



NEWSLETTER

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

VOLUME LVII

AUGUST 8, 2016

NUMBER 3

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, slides, and discussion. To publish a newsletter which contains news of the Society's activities, research papers and articles that pertain to genealogy.

Society Officers For the 2016 & 2017 Term

President: Richard Hollembeak
Vice-President: Sally Robinson
Secretary: Roberta Brady
Treasurer: Bob Armour
Directors: James Robinson
Jim Marlowe
Dave Lewis

Newsletter Editor: Dave Lewis

BCHS Website
www.bchs1764.org
Webmaster: Jimmy Green

AUGUST MEETING TO BE HELD AT BEMC IN SUPPLY, NC AUGUST 8, 2016 7:30 P.M.

The next meeting of the *Brunswick County Historical Society* will be held on Monday, August 8th 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 2016 issue of the *NEWSLETTER* began the 57th Volume. Volume I, Number 1 was printed September 1961. A complete set of the Newsletter from September 1961 to November 2015 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).

BCHS member, **James Robinson** will be our speaker for the evening. His topic will contain information pertaining to the "*telegraph service*" during the Civil War. He will explain the indispensable importance of the electric telegraph both as an administrative agent and as a tactical factor in military operations. Jim was a telegraph operator while in the US Air Force.

Dues

ANNUAL DUES are past due unless you are a **Life Member**. The annual dues are \$15.00 for an active member or \$150.00 to become a Life Member. Checks may be mailed to the **BCHS** in care of Bob Armour or bring check or cash to the next meeting. Use the membership application found on page 7 for contact changes. Make checks payable to the **Brunswick County Historical Society**.

OLD COURTHOUSE PUT ON WATCH LIST

The old Brunswick County Courthouse and former Southport City Hall made the Historic Wilmington Foundation's "watch list" for 2016.

The structure located at 201 East Moore St., Southport, NC is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and was designed by W.D. Morell and built in 1854. There was an extensive remodel project completed in 1922, which included a large one-story portico with two piers.

Southport had used this building until March of this year. City government and the police department vacated the old courthouse because of deterioration, water damage, mold and lack of maintenance.

City officials said a new roof is scheduled to be installed, and the mold and other issues would be addressed. Foundation Director, George Edwards, said "adding the structure to the "watch list" could help galvanize support for the structure. There is reason to be hopeful for this Brunswick County landmark."

The BCHS voted to support the nomination of the old courthouse to be included on the 2016 "watch list". Thanks to David Holden for leading this endeavor and submitting the nomination resolution.

MILITARY-TELEGRAPH SERVICE

The experiences of the Civil War demonstrated the importance of the electric telegraph system. In addition to the utilization of existing commercial systems, there were built and operated more than fifteen thousand miles of lines for military purposes only.

Serving under the anomalous status of quartermaster's employees, often under conditions of personal danger, and with no definite official standing, the operators of the military telegraph service performed work of most vital importance to the army in particular and to the country in general. They fully merited the gratitude of the Nation for their

efficiency, fidelity and patriotism, yet their services have never been practically recognized by the Government or appreciated by the people.

For instance, during the war there occurred in the line of duty more than three hundred casualties among the operators from disease, death in battle, wounds or capture. Scores of these unfortunate victims left families dependent upon charity, as the United States neither extended aid to their destitute families nor admitted needy survivors to a pensionable status.

The telegraph service had neither definite personal nor corps organization. It was simply a civilian bureau attached to the Quartermaster's Department, in which a few of its favored members received commissions. The men who performed the dangerous work in the field were mere employees who were mostly underpaid and often treated with scant consideration. The inherent defects of such a nondescript organization made it impossible for it to adjust and adapt itself to the varying demands and imperative needs of great and independent armies such as were employed in the Civil War.

Operators engaged in the active campaign hundreds of miles from Washington were independent of the generals under whom they were serving, but still suffered from the natural impatience of military commanders who resented the abnormal relations which inevitably led to distrust and contention.

Other than telegraphic espionage, the most dangerous service was the repair of lines, which often was done under fire and more frequently in a guerilla type assault. It was reported that about one in twelve of the operators engaged in the service were killed, wounded, captured or died in the service from exposure.

