



NEWSLETTER

BRUNSWICK COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
BRUNSWICK TOWN, P.O. BOX 356, SOUTHPORT, N.C.

Vol. XV, No. 2

May, 1975

On April 19, 1775, the "shot heard 'round the world" was fired on the Village Green in Lexington, Massachusetts. However, it was several weeks later that the news of the beginning of the Revolutionary War was received in Brunswick.

The Brunswick County Bicentennial Committee sponsored a reenactment of the courier delivering this news at Brunswick Town State Historic Site and Shallotte Middle School on Saturday, May 10, 1975.

The ceremony at Brunswick Town included the costumed horseback rider bringing the news of the battle, as well as messages from the northern Committees of Safety, to the ruins of Richard Quince home. After the "citizens of Brunswick" were informed by the costumed Town Crier, Quince sent the messenger on to Isaac Marion in Little River, South Carolina.

The celebration also included the opening of a Bicentennial Art Show, awarding of prizes in the Bicentennial Essay Contest, performances by the Wilmington District Minutemen, high school bands and Jr. ROTC units. Representatives of the Bicentennial Committee, County Commissioners, Miss Bicentennial of Brunswick County, and Miss Brunswick County participated in the event. Another feature of this commemorative observance was half-price admission to Orton Plantation for the benefit of the Bicentennial Committee.



TOP ROW — Left to Right

1. William Darrell Clemmons as Richard Quince
 2. Paula Spencer — Essay Winner and Mary Gornto
 3. Wilma Lynn Mintz — Essay Winner and Mary Gornto

SECOND ROW — Left to Right

4. West Brunswick High School Band
 5. Dianne King — Miss Bicentennial
 6. Susan Greene, Messenger and William D. Clemmons as Richard Quince

THIRD ROW — Left to Right

7. North Brunswick Junior R.O.T.C. Drill Team
 8. South Brunswick High School Junior R.O.T.C. Color Guard
 9. Wilmington District Minutemen

FOURTH ROW — Left to Right

10. William Marion Reaves (Hoss) as the Town Crier
 11. William Marion Reaves (Hoss) as the Town Crier and William D. Clemmons as Richard Quince in foundation of home where news actually was received on May 8, 1775
 12. The End

MRS. ALICE JOHNSON TAYLOR

(August 14, 1888 – March 31, 1975)

As one who truly and actively appreciated her heritage, Alice Jackson Johnson Taylor has herself left a great heritage for her family, her friends, and for all others who may benefit from her influence.

The daughter of Jackson and Alice Julia Sanders Johnson, Mrs. Taylor was born in Wilmington, North Carolina, on August 14, 1888. As the niece of Governor and Mrs. Daniel L. Russell, she spent much time with them at the Governor's Mansion in Raleigh and in later years delighted young folk with tales of her experiences there.

In 1911 she received a B. L. degree from Southern Presbyterian College and Conservatory of Music (later called Flora MacDonald College). In that same year, she married Edwin W. Taylor and made her life-long residence at Winnabow at her husband's ancestral home-place known as "Shrub Hill." An industrious person with an innate sense of refinement as well as a firsthand knowledge of hard work, she lived there as a good neighbor and a staunch supporter of New Hope Presbyterian Church. She and her husband had five children, all of whom they reared to become worthy individuals, now making their own contributions in their respective communities. They are Mrs. James W. White, Miss Helen Taylor, Edwin W. Taylor, Jr., Jackson J. Taylor, and Charles M. Taylor.

Particularly outstanding was her participation in the Brunswick County Historical Society. A charter member and a motivating force from the time of its inception, Mrs. Taylor and her family provided the inspiration and guidance this organization needed until it increased in size and prestige. To many of its members, a meeting did not seem complete without Mrs. Taylor. And through all that, she maintained an unassuming and very modest role – and even sat on the back row at the meetings. For years and years, Mrs. Taylor was a member of the program committee and never failed to provide suggestions for excellent programs of the greatest variety and the highest caliber. The sincere interest she had in others and the encouragement she gave in the realm of history led them to acquire greater insight into the fascination of history and its relevance. Then on Special occasions such as the Bicentennial Celebration of Brunswick County, she and her family helped make the day a tremendous success and even provided an enormous red, white, and blue cake with two hundred candles! She herself was a veritable source of history and spent long years seeking facts in a meticulous effort to preserve history, especially that of Brunswick County.

The English poet, James Thomson, has four lines which seem appropriate to summarize the activities and the philosophy of this admirable lady, whose memory is truly a benediction.

