

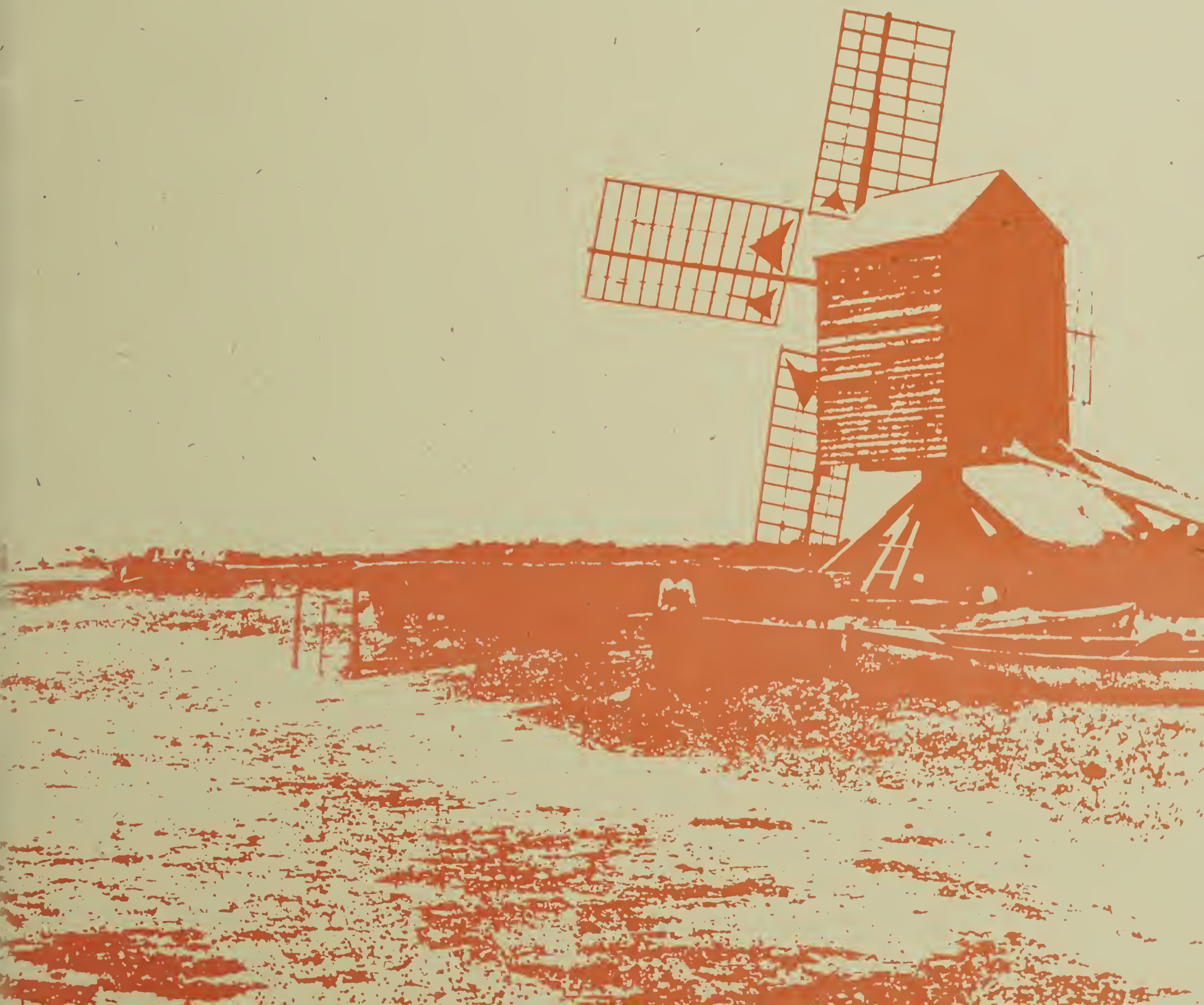
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A PUBLICATION OF THE NORTH CAROLINA MARITIME HISTORY COUNCIL

Tributaries

OCTOBER 1996

NUMBER - 6





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About the Maritime History Council

THE NORTH CAROLINA MARITIME HISTORY COUNCIL came together in 1988 when a group of individuals professionally involved in maritime history programs began meeting informally to share information and to discuss issues of mutual concern.

