

THE SAMPSON COUNTY TIMBER BLITZ

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Anthony Barefoot is standing on the old tram rail bed that ran through his great grandfather, George P. Lee's, farm early twentieth century. A length of rail and a four inch spike are displayed in the foreground. The rail was uncovered by bulldozer work. This was the main line running from Dunn to the Rosin Hill Station and beyond.

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Membership payment of \$10.00 covers the period of January through December and includes a hard copy of the Huckleberry Historian. If joining during the year you will receive all back issues of the HH for the current year. The number by your name (John Doe 2011) on the mailing label indicates the year that you are paid through. Mail payment to Treasurer Kent Wrench; address on page 16.

THE SAMPSON COUNTY TIMBER BLITZ

BY KENT WRENCH

One hundred years ago a bird's eye view of Sampson County would have revealed an enormous webbing of tram tracks. There were miles and miles of tracks laid over the county during a period of two decades. Several large timber companies had swooped down on the remaining timber after the turpentine industry had gone into steep decline. Over the next decades trees would come crashing down at a rate never before or since seen in Sampson County.

Our road system was much as it had been in the previous century. They were mud ruts and sandbeds and impassable all too often. But, with the coming of the railroads a solution to transportation was in sight. The advent of steam-powered, small-gauge trains made it possible to transport freight to the county side and ever larger loads of logs to the mills.

Commercial logging was to alter the face of Sampson County, and in the process bring tremendous changes in the economic, social, and environmental composition of the region.

Tilghman, Turnbull and Brown Lumber Companies had carved Sampson into three huge slices. Imagine a line from Newton Grove to Clinton and on the east would have been Turnbull and

on the west would have been Tilghman. Brown worked the southern portion of the county. A few lesser lumber companies picked up other odd tracts.

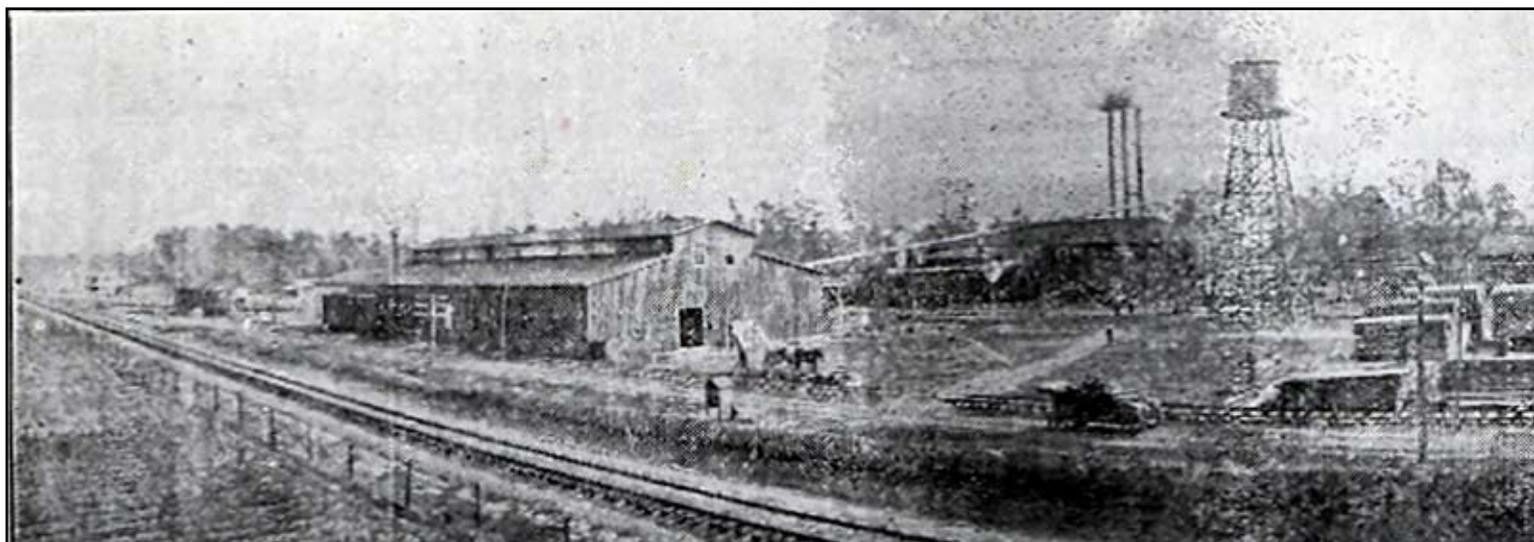
Turnbull had a tram rail line out of Bowden (Duplin County) and harvested timber in Piney Grove, Halls and Newton Grove Townships of Sampson County; Turnbull had a sub head quarters at Goshen. He shipped product from Bowden by what once was the Wilmington & Weldon Railroad (est. 1840).

Brown operated in Southern Sampson and was head-quartered at Ivanhoe. He laid tram tracks and used the Black River to float timber to the saw mill in Ivanhoe. He shipped lumber by what started as the Cape Fear and Yadkin Valley Railroad (est. 1890-91).

Tilghman Lumber Co. was situated just outside the north corporate limits of the town of Dunn. He worked Sampson, Harnett and Johnson Counties from the Dunn mill. He shipped by the north/south Atlantic Coast Line (est. 1886).

Our focus for this story will be on a huge chunk of upper Sampson County carved out by Tilghman. He laid tram tracks into Plain View, Westbrook, Herring, Mingo, Dismal, Honeycutt, Belvoir and parts of Newton Grove Townships.

