-off for those young men who volunteered. (See RECOLLECTIONS by Miss Ella Thompson.) This house has sheltered many families since Solomon Lea's daughter, Miss Wilhelmina Lea died. Some of the families who lived here were those of Kelly O. Brewer, Dorsey Denny, William D. Weaver, and presently descendants of Curtis and Florence Clayton own it but do not live there.

16. Green Pulliam, Robert Ira Newman house. This is the house Brandon Newman now lives in. Before him, his grandfather, Robert I. Newman, and then his father, Robert P. Newman, lived here. It is said to be one of the oldest, if not <u>the</u> oldest house in Leasburg. Said to have been built by James Lea before 1810, George Lea, once lived there. Oral tradition says the large oaks in the yard sprang from acorns brought from England.

17. The Leasburg United Methodist Church. Built in 1953 when Edward F. Smith was the pastor, this is the second Methodist Church on this site. The first Methodist church Leasburg built was Bethany in 1836, about a mile and a half north of the village on what is now the

Solomon Lea Road. Later the old Brick Academy, because it was nearer, began to be used for Sunday School and worship services. About 1857 it was decided that a church should be built here. At the same time the first Masonic Lodge in Caswell County was chartered in Leasburg, so with the cooperation of the Masons, a plain two-story building was erected. The first floor was to be used for worship services and the upper floor, for the Masons. When the Masons no longer used the upper floor, the church was remodeled to look more like a church. It was a neat, one-story, white frame building that sat farther back from the road than the present church.

18. The Methodist Church Parsonage. This was the parsonage until the new brick one was built in the 1960s on the east side of the church next to #14, Robert Fuller's home. Then James Raymond Bradsher, Jr., bought Leasburg's first parsonage and still lives there.

19. W. J. Pulliam's Store. This old store building, much remodeled, was one of the sites of the Leasburg Post Office. Jerry Dixon was acting postmaster from 1940 until 1945 while he and his brother ran the store. No longer used as a store, Curtis and Rosie Martin re-modeled it and lived there. (They put it up for sale, July, 1999.)

20. Built by R. John Fuller for himself and sisters, Mary Ann and Lizzie, later sold to W. J. Pulliam family. House burned in late 1960s or early 1970s when Catherine Averette Briggs owned it. She built the present home on the same site. The old plantation "office" and kitchen still survive. The office was used as Leasburg's post office by postmasters, Miss Mattie Pulliam and Mrs. Mary Stanfield Rittenbury, until 1966. George Henderson, Jr., and wife, Kim, bought the property, added onto the house and live there with their son, Jamie.

21. Mr. John C. Wilkerson's home. Addison Lea, Methodist minister and brother of Solomon Lea, owned it before Mr. Wilkerson. (Addison Lea, born Jan. 29, 1813, was the youngest of William Lea's five sons. He graduated from Randolph-Macon College. After graduation, he entered the ministry. In 1852, he left Leasburg and became president of Aberdeen College in Aberdeen, Mississippi.) Addison Lea, having left Leasburg in 1852, the house had to be built before 1860. It has had many owners since Mr. Lea and Mr. Wilkerson. The ones I know are: Walter Lea Thomas, Joe Smith, nieceClara Hodges who never lived there, Edwin and Ruth Dixon, Arnold Lea, Carl Manfield, Stephen and Judy Carscadden, Michael and Sandra Durden, and the present owners, Justin and Karen Everrett bought it in 1994.

22. The Walter L. Thomas Store. This was a large two-story structure just west of the John C. Wilkerson home described above. It had a porch on each level which wrapped around the front and the east sides. On the lower level there was a stock of general merchandise and it also served as Leasburg's Post Office from 1900 to 1912 when Walter L. Thomas owned the store and was postmaster. S. P. Newman bought the store from Mr. Thomas and and was postmaster also from 1912 to1927. Besides whatever else was on the second floor, there were coffins in stock. This building was torn down in the late 1940s by Mr. Clyde Arvin who used some of the materials to build a house for his family on the same lot the store had occupied. That house became infested with termites when Leslie Yeatts owned it and he tore it down. Except for the well house, the lot is vacant.

23. The J. T. Bradsher Store and **24**. The Malone House. The store was in the corner of the old stagecoach road to Hillsborough and Hwy 158, on the east side of the house James Malone built in 1861. J. T. Bradsher bought the house sometime after the Malones lived there. John W. Stephens, Sr., was the next owner. After the death of both John Stephens, Sr., and his wife, Nancy, it was sold to the Stephen Weber family who lived there a few years before being transferred to the coast of N. C. The next owners, Harvey and Myrtle Brooks Kirby, did extensive remodeling, built all the outbuildings now located there, and sold the property to Robert Saxton July, 1999. Saxton sold it to Geoffrey and Laurie Casner Family in April, 2000.

25. The Addie Stephens house is located across from Leasburg Grocery and the Ridgeville Road. Mr. Stephens was a Justice of the Peace for many years. Ashley Briggs and his wife, Mary Henry, owned the house for a long time. It still belongs to the family of his deceased son, Curtis, and has been rented to Mexican migrants for several years.

26. The Bob Hancock, Buck Johnson, and Will Wade house. The house is now owned by the Charles and Janie Smart family. Dr. Wesley Stanfield owned it for a number of years. His mother and two brothers lived there. Later his sister, Mary Stanfield Rittenbury, moved back to Leasburg and made it her home. James and Clara Marklew bought it after Mrs. Rittenbury's death and did extensive remodeling. Aluminum siding was put on the outside which covered up the fan and transom windows at the front door and replaced the old windows put together with pegs. The west side of the house is the oldest and was probably built before 1810.

27. The S. Pink Newman and Jefferson Whitfield house belonged to Barbara Baynes house before William H. Wade bought it in 1897 with six acres of land for $430.00. Mr. Wade sold it to S. P. Newman in 1901. Until then only the Federal-style part of the house on the north existed. The two-story Victorian-style wing on the south side facing Hwy 158 was added after Mr. Newman bought it. After S.P. Newman's death, his son, William J. Newman' and his family lived there until Nov. 1, 1993, when his wife, Wilma, who survived him, died. Robert and Karr Lynne Johnson bought it and live there with children, Dwight and Frances Kate.

28. The Benjamin F. Stanfield house, built about 1860, has had many owners. Others lived there and rented the house. The John N. Robbins family lived there when he was principal of Solomon Lea School. The Hester family lived there a while as did Alex Denny's family later. When Camp Butner was built in the early 1940s, Herman Gray's land there was taken for the camp and he bought the house. After his death, his son, Ernest and first wife, Linda, owned it and lived there. When they moved, Jeannine Whitlow rented it several years. Now Raymond Coleman and his wife, Janie Lou Gray Coleman, sister of Ernest Gray, own it and live there. They added tan and brown siding to the frame house, and removed the wrap-around porch, but began building it back in September, 1999. A storm blew a large oak onto the house in the late 1990s. Other large trees in the front yard have been removed also.

29. The Buck Paylor and Vincent Morton house was originally the home of Gabriel Lea, believed to have been built before 1810 and said to be a regular stopping place for Francis Asbury, the Methodist circuit rider. Voss Stephens who bought this house from the Mortons, lived there with his family for many years until he and his wife, Annie Dixon Stephens, died. Charlie and Zona Turner rented it and lived there for many years with their family. When the Stephens estate was settled, Mary Arnold Stephens, daughter of Voss and Annie, became the owner. She and Lynne Bailey live there now.

30. The William "Billy" Lea house was built on the stagecoach road running from Milton to Hillsborough which crosses Hwy 158 at Leasburg. The southern end of the road has been named Stagecoach Road. House was a tenth of a mile from Hwy 158. The old home burned in the 1930s. Miss Anabel Thompson was so distressed by the fire she walked all the way from her home on Hwy 158 on the south side of Olive Hill Church Road, near the Caswell-Person County line, carrying one bucket of water to help put out the fire. J. T. Bradsher's old store was moved from the east side of his former home and put on the foundation of the Billy Lea home. That also burned in the late 1970s. The Estate of Curtis Briggs sold the property to the children of Mrs. Virginia (R.H.) Oakes. They have built four or five homes in that area.

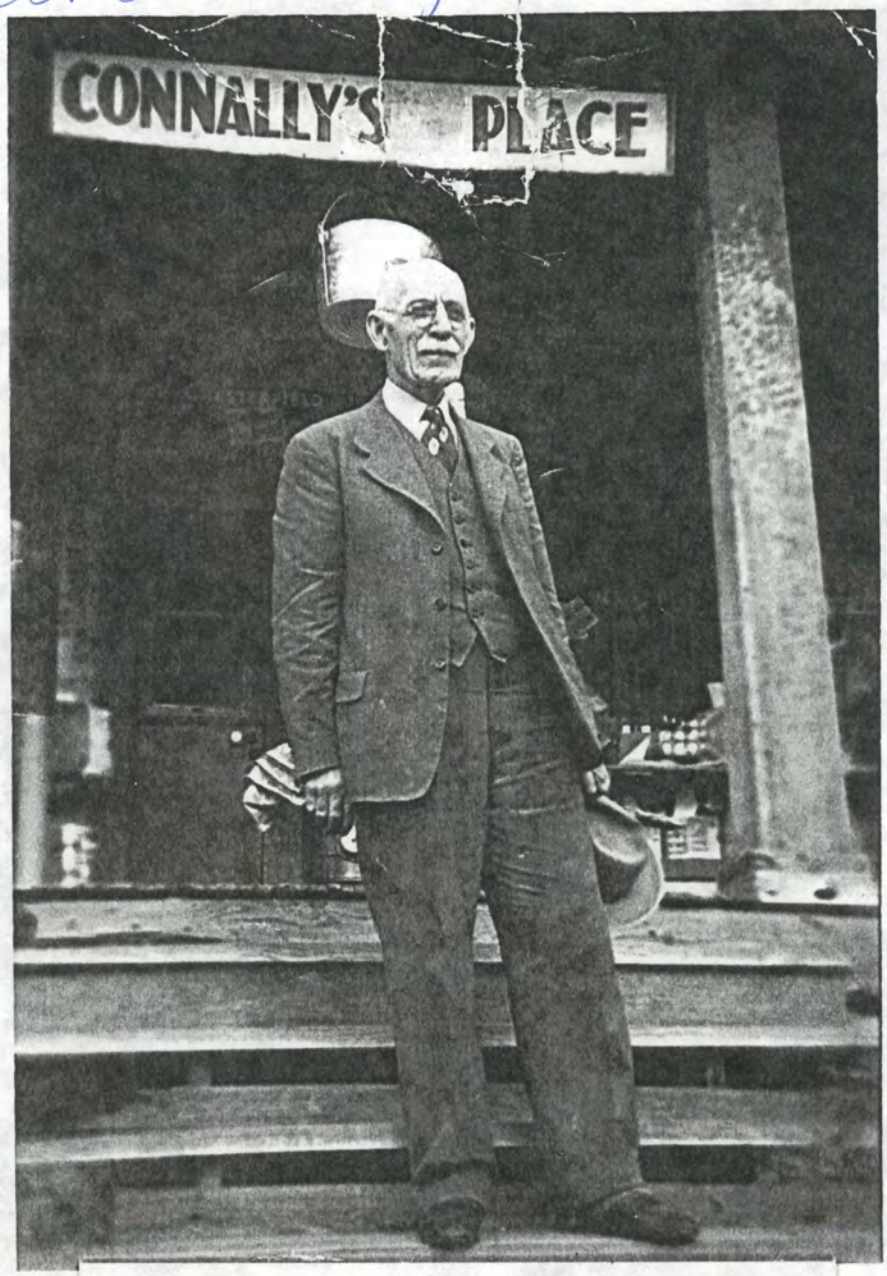
31. Site of Paylor & Hancock Tobacco Factory torn down after 1940. Only a few rocks remain.

32. Present site of the Leasburg Post Office.

#6 on Leesburg Historic District Map

William Archer Lea House about late 1940's or 1950's.

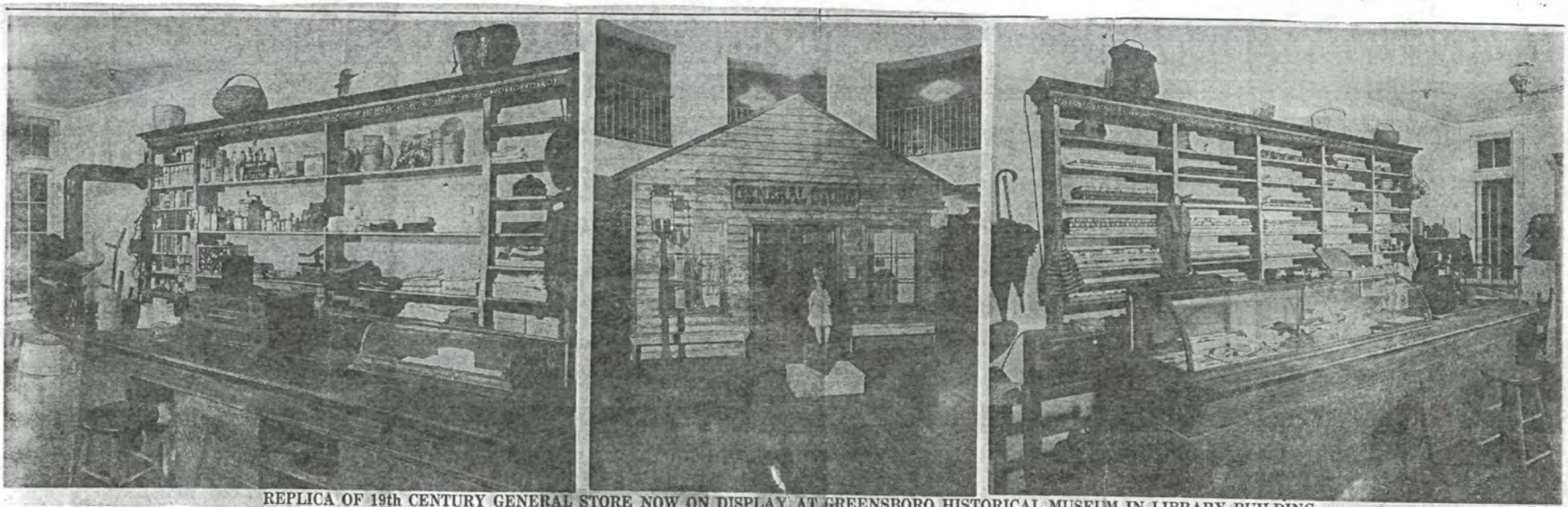
Front of H. J. Connally's Store



George B. Connally, the last proprietor of Connally's Store. He was born in 1873 and died in 1956. After his death, the store closed and was torn down sometime later by Nathan Seamster who salvaged much of the structure and sold it

Connally's Store after it closed and before it was torn down. It had grown up so much it is hard to see the front entrance.

Connally's Store Display in the Greensboro Museum



REPLICA OF 19th CENTURY GENERAL STORE NOW ON DISPLAY AT GREENSBORO HISTORICAL MUSEUM IN LIBRARY BUILDING

Old Store Is Donated To Museum

BY C. A. PAUL
Greensboro Daily News Staff Writer

A 19th century general store has been donated to the Greensboro Historical Museum and a reception for the donors will be held at the museum, 220 Church St., at 8 p.m. Thursday.

The store has been set up on the second floor of the museum and is well stocked with such items as liniment recommended "for man or beast," cuff protectors made of woven straw, blood purifiers, senna syrup, parasols, straw hats, calico and gingham.

Old Fixtures

The fixtures include oval, glass-top counters, a plug tobacco cutter, a pot-bellied stove and a checker board, complete with checkers and chairs for the players.

The donors, all of Leasburg, are Miss Mildred W. Connally; her sister, Mrs. Mary Womack; and Mrs. W. E. Connally, widow of Walter Connally, a brother of Miss Connally and Mrs. Womack.

The store was opened in Caswell County about 1845 under the name, Hancock & Paylor. In 1869 the store was sold and its name was changed to Pulliam & Connally. The Connally was the grandfather of Miss Connally and Mrs. Womack.

The store remained open for business continually until 1956, when George Connally, a brother of Miss Connally and Mrs. Womack, died. He had run the store since the death of his father in 1914.

New Director

In addition to meeting the donors, those attending the reception will meet the museum's new director, Carl Cannon, who came here recently from Mystic, Conn., where he was engaged in museum work.

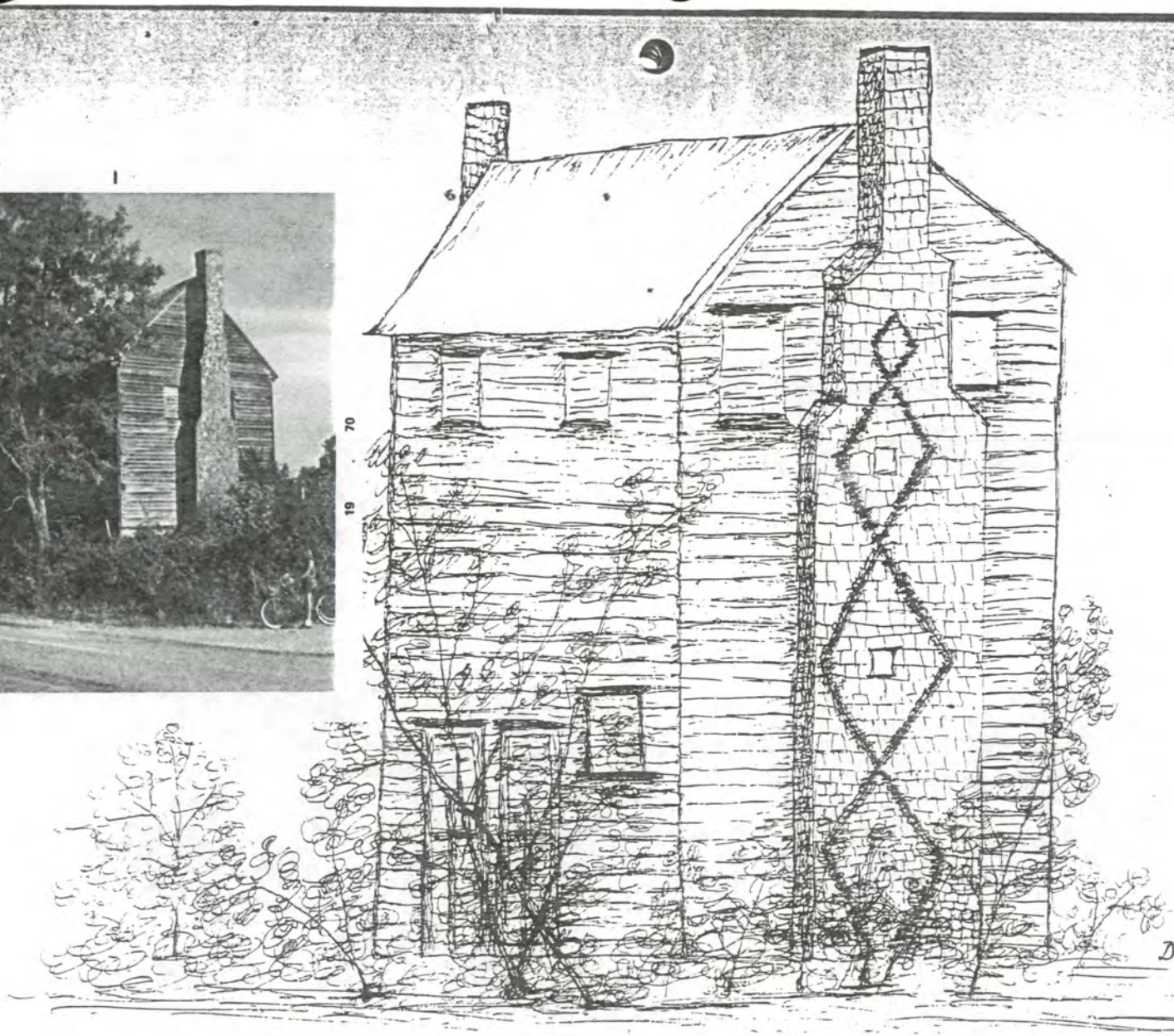
Hostesses at the reception will be members of the Greensboro Junior League. The league recently "adopted" the museum as one of its projects.

Cannon has written a brochure, "The Country Store," and visitors at the reception will be given copies of it.

CONNALLY'S STORE BUILT CIRCA 1845
LEASBURG, NORTH CAROLINA
FIXTURES DONATED TO GREENSBORO MUSEUM
PUBLISHED MONDAY, OCTOBER 2, 1961
GREENSBORO DAILY NEWS, Section B
GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

Walter L. Thomas Store - Late 1930s - 1940s.

John B. Stanfield is on the wagon. He was the son of Benjamin Elijah Stanfield whose wife was the former Josephine Hambrick



Drawing by
Mary Rittenburg, daughter
of Rev. Benjamin E. Stanfield
and his wife, Josephine Hambrick

The Old Leasburg Tavern was a stop for the stagecoach that traveled from Hillsborough to Virginia. It is said that the men slept in the tavern and the ladies slept in the homes in the village. The most interesting feature of the tavern are the chimneys. There is a diamond shaped design with a red brick in the center of each diamond. This is a Flemish design and indicates that the tavern was built in the 1700's.

ABOUT LEASBURG, NC

1. First settled about 1750 by Lea families who came from England by way of Virginia when the present counties of Caswell and Person were still a part of Granville County, formed 1746, or Orange County, formed 1752. James Lea settled in present-day Leasburg, William Lea, three miles east of Leasburg near Lea's Chapel Church.

2. Became the **first county seat of Caswell, the first North Carolina county formed after Independence was declared**. From 1777 to 1792, Caswell County included Person County.

3. Was the first town within the Caswell-Person County area to receive a charter of incorporation, effective December 6, 1788. The charter is no longer in effect, but it was Caswell's first incorporated town. Milton has continued to be actively incorporated since December 23, 1796.

4. Established the first post office (by) October 1, 1794, in the Caswell-Person area. At that time there were only 51 post offices in North Carolina and 450 in the nation as a whole.

5. Established a classical boarding academy for males, 1835, on site of present Leasburg Cemetery.

6. Was considered for the site of the first chartered woman's college in the state of North Carolina and the second chartered in the south. Although Greensboro was selected for Greensboro Female College, now UNC-G, a Leasburg native son, Solomon Lea, became its first president 1845-1847.

7. Leasburg native, Solomon Lea (1807-1897) returned to Leasburg and founded the Somerville Female Institute in 1848. Many young ladies from southern states attended this boarding school. After the Civil War, there being few boarders, it became a day school and boys were admitted. The school continued until 1892 when Solomon Lea, age 85 and in failing health, closed the school. His son-in-law, Benjamin Lee Arnold, became the first president of Oregon State University.

8. During the Revolutionary War, Cornwallis' troops came through Leasburg in February, 1781. The Clerk at the Courthouse hid the records for safekeeping. The home of Gabriel Lea, a Revolutionary War soldier, was entered by the troops who emptied feather beds in the yard, his family said "for spite."

9. The first fraternal society of Ancient, Free, and Accepted Masons, Caswell Brotherhood Lodge No. 11, chartered in Caswell County November 20, 1788, met in Leasburg until 1799.

10. Jacob Thompson, son of Nicholas and Lucretia VanHook Thompson, Secretary of the Interior under the Buchanan administration, 1857-1861, was born here in 1810.

11. Lt. Evelyn B. Whitlow, Leasburg native, was among 25 Army Nurses during World War II, the first American military women sent into the field (Bataan) during wartime. She was one of 70 Army nurses and 12 Navy nurses, who were the first American military women in U.S. history to be taken as prisoners of war. Whitlow was the only North Carolinian among this group called the "The Angels of Bataan and Corregidor." Most, but not all of these nurses, were interned by the Japanese with civilians at Santo Tomas University, Manila, Philippine Islands, from May, 1942 until February, 1945. (POWs in Santo Tomas numbered 3,768 when liberated February 3, 1945.)

12. Connally's Store, built well before the Civil War, was closed soon after the death of George B. Connally in 1956. The family donated old fixtures and contents of the store to the Greensboro Museum in 1961. Later, Nathan Seamster tore down the ancient structure and salvaged huge beams and marvelous timbers.

The Rev. E. L. Perkins, M.D., was enrolled in Leasburg's Male Academy in February of 1840 when Lorenzo Lea, brother of Solomon Lea, was schoolmaster. In the TRINITY ARCHIVE published at Durham, N.C., February, 1898, he wrote, "It is very doubtful if there is a small village in the State which has exerted an influence in the moral and intellectual world as wide-spread as the little village of Leasburg."

DID YOU KNOW THIS ABOUT LEASBURG, NORTH CAROLINA?

Leasburg was first settled about 1750 by Lea kinsmen, James, William, and John, who were English and came from Virginia. James settled in present-day Leasburg, William, three miles east of Leasburg near Lea's Chapel Church, and John, in the old Long's Store vicinity.

Leasburg was the first county seat of the first North Carolina County formed after Independence was declared. Caswell, the new county, included the area which is present-day Person County.

"Three counties share the distinction of having been formed by the earliest state government. Burke and Caswell counties were authorized by the 1777 General Assembly (the first to convene under the new constitution of 1776) to be laid out effective June 1, 1777. The act concerning Caswell is Chapter XVII, ratified on May 9, while Chapters XVII and XIX pertain to Camden and Burke counties, respectively, ratified on the same date, but the act creating Caswell appears first in the session laws. Caswell County, therefore, was the first county created by the new State of North Carolina at the first session of its first legislature, and its court convened a month before either of the others. A session later in the year also created Nash and Wilkes counties."....

"The act of the assembly described the bounds of the new county as beginning at a point twelve miles due north of Hillsborough. From there it ran east to the Granville County line, north along that line to the Virginia line, west along the Virginia line to the new Guilford county line, south along that line to a point due west of the beginning and from there due east to the beginning. " (From William S. Powell's book, WHEN THE PAST REFUSED TO DIE, A HISTORY OF CASWELL COUNTY 1777-1977.)

Leasburg was the first town within the bounds of Caswell and present-day Person counties to receive a charter of incorporation, effective December 6, 1788. Although Leasburg's charter has lapsed, it was the first town in Caswell County to be incorporated.

The first fraternal society of Ancient, Free, and Accepted Masons, Caswell Brotherhood Lodge, No. 11, A.F. and A.M., chartered in Caswell County November 20, 1788, met in Leasburg, then county seat, until late in 1799 when it ceased to function. In 1855 the Lafayette Lodge, No. 179, at Leasburg was chartered but its charter was surrendered in 1873. In 1876 an attempt was made to organize another lodge, but the project was abandoned in 1877.

The first post office in Caswell County was established by Oct. 1, 1794, at Leasburg.

A Classical Academy for Males, a boarding school, was established in Leasburg in 1835. It was of brick and was located where the Leasburg Community Cemetery is now. No trace of it is left. When a grave was being dug several years ago a brick wall was struck which was probably part of its foundation. In later years this school was referred to as the Old Brick Academy.

Leasburg was considered for the site of Greensboro Female College, now known as Greensboro College. Leasburg was not selected for the site, but a native son, Solomon Lea, was chosen to serve as its first president from 1845-1847. This school was the first chartered woman's college in the state of North Carolina and the second chartered in the south.

Solomon Lea returned to Leasburg and founded the Somerville Female Institute in 1848. Hundreds of young ladies from all over the south attended this boarding school. After the Civil War when there were few boarders, boys were admitted. The school was in operation until poor health caused Solomon Lea to close it in 1892. Solomon Lea, born in Leasburg in 1807, died April 30, 1897.

THE WORLD IS OUR CLASSROOM

I'VE LEARNED THAT.....

Most of the things I worry about never happen.--age 64

Every great achievement was once considered impossible.--age 47

You can't hide a piece of broccoli in a glass of milk. --age 7

If there were no problems there would be no opportunities.--age 19

It doesn't cost anything to be nice. --age 66

The most important thing is not what others think of me but what I think of me. --age 38

Even the simplest task can be meaningful if I do it in the right spirit.--age 72

In every face-to-face encounter, regardless of how brief, we leave something behind.--age 45

Whenever I decide something with kindness, I usually make the right decision. --age 66

If you spread the peas out on your plate, it looks like you ate more.--age 6

Regardless of color or age, we all need about the same amount of love.--age 37

Education, experience, and memories are three things that no one can take away from you.--age 67

Motel mattresses are better on the side away from the phone.--age 50

The simple things are often the most satisfying.--age 63

If you want to cheer yourself up, you should try cheering up someone else.--age 13

Successful living is like playing a violin--it must be practiced daily.--age 70

If you laugh and drink soda pop at the same time, it will come out of your nose.--age 7

A sunroof is worth the extra cost.--age 29

Optimists live longer than pessimists. That's why I'm an optimist.--age 84

Happiness is like perfume: you can't give it away without getting a little on yourself. --age 59

When someone hurts your feelings, it's unimportant unless you persist in remembering it.--age 68

There's no elevator to success. You have to take the stairs.--age 48

If you smile at people, they will almost always smile back.--age 81

Homemade Toll House cookies should be eaten while still warm.--age 29

We grow only when we push ourselves beyond what we already know.--age 53

Never to underestimate the potential and power of the human spirit.--age 82

Everyone has something to teach.--age 51

A HISTORY OF LEASBURG
WITH PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS
By ELLA GRAVES THOMPSON
1960

Leasburg has been such a quiet, well behaved spot it is not surprising to find persons within a radius of fifty miles who say they never heard of the place. For generations the village has done little to come before the public eye. Even in the old days it never produced the founder of a great industry (like Yanceyville), never sent an ambassador to a foreign land (like Milton); but since it was first settled over two hundred years ago it has gone on doing a solid, substantial work, and from its midst has gone a steady stream of citizens, doctors, lawyers, and educators to become leaders in other communities. The life of the place has alternated between periods of glowing activities and continuous decades all too serene and still. For almost a hundred years now such peace has pervaded the atmosphere; it has been easy to fall under its enchantment and let the rest of the world go by. To confused and weary visitors from the outside world this peace has been one of Leasburg's greatest assets; to those who wish for progress or growth, it has no doubt seemed an insurmountable hindrance.

An outstanding fact about Leasburg is the great devotion its citizens feel for the peace. Old letters written through the years by young and old speak with tender affection of "Sweet Leasburg." So often any slight reference to the village is put in those words: "Sweet Leasburg." Persons whose forefathers moved away long ago come back and say, "This place is almost sacred to me," or "I want my children and grandchildren to know that their roots are in Leasburg." In 1933 John Lea, great-great-great-grandson of our first James Lea, came from his home in New York to visit this locality so cherished by his ancestors, and he purchased one acre of Leasburg land to keep in his family forever. Persons of experienced judgment have often remarked it would be hard to find in the state another place so small which has exerted an influence so great, especially in the moral and educational life of the state. No doubt it has been this silent, pervasive influence, together with its atmosphere of complete freedom plus the general conditions of life here, which has so endeared the village to all who have known it.

Throughout the greater part of its existence, Leasburg has been predominately a farm village - a cluster of comfortable homes, each home owner managing a farm within easy reach, some at the same time carrying on another business or profession in the village. Until the present generation every family had its own garden, fruit trees, horses, cows, pigs, and chickens; most of them had also books and music and access to abundant service. These basic assets suggest the simple comfort and prosperity of Leasburg life, where by standards of today nobody has ever been really rich, though none has lacked the essentials for health and well being. Though everybody in Leasburg worked, this work was in the home, unlike today when so many are employed outside. There was excellent housekeeping and home management, consequently considerable leisure and opportunity for cultural interests. There was genuine goodness. My generation like many before me grew up with the sure knowledge that people around us were high-toned, peace-loving, God-fearing, and contented. They were industrious and thrifty, kind and hospitable. A remarkable spirit of unity and mutual concern bound the whole village together as if it were one big family.

Leasburg stands at the headwaters of Dan River. To the south and east of the village numerous springs flow together to form Cobb Creek sailing on into Hyco, then into Dan, and on through the Roanoke into the sea. The village is surrounded by wooded hills with open cultivated fields broad enough to allow glorious views of sunrise and sunset.

For long years this location was practically cut off from the rest of the world by rocky roads, frequent high water, and deep mud; but visitors who found their way here declared the village was like a lily in a grotto, no less lovely the unseen. It is a pleasing, healthful location, remarkable in the number of its citizens who have lived to be nearly a hundred years old with

continued enjoyment of their faculties and a keen interest in life. It is significant that before Greensboro College of Women was built, this place was considered for the location of that college. The fact that no railroad came this way made the location impracticable. Though the college could not be located here, the Trustees did choose a Leasburg citizen, The Rev. Solomon Lea, for the first president of the institution.

To those first settlers here, the two stalwart brothers, James and William Lea, this particular spot seemed undoubtedly a good place to live. The Leas came from England by way of Virginia about 1750. They were men of strict moral caliber, intellectually and physically sound, robust and alert. Their industry and temperance established an ideal for the settlement which has been handed down these 200 years.

It is generally known that in 1777 while the Revolutionary War was at its height, the northern portion of Orange County was cut off to form a new county, named Caswell in honor of Richard Caswell who was governor of North Carolina at that time. The new county was an almost perfect rectangle about 50 miles from east to west and 25 miles from north to south. Twenty-five years before the new county was formed, the Leas had established their settlement in almost the exact center of this area, and so this location was chosen for the county seat of the new county. At the session of the General Assembly convened in Fayetteville, November 3, 1788, "An act to Establish the Town Already lain off at the Court House in Caswell County." says that "Whereas 100 acres of land, adjacent to and whereon Caswell Court House now stands, has been laid off into a town of square streets and sixty-two lots, by Nicholas Delone and William Lea," the Assembly constituted and named that town Leasburg in honor of William Lea. (cf. Vol. 24 pp. 992-3, Chap. L Laws of N. C.). When by this act the settlement was legally chartered, a Board of Trustees, William Lea, Gabriel Lea, Nicholas Delone, Thomas Neely, Lloyd Van Hook, Samuel Johnston, and John McFarlin were appointed to design, build, and develop the town. Miss Willie Lea, lineal descendant of this Trustee William Lea, told me that the plan for the town was kept at her house for generations. Finally, she, herself, in the frenzy of house-cleaning, decided the old paper was of no importance, and destroyed it. She realized too late the absorbing interest wrapped up in this 150 year old document.

Leasburg as County seat was becoming a thriving little town when it became evident that the Court House was too far from the borders of the County for satisfactory transaction of business. Twenty-five miles over such roads as there existed was a full day's journey or more. So after 14 years of struggle with the difficulties of transportation, the eastern half of the county was cut off in 1791 to form Person County. Caswell Court House was moved from Leasburg to the center of Caswell, to a point which eventually developed as Yanceyville. Leasburg was left on the extreme edge of Caswell - a fact which to this day has hindered the development of both Leasburg and the county.

Though the Court House had to go, the Leas remained. It was they, with other sturdy pioneers, who gave character and substance to the settlement. Being a cultured, Christian people they were keen to promote religion and education. Of pure English stock, the Leas adhered to the Church of England. Very early they built an Episcopal church which was called Lea's Chapel. This church, remodeled, still stands, three miles east of the village. It was probably during Bishop Asbury's periodic visit here that it passed into the hands of Methodists. Later it became an important church in Person County. Graves of early Leasburg citizens may be found in the old cemetery there.

There is scant record of Leasburg between 1791 and 1810. We know that a post office was established here in *1796; (Note: It was actually established by Oct. 1, 1794. JDW) that mail was brought by stage coach from Milton to Hillsborough, and that Lawrence Lea (Larry) served for thirteen years as first postmaster and was succeeded by Vincent Lea, then by Gabriel B. Lea 'til 1818.

We have Bartlett Yancey to thank for a picture of the village in 1810. In a sketch of the county written at that time he named Leasburg as one of the two "towns" in the county, the

other "town" being Milton. "Leasburgh," he said "has one store, a grocery shop, a saddler's shop, a cabinet maker's shop, and about 10 or 12 houses." The store was managed by Gabriel Lea's three sons who were prominent merchants in Leasburg for nearly half a century before moving to Petersburg, Norfolk, and New York. More than half the homes can be pointed out today; others of them, built of the best seasoned lumber, have been added to or rebuilt, and more or less modernized for present day living. The Gabriel Lea home, where Voss Stephens lives now, was the habitual resting place of Bishop Asbury (1745-1816) as he made his annual rounds through the country. The oak grove crowning the knoll where Rob Newman now lives sprang from acorns brought by the Leas from England. George Lea lived there.

Another home in the village in 1810, as well as the saddler's shop which Bartlett Yancey mentions, was owned by my grandfather Nicholas Thompson. Grandfather Nicholas had come to Leasburg as a very young man about 1800. He had acquired possession of the former Court House grounds, had built his home on the spot where the Court House had stood, and had established a flourishing tan yard on Cobb Creek. In the corner of his yard, opening out upon the street, was the shop where the leather he tanned was made into fine harness, saddles, knapsacks, etc. The house he lived in still stands. Since 1810 this dwelling has been occupied continuously by his descendants.

When Mrs. Lillie Lea Neal (Mrs. T. C.) was in her 90's, she drew at my request a sketch of Leasburg as she first knew it. This is our best source of information about the village in the middle 1850's. In addition to the homes mentioned, her sketch shows the home of Sidney Thompson, eldest son of Nicholas, the home of Dr. John Tillett, Presiding Elder of Hillsborough District, the parsonage, the home of a skilled dressmaker, and that of a carriage maker, also a carriage factory, a cotton gin, a hotel, and four stores. My father's diary in 1851 mentions Morgan's Tailor Shop where he was having a coat and satin vest made. (He was then a sophomore at U.N.C.). Leasburg has always had a wide trade for a place of its size. Supplies of every kind which could be needed in the home or on the farm were carried in stock. Very elegant silk and satin dress goods and handsome ribbons and laces were brought from Petersburg, Va., and found ready customers here. Old costumes still occasionally brought to light from old trunks or closets testify that Leasburg women had good taste and somehow had access to exquisite materials and styles.

The village was teeming with life and industry in the 1850's. While there were woodshops, blacksmith shops, a shoe shop, a saddler's shop, tailor's shop, cotton gin, carriage factory, most important of all there were two big schools and three tobacco factories.

We do not know what provision was made for education in Leasburg in the very earliest times. Bartlett Yancey makes no mention of a school in the village. We know, however, that these early settlers saw to it that their families had every educational advantage of that day. Chapel Hill records for the early decades of 1800 show a number of University graduates from Leasburg.

Sometime before 1825 a school house had been in use not far from Ebenezer Church, about a half mile east of the village. In my grandfather's account books there is record of a bill paid to Gregory Hightower, the master there, for tuition and singing lessons for his elder son. By 1835 arrangements had been completed for the operation of a larger and better school.

In January 1835, there appeared in THE STAR, a newspaper published in Raleigh, the announcement of a new preparatory school to be opened in Leasburg with a view to permanent location. In this new classical school would be taught all the branches of literature and all the sciences normally taught in the best of preparatory schools. The article stated that "more than ordinary attention would be given to the much neglected studies of composition and declamation." The Principal would consciously consider himself instructor not only of minds, but of manners and morals as well. The school was most fortunate in its location, the article said, because there were fewer temptations and distractions here than in most places where classical schools were generally located. Leasburg was a "neat rural village, in every

way eligible as a school location whether considered from the standpoint of healthiness, intelligence, and morality of the inhabitants, or the cheapness of board, which (including firewood, washing, candles, etc.) would vary from five to seven dollars a month." The Academy building was of brick, the notice said, situated in a beautiful oak grove; the school room comfortable and commodious. Tuition for language Greek, Latin, and French, $15 per session; for higher English branches $12.50; for lower English $10. The notice was signed by William H. Owen, Principal.

Mr. Owen had been graduated from the University of N.C. in 1823 and was probably teaching in Leasburg when this new preparatory school was being built. An account dated July 2, 1835, shows that Owen was paid $32.50 for William Thompson's tuition. Another item the same year shows $12.50 for tuition paid to Lorenzo Lea. Lorenzo Lea had received his master's degree from the University in 1832 and apparently took over the new school at its opening, as Owen became a tutor at the University in 1835 and served there for the next eight years.

In regard to this Classical Academy for males John Herbert Claiborne, in his book "Seventy-five Years in Old Virginia," tells that in 1838 when he was in his tenth year his father selected for him a "Large boarding school in Leasburg, in Caswell County, taught by an excellent scholar and gentleman, the Rev. Lorenzo Lea's older brother. In later years Lorenzo moved to Corinth, Miss. and founded Jackson College there. Mr. Claiborne speaks of the 3-day journey to Leasburg, more than 100 miles, himself riding a thorough-bred Lusborough filly, his father in a gig, followed by his dining-room serving man on horseback, who was to lead the filly back home. He pictures the desolation he felt as he was conducted from the village tavern in Leasburg to the boarding department of the Academy; and how, though the smallest and meekest boy in school, he somehow survived the rough and tumble life in a dormitory full of "boys bright, busy, and bad." He gives a laughable description of the style hat and hair worn by the boys of the Academy in that day, the hair cut close behind and allowed to grow long in front, to come below the ears or even to the collar. This long hair was trained in position by means of a soapy kind of paste, and came to be called "soaplocks." These carefully arranged locks were on dress occasions proudly surmounted by a hat with very tall crown. Such was the appearance of a fashionable Leasburg Academy boy 120 years ago! Claiborne, then only ten years old, adopted the style himself - to the amusement and dismay of his Virginia mother when he returned home at close of school.

This old male Academy was located where the cemetery is now. All trace of it is gone, and nobody knows the exact location of the building or when or why the school ceased to be. We have always heard it referred to as the Old Brick Academy. Mr. A. R. Foushee of Roxboro in his Reminiscences says his last years at school were in the Old Brick Academy here in 1859, where he was 20 years old. Henry A. Rogers was in charge of the school at that time and seems to have been greatly admired by students and patrons. From all we can learn, Mr. Rogers was the last person to conduct his school.

When the lawn around this old school building began to be used for a burial ground nobody knows. The fact that it was more than 150 years ago is proved by dates on grave stones and by the way some of the earlier graves and family plots are protected by thick stone walls of huge native rocks fitted together, 3 or 4 feet high. The oldest grave stones are those of William Lea and Betsy Darby, both of whom died in 1806. The whole west side of the cemetery was used in early days for negroes, probably faithful family servants. Near the center of the cemetery is a stone honoring "Aunt Millie," who was the beloved Negro Midwife and Nurse for the whole community for 50 years or more when hospital care was next to impossible. The old cemetery is still a beautiful oak grove, a place of unspeakable peace, a heritage we fondly cherish and wish to be cherished always.

While the school for boys was flourishing, Mr. Solomon Lea, brother of Lorenzo Lea established Somerville Female Institute. Mr. Lea had been teaching with outstanding success in N.C. and Virginia. After having served for 2 years as the first President of Greensboro College he decided to come back to his home in Leasburg and found his own school here. By the late

1850's Somerville Female Institute was recognized as one of the best educational institutions of the country. Mrs. A. R. Foushee who was educated at this school owned copies of the catalog which it was my privilege to examine years ago. Recently I have studied copies on file at the University of N. C.

