



Greenwood County Historical Society

P.O. Box 49653, Greenwood, SC 29649

September 2015

President's Message - September 2015

Fall is here and we are now in a time of renewal after a hot, southern summer. This summer we took our second "Civil War Tour" as a vacation through battlefields in Northern Virginia and we are now re-watching Ken Burns epic "The Civil War" on PBS. Much was learned and remembered as we took time to visit and learn from our past. I hope you continue with us as we continue our mission to study, promote, and educate others on our history and its importance.

We hope you enjoyed our last meeting at the Greenwood Library in June on local textile baseball history for this presentation. Tom Perry and Mac Kirkpatrick led this presentation which was full of great information of our local baseball history. If you were not in attendance, you missed a great event.

This month's meeting will be led by Karen Stokes from the South Carolina Historical Society on the topic of Sherman's Path through South Carolina, as we begin to wrap up the commemorative celebration of the sesquicentennial of the War Between the States. This should be a highlight and one you SHOULD NOT MISS! We will meet at the Greenwood Library!

We thank you for your continued support of the GCHS! Financially, we appreciate your renewal, and in attendance of our meetings in support of our mission. Please join and bring a friend if you have not done so.

If you have nominations for our Architectural Restoration and Preservation Awards please send those in! The time is at hand. We will begin our review of nominations in October and plan visits at that time.

Remaining dates for 2015: Our series looks finished with the Sesquicentennial of the end of the War Between the States.

September 27 **3:00 Greenwood Public Library**

Karen Stokes, "Sherman's Path Through South Carolina".

November 1 **2:00 Jefferson Davis Driving Tour. Details below**

Meet at Coronaca Bi-Lo. We will travel from there to Abbeville SC, stopping at several locations along the way, including Stony Point, Tabernacle, and Cokesbury. This is the route President Davis and his entourage took as they escaped capture to Washington Georgia in April/May, 1865. Please plan on joining us this afternoon as we share and celebrate in the commemoration of the sesquicentennial of this event!

We appreciate your continued support! We look forward to seeing you at our remaining meetings this year! Please send any ideas or suggestions for meetings for next year to me @ ctinsley63@yahoo.com Also, if you would like to serve on our board, please let me know!!

Yours in History!

Chip

<http://greenwoodcountyhistoricalsociety.com/>

GREENWOOD HISTORY: OUR OLD ROADS

By Harry Legare Watson

These sketches about the early travel routes in the area that is now Greenwood County and early families who lived along the old roads were written by the editor of *The Index-Journal* of Greenwood, and were published weekly in this newspaper from August 18, 1940 (with an occasional break) until February 1950, numbered 1-428. They include considerable family history information as well as local and area history. They will be reprinted here in following issues with the permission of the editor of *The Index-Journal*.

No. 77

Saturday, February 7, 1942

The execution at Old Ninety Six of the notorious Tory named Mathew Love in December 1784 was an event which for years was badly misrepresented by many writers, all without intending to do violence to the facts.

Love, according to the account of Governor B. F. Perry in Johnson's Traditions, was tried in the court of general sessions at Old Ninety Six, Judge Aedanus Burke presiding, and "after being acquitted" was seized by a group of citizens in the court house itself, dragged out and hanged on a tree right in front of the court house. Governor Perry even had the name wrong, calling the man "Loveless", and also said he was tried and acquitted of horse stealing--that was a crime punishable with death then--and that "Loveless" had been a leader in the killing of General William Butler's father--this was the massacre at Cloud's Creek.

Chief Justice O'Neill continued the story with the tradition--which will be shown below to have been wrong--that the relatives of the patriots massacred at Hay's Station in 1781 seized Love in the court house itself and dragged him, violently protesting, outside. And that Judge Burke ordered Sheriff Robert Starke "to quell the riot" and that Sheriff Starke replied: "It is more than my life or yours is worth to undertake it"; and on hearing this, Judge Burke instantly adjourned court and calling to his servant said: "Kit, Kit, get the horses" and was soon galloping off down the Island Ford road and did not stop until he had reached the house of a friend ("Springfield" later owned by O'Neal) near Newberry.

Judge Burke did not do either. He adjourned court in due form that day because all business before the court had been disposed of and when he got back to Charleston he wrote a full account of the hanging of Mathew Love.

