

Early Louisburg History

(By Rev. E. H. Davis)

May I take a little of your space occasionally to say just a few things about some old places and old people in and around Louisburg whose names have even now well nigh faded from the memory of all of us and presently will have entirely gone so. For instance only a few comparatively of those now living ever hear the names Milbry Dunn, the Cross place, the Kilpatrick place, the Farmers Inn, etc., yet they were very familiar names and places to those who preceded us.

Our venerable and wise County Historian had never heard the name Milbry Dunn when I mentioned it to him. When I began to make inquiry I was not sure from the name—Milbry—whether she was a man or he a woman. I was not even sure that there ever was such an individual—possibly she was mythical in whole or in part as the better known Bob Flat who said when he first came to Louisburg or to where it afterwards stood, Tar River was no larger than a spring branch. As material evidence Milbry Dunn really was in her grave while no such evidence of the notorious Flat's existence is known. He may have been taken away without the formality of a burial while still in the flesh by the father of all liars, The Milbry Dunn house standing on the brow of the equally famous Milbry Dunn hill opposite Kenmoor is without doubt one of the oldest domiciles around this dear old town. The hill no less than the house abides in the memory of our older folk. Almost no hill appears there now in this day of grading and hard surfacing but it was at one time a very real one and a serious matter to every trader towards Franklinton in the dead of winter. As to its grade one can judge as he looks at the banks on either side and the long steps he must climb to reach the residence above. At the steepest part of the hill on the right as you go south stands the old house, some part of which successfully defying the test of time must have been sturdy for the matter of 100 years—possibly more. It is now occupied by Tom Jackson, colored, a worthy carpenter, who showed me over the house and pointed me to the graves of herself and her husband—of whose existence I had not heard before. From the best I can gather after conferring with a number having some knowledge of those far off days, among them Mrs. G. W. Ford, Mrs. L. P. Hicks, Mrs. Kate Davis Crenshaw, Thos. B. Wilder and Robt. H. Davis, Milbry Dunn was an estimable free negro woman who in some way now unknown had acquired this property and as it seems has for all time associated her name with. She was skillful in nearly all kinds of housework including sewing—a serious matter in those days before the advent of sewing machines into these latitudes and her services were in frequent demand in the many well-to-do families in and around the old burg. Nothing is known of her except to her credit and she seems entitled to all the fame that the perpetual association of her name with that house and hill can confer. This colored people should be free and the owners of property during the time of slavery need not be considered strange. In one way or another in some well known instances they acquired their freedom—some times as a gift by reason of some distinguished service—oftener by purchase—securing the money necessary—usually \$1,000 for a healthy full grown vigorous man—by working overtime at some trade usually shoe-making for which a just and kind-hearted master was ever glad to pay him. There is the well known instance of Tom Blacknall in the Hayesville section. My mother who passed away seven years ago at the age of 94 told me that in 1846 when she was 10 years old she attended a sale at the Toole place—not far from Toole's Creek—where her grandfather, Geraldus Toole had for years maintained a summer residence and that either this day or shortly afterwards the plantation was bought by this same Tom Blacknall, who at his death according to Mr. Joe Seawell, historian, was himself possessed of 1500 acres of land and 14 negro slaves. In company with my mother and some others a short while before she left us I visited the old place which she had not seen since the distant date mentioned. Many features of it she recognized—at once though more than 80 years had intervened. I picked up a tax receipt from the floor which I am sorry I did not retain bearing date of 1863 signed by the Sheriff bearing the name of one of the Blacknall heirs.

Reverting to Milbry Dunn again while she was unquestionably a real personage it is remarkable that while there is a township in

Go in' To Town



Not on a Mississippi levee, but in the Rainbow Room at Rockefeller Center! Headlined at the opening of the Dance International and viewed by attending notables, Afro-Cubans performed their weird native dances, banned by the present Cuban Government because they tend to induce mob hysteria. Here Florencio Castillo drinks his rum while beating a native drum.

the county by the name of Dunn no other family of this name, white or black, so far as is known was ever permanently located here.

JAPAN BOMBS SHIP

(Continued from page one) regret." About the same time the United States ambassador to Tokio, Joseph C. Grew, was receiving the formal apologies of the Japanese government.

A dispatch from Admiral Yarnell, commanding American ships in China, said that the Japanese commander-in-chief had ordered the Japanese gunboat Hozu to proceed from Nanking to help care for American survivors of the Panay and three Standard Oil vessels.

It was believed "regrets" may come directly from the Japanese emperor, in view of the President's message to him.

Visit Starts Rumor Diplomatic circles coupled the visit of British Ambassador Sir Ronald Lindsay to Secretary Hull and the President's mention of "other non-Chinese vessels" in his message to the emperor. They took this to mean that a state of consultation, if not of co-operation, existed between the United States and Great Britain with respect to the incident. Japanese planes, besides sinking the American boats, also hit a British gunboat.

Secretary Hull, who spent one of the busiest days of his life as a result of the Panay sinking, clearly expressed his grave view in one of his dispatches to Ambassador Grew in Tokio.

He called: "Impress upon him (Foreign Minister Hirota) the gravity of the situation and the imperative need to take every precaution against further attacks on American vessels or personnel."

Hull began to work on the incident last night, upon receipt of first bulletins of the sinking, communicated by Admiral Yarnell.

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DOAN'S PILLS

THIS WEEK IN WASHINGTON

(Continued from page one) which, with its high wages, is the most expensive form of relief, and a return to the less costly method of taking care of the needy by direct relief allotments to states and municipalities.

The whole program for stimulating home building rests upon no Federal loans or appropriations but merely Federal guarantee against loss to mortgage lenders. The Government's largest experiment in lending its own money on homes, the H. O. L. C., has resulted, after four years, in one-fifth of the borrowers defaulting on their payments, with the prospect in sight that Uncle Sam will have to foreclose mortgages on the homes of 240,000 of his nephews.

A.F.L.-C.I.O. RAP N.L.R.B.

The labor situation is not being resolved very fast. The Federation of Labor and the Lewis C.I.O. are still at odds. The only point they agree on is that the National Labor Relations Board and the Department of Labor are not doing a very good job. Indications are seen in Administration and Congressional circles of a change in the Government's attitude toward labor. There are hints of a well-backed movement to revise the Wagner Labor Relations Act to give employers a better break.

Stung by criticism of the off-hand way in which the Senate Judiciary Committee dismissed the demand for an investigation of Senator Hugo Black's record before reporting favorably on his nomination for the Supreme Court Senator Ashurst, chairman of the committee, has announced that the investigation of Representative "Freddy" Vinson's qualifications for Justice of the Court of Appeals of the District of Columbia will be prolonged and searching. Not that anybody has ever even hinted that there is the slightest smudge on Mr. Vinson's record or character, but "once bit, twice shy" is the Senate Committee's attitude.

Rumors of a political scandal

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brewing in the Bituminous Coal Commission are floating around Washington, but no details have been made public.

Forty million kilowatt hours of electricity will be consumed by the 1939 Golden Gate International Exposition.



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