

Ruth Faison Shaw, Teacher & Fingerpainter, Native Of Duplin

By: Claude H. Moore

Ruth Faison Shaw, teacher and originator of fingerpainting, now of the faculty of the University of North Carolina, speaks of Kenansville, Duplin and Sampson Counties as home. She was not only born in Kenansville while her father was pastor of Grove Presbyterian Church, but her Faison forefathers, James and Henry Faison were colonial settlers in Duplin and Sampson Counties (1788).

Miss Shaw was born in Kenansville in an old home near the fork of the Wilmington and Warsaw roads, which was built in 1861 by Louis Froelich, the builder and owner of the Confederate Arms Factory (burned in July, 1863, by the Yankees) She was the daughter of the REV.



Miss Shaw as a young teacher.

William Shaw and Alberta Faison Shaw. The Rev. Mr. Shaw, a graduate of Davidson and the Presbyterian Seminary in Richmond taught school in Wallace and Magnolia before he became a Minister. His father, the Rev. Colin Shaw, was a pioneer Presbyterian Minister (and Confederate Chaplain) in Sampson, Duplin and Bladen. Miss Shaw's mother, Alberta Faison Shaw, was a teacher and a talented musician, having graduated from the Clinton Female Institute. She was a daughter of the Hon. Thomas Ivey Faison of "Summer Hill" Plantation near Turkey. Mr. Faison was Clerk of the Superior Court of Sampson County for 20 years, a leading mason, and member of the N. C. Constitutional Convention, 1835 and 1865.

Miss Shaw relates that her real education began at home. When she was quite young her family moved to Cabarrus County, where her father became pastor of Bethpage Presbyterian Church. It was there that she attended her first organized school which was operated jointly by the church and the community, and was taught by a Mr. Dalrymple a graduate of Davidson. She recalls that the school was small and much individual attention was given to students, with emphasis on thoroughness, initiative, and self discipline.



One of Miss Shaw's finger painting scenes

After about five years, the Shaws moved to Southport, where her father built the first Presbyterian Church there, and also opened a private school which was taught by his cousin, Miss Mary Faison DeVane, who later taught English at James Sprunt Institute and was for

many years Librarian of Goldsboro. Miss Shaw well remembers the hanging lamps and the wood burning heater. Miss Shaw believes that it was Miss DeVane's excellent command of the English language and her knowledge and love of literature that developed in her students an interest in reading and literature. Miss Shaw relates that Presbyterians were few in Southport, and she especially remembers the friendliness of the Episcopalians. Steamboats at that time plied the Cape Fear River from Wilmington to Southport, the later of which was a shipping port for Naval stores. As a child, she visited historic Orton Plantation, the ruins of Brunswick Town and St. Phillips Church and Fort Caswell. Miss Kate Stewart at that time ran a hotel which was somewhat of a retreat for summer vacationers from Wilmington. Miss Shaw remembers visits from an old family friend, Mr. Cameron Certain while they lived there. Mr. Certain, a native of England, became a great friend of the Faisons during the War Between the States, and after the War, being a talented musician, he taught music in Faison and Turkey until his death in 1901.

In 1899 The Rev. William Shaw accepted the principalship of James Sprunt Institute and the pastorship of Grove Presbyterian Church. James Sprunt Institute was operated by the Wilmington Presbytery and was named for the Rev. James Sprunt, D. D. a native of Perthshire, Scotland, who had married Miss Eleanor Hall (a descendant of Owen Kenan of the Revolution) and was pastor for many years of Grove, Union and Faison Presbyterian Churches. The Shaws lived in the historic old Pearsall house (still standing) which was used as the President's house. The Institute was reorganized in 1896 and was considered a successor of Grove Academy built in 1785 in Kenansville.