The courses offered at Somerville Institute were "all that were necessary for young ladies" in that day. They laid a thorough foundation for a liberal education. Years of ground work in the 3 R's were followed by a 3-year "seminary" course largely scientific and classical, with such "ornamental branches" as music "on the piano" with singing, drawing, painting, wax work, leatherwork, and fine embroidery. The course in Latin included Virgil, Sallust, Cicero, and Horace; in Greek the New Testament, the Anabasis of Xenophon, and Euripides. The sciences, besides physiology and geography "with Atlas and Globe," included chemistry, astronomy, mental and moral philosophy, botany and minerology. The list of text books used is impressive.

Reading, spelling and writing continued to be required of every student every year. Writing included composition, letter writing, and penmanship. Special attention was given to English grammar. I remember hearing one who was graduated from this school in its latter years speak feelingly of efforts to analyse and parse Thompson's SEASONS and Milton's PARADISE LOST.

Mr. Lea was especially fond of physics and astronomy. He had named his school for a distinguished contemporary woman astronomer and physicist, Mrs. Mary Somerville of Scotland, whose work he greatly admired. I can recall a great cabinet that filled one side of the old school building (which was still being used when I was a child) and the strange looking apparatus that piqued our youthful curiosity, no doubt inspiring some of us to seek higher education ourselves in after years.

This school drew patronage from many parts of N.C. and Virginia, Georgia, and Mississippi. By present standards expenses seemed unbelievably reasonable, board and room with laundry, $42.50 for a session of twenty-one weeks. Lights cost $1.00 or pupils might "furnish their own candles." Extra cost for one of the "ornamental branches" was $5.00 a session. Spring sessions opened the first Wednesday in February and closed the last Wednesday in June; fall sessions ran from the 2nd Wednesday in July to the lst Wednesdy in December. In this way a 5-week vacation was provided in mid-winter as well as in summer.

The catalog's general remarks give an insight into Leasburg life as well as the over-all sense of responsibility felt by the administration:

> "The village is moral and free from many temptations that too often exist in other communities. While we have all the facilities of a large village in having access to the stores and post office (the stage passing six days a week), yet we have few or none of the inconveniences. The young ladies, after being confined in school can walk out and ramble in various directions without any inconvenience or fear of disturbance, and no doubt it is owing to this circumstance in part at least that the ladies have by a kind Providence enjoyed such fine health."
>
> "The young ladies are not permitted to form accounts without the consent of their parents or the teacher. Nor are they permitted to visit the stores unless in company of a teacher or some member of the family where they board. We open school every morning with singing and prayer and close with singing. Once a week the young ladies are to repeat by heart some verses of the Bible."

One evening a week a kind of literary society met. It was devoted to criticism and general improvement under the supervision of the Principal. The programs consisted of reading and

writing and conversation on chosen literary subjects. We may feel sure that manners and morals and a basic philosophy of life were duly emphasized.

The Lea home with a dormitory in the yard could provide room and board for upward of thirty students. Other young ladies boarded in other suitable homes in village and neighborhood. Needless to say their presence added much to the life of the village.

This period just prior to the Civil War was indeed Leasburg's heyday. After the war there were few boarders for Somerville Institute. Solomon Lea continued to teach - now a mixed school - in the old building 'til the early 1890's. He was assisted by his daughter, Miss Lillie, while the other unmarried daughter, Miss Willie gave private music lessons at the home. Their work was characterized by thoroughness, breadth of vision, and genuine love of learning and teaching. Under their inspiration a generation of young people went out from Leasburg to receive college educations and become themselves strong and efficient teachers. When Miss Lillie was married to Mr. T. C. Neal in 1894, her love for the school prompted her to have the whole student body, even the 7-year olds, serve as her attendants.

Not only her schools brought prominence to Leasburg during the mid-century. Before, and just after the Civil War, three tobacco factories were doing a flourishing business here. Miss Willie Lea and Mrs. Lillie Lea Neal could remember the bustle of industry when these factories were being built. At first, no licenses were required for the manufacturing business, and a fortune could be made by any man enterprising and capable enough to manage it. It is said that at one time 95% of the plug tobacco on the United States market came from Leasburg. Wilkerson and Fuller, E. W. Culbreth, William Paylor, and R. P. Hancock are names on record as operators here. In some way, R. L. Lockett was also associated with the business. One of the factories was located in the large lot back of the Connally home; another in the lot just west of the Joe Smith home; the third, operated by Paylor and Hancock stood far back directly across the street from the Connally store. The last mentioned factory registered as No. 98, 5th District, North Carolina, did the most extensive business and continued operation for the longest time. An interesting chapter in the history of tobacco as well as the history of Leasburg could be pieced together from a tour of this old factory which remained standing until 1940 - too strongly built to tear down, too dilapidated to repair. From stamps on the wall, it is clear that Leasburg was supplying chewing tobacco to large firms at distant points, notably Atlanta, Montgomery and New Orleans. William Paylor seems to have dropped from this firm soon after the Civil War, perhaps when a prohibitive tax was levied by the government in an effort to raise money to pay the war debt. Transportation was so difficult and labor so unpredictable that the tax finally was ruinous. An effort to evade this tax finally crushed Hancock financially and brought an end to this chapter of Leasburg history.

While Leasburg was booming industrially and educationally there were sports of various kinds. From old letters we gather that before 1825 a race track had been opened north of the village and racing was much engaged in. This diversion continued for years. Elijah Morton's fine Arabian stallion known as Morton's Bay won a wide reputation. A popular brand of tobacco manufactured here was stamped with a picture of this horse and the name Morton's Bay. As game was plentiful, hunting was a lively interest. The earliest settlers had all had their horn and pack of hounds. Old letters speak of feasting by day and dancing by night.

Meanwhile the church held an important place in the lives of the people. There was access to Lea's Chapel, Ebenezer, and Bethany, but no church building was in the immediate village. In early times regular services were held at Bethany, a Methodist church a mile and a half north of the village. Bethany was established in 1836 while John Wesley was in America. It was probably the first church of this faith to be built in this part of America. The first trustees of Bethany were George Jeffers, Lorenzo Lea, John Johnston, William Lea, George W. Lea, William Smith and Samuel Johnston. It was a large well-constructed brick building. Because it was often used for a great Methodist camp meeting of that early period it became widely known as the Old Camp Ground. It was the central church of the Leasburg Circuit, which was then composed of ten churches, the pastor living in the parsonage here. Large gatherings of various kinds were

held in this big one-room building at Camp Ground, among them commencement exercises for Somerville Institute. Crowds poured in from a long way off, in fine carriages, covered wagons, and on horseback, to see the young ladies take part in these so-called "exhibitions" and receive their diplomas.

As a matter of convenience, as years went by, Sunday School, then worship services began to be held in the old Brick Academy in the village. A few years before the Civil War, about 1857, it was decided to erect a church building here. About this time, the first Masonic Lodge in Caswell County was chartered here in Leasburg. The Masons united with the Methodists to put up a plain two-story meeting house, the first floor to be used for religious gatherings, the second for the Masons. This church building, twice remodeled, was in continuous use here until 1950, when the present building was erected on the same site.

It was at Ebenezer Church 3/4 miles east of Leasburg that one of the most celebrated events in North Carolina Church history took place in 1833. Ebenezer at that time was a member of Country Line Baptist Association. At the associational meeting that year, 1833, under pressure from reactionary members coming in from another state, a resolution was passed declaring "irreconcilable hostility to Bible societies, missionary societies, temperance societies, Baptist conventions and religious newspapers." Stephen Pleasant whose heart was aflame with missionary zeal and fervor for enlightenment, voted against this resolution. Because of his stand, Ebenezer withdrew fellowship from him. The next year Stephen Pleasant organized three small churches of those Baptists who had views similar to his. Thus came about that separation of Missionary Baptist from Primitive Baptists which has never since been bridged. By the time of Stephen Pleasant's death twenty years later, more than twenty churches had declared their independence of this deadening resolution of 1833, and had joined the Beulah Association which Stephen Pleasant had organized. Ebenezer has continued until now a bulwark of the Primitive Baptist Faith.

Meanwhile wars have come, and to every one Leasburg so far has sent a quota of soldiers. It has been impossible for me to piece together a list of those who took part in the early conflicts. We know that Gabriel and George Lea had been officers in the Revolution, William Archer Lea a Major in the War of 1812. Only a few names of those who served even in the War Between the States can be definitely determined - among these were Major John T. Hambrick, John Andy Stephens, Jim Winstead, James Nicholas Thompson, Major of the home guard George N. Thompson, and Dr. John Stephens. We have a fuller list of the soldiers who went from Leasburg in World War I and II. These lists will be preserved (though not given here) that the future may know for certain what men from our midst went to fight for their country. It will not soon be forgotten how the whole community threw itself into the effort to win; the meatless and wheatless days, war gardens, knitting for soldiers, rationing, and other activities, "making do, and doing without." Only one of our boys, Ralph Winstead, made the supreme sacrifice. Mrs. R. N. Whitlow won distinction as a war mother, having four sons and two daughters in service at the same time. Her daughter, Evelyn, an Army nurse was captured at Corregidor and could not be heard from for nearly three years.

But we must go back for a moment to the War Between the States. When Miss Willie Lea and Mrs. Lillie Lea Neal were in their 90's, together they told me about the day the Leasburg Grays went off to war. It was a notable day, full of hope and promise in the eager young soldiers, fearful and sad for those left behind. There was a farewell program with presentation of Confederate flag. The people all assembled in Mr. Solomon Lea's yard. Miss Willie (reigning belle of Leasburg, her sister said) had been chosen to make the farewell speech to the boys. She stood on the porch of her home "dressed in a pretty new silk," surrounded by her family and friends, addressing the soldiers who stood before her in the walk. Relatives and friends thronged the yard. The company was going out under the command of Captain John T. Hambrick, who was soon to be promoted to Major. The flag had been made by Miss Lillie (16 years old) and Miss Willie, seventeen. "It was beautifully sewed, the pride of our hearts," Miss Lillie said; then with a merry little chuckle she added, "But Willie and I knew nothing in the world about cutting a star - so the Leasburg Grays marched off to war under the stars with six

good points!" When Miss Willie was asked who the young soldiers were, she said there were many, but she could not recall their names, she knew only that most of them never came back. Of the few who did come back one soon died of wounds incurred in battle, one continued to suffer all his life from injuries received, some lived a long life of usefulness in the community.

Naturally a slump followed the war. But by 1885 W.J. Pulliam and H.T. Connally had re-established the village as a trade center for a broad area. Both these merchants handled general merchandise. For succeeding decades they were community leaders of character and influence. The church and many other public interests benefited by their wisdom and willingness to serve.

In the early 1890's there were 18 homes in the village and four stores. Most of the homes were rather large two-story houses painted white with green blinds. The houses were well furnished. Pieces by Thomas Day, the Milton cabinet maker, found place among early American and imported furniture. White picket fences enclosed attractive lawns and broad box bordered walks led to the street. A row of majestic walnut trees 100 years old marked the eastern entrance to the village.

The householders at that time, going from east to west in the village were Sidney Thompson, George N. Thompson, Henry Lea, Dr. Jake Thompson, W.R. Hambrick, Mrs. Martha Hambrick, H.T. Connally, Solomon Lea, R.I. Newman, W.J. Pulliam, W.L. Thomas, J.T. Bradsher, Mrs. Barbara Baynes, John Johnston, Ben J. Stanfield II, and Vincent Morton. There were several vacant houses, those now occupied by Mrs. W. E. Connally, Ashley Briggs and Mrs. Lex Sally. The Rev. L. S. Massey was in the parsonage. On the outskirts of the village were the Winsteads, Fulchers, Jeremiah Dixons, Holsenbacks, Mrs. Nannie Fuller, the Pink Newmans, the Tom Featherstons, Mrs. Nannie Stephens, the Whitlows, Wades, Sawyers, Smiths, and Hamletts. Children from these families were in schools here. The four stores in the village were run by W.R. Hambrick, H.T. Connally, W.J. Pulliam, and W.L. Thomas. Mr. Hambrick's store was more distinctly a grocery and drug store. Mr. Hambrick was the postmaster from 1881 to 1898, when he moved to Roxboro to set up a leading drugstore there.

From one end of the village to the other, every dwelling, every store, every little shop or office had a history of its own. But most interesting of all were the people. Within my own recollection this locality has produced a number of individuals of most original and unique personality. Ulysses had his Homer, but there was no one, alas, to immortalize in song or story "Miss Willie," "Mr. Ed", "Miss Anabel," and others vivid and delightful. There was magic in their charm adding a spice and genuine worth to our daily life. There were Negroes, too, of unusual stamp, writing great originality to the special characteristics of their race. We could describe "Uncle" John Key, "Uncle" Haywood Garrett, "Uncle" Richard Elliott. For a long time practically all the Negroes around Leasburg were descendants of those who had been brought up in the best white homes in the community. They were capable of making in their own way a distinct contribution to the life of the village, and this they did, faithfully and well. An excellent spirit has always existed between the races here, each recognizing its dependence upon the other.

An impulse of new life was felt in the village by the mid-1890's. This may have begun when Dr. R. J. Teague came as resident physician. Certainly it was carried on by R.G. Cox, a singing master of real skill and very contagious enthusiasm, who brought along the little melodion and a new song book with shaped notes. Mr. Cox could do wonders with his melodion. Along with a keen sense of humor which could express itself in music, he had an amusing ability to play a different melody with each hand while at the same time singing or whistling a third tune. He established singing schools in several neighboring communities, with Leasburg as headquarters. The singing school here was a lively and delightful experience for both adults and children. There were good voices in the village with music lovers and piano students in nearly every home. After Mr. Cox's training, with Miss Bessie Thompson at the old reed organ and Mr. Ed Lea as song leader, the village church was widely recognized as outstanding for its fine congregational singing.

About this time the Reverend R. H. Broom became pastor of the church and Prof. M.C. Newbold Principal of the school. These also were men of energy, vision, and leadership. In a very effective way Mr. Broom combined genuine spirituality wih excellent business acumen. His boundless vigor of mind and body was a stimulus to action. It was during his pastorate that the Durham District Conference was held here - an unusual occurrence for a place so small, and truly a great occasion. In preparation for this conference the church building was one of a number of things remodeled and completely renovated.

Mr. Newbold during his two years as Principal of the school did a very distinctive work here. He was young and very much alive - fresh from Trinity College (now Duke), a born educator, teeming with new ideas. He went all over the countryside arousing interest in education and searching out students of high school age who had had no high school advantages. He introduced up-to-date textbooks, new and advanced courses of study,started a debating society, bought patent desks to replace the old hand made furnishings left over from Somerville Institute, and in other ways built up the school to the largest enrollment of many years.

After this resurgence of new life Leasburg for the next twenty years or more, around the turn of the century, again fell into a period of deep quiescence. The roads leading to the village, and even through it, were still narrow, rocky and muddy. Periodically the men in the community, shouldering their own axes and shovels went out in a group with appointed leader, and spent days working on the road. Three days of this work was required by law of all men of poll tax age. A respectable sidewalk, which the more public spirited citizens kept in very good order with sawdust, encouraged activity within the limited confines of the village with its easy hospitality, a delightful place to visit and visits were frequent, lasting for weeks, sometimes for months; consequently, few of the population railed against the halcyon calm, or seemed even aware of it. Though radios and television were undreamed of, and a telephone only a temporary blessing for a brief period about 1900, life was somehow full and interesting. There was important work to do, without too many distractions. There was important time a plenty for picnics, ball games, fishing. A croquet set was on nearly every lawn, and contests were frequently played. There were lawn parties, ice cream suppers, hayrides on moonlight nights in summer, innumerable indoor parties in winter, and skating on ice ponds in coldest weather. There was not so much "twosing" and "going steady" as today, but plenty of love-making and romance. Old fashioned games were relished by every age group, the whole village together apparently enjoying each other, and young people having a good chance to know each other under all kinds of conditions. Much of the necessary work - ice gathering, corn shucking, sorghum cooking, quilting - could be turned into play by all the neighbors working together.

As labor had become less abundant, farm and home affairs kept the eighteen families of the village healthfully employed and out of harmful mischief. Though there was little to boast of, there was less to be ashamed of. The church and school were doing good work, and the young people were going off to college.

With opportunity for advancement what it was, however, and life all over the nation stepping up, naturally the more ambitious youth left the village to seek employment. After having entered business, or married, too often they built homes and careers outside. Some of these who were left behind dreamed of a better day for Leasburg, but being for the most part older people or little children there was little power to initiate action.

In 1914 a handful of women in the communiy joined together in a Community Improvement League in line with the nation-wide Country Life Movement. With its emphasis on sanitation and health, home and school beautification and improvement, proper food, and wholesome recreation this was a forerunner of the Home Demonstration Club, which came in twenty-five years later. There was a nucleus of real vision in the League, and tremendous possibilities opened up for home and community improvement. In those horse-and-buggy days, however, nearly 50 years ago, the interests of women almost everywhere had been so confined to the home that the majority of the citizens of Leasburg, both men and women felt it was "not a

woman's place" to be concerned about matters of public interest. That was "the men's business" and our men were not much concerned. Hence, as the studies and activities of the League broadened out to include larger issues, this organization ceased to exist. Beyond a doubt Leasburg was too well content, too satisfied with its mellow peace.

There had been a gentle stirring, however, concerning the school. In the early 20's the county at last bought the school property, which up to that time had been privately owned and annually rented to the county. By 1925 State highway No. 158 running through the village was finally completed. Also the Carolina Power and Light line. This was a great day for Leasburg for thus at long last the place had ready access to the outside world. Only the older inhabitants realized what loss of safety and sociability was incurred when sidewalk and shade trees were sacrificed for these larger improvements. Soon a number of new residences began to build in and around the village, so that the boundaries were constantly being extended. About forty new families came in within the next twenty years.

Among the householders who have built here since the early 30's the following are named in order as their homes stand from east to west: Jack Warren Dixon, John Pleasant, W.D. Fulcher, Jr., Raymond Bradsher, Sr., Flint Bradsher, Gregory Holt, Mrs. McKinley Dunn, William Duncan, W.H. Duncan, Sr., Richard Foushee, Richard Duncan, Glenn Graves, Raymond Allen, Bob Fuller, Brandon Newman, Ernest Winstead, Curtis Briggs, Ray Knight, Clyde Arvin, John Fuller, Miss Sallie Newman, John Stephens, Jr., Leslie Yeatts, Mrs. J.A. Denny, Stanley Whitlow, Sr., Carson Watson, Reuben Knight, Tommy Carter, George Henderson, Alvis Briggs, Bill Brewer, Theodore Watson, Dorsey Denny, Fred Cox, Sr., Charlie Cox, Bob Coleman, Melvin Crabtree, Luther Delp and Leon Delp. With the few exceptions these families own their homes. They have cast their lots with Leasburg because they saw definite advantages and attractions here. Like the pioneer settlers, having found a good place to live they sought no further. Besides the dwellings mentioned, several nice ones have been built by Negroes who have lived here for many years.

Though there are still some excellent farmers here, Leasburg can no longer be called a farm village. Members from a number of these newer homes have found employment in the mills and stores of Roxboro and Danville; some are in road construction and other work for government; others carry on various occupations essential to community life, in filling stations, grocery stores, machine shops, etc.

It would seem that the time has come now for Leasburg to wake up again. However, if by waking up it meant developing into an industrial center, this will probably never be. Though situated on one of the state's main highways, with access to abundant electrical power and other attractions, such development is not necessary for the village is near enough to Danville and Durham, to say nothing of Roxboro, that ambitious young city only 10 miles away - for easy commuting; and besides, the ultimate purpose for her existence might in the great scheme of things be quite different. As time goes on there is more and more need for retreat from the strain and stress of the busy world, small places safe and sane which simultaneously offer all the potentialities for a satisfying life - an ideal resort for prosperous families who wish to be relieved of the bustle and rush of modern business yet within easy reach of selected activities. Once a tiny visitor playing on one of our spacious lawns was heard joyfully shouting, "This is a fine place to raise children!" and it is, a good place for young couples with growing families, a good place to end one's days in peace.

Those who live in Leasburg see the need for improvements in the village. They know its short-comings, and want to reduce them. They would have the village the most beautiful small stretch along this highway, so comfortably attractive in every way that, even passing through, people would experience a sense of delight and uplift. They have a basket of plans to that effect; but, unfortunately, plans do not complete themselves. Evidently, there is need for inspired, dedicated leadership plus what it takes to follow the leader.

One October as Dr. W.L. Poteat and his artist sister, Miss Ida, were enjoying a drive from Yanceyville to Leasburg, Miss Ida said, "Bud Louli, is it true that Caswell County is one of the most beautiful places in the world, or is it just that we love it so?" Dr. Poteat was silent for a moment, then in that well reasoned forceful way of his he answered, "Both, sister."

Well, that is how we feel about Leasburg - it is a good place to live and we love it. "Both, sister!"

Of course anyone with half an eye can see that, as Horse said of his Sabine Farm, "This corner of the earth smiles for me beyond all others."

-THE END-

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NOTE: Miss Ella Graves Thompson, daughter of George Nicholas and Ella Williams Graves Thompson, was born September 27, 1886. She died January 18, 1970. "Miss Ella" was the last Thompson descendant to occupy the home built about 1800 by her Grandfather, Nicholas Thompson, on the site of the first Caswell County Courthouse at Leasburg, N.C. After her death the homeplace was sold to Mrs. C.R. Thomas, passed to Mrs. Thomas's son, James Upchurch, then to Guy and Margaret Hill, and is presently owned (1999) by Dwight and Susan Bellinger who live in Hillsborough, N.C. The house is unoccupied.

Miss Ella Thompson received her B.A. from Meredith College and her M.A. from the University of Chicago. She was an instructor in the English department at Meredith College for two years, then taught Latin at East Carolina Teachers College several years. She taught four years (1918-1922) in the two-room school at Leasburg which had been a part of the former Somerville Female Institute founded by Rev. Solomon Lea. The Solomon Lea Elementary School, built of brick, was constructed in the early 1920s on the former grounds of the two-room school. However, with the coming of school consolidation in the 1960s, the Solomon Lea Elementary School ceased to be a school and was sold. It was used as an antique shop for about ten years until 1975. Mrs. Frances Rudd Brann is the present owner.

Most of Miss Ella's later life was spent in Leasburg where she taught piano students for a number of years. She was the "keeper of Leasburg's History" and was always willing to share her knowledge. In 1938, when she toured Europe, she sent postcards back from her tour. Even young children of the community were recipients of her gracious thoughtfulness. The card sent to me from Venice is still a treasured keepsake.

The one acre of land bought in Leasburg in 1933 by John Lea, G-G-G-Grandson of James Lea, to be kept in the family "forever," was sold by his descendants October 30, 1979.

The exact location of the Male Brick Academy is not known, but when the grave of Mrs. Voss Stephens (nee Annie Dixon), was being dug in the Leasburg Community Cemetery, a brick wall was encountered which might have been part of the foundation of the school.

The beautiful old walnut reed organ was bought May, 1881 for the Leasburg Methodist Church. Martha Pulliam Newman, the first organist, played it for services until she married and moved to Winston-Salem in 1889. Miss Bessie Thompson was the next organist, and continued until about 1900 when a piano was bought. Facing the pulpit, in the old church, the piano was on the far left and the organ, on the far right. The organ remained there until the 1940s when it was moved into "the hut," the office building next to the old parsonage, where it was used by the Methodist Youth Fellowship, the Womens' Missionary Society and other church and community organizations. The little office building ceased to be used after the new brick church was built in 1953, and the organ was sold. Rats and squirrels had stored acorns inside and cut the belt to the bellows, leaving it silent and forlorn. It has been refinished and restored insofar as possible without disturbing the carpeting on the pedals which still show the footprints of those who played it a hundred and more years ago. Because it is a part of the church's history, the organ has been offered as a gift to Leasburg United Methodist Church. The offer has been declined due to lack of room. It is presently owned by this writer, Jeannine D. Whitlow.

THE LEASBURG I KNEW
By WILLIAM S. DIXON
APRIL 28, 1968

My first awareness of Leasburg must have been at about the turn of the century, at which time I was four years old. I am sure I had visited Leasburg from our Person County home in the arms of my mother (Emma Thomas Dixon) from babyhood, since her mother and father lived there. He was a retired Methodist preacher (Rev. M.C. Thomas); she, a daughter (Henrietta, Born, 1840) of Reverend Solomon Lea. As the name "Leasburg" should disclose, it was, or had been a Lea center. Solomon Lea was born there (1807) and spent most of his 89 years there. At this particular time a maiden daughter, Wilhelmina, (Aunt Willie) and a bachelor son, Edward (Uncle Ed) were all that were left except, of course, Grandma (Henrietta).

There were other relatives, Walter L. Thomas, my mother's brother, married to Mollie Dixon, my father's half sister, with their children was another attraction. Then my father's father, J. W. Dixon, Sr., lived no more than a mile northeast of Leasburg. We frequently visited there.

About 1904 Leasburg was particularly glamorous to my country-boy eyes. Uncle Walter and Uncle Jerry Dixon (J. W., Jr.) together had erected a roller mill in the valley back of Uncle Walter's store. This was the closest roller flour mill to us and this made for more trips to Leasburg. What a wonderful thing to watch the various machinery in operation, and to watch colored Tom Stanfield fire the roaring monster of a boiler with green puncheons from the sawmill.

Then John Pettigrew, one of the widely known Pettigrew brothers of Roxboro, all blacksmiths like their father, had moved to Leasburg. He had a new blacksmith shop at the crown of the hill descending to the great mill. Now, patrons of the mill could have their mules shod while waiting for their wheat to be ground. Pettigrew also did wagon repairing, such as shrinking tires, making new whiffle trees, or even rebuilding wheels. To my youthful eyes, things were humming.

Business was so rushing that Pettigrew had to have help. The young man that joined him was Bob Whitlow. He was a stout country boy, better able to wrestle mules than Pettigrew himself. It must have taken some time to learn the fine points of blacksmithing, such as driving a horseshoe nail so it wouldn't go into the quick. I marvelled how they did it. Bob evidently did learn for somewhere along the line, I don't know when or how, Pettigrew left and it was Bob Whitlow's shop. At times he, too was over-rushed and had his brothers, George or Will, or both helping him.

Bob was an all-around man with many abilities. I believe it was Will Newman that mentioned that Bob Whitlow could cut hair. So I sneaked my father's hair scissors and a comb and called on Bob to get a hair cut. He seated me on the head of a barrel in the shade outside the shop door and fell to. I remember we discussed the relative merits of chewing versus smoking tobacco. He thought chewing was less harmful. So I got a hair cut--and the price--one dime!

It was the next year that my father bought the Sidney Thompson home and farm at the east end of Leasburg and in November 1905 sold our Person County home and moved to Leasburg.

Like many of the homes in Leasburg ours was built before the war--the Civil War. Part of it was said to be 150 years old then; the newer part only 75 years old. We had occasion to cut an opening for a door through a wall and found 6" x 6" studding fastened with hickory pins.

We have been told that when the father of Mr. Sidney Thompson was sending all of his sons to Chapel Hill for University education, Sidney insisted that what he wanted more, was plenty of good farm land, and enough money to build the prettiest house in the village for the girl he loved. (He got what he wanted.)

It was a sturdy piece of construction. The first floor was fourteen steps from the ground level, with two finished rooms underneath. One, later used as a bedroom, was probably built for the owner's office; the other was the dining room, reached by an inside stairway. The kitchen was in a separate building in the yard, as was customary in ante-bellum days. The residence and surrounding buildings were in Caswell County, but most of the farm was in Person County. The County line was Cobb Creek which provided water for the stock and cattle as they grazed in the meadow along each side, and very importantly, to me, it furnished the makings of a swimming hole where I learned the art of staying afloat.

The population of Leasburg at that time was given as 175, but I can't begin to count that many. RFD hadn't started then and maybe the surrounding country was counted as Leasburg. Mail had to brought from, and delivered to, Semora, the nearest railroad point--nine miles away.

Our nearest neighbors were the George Thompson family. Mr. Thompson was deceased but his third wife lived there with the children of his three marriages. Of the first family was Miss Bessie. Miss Bess was a particularly good friend of my mother, for they had attended school together as girls in Solomon Lea's academy there in Leasburg. At this time, she was still teaching school. The horse was hitched to the wagon, and with a little negro boy, Dave Curry, sitting beside her, grinning like a "cheshire," she drove off to the school over near Mr. Charlie Winstead's home on the road to Olive Hill. Sometimes she rode the horse side saddle with Dave behind her. Miss Bess was the organist at Leasburg Methodist Church and teacher of the grown-ups, the biggest class in the Sunday School.

Then there was Miss Anabel of the second family. She was the man of the house and did a bit of farming with the help of the same Dave Curry. She wore a man's hat and coat when doing these farm duties but at other times was the acme of simple neatness and good taste. She was Sunday School teacher of the boys' class, my group, for years; and a good teacher she was.

At this time, except for the widow the third family was away from home. Graves was in his last year at A & M, now N. C. State University in Raleigh, and Miss Ella was a student at Meredith College, where she later taught. There were other members away too: Miss Bess had a brother, Sam, a tobacconist in Kinston; Miss Anabel had a sister, Ida, a nurse in Durham, and a brother, Jimmie Neal, manager of a hotel in Greensboro. Mrs. Thompson was mistress of the home--all a wonderful family--wonderful neighbors.

Around the corner from the George Thompsons lived William Stanfield and his wife, Lucy, his son, Fletcher, and wife, Rosa, unusually well-bred negroes. Uncle William was already past middle age; he was an excellent carpenter, I would say a cabinet maker. He could do, with simple tools, what many today cannot do with machine tools. I loved to be around him when he did work for my father. I remember coming past his house from Sunday School one Sunday and hearing hammering in his back yard. I investigated and found that he was making a coffin for a negro child that had died the night before. It was a

nice job he was doing, as always. Fletcher, his son, was a powerful man in his thirties. He was the best wheat cradler I ever saw. He liked to use a special home-made cradle of my father's and could he cut a swath! He was also the best ax man I ever saw. Rosa, Fletcher's wife, was one of the Bigelow girls from western Caswell County. They were half-white--all seamstresses and smart. Rosa sewed for my mother and others.

A little farther west and across the street was the former home of Dr. Jake Thompson, general practitioner for a widespread community. He was dead, the family scattered, and the house vacant. His son, Dr. Joe, returned after graduation from the medical school of Kentucky University and practiced around Leasburg for a year or two before marrying and locating in Creedmoor. Dr. Joe had his office over Connally's Store. There he once treated my leg for a pretty bad dog bite. I still have the scar, but no other ill effects. Al Wade eventually bought the home of Dr. Jake Thompson and settled his family there.

Farther west and across the street was the home of my mother's parents, Reverend M. C. Thomas and his wife, Henrietta Lea. Grandpa wore a peg leg necessary since a fall from a high load of hay. (Note: An account written by Lillie Lea Neal, daughter of Solomon and Sophia Lea, nee Ainger, says that Rev. Thomas was hauling a wagon load of wood when his spirited horse took fright, ran away, turning over the wagon, the wood crushing his leg so that it had to be amputated above the knee. She accompanied him to New York to have an artificial leg made.JDW). He was living here in retirement, already in his seventies. He was a strong-minded Methodist. I used to wonder if he thought any other denomination stood a chance for heaven. He was a prolific writer, had scrapbooks all around, and could do a pretty good job at poetry. Grandma was a very quiet, religious person, but very alert and intelligent.

A little farther west and across from Grandpa was the old Hambrick home. All the Hambricks had married and moved away and Mrs. Nannie Stephens, a widow, lived in this house with her three youngest children. Voss, who later married my older sister, Annie, Lula Belle, a very good friend of my same sister, and John, one of my boyhood friends. Mrs. Stephens had the only telephone in town. It was a party line as most country phones were and she would literally talk by the hour with friends in a true "party" conversation. Stella Tapp, over near Roxboro, was one of her favorites.

Up the hill was Connally's Store, managed by Mr. H. T. Connally, and adjacent, was the Connally home, one of the finer homes in Leasburg. Here lived fiery, but likeable, Mr. Henry Connally, wife, Sallie, daughters, Mary and Mildred, and sons, George, Edgar and Walter. None married, although later on Miss Mary was married to Judge Womack and Walter married the school "marm," as I shall relate later, and lived across the "street."

North from the Connallys, on a knoll in a beautiful grove of oaks was the R. I. (Bob) Newman home. Here the school teacher roomed and boarded. It was convenient for the one-room school house was not more than a couple of hundred yards away. There were two sons, Rob and John. John was another of my boyhood friends, and there were still four of the pretty daughters at home--five including Evie, who married my Uncle Jerry and thus became one of my favorite aunts.

Down the gentle slope and across the Semora road, stood the school house with a line of cedars along the road in front. The one teacher was Miss Virginia Underwood, who reigned over all the grades made up of thirty-five to forty pupils. There were no formal grades. One started to school at age seven, learned to read, and advanced year by year until upper 'teens when boys just didn't come to school any more, chiefly because they became more valuable on the farm. Rare indeed was the boy who went on to higher schools. The girls, however, frequently went on to college. They, of course, trained for the teaching profession.

Miss Underwood, as we called her, was an excellent teacher. How she maintained discipline over that mixed-up group and drilled a little education into their heads is beyond me. Her commencement exercises at the close of each school year became something of a tradition. To me, coming from an even more primitive country school, these exercises were wonderful. They were held in the church as the only building in the village large enough. All pupils took part in commencement. I fell into it good and proper my first school year. In trying out for parts, boys were called in one by one to find one who could sing. I got the part as Reuben in "Reuben and Rachel" with Mabel Stephens as Rachel. Our performance was a great hit--the crowd went wild with applause.

Miss Underwood didn't escape romance. We began to see Walter Connally taking her for a drive after school and the girls began to get excited. Sure enough, they were married the following summer. Then the problem arose: what should we call her as a teacher? "Mrs. Connally" just wouldn't do. She settled it by informing us that she was "Miss Genie" Connally forever. She was indispensable in the social and religious life of the village, a lovely lady.

South of the school, was the Lea home, originally home of my Great-grandfather, Solomon Lea, now the home of Uncle Ed and Aunt Willie, neither married. Aunt Willie was a talented musician. Not only could she play the piano well but she composed music and poetry as well. She gave piano lessons and both of her pianos were busy before and after school. Uncle Ed was quite a scientific farmer and used many advanced ideas on his farm. He read widely, was an interesting talker, and was quite a drawing card as he sat on the store porch to dispense his wealth of knowledge.

The church, Methodist, stood as now at the intersection of the Semora Road with the Roxboro-Yanceyville Road; the parsonage alongside, to the west. There were five churches in the Leasburg circuit; besides Leasburg Church, there was Salem, Bethel, Hebron, and Union. I am not sure how one preacher made the rounds, I do know he preached once a month in Leasburg in the morning, and at 3:00 p.m. 'most every other Sunday, as well as Sunday night. He also conducted meeting every Wednesday night. Uncle Ed used to say the Wednesday night prayer meeting was Leasburg's "matchmaker," it provided such comfortable opportunity for the boys to escort the girls to and from church. The modern "date" was unheard of at that time.

Adjacent to the parsonage was the Joe Pulliam home and across the street was "Pulliam's Store." West of Pulliam's Store was the home of W. L. Thomas, (Uncle Walter) and on the west edge of Uncle Walter's lot stood his store. Facing Uncle Walter's was J. T. (Brud) Bradsher's home and store. This store was not very busy, for its stock was rather run down. It was the only store that pretended to carry any drugs. Once when my father was in bed with a deep cough, and threat of worse, he had Dr. Love, who then lived west of Leasburg, in the country, come to see him. When Dr. Love left he took me along to Bradsher's Store, where he looked over the various drugs on the shelves, selected two or three and mixed a cough medicine which I took back home. It seemed to be effective.

Across the street where the mill road turned left toward Prospect Hill, lived Mr. Addie Stephens, our Justice of the Peace. Farther on lived the Fuquas, and later the Bill Wades, Al's parents. Across the street was the S. P. "Pink" Newman home.Mr. Pink worked in Banner Warehouse in Danville, Va. during the tobacco season, but came home weekends. The son, Will, was my age. There were also three pretty daughters, Sallie, Annie, and Mary. Next to their home lived the Ben Stanfield family. Their only son, Bennie, studied at Trinity (now Duke University) and became a Methodist minister; the rest were attractive girls of whom five were still at home, Ruth, Anna, Bettie, Ethel, and Hattie Irwin, or "Irvin" as she preferred to be called. That leaves at the west end of the village only the Vince Morton

home, (the original Gabriel Lea home). Mr. Morton was deceased but his widow still lived there with sons, Monroe and Wheeler. Voss Stephens, Mr. Morton's grandson, later acquired this home and lived there.

But Leasburg had a suburb of sorts off to the south known as "Sugar Hill". Here about all the colored citizens, except William Stanfield, lived. To mention a few, there was Aunt Fannie Elliott with two daughters and three sons, that I knew about. Henry, the oldest son, married our favorite cook, Nora. Henry worked for Uncle Ed Lea. After Uncle Ed's death, I am told that Henry practically ran the farm and his son, Robert, faithfully looked after Aunt Willie until her death at the age of ninety-two, the last year or more bedridden with a broken hip. Henry's sister, Mary, married Tom Swan. Tom worked for my father several years. He was powerfully built, good natured, and more intelligent than average. He had a rumbling, deep voice and sang the bass part well. I have heard him joining in the singing at baptizings held on Cobb Creek just below our home. He was something to hear; Uncle Ed Lea said he had the best bass voice he ever heard.

I am reminded of an incident involving Tom. A dentist in Milton, Dr. Hurdle, used to tour the surrounding country once a year with his foot-powered dental engine and other equipment and take care of dental needs of people in these small towns. When in Leasburg, he used a one-room office building in the southwest corner of the Henry Connally yard. Now Tom had very bad teeth and determined that he would have them all pulled out and get artificial dentures. He later told me about going to Dr. Hurdle for the job. Dr. Hurdle set about pulling the old snags and stumps in Tom's mouth. Cocaine was not used in that day. Tom said he endured the pain of extraction until the last tooth, a particularly tough one. That one hurt so bad that he involuntarily threw up his hand and struck Dr. Hurdle, not a large man, and knocked him across the room onto the floor. Tom jumped after him, picked him up as he would a child and stood him by the dental chair, then Tom took his seat to have the job finished. He got a beautiful set of plates which improved his genial smile.

Besides the Elliotts and Tom, there lived on Sugar Hill Grant Smith, the negro school master, and not far away, Rich Williams, who I believe had nine sons, all grown, enough for a baseball team, they used to say. Rich was a good shoemaker. He actually made shoes; I wore a pair as a boy and they were comfortable.

My Uncle (W. L. Thomas) Walter's store was also the Post Office. Uncle Walter was one of the two Republicans in town, as far as I knew. That might account for his having the Post Office. He was a great admirer of Teddy Roosevelt. The other Republican was Uncle Ed Lea. Uncle Ed pinch-hit as postmaster when Uncle Walter had to be away on business. Uncle Ed subscribed to the New York World Tri-Weekly. After he had finished reading it, he gave it to me. I delighted in the serial story it carried. I remember one, "The Man in Lower Ten". It was a crime mystery and a hair raiser.

Mr. J. W. (Joe) Pulliam, owner of Pulliam's Store, was one of he finest men I ever knew. Not only was he pleasant and friendly in his business relations, but he was a mainstay in the church. As long as I lived in Leasburg, he was Sunday School Superintendent. I can still see Mr. Pulliam standing back of the organ, with Miss Bessie Thompson at the organ, and Uncle Ed Lea seated just back and to her right. There was no choir. Everybody sang. Uncle Ed led the singing. Mr. Pulliam sang a good bass. Walter Connally usually sat nearby; he was our only tenor; he had a beautiful voice.

Connally's Store was mainly operated by George, the bachelor son. George was a favorite with lady customers, for he carried a good selection of dress goods and accessories and he had a knowledge of just which of such items would be becoming to his customers. He kept individual tastes in mind when he made buying trips to Richmond. He also had a pleasant

manner and voice, which customers appreciated. It would be amiss not to mention the great service George Connally gave the church. He took it on himself to act as custodian and kept the church in spic-and-span condition, rang the bell, provided and arranged flowers for services, and on cold days, started fires in the two stoves that heated the building. He was also Sunday School Secretary, and part of the time, was Treasurer. Mr. Henry Connally was a bit eccentric at times. I have heard a story of how a crotchety old negro argued with him over a thirteen-cent item that was marked two-for-a-quarter. Mr. Connally grabbed a penny, went out to the woodpile, laid the penny on a block and chopped it in half and handed the negro a half and told him to "get". He put in a soda fountain for his own pleasure, but we youngsters revelled in it, too.

Connally's Store was rallying point for the young men on Saturday afternoons when farmers took off and came to town. The baseball field was across the street, in the (tobacco) factory lot, and in the summer this was the center of interest. The field was shortened in center field by the old factory building. Many hotly contested games were played between Leasburg and surrounding communities. These communities centered around a country store usually, such as Hester's Store, Edgewood, and Bushy Fork. The teams were mainly made up of farmer boys who had worked hard all week. But we knew nothing better and thought it was good baseball.

No mention of baseball can be passed without referring to the Briggs boys. The Briggs family lived west of Leasburg, in the Caswell County hills. They were all natural ball players, but chiefly noted for their prowess as pitchers. There were Will, Cleve, Oscar, Ashley, and Lem. Will was the oldest and many claimed he had been greatest of the family, but he was done as a pitcher when I knew him. He usually played first base; he sometimes caught or backstopped in a pinch. No doubt he taught his brothers much about the art of pitching. Cleve was rather tall and a bit slender. He had an assortment of curves fit for a big leaguer. He threw an in-curve that must have been something like Christy Mathewson's fade-away. But Cleve didn't have the speed and power of Oscar, who was more sturdily built. Oscar not only had the curves but he simply overpowered the batters with his speed. He was the hero of us boys. Ashley and Lem had not developed when I left Leasburg.

The white people of Leasburg were mainly Methodist. The negroes were Baptist. Their big annual event was the "Sossation". There was a white Baptist church east of Leasburg named Ebenezer. It was Primitive Baptist. A Reverend Oakes was the preacher. He used to drive past our house on Saturday mornings in his fringe-top surrey and drop off a bushel of corn to be ground in our grist mill and he picked it up on his return from the Saturday service. The whole family went along. He had a rather pretty teen-age daughter that we boys eyed with interest.

It fell the turn of Ebenezer Church to have the Association. Crowds came from far and near to attend; some with honorable motives; some not so honorable. In town, Connally's Store was busy. Some of the second variety were on hand there. One of these was a Warren from out south in the Hester's Store area. He was a noted trouble maker and a fight picker. He was on horseback that day and mean drunk. He rode his horse up the front steps of the store's porch and tried to urge him inside. Mr. Henry Connally would not back down from any man; he came out of the store with a pick handle and drove them back down the steps. So Warren dismounted and entered the store on foot. He staggered and stuck his elbow through a show case. He then took a swing at Fate Brooks, a much smaller man, also from the South Country. He had picked on the wrong man that day; Fate drew his pocket knife and with one swipe slashed Warren across the chest. Warren walked slowly down the road in the direction of Ebenezer. A negro took him in his buggy to the church grounds.