The plant was a large one. It had a capacity of 60,000 board ft. per day. The plant employed 150 men. The company had its own electric light plant and water system. The plant took the timber from the stump and delivered it, to northern markets,



TILGHMAN'S MAMMOTH LUMBER

The above headline & picture were part of a promotional



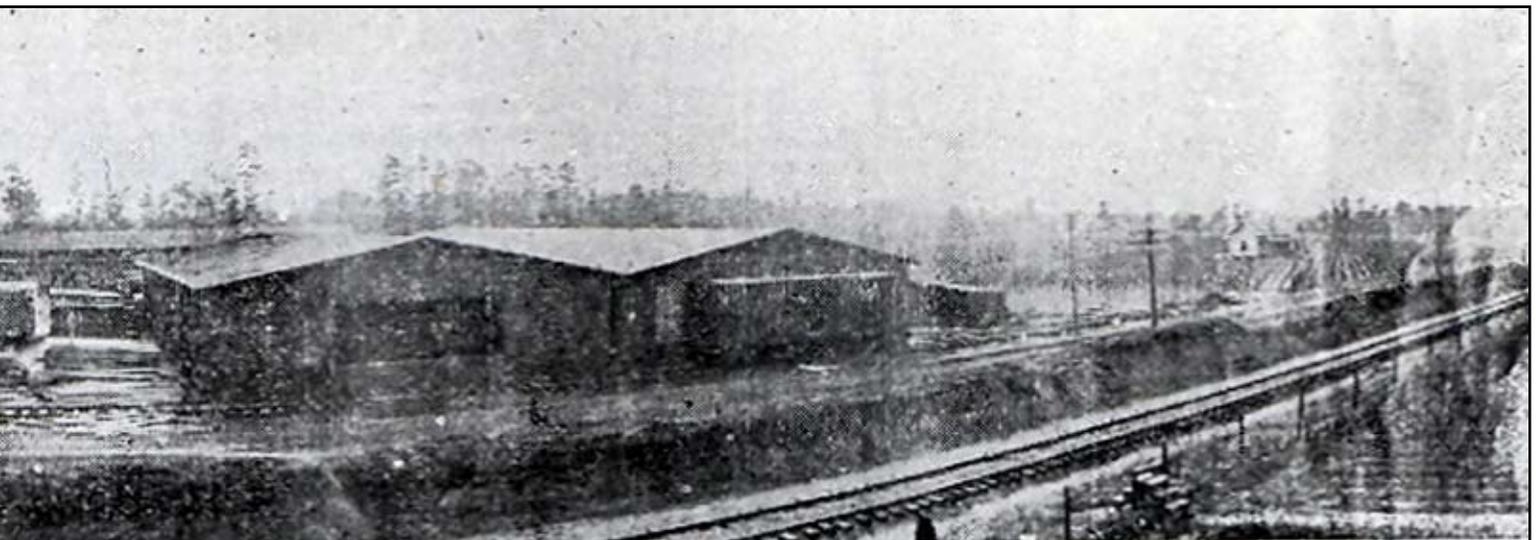
Capt. Cicero J. Hanna, standing tall, was foreman of the Tilghman works. The scene was at the Dona McCullen place in Plainview Township.



Tilghman's operation mirrored the above scene. A thick canopy prevented undergrowth from growing under the pine trees.



A load of Sampson County logs arrive at the Tilghman mill in Dunn, NC. The water tank in the background was still standing in 2011.



PLANT LOCATED AT DUNN, NC

brochure about the Tilghman Lumber Co. c. 1910-1928

finished and ready for inside use in buildings.

An early advertisement brochure boasted that they had twenty two miles of their own railroad; section were moved when a timber tract was cut-over. They operated on their road three locomotives and more than 50 cars.

These tram lines were extended as the logging fronts advanced through the pine forests of Sampson County, often resulting in an intricate spider web design of cleared routes that would eventually become the basis for a fully developed rural transportation system of farm-to-market on tram roads.

In addition to cutting tasks, forest workers transported logs, worked on road beds, and set miles of ties for rail tracks. Right of ways had to be cut through the forest, ditches dug for drainage, streams crossed and lines kept in good repair. Almost everything was done by hand labor.

Tilghman developed a good business hauling fertilizer & other supplies to platforms at field stations such as Rosin Hill, Plain View, Piney Green and other stations.

From these stations, local farmers loaded supplies onto their farm wagons, saving a long slow round trip over rough roads to the nearest town. A car was fitted with seats on the train and rural Sampson folks could get a ride to and from Dunn and points in between by using the tram line.

In a sketch of her life Mrs. Annie Mcphail of Rosin Hill had this to say: *“So we did a big time business, we bought turpentine. We carried rosin and spirits by raft on Big Coharie and Cape Fear River to Wilmington until Tilghman’s Tram road came over here. We sent it by railroad.”*

Quoting from a letter written Feb. 1 1917 from Honeycutt Township: *“Theda is gone to get some guano that Tilghman has brought on his train. Tilghman’s train will soon be all around here hauling off the pines but he ain’t got none on our land.”* Theda picked up guano at the Piny Green Station.

The small locomotives used by Tilghman were an item of special interest to most country folk. These “dummy” trains were only a fraction of the size of the regular Atlantic Coast Line engines that ran on the main line tracks. They were moved to a new far away site by driving them up



Trees were cut down with crosscut saws and limbs trimmed off with axes.

onto flatcars on the main line railroad.

Many of the company’s workers came with it from Conway, S.C. They were housed in rough wooden gray dingy boxes/shanties that could be set up on railroad flatcars and moved from one place to another. Boxcars and tents served as housing in some situation for the forest workers. Mill camps were composed of segregated quarters for black and white workers

Sawmills represented the only source of cash in some circumstances. The mill created work where none had been available. Many local people signed onto the workforce as worked progressed into their neighborhoods. Money was coming in from timber tracts being sold and many Sampson County men now had work. This was somewhat of a boom for the county.

Many experienced loggers were expert at their trade, able to notch, saw, and fell a tree with precision. Trees were cut with crosscut saws and trimmed up with axes. Conditions were often grueling, with workers putting in 10-hour days on back-breaking tasks in the forests, often many miles from the mill.

Timber crews, usually of 40 to 60 men were supervised by a woods boss, known also as the “bull of the woods.” The boss wielded consider-



Early cross-loading operation used mules to skid logs onto a flatcar.

able authority; when a worker got into a confrontation with the boss, it was said that he had “locked horns with the bull.”

In the larger tracts of timber, sawmills were brought in, set-up and the lumber sawed “on the spot.” Farm folks could have the slabs (bark portions of the logs) free by hauling them away for firewood, building hog pens, etc. For many years high sawdust piles dotted the Sampson County landscape, but they gradually rotted or were hauled away for compost.

