



NEWSLETTER

BRUNSWICK COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
PO BOX 874, SHALLOTTE, NC 28459

VOLUME I

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Organized June 21, 1956

MISSION STATEMENT

To collect, preserve, study, evaluate and publicize the history of Brunswick County, NC. To devote meetings to presentation of materials about Brunswick County and the Lower Cape Fear through lectures, slices, and discussion. To publish a newsletter which contains news of the Society's activities, research papers and articles that pertain to genealogy.

Society Officers

President: Gwen Causey
Vice-President: James Green
Secretary: Roberta Brady
Treasurer: Sandra Ward
Directors: Don Hickman
Jim Marlowe
Dave Lewis
Newsletter Editor: Dave Lewis

BCHS Website

www.bchs1764.org
Webmaster: Jimmy Green

NOVEMBER MEETING TO BE HELD AT BEMC IN SUPPLY, NC NOVEMBER 14, 2011 7:30 P.M.

The next meeting of the *Brunswick County Historical Society* will be held on November 14th at the Brunswick Electric Membership Corporation Building, 795 Ocean Highway West, Supply, NC. The meeting begins at 7:30 P.M. We always meet the 2nd Monday in February, May, August and November.

The February 2011 issue of the *NEWSLETTER* began the 50th Volume. Volume I, Number 1 was printed September 1961. A complete set of the Newsletter from September 1961 to November 2009 can be found in the Wilson Library at UNC-Chapel Hill, NC and at the New Hanover County Public Library North Carolina Room in Wilmington, NC. There were no publications of Volume 17, #3 & 4 (1977) and Volume 18, #1 (1978).

The November program will include Mr. Eric Cozen from Oak Dale Cemetery in Wilmington. Mr. Cozen will explain the proper techniques for monument cleaning.

With the year coming to a close your 2012 BCHS dues will be payable January 1. Individual dues are still \$15.00 a year or lifetime membership is \$150.00. See Sandra Ward or any officer or mail check to Brunswick County Historical Society, PO Box 874, Shallotte, NC 28459. Use the membership application found on page 7 for contact changes or pass along to your friends or relatives. Help us to increase our membership during the next year.

Pictures and Documents

BCHS's project to scan, record and preserve old historical pictures and documents will begin at the next BCHS's meeting to be held on Monday night November 14, 2011. You may bring any old pictures and or documents to be scanned between 5:30 and 7:30. Your information will not leave your sight and you will be able to take them home with you.



In preparation for this project, make a list of the people or objects in the photos with dates and or information to be included with the scanned object. Please help us to preserve Brunswick County's history.

Video

At the last meeting of the Society there was a discussion about helping to preserve our local history thru video taping of interviews with our older generation and landmarks found within the county. The idea is to engage them in conversation about their past and the community in which they lived.

Christy Judah and Bertha Bell were appointed as a committee to report back at the November meeting. You don't want to miss this ongoing discussion.

CORRECTION

Correction and addition to the August 2011 *Newsletter* article, "The Eagles Island Causeway..." Sentence stating "During the Civil War, on a firmer causeway, Union and Confederate troops fought in hand to hand combat," was incorrect.

"The Wilmington Campaign, Last Rays of Departing Hope" by Chris E. Fonvielle, Jr. refers to this skirmish as an artillery battle.

As quoted from Mr. Fonvielle's book, "With flags flying and skirmishers leading the way, the 16th Kentucky and 65th Illinois advanced across Eagles

Island on the narrow causeway, the only road across the marshy island. It soon became apparent that the Confederates were still in the vicinity when dismounted horsemen of the 2nd South Carolina Cavalry appeared on the east side of the island. The Confederates fired on the approaching Federals, and a sharp skirmish ensued. The small band of Southerners, who never intended to seriously contest possession of the island, was easily driven back and the Federals moved to within rifle range of the city.

Without warning a masked Confederate battery opened fire on Eagles Island's latest residents from the streets of Wilmington. The first shot ripped down the causeway, showering the Federals with dirt as it bounded past them and exploded in their rear. 'This was just not the kind of reception I expected to meet with,' exclaimed David C. Bradley of the 65th Illinois. The projectile did not hit anyone, but it scattered the troops, many of whom sought refuge in the soft, spongy ground on either side of the causeway. 'In my jump I was fortunate enough to light on top of a soldier who had fallen flat, and to this unfortunate accident I am indebted for not receiving a slimy bath of North Carolina mud,' Bradley wryly noted....