This was all reported to me by eye witnesses. But about this time, my father decided he and I needed some association atmosphere, so we drove out there. Not too far from the church I saw Warren reclining against a big oak with his bloody chest exposed. Dr. Love, with customary cigar in his mouth, was stooped in front of him sewing up the gash that looked at least a foot long and more than half an inch deep. I thought "you are wasting time - he can't live". But he did live, and I heard he was in another fight six months later.

There were still veterans of the Civil War living when I lived in Leasburg. Dr. Jake Thompson had been a surgeon in the war. Bob Smith was there and the Whitlow brothers, *"Boy" and "Pink" *(See note at end of story); and Henry Connally, though young, had served during the last year of the war. There was George Sawyer with his hearty "HOWDY PODNER". The Civil War was only about forty years behind us in the first decade of the twentieth century. Here in 1968, we are already fifty years away from World War I.

Summer in Leasburg was exciting. Then the wandering returned home. There were the Joe Pulliam married daughters with their children; Lea relations came to visit Aunt Willie and humor their nostalgia in the origin of the Lea families. There were the Thompsons, the Newmans, the Stanfields and the Mortons. The college girls were home from college; Sunday School and church service rang with practiced voices; picnics and evening lawn parties enlivened our days and nights. Many of the families in Leasburg were inter-married and kin. Bob Newman and Pink Newman were brothers, sons of Banks Newman, still living. Mrs. Joe Pulliam was their sister. Mrs. Bob (Nannie) Newman and Mrs. Henry (Sallie) Connally were sisters of Mrs. Joe Pulliam. J. T. Bradsher was brother to Aunt Mollie Thomas's mother, and of course the Leas, Thomases, and our family were closely related.

Leasburg must have changed in the more than fifty years I have been away. I hope the change has been beneficial, but I suppose it is characteristic of old people to dwell on old times and the fine people they knew - most of whom are scattered or passed on. It causes a tug at the heart strings, at least it certainly does for me.

Loyally,
Will Dixon
809 North Gray Street
Pampa, Texas 79065

---END OF TEXT---

***Note:**

William S. Dixon was born June 1, 1896, at what was then called Alliance Hall, an area in Person County near Roxboro and the present-day Lamberth Memorial Baptist Church. He was living in Texas when he wrote these reminiscences of Leasburg. He died there April 27, 1977. I met Will Dixon in the mid-1970s, a few years before he died. He was a remarkable man who had vivid memories of all that had occurred in his lifetime. JDW

James Solomon Whitlow, nicknamed "Boy," was a Civil War veteran, but George Pinkney Whitlow, called "Pink," born in 1850, was too young. However, two other brothers, John Norwood Whitlow, wounded at Spotsylvania Courthouse, Va., and Pleasant A. Whitlow, as well as a half brother, William Whitlow, wounded at Brandy Station, Va., were Confederate soldiers.

When Mr. Dixon moved to Leasburg in 1905, John N. Whitlow had died in 1900, Pleasant Whitlow had moved away, and it is not known whether William died or moved West with other relatives. (Jeannine D. Whitlow, Granddaughter of John Norwood Whitlow).

GREENSBORO DAILY NEWS, SEPTEMBER 27, 1939

By John W. Cannon

AMONG OUR NEIGHBORS

Leasburg, Sept. 26....Is the golden age of prosperity about to return to Leasburg? Will it again be like it was when this little town now hardly boasting more than 150 souls, was the County Seat of Caswell and Person Counties? Will times return like they were just before and after the War Between the States when the village was a tobacco manufacturing center? Will ever again there be another hey-day like that when Rev. Solomon Lea was operating his Somerville Institute or his brother, Lorenzo Lea, was operating a boys' school some time prior thereto? Will this village, which was full grown before many another North Carolina town had started, produce any more fortunes like that amassed by one of its earliest citizens, Nicholas Thompson, tanner and farmer, whose affluence prompted him to import a carriage from Baltimore at a cost of $577.44 as shown by his ledgers which are still preserved? Not only that, but he had no trade-in and his carriage driver, old Nathan, had to go all the way to Petersburg, Va. to meet the vehicle which came there by boat. Nathan had to drive the new outfit overland to his master's home and no doubt the condition of the roads of that day brought some strain on the reputation of the village for moral correctness. But then why should a carriage driver, forced to negotiate roads that have since made many a free-born Tarheel cuss, be held accountable for correctness and purity of speech?

WAITING FOR THE MAIL----The group which was sitting this week on the piazza of George Connally's Store, a mercantile establishment that has been operating continuously for more than 75 years in the same building, was not so sure about the dawn of another period of prosperity. These boys, the oldest 85-year old F. P. Dixon, had foregathered in the pleasant shade of this building to wait on the morning mail and discuss the topics of the day. They felt bad about the European situation and still worse about the tobacco holiday. Nobody knew what was going to happen to many of the planters of tobacco in Caswell, but, as Mr. Dixon said, "I'll bet they'll keep on growing tobacco."

"Too many drummers and not enough customers" was the terse comment on the town's commercial life by Mr. Connally himself, who although he favors good highways, feels sure that they are taking many prospective traders to more populous centers. Except for the filling stations, Leasburg has about the same number of mercantile establishments that it had in 1810.

REFERRED TO MISS BESSIE----"But before you make any predictions," cautioned one of the store porch advisers, "you had better go down yonder and see "Miss Bessie." She knows more about Leasburg than anybody else and is more likely to tell you what it is going to do. The advice proved well worthy of being followed.

Miss Bessie Thompson is the superintendent of the only Sunday School in town, but she has many other interesting contacts besides. She is the granddaughter of the very practical Nicholas Thompson, the early settler whose fortune was estimated at something like $100,000 when he died in 1857--a whale of a fortune for that day.

The pantry door in her house came out of Caswell's first courthouse which stood in the front yard of what is now her home. Between the rows of boxwoods which lead from her front door to the gate in the picket fence can still be seen some of the remains of the old courthouse foundation. In one corner of the yard is the law office of her father, George N. Thompson, former member of the North Carolina General Assembly. This building too, was fashioned from the timbers that came out of the courthouse.

It so happened that on the morning the reporter called on Miss Bessie, the little Negro boy who works on the place had uncovered an omen for Leasburg in a patch of peas. He dug up, at the site of an old building of some sort, a practically unused coin whose superscription showed it to have been minted in the year 1829. No one would have taken this discovery so seriously--maybe they didn't anyway--had it not been made by a little Negro who is the Great-Grandson of Miss Bessie's Black Mammy and the Great-Great-Great-Grandson of the Mammy in Nicholas Thompson's home. Anybody would know that such a find must mean something.

FAITH IN LEASBURG----But Miss Bessie had an unalterable faith and belief in the Leasburg fundamentals long before the Negro lad toted the coin up. "What place can bestow such longevity on its citizens?" she asked the reporter, and then began to count on the fingers of both hands persons who had passed the 90-year mark. This sort of news gets around, too, for that very morning the reporter had found an 85-year old farmer who got tired of his 400 acres out in the country and moved into the village to round out a happy career.

"It's just such a good place to live." continued Miss Bessie. A look around at the beautiful old place with some of its original homes still standing, spacious lawns and lovely boxwoods seem to confirm her opinion.

We are inclined to let Miss Bessie's verdict stand and wish with her for a little more advertising for the lovely village. Even the Highway Commission has seemed neglectful, having put up only one marker as far as anybody has found which points the way to Caswell's first County Seat.

If the merchants and business people become discouraged now and then, as all people do, they will remember that Miss Bessie can think up enough community assets to bring in a whole host of people with the proper publicity. And nobody who wishes good fortune for Leasburg must forget that good luck piece which has been dug up by the Great-Great-Great-Grandson of a servant of Leasburg's practical citizen who, by the way, was the father of *Jacob Thompson, a member of President Buchanan's Cabinet. You mustn't dodge when fortune smacks you in the face.

Note:

*This Jacob Thompson was Secretary of the Interior (1857-1861) under Buchanan's administration and during the Civil War he was a Confederate secret agent in Canada. His nephew, Dr. Jacob A. Thompson, was a surgeon in the Civil War. After the war, Dr. Thompson bought the house built by William Archer Lea and lived there about fifty years. William Ham of Martinsville bought the house at auction in the 1950s and stripped it of its fine interior woodwork, staircases, elaborate mantels, one of which was carved with an eagle and 23 stars, to be incorporated into a home Ham proposed to build in Martinsville. Robert and Irene Crowder bought the house from Ham in 1958 and replaced the interior with new materials. It is on the west corner of Hwy 158 and Olive Hill Church Road in Leasburg. JDW

HISTORY OF LEAS CHAPEL CHURCH

By

Miss Ella Graves Thompson

James, William, and John Lea came from England to Orange County, N.C., by way of Virginia about 1750. They were men of strict moral caliber, intellectually and physically sound, robust and alert.

Being public-spirited Christian people, the Leas were keen to promote religion and education. Of pure English stock, they adhered to the church of England. Very soon after settling here they built an Episcopal church, which was known as Lea's Chapel. The original building, we are told, was constructed of logs, for this region at that time was almost a wilderness of forest.

During the past 200 years the church has been rebuilt three times on the same sacred spot. It still stands---3 miles east of Leasburg. Graves of early Leasburg citizens may be found in the old cemetery there,--for the most part, Leas and close relatives; among them may be found that of Dr. William Louis Poteat's great-grandmother, Anness Lea McNeill Cochran, wife of John McNeill. After his death she married James Cochran, member of the legislature.

We have been told on good authority, Mrs. May Morton Hester, who said she saw it done, that at one time the southwest corner of the church building seemed to be giving way. A stout flat stone was needed to lift it slightly. In looking over the place for a suitable rock, one of the workmen found lying on the ground apparently nowhere near a grave, the marble headstone from William Lea's grave. The grave could not be located. The committee in charge agreed that no place was more suitable for this stone to be preserved than as a cornerstone for the church the Leas had founded; and so it was placed where needed to support that corner of the building.

Some years after that, the church was enlarged; and later on an annex for Sunday School rooms, and a fellowship hall were added. Underpinnings for these have put the grave stone so far under the building that it would be almost impossible now to retrieve it.

It was probably during Bishop Francis Asbury's periodic visits here, about the time of the American Revolution, that Lea's Chapel passed into the hands of the Methodists. It has since then remained an important church in the North Carolina Methodist Conference.

Rev. Solomon Lea, great grandfather of *Mrs. Sam Newton, (a church member at the time this history was written), was never full-time pastor for Lea's Chapel. The school he founded in Leasburg, (Somerville Female Institute), was one of the leading schools in the South before the Civil War, drawing patronage from cultured families in a number of states. This vocation took most of his time and strength. But he never lost his early inclination to be a minister of the Gospel, and often he served as supply or as guest speaker at Lea's Chapel and other churches. He loved horseback riding and when he went out from Leasburg to meet appointments, that was his mode of travel. He sat erect in the saddle, with his coat buttoned tightly around him, his horse going in a "long trot." One who knew him well said, "Mr Lea always wanted to keep things going and get things done."

People loved to hear him preach. His sermons were brief, pointed and logical; his deep spirituality, winsome and effective.

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***Note:** Mrs. Sam Newton, nee Bertha Dixon, was a daughter of Williams S. and Emma Thomas Dixon. Emma was a daughter of Rev. Marcus C. and Henrietta Lea Thomas. Henrietta, born in 1840, was one of six daughters and two sons born to Solomon Lea (B.1807, D.1897), and Sophia Ainger Lea, (B.1810,D.1866).

A copy of this history came from Miss Bessie Bradsher, (1899-2000) and was written by Miss Ella Graves Thompson who died in 1970. It is not known when it was written. Jeannine D. Whitlow

OCTOBER 1929

FOUR SURVIVING DAUGHTERS OF SOLOMON LEA AND SOPHIA AINGER LEA...1929

FROM THE NEWS & OBSERVER NEWSPAPER, Raleigh, North Carolina

Back row, left to right: 1. Henrietta Lea Thomas married Rev. Marcus C. Thomas. When this photo was made she was 89 years old and was widowed.
2. Miss Wilhelmina Lea, 86 years old, never married.

Front row, left to right: 1. Lilianne Lea Neal, age 84, married Thomas Chalmers Neal. When this picture was made, she was widowed.
2. Eugenia Lea Lea, 83 years old, married a distant cousin, Dr. Calvin Graves Lea. Dr. Lea was a surgeon during the Civil War. She was a widow, also, when this picture was made.

RECOLLECTIONS

By **LILIANNE LEA NEAL**
Born January 8, 1845, Died April 21, 1938

(Daughter of Solomon Lea and Sophia Ainger Lea)

In the summer of 1863, when the Civil war had been in progress for two years, Aunt Mary Graves came to Leasburg on a visit. She said that Uncle Azariah Graves wanted a teacher for his children. The lady who had been teaching them had married. I have forgotten her name; she married John Kerr, who was a very prominent lawyer and noted for his eloquent oratory. (Note: Her name was Miss Catherine Yancey, and known as "Miss Cat." JDW)

Aunt Mary asked Sister Addie to take the school that Uncle Azariah offered. She could not be persuaded to take the place. A few years afterwards, while teaching music in Uncle Lorenzo Lea's school in Jackson, Tenn., she met Mr. Benjamin L. Arnold and married him. She died comparatively young and very suddenly leaving two children, Harry, at that time 3 years of age, and John, 8 months. John only lived two or three weeks after his mother's death and is buried in the cemetery in Leasburg. ("Addie" or Adeline, as she was named, died of what was then called cramp colic, now known as appendicitis. She was born in 1842 and died June 24, 1871.JDW) Addie was buried in Bolivar, Tenn., where Mr. Arnold was teaching at the time of her death. Mr. Arnold afterwards moved to Oregon, being offered the presidency of college at Corvallis. (Benjamin L. Arnold became the first president of Oregon State College and retained that position for 20 years. JDW). As Sister Addie would not take the school at Uncle Azariah Graves', she offered it to me, and after some urging I consented to undertake the job.

I was 18 years of age, and had had some experience in teaching, assisting my father in his school, (Somerville Female Institute at Leasburg, N.C. JDW). (Aunt Mary was Uncle Calvin Graves' second wife. Her first husband was my father's brother, William Lea, of Petersburg, Va. She had two children, John W. Lea, a Col. in Confederate army, afterwards became Episcopal minister, and Maggie who married Col. Charles I. Graves, an officer in the navy.)

When I assumed my duties as teacher at Mr. Azariah Graves', he told me to call him "Uncle", and his wife "Aunt" as Maggie did. This I was very glad to do, being a timid creature, and having seen but little of the world.

He had four children to go to school, Algernon, Ella, Azariah and Rebecca. Two came from Mr. Ware's, Joseph and Frank Burton, Joe was Frank's uncle, though two years younger. There were two Blackwells, Ed and Mary Boyd. Philemon Howard was also one of the pupils. Joe Ware & Frank Burton used to bring nice, red apples to school. Frank delighted to tease the little girls by offering an apple, then holding it above their reach. Martha Williamson said, "Miss Lillie, make Frank quit turtlelizing me."

Algernon Graves, Frank Burton and Phil Howard were all large boys, sixteen years of age, or near that. I was only 18 and I took a big cry at the thought of teaching those large boys. I must say that they gave me no trouble whatever. It was a pleasure to teach them after I became accustomed to it. They studied Latin, and used Bullions Grammar and Reader, with which I was familiar having studied them myself. In arithmetic they had Emerson's 3rd Part, which was new to me and somewhat difficult. After school I used to take the book,with slate and pencil, and sit in the upper porch, which was a quiet place, and there was no passing there. I worked out every example as I went along, and kept several days ahead of the class. I had to work hard over some examples, and it is needless to say that the

pupils couldn't manage them without my assistance. Fortunately I had always been good in arithmetic.

Besides the school work, Ella and Rebecca both took music lessons. Ella had a talent for music and made good progress. Afterwards when she went to college in Danville, the professor of music complimented her performance and asked who was her teacher. She replied, "Cousin Lillie Lea."

The school room that I taught in was originally built for a store, I believe. It had one large room with a small one on one side. "Wonders never cease!" as a cousin of mine used to say. That old school room became my home during my married life, and now in my old age, I am living again in the same old house which has been remodeled twice since then.

I will mention some little incidents in the school. Phil Howard was a good speller and was usually head of the class. One day he happened to miss and got "foot." Ella was so delighted that she cried out, "Full is fit! Full is fit." (Got her vowels changed in "Phil is foot.") The word martyr occurred in a lesson. I asked who knew what it meant. No one replied. Azzie then held up his hand. "'What is it, Azzie?" "Dem little red things what grows in the garden." In the botany class after analyzing a flower, I told them to look for the emblem in the back of the book. "Fiddlety, Fiddlety," cried Nannie Staulcup. (Fidelity?)

While I was teaching at Uncle Azariah's, Willie (sister Wilhelmina Lea) was teaching at Mrs. McGehee's. She was so homesick in her disposition that she never stayed anywhere long. I taught two years at Uncle Azariah Graves' place, having during the time a number of pupils besides the ones mentioned, among others, Martha & Ben Williamson and Walter Paxton. One of Azzie's "Compositions": "The horse is a useful animal. He takes our corn to mill. If we didn't have a horse we would have to tote it ourselves, and it would be a <u>hard tote</u>."

I was fond of walking in the woods in search of wild flowers and one day in April, 1865, had taken the children in the woods as I often did. On our return Uncle Azariah informed me that Gen. Lee had surrendered. It was one of the great shocks of my life. I was an ardent believer in the Confederate cause. After Gen. Lee's surrender, I remember Uncle Azariah calling his negroes together in the back yard. He told them they were "free" to go where they pleased, but if they stayed with him he would pay them for their work. Lincoln had issued the Proclamation of freedom the previous 1st of Jan., but few had taken advantage of it.

After Gen. Lee's surrender, Uncle Azariah called all his hands together. Lincoln had issued the proclamation making them free the previous 1st of January, but most of the slaves remained where they were until Gen. Lee's surrender. Uncle Azariah told them that they were free. They could go where they pleased, but that if they continued to stay with him that he would pay them wages. Excuse an old woman's bad memory for writing this twice. I don't remember whether I taught a day there after the surrender.

My brother-in-law, Rev. M. C. Thomas came by and insisted on my going to Wentworth with him. He was on the Wentworth circuit then. He had two children, Eugenia & Walter. Eugenia was four years of age. I began teaching her to read. She was very precocious and learned rapidly.

That fall I was offered a school in Wentworth which I accepted. I boarded at Capt. Buck Ellington's. He was a widower, but had a daughter, Mary, about 14 years of age. She went by the name of "Sis Buck," but I had no taste for nick names, and always called her Mary. One of the sons was called "Sam Buck" & another "Jim Buck" & the cook was "Bettie Buck." I think I had about 20 pupils in that school, which I taught for five months. I then stayed a while at my sister's (Henrietta Lea Thomas) in the parsonage. On the 8th of January (1866), my 21st

birthday, her son, Charles Moran was born. He was always called "Moran" in honor of Dr. Moran, the presiding elder.

I took another school in Wentworth. I did not teach in the same building, and boarded at a different place, Col. James Dillard's. Mrs. Dillard was a Miss Lash. She was a pretty woman, and a nice housekeeper--kept a good table. They had no children. Capt. John Dillard's daughter, Lucy, went to school to me, also took music lessons. He afterwards became Judge and moved, away from Wentworth. Bettie Raine, one of my pupils also boarded at Mrs. Dillard's. She was a very pretty girl, sister of Dr. Raine, a prominent physician there. I was about to forget Lucy Dillard's little sister, Annie Martin, six years of age who was one of my pupils. I taught her to read. In after years she married Mr. Frank Hall. They live in Reidsville & they once invited me to take supper. Mrs. Hall looks about as old as myself and one could scarcely believe that I taught her to read.

I remember another pupil, Mary Williams, a cousin of Lucy Dillard's from Richmond. She married a Collie, and once when I was in the hospital in Danville, she and Mary Womack came to see me. She remembered going to school to me. Mrs. Collie has died since then. Sallie Smith was one of my pupils at both of the Wentworth schools. She married twice, a Barnes the first time. Strange, I can't think of her name when she married the 2nd time, though I used to meet her in Reidsville and she made one or two dresses for me. She was always very fond of me.

Half a dozen Hancocks were among my pupils. Mollie was devoted to me, and wrote to me for some years. The noted high priced dressmaker, "Madam Hancock," was the wife of one of my Hancock pupils.

After teaching the two schools in Wentworth I returned to Leasburg and found my mother in very poor health. She lingered bedridden for 8 months and passed away Nov. 22, 1866, aged 56 years. Willie (sister, Wilhelmina Lea) was teaching music in Louisburg College at the time of her death, and Sister Addie was teaching music in Uncle Lorenzo Lea's school in Jackson, Tenn. Sister Henrietta, with her three children, was staying at Pa's. Sister Eugenia was there also with me. Sister Addie married soon after Ma's death and Eugenia, two years later to Dr. Calvin Lea. Mr. Shell was the preacher in Leasburg (1866) at the time of Ma's death. I was very fond of his entire family. He was on the Yanceyville circuit after leaving Leasburg, and I used to visit them there.

For some time I stayed in Leasburg helping Pa with the school. One time I taught all the girls in a house in the yard, while Pa taught the boys at the Academy. I had 12 or 15 large girls at that time. Sallie Pulliam, afterwards Mrs. (Henry T.) Connally, was one of them. Mollie Paylor was the only small one at that time. I was not paid for my teaching. Pa needed the money and he gave me a note for $100, which was never paid. Nannie Woods was one of my pupils and there were two Oakleys. I wish I could remember more of them.

The next year Willie, Eugenia and I begged Pa to let us do our own cooking. He was very reluctant, but finally consented. We were an ignorant set about cooking as Pa always kept a cook. We took it turn about one week at the time. I cooked the first week; I remember what I had for dinner. Spare ribs, sweet potatoes, and corn bread. I was quite exhausted after accomplishing that grand feast, and went to bed to rest.

Mr. (Rev. M. C.) Thomas was on the Olin circuit at that time. He asked for one of us to come and stay with his family and Willie decided to go. That left Eugenia and myself to scuffle with the cooking. One day we had churning to do. I would churn as long as I could, then Eugenia would take hold, but no butter came. Lydia, wife of a tenant, came along. She took hold of the churn, and got the butter in 5 minutes. The trouble was that we did not have the temperature right. We did not remain as ignorant as we started out. We got a recipe book and began to try everything that we could. We preserved and jellied every kind of fruit. So we soon learned how to do things, and really kept a better table than the cooks had.

However, at the end of the year Pa said, "Children, you have fed me very well, but I had rather have a cook." That ended our experiment during Pa's lifetime, but we had learned things that came in use in after years. My mind is all in a jumble about the time of events. I wish I had kept a diary, but I did not.

One spring, Mr. (Rev. M. C.) Thomas, being on the Roxboro circuit, he had a very spirited horse to which he was much attached. He was hauling a load of wood with her when she took fright at something, ran away, turned over wagon and load which crushed one of Mr. Thomas's legs so badly that it had to be amputated. Dr. Strudwick of Hillsboro performed the job. His brother, Judge Thomas of New Bern, offered to pay for an artificial leg. He had to go to New York to have it made. He asked me to go with him. Brother Edward said if I went I would regret it as long as I lived. Mrs. Dr. (Josiah Asbury) Stanfield, who lived then in the house now owned by the (Henry T.) Connallys, said, "If you don't go you will regret it as long as you live." I took Mrs. Stanfield's advice, and did not regret it.

Willie at that time was teaching music in Murfreesboro, Tenn. (Uncle Lorenzo Lea, who had owned a nice home in Jackson, Tenn., met with many misfortunes. He lost his wife and his 5 children in the space of 2 years. He was a very handsome man, and highly educated, especially in Languages. He was well versed in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Italian, Spanish and German.) He sold his home in Jackson, Tenn., and accepted a place in the college in Murfreesboro, Tenn. He induced Willie to go there too. When the school closed Willie went to sister Anness Richmond's, who lived near Memphis, Tenn. She had just gotten there when she received a telegram announcing the sudden death of Sister Addie. She had an attack of cramp colic (now known as appendicitis). Two doctors were with her. They dosed her with morphine. She nursed her baby, (John), turned over in bed and died. Willie came home with Mr. Arnold & an 8 months old baby. He took Harry, 3 years old, to his sister Amanda, in Va.

Willie took entire charge of the baby that was in perfect health at its mother's death. She took no one's advice, wouldn't let any one do anything for the baby, but herself. The little thing lived 2 weeks and died and is buried in the Leasburg cemetery.

I started telling of my trip to New York. Sister Addie died June 24, 1871, while I was there. Before going to New York, Mr. (Rev. M. C.) Thomas spent a week or two visiting relatives, I being with him, and Walter, who was 7 years of age. We went to New Bern and spent several days at Judge Thomas's. Then to Morehead to see his sister, Mrs. George Dill. I was received very cordially at both places. We then returned to New Bern, where we took passage for New York on the steamer, "Ellen S. Terry," my first trip on a steamer. I was very seasick as soon as we crossed the bar, but Mr. Thomas and Walter were not at all.

Mr. (Rev. M. C.) Thomas's brother Alonzo, who lived in new York, met us at the landing and took us to his home, where we spent two weeks most hospitably treated. Mr. Thomas went every day to the office of the man who made his artificial leg. Walter & I would stay there a while, then walk on the streets and look at the sights. Streetcars were drawn by horses in those days. Stuarts was the grand store at that time. One Sunday I went to a Roman Catholic church and heard Archbishop McCloskey confirm 400 boys and girls. He made a very impressive talk, after which I don't suppose a single one of them could ever be induced to leave the Roman Catholic church. I enjoyed a visit to Central Park. One night Mrs. Thomas took me to the closing exercises of a school. The pupils recited & sang as was done in the South. We left new York on the steamer, "Isaac Bell," for Richmond, Va. The view was very pretty up the James River. We then went to Roxboro where Pa sent for me. Edmond Oliver and his daughter Fannie, came for me. It was a great shock when Fannie said, "Miss Addie is dead." She was buried in Bolivar, Tenn. The authorities of the town would not permit her body to be shipped to N. C. in the hot weather. (No embalming common in that day.)

Mr. Arnold engaged to teach a school in Shelby Co., Tenn., but deciding to make other arrangements he wrote to Pa and asked him to take his place. He consented to do so. He taught that school for 5 months, then taught 5 months in Salisbury, Tenn. He then came

home, looking well, and with money enough to pay some debts. During his absence Willie kept house, and I taught the school.

After a year or so Uncle Lorenzo Lea went to Marshall Co., Miss., and took charge of Marshall Institute. He wrote for Willie to come out, assist in school & teach music. She went, but did not stay very long--got homesick as usual. She wrote to me to come & take her place, which I consented to do, as Sister Henrietta was at Pa's, and could keep house for him. Willie did not go home at once, but went to Sister Anness Richmond's (in Germantown, Tenn.) for a visit. I had not been very long at Marshall Institute when I received a letter from Mr. Arnold asking me to go back home and take charge of Harry. He would pay my expenses back. I wrote him that I was not willing to break my engagement with Uncle Lorenzo. He then asked Willie to take him which she consented to do. I don't know exactly how long Harry stayed with Willie, not longer than a year or two.

I was with Uncle Lorenzo at Marshall Institute until the close of the term. He wanted me to study Italian with him, but instead of having an easy book to begin with, he had a voluminous novel. I couldn't manage that, so in disgust he gave me up. When the school closed I went to Holly Springs, Miss., and made a visit of 5 weeks to Uncle Willis Lea's family who lived there. Uncle Willis had been for years one of the most prominent physicians in Northern Mississippi, but was crippled then by a fall from a mule.

After the visit in Holly Springs, I went to Sister Anness Richmond's (at Germantown, Tenn.) near Memphis and stayed until Uncle Lorenzo's school opened again. He decided to move to Corinth, Miss., & establish a school there. In addition to me, he had a Miss Rives assisting, who also taught music. She was well educated and a good teacher, and we became close friends. Uncle's school in Corinth was not very prosperous, so the 2nd year he did not keep Miss Rives or me, but got cheaper teachers. Poor Uncle did not live long after that. He died and was buried in Corinth, (Miss.). A battle was fought near Corinth during the Civil War, and there is a U. S. Cemetery there in which 40,000 soldiers are buried. It is kept in beautiful condition.

I forgot to mention that Miss Rives and I studied German under Uncle Lorenzo, and we made very good progress, but all I remember now is "Guten Morgen or arben" and "Was ist das?" I must tell of a faithful old negro woman who was with Uncle Lorenzo through all his moves and until his death, "Aunt Till."

When the Corinth school closed I went home. Pa met me in Milton. The narrow gauge (rail) road was running then. It was called "The Little Janie." Pa came in a wagon with two horses and a negro boy to drive. One horse was quite young and gave out. We stopped at Mr. John Smith's who lived 5 miles from Leasburg. He borrowed a mule, and put a saddle on the young horse which he rode, leaving the boy to drive the wagon. We hadn't gone far before Mr. Smith's mule began to run away. Pa was out of sight on his horse. The negro (boy) leaped from the wagon, leaving me to my fate. The team, rushing into a side road, (were) striking trees on each side. I thought "I have come all the way from Miss. to be killed near home." I jumped out, landing on my hands, hurting my wrists, but breaking no bones. The team rushed on to Mr. Alick Fuller's, where they were stopped and someone came to see who was hurt. Pa came up on his horse and we walked to Mr. Fuller's, which was not far. It was quite late, and Mr. Fuller insisted on our spending the night. There was nothing else for us to do. Mr. Fuller had a nice, large house, well furnished, where he lived with his negroes. He was a man of disreputable character. His cook gave us a good supper and breakfast, and I had a nice room by the side of Pa's. In after years Pa induced Mr. Fuller to be legally married to a white woman with whom he was living. The young horse was all right in the morning. Mr. Smith's mule was returned, and we went on to Leasburg.

I don't remember the exact year, but Dr. Richmond wrote to me and asked me to come out and teach his children, which I consented to do. I taught his children and a family of Paynes who lived nearby for five months, when the school closed for the summer.

My friend, Miss Rives, with whom I was associated in Corinth, Miss., was then living in Searcy, Ark. She wrote to me giving me an invitation to visit her. I was always ready to see a new country, so accepted. I went on a steamboat at Memphis, sailed down the river some distance, then up the White River to a landing a few miles from Searcy, where a hack met the boats. Searcy was a very nice place, noted for mineral springs. It was not a large place then, but has developed in later years. After a month's visit, the school there opened, Prof. Rives being principal. He offered me a position in the school, and I accepted as Dr. Richmond's children were going to the public school in the fall. I taught exactly one month, when the Searcy authorities passed a law that no one was to be employed in the school but citizens of the place. I know of another town that passed a law that no teacher should be employed that lived in the place. Two very absurd laws in my opinion. So after teaching a month I had to leave. I was teaching just as usual when suddenly informed of that decision. The pupils were told to leave the room and to go to another teacher in a building some distance off. They had become attached to me, and left crying dismally. I made my arrangements to leave at once from what I call "My Fool trip" to Searcy. In company with a nice family who were going to the Little Rock fair, I left Searcy. They were very nice and attentive to me, but I have forgotten their names. I stayed a day or two in Little Rock, attended the fair and saw horse racing for the first time. I returned to Memphis on the train and Sister Anness met me there. Soon afterwards I went back to good old Leasburg.

There was a little girl by the name of Lippy among the pupils whom I met a number of years later. Her father sold his home in Searcy, Ark., and moved to Durham, N. C. On a visit to Nat & Addie, who were living in Durham at that time, I went to a tobacco factory to see the operations, and saw the Lippy girl who went to school to me in Searcy, Ark. Leaving Durham, I went to Caswell to attend the marriage of Florence Lea to Stokes Clarke. Nat took me to the station in a very open surrey that he borrowed from a neighbor. It was before day & very dark. My handbag being very full, rolled out, my $100 watch being in it with other things. The loss was advertised without result. Years passed, in the meantime, I married Mr. Neal. One day I received a registered package and a letter saying, "Here is your watch that you lost 20 years ago." Mr. Lippy found the bag, gave the watch to his daughter, who married afterwards & lived at Jamaica. She thought of me. Got my address from Addie & Nat & sent the bundle to me. I gave the watch to Julia.

About that time (when I left Searcy, Ark.), the Khedive of Egypt advertised for American officers to train his army, and Col. Charles I. Graves, who married Cousin Maggie Lea, offered for the place. He had come through the Civil War with no means and a family to support. He always said that he went to Egypt to "get corn." He spent 3 years in Egypt, came home, paid his debts and bought a comfortable home, died finally of disease contracted in the climate of Egypt.

Cousin Maggie Graves with her 5 children came to Leasburg and spent 2 years at Pa's, occupying an office in the yard. While she was in Leasburg, the Milton people begged Pa to teach the school there, so he did for 5 months, leaving the Leasburg school to me. The next year Cousin Maggie Graves decided to go to her mother's who was the 2nd wife of Uncle Calvin Graves. She wanted me to come up there and teach her children and others in the neighborhood. I taught in the little office outside of the yard. Besides Cousin Maggie's children, there were 5 of Uncle Aurelius Turner's boys, Mrs. Belle Graves' 4 children, 3 Paschals and Fannie Headen from Pittsboro.

I don't remember how long I taught there, but Col. Graves returned from Egypt, and they left for Rome, Ga. I moved the school up to Mr. Jim Williamson's for a while, and Tom Williamson's children came to me there. Then the school was moved to the 2-room building near Trinity Baptist church. Bill Johnston's 5 children went to school to me there, also Mrs. Belle Graves four, Jim, George, Calvin & Dorabelle, (also) Minnie Blackwell, who afterwards married a McKinney. As a pupil Dorabelle Graves was exceptionally good, respectful and

obedient. One day George said to me, "Miss Lillie, please make Dorabelle behave herself, & quit worrying me." I replied, "I am truly glad to hear that Dorabelle is doing something bad. I have been afraid that little angel wings would sprout on her shoulders, and she would fly away."

I boarded then at Uncle Azariah Graves'. His daughter, Ella, kept house for him. My board was $8 per month, including laundry. At the end of 5 months I paid Ella $40, and she went to Danville & bought a handsome gold chain. While I was boarding there, Mr. Neal's wife Beck, gave birth to her 3rd child, Tom. Ella went to stay with her sister & insisted on my going there too. It was not exactly a suitable place for me, and I ought to have gone to Mr. Tobe Williamson's for a time, but I yielded to her desire. She said they would have to keep both of us in order to have her services.

About this time I went to a summer school at Chapel Hill. There I formed the acquaintance of Miss Mollie Goodloe. A graded school was being organized in Rocky Mount, in which Miss Goodloe was going to teach. I made an application for a place in the school and was accepted. Miss Goodloe kept house, and I boarded with her. Capt. John Dugger was principal of the school. I had the 2nd & 3rd grades. Among my pupils were several Bunns and Battles. They were fond of me, and Mrs. Bunn asked me to come to the country and accompany her children to school. They lived three miles from Rocky Mt. They went in a surrey & drove a gentle horse. I accepted, & thus began a lifelong friendship for the Bunn family. I paid no board, my being with the children sufficient for that.

Capt. Dugger was principal of the school 2 years, then a Mr. Jones succeeded him one year. I don't remember a thing about him. Then a Mr. Southwick, a Northern man, took charge of the school. I did a very silly thing at that time. I asked to have the 4th & 5th grades. I ought to have remained in my little separate house with my same grades. The Bunns had late breakfast during the short winter days, & a number of times I was tardy. Mr. Southwick persuaded the committee to pass a rule that if a teacher was tardy for 3 times she must be dismissed. I at once left the Bunns, & boarded at the hotel, kept by a Mrs. Hammond. I fared well there and was always in time for school. Not only in my case, but in many ways, Mr. Southwick was so unpleasant that he was asked to resign. A Mr. Wilcox took his place. For the want of means, the school did not continue through that year, so closed after four and one half years. The Bunns asked me to teach their children the rest of that year. Two little Battle girls, cousins of the Bunns also went. Mary and Hattie Bunn took music lessons.

While teaching in Rocky Mt., I went with a party of teachers under the care of Mr. Eugene Harrell to Washington. We spent about a week. Went to Mt. Vernon. Went to most of the places of interest in the city. Went to the White House & shook hands with Grover Cleveland. Another trip taken from Rocky Mt. was in company with Miss Mollie Goodloe & Eugenia Thomas. We went to the Summer school at Martha's Vineyard. On the way we spent a day or two in Washington, & a day & night in New York, where we took passage on the steamer, Pilgrim, changed steamers at Buzzards Bay, Mass., & finally reached Martha's Vineyard where we spent about two weeks. I went on an excursion to Nantucket while there. Miss Goodloe & Eugenia did not go. We then went to Boston and spent several days, boarded with a friend of Miss Goodloe's, saw the sights of Boston, ascended Bunker Hill Monument, (and) visited the home of Longfellow at Cambridge. Leaving Miss Goodloe in Boston, Eugenia & I took a steamer for Norfolk, Va., where we separated & made our way to our homes.

Another trip taken from Rocky Mt. was to the New Orleans exposition, which took two weeks, including the journey there & back. Mr. & Mrs. Bob Ricks, Mr. & Mrs. Braswell, Mrs. Griffin and I made the party. We boarded with a lady who came from North Carolina. On the way to New Orleans, we stopped at the battlefield where Gen. Jackson defeated the British army. We were on an excursion train & could stop to see things on the way. Wish I could mention all that I saw at the exposition. Made a trip to Lake Ponchartrain, & to the Gulf of Mexico--had a most enjoyable time, & was cured of a very bad cold.

(After finishing out the school year teaching the Bunn's children at Rocky Mt.), I returned to Leasburg in the summer. Mr. (Rev. L. L.) Nash was preacher (1884-1887) on the circuit. He said I was needed in Leasburg and insisted on my staying there. After a year, I did not fancy every cent I made going into the family expenses. Mr. (Rev. M. C.) Thomas told me that 2 families in Anson Co. were asking for a teacher. He was well acquainted with them, having been on the Anson circuit. I decided to take that school. Burns and Gaddy. They were to give me my board and $25 per month. I boarded first at Mr. Burns'. Nannie and Beulah both took music lessons. After two months there I went to the Gaddy's. They had 6 daughters, all good looking and all quick to learn--Mattie, Mary, Genie, Annie, Maud and Glen. At the end of 2 months there I had an exhibition at the Cedar Hill school building. Tom Clarke had been teaching there. The neighborhood elected me to take the Cedar Hill school, and Tom Clarke moved to Texas. He was very musical and sang beautifully.

The two oldest Gaddy girls did not go to me at Cedar Hill. Mattie married a Mr. deBerry, and Mary began teaching, herself, at Morven. When the school began I boarded at Mr. Dave Dunlap's. There were 5 of his children to go to school, Mamie, Ben, Carl, Bessie and Ethel. Mr. Jim Dunlap had 5 in school, 2 girls & 3 boys. Mr. George B. Dunlap had 5 in school, Pet, Blanche, and 3 small boys. I taught 3 years in all in Anson.

While teaching at Cedar Hill, I joined a party of 100 teachers under the care of Mr. Eugene Harrell, for a trip to Europe. We went on a steamer from Norfolk to New York, and there took another steamer for Glasgow. Spent several days in Glasgow, visited the Highlands, Edinburgh, Burns' birthplace, & other places in Scotland. Went by train to London, spent a week there, then on steamer to France, landed at Dieppe, took train for Paris. The Exposition was going on. Haven't time or space to tell all that I saw. A Mrs. von Bulow was my special friend on this trip. Her home was in Ohio but she taught in a college in Hickory. We made a plan to visit the Yosemite, California & Oregon together, but she was killed in a railroad wreck, so I never made that trip.

A wealthy family in Rome, Ga., wanted a teacher, Maj. Reynolds, a banker in the place. They were intimate with Cousin Maggie Graves' family, and learning that her children had been taught by "Miss Lillie Lea," they were extremely anxious to have me to teach their children. I consented to teach them for 5 months. The Leasburg people wanted me back there. I told them I had engaged to teach 5 months in Rome, Ga., but would then come back to Leasburg.

It was pleasant to be near Cousin Maggie Graves; family once more, but it was not very pleasant at the Reynolds; on account of Mrs. Reynolds' irritable temper. Mr. Reynolds was as nice as could be. The three girls were agreeable, but the boy was perfectly hateful. It would have been more sensible to have sent their children to the public school, but at that time, many people were prejudiced against a public school and would not send to it. I call my teaching the Reynolds' family another one of my "Fool trips." The girl who succeeded me there only stayed three weeks, couldn't stand Mrs. Reynolds.

I returned to Leasburg and began teaching there once more. My pupils were 2 Pulliam girls, 2 Newman girls, 2 boys from Connally's & Mary, Ella Thompson, Ida, and Graves, Helen Graves, Mollie Belle Smith, Hattie Winstead and 2 brothers, Lula Winstead and 2 brothers, Ed Yarbrough who was living with his aunt, Mrs. Garrett, and several others. (Note by Miss Ella Graves Thompson: Aunt Lillie is evidently clearer about this than I am, but I do recall being in her room & then in Sister's, so this must have been my first year in school. I have many vivid memories of it all!) I believe I taught about two years in Leasburg this time, being assisted the last year by Miss Bessie Thompson.

In the summer of 1893 I attended the Chicago Exposition with a party gotten up by Mr. Eugene Harrell. I was in company with Mrs. Foster of Milton. We spent about a week and took in all the sights. Talked on telephone which had just been invented. Heard Moody

Letter of Proposal to Miss Lilianne Lea

Ashland NC
June 10th 1894

Miss Lillie

I cannot longer deny myself the gratification of writing a few lines to you. Of course you are aware of the sad breach that has been made in my once happy family. This is my apology for intruding myself on your notice. Your many excellencies of head and heart have caused me to select you, among my wide circle of friends, to succeed the sweet spirit that has taken its everlasting flight--and I doubt not if she could be consulted in bodily form it would meet her hearty approval, as you know in what high esteem she always regarded you. She has often told me that if I should survive her, she wanted me to make a judicious selection and secure for for her children a good step mother as she had. After some months of prayerful consideration I have settled down upon you as the one above all others--from many points of view--if I should attempt to enumerate them I should utterly fail--but will say that your long and intimate association with children render you peculiarly fit to fill the sad vacuum in my house hold.

Another consideration-Time is passing away and we are passing away with it--according to the unalterable laws of.....

.....

bind your house together, must soon be severed--and it would be acting the part of wisdom to form other ties to stand instead. Of course there is great responsibility involved in this matter, but we are not so constituted as to fight the battles of life singlehanded. I have often heard that the very best women in the land are called to the front in emergencies like this.

I hope you will not consider me premature, as my sincere admiration forces me to write with candor. I have much to say to you which would not be admissable in a short note, and this, I hope to be enabled to do, ere long, viva voce, if you will be kind enough to give the subject a prayerful consideration, and give me an opportunity of cultivating(?) and renewing your acquaintance, for as you know the current of life has led us in widely different directions--still I feel that the virtues that we possess have been purified and refined by time and applications(?).