Miss Shaw enrolled at James Sprunt where she graduated in 1906 in a class of seven, two others, Mrs. W. B. Murphy (Mary Colvin) and Miss Edna Robinson of Ivanhoe, are still living. At that time, the lady principal was Miss Daisy Marable (a daughter of the Rev. B.F. Marable, D.C. and Octavia Faison Marable. Miss Marable later married a Mr. Southall and has a son, the Rev. Thompson Southall, Presbyterian Minister of Staunton, Va. The music teachers were Miss Bessie Cowan (Mrs. Robert Grady), Miss Fannie Gray Farrior (Mrs. Charles Hussey), Miss Kate Brown taught Latin and French, Miss Mary Devane and Miss Elizabeth Hicks taught English and History and Miss Maria Loftin taught mathematics. Besides these subjects, Rhetoric, Botany, Geography, Physiology and Hygiene were taught. Mr. Shaw taught advanced Bible and Miss Annie Ross Williams taught art. Enrollment was around 90. The catalogue of 1906 describing the town of Kenansville says, "The moral influences of the community are unsurpassed and vice and temptations almost unknown. It is an ideal spot for study, and for the attainment of those gr-

speaking school for young boys and girls. Miss Shaw sailed for Rome in 1922 and set up her school on Via Vittor Veneto. At that time, the teaching methods of Dr. Maria Montessori were being popularized in Western Europe. Miss Shaw was able to inject much of her own philosophy of education in her school which came to be known as the Shaw School. Some of the students were children of English speaking families and others were Italian children of the Roman aristocracy who could speak English. Besides the three "R's" Miss Shaw's school offered science, and art. Much was learned by visits to the Roman ruins of earlier civilizations, to the Botanical and Zoological Gardens, to the Museums, Art Galleries and to the ancient churches. She also taught story telling and creative writing and through the latter, she was able to learn much about her students. Out of her belief that children need opportunities for self expressions, Miss Shaw developed the art of fingerpainting and at the same time she devised a formula for making fingerpaints. All of her students painted, but Miss Shaw says that even though some finger paintings are not beautiful they may offer a clue to some deep seated obsession. She believes that children as well as adults often present a record of their emotional condition at the time they are painting, some from the present and some from the past. In her own words, she says "Impressions of the past come out in fingerpainting."

Miss Shaw was soon recognized as a pioneer in progressive education and her school in Rome was visited by many of the leading philosophers, painters and educators. While in Rome, Miss Shaw lived in an old Roman villa, and had beautiful flower gardens. Many of her friends and relatives from North Carolina visited her in Rome. Her mother went to live with her and finally died there and is buried in one of the old churches. While in Italy, Miss Shaw not only visited the many

aces and accomplishments which count in producing refinement and character." After Miss Shaw's graduation at James Sprunt, she taught in a one teacher school at Mont Vale, Tennessee Co., N.C. This was in the middle of the Appalachian Mountains. There were 30 pupils enrolled. Miss Shaw relates that it was there that she got her first glimpse into the unexplored depths of the child's mind. It was here that she concluded that children had many latent talents which had to be stimulated and developed by the teacher.

After a term at Mont Vale, Miss Shaw felt the need for more advanced schooling and she enrolled at Peabody Institute of Music in Baltimore. Her mother, being a musician, was anxious for her to pursue music. At that time, Miss May Farrior and Miss Callie Newton of Hallsville were attending Peabody.

Mrs. Shaw returned to Kenansville after her graduation and taught piano. Her family soon moved back to Southport, where her father did mission work for the Presbytery. Miss Shaw then taught at a school near Rochester, N.Y. She later taught at Rosendale in Bladen Co., N.C.

During World War I, Miss Shaw volunteered for Y.M.C.A. work for 2 1/2 years in France. While there, she got to see much of the country to visit many of the museums and art galleries. After she returned from France, her father died and she and her mother moved to Wilmington. While there, she taught music for a year in Southport and commuted to Wilmington by steamboat.

