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Along the Way

By **Emily Killeto**

From time to time a manuscript containing great historical date will be rediscovered among family heirlooms. Our county was very fortunate in 1958 to be presented with the original book of minutes of the Duplin Agricultural Society, organized in 1854.

The Duplin Agricultural Society sponsored the county fairs. The Society sponsored an annual fair from 1854 until 1861. A reorganizational meeting was held in 1865 but minutes after that do not appear in the manuscript found by Miss Macy Cox of Magnolia. Minutes of the last meetings of the Society indicate the growing tension and controversy due to the question of civil rights.

The manuscript was among the collection of medical and religious books owned by Dr. Needham Herring of Kenansville. Herring served the Kenansville area as both a doctor and Presbyterian minister. After Herring's death the books were given to John Shine Herring, the doctor's son. After the death of Deputy Sheriff John Herring, the books were passed on to Minnie Lee Herring, daughter of the deputy sheriff. John Herring married Dora Cox, sister of Miss Macy Cox of Magnolia. While the books were in the possession of Minnie Lee Herring, they were moved to Magnolia and many burned. The remaining collection was given to her aunt, Macy Cox. Searching through the collection, Miss Cox found the old ledger of meetings' minutes of the Duplin Agricultural Society.

The job of transcribing the old minutes from the beautiful old script writing in the crumbling manuscript was undertaken by H.L. Oswald, owner of the Wallace Enterprise. The first publication of

the "Story of the Duplin County Agricultural Society" appeared in 1958.

The first organizational meeting of the Agricultural Society was held April 23, 1854, in the courthouse at Kenansville. Elected to serve as president was Jeremiah Pearsall; vice-presidents, Owen R. Kenan and James Dickson; corresponding secretary, Stephen M. Grady; secondary secretary, Isaac B. Kelly; and treasurer, Dr. Needham W. Herring. More than 90 members were listed on the roll October 17, 1853 prior to adopting the Agricultural Society constitution and by-laws in 1854.

President Jeremiah Pearsall made a motion the Society hold a fair in Kenansville on the 7th of October, 1854. A committee of Alsa Southerland and Isaac B. Kelly were appointed to make the arrangements to hold a fair and a list of premiums for the event was prepared for publication. The fair was held in Kenansville using the courthouse as a floral and farming hall and the yard in front of the Baptist Church for exhibition of livestock. The 1855 county fair was held in the same location, using the courthouse and surrounding grounds.

The third annual Duplin fair was held next to Grove Academy, just outside the town of Kenansville. William B. Middleton deeded eight acres of land adjoining Gove Academy, at no cost to the Society, for use as fair grounds.

Throughout the following years the list of premiums issued at the county fair grew. Each year at noon the president of the Agricultural Society would announce the premium winners from the speaker's stand at noon on Friday of the fair week.

Local Auditions To Be Held May 22

Auditions for local participants in the eighth annual production of THE LIBERTY CART will be held from 2 to 5 p.m. May 22 in the William R. Kenan Jr. Memorial Amphitheater.

The season will open July 8.

The outdoor drama depicts the development of eastern

North Carolina from colonial times through the Civil War.

Actors and technicians are needed, according to Jim Johnson, general manager. About 40 people of all ages will be required for the local cast.

Johnson said local actors and technicians will be paid \$100 each for travel costs.

Musikfest At JSTC

A Musikfest featuring performances by three visiting artists and members of the Duplin County Choral Society, will take place May 18 at James Sprunt Technical College in the Hoffer Building auditorium from 8-9:30 p.m.

Organized by John Goodnow, JSTC visiting artist, the program will include solo performances by Frank Elliot, a classical guitarist from Roanoke-Chowan Technical College; Vince

Phillips, a classical pianist from Craven Community College; and Mark Shelton, a percussionist from Coastal Carolina College. Members of the DCCS will perform several selections including Renaissance madrigals.

Goodnow, who will serve as master of ceremonies, said, "I've heard all of the artists perform and they are great. Anyone who enjoys music should enjoy this program. The public is cordially invited to attend."

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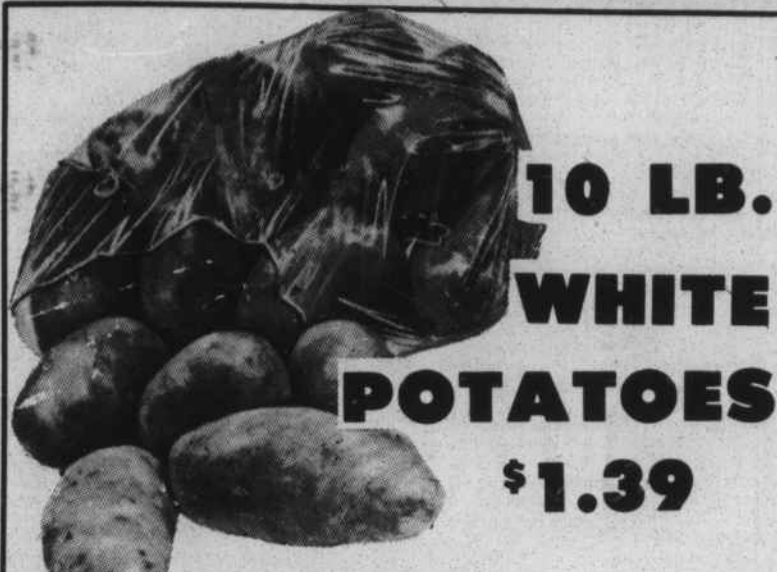
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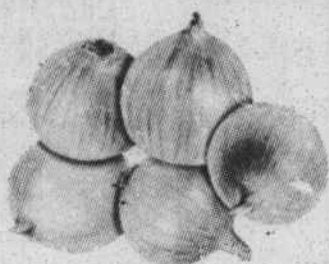
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**QUICK QUAKER
GRITS** 1 LB. **33¢**

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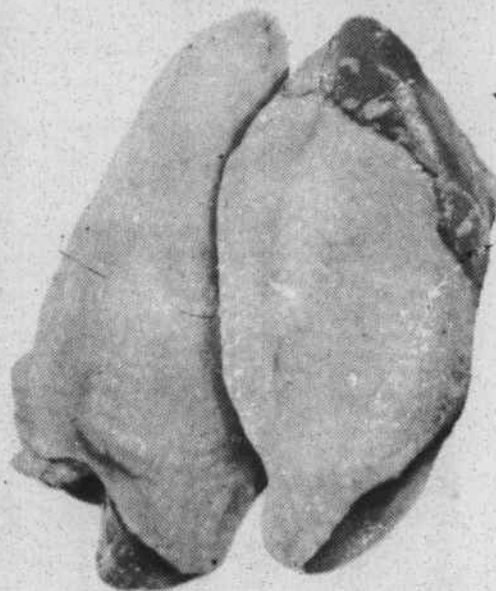
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39¢ LB.

★ **DRUMSTICKS**
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