In spite of all the hardships, telegraph-operators with the various armies were men of rare skill, unswerving integrity and unfailing loyalty. The value of the telegraph cannot be exaggerated and helped to shorten the war.

Source: Civilwarhome.com/telegraph

ROSIN, TAR AND TURPENTINE

As written by LeRoy Mintz, Sr.

LeRoy Mintz, born in Brunswick County on August 26, 1910 and died in New Hanover County on November 21, 1984 was the son of Harry Luther Mintz, Sr. and Minta Catherine Tart. He married Eva Catherine Chadwick on August 12, 1939 in Brunswick County and they had two sons, LeRoy Jr. and John Hamilton Mintz. LeRoy Sr. was a graduate of NC State University and with first hand knowledge through years of observation provided a written article on the history of the timber and related industry as it was practiced in Brunswick and Columbus Counties. He described the changes that have occurred in Navel Stores production and transportation from colonial days to the mid 1980's in detail. Here is a portion of his article with more to follow in future *Newsletters*.

Home Uses of Rosin, Tar and Turpentine: We used to beat up pieces of rosin. Papa would buy it by the barrel. We'd put it in a bag and beat it up into dust. At hog-killing time, we'd put the powdered rosin on the hog before scalding and the hair would come off more easily. Turpentine had a surprising number of uses. Tar was used for sore feet on mules. It was put on plow lines. A cotton plow line wasn't effective but with tar on it, it would have enough weight to handle better.

Making a Tar Kiln: They would dig out a place or build up a place, depending on the site. The size depended on how many barrels they wanted to make. They would have a flat hole sloped, with just a little build-up at one end. They would bank it six feet high with the fattest lightwood they could find. It had to be banked up so that the wind couldn't hit it. They would have an outlet at one end, maybe use a piece of tin or a piece of terra cotta pipe to make an outlet for the tar to run out of. They'd make a hole under that tin so that the tar would go out into a dirt hole. They'd fire it at the other end. It would burn slowly and the tar would eventually run out. That was a slow, crude, sandy, dirty operation.

You had a wooden bucket tied on the end of a pole and you'd dip the tar out of the hole with a bucket

and put it into a barrel. When you got the barrel full, you'd cap it to sell it. It was very heavy. One barrel sold for five to seven dollars. It was something for farmers to do in wintertime when there was no other employment.

If you go out in the woods today and find a ridge, chances are there will be a hole where there was a tar kiln. The kiln would be located at the site where they could get the fat lightwood. They would go to it three to four times a day to empty out the hole. They would roll the barrels to load them on boats to sell them in Wilmington. It was a discouraging way for a man to make a dollar.

Turpentine: Turpentine required hard work too. Dipping the turpentine, going from tree to tree, carrying a wood bucket and it covered with turpentine and turpentine covering your leg. You got one-half to one-third of what the tree produced. A lot of it was left on the tree. The sun wouldn't get hot enough to melt it, or it would run all the way down, and when fires would go through the turpentine would ignite quickly. After that, the tree wouldn't be any more good for turpentine. According to Lawrence Lee, Brunswick County historian, Columbus County led the state in its production of turpentine in 1860. Brunswick Ranked sixth with a large amount. Also turpentine was considered the single largest source of income for the county. Also it was put into barrels like the tar and shipped by schooner to Wilmington.

Forests were the first source of income in Brunswick County. There was fishing, but few sales. People would give you all you wanted if you would help them dress fish. They'd split the fish and take the entrails out. They'd salt the fish and put them in barrels which were rolled onto schooners to sell in Wilmington. There was no market for oysters. Clams began to sell about 1918 and later when they got trucks, they began hauling oysters in the shell.

We had cotton on the farms and peanuts and tobacco. About 1923 tobacco was grown on a larger acreage in this county. We were just getting into it good when government-control programs were instituted.

Brunswick county depended on its forests for rais-

ing swine. Hogs ran loose in the woods. They fed on whatever they could forage in the rich woodland.

Water Transportation, Schooners: The schooners carried tar and turpentine, rosin – all the products out of the forest. That was the only way they had to transport them. Sometimes they'd get in a little storm out in the ocean and knock off a barrel of turpentine or rosin. Now shrimp boats sometime occasionally picked up pieces of that.

A schooner was a two-mast boat. It was a plain boat, not built like a shrimp boat. They had a cabin in the back below deck. Above the cabin in the back, there was the hold where you put your freight.