I shall wait with great anxiety a reply to this missive as early as convenient.

I am sincerely yours, etc.
T. C. Neal

Miss Lillie Lea's response to the proposal of T.C. Neal, who she later married.

Leasburg, N. C.
June 15, 1894.

Mr. T. C. Neal:

I received your letter two or three days since, and will make an attempt to reply this evening. Its contents were quite a surprise to me, for although I had received several messages from you, I took them as a joke, having always made it a rule to believe nothing on that subject unless expressed in unmistakable language. I have tried to consider your proposition carefully and prayerfully, but it would be impossible to come to any decision on so short a notice.

I have looked upon you simply as a friend, and although I appreciate the highest compliment which a man can pay a woman, my feelings could not undergo an instantaneous transformation. When it is convenient for you to do so, come down to Leasburg, and we will talk the matter over. There are many difficulties in the way, first, I might mention my own age and increasing gray hairs. You, just in the prime of manhood, could marry a finer looking and more youthful person. I think I fully realize the responsibility of taking charge of children, but would not object to that, for I have always had a desire to have the training of some children, and have often spoken of adopting one or two orphans. But, on the other hand, your children might object to me, so unlike their own bright, pretty mamma.

There are other things I would like to speak of, which I do not care to put on paper.

I will be at home until July 1st, at which time I contemplate making a visit of a month to Anson County, where I taught for three years and have many very warm friends.

Trusting that our Heavenly Father will guide us in the way that is right and best, I am,

Very truly, your friend,
Lillie Lea.

preach. Continued teaching in Leasburg until Nov. 28, 1894, when I married Mr. T. C. Neal of the Locust Hill neighborhood. He had lost his wife, who was Rebecca Graves, in April of the previous year. I had for some time been expressing a desire to adopt two orphans to which project Willie was bitterly opposed. When I was offered the care of seven orphans, I consented to undertake the job. I had managed so many children in the school room that I imagined I was capable of doing it. I soon found that it took more judgment, patience and tact with step-children than with hundreds of school children. I earnestly tried to do my best to all concerned, but of course made some blunders. As time passed I more and more adapted myself to the new situation.

Claude was seventeen years of age, and Lizzie the youngest was two. Five others were between. I soon found that they had been very poorly taught, so applied for the public school, and at once began to try to remedy the case. It taxed my strength to the utmost to keep house and teach school at the same time, and naturally both causes suffered in consequence. However I continued to teach for six years having an additional motive for the work when I learned how deeply in debt Mr. Neal was. I had a horror of debt, and would go without anything that I could not pay cash for. The public school terms were for only three months, and teachers were paid $25 per month. I seldom saw a cent of the $75. Louis Neal, first, and afterwards Steve Siddle usually cashed my vouchers and the amount went to them to pay interest on the mortgage which they held.

I had some income from 50 acres of land near Leasburg which I had bought with money made by my teaching in Rocky Mount. Mr. Jerry Dixon had a mortgage on it when I paid the $350 for it. I got the land for a very cheap price but it was all that I ever got from Pa's estate as he made his will after I married, giving all he left to (brother) Edward (Lea) and (sister) Willie (Wilhelmina Lea). Pa died about two years after my marriage and several different persons rented my land, I receiving a little over enough to pay the tax on it. Finally Edward himself rented my land, giving me $50 a year for a while. When learning that I was thinking about selling the land, he raised the rent to $100. That was only for a few times when Edward died (in 1921). I am ignoring other things while writing about the land, but will finish that subject. Mr. Pink Newman offered me $1,000 cash for my land. It had not been rented at all for a year or two after Edward's death, so I sold to Mr. Newman, not wishing to be troubled with it any longer. I disposed of the $1,000 according to my own wishes, as I had made it by my own teaching. I gave an annuity to the American Bible Society of $500 for which I receive 9 per cent annually. To the Methodist Orphanage in Raleigh $350, for which I receive 6 per cent. To the Missionary cause, $100, and to the Jewish mission in Chicago, $25. I receive nothing in return for the last two items but the satisfaction of doing good.

I will recapitulate a little. Mr. Neal's affairs jogged along. Each one of his boys leaving home and going to work for themselves when they reached the age of 18. Then Mr. Neal sold half of his land, and at last was out of debt.

The price of tobacco advanced greatly and everything was getting in better shape. Then came the World War, in which Sidney volunteered. He ought never have gone, for he was undersize and had defective eyesight. He did not pass the physical examination, but they sent him as he volunteered. He kept well and wrote cheerful letters, sent a photograph home which we prize. Finally on Nov. 2, 1918, he was mortally wounded & died Nov. 3. He was buried in the soil of France.

Mr. Neal had gotten into very bad health and Sidney's death was a great shock to him. He had heart disease and Dr. McGehee who attended on him said that he was liable to pass off suddenly at any time.Mr. Neal realized this and spoke of his readiness to go. He lived until Feb. 10, 1919, and really appeared much better the last month of his life. He could again have family prayers. I would read a chapter and then he would offer the prayer. He appeared to be unusually well that Sunday, Feb. 10. Tom and Ida were living at the house he had built near Trinity church. There was snow on the ground but it was not bitterly cold.

Tom and little George came to see him that day, and were glad to see him looking so well. That night at prayers Mr. Neal said, "Wife, read the 91st Psalm." which I did. He then prayed a most comprehensive prayer. He did not omit anything, besides the family, government rulers in authority, etc. He went to bed and went to sleep as usual. Just before midnight, he got up, lit the lamp himself and poured out some medicine. I sprang up and asked if he had a spell. He said, "Yes, and worse than ever." In a moment he fell, his feet going right into the fireplace, the coals fortunately being covered with ashes. With all my strength I pulled him back from the fire, then ran and called Rebecca. A boy named Robert Slayton was living with us at the time. I roused him and told him to ring the farm bell, and also to go for John Williamson. Graves Thompson heard the bell and came at once to see what was the matter. We sent for Tom again in a hurry. Mr. Neal breathed for about an hour, but never regained consciousness. He was buried at Bethesda. The roads were not good then like they are now. The hearse stalled several times dragging through the mud.

Rebecca, Lizzie and I continued for a while living at the home place. Lizzie had been teaching for several years and had made enough to buy an automobile. Her last school was at Thompsonville, seven miles from home. She was principal of the school and a Miss Lemmons was assistant. She had gotten up a Hallowe'en entertainment. It was a beautiful night, and all of her friends about here went, and I went, but Mr. Neal did not. Everything went on smoothly for a while when someone said, "One of the teachers is sick." Which one?' I asked. The reply was, "Miss Neal." I at once went to investigate. Lizzie had had a stroke of apoplexy. Robert Lee (Neal) and Rebecca (Neal) carried her to Mr. Waynick's house, which was nearby, and she was put to bed. Some one was sent to Reidsville for a doctor. Dr. Cummings came. He said he thought she would be all right by morning. In the morning Robert Lee went back for her and brought her home. Dr. Malloy was sent for. He examined her carefully, said her condition was serious and thought that she would never be able to teach again. Lizzie was conscious, but unable to speak or move. She thought that she would get back to her school in about three weeks.

Mary Fannie Shelton applied for the place in the school at Thompsonville, and she finished out the term. when Lizzie got so that she could speak a word or two, we were so glad and felt encouraged about her case. It was decided to send her to Dr. Tucker's Sanatorium in Richmond. She was there 5 or 6 weeks and improved a good deal. Rebecca went with her, and stayed several days in Richmond. They taught Lizzie to knit & she knit numerous wash cloths, which I put on for her.

I have gotten things badly mixed, writing just as events popped in my head. Lizzie began to walk some, and was trying to read again. She would try to help about domestic matters. She was right cheerful until she realized that she would never be entirely well again. She had a perfect horror of being a burden to the family, which she felt more after Mr. Neal's death. She was restless and wanted to keep going. Once she stayed a day or two at Graves Thompson's. Then she wanted to go to Tom & Ida, who were living near Trinity church. Rebecca & I consented for her to go, hoping it would help her. While there she began looking through the drawers as if in search of something. Unfortunately she found a loaded pistol. She tied a string around it, then tied it around her waist and went in the woods nearby, where she shot herself, aiming at her heart. Ida heard the shot, and began a search. She found her lying on the ground bleeding. Tom came quickly for Rebecca & me, saying he hardly thought she would live until we got there. Someone went quickly for Dr. McGehee. He said that she had one chance in 10 to live. Bessie Turner was sent for to nurse her, but Bessie was afraid to stay with her alone, so some of us also stayed with her.

She rallied and was getting a little better. Dr. McGehee advised taking her to Morganton. He had brought a most efficient and capable nurse in the place of Bessie Turner. I am sorry that I have forgotten her name. She was put in a private sanatarium & not in the State one. She was there two weeks, but the expense was more than we could afford. In the meantime application had been made for a place in the State hospital in Raleigh which was successful. Robert Lee & Rebecca went to Morganton, took her and

carried her to Raleigh. She improved there, and thought that she would be able to come home. I made a visit to her during the Raleigh fair & was pleased to see how well she was getting on. Then Rebecca went to see her at Thanksgiving and spent a day or two, boarding at a place nearby. Rebecca had scarcely gotten home and resumed her teaching at the Trinity school, Miss Etta Sledge assisting her, when we received a telegram saying that Lizzie had had another stroke. Rebecca returned at once to Raleigh, leaving the school in charge of Miss Etta. Lizzie lingered several days, never regained consciousness. Rebecca stayed with her to the last. She was brought home and buried at Bethesda.

Rebecca & I remained at the homeplace for a while, then I decided to spend some time with Zack's family in Millen, Ga. Mr. Neal had left the place to me & Rebecca for our life time, but I decided it was best to sell & divide the property among the children. Rebecca was opposed to selling, but I didn't think we could manage being in the country. If we had been in town I would not have sold it.

Robert Lee (Neal) bought the homeplace & Tom bought a house from Mr. Wright who married Mary Orr. It was part of the Orr tract near Bethesda church. Tom added to the house, making a very nice & commodious building. He offered a home to Rebecca and me. Tom borrowed quite an amount of money from both Rebecca & myself. Rebecca began teaching in Draper, & I spent the most of my time in Leasburg with Willie, tho' Tom's house was headquarters for both of us. Time went on when a tumor developed in the loin of my left leg. I was taken to Dr. Robinson of Danville who pronounced it cancerous and advised an operation. That was the beginning of operations. During the following years I had six operations, & spent a great deal of time in the hospital, first in Edmond's Hospital, and then in Memorial where I still have to go at stated times for x-ray & radium treatment.

In August 1935, Tom had an attack of appendicitis. The appendix burst, peritonitis set in, he was carried to Memorial Hospital, but died in 2 days. It was one of the greatest shocks of my life. Tom's death was a great loss to his family, to the church, & to the whole community. Ida lived just 6 months after Tom's death, when she followed him to the grave. There was no one there when the stroke came but me and Lea Williamson. Douglas was at Davidson at school, George at a military camp at a Fort off the coast of South Carolina, Tom, Jr., living in Burlington. Ida ate a hearty supper that Friday night. She was lying on her bed but not undressed. Dr. Malloy had told her to stay in bed on account of high blood pressure. Lea Williamson went in my room to make me a fire. Ida got up, went to the closet & got her gown, undressed & threw her clothes on a chair, got in bed & laid down. I noticed her rubbing her head. I said, "Does your head hurt you?" She made no reply. I spoke again & said I hoped she would soon feel better. Still no reply. Lea came back & I said, "Ida is suffering." He looked at her & said, "She is dying & what shall I do?" Neighbors were called, the doctor sent for, the family summoned. She ceased breathing in about an hour. Sunday she was laid to rest by the side of Tom in the cemetery under a quantity of beautiful flowers. A week after Ida's burial I moved over to Robert Lee's to make my home with them. Dorothy Williamson came from Washington & stayed until Rebecca's school closed. Rebecca is staying there now, & I am at the end of the chapter. Goodbye, L. L. Neal.

As you know all the particulars about Willie's death, I will not write anything about it. I am now the last of the immediate family. In the course of nature I cannot be here a great deal longer.

End of Text

(See additional notes on the following page. JDW.)

(**Note**: The following comments were written by Miss Ella Graves Thompson. The notebook was torn and the last words were incomplete. JDW).

"AUNT LILLIE"

"Written in 1936-1937, in Aunt Lillie's 91st & 92nd yr. Marvelous woman that she was! I gave Aunt Lillie several little notebooks like this and asked her to jot down anything she wished to, about past or present people, events, or thoughts of any kind--to entertain herself-& incidentally to delight my own soul, for every word she said or wrote was always interesting to me. I value this little volume very highly--tho' she apologized, & wished to copy it or write it over. Sh----ne Rebecca -----others."

Note: Lilianne Lea Neal, daughter of Solomon and Sophia (nee Ainger) Lea, was born January 8, 1845, at Leasburg, North Carolina, Caswell County, the fifth child in a family of eight children, seven of whom survived to adulthood: Sophia Anness, born 1838, Henrietta, born May 24 1840, died, Dec. 12, 1929, Adeline, born 1842, Wilhelmina, born, Nov. 9,1843, died, June 23, 1936, Lilianne, born 1845, Eugenia, born 1846, Edward, born 1847, died, 1929 and Robert, born 1849, lived only two months. Neither Wilhelmina nor Edward married.

Solomon Lea's school, Somerville Female Institute, became a day school for both girls and boys sometime after the Civil War. It continued to operate until his failing health caused him to close the school when he was 85 years old in 1892.

On November 28, 1894, at age 49, "Miss Lillie" married Thomas Chalmers Neal who was born June 27, 1847, and died February 10, 1919. She died April 21, 1938, and is buried in the Bethesda Presbyterian Church cemetery. Her parents, two sisters, two brothers, and other Lea ancestors are buried in the Leasburg Community Cemetery.

The loan of the original copy of RECOLLECTIONS by the present owners, Jerry and Gertie Kendrick Duncan of Leasburg, N.C., is gratefully acknowledged. As near as possible, it was copied as "Miss Lillie" wrote it in longhand. However, some dates have been added and initialed. Jeannine D. Whitlow, P.O. Box 96, Leasburg, N.C. 27291-0096.

A VISIT OF THE SCHOOL SPIRIT

Scene: Leasburg School Campus. Time: Present (Between 1922-1925).
(This two-room school was torn down and the brick Solomon Lea Elementary School was built over the site on which it stood. JDW)

Characters: Leasburg School Children

Ercell Clayton (Satterfield)	Ellis Denny (X)	Randolph Hester
Kathrine Nicks (McDade)	Velma Nutt (Clayton)	Norwood Wade (X)
	Blanche Whisnant	

Spirit: Iola Butler (Murphy) (X)
Father Time: Eugene Connally (X)
"Pop" Keen: Lessie Nutt (X)
Girls from Danville: Alma Daniel, Josephine Wade (Allen), and Mary Stephens (Moseley) (X)

Soldiers

Billy Hester	N. H. Hester (X)	Clarence Nutt (X)
Wardie Nutt	Bertwell Winstead (X)	Ernest Winstead (X)

Nannie Pulliam: Margaret Bradsher (Dixon) (X)
Allie Paylor: Reable Stephens (Painter) (X)
Sallie Pulliam: Maggie Elliott
Mary Fannie Newman: Sue Elliott
Blanche Denny
Kathleen Elliott
Annie Belle Loftis (Parker, Overbey)

Mr. M. C. Newbold: John Whitlow (X)
Miss Bessie Thompson: Pansy Stephens (Wilborn)
Mr. Poole: Dorsey Denny (X)
Miss Genie Underwood (Connally): Ruth Whitlow
Miss Fannie Sergeant: Marianna Nicks (Wilson)

Cab Carter (X)	Coleman Carter	Melvin Carter (X)
Silas Carter (X)	Joe Daniel	Ralph Gravitt
Albert Hamlett (X)	Frank Hamlett (X)	Charlie Loftis (X)
Robert Loftis (X)	Jim Whisnant	Martin Whitlow

Miss Edna Watkins (Mebane): Janie Wade (Graves) (X)
Miss Smithe: Fannie Daniel
Miss Ellerbe: Eudora Whitlow (Simmons, Lee, Maxwell) (X)
Miss Ella Thompson: Stella Nicks (Stanfield, Bartlett) (X)
Dr. Jacob Thompson: Clyde Denny (X)
Rev. B. E. Stanfield: Jamie Whitlow (X)
Rev. S. F. Nicks: Robert Nicks

A VISIT OF THE SCHOOL SPIRIT
By Miss Estelle Carlton, Teacher

Randolph: Come on kids, we got to learn this before we go back in the house. "Wynken and Blynken are two little eyes, and Nod is a little head, and the------.

Kathrine: Oh! Let's make it! I love to make the things we read about.

Harry: I've already made what there is to make. Wynken and Blynken are two little eyes, and Nod is a little head (pointing to eyes and head). See we already have that much! And the wooden shoe that sails the sky is a wee one's trundle bed. (Takes wooden shoe from behind him.) I made this last night when I started to study it.

Ercell: Oh! Harry, I hadn't thought of that. I see it now just as plain as day.

Velma: Let me get my doll and put in the shoe; then we can see it better. (Goes out and returns with doll and places it in shoe.) Wynken and Blynken are two little eyes, and Nod is a little head. (Pointing to doll.) All the children join in as they rock the shoe in the sky.)

Kathrine: Oh! I think Eugene Field writes the nicest things to study. I just love him anyway.

Norwood: You are always talking about Eugene Field, but I like him, too, because he believed in ghosts.

Ercell: I do, too, and I want to see a ghost or a spirit.

Blanche: I do, too, but I know I'd run from it.

Randolph: Run nothing! I'd say, "Who are you?"

Kathrine: I want to see a school spirit. I've heard people talking about school spirits. I wonder what they are like.

Velma: I've heard people say, "They've got the school spirit there." I wonder, too.

Norwood: I've heard them say that too, but I've never thought about what it looked like.

Ellis: I'm going to call it. If it's got one it ought to come. (Calls.) School Spirit, Leasburg School Spirit, we want you to come here.

(Spirit enters dressed in white robe with LEASBURG on sash.) Children appear frightened.

Spirit (Iola): Oh, children! Please do not be frightened. I know you were not really expecting me to come, but when I heard your earnest call, I had to show myself. I came because I knew that you were interested in your school.

Randolph: (Going up nearer.) Where do you stay anyway?

Spirit (Iola): Ah! I live in the hearts of the people who love Leasburg School. Sometimes I have a nice home in the hearts of the people who have moved away from Leasburg. Sometimes I have a better home in the hearts of the people who live here, and sometimes I have the very best home in the hearts of you boys and girls who go to school here <u>right now</u>! Do you remember one morning one of you came to school and said, "We're going to have a new building. We're going to have one. I know we're going to have one!"? I was the

one who made you feel that way. I know how to manage boys and girls. I've been at work a long time.

Randolph: How old are you?

Spirit (Iola): You really want to know all about your school, do you? I am 75 years old. In 1848 Rev. Solomon Lea founded your school upon this very spot. Of course, no school could exist without a spirit, and so I made my home in the hearts of the students and friends of the school. Lots of things have happened since then. I couldn't begin to tell you all, but if you wish, I'll call Father Time and ask him to tell you something.

Kathrine: Oh! We want to know all about it.

Randolph: Do you reckon he'd come?

Spirit (Iola): I'll ask him. (Goes to curtain of Time and calls.) Father Time! Father Time! Come reveal to these dear children some of your knowledge of their school. (Opens curtain and Father Time is seated at a table with large book in which he is writing.)

Father Time (Eugene): (Without looking up.) Time never stops for anything, you know.

Spirit (Iola): Oh! Please stop for a moment. Time will not be wasted if you tell them about their school.

Father Time (Eugene): I will stop then, but for a moment only. I am afraid the people will be wondering what is wrong with old Father Time. (He rises and moves to front.)

Children: Oh! He's coming!

Father Time (Eugene): So you children want to know something about your school. I'll look up your record. (Goes to book and returns with record.) I'll read you something of your little village first. (Reads.) In 1750 several families of Leas came from Virginia to live in what is now known as Leasburg. They built their homes here, and soon others moved here, and the place was known as Leasburg.

Mr. Larry Lea (Lawrence Lea, Leasburg's first Postmaster, JDW) lived in one of the first homes. It is the house where Miss Willie (Wilhelmina, daughter of Solomon Lea) now lives. Mr. William Lea, father of Mr. Solomon Lea, lived in the house that Mr. Ray Hamlett now occupies. Mr. George Lea built the house in which Mr. R. I Newman now lives. He also planted the oaks in that grove with acorns brought from England.

In 1777 Caswell County was formed from Orange County and Leasburg was made the county seat. It remained the county seat until 1792 when Person County was formed from Caswell. The courthouse was located on the lot where the Thompsons now live. There was a public spring directly back of the house in the Public Square. Part of the office in the Thompson's yard is the old courthouse.

In those days, however, schools were not thought as important as they are now and there was not a school in Leasburg until several years later.

The first school was The Brick Academy for boys. (In 1835) that was located where the village cemetery now is. In 1848, however, Rev. Solomon Lea, the first president of Greensboro Womans College, returned to Leasburg and founded Somerville Institute for girls. This institution originated from a heart of love for education and the betterment of mankind. The name, Somerville, was given to it because of Mr. Lea's love for astronomy. Miss Mary Somerville was a noted astronomer.

The Institute grew and soon there were girls here from many counties in North Carolina, Virginia, Mississippi, and other southern states. This was the only school of any note at that time. Numbers of girls came from Danville. Among the first was Miss Mary Ann Keen, better known among the students as "Pop." She was aunt of Lady Astor. There wasn't a girl in North Carolina or Virginia more beautiful than "Pop", nor more stylish than she.

Spirit (Iola): Father Time since you have stopped to tell of the past, would it be asking too much of you to ask you to show some of the things as you pass along?

Children: Oh! Please show us something.

Father Time (Eugene): It will save time, so I will do it. First you may see "Pop" Keen and her friends as they come from Danville. Many times the students came on private conveyance, but sometimes they came on the old stagecoach, but "Pop" Keen always came on private conveyance. The passing of the stagecoach through Leasburg caused a great deal of excitement at this time. When the horn was heard, many eyes could be seen peering from the curtains or through the door. Children ran to the road to see the six horses pass and to see if anybody came to Leasburg, and most of all to see if they got any mail. (Horn is heard. "Pop" Keen and others enter talking and showing letters as the curtain is pulled back.)

Danville Girl (Josephine): That ride on the stagecoach from Milton was dreadful! I'm glad I don't have to go on to Hillsborough, aren't you?

Danville Girl (Mary): Yes, indeed! I'm glad to get back to Leasburg.

"Pop" Keen (Lessie): Let's hurry and find Mr. Lea. I want to see all the girls. Goodness! These carpetbags are heavy! (Curtain is dropped as girls pass on out.)

Father Time (Eugene): (Reading.) Here are the names of some of the others who were here at that time. Miss Laura Thompson, now Mrs. Long of Roxboro. Miss Anna Williams, now Mrs. Wagstaff. Miss Sallie Pulliam, now Mrs. (Henry T.) Connally of Leasburg. Miss Anniva Bradsher, later Mrs. Jerry Dixon. Miss Belle Wagstaff, now Mrs. Brooks. Miss Bet or "Pete" Wilkerson, later Mrs. Foushee of Roxboro. Miss "Cat" (Eliza Catherine) Yancey, now the wife of *Judge Kerr of Yanceyville. *(See note at end of play. JDW)

Kathrine: Where did all the girls stay? It doesn't look as if there's room in Leasburg for so many.

Father Time (Eugene): Mr. Lea had several houses, dormitories, in his yard, and others in the village took boarders. You may wonder, too, how he cared for so many in school. The building was larger than it is now. He usually had an assistant too. Some of his assistants were Miss Annis Lea, later Mrs. Richmond. Miss Addie Lea, later Mrs. Arnold. Miss Harrison, Miss French and Miss Ballard.

They also had an art department at times. Miss Hall had charge of this. The music department had a prominent place in the curriculum. Mrs. Solomon Lea was the first director of this department. Miss Willie (Wilhelmina Lea) assisted her and later took her place. The average number of piano pupils was 30.

Children: Oh! That's almost as many as we have in our room.

Father Time (Eugene): At that time the girls of the higher (wealthier) class did not work. They did not teach as many of them as we do now, and so we have the record of only two teachers who went out from Somerville Institute. They are Miss Carrie Garrat (Garrett?), who has spent her life as a teacher, and Miss Kate Roberts.

For 13 years Somerville Institute grew. Then came the dark days of the war (Civil War).

Mr. Lea was so much concerned about the condition of our country he gave up teaching one year, but I must not tarry longer. Already, time has stopped too long. I will turn my record over to your school Spirit. If she needs any help to give you the desired information, she may call on someone to help her. I will send whoever she calls.

Spirit (Iola): Thank you, Father Time. We hope the people have not missed you.

Norwood: I didn't know all this had happened right here in Leasburg.

Spirit (Iola): Do you know enough about your school?

Children: Of course we don't.

Kathrine: Please tell us what happened after Mr. Lea stopped teaching when our grandpas all went to war.

Spirit (Iola): Although Mr. Lea stopped teaching for one year, this school did not stop. His daughters and their assistants held the school together. (Reading.) I see here something about the "Leasburg Grays."

Randolph: Please let us see them. (Spirit opens curtain and soldiers are standing there.)

Soldier: There was never a braver or prouder company of men than we "Leasburg Grays" when we acepted this flag presented by Miss Willie (Wilhelmina) Lea, daughter of Rev. Solomon Lea. It was made by her and her sister, Miss Lillie.

Our hearts ached at the thought of Somerville Institute and the other schools. We were afraid that the war would close all the institutions of learning. We were glad, however, to return and find Somerville Institute still doing a great work. (Spirit drops curtain.)

Spirit (Iola): Yes, Somerville Institute lived during the (Civil) War and reconstruction periods, however it was never the same after that time and the name, Somerville, was gradually changed to Leasburg Academy.

It was the custom at that time to have public examinations at the close of the term. You may see the nature of these examinations from a conversation among the students at that time. (Spirit opens curtain and girls are seen hurrying with books, slates, etc.)

Mary Fannie (Sue): I dread this examination on reading more than anything else. I just know I'm going to have to read "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star."

Sallie (Maggie): Well, Mary Fannie, that reading is not half as hard as this simple interest in arithmetic. I just can't work it before all those people.

Nannie (Margaret): I know I'm going to have to subtract on the board or on my slate.

Sallie (Maggie): I wish Mr. Lea wouldn't have these examinations. I'm always so scared I don't know what I'm doing.

Allie (Reable): Well, Sallie, I just can't spell when I get there. Can you?

Aggie: No, Allie, I can't. Let's go beg Mr. Lea not to have a public examination this year.

All: Let's do! (Curtain falls.)

Blanche: You know they didn't have to have the examination before everybody.

Ercell: I would have been scared too.

Spirit (Iola): The methods of teaching have changed a great deal since then. Let's see. (Looks in book.) The school property was in the hands of the Leas until 1901. Mr. Solomon Lea and his daughter, Miss Lillie, now Mrs. Neal, taught until 1892. Miss Isla Council taught the next year, and Mr. Newbold succeeded her.

Children: Newbold! What a funny name! What did he look like?

Spirit (Iola): You shall see. (Opens curtain and Mr. Newbold passes.)

Mr. Newbold (John): I'm in a predicament! I'm in a predicament! (Curtain falls.)

Children: What did he say?

Spirit (Iola): (Without answering.) Miss Bessie Thompson assisted Mr. Newbold.

Children: Oh! Miss Bessie can tell us! (Spirit opens curtain and Miss Bessie enters.)

Miss Bessie: Oh! I am so rushed I hardly know what to do! Our commencement comes off next week. What a big word, "commencement" is anyway. We've always called our closing exercises "exhibitions". This is our first commencement, and just think we're going to have real commencement invitations too. Here are mine! (Holds up two invitations.) I am going to send them to somebody who will not come. I can't help what Mr. Newbold says.

I have to have a good laugh every time I think of Mr. Newbold saying that he was in a predicament. Of course, everybody was anxious to see the new teacher when he came. When Mrs. Stanfield met him, she said, "Well, Ben, after all the writing you've done, is this the best you could do?" She was talking about his size, of course. Mr. Newbold went down home saying he was in a predicament. Helen (Graves) didn't know what he was in, and so she ran for the dictionary.

Laying all jokes aside, Mr. Newbold is a splendid hand to visit his pupils when they are sick, and he is a good teacher. I must hurry and practice for our commencement. (Curtain falls.)

Spirit (Iola): After Mr. Newbold, came Mr. Miller, but on account of his father's death, he stayed only half the term. Miss Evie (Evelyn) Newman, later Mrs. Jerry Dixon, assisted him. Mr. (Robert T.) Poole finished out his term.

Kathrine: Oh! I bet he was the Mr. Poole's father who married Mr. Joe Pulliam's daughter.

Spirit (Iola): No, it was this same Mr. Poole. You must remember that this was only 25 years ago.

Ellis: Goodness! I thought it was a long time ago.

Spirit (Iola): You may see him, then it will not be hard to believe. (Spirit opens curtain and Mr. Poole enters.)

Mr. Poole (Dorsey): I won the name of being quite poetic when I first came to Leasburg because I said, "My name is Poole, and I've come to take the school."

Randolph: "My name is Poole, and I've come to take the school." That does sound like poetry, doesn't it?

Spirit (Iola): Miss Fannie Thompson succeeded Mr. Poole. She was the last teacher who

taught in the building you're now using, before the stockholders bought it. Miss Mary Parker taught the next year in the Wade's Store. She stayed only half the term, and Rev. Bennie Stanfield finished that term's work. In 1901 Miss Virginia ("Genie") Underwood, now Mrs. Walter Connally, took the school. She was the first teacher after the stockholders bought the school.

Children: What does "stockholders" mean?

Spirit (Iola): The teacher who was here in 1901 may tell you about them. (Opens curtain.)

Mrs. Connally (Ruth): In 1901 the people of Leasburg began to realize as never before the need of education, and seven stockholders, namely, Mr. J. T. Bradsher, Mr. Henry T. Connally, Mrs. (Bettie) Jenkins, Mr. R. I. Newman, Mr. W. J. Pulliam, Dr. Jake Thompson, and Mr. W. L. Thomas bought the school property. They paid $356 for it. Later, Mr. S. P. Newman and Mr. W. S. Dixon bought shares in it.

The stockholders at once remodeled the building. It has folding doors to open into the large room you now use, or into what is now the whole building, for it has been divided into two rooms since then.

I enjoyed my work as a teacher for 5 years, although it has been told that I said at my last commencement, "Thank goodness, this is the last. Next year I'll be Mrs. Walter Connally." (Curtain falls.)

Children: Do you reckon she really did say that?

Spirit (Iola): You may ask her sometime. In the spring of 1908, Miss Fannie Sergeant, now Mrs. Walter Thomas of Milton, took the school. She remained here for a year and a half. Her commencement in the spring of 1909 was the last one given here. The people especially enjoyed this because she succeeded in training the little boys to sing. Some of them were: Messrs. Will and John Newman, Raymond, Arthur, and Dewey Bradsher, Charles and Fred Thomas, John Stephens, and Will Wade. (Spirit opens curtain and Miss Fannie is teaching boys to sing "Tramp, Tramp, The Boys Are Marching.")

Miss Fannie (Marianna): Now boys, you must sing. Do your best and I'll help you all I can. I am not going to worry, for if you do nothing, it will be your failure and not mine. Now, try it again. (Boys sing better.) I know you're going to get it all right. Run home now, for we must practice the drill. I must hurry for Mrs. Newman always has an early supper. (Curtain falls.)

Spirit (Iola): It was about this time the church was remodeled and because the school building was inadequate, it was impossible to have any kind of entertainment. Miss Edna Watkins, now Mrs. Giles Mebane of Blanch, was the next teacher. She taught two years and then came back later. Miss Mildred Connally and Miss Bessie Thompson both assisted her. Many of you know "Miss Edna". (Opens curtain as "Miss Edna" (Janie Wade) passes.

Miss Smithe was the next teacher. Miss Lula Belle Stephens, now Mrs. Graves Thompson, was her assistant. Miss Smithe did something that you all should be proud of.

Children: What did she do?

Spirit (Iola): (Pulling back curtain.) She may tell you.

Miss Smithe (Fannie): (Holding Mr. Solomon Lea's picture.) I am sure that we could not have used our money in any better way than to have had this picture enlarged for the school. The people who remember Mr. Lea say that it is just like him. I hope the children will appreciate it as they should, for Mr. Lea certainly did mean a great deal to their little village

and county.

We must give the credit for this to Mr. Preston Featherston. In his talk at the schoolhouse, he said, "I want to see dear old brother Solomon Lea's picture hanging on these walls. The children who come to school here should be reminded of what he has done for the village through his school and his work." (Curtain falls.)

Children: Well, is that the way we got that picture?

Spirit (Iola): Yes, (Reading.) I see that Miss Evelyn Clark was the next teacher, then Miss Gertrude Stanfield, Miss Lucy King, now Mrs. Waddleton (Watlington?) and in 1916, Miss Ellerbe took charge of the school. She may tell you about her work.

Miss Ellerbe (Eudora): I realized that Somerville Institute, or Leasburg Academy, had done a great work, but the public school system has been improved so much since the days of the private school, I saw that the county ought to own the school property. In vain have I worked to get the stockholders to sell the school property to the county, but they haven't yet realized what it will mean.

Spirit (Iola): The next year Miss Nettie Blackwell had charge of the school, and in the fall of 1918, Miss Ella Thompson succeeded her. She, too, realized that with the present system of public schools, the county should own the school property. In 1919, the county succeeded in buying it.

Children: We were coming to school then.

Spirit (Iola): Miss Ella remained here four years.

Children: Oh! Let her talk to us. (Spirit opens curtain and Miss Ella appears.)

Miss Ella (Stella): I am so glad that the county has at last succeeded in buying the school property. I believe the stockholders gave $365.00 for it, and the county gave $205.00. I think it shows real school spirit for some of the stockholders to be willing to give their shares as they did.

I do hope our school will not have to go back to a one-teacher school. We have had two teachers now for two years and a half. In the spring of 1920, Miss Mary Newman, later Mrs. John Pulliam, and Miss Mattie Pulliam assisted. The next year Miss Ruth Loy assisted and this year Mrs. John Pulliam came back.

I dream of a larger and better school for the children in and around Leasburg. (Spirit drops curtain.)

Randolph: Miss Ella makes me feel as if I've been on a long trip and come back to our own school.

Ercell: And me too!

Kathrine: I feel that way too, and I wouldn't give our school for any other one.

Ellis: I even love the old building better than I did.

Spirit (Iola): Then my visit has not been in vain. I must not tarry longer. When you feel as you do now, you do not need me in person.

Kathrine: Can you tell us how many children have been to school here?

Spirit (Iola): I'll look it up in old Father Time's book. (Spirit opens book and searches while children talk.)

Velma: Father Time said that our school was 75 years old. Goodness! I know there's a crowd!

Blanche: Oh! I know there's a crowd, too!

Norwood: I can tell you how many--Let's see--Oh, work it out yourself.

Randolph: I knew you couldn't work it. I can.--60 X 75. Oh! How many is it? (All work on paper.)

Kathrine: Four thousand, five hundred! Think of that many children coming to school here!

Spirit (Iola): (Looking up.) I cannot find the number of children who have been to school here because I'm not very familiar with Father Time's book. Here is the number of students who have taught since they finished school here.

Children: How many?

Spirit (Iola): There are 36 on this list.

Children: Who are they, and where are so many?

Spirit (Iola): Here they are as they are written in the book:

1. Miss Irene Bradsher, now Mrs. Bryant Barnett.
2. Miss Gertie Bradsher, now Mrs. Connor Merritt.
3. Miss Mildred Connally.
4. Miss Irene Crowder, now Mrs. Rob Newman.
5. Miss Annie Dixon, now Mrs. Voss Stephens.
6. Miss Lizzie Featherston, Now Mrs. Henry Rogers.
7. Miss Fannie Fuller, now Mrs. Philip Cooper.
8. Miss Carrie Garrat (Garrett?).
9. Miss Helen Graves, now principal and recognized as founder of the Olive Hill High School.
10. Miss Hattie Gravitte.
11. Miss Anna Mae Harris, now Mrs. Ivey Pleasant.
12. Miss Evelyn Newman, later Mrs. Jerry Dixon.
13. Hallie Newman, now Mrs. Monroe Walters.
14. Miss Sallie Newman, now a teacher in the Guilford High School.
15. Miss Mary Newman, now Mrs. John Pulliam.
16. Miss Annie Newman, who taught history and math in the Wanico High School.
17. Miss Nancy Newman. (Married John W. Stephens, Sr. in 1924. JDW).
18. Miss Bertha Pulliam, later Mrs. Robert T. Poole.
19. Miss Cora Pulliam, now Mrs. Arthur Marvin Newsom.
20. Miss Bessie Pulliam, now Mrs. Robert T. Poole. (Note: Her sister, Bertha Pulliam, married Mr. Poole in 1904. Bertha died in 1906 and Bessie married Mr. Poole in 1908. JDW)
21. Miss Mattie Pulliam. (Was Postmaster of Leasburg 1927-1958. JDW)
22. Miss Willie Pointer.
23. Miss Kate Roberts.
24. Miss Gertrude Stanfield.
25. Miss Ella Stanfield, now Mrs. Burt of the Methodist Orphanage in Raleigh.
26. Miss Ruth Stanfield, now Mrs. (Anderson. JDW)
27. Miss Ethel Stanfield.
28. Miss Bettie Stanfield, now Mrs. _____.
29. Miss Hattie Ervin Stanfield, now Mrs. (Johnson. JDW)

30. Miss Mollie Belle Stephens, now Mrs. Forest.
31. Miss Lula Belle Stephens, now Mrs. Graves Thompson.
32. Miss Bettie Thomas.
33. Miss Wilhelmina Thomas, now Mrs. Upchurch.
34. Miss Bessie Thompson.
35. Miss Ella Thompson, who was for two years an instructor in the English Department at Meredith College.
36. Miss Lula Wade. (Married Tommy Moss. JDW)

Children: That certainly is a crowd of teachers!

Spirit (Iola): Yes, and here are two men you should feel proud of, too. (Opens curtain.) Dr. Joe Thompson and Rev. B. E. Stanfield. The only doctor and preacher whom your school has sent out.

Randolph: We surely have got a lot to be proud of.

Spirit (Iola): Here is something that you know about, but perhaps you have not thought very much about it. It happened last fall.

Children: What is it?

Spirit (Iola): Julian Connally may tell you.

Julian: On September 22, 1922, a society was organized by Miss Mary Bottoms for the advanced pupils of Leasburg School. The society was named the Solomon Lea Literary Society in honor of the founder of your school. Eudora Whitlow is president, Eugene Connally is secretary and chairman of the program committee, Stella Nicks, treasurer, and Miss Mary Bottoms, critic. (Continues to tell about the Literary Society, but narrative is not included in the text. JDW)

Children: We had never thought of that before.

Randolph: Well, they have done something, haven't they?

Velma: Well, I certainly am glad we have found out all these things.

Randolph: There's one more thing I want to know--

Spirit (Iola): What is that?

Randolph: I want to know something about these school meetings they've been having around here.

Kathrine: I do, too. Are we going to have a new building?

Spirit (Iola): You may answer that question after you hear the rest of your school history. During the Christmas holidays, several men were in Mr. Joe Pulliam's Store. Their conversation drifted into a discussion of the school. After a very interesting discussion, Rev. A. F. Nicks asked that a meeting be held at the school building on the following night. At this meeting, consolidation and a new High School was discussed.

The representatives from Oak View invited the people over there to talk over the school proposition. Out of this meeting grew the one at Union Church. The next meeting was the one in your church (at Leasburg) when there were representatives from all the schools together with the two county superintendents, Mr. Pope and Mr. Beam. Here, real plans were made. Mr. Joe Pulliam, Mr. Willis, and Mr. Trollinger were appointed to outline the new

district. This they did. Then a petition was drawn up.

Ercell: Oh! And it snowed so that Rev. Nicks couldn't get to Yanceyville with it.

Spirit (Iola): Yes, the petition was to have been carried in the first Monday in February, but it was only one week late.

Kathrine: I was so glad they didn't have to wait a whole month.

Randolph: Well, Katherine, what did Rev. Nicks say they did up there at Yanceyville?

Kathrine: If I knew, I wouldn't tell you. I want the Spirit to tell us just like she did the other things.

Children: Of course it would be better. Spirit tell us about it.

Spirit (Iola): As you know Rev. S. F. Nicks took the petition before the board. I'll let him tell you about that part of it.

Rev. S. F. Nicks (Robert): And so you children want to know if you're going to have a new school building, is that it?

Children: Yes, sir, and you know, about that petition, too.

Rev. S. F. Nicks (Robert): Well, just before our petition was presented, Mr. Upchurch presented one from Prospect Hill. I gave him ours, but after he had presented it to the board, I felt that I must tell them how badly we needed a big High School and how anxious we were for it.

You know a petition of that nature requires the signature of only one-fourth of the land owners. Ours was signed by over three-fourths of the land owners. Not only that, but besides consolidating the four schools in Caswell, namely, the Leasburg School, the Oak Brand (Branch?), the Osmond or Mealer, and the Stephentown Schools, our project includes the Oak View School in Person County. They, too, are presenting a petition to their County Board of Education for the same purpose. I told them that it was especially important that our petition was passed on, since our neighbors in our sister county were cooperating with us, and with them, we were looking in the future for the school our boys and girls needed.

Children, you may enjoy your vacation, and plan to come back to a better school next year.

Ercell: I can almost see a new school building. I can't tell whether it's in Leasburg or near here.

Randolph: No matter where it is, we're going to have it. I know we're going to have it somewhere.

Spirit (Iola): I feel stronger than I've felt in years. I can now venture into some of the hearts where I have not been before. Goodbye, if you ever need me, call me.

Children: Goodbye, you may think you're leaving us, but you are not, for we feel you right here. (They touch their hearts.)

Kathrine: I want to say something and I don't know what it is.

Randolph: If you can't <u>say</u> it, let's sing it.

(All sing School Song with much spirit.)

OUR OWN LEASBURG SCHOOL
By Miss Estelle Carlton, (Teacher)

Dear Leasburg, Dear Leasburg!
Our hearts thrill for thee.
The School of our fathers who
Were trained by thy rules.
(Chorus)
Leasburg! Leasburg!
Old Leasburg School most glorious!
Leasburg! Leasburg!
Our own Leasburg School.

II

Love and honor we give thee,
With our hearts overflowing,
For the school we're representing
Is the school we shall follow.

III

Let us now be loyal,
And strive to defend her,
That our school bright and glorious
Through eternity may linger.

