

We Remember Nassawadox

Oh, yes Nassawadox had a beginning in the early 1880's and according to my brother Gordon Wescott he wrote these facts in 1936.

"Perhaps many of you remember when tall ~~pink~~ trees covered most of the present location of Nassawadox. This town owes the credit of its birth to the railroad which was built in 1884. the station was first named Upsher. Because of much opposition it was changed to Nassawadox for Nassawadox Creek, which was named by the Indians many, many years before. the first building in Nassawadox was the residence now owned by the Nature Conservancy. In 1884 Mr. John Rogers built a store where the firm of A N Bell now is (the 5 and 10 cents store now). This was the first business interest in the town. Since that time nineteen more have arose. In fifty years of its growth seventy-five homes have been built. The town has a white population of about 275.

Nassawadox is very proud of its progressive public enterprises. I shall mention details of them. The oldest in these is Northampton Lumber Co. though the first has bourne this name for 33 years, its origin was not here. The mill first owned by Mr. Schroder. In 1894 Mr. J.B. Savage bought it from him and sold it to Chandler and Walker in 1894.

In 1901 the change of name became the B.D. Holland and Company, in 1903 it became incorporated under the name of Northampton Lumber Co. This business is being carried on now by Lynwood Walker, George Walker, and Alvin Holland.

In September 12, 1906 Mr. J.P. Wescott deeded a plot of land to the Bank of Northampton Inc. for \$400. The bank opened Sept 11, 1906 with W.L. Henderson as cashier and W. E. Thomas as president of the organization. Mr. Henderson remained as cashier only a short time and was followed by W. C. Roberts who held that position until this time. The bank opened with a capital of \$6,000 increasing to a total of \$31,250 to date. In 1915 Mr. John E. Nottingham succeeded Mr. Thomas as President of the bank. In its

development the Bank of Northampton has taken over the Farmers Bank of Birdsnest and the Planter's Bank of Machipongo.

The youngest of these is the hospital an institution first promoted by Dr. W.J. Sturgis. The movement experienced various degrees of interest and success in its history. Many citizens were enthusiastic supporters but probably it is no more than fair to say that these were foremost in and vacating it. Mr. Jeff Walker, Dr Sidney Kellam, Judge John E. Nottingham, Mr. James Rogers, Mrs. Bessie Anderson and Mrs Nettie Rogers.

The hospital was a shrine to the men of the shore who served n the World War. The need of such an institution was first realized by people of our community in 1920. In August of the same year the first organization developed for the purpose of raising money for this project. This organization was the Ladies Auxiliary of Franktown and Nassawadox. It pledged to give \$5,000. The Ladies Auxiliary of Northampton County grew out of the Franktown and Nassawadox Auxiliary. The total cost for the hospital has been estimated to be \$125,000.

In October 1924 the lot for the building was bought from Mr. James B. Rogers, In the same year the building was begun and was completed in 1928. It opened the same year with three doctors, three nurses and a superintendent.

These local enterprises bespeak the life and character of the people who create them. We believe that in our local institutions, homes, churches, and businesses there is fair evidence of a strong purposeful and worthy citizenship, one that holds a real challenge for the future.

Memories of Nassawadox by Elizabeth Richards Hamilton

I went to Nassawadox to live in September, 1917, when I married Milton V. Richards. The town was small, very friendly, and had lots of shady trees. Streets were dusty and unpaved.

Next to our house was the drug store when Alan Arnold was always present with a smile. That was where everybody gathered.

The bank was next door and beyond the bank there was a general store owned by the Goldbergs. On the opposite side of the street there was a tiny barber shop and a small grocery store -- then there was a space and the N.Y.P. and N. Railway. Across the track was the town movie owned by Mr. Jones.

Opposite our home was the Whitehead home and next door were the Wescotts. That's where my two little "shadows", Gertrude Whitehead and Grace Wescott, lived. I never felt closer to anyone than to those two little girls.

