Recollections of My Teacher
Frank S. Wilkinson

Presented
by
Gaston Lichtenstein

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My Recollections of Frank S. Wilkinson

In 1888, Tarboro's Graded School (so called) opened its doors. A new frame building, on the West side of the Common, contained only seven grades. Across Tar River a similar structure was erected for colored children. Brick buildings and high schools were in the distant future.

Miss May Barnes, an attractive teen ager (if my memory may be relied upon in regard to her age) was my teacher for the first year, 1888-1889. Miss Lizzie Porter taught me the following year. It should be of interest to note that this daughter of Tarboro married Philander P. Claxton in 1894; at that time a professor of pedagogy and German in a North Carolina College. But, in 1911, he became nationally known, through his appointment as United States Commissioner of Education.

While selecting teachers for the school year of 1890-91, the board did something, unthinkable today. It elected a teacher for the fifth grade, who was incompetent. For this reason, she will be nameless. She was not a Tarborean. Quickly the children realized that she had not any idea how to enforce order.

Lack of discipline produced chaos. When my father learned what was happening daily in the fifth grade, one morning he told me to go to the Tarboro Male Academy. He offered no word of explanation. When my father gave an order to his employees, his domestic servants, and to his children, he required obedience.

Frank S. Wilkinson, my teacher for the next four and a half years, graduated from the University of North Carolina in 1857. With no experience, but with the prestige of an A. B. degree, he learned the hard way how to instruct boys. Thirty odd years later he had become familiar with his subjects, and knew how to impart knowledge to those pupils, who wanted to learn; in this connection, I realize that his first pupils received different impressions from my own.

One of them, who was at the Male Academy during the War Between the States, was Bishop Joseph Blount Cheshire. He was born in 1850; and entered Frank S. Wilkinson's school in 1861. He remained there about the same length of time as I did a generation later. As we both wished to absorb knowledge, and as our impressions were obtained at the same period of life, it will be well to quote from "Some Account of My Life for My Children," by Bishop Joseph Blount Cheshire.

The Carolina Churchman carried this biography in a number of installments. During the course of my recollections, the Bishop's comments will be used. At present, only four sentences will be necessary. In the paragraph, which tells of his being sent to the

Tarborough (this word was spelled with the 'ugh') Male Academy in the autumn of 1861, Bishop Cheshire wrote these impressions of Frank S. Wilkinson:

"He surely had a hard task. According to the time and fashion of the country, he took boys of every age and of every stage of development, from the boy who had to be taught the alphabet up to the young man just ready to enter college. And he was expected to teach everything necessary to a complete education up to that point. He had classes in spelling, reading, geography, arithmetic, history, algebra, Latin, Greek, ancient geography, and, perhaps a little simple science thrown in; though I am not sure about the last."

With two exceptions, I could have written these four sentences. Frank S. Wilkinson taught no boy the alphabet in my day. Also, in 1890, one of my most interesting subjects was Paul Bert's first steps in science. Originally this book was in French. It is probable that some American educator had noted its value. Paul Bert, in the 1880s, wrote a number of elementary textbooks.

As fascinating as this subject was, my teacher made it more interesting with information not included in these first steps in science. While studying the section, devoted to chemistry, naturally we learned that water was composed of hydrogen and oxygen. But, Frank S. Wilkinson made a lasting impression upon my mind, by telling the class of a British scientist, who through a series of explosions of hydrogen, produced a glass of water, drop by drop, and gave it to Queen Victoria to drink.

Queen Victoria was a world figure in 1890. She had ascended the throne when my teacher was only four years of age. Although he was well past the half century mark, when he related this incident, Queen Victoria not only continued to assert herself in affairs of state; but she reigned for ten years longer. She was Queen for sixty-three years.

Before the end of the session of 1890-1891, two days stand out. I have a hazy recollection that the editor of the Southerner printed the facts of the story, so far as they were known to him. In order to "set the stage," a digression is necessary.

Not many months before I entered the Male Academy, the Norfolk and Carolina railroad was completed. It is today a branch of the Atlantic Coast Line. One thing, which impressed me, was placing the 100 mile post near the depot. It is worthy of record that exactly one hundred miles separated salt water from Tarboro, via the Norfolk and Carolina.

