

# George Moses Horton—love poet for hire

by Ben Steelman  
Staff Writer

This is another in a series of articles exploring some of the more intriguing stories of the University's past.

George Moses Horton was perhaps the most outstanding man of letters Chapel Hill produced before the Civil War.

But he was never a student or member of the faculty, despite a close association with the University lasting nearly 50 years.

Horton was a black man, a slave who by a miracle of effort and will taught himself to read, write and compose poetry. From the middle of the War of 1812 until the University's temporary closing in 1868, he would walk from his Chatham county home

each Sunday, sit in front of Gerrard Hall and sell poems of his own composition to students for a quarter apiece.

Horton was born in 1797 in Northampton County, but had been moved to Chatham at about age six by his master. William Horton (slaves normally took their owner's last name) was a lenient slaveholder by 19th century standards. Whippings seemed to have been comparatively rare, and slaves were allowed to travel to the nearby University on their days off, sell produce from the plantation and keep most of the profits for themselves.

It did not take students long, however, to notice that George Horton was different from the other fruit and tobacco vendors.

For one thing, he could read. As a child, left to tend the Horton family livestock, he

had stolen every spare moment memorizing the contents of an old blueback speller which had fallen into his hands.

From this he progressed to a Bible and his mother's Methodist hymnal. The rhythm and flow of the words somehow struck a chord inside him; soon he found himself making rhymes in his head as he plowed fields or chopped wood.

At first, the students, amused by Horton's elevated vocabulary and occasionally awkward syntax, would gather round and pay him to deliver long orations.

Then, somehow, someone discovered that Horton could write poems on any subject requested. Tradition has it that James K. Polk, an 1818 graduate and later President of the United States, first encouraged him in this respect.

Thus by the 1820's he was writing poems on order—chiefly sentimental love ballads which students usually mailed to girlfriends as original compositions. A specialty of Horton's was acrostics, poems in which the first letters of every line, arranged vertically, spelled out the name of the young lady in question.

For all this, Horton charged 25 cents per poem, although grateful customers frequently chipped in as much as 50 cents or \$1 if their purchase proved particularly effective.

Horton's activities attracted the attention of University presidents Caldwell and Swain, and other University officials, most of whom became fervid patrons and close friends.

Caroline Lee Hentz, a faculty wife from

Lancaster, Mass., transcribed several of his poems and gave him lessons in meter and diction. Horton responded by writing a touching eulogy when Mrs. Hentz's first child died.

By the 1830's, the works of the "Sable Poet" were appearing in the liberal *Raleigh Register* and the prestigious *Southern Literary Messenger*.

White friends sponsored the publication of two anthologies, *The Hope of Liberty* (1829) and *Poetical Works* (1845), in hopes of raising enough money to buy Horton's freedom. Several fund-raising drives, one sponsored by N.C. Governor John Owen, were organized with the same object.

But All Horton, who had inherited George Moses from his father, remained adamant. If his "property" was valuable enough for

respectable persons to raise money for it, he had no intention of letting it go.

So Horton remained a slave until 1865, when he was liberated by Sherman's troops. With the help of several Union officers, he published a third anthology, *Naked Genius*. Moving to Philadelphia in 1866, he was admitted to the Banneker Institute, a society of black intellectuals, and wrote a series of short stories on Biblical themes set in modern times before his death sometime in 1883.

Today, Horton is regarded as the most important black American poet between Phyllis Wheatley and the figures of the "Harlem Renaissance." Several studies, most notably Richard Walter's *The Black Poet* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1966), have been written on his works.

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### Jones captures RHA presidency

by Art Eisenstadt  
and Jim Roberts  
Staff Writers

Betsey Jones won a narrow victory over the team of Mike O'Neal and Lars Nance in the race for the Residence Hall Association (RHA) presidency. Voter turn-out was sparse.

With all precincts eligible to vote for the post reporting in Wednesday's campus-wide elections, unofficial figures showed Jones with a total of 519 votes, compared to 467 votes for O'Neal and Nance.

Meanwhile, a proposed constitutional amendment which would authorize the Campus Governing Council (CGC) to allow Student Government-funded organizations to keep budgetary surpluses was approved easily.

With all precincts reporting, "yes" votes unofficially outnumbered "no" votes, 966-202. This is about a five-to-one margin in favor of the amendment.

Fewer than 1,200 voters, or one of every 19 students eligible to vote, cast ballots in the election.

O'Neal and Nance carried only six precincts. They were Morrison, Connor, Parker, Ruffin, naval armory and Granville.

Jones won the remaining eight precincts by about a two-to-one margin.

The RHA vote apparently settles a controversial problem of RHA leadership.

O'Neal lived in Craige dormitory last year, but the predominantly graduate residence hall is not an RHA member. The RHA constitution requires the president to live in an RHA dorm. Last year he moved to Granville.

Under pressure from Student Body President Marcus Williams and Chancellor N. Ferebee Taylor, O'Neal resigned on Sept. 13.

Granville residents only regained the right to vote in the RHA election during a special Supreme Court session held

Tuesday night.

The amendment passed easily in all precincts. In some, support ran as high as eight-to-one in favor.

