



Johnny D. Oliver

Havelock News photograph 2010
By Drew Wilson

Johnny Dean Oliver Remembers Old Havelock

The following is information from one of the oldest surviving members of the Havelock community, J.D. Oliver, which began with an email to me after he had finished reading *In This Small Place*. His memories and photographs are priceless and are presented here as they occurred.

Mr. Oliver's personal story begins on page 4. A portraits of J.D. is above and one of Braxton Oliver, both from the *Havelock News*, is on page 13. J.D's moonshine still photographs begin on page 14.

I have added a few additional comments about the contents at the end of the document, see page 16.

--*Eddie Ellis*

In a message dated 8/31/2011 2:32:36 P.M. Eastern Daylight Time, jjva@charter.net writes:

Good afternoon Mr. Ellis,

My name is Johnny D. Oliver and I have just finished reading the subject book written by you. I enjoyed the book immensely. It brought back many memories of my life in Old Havelock. I was born on Beach Haven Farm (which is located today where the ammunition dump is (I do not know if it is still there or not) located on Cherry Point in 1934. My father was a tenant farmer with 8 children and a wife. Several years

later my family relocated to what was called Havelock (now, I refer to it as Old Havelock). My family lived at several different homes while living in Old Havelock. I lived there until I joined the U S Army in 1954. After spending 3 years in the Army, I returned to Old Havelock in 1957. After entering college at NC State University, I only returned to Old Havelock to visit my mother who at that time was living down the Lake Road approximately one mile from Trader's Store.

There were 8 children in my family. I am the baby. All of the children except four have died. My brother, Braxton S. Oliver, was 94 years old yesterday and he lives with his wife at Great Neck Point. My sister Helen Freeman, who is 92 years old lives at Sumter, S. C. My sister Greta C. Givens, who is 83 years old lives at Franklin, Tenn. and myself, who is 77 years old lives with my wife at Suffolk, Va. As you may know my brother Braxton and myself were interviewed by Mr. Drew Wilson of the Havelock News on 2/27/2010.

Prior to living with my family down the Lake Road, I only remember living in the Rooks house (no longer there), which was located two houses on your left as you go straight across the railroad tracks going down what is now Greenfield Heights Blvd (GHB). In front of the Rooks house used to be an abandoned church. Cherry Trader, her brother Sidberry, myself and several others used to go roller skating on the wooden floor within the old church. There was an old cemetery located at this church also. You mention Richard Rice in your book. He and his family lived at the next home on your left just past our home. On your right, just before you go down the slight hill (seems that it use to be much steeper) on GHB, there use to be a one room school house. The teacher for the school was Rosa Lee Wynne.

While reading your book, several minor things stood out that differs from my observation:

1. When referring to the housing that was available for all of the new employees at Cherry Point, you do not mention that several families in Old Havelock took in boarders during the war. My mother took in many boarders during the war.
2. When referring to the filling of the railroad water tower along the tracks close to the creek, you do not mention that at one time there was a one cylinder gasoline water pump used to fill the tank. I used to go with my brother Richard J. Oliver to start the pump and fill the tank. He also would run bootleg to Raleigh from Havelock in a cut down ford coupe. While he was alive, he told me stores of being robbed while transporting bootleg out of the wood on what is now Sunset Road. He had many stories to tell about the bootleg business in Craven County.
3. You do not mention the three military aircraft that crashed (the story was at that time they ran out of fuel) while scouting the area for the base. I remember seeing some of these planes being loaded on flat cars at the Railroad Station at Old Havelock. At one time when I was about 14, a Mr. Rouse was manager of the depot at that time. This is about the same time that Mr. Walter Wynne was the postmaster at the little post office located on the Newport Side of the Lake Road just

past the tracks. Mr. Wynne would give me a stick of chewing gum each time I got the mail for my mother. One time he took out his false teeth and laid them on the counter at the post office as I reached for our mail and it scared me. Funny how we remember things like that!

I am attaching a story that I wrote many years ago about my life at Old Havelock prior to entering the U S Army.

I am also attaching some pictures of a whiskey still I took in December of 1960 (the pictures were not developed until March of 1961) after I got out of the service. The still was located at the opposite side of the Cahooque Creek at the end of Cahooque Creek Road. The beer was still working in the wooden vats and there were 250 half gallon fruit jars next to the still. In addition, the people responsible for the still had strung black sewing machine thread (about a foot off of the ground) in two places around where the still was located. The men in the picture are friends of mine and we had been squirrel hunting. We did not kill many squirrels but we did come up with what we thought was a fantastic idea for Christmas. We decided we would call the sheriff at that time by the name of Mr. Bruce Edwards and inform him of the still if he would make sure that we got 2 half gallons of the whiskey for telling him. Needless to say, we never got out 2 half gallons, but the still was destroyed shortly after we informed the sheriff. We went back to the area several weeks later and it had been destroyed.

