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Neighboring Fort Bragg One of World's Largest Artillery Ranges

Government Found Here Ideal Location for Purpose.—An Historical Sketch

BY HELEN K. BUTLER

In the Sandhills your neighbors are one of the most interesting features of your living arrangements. As a rule Sandhill people are people who have traveled about here and there and seen considerable of the world, and who make their settlement after taking into account climate, geographical position, distance from a man's business world, and all the other things the head of the household mulls over in selecting a permanent home for the family. Sandhills people are a selected people who locate entirely from choice, which speaks well for the community and assures the stranger his neighbor is not apt to be undesirable.

About three miles east of Southern Pines begins a huge boundary line, enclosing some 125,000 acres, the equivalent of nearly 20 square miles in which are stationed our neighbors of Fort Bragg. Today one of the largest artillery ranges in the world adjoins us. The great sweep of territory that lies between Southern Pines and Fayetteville belongs to the government, excepting a fringe of land bordering both towns, on the east and west sides. Locating Fort Bragg was not an accidental affair with Uncle Sam, any more than it was with the individual settler. Government heads knew what they wanted, if they could find it. They wanted a broad tract of sandy land in a rolling country. Under Col. E. P. King a search was started and the officer traveled over the continent, rejecting everything that was presented until he heard of this particular section of North Carolina.

The rest of the story is too well known to go further into. Next door were found the sandy slopes the government approved of. Here was forest for miles in any direction, not a town in the proposed area larger than a cross-road settlement and farm homes few and far apart. The land was condemned and farms were evacuated, buildings were torn down or destroyed by fire; a couple of old churches, historical landmarks, were preserved. Aside from the ancient shrines no further sign of civilian life is left. Swallowed in the wilderness the country returned to its original state. Fort Bragg stands lord of the forest. Miles of boulevards have been opened, cutting a hundred foot swath in their various directions. Closed to the public, these roads were built for military purposes. New bridges have replaced old ones, and as the army moves in practice maneuvers, the heavy guns of the artillery roll over improved sand-clay roads.

Stirring Times

The historian if allowed an ordinary amount of imagination can find no end of amusement in roaming the forbidden hills, as Cumberland and Hoke counties witnessed some rather stirring chapters in the making of a nation. Viewing the scene that stretches away from the summit of Johnson or McPherson mountains the eye roams over an interesting panorama. The miniature hills with the young growth of pines and black jacks outline a horizon that is hard to surpass.

The Cape Fear Scotch drifted up into the Rockfish country from Wilmington. They staked out just about what they wanted in boundary lines, for land was to be had for little more than the asking at that time. Farms came into existence and here and there a church was established. If Cornwallis followed all the roads he was accredited with he was one of the world's greatest tramps; however, tradition says that in his retreat to Wilmington he traveled down the road that led to Fayetteville. Piney Bottom, only about seven miles away, was the scene of a lively skirmish between the Tories and Whigs during the Revolution when a number were engaged in an encounter that cost the lives of half dozen or more men at the time when David Fanning, chief of the Tory leaders, was a much talked of man. Fanning on his bay mare "Bay Doe," had the reputation for all kinds of rascality and infamous deeds, probably the most remembered the capturing of the governor of North Carolina, Thomas Burke.

Quiet came at last to the harassed Highlander, but not for long. In the path of Cornwallis, Civil War troops were to march down the same road. On the Morganton road Kilpatrick was moving men eastward. Hardees outfit was a few miles away on the Yadkin road. On the Neil S. Blue farm a battle took place,

Author and M. F. H.



JAMES BOYD

Author and Master of Foxhounds with several couples of Moore County Hounds which hunt the Southern Pines country.

one of the last encounters of the war. Longstreet stands a lonely watch, a forgotten parade ground in the sixties, the burial place of North Carolina boys who lie under the ancient cedars, shrine of the past. What the hills of the evicted Highlander will see again is sealed in the future. Guns rumble and roar as they discharge their terrific charges in the general scheme of our national defense.

Fort Bragg is established with all the solidity of a lasting organization. The War Department found what it was looking for. It has the dimensions for its long range guns and an agreeable year 'round climate for an army post, where training schools and finishing schools for the artillery man and officer are about ideal.

In the social life of the community the Fort Bragg neighbor fits into the picture. He joins in the horse show festivities, cheerfully lends an enthusiastic hand to public functions, and blends with all activities of the resort section. Our neighbors of Fort Bragg are one of the important acquisitions of the Sandhills.

JUDGE SINK TO PRESIDE

A term of Superior Court for the trial of civil cases in Moore county is scheduled for December 11 and Judge H. Hoyle Sink is expected to preside.

COTTON GINNING REPORT

The census report shows that 792 bales of cotton were ginned in Moore county from the crop of 1939 prior to November 1st, as compared with 349 bales for the crop of 1938.

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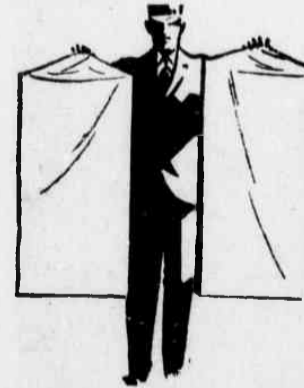
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28 Years Of Service

This week marks the beginning of the 28th year that the Montesanti firm has been located in Southern Pines.

A. Montesanti came to Southern Pines in 1912 at the insistence of the late Mr. A. I. Creamer, for many years the manager of the Highland Pines Inn and was so much impressed with the Sandhills he decided to make it his permanent home, and moved his family here from Boston.



Since that day, Montesanti has expanded and progressed with Southern Pines. Their plant is well known all through the East and South for its fine Tailoring and Dry Cleaning Services, and enjoys a fine mail order trade in its dry cleaning department.

The Montesanti plant has always kept abreast of the changes and times in the industry, and has added equipment from time to time to expand and improve its services. Besides a complete tailoring and dry cleaning establishment, it is equipped for Rug, Drapery and Furniture cleaning, and De-Mothing services.

Dante Montesanti is associated with his father in Southern Pines. He is a graduate of the Southern Pines High School, and attended the Institute Cleaning School in Silver Springs, Maryland, where he took a complete Dry Cleaning course in 1928. He has returned there from time to time to do post-graduate work. Last July, Dante Montesanti was elected President of the N. C. Association of Cleaners and Dyers for 1939-40, after having served as a director for four years. He is also past president of the Seaboard Association of Cleaners and Launderers.

Mr. Montesanti and his family have always taken an active interest in local affairs, and supported every move to help the progress of Southern Pines and the Sandhills.

