

THE COASTLAND TIMES

Published Continuously at Manteo, N. C., Since July 4, 1935

The Weekly Journal of the Walter Raleigh Coastland of North Carolina, Foremost Region of Recreation and Sport, Healthful living and Historical Interest On The Atlantic Seaboard

Entered As Second Class Matter At The Postoffice At Manteo, N. C. Subscription Rates: 1 Year \$2.50; 6 Months \$1.50; 2 Months \$1.00

PUBLISHED EVERY FRIDAY BY TIMES PRINTING CO., INC., AT 505 LODGE STREET, MANTEO, NORTH CAROLINA

VICTOR MEEKINS Editor and Manager

CATHERINE D. MEEKINS Secretary-Treasurer

Vol. XX Manteo, N. C., Friday, July 30, 1954 No. 5

Old Realtor Recalls Many Changes In Manteo Vicinity Since Starting Work For Himself At Age of 15

William J. Griffin From Security of the Cannady Tourist Home, Entertains Young Reporter With Account of His Activities of Three Quarters of a Century

"In my lifetime I have bought and sold more than half of Manteo," is the astonishing claim of Mr. W. J. Griffin of Manteo. "In 1889 bought my first piece, the lot at the corner of Church and County Streets where the Bonners live now. I was 15 years old then and I paid \$90 for it—five dollars a month. Later on I sold it for 150 dollars. Now it is worth around \$8,000," he says. "But then, of course, there was no Manteo, nothing but woods."

Mr. Griffin was born on a farm not far from Manteo on June 27, 1867 soon after the close of the Civil War. His parents were Mary and Elisha Griffin. "Yes," he chuckles, "I hatched right here and except for a few years I have lived my entire life here."

During 87 years of life in Manteo, 36 of them spent officially in the real estate business, Mr. Griffin has indeed at one time or another owned much of Roanoke Island and the surrounding areas as well as investigating or participating in many of the "firsts" of this area and holding, by actual count, around 13 jobs.

At one time he owned a strip of territory around Manteo beginning at County Street and continuing, except for a few lots to Brinkley Street and across the highway for about 500 yards. "My first home in Manteo was where Tarkington House stands now," Mr. Griffin declares. "Then I lived where the old Methodist Parsonage was until I sold it to the Methodist Church."

Before World War I Mr. Griffin and his wife owned the Mother Vineyard farm. "My wife was the one who named it 'Mother Vineyard,'" he remarks. Mr. Griffin once bought 150 acres of Nags Head ocean front property where Jockey Ridge restaurant now stands for \$150 and sold it for \$500. Now he estimates the land is worth a million dollars. Mr. Griffin doesn't remember the dates. "So many things have happened in 87 years," he says, "that I don't try to keep the dates straight anymore."

Mr. Griffin worked on his father's farm until he was fourteen. His first job was with Capt. Lester on the Lena Elida, a sailing ship carrying mail, freight and passengers on the inland waters. Asked if 15 was not a little early for a boy to start to earn his own living, Mr. Griffin replied, "everybody had to work in those days. You don't see people working like that today."

After two years with Capt. Lester, Mr. Griffin was sufficiently experienced to captain his own ship at 17 years of age. "Everyone worked in those days," he repeats. Next together with M. D. Haymen, Mr. Griffin bought the Sara Emma and tried oystering and shad fishing for awhile. Then they got a charter with the fishermen of Roanoke Washes to carry fish and cargo to Elizabeth City. On her first trip out, however, the Sara Emma sprang a leak and sank in the Croatan Sound. A high wind was blowing," says Mr. Griffin, "and we clung to her mast in a life belt all night long. Finally a colored man spotted us and came out to tow us in. The wind was so high that he had to sail under a goose wing. You wouldn't know anything about that," he told his landlubber interviewer, "but a goose wing is a shortened sail."

After this he joined with Sheriff R. W. Smith in the mercantile business. "60 years ago," Mr. Griffin recalls, "I brought Carlton Davis here when he was 18 to clerk for me at \$20 a month." Mr. Griffin smiles over this memory of one of Manteo's successful merchants.

