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We heartily agree with the sentiment expressed by the late Irvín S. Cobb when he said, "People who aren't proud of their past don't deserve to be remembered."

Because the great short story writer hunted east of New Bern, and described our upper Trent as the most beautiful river in eastern America, he would have been pleased with the dedicated efforts of Elizabeth Moore and Frances B. Claypoole to preserve the history of this town and the area surrounding it.

As gracious and charming a lady as ever breathed the breath of life, Bonnie didn't live to see their mutual project bear full fruit, but Elizabeth has carried on and rendered a tremendous service to the community and to all outsiders who consider genealogical study worth their while.

On our desk as we write these lines is a priceless book recently published—RECORDS OF CRAVEN COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA Volume One. Based in large measure on material that has appeared in the Historical Gleanings column carried continuously in The Mirror since September 19, 1958, it is as readable as it is valuable.

Elizabeth compiled the publication and Genealogical Recorders of Bladensburg, Md., published it. Little did she and Bonnie dream that such a thing would happen when they began their Mirror column. That this weekly encouraged them in their tireless and conscientious endeavors is a source of deep satisfaction for us.

In the Bible we are reminded that a prophet is not without honor, except in his own land, and how true this has been for Elizabeth Moore and Bonnie Claypoole. Too few New Bernians are aware of the fact that they have long been regarded as outstanding genealogists, and were thoroughly qualified to do a superb job in preserving our heritage.

Elizabeth, who is State President of the National League of American Pen Women, is a member of the National Genealogical Society, the North Carolina Society of County and Local Historians, and the State Literary and Historical Association.

Bonnie, who died last February, was a member of the Society of Colonial Dames and the Daughters of the American Revolution. Her genealogical research included visits to Scotland, England, and Europe, but nothing was more rewarding to her than the discoveries she and Elizabeth made here in the dusty and long overlooked documents of the Craven county courthouse.

Fortunately, we have in the courthouse a vast treasure of records extending from 1735 to 1850. Included are a great many unrecorded wills, inventories, accounts of sales, estate settlements, administration bonds, land divisions, maps, records of schooners and other vessels, bills of lading, lawsuits with priceless affidavits and depositions, military records and other assorted documents.

Elizabeth, deputy clerk of Superior Court in Craven county, found them stored in an unused vault at the courthouse. To her everlasting credit, let it be said that she realized the importance of her discovery.

No longer languishing in the oblivion of time, the records now repose in proper order in 365 file drawers, and efforts are being made to carefully restore and permanently preserve those documents that are in fragile and damaged condition.

RECORDS OF CRAVEN COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA, Volume One, is a comprehensive book com-

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A HOLIDAY AT HOME—Laurence Stith, Jr., and his lovely wife, Jane Morgan Stith, beam happily as they open presents under the giant Christmas tree in their historic residence at the intersection of Johnson and East Front

streets. Gracious and unassuming, Jane has quickly won the hearts of New Bernians fortunate enough to meet her. —Photo by Florence Hanff, Wooten Moulton Studio.

'No One Could Ever Be Nicer' Describes Jane Morgan Stith

New Bernians who welcome every opportunity afforded them to see and hear Jane Morgan Stith on television get the emphatic impression that she is genuine and down to earth.

Once you're privileged to know her, away from the glitter and make-believe of big-time show business, you're even more firmly convinced that what has been projected on your screen isn't a cleverly contrived illusion but a factual character analysis.

It was Rudyard Kipling who spoke of those who "walk with kings nor lose the common touch." Jane, and for that matter her husband, New Bern's home-grown Laurence Stith, Jr., remain completely unspoiled by the plaudits of the throng and close association with national and international notables.

Friends and strangers alike recognize it, and we can think of no more heart-warming story than the one revealed by Hedda Hopper in her syndicated newspaper column, a few short days before Laurence and Jane came to New Bern for the Christmas holidays.

The Stiths had been in Los Angeles for a two-week run at the famed Coconut Grove, and something unprecedented happened on their final night there. As the act neared its conclusion, a huge bouquet of 100 roses and 25 orchids was presented to Jane.

Flowers for theatrical celebrities is no rarity, but this could hardly be classified as an ordinary occasion. In this instance, the bouquet had been purchased by employees of the Coconut Grove—the waiters, bus boys, bell hopés and

others—and they formed a procession to pay enthusiastic tribute to her.

Jane, who has the sentimentality and sincere humility that always goes with true greatness, was deeply touched. So were the cash cus-

tomers, fellow entertainers, and sometimes cynical reporters who happened to be on hand. All of the big names play the Coconut Grove, but never before has a performer been honored in such fashion.

Jane and Laurence are as unaf-

fected as Perry Como and Mary Martin, and it isn't surprising that they are friends. "Perry is one of the kindest and most considerate persons I've ever known," Jane told us during the recent holidays, and Laurence readily agreed. Como, they said, is exacting in his efforts to achieve perfection with his program, so coupled with the affection he engenders is well deserved respect.

Andy Griffith is another friend of the Stiths, and viewers need not be told that he is as plain as the proverbial old shoe. Few New Bernians know it, but Laurence used to play the piano in the act when Andy and his talented wife, Barbara, were getting their start here in North Carolina before civic clubs.

Laurence was in on the ground floor when Andy concocted his famous recording, "What It Was Was Football", and the local young man actually wrote one of the cleverer punch lines in the narration.

By a strange quirk of fate, Jane met Andy before she ever heard of Laurence. In fact, if memory serves us correctly, Griffith and the future Mrs. Stith were co-recipients in Washington, D. C., back in 1958, of a newspaper award given to the most outstanding entertainers who appeared in the Capital that year.

Andy was later dumbfounded—if he can ever be pictured as silenced, when he learned that his old friend, Laurence, had given up bachelorhood to marry someone that Griffith knew and admired.

"It all started two years ago," says Jane. "I was working on a

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A CHANCE TO RELAX