

THE WHITTLERS BENCH

Southport Historical Society

501 North Atlantic Avenue
Southport, North Carolina 28461

Vol. XVI No. 3 May 30, 1992



NO REGULAR MEETING IN MAY - FOUNDERS DAY INSTEAD!

While the President's away (on vacation) the members will play! For those of you who do not already know, our president and his wife are traveling in Europe and will visit Southport, England before they return. Our Treasurer and quite a number of other Southport, N. C. people will be joining him in England next month.

In the meantime, though, as you will recall, Southport Historical Society is hosting a Founders' Day celebration on May 30 and 31. More than a hundred and fifty descendants of the early town settlers have made plans to attend. Many of these are coming from distant states: California, Louisiana, Alabama, Texas, New Jersey, Georgia and Maryland, to name a few.

ALL OF OUR LOCAL MEMBERS are needed to help prepare for the celebration. As you can see by the schedule printed below, we will be providing an old-time Southport covered dish dinner for our guests. The Arrangements Committee has planned to get meats prepared, but we are asked to provide salads, vegetable trays and desserts. With so many guests, each of you are asked to prepare extra large dishes of whatever you bring. Time is short; please don't let us down. And you will be needed to help greet our guests, make them feel welcome and get acquainted with them.

It promises to be a great time for all of us and our guests as the citizens of Southport today and the descendants of those who brought the town into being gather on May 30. Some of you will be both guest and host - but that doesn't excuse you from helping out with the food! Think food, in large proportions.

The agenda for the day goes like this: (Events at Community Building)

10:00 A. M. Registration and getting acquainted (books for sale; exhibits of family memorabilia). You can help in several ways.

The DILIGENCE is to be at the City Dock and open for visits on Saturday and Sunday. You can be available to invite our guests aboard.

Some may also want to take a tour of the town. You can help here. Or they may just want to go to their motels and rest until the program time.

1:30 P. M. Program at Community Building

6:00 P. M. Covered Dish Meal at Community Building. We sure need help here.

SUNDAY ACTIVITIES

Worship services in area churches. List will be posted at Community Building.

The afternoon will find many activities taking place in Franklin Square Park. These activities are for everyone. At this time the townspeople (not just members of the Society) will have a chance to meet and mingle with the Descendants. I understand that hot dogs and hamburgers will be for sale, too. Be sure to plan to join in these activities, too.

ANOTHER REMINDER: Quite a few of you have not paid your 1992 dues. Our By-laws say: "Annual dues shall be payable in advance, and members in arrears more than six months after payment is due shall be dropped from membership. Persons joining (not paying regular dues!) after July 1 shall be members through the following calendar year."

The 1992 dues should have been paid in January. Therefore, June is the cutoff time. PLEASE don't let this happen to you. We need every member. Mrs. Francey Wertz, the Treasurer, will be available. You can pay your dues to her. If you don't see her, then you can always give your check to Susie Carson, who will deliver it to Francey.

HISTORY PAGE: You will note that the format for The History Page "Looking Back" is quite different for this issue. We felt that you might like to know about the national election of 1792, and also the national election one hundred years later. The information was obtained by Francey Wertz for the editor from a publication of The Travelers Insurance Company entitled America Goes to the Polls. Francey is a former employee of the Travelers. Her contribution to this newsletter is deeply appreciated.

FOR YOUR USE IN PAYING DUES (RENEWALS OF NEW MEMBERSHIPS)

NAME: _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____

TELEPHONE NUMBER: _____

AMOUNT: \$ _____ (dues) \$ _____ (contribution)

Rates:	Individual \$10.00 annually	Husband and wife \$15.00 annually
	Sustaining \$25.00 annually	Individual Life Membership \$150.00
	Business, \$15.00 annually	Husband/wife Life Membrshp. \$200.00

Second ELECTION

1792

CANDIDATES FOR PRESIDENT	PARTY	ELECTORAL VOTE
George Washington	Federalist	132
John Adams	Federalist	77
George Clinton	Anti-Federalist	50
Thomas Jefferson	Anti-Federalist	4
Aaron Burr	Anti-Federalist	1

