

Historical Sketch Of Laurinburg

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son and one of the founders and trustees of Laurinburg male and female high school. The large residence formerly owned by H. O. Covington, 8 miles east on the new highway, was owned by Mr. T. T. Covington for several years. Later he built a store by the side of the road which is now Main street, between the Burlington drug store and McDuffie's boarding house. This store was a plain boarded up house with wide boards, stripped up and down. It was set parallel with the street, the eaves on one side dripping in the street. Mr. Covington's farming interests demanding all of his time, he gave up the store business to his son-in-law, Capt. L. T. Everett, who formed a partnership with his brother, later, involving at one time or another besides Capt. Lawrence T. Everett, Capt. W. I. Everett, Mr. J. C. Everett and Mr. John Everett. Later the business required larger quarters and they bought the lot now owned by Mr. J. F. McNair, and built there, where they enjoyed an unusual prosperity for a number of years.

In the meantime, James L. McCullum came up from Wilmington and bought two frame (wooden) stores under one roof where the First National Bank is now, and he conducted in the corner the most unique drug store probably ever conducted in North Carolina. He was a man of great affability, who would not break into any interesting conversation to make a sale, and seemed to feel that his whole duty was done when he told suffering humanity that he had ordered the drugs demanded by them, and was not the least confused if the customer came every day for several weeks to enquire. He would most politely inform the customer that it was past his explanation why the goods had not come, but he was expecting them in on every train.

It seems that Mr. McCullum prospered, for in 1867 he bought that valuable property known as the McCullum lands for the sum of \$200, taking deed July 3, 1867. It would also seem from that deed that the store owned by McCullum had been owned by John A. and Nell A. Carr, prior to McCullum's purchase thereof.

In the early years there was a turpentine distillery owned by McCullum & McLean just east of the residence of Mrs. W. D. James, on Railroad street, and the ruins can now be found in the ground there by a little excavating.

The first evidence of an intelligent attempt to procure a town seems to be recorded in a deed from Col. J. C. McLean, wherein on Dec. 30, 1862, he conveyed to B. W. & W. L. Berry for \$14,837.50 practically all the lands between the McCullum lands, Main street and out to the boundaries of what was afterwards the Roper farm. This deed is registered in Book V, at pages 208, etc., and in it is a reservation for Main street in the following words: "Excepting a street to be left open, beginning at the corner of the warehouse and runs south 21 1-2 west 24 chains (1584 ft.) to a stake; thence north 23 1-2 west 68 feet; thence north 21 1-2 east to said railroad; thence to the beginning." There was previous reference in the deed to the Wilmington, Charlotte and Rutherfordton Railroad, now the Seaboard Air Line, hence "said railroad," and the warehouse was the freight depot then just east of Main street.

During the Civil War the railroad moved its shops here to get away from danger of seizure by federal armies besieging Fort Fisher near Wilmington. A deed from J. C. McLean to Robert H. Cowan, president W. C. & R. R. E. Jan. 23, 1867, for that portion of land now vacant north of the two S. A. L. depots and including the old L. & S. depot, would indicate that they did not decide to locate permanently here and expand, until about that date. The shops were located here under stress and fear, for temporary purposes, and there was, from the first, the insistent danger of immediate removal, which hovered over this town until 1894, when the final decision took the shops away. During all these years the fear of disaster should the shops move, was so apparent that even those who were able to build largely and permanently, refused to do so; or as one of our citizens put it when his contractor told him he was planning a home he did not want, the owner said: "Build it so that if the shops leave and my business should be so crippled that I shall have to go too, I will lose as little as possible in selling out." (This home has been remodelled and is one of the most attractive in town today.) This indicates what an insistent presence of the shops was, with the insistent threat of removal.

When the shops left in 1894, property values slumped, and low cotton added to the depression, until improved property could be bought at barely more than the raw material would cost to construct the buildings thereon. But this was only temporary. The prospects of disaster were soon turned into prospects of hope, and workers for the future. Now industries spring up until our pay roll soon far outstripped what it was, with the railroad shops here, and now there is also a dividend return from these enterprises that finds its way into the pockets of our people, and prosperity is more than a hundred fold what it was from all industrial sources prior to the removal of the railroad shops.

The railroad which is now a part of the Seaboard Air Line was short-cut to the Wilmington, Charlotte & Rutherfordton R. R., and secured large subscriptions from private parties, counties, towns and townships along its line. Quite a number of brightly illustrated bonds and certificates of stock, found their way into the hands of our people, but the road was run for the benefit of the

promoters and not for the good of the public or the stockholders, and these certificates and bonds became worthless. Later the line was changed to Carolina Central Railroad, and the debt and stock of the old organization was separated from the property.

