

# Olde Dobbs Trail

Newsletter of the OLD DOBBS COUNTY GENEALOGY SOCIETY

P. O. Box 617, Goldsboro, NC 27530

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JULY 1990

VOL. 6 No.1

## NEXT MEETING

22 SEPTEMBER 1990

WESTERN SIZZLIN STEAK HOUSE

100 N. Berkeley Blvd.

11:30 am

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QUERIES:

TARVER: Etheldred b. 1770 Dobbs Co., NC - Parents Samuel Tarver and Celia Jordan Tarver. Both b. 1739 and residing in Dobbs in 1780. Would like to exchange information. *{address removed for privacy}*

TARVER: John and Sarah Rogers Tarver parents of Frederick d. 1772, Johnston Co., NC; Samuel marr. Charlotte Goff 27 Dec 1787, d. in TN 8 Feb 1845. Need information on other children:  
*{address removed for privacy}*

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## REMINDER:

OUR YEAR BEGINS IN JULY. DUES ARE DUE JUNE 30th. THIS IS THE LAST NEWSLETTER IF DUES ARE NOT IN BY JULY 30th.

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HELP WANTED: WE HAVE THREE PEOPLE TO WORK WITH THE NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE. HOWEVER, WE NEED SOMEONE TO BE CHAIRMAN OF THIS COMMITTEE. PLEASE CALL  
*{address removed for privacy}*

State of North Carolina: Wayne County, - in Equity  
To the Honorable the Judge of the Court of Equity of  
the County of Wayne.

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The Bill of Complaint of Stephen Boyt, Arnes Boyt, Mrs.   
-cajah Boyt, Dumphy Boyt, and of Elisha Boyt, Louisa Boyt, Ellen Boyt,   
Alice Boyt, John Ashby Boyt, the said Elisha, Louisa, Ellen, Alice and   
John ~~are~~ Infants, and sue in this behalf by Polly Boyt their mother, and   
next friend; the said Polly Boyt administratrix of Meier Boyt, and Thomas   
-Mrs, all of Wayne County; and of America Soler, and Eliza Jolar, Eliza-   
-both Jolar and Annham Jones, of Johnston County, the said Eliza,   
Elizabeth and Annham are Infants, and sue in this behalf by the   
said America Soler their mother and next friend, humbly sheweth   
That James Jones late of Wayne County, on or about the twenty the day   
of December in the year One thousand eight hundred and twenty five   
being of sound and disposing mind and memory, duly made and   
published his last will and testament in writing, with the solemnity   
required by law for the disposition by will of real and personal estate, and   
on or about the day of January following the execution of said   
will departed this life without having revoked, cancelled or in any way   
altered the said will. Your Orator further shew unto your   
Honor that of the said will your Orator Stephen Boyt and   
William Thompson were appointed Executors: and although the said   
will was seen by several persons after the decease of the said James   
Jones, it has been subsequently taken away from the place where it   
was deposited, and the said executors have not been able to find   
the same, so that the said will cannot be obtained to be proved   
in regular form of law in the Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions   
of Wayne County, and your Orator verily believe that it has been   
lost or destroyed. Your Orator further shew unto your Honor   
that the said last will, thus made, published and declared   
contained the following devises and bequests, and to the effect   
and was the same expressed in the terms, and to the effect   
following, that is to say: -

I James Jones do make this my last will and testament in   
manner and form following: -

I leave sixty acres of land lying on the West side of the road that leads from Arthur Jones' to Hillary Hooks' to be sold at my death. The balance of my land over the road I give to Elisha Boyt, called the son of Moses Boyt, to him and his heirs forever.

I lend to my wife Mary Jones all my land, except the fifty acres to be sold, and all my negroes and other property during her life.

I give to said Elisha Boyt, son of Moses Boyt, a negro boy, called Coalman, to him and his heirs forever.

I give to Moses Boyt a piece of land on the other side of said road, beginning at the road at a stake toward Arthur Jones' and running with Arthur Jones' lines to a stump James Jones', Willis Jones, and Arthur Jones' corner; then across from the stump, through or by the Shop field so called, to a burnt pine; then to an oak near the Cart path, called Coys Cart path, to a pine tree, and Kennedys' and Howells' corner, then to the road with Kennedys' line, then to the beginning.

I give to Moses Boyt two negroes named Rose and her infant to him and his heirs forever.

I leave to Thomas Wise a negro boy named Matthew, and if the said Wise should die without an heir of his body the said negro shall come back to Stephen Boyt.

I leave to the said Moses Boyt two mules Jack and Gin and all my hogs at the wild-cat pen to him and his heirs.

I leave to America Toler, widow of Dickson Tolan deceased two Cows, and calves, and to her three children fifty dollars each for three years for schooling said children.

I give to Stephen Boyt seven negroes named Bile,ebra, Charles, Sampson, Lucy and her two infants; - all the land that has not been willed away; all the stock except what has been willed away; - all the household and kitchen furniture, and all of the property that is not given away, except five pounds <sup>which</sup> I give to my heirs at law.