Thanks for your time in reading my comments about Havelock.

Sincerely,
Johnny D. Oliver

On 8/31/2011 3:33 PM, ebe@edwardellis.com wrote: (Mr. Oliver then responded in red)

Mr. Oliver,

I have been aware of your family for many years so it is a sincere pleasure to hear from you. I appreciate so much the information you shared with me, the amazing moonshine still photographs and your reminiscence in the story you wrote. Thank you.

I had heard of the railroad's water tank gasoline engine from Mrs. Lila Simmons (Clay and W.J. Wynne's sister) and have tramped all over that site so it's great to get more details. The wooden tank had fallen but was still laying in the woods when I was a child. **Oliver: I doubt that either Clay or W. J. ever told you that their sister used to date my brother Richard. Richard and Lila liked each other very much.**

An old black fellow I knew when I was young, Adam Culley, told me he used to put black thread around his still site so he'd know when anyone had been there.

I did not know about the crashed scout planes, but I did find the collection of aerial photographs they took that helped the Marine Corps decide to place the base where it is today. I donated those photographs to East Carolina University. I appreciate the additional information.

I have also written a book called *Historic Images of Havelock and Cherry Point* that has, among other things, a picture of your sister, Greta, striking a pose in the middle of Highway 70 when she was a teenager. If you will send me your mailing address I'll be happy to present you with a copy of that book. It has over 170 photos and pictures of the "old days." There are pictures of Grandma Mat and Thelma, Eloise and Zippiette, many of the Russells and Traders, Sap Hardy at a moonshine still, and many other people and places. I think you and Braxton might enjoy it. **Oliver: Thanks you for your offer, but I purchased a copy several years ago and enjoyed reading it very much. My sisters Greta and Helen both have read the book. They, especially Greta, enjoyed the book.**

All of the information I have gathered about Havelock has come from kind people like you sharing stories, pictures, documents and cherished memories with me. I will add your material to the collection at ECU so that others in the future may refer to it as we work to preserve the valuable past of our community. If you are willing to identify the people in the "still" photos that would be something good to know. **Oliver: In the picture where the man is holding the jar (I do not remember his name), the other two men are the Smithwich brothers. They had another brother by the name Henry. He and I played football for the Bears in New Bern during the early 1950's. Henry died early after getting out of the Army from an injury he had one night on the football field at New Bern. None of these men were from Old Havelock. Their parents worked on the base.**

There is something else you could help me with. On page 93 of *In This Small Place* there is a list of names of local farmers from the *Branson Directory* for 1896. One of them (at the bottom of the page) was listed as "J.P. Voliver." I have always suspected that this was a typo and that the last name might have been Oliver. Do you know of anyone with the initials J.P. in your family, or if your family was here in 1896? **Oliver: No, my family only moved to Old Havelock in 1935. They were from Onslow County. Check the following link to see the family history: <http://familytreemaker.genealogy.com/users/o/l/i/Johnny-D-Oliver/index.html?Welcome=1090695410>**

Please say *Happy Birthday* to your brother, Braxton, for me. Feel free to write me any time. I'd love to hear more of your recollections. **Oliver: Will do. Thanks.**

And please email your address so I can send you the photo book with my compliments. **Oliver: My address is 1713 Mill Wood Way, Suffolk, VA 23434. Telephone no: 757-539-9964. Thanks for responding so quickly. J. D. Oliver**

