



CAROLINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

April 2021

P.O. Box 324, Bowling Green, Virginia 22427

Vol. 41, Issue 2

MEETING CANCELLED

The Caroline Historical Society, Inc., will NOT meet at 3 p.m. on Sunday, April 25, 2021, in the Caroline Community Services Center, 17202 Richmond Turnpike, Milford, VA 22514

From the President

I sincerely hope our members, families, and friends are healthy and doing well. Most of us have never experienced anything to compare to this current COVID pandemic. In a sense we are experiencing, for the time in our lives, an event impacting millions of peoples, businesses, industries, governments, civic organizations, and churches, just to name a few. Pray this event is over soon and my heart-felt sympathy goes out to those who may have lost family or friends during this horrific time in our history. Look forward to seeing everyone in the near future.

CHS Annual Award

Each year the Annual Award Committee reviews names submitted for consideration for the CHS Annual Award. The award is given to an individual, group, business, organization, or other entity that has made great strides in efforts to promote and preserve local history. It is my honor to announce James Presgraves as recipient of the CHS Annual Award for 2020.

James Presgraves, son of Stanley T. Presgraves of Lincoln, Virginia, and Lucille Jones Presgraves of Bowling Green, Virginia, was born at "Clay Hill" in Upper Zion, Caroline County, Virginia as the 6th generation on the family farm. In 1941, the Federal Government announced the purchase of 77,000 acres of land in Caroline for military training purposes. This acquisition included the Presgraves family farm. Young "Jim" was only 3 years old when the Presgraves family and 2,300 other residents (534 families total) were forced to relocate after their land was acquired by the U.S. Government. As a part the government relocation plan, ten schools, eight churches, and numerous local businesses were closed. The military training base became Fort A. P. Hill.

James Presgraves, age 3, helps family move in 1941



Mr. Presgraves graduated from the University of Richmond with a bachelor of arts (BA) and a master's degree in education. After several years of teaching in Richmond public schools, he joined the faculty at Wytheville Community College. While on the faculty, he successfully wrote over 23 grant applications for the federally funded TRIO programs. These programs provided academic opportunities for low income and/or students with disabilities, thus promoting and increasing college entrances and graduations.

Mr. Presgraves' leadership qualities in the public education were demonstrated as president of the (Richmond) Secondary Teacher's Association and later as president of the Wytheville Community



James Presgraves – 2021

College Faculty Government Association. In working with the TRIO programs, he helped found and served as president of the Virginia Association of Education Opportunity Programs, which later became the VAWVA Association and later a component of the Mid-Eastern Association. As a bookseller, he founded Bookworm and Silverfish in 1967 and developed a 3,000 volume reference collection. Later he helped to start and served as president of the Virginia Antiquarian Booksellers Association and served on the board of the Antiquarian Booksellers' Association of America. During his career as a bookseller, he "borrowed" from relevant sections of Hardesty's Historical Atlases which he edited and published details on 25 Virginia counties and 6 West Virginia counties. He also assembled and published books on the Allen Tragedy and Snowville.

Community service included chair of the Wythe County Republican Party, chair of the Rural Retreat United Methodist Church Council, and later as delegate to Holston U.M.C. service on the Conference Foundation and later the Education Committee.

As a member of the Mount Airy Masonic Lodge 226, he served as secretary for several years, then as chair of the Grand Lodge of Virginia Masonic Community Blood Program, helping to collect over 350,000 units of blood.

Through Mr. Presgraves generous donations, CHS has received hundreds of local family photos, letters, legal documents, receipts, and other items from early the 1800s to the 1920s. His gifts to CHS also included a number of family genealogies, which will be useful for future research.

"Thank You" for allowing CHS to be the caretakers of these valuable items from Caroline County past thus allowing others to enjoy and appreciate in the future.

Mr. Presgraves and his wife Betty currently live Rural Retreat, Virginia. Due to the COVID-19 restrictions and the associated health concerns, Mr. Presgraves' CHS Annual Award was presented by mail. It is our hope Mr. Presgraves and his family will join us for a future meeting, when times are better.

R. Wayne Brooks, President

Introducing Women in History Month 2021

March is designated as National Women in History month. For the sixth year, the Caroline Historical Society honors outstanding Caroline women who have become successful individuals in their professional careers and/or made contributions to improve the community. Over the years, the public has been asked to recommend names of women they believe worthy of consideration. Members of the Society then research the individuals and write articles for publication in the *CHS Newsletter*, the CHS Web page and the CHS Facebook page.

Dale Brittle, Secretary

Rosa Belle Courtney Quash – Caroline Women in History

Rosa Courtney Quash was a citizen of Caroline, beginning her life in the Reedy Church area. In February 2016, days before her 96th birthday, Rosa received a Resolution of Appreciation by the Caroline Board of Supervisors, recognizing a lifetime of outstanding achievements. Sadly, on Monday, February 5, 2018, Rosa passed away, just shy of her 98th birthday.

