



Fairfield Genealogical Society

NEWSLETTER

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March 2003

The next meeting of the Fairfield Chapter of the SCGS will be Sunday at 3:00 pm, March 23, 2002 at the First Methodist Church in Winnsboro, S. C. The church is located on Congress Street, one block north of the town clock, across from the Winnsboro, S. C. Post Office. Put this date on your calendar and plan to join us for the meeting.

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Cemetery Books

Cemetery survey books of Fairfield County are available at the Fairfield Museum in Winnsboro or by mail from the address below. Volume One includes large cemeteries in the western section of the county; Volume Two is the eastern section; and Volume Three is some of the rest of the cemeteries including most family and abandoned burying grounds. The cost is \$25.00 each (plus \$5 for each volume if mailed).

FAIRFIELD GENEALOGY ROOM

O. BOX 941

WINNSBORO, S. C. 29180

officer departed, Justice Gaston sent runners to various places in the community for men to meet at his house that night. The summons were obeyed with alacrity and by midnight thirty men of no mean mould, strong in spirit and of active and powerful frames had collected together.

These men were commanded by John McClure and were armed with the deadly rifle, clad in their hunting shirts and moccasins. With their wool hats and deerskin caps, their otter skin shot-bags and butcher knives by their sides, they were ready for any enterprise in the cause of Liberty. Next morning they paraded before the door of the aged patriot and according to the custom of that day he brought out a large case of bottles. Commencing with the officers, John and Hugh McClure, he gave each a hearty hand shake and then presented the bottle, after which they took their course noiselessly along the old Indian trail down Fishing Creek to the old field near Beckhamville, where many of the people were already gathered. Their sudden onset took by surprise the promiscuous assemblage, about two hundred in number. The enemy were defeated and "their well directed fire," says one who speaks from personal knowledge, "saved a few cowards from become Tories, and taught Houseman that the strong log houses at Rocky Mount were safe from his myrmidons."

This encounter was the first effort to breast the stream after the suspension of military opposition, the opening wedge to the recovery of South Carolina.

Filled with rage, Houseman sent a party early next day to bring the hoary-headed patriot, then 80 years of age, to his headquarters, but they found the dwelling deserted. His wife concealed in some bushes nearby saw them plunder the house of everything and carry off the stock from the plantation; nothing was left but the family bible, a precious relic which may be still preserved in the family.

John Gaston had nine sons in the army, three of whom were killed and the fourth one shot down at the Battle of Hanging Rock. When their mother was informed of these facts, she replied, "I mourn their loss, but they could not have died in a better cause."

From the December 17, 1895 Issue of the Fairfield News and Herald

A Biography Worth Keeping

The biography below has been copied from a work, in the hands of a lady in Charlotte, entitled "The Living Female Writers of the South".

The work was gotten up by a lady in Mobile, under the nom de plume of Ida Raymond, and dedicated to John R. Thompson, of Virginia, James Wood Davidson, A. M., of South Carolina, Hon. W. G. McAdo, of Georgia, and Charles Dimirty, of Louisiana, a quartette of Southern Authors, who have ever kindly encouraged and judiciously advised the female writers of the South.

The Living Writers were stereotyped by Fagan & Son, and published by More Brothers, of Philadelphia, in 1871. Not a volume of this work can now be found for sale.

Mrs. Catherine Ladd

The name that heads this article will call a thrill of pleasure to many hearts, for this lady is one of the most noted and successful teachers of the state of South Carolina; and hundreds of

her pupils, many of them now teaching throughout the land, remember her kindness and entire unselfishness.

She is the most generous of women; her time, her talents, her worldly goods are at the command of all her friends, says one of her ex-pupils.

Mrs. Ladd is a native of Virginia, was born in October 1809, married when eighteen years old to Mr. Ladd a portrait and miniature painter. Her maiden name was Catherine Stratton.

For several years after her marriage, Mrs. Ladd wrote poems, which was published in the various periodicals of the day. For three years she was a regular correspondent of several newspapers and published a series of articles on drawing, painting, and education, which attracted considerable attention. In 1841 Mrs. Ladd permanently settled in the town of Winnsboro, South Carolina, where she established one of the largest institutions of learning in the State, while sustained its well deserved reputation until closed in 1861. Mrs. Ladd has contributed tales, sketches, essays and poems to various journals under different noms de plume as Minnie Mayflower, "Aretms," "Alider" and Monia. During the existence of the Floral Wreath, published in Charleston by Mr. Edwin Heriott, Mrs. Ladd was a regular contributor. Mr. Heriott, in a notice of the literary talent of the South, speaking of Mrs. Ladd's poetical works, said, They are sweet, smooth and flowing, particularly so, but like Scotch music, their gayest notes are sad.

