

Albemarle Stories

(Editor's Note: The following article of local interest first appeared in the Durham Morning Herald on December 28, 1981.)

By Betty Hodges

Thomas B. Wood works on the attorney general's staff in Raleigh by day but by night he finds a quiet corner in his Raleigh home, pulls out a legal pad and retreats into the past in fiction of his own creating.

Times Printing Co. of Manteo has just published his first book, *Plantation Tales of Albemarle* (108 pp. \$4.95), a paperback collection of three tales set in his native Edenton where the sense of the past is so strong it left its mark on his imagination.

"I grew up at Athol Plantation on Albemarle Sound," Wood said in a telephone interview last week, "there and at Mulberry Hill which I still own and continue to restore."

THE FAMILIARITY with the past as embodied in the two old Chowan plantations stayed in his mind, he said, long after he'd finished law school at the University of North Carolina, married and settled to live in Raleigh.

It had something to do, too, with his enrollment as an undergraduate at UNC in the late Jessie Rehder's creating writing classes, and with his hobby of collecting old books, particularly in the field of North Caroliniana.

Southern Gothic is his field, he said, and when he reads it's "things like Rebecca, Victor Hugo's works, anything dark and brooding."

THE PREFERENCE has left its mark on his own prose, which is flowery and romantic.

The first of his stories is that of Richard Benbury and its intertwined between his own Mulberry Hill and Benbury Plantation just outside Edenton. It is, of course, a tragic story, told in first person and involving a stormy evening's

visitation witnessed by a 16-year-old.

The second is built around a mysterious unfortunate whose mother's widowhood scarred his life and thwarted his happiness with the one woman he ventured to love.

AND THE LAST is the journal entry of one Edward Paxton, a fanciful explanation of how "each man kills the thing he loves" then must live on in miserable atonement.

The three stories were written as he writes all his stories, Wood said, in longhand on the legal pad that is a natural tablet for him.

"I'm not smart enough to do it on a typewriter," he said. "Sometimes I type a little bit but usually I hire it done."

THE SUBJECT of his concentration now, he said, is another collection of Chowan tales which "aren't quite finished" and need some polishing.

There are diversions, he admitted. He is active in the Edenton Historical Commission and has himself recently organized the Edenton Historical Foundation Inc., which will occupy itself with raising funds for the protection and restoration of endangered properties in the town.

But his long range goal, he said, is a book on the fight to control the ports of North Carolina during the Civil War. It makes his interests all of a piece.

Repairs Begin

WILMINGTON — Structural maintenance and repairs of Coinjock Bridge are scheduled to begin January 12 and continue through January 22.

For the first four days, January 12 through January 15, the bridge will be closed to both water and highway traffic for five hours each day from 10 A.M. to 3 P.M.

During the second week, January 18 through January 22

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...OR ICE SKATE AT OWN RISK! — The above sign behind the Edenton Municipal Building seems a little out of place, due to the frozen Albemarle Sound behind it. A recent cold front hit Edenton with all its fury, dropping temperatures around the zero degrees mark.

Amburn Reappointed To Post

L. F. Amburn, Jr., editor and publisher of The Chowan Herald, has been reappointed to the N. C. State University School of Agriculture and Life Sciences Advisory Council. Amburn's original term expired in 1981.

Dean J. E. Legates said Amburn's reappointment is in the school's plan to maintain a continuing position for the state advisory council.

"We are most grateful to you for the energetic leadership which you have given our total agricultural program," Dean Legates wrote Amburn. "It has meant much to our Extension Service and personnel, as well as our entire school."

Amburn is serving his third year as chairman of

the 10-member state council, which has more than 60,000 volunteer leaders across the state. He said he is pleased that Dean Legates recognized the need for linkage between the lay organization and the school.

"... your continued support of the Advisory Leadership System encourages us all to give a little bit more to spread the message," Amburn wrote Dean Legates in accepting reappointment.

Amburn also serves as secretary of the National Extension Advisory Council and as chairman of the National Extension Committee of the U. S. Department of Agriculture's Joint Council on Food and Agricultural Sciences.

"Most people judge men only by success or by fortune," La Rochefoucauld

Sailing Club To Hold Organizational Meeting Jan. 21

An organizational meeting for a new community-wide sailing club will be held on Jan. 21 at 7:30 P. M. at John A. Holmes High School. The purpose of the club will be to promote the sport of sailing through sailing classes, racing and recreational day sailing in small sail boats less than 20 feet in length.

