

# Weekly Perspective

## Wide farm equipment questions answered

It is obvious that harvest time is upon us in Perquimans County due to the number of combines that we are seeing on our local highways.

There are several laws which govern combines and other wide farm equipment when being operated on the highway. The law that I am questioned about most frequently regulates the width of farm equipment.

The flags must be at least 3 feet wide and 4 feet long and be visible from both directions for at least 300 feet.

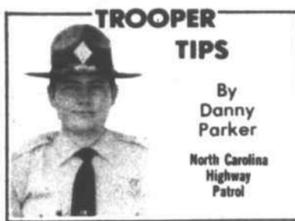
Equipment which must travel more than 10 miles or on which the flags cannot be seen for at least 300 feet at any point due to the terrain or obstacles (curves, etc.) must have an escort.

The escort must precede the wide load at a distance of 300 feet. A second escort must follow the wide load at a distance of 300 feet. Both escorts must display an appropriate warning light or flag.

When the wide equipment is causing a delay in traffic, the operator must move the equipment off the paved portion of the highway at the nearest practical location until the vehicles following the equipment have passed.

Letting the backed up traffic by is not only a matter of courtesy, there is a traffic law which specifically requires this action.

Farmers are a very important part of everyday life in Perquimans County. I trust that you the farmer will operate your wide equipment in a safe and lawful manner when on our highways in order to promote safety and prevent accidents.



### TROOPER TIPS

By  
Danny Parker  
North Carolina  
Highway  
Patrol

Farm equipment greater than 18 feet wide cannot be operated on the highway, except by special permit. Equipment that is 10 feet wide or less can be operated on a highway (excluding Interstates and Defense Highways) without any type of escort.

Equipment that is between 10 and 18 feet wide may be operated on the highway during daylight hours, but the equipment must display a red flag on the front and rear.

## Oldest land deed claim proved false

The claim that Perquimans County has the oldest land deed in North Carolina has circulated for at least a century.

So weighty an authority as the respected William L. Saunders wrote in 1886: "The earliest grant made in North Carolina, of which we have a copy, is now of record in Perquimans county, and was made by the King of the Yeopim Indians on the 1st March, 1662, to George Durant,..."

Numerous books repeat the claim. Reproductions of the purported oldest deed hang in the county Courthouse and may be had from local suppliers.



However, the claim is completely false on two grounds: first, because the much publicized document is not the oldest deed in Perquimans, and second, because Perquimans' oldest is not the oldest deed in North Carolina.

Examination of the deed books in our Courthouse reveals the two earliest deeds there are numbers 374 and 375 in Perquimans Deed Book A. Both instruments are conveyances from the King of Yeopim (whose name may be rendered Kiskitano) to George Durant.

Deed A: 374 bears the date March 1, 1661; it is the famous deed for which great claims of age and importance are made. Deed A:375 is dated August 4, 1661; it is unjustly ignored.

The assumption has commonly been made, based on appearances, that A:374 is older than A:375; surely, March precedes August. However, appearances delude. The sun of August 4, 1661, had set nearly seven months before that of March 1, 1661 ever dawned.

The calendar used by George Durant was not the Gregorian one we use today. Until 1752 England and her colonies adhered to the outmoded Julian Calendar, refusing to accept so practical a thing as an accurate calendar because it was recommended by a pope, Gregory XIII.

Julian usage began the year on the Feast of the Annunciation, March 25. Thus March 1 came very near the end of the year.

Expressed in terms of our calendar, the year of Deed A:374 would be 1662, as Saunders himself noted. Despite its fame, it is not the oldest deed in Perquimans and therefore cannot be the oldest in the state. Deed A:375 has the distinction of being Perquimans' oldest.

Having disproved the claims for A:374, can it then be said that A:375 is the oldest deed in North Carolina? Much as Perquimans seeks an affirmative, the answer must be negative.

Dr. Elizabeth McPherson and Mrs. Mittie Baum were examining the early records of old Norfolk County, Va., in Chesapeake some years ago. There, in Deed Book D:293; they discovered a deed from Kiscutaneh Kinge of Yausapin to Nathaniel Batts on September 24, 1660.

By that deed Batts was to receive the land on the south side of Pasquotank River running from the river's mouth to the head of new Begin Creeke. The text, with much historical background on Batts, was printed in "The North Carolina Historical Review" in January, 1966.

A copy of the deed was also recorded in Pasquotank County, and commemorative markers were erected as well.

At the moment, the Batts deed of 1660 is the oldest deed known for North Carolina. All claims that Perquimans has the oldest deed are false, as shown by evidence readily available these seventeen years. They should be abandoned lest our county be a laughingstock in the community of historians.

It is ludicrous enough that our claim always rested on the wrong deed anyway. There is no honor in making false claims.



## The Oxford Orphanage

# One hundred years of Masonic love

(Editor's note: The following article replaces the column that generally appears in the space. Because of the community concern for this project we feel that Mr. Gregory deserves this opportunity to "chat" with the people of Perquimans County.)

By PAUL GREGORY

On October 15, 1983, the Oxford Orphanage Choir will be in Perquimans County to entertain its patrons from the 1st Masonic District. The recital will begin at 7:30 at the Perquimans County High School Auditorium. Donations are requested in the amount of \$3.00 for adults and \$1.50 for children under 12.

The Oxford Orphanage was opened in February of 1873 by the Masons of North Carolina. At that time disease had claimed the life of a great many parents and farming became the predominant means for livelihood. The era had a surplus of orphans and the masonic lodges decided to tackle the problem.



