

Mrs Catharine LADD, wife of the late George Williamson Livermore Ladd was a famous educator, who opened a school for girls in Winnsboro in the year 1840.

(Her biography written by the subject and the property of her granddaughter, Mrs. Fee of the western part of Fairfield) was sent to the Dictionary of American Biography and can be seen in the Fairfield County, S.C. library in Winnsboro. Although not full I have added other important details of Mrs. Ladd's life to this sketch.) Mrs. Ladd was born October 28, 1808 at Richmond, Va. where her father, James Stratton, had married Martha Ann Collins in 1807, one year after his arrival from Ireland. Six months after Catharine's birth he fell from a vessel on the coast and was drowned. Mrs. Ladd died January 30, 1899 in western Fairfield County.

She was educated in the schools of Richmond and was said to have been a playmate of Edgar Allan Poe. One of her most treasured recollections of Richmond was her meeting Lafayette at a public reception given for him there in 1824. In 1828 she was married to George Williamson Livermore Ladd born in Plymouth, New Hampshire, who had been a seaman for ten years before; but having studied portraiture under S.F.B. Morse in Boston, he was then in the South as a portrait painter.

Accompanied by his mother she went to Charleston, S.C. where they arrived in time to witness the jubilee for the election of Andrew Jackson. From Charleston they went to Augusta, Georgia, where for three years until burned out by the great fire of 1829. They then returned to South Carolina but later moved to Macon, Georgia, where for three years Mrs. Ladd was principal of Vineland Academy. She next opened a school for girls in York, South Carolina.

Hearing of a suitable building for a girls' school in Winnsboro, she moved there and opened the Winnsboro Female Institute January 1, 1840 which is said to have had 9 instructors and 100 pupils in the year 1850; and she remained principal until her school was closed by the Civil War. The large brick building on Congress Street, west side was the girls' dormitory and a wooden dining-room was added to the south side of this building along with a wooden residence for the Ladds on the corner of Congress and Multrie Street.

Mrs. Ladd took a great interest in public affairs and it is said she published as early as 1831 articles on the encouragement of manufacturing in South Carolina. She was said to have submitted a design for the American flag as permanent president of the Ladies' Relief Association of Fairfield County she did much for the sick and wounded Confederate soldiers. Her son, Albert Washington Ladd, was wounded at the Battle of Seven Pines. Her husband died July 14, 1864; and she lost everything in 1865 when her home was burned by Sherman's troops. In 1870 she opened a boarding and day school in the western part of the county, teaching among her instruction, art, music dancing. This was in the Feasterville section and she taught girls and boys.

Probably because of failing eye-sight she retired in 1880 and went to live at Buena Vista plantation in her 91st year.; and although she had been a member of the Episcopal Church she was buried in Salem Presbyterian Church cemetery.

Mrs. Ladd's poems are characterized by religious feeling and love of nature. Her occasional letters of reminiscence and later poems which

appeared in the Winnsboro press, are signed "Mrs. C. Ladd.", but her earlier pen names were "Minnie Mayflower", "Arturus" "Aleda" . Two poems of little merit signed by her pseudonym, "Morna", appeared in the second volume of the Southern Literary Messenger. She is said to have been a regular contributor to the Charleston News and Courier, and to have published articles on art and education as tales, essays, plays and letters.

From Fitzhugh Mc Master's "History of Fairfield County" he says: "She was a cultural element in the life of Fairfield County for one third of a century in the middle of the nineteenth century in the educational and dramatic entertainment supervised by her and the sphere of her influence extended strongly to the Feasterville Community, where she taught for some years and near where she had her last home and died. From Feasterville two hours of schooling, she was living in Winnsboro before and after the Civil War thus teaching in Feasterville 1864-65. While in Feasterville she lived in the school, which was called the "Feasterville Boarding house .She was in Winnsboro when Sherman came through Winnsboro from Columbia."

From an article published in the Winnsboro press written by Mrs. D.V. Walker, Sr., nee Alice Buchanan, a few years ago Mrs. Walker having been born in the house immediately next door to the dwelling Mrs. Ladd occupied when her home and the school dining hall were burned on the corner of Congress and Multrie Street by Yankee troops of Sherman, is quoted the following excerpt-" Mrs. Catharine Ladd's influence in the cultural and educational field in Fairfield County and this section of the state cannot be properly estimated. Her theatrical trained group gave light operas in the Thespian Hall in Winnsboro on East Washington Street and the programs were attractively and firmly printed and the stage backdrops were splendidly painted by Mrs. Ladd- this being the second oldest theatrical group organized in the state- Dock Street Theatre in Charleston being the oldest theatre in S.C. The personnel of the dramas included the students of the Ladd school and others of vocal talent among the towns-folk.

I have in my possession the well-preserved printed programs of Gilbert and Sullivan operettas done by this group, along with a dainty 100-thread crochet cap a baby gift made for me at my birth."

" (Mr. Mc Master's "History of Fairfield County" states Mrs. Ladd after being in Feasterville in 1864 and 1865 returned to Winnsboro. Page 35)

" Dr. George Williamson Livermore Ladd, husband of Mrs. Catharine Ladd, left behind him when he passed away July 1864 fine oil portraits by him for Fairfield families . It is said my grand-father, the Honorable Osmund Woodward of Winnsboro, who previously sent his four daughters and a niece- Esther Woodward, to the Ladd school in York, South Carolina, said school located there before the set up of the Ladd school in Winnsboro, on Mrs. Ladd's sincere wish to locate in Winnsboro sent his mule-teams and slaves to bring her and her effects to the new brick school in Winnsboro. This was January 1840. My daughter, Alice America Beaufort Walier through her grandmother, Mrs. Robert Buchanan (Rebecca Woodward Buchanan) owns today the large oil ; portraits of my grand-father Osmund Woodward and his wife, Martha Alice Williamson Woodward. Also the misses Julia and Mary Faucette possess portraits of ancestors painted by Dr. Ladd."

See the history of the Ladd school building on Main or Congress Street
Winnsboro, S.C. This building is known by its last owner's name as the
Ketchin building. Data from the Clerk of Court books in Winnsboro.

Bk. II. I99#I829

Deed. John Mc Master to Richard Cathcart. Lot # 53. South Congress St.
Consideration \$200.00

BK. II. P. I91. I852 . Richard Cathcart to George W. Ladd Lot #53 includ-
ing house. South Congress St. Cons
Lot 53-54 I9 20. Consideration \$3,500.00

Bk. WWP I862 George W. Ladd to Philip E. Porcher (trustee of Mattie
Egleston, wife of George W. Egleston, District of Charleston)
Consideration \$6,000.

Bk. A.E.P.P. 396 I874. Maria Porcher to Priscilla Ketchin. Lots above.
53-54 I9-20.

November 28, 1936 Deed to John W. Cathcart by receivers of Winnsboro
Bank., Winnsboro, S.C.