The Confederate fire was from two cannons commanded by Capt. Abner A. Moseley of the Samson Artillery, and independent North Carolina battery posted on either side of Wilmington's market house on Market Street, between Front and Water... When the Union Soldiers only partially withdrew, Colonel Hedrick of the 40th North Carolina took one of the howitzers onto the island itself and opened fire on them. The move, while bold, quickly drew the wrath of Cox's ordnance, which retaliated by sending projectiles into the city, crashing into buildings along the waterfront..."

Editors note: Thanks to Glenn Kye for bringing this to my attention and supplying the correct information.

Last Will and Testament of Richard Eagles

IN THE NAME OF GOD AMEN. I, Richard Eagles, of the County of Brunswick and Province of

North Carolina, Gentleman, being weak in body but of sound mind & memory, and considering the uncertainty of this Life, do make this my Last Will and Testament in manner and form following, that is to say.

Imprimis: It is my will and desire that all my just Debts be paid out of the Profits of my Estate, by my Executors hereafter named.

I Give and Bequeath to my son, Joseph Eagles, son of Margaret Henrietta Eagles, my wife, formerly Call'd Marg't Henrietta Bugnion, his heirs and Assigns forever, the House, Plantation, Saw & Grist mills, where I now Live, together with all the lands I am now possessed of, Except such as is hereafter given to my Daughter, Susannah Eagles, or otherwise; Also I give to my Son Joseph, son to my wife Marg't Henrietta Eagles, formerly Called Marg't Henrietta Bugnion, fifteen Negroes, Big and little, as their families shall be; also, his Choice of four Lotts of Land in the Town of Wilmington, together with two thirds of all the stock I am Possessed of, Cattle, Horses, mares, hogs, sheep, &c.

Item. I Give and Bequeath to my Daughter, Susannah Elizabeth Eagles, Daughter to my late wife, Marg't Henrietta Eagles, formerly Called Marg't Henrietta Bugnion, Six hundred and forty Acres of Land Adjoin'g the Bank'd piece now Intend for a rice field & Bought of Hugh Blenning. Also, one third part of all the Land I now owne on the Island Commonly Call'd Eagles's Island, together with one half the number of Lotts in Wilmington, that I am possessed of Except such as are already given to my Son, Joseph; Also, one third part of all the stock I am possessed of Viz: Cattle, Horses, Mares, Hogs, Sheep, &c.

Item. I Give and Bequeath to my Two Cousins, Jean & Elizabeth Davis, one young Negro each, about their owne Age, to them & their Heirs for ever.

Item. I give and Bequeath to my Sister, Elizabeth Davis, the House she now lives on the no. side of the mill Pond, with the field that is fenced in, as long as she Lives, after her Death, to return to my son, Joseph Eagles.

Item. I Give and Bequeath to Jeanet McFarling, for and in Consideration of her faithfull and Diligent Care & Attendance in Mrs. Eagles's life time as well as since; two Negroes, Vizt: a wench Called Caelia, and a Boy Call'd Peter, to her & her heirs forever; And it is my Desire that she, the sd. Jeanet McFarling, be and remaine in the house I now live, to have the Care of the Stock, Poultry, &c., and that my Execut'rs pay her the sum of Thirty five pounds, procl., Yearly until she is married or my son, Joseph, Come to the Years of Eighteen; Afterward as long as he shall think proper & no longer.

Item. I Give and Bequeath to John Eagleson, my Negro boy Jack, also, I do hereby Assign over to him the Mortgage of Price's Land, Commonly Call'd Judy's Branch, & four Mares & Colts.

It is my Desire that my two Molatto Boys, Natt & George, both have their freedom, when they arrive to the Age of thirty five Years. And Also that my Negro fellow, old Larry have his freedom, as soon as my son, Joseph, Comes of age, 'till which time to be and remaine on the plantation as usual, without being turn'd into the feild or other hard Duty.