I leave to Moses Boyt, Micajah Boyt, and Dempsey Boyt the debt John W. Kinne owes me. I appoint William Thompson and Stephen Boyt my

country -

which said will, your Orator charge was signed by the mark of the said James Jones, thus "James & Jones" - and acknowledged to be his last will in the presence of <sup>his</sup> John C. Pendar and Hamilton Howell, who in his presence and in presence of each other signed their names as Witnesses thereto.

and your Orator further shew unto your Honor that the said James Jones left a widow Molly Jones who resides in Wayne County, and one brother, Arthur Jones, and one sister Betty Gairin the wife of Miller Gairin, all of whom reside in Wayne County. And the following descendants of

deceased brother and sister - That is to say -

Thomas Wise, only child of Editha Wise.  
and Henry Jones, Theophilus Jones, Charity Jones, Mary Wedggett,  
Pagan Jones, Percy ~~son~~ wife of Ephraim Thompson, Editha Jones,  
Charlotte Jones, Darcas Green wife of James Green, the children  
of Wiley Jones deceased.

and, Garden Polar, Eros Polar, Betty Stickland wife of Benjamin Stickland, children of Grace - Polar, who was the wife of Myra Polar.

and Robert Jones, John Jones, William Jones, Penny Jones, and Hardy Jones, children of Hardy Jones.

and David Howell, Edmund Howells, Theophilus Howell, James Howell, Cybar Howell, Molly Waller wife of Elijah Waller, Melly Howell, Sally Howell, Joshua Howell, and Lewis Howell, children of Jeremiah Howell, who was the wife of Cybar Howell.

to which said living brother and sister, and to the said descendants of the deceased brother and sister of the said James Jones (subject to the dower of his widow) would have descended as his heirs at law all the real estate of the said James Jones, and among the said widow & brother and sister and children of deceased brother & sister, as next of kin, would have been distributed all the personal estate of said deceased

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had the said deceased died without will or testament.  
 Your Orators Elizabeth Toler, and Durham Jones, are the  
 children of America Toler mentioned in the said will.  
 Moses Boyt survived the said James Jones, and has since died  
 leaving your Orators Elisha Boyt, Louisa Boyt, Olen Boyt, Alice  
 Boyt, John Ashley Boyt his children and heirs at law -  
 Administration on the estate of said Moses Boyt has been granted  
 to your Orator Polly Boyt.

Your Orators further shew unto your Honor that Mrs. Jones  
 widow of said James Jones disclaiming all benefit under the said  
 will, insists on and prefers the dower and distribution share given  
 to widows who depart from their husbands will -  
 Your Orators further shew unto your Honor that they are in  
 danger of losing the benefit of the devise and bequests to them,  
 by reason that the said will has been lost or destroyed before  
 being proved: and that the persons herein named as heirs at  
 law and next of kin of the deceased James Jones claim to take  
 by descent and by distribution the real and personal estate  
 of the deceased as though he had died intestate: and your  
 Orators are unable <sup>either</sup> to prove the due execution of said will, to  
 make out a copy of its contents, or to establish its copy, without the  
 aid of a discovery from the said heirs at law and next of kin, and  
 are without the means of any competent and effectual remedy for  
 the assertion of their rights, except through the interposition of  
 this Honorable Court.

The said Arthur Jones, Willie Garner and Betsey his wife and  
 Thomas Wise, Mary Hedgepeth, Barden Tolar, Enos Tolar,  
 Benjamin Thickland & Betsey his wife, reside in Washington County.  
 Ryan Jones, Ephraim Thompson & Perry his wife, Edith Jones,  
 Charlotte Jones, James Green and Socastus wife, and David  
 Howell, <sup>and others</sup> reside in Johnston County.

#### HOOKS IV

THE NIGHT-RIDE OF MARY (POLLY) HOOKS REASSESSED: At the beginning of the story called HOOKS III-The Night-Ride of Mary (Polly) Hooks I promised to explain why I felt the story should have been written under the title Mary (Polly) Hooks rather than Mary Slocumb as was done by Mrs. Ellet. We shall now do just that.

To be sure Mary Slocumb and Mary (Polly) Hooks were one and the same, but at that time Mary (Polly) was not the wife of Ezekiel Slocumb. This fact is of great importance in the story, not just to the title, out to the total understanding of the account of Mary's ride. Having said that let me hasten to say further that many, perhaps most, historians have tended to disallow the story of the Night-Ride of Mary Slocumb. These historians have not been able to overcome some minor details in Mrs. Ellet's account. I shall attempt in HOOKS FAMILY HISTORY III-The Night-Ride of Mary (Polly) Hooks<sup>Reassessed</sup> to overcome these problems and to show the story is essentially sound and that these minor difficulties are, indeed, subject to adequate explanation.

