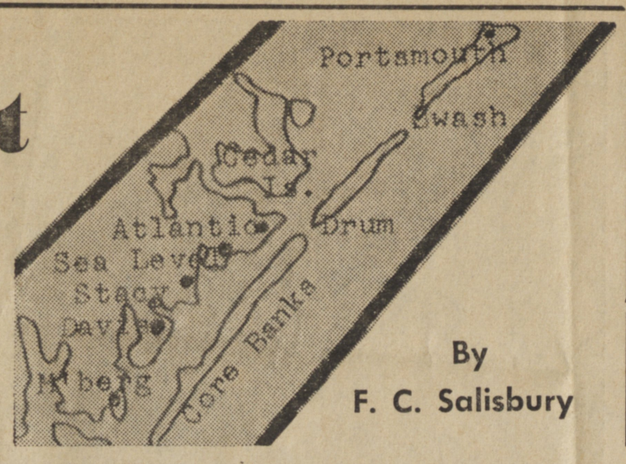
# Down East in Carteret




By F. C. Salisbury

**(Note: This is the third in a series of articles on eastern Carteret as it was 40 years ago. The second part told about Marshallberg and continues below, telling of the innovations the Rev. C. M. Levister, president of Graham Academy, made at the school.)**

**New pianos** were bought for use in the music department, also a printing plant was installed. A new building known as Roseville Hall for the home of the president, office and music hall, was one of the many improvements.

The Rev. Mr. Levister spent considerable time on trips north in an effort to raise funds for the operation of the school. Mrs. Levister served as music teacher and was very active in the church society. Her mother made her home with her daughter, acting as a "house mother" to the boarding students. In 1903 the name of Graham Academy was changed to that of Graham Collegiate Institute.

**The expensive ideas** of the Rev. Mr. Levister ran the school in debt some $3,000. He retired in 1906 and Dr. Graham, assisted by W. J. Plint as vice-president were placed in charge. Faculty members during the term of office of W. J. Plint were the Misses Nannie Gillikin, Blanch Jacoby, Violetta Jacoby and Helen Ditmar.

Fire destroyed the main building in 1911. For the next two years an effort was made to carry on the work until the Conference decided not to replace the building. This decision was made for the reason that the location of the campus was too far from the center of the village; which showed no evidence of expanding in that direction.

**In 1913, Conference** moved the seminary department to Washington, N. C., where it continued to operate until 1931. At its new location it became known as the Washington Collegiate Institute.

At the rear of "The Church in the Wildwood," as the Star of Bethlehem Church became known, a fenced enclosure contains a cemetery. Buried there is the body of John Luther, age 20, a seminary student who died in 1906 while attending the Institute. He died from over-exertion, fighting a fire in a nearby community. Former boarding students recall the good cooking of Aunt Sally Ann Davis who presided over the kitchen.

**As the county school** system had started caring for the educational needs before the burning of the main building, the Missionary Society abandoned the idea to rebuild and carry on a private school. With the exception of the church, the remaining buildings were sold. The parsonage was purchased by William Davis and moved nearer to the village.

The other two structures were torn down and the lumber used in other constructions. Star Church was to meet its fate in a forest fire several years later.

**Credit is given** to Dr. Graham for all the good the school ever did and for the expansion of the church in the eastrn part of th county during his years as Presiding Elder and head of the Graham Collegiate Institute.

There are many persons in Carteret County and elsewhere who revere the memory of Dr. Graham and the Rev. Mr. Levister.

**During the** seven-year period when Dr. Graham was not at the head of the Institute, he devoted his time as Presiding Elder of the district to the work of the several Methodist Churches North, within the county.

Dr. Graham was born in the small community of Eagle Mills in Iredell county. As an orphan at an early age, he was raised by Barnet and Jane Mullace of the settlement in which he was born. He was to repay this kindness in later years when he took his foster mother into his home after the death of Mr. Mullace, caring for her until her death in 1906.

**When he moved** his family into the county he brought with his wife and six children three orphan girls of young age from his former home, arranging foster homes and education for them. He built a family home which is still standing, though in a dilapidated condition, about opposite the new West Carteret School. Dr. Graham passed his last days at Ronda, N. C.

The Rev. Charles M. Levister also came from the western part of the state. Of humble parentage he became a "printer's devile" in a small print shop at a yearly salary of $75.