Aware that the sheer size of the state's coastal area, increasingly rapid development, and the variety of coastal waters have tended to fragment efforts to preserve the state's maritime history, the group began to explore ways to pool the resources of disparate state and federal agencies.

The North Carolina Maritime History Council was incorporated in 1990 with the mission to identify and encourage historical and educational projects that have as their purpose the enhancement and preservation of the state's maritime history and culture, and that create public awareness of that heritage.

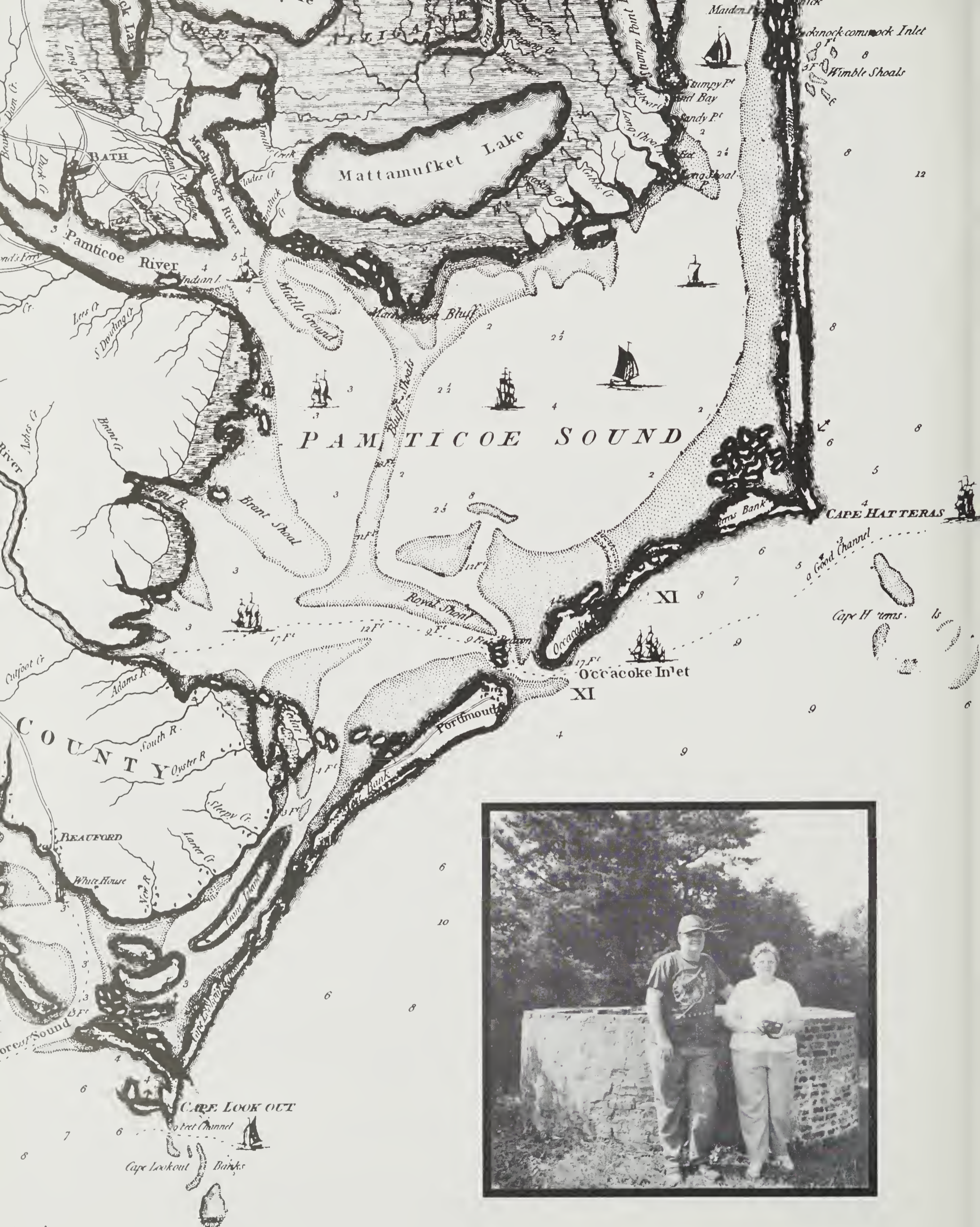
The council views this heritage in broad perspective, noting that its influence extends to the heads of navigation of the state's rivers.

