

HIGH LIGHTS IN THE EIGHTIES

The Stalwart Men of Forty Years Ago Who Laid the Foundations for the Laurinburg of Today.

(By ARCHIBALD JOHNSON)

In the year 1888 the writer took up his residence in Laurinburg where he lived for seven years. It was not much of a town then for size, but among the citizens were some as big and brainy as the present leaders in the social, business and religious life of the town.

There were no factories. There was not a paved street in the town. The Carolina Central Railroad shops were the chief industry within the corporate limits, though outside these limits, especially that section bordering on the South Carolina line, the farming interest was highly developed, and was, as it still is, one of the largest factors in the solid growth of the town.

But it is not my purpose to dwell on the material resources that lent their aid to the remarkable development of the town, so much as to remind the readers of The Exchange of the men of 40 years ago who were large factors in laying the foundations of the progressive Laurinburg of the present.

I cannot mention them all for I have neither the time nor the space at my command, but a few of the outstanding figures in the leadership of the town come trooping to memory as I write. The two prominent firms doing a "time" business in the early eighties were McCaskill and McLean and Everett Brothers and Gill. Mr. Rod McCaskill, never noted for his personal pulchritude, was one of the noblest characters in the town. He was honest as the day was long, a man of fine intelligence and a devout and consecrated Christian. His partner, Dickson McLean, was also a man of the highest integrity, of unflinching energy and sterling character. This old and honored firm served the surrounding section for many years. Lawrence Everett, the head of the other principal firm in the town, came of a family of merchants, and he was not by any means the least talented of the family. His partner, Washington Gill, was a quiet, modest man. This old and honored concern was highly prosperous and commanded a tremendous patronage.

Scattered along between these two big establishments, were a score or more of smaller stores eagerly reaching out for the dollars of the passing throng. Several of these merchants were successful, some of whom are

still useful and progressive citizens of Laurinburg.

Among the cash and thirty-day stores, E. R. Lee and Phillips and McDougald probably commanded the largest trades, though Malcom and Armasan McKay, pioneer merchants, did a thriving business for many years.

A unique figure in the business life of Laurinburg in the eighties was Lock Monroe, who though retired from active business, is still living, and may be long live to enjoy the fruits of his honest toil.

Phillips and McDougald, known in town as Bob and Dan, were diligent in business but also extremely fond of music. On one Saturday Lock Monroe had some urgent business with the members of the firm and dropped into the store. He inquired of the clerks as to the whereabouts of the boss. "They're in the back room looking over a new song book," was the reply. "O, yes," said Lock, "I can take a hymn book and lead Phillips and McDougald to Hamlet."

Among the business men of the town there was another very unusual man. In his early manhood he was severely wounded and his lower limbs were paralyzed. He occupied a small brick shop, some eight feet wide and 15 feet long, and repaired clocks and watches. Handicapped as he was, he made a good living and provided well for his family. He was the most sunny tempered man in town. His neighbors with the blues went to him for relief—and found it. He was a magnet and men flocked around him to catch the happy spirit that exuded from him as light streams from a lamp. He is dead long ago, but to the last he maintained his sunny, joyous temper. He was the optimist of the town and his name was Archie Clark.

A. L. James and Tom Gill, who have made the First National Bank a great financial institution, were young men getting ready for their large and useful career of their later manhood.

Jim and Bill Fields and "Cuffy" James, since then prominent and prosperous citizens, were then in their teens laying the foundation for their subsequent success.

Old Capt. James Maginn, master mechanic of the railroad shops, and Dave Everett, fine mimic and ball fellow well met with everybody, and Bob Clark and Sam Hunter and George Goodwyn and John McDougald—all railroad men, besides a hundred others, were useful and loyal builders of the town.

In the professions who among us will ever forget Dr. Prince who wore worthily his royal name, and his partner, old Dr. Dickson, limping along to bring cheer and comfort to his patients. These ministers of mercy bore a great part in the mak-

ing of the town. And Dr. Hamer was another, wearing the smile that never wore away.

Walter H. Neal began the practice of law in Laurinburg and is there yet, though for several years he served ably and well on the bench. Evan D. Cameron was another limb of the law who afterwards became a distinguished minister, and John D. Shaw, strong and promising, who died in the prime of his manhood, and Charles W. Tillett, famous Charlotte lawyer. This was years before Laurinburg became a county seat.

Rev. John H. Coble was the faithful pastor of the Presbyterian church, then so little, now so large. Mr. Coble was greatly beloved, and gave the richest years of his life to the spiritual betterment of the town. The words of the Psalmist come to mind when I think of Mr. Coble: "Thy gentleness hath made me great."