*An elegant Sufficiency, Content,
Retirement, rural Quiet, Friendship, Books,
Ease and alternate Labor, useful life,
Progressive Virtue, and approving Heaven!*

Mary Wyche Mintz

Excerpts from the Southport Leader , Thursday May 1, 1890

Sergeant Madigan is preparing to build a new house in the west end of the city.

A. H. Reynolds had new Irish potatoes and green peas from his garden in this city last week.

The handsome mail box presented to Capt. J. S. Sellers of the Steamer "Passport" by the Leader is greatly admired by all. The wood is native cedar and the work was done by A. E. Peterson of this place.

The following Southporters were in Wilmington last week: Mrs. E. H. Cramer, Capt. Cramer, W. A. Pyke, J. L. Daniels, A. E. Stevens, Mrs. Lee, Miss Worth, Wm. Swain, William Cotton.

The following were the arrivals at Miss Kate Stuart's the past week: D. H. Penton, T. C. Mathews, Mr. & Mrs Daniel Clark, Iredell Meares, H. P. West, R. L. Holmes, Brooke French, Lieut. Failing, all of Wilmington.

MAY MEETING

DATE: Monday May 12, 1975

TIME: 8 P. M.

PLACE: Camp Methodist Church Fellowship Hall, Shallotte

PROGRAM: Wilmington - New Hanover Safety Committee Minutes - Mrs. E. M. McEachern

SOCIETY OFFICERS - 1975

PRESIDENT: Mrs. Lucille D. Blake, Leland

VICE-PRESIDENT: Mr. Harold Aldridge, Southport

SECRETARY- TREASURER: Mr. Grover A. Gore, Southport

DIRECTOR - EDITOR of NEWSLETTER: Mr. R. V. Asbury, Wilmington (resigned)

DIRECTOR - Mrs. J. T. Keziah , Shallotte

CHAIRMAN of Brunswick Town Preservation Committee - Mr. Wm. G. Faulk, Southport

PROGRAM CHAERMAN - Mrs. Amarette P. Pierce, Shallotte



NEWSLETTER

BRUNSWICK COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P. O. BOX 22, WINNABOW, NORTH CAROLINA

Vol. X, No. 2

May, 1970

THE ENGLISH CLAY PIPE: SIXTEENTH THROUGH EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES

It has been said that the decorative objects of man's handiwork — the recognized things of beauty and objects d'art — will always be preserved by each generation because of their recognized and intrinsic value. On the other side of the coin, however, John Graham, Colonial Williamsburg's eminent and tireless curator paints a telling picture by remarking that if you want to do a future restoration a favor, "Buy yourself a can of tomato soup and keep it 250 years."¹ The point is clear and well taken. Those common and everyday things, the trivia that is looked at one time and then thrown away, are the very things that become scarce and then ultimately, rare. Early soft drink bottles are recently coming into their own as collectable items and everyone has thrown away his share at one time or another. Some day the value placed on these cast-off items will be nothing short of ridiculous in our present-day viewpoint.

So it is now with one of the most commonly found artifacts on today's excavated colonial sites. It was in its day among the cheapest and most frequently encountered objects to be seen in the streets, homes, and public houses. This was the clay pipe. Colonial Williamsburg's archeological collection reflects that remains of the clay pipe is the third most frequently encountered artifact.² Brunswick Town is no exception and literally thousands of fragments ranging from the tapering mouthpiece to the bowl have been recovered during the course of excavations. Being made of a compact and hard-fired clay, they arrive at the surface more often than not in a remarkable state of preservation. Bowls have been recovered showing blackened interiors from the last smoke.

Though it is thought that pipes were used in Europe for smoking medicinal herbs long before the arrival of tobacco, the tobacco pipe is regarded as a purely American invention.³

