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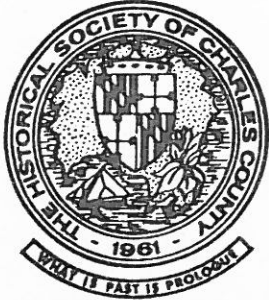
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R. Wayne Winkler, *President* R. Wayne Winkler, *Editor*

ATale Of Two Cities

(Apologies to Charles Dickens)

By Joseph Rowe, 1998

Actually this is not a tale of two cities, but rather a tale of two towns. These two towns are Orange, Virginia and Indian Head, Maryland. Most of my life has been spent living in one or the other of these two towns. However, this tale is not about me. I am merely the teller of the tale.

Our story begins in Orange Court House, Virginia. The time is the winter of 1863-64. Following the disaster at Gettysburg, General Robert E. Lee had brought his Army of Northern Virginia here. The purpose in coming was both to recover from Gettysburg and to prepare defenses against what would surely be an all-out offensive by General Grant the following spring.

Two members of Gen. Lee's army figure in our story. One is Lieutenant Nathaniel Chapman of Mount Avantine Farm near Indian Head. Chapman was a physician. The other was Captain Robert Boykin of Portsmouth, Virginia.

Early during their stay in Orange, both of these men found their way to the home of Judge John Madison Chapman, who lived in an imposing Federal style brick house on Main Street. Dr. Chapman came there, ostensibly, to renew his acquaintance with his cousin, Judge Chapman. Perhaps Capt. Boykin was introduced there by Dr. Chapman. Both men became frequent visitors to the Chapman house. Both men noticed that Judge Chapman had beautiful daughters. The doctor took a particular interest in the eldest daughter. Her name was Mary Ella. The Captain's interest was directed toward the second daughter whose name was Emma.

As the winter waxed so did the courtship between Nathaniel Chapman and his cousin Mary Ella; and so did the courtship between Robert Boykin and Emma.

Robert Boykin proposed marriage to Emma. His proposal was accepted and they were married immediately in St. Thomas church in Orange in February of 1864. The Rev. R.T. Davis officiated. Among the distinguished guests were Robert E. Lee, J.E.B. Stuart, A.P. Hill and James Longstreet.

Dr. Chapman, in the meantime, had asked Mary Ella for her hand in marriage. While his proposal was accepted, he imposed certain conditions. He could not marry until the war terminated. Then he would have to bring Mt. Avantine back to productivity and, finally, he would have to establish his practice. The engagement was to last four years. True to his promise, Dr. Chapman did return to Orange and married Mary Ella in November of 1867. The ceremony took place at St. Thomas Episcopal Church. The Rev. T.M. Carton officiated. The young couple then returned to Mt. Avantine Farm in Charles County Maryland where they lived happily for the next twenty-five years.

In 1892, when Nathaniel and Mary Ella were both 50, they decided to leave Mt. Avantine and move to Washington, D.C., each for their own reason.

Mary Ella had become very interested in Christian Science. She wanted to live in Washington, D.C. where she could attend a church of that denomination. Dr. Chapman wanted to move so he might enjoy a more lucrative practice. He had many patients in the Mt. Avantine—Indian Head area, but the patients had no money. They paid for his services with chickens, hams, flour or whatever they had. The doctor needed money to support his large estate.

Upon leaving, he turned his practice over to his nephew, Dr. John W. Mitchell.

By 1890, Capt. Boykin had died and Emma Chapman Boykin married for the second time. She married a Mr. Samuel Culver, about whom very little is known. Again the marriage was at St. Thomas Church. The Rev. John S. Hansborough officiated.

Knowing that Mt. Avantine had been vacated, Emma was very anxious to have it for her own. After all she was a cousin of Dr. Chapman and the sister of his wife. She begged her new husband, Mr. Culver, to buy it for her and he did. Thus, Emma became the new chatelaine of Mt. Avantine.

The Historical Society of Charles County
Post Office Box 261
Port Tobacco, Maryland 20677



Mr. & Mrs. Michael Mazzeo, Jr.
6795 Normadie Woods Dr.
LaPlata, MD 20646



Historical Society of Charles County Donates a Cannon Ball and Minnie Balls to Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum

By Wayne Winkler

In March of this year, the Historical Society donated one, small caliber, solid cannon ball, recovered at Benedict, Maryland by Bill Kennon, and one collection of more than 250 minnie balls from Camp Stanton, Charles County, by Mr. Saporita, to the Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum at St. Leonard, Maryland. The Historical Society originally received these from the Calvert Marine Museum in 1998.

Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum has undertaken the project of collecting and identifying as many items as they can find relating to America's declaration of war against Great Britain in June of 1812 as it pertained to the State of Maryland.

As I held the Minnie balls in my hand one day, I could imagine what it must have been like to be standing in Benedict when four ships, 20 frigates and sloops, and more than 20 transports carrying 4,000 regulars under the command of Sir Alexander Cochrane, proceeded up the Patuxent River towards this little town on August 18, 1814. As history tells us, Commodore Joshua Barney, USN., and his flotilla of gunboats that protected the Bay and river, fled upstream before the advance of the formidable British fleet. As the line ships kept the Americans running, the British lightly shelled Benedict, and the next day disembarked their troops at Town Point, Benedict. A force of soldiers and marines was formed to march parallel with the ships in pursuit of the American gunboats.

On August 22, Commodore Barney, believing the situa-

tion to be hopeless, blew up his boats and sent the marines on to defend Washington. The British accomplished their purpose by burning Washington and returned to Benedict unmolested by August 29. The next day they re-embarked and sailed downriver. When a red brick house on Steamboat Lane (Red House) was torn down, British cannon balls were found embedded in the walls of the structure.

Herein is the problem: not a shot was fired in Benedict during the War of 1812. The Minnie Balls in my hand were from the Civil War and I did know they were from Camp Stanton. This information was presented to the Historical Society in a lecture by Anthony Pitch at our May meeting this year. Mr. Pitch is the author of *The Burning of Washington—The British Invasion of 1814*.

Camp Stanton, in Benedict, was established in August of 1863 for the purpose of recruiting and training a Black Infantry. Recently liberated Negroes were actively recruited to serve in the Union Army. Army life afforded food, shelter, and pay when little was otherwise available. Recruiting was so successful that the 7th, 9th, 19th and 30th Colored Infantries formed and trained at Camp Stanton.

This goes to show that we are never too old to learn history. Thank you Mr. Pitch for your wonderful book and lecture bringing me up to date.

Footnote: Much of this information came from *Charles County Maryland, A History Bicentennial Edition 1976*.

Larrabee Photographs of Charles County Donated to The Southern Maryland Studies Center at The College of Southern Maryland

Well known and respected photographer, Constance Stuart Larrabee, has been kind enough to donate many photographs that she has taken of historical homes and sites within Charles County to the Historical Society of Charles County. These photographs include such homes as Araby, Dr. Samuel Mudd Home, Habre De Venture, Rose Hill, etc., as well as old photos of the railroad, main street in La Plata, Chapel Point, etc.

This collection can be seen in the Southern Maryland Studies Center.

Also included in the collection is a copy of the *Charles County Tercentenary Souvenir Program—1958* which includes much of her work. In the program are advertisements of businesses that existed during that time. In these ads are the T.R. Farrell Store, Stumble Inn, M&M Electrical, B.R. Winkler Plumbing and Heating, Bernie Jarboes Restaurant, etc. This program is worth looking at if you enjoy history and grew up during that era as I did.

In Memory of a Dear Friend

A dear friend and a wonderful member of the Historical Society, Patty Boone, passed away in June of this year. Patty was active in many organizations and was a wonderful asset. She was always willing to do whatever it took to get the job done, and a pleasure to be with and to work with. She will be sorely missed. Our thoughts and prayers go out to her husband Bill and family.

So, we have both of Judge Chapman's daughters of Orange, in succession, at Mt. Avantine near Indian Head.

After the death of Emma Chapman Boykin Culver, the estate of Mt. Avantine was bequeathed to her son, Robert Boykin, Jr. He was the last member of the Chapman family to live at Mt. Avantine.

Epilogue:

Robert Boykin, Jr. found he had little interest or talent in managing a large estate, so he sold it. During the 20th century, Mt. Avantine has changed hands many times. During the 1980's the house was restored very faithfully. It is presently used as an office for a real estate company.

Robert Boykin III, now a man in his early 80's lives a quiet and modest life in Indian Head. I see him occasion-

ally when I visit in Indian Head and attend St. James Church. We enjoy recalling the time we were fellow acolytes at the church.

Dr. Mitchell, the nephew of Dr. Chapman, who took over the Chapman practice, was my father's boyhood doctor. As an old man he was my boyhood doctor. I remember him well. He came in a buggy. He had a white mustache and goatee, both stained with nicotine.

Back in Orange, the Chapman house ceased being a Chapman house long ago. In 1899, this dwelling was purchased by Dr. Lewis Holladay. It is now owned by Lewis Holladay III. He and his wife, Phoebe, run a bed and breakfast there.