Dr. North was the first pastor of the Methodist church that I recall. Lyon, Culbreth and others that I do not remember served the church and laid the foundation of the splendid temple that adorns the most beautiful street in the town.

Rev. J. W. Wildman, a courteous Virginian, Rev. A. W. Price with a golden tongue, and Martin Luther Keeler, rugged and strong, were in charge of the Baptist church, during those eventful years.

Jesse D. Bundy and Tom Covington established the Exchange which, so far as I know, has never missed a week, except at Christmas, from then till now. Jesse has become one of the foremost preachers in the state and Tom is still in business (not running the Exchange, however) in the old town.

Laurinburg had a great teacher—a man of mighty power. He was much more than a teacher. He was counsellor, guide and friend! When his friends went astray he abused them; but without giving them offense; when they did well he loved them into doing better. Laurinburg built a monument to his memory, and in so doing brought imperishable honor to herself!

And there was Rod McRae, the gentle Christian, and Jim his brother, and the "Squire," their father, tall morally as he was physically, and Colonel Roper and Frank Blazell and Capt. Billy McLaurin and Key Ritch, who always brought to mind the lines:

"Under a spreading chestnut tree
The village smithy stands;
The smith a mighty man was he
With large and sinewy hands."
And good old "Squire Murphy and old man Ben Phillips, then a saloon keeper, but afterwards a Christian whom I had the pleasure of meeting at an association where he was a delegate from his church, and Murd McDuffie, and the Tata brothers and J. R. Jor-

L. & S. RAILROAD

Successful "Short Line" Has Meant Much to Laurinburg and Country Along Line

This late Senator Daniel, of Virginia, one of the great statesmen of the last generation, once called attention on the floor of the senate to the fact that mankind can create nothing, but can only move things already in existence. Applying this obvious truth, Senator Daniel remarked that every effort to improve and extend transportation facilities was along the line of man's highest endeavor, and deserved the support and assistance of all forward-looking people.

Not every community can be served by a through line of railroad, and herein lies the opportunity for what is known in railroad language as the "short line." Many of the shorter roads of the country are among its most important railroad undertakings, and are real servants of the public located along their lines.

In 1900 the Laurinburg & Southern Railroad Company was organized, and constructed a line thirty miles in length, extending through a fertile section from Johns to Rutherford. All along this line development has followed rapidly in the wake of the railway's construction. Its facilities mean much to all classes of people located upon and near the line, and the entire section is building up rapidly. Freight service is regular and frequent, and motor car passenger service is furnished. The company employs 37 persons, and is regarded as one of the state's most successful short lines of railway.

At the head of the road is James L. McNair, one of the leading merchants of Laurinburg. Mr. McNair is active manager of the operation of the road. Mr. John F. McNair is one of its chief owners. He is well known in the business community, and has huge farming interests in various sections of the country. The office of the company are located in Laurinburg, and Ed. Buchanan, and so many more that I am compelled to stop for lack of room.

These were the men who had a large hand in making Laurinburg the handsome, progressive and vigorous town it is today. And I have not said a word about the women who were as bright and beautiful and useful, though not so numerous, as those who brighten and bless the Laurinburg of 1924.

It has given me great pleasure to comply with the request of the editor to furnish an article for this issue of The Exchange, for it has recalled to my mind so many of the dear friends of my youth. Their memory will abide for—
"You may break, you may shatter the vase if you will
But the scent of the roses will hang 'round it still."

M. F. GILFEATHER

Popular Place Does High-Class Plumbing, Steam, Hot Water and Vapor Heating

The growing popularity of the various systems of heating for homes, business houses, and public buildings in the south has led to the establishment of first-class concerns for the installing of heating plants in most towns of consequence in this section.

The people of Laurinburg are fortunate in having one of the best equipped shops of this kind in the state. M. F. Gilfeather, recognizing the field long ago, established his plumbing and heating business in Laurinburg in 1916, and has been busily employed ever since in installing systems in the city and throughout the county. In addition to heating and plumbing work, which has heretofore been largely confined to the cities, Mr. Gilfeather has undertaken the installation of waterworks for many country homes, thus adding materially to the attractiveness and the comfort of country living. Throughout the county there are numbers of country homes which have been thoroughly equipped with water systems installed by this progressive concern.

In Laurinburg, practically all the heating work and a large proportion of the high-class plumbing done in the past fifteen years has been done by this establishment. Among the more important of the contracts handled by Gilfeather may be mentioned the plumbing and heating work in connection with the Laurinburg High School, the McNair Building, the J. L. McNair home, the Fletcher Building at McColl, S. C., the Gibson Graded School, the W. G. Bule home at Wagram, and many others. The concern employs from ten to twelve men regularly to care for the work coming to its plant. Both large and small work is handled by Gilfeather, and the same careful attention is given the smaller contracts that is bestowed on those undertakings involving thousands of dollars.