This letter of Judge Burke's was many years ago removed, possibly stolen, from the State's records, but fortunately it had been published and the present writer more or less accidentally stumbled upon it in a copy of the "American Museum", a monthly magazine, for the year 1787 and bound in one volume.

Judge Burke, in his letter, gives a full and complete statement as to his part in the affair and, it will be noted, was highly impressed by the "consideration and courtesy" shown the court by the party who took Love in hand and hanged him to an oak tree.

The investigations made by General Samuel McGowan,

in 1850, of the records of the court of general sessions of Old Ninety Six district and then intact in the clerk of court's office in Abbeville, sustain all the statements as to the judicial proceedings made by Judge Burke as General Samuel McGowan said in his letter printed in the Newberry Sentinel. General McGowan, however, added, "There was no account in these records whatever of the tumultuous proceedings, which, we are informed by tradition, occurred after the discharge of Love by the court."

General McGowan continued: "We suppose the clerk of the court (at Ninety Six) considered--and if so he considered rightly--that it was not his duty to place upon the records of the court anything that occurred after the discharge of Love. The supplement was clearly 'extra judicial'. The proceeding at the Post Oak was a matter of records of history but not the records of the court."

The reference to the "Post Oak" is a facetious location of the end of Love by hanging from a "Post Oak" which tradition says was just above the spring at the head of Jail Yard branch. This does not seem to have been the famous "hangman's oak" which stood nearer the present highway and on the edge of the village of Cambridge.

The letter from Judge Burke to Gov. Benjamin Guerard, with the sketch of the part of certain Tories before the end of the Revolution, left out, is as follows:

"Copy of a letter from Mr. Justice Burke, to the Governor of South Carolina, giving an account of the execution of a man named Love at Ninety Six, in November 1784."

"SIR:

I arrived from my circuit this evening, and take the earliest opportunity to communicate to your excellency a very extraordinary affair which happened in the town of Ninety Six, on the 7th ult. (inst.?) I suppose your excellency is not unacquainted with the noted Tory, William Cunningham." (He then relates the massacres of patriots by Cunningham and says that "a man named Love" was one of his principal lieutenants.) "Love was a fiend in human form. When Col. Hayes and his party had surrendered, and Cunningham ordered them killed, Love went to the work with the fire of a savage and not only killed more than any one else, but took his sword and went all around, thrusting it into those who had not died instantly when cut down or shot down by others. It was said that those already dead, he stabbed again and

gave many barbarous insults to the bodies of Col. Hayes, Captain Williams and others of the party of patriots which had been massacred." (This was the massacre at Hays' Station in what is now Laurens county.) "The facts were related by Majors Hunter, Downes and Mulvee who through the soft-heartedness of a member of the band, and by the intercession of their own slaves, who had taken up arms under the Tories, escaped."

Now follows the account of the trial and hanging:

"Thenceforth Love was held in universal execration, and went off with the British, but some time ago, venturing to return to the vicinity of Ninety Six, he was taken up by a justice of the peace, who committed him to jail, thinking so barbarous a man did not come under the treaty of peace, so as to be sheltered from prosecution. The attorney for the State pressed the matter before the court of sessions. But I overruled the prosecution: and gave it as my opinion, that his conscience, his feelings alone, stood responsible for what was alleged; and on motion of his council (counsel) he was discharged. I could not help remarking at the same time, that no appearance, not a look of disapprobation, was directed against him; all seemed reconciled to the court's decision. Love's affair closed the business of the sessions, and the court then adjourned to the 26th of April next.

"A party of men, as respectable for good character and services in the war, as most in the district, composed of the fathers, sons, brothers, and friends of the slain prisoners, had attended court as usual, and waited until the judge had left the court-house, and arrived at his lodgings. And then without tumult or noise, they made Love a prisoner, and put him on horse-back. Through the whole affair they studiously affected to preserve every appearance of respect towards the judge; for though the house which they supposed he had entered, led directly to the place where they intended to convey Love, yet they took a circuit another way, to the skirt of a wood, where arriving under a tree, in an arm of which they tied one end of a rope, with the other around his neck and bid him to prepare to die; he urging in vain the injustice of killing a man without a trial, and they reminding him that he should have thought of that when he was slaughtering their kinsmen. The horse, drawn from under him, left him suspended till he expired; and the multitude dispersing back into town, all was quiet, as if nothing had happened.