The second thing of interest to the boys of Tarboro was an "iron bridge" across Tar River; reached by walking up the track, no great distance for a healthy youngster. Prior to this time Tarboreans were familiar only with wooden bridges—one used by the train to Williamston and, the other was for pedestrians and vehicles, to and from Princeville. Let us now return to the Male Academy.

On April 1st, 1891, when I arrived at school, the oldest boys (who loomed large in comparison with youngsters like myself) were talking to the assembled group. Soon they had persuaded every one present, apparently, to play a prank on "Old Frank". In a body we were marched up to the depot. Then we proceeded along the Norfolk and Carolina track to the "iron bridge."

There we spent the day. The weather was ideal for an escapade of this kind. A warm day enabled me to sprawl upon the ground and watch the movements of a colony of ants. Not to be incarcerated (I suppose boys still look upon school as a jail) made us feel as free as birds are said to be.

The next morning we returned to school. Not a word concerning what had happened the day before was said, either by our teacher or ourselves. About three-thirty in the afternoon, when time came for school to be dismissed, Frank S. Wilkinson made two announcements in a quiet voice. First, he said: "Those who were here yesterday are dismissed." Three boys arose and walked out.

Then he informed us: "Lessons missed yesterday will now be made up." Many, many years later it occurred to me that doing two days work was more of an ordeal for him than it was for us. When we finally arrived at our homes, Erebus, divinity of darkness, had thrown the mantle of night over the town.

Although it was long past the time of the evening meal, my parents were strangely silent. Ordinarily, they would have been disturbed. Frank S. Wilkinson must have informed the fathers and mothers of the boys what he intended to do. I cannot speak for the others; but, personally, a lasting lesson was learned. April 1st and April 2nd, 1891, are indelibly impressed upon my memory.

Bishop Cheshire must have heard much war talk, while he was at the Male Academy. Probably he wished to forget this period of fratricidal strife; because he does not refer a single time to the War Between the States. Elsewhere in his writings, he makes references to the "Confederate War" (that is how he termed it.)

In view of the fact that his father, Reverend Dr. Joseph Blount Cheshire, Senior, every summer moved his family away from the heat of Tarboro, the future Bishop was not there to witness the Yankee Raid in 1863. Frank S. Wilkinson did see the Federal soldiers and told the boys of my day a personal experience.

He, an unarmed civilian, was leaning against a tree, when a Yankee trooper rode up to him and, with an oath and in a menacing manner, called upon him to surrender. Before the school teacher could find words, the mounted man rode off. The soldier must have quickly realized that the *little* man was harmless.

Frank S. Wilkinson prepared boys for the future. Naturally, he taught the Southern viewpoint. But—he did not dwell upon the

past. One day a boy brought a Confederate textbook as a curiosity. To the present generation its contents are unbelievable. Nevertheless, Southern boys received such instruction.

This particular textbook was an arithmetic. I cannot recall the exact words but here is a close resemblance to a certain problem: "If one Confederate soldier can defeat three Yankees, how many Yankees can five Confederates defeat?" More than once have I heard Tarboro veterans go through a succession of "We licked 'em" at this battle, at that battle, and so forth.

Shortly after the close of the War Between the States, the Episcopal Church was reunited. Dr. Joseph Blount Cheshire, Senior, helped to reestablish brotherly relations by sending his son to a Northern institution of learning. In the Dictionary of American Biography (Supplement) will be found a sentence, throwing light upon this matter. The author of the sketch of the younger Cheshire used these words:

"After attending the Tarborough Male Academy, Cheshire in 1866, entered Trinity College, Hartford, Conn., where he was warmly welcomed as the first student from the former Confederate States."

Who were some of the other boys at the Male Academy? The future Bishop, in referring to the hard task of Frank S. Wilkinson, named three of them favorably. In writing of the various subjects, taught by one man, the eminent Churchman said:

"How he got through with it all I do not understand. But he did get through with it in some fashion; and I am bound to say, he did it faithfully. Looking back on those days, I feel that he honestly tried to do his duty by me, and was always ready to do all in his power to help me in my studies, and to make me understand and enjoy the subjects he taught. I think that he had a special regard for those in the school who seemed to show some *sparks* of intelligence, and to make some effort to do their work well. Frank Porter, George Terreli, Dick Lewis, he was quite proud of; and I think he had some such regard for me also."