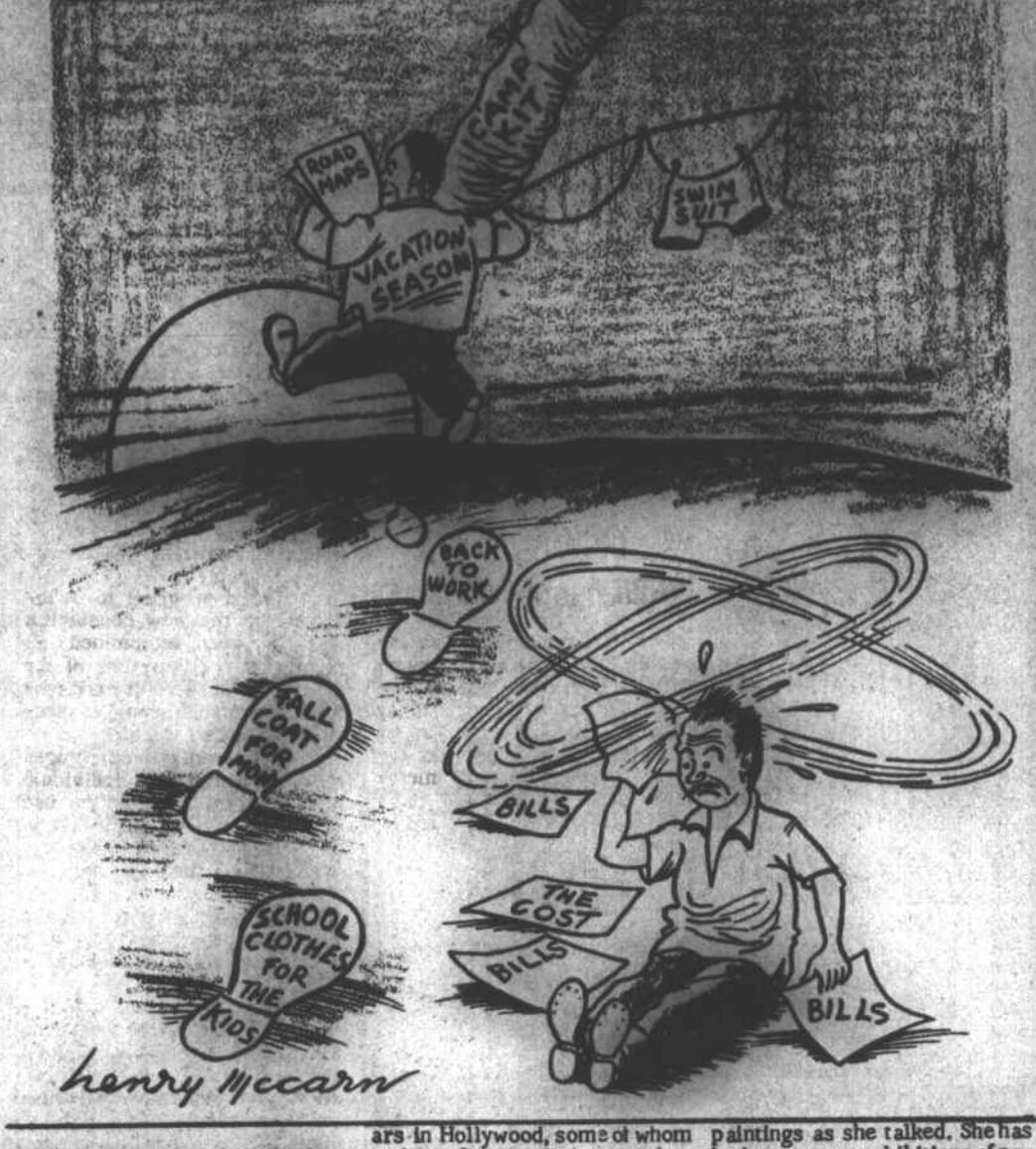
Miss Shaw had a great desire to go abroad and through a friend in the diplomatic service, she was invited to go to Rome, Italy and establish an English



Miss Shaw giving finger painting lessons to the Rocquettes at Radio City, N.Y.

historical cities including Venice, Milan, Florence and Naples, but she was called on to lecture in many parts of the country. In 1932 after ten years in Rome Miss Shaw went to the Sorbonne in Paris where she lectured for a time and then she returned to the United States. She set up her studio on 42nd St., in N.Y., where she was employed by Binney and Smith, manufacturers of art materials. She lectured and gave finger painting demonstrations all over the U.S. Miss Shaw wrote many articles for magazines and newspapers. She also gave many finger painting demonstrations for service men at U.S.O. Centers for World War I. In 1934 she was invited to lecture in England by an educator from Cambridge. While there, she appeared on radio programs and also met H.G. Wells and Bertrand Russell. Miss Shaw gave demonstrations for the movie st-