All the best,
Eddie Ellis

An Old Havelock Boy's Life

By JOHNNY D. OLIVER

In 1934, my family (consisting of my father Willie Kendall, my mother Leona Gerock, my brothers Evelyn, Richard, Braxton, Charles and my sisters Helen, Leona and Greta) moved to the Beach Haven Farm (down what is now Slocum Road off of Highway 70) which was located on the Slocum Creek about five miles from Havelock. Prior to the family moving to Beach Haven Farm, they lived in Onslow County near Maysville. My father and mother were share croppers on the farm. That spring, my father planted several acres of tobacco, cotton and soy beans. My brothers, who were still living with the family, tilled the land with horses and mules. There were no tractors on the farm. Only a few farms in the whole state of North Carolina had tractors at that time. All of the crops planted had to be cultivated by mules, hoes, rakes and a lot of human sweat. My mother was pregnant with her ninth child (she had one miscarriage shortly after marriage) and the moment of birth was rapidly approaching. On that particular day, my father and all of the children in the family except my sister, Helen (who was 12 years old) had gone to the fields to chop cotton before the sun got too high in the sky. Helen had been taking care of Mother and the family for the past several months while Mother carried the unborn child. Helen did the family cooking, washing of clothes and house cleaning during this time. Helen had just cleaned up the breakfast table and was washing the dishes when mother called out to her to come quickly. Mother told Helen it was time for the baby to be born and she should run to the field and tell Father. Helen ran to the field and informed Father the baby was about to be born. Father instructed his two sons Charles and Braxton to go and fetch Grandma Mat the midwife. She lived about eight miles away in a small country town named Havelock (today, we refer to the county town as "Old Havelock"). The two sons started running down a path to Slocum Creek. Once at the creek, both boys paddled a boat across the creek and continued down a sandy country road for about eight miles until they arrived at Grandma Mat's (Mattie Armstrong) house in Havelock. Once there, they knocked on the door and explained that Mother was with child and about to give birth. As soon as Grandma Mat heard the news, she prepared for the trip to Beach Haven Farm. It took several hours for them to get to the farm. By the time they arrived, Helen had already prepared several gallons of hot water and had removed the best bed sheets from the closet getting ready for the joyous occasion. All of the family had returned from the field. On June 22, 1934 Mother gave birth to a healthy baby boy, naming him Johnny Dean (J. D.). I lived the first year of my life with my family on Beach Haven Farm. Later, my family moved to Havelock. My parents moved into an old one story wood frame logger's camp building located alongside the railroad tracks about a mile South of Havelock. They lived there for several years.

Havelock was nested among the long leaf pine ridges that line the Southeastern part of North Carolina. There was a railroad that ran through Havelock. About a mile east of Havelock is a creek called Slocum Creek. The creek ran south to the Neuse River. At the creek, where the railroad trestle crossed the creek, there was a deep hole in the creek which was always a good spot to fish for perch in the summer time. It also served as a

good swimming hole during the summer. About 100 yards east of the railroad trestle, there stood an old water tower tank which was used to provide water to the old steam locomotives that traveled the railroad between New Bern and Morehead City. My brother Richard use to operate the gasoline engine (a one cylinder) what was used to pump water into the water tower tank. Located at that time in an area behind the old water tower was an area where the Union Army had built a bunker to fight off the Confederate Army during the Civil War.

About a quarter of a mile down Slocum Creek was a wide spot in the creek called the "Mill Hole." It was there that my Father kept an inboard fishing boat that he made. On many Sundays during the summer, the family would go down Slocum Creek to fish and crab. On those occasions, Mother would prepare the catch on the shore of the creek. One time the gasoline engine played out and Father, my brothers Richard and Braxton had to row the boat back to the Mill Hole. It was also on the Slocum Creek that Father and I used to go dip net fishing for herrings. We would walk down the railroad tracks from the Train Station to the trestle to get to the creek. We usually fished for several hours before a mess of fish had been caught. We would carry them back to our home. Mother and Daddy would clean the fish. Later some of the fish were cooked for our meals and some were salted down in a barrel for future cooking.

Havelock was a small country town with a population of about sixteen families, approximately 80 folks in all. The following families lived in Havelock at that time:

Hugh and Elise May Trader (who ran the Hugh Trader Texaco Store) with their daughter Cherry and their son Sidberry. They lived in their home (Miller Blvd.) next to the store. Sidberry and I played together a lot while growing up in this small town and my sister Greta played often with Cherry. Sidberry and I were close friends and later joined the US Army together under the "Buddy System" with two other high school friends from New Bern. A picture of the group of the young volunteers is posted on the wall today in Hugh Trader's Store. Sidberry and I went through the Army basic training together at Fort Jackson, South Carolina. We went to the US Army Basic Electronics School at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey. During our military service both of us were stationed in Germany for several years. When I left Germany to go to Frankfurt to catch an airplane Sidberry was waiting there to catch the same plane back to the USA. We rode a train to Fort Jackson, South Carolina in preparations to getting out of the US Army. We separated from the US Army in 1957.

Johnny and Lillian Trader with their daughters Maggie and Margaret and their sons Pedru, Junior and Eddie. They lived on the other side of the highway (Miller Blvd.) from Hugh Trader's store. Eddie and I often played together as we were growing up.