"Thus I have related this unhappy affair and the motives which led to it, as I have heard it. And I can assure your Excellency, that whatever appearance this transaction may have to the contrary, the people of Ninety Six appear very desirous to forget the injuries of the war, and settle the government, provided those do not return among them, who have committed wanton acts of barbarity. Many plunderers and other mischievous people, who had taken part with the enemy, now set down among them without molestation; nor

can I learn that a serious resentment exists against any man who acted like a soldier, and fought them or killed their friends in fair, open action. But it is to be lamented that such men as Love is described to have been, will be so infatuated as to return, to keep alive the remembrance of past calamities, and thus prevent a restoration of public tranquility.

"I have the honor to be, &c,

AEDANUS BURKE

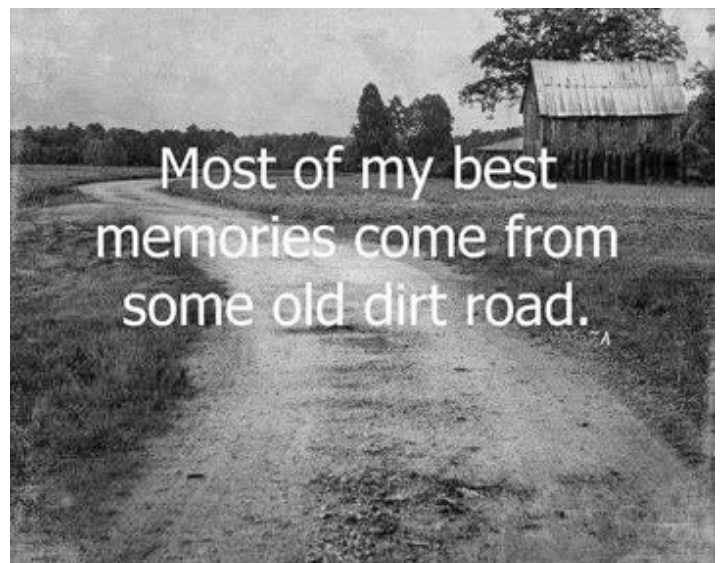
To His Excellency Governor Guerard

The party of citizens, "as respectable as most in the district" in the words of Judge Burke, was headed by Captain James Caldwell, brother of Major John Caldwell and an uncle of John C. Calhoun. The other members of the party were General William Butler, Colonel Zack. S. Brooks, William Brooks, John Satterwhite, Bartlett Satterwhite, Robert Gillam and James Atwood Williams, according to O'Neill. He also says the tradition that Gen. Butler was in command is wrong--he was considered too prominent for the business in hand--and that when Love was seized by order of Capt. James Caldwell he was "thrown upon a horse held by James Atwood Williams--thence conducted to a stooping oak or near the spring and hanged." Tradition of the Butler family is that Love was put on the favorite saddle horse of Mrs. William Butler and that Mrs. Butler would never ride the horse again.

Another feature of the story is that Mathew Love after he had been discharged made a plea that he was without money to pay the costs charged against him. But after he had been seized and saw that death was inevitable and soon, he pulled out of his pocket a purse of guineas (English gold coins) and handed it to his wife.

And this was the end of Mathew Love, bloody Tory, hanged from a tree near the court house in Old Ninety Six on Tuesday, December 7, 1784.

(to be continued. . .)



GCHS News

SC Historical Society

September 27 3:00 Greenwood Public Library

Karen Stokes, “Sherman’s Path Through South Carolina”.



Karen Stokes

Processing Archivist. SCHS

Karen Stokes has been an archivist with the Society since 1994. She has a B.A. in English from the College of Charleston and an M.S. in library and information science from the University of South Carolina. Her main focus is the processing and cataloging of our wonderful manuscript collection, and her primary area of interest is South Carolina in the Confederacy. She has published a number of articles on South Carolina history, and is the co-editor of *Faith, Valor, and Devotion: The Civil War Letters of William Porcher Dubose*, a collection of correspondence in our archives.

The Historical Society wishes to thank the newsletter editorial committee including Missy Lowery, Henrietta Morton, Carol Scales, President Chip Tinsley and editor Diane Wardlaw for their dedicated contributions to the Greenwood County Historical Society Newsletter.

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If you haven't yet renewed your membership, please send your dues now. Individual \$20. Couple \$30. Make check payable to the Greenwood County Historical Society and send to PO Box 49653, Greenwood, SC 29649



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