Father Time (Eugene): (Reading.) Here are the names of some of the others who were here at that time:

Miss Laura Thompson, now Mrs. Long of Roxboro.
Miss Kate Thompson, now Mrs. Bradsher of Roxboro.
Miss Anna Williams, now Mrs. Wagstaff.
Miss Aniva Bradsher, later Mrs. Jerry Dixon.
Miss Belle Wagstaff, later Mrs. Brooks.
Miss Bettie Wilkerson, now Mrs. Foushee of Roxboro.
Miss Annis Lea, later Mrs. Richmond. (Married Dr. Richmond. JDW)
Miss Willie (Wilhelmina) Lea.
Miss Addie Lea, later Mrs. (Benjamin Lee) Arnold, (who became first president of Oregon State University. JDW)
Miss Lillie Lea, now Mrs. T. C. Neal.
Miss Eugenia Lea, now married to Dr. C.(alvin) G.(raves) Lea.
Miss Laura Crump, later Mrs. Patrick, the first graduate of Greensboro College and the founder of the General Hospital in Danville, Virginia.
Miss "Cat" (Eliza Catherine) Yancey, now the wife of *Judge Kerr of Yanceyville.

---THE END---

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*(Note: The brick school that replaced the two-room school was built sometime between 1922 and 1925. Mrs. Virginia Dixon Rogers said the school was new when she entered first grade there in 1925.

Copied from a text of the play, courtesy of Mrs. Iola Butler Murphy, now deceased. Additional information has been added and initialed. Some dates have been corrected, when known. Other information, though in doubt of its correctness, has been left as originally written. *Miss "Cat" (Eliza Catherine) Yancey married John Hosea McNeill Kerr, who was Caswell County Clerk of Court 1888-1892. No data was found to indicate he was a judge although a son, John Hosea Kerr, born in 1873, was elected Judge of Superior Court while living in Warrenton, N.C., and served eight years. Later he was an elected Congressman from the 2nd District 1923-1953.

When known who the girls in the play later married, the married name, or names, were added and put in parenthesis. Also, when it was known a former student was deceased as of June 1999, this was indicated with an (X). So far, no more has been learned about them. Jeannine D. Whitlow)

Robert Norwood Whitlow & Ruth Caroline Stephens Whitlow 1907

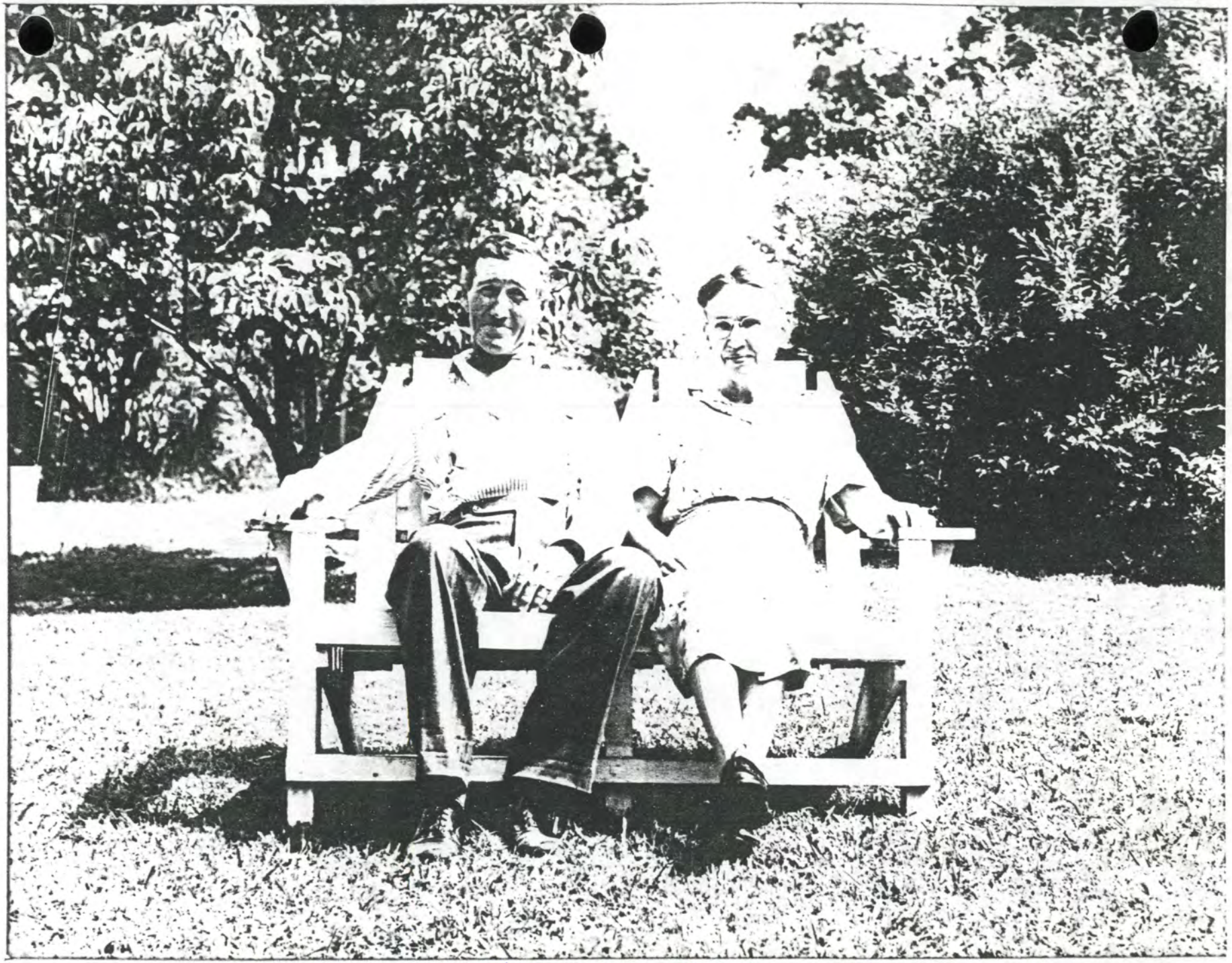
I think this was made around the time they got married.


"Bob" and "Carrie" Whitlow and their first six children. About 1916
Ruth Born 1911
John Born 1913
Marion Born 1914
Eudora Born 1908
Evelyn Born 1916
James Born 1909

Last 3 Children of "Bob" and "Carrie" Whitlow - Photo made in 1931

BIRTH AND DEATH STATISTICS TO July 22, 2000

WHITLOW	BORN	DIED
PARENTS		
Robert Norwood (Died of Stroke)	July 8, 1878	Sept. 8, 1949
Ruth Caroline Stephens (Died of Stroke)	Feb. 25, 1891	Oct. 19, 1974
CHILDREN		
Eudora Eva (Cause of death not known) Married 1st, W.L.Simmons, 2nd, B. O. Lee, 3rd, James Maxwell	Jan. 1, 1908	April 10, 1994
James Robert, Married Cora Weaver (Died of Cancer)	Nov. 5, 1909	Dec. 11, 1988
Minnie Ruth, Married E. H. Kelley, Jr. (Died of Heart Attack)	Nov. 7, 1911	Dec. 31, 1991
John Elijah, Married Malvena Carter (Died of Heart Attack)	March 21, 1913	Feb. 23, 1990
Harold Martin Married 1st Shirley Hundley 2nd Doris Smith Burch	Aug. 16, 1914	----------
Evelyn Barbara Married Milton Greenfield (Died of Cancer)	April 17, 1916	June 3, 1994
Ralph Henry, Married Irene Hundley (Died of Cancer)	Dec. 24, 1917	July 31, 1986
Elizabeth Nichols Married 1st, James Reith, and 2nd, William Price	March 15, 1920	----------
William Carleton, Married Leona Weaver (Died of Cancer)	May 17, 1923	April 15, 1973
Stanley Dorsett, Married Sue Weaver	Nov. 15, 1924	----------
Marion Walker Married E.B.Abbott (Died of Cancer)	Jan. 4, 1927	Jan. 8, 1996
Jeannine Dare, Married, 1st Winstead, 2nd Keaton (Divorced, resumed maiden name)	Sept. 24, 1930	----------



Robert Norwood Whitlow and Ruth Caroline Stephens Whitlow
July 27, 1947

Belk - Leggett

ARMY NURSE CORPS SERVICE

IN

THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS

DURING

WORLD WAR II

OF

EVELYN B. WHITLOW
1ST LT. A.N.C., DECEASED

ALSO MAPS, SANTO TOMAS STYLES, ETC.

BY ETHEL "SALLY" BLAINE MILLETT
1st LT. A.N.C., RETIRED

Published by - - - - - - - -

Angels Of Bataan

Major MAUDE C. DAVISON
Office of The Surgeon General, Washington D C.

CAPTAINS

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Gorgas, Alabama

JOSEPHINE M. NESBIT
Parlin, Colorado

EDITH E. SHACKLETTE
Brandenburg, Ky.

CLARA MUELLER
Philadelphia, Penna.

ELEANOR E. O'NEILL
San Francisco, Calif.

FIRST LIEUTENANTS

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Minot, North Dakota

LOUISE M. ANSCHICKS
Chicago, Illinois

CLARA M. BICKFORD
Tivoli, Texas

ETHEL L. BLAINE
Greensburg, Missouri

HATTIE R. BRANTLEY
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MARY BERNICE BROWN
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HELEN M. CASSIANI
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EARLYN M. BLACK
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Spencer, West Virginia

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Richmond Hts., Mo.

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BERTHA DWORSKY
Hallettsville, Tex.

MAGDALENE ECHMANN
San Andreas, California

ADELE F. FOREMAN
Bethlehem, Penna.

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BEULAH M. GREENWALT
San Francisco, Calif.

HELEN M. HENNESSEY
Leavenworth, Kansas

VERNA VINSON HENSON
Long Beach, Calif.

PHYLLIS ARNOLD IACOBUCCI
Minneapolis, Minn.

IMOGENE KENNEDY
Philadelphia, Miss.

BLANCHE KIMBALL
North Topeka, Kansas

MILDRED J. DALTON
Jefferson, Georgia

SALLIE P. DURRETT
Louisville, Kentucky

DORCAS E. EASTERLING
Abbott, Texas

EULA R. FAILS
Huntsville, Texas

HELEN L. GARDNER
Dayton, Ohio

MARCIA L. GATES
Jamesville, Wisc.

ALICE J. HAHN
Chicago, Ill.

GWENDOLYN L. HENSHAW
Los Angeles, Calif.

ROSEMARY HOGAN
Chattanooga, Okla.

GENEVA JENKINS
Sevierville, Tenn

DORIS A. KEHOE
St. Albans, N. Y.

ELEANOR O. LEE
Lonaconing, Maryland

FRANKIE T. LEWEY
Dalhart, Texas

WINIFRED P. MADDEN
Monello, Wisc.

LETHA McHALE
Haverhill, Mass.

FRANCES L. NASH
Washington, Georgia

RITA G. PALMER
Hampton, N. H.

MARY J. REPPAK
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DOROTHY B. SCHOLL
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EVELYN B. WHITLOW
Leasburg, N. C.

EDITH M. WIMBERLY
Campti, Louisiana

EUNICE F. YOUNG
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MAUDE D. WILLIAMS
Guthrie, Texas

DOROTHY L. LUDLOW
Lexa, Arkansas

INEZ V. McDONALD
Tupelo, Miss.

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Wellsville, Missouri

RUTH M. STOLTZ
Dayton, Ohio

MADELINE M. ULLOM
O'Neill, Nebraska

ANNE E. WILLIAMS
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Leominster, Mass.

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Brownville, Maine

DIETITIANS

RUBY F. MOTLEY
Columbia, Mo.

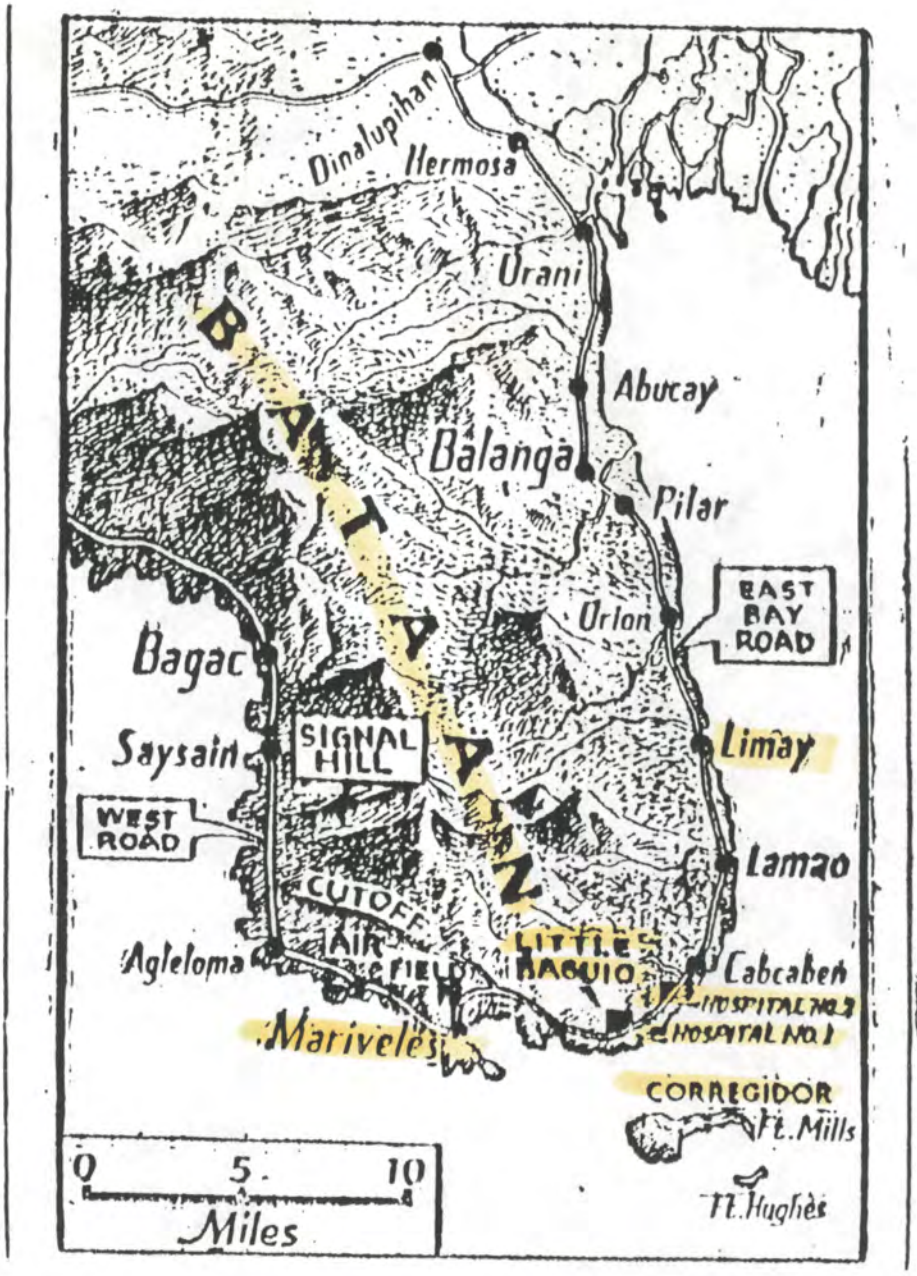
VIVIAN G. WEISSBLATT
North Bend, Oregon

PHYSIO THERAPY AIDE

BRUNETTA KUEHLTHAU
West Bend, Wisc.

Evelyn B. Whitlow, Student Nurse 1930s

1st Lt. Evelyn B. Whitlow
Miami Beach, Florida, June, 1945.



BATAAN PENINSULA

Limay-Where the <u>first</u> group of about 25 American Army Nurses were sent into the field during wartime on December 24, 1941. Lt. Evelyn B. Whitlow was with this first group.

Hospital #2-Whitlow was stationed here when the nurses were evacuated from Bataan.

Mariveles-Left pier here to cross channel to Corregidor. See tadpole shaped island lower right corner of map. When the nurses were evacuated on April 8, 1942, it took from about 8:00 p.m. that day until about 2:00 p.m. April 9th to get from Hospital #2 to Corregidor, a distance of about five miles!

Corregidor, shaped like a tadpole with its head turned westward to the China Sea, and the tail curving east towards Manila, is a rock formation 4 miles long and about half a mile at its widest point, with an area of 3 square miles, situated at the entrance to Manila Bay. It is 26 miles from Manila, 10 from Cavite, and about 5 miles from Bataan. Tunnels began in 1922. This is where Gen. Jonathan Wainwright was forced to surrender to the Japanese May, 1942.

The valiant nurses of Bataan were led by (*from left, above*) First Lieutenant Josephine Nesbitt, Captain M. C. Davison, Second Lieutenant Helen Hennessey of Army Medical Corps. They soon gave up unwashable whites, wore khaki, Air Corps overalls, heavy Army shoes. And in the little creek outside Hospital No. 2, Mrs. Melville Jacoby, wife of LIFE's correspondent-photographer, took pictures of them washing themselves and their remaining clothes while their sister nurses in pants looked on. Some escaped to Corregidor, dazed with exhaustion.

BATTLING BASTARDS OF BATAAN

WE'RE THE BATTLING BASTARDS OF BATAAN,

NO MAMA, NO PAPA, NO UNCLE SAM,

NO AUNTS, NO UNCLES, NO COUSINS, NO NIECES,

NO PILLS, NO PLANES, NO ARTILLERY PIECES.

AND NOBODY GIVES A DAMN.

(ATTRIBUTED TO FRANK HEWLETT, U.P. CORRESPONDENT, PHILLIPPINE ISLANDS, 1941.)

(On Bataan Peninsula in the Philippine Islands, the American and Philippine soldiers made a valiant, heroic stand. Their strength was depleted by tropical diseases, lack of medicine, near starvation, and exhaustion. Their ammunition was so old and defective only about half of it would fire. They expected help any day because President Roosevelt had promised, "Help is on the way." knowing none was being sent! The United States had committed itself to winning the war in Europe. Until such time, the Philippines had been abandoned! These American and Philippine troops fought against terrible odds to buy time for the U. S. to **prepare** for war. They were expected to be able to hold on in Bataan no longer than February, 1942, but it was not until April 9, 1942, that General Edward King, Jr., sued for a truce on Bataan.

The soldiers were not alone on Bataan. Army Nurses had been there at Limay since December 24, 1941, to receive the wounded in tent hospitals carved out of the jungle. Later, at Hospital #2, there were no tents. The jungle canopy and sky was their roof and their bed was a blanket on the jungle floor. These nurses were the first American military women sent into the (battle)field during wartime. Although the hospital areas were marked with red crosses, the Japanese bombed them anyway, killing patients and wounding nurses.

The above poem, attributed to Frank Hewlett, UP Correspondent, reflected the feeling these weary troops experienced of being disowned and abandoned. JDW)

EVELYN B. WHITLOW GREENFIELD & ETHEL "SALLY" L. BLAINE MILLETT
1st LIEUTENANTS, ARMY NURSE CORPS, RETIRED
(From a tape dated March 2, 1983)

Sally: Let's begin with the evacuation of the Army Nurses from Hospital #2 on Bataan.

Evelyn: Late evening, April 8, 1942, I was on a bus with other nurses headed for Mariveles Pier on Bataan when we were caught between the advancing Japanese army and the blowing up of the ordnance warehouse and ammunition dumps. We had to wait until the way was clear before we continued to Mariveles, arriving there at daylight. We were put on a barge going to Corregidor, but there was an air raid. We were stranded out on the water until Corregidor let us in two or three hours later.

Sally: How did you get up to Corregidor? To the tunnel?

Evelyn: I don't remember. I had malaria and diarrhea. My temperature was 103.

Sally: I don't remember how I got up there either. It's just blanked out of my mind. I got into Corregidor at 8:30 or 9:00 a.m. but you didn't get in until about 1:30 p.m.

Evelyn: Around 1:30 or 2:00 p.m.

Sally: I saw all of you come in because I got in earlier that morning. We kept waiting for you because we were told the big ship had already gone when I got to the pier.

Evelyn: I think we just walked up to Malinta Tunnel. We weren't carried, anyway.

Sally: What did you do when you got there?

Evelyn: I was sick and they put me to bed.

Sally: Did you do any duty on Corregidor?

Evelyn: No, I was sick with malaria for three weeks and didn't do any duty there at all.

Sally: I didn't do any duty on Corregidor either. Did any of us nurses do duty there?

Evelyn: Yes, some did, but the sick ones were in the tunnel in triple decks.

Sally: Do you remember the evening (April 29th) we were called in by Josie (Capt. Josephine M. Nesbit) to meet in the dining room area for our orders to leave?

Evelyn: Yes, but I think it was (Major) Maude (C.) Davison instead of Josie.

Sally: There were a lot of people in there. There were men (in the meeting), weren't there, or was it just for the nurses?

Evelyn: It was just the nurses. The men got their own orders from their commander.

Sally: But not all the nurses were called in, just those who were going to be sent out?

Evelyn: Yes.

Sally: I thought sometimes those who were already married were also selected to leave. Rita (Lt. Rita G. Palmer) had been married. I think she was selected, possibly because she had already married.

Evelyn: The rumor went around that they were sending all the crazy nuts home.

Sally: Oh, I don't think it's necessary to say that, Evelyn, please! There's enough ugly rumors without adding to it. We had been told not to tell anyone we had orders to leave and I didn't tell anyone. I had a boy friend there that I liked a lot. When I saw him later on that evening I never told him I had orders to leave. When we got on the PBY that flew us out of Corregidor, he was on that plane, and he hadn't told me either. So, you see, we actually did keep our mouths pretty closed.

Evelyn: Nancy, (Lt. Nancy Gillahan) the nurse that came over with me on the President Coolidge asked me what the meeting was about. I told her I couldn't tell her. She cried because she wanted to go with me. The Chief Nurse (Maj. Maude C. Davison) told her not to worry, she'd be on the next flight out, that she would get out! She was taken out on the submarine, (Spearfish), with some of the other nurses. She got to Australia safe and sound and she visited my parents. She told them I had been caught on Mindanao with the head hunters. I was "missing in action."

Sally: That must have been a great consolation for your mother to know that you were with the head hunters.

Evelyn: My mother never gave up. She always said, "Evelyn will be alive!"

Sally: (Lt.) Ressa Jenkins and (Lt.) Geneva Jenkins, the sisters, were selected to leave. Geneva was on the PBY with us, but Ressa was on the other plane. Ressa wrote to my mother all three years I was locked up. (Lt.) Dorothea Daley, who was from Missouri, wrote to my mother all the time, too. But, getting back to the night we left Corregidor, I always thought there were about 40 men and 13 women on the PBY.

Evelyn: I don't think there were that many.

Sally: We were pretty jammed up. There were a lot of men on our plane.

Evelyn: There were pilots, but the PBY didn't hold that many people.

Sally: When we took off from Corregidor, they made us all go to the front of the plane so the tail wouldn't drag.

Evelyn: There were the pilots, an admiral, a general and his wife, a captain's wife and a navy man's wife....

Sally: There were thirteen women all together. Boots, Virginia and Mrs. Seals....

Evelyn: And ten nurses! (Note by sister of Evelyn: The ten nurses were: 1st Lt. Eleanor E. O'Neill, and 2nd Lts.: Earleen Allen Francis, Geneva Jenkins, Louise Anschicks Prud'homme, Rosemary Hogan, Ethel Blaine Millett, Helen Gardner Rozmus, Agnes D. Barre, Evelyn Whitlow Greenfield, and Rita Palmer James. JDW)

Sally: There were ten nurses, thirteen women, and the rest were men. We had the Filipino general. I don't remember which one it was. And Frank Bridget (Commander Frank Bridget, formerly Chief of Staff of Patrol Wing Ten who had been C. O. of the Naval Defense Battalion on Bataan) was on there, too, wasn't he?

Evelyn: He was an admiral, wasn't he?

Sally: I thought he was just a Commander.

Evelyn: Maybe he was a Commander. I don't remember his rank.

Sally: He was not one piloting the plane. That was "Greasy" Neale (Lt. Commander Edgar T. Neale). I met his cousin later in Louisville, Ky. We belonged to the same club.

Evelyn: Bridget was knocking out windows trying to get out of the water because everybody couldn't get out the door at one time.

Sally: Oh, really?

Evelyn: Yes, because we were standing in water, very deep.

Sally: I had water up over my ankles before I got off the plane, but we did have an uneventful flight from Corregidor to Lake Lanao. What did you do that day?

Evelyn: After we camouflaged the plane...

Sally: We went shopping. They allowed us to go into Dansalan to shop. At least I did.

Evelyn: I didn't. They took us to a hotel there. We had a champagne breakfast and I went to sleep. The men hadn't seen women, and the men and the women were running around going shopping, etc., but I went to bed.

Sally: Well, you had been sick with malaria. I wasn't sick then. I was feeling good and spent all that day with the Commander (Lt. Commander Edgar T. Neale) of the ship. Someone stole his billfold while we were shopping up in Dansalan. In the evening we went back to the plane to leave. We loaded about the same time, but the other plane got off first and circled over us for a little while when they saw we weren't getting off.

Evelyn: Our plane was supposed to take off first, but we were having trouble. There was supposed to have been two boats to pull us out and we only had one. The rope slipped and we were pulled against rocks, knocking holes in the bottom.

Sally: That's what I heard. (Lt.) Rosemary Hogan took off her terry cloth jacket and stuffed it into the holes. Rosemary thought she was strong.

Evelyn: She was strong as an "Amazon."

Sally: She was a big girl but she couldn't keep the water from coming up into that plane. It got up onto the seats and up over our ankles. I was seated next to (Lt.) Rita (G.) Palmer and Rita said, "Come on, Sally, let's get out of here. I'm getting off!" We started, but Mrs. Seals (General Carl H. Seals' wife) was pushed ahead of us and she got off before we did. She forgot all about having arthritis.

Evelyn: It was up to my waist by the time I got off. I was one of the last because I was in the tail end of the plane.

Sally: I was about the third person off the plane. It's a wonder we all got off. Weren't we lucky that we did?

Evelyn: Yes. We had six bags of USAFFE (United States Army Forces, Far East) secrets and (General Jonathan M.) Wainwright's diary, and we got that off.

Sally: Whose diary did you get off?

Evelyn: Wainwright's.

Sally: You did? I didn't know that!

Evelyn: Oh, yes! We saved all that and then we laid around on the airfield for ten days waiting for another plane.

Sally: But that first night we went up to that Dansalan hotel and stayed all night. The next day we went over to the Del Monte Plantation and had an evening meal there. That was where (General Douglas) MacArthur "roughed it" in the wilds of Mindanao at this Del Monte Plantation, which Mrs. Crawford called their "summer home." We left there and went over to the Valencia Airstrip thinking there'd be another plane coming.

Evelyn: Yes, they said MacArthur would send another plane, but he had no other plane, so we laid out there about ten days, total. We slept on canvas cots, fully clothed, each night so we'd be ready to go when a plane came.

Sally: On our way to Valencia Airstrip we were riding on a Filipino bus, just the nurses, and the bus didn't have enough power to get up the hill. We had to get out and walk and (Lt.) Rosemary (Hogan) and some of the other nurses pushed the bus up the hill.

Evelyn: I remember that.

Sally: It was at Valencia that we were bombarded and strafed by the Japanese. There was a Filipino Captain Soso(?) there. Later we were at Leyte at his home and danced at his father and mother's home. That was when we were in Tacloban in 1945 after we were released. Do you remember that?

Evelyn: No.

Sally: I remember it very well. I went back and talked to his mother, his wife, and two children. Captain Soso(?) was one of the Filipino ace pilots. When we were down in Mindanao, we went from the airstrip to this governor's home. He was a governor of the Philippine Province. His wife was a pianist. His name was something like "Fertik."

Evelyn: Fortich's Ranch. He worked with the guerillas.

Sally: Was he American?

Evelyn: No, he was Filipino.

Sally: Okay, Fortich's Ranch. His wife played the piano for us.

Evelyn: And they had a fireplace. We had to open all that mail, get out all the secrets, and get the money out. We burned the papers and Wainwright's diary. Col. (Stuart) Wood and Capt. Snead were in charge of this. I had a gift to mail back to the States which a colonel had given me in Corregidor and asked me to mail when I got out and to see that his wife got a message. I said, "Sure, if I get out!" I had to open the package to see what was in it and there were three lovely pieces of ivory. Mrs. Fortich said she'd bury it out in the yard and keep it for me, but I never got it back.

Sally: Did you ever contact her again?

Evelyn: Oh, sure! She was a Congresswoman. I went to the Manila Hotel where she was staying in 1947 and she said she didn't remember it. The houseboy was supposed to bury it. I don't know what happened to it. The ivory figurines may still be buried in her yard.

Sally: After we were at Fortich's Ranch, it seems to me during those ten days we went back and forth from the hospital that Major (William R.) Davis had in Impalatao to Valencia Airstrip and maybe back to the hospital another time and then to Valencia and back to Fortich's Ranch. On May 10th Col. (Stuart) Wood told us we were going to be taken prisoners

and that we would be taken up to that Force General Hospital at Impalatao, Mindanao. Do you remember that was a reforestation project up there? That it was a beautiful place with lots of flowers?

Evelyn: Yes, it was lovely, very beautiful.

Sally: And the hospital was hidden in under the trees. The catwalk had a shelter over it and the roof had been built right around the trees. You couldn't see the hospital from up above. There were about 15 Filipina nurses there. They shared clothing with some of us. I was small and I got to wear a robe that belonged to Florencia Raklaman(?). Did you get any clothes from any of the Filipinos?

Evelyn: No.

Sally: Well, you were too big. I was lucky I was little and could wear one of her robes. I don't remember very much about washing dishes and cleaning up in the nurses' quarters. Did you do any of that?

Evelyn: Yes, I did. I cooked in the kitchen, too.

Sally: I don't remember a lot about that, but I remember when you and I went swimming every day and washed our clothes, I always picked flowers and put fresh flowers on the table in a soup tureen, using hydrangeas for a frog. Every day, I had flowers on our table!

Evelyn: The flowers down there were beautiful.

Sally: They had every tree and every shrub that grew in the Philippines in that reforestation project. The flowers grew profusely there. It was the rainy season and it rained every morning.

Evelyn: They had vegetable gardens there, too, but locusts came and ate everything. They climbed the walls, and climbed the trees. They were everywhere! We couldn't get rid of them, so we cooked them in oil and ate them.

Sally: They tasted good, but you had to pull the legs off up to the knee joint.

Evelyn: Because it would tickle going down your throat.

Sally: Yes, but they tasted like bacon rinds. I thought they were good.

Evelyn: Yes, that's right.

Sally: Actually, we were hungry. I think they'd taste good today.

Evelyn: Yes.

Sally: We didn't have any clothes except what we had on when we got there.

Evelyn: Coveralls.

Sally: I had a sweater in my hand and two silk handkerchiefs, one that carried my three pounds of air mail I was taking out of the Philippines. I had $200 in my pocket that was supposed to be used to mail the letters from Australia to the States.

Evelyn: We were given an allotment of $150-$200 before we left Corregidor because we had no money. We were going to Australia where it was winter and we had to buy clothes.

Sally: I don't remember that.

Evelyn: I do, because I was broke!

Sally: Isn't it strange the things we forget? Of course, no one had any money. We had no use for money on Bataan. While we were at this hospital at Impalatao, there was a bodega there loaded with printed cotton. Miss (Capt. Eleanor E.) O'Neill got permission to use some of that material for dresses. You and I made watermelon red, flared skirts. You cut out the patterns because you could cut much better than I.

Evelyn: I made a lot of clothes.

Sally: I don't remember anything I made except that and a white blouse from the parachute silk. Someone brought me a parachute. We raveled up the guide lines and knitted things out of it. I knitted a pair of panties for myself and I made a blouse. When I got to Santo Tomas I had enough to make sheets. I had silk sheets all the time in prison and they were wonderful. They dried in ten minutes outside.

Evelyn: I think I brought some parachute material home with me when I came back in 1945.

Sally: It was pure silk. I'm sure they make parachutes out of rayon or nylon today, but in those days they were silk. When they became a dingy yellow, I dyed them. I had purple sheets, purple pajamas, purple shorts and underpants, that I wore in the prison camp. Back at Force General Hospital, we stayed about three months and left in August, I think. On July 22, 1942, we were put to duty in the hospital by order of the Imperial Japanese Army--by their doctor, Matsui. He was a first lieutenant and he ordered Miss (Capt. Eleanor E.) O'Neill and Major (Maude C.) Davison to put us on duty. We didn't work a full eight hours, though, did we?

Evelyn: I did. I was on night duty. I always got stuck on night duty!

Sally: I must have been too frail. They didn't put me on night duty. I remember working a little bit. I didn't have malaria when I was there, but I know you did several times.

Evelyn: Yes, I did.

Sally: I remember one thing we did that was sort of risque. We went someplace at night to some building where the pharmacist came. He brought alcohol from his pharmacy and we made drinks mixed with green orange juice. He also brought coloring material from the pharmacy and we had blue, pink and yellow drinks. It was horrible tasting stuff, and mixed with green orange juice it was still more vile.

Evelyn: I wasn't there. I was on night duty.

Sally: Oh, Evelyn, you poor girl. I'm sure it must have killed all the bugs in me because I didn't have any malaria while I was there. You never got any of this stuff?

Evelyn: No. I had only pineapple juice and pineapple. I wasn't drinking at the time.

Sally: You had some wine once while we were there, but you were always bringing sugar into our room and the ants would crawl up in the window sill and it would make me so mad. I hated ants!

Evelyn: Well, I had paid for the sugar....

Sally: You liked sweet things and you were always bringing in sweet tea in a cup. The ants would come, and I'd be so upset! But you did something for me that was very nice. I hated

drinking out of those old thick cups they had there. The rim was about a fourth of an inch thick. There was one china cup and you said, "Here, Sally, you take this one because I don't care."

Evelyn: I don't know where I got it. Probably from the Japanese.

Sally: You stole it, huh?

Evelyn: It was as thin as an egg shell. It was beautiful.

Sally: And I used it. I don't like Japanese china to this day, but that was a real nice cup, and you gave it to me. Some of you played bridge to pass your time, but I never did.

Evelyn: I played bridge.

Sally: You played a lot. There were some male officers there who came and played bridge with us in the nurses' quarters. I never could figure out what they were doing there or how they happened to stay around there. They were not medical officers.

Evelyn: I think they got a pass from the military camp. I'm not positive.

Sally: I remember them playing bridge with you and Virginia Grady. She was a pretty good bridge player. I also remember the stinky Cebu sardines that we ate. They smelled like G.I. soap and tasted like G.I. soap. We had squid and we exchanged it for the sardines the Japanese had because they liked squid, but we liked it less than sardines. We didn't have very good or very much food at this little hospital. It was very meager.

Evelyn: We did get in some carabao because that was the cattle country and they brought in cattle. I know because I talked the mess sergeant into letting me cut off a small chunk with a pen knife. I brought it back to the nurses' quarters and cooked it.

Sally: Did you get caught?

Evelyn: Well, the Japanese made inspection and I....

Sally: While you were cooking?!

Evelyn: While I was cooking and I thought they were going to take it away from me, but they just passed by. Unfortunately, the meat I cut off was from the neck. It was so tough we could hardly eat it.

Sally: I was never afraid that the Japanese would harm us except for one time. Someone had robbed their bodega, their storehouse, and stolen a lot of blankets. They were so angry! They came to the nurses' quarters, down those wooden catwalks, and their sabers, or whatever the thing was that they wore that dragged along on the ground. What was it? A saber?

Evelyn: A sword.

Sally: Okay, a sword. They were so angry they were going, "Umph! Umph! Umph!" That's the way they sounded when they were angry. But none of us knew anything about the blankets. It was really the only time I ever felt afraid.

Evelyn: They <u>were</u> angry!

Sally: When we first came there, they had the worst time counting us. They counted, and counted, and counted! I don't know whether they were having trouble with our names or what, but they counted us three or four times. All I could think of was, Orientals can't count Occidentals!

Evelyn: I think they got us mixed up with the civilians. They couldn't tell the military personnel from the civilians. The general who was in command, was counting and he didn't know what to do with us because they didn't have any women in the military service. They asked if we were red cross workers before we got in the army and we said, "Yes." He said, "Well you're red cross workers and we have to do something about that." I got bold enough to ask, "Could you please tell me what happened to all the nurses left on Corregidor?" He looked me straight in the eye and said. "They are all dead!" Others told me I turned as white as a sheet. I was absolutely ready to drop dead. He looked at me sternly, then started laughing a big laugh and said, "Ha! Ha! Ha! That is a joke!" I said, "It might be a joke to you, but it's not to me!" I didn't ask him any more questions.

Sally: Maybe it was a good idea that you didn't. When you were on night duty at the hospital, did the Japanese guards come around and guard you or ever bother you at all?

Evelyn: Yes, the guards came every hour or two, guarding and checking to see if anybody had escaped. One night I was charting a patient's record when the guard grabbed the fountain pen out of my hand and gave me a pineapple in exchange. I said, "Listen, I have to write these charts. I don't need the pineapple!" He was talking in Japanese and I was talking in English. I had an American patient in the back corner who was married to a Japanese. She was there taking care of him because we really didn't have enough nurses on duty.

Sally: You mean his Japanese wife was there?

Evelyn: Yes, She was sitting by him and massaging him. He was almost unconscious, but she took care of him and kept massaging him until she brought him back around. She heard the commotion and came up to me and the Japanese guard. She said something to him in Japanese. I got my fountain pen back and he let me keep the pineapple, too. Thank God for that Japanese woman!

Sally: Was the pen something you treasured?

Evelyn: Yes, it was a Waterman fountain pen my sister gave me as a graduation gift when I finished nurses' training. I still have it to this day someplace in this house.

Sally: That's fantastic! Do you remember how we used to take a bath and where we went to bathe when we were at Force General Hospital?

Evelyn: We bathed in a creek or a stream of water somewhere.

Sally: It was a waterfall. The waterfall made a pool.

Evelyn: Yes, yes, that's right!

Sally: We had showers but there was no hot water.

Evelyn: There was no way to heat water.

Sally: We had a shower in our room but it was so cold you couldn't stand it. If we had waited until noon, maybe, it would have been better, but when we discovered that pool, that was more satisfactory. It rained every day about 1:15 p.m., but we went before then, washed our clothes and got them dry.

Evelyn: That's one of the most beautiful islands in the Philippines. On Mindanao, where the waterfall was, is where the trees and most of their crops are grown.

Sally: I wonder if it's still really pretty or if they cut it down like they did Bataan.
Evelyn: I don't think it was cut down because one Japanese guy held out down there for about 20 years after the war ended. They found him up in the hills and he didn't even know Japan had surrendered! It was in the newspaper.

Sally: That was on Mindanao? I hope they preserve some of the jungle. I even liked the jungle on Bataan.

Evelyn: Mindanao is where the trees grow that are used for making beautiful mahogany furniture. The cattle are on that island, too. It's one of the most prosperous islands in the Philippines!

Sally: You might have had a lot of night duty, but you had a lot of time to go bathing at noontime. We'd take off our clothes, wash them, throw them up on the bank to dry, and then play in the water up to our necks until our clothes dried on the rocks by the stream.

Evelyn: Just like a Filipino.

Sally: We were living there. "When in Rome, do as Rome does." So we did. It was so refreshing!

Evelyn: At least we were clean!

Sally: It was wonderful, but I can't remember any of the other nurses going there except, maybe (Lt.) Helen (L. Gardner) went with us once.

Evelyn: We didn't have any soap. We used gogo (?) bark from a tree.

Sally: And washed our hair with it, too.

Evelyn: Yeah, and it turned our hair a reddish tint. We had hardly any soap except for the little we had to wash the patients. There was none for luxuries.

Sally: Bathing in that stream, that was a luxury! To be clean and have clean clothes every day, that was marvelous! Eventually we left there and went to Davao. What did you do when we got there?

Evelyn: I was treasurer of our outfit and had the $1000 that Col. (Stuart) Wood had given me. Mr. Downs asked me to go to market to buy supplies for us to eat. We went into town with a push cart with one Japanese guard in front and one guard behind us with drawn bayonets. We bought mostly fruit and fish. On our way we passed a bowling alley and I said, "Mr. Downs, please let me go in and throw one bowling ball." He said, "Evelyn, you're crazy! The Japanese aren't going to let you do that, but I'll ask them." He asked them and they said, "Oh, yes!" I went in and threw one ball down the alley and I was happy! We bought 17 varieties of fruit and had that for lunch on the boat as a fruit salad. That night we had fish and rice. But that's the best we ate the whole time.

Sally: I don't remember much about the food. I guess I was always concerned with keeping clean, but some of us got off the ship in Zamboanga and went where they opened up three or four fire hydrants. The water gushed out with a lot of force. We soaped each other's backs, in our clothes, those of us who wanted to bathe. Then we stood in front of the fire hydrant. The water came with such force it would rinse all the soap off. We felt clean. It was terribly hot there, and within 35 or 40 minutes our clothes were completely dry on our bodies. It was really a treat to me because we hadn't had a decent bath since we left Force

General Hospital. That was a treat I'll never forget. And you remember the food and bowling!

Evelyn: The soap we used was the white, homemade, Filipino bar soap. They used it to do laundry and we bathed with it.

Sally: It was our toilet soap, hmh? By the time we left Davao, I was getting sick. We left there about September 5, 1942, and I was sick with dengue fever. That's when you really began to take care of me. I'll bet you don't remember half the good things you did for me.

Evelyn: Well, I stood in line to get food for you in many places.
Sally: I couldn't lift my head off the pillow.

Evelyn: I stood in line to get food for you, brought it back and if you couldn't feed yourself, I fed you. Then I'd go back and get my food.

Sally: Oh, my, I didn't know that! I know you brought food to me and I suppose I ate it. I don't remember because I could hardly stand up. I was left lying on a blanket on the deck. That was the clean ship we were on. That was the time the Japanese told some of us in Davao that, "You're going to be repatriated. The red cross has decided to repatriate you people. We will take you to Manila and there will be the Gripsholm repatriation ship there and you will be sent to America." I was happy to be chosen. When we left Davao and got back on the ship, we were on "D" deck. We had to climb up a rope ladder. It was a long way to crawl up the side of that ship. My temperature was close to 104.

Evelyn: I couldn't climb up it today. I was more agile then.

Sally: You took care of me. If you hadn't I might not have been here today. I was very, very ill! After I got on the ship, I immediately unfolded my blanket, lay down, and stayed there the rest of the trip. About the first day, a Japanese guard I thought was a medic, came along. He was clean looking, clean shaven, and had on a pants suit with a white collar that was immaculate. He came over to me, knelt down, and touched my forehead, and said, "Oh, very hot!" You were standing near me as you always were when I was sick. He said, "You got icecap? I got ice." I don't know how you happened to have an icecap, but you did. The Japanese took you with him to get ice. There was some sort of ice chest somewhere.

Evelyn: I don't remember. Maybe in the galley.

Sally: When the ice melted, off you'd go to get more. The Japanese offered me some medicine. I thought he was truly concerned about me and wasn't afraid he'd poison me like you were afraid they would poison Mr. Downs. I took the medicine one or more times. Whether it helped me, I don't know. He was a rather kind Jap and I'm glad I had that experience. It gave me a lot of courage and faith in the Japanese. That Japanese medic was really a kind-hearted man because there was a little baby, an American child about three or four months old, left on a pallet near me while her mother went to eat. When the mother, Beth Ploughman, was gone, the baby started to cry. It cried and cried, but I was too sick to do anything for it. The Japanese medic came by, picked the baby up, patted it a little bit, and the baby stopped crying. He walked a few paces with it, turned around, put it back on its pallet, then walked away. The baby started to cry again. He came back, picked it up and held it in his arms as he walked back and forth on the deck of that ship. He kissed that baby on the forehead, I'll bet a hundred times!