In succession Mr. Griffin was postmaster under the last Cleveland administration, organizer, director and president of the Eastern Carolina Transportation Co., carrying mail, freight and passengers over an area unreachable except by water; and Superintendent of United States Employment Service in Norfolk,

Washington, Richmond and Baltimore. When these offices closed in the early 20's Mr. Griffin went officially into the business that he loves and that he has been in ever since—real estate. In 1925 he went to Florida to open a real estate office. Eleven years later he came back here to buy and sell more of Roanoke Island.

Thinking back over the days when Manteo was growing up from a few houses in the trees, Mr. Griffin remembers when the town was incorporated. In fact he remembers being a leader in its incorporation. Once, he doesn't bother to remember exactly when, but something like 60 years ago, he remembers being one of Manteo's first mayors.

Over 50 years ago he remembers helping to bring the first telephone line to Roanoke Island, one from Manteo to Skyco to Wanchese. He tells of being a member of an early Chamber of Commerce. We didn't have any money but we got things done," he says. "We had a cable laid across Croatan Sound so that Manteo could have a telegraph office, we had the bay dredged out, we had the mail re-routed from Skyco to Manteo, and most important of all, we organized the Bank of Manteo. With \$10,000, an old safe and an office in the old frame courthouse we organized it and now it has assets amounting to over \$200,000. I was the first Vice President of the bank and it was I who suggested that we call it the bank of Manteo."

I helped erect that stone marker you see in Fort Raleigh," Mr. Griffin says proudly, "and I was the first local stockholder in the Roanoke Island Historical Association."

Mr. Griffin was of a large family, having five brothers and one sister, and he had a large family. His wife was Alberta Evans. "She came from Chowan County," he says. "All the Evans came from there. My wife was the postmaster, Charlie Evans' mother's sister."

Of the large family of Griffins, he says that only two now live in Manteo, himself and Mrs. Rennie Williamson, his niece. Three of his four children live in Norfolk, Jerome B. Griffin, Annie McCoy, and Margaret Griffin. His other daughter, Mary Goldsberg, lives in Charlotte.

"Oh, he twinkles, "I almost forgot. I was wreck commissioner and an agent for Beard and Chapman wrecking agency in the days of the sailing ships. There were more wrecks in those days when the sailing ships would come ashore."

"I don't trust that ocean," Mr. Griffin shakes his head warningly. "I've never been bathing in it here in my life. I used to go in every day down in Florida but here the sea is too rough and cold. A lot of 'em have been in there and never come out again."

Mr. Griffin is proud of the growth and prosperity of his town and the surrounding area that he has helped to promote. "Everything, town or whatever, that grows and prospers has to start somewhere. I like to think that I helped to start Manteo," declares Mr. Griffin.

FIRE DESTROYS TRAILER IN MANTEO ON SATURDAY

Fire destroyed a house trailer belonging to Bruce Lennon of Manteo Saturday night at an estimated loss of \$1000. Lennon was in the trailer when the fire, apparently caused by a cigaret, started around 7:30. He was rescued, unhurt, by neighbors. The trailer was not insured.

Two fires were reported by Ivy Evans, fire chief, this week as caught from burning trash. An hour was required for Manteo firemen to extinguish a woods fire on the north end of Roanoke Island Monday at 12:00. Tuesday at 11:00 they were called to a grass fire at Nags Head that was threatening several cottages.

IT PAYS TO ADVERTISE

THE HIGHER THE FEWER

There's Always Plenty of Room At The Top

By NANCY J. MIDGETT

Why do people, including myself, put off 'till tomorrow what should be done today? For instance I have just been to the dentist and had a lot of digging and delving done after roots because the tooth broke, because I had let it get too bad before going for attention, because—And so on and so on and the worst of it is we never seem to learn for I expect I will do the same thing next time which is just plain foolishness for we just give ourselves more pain, trouble or expense, whichever applies to the case in hand.

I can remember Capt. W. J. Tate, with a twinkle in his eye, admonishing myself or some member of his family for procrastination as he called it, and quite correctly too but plain "putting off" is bad enough,—the other sounds too, too devastating, and Capt. Tate certainly found it so for he was a great man for getting things done and action at all times as soon as possible.