Another item of special interest was a steam-powered skidder set-up beside the tram line. It had a long steel cable wound on a winch and a grappling hook on the end. The cable was drug

far out into the woods by a large horse with a mounted driver, the cable was attached, and the winch skidded the logs to within reach of the log train. From there the logs went to the saw-mill.

Before the steam-powered skidder was in wide use, horse-power was used. Huge log carts brought timber to the loading site or saw-mill. Horse power was used to skid the logs onto the flatbed car. Early cross-loading operation used mules to load logs onto a flatcar. The later introduction of steam-powered cranes to hoist the logs revolutionized the logging industry.

Judge Spivey joined the Tilghman Company as an appraiser. He drove a pretty horse hitched to a new black buggy, he was a “take charge” sort of person. He would drive up to the farm houses, inquire if they might have some timber for sale, and suggest he go with them into the woods to appraise it. Enough timber was purchased in the early years to last the next twelve years.

Like the naval stores industry, the lumber business “played out” and Tilghman moved away, but not Judge Spivey. He erected a small store at the junction of old NC 60 and NC 102 (now US 421 and US 13) and operated it until his death. Hence Spivey’s Corner got its name.

Evidence of a main rail line extending from Dunn to Rosin Hill and beyond, is still evident today. The old road bed is traceable in spots and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14



George A. Barefoot points out pilings that once supported a rail trestle crossing the Mingo Swamp. This was the trunk line from Dunn into Westbrook Township; spur lines branched off still further.

DICKSON LETTERS

EDITED BY JEROME TEW

NOTE: COLONEL JOHN DICKSON FIRST PATENTED 640 ACRES OF LAND IN NEW HANOVER. THIS 1746 LAND PATENT WAS LOCATED 8 MILES SE FROM WHERE THE OLD DUPLIN COURT HOUSE, BUILT IN 1750 AND 3 MILES SW FROM WHERE THE PRESENT DUPLIN COURT HOUSE BUILT IN 1784. THAT DICKSON PLANTATION WAS LOCATED ABOUT HALF WAY BETWEEN PRESENT KENANSVILLE AND MAGNOLIA. NEAR ALL OF HIS CHILDREN PATENTED LAND WITHIN 5 MILES OF THEIR FATHERS LAND. THE OLD DUPLIN COURT HOUSE WAS LOCATED 2 MILES WEST OF WARSAW NC AND ½ MILE NORTH OF HW 24.

IN 1781, WILLIAM DICKSON LIVED WHERE CORNWALLIS PASSED THROUGH, HIS HOME WAS THREE MILES EAST OF PRESENT WARSAW AND ABOUT 3.5 MILES NORTH OF THE DICKSON PLANTATION. ALEXANDER DICKSON LIVED ABOUT ONE MILE EAST OF HIS DAD'S PLANTATION. EDWARD DICKSON LIVED ABOUT ONE MILE NORTH OF THE DICKSON PLACE. JAMES DICKSON LIVED TWO MILES SE OF DICKSON PLANTATION. ROBERT DICKSON LIVED 2.5 MILES SE OF DAD. JOSEPH DICKSON LIVED TWO MILES EAST OF THE DICKSON PLANTATION. MICHAEL AND SON ROBERT PATENTED 300A FIVE MILES EAST OF THE PRESENT DUPLIN CH. I DO NOT THINK THAT THEY LIVED THERE AS THEY MOVED SOUTH IN 1767. THEY LIKELY LIVED ON COLONEL JOHN DICKSON'S PLANTATION. WILLIAM MCGOWAN AND WIFE MARY DICKSON MCGOWAN PATENTED LAND IN 1779 ABOUT 2.5 MILES EAST OF THE DICKSON PLANTATION.

LETTERS

First Letter: 30 Nov 1784 from William Dickson. Sampson was now a county. Cornwallis and 8,000 of his men surrendered on 19 Oct 1781 at Yorktown and the RW was over on 3 Sep 1783, but the last British soldiers did not leave NY until 26 Nov 1783. The Dickson brothers are all detailed in this letter but Michael, who had moved to SC before 1770. All sons of Colonel John Dickson served or provided aid in the RW. The British pulled out of Wilmington on 18 Nov

1781 and the Tory command began to collapse. Michael, the oldest son, was a major in the SC Militia and is listed in some SC RS pension applications. Colonel John Dickson was Clerk of Court in Duplin before he died and son William was then named Clerk of Court for Duplin. Cornwallis came through Duplin on 27-30 April 1781 and British Major Craig came through Duplin 3-7 August 1781.

To: Rev. Robert Dickson in Ireland.

Dear Cousin Robert:

About two months ago I received a very long letter from you, dated in Sept 1783 which afforded me much pleasure and satisfaction in the perusal, as it contained a historical account of the political proceedings of the Irish Nation during the continuance of the late American War. I much admire and applaud the determined resolution of the volunteers in claiming a redress of public national grievances, etc. I understand by that letter that you wrote me in May 1783, by the ship Congress, Capt. Chenen, bound for Philadelphia; that letter never came to hand. I received another letter from you dated 19th of July 1784, which was handed to me by my cousin Joseph Dickson, from Dromore, who arrived in Virginia the 2nd of October last and came to my house about the 20th of the same month with his wife and little son, all in good health. He and his family remain with me yet. He is not provided with any settlement or place of employment. Since his arrival here he has visited his friends, that is, my brothers and sister, and he has been to Bladen County, about 60 miles from here, to inquire after his uncle Maturine Colvill's affairs; he finds that estate is much wasted and embezzled: there are only the lands and some part of the slaves found remaining, which are now in the possession of Mr. Patrick Neil, who came over last year in quest of said estate. Joseph is now gone to Wilmington to see Archibald Maclaine. Esq., who is attorney for some of Colvill's heirs, and as soon as he can be informed concerning his uncle's affairs he will write to his father on that subject. Your letter by Colvill Dickson has never come to hand. Your friend and relation Mr. Josie, who came over with Joseph, stayed in Virginia; he had the offer of a good school and did

