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The Hamricks Keep History Alive

By PAM LATTIMORE
Times Staff Writer

From the outside, the Hubbard Hamrick house on West

Warren Street seems to speak of days of the past. Sitting back from the road surrounded with trees and a porch that stretches around the two story house,

one of the first things noticeable is the old well conveniently placed on the back porch with the pump and the old well bucket still sitting within sight.

Once inside, you find that the house itself is only the beginning of a lifetime of collecting, saving and searching historical records.

The Hamricks have made their home into a museum that would do a library justice. Collections of birds' eggs and seashells; clothing hand-made during the Civil War and actually worn by some of the Hamrick ancestors; old papers dating back to the late 1800's; deeds and wills of old Cleveland County families; family records and county historical records are only a part of the Hamricks' collection.

At one time, the Hamrick home museum was open to school children who came to visit and see spinning wheels and quilting frames. Mrs. Hamrick said that more than 2000 students had visited in their home to see the collections.

In Mrs. Hamricks' "workshop", right off the living room downstairs, is one of the most interesting articles in the collection—a picture of the return of the Cleveland Guards flag to the remaining members of the unit in 1892.

The picture was in the possession of Mrs. A.C. Miller, Jr. and was given to Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Hall. When reprints were made, the Hamricks were one of the few to receive a copy. Mrs. Ollie Hamrick, who is now 97 years old and attended the meeting in the court house when the flag was returned helped to identify the men in the picture.

The story of the Cleveland Guards flag was compiled by Mrs. J. Frank Roberts and tells as follows:

"On the 22nd of April, 1861, Cleveland County sent her first company to the defense of the South. This Company was known as Cleveland Guards, Company E, 12th Regiment of North Carolina. Augustus Burton was Captain; Cicero Durham, 1st Lieutenant; Jessie Jenkins, 2nd Lieutenant; and Peter Hoke, 3rd Lieutenant.

"Standing in front of her father's home on the north side of the Court Square in Shelby, Miss Zulia Durham presented the company with a beautiful silk flag, three by five feet, made by the loving hands of the ladies of Shelby. On it was embroidered the words, 'Cleveland Guards'.

"The 9th Massachusetts infantry, composed almost entirely of Bostonians, captured the flag at Hanover Court House, Va. on May 27, 1862, when Co. E was ordered to cover a retreat and to fall back the same way. They failed to fall back the same way and were cut off from their wagons, thus losing

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CLEVELAND GUARDS ONCE AGAIN DISPLAYED THEIR FLAG - After 31 years, the flag of the Confederate company of the Cleveland Guards was once again returned to the county. The flag, captured by the Confederate soldiers in April of 1861, was lost in a battle at Hanover Court House, Virginia. Pictured above, standing left to right, are the Guardsmen remaining from the

company when the flag was returned in 1892: R. L. Ryburn, Capt. L. J. Hoyle, J. L. Webb (later Judge Webb), Peter Hoke (tentatively), J. T. Gardner (Shelby mayor), Captain J. W. Gidney, A. C. Miller, and Pink Dellinger. The delegation from Boston who returned the flag are seated.

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the flag which was kept in a knapsack on the wagons as a treasured memento of the love and loyalty of the women at home.

"After a lapse of 30 years the surviving members of Co. E learned that their flag was in the possession of the city of Boston and wrote to the mayor of that city, asking that it be returned to them. The Mayor being assured that it was the wish of the surviving members of the old Ninth Massachusetts Regiment that the wishes of the North Carolina soldiers should be complied with, sent a message to the City Council heartily endorsing such action."

"Thus it happened that on Sept. 20, 1892, the city of Boston, at her own expense, sent a delegation of five prominent citizens to Shelby to return the flag....The Mayor of Shelby, Mr. J.T. Gardner, met the delegation in Charlotte and escorted them to Shelby, where the citizens gave them a hearty welcome.

"That night the Court House was crowded with enthusiastic people who listened appreciatively to the patriotic speeches of the evening....Mr. Priest, an old Union Veteran who was made a life long cripple by a ball from the rifle of a North Carolina soldier on the field of Cold Harbor, presented the flag to Capt. J.W. Gidney, the former captain of the Cleveland Guards in 1863 and 1864. It was Mr. Priest who found the Cleveland Guards' flag. After he was wounded, he crawled around on a tour of investigation among the knapsacks, in one of which he found the flag....

"At a reunion of Confederate veterans in April, General Gordon said: 'The old flag has been furled forever; the cause of separate national existence lives only as a memory. Old things have passed and a new era has come and we are all American citizens.'"

The Cleveland Guards flag has been since presented to the Museum of Archives and History in Raleigh, according to Mrs. Hamrick, where it will be kept--after its long absence, in the history of North Carolina.

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