

Alice's Last Will and Sad Testament

As for larger furnishings, Alice had paid hefty storage fees over a period of many years in New York and Paris, but as her debts grew, she had been unable to continue paying. Storage facilities had sold her possessions to recoup losses.

More realistically, in the fourth section, she willed the portrait above her bed of her goddaughter, Mrs. Frank Stephens, to the artist and gave Mrs. Stephens' copy of *Daily Strength for Daily Needs*, which Alice had relied on heavily, to the Stephenses' daughter-in-law.

The fifth through the ninth sections turn to people she felt she owed a debt of gratitude. Most were people who had over the years been in her employ, and some she was still counting on to assist her. These include her former secretary Lillian Wilson; Gabrielle Germaine Brard, her current companion, whom Alice referred to as her "Stand In"; Lawrence and Lela Sadler as long as they continued in her service; a banker and financial advisor, Elbert J. Knowles; employee Ira Guthrie as long as he remained in her service; and four others who may also be former employees—Miss G. Kaye and Nina Marinel of Washington, DC; Miss J.N. Norse of New York City; and Augusta Girardin in France. She willed them all small amounts, except for Gabrielle, who got a more sizeable allotment.

In section eleven, Alice listed what she wanted to give to two charities: \$2,000 to the Morehead City Hospital for the primary purpose of treating children with infantile paralysis and \$500 to Father Flanagan's Boys Home.

She willed to her niece, Eleanor Butler Roosevelt, "the residue and remainder of my property, both real and personal, of every kind and wherever situated." She included her jewels, silverware, paintings and antiques.

She also gave Eleanor authority to distribute these assets as she saw fit, especially among her children, and appointed her executrix. In the second codicil, she changed that appointment: "I hereby nominate, constitute and appoint by grand-nephew, Theodore Roosevelt, III, and my attorney and friend, Frank M. Wooten, Jr., as executors . . ." She explained the change as follows: ". . . because my niece, Eleanor Butler Roosevelt, is a resident of the State of New York and because of the distance from North Carolina, it would be an undue strain upon her health and would require a great deal of her time, which is already used to capacity in many worthwhile projects in New York . . ."

The remainder of Alice's will, including the remaining five codicils, reveals her final obsession—her nagging sense that she had little money and few assets to distribute to people she would like to be able to acknowledge or thank for taking care of her.

Perhaps saddest of all but most fortunate for her lasting legacy in Pine Knoll Shores was the first codicil where she stated: "I have provided for my great niece and nephews, the children of Eleanor Roosevelt, by a trust which is held by the Wachovia Bank & Trust Company. It is my will and desire that they have this as is provided in the trust agreement dated February 21, 1948. The source of the principal of this trust is the estate of my grandfather, Theron R. Butler, and I have provided in the said trust that it continue as long as permitted by law. This provision is made in the belief that the principal of my grandfather's estate should continue intact as long as possible."

The trust, in reality, was beyond her control. But, in this will, we see her struggling with reality, reassessing how much she can give with how much she would like to give. Today, we thank her for what she indirectly gave us.

Fishing & Hunting

By Richard Seale



Distant memories, but still in sharp focus

We are almost to the end of most of the 2016-17 hunting seasons. It was an interesting fall with much time spent coping with Hurricane Matthew damage to our farm in Beaufort County. Pungo Creek flooded like never before, and as can be expected, the force of fast-moving water eroded, moved, destroyed, and carved much more than we could have imagined.

The forces here on the coast are powerful, too, and I personally cannot believe the accumulated mass of energy coastal structures have to absorb to survive. The more movable the structure, the better it seems to adapt and cope with these forces. Yes, our shore beaches look like they are drastically impacted. But, in reality, the sands that make them up just go with the flow, which allows the sand material to "pop up" elsewhere. Our hardened structures like homes, piers and bulkheads do not have the ability to pop up intact elsewhere, so they can be truly destroyed by these forces.

Far up our creeks and rivers, massive flood water forces are millions of tons of fast-flowing water and not wave actions. What seems to be a common thread between our coastal seas and rivers is that sand does move and does show up elsewhere in both cases. Beaches "know" what to do with newly added sand. Lands beside rivers, be they forests or fields, can end up very different environments after a violent flood. Trees die due to the buildup of sand and earth around their bases, fields become so eroded they are not able to be farmed, and access lanes lose culverts and become impassable swamps. We are still coping with such "gifts" from Hurricane Mathew.

A bright spot in all this was that I was able to use a Marlin 336, .30-30 caliber lever action rifle to take a deer this season. This model gun was the one my father used. With it in my hands, wonderful memories of deer hunting trips with my father surfaced in my mind.

Our trips were up to the town of Walton in the Catskill Mountains of New York. We stayed with Bob Allison, who was superintendent of the area school district. His brother, Paul Allison, was a good friend of my father, as well as the principal of the grammar school I attended and my Boy Scout troop scoutmaster. Paul's son, Sam, and I were Boy Scout and play pals for our school years. Sam and I managed to slip into the adult



This Marlin 336, .30-30 caliber lever action rifle brought back childhood memories.
—Photo by Richard Seale

hunting group of men as often as we could. We shared memorable adventures hunting, hiking and camping. Sam now lives in North Creek, NY, where he retired from teaching locally. In the early years of these adventures, Sam and I were too young to qualify for hunting licenses, so we just tagged along with our fathers. Places like Ives Valley and Rock Rift became part of our lexicon for reliving adventures once back in our normal lives. We constructed forts in the local woods around our homes, which allowed us to enjoy such memories to the fullest.

My father bought his Marlin 336, .30-30 at a New York City sportsman's shop and brought it back to our home on the commuter train. I do think it was boxed, however. I was with my father when he shot his first deer. In fact, I was designated to do the field dressing, which was a very valuable lesson.

My father had been born in Barbados, West Indies, and his father had died when he was only six months old. He did not remember his father, of course, and obviously never had adventures like my father and I shared. I really do not know how my father learned things like hunting and fishing skills and bird identification. He did learn enough to pass on to me passions for these activities.

When I had come of age to hunt deer, another friend of his, Stanley Whiteside, who also had a Marlin 336, .30-30 lever action, lent me that gun for some deer hunts on Rock Rift. I never shot a deer with it, but I did have adventures with my father somewhere on the same mountain where my father had shot his first deer.

So, as this hunting season passes into history, my experience of successfully hunting with a special Marlin rifle has added a piece of history to my life that I know I will relish the rest of my life. My sons and I have been able to share hunting and fishing adventures with each other and I now see them passing this heritage of shared adventures on to my grandchildren. Life in America is indeed good.