Ford and Rena Bryan lived in a home next to the railroad tracks/station with their sons Sam, Scoot, Edgar and Terry and their daughter Margie. Scoot was about the same age as my youngest sister and Terry was my age. Later Rena died and Mr. Bryan remarried Missouri Russell (her nickname was Zoodie) who had previously been married to Pet Russell. Pet, before he died, ran the fishing camp at Cherry Point. Pet and Zoodie had

two daughters, Verna and Veda. They lived on what is now the corner of Greenfield Heights Blvd. and the Lake Road.

Dick and Mary Rice was our neighbors on the other side of our home. The Rice's moved to Havelock shortly after World War II started. Their daughter was Betty and their sons were Jimmy, Donald and Richard. Jimmy was about the same age as my youngest sister and Richard was my age. Betty was several years younger than her brother Richard. They lived on what is now Greenfield Heights Blvd.

Walter and Maude Wynne whose daughters were Elaine and Lila and their sons were William J. and Henry Clay. They lived at the intersection of what is now Gray Road and Greenfield Heights Blvd.

Cye and Richard Wynne whose sons were Grundy and Richard Allen. They lived on what is now Gray Road. Grundy was in service and once while he was home on leave he stated to me that if I was ever able to attend college that I should do so. He told me this while setting on one of the benches in front of Hugh Trader's store.

Corbit and Thelma Norris whose daughters were Iris, Marie and Betty and their sons were George and Jimmy. Bobby Hardy (who was a cousin in the family), Mattie Armstrong (Grandma Mat) and Zippiette Armstrong lived with them. I used to spend the night with Jimmy and Bobby. I can remember the large homemade biscuits that Zippiette used to prepare. They lived on what is now Gray Road.

Woodrow and Mary Armstrong had no children. They had two Cocker Spaniel dogs which they were very fond of. They lived on what is now Gray Road.

William and Leora Gray with their daughters Rosa, Ruby, Francis, Mary, Hazel, Mildred, Ann, Ruth and their sons Joe and Mason. William Gray for several years drove the school bus which carried all of the locals to school. He also was a farmer. Hazel, in later years, would marry my brother Richard. They lived at the end of what is now Gray Road.

Fred Sr. and Bett Bryan and their daughters Lillian, Dot, Irene, Alice Ann, Faye and their sons Fred Jr., George, Tinnie, Baker, Alton, Raymond and Joseph. They lived close to the end of what is now Greenfield Heights Blvd. next to Highway 70. Raymond and I joined the National Guard at New Bern in 1952. I only served one year before joining the US Army.

Leslie and Victoria Muse and their daughter Ruby and their sons James and Tommy. They lived on what is now Greenfield Heights Blvd. just past the old Slocum Creek Bridge. Tommy and I used to drink a few beers at the Jet Drive Inn after high school.

Dalton Sr. and Ilia Lee and their daughters were Victoria and Dot. Their sons were Dalton, Bobby and Archie. They lived just beyond the Muse's on what is now

Greenfield Heights Blvd. Archie and I also drank a few beers and some white lightning on some parties during high school.

Daryl and Madge Wetherington and their daughters Marie and Grace. Their son was George. They lived on what is now Greenfield Heights Blvd. Their home burned down while they were living there.

Bill and Louise Jackson whose daughter was Alice and their son was Gene Allen. They lived on what is now Highway 70 next to Church Road (where the Havelock Tourist Building is today). Both Alice and Gene were very active in the New Havelock. Gene owned many business and property in New Havelock.

C. P. Ketner and wife whose sons were Sterling, Veron and Opel. Their daughter was Ethel. After Mr. C. P. Ketner died, he remarried a Mrs. Kelly. They lived on the east side of Highway 70 north of the Slocum Creek Bridge.

Rosa Lee Wynne, sister of Walter Wynne, was an old maid school teacher. She lived in a home located on Highway 70 off of what is now East Main Street. She taught school in the "Old School" at Old Havelock. Many of the local children were taught by her.

All of these families were country folks -- all helping one another. The lives of all of these families were tied very close together. They visited each other on Sundays, attended church together and saw one another during the week. Often, during the evening time, you could find the young folks catching tad poles in the roadway ditches or playing "Kick the Can", "Catching Lighting Bugs" and playing softball/football. You would probably find the young boys building a log cabin in the woods or swimming in Slocum Creek down by the old wooden bridge (located on what is now Greenfield Heights Blvd.) during the summer months.

At this time, my family consisted of my parents Willie and Leona, Brother Richard, Sister Greta and myself. My other brothers and sisters were living away from Old Havelock. It was during this time my father supervised the building of the concrete bridge over Slocum Creek (located on Church Street today).