The club will be open to anyone interested in sailing from ages 8 to 80, and will be organized in three divisions: a youth division for youth up through 8th grade; a junior division for young people up to age 18; and a senior

division for all above 18 years of age. Membership will be open to individuals and families.

The new club is an outgrowth of a sailing club started several years ago at Holmes High School for Holmes students. It is hoped that more interest and participation will be generated by expanding the club to include all segments of the community.

Interested persons need not own a sailboat in order to be a member. The club will have available for instruction and use two

Tanzer 16 and two Gram-pian 17 fiberglass daysailers. Direction for the club will be provided by a Board of Directors consisting of a representative from the Edenton Yacht Club, Tanzer Yachts, Inc., and the Edenton Optimist Club. Additional information may be obtained by contacting Gil Burroughs at 482-2624.



EMPLOYEE OF THE QUARTER — John H. Bond, left, was recently announced as Seabrook's Employee of the Quarter by manager Robert Halsey, right. With the award goes a \$50 savings certificate and dinner for two.

Centralized School Menus

Edenton-Chowan Schools have released the following lunchroom menus for the week January 18-22.

Monday — Chilled juice, assorted cereals, milk. Pork with gravy, whipped potatoes, green beans, apple sauce, rolls and milk.

Tuesday — Chilled juice, doughnut and milk. Fish 'n cheese on bun, cole slaw, french fries, pineapple and milk.

Wednesday — Chilled

juice, cheese toast and milk. Meat loaf with gravy, steamed rice, mixed vegetables, pears, rolls and milk.

Thursday — Chilled juice, sausage link, buttered grits, and milk. Beef vegetable soup, sandwiches, crackers, peach cobbler and milk.

Friday — Apple sauce, cinnamon toast, and milk. Roast turkey with dressing, giblet gravy, cranberry sauce, candied yams, green peas, rolls and milk.

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Facts About The BIBLE BY JOHN LEHTI
TO MAKE A LIVING — PICK UP STICKS!
AS IN EVERY PERIOD THROUGHOUT THE WORLD'S HISTORY, THE POOR AND NEEDY OUTNUMBERED THE WEALTHY AND MIDDLECLASS IN BIBLICAL TIMES — ESPECIALLY IN THE CITIES! THOSE WITHOUT A FAMILY BUSINESS, OR SOME SMALL PLOT OF LAND ON WHICH TO GROW FOOD, WERE HARD PUT TO EKE OUT AN EXISTENCE! ONE MEAGER METHOD BY WHICH A POOR MAN COULD MANAGE TO SUBSIST, WAS GATHERING TWIGS FOR FIREWOOD. IN A PLACE LIKE JERUSALEM, IT WAS AT A PREMIUM FOR NONE COULD BE FOUND IN THE CITY, AND THE OUTLYING AREAS BORDERED OF VERY LITTLE MORE! EVERY STICK AND TWIG THAT LAY ON THE FLOOR OF THE KIDRON VALLEY EVERY FALLING BRANCH FROM THE OLIVE TREES ON THE MOUNT ABOVE, WAS POUNCED UPON. THE WOOD-GATHERERS SPENT LONG, BACK-BREAKING HOURS AT THIS TASK. FINALLY TO CARRY THEIR HEAVY BUNDLES IN A WEARY CLIMB UP THE HILL TO THE CITY, DURING THE DIM TWILIGHT AT THE END OF DAY — THERE, TO BARGAIN WITH SOME ANXIOUS HOUSEWIFE NEEDFULLY OF WOOD TO COOK THE EVENING MEAL OR TO WARM THE HOUSE AGAINST A CHILLY NIGHT!
PERHAPS THE OLIVE GROVES WERE THE BEST PLACES FOR WOOD GATHERING, ALTHOUGH IT DID MEAN A LONG TRUDGE DOWN INTO THE KIDRON VALLEY AND A HARD CLIMB UP THE MOUNT OF OLIVES TO GET THERE! BUT WHEN THE TREES WERE PRUNED, ALL FALLEN TIMBER BELONGED TO THE WOOD-GATHERERS, FOR THIS CAME UNDER THE MOSES' LAW OF GLEANING AS STATED IN DEUT. 24:19-21. LIFE WAS HARD FOR THE POOR BUT AT LEAST THESE LAWS GAVE THEM SOME HELP!
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