

Mecklenburg Messenger



Olde Mecklenburg Genealogical Society
P.O. Box 32453
Charlotte, NC 28232-2453
Email: omgs1775@yahoo.com
Web page: <http://www.rootsweb.com/~ncomgs/>

December 2004

Joan Raney, Editor

Directions to Aldersgate

Ray Hall Community Center: Aldersgate asks that we use the main entrance and park in front of the Ray Hall Community Center, entering the building by the front door.

Coming from Eastway Dr., turn on Shamrock Dr. Proceed out Shamrock to Aldersgate Main Entrance. You will pass these buildings on Shamrock Dr.: WNC Methodist Center, Museum of History, Asbury Care Center, and Wesley Nursing Center.

At the traffic light, turn right on Willard Farrow Dr. After the Welcome Center (like a gate house), drive 0.3 mi. on Willard Farrow Dr. After the Hezekiah Alexander House on the right, you will see 3 buildings facing a circle.

Ray Hall Community Center is the 2-story building in the middle, between Epworth Towers and Francis Residential Building.

Park in the visitor parking in front of the Community Center and enter by the front door.

Notes from November Meeting

by Mary Utting

Patti Proctor, who had talked about women's role in the Civil War at the July meeting, returned for an encore performance with her associate, DeDe Wilkes, for the November meeting of Olde Mecklenburg Genealogical Society. The two women put everyone in the holiday mood with a talk and visual display of old Christmas customs.

Proctor pointed out that the South celebrated Christmas early in our history, while the New England Puritans, who believed that Christmas represented pagan customs, and the celebration of the holiday near the winter solstice was not biblical.

OMGS Meetings

The December 2004 meeting of OMGS will be held on Wednesday, 8 December 2004 at the **Ray Hall Community Center, Aldersgate**, 3800 Shamrock Drive, Charlotte. *See first article for directions.* It will be our annual Christmas Party. I hope that all of you have signed up to attend! Our January program will be on January 12, 2005. Don't miss these great programs!

The Hopewell Branch will meet on Saturday, 11 December, at Hopewell. We will have our annual Christmas Luncheon. Come out and join us! And bring a side dish or dessert! Be prepared to eat!

At first, this was an adult holiday with gala balls and parties. It was during the Victorian era that many favorite Christmas customs began, partly with the German influence of Queen Victoria's husband, Prince Albert, who popularized the use of Christmas trees, a tradition in his native country.

The two speakers thus dressed in Victorian era attire, Proctor representing a woman at home who might be decorating her house, while Wilkes was dressed in visiting costume, including a hoop skirt. Both wore high knit stockings, pantalets, full petticoats, hats, and gloves. Proctor chose red for both outer and undergarments.

Proctor said she had researched the Christmas tree and found one mentioned in 1814. There were stories that some of the Hessian soldiers, who were hired by the British to fight in the American Revolution, may have brought the custom with them. But it was later on that decorating a tree with homemade ornaments became popular. The tabletop tree they showed would have been used about 1860. Later full-sized trees were put up in larger homes.

Candles were on trees, though they were hard to get in the back country; they were lighted only on Christmas Eve, because they were an obvious fire hazard. The early ones were homemade.

Glass ornaments made in Germany, called kugels, were seen about 1820-30, but they only became really popular in America when they were sold in dime stores. One tradition: if a child found a pickle on the tree, he or she got an extra gift.

Homes were decked with fresh greenery, such as holly or pine. This custom began with the Druids, who believed greenery held magic to keep away evil spirits. They also put rosemary on the floor. This all reminded them of the spring to come.

Christmas may have begun with an English gentleman who sent a homemade version to a friend in the 1820s. The friend liked the idea so much that he had some simple cards printed for his use. The first versions were much like postcards with pictures of spring to come or simple Christmas images.

Gingerbread has long been a holiday staple; it was first used by Germans in celebration of the winter solstice and then carried over into the Christian holiday.

Wilkes said one of her favorite customs was to put lighted candles in the window to represent goodwill to the less fortunate. The early candles were sugar-coated.

She told the tale of a father with three girls to marry off, but he was concerned they would not have enough money to attract suitors. St. Nicholas is supposed to have poured three bags of gold coins into the stockings that the girls had hung by the heart. The idea of our modern version of Santa Claus is attributed to Clement Moore's "The Night Before Christmas." It also illustrates the inclusion of children in later celebrations.

Joel Poinsett, ambassador to Mexico, brought back the traditional Christmas plant that bears his name: poinsettia.

The star on the Victorian tree was a symbol of hope and goodwill. Some children whose behavior was not the best found a lump of coal in their stockings. But Proctor said this also came to mean that the house would be warm all year. Likewise, the gift of an apple or orange in

a stocking signified a full pantry to come. Little toys also were among stocking stuffers.