not come to Carolina. In both your letters which I have received you requested I would give you some account of the present circumstances and situation of our families since the war, also the present state of our civil government, also concerning religious matters and how ministers were supported in this country, and also concerning the price of plantations and whether any new settlements were about to be made on the western waters over the Appalachian Mountains, etc. Dear Cousin, in answer to those questions I wrote you a very long letter about a month ago which was a few days after the arrival of my cousin Joseph. That letter I sent at random by a person going to Virginia, where, I was informed there was a vessel which would sail in about three weeks for Belfast. That letter is a very long one, but written in such haste that it will appear a perfect scrawl. The person who carried it waiting with impatience while I wrote. I had not the opportunity to review or correct it. However if it ever comes to hand I make no doubt you'll be able to digest its contents. In it you'll find I have attempted to give you some account of our civil government and mode of legislation, etc. Also of the different sects of religious people most prevalent amongst us in the lower counties of this state, and that the Presbyterian settlements are chiefly with the upper counties of the state, where there are many large and able congregations and some of them are frequently vacant. I also gave you my opinion that a good sound preacher of a good moral character scarcely ever wanted good encouragement. I also wrote you concerning the price of lands and plantations in this part of the country. I also began in that letter a historical account of the war as far as concerned us and our families in the vicinity of Carolina which I have found from the commencement of the war down to the Battle of Guilford in North Carolina, which happened in the spring of the year 1781, from which Lord Cornwallis returned to Wilmington to recruit and repair his damages, etc., before he could proceed to Virginia; and General Green marched his army to South Carolina to dispute the dominion of the state with Lord Rawdon who then commanded the garrison at Camden; then I concluded my last letter in which you'll find none of our families concerned except my oldest brother Michael, who had his share of both good

and ill fortune. I can give you no account of his present situation. The last account I had from him he was about moving his family to Georgia. Having thus brought the war to our door, I shall now give you some account of its operation here and how much it affects us and our families. About the 25th of January, 1781, (British) Maj. Craig arrived in the Cape Fear River, landed at Wilmington with about 450 veteran troops with which he garrisoned the town and detached a party up the North East River to the great bridge about 12 miles above the town, and then demolished the bridge, seized and burned some public store ships and their contents which had been run up the river for safety, and also destroyed some private property and returned to the town, and Major Craig immediately fortified the garrison. The militia of three counties were then immediately ordered down to take post at the great bridge, and that pass was fortified by us in order to prevent the enemy from making excursions into the country. We had been there about three weeks (Mar 1781) with about 700 militia when Major Craig marched out upon us in the night with his main force and some field pieces, surprised and dispersed our piquet guard and displayed his artillery across the river upon our dirt works, but without any effect. The enemy finding their attempt entirely fruitless, after staying and viewing us across the river for two days, returned in the night to Wilmington. About two weeks after this (15 Mar 1781) we received intelligence from Guilford County in the upper part of the state that a general engagement had ensued between Lord Cornwallis and General Greene; there the conflict was long and obstinate and the victory had been in favor of the Americans had it not been for misconduct of the North Carolina militia, who broke and left our part of the line exposed, which the enemy seeing, and being about to make use of the advantage. General Greene ordered a retreat and broke off the whole without any confusion. The enemy remained upon the ground. General Greene finding his troops still in high spirits and not so much diminished as might be expected, made all the necessary preparations to attack the enemy the next day, but was disappointed by Cornwallis precipitately decamping in the night; he carried off some of his wounded and left about 200

of his wounded at the place of action with an officer and two surgeons whom he recommended to the compassion and humanity of the American General. Cornwallis made his retreat good to Wilmington and General Greene, after pursuing him two days without any prospect of coming up with him, turned his course and marched into South Carolina, where I shall leave him for the present. Cornwallis arrived at Wilmington (5 Apr 1781), and General Greene being gone to South Carolina, seemed to strike terror on our militia then at their post. General Lillington, who then commanded the post at the great bridge, ordered our retreat from that to Kingston on the Neuse River, about 30 miles above Newbern, where on the 28th of April, he discharged all the militia except one company to guard the artillery and stores. The militia thus discharged, we had not the name of an army in North Carolina. Every man was now to look to himself. The next day after being discharged we returned home. Cornwallis' army was then in the middle of our country, encamped at my brother Robert Dickson's plantation. The whole country was struck with terror, almost every man quit his habitation and fled, leaving his family and property to the mercy of merciless enemies. Horses, cattle and sheep and every kind of stock were driven off from every plantation, commodities, and forage taken for the supply of the army and no compensation given, houses plundered and robbed, chests, trunks, etc., broke, women and children's clothes, etc., as well as men's wearing apparel and every kind of household furniture taken away. The outrages were committed mostly by a train of loyal refugees, as they termed themselves, whose business it was to follow the camps and under the protection of the army enrich themselves on the plunder they took from the distressed inhabitants who were not able to defend it. We were also distressed by another swarm of beings (not better than harpies). These were women who followed the army in the character of officers' and soldiers' wives. They were generally considered by the inhabitants to be more insolent than the soldiers. They were generally mounted on the best horses and side saddles, dressed in the finest and best clothes that could be taken from the inhabitants as the army marched through the country. Our family are all obnoxious to the enemy, al-

though none of the brothers except myself have actually taken arms and joined the army. I will now give you some account of how we all fared while the enemy were in our neighborhood. My brother Robert had left his place and removed his family and property. The enemy encamped one day and night at his plantation (28 Apr 1781) and destroyed some of his stock which he had not got off. The same day my brother Joseph in his own house by the dragoons, but being determined would not surrender, fled into a thicket or swamp, and although pursued made good his escape. The enemy plundered his house, took all his commodities, his horses, and his wife's clothes, side saddle, etc. The same day another party went to my brother James house, and not finding him at home, plundered his house of everything they could find in it, took off two of his slaves and all his commodities, etc., and compelled his wife and a neighbor woman, who was there, to deliver them the rings off their fingers and the buckles off their shoes. The same day my sister's husband, William McGowan, was found driving some stock out of their way; he was made a prisoner and after being some time under guard was compelled to pilot their Light Horse to his own and several of his neighbor's houses where they took all the commodities and forage, all the horses and cattle, etc., they could get. The night following they detained him under guard and went and plundered his house of everything they found in it worth carrying away, broke every lock, ransacked every chest and trunk, took away all the bedding, etc., all the apparel, even the baby's clothes, stripped the rings off my sister's fingers and the shoes and buckles off her feet, choked the children to make them confess if their father had not hid his money, and to tell where it was, etc., and many of the neighbors were treated in the same brutish manner.