Caroline Progress reporter Bridget Douglas interviewed Rosa Quash for *Caroline Magazine's* March 2016 article. Rosa was a lifelong educator who taught first and second grades in Madison County, Sunshine Elementary in Woodford, Dawn Elementary for 22 years, and finally at Bowling Green Primary for seven years. Although she did not have children of her own, after school education and activities continued with Rosa generously mentoring children under her tutelage.

According to this article, Rosa stated, "People said every time they saw me, I would have a load of children going somewhere. When I was teaching, the parents did not always take their children around, so I enjoyed taking them different places." Rosa was active in the Caroline Education Association, the Virginia and National Education Associations, the Caroline Literacy Council, the Caroline Chapter of VSU Alumni, and the Caroline Retired Teachers Association.

In addition to her love of education, Rosa was very active in her community as a member of the Caroline Community NAACP, the Dawn Area Planning Committee, the Dawn Progressive Association, the Caroline Cancer Society, McGuire Hospital veteran volunteers, Caroline Emergency Relief Through Volunteer Efforts, Inc., and the Caroline County Library Board. She served as both a cofounder and one of two former vice presidents of the Dawn Library.

Harkening back to earlier times, Rosa had been a member of the Second Mt. Zion Baptist Church in Dawn from the age of six. There, she later became president of the senior choir, treasurer of the



pulpit circle, member of the senior missionary society, and a member of the scholarship fund committee, as well as Sunday school teacher.

Rosa Belle Quash

Recognized for Service to Caroline

Photo Credit: Mark Svare

I had the pleasure of speaking with a descendant of Rosa's, her niece, Evelyn Dupree. Evelyn remarked that Rosa was indeed a generous person, and that Rosa served as Evelyn's role model. Evelyn remembered Rosa as a mild-mannered person who would do anything for anyone – and that if anyone needed help, Rosa would either help them herself or facilitate help from organizations with which she was involved. Rosa is missed greatly to this day.

Clearly, Rosa Courtney Quash is an exemplary role model for so many, and her path to greatness began early in life. It got me to thinking, who could Rosa's early role models have been? I researched a bit for a possible answer. What I discovered was itself extraordinary.

According to delayed birth records, Rosa was born February 25, 1920, in Caroline to Mattie Lewis and Arthur Allen Courtney. Rosa's paternal grandparents were Martha Ellen and William James Courtney, and Rosa's great-grandparents were Sina (Nancy) Kay and John C. Courtney. It is often quite difficult to trace African-American ancestry before 1870; however, Sina Kay and John C. Courtney were among the free black community of Caroline County, with records clearly identifiable back to before 1830.

Sina Kay and John Courtney were married in Caroline on or about March 11, 1822, and had two sons and two daughters. In both the 1830 and 1840 Censuses, John and Sina Courtney were free. By 1850, John Courtney was running a farm of 50 acres, 25 acres of which had been improved. Livestock included three horses, two milk cows, other cattle and livestock, and the farm yielded 275 bushels of Indian corn, oats, and tobacco. In April 1859, John died, leaving a sizable farm to Sina, by then age 63.

With the Civil War quickly approaching, in 1860, Sina Courtney, born about 1796 and by then age 64, was a farmer by occupation. Living in the household with Sina was her daughter, Amanda, as well as her two granddaughters. Remarkably, according to the 1860 Agricultural Schedules, Sina owned and worked the family livestock, and planted and harvested 200 bushels of Indian corn that year, along with 40 bushels of wheat.

According to Henry Louis Gates, Jr., executive producer, writer, and presenter of the series, "The African Americans: Many Rivers to Cross," approximately 90 percent of African Americans became free either during the Civil War or after the Civil War as a result of the ratification of the 13th Amendment.

Rosa Courtney Quash served as a remarkable woman in Caroline's history – as did her extraordinary female ancestors, all who made an indelible mark across time in Caroline.

Resources:

Caroline Magazine, "Outstanding Citizen: Rosa Quash," by Bridget Douglas, Caroline Progress reporter, March 2016

Evelyn Dupree, personal conversation, February 2021

Ancestry.com, 1830, 1840, 1850, 1860, 1870, 1880, 1900, 1910, 1920, and 1930 United States Federal Censuses (Provo, UT, USA, Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., varying years)

Ancestry.com, U.S., Selected Federal Census Non-Population Schedules, 1850-1880 (Provo, UT, USA, Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010)

Ancestry.com, Virginia, U.S., Birth Records, 1912-2015, Delayed Birth Records, 1721-1911 (Provo, UT, USA, Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2015)