The candy cane is one of the oldest customs, which has been around for centuries. It started as a simple sugar stick for children, which later became shaped like the shepherd's crook and was flavored and decorated in red and green.

Christmas fans and handkerchiefs were used by women to convey certain flirty messages to the men at holiday events. Books on the language of fans and hankies actually appeared, although the messages were not always the same.

The speakers concluded, however, that the great importance of Christmas celebrations was the opportunity for friends and family to come together at the holiday.

Help Needed

Dr. Vernon Herron is heading an ongoing project to document abandoned black cemeteries in Mecklenburg County. If anyone knows of these cemeteries, he would appreciate being notified of their location and condition. You may reach him at 704 599-4914.

New from the Carolina Room

by Jane Johnson

8-21-to 9-20-2004 & 10-21 to 11-20-2004

To view the Public Library's catalog for a complete list of holdings, go to <http://www.plcmc.lib.nc.us/online/catalog/>.

A scanner has been added to one computer in the Family Research Computer Center. Patrons may now scan materials and copy them to a disk.

These are new titles of interest to genealogists in the Carolina Room, Main Library, 310 N. Tryon Street, Charlotte, NC.

John Chapman 1735-1780 Wilkes County North Carolina

Rev. John Bumgardner 1817-1890 Rutherford County North Carolina

Rickles Stanley Abt 1750 Mitchell County North Carolina

*Whitehead's of East Tennessee Workbook
My Ancestors William R. Navey Mainly From
Western North Carolina*

*Eastern Tennessee (Blevins, Boothe,
Bumgardner, Chapman, Garland, Hampton,
Honeycutt, Newton, McCall, Pate, Pruett, Riley,
Seely, Stout, Tallent, Whitehead, Whiteside,
Navey)*

Honeycutt-Hunnicut-Huneycutt Descendants of Augustine Hunnicutt 1625-1682 & Mary Alice Carter Parke England to Virginia
James Cornish Navey 1791-1849 Burke County North Carolina
Nathan Blevins Western North Carolina Eastern Tennessee With Many Barnett-Garland-Gouge-Honeycutt-Miller-Pate Family Connections
John "Bee Log" Pate & Fanny Barrett (Buncombe, now Yancey Co., NC)
Gutridge Garland 1753-1848 East Tennessee Western North Carolina
Ebenezer Newton-Elizabeth Buchanan Rutherford County, NC Their Descendants Mainly to NC-AL-GA-TN-TX
Workbook Descendants of Dietrich Grantzorf (Grindstaff) 1650 Zweibrucken, Germany
The Families of Haywood County, Based on the 1880 Census Records, Book 4
Broken Swords, The Lives, Times, and Deaths of Eight Former Confederate Generals Murdered After the Smoke of Battle Had Cleared
Family Sketches And A Bit of Biography of Andrew J. Moore
Saga of Sergt. (Gilbert H.) Bates (Union soldier) Carteret County, N. C. Folklore, Facts and Fiction
An Early and Strong Sympathy, The Indian Writings of William Gilmore Simms
Brides Index for Beaufort County, NC, Vol. 1, 1847-1909
Town Leaders, Littleton, North Carolina 1790-1920
In The Name of God, Amen! Abstracts of Hyde County, North Carolina Wills Probate 1709 through 1775
Beaufort County, North Carolina Marriage Register 1867-1872
Descendants of Samuel Winstead (1701-1774), Joseph Winstead, vol. 4
Extracts from Darlington, S. C., Newspapers 1880-1884
"Pocahontas" My Ancestor
Mecklenburg County Loose Estate Papers (microfilm)
Southern Claims Court (microfilm)
The Remote Part of the World: Regional Formation in Lower Cape Fear, North Carolina 1725-1775
The Roman Years of a South Carolina Artist
Caroline Carson's Letters Home, 1872-1892
Rejected or Suspended Applications For Pensions NC, Dept. of Interior 2/23/1852
Virginia Pension Roll of 1835, Vols. 1, & e2
Federal Pension Roll of 1835 - AL, ARK, DC, FL, LA, MS
Tennessee Pension Roll of 1835, Vols. 1 & 2