End of Part 1

BILLIE FAISON

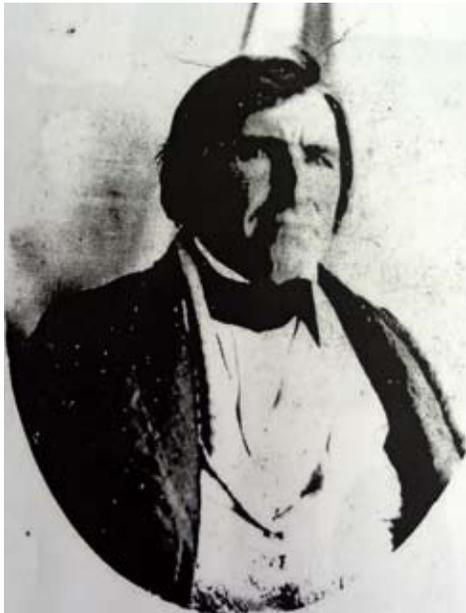
(1791-1857)

Page Thomson Steele/Joel W. Rose

An account of William “Billie” Faison of “Mount Pleasant” plantation, formerly located at Elliott, Sampson County, NC as written by his son, William A. Faison on February 8, 1898. William A. Faison was born 1821 and died 1903.

Before he died, Billie Faison was one of the largest landowners in Sampson County and owned more than 300 slaves.

Submitted by Page Thomason Steele of Houston, TX, great, great, great granddaughter of William “Billie” Faison, descended through his eldest child and daughter, Eliza Anne Faison Murphy, wife of Patrick Murphy II of “Cuwhifle” plantation near Taylor’s Bridge, Sampson County, NC.



WILLIAM “BILLIE” FAISON
B. AUG. 29, 1791..... D. SEPT. 7, 1857

My father, William (Billie) Faison, was born August 29, 1791 on the east side of Six Runs Creek in Sampson County and died in 1857. He was the youngest child of six born to his parents, James Faison III and Mary Hollingsworth Faison. He had but little schooling in books. I have heard that he went to school only about three months. He did manual labor in the field, leading all that worked with him up to 1822, when at

the solicitation of his mother; he ceased to work in the field as a regular hand. He kept the mill for some time. I have heard him say he could do what he had never seen but one other man do. He could stand in a half-bushel measure and take up a bag from the ground, containing three bushels of corn and put the bag on a horse. He married my mother, Susan Moseley, February 8, 1814, just eighty-four years ago today.

Several years ago he and I were riding horse back from Kenansville, and he pointed out to me a Black Haw tree where he and Mr. Ringgold stopped and ate some of the fruit as they were on their way to an examination at Spring Hill in Lenoir County, where a large school was being taught by Mr. Joe Eliot, an uncle of Mr. John Eliot. Mr. Ringgold was taking my father to visit a rich lady, Miss Tull. Father was not pleased with the Tull lady. He spent the night at my grandfather’s, Matthew Moseley, and there he met my mother, Susan, for the first time. (The Moseleys lived at Moseley Hall, in the vicinity of today’s La Grange near Kinston.) Uncle Elias Faison and my father married the same day and on their return to their homes, they met in the road where Owen Fryer now lives. The brides got out of their carriages and kissed each other, and the husbands made a promise that who ever had a babe born unto them first, the other was to give him a cow and calf. My mother had nine and Aunt Mary Faison did not have any children. Sister Bella got the cow and calf. (Susan Arabella, 7th child of William and Susan Moseley Faison, 1828-1902, married to Dr. Elias F. Shaw in 1847. He was Colonel in the Confederate Army and was killed at Five Forks, Petersburg, VA on May 2, 1865. A faithful slave brought his body home for burial.)

Grandfather James Faison gave my father two Negroes: a boy, Joe, and a girl, Dinah, soon after father married. Joe was taken sick when my father was at Duplin Court and mother sent for him. He brought Dr. Hopten with him. When they reached home Joe was dead and the doctor charged \$20.00 for the visit. Dinah grew up and raised ten daughters and one son. Her oldest daughter, Harriet, was a bad Negro and she was the only Negro of all that he raised that he ever sold. He never sold but very few Negroes out of about 300 that he owned. He was a great hand

to control Negroes and they had the greatest respect for him because they feared him. A Negro does not respect anyone that he does not fear. This is a fact, without a doubt. My Father was a good judge of men and he was a great lover of animals.

My father lived with his mother until her death in 1822. The house (a log building) is now standing, perfectly sound, and has been used as a barn since 1821. I was the first child born in the new frame house that my father had built in the grove where my brother, Livingston, is now living.

The Yankees burnt the old house in 1865. The old house stood very near where our family cemetery is now. (The Faison family cemetery at Mount Pleasant was said to have been the most beautiful cemetery in the South.) Father moved the old house and used it for a barn and put up another house in the yard for Grandmother. After the family got so large the boys slept in it and it was used to set the table when any of the children got married. Marion Butler, husband of my niece, Florence Faison, had it fixed up and used it for his office. (Butler was a U.S. Senator from NC (1895-1901) who married Florence Faison, 2nd child of Edward Livingston and Cornelia Faison.)

Soon after my father's marriage, some property came on to the market that he wanted to buy. He went to Grandfather Moseley and tried to borrow the money, but he was afraid to loan it to him. But if my memory serves me right, father got the money elsewhere and bought the property.

Father was a great worker, but I never saw him seeming to be in a hurry. Never so much so that he would not stop and speak to any person that he met if he knew them. He spoke to anybody, and bore malice to no person. He was kind to all classes, remarkably so to the poor and needy. A great many poor people were settled on his lands, lived and raised large families and he never charged them any rent at all. They often came to his corncrib and smoke house for something to eat; they never went away empty handed. All that wanted work could find it when they came to him.

I hardly know when he added most of his estate. It depended on when most property was offered for sale for I never knew him to try to buy

any property but once that wasn't on the market, and that was in 1843. It was sold and afterwards he bought the remainder of the tract. The party that bought the first piece sold it at an advance price and as my father had bought a part of the lands, he went to the last buyer and paid him an advance of \$300 in his trade.