An example of its accomplishments is the purchase of the Edwin Champney drawings, a collection of fifty-nine sketches of coastal scenes from the Civil War period that were obtained by the council in 1990 using funds donated by the Frank Stick Trust and other nonprofit groups. They are now part of the permanent collections of the North Carolina Division of Archives and History and are administered by the Outer Banks History Center.

The council advises the North Carolina Maritime Museum on the newly instituted N.C. Historic Vessel Register. This journal has been published by the group for the past six years.

Council membership is offered to nonprofit organizations and institutions involved in the study and teaching of the state's maritime culture and to individuals interested in maritime history.

Rodney D. Barfield
CHAIR



North Carolina's First Hospital

by Dr. Martin Rozear

Although hospitals were well known in ancient Greece and Renaissance Europe, they were a relatively late development in the burgeoning British Colonies. The first was Pennsylvania Hospital in Philadelphia, founded in 1755.

Similar institutions followed—New York Hospital (1775) and Massachusetts General Hospital (1821)—but hospitals were virtually unheard of in the South before the Civil War. Patients were treated in homes, barracks, monasteries, or whatever shelter suited the occasion (“derived hospitals”).

Physicians converted large residential dwellings to “proprietary hospitals,” a practice that persisted and evolved into the twentieth century. However, the phenomenon of a building planned, constructed, and used as a hospital (“designed hospital”) did not exist in North Carolina until the fifth decade of the nineteenth century.

One would guess that North Carolina’s first hospital might have been built in a large metropolis, such as Raleigh or Charlotte. In fact, Dorothea Dix opened its doors to patients in Raleigh in 1856. Charlotte Memorial Hospital first transferred patients from a building originally used as a military academy in 1878.

Surprisingly, the first designed hospital in North Carolina was built in 1846-1847 in what is now a ghost town; Portsmouth, on Portsmouth Island, adjacent to

Ocracoke Island and Ocracoke Inlet.

In its hey day, the 1850s, a population of almost 700 and an active commerce flourished there. Thereafter, the population declined. In 1958 Portsmouth claimed only three residents, and by 1972 there were none. Now, two dozen empty buildings, maintained by the National Park Service, stare out at Pamlico Sound and Ocracoke Inlet. They seem to be waiting for someone to come home. All that remains of the hospital is a brick cistern and a fragmented fireplace foundation.

It is instructive to visit this bleak island and reflect on humble beginnings (and endings). Inaccessible now except by privately-owned boat or aircraft, Portsmouth possesses all the eerie beauty one could wish for in a ghost town; roads that are dark tunnels meandering through sighing cedars, and crumbling cemeteries with scary old-fashioned markers leaning wearily in the sandy loam. And silence.

Portsmouth was contrived by the colonial government in 1753 to fill a crucial need in North Carolina; facilitation of the practice of “lightering.” Bound as the state is by the Outer Banks, which are cut by treacherous, changing inlets, maritime shipping had from the beginning avoided North Carolina’s harbors for Charleston and deeper Chesapeake ports. Ocean-going ships drew too much water to manage the systems of bars, swashes, shoals, and sounds. Ships fit for commerce within the sounds were too small for trans-oceanic work. The best solution at the time was to “lighter” (lighten) large ships arriving from Europe, New England, and the West Indies. Near the inlets, portions of the cargoes were transferred to smaller ships, “coasters,” which could then be distributed to interior towns.