The Bishop's mentioning three of his schoolmates recalls a boy of my own day, who deserves a special article. He graduated from the United States Naval Academy in 1902; and after a long career in the Navy, was retired as a Rear Admiral. I am referring to Adolphus Staton.

Wordsworth wrote the child is father to the man. This was true in regard to "Dolph," as he was known. I am unable to vouch for the truth of the following story; but it was current at the Tarboro Male Academy.

One night "Dolph" had failed to reach home. Usually, it was before dark, when he arrived from school. His anxious parents instiuted a search. "Dolph" was located in the Common, where hours before he had thrown down a boy and was waiting for him to say "surrender".

When school closed for the summer in 1892, Frank S. Wilkinson learned that my uncle, "Gus" Zander, expected to take me as his companion on a tour which included cities in the Middle Atlantic States, thence to Canada; and returning through New England.

He requested that I should write him a letter, describing what I saw. An opportunity to do so presented itself, when we reached Troy, New York. There we spent a week, visiting a sister of my grandmother. While reading the Troy Sunday newspaper, my uncle showed me a picture; and asked if I recognized it.

There was no difficulty in recognizing the familiar features of Edgecombe's own Elias Carr, who had recently been nominated by Tar Heel Democrats for Chief Executive of the State. Beneath the cut were these words: "The man North Carolina wants for Governor."

My teacher lost no time in replying to my letter. At Montreal it was handed to me, together with a copy of the Southerner, containing a stirring account of a baseball game, which the local team won. As Frank S. Wilkinson referred to this team in his letter, it enables me to state that "Dick" Johnston was pitcher and Luther Bryan, catcher.

"Old Frank" touched upon a number of topics, which could be expanded into articles. I enjoy rereading what he wrote in those far off days. His letter should awaken the memories of older citizens. It follows:

Tarboro, N. C., July 23, 1892

Dear Gaston—After five days' absence from Tarboro, and after traveling by buggy about one hundred and eighty miles through the Southern part of the our County visiting the public schools, nothing on my arrival home this evening, greeted me more pleasantly than your very interesting letter, and my only regret is that my tired and wearied condition tonight will not let be indite to you an interesting letter in return for yours. My arrival this evening was not early enough to gather the news, or town gossip, but on my way home from the postoffice I saw your mother across the street, yet I was then too much jaded to cross over and speak to her. She was looking well, very well. Your little sister was behind her looking as rosy and sweet as usual.

The Tarboro Baseball Club has had two or three match games, but my information on such subjects is limited, being in the country for several days, and in company with farmers only, my head is well-nigh filled with something about corn, cotton, peanuts, rice, tobacco, and even "Third Party," all somewhat mixed and confused with public schools, redbugs, mosquitoes, etc., which will probably disturb my dreams tonight but will not likely interest you.

I discovered that Daniel, the painter, was applying his paint brush to our old school building, trying to put on a newer, gayer dress, ready for our reception, the 29th of August.

The hot suns of July are upon us, but with them comes the delicious peach and sweet melon, the delight of the small boy who now begins to neglect his bat and ball for the more pleasant retreat on the shady banks of Hendrick's Creek or the Tar.

I am too jaded and drowsy tonight to write a letter worthy of demanding your attention from those grand objects which Nature has showered upon the banks of the St. Lawrence and its tributaries where your mind may feast and look up through "Nature to Nature's God."

Your deeply interested friend.

F. S. WILKINSON.

Frank S. Wilkinson made me acquainted with Ichabod Crane. Little did he imagine that, about sixty years later, the art of discipline, as exhibited at the Male Academy, would be compared with what went on at the schoolhouse in Sleepy Hollow. Washington Irving, in relating how Ichabod Crane "urged some tardy loiterer along the flowery path of knowledge," continued:

"I would not have it imagined, however, that he was one of those cruel potentates of the school, who joy in the smart of their subjects; on the contrary, he administered justice with discrimination rather than severity; taking the burden off the backs of the weak, and laying it on those of the strong. Your mere puny stripling that winced at the least flourish of the rod, was passed by with indulgence; but the claims of justice were satisfied by inflicting a double portion on some little tough, wrong-headed, broad skirted Dutch urchin, who sulked and swelled and grew dogged and sullen beneath the birch. All this he called 'doing his duty by their parents,' and he never inflicted a chastisement without following it by the assurance, so consoling to the smarting urchin, that 'he would thank him for it the longest day he had to live.'"