Even at the age of eighty plus he would be up bright and early and rarely stayed still for long all day long. When evening came he would look over the paper or the Geographical Magazine, fascinating reading to me, perhaps about and then retire at a reasonable but not too early hour. He had one of the neatest yards I have ever seen and his vegetable garden always looked thriving and healthy and in shipshape order and so it should for it received all the time and attention he was able to give it and most any plants will show their best for some one who really cares for them more than the aching back and grubby hands that working with the soil can give you. Of course a "green thumb" is also an asset and a water supply and hose that can at least relieve the parched earth when rain is long in coming.

Capt. Tate and my mother are two of the most active elderly folk I have ever known. My mother too, although loving her home and wanting it to be in apple pie order also had a terrific driving power in her to be out and about and know what was going on. I've known her to set off down town to see the shops and get out in the air when she could hardly drag one foot after another, and going down town in our community or part of our community meant walking about two hundred yards or more down our road, waiting for a trolley-bus, unless you were prepared to walk the whole twenty minute, or half-hour walk to town, and then walking through the busy shopping streets and markets when you got there. Sometimes I would get so anxious when I got home from work and found her note that she had gone out that I would pop in and out of the house like a jack-rabbit until I saw her turn the corner of the road on her way home. We tried to get her to rest more but when we realized how much enjoyment she got from it, we gave up.

Like Capt. Tate, my mother was a great one for getting things done and not being afraid to try new ventures. When I think now of all the work she used to get through as well as sewing and gardening and do it so much better than most and yet find time for outings, I feel very feeble. She was brought up though to work and few of the present generation could even imagine living the life she and others of her generation, born in 1866, found ordinary and everyday. She was one of nine living in a small farm or holding in the lonely countryside of Aberdeenshire, walked all or most of the five miles to school except in the bad winter snows and was expected to do a full and heavy share of the farm and house work, she being the oldest girl.

Its a very good thing in most ways that those health and heart breaking chores have passed from the lives of our children of today but I still feel that they did at least put a strong purpose into living and bred a stamina that our softer living lacks. Maybe it is all for the best and will build greater mind power but it is harder to me to get my mind to get my body going to do a job I know should be done especially if it needs mental concentration than it is to take the old carcass out and make it mow the yard. Sometimes procrastination arises from laziness of mind. My French teacher once asked me whether I was lazy or just stupid. I never did answer her for I couldn't make up my mind which was the more disgraceful. That was a long, long time ago and I still haven't made up my mind.—Just putting it off.

Nation's 4-H's Seek to Cut Death Toll of Farm Folk on Rural Highways



Look out, young feller!

CHI AGO—(Special)—"Make Safety Your Number One Crop," the slogan of several million rural boys and girls throughout the nation since its introduction in 1945, continues to be fostered by more than 615,000 4-H Club members. They are taking part in the 1954 National 4-H Safety Program being conducted in 46 states for the tenth consecutive year. Participants receive training in farm accident and fire prevention, which includes checking and removing hazards of every conceivable nature.

These surveys are credited by safety experts as being a valuable contribution to the nationwide campaign to reduce the tragic annual toll of 15,000 lives and 1,225,000 disabling injuries to farm folk.

In conducting their surveys, the 4-H's look for such safety hazards as loose or floppy clothing worn about moving farm machinery, cluttered stairways, oily rags, frayed electric cords, broken ladder rungs and sharp tools. What is becoming an increasingly serious problem is that ac-

CHANNEL BASS RETURN TO DARE INLETS AND SURF

Nags Head.—Channel bass, a copper-colored game fish which shows up in the surf and inlets of the Dare coast during the spring and then continue into the sound and spawning grounds, have begun an early migration back towards the ocean. This has been proved by the large number of these fish that have been taken with rod and reel at Oregon and Hatteras Inlets and in the surf from Kitty Hawk to Ocracoke during the past few days.

Normally the autumn run of channel bass does not begin until early September. This year, judging from the catches made during the past several days, the channel bass run which usually comes during early Autumn and continues until winter, is already well underway.

One party of five anglers, Mr. and Mrs. Whit Shearin, their son Whitman Shearin, and Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Cook all of Littleton, N. C. made one of the best summer catches of channel bass on Thursday when they hooked and landed 13 of the fish. Their bass weighed from 20 to 30 pounds each.

