

THE HISTORIC "GYPSY" PINE NEAR AVERASBORO BATTLEGROUND

(By Charles Edwards)

It was the Patriots' testing time. Throughout the entire Southland kindred had become enemies to their northern brothers, and blood ran in rivers from every battlefield.

It was March 17, 1865, before Lee's surrender at Appomattox April 10. On the tongue of every person not able to fight was the ceaseless argument of Blue versus Gray, while in the lower part of Harnett County the constant booming of cannon and crackling rifles kept Mother Nature a-tremble.

Today a memorial cemetery, Chicora, commemorates the heroes who died in the battle of Averasboro, six and one half miles from Dunn.

It should be recalled that in early times when the permanent site for the state capital was being voted on, that Averasboro lacked only one vote winning the decision over Raleigh. Averasboro was at that time a flourishing young river village on the Cape Fear with considerable trade in forest products.

Yes, it was Patriots' testing time. The war was lost and won. Greatly discouraged by their lack of numbers and lack of reinforcements, the game but battered Confederate troops were forced to their rear lines while the new Union troops poured into the conflict.

But those men in Gray had accomplished their mission. They were sent against one main division of General Sherman's forces, to keep them in check while General Johnson attacked the other division. They had not hoped to win, but they were protecting General Lee from a southern attack. This they did, but gulleys full of kindred blood was the price.

The skirmish started on a large plantation, about two miles northwest of Godwin. The Federalists marched out of the woods, and the Confederates made use of the field and gulleys as a battle field and breast-works. Trees and barns were destroyed by the whizzing lead and steel. However, in the midst of all this, one pine tree stood unscarred, unmolested. While every neighboring twig of vegetation was being hewn down and destroyed, this tree stood, a living memorial and witness of all that had taken place.

Tradition are numerous as to the reason for this phenomenon. One of them is that during the thick of the fight, a phantom Gypsy girl, swept to the top of this pine and by her magic power cast a spell about the tree, and it was untouched. The truth of this story can not, of course, be asserted. However, the all-important fact remains, as does the tree; and to-day it may be seen standing alone in a large open field, its long boughs turned upward and then down as they near the end, but curled up again at the tip like the bow of a Greek warrior.

Up the road about a mile, is the graveyard, where those brave ones who gave their lifeblood for their cause lie sleeping, awaiting the day of judgment.

In that one day's battle, from about dawn to sunset, South Carolinians fought hard under the leadership of Hardee. About three or four times as many northerners were killed that day as Southerners. Under cover of night Hardee marched his men to Bentonville where they joined the forces commanded by Joseph E. Johnson, and there fought two days.

From this engagement Johnson withdrew in good order, moving northward, intending to hit Sherman's front several more times before joining Lee in Virginia. But the surrender at Appomattox cut short this plan. Peace had come, and the Civil War passed into history.

Only a few landmarks of the battle of Averasboro still remain. Save the cotton planted annually in the field surrounding the silent graves not far distant are the only company the "Gypsy" has. Counting the years as they pass, it stands with its boughs drooped as in mourning, conscious only of God's occasional breezes or perhaps a curious spectator who comes to marvel at its miraculous preservation. Before the war, it had served as a Gypsy trading post and camp, but was forsaken after this old

road by which it stands was abandoned as a state line. Because of Gypsy association, it was given the name "Gypsy".

What a story this "Gypsy" could relate, if men only understood the language of trees. The poet, Hubbard F. Page, reared within one mile of the "Gypsy" has caught something of its spell, as is revealed in his poem, "The Wraith of the Gypsy Pine", which follows:

THE WRAITH OF THE GYPSY PINE

Where broad plantations kindly spare
A strip of woods between,
With brook and stream and many a
rare

Wild flower and evergreen,
Beside the old stage highway, still
May the traveler descry,
Topping a sparsely wooded hill,
A pine against the sky.

Apart, lofty, sedate, it stands
With branches drooping low;
Beneath which, gay, far-faring bands
Pitched tent long, long ago,
And sang or danced or sighed or
laughed,
To moodful viol and lyre,
Or plied their mystic Old World Craft
About the quaint forge fire.

And old wives tell how, on a day
When March winds loudly blew,
The louder blast of battle fray
Here shook the forest through;
And how, when mangled trees and men
Lay scattered on the ground,
The gypsy Pine o'er-looked the glen,
No mark upon it found.

And one tells how a Kundra girl
Stood tip-toe on its top,
And when she gave her wand a twirl
The cannon ball would drop—
Drop sudden there in swiftest flight,
The thick the earth was strown,

CANDIDATE FOR JUDGE FOURTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT



CHARLES ROSS
of Harnett County

Democratic Primary, June 2, 1934

"Mr. Ross by nature and training has the qualities of head and heart which will insure the maintenance of the high standards the people of the Fourth Judicial District are accustomed to expect."

—Harnett County Bar.