Just past the Wescott house were Mr. and Mrs. Jeff Walker and opposite the Walkers were Mr. and Mrs. Linwood Walker, Nassawadox was a "homey" little town. In July 1918 our first baby was born and Gertrude and Grace were my eager little nurses, very watchful and helpful.

There were a few little stores back of the barber shop and on down the track where the colored people lived. That is where our good old Aunt Bridgett lived. In those days almost everyone had help in the house.

Walter Hurtt was the town's favorite bachelor, often bringing us gifts of oysters and other seafood. Just about everybody found time to cultivate nice flower and vegetable gardens.

Dr. Downing came from Franktown, where he lived, when anybody was sick, or to deliver babies. A few years after I went to Nassawadox, Dr. W. J. Sturgis had a nice brick house built across the R.R. next to the movie. He said Nassawadox needed a hospital to take care of the Eastern shore people. We all did things to raise a little money - went around begging for money for the hospital fund and had "Rook" parties. Finally the whole Eastern shore realized the hospital need and pitched in to help.

Wescott's porch with its swing was the summer gathering place every afternoon. Mrs. Wescott was a hospitable hostess. Mrs. Jeff Walker (Aunt Sally) gave us eggs from her little flock of chickens. Later I insisted on paying, so after that a dozen eggs cost 25 cents.

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Everybody wore hats! Miss Mildred's hat shop on the main street supplied us. And we all, adults as well as children, improvised simple costumes and went from house to house on Halloween and had a jolly good time.

Then the new Highway 13, which we called "the stone road," was built parallel to the R.R. tracks, cutting the town in half. It was the favorite place to roller skate before traffic started.

My turn to remember: by Marguerite Wescott Whitehead

Now it is my turn to remember. Childhood memories, that can never to be erased and there are so many. Our town was a small but very friendly, neighbors chatted over the fence anytime of day and visited in the afternoon. It seems so sad to me that television has taken place of afternoon visits and we miss that small town knowing everybody. Nassawadox had several stores in the early nineteen hundreds but our favorite was the Rogers store and the thing children liked most was the candy showcase. The candy was great and almost every kind was two or three for a penny. Our cousins Mary and Paige Wescott were like us they bought candy with eggs. Mr. Hamlet the clerk always said here are my pretty girls with eggs to spend.

R. D. James store was a real shopping place but at Christmas it was a child's paradise. The big Christmas tree was beautiful but there were no lights on it, but all kinds of home made items as well as store bought Christmas tree decorations. Mr. James niece Miss Helen Wilkins was kind of a hostess up there and made the displays so appealing to children.

Halloween was a special time of the year also, we all dressed up and went from house to house. We did not do this modern day trick or treating, we lined up and the houses we visited invited us in and tried to guess who was who. The guessers never had much success except for one lady who every year dressed as a hobo.

Memorial Day here was celebrated by the blacks with a parade that began in Franktown and marched thru Nassawadox and

went back to Franktown by the back road. Nehemiah Saunders, the black undertaker rode in a topless buggy drawn by a beautiful black horse. the marchers followed him, they were mostly younger men except the two men who beat the drums. This was a yearly event until 1917 and most of the young men were in the service so no more parades.

I cannot finish without mention of the wonderful neighbors and friends on our street there were the Jeff Walkers, the B.D. Hollands, Mrs Betty Wilson and her daughters, Minnie and Darsey, the Johnsons, Mr Johnson's sister Lucy, the Johnson's children Barley and Etta, the Richards and what a character Mrs. Hattie Richards was, the Scroder, but I don't remember them, the Smith family, I think were related to people on the seaside road. there were Rogers, Jones, Hastings, and Jameses scattered on the other streets. I guess there are others I have missed but the whole article has been a wonderful recall of childhood memories.

Early

an Addition

I don't know how I ever forgot to include our good friends the Scarboroughs. They lived on the west side of town, on what we called the hill. Later this property was owned by Mr & Mrs Charlie Hurtt, then by Dr. Allen Arnold and now by Mr & Mrs Kirk Webb. The Scarboroughs were very aristocratic people yet down to earth.

I am glad I have gotten in touch with their great grandson "Chuck" Scarborough.