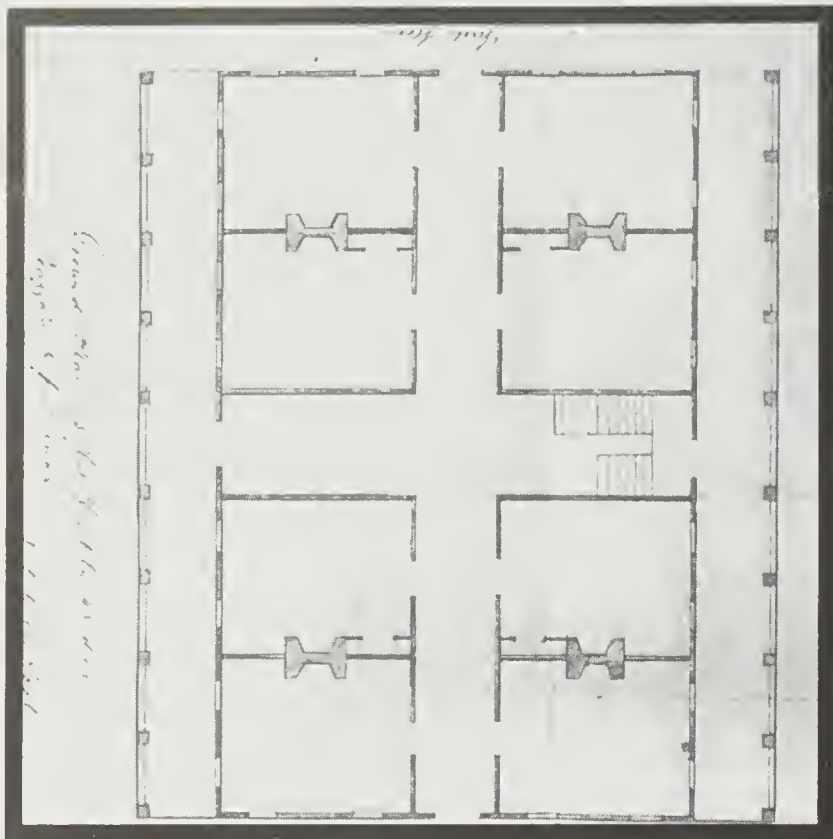
Thus lightened and therefore drawing less water, the larger ships could enter the inlets to lie at anchor in the relative protection of the islands, take on provisions, give crews shore leave, etc. This business, cumbersome, labor-intensive, and dangerous as it was, actually worked. Reliable observers of the early 1800s described seeing as many as “30 to 60 sail of ship” in the roadsteads around Portsmouth at one time.

Lightering required locals to pilot the ships in and

Left: **Portion of 1775 Mouzon Map showing Ocracoke Inlet and adjacent islands. Portsmouth is shown as a sizable town with a collection of buildings and a road stretching several miles down Core Banks in this map, drawn only 20 years after the town was begun.**

Inset: **Brick masonry cistern built for the hospital in 1853 at a cost of \$150. Pictured in front are Dr. Samuel Dudley’s great-great grandchildren William Swindell III and Ann Dudley Grant.**

(Photo: Frances A. Eubanks Collection)



A portion of one of the plans submitted to the Department of the Treasury for the United States Marine Hospital at Portsmouth, completed in 1847. Note fireplaces in each room.

out of the inlets, hands to assist with cargo transfer, wharves, warehouses, and other storage facilities, and all the ancillary furniture of a busy port town—which soon appeared at Portsmouth.

The lightering and coasting trade brought another element to this busy, lucrative scene; sick seamen. They came from abroad, as well as from interior towns, with scurvy, smallpox, dysentery, fractures, infected wounds, venereal disease, insanity, yellow fever, ague, and miasmas. (They rarely lived long enough to have strokes, heart attacks, and cancer.)

Being unfit for duty (many posed potential quarantine problems for their ships at the next port of call), these sick sailors were “dumped” on the island more or less to fend for themselves. Generally poor, filthy, and graceless, they made a sorry sight and were a major problem for the islanders. Care, such as it was for these wretches, was provided in homes, haphazardly. There was no physician within 40 miles of Portsmouth until 1828.

The Marine Hospital Service

Congress, following a British practice, established a system providing “Relief for Sick and Disabled Seamen” by an act of July 16, 1798, signed into law by President John Adams. This was, in reality, a compulsory, payroll-deduction, health insurance scheme.

Under the plan, \$20 was deducted by the ships’ masters from the monthly pay of each seaman (“hospital

money”), and paid to the Collector of Customs at each port of entry. The collector, in turn, disbursed the funds, procuring for sick and disabled seamen, “relief,” in the form of medical care, nursing, medicines, lodging, and board, such as might be available locally.

Ocracoke was made a port of entry in 1806. James Taylor was appointed the first collector. The collectors at Ocracoke, many of whom resided at Portsmouth, managed the medical care of seamen in these two towns.