Evelyn: They were crazy about children. They even gave some of their food to the children!

Sally: He was really so kind. He held the baby until the mother came back and then gave it to her. Then he took out a billfold and showed her a picture of a baby. The mother had

worked at the American Embassy in Japan and spoke Japanese well enough to converse with him. He told her when he left home eight years before, he had a baby the same age as hers, but had not seen his child since. He was reliving his life with his own baby. I never did fear the Japanese much after that. It made a great impression upon me to see the kindness in him, even though I had seen them club some Filipinos in Zamboanga a few days before. I guess you were out playing bowling and didn't see that.

Evelyn: I was out shopping for food.

Sally: The Filipinos tried to get to us in Zamboanga because they wanted to talk to us, but they got too close, and the Japanese guards hit them over their heads, really hard, with clubs and wouldn't let them near us. That was the only brutality I saw any of the Japanese inflict on any Filipinos. I don't mean it didn't exist, but I was just lucky and never saw any of it. Did you ever see Japanese do very brutal things to people?

Evelyn: Yes! In Santo Tomas!

Sally: When the ship we were on got close to Manila, do you remember what he told us about the mines?

Evelyn: He said there were mines everywhere and they had to be careful how we got into the harbor or the ship could blow up.

Sally: He told us to put on our life jackets. Did you put yours on?

Evelyn: I don't remember, but I don't think it would have done much good if the ship had blown up.

Sally: I don't know what the other people did, but I'd already made up my mind I wasn't going to put one on. I was already sick and every bone in my body hurt. You know they call dengue "breakbone fever." I didn't want to be blown into the water and bob up and down in the ocean half a day before I died! Apparently there were not as many mines as the Japanese thought, because we did get to Manila without mishap. When we got off the ship, we rode a bus up to Santo Tomas. I had been given a message for Bert Holland by Don, one of the men who had been with us down in Davao. Bert had been an "efficiency expert," and he and Don had worked at a sugar plantation. Bert was in Santo Tomas. I told Don I might not find him, but he said everyone would know Bert Holland. When we got off the bus, there were several men standing at the front of the bus as we stepped down. Some of us were sick and I heard them say, "Take this one to the hospital. This one's okay. Take this one to the hospital...." When I stepped down, some man took me by the hand and said, "Bert, take this one to the hospital." That triggered my memory. As we started to walk, the man asked me if I could walk or if I wanted a wheel chair or a litter. I could barely stand up, but I wasn't going to ride in a wheel chair to the hospital only about 150 yards away. We were in front of the main Education Building when we went in, so I walked about three steps and said, "I have a message for Bert Holland, do you know...?" He said, "I'm Bert Holland." There were about 2,000 or 3,000 people in that camp. I had a message for one man, and I stepped off the bus into his arms. I thought that was rather fantastic! Did you have any similar incidents to mine with Bert Holland?

Evelyn: Yes. I had been sent from Ft. Oglethorpe, Georgia, in 1941 for temporary duty at Ft. Benning, Georgia, during an epidemic of mumps there. I had volunteered to go, and while I was there I met a nice officer in the mess hall of the Officers' Club. We got to be friends and I dated him several times. After that tour of duty was over, I didn't see him again until I got to Limay, Philippine Islands, when I was on duty in Bataan. He showed up at my hospital for treatment or supplies. I was shocked to see him because I didn't even know he was in the Islands.

Sally: Did he remember you?

Evelyn: Yes. It was fantastic! He hugged and kissed me and I hugged and kissed him. It was good to see a familiar face!

Sally: That must have been wonderful because you just barely got to the Philippines when the war started, didn't you?

Evelyn: I'd been there just two weeks! I never saw him again.

Sally: Did you ever hear whether or not he lived?

Evelyn: No, I never did.

Sally: That's too bad. When we came from Davao into Santo Tomas, where did you and the rest of the nurses go to live when I went to the hospital?

Evelyn: We were sent to the Dormitory of the University where the students stayed before the war. The university closed down when the war started, so there were no students there. We were with the rest of the nurses at their headquarters. There were also civilian wives quartered there. The nurses were split up because the rooms were small. We stayed there until the mothers wanted the dormitory to use for separate quarters for them and the children so the children could play outside. It was on the ground floor so they voted us to go to the Main Building where we had rooms on the second floor. We stayed there until we were liberated.

Sally: I spent maybe ten days in the hospital sick with dengue. We had been told we were to be sent home on the Gripsholm, but it went out in September of 1942. Did you think you were going home on the Gripsholm?

Evelyn: Yes, but other people were sent instead of us. Some, I heard, had done favors for the Japanese.

Sally: I remember thinking I was too sick to go. After that there was never any talk of the nurses being repatriated except one girl, Davis, who had been sick all the time. She got out with the second group.

Evelyn: She was not an Army Nurse.

Sally: We didn't know she wasn't an Army Nurse at the time. Miss (Capt. Josephine M.) Nesbit told me her commission had been granted and the attempt was made to send it to her, but it didn't get through. In Washington, D. C., she was recorded as a second lieutenant. When she got home, she drew all her back pay the same as we did. She came back into Santo Tomas again when the troops came and we were liberated.

Evelyn: Some were not Army Nurses. Some were Civil Service in our group, and they were commissioned, also.

Sally: I was sent to a room in the Main Building after I got out of the hospital because there was no room for me in the Dormitory where the rest of you were living at that time. My first night was on an old canvas cot. There were bedbugs in the cot. They began to bite and I was miserable. I got up and worried around half the night. The next morning, I asked to have my bed changed. I stayed there for several days. When we first got into Santo Tomas, were the other nurses who had come over to the Philippines in June already there and the nurses from Corregidor were they already living there?

Evelyn: Yes. There were civilian women, also in the quarters with us. No husbands, just the women. No children were allowed in the building at that time, but we were transferred to the Main Building, and then those quarters were used by the mothers and children.

Sally: How long do you think it was before you moved from the Dormitory to the Main Building?

Evelyn: It was several months or early in 1943. The mothers and children wanted the Dormitory so they moved the nurses up onto the second floor. There were about four rooms with sixteen of us to a room.

Sally: I didn't move out of the place where I was staying. I lived with a few of the nurses in a place called "the boiler room." I was there the first Christmas we spent there in 1942 when you were still living in that Dormitory. Do you remember the duties you had in the hospital at Santa Catalina? Were you working before you moved up to the Main Building?

Evelyn: I was working all the time. I was on day duty then, working three or four hours a day. Four hours a day. We were given very meager food, but the nurses were fed a little bit more because we were working. We ate at the hospital when we were on duty.

Sally: We were only fed the days we worked and only the noonday meal then.

Evelyn: Yes, that's right!

Sally: Did we work two weeks on and one week off or was it one week we worked and two weeks off?

Evelyn: Well, I worked most of the time.

Sally: We had time off. You worked two weeks on and a week off was about the way it was arranged. We did not work full time.

Evelyn: Yes, I did! I did, but some of the nurses didn't. I worked most of the time. I was on two full months of night duty! I know because I demanded to get off night duty.

Sally: What? You worked with the T. B on the T. B. ward or...?

Evelyn: Yes, on the T. B. ward. One night ten people died, and after that I couldn't take it any more. I went to the Chief Nurse and told her to take me off night duty because I couldn't stand it any more.

Sally: Were you on the men's ward or women's ward?

Evelyn: The men's T. B. ward. They were coughing up blood on me and the dead were out in the hallway wrapped in sheets. We called the priest to come and say mass over them, no matter what religion they had.

Sally: You don't mean you had ten men die in one night?!

Evelyn: Yes, I do! Yes, I do! Ten died in one night. They were stretched out wrapped in sheets there in the hallway! The Japanese had a cart with American soldiers pulling it. A Japanese with a bayonet was in front and another one with a bayonet in back.

Sally: With American soldiers?! We did <u>not</u> have American soldiers in Santo Tomas, Evelyn!!

Evelyn: We had them outside in Bilibid! The Japanese brought them into Santo Tomas to remove the dead. First, they had a hearse until they ran out of gas. Then they came with a horse and buggy, or carriage. The horse died, or something, and then they had a cart. They had one casket made out of plyboard that was warped. They'd bring the casket in, take a body out, and come back to get another body 'til the ten were gone. They used the same casket. They said they threw them in the river. I don't know where they put them, but they didn't stay very long and the river was not far from us. I know they took the same casket because it was warped and you could see the body inside the casket.

Sally: And you had ten patients die in one night?

Evelyn: Yes! Ten in one night!

Sally: But that was along toward the end of....

Evelyn: Yes! Malnutrition! When the doctor said they died from malnutrition, the Japanese told him to sign it was from natural causes. He refused to sign it, so they put him "in a jail within a jail!" He was a Missionary doctor.

Sally: That was Dr. Stephenson, and that happened just a few weeks before we were liberated. I remember that incident. But, in the beginning we didn't have so many people to die.

Evelyn: No, but we ran out of medication.

Sally: Well, we ran out of food and those old men died. Most of those were elderly men.

Evelyn: Some of them just gave up! They had nothing to live for! And some of them died the day we were liberated!

Sally: Yeah, I know. But you did get extra food if you worked in the hospital.

Evelyn: Yes. I worked most of the time when I wasn't sick. The Chief Nurse, (Major Maude C. Davison) kept me working because a lot of the nurses didn't work at all in the hospital.

Sally: Do you remember the guy named (Edgar D.) Whitcomb you met when you first came into Santo Tomas?

Evelyn: Yes it was the day I came in (September 9, 1942). I had been walking around the grounds looking things over when I saw a familiar face in the kitchen. I said, "Whit, what are you doing here?" He didn't answer me. I didn't know what to think because I knew the guy and had dated him. I wondered what was wrong with him. The guy working next to him said, "That girl seems to know you." He said, "Oh, I probably dated her before the war. I don't know who she is." But he knew who I was! He was a military man, a navigation pilot, under an assumed name and not supposed to be in Santo Tomas. After Corregidor fell to the Japanese, he swam from Corregidor to Manila, got civilian clothes, was later picked up, and brought to Santo Tomas. He was there under the assumed name, Johnson.

Sally: He didn't stay long because he went out on the Gripsholm.

Evelyn: Yes, the one we were supposed to be on. Because I knew his identity, he was afraid someone would tell the Japanese and they would torture us both until I told or he admitted to being in the military. Then they'd behead both of us. After he swam from Corregidor, he tried to get to Australia. but was picked up and brought to Santo Tomas. Soon afterwards he was able to go to Shanghai, leave there on the Gripsholm, go back to the U. S., and come back to the Philippines to fight the second time!

Sally: He was quite a guy!

Evelyn: Yes! He is now a former Governor of Indiana.

Sally: Are you still in contact with Whitcomb?

Evelyn: Yes, I see him and correspond with him and his wife. We went back for the 25th anniversary of Bataan Day. Several years ago I was an overnight guest in his home and he cooked dinner for us. I'm still in contact with him and call him occasionally. He wrote a book, ESCAPE FROM CORREGIDOR and gave me copies which I gave to friends and relatives.

Sally: He must have been quite a guy to get out of prison, go home, and talk the Army into letting him come back to the Philippines again before the war was over! I remember that a lot of people in the camp gave us money. You must have had friends who gave you money, too.

Evelyn: No! I borrowed money! Nobody gave me money except Col. (Stuart) Wood who gave me $1,000 on Mindanao which I divided among the ten nurses who were with us.

Sally: We borrowed money. General Electric, I think, was one of the companies that provided money.

Evelyn: I don't know who I borrowed from. It was an assumed name.

Sally: Miss (Major Maude C.) Davison arranged it.

Evelyn: Yes, and after the war she wrote telling me to send the money to a bank. I never knew who I borrowed the money from.

Sally: I always thought it was General Electric. I want to go back to an incident that happened on Corregidor during the three weeks we were there (April 9-29) in 1942. Weren't you and (Lt.) Helen (L. Gardner) brave enough to go on a little motorcycle ride there?

Evelyn: Yes, we were crazy enough to go on a motorcycle ride!

Sally: Did anything happen to you?

Evelyn: No, the air raids weren't on at that time. We were daredevils and had a good time!

Sally: Do you remember how we managed to cook in the prison camp?

Evelyn: We had something like hibachis only it was just a big clay pot with a grill over it.

Sally: We did have vendors for a while who brought food into the camp. You bought food from them, I'm sure.

Evelyn: Yes, the Japanese were "kind" enough to allow vendors in at the beginning when the war was going badly for the U. S.

Sally: There was a man called Damon who used to go out and buy produce and bring it into the camp.

Evelyn: Bob Dameron?

Sally: Yeah, Dameron. He brought food in and we were able to buy food for a long time--until we started winning the war.

Evelyn: Some of the civilians had cooks and houseboys back in their houses who were allowed to bring food for them to the main gate.

Sally: We called that the "package line." Remember Mrs. Hube, the Army Nurse who was--?

Evelyn: In World War I!

Sally: Yeah, she sent food in to us.

Evelyn: And Kotex, supplies, and thread. We knitted and crocheted socks, brassieres, pants and other things with this twine. It was rough on the skin, but it was something to do. We didn't have any knitting needles, but the men carved needles for us out of bamboo. I crocheted a sweater--

Sally: Knitted.

Evelyn: Knitted and crocheted, both!

Sally: I knitted some too.

Evelyn: We had two Singer sewing machines there and I did sewing. I had a friend send in material who had a factory outside. He sent me blue, maize, and white material. I made a dress each for (Lt.) Helen (L. Gardner) and me--a blue one and a yellow one, both trimmed in white.

Sally: There were people in camp who did sewing if you had money to pay them. There was a store outside that you could order clothing, sight unseen.

Evelyn: I made patterns, cut out the fabric, and sewed my own because I'd had Home Economics in school. I was very good. I designed and made all my clothes.

Sally: I had a brown, two-piece suit made of a fabric almost like wool and a full-length navy blue and white striped bathrobe made out of a knitted fabric, almost like nylon, when I was sick. I think the fabric for those two garments came from Aguinaldi's, a store in Manila.

Evelyn: There was a Frenchman down there, too.

Sally: Catalina Hospital, just outside the walls of Santo Tomas, had belonged to the nuns, but they let us use it for a hospital. What do you remember about it?

Evelyn: It was beyond the compound of the camp and there was a gate there that we had to go through to get to the hospital.

Sally: It was walled in, also.

Evelyn: It was walled in from outside of the community. We were walled in and the guards saw to it that we couldn't get outside or someone else get in.

Sally: We had two bed-wards, and a ward for men?

Evelyn: Yes, a ward for men and a ward for women. There were about 40 or 50 beds for men and women or the equivalent.

Sally: There was a little space at the head of the landing where we had a patient with tuberculosis. A woman stayed there.

Evelyn: Yes, and the night nurses had a room, as well as another room for the chief nurse.

Sally: Once in a while we'd put beds there when we had an overflow.

Evelyn: Out in the hallway there.

Sally: Yeah, I was a patient there one time. Later on in 1944, maybe March or April, we were equipped with an operating room upstairs on the same level as the women's ward and the men's ward.

Evelyn: Downstairs was the kitchen, the pharmacy, the outpatient clinic, and the chapel.

Sally: And the nuns lived downstairs.

Evelyn: The nuns were someplace in that area because it was the nuns' home.

Sally: It was a big building. I never saw all of the downstairs and only went into the chapel near the end of the war. We had some patients in the chapel area then.

Evelyn: They were in the hallway wherever space was available to put beds, cots, anything.

Sally: Some of the nurses on night duty stayed on night duty months at a time, like (Lt.) Eunice (F.) Young and (Lt.) Earlyn (M.) Black. They liked it.

Evelyn: I think I took it for two months after (Lt. Earlyn M.) Black, until I refused to nurse any more at night. (Major) Maude (C.) Davison, our Chief Nurse, put on "Swish,") Lt. Alice M. Zwicker). Which one used to live in Escondido?

Sally: Alice?

Evelyn: No, the one who got T.B.

Sally: Oh, Gwen (Lt. Gwendolyn L.) Henshaw.

Evelyn: Yes, they stayed on night duty six months.

Sally: I didn't realize they had that much night duty.

Evelyn: They asked for it because night duty was easier.

Sally: Then, they got to sleep over there in that quiet room and not be subjected to all the other nurses!

Evelyn: They contracted T.B. while they were there because they didn't get enough sunshine and food.

Sally: We had other hospitals, too. There was a clinic in the Education Building. A civilian nurse worked there.

Evelyn: Some of them were sent outside and lived at St. Luke's and at Doctors' Hospital.

Sally: You mean patients?

Evelyn: Yes, they requested and got a pass to go outside.

Sally: In the early part of the war, lots of people went outside.

Evelyn: Yes, but some of the nurses also went outside. A friend of mine, a Syrian Jew, went out for two days and stayed two years. He loaned us a shanty he'd had built. The men could live in the shanties, but not the wives and no women were allowed there.

Sally: Not until the end of the war when we got so crowded for space.

Evelyn: That's right. The shanty had to be built to specifications. The door was open and the windows were open. You could see all the way through. There was no love-making, no hanky-panky, no nothing!

Sally: The Japanese didn't want us to hold hands, and I was told later that it was not the Japanese, but the missionaries who were so concerned.

Evelyn: The men and women who were married wanted to be able to make love. They put it before the board of the Americans and the Americans put it before the Japanese. The Japanese wanted to build a great big tent so that all the married couples could go into the tent and make love. They (the POWs) were against that and said, "Nothing doing!" So they gave up the idea.

Sally: In 1960-1970, that'd go over all right, but it didn't work then.

Evelyn: That's right, but when any married woman got pregnant, they'd put her husband "in a jail within a jail" on half rations and without a mosquito net.

Sally: Everyone got mad at every woman who got pregnant because it really meant there'd be another mouth to feed and there wasn't enough food to go around as it was.

Evelyn: I remember one woman who had a baby after she and her husband had gone outside on a pass. Nine months later the baby was born. They had four or five children already, but at least they were married.

Sally: I remember some of those things that went on. I don't know how many children were born in camp, but there must not have been more than a dozen. Not very many when you consider--

Evelyn: Well, some got married. Some had babies. And some died!

Sally: A lot more died than were born there!

Evelyn: That's right!

Sally: Do you remember who was in the Gymnasium? There were a lot of old men there.

Evelyn: Yeah, the bachelors, retired Americans, and the "Pan-American crew"--

Sally: But strictly men!

Evelyn: Yeah, it was men. The Education Building was for young boys--

Sally: They had a clinic at the Gymnasium, finally, for those old men who were too feeble to walk far. I think (Lt.) Rosemary (Hogan) worked there. I don't remember who else.

Evelyn: At the Education Building they had men to take care of the young teenage boys who lived there. They gave guidance, like a scout leader in that building. That's where the Japanese held them hostage when we were liberated.

Sally: That was the Education Building, Evelyn.

Evelyn: I said Education Building.

Sally: I'm talking about the Gymnasium. I'm sorry we're talking about two different things.

Evelyn: We started talking about the Gymnasium where all the bachelors were. A lot of them were sent from there to Los Banos. But the old people were in the Education Building with the young boys. They were upstairs and the Japanese had their offices downstairs. The Education Building was the office building for the American camp officers, like Mr. Grinnell and Mr. Kalb. Their offices were there, and all the Japanese, about 50, had the first floor in administration offices.

Sally: I thought they had a little separate building where they conducted business.

Evelyn: No, no! Education Building, the first floor! That's why they (the Japanese) had all the boys upstairs holding them hostage when the Americans rolled in with their tanks. The Japanese had them upstairs and wouldn't let them out. They held out for two or three days, demanding to be escorted five or ten kilometers out of town!

Sally: I was trying to establish how many hospital units and different areas for treatment we had there. There was a clinic in the Gymnasium, a clinic at Santa Catalina and a clinic in the Main Building. The clinic in the Main Building was on the first floor on the left-hand side as you went into the building.

Evelyn: That was the library as far as I was concerned and the sewing room. I never saw a clinic there.

Sally: Well, I worked in the clinic there from 3 to 11, many, many times!

Evelyn: I didn't work there. I was always at the Main Hospital or at Catalina.

Sally: I worked 3 to 11 in that clinic night after night and I know they had it!

Evelyn: Well, it's possible--

Sally: Possible, Evelyn!! I--

Evelyn: I just never worked there.

Sally: Well, we had it! There would be, maybe 150 people go through there.

Evelyn: I know there was a big library. They had the most wonderful library in the Philippines because it was the main university. We did have reading material. That's one thing we did have!

Sally: Yeah, we did have a nice library. I did a lot of reading there. But we also had a clinic in that Main building. Then we had what we called the Women and Childrens' Hospital where you stayed when you first went into the prison camp.

Evelyn: Yes, and we had American guards at that door.

Sally: Eventually, (Lt.) Gwen(dolyn L.) Henshaw ran an isolation hospital. I thought it was mostly tubercular people she had over there, but it was an--

Evelyn: We even had a Japanese patient who was there about two days.
Sally: Oh, I know. He was the Commandant of the camp!

Evelyn: Yes, that's right.

Sally: I thought that was a very interesting story.

Evelyn: The Americans resented it. They thought he ought to go to his own clinic, but he wanted to be with the Americans.

Sally: After all, he was the boss of the camp and could go wherever he pleased, couldn't he?

Evelyn: Yes, I suppose so.

Sally: I think diarrhea was all that was wrong with him. He was able to get out in a couple of days. Stevenson was his doctor. I remember very well the story that was told. Stevenson made rounds one afternoon and told the Japanese, "I think you'll be all right to go "home" in the morning, but I want to see you again before you leave." This shows how much respect the Japanese had for authority. Here he was the Commandant of the camp! Next morning the Commandant got up, dressed, sat on the edge of the bed, and waited until Stevenson made rounds. When the doctor checked him and found out how he was feeling, he said, "Well, okay. You're all right. You can go back to your office." And the Japanese got up and left. I thought that was really some story that the Commandant would take orders from the American doctor! But he knew that the American doctor knew what he was talking about.

Evelyn: He was a good doctor!

Sally: He was an excellent doctor.

Evelyn: We had a Filipino doctor there too, Dr. Fletcher, and we also had an American Dr. Fletcher.

Sally: That's right. He's the one who operated on me.

Evelyn: The American Dr. Fletcher, his wife and children were there. The children were born and brought up in the Philippines.

Sally: Dr. Fletcher had operated on Governor General Wood in World War I.

Evelyn: He had three or four sons. He hoped one would be a doctor, but none of them turned out to be a doctor.

Sally: Santo Tomas and Santa Catalina were quite some places. All the men left in '43 and went up to Los Banos, internment camp, which I think had been an agricultural camp.

Evelyn: All the able-bodied men and many of the nurses.

Sally: The nurses didn't go until the shacks were built. They sent the men up first to build the shacks.

Evelyn: And most of them volunteered to go.

Sally: Oh, the men wanted to go!

Evelyn: Yes, yes, to get out of Santo Tomas!

Sally: Anything to get out of that place! The men had lived up on the third floor and we, most of the women, lived on the second floor. After the men left, women and children moved in and took their places. About 800 men went up to Los Banos and they could sponsor

their mother, sister, sweetheart, wife, or whomever they wanted to sponsor. That meant they had to be responsible for the person's having a place to sleep and, apparently, be able to provide some food for them. When they left I remember how it sounded. The voices of the men had a deep roaring sound at night when we heard them talking up on the third floor. After they left and the women and children moved there, they sounded like a lot of quacking geese. The sound of the voices of the men were like the deep bass notes on a piano. The women and children sounded like the notes on the treble clef. And we had to share the bathrooms with all those women and children!

Evelyn: Three showers and two or three sinks!

Sally: And about four or five toilets. Do you remember what showering was like?

Evelyn: We were there all together. Skin and bones, skeletons--

Sally: Not skeletons at the beginning. There would be about 20 women at one time, undressed and waiting.

Evelyn: That's right. No shame!

Sally: That was no time for modesty, but we'd stand there until we could go into the shower and get wet. Then we'd back off and soap. Some other woman would walk in, wet her body, then back off to soap. We'd rotate and sometimes there were three or four women bathing under one shower.

Evelyn: Then we'd try to get a sink to brush our teeth.

Sally: I remember one woman who smoked incessantly, even under the shower. She just fascinated me. She was built a little like Mae West and would stand with her chest thrust forward and her head back with her mouth up high so the water wouldn't put out her cigarette, and then she'd back off.

Evelyn: I wonder where she got the cigarettes. Some smoked hibiscus leaves and almost went blind.

Sally: People smoked all the time in camp. Whatever they smoked, they <u>smoked</u>!

Evelyn: Some even traded the milk the Red Cross had sent in for cigarettes.

Sally: We traded lots of things. I traded baking soda for fingernail polish. I must not have been very hungry. I also had a permanent wave once while I was in that prison camp. A woman who had been a beauty operator had brought her equipment in. I asked her if she'd give me a permanent wave and she did. Oh, you bet! I was going to make myself look--

Evelyn: (Laughing) Clean and beautiful! Clean and beautiful!!

Sally: That's right! One time I walked over to Jimmy Horton's shanty after I'd just taken a bath and made up my face as best I could. This was in our <u>hungry days,</u> about 1944. As I walked into his shanty, he looked at me and said, "Well, Sally, you look awful cute, but a ham sandwich would look better!" You remember the "package line." People brought in fresh food from outside if you had a houseboy. How did it work? You could send out your dirty clothes and then you could come back in a little bit and pick up the food they brought and your clean things? The Japanese guarded down there but the package line was open.

Evelyn: We didn't get outside.

Sally: I know we didn't get outside but you went to the package line, at the gate.

Evelyn: At the main gate.

Sally: You could send out your dirty things if you had a Filipino servant outside who'd wash for you and he'd bring in food when he brought back your clean clothes.

Evelyn: They brought in cooked food, your clean things and other necessities.

Sally: Didn't you get some cloth or (Lt.) Helen (M. Gardner) get some cloth? She made you a bed jacket.

Evelyn: Yes, I had two friends who were manufacturers. They had a factory at Santa Ana and made baby clothes. We had no clothes and no dresses, only our coveralls and uniforms. This man befriended us and sent food in to us twice a week. He went out on a pass for two days; he had double vision. He asked us to look after his shanty because if he didn't stay there, even if he stayed away one night, his shanty would be confiscated. If someone used it, they wouldn't take it away. He asked us girls to use it. One of us worked in the morning, one in the afternoon, and one at night, so we rotated. We were allowed to go to the shanty about 8 or 9 o'clock in the morning and stay until 5 o'clock for roll call. We had one of those charcoal stoves you'd call an hibachi today, but it was just a clay pot with a grill. We cooked the food on it that was sent in to us. They also sent in some material. We had no dresses. I made two dresses, one for me and one for (Lt.) Helen (L. Gardner). I made a pattern, cut out the dresses and made them. I had another friend who lived in "Froggy Bottom" who had a shanty. It was Easter and he'd had another friend outside send in a turkey. He invited a group of us over to eat. I had shampooed my hair in gogo bark, got all dressed up in my beautiful yellow and white dress and the pair of shoes he'd gotten for me from outside. I didn't have shoes, only bakias. After I got there, he had some duck eggs and I said I wished I'd had an egg shampoo to wash my hair. He reached up in the rafters, got an egg out of a basket, and cracked it on my head. Egg went all over me and my beautiful new dress, the only one I owned. I had to go back to my quarters, shower, re-dress, and come back in shorts. I could have killed that man. But that's the man I married. My friend, (Lt.) Helen (L. Gardner) made a bed jacket for me out of some batiste material and French lace they sent in. She didn't know how to sew, but I taught her. She sewed it all by hand. It was very pretty, and I used it. After 35 years or more, I still have it as a souvenir in my camphor chest.

Sally: Do you remember the typhoon while we were locked up in Santo Tomas?

Evelyn: Yes! One year we had a bad typhoon. This was one of the worst because we were down about sea level and the drainage wasn't good there. The water was at least waist high and we had to swim to the shanty we were taking care of.

Sally: Did you actually have to swim or could you walk it?

Evelyn: No, we had to swim. It was quite a distance from the Main Building to the shanty, but we had left a bag of rice on the shanty floor. The shanties were up on stilts, but the water was above the stilts. We didn't want our rice to get wet. There was a table-like thing at the shanty, but it also folded up to make a bed that a mat could be put on and used for sleeping. We swam out to elevate the rice and sugar he'd sent in. He also sent in melba toast. That's why we didn't lose so much weight. He sent food in because he eventually planned to come back in, himself. While he was outside he had contacts to send this food in while we were still allowed to accept food at the main gate. He also sent in charcoal. The bamboo poles used to build the shanties had to be sent in also. With these poles coming in, someone figured out how to get alcohol into camp, undetected. They bored holes in the bamboo, hollowed out the center, and filled the hollow spaces with alcohol, and corked it up. After dark, the liquid was emptied into containers. When people got drunk, they couldn't figure out how the liquor got into camp, but that was one way it was brought in. Bamboo is not really heavy. When the

Filipinos brought the poles inside with something in them, you could tell the poles were really heavy on their shoulders, and you knew something was there besides bamboo.

Some of the people had businesses inside the prison camp. One man was allowed to have a restaurant and served bacon and eggs, sandwiches, etc. Another, had a coffee shop that sold doughnuts and coffee. The man with the restaurant had bacon and eggs brought in by the wheelbarrow load. The men who went down to the main gate to get it, pushed it up the driveway to the restaurant near the Education Building. One day several of us off-duty nurses, who called ourselves "X9," were sitting under the trees just resting and observing the activity around us. I said, "Those eggs look awfully heavy to me. It's impossible they could use that many eggs in the restaurant." The American police in the camp had tried to find out who was smuggling liquor into camp. This was another way it was brought in. Underneath the eggs were bottles of liquor. They were fined and put "in a jail within a jail" down in the Gymnasium Building.

Sally: You mean the Americans put these guys in Jail?

Evelyn: Yes! They put them behind bars. One Easter we got some eggs, colored them different colors, and walked down to the Gymnasium, but we couldn't see them. We got down far enough to throw these hard-boiled eggs to those men. They were Pan-American guys. One man worked with the stevedores in the Navy. We threw the eggs through the bars in the window there at Easter. Afterwards, they volunteered to go to Los Banos.

Sally: Los Banos was a much nicer place, I'm sure of that.

Evelyn: Yes, it was better than being "in a jail within a jail."

Sally: Surely they weren't going to keep them in jail forever, were they?

Evelyn: I don't know. They were in there for months. Being in prison is bad enough without being "in a jail within a jail!" **---END OF TAPE--**

COMMENTS: Early in their internment, the civilians recognized the need for governing themselves to relieve the chaos at Santo Tomas. They set up their own form of internal government and looked for ways to make imprisonment more bearable They interceded with their Japanese captors on behalf of the internees to improve living conditions. Guidelines were established and the civilians were expected to follow them. They organized their own civilian "police" who were concerned with the safety of the people, but if there were infractions, various forms of punishment were prescribed according to the severity of the offense. The preceding tape mentions some who were fined and others who were put into "a jail within a jail."

There were few toilet and bathroom facilities when they arrived. Pipes for plumbing and appliances were bought and installed by the internees. Beds were few and many slept on the floor until these, too, were eventually obtained.

Toward the end of the war, the Japanese refused to let food and supplies be received by the internees. Although those outside continued to bring food to the gate, it was never allowed inside and rotted where it was left. The civilian government interceded with the Japanese to relieve the terrible hunger in the camp. The diet had been cut so drastically many died of malnutrition and related diseases. By then, the Japanese had become harsher and more fanatical. The war was going badly for them. After pleading with the Japanese for more food, some of the camp's representatives were taken outside Santo Tomas and not seen again. It was later learned these men had been murdered by the Japanese and left on the street. (Jeannine D. Whitlow, sister of Evelyn Whitlow Greenfield).

ERNEST BRADSHER WINSTEAD

Sunday, July 26, 1908, Tuesday, November 9, 1999

Ernest Bradsher Winstead, 91, died November 9, 1999, at Person County Memorial Hospital following a heart attack October 25th. He was born July 26, 1908, on the Person County side of Leasburg. His father, Charles Fletcher Winstead, was the son of James Fletcher Winstead, and Eunice Bradsher Jacobs Winstead. His mother, Claire Cornelia Winstead, was the eldest child of Charles Edward Winstead, (born Aug. 5, 1864, died Mar. 7, 1946), and Minnie Lee Stephens Winstead, (born Mar. 29, 1869, died Apr. 29, 1924).

Ernest had one brother, Fletcher Bertwell, born May 5, 1911, and died July 23, 1986. He had been close to Bertwell and relied on him for advice. His death was a great loss to Ernest.

Charles Fletcher Winstead, Ernest's father, improvised the first "school bus" in the area by placing seats in the back of a farm truck and putting a cover over the top that could be removed when using it for farm work. He was paid 10 cents a child, a day for transportation to and from the small, local rural school. Both of Fletcher's sons were accustomed to driving the truck on the family farm. As no license to drive was required in 1921, Ernest, age 13, and Bertwell, age 11, took turns driving the "school bus-truck."

Ernest and Bertwell were both born in the house built about 1820 by their Great Grandfather, Elijah Jacobs. It was in Person County, located on Hester's Store Road, now officially named Gordonton Road. In 1925 their father built a new home in sight of the old one and turned the old house into a store. It is still standing, but was moved to the opposite side of the road and located a quarter of a mile north. The "new" house was torn down in the middle 1990s by the new owner who said termites had done irreparable damage. The floors of heart pine and oak, were beautiful. The demolition of this home was a great loss.

In February, 1930, Ernest married Sally Harris of Rougemont, NC. They lived in the new house with his parents at first, but later moved into the Elijah Jacobs house where they lived for many years.

For a short while Ernest ran a general merchandise store in Leasburg. Now, a convenience-type store, it is still in operation as Leasburg Grocery. He and Bertwell also ran a store at Hightowers. Margaret remembered supplies being moved to that store on a wagon. In World War II, Ernest was in service briefly. Later, he worked at Collins & Aikman 38 years before retiring. After his parents died and his brother, Bertwell, and family moved

to Roxboro, Ernest and Sally built a home on Hwy 158 across from the Methodist Church in Leasburg. They moved there about 1956 or 1957. From then until Ernest left his home at 7531 US Hwy 158 East and went into a nursing home, a period of about 40 years, he looked after the church, checking it periodically to make sure there were no problems. He turned on heating or cooling systems in the church for services or other meetings, set the chimes, locked and unlocked the doors and was on call for service people to get in to make repairs. It was regrettable when the church could no longer be left unlocked, but after incidents of vandalism, it was necessary.

After Ernest had a heart attack, his doctor advised him to walk which he did faithfully. That's how he became Leasburg's unofficial "Goodwill Ambassador." Whoever he met on his daily walks, people on cars, tractors, bicycles, or on foot, eachwas greeted with a wave and a big smile. Ernest had a nickname. Like his father, he was also called "Honey." He was a sweet, loving person, often declaring, "I love everybody!" As long as he was able, he walked the eight-mile course from Leasburg to Salem Church in the annual "Crop Walks."

Sally and Ernest gave a real service to the village by giving neighbors transportation to doctors' appointments, grocery shopping, or attending to personal business.

After being married 51 years, Sally died August 16, 1981. Ernest had depended on her so much, he felt lost, but proved to be more resilient than expected. He learned to cook his meals, took care of the house and yard, but said he finally understood why Sally was constantly doing housework. He marvelled at how efficient she had been and how slow he was. Often he said: "Man may work from sun to sun, but a woman's work is never done."

Even though they never had children, one year the Leasburg United Methodist Youth Fellowship named Ernest "Father of the Year." He was like a kind father to all of them. Ernest was a member of the Senior Citizen's Club at Prospect Hill and gave all the other club members in the neighborhood a ride to the meetings each Monday morning. He liked people and got pleasure from doing things to make them happy.

In his younger years Ernest loved riding his motorcycle. He had some accidents, but long before Sally died, he had a bad one and gave up that pursuit. Still, he enjoyed playing harmonica, and owned several. On October 2, 1994, as part of the day's entertainment program celebrating the Bicentennial of the establishment of Leasburg's post office, October 1, 1794, he played selections on his harmonicas and received resounding applause.

As his health deteriorated after Sally's death, he had a great advantage in having his sister-in-law, Margaret Brooks Winstead, to help him and empowered her to make decisions regarding his health if he became incapable of acting on his own. When he could no longer manage on his own and needed medical care, he went into a nursing home in 1994.

Ernest was a Great, Great, Great Grandson of Moses Bradsher and Martha Banks Bradsher. Their eldest son, Abner, (born Sept. 2, 1778, died July 1, 1858) and Elizabeth Johnston Bradsher were his Great-Great Grandparents. Their youngest daughter, Martha Banks Bradsher, named for Abner's mother, married her cousin, Benjamin Jacobs. They were Ernest's Great Grandparents. Their daughter, Eunice Bradsher Jacobs, married James Fletcher Winstead, and they were his Grandparents. Their son, Charles Fletcher Winstead, (born June 3, 1880, died Dec. 10, 1951), was married Oct. 1, 1902, to Claire Cornelia Winstead, (born Dec. 17, 1887, died Oct. 19, 1955), and they were his parents.

His sister-in-law, Margaret Brooks Winstead, widow of his brother, Bertwell, survives him as do Bertwell and Margaret's children, Bertwell Clyde, his nephew, who lives with his wife, Karen, near Denver in Lakewood, Colorado, Ms. Sylvia Winstead, his niece, of Dallas, Texas, whose children are Robert Herbert Page and Sylvia Anne Page who married Alton Engle. The Engles have a son, Jason Lee Engle and a daughter, Natalie Engle.

Ernest Bradsher Winstead was remarkably adaptable. No matter in what circumstance he found himself, he wasted little time in regretting what might have been. Instead, he looked for ways to make others happy. Wherever he was, he always found a way "to bloom wherever he was planted."

Visitation was at Brooks and White Funeral Home Wednesday evening, Nov. 10, from 7:00 p.m to 8:30 p.m. Funeral services were held at Leasburg United Methodist Church, Thursday, Nov. 11, 1999, at 2:30 p.m. with the Rev. Sherrie James in charge of services. Pall bearers were Clyde Brooks, Nat Brooks, Harris Gooch, G. B. Holt, Jr., Arthur Winstead, Lamar Winstead, Sam Winstead, and Tim Winstead. Memorials may be made to the Leasburg United Methodist Church, P. O. Box 98, Leasburg, N. C. 27291, Ernest joined this church at age 10, loved it and its people the rest of his life, and was a member 81 years.

(**Note:** A short graveside service followed the church service. Standing a little distance from the grave, I started to make a step when I saw a snake at my foot. It was less than a yard long and of the prettiest shade of green. As I stood there afraid to move, it went a little way and stopped. Funeral director, Bill White, noticed it. Not fond of snakes, still he gamely picked up the snake's head with two fingers of one hand and the tail with the other hand and carried it across the cemetery, away from the gathering. Then the thought struck me; "Ernest just played one last prank on us." Did he????

P. S.

After the death of Ernest Winstead's parents, Charles Fletcher, in 1951, and his mother Claire Cornelia, in 1955, the farm was rented to Sam Winstead. He and his wife, (at that time, the former Jeannine Whitlow), children, Linda and Ronald, lived in the house Fletcher and Claire built about 1925 and lived in until they died. Ernest and Sally continued to live in the Elijah Jacobs house until their new home in Leasburg was completed. Before they moved, Linda loved to visit Sally and Ernest. Sally had special toys she gave Linda to play with when she visited. One was a little glass dog. She liked to be with Sally, liked to watch her cook, especially when she made sugar cookies. She has a distinct memory of the pink carnival glass cookie jar Sally kept her homemade cookies in.

About 1956, not many families owned television sets, but Sally and Ernest did. Some nights all of Linda's family went over to watch special television programs.

Linda probably went to their house sometimes without asking because she was there early some mornings when Sally packed Ernest's lunch to take to the mill. As Sally made sandwiches, she'd give Linda a slice of the lunch meat to eat. In particular she recalls the olive and pickle loaf kind. She was also given homemade sugar cookies like those that went into Ernest's lunch box.

Ernest's routine in telling Sally goodbye when he left for work at Collins & Aikman didn't vary as Linda recalls. He'd give Sally a kiss and say, "Keep your nose clean if it takes both sleeves."

It was lonesome over there after they moved to their new home in Leasburg.

BARBARA JEAN HISKEY

Barbara Jean Hiskey, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Hiskey, Sr., of Rocky River, Ohio, was born July 22, 1944. After graduating from Ohio State University, she became a psychiatric social worker and counselor to young people. In Springfield, Ohio, she was associated with the Oesterlan Residential Treatment Center for Behaviorally Disturbed Adolescents. Later she worked at the Central Ohio Adolescent Center and was on the advisory board of Syntaxis, a residential center for disturbed adolescents in Columbus, Ohio.

As a teenager, Barbara picked vegetables in the summer for commercial growers because she enjoyed working outside. When her family vacationed in Florida, she was a volunteer at an injured sea bird refuge where she cleaned cages and helped care for the birds. Barbara played tennis and competed in many amateur events, but never played professionally. She was always interested in knowing how things worked so she could work with them herself. Fearless and self reliant, she often went camping with only her dog for company.

After the death of her mother, Barbara's father fell victim to Parkinson's disease and she resigned from her job to take care of him. She wanted to buy a farm, but found nothing suitable in Ohio. Farther afield, she saw an advertisement for a 126-acre farm on the Person County side of Leasburg, N.C. Her father was able to make the trip with her to look at the farm which she liked and bought.

Some months later her father died. She left Ohio and moved to Leasburg where she had no relatives and knew no one. Being outgoing and friendly, she introduced herself, asked directions and advice about many things and soon made a place for herself. If she was around someone who was working and she thought she could help, she didn't hesitate to ask, "What can I do to help?" and pitched right in. With her open, sincere manner, she made friends and soon knew more people in the area than most of the native-born. In these contacts, she found people like "Hap" Warner and James Pass who advised her about buying used farm equipment and helped her transport purchases back to the farm. They taught her how to operate a tractor, plow and plant with it, how to use a bushhog, and how to repair the equipment when it broke down. They also taught her how to put a new clutch in her used pickup truck. Barbara was a "hands on" person.

Barbara had two ponds on her farm. Just for the asking, people were allowed to fish. One evening as a fisherman left her pond, Jeremy, the dog she brought from Ohio and loved so much, ran under the wheel of his truck and was killed. She grieved at the loss, but did not heap guilt or blame on the driver.

Animals loved her and "took up" with her as though drawn by a magnet. When she found abandoned animals, they were immediately taken to a vet for examination, treatment if needed, and shots. Then she took them home with her. If no good adoptive home was found, the animals remained with her. Two bird dogs belonging to her closest neighbor found their way to her house. Time after time she took them back home in her pickup truck, only to have them take a short cut through the woods, and when she got home, they greeted her, tails wagging, on her doorstep. Since the dogs would not stay at home, the neighbor gave them to her. One day one of them was missing. After ascertaining it had not returned to its former home, she put up notices and searched animal shelters. She did not find the dog there, but adopted three cats. The missing dog returned the following day. It was spring. He had been visiting a "lady friend" a short distance away.