ars in Hollywood, some of whom took up finger painting as a hobby. She became a real friend of Walt Disney, and prizes highly a set of the originals of "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" presented to her by him. During World War II, Miss Shaw worked with psychiatric patients at the famous Menniger Clinic at Topeka, Kansas, where she remained for two years. She was a consultant to the psychiatrists there, and she kept detailed histories of the patients with whom she worked. She began to use finger painting as a therapeutic technique. After this wonderful experience in Topeka, Miss Shaw returned to New York, where she restored an old abandoned colonial house at West 46th Street. Her studio was located in her house. She held classes in finger painting and lectured to teachers at Colleges and Universities. She also restored a 1720 house at Dennis on Cape Cod. She held summer classes there. The writer had the pleasure of assisting her with her art school one summer. Miss Shaw has always been surrounded by the most interesting people during that summer, her friend, Helen Hayes and daughter, Mary and son Jimmy (now actor in Hollywood) spent two weeks with her. Other visitors were: Dr. Karl Menninger of Topeka, Sir Cedric Hardwick, the Countess Tolstoy, the actress Gwyn Anderson and Gertrude Lawrence, and innumerable psychiatrists, psychologists, teachers and artists. During the years, Miss Shaw was always able to find time to come back to North Carolina, to visit her Faison, Shaw and Moore relatives. Her brother, William was for many years Postmaster of Fayetteville, N.C. and her brother, Heman, was a professor of History at the Haverford School, Haverford, Pennsylvania. In November 1959 Miss Shaw came to the University at Chapel Hill, where she has been a consultant in the Department of Psychiatry and has worked with patients at the N.C. Memorial Hospital. For a time she had a fascinating program on the WUNC-TV, in which she told stories for children and illustrated them with finger



Henry McCann

paintings as she talked. She has had numerous exhibitions of paintings of her own as well as her students. Her interesting house is usually included in the spring tours of interesting homes in Chapel Hill. Miss Shaw is still active in many ways. She recently visited James Sprunt Institute, where a collection of her paintings are now on exhibit. She was also a guest of the Kenan Family at the Kenan Dinner given on the occasion of the dedication of Liberty Hall.

Well! Well! Wells!!!
By: Ruth Wells

Doesn't this weather feel good? It never ceases to amaze me that the weather man over the news media said for ten straight days "No relief is in sight." They had not read the Progressive Farmer. Those folks must compile their information some two or three months in advance but they knew when it would change, and the very day it would change.

The School bells rang out yesterday and brought an end to summer vacations for another nine months. The class room will be greeted with mixed emotions, as some enjoy the house of learning. With others, the beach and swimming pool are still utmost in their thoughts.

Farmers were generally pleased with opening sales of tobacco on the Eastern Belt. But did you ever stop to think that tobacco would be selling for \$5.00 per pound had the price of tobacco gone up proportionally with steel? It is something to think about.

It is getting to be the time of the year to gather pumpkins and Indian corn for fall arrangements. Many people are gathering their colorful harvest and preparing for what I am sure will be lovely arrangements.

Have a safe Labor Day!



Miss Shaw finger painting Jack Benny.

Departing Leaves Him Dizzio

Uncle Pete From Chittlin Switch Says

DEAR MISTER EDITOR:

It's like they say, I reckon, great minds run on the same track. Ed Doolittle come up with a problem at the country store Saturday night, and Zeke Grubb come up with the answer.

Ed reported to the fellers he had been doing some reading on this rural-urban life and he was of the opinion folks has got to choose between living and making a living. We've just run out of room where we need it, allowed Ed, and they ain't no way to do both.

Fer instant, said Ed, we got cities with more cars than parking places, more sick people than hospital beds, more folks at conventions than hotel rooms, more mouths to feed than food and more crooks than cops. We run out of sideways space a long time ago and now we was running out of straight up room. Trouble is, Ed allowed, we got millions of acres with nothing on 'em, then we got millions of people on a few acres.

Then Zeke broke in to say he had done some study on this problem and he had come up with the Zeke Grubb Group Plan. All it is, said Zeke, was what them science fellers calls "mass movement." What had got him on this plan, reported Zeke, was where he had saw that by 1985 we will have an average work week of 22 hours and workers will be retiring at 38 year old.

We got to copy the ants, Zeke

explained. Keep the workers in the ant hill cities and git the deadwood out on land that ain't being used. Instead of all that public housing in the middle of the cities where land is scarce, put it out on the deserts and mountains and on all that land in the soil bank. We would have people's pastures for all the worn out folks over 38, was Zeke's words. Take all retired folks out of the cities and we'd have room for them under 38 that has to work.

