

Perspectives



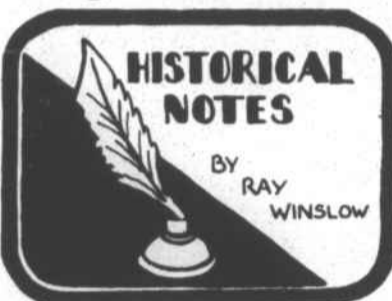
Still the best way to cool off!

Jacocks becomes powerful Perquimans County resident

Born in Bertie County and long resident in Perquimans, Jonathan Hill Jacocks was one of the wealthiest and most powerful citizens of ante bellum Perquimans. He also had influence through eastern North Carolina.

In 1835 Jacocks was elected by the voters of Perquimans to represent them in both the state legislature and in the state constitutional convention called to consider needed amendments to the state's basic instrument of government.

Jacocks became an active Whig party spokesman for eastern interests in the convention, although he had voted against organizing the convention and he would vote against the new constitution prepared therein. He did, however eventually accept office under that constitution, return-



ing to the state Senate for the First District in 1842. That same year he served in the simple office of public school committeeman.

Although a resident of Perquimans, Jacocks attended Christ Church in Elizabeth City, of which he was elected a vestryman in 1844.

In 1840 the census for the third time found Jacocks' household to be the

largest in Perquimans, having one hundred thirteen persons, of whom fifty-four were engaged in agriculture. Three years later the county tax list showed he held 1,269 acres.

General Joathan H. Jacocks died in January 1847 and was buried near Stevensons Point. The settlement of his estate revealed ownership of a remarkable amount of property.

Jacocks had eighty-nine slaves, including such craftsmen as Hercules (blacksmith), Daniel (carpenter), Maria (weaver), Madison (apprentice carpenter), Tom (shoemaker), and Big John (carpenter).

In addition to farmland, Jacocks owned houses and lots in Nags Head. His properties had yielded 3,800 bushels of corn sold in Providence, R.I., and 910 bushels for Charleston, S.C., and 600 bushels of wheat sold in New

York.

The general also owned a church pew, a portrait of Henry Clay, a sword and belts, gold watches, jewelry, a piano, a violin, a German flute, and a portrait of himself.

He had a large library which included works of Shakespeare, Smollet, Goldsmith, and Wesley; periodicals on agriculture and politics; law books; and more than two hundred titles.

The Jacocks had an enormous quantity of food and drink, including bacon, hams, sugar, yaupon, corn, pork, flour, lard, tea, coffee, molasses, herring, shad, salt, sweet potatoes, cheese, french brandy, Holland gin, Madeira wine, whiskey, spices, and poultry.

Perquimans would have few men to approach the wealth and influence of General Jonathan Hill Jacocks.

Scaring up a scarecrow

With faded memory, I still remember him. He was sometimes sad and sometimes funny, but always standing sentinel in swaying fields of corn or waltzing down a row of peas. He was, the sacred scarecrow...the farmer's loyal helpmate. This straw-filled, tattered sentry keeping vigil over field and flower was once a common sight. By June he graced every garden in the neighborhood, parading around the carrots in colorful, worn-out clothing and yesterday's Easter bonnet.

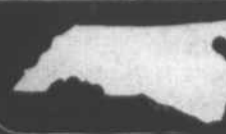
Recently, I saw a scarecrow in a field as I drove down a newly discovered back road I'd never traveled before. Suddenly, all the childhood memories of the straw man came back to me, as well as bits of history about the make-believe figure who once protected the bounty of the earth. It was the first scarecrow I'd seen in a long time. It warranted investigation. I drove into the owner's yard and introduced myself. Two hours later, I left with a bag full of beans, fresh onions, a tightly wound head of cabbage, and a new-found friend. She even gave me an old scarf for the beginnings of my own personal scarecrow.

It's a shame the scarecrow is nearly forgotten. It was around a long time. When the first colonists came to our country, they found them already watching over Indian corn. In early Greece and Rome, they also protected the crops. By the Middle Ages, scarecrows of one kind or another were the rural rule of thumb everywhere. The scarecrow soon became the universal symbol of man's striving to derive his living from the soil. That living was precious, and hard work. No man easily gave his bounty up to a bunch of worrisome crows.

The old custom of using a scarecrow was originally not to scare away crows, but rather as a cross-symbol to protect a cornfield. Superstitious farmers made scarecrows with two poles fastened together in the form of a cross, since the cross was considered a powerful charm against evil spirits. Clothes were then hung on the poles as a disguise.

EASTERN ECHOS

BY GAIL ROBERSON



Today, scientists claim that it is not the scarecrow, but the scent of people clinging to the clothes that keeps the birds away at first. But, soon the rain and the wind carry away the scents, thus also carrying away the "scare" out of the scarecrow. In fact, the very day I saw this scarecrow in a stranger's garden, there was also a large bird perched peacefully on its tattered blue coat.