Driving Cattle and Swine to Market: Nearly everything we had for sale in Wilmington had to go by water, but some livestock was driven on hoof. They'd bunch up cows and hogs. The buyer would hire two or three people who would walk and drive the cattle and hogs to Wilmington. A buyer would go through the area buying a cow here and there until he got fifteen or twenty. He'd feed them up a little bit, but they would lose what weight they'd put on by the time they got to Wilmington. They had a big stable on this side of the Cape Fear River. They'd put the cows in it and get the Wilmington buyers to come over and look at them and buy them.

When the first trucks came, people started butchering the livestock locally and then transporting the meat to Wilmington. Back then they killed porkers at a hundred or a hundred twenty-five pounds.

They'd drive the hogs, or they'd pick cold weather and dress the hogs, load the meat on wagons pulled by mules to Wilmington. I've heard old-timers talk about having twenty head on the wagon and they'd have to spend one night on the Old Georgetown Road. When it was freezing cold, that made the pork much better. They had to pick their times. I don't know how they knew it was going to be cold.

Sweet potatoes were sold in Wilmington too.

And then, of course, when cotton came in, they

shipped cotton on those schooners up to Wilmington until we got our own gins. Gins may have come in about 1895-90. Then they ginned before selling. Seed was two-thirds of the cotton. It was bulky when shipped before it was ginned. The cotton seed could be ground and used for plant food. Cotton seed meal was good livestock feed.

When I was young, my father bought nitrogen and mixed it with cotton seed meal to spread for fertilizer.

Charles Roach, Sr. of Craven County

Charles Roach, Sr. was the patriarch for most of the Roach families in Brunswick County. His grandson, David Summers Roach moved to Brunswick County bef. 1859 from Craven County, NC. He married Susan Ann Lancaster, daughter of Jesse Lancaster, Jr. and Nancy Causey, on June 9, 1859 in Brunswick County. With their four children begins the legacy of the Brunswick County Roach families. David and Susan are buried in the Roach-Lancaster Cemetery located in Varnamtown.

Charles Roach, Sr. is described as a shoemaker in a transaction between him and Charles Johnson on the 7th day of June 1795. (Craven Co. Deed BK. 32, p. 407). Charles was born October 1, 1744 and died bef. March 1821. He married first Elizabeth Nobles of Pitt County on May 12, 1774 and after her death married Polly Summers on November 20, 1799. He and Elizabeth had three sons and Charles and Polly had eight children.

Charles Roach must have lived near the dividing line between Beaufort and Craven Counties for there are deeds of land records recorded in both counties. These records indicate that he lived in Beaufort Co. between the years of 1776 and 1795. He owned land next to a Thomas Pollard whose plantation was on the county line.

During the Revolutionary War Charles commanded a company of Militia from Craven County. Because of some infraction he was relieved of his command until reinstated by Governor Richard Caswell. A letter from the Governor to Col. John Tilman of Craven County states:

Kingston (Kinston) October 14, 1786.

Sir: Upon the Petition of Mr. Charles Roach, I have thought proper to restore him to his command of the Company of Militia in your Regiment, formerly under his command; if there has been any determination of a Court Martial to his disadvantage as has been suggested, the Commanding Officer should have been furnished with a copy. This I do not learn has been the case, and the reason of his being superseded in his command, is, in my judgment, not such as ought to have operated against him, but rather in his favor; for it certainly is the duty of every man to comply with the Laws of his Country, and his doing so in the most perilous times, should have given him credit with his Country, rather than have been a means of degrading him under any circumstance I am acquainted with. I require you shall consider Capt. Roach under the present Commission as restored to his former command, and that he take rank accordingly.

I am Sir, with great esteem,
Your most obedient Servant,
R. Caswell

Upon his death Polly was appointed administrator of the estate of Charles Roach, Sr. in the 1821 Craven Co. court records. An inventory of the personal effects of Polly Roach made on September 22, 1825 includes an account of ten notes she held in loans. The inventory was signed by Edward Nelson.