Item. It is my will & Desire that all my Negroes, Except those already Bequeathed away, together with all my household Furniture, Plate, Beds, Bedding &cs., be Equally Divided between my Son, Joseph & Susanna Elizabeth Eagles, Son & Daughter of my late wife Marg't Henrietta Eagles, formerly Marg't Henrietta Bugnion, and that the remaining half of the Lotts of Land in Wilmington be the property of my Son, Joseph.

Lastly, I do hereby Nominate & Appoint, John Gibbs, Robt' Shaw, John Ancrum, & Thos. owen, Executors of this my last will & testament, revoking all other former wills by me made, ratifying & Confirming this, & no other.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand & seal, this Twenty third day of March, in the year of our Lord, one thousand, seven hundred & Sixty Nine.

RICH'D. EAGLES ()

Sign'd, Seal'd & Publish'd & Declared to be the last

will and Testament of Rich'd Eagles, In Presence of:

(The Date alter'd before Sign'd.)

JOHN, WALKER.

JNO. FERGUS.

MARY WALKER.

Codicil of the Last will & Testament of Rich'd Eagles.

Tis my will and Desire that Mr. Wm. Dry, has a Title for a Certaine piece of Land Bo't of my Father, Rich'd Eagles & never yet Confirm'd lying and being on the Island near the sd. Wm. Dry's Brick house, he making my Heirs a Title for one Square acre out of the same, on the Side next Wilmington.

RICH'D EAGLES.

Sign'd Seal'd, Publish'd & Declar'd in the Presence of us, this 23d March 1769.

MARY WALKER,

JOHN WALKER.

JNO. FERGUS.

The within last Will and Testament of Richard Eagles, with the Codicil Annexed was proved before me this thirty first day of March, 1769, by the Oaths of John Walker and John Fergus, two of the subscribing Witnesses thereto, who swore they say the Testator sign, seal, publish and declare the same to be and contain His last Will and Testament; and that at the Time thereof, He was of sound and disposing Mind & Memory.

John Gibbs and Robert Shaw two of the Executors therin named took the Oaths appointed for their Qualification.

Ordered that Letters Testamentary issue thereon accordingly.

WM. TRYON.

Source: North Carolina Wills and Inventories – Grimes.

Written: 1769

Early Revolutionaries

Brunswick Town holds the distinction in American history of being the site of one of the first armed resistances to British colonial policies, including taxation and other legislation that the American colonists felt infringed upon their freedoms as British citizens. One such hated legislation was the Stamp Act in 1765, which required that stamps be purchased from the Crown and attached “to all legal documents, newspapers, gambling papers, ships’ clearance papers, and books or pamphlets.”¹

The act was so offensive to the people of Brunswick Town that when the ship *Diligence* carrying these stamps for sale docked at their port, a number of citizens met the ship carrying muskets, frightening the captain so that he did not unload the stamps. This put royal governor Tryon in a bind. He felt bound to uphold the new law, but was sympathetic toward the feelings of the citizens. He even offered to personally pay for stamps on a number of documents and for wine licenses for certain towns. However, his generous offer was turned down.² By refusing to unload his stamps in such a hostile environment, the captain of the *Diligence* assured that trade in Brunswick Town and the whole Cape Fear region essentially ground to a halt. “Barrels of naval stores were soon overflowing the warehouses and were being stacked along the streets. . . . Court could not be held, newspapers were unavailable, and staple items were needed. Wills could not be proven and there were no marriage licenses issued.”³ It seemed as if life itself, at least all of the legal aspects thereof, had stopped completely.

In the summer of 1765, Judge Maurice Moore, son of the founder of Brunswick Town, and by this time an associate justice of the superior court of Salisbury wrote *The Justice and Policy of Taxing the American Colonies in Great Britain Considered* to protest the Stamp Act. In the pamphlet, Moore denounced the Stamp Act and argued that Parliament had no right to impose the tax on the colonies. He also rejected the idea of American virtual representation in Parliament and noted that direct representation of the colonies in Parliament

was impractical and they could not “with the least degree of justice be taxed by the British Parliament.” Moore labeled all British taxation in his colony as unjust, and demanded that it cease. He also suggested that only the North Carolina government possessed sovereign authority to tax North Carolinians.