Mr. Gilfeather is an active and aggressive citizen. He is a member of the Chamber of Commerce. He is a firm believer in both Laurinburg and Scotland county. He is ready to support any movement looking toward the development of the city and county.

Coal is being mined in Spitzbergen in the Arctic.

In charge of operations is Mr. G. Y. Jones, assistant general manager, who has been connected with the road since its organization. Mr. Jones is active in the affairs of the Chamber of Commerce, and is a Shriner and a member of the Methodist church. He is a progressive citizen who is always interested in the growth of the community, as well as of the entire section served by his road.

M'Laurin & Shaw

Pure Food Products Handled by Popular Concern Have Drawn Extensive Patronage

One of the notable things about the grocery business is the fact that there are so many persons engaged in it. Everyone is a patron, to some extent of some grocery store; and it is necessary that there should be a large number of such establishments to take care of the needs of everybody. And it is remarkable how many men of limited ability can conduct grocery stores, and apparently make a living out of the business. Paraphrasing the old saying, it seems that the grocery business doesn't care who engages in it.

Notwithstanding this fact, there is always room for the efficiently conducted and carefully managed grocery store. Discriminating people are found in every community who are particular enough to demand that the grocer whom they patronize shall be of the better sort, giving close attention to the handling of his goods and to the quality of the products put out by his establishment.

Laurinburg housewives are fortunate in the opportunity they have to patronize an establishment of the character of that conducted by McLaurin & Shaw. Established twenty years ago, this firm has been long recognized as one of the best in the business, and one whose goods are of the best quality. Always carrying a complete line of fresh and palatable pure food products, the McLaurin & Shaw store is patronized by those who care. Its stock of groceries is kept in the most sanitary condition, and fresh supplies are constantly being received. In addition to its stock of staple and fancy groceries, produce, etc., it carries a line of the choicest meats, which are kept in the large refrigerating plant of two tons capacity. The meats are effectively protected from insects, dust, and air by screens and refrigerated showcases.

This concern has enjoyed a steady increase in patronage from its beginning business twenty years ago. It occupies a substantial building, containing nearly 4,000 square feet of floor space. Four persons are regularly employed in the conduct of the business, and three delivery wagons are constantly in use in making deliveries to all parts of the city and nearby suburban sections.

Both members of this firm are well and favorably known throughout the county. Mr. McLaurin is sheriff of Scotland county; Mr. Shaw is a member of the Chamber of Commerce. He is in charge as manager, and is also manager of the Purdy Bakery, one of the popular concerns of his kind in this section.

Statistics show there is one officer for every eleven soldiers in the United States army at present.

The Four Busy Cotton Mills of Laurinburg

Scotland, Dickson, Waverly and Prince Cotton Mills are Operating Full Time Under Able Management--Ideal Surroundings in the Village



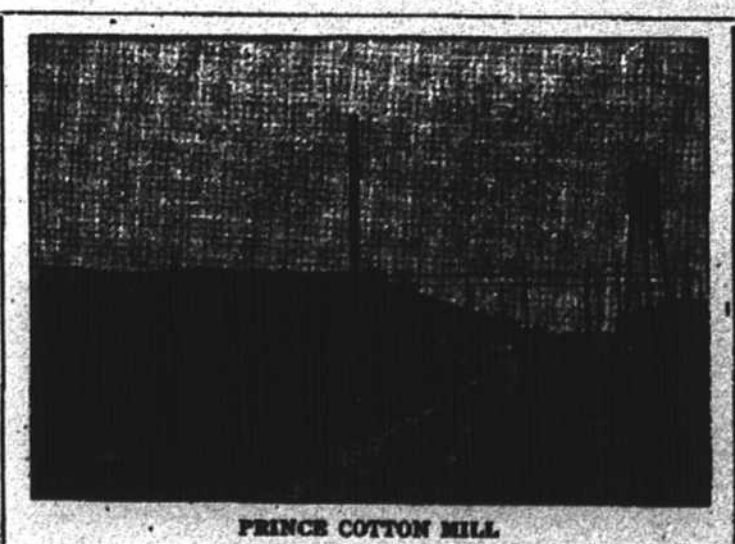
DICKSON COTTON MILL

Six hundred contented and loyal employees constitute the working forces of the Scotland, Dickson, Waverly, and Prince Cotton Mills, all of which are located in Laurinburg, and all of which are successfully operating on full time, despite the fact that many mills both in the south and in New England are finding it necessary to curtail operations at the present time. These Laurinburg mills are running "full steam ahead."

