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In Cleveland County's Early Days

By MAMIE JONES

Just how many newspapers have been published in Shelby since the town was established in 1841, I do not know. In the early days the life of a newspaper in a small rural community such as Shelby was then, was frequently very short. The Star has copies of 16 different papers, including those of today.

The earliest paper of which I have any knowledge is the **Carolina Intelligencer** a religious (Baptist) newspaper, published by Alex J. Cansler, who was editor and proprietor. The copy we have is dated May 25, 1854. The subscription price was "\$2.00 per annum in advance. If delayed longer than three months \$2.50 will be charged, and if longer than six months \$3.00."

Old Rip's Pop Gun a humorous weekly, was printed and published by Rip Van Winkle, with Frank Harley as associate editor. Our copy

is dated Dec. 23, 1854.

In 1863, the **Mountain Eagle** was established. S. S. Ross was proprietor and G. W. Whitfield, an attorney, was editor. Toward the close of the war Ross was afraid the Yankees might come and take the press. It was hidden at what used to be "Flat Rock." Our copy of this paper is dated May, 1863. C. Yates Harris, of Mooresboro has one of about the same date.

The **Carolina Banner**, W. D. McNeil editor and proprietor, was published by H. I. McDuffie. The copy we have is dated July 6, 1871.

J. P. Babington established the **New Regime** in 1872. We do not have a copy. Evidently it didn't run for any length of time. But the **Shelby Aurora**, which Babington established in 1875, was an outstanding paper

for more than thirty years. Babington sold the plant to William H. Miller in about 1882, and he operated it until 1896, (when he bought Cleveland Springs), and Babington continued publication. In 1897 he made it into a semi-weekly. Since that time the **Aurora** has passed thru many hands. In the early 1900's the Republican leaders of the county, headed by J. H. Quinn, Fred D. Hamrick, J. Y. Hamrick and F. B. Hamrick, bought and operated the paper for several years.

The **Cleveland Banner** a 5-column 4-page paper, was published 1870 to 1875 by Durham and Barnett. I do not know whether the Durham was Capt. Plato Durham or Crawford Durham. Probably they were both connected with it. During Reconstruction days this paper was

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a thorn in flesh of the Yankees who were here as a part of the Army of Occupation. Young Jim Webb (Judge James L. Webb) left college and came home to help Plato Durham run this paper. In 1876, after Capt. Durham died, we find the name changed from the Cleveland Banner to the Shelby Banner and J. L. Webb editor and publisher. We have copies of each of these papers.

COLLIER COBB'S PAPER

Collier Cobb, who taught Geology at the University of North Carolina for 40 years, lived here when he was a little boy. When he was about 10 years of age he was editing a small paper called the Home Journal. Later he published the same paper in Lincolnton.

George and Clarence Frick came here about 1880 from Baltimore and established a weekly paper called The New Era. Our copy is dated June 30, 1888.

The Southern Methodist Herald was published here for several years by A. R. Raven. Dr. H. T. Hudson was a regular contributor. Our copy is dated in 1882.

The Shelby Review was established about 1891 by Col. J. C. Tipton, a most excellent newspaper man but not a good financier. In 1894, Clyde R. Hoey (now United States Senator) a gangling youth of 17 with little money but lots of grit and plenty of brains, bought the paper and changed its name to the Cleveland Star. After approximately ten years he gave up the editorship and devoted his entire time to his law practice. H. T. Hudson succeeded him as editor. In 1911, Lee B. Weathers bought the paper and has been operating it ever since. He soon changed it to a semi-weekly; then to a tri-weekly, and some years ago it began daily publication. The name was then changed to the Shelby Daily Star.

Publisher Weathers recalls that on the day in 1912 when the first linotype was delivered at the Star office the stork delivered his son, Henry Lee, to his home.

J. Fell Babington, Buck Hardin, and others established the Shelby News in 1904. Later W. H. Miller was associated with them. After a few years publication was discontinued. In 1909, Broadus Hudson DePriest and his father G. W. DePriest, established the Highlander. Later, they bought the plant of the Aurora and merged the two papers, operating under the name Aurora-Highlander. We have copies of both the Highlander and the Shelby News.

FIRST DAILY

A small daily was published by Plummer Wiggins about 1910. The little town was not—at that time—big enough to support a daily paper, and soon it was discontinued.

Milton Tiddy, a Shelby native who had been living for some years in Florida, came back here about 1923 and established a semi-weekly called the Cleveland News. He took over the Highlander-Aurora equipment and operated the News for several years, then moved to Kings Mountain.

About 30 years ago Claude J. Mabry established the Cleveland Press with W. J. Cash as editor. But the paper was soon discontinued.

The newest paper in the town is the Cleveland Times, a semi-weekly established in 1941 by Rush Hamrick, Jr., and Will Arey, Jr. They disposed of their interest and Ed Post, Jr., is now operating it.

Two papers I have not mentioned are the Negro newspaper published here in 1897 by Rev. J. H. Carey for a short while; and the Tar Heel Poultryman established here about 1894 by Robt L. Simmons. The paper met with considerable success, but publication was discontinued when

Simmons moved to Charlotte. Our copy is dated May, 1894.

If other papers have been published in the town, we would very much like to know what they were called.