As one might imagine, this system was not a great improvement on the old—with two exceptions. First, the locals who assisted beneficiaries of the fund were rewarded for their trouble. Second, in 1828, collector Joshua Taylor was able to attract a physician to Portsmouth, Dr. John W. Potts, who signed a contract to be hospital physician for an annual salary of \$1,500.

At the time, the island’s population was about 300. The pickings being lean, Dr. Potts quickly saw that maintaining a hospital at this remote location, even with a private practice on the side, was a grim proposition. He subcontracted with Dr. Samuel Dudley the next year.

There followed a series of physicians working out of a small, rented, two-room dwelling in the most primitive circumstances. With high tides and storms, sea water flowed over the floors of the “hospital.” Drinking water, described as “brackish and bitter,” was obtained from a shallow hole dug in the sand.

Everyone could see this was an intolerable situation. The lightering business kept building, and the sick and disabled seamen kept coming.

The Hospital at Portsmouth

Aware that marine hospitals had been built at Norfolk, Boston, Charleston, and Mobile, the collectors and other prominent citizens barraged a succession of Secretaries of the Treasury and other officials for a real hospital at Portsmouth. Enthusiastic supporters envisaged a facility that could be a referral center.

At one point the collector complained that he had 17 seriously ill seamen whom he had to put up in a rough boathouse. Finally, an 1842 act of Congress appropriated \$8,500 to build a hospital. A lengthy process of legal contortions over title to the land, planning, bidding, contracting, inspecting, and provisioning delayed opening of the hospital until 1847.

This was a very substantial two-story structure, built on piers, with a fireplace in each room, primitive running water, spacious “piazzas” (porches), and separate quarters for the hospital physician, and at times, a “medical student.” Two plans submitted during the bidding for this structure were recently found in the letters from the Collectors of Customs to the Secretary of the Treasury at the National Archives.

The hospital had a brief existence—as a hospital.



Side elevation of plan. Note the substantial piers supporting the structure which protected the lower floor from sea water (a frequent visitor to buildings on the island during storms) as well as the columned “piazzas” (porches).

The practice of lightering peaked about the time the hospital doors opened. With the arrival of rail service and other improvements at more traditional deep-water ports, such as Wilmington and Beaufort, the lightering business at Ocracoke Inlet began to fall off, never to recover.

During the 1850s a varied, but steadily dwindling, patient population sought relief at the United States Marine Hospital at Portsmouth. At times during the last half of the decade, the beds were empty. The expense of maintaining such a facility at this remote and meteorologically hostile site became apparent to Congress, and plans were started to construct North Carolina’s “main” marine hospital at Wilmington. The Civil War put an end to both endeavors.

During the Civil War, Confederate forces occupied the Outer Banks but were easily dislodged by Federals in August 1861. Most Portsmouth Island residents fled to interior towns; less than half returned after the war.

Except for fishing, subsistence farming, and active involvement in the U. S. Lifesaving Service after 1874, the economy continued to dwindle. The hospital building, never used as a hospital after the war and abandoned by the federal government by 1872, was put to a variety of uses—among them dance hall, weather station, and telegraph station.

The building burned in 1894. All that is left of the hospital is the cistern. Following a practice which is still used by many Outer Banks residents, rainwater was collected from the roofs by gutters and carried through

downspouts to large tanks for storage. The hospital’s original wooden cistern quickly showed an annoying tendency to leak, and by 1852 had rotted irreversibly.

After the usual series of pleas, bids, contracts, deals, and inspections, a fine brick/masonry cistern was built in 1853 for \$150. This structure, about nine feet in diameter, stands a few yards southwest of the lifesaving station. Presently impounding a few gallons of green slime and countless million mosquito larvae, it once contained “the sweetest water” on the island. Nearby, in the sand, are fragments of brick work, probably one of the hospital’s fireplace footings.

The United States Marine Hospital Service continued to grow. It was extensively reorganized in 1870, and became the United States Public Health and Marine Hospital Service in 1902 and the United States Public Health Service in 1912.

