



75th Anniversary brings back a simpler time

By Josephine Hall

Raeford Chapter No. 1279 of the United Daughters of the Confederacy was organized in 1910.

This month the members are celebrating the organization's 75th birthday.

Let's take a look backward and see what was happening in 1910.

When we talk about things in the past, history runs all through it and it becomes part of our heritage.

William Howard Taft was serving as the 26th President of the United States, and W.W. Kitchin was Governor of North Carolina. Hoke County had not yet been formed, although the Honorable J.W. McLauchlin, a Senator from Cumberland County, had introduced a bill in the 1907 and 1909 sessions of the Legislature for the formation of Hoke County.

Finally, in 1911, under McLauchlin's leadership, a bill was enacted into law on Feb. 17 to be effective Apr. 3, 1911.

Raeford, which became the county seat, had been started in 1898.

J.W. Johnson was Mayor of Raeford in 1910.

The area which is now Hoke County had a population of about 10,000.

Raeford Institute, the nucleus around which Raeford was built, had an enrollment of 325 students, drawn from 12 counties and three states.

The 1910 catalog reports there were nine buildings on the campus and there were eight cottages surrounding the campus. A two-story dormitory consisting of 10 rooms had been built for women. Board in this dormitory, including room, food and wood was furnished for \$10 per month.

The catalog stated that the school was in a Scotch and Scotch-Irish settlement and the people were noted for their thrift, integrity, intelligence and high-toned christian character.

If we went into the rural area around Raeford in 1910, we would find around a dozen little one-

room schools. One teacher taught seven or eight grades.

A pot-bellied stove had to be tended and a water bucket had to be filled. A dipper usually hung from a string or rested in the bucket and everybody drank from the dipper. (They hadn't heard about the germ theory back then.)

Each school in the county had a four-month term.

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The time of passing through the tail was predicted for May 25, 1910. Many people remained at home that day, expecting the world to come to an end. Around the appointed time the sky became hazy and bolts of thunder were heard in some places. But by mid-afternoon blue skies returned and no one had been asphyxiated.

The year 1910 was during the transition period between horse and buggy days and the automobile.

By 1903 Detroit had become the automobile center of the country and Henry Ford was becoming the world's largest automobile pro-

ducer. Early cars were the coffee-grinder type.

The crank, which was kept inside the car was inserted into the front of the car and turned to the right until the motor started.

There was no door on the driver's side of the touring model. The horn was a rubber ball with a squawker contraption attached. When it was heard most people were glad to get out of the way of those new-fangled contrivances.

Travelers in buggies, surreys and wagons got out and "held their horses" when they met or were overtaken by a car.

Car seat cushions were not bolted down and could be taken out and used for a seat at a picnic or ball game.

Tools, batteries, car curtains etc. were stored under the seats.

The "curtains," which were made of isin-glass, had to be snapped on when it looked like rain was coming. Only the well-to-do could afford cars and fancy buggies.

Many a man who bought a car back then was looked on as a millionaire.

Lots of people wanted to ride in the miraculous invention but were too scared to get into one.

Since the cars at that time were "open" the prevailing style was to wear a linen or cotton "duster" to save your good clothes when traveling.

The person doing the driving usually appeared with the proverbial goggles.

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Telephones were in use at the time and party lines were a big part of the system.

The friendly "Hello girl" manned the switchboard. Each neighbor had his own private ring but the line was not always so private.

Sometimes when an emergency arose a person would turn the crank and turn and turn until he got some attention and could tell his problem.

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listening anyway the community would go into action to help out.

The old party line was an aggravation some times but as one person said it sometimes made you feel like one big family when you needed help.

In 1910, doctors made house calls, usually traveling in a buggy and they treated everything in the book.

Hog-killing day was an annual event in the cold of winter and trips to the neighbors bearing packages of sausage, backbones, ribs and liver are well remembered.

Soap-making was popular at home. One aid to cleaning was a mixture of home-made soap and sand which was used to clean pots and pans and wooden floors. Corn shuck mops or brooms were often used.

A well or pitcher pump furnished water for most homes. A real convenience was having the pump in the kitchen.

At meals flies were shooed away with a slender limb full of leaves which someone waved slowly to and fro over the table as a sort of fan.

Screens were beginning to come into use and mosquito netting was a cheap substitute.

A path behind the big house led to the usual small building of the era.

A stock company advertised Peruna as a sure cure for everything.

Every farmer and some town folk kept a cow and nearly all of them had chickens.

The farmer's wife usually looked after the poultry operation, especially the "settin" hens.

There were few ice boxes, especially out in the country and many families had "spring houses" where they kept milk, butter and eggs.

The kids got most of their after-school snacks out of the pie safe.

Food was cooked on or in a "wood stove", actually an iron range. Some of these had a reservoir attached at the side. It held and heated an extra supply of water.

There were no paved roads in Hoke County in 1910. Roads were ruts with lots of sand and dust in the dry seasons and mud hub deep when it rained.

One of the main things "Hoke to be people" complained about before the county was formed was the almost impassable roads to the county seats, Fayetteville and Lumberton.

Up until 1910, illumination was with kerosene lamps or gas. But electric lights, with power coming from Lake View, N.C., were turned on in Raeford on January 26, 1910.

Silk was the elegant fabric of the day as seen by newspaper ads.

The porch was a favorite spot, especially for entertaining evening visitors.

The hammock and swing were very popular porch fixtures.

Sounds of the whipporwill and the Katy-dids broke the silence of many a summer night on the porch.

Feather beds were a status symbol. They also kept many people warm on a cold night in an unheated bedroom. The feathers used for stuffing the bed had been plucked from geese. Feather beds were turned on Friday and were aired in the summer.

In 1910 people did not wrap Christmas gifts. There was no pretty colored wrapping paper.

Mail order catalogs supplied many items.

Quilting bees, butchering bees, thrashing bees, barn raising bees and corn shuckings, which were participated in by neighbors, helped when work needed to be done.

Traveling salesmen in 1910 were called "Drummers."

The blacksmith shop and the livery stable were popular places of business.

Log Cabin syrup came in a tin log cabin and poured from the chimney.

Sorghum, cider and grist mills were operated in most communities.

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Discarded medicine bottles were returned to the druggist. They were cleaned and re-used to dispense drugs. Kids picked up a few pennies by collecting and returning the bottles.

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Homestead land was still being given free to settlers in some western areas which had not become states. New Mexico and Arizona became states in 1912.

A lot of changes have taken place since great grandma's day - jet planes, radio and television, trips to the moon, microwaves, computers, video lasers, wonder drugs, transplants, implants and robots to name a few.

I for one, consider it a great privilege to have lived to see the great progress that has taken place since 1910.