And thus the tree, throughout the fight,
Stood scatheless, grim, and lone.

Tells how, when night troubled down,
And stifled, lulled the strife:
She still stood there in sash and crown,
Her wand now changed to rife,
And blew a weird outlandish wail,
Over the stiffening dead,
Then stepping off upon the gale,
Into the darkness sped.

The shifting seasons duly bring
The rain crow to his wood;
The swift poises on rapturous wing
Toward some far-visions good.
But the Roman folk no more
Return unto their tree
With wild prophetic Paynim lore,
And wilder minstrelsy.

Yet some do say, on charmed nights,
Under the lonely Pine,
A gypsy court its camp fire lights,
The briefest space to shine.
And who makes hold to hasten there,
Will find, in state, the queen,
And have of her words passing fair,
Of all his life may mean.

Such fortune never to me fell,
Yet, when I thither stray,
The brookside flowers, a gracious
spell,
Upon my musings lay;
Or, when the stars look from the skies
Upon the ancient Tree,
With the night wind my spirit flies
Toward Life's far mystery.

Let Winborne Go To No Expense

One Macon has entered the primary against Stanley Winborne, present Commissioner of Utilities. It is really unfair for Mr. Winborne to have to spend a dollar in a campaign.

Appointed by the Governor to fill out an unexpired term on the old Corporation Commission, he had to run at the next primary to continue that unexpired term. Then came the regular election and he had to run again. That was only two years ago.

Next the old commission was abolished and Mr. Winborne appointed on the new one. But that appointment, like the first, can hold only till the next election. Now he must be elected to hold the job to which he was so recently appointed—three elections within four years.

Let's let him understand that he will be elected without his worrying or going to any expense. We know he fits the job—it is not known whether the other candidate would fit it or not.

Why The Tender Solicitude For The Backs Of Heartless Scoundrels?

Miss Hattie Berry, early champion of good roads, has joined Captain Ashe in his agitation for the return of the whipping post. Why there should be so much regard for the backs and feelings of rascals who hesitate not to steal, to get drunk and kill with cars, or make and sell liquors to those who do kill under its influence is really strange. For months, as Miss Berry points out, youngsters are fed in jail at public expense while awaiting trial and when sent to the roads scarcely earn their victuals. A good flogging and release with a warning to go and sin no more would probably do the culprit more good and save the State much expense. If the disgrace is greater than a chain-gang sentence the world is open for the seamp to make a new start in another place.

Insult is back and must stand trial. The Leas are on their way to the North Carolina prison, or there already. The law's arm is long and strong, if at times slow.



For SOLICITOR
of the
Fourth District

I hereby announce my candidacy for the Democratic nomination for Solicitor of the Fourth District. Your support will be much appreciated.

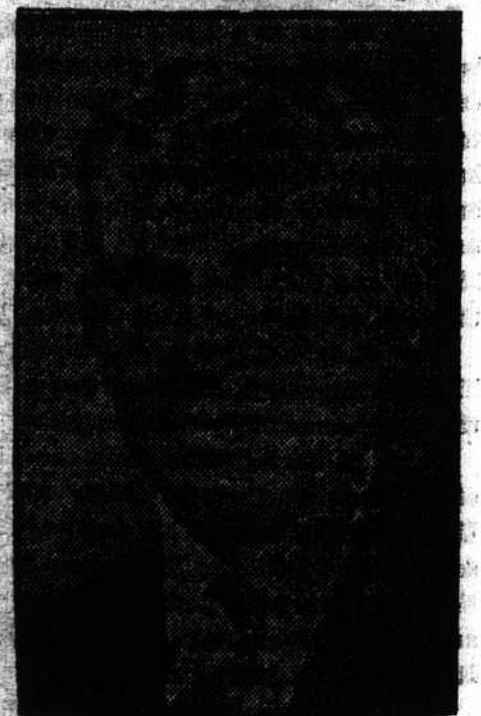
Respectfully,
J. R. (BOB) YOUNG

HIS RECORD

Born and raised at Wallace, Duplin County, N. C., son of Dr. D. McL. Graham and Elizabeth Murphy Graham; educated at the Clement Academy in Wallace, the University of North Carolina, and graduate of the University of Virginia Law School; admitted to the Bar of North Carolina in 1899; practiced law at Clinton since 1903; Mayor of Town of Clinton for two terms; Secretary and later Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Clinton Graded School; Secretary and later Chairman of the Sampson County Democratic Executive Committee; Member of State Democratic Executive Committee from 1923 to present time; Elected Representative from Sampson County to the 1927 General Assembly, being the first Democrat elected to represent Sampson County in more than 30 years; author of the Graham School Bill in Session of 1927; Member of State Board of Equalization from 1927 to 1933, and now serving as representative of Third Congressional District on State School Commission.

Candidate for Congress

THIRD CONGRESSIONAL
DISTRICT



A. McL. GRAHAM
—of—
SAMPSON COUNTY