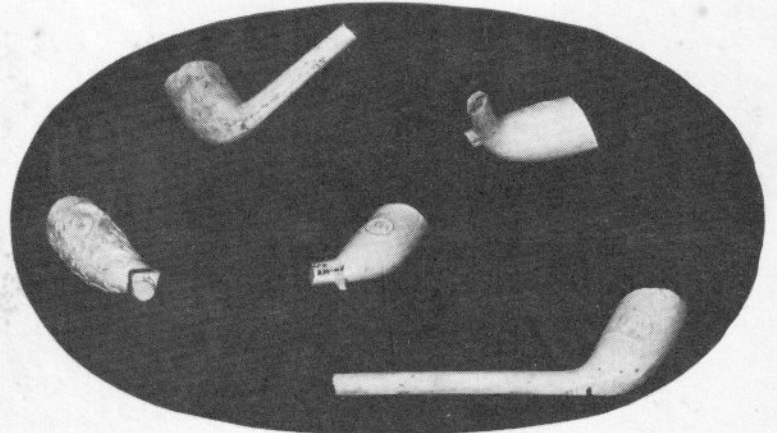
The English had first seen a tobacco pipe being used by the Indians of Florida in 1565.⁴ The idea was brought to England and cautiously tried. Though the Indians of Florida used a rough pottery cup and reed stem, it was the all clay version utilized by the Virginia Indians that was adopted and adapted by the English. Small quantities of tobacco were imported in the late 16th century to England from the New World via Europe, but the cost was terrifically high and the product extremely scarce. The manufacture of pipes that subsequently began was very small, some theorizing that they were first made in and around the village of Broseley in Shropshire.⁵ At the very least, we know that pipes were made there as early as 1575. They were probably hand-made, without the use of molds, and they were very short. The stems of the smallest measured only 1½" in length. The average length was about 3½".⁶ The bowls were barrel-shaped and leaned forward at a rakish angle, as much as 45°. Below the bowl was a tear-shaped flattened base that would later rise in height a bit. This part was called the "heel." It served two purposes. First, it allowed the pipe to be placed on a table and not roll to one side. Secondly, it served by being thickened, to insulate the pipe so as to not blister the wood on which it rested.

In the late 17th century, pipe-smoking was in its infancy, and it remained for Sir Ralph Lane to have the dubious honor (in light of the present-day smoking controversy) of getting the vogue of smoking off the ground. Lane, the governor of the Roanoke Island (N.C.) colony sent as a present to Sir Walter Raleigh a pipe and a quantity of tobacco in 1586. Everyone is more or less familiar with the now legendary story of that particular pipe which ended with a servant dousing Raleigh, thinking that his master was on fire.⁷ With such an important personage as Raleigh more or less personally endorsing it, the new "sport" quickly grew.

The colonists of the first permanent English settlement in the New World, Jamestown, Virginia, brought their pipes with them in 1607. Within the space of less than a year the demand for pipes grew so much that in January of 1608, one Robert Cotten came to Jamestown to ply his trade as a tobacco pipemaker.⁸ The gold that the English had longed for in Virginia in an effort to gain supremacy over the Spanish and their glittering empire in the Americas, turned out to be the "black gold" of the rich tidewater soil. From this soil, with the ever-present and ambivalent Indian aid, Jamestown colonist John Rolfe succeeded in developing a sweet-scented leaf during the years 1611-12. From that time on, the wealth of Virginia would ride the undulating crest of the seasonal and soil changes and their effects on the years' tobacco crops. Personal fortunes and magnificent plantation houses would come and go as the quality of the crops rose and fell.

This new leaf caused a sensation in England and the demand for pipes spiraled upward. Pipes were far from common, but they were on their way there. Even in the remote wilderness of Jamestown, English-manufactured pipes still continued to be received as a welcome treat in the infrequent shipments from "home." Today, the Jamestown archeological collection has about 50,000 clay pipe bowls and stem fragments (none have been found whole) with many from the very early period. This is a clear indication that even in the savage wilds, the Englishman still had time to enjoy his pipe.

These early pipes are variously called "Elizabethan" (though the majority were certainly not made during her reign, the basic shape was retained), "Fairy," or "Elfin."⁹ From the period 1580 to roughly 1680 the basic shape continued to be an angled bowl, gradually increasing in size, due to the availability of tobacco, with a slight "pinching-in" at the top. The stems were straight as a rule, and this was due primarily to the convenience in manufacturing. The pipe making center had moved from Shropshire in the first half of the 17th century to London. Clays had to be brought in from nearby counties. By the middle of the 17th century other cities had taken up the manufacture and were seriously challenging London. Bristol, in particular, seems to have been the principal supplier of pipes to the New World colonies from the 1660's throughout the colonial period.¹⁰ Pipes were now mass produced, using molds. Decorative designs began to be molded on the bowls, but this practice was very limited and not at all common. Seen more often were the makers' initials on the heels, or the back or sides of the bowls. The stems were pierced by a wire while the clay was still in a plastic stage before firing and still in the mold. As the stems became longer, the diameter of the wire was reduced, so as not to rupture the stem wall. The pipes were fired. Some were burnished and/or glazed after firing to remove the exterior roughness. By 1682, there appears to have been at least eight different styles of pipes available in England and subsequently in America. It is a continual surprise to learn how far these fragile products travelled and to what secluded places they came. An early pipe bowl of the style prevailing in the period 1640-1660 and several stem fragments have been found during the course of investigation near the alleged site of "Old Town," a temporary 17th century settlement on the Cape Fear River in Brunswick County, N. C.



Pipe bowls recovered from Brunswick Town