Frank S. Wilkinson resembled Ichabod Crane in Bishop Cheshire's time more than he did in mine. Fortunately, the Churchman, in the biography written for his children, has left evidence on this point. Is there not a similarity between what Washington Irving wrote and the appended testimony of Joseph Blount Cheshire, Junior? This is the Bishop writing, not Irving:

"When he gave me a pretty sound thrashing for not knowing the accusative plural of 'puer,' I think it was partly because he felt mortified that one who usually did well, should show such ignorance or carelessness. I always thought myself that I deserved what I got; and I have never since forgotten the termination of the accusative plural masculine of the second declension in Latin—OS, PUEROS. He was a believer in the use of the rod, and bestowed it pretty liberally upon some of his pupils—the more stupid ones. Indeed, though I do not think he was at all a cruel or unfeeling man, I do think he had too much confidence in that old-fashioned theory. But it was a fault of the time, and not of the man. I do not think, in the two or three times I received such punishment that he ever struck me a lick amiss. There was a general understanding that it was the necessary and proper and becoming method. And I must do him the justice to say that I never saw him fail in this duty because of the size or strength or evil temper of the culprit. I have seen him dust the jackets of dunces and idlers, though they were among the biggest boys in the school. In his later years, after I had become Bishop of the Diocese, and he felt pride in me as one of his old pupils, I would sometimes ask him if he remembered how he used to thrash me. He always protested that he did not remember that he ever had had occasion to give me a lick."

Perhaps it was a coincidence; but it is worthy of remark that the nearest I came to feel the smart of a switch was in a Latin class. Unlike the Bishop I had no difficulty with declensions. The textbook for beginners really gave me pleasure. When my class tried to master the first book of Caesar's Gallic Wars, trouble developed. I easily divided Gaul into three parts; and even set out against the Helvetians.

Along the way I became mired in Latin construction. "Old Frank" must have thought he could do with me what drivers do to animals, attempting to pull a wagon out of the mud. He did not realize, when he raised a switch to a hypersensitive child, he produced an effect the opposite of what he desired.

Terror seized me. The switch did not descend. When I reached home, my parents were told of my fear of corporeal punishment. Frank S. Wilkinson received a visit during school hours. My mother told him of my intention to give up Latin. Such a thing he wisely refused to permit. But never again did he threaten me. As the years went by, boys dropped out of my Latin class. In February, 1895, when I left the Male Academy, "Dolph" Staton and I composed the highest class.

Some of the boys seemed to enjoy irritating their teacher. On a certain occasion I cannot recall what Charles Zoeller did to arouse the ire of the pedagogue. At any rate, the offense called for severe punishment. Frank S. Wilkinson intended to make this whipping one to be remembered.

He sent a boy out to bring back several, stout switches. He wanted no "slip up." Little did he imagine what was to follow. At his command "Charlie" stood before the school. Not a sound escaped from the lips of the culprit, as blow after blow was delivered.

Suddenly, "Old Frank" fell heavily to the floor; and he continued to lie where he fell. No one went to his assistance. This should not be surprising. The change from a role of despot to a human being, requiring assistance, occurred too quickly for the boys to change their line of thought. I cannot recall what happened next. I am certain he struck the back of his head. When he was able to resume teaching,

part of his cranium was covered with a dressing, either the neat work of a surgeon or some other experienced hand.

Let us turn to a more pleasant subject. I have "a warm spot" for Frank S. Wilkinson. Just as Oliver Cromwell told a portrait artist to paint his face with a pronounced blemish, so I am attempting to present my teacher as he was. Owing so much to his ability as an instructor, I shall make amends (if such need be) by setting forth something on the right side of the ledger.

"Old Frank" taught me how to study. Let me illustrate with a lesson in arithmetic. One day he gave an example of the method he wished the boys in my class to follow. Turning to me, his words were about as follows: "When Gaston starts to solve this problem tonight, he should;" then he went on, step by step, until he arrived at a solution. How could an ambitious boy fail to profit from such instruction?