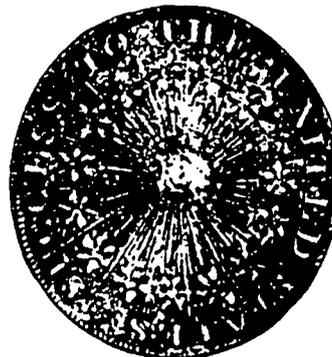
As the time for the second election drew near, Washington expressed a wish to retire. Antagonism between two cabinet members, Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson, spearheaded a division of political opinion and the subsequent formation of political parties. While the withdrawal of Washington was not desired, efforts were made to defeat the second Federalist candidate, John Adams, by the candidacy of George Clinton.

Since Vermont and Kentucky had been admitted into the Union, fifteen states with 132 electoral votes participated in the election. Washington again received a vote from every elector. Adams received 77. Thus the Federalists were again awarded both places.

While no effort was made to attract partisan political support through the use of campaign propaganda or

devices, there were sympathetic demonstrations in many localities for the French people who were engaged in revolution. In Boston, as one contemporary author described it, "an ox, roasted whole, with French and American flags hanging from its gilded horns, was drawn through the streets by sixteen horses, after which the people feasted on it in honor of the French cause."

The second inauguration took place at the new seat of government, Philadelphia, on March 4, 1793, with very little display. Washington was dressed in mourning because of the death of one of his nephews, a young man who had managed his affairs for some time. After the inauguration, a small medalet was struck bearing Washington's image and the inscription, "Success to the United States." Washington had asked Divine Providence to "crown with success our mutual endeavors."



Twenty-seventh

ELECTION

1892



CANDIDATES FOR PRESIDENT	PARTY	ELECTORAL VOTE	POPULAR VOTE
Grover Cleveland	Democratic	277	5,554,414
Benjamin Harrison	Republican	145	5,190,802
James B. Weaver	Populist	22	1,027,329
John Bidwell	Prohibition	0	271,058
Simon Wing	Socialist-Labor	0	21,532



UNREST, dissatisfaction and hard times formed a background for the election of 1892. Benjamin Harrison's administration had been marked by federal spending to a degree never before known. Pensions for soldiers were dealt with liberally. The surplus was dissipated; farm prices were low; work for the laborer was scarce.

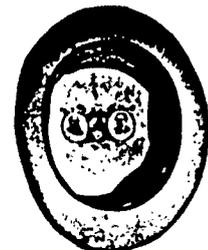
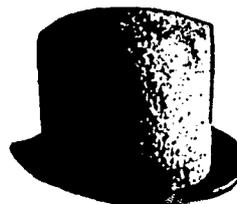
Both Republicans and Democrats nominated for President their previous standard bearers. At the Republican convention, Blaine's name was again mentioned but again he declined the nomination. At the Democratic convention, members of the New York delegation controlled by Tammany had signed a pledge not to vote for Cleveland. Bourke Cochran, the Tammany leader, almost conducted a one-man filibuster on the convention floor to prevent the nomination, but at four o'clock in the morning, amid great disorder in the galleries, Cleveland was nominated on the first ballot. To appease the "Free Silver" advocates, Adlai E. Stevenson of Illinois, grandfather of the 1952 Democratic standard bearer, was nominated for Vice President.

Despite riot and bloodshed during a strike at the Carnegie Steel plant at Home-

stead, Pennsylvania, and political activities by the "Knights of Labor," the political campaign remained dull and quiet. Cleveland again did not campaign. Suffering from the gout, he remained home but much publicity was given to his vivacious young wife. Harrison, saddened by the illness and death of his wife, preferred seclusion. General James Weaver, the Populist candidate, however, stumped the west, rallying the farmers with the cry to "raise less corn and more hell."