The first depot was a long structure, built shortly before the Civil War on the north side of the track just on the east of Main street. It was burned setting fire to the wooden store building of Bissell and Roper located where is now the old Bissell hotel or Hall, the colored hotel of the town at present. The depot was rebuilt on the south side of the track, just across the track from the old location, and remained there for some while, when it was also burned. The next building was at what is now known as the Old Depot, and still stands, 400 yards west of Main street, used as a private warehouse. This location was selected because of the need for more room for the shops, and to get such a member as to fire out of the shop yards. The town never liked the location, and as soon as the shops were moved, agitation began to secure return of the depot to a site near Main street, which was finally successful about 1904.

During the Civil War the management of the railroad system was transferred to Laurinburg, and one of the principal officers remodelled the building formerly the Laurinburg high school building into a residence and lived in it. The offices of the manager and president were removed shortly after the war, to Wilmington again.

The firm of Bissell and Roper was composed of Col. J. T. Roper and A. F. Bissell, which operated on a large scale shortly after the close of the war. It extended its credit so widely that they soon went into bankruptcy, and liquidated. McCaskill & McLean was another partnership operating shortly after the civil war and successfully until the death of Mr. McLean. It was composed of Red McCaskill and James Dickson McLean. Mr. McCaskill conducted the business some years, but finally liquidated without leaving much surplus. James and McLean were successful merchants from 1885 to about 1891 when they dissolved. Mr. Red McLean going into farming extensively and Mr. A. L. James into banking. McCaskill & Robbins succeeded them, both of whom are now dead.

Mr. R. E. Lee opened here near the same period and also Mr. E. D. Phillips, who after a long career retired from the mercantile field and each is extensively engaged in farming. There were a number of smaller concerns located here and doing a more or less successful business, during the period, including the two McKays, Messrs. M. G. McKay and A. Kaye, Messrs. M. G. McKay and A. McAllister, and Will Cameron, and others, not to mention any that are now in business to speak for themselves.

Schools

Early in the fifties Dr. John Malley and others purchased lands for the Laurinburg high school, and there was built the old high school building, consisting of one main hall 85 feet square on each end, connecting by rolling or folding doors so that the whole floor space could be opened into one auditorium. Here were held the celebrations at school commencement and in honor of events such as the completion of the railroad to town, political speechmaking not in the interest of a political party etc., and was also used for preaching. One of the participants has often told me of a brilliant assembly there on the occasion of a railroad celebration, when there was speech making much of the day and a big ball at night, with old time dancing all night. She was unable to tell what was the character of the celebration whether to get the people to put their hard earned money into the road, or to celebrate success in financing it, or in building it to this point, but as it was opened about that time, it must have been held to celebrate the completion of the road to this place.

The participant said she was just building into womanhood at the time. When she told me, in later life, she always took great pains to say that the dancing of that day was not the glide walks common at the time she spoke, but the square dance, the Virginia reel and the stately minuet, wherein personal contact was of the finger tips only.

This school had a steward's hall, now the residence occupied by Mr. A. M. Fairly, with a set of dormitories of four rooms (two stories) just to the rear and a little to the west of the Fairly residence. This latter was moved east and remodelled into a residence by adding a kitchen and an ell and perhaps a room. A catalogue recently found and published elsewhere in this issue shows that in 1854 this was a prosperous school for that day. It seems to have been in debt, as usual with such enterprises, and before 1858 it had been sold to one A. F. Gage, who was from the north, and was principal of the school for some time. He lived until recent years, and was a teacher of note, and author of text books, one of which is Gage's Physics, which has been in use in many of our southern schools. The Civil War closed the school permanently. Later the school property was purchased by H. County of Wilmington, and held by him until Mr. Quakenbush bought it about 1898, with a few weeks ownership by L. T. Everett, Esq., in the meantime.

After the Civil War, there was no school here worthy of the community for some years, and the boys of the town went four miles to Calabogie, where J. T. John and Peter McNair were founding a school of high grade for the special benefit of their own families. In the summer of 1877 I was at work on the farm of my father, when a horseman rode into the field. It proved to be Charles E. Smith hunting a school, prospecting for the school at Calabogie, which was being financed by my father and

uncle. My father told Mr. Smith that that school was supplied for the coming term, but that Laurinburg ought to have a school, and for him to see Col. J. T. Roper, one of the school committee (the others being L. T. Everett and J. T. John) and if he approved, together to see Capt. Roper, and whatever they said agree upon would be ratified by him and perhaps a school could be opened here. The project was a success, and Mr. Smith opened and taught school here two years, the second year moving to the old Laurinburg high school building then cut up into rooms and used for a residence. Smith gave up the school at the end of that year, and the place was advertising for a teacher or teachers. Prof. W. G. Quakenbush visited the town early in the summer, and finally decided to try his lot here, and opened school, 1879, in the old high school building with Mr. H. W. Malloy, assistant. The school was a success from the start, and enjoyed the perfect confidence and loyal support of the community for twenty-one years, when Professor Quakenbush resigned, and sold his property. The tribute paid Professor Quakenbush in the erection of the monument in front of the court house is said to be entirely unique, in that there is not anywhere else in the world, so far as known, a public monument, in a public place, erected by public subscription, to a private school teacher. There are monuments or grave markers, in cemeteries, and public monuments to public school teachers; but it is said there is no monument in a public place, by public subscription to a private school teacher, save this one. That this community should place such estimate upon a teacher has been the eulogistic comment of speaker after speaker, not only in this section, but even beyond the limits of this section. Some years ago in conversation with seat mate on a train from Memphis to Little Rock, I mentioned this monument. It happened that I was talking to one of the judges of the state of Arkansas, who was on his way to a celebration of