Occasionally, he would call for volunteers from the entire school to solve an original problem. I had a variety of subjects to keep me occupied; so there was never a response on my part. Nevertheless, once my interest was aroused—not because of the problem itself, but because of a certain circumstance.

When volunteers had gathered around their teacher one of them asked: "May we get Mr. Clark to help us?" An affirmative reply was received; so after school the boys proceeded to visit the father of Edgecombe's distinguished citizen of the present day, William G. Clark. The merchant received the group in front of his store.

I noted a look of mingled surprise and amusement, when the boys explained their mission. However, the elder Clark lost no time in attempting to please them. Some reader with a keen mind may be wondering how it was possible for me to know exactly what went on. Perhaps an explanation is in order.

The firm of D. Lichtenstein & Co. adjoined the W. S. Clark establishment. Therefore, I could stand in front of my father's store and listen to every word, without participating in the proceedings. Arriving at a solution of this particular problem was not easy. So, while the merchant and the boys were absorbed in their task, I ambled to another part of the town, where there was something less taxing to the mind.

"Old Frank" taught American history; but—I do not remember receiving instruction in this subject—believe it or not. It was a wise omission; because I absorbed easily the facts of importance through extracurricular reading. By putting into my hands Montgomery's History of England, a school book, he greatly enlarged my outlook.

This textbook fascinated me. There were other boys in my history class, but their names escape me. Caesar's 4th and 5th books of his Gallic Wars had already informed me of his invasion of Britain. It is possible that Frank S. Wilkinson formed a class in English history, when he observed the interest of his Latin pupils in Caesar's invasion, a half century before the beginning of the Christian Era.

The Romans, in the reign of Claudius, established themselves in Britain permanently. They remained there nearly four centuries. How long a period this was may be noted, by comparing it with American history. Starting in 1492, the year Columbus landed and coming down to 1892 (just about the time Frank S. Wilkinson began to use Montgomery's textbook) would cover a similar period.

In 1932, I had an opportunity to study Roman ruins in Britain. Shortly after my return to the United States, readers of the Southerner were informed of my visit to Bath. My article referred to excavations in that city. Proof that the Romans expected to be in Britain for all time could be observed, by studying a restored pool, around which were many partly mutliated statues. What most impressed me was the mosaic floor, still retaining its original colors. But we must return to the Male Academy.

The Battle of Hastings was fought in 1066. I have never forgotten this date. English history was profoundly affected by the Norman Conquest. There were children in Tarboro who had been told of their Norman ancestry. In this connection, it is worthy of record that Bishop Joseph Blount Cheshire, through his Blount line, could trace descent from a Norman knight, who fought at the Battle of Hastings, close to nine centuries ago. At that time the family name was le Blond, or le Blound. If this name had been completely anglicized, the surname would be White.

During my first months at the Male Academy, interest in English history was aroused, when my class in grammar parsed these lines from Tennyson: "Kind hearts are more than coronets, and simple faith than Norman blood." Many years passed before I knew the name of the poem from which these well known words were taken. The infusion of Norman blood interested me more than Tennyson's meaning.

Frank S. Wilkinson, while teaching us to speak correctly, called attention to the incorrect pronunciation of Common. He said this word had no final 's'. From that moment I ceased to say Commons. It is remarkable how many nouns, both common and proper, to which Tarboreans attach an unnecessary 's'. One of these words will receive attention, after telling the following true story.

Here is an example of how the English language may be murdered. I happened to be passing two illiterate colored women upon Tarboro's Main Street, when they were discussing the wife of Joseph Zander, not to be confused with my uncle, "Gus" Zander. In referring to the wife of this merchant, who will be remembered by older citizens, one woman used three words, all of them wrong. I was so amused that

this conversation gave my feelings a 'lift.' Instead of saying Mrs. Esther Zander, the speaker gave forth with "Miss Hester Zanders."

Now let me discuss at some length an error of highly literate Tarboreans. In speaking of the street, named for the Patron Saint of Scotland, they always add an 's'. If James Moir, Missionary of the Church of England, who chose the names for the streets of the town, had lived long enough to hear an 's' added to the street, Saint Andrew, he would have spoken his mind freely. He was that type of person.

The street, next to Saint Andrew, is St. Patrick. Imagine anyone saying Saint Patricks. Walking to the next block, we come to Saint David. Originally, Main Street was Saint George. To be consistent, the first Town Commissioners (if Saint Andrew had a final 's') should have called Main Street Saint Georges.