"The African Americans: Many Rivers to Cross" Web site: article, "Free Blacks Lived in the North, Right?" by Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Ph.D., 2013

Barbara C. Lagasse, CHS Member

CHS Member Earns Award

Herbert Ridgeway Collins, CHS life member, and one of the founding members of the Caroline Historical Society, Inc., received a prestigious award from the Virginia Genealogical Society (VGS) at their annual meeting held on October 24, 2020. According to VGS, Mr. Collins was presented the award “for his outstanding contributions to VGS, as founding member, president, and life member, and to the genealogical community in general and Caroline County in particular, through his numerous publications and leadership in the establishment of historical and genealogical institutions.” Nick Burch, vice president of VGS, goes on to say, “It is quite literally impossible to do justice to the remarkable life of Herbert Ridgeway Collins in a few words in a newsletter.”

Congratulations Herb! Well-deserved honor for everything you have done and all you continue to do in preserving and promoting Caroline County history.



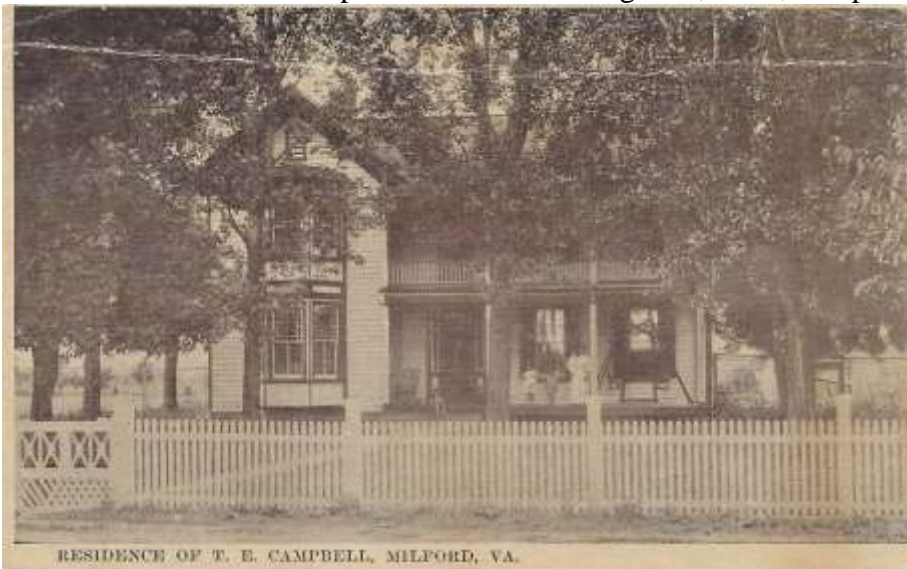
Herbert Ridgeway Collins

Donations

CHS welcomes donations such as documents, photos, and other artifacts from Caroline County’s past. If individuals or families have such items but desire to retain originals for their family heritage, CHS would bear the cost of copying items such as photos for our collection. CHS is especially interested in gathering vintage images of local veterans from 1800s & early 1900s.

Flash Backs

In the early 1900s, Thomas Edward Campbell (T. E. Campbell) owned and operated a general store in Milford. Mr. Campbell was born on August 5, 1876, and passed away on September 13,



1937. T. E. Campbell’s son, Thomas Elliot Campbell (1906 – 1964), became a local attorney and served as the clerk of the court in Caroline County for many years. In 1954 he wrote the popular history of Caroline entitled *Colonial Caroline A History of Caroline County, Virginia* by T. E. Campbell

Residence of T. E. Campbell in Milford, Virginia. (1914 photo postcard)



With the springtime on the way our thoughts turn to outdoor events like high school baseball. The picture to the left was donated to CHS by Jim Cropper. His father, Herman Farrell Cropper, graduated from Caroline High School in 1952.

*Caroline High School
Baseball team 1948*

Top Row: (left to right) Paul Chilton, “Smokey” Stover
Middle Row: Peyton Farmer, Royster Stanley, Eugene Kish, Richard Covington, Aubrey Pickett, Dewey Thomas
Bottom Row: Phlahie Gouldin, Ed Upshaw, Buck Upshaw, Roger Gray, Paul Crismond, George George Farmer, Hampton Dishman

Loss of CHS Member

Ms. Virginia Fall – McDonough, GA.

New CHS Member

Gloria Bolecek – Woodford, Virginia

CHS Membership Dues Reminder for 2020 and 2021

If you have not paid your 2020 dues or your upcoming 2021 dues, please forward payment to:

Caroline Historical Society

P.O. Box 324

Bowling Green, VA 22427-0324

Individual membership – \$15.00 per year

Family membership – \$20.00 per year

Life membership – \$200 for life

General Contact Information

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Facebook—Caroline Historical Society, Bowling Green, Va.

Web Site—www.carolinehistoricalsociety.org

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