Barbara didn't name her animals until she got to know them. A beautiful white cat acquired from the animal shelter, could climb trees but couldn't get back down. Being very busy one day and not wanting to stop to rescue him from the treetop, she looked up in disgust at the stranded cat and said, "You are a pain in the ---!" Then she thought,"Pain-in-the- ---, P-I-T-A!" That's how Pita got his name. Barry and Diana Phillips adopted Pita after Barbara's death as well as another of her strays, Molly, a sweet-tempered, small, black shaggy dog. I inherited Miss Kitty, another of Barbara's strays who, when found, was so nearly starved, survival was a miracle. Now she is so self-confident, she knows she is God's most wonderful creation.

Besides modern farming, Barbara wanted to learn to work with mules. A trip to Sneads Ferry, N.C., found Henry, a handsome, red mule with white muzzle. A month or two later she found Joyce. To be more accurate, the mule trader found Barbara! He owned Henry's sister. Both mules had the same mother and had been trained to work together. Joyce, a sleek and glossy, red mule with white muzzle, matched Henry perfectly. The trader brought the mule on approval July 4, 1990, certain he would make a sale. He was not disappointed. Besides dogs, cats and mules, she acquired chickens, geese, muscovy- and Indian runner ducks and guineas. She also found people down on their luck, and helped them, but no one knew unless those she helped, told.

She met Therit Winstead who had been born and raised close to her farm, and his wife, Linda. They owned a house at the beach and invited her for a weekend. She was skillful with gill nets and crab cages, loved the water, and enjoyed everything so much that her joy and enthusiasm made it more fun for everyone. After the first visit, she had a standing invitation. When she learned about the loggerhead turtles that came up on the beach to scoop out nests and lay their eggs, she was fascinated. She watched diligently for hatching dates on stakes marking nest sites so she could be on hand with good flashlight to guide the hatchlings to the ocean. She spent nights on the beach in her sleeping bag watching over

nests due to hatch. Barbara enjoyed learning new skills. She helped tear down old barns from which a neighbor used logs to build houses at Hyco Lake. She salvaged rocks from barn flues to build herself a large, new house someday.....

Barbara worked hard but she was happy, enjoyed her lifestyle and her new friends. Dressed for the thickets and rough terrain, she delighted in walking over every acre and every inch of her 126-acre farm with her dogs on their daily walks. Some of the cats went along, too! It was an interesting parade of five or six dogs, Barbara, and a cat or two. Usually she wore jeans or jogging pants and an old stocking cap. Often the laces of her walking shoes, having succumbed to brambles underfoot, were untied and dragging. She preferred casual dress to the many beautiful clothes she owned, but no longer wore. Those who mistakenly judged her by her wearing apparel, missed the joy of knowing an intelligent, endlessly interesting, truly caring, unselfish person, who was always alert to the needs of others and eased hardship wherever she could. On one of her walks, she found a wounded deer left by hunters, and called me to help her get the deer out of a deep gully, and up a steep bank to take it to be treated. Unfortunately, the deer was too badly wounded and died on the way.

After having been diagnosed with cancer, she went through surgery and chemotherapy, saying it was "no big deal." The support and encouragement received from survivors, Maxine Galloway, Virginia Moorefield and others was appreciated. But more surgery followed and she did not get better.

When she could no longer take food or medicine orally, she remained in her home preparing her own feedings and medicines which she took through a tube, still believing she could be well again. When she realized she could not, she considered what she wanted to do with her possessions, made notes concerning their disposition, then called her attorney. She established a Charitable Trust naming friends to seek out and select charitable organizations to receive gifts from her estate. Throughout her illness, she took everything in stride and was never self-pitying. Although friends visited her each day to help out, it was only during the last two weeks of her life that she accepted regular nursing care.

Barbara lived on her farm four years. She was only 47 years old when she died June 2, 1992. Survivors are a brother, Ralph Hiskey, Jr., two nieces and a nephew. Approximately $225,000 of her estate was designated to benefit charitable causes in Caswell and Person counties. Distribution of her bequests was completed by her designated Charitable Trust members just prior to Christmas, 1996.

Barbara liked useful, utilitarian things, therefore, her memorial is not a marble tombstone, but a stone bench designed by Linda Janke and built by Sam Winstead. It overlooks a peaceful, pastoral scene of pond, meadow, and trees where she once enjoyed

watching the beavers that "took up" on her farm. At her memorial service, conducted by Michael Rudder at that spot, a favorite of Barbara's, "A Gift to be Simple," was played by a flutist. Her brother chose to have the inscription, "Love is Simple Kindness." inscribed on the bench's plaque. Although a stranger when she came to North Carolina to live, Barbara Jean Hiskey became neighbor and valued friend.

"Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." (Hebrews 13:2.)

(Jeannine D. Whitlow)

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Note: The preceding was written at the request of Piedmont Community College to be presented at a memorial service held for Barbara Jean Hiskey at the Yanceyville campus on February, 26, 1997. PCC was a recipient of one of her bequests. JDW

The bulk of Barbara Hiskey's estate was willed to two nieces and a nephew. The rest of it, valued at about $225,000, was given to these organizations in Caswell and Person counties:

1. Person County Group Homes received her 126-acre farm, buildings thereon and some funds. (They assumed responsibility for balance due on farm mortgage.)

2. Funded four perpetual scholarships for Caswell County students at Piedmont Community College.

3. Funds for Hospice were donated to both Caswell and Person Counties.

4. Safe Haven in Person County and Family Violence Prevention in Caswell County both received funds.

5. Southern Elementary School PTA received funds for students who lacked money to buy warm coats, and shoes, to pay cost of admission to attend Civic Center special events, and to pay for transportation on class field trips.

6. Caswell County Band, received funds to buy percussion instruments.

7. Animal Protection Society, Caswell County received funds. Caswell County's old animal shelter had neither sufficient space nor equipment to care for the animals. There was no heat in winter, and no cooling system the rest of the year. The Animal Protection Society now has oversight of the animals and has built a new shelter. The County does not provide sufficient funds to run the shelter. The shortage has to be made up by donations, fund raisers, etc.

It has been said that a society is judged by the way it treats its weakest, most vulnerable members. Mistreatment of helpless animals also brings harsh judgment against a society.

COPY OF BARBARA JEAN HISKEY'S HANDWRITTEN NOTES OF INSTRUCTION

I want a Charitable Trust set up with the funds I have at Dean Witter. Jim Stein should remain the broker and should continue to handle the account as he has in the past, and as if I were alive, e.g., conservative, long-term outlook. Use the dividends, interest from investments, to help individuals in this area and some local groups: HOSPICE, CANCER GROUP IN PERSON COUNTY, HABITAT FOR HUMANITY (if they ever get started), CHRISTIAN HELP CENTER. Donations to these groups don't have to be "yearly" or regularly. Money for individuals could be for all sorts of things: MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS/LESSONS FOR KIDS, MONEY TO PAY FOR SITTER SO ADULT CAN GO TO WORK, CLOTHING, FOOD, EMERGENCY REPAIR OF A HOME, MONEY FOR HEAT, LIGHT, GAS MONEY TO GET SOMEONE TO WORK UNTIL THEY GET PAID, BIKE OR TOYS FOR A KID, MONEY TO GET A WELL, HELP WITH MEDICAL EXPENSES, GET THEIR DOGS AND CATS VACCINATED.

These people don't have to be the most destitute, just someone who could use a little help right then. It should be given with no strings, e.g., don't have to report back, be a good person forevermore or even say "Thank you." If the money is just to get someone over a bad time and they want to pay us back later, that is OK, but being able to pay back isn't a criteria for giving money. It is easier for some people to take something if it is a "loan." I guess we find these people by keeping our ears open, maybe QUIETLY telling a couple of Welfare Depts., County Health Nurses, School Personnel, and Local Churches of the existence of this fund.

HOW TO APPLY WITHOUT DRIVING TRUSTEES NUTS?

The *3* Trustees can make their decisions via phone, no big meeting is necessary unless they want. There should be quarterly meetings held at the Regulator Cafe or other good spot with all expenses paid by the Trust. (The Charitable Board Trustees were to serve at no cost to the estate, therefore the lawyers told us it would be illegal for us to meet and have a meal paid for from her estate although she wanted to do that. We met at my house and had cokes and potato chips, etc., at no cost to the estate. The lawyers did not think their exorbitant fees were illegal.)

NOTE: This was written when only three of the Charitable Trust Board Members had been selected: Barry and Diana Phillips and Jeannine Whitlow. Subsequent selections made were Therit T. Winstead, and Deborah Warner. Because two members were from the same family, we were advised by the lawyer to take off one member of the family and select someone else to serve in that position. Diana Phillips volunteered to be removed and was replaced by Dorothy Smith. Later, Dorothy Smith resigned and Diana Phillips asked to be re-instated, which was done. The above is only a part of Barbara's handwritten instructions and contains only the portion that concerns the Charitable Trust Board Members. jdw

MS. BARBARA JEAN HISKEY

LEASBURG--Ms. Barbara Jean Hiskey, 47, of Leasburg, N.C., died of cancer Tuesday, June 2, 1992, at her Person County farm on Jerry Dixon Road.

She was the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Hiskey, Sr., of Rocky River, Ohio, and is survived by a brother, Ralph Hiskey of Tucson, Arizona, a nephew, David Hiskey of Ridgewood, New Jersey, two nieces, Karen Hiskey of Seattle, Washington, and Mrs. Susan Bauer of Delaware, Ohio.

After graduating from Ohio State University, Ms. Hiskey worked as a psychiatric social worker and counselor to young people. In Springfield, Ohio, she was associated with the Oesterlan Residential Treatment Center for Behaviorally Disturbed Adolescents. She also worked at the Central Ohio Adolescent Center and served on the advisory board of Syntaxis, a residential center for disturbed adolescents in Columbus, Ohio.

Ms. Hiskey was an amateur tennis player and competed in numerous tournaments in her hometown of Cleveland, Ohio.

Instead of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Cancer Society, to Hospice of Person County or to a favorite charity.

Arrangements are by Triangle Cremation Services.

HISTORY OF THE LEASBURG METHODIST CHURCH

(PREPARED BY MISS BESSIE THOMPSON AND
READ AT THE HOMECOMING OF THIS CHURCH OCTOBER 31, 1948)

The Leasburg Church is an outgrowth of one of the earliest Methodist churches established in this part of America. Early in the 19th century a large brick house of worship was erected a mile and a half north of this village. The church was called Bethany. Often used for the famous camp meetings of that day, Bethany came to be known as the Old Camp Ground.

Old Camp Ground Church, (torn down many years ago was located on Solomon Lea Road about a mile and a half north of Hwy. 158 at Leasburg, JDW), was the central church of the Leasburg charge of Hillsboro District. The pastor lived in this village, where the present parsonage stands. Some of the pastors of those early days were J.P. Simpson, Alfred Norman, James Reed, and L.L. Shell. Dr. John Tillett, called "The Iron Duke of Methodism," was at one time Presiding Elder of this District and made his home here.

Many members of the Old Camp Ground Church lived in or near Leasburg. As years went by, the number of members in the village increased. For their convenience, Sunday School and worship services began to be held in the old Brick Academy, a Boys' School building which stood then on the site of what is now the Leasburg Cemetery; and a few years before the Civil War, about 1857, it was decided to erect a church building here, next door to the parsonage which the Methodists already owned. The Masonic Order of the community, at that time needing a hall, united with the Methodists, and the building in which we meet today was erected--a two-story structure. The second floor was used at first by the Masons, then later on, for various other community interests.

During the years following the Civil War, the Leasburg charge embraced nine churches. Pastors serving during these years were Joseph Wheeler, J.W. Jenkins, J.T. Gattis, H.H. Gibbons, R.H. Willis, L.L. Nash, and D.L. Earnhardt. During the pastorate of the last two mentioned, E.H. Davis and J.H. Shore served as junior preachers. About 1887, the circuit was divided. Prospect and Connally's were given to Burlington and Milton circuits, Concord and Lea's Chapel, to Person (County). Pastors serving from the division of the circuit until 1928--a period of about forty years--were G.W. Ivey, Dr. J.W. North, L.L. Massey, R.H. Broom, J.B. Thompson, Rufus Bradley, R.F. Taylor, N.C. Yearby, T.M. Grant, J.M. Ormond, C.R. Ross, J.A. Martin, R.E. Atkinson, S.F. Nicks, and E.R. Clegg. So many of these men served for four years that the charge came to be considered a "4-year charge."

It was in this period, during the pastorate of R.H. Broom, that the Durham District Conference met with this church. In preparing for the Conference, some renovation of the church building seemed desirable. It is true that this rectangular two-story building did have much the appearance of the old (Hancock & Paylor) Tobacco Factory which stood near it. So, at that time, (1896), the upper story was taken off, supporting pillars in the auditorium below were removed, a large vestibule was cut off at the entrance, and the building was given a fresh coat of paint inside and out. This 4- or 5-day Conference was a great and memorable occasion for this village.

In 1910, when J. M. Ormond was pastor here, the basilica type of church structure seemed to be outmoded, and so this building was remodeled to approach the mode of architecture prevailing at that time. This is the building we have to-day.

After 1928 there was, for one reason or another, an unfortunate succession of short pastorates. During this period, J.T. Stanford, J.W. Demmett, E.W. Hurst, W.C. Jones, D.C. Barcliff, and T.R. Jenkins came and went. Then D.D. Traynham came for four years, followed

MISS BESSIE THOMPSON

BORN OCTOBER 30, 1870 AND DIED NOVEMBER 7, 1955

Daughter of George Nicholas Thompson and wife, Bettie Johnston,
Granddaughter of Nicholas Thompson and wife, Lucretia VanHook,
At the home, Liberty Hall, built by her Grandfather, Nicholas,
on the site the first Caswell County Courthouse at
Leasburg, North Carolina

HANCOCK & PAYLOR TOBACCO FACTORY
NEXT TO LEASBURG COMMUNITY CEMETERY
COPY OF A SKETCH BY MRS. MARY STANFIELD RITTENBURY
LEASBURG, NORTH CAROLINA 27291

Built about 1857, it was remodeled several times, the final remodeling was done in 1910. A new brick structure replaced this church about 1953, and this old building was torn down about the same time in 1953.

LEASBURG METHODIST CHURCH Originally a two-story building built by the Methodists and Masons about 1857. It was remodeled in 1896 and again in 1910. This was the way it looked when it was replaced by a new church in 1953.

by F.A. Lupton for five years, W.G. Burgin for two years, and J.R. Reagan for one year. Then we come to the year, 1947, which brought the present valued pastor, Edward F. Smith.

Of the organizations of the church, the Sunday School is the oldest, having been in operation even before the church building was first erected. When it was organized, only the most progressive churches were having Sunday School. This organization was so active and helpful that even in its early history, as well as a number of times since, it was cited in Conference as a model for other rural churches. During the Civil War, the school was kept in progress by Miss Lillie Lea and Mrs. Kingsbury, wife of Dr. Kingsbury, who was pastor here then.

Throughout its more than ninety years of existence, the Sunday School has had only six Superintendents. It is believed that Benjamin Stanfield, grandfather of B.E. Stanfield of the North Carolina Conference, served first in this capacity. Through the generations since that day, the other Superintendents have been William Paylor, Major George N. Thompson, B.F. Stanfield, W.J. Pulliam, and Miss Bessie Thompson. There have been even fewer Secretaries. Among these, Riley Hambrick and George B. Connally each served about thirty years, the latter with almost perfect attendance. Edgar Connally has a similar record as Treasurer. Miss Anabel Thompson was secretary the last ten years of her life, and for the past ten years Bertwell Winstead has served in this capacity.

It is interesting to note that in addition to the Bible, Webster's Blue Back Speller was a regular text book in the Sunday school in the earliest days. Later on, the Catechism was used instead of the Speller. While enrollment was small, and little was being spent for literature--general church interests being less broad then than they are today--the penny collection was sufficient to take care of all expense of the School. For taking the collection, there was a slot in the Secretary's table, with a box fitted underneath; as the roll was called, each pupil went forward and dropped his penny into the slot.

A distinctive feature of the Sunday School during its early history was its library; due no doubt to the influence of the Lea family who headed the two widely known educational institutions in the village. In that day there were so few public libraries of any kind in rural areas that this one is worthy of note. A random volume still in the church, numbered 157 and dated 1868, gives some idea of the extent of the library at that time. As more books became available in private homes and public schools, these ceased to be in demand.

Until recent years, the Sunday School (enjoyed) an enviable reputation for its singing, also. In the earliest days, when there was no musical instrument in the church, singing schools conducted at intervals by itinerant singing masters, and frequent contests with other church groups, did much to bring music to a high level. There were families in the community who had naturally good voices and a fondness for music; so the singing for several generations was far above the average. In this connection, tribute is due the memory of Mr. Ed Lea, who for a long time was the gifted leader of singing here. (Note: Mr. Edward Lea was the son of Solomon and Sophia Ainger Lea. JDW) There has been no one to take the place made vacant by Mr. Ed's death.

Today the School is organized according to the approved standard of the Methodist church, and continues to be a very active part of the church work. While resident membership of the church is around 70, the enrollment of the Sunday School is 150, with more than 120 sometimes in attendance, a number of classes having to meet outside in automobiles. The literature costs about $160 a year. For all its interests in the year just ended, the total offering of the Sunday School was $431.65.

In close connection with the Sunday School for fifty years or more was the Bright Jewels Band, a missionary organization for children, which was formed years before the Woman's Missionary Society, and continued to function effectively until recent years, when the missionary education of Methodist children was reorganized. Practically all those who

have gone out from Leasburg to take an active part in church work in other localities were brought up in this Bright Jewels Band.

The Woman's Missionary Society was formed in 1896. This organization, now known as the Woman's Society of Christian Service, has operated continuously for more than fifty years.

The Youth Fellowship is a recent organization which we realize has tremendous possibilities for the future.

Throughout the years since the church was founded there have come to the parsonage many lovely Christian women. Tribute is gladly paid these pastors' wives, who have been a blessing and an inspiration to this community.

This history of the Leasburg Church would be incomplete without mention of the beloved *church bell,--and the colored sexton, Uncle Alfred Holeman, who rang the bell for so many years.-- "Uncle Alfred, weren't you a little early ringing the bell tonight?" Mrs. Hambrick asked one evening. "I ring it when I git ready," he replied: "you kin come when you git ready."--In spite of this typical incident, Uncle Alfred served well. He loved the Church, and when Communion rites were administered, he always came forward at the last invitation. The bell he rang had a singularly sweet and reverent tone. Its regular call to Sunday worship and mid-week prayer meeting has been greatly missed, for its influence was felt throughout the whole community.

So much has had to be omitted from this sketch of the Leasburg (Methodist) Church that only those who know can realize how completely, for generations, it has been the center of the social, as well as religious life of this village. It is hoped that this glimpse of its history may arouse appreciation of our heritage, and inspire us with greater zeal to serve the highest needs of our community and our world.

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NOTE:

Since Miss Bessie Thompson wrote this history, the old church building she referred to was replaced by a new, two-story brick building in 1953, and the old white frame one, torn down. A fellowship hall was added about 1966. When the Methodists joined with the United Brethren denomination, the name became the Leasburg **United** Methodist Church. The old "bell that rang so sweetly," was sold to Curtis Briggs when the old church was torn down. A sale was held after his death, and the bell was bought by Raymond Coleman who prizes it. Electronic chimes, donated by the George N. Thompson family, took the place of the bell in the "new" church. When they no longer worked properly and could not be repaired, there was silence until new electronic chimes were installed in 1997, purchased with a portion of a bequest to the church in the will of Jerry Warren Dixon, a former Leasburg native who died Sept. 16, 1996. Miss Bessie Thompson, writer of this history, was the daughter of George Nicholas Thompson and his first wife, Bettie Johnston who died in 1880. "Miss Bessie" was born Oct. 30, 1870 and died Nov. 7, 1955. She was a staunch church and community supporter all her life.

(Additional notes by Jeannine D. Whitlow, 8/27/1998.)

IN MEMORIAM

On the afternoon of Nov. 7, 1955, a long beautiful life was ended when the gentle spirit of Miss Bessie Thompson went home to the God she loved. In point of years, Miss Bessie was the oldest citizen of her native village, but until her last illness she was remarkably alert and active, because she was always young at heart, and experienced a rich, deep joy in living. A little note which she wrote on October 30, 1954, reads, "This is my 84th birthday. Were I not so crippled with arthritis, or whatever it is, I don't believe I should feel one bit older than I did years ago."

Miss Bessie was the daughter of George Nicholas Thompson and Bettie Johnston. She had lived and died at the old Nicholas Thompson home in Leasburg, N.C., a place she loved with all her heart. She was gifted with a natural beauty and charm, and a gracious loveliness which all her life attracted a wide circle of friends. Her home was outstanding for its easy hospitality and constant entertaining of guests far and near. The devotion and comradeship existing between her and her stepmother testified to the lovely Christian character of each.

While distinctly a homemaker of high order, Miss Bessie was a person of unusual public spirit, participating in every activity of her own community, and both informed and concerned about world movements. She was always an eager reader, choosing only the best. It was her custom to store her memory with the finest thought of poets and philosophers. She was an earnest student of the Bible all her life.

As a member of the Leasburg Methodist Church from her childhood, she joyfully gave her time and strength and means to the whole program of that church. The Sunday School and missionary societies were perhaps her dearest interests. Through these she worked with untiring zeal, looking with rare vision to the genuine development and spiritual growth of those within the circle of her influence. She was a teacher in the Sunday School for nearly seventy years, and Sunday School superintendent from 1934 till her health would no longer permit it, in 1951. She was church organist for many years. With true missionary zeal and great love for children, she led the Leasburg Bright Jewels Band from her girlhood until the Methodist Church some years ago did away with this missionary organization for children. The last surviving charter member of the Woman's Missionary Society of her church, she had throughout the years been an example of loving faithfulness as both officer and member.

Though the church was her chief field of labor, she was keenly interested in whatever else might uplift and improve general living conditions. Roads and schools, and farm and home conditions, especially in Caswell were of vital concern to her. She worked for these untiringly, especially the highway through the village of Leasburg. She was a charter member of the Community Improvement League, and later the Home Demonstration Club. Her influence the few years she taught in public school is gratefully remembered by her pupils.

If Miss Bessie had grown up in the present generation her lively intellect would no doubt have turned to the study of law, a subject she was intensely interested in through inheritance and association as well as because of her passion for truth and justice. She often expressed her desire to have known law, and to have been the kind of statesman her times so greatly needed.

Many of Miss Bessie's acquaintances in earlier years remember with pleasure her singing. She was blessed with an unusually sweet clear voice. For years she led the singing in church. In the home and in social gatherings she would delight her friends with choice old songs sung to her own guitar accompaniment. The loss of her voice was a blow to those who loved her singing. This misfortune befell her on the way to the Methodist Centenary

celebration at Columbus, Ohio, in 1919, when with characteristic unselfishmess she gave her berth on the train to a member of the party who had not been well. The draft she slept in that night brought on complete loss of voice, which continued for many almost hopeless months. Finally her speaking voice was restored, but she could never sing again as before.

Though Miss Bessie had naturally a wonderfully smooth disposition, not all of life was easy for her. Disappointments and sorrows which might have shattered a weaker spirit sent her closer to God, on her knees, so that (she) came through like gold refined in a furnace. She was increasingly conscious of God's goodness and love, increasingly submissive to His will and fitted for His service. No trace of fear, resentment or bitterness marred the peace and harmony of her spirit. Faith, hope, love, these were the very center of her being. During her last years she endured the great physical pain of arthritis and leukemia with such marvelous heroism (she) was an inspiration to all who knew her. Callers who came to cheer the shut-in went away themselves cheered and uplifted.

What was it about Miss Bessie that made people love her so and seek her presence from early girlhood through a ripe old age? Was it her human interest and appreciation? The pleasure she experienced in being with others? Her utter sincerity and naturalness, which at once put every one at ease in her presence? Was it her deep love of the beautiful, and her ability to see goodness and worth in all she met? Was it her tolerance of human weakness though never once letting down her own high standard of conduct and integrity? was it her love of fun and the gay wholesome hours others enjoyed in her company? Was it the very human quality of her religion, which made simple goodness winsome and desirable?

One tries in vain to fathom the secret of that charm which drew strangers irresistibly and held her friends with hoops of steel. Those who knew her best will always gratefully recognize the blessedness of association with her, and aspire to emulate her loveliness and worth. Such a life and character are not lost. They go on and on.

(Copied from an undated newspaper clipping. JDW).

Note: Miss Bessie Thompson's grandfather, Nicholas Thompson, bought the site on which the first Caswell County Courthouse stood in Leasburg. It was the first N.C. county formed after independence was declared. Nicholas Thompson built the home, which he named "Liberty Hall," on this site and this was where he and his wife, Lucretia VanHook Thompson, raised their family. After their deaths, their son, George Nicholas Thompson, lived there and raised three sets of children born of three wives. We have the Thompsons to thank for being the "keepers of Leasburg's history," and for teaching us an appreciation of our beginnings. Jeannine D. Whitlow

LEASBURG'S METHODIST CHURCHES

Leasburg was first settled in 1750 by James Lea. A kinsman, William Lea, settled about three miles east of Leasburg within a mile of the present site of Lea's Chapel United Methodist Church on Hwy 158. Built by the Leas about 1752, Lea's Chapel was first an Anglican Church but later became Methodist.

Bethany Methodist Church was built about 1836 a mile and a half north of Leasburg on Solomon Lea Road. It was probably the first Methodist Church built in this area. Her first trustees were George Jeffers, Lorenzo Lea, John Johnston, William Lea, George W. Lea, William Smith and Samuel Johnston. The church was a large, well-constructed brick building, which Miss Ella Thompson said was built of brick brought from England. Because it was often used for a great Methodist camp meeting in that early period, it became widely known as the Old Camp Ground Church. It was the central church of the Leasburg Circuit, then composed of ten churches. The pastor lived in the parsonage in the village of Leasburg.

Large gatherings of various kinds were held at Bethany, this big one-room building at Camp Ground. Among those events were commencement exercises for Solomon Lea's boarding school, Somerville Institute. People came from great distances in fine carriages, covered wagons, and on horseback to attend the graduations, (then called exhibitions), and to see the young ladies receive their diplomas. As years passed, for convenience and a shorter traveling distance, first Sunday School then worship services began to be held in the village at the Brick Academy located on the grounds of the present Leasburg Community Cemetery.

Leasburg, settled about 1750, was the first county seat of Caswell after it was cut from Orange in 1777. It remained county seat until Person was cut from Caswell, effective in 1792. By the time it was incorporated in 1788, William Lea and Nicholas Delone had laid off a town of square streets and sold one hundred acres divided into sixty-two lots on land they owned adjacent to the Courthouse. A post office was established in Leasburg by October 1, 1794. Solomon Lea, after serving as Greensboro College's first president from 1845-1847, established the Somerville Institute in 1848, which remained in operation until declining health caused him to close the school. He died in 1892. Mr. Lea's son-in-law, Benjamin Lee Arnold, husband of daughter, Addie, became the first president of Oregon State University.

It is surprising that over 100 years elapsed between the time of Leasburg's being settled and the time a decision was made to erect a church in the village itself. That decision was made a few years before the beginning of the Civil War, about 1857, when around the same time the first Masonic Lodge in Caswell County was chartered in Leasburg. The Masons united with the Methodists to put up a plain two-story structure. The second floor was used as a Masonic lodge, and the community held church worship services on the first floor.

The building was so plain it was sometimes mistaken for the Paylor and Hancock tobacco factory nearby. In 1896 the top story was removed and about 1910, it was again refurbished making it into a neat, white frame building with small steeples over its left and right entrance doors. It remained in continuous use until 1953 when the present building was erected on the same site. Rev. Edward F. Smith was the minister at that time. Since 1953 a choir loft has been added, the entrance and the steeple have been altered several times, a fellowship hall has been built onto the back, and a new brick parsonage constructed adjacent to and just east of the church.

Just prior to the Civil War, an offshoot of Bethany was established in the village. Before this time preaching services had been held in the Old Brick Academy. Some of the regular pastors of that day were the Reverends:

J. P. Simpson
Alfred Norman
James Reed
L. L. Shell.

Dr. John Tillett, called the "Iron Duke of Methodism," was at one time the Presiding Elder of this section and made his home here.

After the Civil War the Leasburg charge consisted of nine churches, ten counting Bethany. Regular services had been held there, but the congregation became so small these services were discontinued. The Bethany Church building was sold in 1886. In 1994 it is gone. No one remembers its exact location although scattered bricks have been found in the field diagonally across the road from the Campground Cemetery.

The preachers serving during these years were the Reverends:
Joseph Wheeler
J. W. Jenkins
J. T. Gattis
H. H. Gibbons
R. H. Willis
L. L. Nash
D. L. Earnhardt.

During the pastorate of L. L. Nash and D. L. Earnhardt, F. H. Davis and J. H. Shore served as junior preachers. The circuit was then divided. Prospect and Connally's were given to the Burlington and Milton circuits, and Concord and Lea's Chapel, to Roxboro.

The preachers serving the Leasburg charge since that division were:
Rev. G. W. Ivey
Dr. J. W. North
L. S. Massey
R. H. Broom
J. B. Thompson, 1897-1901
R. F. Taylor, 1901-1903
Rufus Bradley, 1903-
M. D. Hix, 1905-
N. C. Yearby, 1906-1909
J. C. Humble, 1909-1010
T. M. Grant,
J. M. Ormond, 1910-1911
C. R. Ross, 1911-1913
J. A. Martin, 1913-1917
R. E. Atkinson, 1917-1919
S. F. Nicks, 1919-1923
E. R. Clegg, 1923-1928
J. W. Dimmette,1928-1929
W.C. Jones, 1929-1930
C. D. Barclift, 1930-1931
J. T. Stanford, 1931-1932
T. R. Jenkins, 1932-1935
D. D. Traynham, 1935-1939
F. A. Lupton, 1939-1944
W. Grady Burgin, 1944-1946
J. R. Reagan, 1946-1947
Edward F. Smith, 1947-1952

Paul Wesley Aitken, 1952-1955
Rufus Stark, 1955-1958
Hugo H. Hodgins, 1958-1960
Eugene Woods, 1960-1961
Robert McBride, 1961-1962
Reginald W. Ponder, 1962-1966
Holland Hale, (who died of a heart attack while here) 1966-1967
W. Allen Wentz, Jr., 1967-1971 (Died Dec. 8, 1995 of a heart attack in Franklin, Va.)
Charles Hutchinson, 1971-1974
Earl G. Dulaney, 1974-1978
Randy Hillman, 1978-1980
Bryan Sexton, 1980-1982
Robert Sadler, 1982-1985
Tony Collier, 1985-1988
Stephen H. Kirby, 1988-1992
David Fisher, 1992-1996.
Van Spivey, 1996-1999
Sherrie James, 1999-

The church has long been noted for its early and excellent Sunday School, which has been in constant operation for well over a century. In the early years, in addition to the Bible, Webster's Blue Back Speller was taught. During a period of ninety years it had only six superintendents. One of the first superintendents was Mr. Buck Paylor who served until 1881 when he moved with his family to Greensboro, N.C. Mr. George N. Thompson then became superintendent and held the position until his death in 1891. At that time Mr. Benjamin F. Stanfield, who had served as assistant, was made superintendent. He was succeeded by Mr. W. J. Pulliam. The Sunday School library was notable and at one time numbered over 160 volumes.

Early organizations in Leasburg's Methodist Church, which were among the first to be established in the Conference, were the Bright Jewel Band, long active but no longer an organization, and the Woman's Missionary Society, still active and now called the United Methodist Women.

Some stories about the church at Leasburg have come down over the years. One of these concerned "Uncle" Alfred Holeman, an elderly black sexton who rang the bell on a regular schedule for many, many years. On one occasion he seemed to ring it early and when questioned about it, replied: "I ring it when I git ready; you kin come when you git ready."

Another story was told in connection with the Rev. L. L. Nash's ministry when he was the pastor at Leasburg. He held a meeting at Prospect and attendance at the first meeting was not as large as expected. On August 31, 1886, there was an earthquake centered in Charleston, South Carolina, which was felt in much of North Carolina. He told how the tin roof crackled so that he thought the parsonage was on fire. Bricks were toppled from chimneys in the village. People, he said, did some ridiculous things and he was probably the only person in the village relieved that it was only an earthquake. On the day following the earthquake, Rev. Nash reported, whereas his attendance at the meeting had been small and the parishioners, lukewarm the attendance increased greatly and the people were ready to do anything they could to assist with the revival.

(Sources: Histories by Miss Bessie and Miss Ella Graves Thompson, old newspaper articles, oral tradition, WHEN THE PAST REFUSED TO DIE, A HISTORY OF CASWELL COUNTY 1777-1977, Caswell County Courthouse records, and personal knowledge. Jeannine D. Whitlow)

EXCERPTS FROM RECOLLECTIONS AND OBSERVATIONS THE LEASBURG CIRCUIT, CHAPTER IV (1884-1887)

By

REV. L. L. NASH

Our conference convened in Statesville in December, 1883. Bishop Keener presided again. I was anxious to get to a place where I could place my daughter in school. She had been going to a primary school, and was about fourteen years of age. She was not prepared for college, and was rather too young to send away from home. There was a good school at Franklinton; and Brother Adams wanted me to go there. But at Conference he came to me and said: "I cannot tell you anything now; for we are all up in the air, and you must not be surprised at anything." I told him that I knew he would do the best he could for me and the church, and I would be contented with whatever was done.

I was sent to the Leasburg Circuit in Caswell and Person Counties. Rev. Solomon Lea had a good school there to which I sent my daughter, and where she was prepared for college. Brother Lea, and his daughter, Miss Willie, were very fine teachers. Brother Lea was the first President of Greensboro Female College; now Greensboro College for Women. He was a local preacher, and did great good in his day. He lived to be nearly one hundred years old.

The Leasburg Circuit was divided just before I went to it. Rev. H. H. Gibbons was my predecessor; and under his ministry several appointments were taken off, and a new circuit was formed. But the people were not satisfied with the division and those appointments were put back the second year I was on the charge. My first year there were six churches; the second year there were ten appointments; and they all required Sabbath preaching.

The first year I was there we had a number of good revivals. But the interest grew, and the second year we had several sweeping revivals. We had a meeting at Lea's Chapel in which nearly everybody in the community was converted. Several of the leading men in the community came into the church. Among them were Col. C. S. Winstead and A. J. Hester, Esq. Mr. Hester belonged to a Primitive Baptist family. His mother, a lady over seventy years old, had been reared in that faith, was converted and joined the church.

When the meeting at Lea's Chapel began, I preached very plainly against sin of every kind; especially against drinking and drunkeness. I did not know that any of the members of my charge were guilty of the things I condemned. I saw, however, that several members were not as cordial as they had been in greeting me. I learned afterwards that one of my stewards had condemned me in rather strong terms during a recess. We had two services, and dinner on the ground between the services. Mr. Hester was standing by, and said: "Gentlemen, I am not a Methodist, but if the Bible is true, your preacher is preaching the truth; and if I were a Methodist I would hold up his hands." This had a powerful effect. That afternoon, Mr. Hester went to the altar and was converted. That gave the meeting a wonderful impetus. A few days afterwards we had an experience meeting, and that steward told the facts above stated, and said he had not been living right, but sought and found pardon. He further stated that he had been thinking for some time that he would resign, as he was tired of being bothered with the work of a steward; but he added, "I have made up my mind to be a faithful steward, and if I get out, you will have to put me out."

The church took on new life, and has been a strong and growing church ever since. A number of those who were converted at that meeting have crossed over the river; but their children have taken their places, and are living to the glory of God. A. J. Hester is among the number who went to his heavenly home a year or two since. He was one of the leading men of Person County, respected and loved by all who knew him. As I think of those years of labor and toil for the salvation of men, I wonder that God blessed me so much, as unworthy as I have always been of His blessings and His mercy and grace.

We had another remarkable revival at Concord Church in Person County. The young people of that community were very much inclined to worldliness; and the Christmas holidays were given up to balls, and other kinds of worldliness. I decided to hold a protracted meeting at Concord during Christmas week. I preached on Sunday and announced services through the week. The congregation was filled with consternation. even the old people thought it an unheard of thing, and were very frank to say that they did not think we could have a revival at Christmas. I asked them, Why not? I told them I thought it a very appropriate time, as it was the time of celebrating the birth of Christ; and it seemed there could be no more appropriate time for a revival. I exhorted all to come, and see what the Lord would do for us. They came, and the revival started at once. The church was greatly blessed, and a great many were converted, and joined the church. After the meeting closed, everybody said it was the best Christmas they had ever had. They all with one voice said we want a revival every Christmas. But I never held another meeting at Christmas at Concord.

I remember one notable conversion in that meeting. It was that of a doctor. He had been a fine physician, but had fallen under the influence of whiskey, and had become a drunkard, and had lost his practice. His wife was a good woman, and he had become reduced in circumstances so that he was living with his family in a tenant house on his wife's mother's farm. he was powerfully converted. I visited him in his humble home, and spent the night with him and his family. When I drove up, his little daughter came out to meet me, clapping her hands, and saying "Uncle Nash, we are all so happy. Papa does not drink any more, and we have family prayers now." I went in and found all the family happy. The doctor had resumed his practice; and all the people showed a disposition to help him on. He lived a consistent Christian life for something over a year, and did a fine practice. But he went to Roxboro one day and some emissary of the devil prevailed on him to take a glass of beer. The doctor refused at first, and told his tempter, "You know I dare not touch liquor of any kind." But the enemy in the disguise of a friend, said to him: "We all know you are a converted man, and a glass of beer will not hurt you." He took the glass of beer, and then another and drank whiskey, and got drunk. He became a raving maniac, and never had another lucid moment. When I heard that he was confined in the jail at Roxboro, I made application and got him into the asylum in Morganton, where he died shortly afterward. That was the saddest case I ever knew.

My circuit embraced the town of Milton; but I had no church in Milton. I preached in the Presbyterian Church once a month. The stated supply of that church was Mr. T. U. Faucette. We became great friends, and I enjoyed our association very much. I held a revival in the Presbyterialn Church in which there was a number of conversions. I never said a word to any of the converts about joining my church. I had a church about two miles from town called Connelley's. Three young men who were converted joined the church in the country. One said to one of those young men: "Charlie, if I were you I would not join that little church out there in the country; if you do you won't get into society." Charlie said, "I had not thought of that. I am trying to get to heaven." That got out, and was much laughed about; and every one thought Charlie had the right conception of church membership.

I was preaching in the Presbyterian Church one night and incidentally alluded to dancing. The belle of the town who was a leader in the dances was there with her escort. She sprung up, and left the church in a hurry. Her escort followed her, and there was a commotion in the congregation. I paused, and remarked: "I am preaching in this church by courtesy: I do not know that I will ever preach here again; but I must preach the gospel as I understand it. If there are others who disapprove of what I say, they are at liberty to leave. I will wait until all who desire to leave will go." No one else left. I was told the next morning that a prominent merchant in town said I ought to be caned. I told my informer to go and tell that gentleman where he could find me, and if he wanted to cane me he could come and do it. My friend went immediately and delivered the message. My would be chastiser got frightened, and said: "You ought not to have told that preacher what I said; for I believe from his looks, if I were to attempt to cane him, he would not leave a grease spot of me."

Suffice it to say that man became a good friend of mine, and I spent many pleasant hours in his splendid home.

The young lady sent me a note, apologizing for leaving the church, and saying that she had a headache. But her escort wrote me a very threatening letter; and I informed him where he could find me; but I never heard anything further from him. Instead of the incident shutting me out of the church, I was invited to have a regular appointment there, and the next time I preached there the house was packed.

I do not believe in abuse in the pulpit, nor do I believe in coarseness or slang. I think, and have always thought, that preachers should speak as the oracles of God. If people become offended at the gospel stated in a dignified manner, I think that the preacher should be courageous enough to stand by the truth, and not apologize for uttering it. This course, backed by a loving spirit will always win. I have been threatened for attacking sin in this way, but these threats have never amounted to anything.

During my fourth year on the Leasburg Circuit, I had an assistant. He was in his first year in the ministry. He was somewhat timid, and inclined to seasons of doubt, when he would say he did not have religion, and it was all I could do to keep him from giving up his work and going home. During a revival he came to me and said: "I haven't got any religion, and I want to go to the altar, and seek religion." I told him I did not think that was the thing for him to do, that I had no doubt that he already had religion, and if he had any doubt about it, to take his doubts to the Lord. He said he knew better than I did how he felt. I told him that might be so. But I knew it was unnecessary for him to go to the mourners' bench at the church to get a blessing: that he was my assistant, and while he could tell me anything, I did not want him to be telling the people he had no religion.

That night we went home to Leasburg, (he boarded with me), and I insisted on his holding prayer meeting, which he did. After the prayer meeting, Rev. Solomon Lea and his daughter, Miss Willie, went with us to the parsonage and in the course of conversation, my young preacher said: "I don't know anything about regeneration or sanctification either." I said to him, "You had better go to the Lord and find out something on these subjects." He left us rather abruptly, and went to his room. Brother Lea said, "What is the matter with the young man: I thought him one of the best young men I ever saw." I replied: "You are right. He is an excellent young man, but he gets melancholy sometimes and he is in one of his melancholy moods tonight." Brother Lea and his daughter left pretty soon, and I went to bed and soon fell asleep. Soon after retiring, my wife waked me, saying there is something the matter upstairs. I went up and found the young preacher rolling on the floor in an agony of prayer. I said to him: "What is the matter?" He answered: "I don't know." He continued to cry, "O, Lord have mercy on me." I said to him: "Well, you have gone to the right one for help; if I had known what the trouble was, I would not have disturbed you." I went back to bed. In a few moments, I heard him come down and leave the house. He went out in the church lot that joined the parsonage lot. I do not know how long he remained out there; but I learned from him next morning that he got a great blessing. I never heard him complain afterwards that he did not have religion. He was a new man from that night.

My experience and observation teach me that there is nothing that will give satisfaction in all conditions of life, but the comfort of the Holy Spirit. Without a divine assurance of personal salvation, there will come times of doubt, when life will be a burden, and the satisfactory performance of religious duties will be impossible. But the clearest evidence of salvation will not abide with us, unless we are careful to abstain from wrong doing, and are earnest in our efforts to serve and please God.

At the time I was on the Leasburg Circuit, from 1884 to 1887 inclusive, that section was in a very prosperous condition. The principal market crop was tobacco; and the farmers were receiving fine prices. The organization of the American Tobacco Company brought the price to the farmer down, and ran the small manufacturers out of business. I am not

stating these facts with a view of condemning those who compose the tobacco trust; for after all, it may be in the end good for the farmer, that his attention was turned to something else. It is my opinion, and I was reared on a tobacco farm, that tobacco culture will ultimately impoverish a country: and I do not say this from any fanatical objection to the tobacco habit; while I admit it is a bad habit; yet the best men I ever knew were tobacco users. But tobacco culture continued for a series of years, impoverishes the soil and burns up the wood for it takes a large quantity of wood to cure the weed, and leaves the farm in a poor condition.