In the Encyclopedia Americana, beneath the caption, Cross of Saint Andrew, will be found these words: "A white saltier on a blue ground, representing the X-shaped cross, on which, according to tradition, Scotland's patron saint, Andrew, suffered martyrdom. It was early adopted as the design of the national banner of Scotland, and is combined with the crosses of Saint George and Saint Patrick in the British national fiag."

It will be observed that the names of all three saints are minus the final 's.' Therefore, an attempt must be made to find an underlying reason for the addition of an unnecessary letter—by educated persons. One explanation may be: they know the University of Saint Andrews, in Scotland, does have the final 's'. But, why this is so, they give no thought to finding out. Any encyclopedia will inform them that this institution takes its name from the town of St. Andrews.

Which brings us to the next point: what explanation is there for this last letter? Years ago my sixth (or if you prefer—psychic) sense told me that, in early days, an apostrophe separated the 'w' from the 's.' Also, that a noun followed the name of the saint. I came to a further conclusion—that this community had some connection with the saint. However, before writing to the Southerner, tangible proof had to be obtained.

It occurred to me that Scotland was the place where evidence would be found. So, on March 5, three days after the first article of the present series appeared, I wrote a letter to the Librarian of Saint Andrews University. The second sentence of his reply reads: "As you suppose St. Andrews University is so named because it is situated in St. Andrews."

George Herbert Bushnell, the Librarian, clinched my case, when he wrote these words:

"Traditionally bones of St. Andrew the Apostle were brought here at an early but uncertain date and were buried where later the Cathedral rose: from this came the name of the city today—St. Andrews."

As the Librarian spelled the name of the Aspostle without a final 's', and, as the site of the Cathedral is traditionally his burial place, there should be no difficulty in assuming that the inhabitants, originally, could have used some expression, such as St. Andrew's burial place.

In Revelation, Chapter One Verse Eleven (King James translation of the New Testament) will be found these words: "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last."

The group of scholars, who translated this passage from the original Greek, must have thought that 'a', the first letter of the English alphabet, was not so diginified as Alpha, which is the first letter in the Greek language. Incidentally, the English word, alphabet, has been taken bodily from ancient Greek.

Omega (whose sound is like a long 'o') is the final letter in the Greek alphabet and could not have been translated into 'z'. Whatever prompted the British scholars to retain Alpha and Omega, they are decidely more musical than the first and last English letters. The translators knew that the Book of Revelation would be read at religious services. Imagine a preacher in a Tarboro church reading: "I am 'a' and 'z', the first and the last." Nevertheless, that is the meaning of the verse. The English clergy used good judgment.

When Frank S. Wilkinson taught me the Greek alphabet, I was twelve years of age. I quickly learned to recite it, from Alpha to Omega. The fourth letter, Delta, was impressed upon my mind; because two well known rivers, the Nile in Egypt and the Mississippi in the United States, had mouths which resembled this letter. Just as Greek authors referred to the Delta of the Nile, so do Americans write of the Mississippi Delta.

I am wondering if it is possible to study Greek today in Edgecombe County. Here is what Bishop Cheshire recalled from his school days at the Male Academy: "The most important classes were those in Latin and Greek, and, so far as I remember, more than half of the boys in school took at least Latin, and a large proportion took Greek also. A young man was hardly thought to be aspiring to a liberal education who omitted either."

Nicholas Constantine, in 1953 a Nonagenarian who was a new resident of Tarboro when I began to read Greek, used to let his newspaper lie upon the counter of his place of business. He paid no attention to my attempts to read its contents; but, there was a Baptist preacher in town, who had the reputation of being a scholar. One day I heard Reverend Dr. J. D. Hufham speaking to him. If my memory be not at fault, Dr. Hufham wished to borrow the Greek newspaper.

This Baptist preacher was well known in North Carolina during the 1890s. His son attended the Male Academy and conducted himself in the unorthodox manner, attributed to preachers' sons. He was not bad. He simply had the weaknesses of most boys. If he had not been Dr. Hufham's son there would have been no comment. The boys could not help being amused and told him so. I distinctly remember his reply: "There is no preach in me."