Muster Rolls War of 1812 Militia of North Carolina 1812 and 1814 and Index
Kentucky Pension Roll of 1835, Vols. 1 & 2
Georgia Pension Roll of 1835
North Carolina Pension Roll of 1835, Vols. 1 & 2
Maryland Pension Roll of 1835
South Carolina Pension Roll of 1835
Troops of Lincoln County North Carolina
1838 Indian Removal North Carolina Regiment Volunteers
Roster of the North Carolina Volunteers in the Spanish-American War 1897-1898
Ancestors Of Our Children (Austin, Blevins, Boothe, Bumgardner, Chapman, Garland, Hampton, Hinson, Honeycutt, Jenkins, McCall, McCorkle, Pate, Pruett, Riley, Seely, Stockton, Stout, Tallent, Whitehead, Whiteside
Pension List From The 1840 Census of North Carolina
Rosters of the NC Troops In The War With Mexico 1846-1847, Muster-Out Rolls The First Regiment NC Foot Volunteers and Companies "G" and "I" 12th US Infantry
Troops Of Mecklenburg, Mecklenburg County NC (1776-1897)

1800 Federal Census, Mecklenburg County, North Carolina

A new transcription of the 1800 Mecklenburg County, NC, federal census will be available 1 January 2005 that corrects errors and omissions in Ronald Vern Jackson's earlier computer index. Taken from the original microfilm, the new transcription keeps pages in their original order so that neighbors are easily identified. Names are spelled as they appear on the microfilm, and modern-day spellings, if different, are cross-referenced in the new index. Enumerations were carefully checked. Mecklenburg County in 1800 included half of present-day Union County. 1800 Federal Census, Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, may be ordered from Ellen V. Poteet, 8336 Adrian Court, Charlotte, NC 28270. Cost is \$12.50 ppd. NC residents add 7.5% sales tax (\$.94).

It's Dues Renewal Time!

Have you sent in your dues? Start the new year off right and send them in! \$20 for an individual membership, \$25 for family, \$40 for sustaining, or you can pay \$225 for a lifetime membership. Mail to OMGS, P.O. Box 32453, Charlotte, NC, 28232-2453.

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DATED MATERIAL INSIDE

OMGS Publications for Sale

<i>Mecklenburg County, NC Cemeteries, Volume 1: North Mecklenburg</i>	\$32.50 PPD
<i>Mecklenburg County, NC Cemeteries, Volume 2: South Mecklenburg</i>	\$32.50 PPD
<i>Mecklenburg County, NC Cemeteries, Volume 3: East Mecklenburg</i>	\$37.50 PPD
<i>Mecklenburg County, NC Cemeteries, Volume 4: West Mecklenburg</i>	\$37.50 PPD
<i>1850 Census Abstract, Mecklenburg County, NC</i>	\$17.50 PPD
<i>OMGS Surname Index, 2000 Edition</i>	\$8.00 PPD
<i>Nine Generation Ancestor Chart</i>	\$6.00 PPD (rolled) \$5.00 PPD (folded)
<i>OMGS Quarterlies: 1983-2003</i>	\$21.50 PPD (4/year) \$8.50 PPD (single) \$2.00 PPD (index)
<i>The Spirit of a Proud People, by Lois Moore Yandle</i>	\$40.00 PPD

Books by Herman W. Ferguson

<i>Mecklenburg County, NC: Minutes of the Court of CP&Q Sessions, Vol. I, 1780-1800</i>	\$30.00 PPD
<i>Mecklenburg County, NC: Minutes of the Court of CP&Q Sessions, Vol. II, 1801-1820</i>	\$32.50 PPD
<i>Mecklenburg County, NC: Minutes of the Court of CP&Q Sessions, Vol. III, 1821-1830</i>	\$27.50 PPD
<i>Mecklenburg County, NC: Minutes of the Court of CP&Q Sessions, Vol. IV, 1831 - 1840</i>	\$25.00 PPD
<i>Mecklenburg County, NC: Minutes of the Court of CP&Q Sessions, Vol. V, 1841 - 1850</i>	\$27.50 PPD
<i>Mecklenburg County, NC, Minutes of the Court of CP&Q Sessions, Vol. VI, 1851-1860 New!</i>	\$29.00 PPD
<i>Mecklenburg County, NC: Genealogical Deed Abstracts Books 10-14</i>	\$27.50 PPD
<i>Mecklenburg County, NC- Abstracts of Deed Books 15-23 1794-1830</i>	\$35.00 PPD
<i>Mecklenburg County, NC: Will abstracts, 1791-1868, Books A-J/Tax Lists 1797-1799, 1806-1807</i> (transcribed by Ralph B. & Herman W. Ferguson)	\$32.50 PPD
<i>Mecklenburg County, NC: A Petition, 1792; Tax Lists 1797-1799, 1806-1808, 1810-1811, 1815, 1823-1824</i> (transcribed by Ralph B. & Herman W. Ferguson)	\$27.50 PPD
<i>Mecklenburg & Cabarrus Counties, NC: Decedents for Whom Loose Estate Papers are Extant</i>	\$16.50 PPD

North Carolina residents please include 7.5% sales tax. Send name, address, order, and payment to

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