Now if you will note in HOOKS FAMILY HISTORY I that Mary (Polly) Hooks and her husband, Ezekiel Slocumb, were step brother and sister before they were husband and wife. Mary's father as a widower and Ezekiel's mother as a widow had married in 1771 and had a daughter Susannah in 1773. During the course of Mrs. Ellet's dissertation she tells of Mary (Polly) speaking of her child. I submit that the child, so spoken of, was not the child of Ezekiel and Mary (Polly) but was rather the little three year old half sister of both Ezekiel and Mary (Polly). I further contend that when in Mrs. Ellet's account she tells of Mary (Polly) referring to her husband, she was really speaking of her step-brother, Ezekiel Slocumb. To be sure when Mary (Polly) spoke of the event years later she would speak of him as her husband for Ezekiel had then become her husband. I feel sure Mrs. Ellet told the story as she did without ever thinking of the problems that might arise in the years that followed, nor did she

#### HOOKS IV

think of the problems that might arise in the mind of the reader ~~as~~ decades of time passed and became centuries. Mrs. Ellet simply told the story as related to her in the simple language that would one day cause problems.

Another problem that has arisen with the historians is the reference to Ezekiel's "Guard Cloak". That is really no problem. In reality the original reference was likely "coat" rather than "Guard Cloak". It may even have been a "home made" coat. As I see it as the story was ~~repeated~~ the language, quite unintentionally, got a little out of line. This, however, does alter the essential correctness of the story. Mary (Polly) recognized her step-brother's coat and if it had been the official "Guard Cloak" that might have not been easy.

Another problem that bothers the historians is the word "he" when the story given by Mrs. Ellet quotes Mary (Polly) as saying, "What a happy ride I had back! And with what joy did I embrace my child as he ran to meet me!" I am convinced that the informant who informed Mrs. Ellet knew Mary (Polly) did have a son at the time of the telling and as in other instances used the word "he" without ever once thinking and never realizing the inaccuracy that was to cause future problems. Again, to me, this does not affect the essential correctness of the story.

Still another problem for the historians is the distance Mary (Polly) rode. That would, indeed, be a real problem if she had had to ride <sup>from</sup> her home in later years in Wayne County. At this time, however, Mary (Polly) did not ride from the home she and Ezekiel were to have in later years, but she rode from the Hooks home in Duplin County which was not quite so far. At the time of Mary's Night-time Ride she and her step-brother Ezekiel Slocumb still resided in the home of her father Thomas Hooks and his mother Susanna (maiden name unknown) Slocumb Hooks. This home in Duplin County was between their future home in Wayne County and the battle site at Moore's Creek bridge.

#### HOOKS IV

And still another problem for the historians is the failure of Ezekiel Slocumb to claim to have been in service at the time of the Moore's Creek Bridge incident. My position in this regard is---There was no reason to make such a claim. He was not officially in the service at this time. Ezekiel Slocumb, like many others, just fell in with the men and young men of the area. He did, however, enlist officially later on. At this time Ezekiel was only sixteen years of age. Likewise the officers in reporting the Battle of Moore's Creek Bridge would not likely be reporting the "doings" of unlisted personnel. They had plenty to do with reporting that which was of an official character and the "doings" of those who were enlisted.

I am sure the reader has come to believe the writer accepts the story as written many years ago by Mrs. Elizabeth Ellet and that I personally have no real problems with the minor details as they got out of hand as the story was told and retold. To be sure I have not proved, nor can I prove, the story, but I do feel that it is essentially true. I cannot believe it is a pure fabrication. Just as I cannot prove the essential correctness of the account, the **historians** cannot, in reality, disprove it.

Proved or unproved as the case may be, the story makes good reading and should be kept alive. I understand a movie has recently been released by Alan Alda. The movie is called "SWEET LIBERTY" and focuses, at least in part, on the story of Mary (Polly) Hooks Slocumb's Night-Ride. SWEET LIBERTY, as I understand it, is a movie about making a movie and stars Alan Alda and Michael Caine in male roles with Michelle Pfeiffer playing the part of Mary (Polly) Hooks Slocumb.

I hope the reader has enjoyed and appreciates my "thinking" on this matter as much as I have enjoyed trying to get my thoughts together in an organized, reasonable, and acceptable fashion. May I suggest that the stories HOOKS, II, HOOKS III, and HOOKS IV be treated as a unit. With the three parts taken together the picture becomes clearer.

OLD DOBBS COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

PURPOSE

To preserve the history of Old Dobbs County and its families.  
To promote friendship and exchange information.

ADVANTAGES OF MEMBERSHIP

Monthly issues of the newsletter "Olde Dobbs Trail"  
Free queries in the newsletter for members.  
Guest speakers and lecturers at meetings.

MEETINGS

Meetings: Fourth Saturday of September, December, March and June

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APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP OR RENEWAL  
(Annual Membership from 1 July to 30 June)

Date \_\_\_\_\_

\$10.00 Single Member \_\_\_\_\_

\$15.00 Joint Members (same address) \_\_\_\_\_

New Member \_\_\_\_\_

Renewal \_\_\_\_\_

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

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BOOKS AVAILABLE FROM  
OLD DOBBS COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY  
P. O. BOX 617  
GOLDSBORO, NC 27530

**OLD DOBBS COUNTY RECORDS (530 pages)**

Contents: Ancestral Charts, Bible Records, Cemetery Information and inscriptions, Elections Records, Military Records, Old Waynesborough Residents, Tax Records, Will Index (1195 names).

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