I will mention a fact that happened in Wilmington some years before his death. We had a very dry year and a large number of persons were in debt to him for provisions and could not pay him, as their dependence was in timber and turpentine. Because of the drought, they could not get their timber and turpentine off to market. At last a freshet (flood caused by heavy rain) came and the timber and turpentine were taken by boat to Wilmington and my father went down to get his pay. When the produce reached the market, the buyers combined to buy at their own price. My father found it out and all by himself he paid a fair price to the parties owing him. They demanded his price at an advance to pay him well, which he got before he would sell to the Wilmington buyers. I think Mr. Harper Williams told my son, Joe, that he was in Wilmington when this transaction occurred.

I have to mention things as they come into my mind.

As I have already said, all Negroes that knew my father had a great opinion of him. I will state a fact that B.F. Marable related to me. Old Jeff, who was an old trusty Negro of father's, and later of my sister's, Amelia Marable, and her husband, B. F. Jeff said to Mr. Marable that if his old Master (Billie) had been living, the War would not have taken place. My father was a brave and fearless man, but a peaceable one. I never knew him to have a quarrel with any man. I will relate a fact showing how observant he was. Many years before his death, he was on his way to Clinton riding horseback (without a saddle). He was alone on the Fryer homestead between the Fryer home and Beaver Dam Creek. He met a fine looking Negro man dressed in broad cloth and wearing a fine beaver hat (with watch and chain, if I remember right) and riding a very fine horse. Father spoke to him and after a few questions, told the Negro to turn back and go with him. He took the Negro to Clinton and put him in jail. The Negro had stolen his Master's

clothing and horse and was on the way to New Bern headed north. Few men would have done this. I neglected to say the Negro's master lived in Fayetteville. Virginia Faison and Isham both told me that they thought my father was the most remarkable man our county ever produced. Virginia also told me she heard Major Rhodes say that my father would have succeeded, no matter what, in being a great General and commander of men.

Father entertained a great many people at his house, both rich and poor, and all ate at his table. I have often wondered how my mother fed and bedded so many people. My father retired early if he had no company and was always an early riser.

He raised several children besides his own. Aunt Polly Taylor and two children lived in the house a long time. Aunt Miriam, who was a widow, lived there, too. I heard Aunt Miriam say that my grandmother Faison could do more work than any woman she had ever seen. She said she had seen her weave twelve yards of cloth in a day and work a square in the garden. I am sorry I didn't have some of her work here at the golden wedding like Grandfather's coat that she wove. Her daughter, Nancy, spun it and Aunt Nancy's husband made the coat. My sister Bella has the coat.

My father's life was a quiet one. He did not let his business disturb him or come between him and his family. There were no broils at home. He never petted any of his children but Amelia. He did not pet his grandchildren, nieces, and nephews when they were small.

I never saw him the least bit intoxicated, but the decanter containing peach brandy sat all the time on the sideboard. He always took his dram before breakfast, sometimes giving it to the smaller children, but never to the large children. Although the decanter sat before us all I never in all my raising saw or even heard of his children or servants that touched the decanter. I have often said I feel confident of the fact that if such were the case now, there would be lots of drinking among the youth at this time in my young days. I never saw any drinking among the youth. Now it is with them all mostly.

Another Negro scrape, and a very important one, where my father took a part has just popped

in my mind. I mean the Nat Turner Insurrection. If I could only see you and relate the matter to you it would show my father's good judgment, a true courage to have; the Negro's death with justice during that exciting time. Those involved were not my father's property. Some of the Negroes belonging to my father were wrongly accused. He told some hard headed and cruel men his Negroes should not be punished, as there was not a shadow of proof of their guilt. The Negroes themselves have told me as well that some white men knew of their circumstance but still tried to blame them. One of the Negroes initially accused was bought by my father many years after the incident and is now living near me. I will be glad to answer any questions you have about it, as I fear you may not be able to understand otherwise.

By: William A. Faison: (continued)

I found out last night that I had made a mistake in one of my statements above. I killed hogs yesterday and could not make the corrections, as my son, Joe, was called to Clinton and I had to look after hog killing. Instead of Mr. Harper Williams being the man, it was Robert Pearsall. He sold my father his turpentine and said much of it had gone down the Northeast Cape Fear and the Coharies, but I know that father had already sent down a good deal by himself. Turpentine prices had been very high, but as soon as the freshet came, more began the buyers bought it. My father went around and saw all that had turpentine and told the sellers he would give them the top of the market and they prepared to sell to him. He went to the bank, got the money and paid them off. He then rented three turpentine distilleries and was there two or three days. Mr. Pearsall stated my cousin, William H. Faison, was with my father and he counted turpentine barrels all night in his sleep. The Wilmington merchants went to my father and asked him if he was willing to sell. He told them he was, as long as the good prices lasted. The merchants then advanced the price and bought him out. These are the facts that my son Joe told me that Mr. Robert Pearsall and Mr. William H Faison told him.

I will state another Negro case to show what confidence my father's Negroes had in him.

Father had an old Negro man named Luke that had been sick a long time and did not improve. He had him put in a wagon and sent him to Dr. Elias Shaw (his brother-in-law) to treat. After reaching there Luke was taken out of the wagon and Dr. Shaw went to examine him. Luke said to the doctor "If old Master can't cure me, it is not worthwhile for you to try". After my father's death, as guardian I hired out a good many of the Negroes to work for others in this state and also in South Carolina. After the first year the parties that hired them wanted to use them again, as farm hands and turpentine hands. I was told that our Negroes were more easily controlled and were better workers than any hands they had previously hired.

I will state one case to show what endurance my father had. Having spent the night in Wilmington, he left there after breakfast and rode 65 miles on horseback to get home. He spent the night at home and after breakfast the next morning, rode the same horse to Moseley Hall near Kinston. He took a new horse there to show his brother-in-law, Joshua Moseley. He then rode 10 miles farther to a Negro frolic, where they captured a Negro man who belonged to my father but had run away. They returned to Moseley Hall where they spent the next two days. The next day he took the Negro and returned home at night, having traveled over 125 miles with just one night's rest. My father said the horse I mentioned above was the most valuable horse he had ever seen. He was high-spirited but any human could control him. He was bred in Kentucky and was Chestnut Sorrel in color. He went by the name of "Sorrel". I saw him buried at the old place.