“Wherein is shewed, That the Colonists are not a conquered People:—That they are constitutionally intituled to be taxed only by their own Consent:—And that the Imposing a Stamp Duty on the Colonists is as impolitic as it is inconsistent with their Rights.”

Things really came to a head when, in February 1766, two merchant ships, the *Dobbs* and the *Patience*, docked at Brunswick’s port. Because their ships’ clearances were not stamped, they were not allowed to unload. Then the North Carolina attorney general announced that the unstamped ships would need to travel all the way to Nova Scotia for their trial. Angry colonists formed an organization called the Sons of Liberty. Several hundred men, at least 500 armed, marched to Governor Tryon’s residence at Russellborough and demanded the release of the ships. Tryon refused. Thinking the citizens would continue their protests elsewhere, he ordered nearby Fort Johnston to spike their cannons so they could not be used to fire upon British ships in the area. The Sons of Liberty returned to Tryon’s residence the following night and demanded the resignation of Brunswick stamp master Pennington, who was rumored to be hiding in Tryon’s house. Pennington, William Dry III (port collector), and a number of other officials were forced to resign their posts and sign documents stating that stamps would no longer be sold or required in the Lower Cape Fear region.⁴

Afterward, the *Patience* and *Dobbs* were allowed to leave and trade began once more. Only a few months later, the English Parliament recognized the negative effect that the Stamp Act had on trade throughout the empire, and so the act was repealed. However, this would not be the last atrocities inflicted on the American colonists by the British

government leading up to the Revolutionary War.

Contemporary newspapers recognized the feat of the Brunswick citizens. In 1766 the *North Carolina Gazette* said

“In no other colony was the resistance by force so well organized and executed. Governor Tyron knew each of his opponents in this struggle; not one made any attempt to disguise himself or to conceal his identity in any way. Acting in a forthright manner, without fear, these men succeeded in preventing the operation of the Stamp Act in North Carolina. In so doing, they gave clear evidence of their support of the belief that Parliament had no right to levy such a tax in America.”

In the same year, the *Virginia Gazette* noted that

“It is well worthy of observation that few instances can be produced of such a number of men being together so long, and behaving so well; not the least noise or disturbance, nor any person seen disguised with liquor, during the whole time of their stay in Brunswick; neither was there any injury to any person, but the whole affair conducted with decency and spirit, worthy the imitation of all the Sons of Liberty throughout the Continent.”⁶

Clearly, Brunswick Town was an example of the early patriotic fervor that signaled the inevitable break with Britain and American independence.

Notes

1. Pedlow, *The Story of Brunswick Town*, 45.
2. Pedlow, *The Story of Brunswick Town*, 45.
3. Pedlow, *The Story of Brunswick Town*, 45.
4. Pedlow, *The Story of Brunswick Town*, 46.
5. *North Carolina Gazette*, 1766, in Pedlow, *The*

6. *Virginia Gazette*, 1766, in Pedlow, *The Story of Brunswick Town*, 47

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Brenda G Bryant
Site Manager
NC Division of Historic Sites
Brunswick Town/Fort Anderson SHS

Work on Causeway Across Eagles' Island—1896

Source: "The Messenger," Wilmington, NC, May 15, 1896, transcribed as written.

Mr. W.M. Cumming, treasurer of the Brunswick Bridge and Ferry Company, gave a Messenger representative a pleasant ride yesterday over the causeway between Cape Fear and Brunswick rivers. A splendid road runs along the entire distance, and this fact was a revelation to us, when we remember the bad condition of the road for several years past.

Mr. E.S. Tennent is president of the company, and under his and Mr. Cumming's management, the road has been ditched on both sides and graded in several places, with levees to prevent the road from being overflowed by the tides. The road is level and pretty, and it is a wonder that our bicycle riders have not found their way over it. Mr. Cumming tells us that further improvements to the road will be made.

By the way, while the men were ditching alongside the road they unearthed the remains of a soldier. They found his brass buttons and other belongings, and again interred them near the same spot. The remains are supposed to have been those of the Federal soldier who was killed by the battery at the foot of Market street while the Federal army was advancing up the causeway on Wilmington.

Since the beginning of the Brunswick Baptist Association the welfare and care of others has been at the center of its missionary work. In order to be successful in Home and Foreign Missions a firm foundation must be laid at the associational level. One area of emphasis was the ministry to the County Home. There has always been a great deal of public sentiment toward the poor. The homeless and the incapacitated.