My family lived in a home owned by the Rooks family for many years. The house was located about 100 yards on your left past the existing railroad tracks on Greenfield Heights Blvd. The Rooks family lived at that time in Baltimore, MD. During the time we lived in this home, there was an old church (Havelock Christian Church) across the dirt road in front of our home which was not being used. The kids in the neighborhood use to go roller skating on the wooden flooring in the church.

It was in early 1942 when the US Navy sent three reconnaissance airplanes to the area to scout out the area around Cherry Point for the purpose of establishing a US Marine Corp. Air Base. Cherry Point located at the mouth of Slocum Creek where Slocum Creek runs into the Neuse River was an old fishing village. It consisted of several homes and a fishing shack where you could rent fishing boats, fishing materials and snacks to eat and

drink. All three planes ran out of fuel and crashed in the woods. To the best of my knowledge, all of the pilots managed to survive the crash. Later the three planes were brought to the Railroad Station at Havelock to be loaded on train flat cars for transportation to a US Navy repair facility. It was while I was living in Havelock that World War II started. It was during this time that the US Marine Corps Air Base called Cherry Point was being built. The main gate to the base was about one and a half miles from Old Havelock. The community which was built later outside of the base would be called Havelock.

When the base was being built, there were no motels or hotels located in the area. There were only two service stations in the area at that time. One was run by Frank Russell (was located across from the main gate to the base today) and the other was run by Hugh Trader. Frank Russell's store has long been destroyed. Braxton at one time worked at the store for Mr. Russell. Believe it or not, you could buy moonshine at Mr. Russell's store. Mr. Trader's store is still standing today along old Highway 70 (Miller Blvd.). Today, it is located about one mile from the main gate.

Many workers from outside of the area came to work on the new base. Many families in Old Havelock took in boarders. My Mother took in boarders for many years during the war while we lived in Old Havelock. I especially remember one of Mother's borders, Mr. Branch from High Point, NC. While staying at our home, Mr. Branch help remove a Navy pilot from a crashed airplane which had gone down one Sunday morning. Our home was approximately 2 miles away from the end of the runway where the planes took off. The plane had crashed into tall pine trees located at the corner of a 5 acre field behind our home. As the plane was burning, the heat from the fire caused 50 caliber rounds in the gun on the plane to explode. Mr. Branch kicked the cockpit open with his feet and used the pilot's knife, which was strapped to the pilot's right leg, to cut the safety belts before pulling the pilot out of the plane. The pilot died later from the crash at the hospital located at Cherry Point.

Another boarder who lived with my family was called Taxi. His real name was William Hill (he was from Abbeysville, South Carolina). Taxi started working at the base shortly after the base opened. He worked there until he retired from Civil Service. While he was living with us, he would loan me his automobile on Saturday nights. On these occasions, it was not unusual for me to cruise 100 to 200 miles on Taxi's car on a single Saturday night. On some Saturday nights, some of my friends and I would drive to a square dance at Harlowe which was located about 8 miles from Havelock on Highway 101. Sometimes Taxi would ask me to go to North Harlow to get him a half gallon of moonshine whiskey. Even in the 1950's you could still buy moonshine in North Harlowe. On one occasion, after buying a half gallon of moonshine for Taxi, I turned over his 1951 Mercury on the gravel road on the sharp curve (it is still there, but the road had been paved) which is located about one mile from Highway 101. It did several hundred dollars of damage to the driver's side of the Mercury. Taxi paid to have the car repaired. That half gallon cost him a lot.

Shortly after the base was built, a movie theater (the Cherry Theater) opened at Havelock in a small shopping center which was located about 1/2 miles from what was the main gate to the base. For many years, Mr. Brooks ran the theater. On Saturday mornings, many of us young people would walk the one and a half mile trip (down what is called Miller Blvd.) to the theater to see first run black and white movies starring Tom Mix, Roy Rogers and the like. It cost twenty five cents to get into the movie and a bag of popcorn was ten cents. My sister Greta worked a number of years at Mrs. Hayes' Dress Shop in the shopping center. There also was located in the shopping center a drug store, barber shop, a post office and other shops. This was Havelock's first shopping center.

During the war, you could hear explosions off the coast of Morehead City and Atlantic Beach as the US Navy was depth charging German submarines.

While living in Old Havelock during World War II and prior to moving down the Lake Road, young marines just out of boot camp would arrive by passenger train at the railway express office (train station) located in Old Havelock. They stayed at Cherry Point and received additional combat and specialized training for about three months. Then they were loaded into Cattle Cars (a large truck drawn enclosed trailer) and taken back to the train station at Old Havelock. Many times while they were waiting to board the train, they would ask two of us young boys to go to Trader's store and get them drinks, nabs, peanuts, etc. prior to them boarding the train. After boarding the train cars they would travel west where they boarded ships headed overseas to fight in the war in the Pacific. Many were killed in the war serving our country and never returned to the United States.