Other items in Craven County Clerk's loose paper file include a petition by the heirs of Charles Roach (*children of Charles and Polly*). It states that James Roach, Samuel Roach, David Roach, Joshua Ecklin and his wife Nancy, Ephraim Pearce and his wife Hannah, and Madison Roach an infant (through his brother-in-law, Joshua Ecklin), all heirs of Charles Roach, Sr. who made his last will and testament prior to March 1821, which was probated in Craven County March term 1821, and Polly Roach was named executor of the estate. The petitioners were to have received a legacy from the executor, Polly Roach, who died in 1825 leaving a will of her own, which was proved in November Court 1825 and Edward Nelson was made administrator of the estates of both Charles and Polly Roach. They had

never received a settlement, and they petitioned for it now.

Papers in these same files contain reports made in 1821 when Edward Nelson paid out \$1849.96 in cash to eight children. In 1827 and 1828 the children again are named as receiving a total of \$1448.47. On November 18, 1825 twenty-two Negroes were sold to several members of the family and others; value set on them as \$2751; on the 19th of November 1828 five others were divided among Samuel Roach and Joshua Ecklin. A further account on the 18th of April 1829 of sale of other property of Charles Roach, Sr. made by Edward Nelson and James Roach, acting administrators, give a further record of his extensive holdings. During this time Madison Roach, an infant, was represented by Joshua Ecklin, his brother-in-law.

Children of Charles Roach and his first wife Elizabeth Nobles:

Charles Roach, Jr. April 20, 1775-Jan. 28, 1831

John Roach: June 26, 1776-death unknown

Reuben Roach: July 27, 1778-death unknown

Children of Charles Roach and Polly Summers:

David Roach: May 20, 1800-death unknown

Hannah Roach: Aug. 28, 1801-death unknown

James Roach: July 5, 1803-Feb. 14, 1864

Sally Roach: Nov. 8, 1805-Oct. 15, 1867

Samuel Roach: April 15, 1808-death unknown

James Madison Roach: Jan. 10, 1809-Mar. 5, 1885

Nancy Roach: Apr. 21, 1810-Mar. 19, 1877

Susan Roach: Aft. 1810-unknown

Note: David Roach moved to Georgia. Samuel, James Madison and Nancy moved to Tennessee.

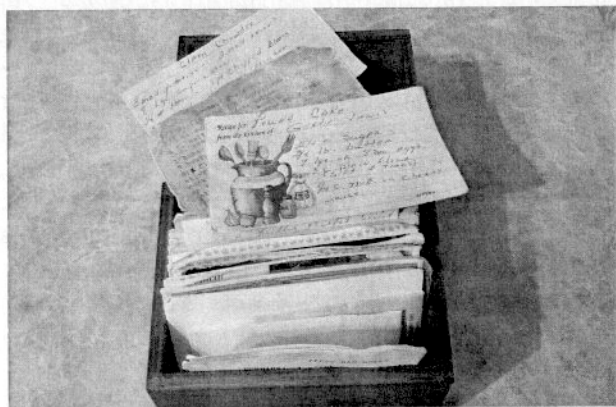
Source: Our Family Genealogy by Rev. Wm. E. Cox and Mrs. Olivia Cox McCormac. First Edition 1938. Second Edition 1967. Published by The Mary Nelson Smith Family 1967. Craven-Pamlico-Carteret Regional Library.

THE OLD RECIPE BOX

Pirates who prowled and pilfered along the North Carolina coast sought treasure chests filled with silver and gold. We can discover even more priceless finds in an old wooden family recipe box. In

the end when the people we love are gone, sometimes all we have left are breadcrumbs.

These breadcrumbs which are tiny glimpses into the lives they led when they were here, lead back to a place in time when we were together and healthy and happy. I'm quite certain this is that space they're referring to when folks so often long for "simpler times".



Browsing the contents of a passed down recipe box is akin to flipping through the family photo album. It conjures up memories and gives us glimpses into how we used to live and eat. Unlike old photos, however, classic recipes are repeatable history. We can still bake the pie that sweet old so-and-so made and enjoy a bite of time travel. Although the taste may be slightly different because we are now using stainless steel pots and pans and glass top electric stoves verses the bygone days of well seasoned cast iron pans, enameled pots and wood burning stoves.