**The Star of Bethlehem Church, built in 1875, served as classrooms until the Academy building was erected in 1888. The new academy stood some distance opposite the church.**

**Completing his seminary** work, he joined the Blue Ridge Conference of the Methodist Church, North. Retiring from the Graham Collegiate Institute, he went to Baltimore, Md., serving as editor at different times of Anti-Saloon League publications. He also served as assistant superintendent of the Anti-Saloon League of Maryland.

At the time of his death in 1935 at the age of 65, the Rev Mr. Levister was acting as welfare secretary of the West Jersey Homeopathic Hospital, Camden, N. J.

## Smyrna

**Heading out into** Core Sound, Captain Ira makes a wide sweep round Great Marsh Point to avoid shallow water. A run of three miles brought us into Maddam Creek at the head of which is located the village of Smyrna. The boys on the dock were eager to catch the line, snubbing it to a piling with the hope, perhaps, of a bottled drink.

Smyrna is at a junction point where the highway from the west joins that running from Marshallberg to Atlantic. The point is often referred to as Smiths Corner, supplanting the town's name. In the early days of settlement, Smyrna was known as Jarrett Bay after the bay into which the waters of Maddam Creek flow.

**At a time when** the local school was receiving support from the Peabody fund, a northern philanthropic society of Boston, the town was called Peatown. We were unable to learn how it become known as Smyrna. Like a group of Quakers coming into the county from Newport, R. I., who gave the name of Newport to the river along which they settled; a group of settlers at Jarrett Bay may have given the place the name of a town they formerly knew.

**This is the William Hancock place at Smyrna, built in 1820.**

**Which came first,** the church or the school, has been a question among the people, also which denomination was the first to establish a church? History names the Baptist denomination as the first to organize a society and erect a building.

The first church was on the site of the present one, on one-half acre of land given by Anthony Davis under deed dated March 26, 1829, to Core Sound, North River and Straits district, to be granted to their "exclusive use, benefits and behoof forever," located on the north side of the main road between Abner Willis' old place and Anthony Davis' swamp.

**In the minutes** of the Neuse Association for 1829 the church is listed as Warren's Meeting House with a membership of 60. Delegates at this session, held in Jones County, were James L. Warren, Whitington Davis and William V. Harris. Davis was a very important man in the county, having been a member of the General Assembly in 1816 and State Senator from 1818 to 1826.

In 1832 the name of the church was changed to Jarretts Bay. With the change of the name of the settlement to Smyrna, the church in 1859 became known as the Smyrna Missionary Baptist Church.

**Church records** are lacking as to the date of organization of the Smyrna Methodist Church. It must have been sometime before the Civil War for Franklin Hancock who died in 1912 had served as superintendent of the Sunday School for 50 years. Three buildings have served this church.

The first was located about a quarter of a mile from the location of the present one on the property now owned by the family of the late Dr. J. J. Davis. The building was of the plainest design with a gallery at the rear for slaves.

**When the need** arose for a new building, a new site was given the society by Capt. Robert Whitehurst in 1885, which is the location of the present building.

Captain Whitehurst, a store owner and ship master, was taken prisoner by the Federal forces shortly before the close of the Civil War on a charge of aiding the Confederacy. He had started with a boatload of supplies for Port Fisher, but learning that the fort had been captured by the Federals, he headed back home. To avoid his boat and supplies' falling into the hands of the enemy, he burned the vessel.

**Along with the** religious advantages came those of educational, giving the children a meager three months schooling yearly. The school house was modeled after others of that period; of wood construction, a one-room affair with plain boards for seats without backs or desks.

A shelf in the corner contained a wooden water bucket with a conch shell to drink from. It is recalled that a Yankee by the name of Cahill was the first teacher of the school.

**Taking advantage** of the aid offered by the Peabody Educational Association, a school was opened in a building called Temperance Hall, located near the Baptist Church. Professor H. S. Lee had quite a reputation in the county. As a teacher, he was the first in charge of what was known as the Peabody school. He is remembered by those who attended school under his instruction that he did not believe in "sparing the rod and spoiling the child." Many of his former scholars can attest to this.

Another school was conducted for a short time in the Odd Fellows Hall with Mr. and Mrs. Norman as teachers. With the adopting of a county-wide school system, an elementary school was built near the Baptist Church.

**In 1923 the** Consolidated High School became the center of the school district with Herbert Banks as principal. During the years the Graham Academy ex-

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