I knew one farmer, and he was one of my stewards, who sold one thousand dollars worth of tobacco off of one acre. With such fine prices for the weed, Caswell and Person counties, at that time were getting rich; and the church was increasing in liberality and spiritual life. That was the last circuit I ever traveled, and I left it in better financial condition than I have ever been since. While I was on that circuit, I kept a good pair of horses, and had a man servant who made a crop and raised feed for my stock, and made more than enough from a tobacco crop to pay his hire and board.

I lived largely off of my farm, and could keep the most of my salary. But I never lost an hour from my ministerial duties by having a little farming interest. I did this for a number of years, and did not find that it detracted from my usefulness as a preacher, or gave the people any excuse for not paying for my support.

My experience is that the man who serves the people wisely and well, will always receive support from them. We sometimes hear it said: "Brother A. is a good preacher but a poor pastor," or "Brother B. is a good pastor, but a poor preacher." The idea is getting into the minds of many that you cannot in the same preacher find both preacher and pastor. I think that the idea is an erroneous one. Visiting in the proper way and spirit from house to house is the best preparation for preaching outside of a prayerful study of the word of God. Pastoral visiting is not simply social visiting, making a great many calls and talking about common place things. To be able to do pastoral visiting as it should be done is one of the finest of fine arts. I do not claim that I was ever perfect in this very important work; but will give some idea of the plan I followed.

Perhaps it may be helpful to some young preacher who may be earnestly trying to do this important and difficult work well. I made it a rule when I went to a new charge, to visit every family as soon as I could. I kept a little book, and when I went to a home I would inquire the name of every member of the family and write them down. I would write the names of all the children in my little visiting book; and when I went again, I would familiarize myself with all the names, so I could call all the children by name. I soon found that children liked that. They do not like to be called "bud" and "sissy"; and in this way I could get hold of the children, and get them to like me; and when I had got hold of the children, I always found that I had the parents too. It took me sometime to learn this simple lesson; and if some one had suggested it to me, it would have been very helpful at the beginning of my ministry. I made it a rule, whenever convenient to have family prayer; but I always had an eye to the fitness of things. I made it a rule not to stay too long at any place; and to be careful not to show partiality to any particular family. I gave more attention to the poor members of my charge, for the poor, as a rule, are more sensitive, and need more careful handling than those who are well to do.

There is one mistake I made that I would warn young preachers against. I too frequently took young lady members of my charge out visiting with me. I did this innocently, and no harm ever came of it; but there are those who are ready to think evil; and I found after a while, that it mattered not how pure my intentions, it would be better to avoid much association with the women of my flock. This is a very delicate subject; but one to which attention should be called. I think I eventually swung to the opposite extreme, and for several years I have had very few lady associates, in so much that a friend of mine told

me that a lady told him, she thought I was a proud man and not very social. I know her estimate is wrong, for I am not conscious of pride; and I know I am of a social disposition.

My object in writing these recollections is to do good; and I hope the kind reader will pardon these personal allusions.

On the 31st of August, 1886, there was an earthquake that damaged the city of Charleston, South Carolina, greatly and shook the Atlantic Seaboard for many miles. I was holding a revival meeting at a church on my charge, called Prospect. It was about sixteen miles from Leasburg, but I happened to come home that night. The shock was severe enough to shake bricks off of some of the chimneys in Leasburg. The community was very much frightened and some ridiculous things were done. We were living in a new parsonage that was covered with tin; and when the quake struck us, that tin roof produced such a crackling noise that I thought the house was on fire; and I suppose I was the only person in the village who was relieved to find it was an earthquake.

The next day I went back to the meeting, and found a much larger congregation than had been in attendance. There were some members of the church that would not attend the meeting because they wanted it held at another time. These were all there, and ready to do anything to help the revival on. The revival received a great impetus from the earthquake. In an experience meeting a day or two after, one brother arose and said with a solemn emphasis: "Brethren, I am convinced that there is power somewhere; for it takes power to shake this earth, and we all felt it this week." I could not help being amused at the thought that the brother had just become satisfied that there was "power somewhere." From the effect of that earthquake on my congregation at Prospect, and the great help it gave me in my revival work, I could enter into a better conception of the effect the earthquake at Phillippi had when Paul and Silas were imprisoned there, and when the jailor was converted.

The last year I was on the Leasburg Circuit, 1887, was a year of general revivals. The church, all over the circuit was in a blaze of revival fire. While on this charge I had two Presiding Elders. When I first went there, Dr. N. H. D. Wilson was Presiding Elder. When his time was out Rev. W. S. Black, D.D., came. Both of these brethren were very helpful to me, and between them and me, there existed the warmest affection. It was always a pleasure to meet them at Hillsboro, twenty-six miles away from Leasburg, and take them to my work. When there exists brotherly love between the preacher and the Presiding Elder the association is always pleasant and helpful to both; and when there is mutual confidence everything works well. The office of Presiding Elder, in the economy of Episcopal Methodism, is a necessary office; but when men get into this office who are misfits, great harm comes to the church and to the ministry. I state a fact without reference to any particular case. It is my purpose to put down such facts as will be helpful to those who consider them, and with no unpleasant memories.

When I left the Leasburg Circuit there were seven hundred and forty members on the register of the circuit, and I knew every one by sight and name; and I knew all the children on my charge. The pastoral instruction of the children is a very necessary and a very difficult work.

Many of the good people who were members of the church on dear old Leasburg Circuit when I left it, have gone to their eternal home. I hope to meet these dear friends in heaven. That country has changed very much since I was there. A great many of the people have moved to the towns and the farming interest has gone backward. Much of the colored labor has left the country for the towns, as the towns have prospered at the expense of the country. Danville, Virginia, and Durham, North Carolina, have profited greatly by the migration from this section; and Roxboro, on the line of the railroad from Durham to Lynchburg has shared in the migration from the country.

1961

1961

Retires After Lengthy Mail Service

John W. Stephens of Leasburg, retired as rural mail carrier at Leasburg after 44 years and 8 months of service. During this period he served under 4 postmasters and used 25 automobiles in traveling 536,000 miles. He became a carrier in January, 1917, and used a horse and buggy for 5 years. His first route was 16 miles long and was served three times a week. The service became daily in 1926. Today the route is a fraction over 61 miles long. Mr. Stephens said that he enjoyed every day of his service, loved his work, and served the "best people in the world". His faithful service is indicated by the fact that he missed carrying the Christmas mail only twice during his nearly 45 years of service.

A HISTORY OF LEASBURG POST OFFICE

With the passing of time Federal records have been lost, making it necessary to depend upon existing records of account submitted by deputy postmasters and letters written to them or about them to fix the approximate date a post office was established. Deputy postmasters were instructed to send financial records of their post offices to the General Post Office at the end of each three-month period. For various reasons many deputy postmasters did not, or could not, submit accounts on time. Suit could be brought against them by the Postmaster General at his discretion. Such delinquent accounts revealed Caswell Old Courthouse, now Leasburg, as one of twelve post offices in North Carolina whose accounts were delinquent. It can be assumed, although not specifically stated, that correspondence concerning this delinquency was the earliest surviving record to fix the approximate date of the establishment of Caswell Old Courthouse Post Office at Leasburg, with Laurence Lea its first deputy postmaster. The delinquency was evidently explained satisfactorily and Leasburg's post office continued to operate. In 1794 it was one of 51 post offices in North Carolina and 450 in the country as a whole. Now, in 1994, there are about 40,000 post offices in the United States.

In 1750 Leasburg's first settlers were the James and William Lea families. They were English and came to the area by way of Virginia. When Caswell County was formed from Orange County in 1777, Leasburg became Caswell's first county seat. In 1792 Caswell County was divided in half to form Person County. Then, Yanceyville became the county seat of Caswell, and Roxboro, county seat of Person. This is probably why Leasburg's post office was called Caswell Old Courthouse in 1794.

At the session of the General Assembly convened in Fayetteville, November 3, 1788, "An act to establish the Town already laid off at the Court House in Caswell County" says that "Whereas 100 acres of land, adjacent to and whereon Caswell Court House now stands, has been laid off into a town of square streets and sixty-two lots, by Nicholas Delone and William Lea, who were the proprietors of the aforesaid one hundred acres of land," etc., etc. The Assembly ratified this on Dec. 6, 1788. When by this act, the settlement was legally chartered and named Leasburg, a Board of Trustees, William Lea, Gabriel Lea, Nicholas Delone, Thomas Neely, Lloyd VanHook, Samuel Johnston, and John McFarlin were appointed to design, build, and develop the town.

Leasburg lost the courthouse, the charter of incorporation lapsed, and generations later Miss Wilhelmina Lea, thinking the town plan was no longer important, destroyed it. Too late, she realized the historic value of the old document. But the post office remained.

When Vincent Lea became Leasburg's second postmaster April 13, 1809, the post office was called "Leasburgh." On April 25, 1893, the "h" was dropped and it became "Leasburg."

The actual length of time postmasters served cannot be determined by the dates between their appointments and the appointments of their successors. Some postmasters began service before being officially appointed, and following their retirement, replacement, or resignation, another person usually served a length of time before a subsequent postmaster appointment became official. The dates indicate when official appointments were made, not the length of service for each postmaster.

The following is a list of Leasburg's postmasters, Officers-in-charge, their appointment dates from October 1, 1794, the approximate date of establishment of Caswell Old Courthouse Post Office at Leasburg, North Carolina:

Laurence Lea, Oct. l, 1794
Vincent Lea, April 12, 1809
Gabriel B. Lea, Feb. 9, 1815
John C. VanHook, Nov. 3, 1818
Joseph S. Thompson, April 4, 1837
Addison Lea, Oct. 2, 1849
William Lea, Feb. 14, 1851
John A. Harrison, Jan. 28, 1856
William Paylor, Jr., Jan 10, 1859
Jefferson Whitfield, Jan. 14, 1859
Mrs. Susan B. Paylor, Sept. 4, 1865
Benjamin F. Stanfield, Feb. 14, 1870
William Paylor, Aug. 6, 1873
William R. Hambrick, Jan. 30 1882
Josephine Hambrick, (later married to Benjamin E. Stanfield), April 25, 1893
Walter L. Thomas, July 20, 1900
Samuel P. Newman, Sept. 28, 1912
Mattie L. Pulliam, Aug. 10, 1927
Jerry Warren Dixon, Jr., assumed charge as Acting Postmaster April 1, 1940 until
Mattie Link Pulliam resumed charge as Postmaster Sept. l, 1945
Mrs. Mary Stanfield Rittenbury, Acting Postmaster from May 31, 1959, was appointed Postmaster Aug. 31, 1960
Mrs. Helen Carr Knight, (later married William Fox), Acting Postmaster Sept. 16, 1965 until
Jeannine D. Whitlow (Appointed as Winstead, returned to maiden name, Whitlow, in 1979) became Acting Postmaster Sept. 2, 1966, and was appointed Postmaster May 8, 1967, retiring Oct. 2, 1992
***Marylene McCain, Officer-in-Charge from Oct. 2, 1992 until**
Mrs. Deborah Cox Fox, Officer-in-Charge, March 17, 1993, appointed and served as Postmaster March 24, 1993 to August 16, 1995.
Barbara Duncan Davis, Officer-in-Charge August 16, 1995-April,1996.
***Robert Harbison, Appointed Postmaster, April 27, 1996.**

* Marylene McCain, was the first African-American to be appointed Officer-in-Charge at the Leasburg, N.C. Post Office.

* Robert Harbison was the first African-American to be appointed Postmaster at the Leasburg Post Office.

Some of the known buildings Leasburg's post office occupied, all located on Hwy 158, are: William R. Hambrick's home adjoining the Leasburg Community Cemetery driveway, W. J. Pulliam's Store, now a residence owned by the Curtis Martin family, W. J. Pulliam's small office building which adjoined his home (home burned about 1970, replaced by a new house), owned by the George Henderson, Jr., family, and the Walter Lea Thomas Store, later owned and operated by S. P. Newman, which was torn down in the 1940s. The present brick post office building was completed in 1966 and occupancy taken, May lst of that year.

When the post office was located in the Walter Lea Thomas Store, in the absence of Mr. Thomas, Solomon Lea's son, Ed, tended store and post office. Someone said it was useless to call for mail when Ed Lea was there if he had just received his NEW YORK WORLD TRI-WEEKLY newspaper. Without looking up from his newspaper, he always said, "You don't have any." In those days there were no lock boxes for customers to get their own mail and there were so few postal customers that whoever was 'tending post office, whether engrossed in a newspaper or not, could remember who had mail and who didn't.

The first rural free delivery experimental routes were begun in West Virginia in 1896, but it was not until 1902 this service was permanently instituted. Edwin Featherston was an early horse-and-buggy carrier at Leasburg. John W. Stephens, Sr., who replaced him in 1917, at first used the same mode of transportation and delivered mail only three times a week. He served for 44 years, 8 months, retiring in 1961. Voss Stephens, John's brother, was his substitute. After John W. Stephens, Sr.'s retirement, Charlie Wayne Coleman was Substitute Carrier until Charles N. Briggs was appointed Rural Carrier Jan. 5, 1963. Melvin E. Butler was Substitute Carrier from 1963 until he resigned due to health reasons in 1991. Ronnie Dunkley, Rural Carrier Relief for the Semora Post Office, was a substitute carrier for Leasburg during the latter part of Butler's service and also for part of Rickie M. Briggs' service following his selection as Rural Carrier Relief in 1992. Alex Denny was a Star Route Carrier for a while. His transportation was horse-and-buggy. He picked up the mail at the Semora railroad depot and brought it to Leasburg. Later Mr. Christenbury was the Star Route Carrier and transported the mail to Leasburg from Yanceyville. Next, Marvin Pleasant was Star Route Carrier until lines of travel for star routes changed about 1968 when Lacy Daniel, Sr., obtained the Star Route contract which was still in effect in 1997.

Some of the clerks employed by the Leasburg Post Office in the last 45 years are: Mrs. Nancy Newman Stephens, (wife of John W. Stephens, Sr., former Rural Carrier, both deceased), Mrs. Wilma Coward Newman, (wife of William J. Newman, both deceased), Mrs. Helen Carr Knight Fox, (wife of Ray Knight, and later wife of William Fox, all deceased), Mrs. Sally Harris Winstead, deceased, (wife of Ernest B. Winstead), Mary Arnold Stephens, a descendant of first postmaster, Laurence Lea, Mrs. Shirley Lassiter Winstead, appointed clerk, 1986, Yanceyville, and Mrs. Barbara Duncan Davis, (wife of Oakley Davis), who has continued as postmaster relief clerk since August, 1986. Mrs. Davis has also filled in as Relief Clerk at Cedar Grove, Milton, Prospect Hill, Yanceyville, Blanch, and Roxboro.

Arthur Hecht, Archivist with the National Archives, Washington, D. C., and chairman of the Postal Information Committee of the American Philatelic Association, had worked with postal records since 1948, when he published POSTAL HISTORY OF NORTH CAROLINA 1789-1795 in the April, 1958 issue of THE NORTH CAROLINA HISTORICAL REVIEW. Some of the information from that article has been used in this history.

(Sources: Written Archives records, microfilm reels of Postmaster Appointments 1789-1832, oral tradition, personal knowledge, and Arthur Hecht's POSTAL HISTORY OF N. C. 1789-1795.)

LEASBURG POST OFFICE BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

Leasburg, first settled in 1750, first Caswell County seat when Person was still part of Caswell, (1777-1792), first incorporated town in Caswell County (1788), observed another first on Sunday, October 2, with a celebration marking the 200th anniversary of the first post office established in Caswell County.

Earliest available records show a post office called Caswell Old Courthouse was established at Leasburg by October 1, 1794. In 1809 it was called Leasburgh and in 1893, Leasburg. This historic community observed its 200th year of continuous postal service with a birthday celebration, complete with birthday cake made by Karen Yeatts and decorated with the design on the special cachet envelope issued for the occasion.

Mrs. Yolanda Dixon sang the National Anthem while members of the VFW and American Legion raised the flag. The Alamance Battleground Militia Drill Team fired musket volleys after the flag raising.

Mrs. Deborah C. Fox, Postmaster, welcomed those in attendance. The Rev. David Fisher gave the invocation. Greensboro Post Office supervisory personnel, Gene Hairston and John Bledsoe, were introduced and made brief comments. Mrs. Fox presented a million-mile award to Charles Briggs, Rural Carrier for 31 years, and introduced other local postal employees, Mrs. Barbara Davis, Postmaster Relief Clerk and Rickie Briggs, Rural Carrier Associate. Letters of appreciation were presented to Stephen "Creekwalker" Pleasant, the artist who designed the special cancellation and cachet envelope, and to former postmaster, Jeannine Whitlow, who also received a painting of the home of James Lea, Leasburg's first settler.

George B. Daniel, North Carolina Senator of the twenty-first Senatorial District, was in attendance and proclaimed October 2, 1994, as Leasburg Post Office Bicentennial Day.

The Homesteaders 4-H Club painted a mural depicting Leasburg's historic buildings, interspersed with farm animals commonly seen in early days. An Amish conveyance, not a usual sight in Leasburg, was included in honor of the Amish families who chose recently to make their homes in Caswell County.

There were clowns, face painting, organized games for children, hayrides, music by string bands of Sonny Duncan and Mack Lea, performances by choirs from the churches of St. James, Beulah, and Leasburg United Methodist. Demonstrations of clogging and flat-foot dancing by the Richard Duncan family and square dancing by the Loch Lily Square Dancers made feet itch to dance. Unable to resist, a little four-year old boy, left the crowd and joined the groups

of dancers. Ernest Winstead, 86, delighted the audience with tunes played on the harmonica.

Demonstrations of old time crafts included the making of lye soap, candles, baskets, corn shuck dolls, apple cider, chair bottoming, blacksmithing and quilting.

The Oakley Davis family exhibited old and new tobacco farming tools, demonstrated the tying of tobacco in bundles as it used to be prepared for market in years gone by, had photos of tobacco farming operations from preparation of plantbeds to marketing, displayed old and new tobacco warehouse bills of sale, and tobacco "roses" made by Mrs. Molly Tuck.

Sue Clayton's doll exhibit included not only beautiful traditional dolls but some rare, well-preserved paper dolls over 100 years old.

Father John Petri showed a sampling of his wood turning, which included bowls and vases, as well as framed examples of his beautiful photography.

The Ruritan Club used the mobile post office to handle sales of cachet envelopes and collectors' parchment sheets which gave a brief history of Leasburg Post Office, as well as names and appointment dates of 21 postmasters during the past 200 years.

Cachet envelopes, $1.25 and parchment sheets, $1.00 will be available through the month of October. Contact Mrs. Deborah Fox, Postmaster, P. O. Box 9998, Leasburg, NC 27291-9998 or call 910-599-8520.

Old postal equipment from the Greensboro Postal Museum could be seen as well as a steel postmarking stamp and letter scales, relics from the local post office. Privately owned collections of philatelic issues of U. S. postage stamps, foreign stamps, and duck hunting stamps were also on view.

Maps with photos and descriptions indicating Leasburg's historic buildings were available to those who wished to make walking tours. A history written by Miss Ella Thompson, granddaughter of Nicholas Thompson who bought the old Caswell County Courthouse site and built his home there, gave details of Leasburg's earliest days when the Leas first came to the area, information about its schools, churches, famous former inhabitants and its ordinary citizens up to 1960. Will S. Dixon's history gave a picture of Leasburg in the early 1900s. His former home adjoined the old Courthouse site. These items are still available by calling 336-599-1939.

Stephen Pleasant, designer of the special Bicentennial cancellation as well as the cachet envelope, prefers to be called "Creekwalker," the name he signs on his

art. "Creekwalker" displayed and had for sale some paintings which included Leasburg's historic homes and buildings. This artist prepared a limited edition of tee shirts featuring the special cancellation design.

Leasburg was made aware of the talent of Cathy Sharpe, its own artist in residence, who displayed poignant paintings. These included a photograph-like painting of a country store. Another, in colorful primitive-style art, was of a family reunion.

Flat River Antique Tractor Club's exhibition of about 20 tractors was a popular attraction and included a 1918 model. Mr. Ned Stebbins hauled two of his own antique tractors from South Boston, Virginia, to add to the display.

The 20-some beautifully restored, polished and shined cars from Roxboro's Antique Car Club were much admired and brought memories of the "good old days"--the "good old days" being when many of the admirers were young at the same time the cars were new. A 1959 red convertible Edsel classic car from Danville took its place alongside the older models.

And there was FOOD! Olive Hill Baptist Church sold hot, cooked-on-the-spot, fish and chicken sandwiches, beverages and baked goods. The Leasburg UMYF were vendors of hot dogs and beverages. Mouth-watering red, candied apples were available from The Holy Tabernacle Church group. The Leasburg Ruritanettes and Faith Assembly Church had a variety of desserts. Popcorn and snow cones were popular snack items.

A Leasburg Volunteer Fire Department fire engine and an EMS vehicle were on hand. Members from these units explained the functions of these two Caswell County services and gave safety tips.

Free blood pressure checks were offered by a nurse from the Caswell County Health Department.

The trailer load of bright, orange pumpkins brought for sale by Roxboro Christian Academy, added color to the festivities and lent a feeling of fall to the atmosphere.

The Leasburg Post Office Bicentennial celebration attendance, estimated at 800 to 1,000 people, was the most widely attended event in the memory of the community. Joint cooperation by both white and African-American church and civic groups made it an event to remember. Many requests were made for annual Leasburg festivals. This request will be considered, not yearly, but perhaps in the year 2000 when Leasburg will be 250 years old.

(Ms. Jeannine D. Whitlow, Postmaster Retired.)

BRIEF BACKGROUND HISTORY OF THE U. S. POSTAL SERVICE

The first indication of a postal system in America appeared in 1639 in the Massachusetts colony when Richard Fairbanks gained permission to receive and dispatch ship mail at his tavern in Boston. He was paid one cent for every letter he handled. The Boston Post Road was so named because of the postal system begun on it in 1672.

In 1692, King William III of Great Britain gave Thomas Neals the monopoly on all postal services in the colonies. The colonists disliked this postal system because the authorities could open their mail to see if it contained evidence of disloyalty to the king. Postage was expensive and, to the colonists, it represented a tax.

Benjamin Franklin was the first great name in American Postal Service. He served as Co-Deputy Postmaster General of the colonies from 1753 to 1774. The second Continental Congress appointed him the first American Postmaster General in 1775. (Note: At this time Leasburg had been settled 25 years).

When the United States was being formed, George Washington insisted on developing an efficient mail service, and personally helped in surveying post routes to speed the mails.

In 1782, the Continental Congress guaranteed the mail service as a symbol of freedom by decreeing that private letters could not be opened or delayed by Postal authorities. This was a milestone in the advance of human liberty. Before this time, the mail service had been primarily for the use of the Government, and private citizens who used it ran the risk of having their mail opened and read.

In 1789, Congress chose Samuel Osgood as the first Postmaster General under the U. S. Constitution. At that time, there were only 75 post offices in the country. (Note: In 1991, there were 40,000).

By 1829, postal service was so important that the Postmaster General was made a member of the President's Cabinet. Adhesive postage stamps were introduced in the U. S. in 1847. Registry service began in 1855.

The Pony Express was the most colorful development in the history of U. S. mail. For 17 months in 1860 and 1861, Pony Express riders carried mail from St. Joseph, Missouri, to Sacramento, California. These daring riders reduced the time for delivering mail from the east coast to the west coast from 24 days to about 10 days. The completion of the transcontinental telegraph in 1861, and the steady expansion of railroads, ended this service.

In 1864 the Post Office began selling money orders, mainly to help soldiers send money home during the Civil War. Postal cards began to be sold in 1873. The Universal Postal Union was founded in 1874 to improve international service. In 1885, Special Delivery service was begun in America. The first experimental Rural Free Delivery routes began in 1896 in West Virginia.

The Postal Savings system was begun in 1910. Three years later, in 1913, Parcel Post and C.O.D. services were introduced. By 1918, airplanes carried mail regularly. The first Highway Post Office Route was begun in 1941 between Washington, D. C., and Harrisonburg, Virginia.

Since 1901, with modern Rural Carrier Service, the number of post offices has decreased from 76,945 post offices in the U. S. to about 40,000 in 1991.

In former days a postmaster's salary was set by the number of pieces of mail received and canceled. I don't know when the salary schedules were changed, but salaries are set now by a fixed schedule depending upon volume of business generated by a post office, number of city or rural routes, number of employees supervised, etc.

Through 1970 the Postal Service was subsidized by the Government. If sufficient revenue was not received from the sale of stamps and other postal services to operate, the government made up the shortfall and private citizens received the bill for this in taxes. In 1971 the Postal Service became a private corporation that had to pay its own way--no more Government subsidies. The cost for postal service is borne by the users of the mail service rather than by everyone's being taxed. It is mandated that the Postal Service must pay its own way. It cannot make a profit, but it must break even. When that can't be accomplished, then a rate increase becomes necessary. With increased operating costs, higher prices are charged for goods and services in the private sector. The Postal Service is not immune to the higher costs. Instead of Government subsidies, the higher costs are passed on to the consumers.

POSTMASTERS OF LEASBURG, N. C.

Laurence Lea		Oct. 1, 1794
Vincent Lea		Apr. 13, 1809
Gabriel B. Lea		Feb. 9, 1815
John C. VanHook		Nov. 3, 1818
Joseph S. Thompson		Apr. 4, 1837
Addison Lea		Oct. 2, 1849
William Lea		Feb. 14, 1851
John A. Harrison		Jan. 28, 1856
William Paylor, Jr.		Jan. 10, 1859
Jefferson Whitfield		Jan. 14, 1859
Mrs. Susan B. Paylor		Sept. 4, 1865
Benjamin F. Stanfield		Feb. 14, 1870
William Paylor		Aug. 6, 1873
William R. Hambrick		Jan. 30, 1882
Josephine Hambrick		Apr. 25, 1893
Josephine Hambrick Stanfield		Feb. 3, 1898
Walter L. Thomas		June 20, 1900
Samuel P. Newman		Sept. 28, 1912
Mattie L. Pulliam		Aug. 10, 1927
Jerry W. Dixon, Acting Postmaster		Apr. 1, 1940
Mattie L. Pulliam		Sept. 1, 1945
Mrs. Mary Stanfield Rittenbury	Acting Postmaster	May 31, 1959
	Appointed	Aug. 31, 1960
Mrs. Helen Carr Knight	Acting Postmaster	Sept. 16, 1965
Mrs. Jeannine Whitlow Winstead	Acting Postmaster	Sept. 2, 1966
	Appointed	May 8, 1967
Ms. Jeannine Dare Whitlow	Retired	Oct. 2, 1992
Mrs. Deborah Cox Fox	Officer-in-Charge	March 17, 1993
	Appointed Postmaster	March 24, 1993-August 16, 1995
Mrs. Barbara Jean Duncan Davis	Officer-in-Charge	August 16, 1995 April 26, 1996
Robert Harbison	Appointed Postmaster	April 27, 1996-

(Robert Harbison was the first African American appointed Postmaster of Leasburg, N.C.)

*Note: In William S. Powell's book, "When the Past Refused to Die, A History of Caswell County, 1777-1977, the lists of postmasters for Leasburg and Yanceyville on pages 555-556 are incorrect. Laurence Lea, shown as Yanceyville's first postmaster, was LEASBURG'S first postmaster. The error is probably due to the difficulty of reading the old records. Leasburg's first post office, called Caswell Old Courthouse, was established October 1, 1794. The name indicates that Leasburg was the former county seat after the new county of Person was formed in 1792 and Yanceyville became the new Caswell County seat.

LEASBURG SERVICE STATION---LEASBURG GROCERY

Martin Whitlow believes Pointer and Thomas Rogers built the store in the late 1920s or early 1930s and thought it was first operated by Henry Newton, who came from the eastern part of the state or maybe the Butner area, where he later returned. Henry Newton was also a mechanic. Being mechanically inclined, Martin, then about 16 or 17 years old, liked to help him. They worked on Model T Fords, mostly, and he thought the year was about 1931. (Martin was born in 1914.)

He was inclined to think Ray Winstead was next to run the store, then Ernest Winstead, J. E. McFarling, Sr., and Voss Stephens, who had it for a long time. Voss got Lex Sally to clerk for him some. While Voss Stephens had the store, the building was added onto twice, Thomas and Pointer Rogers building both additions.

After World War II ended, returning veterans, Leslie Yeatts, who had been a prisoner of war of the Germans, and Curtis Brooks took over the store and were partners from 1946 to 1947. Curtis Brooks dropped out of the partnership and Leslie Yeatts became sole proprietor operating the business 38 years before he sold out his stock in 1984 to Carroll Williams, Jr.

Up until 1984, the store had been a General Merchandise store selling just about all supplies needed on the farm except for tractors and large mechanical equipment. Besides gas, there were axes, hoes, shovels, posthole diggers and handles for same, saws, knives, men's work shirts, pants, boots, shoes, gloves, coats, women's boots, sanitary needs, cereals, flavorings, canned goods, lard, flour, sugar, crackers, bread, ice cream, candy, chewing gum, milk, soft drinks, cabbage, potatoes, onions, well buckets, slop jars, kerosene oil for lamps and lanterns, and live chickens, eggs, etc. Besides the mild Karo and King syrups sold in tin buckets, there was a barrel of black molasses in the back of the store with spigot attached to dispense the thick, strong-tasting, sweet stuff. In season there were plants for sale: cabbage, onion, tomato, sweet potato slips, etc. Fertilizer was available as well as vegetable, flower, and tobacco seed, tobacco plant bed gas and Fermate, MH 40 (or was it MH 30?), for sucker control on tobacco plants. Of course, cigarettes, smoking tobacco, snuff, chewing tobacco and cigars were stocked. And, unlike today's everything-out-in-the-open style, birth control items were available--but under the counter and out of sight.

Besides both farm and home supplies, the general merchandise country store filled other needs, especially for men. With its atmosphere of "Men Only," women purchased what they came for and didn't tarry, but for men it was a social club where they could meet to discuss farm matters, get information, news and gossip. In winter it was a game room where they sat on the homemade benches around a cozy wood-burning heater set inside a box of sand (to keep down fires) and played checkers, set back, rook, told jokes, tall tales or just relaxed and observed. In the 1950s, Leslie Yeatts put in a pool table.

When Carroll Williams bought out Leslie Yeatts' stock in 1984, the store was re-named "Leasburg Grocery" and became more of a "Convenience Market." The clothes, farm tools and implements, well buckets, chains, and ropes are gone as well as the old benches, but a back corner has been saved for a small table and several chairs where customers can have a soft drink with a sandwich, cookies or Nabs and visit. Gas and kerosene are still stocked along with milk, bread, sandwiches, other food items, ice and soft drinks, but beer and wine, unheard of in earlier days, are now available. The country store "atmosphere" of by-gone days is gone. Years pass; things change.

Instead of a wood-or oil-burning heater, there is propane gas heat in winter and air conditioning in summer. The outside wooden toilet is gone and a small bathroom has been added onto the east side of the store. Gone, also, is the pretty shade tree on that side of the store that was removed in 1998 when its roots interfered with the septic line.

The brand names of gas Martin Whitlow remembered the store selling in earlier days were WHITE FLASH, ATLANTIC, and GULF. The BP Company began furnishing its brand of gas to the store about 1996. In the early part of 1997 the company put up a new sign with the name of the store, but changed the spelling of the almost 250-year-old community to LEESBURG. The gas company's colors were brilliant yellow and bilious green, but some citizens "saw red" for several months until BP Oil Company corrected it to LEASBURG.

Before the beginning of World War II, a small stucco building had been erected at the southwest corner of the store that was used as a blacksmith shop-garage. Martin Whitlow worked there only a short time before he was drafted. (He had to tried to enlist earlier, but was turned down because he had lost some front teeth in a car accident. With war a threat, "Uncle Sam" paid no attention to the missing teeth.). Even then, in the late 1930s, there was not much need of a blacksmith's services. Tractors were replacing mules and horses.

After the war, Martin had to find another line of work. The five-generation line of Whitlow blacksmiths ended that had begun with his Great-Great Grandfather, Solomon Whitlow, Sr., in the Revolutionary War in 1779 when he served part of his time working in the shops at Harrisburg (near Oxford, N.C.). Martin and Mr. Clyde Arvin built a number of homes in Leasburg and at Butner before Martin got a job with George W. Kane building a bank in Roxboro. It was not steady, dependable employment so he went into cabinet-making in Danville, Va., working five days a week, and at night and on weekends as a "finish carpenter."

Maybe we just naturally resist change and long for the "good old days" that were really not all that good, but it was the time when we were young and strong, felt good, our friends and loved ones were still with us, and we thought nothing was impossible.

A TRIP TO THE BEACHES IN VIRGINIA

BY

EUNICE BRADSHER JACOBS WINSTEAD WAGSTAFF

1. Push for Boy wanted
2. Push for Ice water
3. Push for Chambermaid
4. Push for Porter
5. Push for Hot water
6. Push for Stationery

(This account began with the above instructions which appear to be signals for room service available in the early 1900s. Notice how the needs of lodgers have changed! JDW)

The train took us from Semora to Pointer's Point. There we took a steamboat to Norfolk. A boy showed us to the place to take a street car. The street car took us to the Va. Beach Station. There we took the train for Va. Beach after waiting for train one and one half hours. We left for Va. Beach at 7:30, landed about 8. Took supper and retired for the night and next day. Then we came back to Norfolk on the 4-10 train. Put up at Grandby Hotel, bathed and changed dress, and went strolling, came back, ate supper and retired to our room. After cooling and resting a while, went to bed and got a good night's rest. Ate breakfast and went to the market house. I never saw so many vegetables and meats of all kinds and sorts in all my life. Took a street car down to the Hampton Roads. We are now at the pier waiting for the boat to take us over to Newport News. The scenery is perfectly beautiful. Boats of all descriptions are in sight on the water. Sail boats, steam boats, and one I don't know what sort you might call it. It has neither sails nor steam, and seems to be loaded with brick or wood. I can't tell which. It may not be neither. It is a long flat boat. Pine Beach is the name of the place just a few hundred yards back. A good many people came down on the trolley as we did to Pine Beach where a Sunday School picnic is going to be held.

Now I see the boat coming that is to take us to Newport News, with the black smoke curling in the air. How delightful to think of a ten mile ride on the water in a steam boat. Now we are on the boat out on deck going at I don't know what rate, but I do know the boat is plowing and churning the waters at a mighty rate. Now we take a street car to Newport News. We are stopping at Hotel Newport, the same house called the Grand Central when we were here two years ago. The number of our room is 5 at Norfolk, No. 12, at Va. Beach. We put up at a cottage called the Mec(k)lenburg. $2.00 a day there, Norfolk and here at Newport News.

We landed here about 12 o'clock. Mr. Wagstaff hunted up Roscoe and we took dinner with him at his boarding place. Mr. Wagstaff, Roscoe, two Mr. Rose and I went fishing in the Hampton Roads. The boy hired a boat and a negro to row it and bait hooks. We baited with crabs. We had neither poles nor corks. We caught twenty nice fish from four or five inches long to fifteen or sixteen inches. I did not catch but one about eight or ten inches. Mr. Wagstaff caught the largest one in the lot. Mr. Will Rose, the next largest and Roscoe the next. The other Mr. Rose caught a large one but his largest was what they call a dog fish and was not fit to eat so he threw it back in the water. I never saw a dog fish before. It had eyes, nostrils and a mouth on the side and a mouth full of teeth-it did not have fins nor tail like other fish, it was a perfect curiosity. We stayed out on the boat and fished three hours. The water (was) about twenty feet. Oh! it was simply grand to let out the long lines and draw in the nice fish. I enjoyed the fishing fine.

After our fishing we, (Mr. Wagstaff and I), came back to our hotel. I bathed and put on another dress (for I had got the one I had on somewhat soiled) and by that time supper was ready, it being six or half passed six. We ate our supper and went strolling. I don't know how far, but a good ways to a dry bridge where trains pass under, houses being all along. We saw

a train there with forty-one or two coaches, a very long train but not as long as I have seen. I think I have seen them have as many as fifty-four or -five. We came back to our room and by this time the streets were lit up, not with lamps like it used to be in places in olden times, but with electric lights at every place of business which would light up the place. We rested a while and took another stroll in another direction.

I can't tell you the pretty things we saw. We strolled in Norfolk and saw many pretty things there too, but I did not have much time to write there. Va. Beach is on the wane. I am sorry, too, to see it for that certainly is a nice place for a great city. They had a storm there in Oct., I think, that did much damage to the place, which has never been repaired. The nice hotel we put up at when we were there two years ago is closed up; nobody runs that at all. I don't think there is but one hotel in the place and that is the Princess Anne, a swell hotel but that charges three or four dollars a day. There are a number of nice cottages to board at; some have $2.00 a day and some $1.50.

The old ocean is just the same, it has not lost any of its attraction to us. It is still tossing its waves, rolling and tumbling as it will as long as time lasts. I have seen right many things but the ocean is the grandest my eyes have ever beheld. It seems to me that it shows the mighty, wonderful power of God more than anything else, but everything shows power, even the breath we draw is wonderful, yet we are so used to that, that we think nothing of it, but he could stop that breath in a moment of time and the wonderful body of man or beast would die and soon return to dust from whence it came. Well, Mr. Wagstaff is fast asleep and I am up here writing. Last night we were in Norfolk. We sat at the window in our room and counted the street cars that passed. In five minutes there were nine, nearly two a minute. Then I reckon it was five minutes before any came on any more, then they commenced again. I don't know how often they pass here at Newport News, but the sound of one hardly dies away before you hear another coming. Well, goodnight, I must join Mr. Wagstaff in dreamland.

(Friday 5) I did not write any yesterday. I was too busy sight-seeing. Yesterday morning, first thing after breakfast, we went down to the five and ten cent store where I saw so many pretty little tricks. I could have spent a bushel of money if I had wanted to.

We took the street car yesterday morning about 8 or 9 o'clock for Hampton where we spent all the forenoon. First we visited the Normal school for Negros and Indians. I was very anxious to see an Indian, but it being vacation, they were all out on the farm. It is the nicest place I ever saw and the best (Paper torn and missing here).....Negro. It was founded by General S.C. Armstrong for the negro soon after the civil war. The Indians came to join them ten years later. It has sixty buildings overlooking the waters of Hampton Roads. The work is done by the students. The Institute has Normal, Business, Academic, Trade, Domestic Science, and Agricultural departments. These departments are equipped with all the improved facilities for each special work. A young negro guide showed us over the buildings, a smart negro, too, had plenty sense. He was one of the students. A young white lady kept the office where visitors register their names. I saw so many things in going from one department to another. I know I would fail were I to try to tell all, so I'll just..... (Paper torn and missing here)....hammering away at the blacksmith anvil, others at the turning lathe making pretty things of wood, others making harness, and others at machines. In another room were a lot of school desks at which a few women or girls were seated with paper and pen, it looked like they were trying to coppy (sic) a writing written on a blackboard or something of the kind, a white lady being their teacher. The office lady was from Mass., a yankey. We talked with her some little bit while we were waiting for the guide. The grounds, the buildings, and everything would do credit to any white institute. Everything was in perfect order, and laid off in the nicest manner. We went from there to the yankey cemetery, a beautiful place indeed, and that was kept in perfect order. I don't know how many soldiers are buried there but where we noticed it was between 6 and 7 thousand, but we were so busy looking at other things we forgot to notice the numbers any

more. Some of the dead were from N. Y., Mass., N. H., Nebraska and everywhere. The most of the stones had names on them but some did not. I suppose they were unknown. Just think how awful it was for their friends to never know what became of them.

We then went from there to the old soldiers' home, which is the most beautiful of all places. The pretty green grass, the nice laid walks, the grand old shade trees, and the most beautiful flowers I ever saw. The flower beds are laid off in he prettiest manner possible. I saw one bed all in bloom in the shape of an anchor and many others in stripes and various ways too tedious to mention, but the greatest curiosity is the eating of the old soldiers. We stayed to see them seated at their dinners. There is a large dining hall large enough and with tables and seats to accommodate eleven hundred at one time. I never saw as much victuals at one time in my life nor such a vast multitude eat at one time. When those eleven hundred were through, eleven hundred more were seated so we were told. They did not allow visitors to remain after they were seated. Potatoes, beef, soup or coffee, tomatoes and bread, I believe is what the meal was composed of. They had waiters of the old soldiers with their white caps and aprons. The victuals was brought in by hand in part and by, I don't know unless you call them trucks, things with four iron wheels and three different shelves or places to set the dishes on, and I suppose each shelf would hold a doz. dishes.

Mr. Wagstaff talked with some of the old vets, and do you know they, (some of them), are not satisfied there. I don't think they could satisfy themselves. (I mean the dissatisfied ones.) With all their needs supplyed (sic), nothing to do but lounge around, read and talk. A lady told me in the dining room that they were paid $1.00 a day whenever they felt like working. Some are not able to work and some are. Some of them walk with two sticks and some with one. They have a hospital. We did not go in that. I had rather not for fear of disease. We went through one of the sleeping departments. There was cot after cot, just room enough to pass between, all looking nice and clean. Some were occupied with the old soldiers, some of them just lying there resting. Some had read themselves asleep with their papers still in hand. Well I have stayed long enough with the old soldiers and Hampton.

We take the street car and go over to Buckroe Beach, about a half hour's ride. We expected to go in bathing here but did not. It is a nice place but very quiet while we were there; nothing much going on but bathing and not much of that. We (did) not like it as a bathing place. We spent the evening there and went back to Newport News.

After supper Mr. Wagstaff, Roscoe and I were sitting in our room when Roscoe looked out of the window and said, "Yonder goes some of the Salvation Army." Two women and a little girl. They had a large drum and two tamborenes (sic). They sang and kept time with their tambereens (sic) and drum, the little girl keeping time as well as the others. They sang pretty humns and prayed and preached. They were just across the street from us so Mr. Wagstafff and I went over to where they were. There was right many to hear them. The oldest lady preached, and she did well, too. She knew well how to express herself and the singing and time-keeping was fine. After preaching they passed the tamberene (sic) around and got only ten cents. I believe they are trying to do good and if they are not appreciated now it will be bread cast upon the waters which will be found after many days. If she really means good, God will help her and make good come of it, but if she is a hippocrit, (sic) it will come to naught. May God bless them and prosper them and make them to cause many souls to turn to God. "I had rather be a door Keeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness."

Friday morning the 5. The time has arrived for us to bid adieu to Newport News. We have already told Roscoe goodby and our guide and luggage boy is here to show us down to the warfe (sic) where we are to take a steamer to Norfolk.

Hotel Granby, noon. Well, we are back at old Norfolk again. We spent one night at Va. Beach, two at Newport News, and this is two here at Norfolk. Our ride from Newport to Norfolk on the water was just fine. We stayed out on deck all the time watching the vessels,

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