In 1851 she, with ardor took up the subject of education, home manufactories, and encouragement of white labor, believing that the ultimate prosperity of South Carolina would depend on it. She reasoned from a conviction that South Carolina could not long compete with the more southern and southwestern states in raising cotton, and an extensive system of slave labor would realize no profit. Mrs. Ladd's plays, written at the solicitation of friends, and performed by them, were very popular. The "Grand Scheme" and "Honeymoon" were celebrated far and wide. The incidents and introductions of characters showed that she had more than ordinary talent for that species of composition. Mrs. Ladd has a wonderful knack of managing young people. After the commencement of the war Mrs. Ladd gave up everything to devote herself to the cause of the South. She lived for the soldiers, was elected president of the Soldiers Aid Association, which office she retained until the close of the war, and by her untiring exertions kept the society well supplied with clothing. Her pen was unused during the war, the needle and her personal supervision being constantly in demand. In Winnsboro no church is built, no charity solicited, no ball, concert, tableaux or fair, nothing goes on without her cheerful and ever ready aid. Mrs. Ladd is said to be "homely" and dresses to suit herself, never caring about the latest "fashions", ignores hoops and always wears her hair short. Her manner's abrupt and decided, but one instinctively feels it to be kind.

The Confederate flag is said to have originated with Mrs. Ladd. The fire of February 21st, 1865, destroyed the literary works of thirty years. With the assistance of a Federal officer Mrs. Ladd saved the jewels of the Masonic lodge in the next house to hers, but the flames and smoke prevented her finding the "charter". By this time the fire had got so much ahead on her own premises and the confusion was so great, that she lost everything.

It is said that outside of the walls of her school Mrs. Ladd was the giv, social companion of every lady under her charge. Following her to the school room you instantly felt the change; though not perhaps a work was spoken, every young lady felt it. She was powerful will and habit of centering every thought and feeling instantly on the occupation of the moment.

The confusion of voices or passing objects never seemed to disturb her when writing. A friend of Mrs. Ladd says her quick motions show the rapidity of thought.

Even now, at the age of fifty-eight, were you walking behind her, you might mistake her from the light buoyancy of step, for a young girl.

Mrs. Ladd, the subject of the above biography, is now in the 87th year of her age. She commenced teaching in South Carolina in '25 and began her literary career in '29. She is now the oldest living writer and teacher in this State. From a severe attack of neuralgia in the head, in the year 1891, she was stricken totally blind, since which time she has written nothing but poetry.

From the October 10, 1888 Issue of the Fairfield News and Herald

Ridgeway

How It Got its Name – Highest Point South of Rock Hill – Its Officers and Business Men Churches, Amusements and Other Matters Concerning It.

The town of Ridgeway enjoys the distinction of being the second place in the county in point of size and importance, the first place being held by Winnsboro, which has the advantage of being the county seat and situated in the centre of the county.

Ridgeway is located on the C. C. & A. R. R., twenty-five miles north of Columbia, and is twelve miles south of Winnsboro, and occupies the highest point on the ridge dividing the Wateree and Broad Rivers, and is also the highest point on the C. C. & A. R. R. south of Rock Hill, being 600 feet above the level of the sea. When the course of the railroad which runs through the town was first being discussed, two routes were proposed from Columbia to Chester. The one advocated by Mr. Wm. Lyles, of Fairfield, and Mr. Saml. McAlilly, of Chester and the other by Mr. Edward G. Palmer, of Ridgeway, who was afterwards elected president. Mr. Lyles route was pretty much that followed afterwards by the Columbia & Greenville Railroad as far as Alston, thence across to Chester. Mr. Palmer's route was adopted and is the present bed of the road. This latter route was called the "ridge route" or "ridge way" and this name was given the station. Mr. McAlilly jocularly called it the "Palmer ginhouse route" as it placed a shipping station within two miles of Mr. Palmer's ginhouse. Mr. Palmer's choice of this route, however lay in the fact that it ran up the back of the ridge, and crossed only one stream between Columbia and Chester, the wisdom of which has been fully sustained by the experience of the Greenville road with the annual freshets and washouts.

The town of Ridgeway was incorporated in 1874, and Capt. R. S. Desportes, now of Columbia, was its first Intendant, in which capacity he served several terms.

At present the population of our neighboring town numbers three hundred souls, and the spirit of push and progress which is seen in so many other places in the State is both visible and audible here in the stacks of lumber waiting for the rattle of the hammer, already engaged in some other part of town.

The commodious store of Mr. I. C. Thomas, on corner of Palmer and Church streets will shortly be ready for his occupancy.

Mr. C. P. Wray's handsome and stylish residence, on Fifth Avenue, under the direction of contractor Alexander, of Shelby, N. C., is rapidly approaching completion.

Messrs. A. F. Ruff & Co., have just added an extension to their already large store house.