Even before the election it seemed clear that the Republicans were doomed to defeat. In the election, Cleveland carried a majority of the forty-four states and was the only candidate to be re-elected after an intervening term by another President.

The fraudulent purchasing of votes was greatly reduced by the fact that for the first time 33 of the 44 states used the Australian ballot.





GENEALOGY



Abbie Bitney

SEMPRONIUS RUSS

Almost in the center of the Old Smithville Burying Grounds, in the town of Southport, North Carolina lies the grave of Sempronius Russ, who died Nov. 19 1816. The marker says his age was 51, and that he was born in Ashville, Connecticut. The grave site is marked with a bronze marker, put there by the Brunswick Town Chapter, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution. None of the current chapter members could remember what he did in the Revolutionary War, so I started out to see what I could learn about this American Patriot who is buried in our historical cemetery.

Sempronius Russ was born 6 July 1767 in Ashford, Windham county, Connecticut. He served as a gunner under the command of Captain Benjamin Derkee, in the Company of Malroses, Connecticut. He enlisted on the 17th of November 1783 and was discharged on 26th of February 1784.

We know he was in Brunswick County, North Carolina because he married Amelia Potter here on September 27th, 1792. Amelia was the daughter of Samuel Potter and Anne Willits Potter of Brunswick county.

Sempronious Russ bought lots 33 and 87 in the town of Smithville on 31 July 1795 from Robert Howe. This deed is recorded in Book C, of Records of Deeds, page 359. This deed also tells us that Sempronious Russ was a carpenter by trade. Deed Book D, page 220 records a Sheriff's auction in September 1798 when Simpronious Russ bought a large tract or plantation on the west bank of the Cape Fear River containing three hundred acres. The records show he purchased only two male slaves. By 1799 and 1800 Simpronious Russ was selling property and slaves. He died in accidental drowning in the Cape Fear River on October 19, 1816. Some records show November rather than October, but the day of 19, and the year 1816 is not disputed in the records.

The children of Amelia (Potter) and Sempronious Russ are listed in the Russ family Bible, with marriages and death dates noted. (This listing of records came from the DAR library, and I do not know who owns the Russ Family Bible now.)

#1. Samuel Potter Russ, born 28 Sept. 1796, died 2 February 1857 married #1 Eliza Frierson, #2 Louise Claridge and #3 Mary Scott Locke.

#2. William Russ, born 23 Jan 1799, died October 26, 1805.

#3. Elizabeth Russ, born 15 March 1801, d.15 March 1834, married Thomas Randle.

#4. Reuben Russ, born 9 September 1803, died 12 April 1804.

#5. John W. Russ, born 10 March 1805, died 19 February 1857, married Susan Carre.

#6. Asa Russ, born 1 June 1807, married Mary Frierson.

#7. Sempronious Russ, born 17 February 1810, died 15 September 1845, married Sara Roberts.

#8. Lylia Russ, born 18 October 1811, died 5 January 1831, married John W. Gause

#9. Amelia Potter Russ, born 1 March 1814, married Daudherty Gause.

#10. Adeline Russ, born 30 June 1816, married Stephen Mead.

(The three children who have no death dates, does not mean they are still alive. It simply indicates that whoever made up this list did not know when they died, and so neither do I.)

Amelia (Potter) Russ, the relic of Sempronious, died 12 January 1851 in Hancock county Mississippi. She was buried in the Old Pearlinton Cemetery, along with three of her daughters. The graves were moved from Gainsville, Mississippi by the U. S. Government Reservation Authorities.

A short Journal kept by daughter Amelia P. Russ, dated 1836, and titled a "Journal of Our Travels" covers about 30 days of travel. She does not say who was traveling in the group she was with. The Journal was published in the Newsletter of the Brunswick County Historical Society, August 1976. The Journal mentions they spent time with her brother Asa and brother Samuel at the end of their journey. They were already residents of Pearlinton, Mississippi. There must have been several Brunswick county families who had moved to the same area -- note young Amelia Russ married Daugherty Gause on 11 November 1837, one year after arriving in Hancock county.