Our fields were once steeped in this rural tradition. Today, the scarecrow has become folk art. An annual Scarecrow Festival takes place in Pennsylvania with a cash prize for the makers of the scarecrows voted the favorites by the public. So, I guess not all is lost.

Perhaps the most famous scarecrow was the brainless, but endearing one that walked the yellow brick road with Dorothy and Toto on the way to Oz. However, today, scaring up a scarecrow is still nearly impossible. One agricultural experiment station declares that the best modern-day bird repeller is a prominently displayed life-sized plastic owl. Whirligigs, those wind-propelled noisemakers guaranteed to terrify any bird, are also popular. The birds really do seem to hate them.

But, I still love the old-fashioned, straw-stuffed "man" on a post that wore mama's blouse, daddy's trousers, brother's gloves, Aunt Cenie's shawl, and a gourd head crowned with grandma's straw hat. Who cares about battling the birds as soft green shoots poke above the earth, so long as one of our most beloved and much missed farm folk finally makes it back to the soil.

CLASSIFIEDS WORK

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Brant Murray leaves for governor's school

BRANT MURRAY LEAVES GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL: Brant Murray, son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Murray of Hertford, left Monday to attend Governor's School on the Salem campus in Winston-Salem. Four hundred of North Carolina's most intelligent and talented students are chosen every year to attend the school. Brant will study English.

FREIGHT CARS JACK-KNIFE AT OKISCO: Eighteen cars of an 82 freight train were derailed near Okisco Friday. Cause of the wreck is thought to be due to the high temperature which makes the rail expand. None of the four crewmen were injured. The train was enroute to Norfolk, Va. from Chocowinity loaded with military trucks, jeeps, utility poles, lumber, grain and other general cargo. Fire Departments from Perquimans County and Elizabeth City were called to the scene. Traffic was re-routed through rural Perquimans and Pasquotank counties while State Road 1440 leading to U.S. 17 was blocked.

MISS HARRIS TAKES POSITION IN ATLANTA: Miss Beth Harris has

Letter to the editor

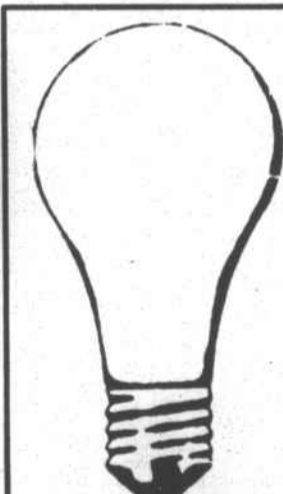
June 25, 1988 marks the anniversary date of the Brian Center Nursing Care. On that date, one year ago, our first resident-patient was admitted. Since that time interagency and interpersonal relationships have developed creating a smooth continuity of care for our residents. We have had our growing pains but thanks to our families, staff and residents transitions were made easy and team effort has created a nursing home you, the people of Perquimans and Gates County, can be proud of.

On behalf of Brian Center Nursing Care, I wish to thank the residents and families for their support. A special thanks is extended to Anne White of Open Door who has provided clothing for the residents as well as donated over fifty (50) lap robes which she and her staff have sewn. Also, to Mr. & Mrs. George Moore of Edenton and all the others who have donated time, money and needed items, a special thank you.

Through continued efforts it is our desire to provide the best possible nursing care to our residents.

Nancy Morgan

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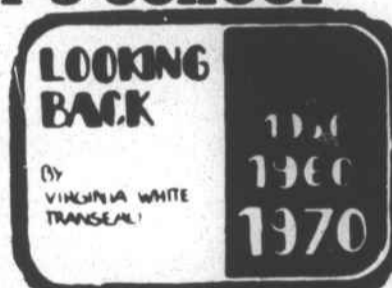
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accepted a position in Atlanta, Ga. Miss Harris is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jesse Lee Harris. She is a recent graduate of the University of North Carolina, where she was awarded a B.S. degree in Business Administration.

ANNOUNCE BIRTH: Mr. and Mrs. Robert H. Reed announce the birth of their second child, second son, Nelson Elliott, born Monday, June 4, 1970. Mrs. Reed is the former Lynn Tucker of Rocky Mount, NC.

ANNUAL WINSLOW REUNION IS HELD: The annual Jesse T. Winslow family reunion was held Sunday at the Whiteston Community Building.

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The news and editorial staff of The Perquimans Weekly would like you to tell us what kind of stories you like to see in the paper. If there is something or someone you feel is important — or some provocative issue you would like us to examine — please, let us know.

Just clip and fill out this coupon. Include as many details as possible (Names, addresses, telephone numbers, etc.) It may not be possible for us to use some of the stories suggested but we are always looking for new ideas.

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