When I turned 12 years old, I joined the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 52. Troop 52's clubhouse was located on the base in a building that use to be a fishing/hunting lodge prior to the base being built at Cherry Point. It was called "Lucky Lodge." Mr. Harry Bell had been the caretaker of the lodge for many years. Before my brother Richard entered the US Army in 1942, he would take me with him just about everywhere he went in his 1938 Buick. This is how I first became aware of Lucky Lodge. Richard visited Mr. Bell often at the lodge.

I lived in the Rooks' home for many years. My father built our first home on the Lake Road about one mile West of Old Havelock. It is still called the Lake Road today. The brick home is still standing today. Prior to that time, all of the homes we had lived in were owned by other individuals. Needless to say we were all very happy to be moving into our own home. For a number of years we did not have electricity, telephone or running water at our home. Around 1949, with the efforts of my mother Leona and Mrs. Bett Bryan, the Rural Electric Association (REA) installed electric power lines down the Lake Road. It would be many years before telephone lines were installed down the Lake Road.

When we first lived on the Lake Road, I had to walk about a mile on the sandy road to where the railway station was located to catch the school bus. Later my parents gave me a bicycle and I would ride it to catch the school bus. I would leave the bicycle at Mr.

Ford Bryan's home (the Old School House by the railroad tracks). Sometimes I would ride my bicycle over to the Norrises to see Jimmy and Bobby before going home. When I left their home I would ride the bicycle down what is Gray Road and hit a dirt path located in front of Woodrow Armstrong's home between two tobacco barns to continue to my home.

Shortly after turning 16, I got my driver's license and started driving a school bus. I drove the bus from Old Havelock to New Bern on Highway 70, picking up kids all the way until I graduated in 1953. I had to stop at two schools before arriving at New Bern High and Elementary Schools in New Bern. The total trip was 20 miles one way. The bus stopped at the Croatan Elementary School and Brinson Memorial School.

In the midst of this small country town there was and still is (on Miller Blvd.) a Methodist Church. The church used to be the social meeting place for the local community. Mr. Walter Wynne was the Sunday School Superintendent. Whenever there was no full time preacher in the church, you could find Mr. Walter Wynne preaching on Sunday mornings. I remember clearly the many Easter Egg Hunts and Christmas plays we use to have there. Today, many of the old timers are buried behind the church.

Prior to and during the first part of World War II, Mr. Walter Wynne was the postmaster at Old Havelock. The post office consisted of a very small 8 ft. by 15 ft. building. It was located about 80 feet on the north side of the railroad tracks and on the left side of the Lake Road (Just across from Mr. Ford Bryan's home, the Old School House). During the war, when you went to get your mail, Mr. Wynne would give you a single stick of chewing gum. He sometimes would take out his false teeth and lay them on the counter to scare you. What an experience that was for a young boy!

Except for a local railway express office next to the railroad tracks (now called the Carolina Railroad Services), Mr. Hugh Trader had the only business in Old Havelock at that time - a small country gas station and general merchandise store where you could buy a gallon of gas for 20 cents and a pair of blue jeans for \$1.25. Before the store got electricity, there was a Delco Battery System installed in a small building behind the store which provided 32 volts direct current for lighting within the store. The store is located today at the intersection of Church Road and Greenfield Heights Blvd. Many times I used to get off of the school bus at the store in the afternoon. I would go inside and get a pint of chocolate milk and a bag of salted peanuts. It was always rewarding to visit Trader's store. When you first entered the store you would see Mrs. Elsa May Trader sitting behind the counter on your right. She would be smoking a Kool cigarette and maybe drinking a glass bottle Coke Cola. While there, you could also buy a Royal Crown (RC) Cola and a Moon Pie or a bag of peanuts for ten cents. Mr. and Mrs. Trader would always let you charge your purchase to your parent's account in the large ledger they kept beneath the counter. Most families in Old Havelock had an account at Trader's store. During prohibition, Mr. Trader sold sugar and half gallon jars to the bootleggers who made whiskey in the area. Mr. Trader graduated from Trinity College (today it is Duke University) years before operating the store. Many years later, after Mr. Trader died, there were many accounts in his ledger which had not been paid. If you could find

his old ledger today, you would still see that many accounts had never been paid. Mr. Trader helped many families living in the Old Havelock area during the hard years between 1929 and 1946.

My parents lived most of their life on farms, share cropping land to grow tobacco, cotton, corn, potatoes, etc. They were hard working parents who had a strong sense of loyalty to the family, land, the community and God.