"Old Frank" drilled my Greek class for a few months in the fundamentals of the language. Then he followed the usual course, by having the class translate Xenophon's Anabasis. In 1895, when I arrived in Cincinnati, Ohio, to receive what is called "higher education," I noted that the first Greek classic, taught in the High Schools of that city, was Xenophon's Anabasis. The second classic was Homer's Iliad.

Fred S. Wilkinson proceeded slowly but thoroughly. At each lesson only a few lines were translated. Those, who are familiar with the first Book of the Anabasis, will recall the frequency of Xenophon's reference to the number of parasangs, marched by the Greek mercenaries. Their advance into Persia gave this book its name.

As most of Xenophon's classic is concerned with a march through hostile territory, known in history as "The Retreat of the Ten Thousand," this famous work could more properly have been called Katabasis. After the Battle of Cunaxa, where Cyrus the Younger was killed by Artaxerxes, his brother, the Greek mercenaries of Cyrus were compelled to retreat. But, the first part, which we studied, was an advance into Persia; therefore, the word Anabasis is correctly used for this section.

Modern English is indebted to Ancient Greek for so many words, that one of the results of studying this language at the Male Academy was to enlarge my vocabulary. Apart from every day words, such as telegraph and telephone, and the multitude of polysyllabic words, used by scientists, a thousand could be cited. The following list of words may appear to be long; however, the next paragraph will give only a small fraction of what English owes to Ancient Greek. Ponder this list:

Abyss, academy, acme, acoustics, agony, analysis, antithesis, atheism, atom, basis, calisthenics, catastrophe, catechism, choas, chemistry, chorus, climax, crisis, criticism, diagnosis, dilemma, dogma, drama, epoch, enthusiasm, ethics, gymnastics, idol, irony, mathematics, meteor, myth, nymph, ocean, optics, period, pharmacy, politics, polytheism, propaganda, rhapsody, sarcasm, statistics, system, and tyranny.

Modern English is so unlike what is known as Old English that they appear to be different languages. On the other hand, there is a surprising similarity between Ancient and Modern Greek. I learned this about thirty years ago, when a group of Richmond Greeks requested me to translate a Proclamation, prominently displayed upon the front page of one of their newspapers.

I told them I had not studied Modern Greek, but would try to do what they asked. Aided only by a present day Greek-English dictionary, while they stood near, my task was completed within a few hours. Later their appreciation was expressed, by presenting to me a gold plated fountain pen.

The story behind their request is too long to be given in full. But—even a condensed account may be read with some interest. Shortly after the first World War, the local church divided into two groups over a vital matter. As an historian, this schism attracted my attention. Lack of space prevents my setting forth the facts. Suffice it to say, each group wished to control the church property. So the matter was taken before a Richmond jurist for a legal decision.

In view of the fact that many schisms have occurred in American Protestant churches, this division in an Orthodox Greek congregation should be viewed with tolerance. The Greeks were finally united; however I am able to point to a case of later date—when Richmond Presbyterians divided upon a less vital matter than the Greeks. And—they have never composed their differences.

The members of Grace-Covenant Church, one of Richmond's largest congregations, provided reporters with "copy" for quite a while. The Public Library of this city has preserved clippings for reference. To be brief, several hundred members and the pastor, around whom the controversy raged, established a new congregation, known as St. Giles. Both congregations are flourishing.

My duty is to relate facts—not to express an opinion. Besides, I am unprepared to decide who is a good Presbyterian. The Greek schism did to a certain extent invade the field of history, where I am at home.

When a committee of Richmond Greeks made the presentation, referred to above, something "popped" into my conscious mind. It had occupied the subconscious mind for years. Frank S. Wilkinson had spent much time, impressing my Latin class with oustanding lines in Virgil's Aeneid. It should be recalled that, in the Second Book of this famous Epic poem, Aeneas relates to Dido the details of the Fall of Troy.

"Old Frank" dwelt upon these Latin words: "Timeo Danaos et dona ferentis" (which means, "I fear the Greeks even when bringing gifts"). Although I know the Richmond Greeks were kindly disposed toward me, Virgil's words came to mind. In justice to some respected residents of Richmond, it should be added that the gold plated fountain pen never proved to be a Trojan horse.