The wording of the referendum on the ballots was "I approve the amendment to allow student government organizations to retain surplus funds."

Now that it is approved, the amendment will go into effect immediately. As previously written, the SG constitution required all budgetary surpluses to revert to the general budget surplus, used as a contingency fund in the following year's budget.

Under the amended version, CGC can vote to allow any particular organization to keep its surplus. If CGC does not act, the funds will revert to CGC as before.

In the undergraduate court districts on campus district I, Peter Gardner and Gloria Anderson ran unopposed. Gardner won with 118 votes and Anderson won with 116 votes.

Susan McAdams ran unopposed in on-campus district II, receiving 64 votes. In on-campus district III John Cox ran unopposed and got 106 votes. Susan Adams also ran unopposed, receiving 109 votes.

Bruce Tindall and Mary Virginia Curry ran unopposed in on-campus district IV receiving respectively 60 and 67 votes. H. Morris Caldwell Jr. ran unopposed in on-campus district V and received 74 votes.

Ken Ledford and Betsy Brown both ran unopposed in on-campus district VI, receiving respectively 137 and 135 votes. In on-campus district VII Jon Mundorf defeated Jon Shobebotham and Rick Mayo with 32 votes. Kathy McArthur ran unopposed and received 80 votes.

In on-campus district VIII James Jernigan defeated Sam Cooper with 66 votes. Ashley Moore ran unopposed with 104 votes.

By press time, CGC results were not final.



Democrat Rufus Edmisten reveals tax history for past decade Wednesday

### Granville penalty lifted for election

by Jim Roberts  
Staff Writer

The Student Supreme Court rescinded its contempt order against Granville Residence College Tuesday and instead ordered vacated the position of Granville governor, held by Mark Miller. The court also held the Granville senate in contempt of court without immediate punishment.

The court will also write a letter to Chancellor N. Ferebee Taylor, emergency justice David Ford said. "The letter will state that Granville would not go along with the lawful order of the court and will ask the Chancellor to review Granville's status as University-approved housing."

With the position of Granville governor vacant, Mike Mayhew, speaker of Granville's senate, took over as acting governor.

The Granville senate was to meet Wednesday night to vote for a permanent governor. The senate can again choose Miller if it wishes. If this occurs, Ford said, the court would have to take further action. "The purpose of holding the position vacant was to make them hold another election."

The decision came as a result of a suit filed by Bill Strickland on behalf of Granville.

The suit stated that the original contempt citation improperly labeled the defendant as Granville Residence College.

When Alvia Gaskill filed suit for a new Granville gubernatorial election, the defendant named was "Lindsay Hughs Wrenn, as Chairman of the Granville Residence College Elections Board." However, when the contempt of court citation was handed down because Granville failed to hold the necessary election, the citation labeled the defendant as Granville Residence College.

The contempt citation suspended Granville Residence College from RHA and forbade residents there from voting in "campus-wide elections which involve the election of RHA officers." In effect, Granville residents could not vote in Wednesday's election for RHA president. Tuesday's late night decision allowed these students to vote.

Strickland said the citation violates the right, as specified in the Student Constitution of the RHA, to handle matters concerning student life in University-approved undergraduate residence halls. "In suspending Granville from RHA, the citation also suspends the Student Constitution."

### Edmisten gives tax history for last decade

by Sandra Millers  
Staff Writer

In an effort to rescue his campaign for state attorney general from damaging controversy over his income taxes, Democrat Rufus Edmisten released a personal financial statement Wednesday covering the past decade.

He also challenged his Republican opponent, incumbent Attorney General James H. Carson Jr., to do the same.

Edmisten's income and tax listings showed a total income for the 10-year period of \$194,143.44 and Virginia income taxes of \$7,087.94. The statement also showed Edmisten and his wife, an attorney whose earnings totaled two-thirds of his paid joint federal income taxes of \$78,100.59.

"I'm taking this action, I challenge my opponent to disclose to the citizens of North Carolina an equally candid and complete statement regarding the amount and sources of his income and the amount of taxes he has paid," Edmisten said during a Wednesday morning press conference.

Carson replied later in the day with an itemized financial listing including his tax returns since 1963. Carson disclosed that he paid \$4,984.18 in North Carolina taxes last year.

In a statement released by his campaign office, Carson said he believes "public officials have an obligation to go above and beyond their legal responsibilities" in responding to questions about their financial statements while serving as attorney general.

"With this statement," Carson said, "I think I have gone as far or further than any other candidate for statewide public office in

terms of public disclosure of financial status and North Carolina tax returns."

The controversy over Edmisten's taxes began during a Chapel Hill debate Sept. 24 when Carson charged his Democratic opponent with paying state income taxes in Virginia while working for N.C. Senator Sam Ervin, although maintaining legal residence in this state.

In his Wednesday statement, Edmisten called Carson's comments irresponsible and unfounded, and accused the attorney general of "abusing his important office for partisan political gain." Edmisten said other congressional aides had also filed taxes in Virginia while voting in their home state.

"The present Republican administration has had two years to begin enforcement of its policy — if indeed this is its policy," Edmisten said, "and it appears most unusual that I — a Democrat running against a Republican appointee — happen to be the first and only person singled out."