I forgot to relate a fact of the Nat Turner affair in 1831. The news came to Faison soon one morning by a young man named Hardy Springs, who was riding a bay horse with a white face. He was a tenant of my father's and in a great hurry. He remarked very excitedly that the Negroes were rising and had captured the Big Bridge (located on today's Hwy 117 at Castle Hayne) this side of Wilmington on their way out of there. I was a small lad standing in the door with my father at the time. My father quietly stepped back off of the porch into the foyer and got his rifle. He stepped up to Springs, who was still sitting

on his horse, gave him his rifle and told Springs to go and meet the Negroes. He then told me to go down in the fields and tell the Negroes there to come to him, which they did. Once they had gathered around, he told them all to work very near the dwelling. He also told them what would be the consequence if any of them left there before he returned. My father then left his horse and did not return until that night. By then all the families in the neighborhood had gone to the house where Mr. Owen Fryer now lives where armed soldiers were sent to protect them. Not a Negro of my father's was implicated, though one of the ringleaders had a wife there and was later hanged in Clinton. This same Negro said that it would not do for any of my father's Negroes to know about the conspiracy. If I could see you I could tell you more about the matter. I guess I have written a good deal that you can't understand, and if you could it would not be of much interest to you. If you will let me hear from you about anything particular that you want to know I will write telling you if I can. I will send all of my Hollingsworth papers for you to examine. Hoping you will be able to understand my disconnected letter, I will close.

I wish I was able to write it over, but I'm not able to do so. **end**



**Your true and humble friend, William A. Faison
B., 1821.....D., 1903**

ONE OR TWO AMENS FOR THE FALLEN

MICKI COTTLE

Memorial Day has always fit so richly in our lives; like an old familiar tune that dances in our head and brings a smile to our lips, enfolding us in memories of times long past.

As a child I remember thinking the place and the services only another one of those solemn Baptist affairs held at a country church in Prince William County, Virginia. I thought the backdrop of grassy hillsides and chirping birds were just for the dead.

Now I know it wasn't that way at all. It was more than a yearly ritual for the dead. It was a reverence for the living that we observed in memory of all those fallen young men who left home one day to do their duty, and never came back. It was a memorial to all those who fought in wars they little understood. It was a yearly reminder that we needed to pay homage to the lives that once walked these paths.

I can remember sitting on a rickety lawn chair surrounded by friends and family, all of us straining our eyes to see in the bright Virginia sunshine, that floated around us like an ocean of heat, fanning furiously with church bulletins or funeral home fans.

Our Choir Director, always began the service on a dramatic note. She would purse her lips and motion us to silence with her small baton; we stood erect, heads up, singing, a little off-key, (which must have pained her), The Battle Hymn of the Republic; America, and her favorite song in the universe, "Amazing Grace."

I can just see Miss Jessie, dressed in her silky-chartreuse dress, with her matching (Easter) hat, rakishly tilted, shading her plum cheeks and serious blue eyes. Under that unforgiving sun she stood, as she had stood for as long as I could remember, never missing a Memorial Day. Totally inspired, totally dedicated, a grand witness to us that temporary physical discomfort was a small sacrifice indeed, on such a special day as this.

Floating over the sea of graves and settling gently over our heads, her lovely soprano voice echoed sweetly. She recited some history, and

took us back in time to the "War Between the States," reminding us that remembering the dead was far more than just a formal obligation. The older folks shook their heads in agreement. And there must have been one or two; "Amens."

Someone, usually a local pastor, retold the story of how, in the spring of 1866, a group of young women in Columbus Mississippi, visited the graves of Confederate soldiers at a local cemetery. While there, they carefully placed flowers on Union graves as well, an act of charity that prompted the creation of a national day of healing-Memorial Day.

Following his message, delivered with all the gusto of a modern day Abe Lincoln, there would be more singing. (Baptists believe in making a joyful noise.) Then came the long closing prayer. And in the stillness, the wind seemed to whisper, "remember me, remember," as it flowed and stirred the leaves of the sugar maples that surrounded the cemetery like ancient warriors. And for that moment, we were transfixed; and time stood still in that historical city of the dead.

After the services, the grownups embraced and hugged the children so tightly we struggled to escape. Everyone strolled slowly past the graves, admiring the fresh flowers, carefully reaching out to trace the inscriptions with their fingertips. "Father of" "Son of," wounded in the battle of Fredericksburg; "Devoted Son; Rest in Peace." Messages gently carved long ago, still speaking, begging to be remembered.

We eventually followed a rocky, flag-lined path to waiting cars ready to whisk us quickly away from this quiet place to yet another sanctuary, Triangle Baptist Church, and the promise of dinner on the grounds.

Dinner on the grounds, with fried chicken and iced tea that was so rich and black and sweet it would almost make you sick. So cold it sent daggers of sharp pains through your head if you gulped it down, and we did.

These days when I ride around the counties and see the neglect in so many of our country cemeteries, some gone as though they never existed, many simply forgotten; I wonder if it is true that civilizations are closely judged by the way they honor their dead? If they are what does that say about us?

Then I remember Memorial Days long past,

friends long gone. I see an endless sea of faces, names; and I see the spirit of dear Miss Jessie, standing straight and tall in her bright silk dress, eyes lifted to heaven, directing a multitude of off-key voices, filling the air with sweet strains of "Amazing Grace."

And I am somewhat relieved knowing that in a certain Memorial cemetery in Virginia, the past and the future are part of the present. The veterans who rest there would always receive the honor that is their due.

I don't think Miss Jessie would ever have it any other way...

WHAT OUR READERS SAY

Thank you so much. I received the April Issue and it's great! from just skimming the pages as they printed. Now for the serious reading! My great grandmother is from the Autry family, a cousin to Micajah somehow. **Thanks. Barb**

Oh, how ironic that you have just completed the Faircloth article. I have worked on the Faircloth history for about 30 years and am just updating some new births, etc. I will sure compare your information with mine as you have my whole family in there!!

I look forward to meeting all of you at the next meeting and joining the group. I have written several history books and would love to see one done on Sampson County, if not already done.