Masonic Musings

On October 20, 1887, the Southerner carried a brief item, which had nothing to do with Masonry; but, it will serve to lead up to the subject. Readers were told: "Mr. Don Williams left Monday for Baltimore where he goes to study dentistry." In time he became Dr. Don Williams, Jr. So Tarboro had Dr. Don Williams, Sr. and Jr. They lived on Saint James Street, near Saint Patrick.

The elder Donald (not Donnell) Williams, took a great interest in Masonry. One of my recollections of childhood is a funeral service, conducted by the members of Concord Lodge. Dr. Williams, Sr., acted as Master and spoke most effectively. The beautiful language made such an impression that I, at the earliest possible moment, told my father of the profound effect this Masonic service had upon me.

His only comment was that Dr. Williams was a good ritualist. My father did not need to be so reticent. Many years later I learned of Mackey's Encyclopedia (easily accessible in public libraries); which stood as proof that a large number of matters could be discussed with a non-Mason. Further on a quotation from Mackey's monumental work will be given. This will be done to explain how the name of a certain officer of lodges, who may appear in full view of the uninitiated, came into existence.

In 1887 Concord Lodge met in the frame building at the corner of Saint Andrew and Saint James streets. Members entered a door downstairs, opposite the Methodist church. In those days there stood in front of this door, while meetings were held, a *diminutive* man with a drawn sword.

Perhaps long ago Concord Lodge has discontinued this custom of having its Tiler stand on the street. Andrew Sorg was the name of the officer, holding at attention a sword of formidable appearance to a youngster like myself. In the Mystic Knights of the Sea, it may be recalled that Amos and Andy referred to a similar officer as the Swordfish.

Andrew Sorg possessed little prowess. He stood simply as a symbol. An intruder would find that it requires more than brawn to enter a Masonic lodge. Before quoting from Mackey, it is well to explain that, originally, members of the craft were builders. They erected the magnificent piles, hundreds of years ago, that tourists visit with delight. These builders were known as Operative Masons. In the course of time, persons applied for membership—all the way from monarch of the realm to commoner, who possessed requisite qualifications. Thus, Speculative Masonry came into existence. Through these preliminary remarks it is possible to read with understanding what Mackey wrote concerning the Tiler of a lodge. Here are his words:

"The title is derived from the operative art; for as in Operative Masonry the Tiler, when the edifice is erected, finishes and covers it with the roof (of tiles) so in Speculative Masonry when the lodge is duly organized, the Tiler closes the door, and covers the sacred precincts from all intrusion."

In 1787, exactly a century before the period I am writing about, Masons assembled in Tarboro to reorganize the Grand Lodge of North Carolina. Six years after Yorktown, the population of the state had not learned to govern itself. They had succeeded to a certain extent. Religious conditions were deplorable. At some future time the efforts of the Episcopalians to organize will be set forth.

Coming down the years to my own lifetime, John W. Cotten, who should be remembered by all Tarboreans beyond the half century mark, was an officer in the Grand Lodge of North Carolina in 1886. Knowing that the following year would mark the end of the organization's first century of existence, he tried, unsuccessfully, to have the Centennial Celebration held in Tarboro. The Grand Lodge voted to meet in Raleigh. Concord Lodge sent two representatives to this historic meeting in January: A. P. Hyman, its Master, and Henry Morris, the mayor of Tarboro.

Actually, December 9, 1887, was the anniversary date. The Grand Master began his address with these words: "Brethren, we have reverently begun this, the one hundredth annual communication of the Grand Lodge of North Carolina, by a due acknowledgment of and dependence upon the gratitude to the Divine Creator for His continued blessing. Our tribute is next due to the illustrious North Carolinians who so wisely reorganized this grand body in the village of Tarboro a century ago."

Some readers may be asking themselves, Why was Tarboro selected, if it was such a small place? Because the General Assembly was meeting there and North Carolinians had traveled great distances to be present. A traveler from Pennsylvania, who was in Tarboro at the time, is authority for the statement that this small community took care of the visitors comfortably. It does not seem possible. If ever Tarboro's history appears in book form, an entire chapter should be devoted to the State Legislature in 1787.

An eyewitness account may be used. Manners have improved since then. It should be enlightening to the present generation to read some of the happenings in Tarboro, as seen through the eyes of a Northern visitor. In justice to the inhabitants of the town, visitors seem to have been responsible for much of the boisterous behavior.