And the Zeke Grubb Plan, he said, would take care of that problem we got now when retired folks was living so long. Them that had retirement income could take care of the farms and ranches and not starve to death while they was doing it.

Ed butted in to say he special liked the Zeke Grubb Plan on account of the retired folks would have plenty of parking space and more'n 10 foot fer burial space.

All the fellers, Mister Editor, took to the Zeke Grubb Plan. Even Ed said it might work if the Government didn't git aloft of it. I figger the fellers at the country store went along with Zeke on account of we're already out in the people's pasture and the only move we got to make under the plan is to the cemetery.

Yours truly,
Uncle Dan

The Minister's Desk

Prayer changes things! Have you ever heard this statement? It is true. The important thing is not that you agree with this statement but that you believe it enough to commit your life to God in prayer.

The trouble with most of us who do pray is that we have made it phony. We have made prayer phony by not really meaning what we have said in the form of prayer, so that it has become a cultural cliché. An elegant woman at a cocktail party kisses a friend and purrs, "God-bless," which really means "good-bye." Then there is the cliché that occurs when somebody sneezes. Even in a tavern or hamburger haven, a voice may ring out: "God bless you," which means God-knows-what, maybe "get your

handkerchief out" or at best "I'm sorry you sneezed."

We make our prayers phony by praying as though God were some private possession or miracle worker. We pray selfish prayers like the one of the young lady who was twenty-nine years old, for the second year in a row, "Lord, I'm not asking for much for myself, but please send my mother a son-in-law."

Our prayers are also often like the prayer of a certain little boy who decided that he wanted \$100 and decided to pray for it. Unsuccessful in his prayer, he wrote to God: "The post office, not knowing what else to do, forwarded the letter to the White House and the President ordered that \$5 be sent to the boy. Delighted that his prayers had been at least partially answered, the lad wrote a thank-you note to God, adding, "I notice you routed my letter through Washington and as usual they deducted 95%." The President didn't have to send \$5. But he did!

God knows our needs. He also knows that we often ask for more than we need. He sends us what we need, not what we selfishly ask Him for. Sincere prayer, not selfish or phony prayer, is the need of every human heart. He who starts the day out on his knees will be more than likely to stay on his toes all day.

The greatest tragedy of our lives, however, is not that we pray selfishly, but that we do not pray at all. Imagine a person with a head the size of a washtub and a body the size of a boxcar, but with a soul the size of a navy bean. When you have done this you have gotten a fairly good picture of the man who stresses physical health and mental health, but who leaves out entirely spiritual health.

Our nation needs a strong faith in these perilous times. A sign found recently on a school bulletin board expresses it well: "In the event of atomic attack, the federal ruling against prayer in this school is temporarily suspended."



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A Duplin County Journal devoted to the religious, material, economic and agricultural development of Duplin County.

1 YEAR AGO
Popular druggist Bernard Cleveland (Bill) Sheffield, 60 of Warsaw dies suddenly of heart attack.
Lt. Gov. Bob Scott speaks to graduates at J.S.I.
N.C. Art Museum in Raleigh proclaims Duplin Day.
Mable Anne Straghan is wed to David Franklin Parker.

5 YEARS AGO
Mr. and Mrs. James Miles and Mr. and Mrs. Lynwood Turner represent Jones Chevrolet at Convention in Detroit.

Miss Katie Sue Grady is named home service representative for C.P.L.
Miss Addie Sue Horns, bride-elect of Beulaville is honored at shower in Richlands.
Duplin is now home of Area "C" Civil Defense. Area C now includes 11 counties.

10 YEARS AGO
Glenn S. Rasmussen assumes duties as surgeon of Duplin General Hospital.
Strad T. Sively resigns pastorate at Hallsville and Grove to accept call at Mt. Gilead Church.
Thomas Henry Brown 18 of Chincuplin is held in hit-and-run death of Cleveland Wesley Riggs.
David Lane, Rt. 2, Mt Olive, is named to FHA Committee.

20 YEARS AGO
Mr. and Mrs. John O Barnes are victims of an auto wreck in Mobile, Ala. Mrs. Barnes was the former Estelle Shaffer of Kenansville and a sister of Mrs. Ivey Bowden.
Officers arrested a witch craft teacher Riley Gaden, also known by six other names, after he stole \$275. from a Kenansville man. Gaden said his chosen profession was the "ministry."