Christy Judah

This week I received the latest copy of the Sampson County, NC Historical Society Newsletter called the "Huckleberry Historian". I have been a member of this group for many years and have thoroughly enjoyed my membership. The latest edition has a very good article about Newton Grove, NC. The article tells how the town came about and some of the history of the area.

Mr. Wrench thanks for the reminder. I really enjoy reading the newsletter although I have never lived in Sampson Co. I lived in Bladen Co. about 60 Years ago, I learn every time I read the newsletter. You are doing a great job. Thank you, **G. E. Conley.**

Thank you. Use the address hobbsr_1@frontier.com . I enjoy reading the Huckleberry Historian. You all put a lot of time and effort into each issue. I have a suggestion for the newslet-

ter. How about adding an "In Search Of" section for people who are doing genealogical research? I have been trying for years to locate Sampson County Hobbses related to me. I am quite sure our lineage is from Sampson County but I cannot make the connection I need. I am a member of several genealogical search services but they have not made the connection either.

Kent enclosed is a check for my subscription renewal. I enjoy the magazine and look forward to its arrival. Nadine has been very helpful when I order books, and I will miss her. **Marion Godwin Smith**

Picture collection: John Aman, a society member, has many unidentified photos and about 200 others with names. He is willing to share these at no charge. Many are over 100 years old and most picture individuals or groups from upper Sampson or lower Johnston Counties. **John Aman**

continued from page 5

a few artifacts (spikes, rails, bolts and nuts) can still be found. This line had junctions that led to timber tracts on either side. There are other areas of the county where artifacts of the rail line have been discovered.

It would be extremely interesting to see a map of all the lines that webbed the eight townships mentioned. The last rail service was in 1928. I can not determine if timber was still being harvested in 1928 or maybe this was only a freight line or both.

Knowledge about this era of the dummy trains is now almost extinct from our modern world. By the late 1920s, many of the tracts of timber acquired by the big mills had been cut out, leaving tangled thickets of second growth hardwoods, mixed with a few pine seedlings. Today the only evidence that this big time logging ever took place is an occasional fat lighter stump and a few artifacts left behind.

Sources: The book "Sawdust Empire;" Sampson County Heritage book; oral history from Anthony & George Barefoot; Jerome Tew letter; business brochure Bobby Carr.

THREE HUNDRED YEARS OF WRENCHES

Review by Jerome Tew

Dear Wrench Cousins, I have published a book titled: "Three Hundred Years of Wrenches" The book is hard back, the dimension are 8 ½ X 11 inches and contains 478 pages. The first 140 pages contain over 50 pictures and illustrations with stories about people, churches, schools, tar & turpentine and more. The remainder of the book is genealogy of over 300 years of the Wrench Family coming from VA to NC.

If you are interested in a copy you can pick one up at my home for \$25.00 or I will mail it to you for \$30.00. These prices barely cover publishing and handling cost. Phone # 910 567 6528; Address 2821 Wrench Road Godwin NC, 28344.

Review

In reading and reviewing this book, I find that Kent Wrench is kin to everyone. There are stories, cemeteries, photos, preacher trails and tales, huckleberry woods, cemetery plots, tar makers, marriages, dead men walking, and land lots. Also wills and stills and biographical trills. There is also a lake, heroic soldiers, snap shots, brides to be, and even an old pine tree.

I like the index...because Kent includes the YOB. That allows you to make a positive ID on who you want to locate.

The Genealogy section covers about 250 pages and the text program provides key cousins and their family. Some families have an eleven generation connection back into history. However, the program also list some links with females in the generation links. The program makes you work harder to verify those eleven generations with female names.

This book is good reading on Sampson kin and is a great blessing to those families named in this book. This book is a great valve for those who research their ancestors in Sampson.

LIST OF STUDENTS/SALEM ACADEMY FALL TERM/1885

Submitted by Jerome Tew



Salem High School, Marion Butler principle-date unknown

Name	Course	Residence
Barbrey, A. M.	Teachers',	Hobton,
Butler G. E	Preparatory,	Huntley,
Butler, Lester F.	Primary, 2nd grade,	Huntley,
Butler, H. W.	Academic,	Huntley,
Butler, J. E.	Teachers',	Warrensville,
Butler, Bias	Primary, 1st grade,	Huntley,
Butler, Wade, H.	Intermediate,	Huntley,
Butler Reddin	Academic,	Huntley,
Cooper, Ammon	Academic,	Huntley,
Cooper, Luke	Academic,	Huntley,
Cooper, Junie	Primary. 2nd grade,	Huntley,
Cooper, Frank	Primary, 2nd grade,	Huntley,
Cooper, Howard	Academic,	Huntley,
Fisher, W. J.	Teachers',	Huntley,
Hales, R. A.	Teachers',	Dismal,
Harris, T. H.	Business,	Owensville,
Harris A. B.	Academic,	Owensville,
Howard, H. B.	Preparatory,	Huntley,
Lockerman, Ferdie	Primary,	Huntley,
Lockerman, P. B.	Intermediate,	Huntley,
Royall, F. M.	Teachers',	Huntley,
Royal, Amma	Teachers',	Huntley,
Royall, A. E.	Academic,	Huntley,
Tew, Kelly	Intermediate,	Huntley,
Williams, Charles	Academic,	Dismal,
Williams, J. T.	Academic,	Dismal,
Williams, W. E.	Academic,	Dismal,
Autry, Myrtle	Intermediate,	Huntley,
Autry, Bettie A.	Primary, 2nd grade,	Huntley,
Butler, Mittie D.	Primary, 1st grade	Huntley,
Mathews, Minnie	Primary, 2nd grade,	Dismal,
Royal, Ida J.	Primary, 2nd grade,	Huntley,
Sessoms, Lenna J.	Primary, 2nd grade,	Owensville,

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NEXT QUARTERLY MEETING SATURDAY, JULY 14TH , 2:00 PM

We meet at the Piggly Wiggly Restaurant
Located in the Jordan Shopping Center (bus. 701) Clinton, NC.
The meeting room is upstairs.

Debra Westbrook

WILL BE OUR SPEAKER FOR OUR JULY 14TH MEETING.

She is an active member of the Harper House Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy and plans to speak to us about their chapter and the national organization, as well.