Edmisten said he has consulted with experts in North Carolina tax laws and that he remains convinced "no language contained in the general statutes of North Carolina expressly and explicitly requires me to file North Carolina returns since Virginia law absolutely required me to pay taxes on all my income."

"I felt that my income was not subject to a second tax by North Carolina and that I was not required to file a second tax return."

The Democrat expressed surprise that Gov. James E. Holshouser Jr., who appointed Carson attorney general, had refused to investigate the possibility that his tax records had been leaked.

Edmisten refuted Republican rumors that he might withdraw from the race and affirmed his desire to get back to the issues.

In his Wednesday statement, Carson replied, "I am pleased my opponent has chosen to join me in debating the issues of the campaign." The attorney general added he feels confident North Carolina voters now have "a clear track record" to help them decide how to vote.

### Sunny

Today will be sunny and cool. Highs will be in the middle 60s, and lows tonight in the low to mid 30s.

Chance of rain is near zero today and tonight. Winds will be from the north at 10 miles per hour.

## Servomation's future brightening on campus

Students say Pine Room improved

by Don Baer,  
George Basco  
and Jim Bule  
Staff Writers

Many students believe the Pine Room has improved significantly since last year.

Areas of improvement, they say, include food preparation, menu variety and general sanitation.

Ninety-five students eating in the Pine Room between 12:30 and 6 p.m. were polled by the DTH.

Most of the students ate in the Pine Room daily.

Twenty-eight students said they ate in the Pine Room last year. About half said the food preparation has improved since last year, while the other half has noticed no change.

"They have made some effort to change the atmosphere," Kay Pritchett, a Spanish graduate student said. Junior Tom Fowler thinks they still need to make improvements.

Compared to last year, 53 per cent think the menu variety is better, while 40 per cent found no change.

"It certainly has improved over last year—I would not eat here last year," Rick Stradler said.

Although 40 per cent of those polled believe sanitation and housekeeping has improved since last year, the majority found no notable differences in this area.

Overall, most students think sanitation conditions are now good.

"They should make Chase as good as this," freshman Edwin White said.

The consensus is, however, that menu variety and food preparation are only fair.

"Sandwiches are the only decent food," Fowler commented.

"Yesterday I had to throw away a chef salad—it was at least two days old," junior Enid Miller said.

Although students seem to think improvements have taken place, many are still dissatisfied.

More than 80 per cent of those polled said they eat in the Pine Room not because of food quality, but convenience.

Three of every four students said food items are not priced fairly.

Graduate student Dora Polacheck cited other cafeterias downtown as having more reasonably priced food.

The Food Service Advisory Committee is scheduled to decide this month if Servomation, the company presently operating the Pine Room, should have their contract renewed. Students were asked whether Servomation should be allowed to stay or should be replaced.

A majority of students believe a replacement should be sought, while six per cent think Servomation should be allowed to stay.

"If another company can serve us for the same price and increase quality, I would definitely say replace Servomation!" Linda Livengood said.

Administrators see no problems

by Ted Melnik  
Asst. News Editor

Servomation Mathias, Inc. now seems to face a brighter future at UNC.

Threatened last spring with termination of their contract, Servomation was required this year to make changes in its pricing, menu and sanitation policies. During the first fall meeting of the UNC Food Service Advisory Committee Wednesday, students and University administrators said they thought Servomation, although still not perfect, is now doing a satisfactory job of serving UNC's food needs.

"I think we have come a long way since last spring," committee member and Associate Student Affairs Dean James Cansler said.

"We appreciate it," Servomation Director Robert Greer replied.

James A. Branch, committee chairman and auxiliary enterprises director who earlier this year said the food committee would begin recruiting a replacement for Servomation if the required changes weren't made, said he thought Servomation was doing well.

"So far it's in their favor," he said. "I think they've done a good job."

And Servomation officials appeared eager to correct any remaining complaints.

"If anybody ever gets a cold sandwich, the best thing they can do is bring it back to the serving line," Pine Room

assistant manager Bill Terry said. "And if we have to make them another sandwich, they'll get another sandwich. And that goes for any product anybody gets that is unsatisfactory."

"And if they wish," Pine Room manager Jack Haney added, "we'll refund their money if they've already paid for the item."

A *Daily Tar Heel* poll taken Wednesday showed that many Pine Room customers believe service in that Servomation facility is now satisfactory. However, another DTH poll taken recently showed that students are still unsatisfied with the Union Snack Bar.

"I've been in the Pine Room many times this year and I think there are many improvements," Cansler said. "But I haven't eaten any Snack Bar hamburgers. I got scared off by the newspapers."

Snack Bar manager Clarence Mayo thinks the Snack Bar's problem is its reputation rather than its food.

"We expect a certain amount of criticism on the Snack Bar," Greer said, "but it is fast. That's our primary concern and there have never been any complaints about that."

Mayo said representatives of Servomation's main office visited the campus last year and heard that students had been complaining about the Snack Bar's food quality.

"Well, as long as you are still packing the students in," Mayo recalled one representative saying, "why worry about the food?"