Mother was always very industrious and always had enough food on the table to feed all of us. I never remember a time when I went hungry. Mother grew chickens in our back yard for eating. Daddy always brought fresh wild meat home to be cooked and eaten. Both of them always had a garden.

Country families were the main spring of the farming machinery that tilled the land and harvested the crops. They were just good old country folks with lots of common sense.

The only vehicle I remember my family owning was a 1939 Ford panel truck. I understand they use to own a Model "T" Ford. During the summer of 1940-1946, we would leave Havelock in the panel truck and travel via the Catfish Lake road (a narrow dirt road which runs between Croatan and Maysville) to my grandparent's home. My Oliver grandparents lived in Deppie and my Gerock grandparents lived in Maysville. I was too young at the time to remember my grandfathers and grandmother Gerock.

I attended elementary school at Brinson Memorial Elementary School which was about an hour's ride by school bus from Havelock. I attended the Croatan Elementary School at Croatan during the 5th grade. The reason I stop going to the Brinson Memorial Elementary was because my girl friend at the time was attending the Croatan School. I attended the eighth grade at the New Bern Elementary School in New Bern which was another 15 minutes ride by school bus from Brinson Memorial. I attended high school in New Bern, graduating in 1953. During my senior year, I tried out for the football team and was selected to play as a defensive end. During football season another person drove the school bus in my place. While attending high school, I had no idea I would be able to attend college after graduation because of my financial situation. I would in several years later develop a desire and find a way to attend college.

My first job for wages was at the age of 12. It was harvesting tobacco on lands my father and other farmers farmed. I also worked part time at the new bowling alley which was located close to the main gate at Cherry Point. I was a duck pin set-up boy. What a job that was! I walked from my house to the bowling alley which was a good mile away. Sometimes at night while walking back home on the lonely stretch of old Highway 70 (now called Miller Blvd.) from the bowling alley, I would see the fire burnt black stumps of trees along the side of the road and think they were bears. I would run all the way home on those dark nights if I was walking alone on the highway.

In 1950 my Father died. My Mother and I lived in the home on the Lake Road until Mother decided to move to Florida to live with my brother Charles and his wife. Shortly

after my Father died I had to have my appendix removed. At the same time my appendix was being removed, Helen's husband, Leo Adams, had his appendix taken out. As he was healing from the operation, his incision got infected and he died of blood poison. When my Mother moved to Florida, I went to live with Greta and her husband Bill Givens who lived in Havelock. Bill was in the US Marines and was subsequently transferred to a marine base in Georgia. After they moved to Georgia, I went to live with Richard and his wife who also lived in Old Havelock. At this time I was in the 12th Grade and I was still driving the school bus. Later, I had to move to New Bern to live with Braxton and his family. When I went to live with Braxton I had to give up driving the school bus. I was staying with Braxton when I graduated from high school in 1953.

After graduating, I continued working at Wynne Brothers Service Station for several months. I left the service station to go to work for Rayborn Construction Company which was also located at Havelock. The company had a contract to pour concrete for roofs of buildings (airplane hangers) located on the base at Cherry Point. This was very hot work in the summer. During that time while working in Havelock I had to commute between New Bern and Havelock. I continued working for the construction company until I enlisted in the US Army in January of 1954 with Sidberry Trader and several other young men from New Bern.

