

Early Service -- In 1904 John Blue extended the tracks of the Aberdeen and Rockfish Railroad through Raeford to Hope Mills Junction a few miles from Fayetteville. Service from the Laurinburg and Southern Railroad began here after 1910.

A LOOK BACK

FORMER RESIDENT HELPING WITH HOKE HISTORY

by Paul Fu

Hoke County Library Consultant and Technical Services Librarian of the Sandhill Regional Library System, Paul Fu, is cooperating with Mrs. Suzanne Cameron Linder, to write a book on Hoke County railroad history.

Mrs. Linder is currently working as Librarian/Media Technician for the Orange Blossom Railroad History Project sponsored by Richmond Technical College.

It is the authors' hope that the book be used as a basis for the future expansion into a book on Hoke County history which we do not have yet.

The project has received a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to research the impact the railroad industry has had on the growth of communities in the Sandhill Region.

It is designed to involve the citizen of this region in their own history as they have moved from agricultural-textile areas into diverse industrial communities.

Fu is responsible for writing the history of two main railroads in Hoke County which are still in

operation. They are the Aberdeen and Rockfish (A&R) and Laurinburg and Southern (L&S) railroads.

Linder is responsible for organizing, editing, and making photographs.

She is also writing the history of the third railroad, the Red Springs and Bunmore, which was demolished in 1950.

Suzanne is not a stranger to some Hoke residents. She's the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Tom Cameron of Raeford, and graduated from Hoke County High School in 1957.

After the graduation she entered Converse College in South Carolina as a national merit scholar student with a major in history.

Suzanne finished her college education in three years for a four years' program. She continued her study in Wake Forest University with a full graduate fellowship and received her M.A. degree in history.

Suzanne's master thesis, "William Louis Poteat, Prophet of Progress," is a full-scale biography of the late Wake Forest president and proponent of academic free-

dom, which was printed later into a book and published by the University of North Carolina Press.

Her second book, "Medicine in Marlboro County, 1736 to 1980," a detailed medical history of the South Carolina County, was published by the Marlborough County Medical Society.

In it, she managed to transform dry statistics and courthouse records and bits of biographical data into a compelling narrative which relates the progress of medicine in that county to the advancement of medical science in the nation and world; reviewers have hailed it as one of the best local history books ever published in the Carolinas.

Hoke County Library has both of Suzanne's two books mentioned above. She is thinking about undertaking a third book after the conclusion of the railroad history project next spring.

"I'd love to write something about railroad history -- but right now I'm inundated with such a wealth of information that it's difficult for me to settle on a topic that's sufficiently narrow for one

book," she said.

Before joining the "Orange Blossom Special" staff, Suzanne taught history courses for two years at a South Carolina technical college. Earlier, she had taught in public school -- at levels from kindergarten through high school.

She took a year off from studies, between college and graduate school, to teach in Winston-Salem. There she met Jim Linder, then a student at Bowman Gray School of Medicine, now a Bennettsville surgeon. They were married 20 years ago.

As both a librarian and a historian, Suzanne thinks the purpose of librarian work is twofold. "We want to stimulate the public to use the libraries more, and we want to place the historical material we accumulate permanently in libraries. I see this historical preservation aspect as the main purpose of the (Orange Blossom Railroad History) project," she said.

This is the main reason why Suzanne and Fu are working together to publish a tiny book on

Hoke County railroad history, which is largely based on Hoke County Library's Local History/Genealogy Collection.

Actually the book is a further expansion of Fu's article, "Aberdeen and Rockfish Railroad Was Critical to Hoke County," which was published in *The News-Journal* on September 30, 1982.

He spent almost two years in collecting and organizing local history/genealogical material, including the researches on various family connections in the Sandhill region.

The work was completed one year ago.

The focus of the railroad history book is concentrated on the analysis of its two builders, John Blue and John F. McNair, and their family members' participation in railroad business.

Their connection with the operation of Hoke's two important transportation systems have greatly contributed to the growth of the county and the development of its business.

The book will be published soon and will be distributed to the public without any charge on December 6 when the Sandhill Regional Library System celebrates its 20 years anniversary.

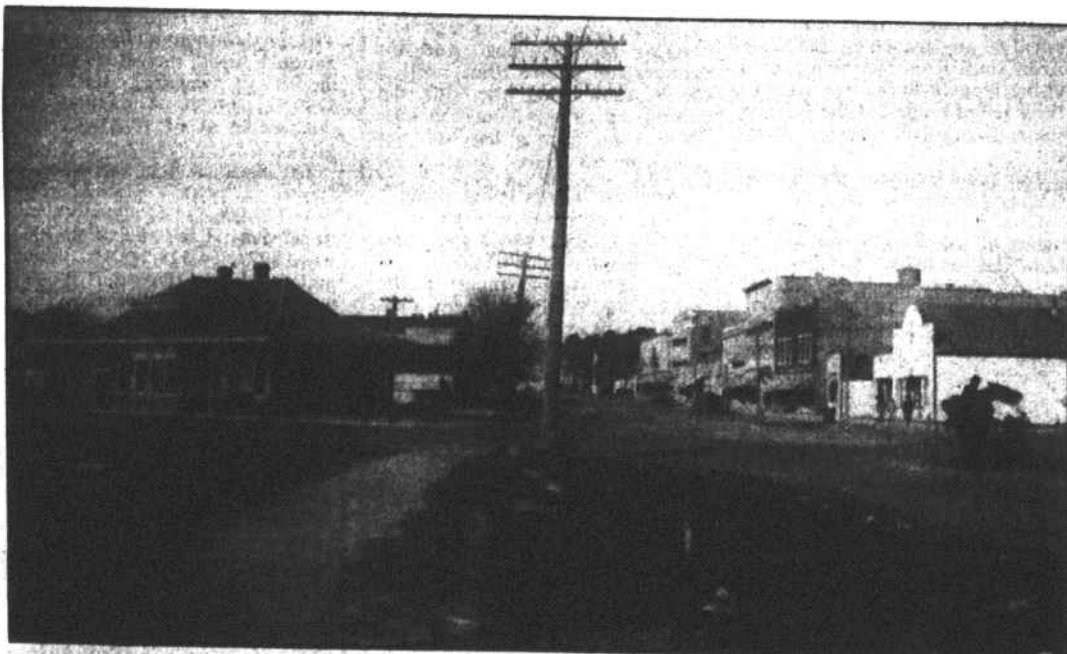
Hoke County Library is a member of the system. On that day the library here will have an open house. All the county residents and the friends in the Sandhill region will be cordially invited to jointly celebrate its birthday in the library.

The open house will include several activities. Meanwhile, Suzanne also plans to come to Raeford and help distribute the new books.

Railroad/train photos and pictures will also be displayed in the library.

Some folks have not seen Suzanne for a long time, this is her home-coming and a good opportunity to talk to her.

Please come to the library on December 6, one week from today. See you next Wednesday.



Water And Sewer -- J.H. Austin was elected mayor of Raeford in 1913 and a year later the town began preparing for water and sewer service. The project was finished in 1916.



The McLauchlin Company -- The firm was founded by the "Father of Hoke County" J.W. McLauchlin, and is believed to be the oldest business in Raeford. The business started as a country store.