In December 1840 the Brunswick County Superior Court appointed a commission to "take into consideration the best mode of taking care of the poor of the county and to the expenses of building a poor house for that purpose." It is not known whether the county implemented steps immediately to secure a site and build such accommodations.

It is known that a "poor house" existed from the 1870's. In 1878 Elisha Sellers submitted a bill to the county for services rendered. The 1880 census had a Poor House entry with 11 residents listed.

The old County Home was located on the Old Georgetown Road (now Galloway road) about half way between Bolivia and Supply. The site is about one half mile North and West of the Brunswick Community College campus near the run of Clark's Branch in a large field referred to as the Coleman Field. It consisted of 50 acres of land, 11 of which were under fence and four buildings. Located to the East and on the same road was Shiloh Baptist Church.

The 1908 minutes of the Associational Meeting at Mt. Pisgah Church on October 15 had a report from the Executive Board which stated that they had decided to use the State Mission money in the bounds of our Association. This may have been used to pay preachers to preach at the County Home or it could have been used to continue aid to Camp Branch and Little Zoar churches.

Meeting at Southport Church on October 12-14, 1909 the Executive Board reported on the first day that at their second meeting on the 27th of November they decided to use the State Mission money in the bounds of the Association and ordered that Rev. E.L. Swain be sent to the County Home to preach to the inmates. At their fourth meeting Rev. Swain made a report of three trips to the County Home for which he was paid \$15.00.

On October 14, 1909 it was ordered that a committee be appointed to report on supplying the County Home with preaching. J.M. Long, I.W. Harrelson and G.F. Drew were appointed. They asked the Association to furnish the home with preaching at least once a month and recommended that Rev. J.O. Fulbright be selected to serve. The committee further suggested that each church in the Association take a liberal contribution to defray the expenses of Rev. Fulbright.

During the evening session on October 15, 1910 at Beulah Church a resolution was adopted to supply the County Home with preaching monthly and that each church take two collections to defray expenses. A committee consisting of L.M. Todd, Y.C. Rich and A.P. Thomas was appointed to settle with Rev. J.O. Fulbright for preaching. He would be paid out of the Associational Mission funds. The statistical tables showed an amount of \$14.24 in the fund.

The 1911 Associational meeting was held at Brunswick Church (Mill Creek) on October 12-15. At the evening sessions on the 14th it was ordered that the Associational Mission funds be used to defray expenses of supplying the County Home with preaching. Rev. J.L. Jenkins, pastor of Southport Church, was employed to preach at the Home for the ensuing year at a salary of \$24.00 to be paid quarterly. The fund at that time had an amount of \$16.56. Again it was ordered that each church be asked to take a collection each month to help pay the expenses of Rev. Jenkins.

No other minutes mention the County

Home. In the 1912 minutes the Executive Board ordered that the Associational Mission fund be used to defray expenses of printing the minutes as there was a shortage in the minute fund.

The Brunswick I Association existed from 1886-1894. The 1893 meeting was held at Soldier Bay Church on October 27 and 28. The Executive Board recommended that all of the churches help Shiloh Church in sustaining her pastor, as many of that church are paupers of the county, living at the home of the aged and infirmed of the county. The Finance Committee received \$1.80 for Associational Missions which was paid by the Treasurer to Rev. D.L. Hewett, pastor of Shiloh Church. The church paid him a salary of \$8.00.

Sometime after 1940 a new County Home was built in Southport, NC.

During the 1950s and 1960's the County Home was again served by the churches of the Association. Regular services of preaching and singing were held on Sunday afternoon. Churches were on a rotation system of visitation. There is no County Home today, however, several churches hold services at the local nursing homes.

Reprinted with permission from: "Great is Thy Faithfulness—A Glorious Century" Brunswick Baptist Association, October 1999.

***Membership Application ... Invite a Friend to Join
Brunswick County Historical Society***

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ E-Mail _____

New: _____ or Renewal _____ Amount Enclosed _____

Mail this form with your check to: P.O. Box 874, Shallotte, NC 28459

Annual Dues: Individual \$15 Life Membership \$150