

July 2019

Undated, November 3

Mamie Jones

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.gardner-webb.edu/fay-webb-gardner-cleveland-county-early-days-column>

Recommended Citation

Jones, M. (n.d.). Cleveland County Early Days - Undated November 3, The Daily Star. Fay Webb Gardner Collection, Gardner-Webb University Archives, John R. Dover Memorial Library, Boiling Springs, NC.

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Series 1 - Personal Papers, Diaries, Scrapbooks at Digital Commons @ Gardner-Webb University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Cleveland County Early Days Column by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Gardner-Webb University. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@gardner-webb.edu.

nov-3-

In Cleveland County's Early Days

By MAMIE JONES

Up to the beginning of the 19th century there had been—in 2,000 years—but little change in methods of transportation.

The horse was the engine in common use. The only difference being that Solomon and the Pharoahs rode in two-wheeled vehicles, while those people of the 1800's rode in four-wheeled vehicles.

But even as late as the 1890's the four-wheeled cart was in use right here in this section over muddy Cleveland county roads, which were frequently referred to as cartways.

TRANSPORTATION BY STEAM

A revolutionary change in transportation was brought about in 1807 when Robert Fulton operated a paying steamer named "The Cleremont" on the Hudson river above New York. This steamer was equipped with a British-built engine, but used paddle wheels.

Folks said a man must be crazy who would put an engine in a boat. They were afraid the flying sparks might start a fire; but they did admit that the boat moved far more rapidly than a horse could travel.

LOCOMOTIVES IN 1830

In 1825 the first railroad train, with a steam engine, was opened to traffic in England. In a few years trains were operating in the United States.

Here was a sudden change in what had long been a fixed condition of human life. The maximum rate of transport for railroads reduced the time of covering distances to about one-tenth of what it had been.

By 1830, a number of American locomotives had been built. One of them was named "The Best Friend" and was the first successful locomotive built and operated

in America. It made its formal debut over the line of the South Carolina Canal and Railroad company on Christmas day, 1830.

In describing the first locomotive to draw a train in America the Charleston News and Courier said: "It flew on the wings of the wind at a speed of 15 to 21 miles an hour, annihilating time and space . . . leaving the world behind . . . darted forth like a rocket . . . scattering sparks and flames on either side." (South Carolina claims to have built the first railroad in the world more than 100 miles in length).

STOPS FOR WOOD

In running trains in these early days of railroading, it was frequently necessary to stop the train, that the Negro fireman might get off and gather wood to burn to

LIFE

From Page 1, Second Section

create steam sufficient to continue the journey.

These railroad tracks were laid with wooden rails on which was fastened plate iron two inches wide and half-an-inch thick. The coaches were modeled after the stage coaches which they superseded.

The following is based on a story by M. P. Beam:

In 1828, when talk of a trail of rails across the Allegheny mountains was going about, the younger citizens of Lancaster, Ohio, applied for permission to use the school room for a formal debate on railroads. In answer to this application for use of the schoolhouse the board said:

FRIGHTFUL SPEED

"There is nothing in the word of God about railroads. You are welcome to use the school room to debate all proper questions in, but such things as railroads and telegraphs are rank infidelity. There is nothing in the word of God about them. If God had designed for his intelligent creatures to travel at the frightful speed of 15 miles an hour by steam he would have foretold it through his holy prophets. It is a device of Satan to lead immortal souls down to hell."

CONSTRUCTION DELAYED

There were two reasons for the delay of 14 years in completing

the road from Cherryville to Shelby. The first was the War Between the States, which held up all building activities. The second reason was that when the road builders reached a point about three miles east of Shelby, at what is now known as Rock Cut, they had no tools adequate to cut through the heavy rock formation, and had to wait until such tools could be manufactured.

The following is from Harry Fulenwider's book, "Thirty-one Years of Genteel Vagabonding":
"THE FIRST SHELBY RAILWAY TRAIN

"Many older citizens will recall the coming of the first steam roller into Shelby. For many seasons the terminus was Cherryville of the old Carolina Central Railway, then like a snail it was pushed on to Buffalo, the pretty estate of the well-to-do, well known Tiddys. Finally it was completed and Shelby, then a little county seat, seemed to swell with pride when on a hot summer's day the great engine and the honored passengers with great noise and hurrah steamed into town; and to make it more exciting, was accompanied by the Lincoln brass band, under the training conductorship of Mr. Paghentecker, a wine maker of Germany, and later for years at the old Wells' Winery in Shelby.

"But my! When the band at the station played 'Annie Laurie' Shelby breezes were bonnie, and sounds would rise high and fall sweetly to the ear. Madly I ran with all my might for a mile over the red

clay hills to get there and hear the first brass band of my life."

HOW MUCH FASTER?

What would the good brother have said if some one had told him that 120 years later men would be transported through the air at a speed exceeding 700 miles an hour? More than eleven miles in one second!

The earth makes its yearly journey around the sun at 18 1-2 miles a second. Will man some day go through the air at that speed?
LOCOMOTIVE AND STAGE-COACH RACE

The stage coach companies had large investments tied up in coaches and horses, and it was to be expected that they would fight the coming of the railroads. They maintained that the trains could not go as fast as their horses.

To settle this question a man named Peter Cooper constructed a small steam locomotive with rifle barrels for boiler flues. He called it "The Tom Thumb."

On a double tracked section of the railroad, in the presence of a large crowd, a firm of stage coach proprietors raced one of their coaches—drawn by a single grey horse—against this engine. The fates were with the stage coach people. The fan belt of the engine slipped and the grey horse won the race.

It was many years before the railroads reached Shelby. But in 1861 the Wilmington, Charlotte and Rutherford Road was completed to Cherryville, and in 1875 it was run into Shelby.

This road was later called the Carolina Central, and is now the Seaboard Air Line Railway.

(Copyright by Mamie Jones)