Inside a recipe box we find 3-by-5 cards covered with the handwriting that once signed our birthday and report cards. There is something about the weathered feel of the more loved index cards, the loops and dips of someone's signature cursive/print hybrid scrawl. We unfold old light-bill envelopes on which someone jotted notes so brief and random that they resemble cryptic code. We come across clippings from newspaper, magazines and the backs of packages, held together by yellowed Scotch tape. There are recipes for dishes someone made with enough pride to warrant writing them down or intended to fix at a later date. Reading and looking through them and seeing the way your

grandmother may have gone back and annotate each one after trying it: use less oil, add more of this or that. Family recipe boxes are accidental archives of everyday lives, time capsules filled by people we sure do miss.

There is something different about handwriting that makes it in some ways the most prized breadcrumb of all. Perhaps it is the idea of knowing that no one ever has and will ever again make anything that looks exactly like this. We can be alike in so many ways, but our signature is always our own. Maybe because when you pick up something that was written by someone you loved and lost, you can imagine them holding that very same letter or recipe card in their hand, pressing pen to paper. You both touched it. You can't touch each other now, but you can travel the same space.

Sometimes the recipe box is no wooden box at all, but a scrap piece of paper slipped inside a book, empty coffee can or even inside a bag that once held a pound of dried pinto beans. There may be handwritten recipes in a little notebook with the first entries from a new bride neatly written. Next came quickly scribbled recipes for baby formula made with Pet milk, Karo syrup and liquid vitamins. This says much about how a busy housewife in Southeastern North Carolina fed her family.

Later, the notebook was abandoned and the bag filled with a time lapse of her recipes through fifty-plus years of marriage. Dishes range from an era when nearly everything was homegrown in our sandy soil and put up, to the advent of convenience ingredients such as Cherry Yum Yum, made with canned pie filling and Cool Whip. There are recipe cards from sisters-in-law, Sunday school classmates and neighbors, each of whom took the time to share a recipe that not only promised something good to eat, but also conveyed deep affection and camaraderie in their kitchens and communities. They consisted of equal parts recipe card, greeting card and calling card. Sometimes you may find written across the top of a recipe a strange name. Perhaps it is the handwriting of your grandmother and she just had written this name to let her daughter know where it came from before she passed it along.

lection is a keeper although they should be kept nonetheless. We may laugh when we find a recipe for something we can't imagine anyone every wanting to eat. Maybe that mystery casserole or Jell-O mold filled with everything animal, vegetable and mineral all at once. The misses, as well as the hits, belong in our culinary genealogy. We owe it to our descendants to take up pen and paper to add our entries to the family recipe box. That's "pen and paper" and not "pin and post".

It might be more organized to collate recipes on a laptop or the Web, but no one will ever *ooh* and *ahh* their way through a heirloom hard drive. You can't Google your grandmother's recipe for her cherry pound cake recipe taken to the family reunion or find on your smartphone her stewed flounder recipe where she reveals her secret ingredients in her own handwriting! Nope, that treasure belongs to you, the trustee of the recipe box. Indeed writing something down, regardless of what it is, can be a transformative experience. Science increasingly proves that it is the writing of information, not the typing, that promotes a space in our brain that lends more to the processing and interpretation of information, not just the recording of it.

Many cookbooks contain recipes using ingredients caught in our coastal waters and grown in Brunswick County's hot, sandy soil but none compare to those found in the old wooden recipe box. Some pirate or your sister might have gotten the silver, but you took the cake.

Source: Inspired by an article written by Sheri Castle, Our State Magazine, May 2016

Confederate Salt Works

Located on Walden's Creek off the Cape Fear River just north of Southport a large Confederate Salt Works was established. Salt-water was carried in tanks from New Inlet to the creeks and evaporated, supplying salt to the soldiers. It was probably demolished by the Federal blockades.

Refreshments

Thank you Sandra Ward for furnishing us the delicious refreshments at the May meeting. Richard Hollemeak will provide the snacks at our August meeting. Please consider volunteering to provide refreshments for the upcoming meetings.

Area Events

August 9, 2016: *2nd Tuesday Talk* with Stuart Calari, *Growing Up in Two Cultures*. Harper Library, Southport beginning at 10:30 am. Free programs are open to the public.

September 14, 2016: *Cape Fear Revolutionary War Round Table*, will meet at the Community Building in Southport at 7 pm. Charen Fink will be the speaker for the evening. For additional information contact Connie Hendrix at 910-278-6705.

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