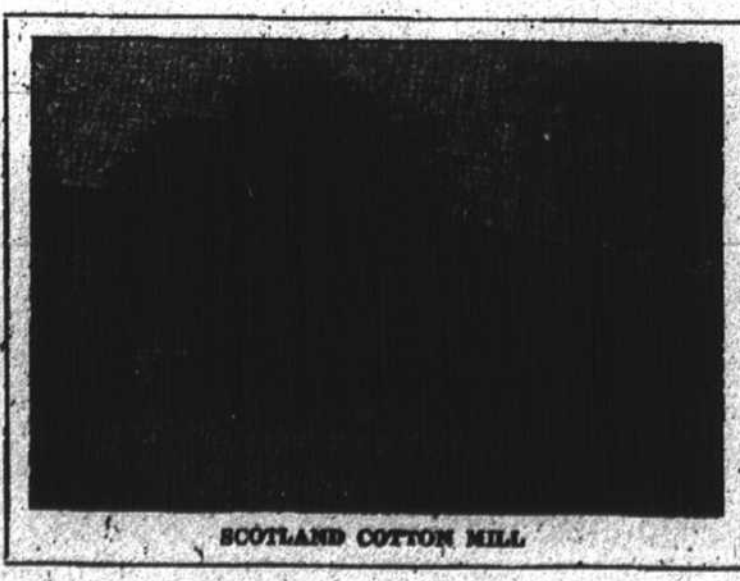
Beginning with the Scotland Mills in 1896, the interests operating these four concerns have added to their facilities from time to time, until at present they own and operate one of the most important cotton mill undertakings in this part of the state. The original mill contained 12,000 spindles, and was followed in 1899 by the Dickson, with 20,000 spindles. In 1900 the Waverly mill was built, with 20,000 spindles, and in 1920 the Prince mill was put into operation with 13,000 spindles. The plants are engaged in the manufacture of hosiery yarns on Foitser and Universal cones, twisted yarns, tubes, and skeins. The market for these goods holds strong at the present time, and for this reason the entire organization is operating on full time.

The six hundred employees of these mills, with their families, reside in one of the most attractive and modern mill villages to be found anywhere. Three hundred comfortable homes have been erected by the company, with sewerage, electric lights, and water. The management proceeds upon the theory that contented workers are worth far more than those who are dissatisfied, and as a result of this policy the company has retained for many years a number of its best employees. Nothing is neglected that can reasonably add to the contentment and improvement of the employees. A modern playground is maintained for baseball and other recreational purposes. One of the best hands in this section of the state is maintained by the employees of these plants, and is a matter of pride to both the employees and the managers of the mills.

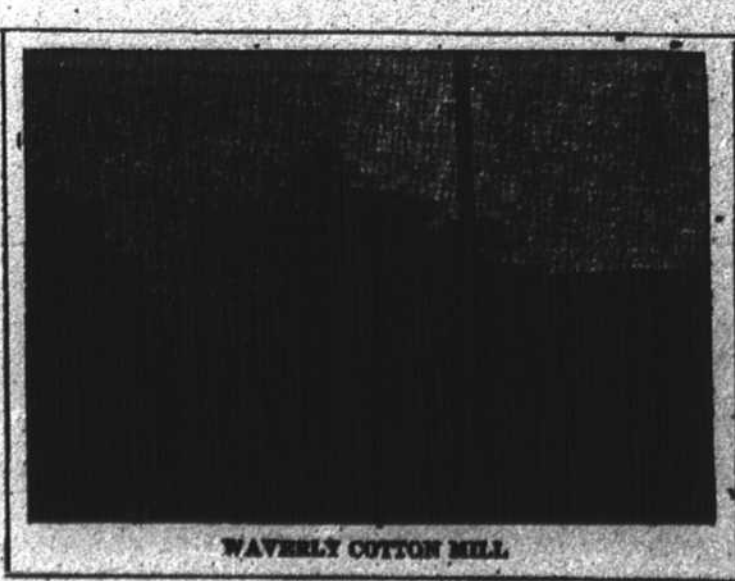
At the head of this modern and progressive cotton mill organization is James L. McNair, president and treasurer. Mr. McNair is active in the Chamber of Commerce and is a member of the Presbyterian church. He has many business interests in this section. E. V. Pate, vice president, is one of the best known citizens of Laurinburg, and is extensively engaged in farming operations in Scotland county, in addition to numerous important business connections. A. M. Fairley, now general manager, has been superintendent of the plants since 1916, and has done much toward the success of the mills. He is a Shriner and a member of the Chamber of Commerce. D. T. Blue is secretary of the mills. Mr. Blue gives his attention largely to the office end of the business. He is largely interested in dairying.



PRINCE COTTON MILL



SCOTLAND COTTON MILL



WAVERLY COTTON MILL