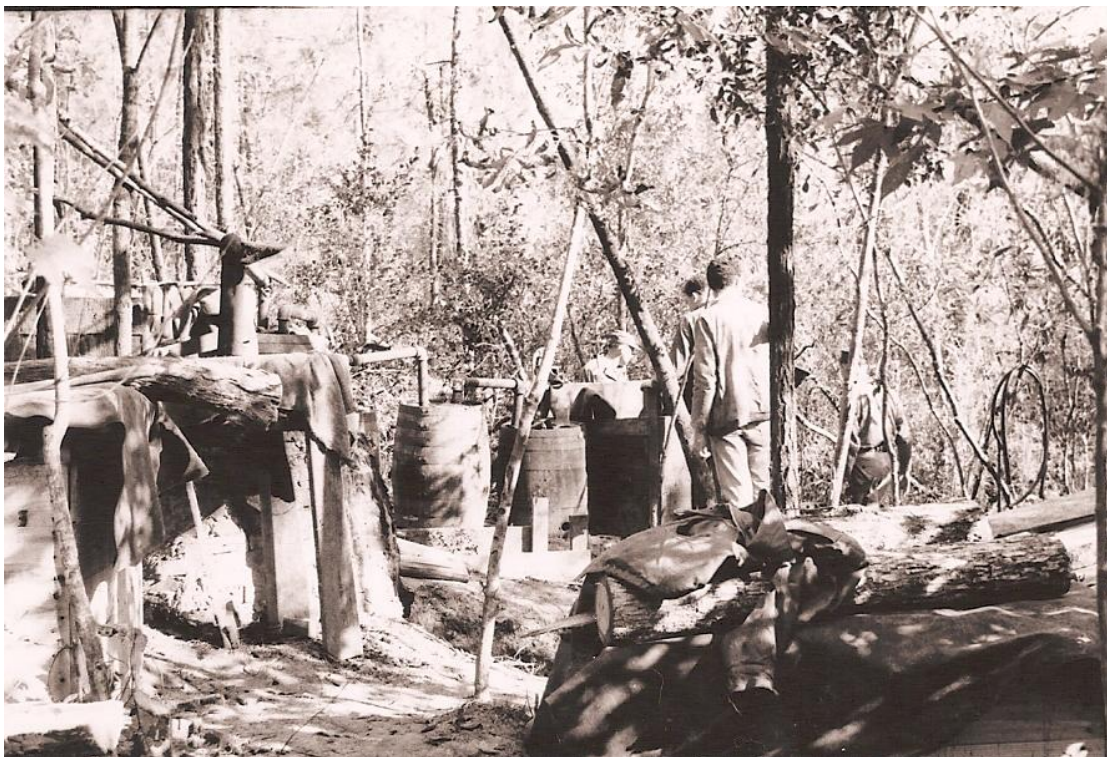


Braxton Oliver

Havelock News photograph 2010
By Drew Wilson



**Moonshine still site at Havelock, N.C. 1960
Photographs from J.D. Oliver**



Moonshine still site at Havelock, N.C. 1960
Photographs from J.D. Oliver



Moonshine still site at Havelock, N.C. 1960
Photographs from J.D. Oliver

A few notes on the contents:

“Old Havelock” was that area immediate around the intersection of Lake Road and what is now Miller Blvd. and Greenfield Heights Blvd. and including the area down to and around Gray Road.

Mr. A. D. Rooks is buried in the United Methodist Church cemetery on Miller Blvd. The cemetery is behind the church.

The family of former Craven County attorney Jim Sugg also lived at Beach Haven Farms. His parents, W.D. and Natalie Sugg also “took in boarders” during the construction of Cherry Point. Jim and his brother made pocket change rowing these employees across Slocum Creek near “Ordnance Point” to go to work. Natalie Sugg made further income packing lunches and preparing evening meals. Beach Haven Farms was in the area now traversed by Slocum Road between Cherry Point’s western gate on U.S. 70 and Slocum Creek.

Photographs of the Havelock Christian Church appear on page 48 of *Historic Images of Havelock and Cherry Point*. (HIHCP)

Havelock storekeeper Frank Russell’s portrait is on page 13 of HIHCP.

A photograph of Mr. & Mrs. Hugh Trader and children Cherry and Sidberry appear on page 44 of HIHCP. (They're also on the book's cover).

A photograph of Greta Oliver is on page 47 of HIHCP.

Rosalie Wynne and the old Havelock school are on page 46 of HIHCP. It was moved from its site near Gray Road to the corner of Miller Blvd and Lake Road where it was later converted to a residence. The family of Ford Bryan lived there for a time.

Dalton "Dalt" Lee's farm occupied much of what is now Greenfield Heights.

According to his son Clay, Mr. Walter Wynne was paid \$12 a month by the railroad to make sure the wooden water tank by Slocum Creek was kept full for the steam locomotives that stopped there.

"Grandma Mat," Havelock's famous midwife, was Martha Lena Russell Armstrong. Her portrait and story appears on page 30 of HIHCP along with a photograph of her daughters.

A reproduction of a postcard of Havelock's first shopping center, the Commercial Shopping Center, can be seen on page 93 of HIHCP.

The "Mill Hole" mentioned on page 6 is the pond of an old grist and lumber mill, destroyed during the Civil War, situated a short walk up Slocum Creek from Church Road toward the railroad tracks. A walking path from the Havelock Tourist and Events Center leads to the site which still shows up on modern Coast and Geodetic Survey charts as a "mill pond." The walking path is actually the top of the old earthen dam that once contained the pond.

Old hand-written account ledgers from Trader's Store have been donated by this writer to the Havelock Library where Mr. Oliver's statements about customers, prices, credit and occasional non-payment thereof can be verified.

--*Edward Ellis*
Viera, Florida
September 1, 2011