Entrance into the orphanage is through one of the 390 Masonic Lodges in North Carolina. The membership votes as to sponsorship of a child or children after a thorough investigation of the homelife has been made by local Oxford Orphanage Committee.

Many of the 75,000 North Carolina Masons visit the children every year. During Christmas holidays and other vacation times individual families take these children into their homes.

The orphanage consists of 440 acres with twelve handsome brick cottages which house between 20 to 24 children each. The campus resembles that of a small college since it was St. John's College prior to the Civil War.

Each dormitory has its own house parents — counselors who are well trained in caring for problem children of all age levels.

But it is probably the education received by the children which leaves the most lasting impression on them. Classes from kindergarten through grade 12 are conducted five days a week by certified teachers with a variety of degrees.

When the children reach high school level, one half of each day is allotted to vocational training while the remainder is spent on scholastic programs.

Contained within the campus are facilities for electrical training, printing, carpentry, plumbing and house painting. There is also a farm and dairy which is operated by the children at the orphanage, under the close supervision of its staff.

Once the students finish the twelfth grade, the orphanage either finds them a job or sends them to college for additional education.

The annual budget is over \$2,000,000. This pays for 72 full-time staff members, numerous part-time employees and the general operation of the orphanage. No state or federal support is received by the orphanage for any of the children.

The financial support comes strictly from endowments and donations given by Masons and other interested patrons.

All donations received at the concert on October 15 will be put into a Foundation Fund for operating the orphanage.

What is unique is that only the interest from this Foundation Fund will be used. The principle amount will never be spent.

Although the home has retained its name of Oxford Orphanage; not all children are orphans. In fact, only a

few are without parents. A large portion of the children are at Oxford Orphanage while their parents are trying to "get their life together."

The parents may come at any time and request their children.

This year, the choir has traveled from the mountains to the coast. The entire choir, consisting of fifty members ages eight through 18, will come to Perquimans County. They will be housed by Masonic Families of Perquimans Masonic Lodge 106 on Saturday night and return to the orphanage on Sunday.

Anyone desiring tickets for the performance may contact any of the following Masons: Paul Gregory, Max Mercer, Melvin Colson, Lawrence Spivey, John Long, Bob Spivey or any other masons of Perquimans Masonic Lodge 106.

## Letter to the editor

Editor

THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY  
As the state representative for the National Tuberous Sclerosis Association, I am writing as part of our national effort to locate and register victims of Tuberous Sclerosis.

Tuberous Sclerosis is a genetic disorder characterized by epileptic seizures, mental retardation, benign tumors of the brain and skin lesions.

Our voluntary, non-profit parent group was formed to offer information and support to families who previously could learn little

about this disorder.

It is vital to the advancement of basic and genetic research that families become registered with NTSA. The ultimate goal of NTSA is to find the cause of Tuberous Sclerosis and hopefully a cure.

In the meantime, NTSA is striving to provide the best life conditions for TS individuals and their families.

At the present time, 20 cases have been identified in North Carolina with eight cases registered.

However, we know many more cases exist, as Tuberous Sclerosis is

thought to occur as often as 1 in 10,000.

Parents are advised to contact the Headquarters of the National Tuberous Sclerosis Association, P. O. Box 612, Winfield, Illinois 60190. Or call the headquarters at (312) 688-0787.

They may also contact me by calling (919) 236-3243 or writing Route 2, Box 6, Elm City, North Carolina 27822.

Plans are underway for a local parent support group.

Sincerely  
Debbie F. Murphy, LPN  
NTSA State Representative

## Looking back

20 Years Ago

By VIRGINIA WHITE TRANSEAU  
OFFICERS ELECTED FOR MARCHING UNIT: The newly formed board of directors of the Perquimans County Marching Unit met Monday at the Chamber of Commerce office.

The board is designed to replace the previous Chamber committee which was set up for the purpose of getting the unit started. Since this objective has been coordination as finance, membership, equipment, purchasing, travel arrangements, training, etc.

Members of the board include Henry C. Stokes Jr., Francis Nixon, John Biggers, Bob Taylor, Don Norman, Mrs. John Bevers, Sid Harmon, Mrs. Tom Brown, Mrs. Eugene Boyce, Mrs. Sidney Harmon,

Henry Clay Sullivan, Mrs. Joe Rogerson and A. L. Aydtlett Jr., secretary.

SCOTTISH RITE CLUB HAS COOK-OUT: On Wednesday night, the Perquimans County Scottish Rite Club held a cookout and ladies' night party at the Hertford Grammar School.

The food committee, composed of Dr. A. B. Bonner, Tuck Webb, Toss White, Matt Spivey Jr., Carson Spivey Sr., Marvin Caddy, Horace Webb, C.E. Winslow and others, got those steaks going and ready in a hurry.

BPW CLUB PLANS MEMBERSHIP DRIVE: The Hertford Business and Professional Women's Club met Thursday night at the home of Mrs. Betty T. Swindell for their regular meeting.

## Letters

The PERQUIMANS WEEKLY welcomes the opinion of its readers. We print letters to the editor on subjects of local, state, national and international interest.

Letters should be limited to 300-350 words and should include the name, address and telephone number of the writer. Only the name and address will be published with the letter.

The subject matter should be of interest to the community, not a personal gripe. Letters may be edited by our news staff for clarity and space limitations.

Mail letters to: The Perquimans Weekly, P.O. Box 277, Hertford, N.C. 27844, or drop them off at our offices at Courthouse Square.

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