A few days previously, Linwood Quidley, a Buxton angler casting in the surf at Hatteras Inlet hooked and landed a 62½ pound channel bass, a fish that was larger than the national record for the species last year.

ENGELHARD PERSONALS

Mrs. Mildred Guthrie of Smithfield is spending her vacation with her mother, Mrs. Florence Gaskill.

Mrs. Cynthia Spencer of Washington is visiting here.

Mr. and Mrs. Harold Carper and little daughter of Newport News have returned home after visiting Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Payne.

Mr. and Mrs. R. L. Patrick were visitors in Richmond, Va. last week.

Sam Spencer has returned to Norfolk after spending the week end with his family.

Mrs. Delia Neal has returned from Norfolk where she spent last week with friends.

Mr. and Mrs. Reggie Spencer of Norfolk visited here during the past week.

Mr. and Mrs. Fred Berry, Loy Midgett and Ivadell Spencer were week end visitors to Nags Head.

Mr. and Mrs. A. H. Smith of Columbus, Ohio have returned home after spending several days with Mr. and Mrs. Royden Neal.

Henry Harding and his mother, Mrs. Harding of Pilot Mountain, spent some time with Mr. and Mrs. R. L. Roper. They were accompanied home by his wife and daughter.

Mr. and Mrs. George Williams, Mrs. Lucerne Pennington and little daughter Patty of Alabama, have returned home after visiting Mr. and Mrs. Dave Swindell, parents of Mrs. Williams and Mrs. Pennington.

Mr. and Mrs. Royden Neal, Patty and Pete Neal and their guests, Mr. and Mrs. Henry

MANTEO PERSONALS

Mrs. L. D. Austin of Norfolk, Va., and her grandson, Art Scott, visited Mr. and Mrs. C. S. Meekins last week end.

Mrs. C. S. Meekins has returned from Nashville, Tenn., where she attended a short course at George Peabody College.

Mrs. Michael Reich is a patient in Norfolk General Hospital.

Affie Lee Midgett, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Zora Midgett, is in Leigh Memorial Hospital in Norfolk, having undergone an operation this week.

Miss Betty Rae Rogers has returned to her home from UNC, Chapel Hill, where she attended summer school. Her uncle and aunt, Mr. and Mrs. Willie Rogers, and their daughter, Mary Faye, went to Chapel Hill to accompany her home. They were accompanied as far as Raleigh by Mrs. Lida Bridges, who had been visiting her daughter, Mrs. Thomas G. Gaskill, at Wanchese; and by Mrs. Betty Gaskill, who visited Mrs. Bridges in Raleigh.

Mrs. C. W. Kirkman and children, Carol and Billy, of Greensboro, are visiting Mrs. Kirkman's father, Dr. W. W. Johnston. Mr. and Mrs. Wiley Johnston and son Warren III left recently for their home in Oak Ridge, Tenn., after spending some time here. Miss Nancy Johnston, who is a student nurse at Presbyterian Hospital, Charlotte, is at the bedside of her mother, who remains critically ill in a Norfolk Hospital.

Mrs. S. A. Stowe returned to her home Tuesday from a Norfolk hospital, where she had been a patient for some time.

Harding and daughter Emily and Mrs. Pearl Harding of Pilot Mountain attended the showing of the Lost Colony Friday.

Mr. and Mrs. M. C. Holland and children have returned from Dunn.

IT PAYS TO ADVERTISE

GLIMPSSES OF THE PAST

By CAROLYN LLOYD

I have been reading that cook book again, this time in search of an easy dessert to serve at my bridge club. I found the dessert and some interesting information, as well. Did you know that Thomas Jefferson had the first ice cream freezer in America? He called it "a machine for making cream." I had always thought that Dolly Madison introduced ice cream in America, but perhaps she was just the first to serve it in the White House. Jefferson is also credited with introducing macaroni and vanilla in this country. A man of many talents and a flair for good living, was Thomas.

That bit about the ice cream sent me into a nostalgic reverie about the days when I waited impatiently for the dash to come out of a freezer of home made ice cream. That was the standard reward to the children who patiently turned the crank of the old-fashioned hand freezer. Refrigerator ice cream and the "store bought" variety are good, 'tis true, but nothing can touch the smooth, cold richness of ice cream right off the dash.