THE SCOTLAND COUNTY SAVINGS BANK

Twenty Years' Operation Shows Deposits Increased From \$60,000 to \$225,000

The importance of savings accounts is shown by the fact that the United States government, along with those of most other leading nations of the world, has provided a plan by which the person who wishes to lay aside a small amount of money may do so by depositing it with the post-office department. This undertaking on the part of the government is chiefly to promote the practice of thrift and saving—virtues most sorely needed among large numbers of people in these days.

The best method of saving, however, is through the savings bank of the community, in which one lives. Not only is a higher rate of interest paid than is offered by the government savings agencies, but the money saved is kept in the community where it is earned, and is put to use by the savings bank for the community. In very rare instances are there any examples of losses to depositors in savings banks, and these instances are becoming more rare with the passing of the years. Strict state supervision has made savings banks almost as safe as the government itself, and the safety of the average savings bank is no longer a question of doubt with most practical people.

Laurinburg is fortunate in having a splendid savings institution in the Scotland County Savings Bank. Closely allied with the First National, the Scotland Savings is under the same general management and has the advantage of the experience and ability of the men who have made such a pronounced success of the First National. Beginning business in 1904, with a capital of \$10,000, it now has a capital of \$15,000, with surplus and undivided profits of \$12,000. Deposits have grown from \$60,000 during the first year's operation to \$225,000 at the present time. This wonderful success of the Scotland County Savings Bank has been due to the conservative but aggressive policy pursued by the management, which is composed of some of the leading business men of the county. A. L. James is president, Hinton James, is cashier, and W. R. Middleton is assistant cashier. Mr. James is a farmer of extensive holdings, and is also interested in mill enterprises. Mr. H. James, who is one of the best known and most successful cotton merchants in the state, is a director of the Chamber of Commerce, and a leading member of the Presbyterian church. He is in active charge of the bank, and has been untiring in his efforts to build it up to its present position of strength. His judgment is sought and highly valued on the matter of investments, property values, and the like, by persons in all lines of business in Laurinburg. Mr. Middleton is a Mason, a Moose, and a member of the Chamber of Commerce.

All members of the staff of the Scotland County Savings Bank are wide-awake, progressive men, fully interested in the growth and progress of the city and county.

C. E. PATRICK

Laurinburg Radiator Specialist Does Work for Entire Section and District Points

When a man makes a specialty of one line of activity, there are two advantages that he has over the man who does general work in a wider field. In the first place, he develops a degree of skill in his undertaking that is scarcely possible to the man who does general work, and thus turns out a higher class of work. In the second place, he builds up a reputation that becomes wider and

more permanently established every year, thus attracting patronage that otherwise would be indifferently handled by the average workman in his line.

These advantages in favor of the specialist are strikingly illustrated by the success that has attended the efforts of C. E. Patrick, radiator specialist of Laurinburg. Beginning business in 1918, Mr. Patrick began to specialize on radiator work of all kinds, with the result that practically his entire attention is now devoted to that important phase of automobile work. He is recognized as one of the best equipped men in this section of the country for the proper handling of radiators, and his work is all fully guaranteed. The machinery and equipment used in his establishment is of the latest and most improved design. One of the most recently installed pieces of machinery is an acetylene welding outfit, which is proving quite satisfactory and is aiding materially in the work that comes to the Patrick establishment. This outfit is used for the proper welding that may be necessary in any part of automobile work, and all the work that can conveniently be handled is being received for this machine.

Occupying a splendidly equipped shop, containing more than 1500 square feet of floor space, the Patrick establishment employs two experts in the handling of the large and growing patronage coming to the plant. The work has become so well known that a great deal of radiator work is done for persons quite a distance away from Laurinburg, some of it being shipped as far as Long Island. Repairs for Ford cars, and Ford parts are also handled by this concern. The local agency for the famous Tyree Copper Core for radiators, fully guaranteed and backed by a \$25,000 bond, is handled by him and a splendid business is done in this department.

C. E. Patrick, the proprietor, is one of the leading automobile men of this section. He is well known, and has friends by the score. He is active in the affairs of the Chamber of Commerce, and is a member of the Methodist church. He is enthusiastic in his loyalty to his home town of Laurinburg, and is always ready to assist in the promotion of its growth and development.

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