About more important things in my childhood my mind is a complete blank, but I can see plainly that freezer sitting on the back porch on a burlap bag, with salty water running out of a hole in the side. One experience with it is particularly vivid: my mother and a friend had made up their favorite recipe, with the richest of ingredients and had planned to serve the ice-cream at a party. The friend's son and I had been delegated to turn the freezer. It was a hard job, but the promise of licking the dash was compensation enough. Then the blow came—when the freezer was opened, the ice cream was found to be heavily flavored with salt. The adults abandoned the whole thing in disgust and set about preparing other refreshments for the party. But not my little friend and I, we had worked too hard and the anticipation had been too great; so, left to ourselves, we consumed almost the entire freezer of ice cream, salt and all. Need I add that we were very, very sick?

A companion piece of the freezer was the old-fashioned ice box with the lid in the top that also stood on the back porch. It usually fell to my lot to crack the ice for tea, and almost invariably that lid cracked me on the head before the job was done. Either that, or I managed to stab myself with the ice pick. Surely no one wastes a sigh upon the overflowing drip pan beneath the old ice box, or the ice pick that managed to be lost at the crucial moment. Ice picks were versatile object in the section of the country where I lived anywhere—rarely a Saturday night passed but that one of the mill hands used one to stab his lady love. No, the modern refrigerator is a thing of beauty and a joy forever to me. Even so, my childhood complex about the ice has carried over so that, if anyone else is around to get out the ice, I'll be very busy doing something else when the time comes. As a matter of fact, I believe I'll just go to the drug store and get some ice cream; that is unless some more ambitious soul wants to make up a freezer full, if so, I'm always available when it's time for the dash to come out.

British Royal Engineers are experimenting with inflatable "sneakers" to give mine-hunting troops a light tread.

Scientists hope to develop an electronic device which can detect drowsiness in a driver, and warn him to stop driving until he is rested.

BOXING ATTRACTION AT CASINO MONDAY

Five boxing bouts have been lined up for Monday night, August 2, according to G. T. Westcott, manager of Nags Head Casino.

Main event of the boxing will be a 10-round bout between Nature Boy Bell, former sparring partner of Joe Louis, and McLendon of Philadelphia. Four other bouts have been arranged, but names were not available for publication.

Westcott promises this to be a great attraction to all fans, and states that he has made this available due to requests from people of the area.

Although the Chinese invented printing, they did not generally adopt it because of the large number of characters in their alphabet, according to Encyclopaedia Britannica.

Total stocks of corn in all positions in North Carolina on April 1, 1954 amounted to 21.8 million bushels, 8 per cent above the figure for a year earlier.

EXCEPTIONAL INCOME SPARE OR FULL TIME COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL VENDING MACHINES FURNISHED WITHOUT CHARGE TO OUR DEALERS - NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY - COMPANY OBTAINS LOCATIONS - WILL TRAIN PERSON SELECTED To qualify you must have: Good Credit and Character References. At Least \$600.00 Cash To Buy Merchandise. For Personal Interview Write: ATLAS PRODUCTS 429 N. Vandeventer ST. LOUIS 8, MO. Include Your Phone Number

WHEN THAT HARVEST SUN'S A-BEATING THIRSTS ARE MIGHTY HARD TO CHASE! WHAT GOES BEST WITH HE-MAN EATING? SEVEN-UP AT EVERY PLACE! The All-Family Drink! 7-UP BOTTLING CO. Box 4355 Elizabeth City, N. C.

There are many paints sold but none are made like... THE ONLY SEA COAST PAINT THE COAST GUARD IN MANTEO - NAGS HEAD VIRGINIA BEACH - NORFOLK CLEANS WITH THE RAIN - MILDEW RESISTANT ESTABLISHED 1885 NASH NORFOLK EST. 1885 C. A. NASH & SON, Inc. Granby St. 732 MILLIONS OF GALLONS OF PAINT PRODUCTS SOLD ON THE ATLANTIC COAST. Distributors for Nash-Norfolk Daniels Building Supply, Nags Head, N. C.