With the addition of the National Institutes of Health, the U.S.P.H.S. grew to the multi-billion dollar agency we know today. The crumbling remains of one of the first U.S. Marine hospitals and of North Carolina’s first hospital stand in mysteriously beautiful Portsmouth Village; a silent witness to the humble origins of great health care systems of the state and nation. ❖

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NOTE D
 Hatteras Inlet is subject to continual change.
 Entrance buoys are not charted because they
 are frequently shifted in position.

The Emergence of Hatteras Inlet, North Carolina

by Tom Marcinko

Located along the Outer Banks of North Carolina is a series of inlets and ports long used by the maritime community. Among these is Hatteras Inlet. For several decades in the mid-nineteenth century, Hatteras Inlet provided a direct economic and military link between the interior of North Carolina and the major ports on the East Coast and the West Indies.

Originally the inlet developed as a center for maritime commerce in the middle of the century, providing inland ports such as New Bern, Washington, Plymouth, Edenton, and Elizabeth City with an accessible waterway from Pamlico and Albemarle Sounds to the Atlantic Ocean. Hatteras Inlet also served as an important Confederate coastal defensive and privateering base during the first year of the Civil War. Today, the inlet is no longer used by commercial or military vessels. Its only maritime traffic consists of local fishermen and pleasure boaters.

Hatteras Inlet is different from most inlets along the North Carolina coast in that it has been located in two different positions in historic time. In 1884 William Welch, who developed a curiosity about the inlet while stationed there in the federal army in 1864, contacted then Governor Thomas J. Jarvis regarding information on the inlet. Jarvis, in turn, enlisted the aid of Redding Quidley, a Hatteras Island citizen and pilot, to help trace the history of the inlet. Quidley gathered information from other residents and reported to Welch that the old inlet was located in an area which is now part of Ocracoke Island called the "Swash."

John Austin, at 75 years of age, the eldest resident of the southern portion of the Outer Banks at the time, told Quidley he recalled his grandfather saying:

there was an inlet about six miles southwest of where the inlet is now...; there was an English vessel, a ship, ran on the bar of said inlet and was lost, and the wreck sanded up the beach made down to it and finally closed up the inlet.¹

A second interview by Quidley of William Balance, 72 years old and the second eldest resident of the area, reinforced Austin's description of the closing of the first inlet. Balance told Quidley he remembered hearing his father say:

that he had seen a piece of wreck standing up, right at, or near the place that Austin speaks of as being the place where the inlet was, and had been told by other people, that it was the stern post of the vessel that closed up the inlet. This place that they speak of is about five or six miles from this inlet we have now, between two points known now as 'Shingle Creek' and 'Quake Hammock.'²

The exact date of the closing of the old inlet is currently unknown, but the old Hatteras Inlet last appeared as a navigable inlet on a chart made in 1738 by James Wimble. A 1764 chart made by Daniel Dunbibin showed the inlet as non-existent.³ From this information, it appears that over the span of those 26 years, the old Hatteras Inlet closed due to the wreckage of a ship, possibly English, and the eventual accretion of sand around the vessel.⁴

The area between Cape Henry, Virginia, and Ocracoke Inlet, North Carolina, remained void of a navigable inlet until 1846. Consequently, Ocracoke Inlet became the dominant passageway into and out of the North Carolina sounds. An 1842 government report stated that 1400 vessels sailed out through Ocracoke Inlet during the 12 consecutive months in 1836–1837. The report further noted that occasionally, due to unfavorable weather, it was "not uncommon to see from thirty to sixty sail of vessels anchor in the roads [at Ocracoke] at one time."⁵

Left: **Section of current navigational chart of Hatteras Inlet, North Carolina.**

Residents of the northern Outer Banks unsuccessfully petitioned the federal government to create an inlet in the vicinity of Nags Head. They believed another inlet would allow the merchants and sailors from the Albemarle region an alternate route to Atlantic shipping lanes, which would bypass the treacherous shoals off Cape Hatteras and provide a safer and quicker shipping route. Nature obliged them in September 1846 by creating not one, but two inlets between Cape Henry and Ocracoke.

A storm connected Pamlico Sound with the Atlantic Ocean at Hatteras Inlet and at Oregon Inlet, south of Nags Head. This gale-force storm gained additional power from a perigean spring tide.⁶ The new Hatteras Inlet emerged on September 7, 1846. Quidley noted that "Hatteras Inlet was cut out by a heavy gale, a violent storm on the 7th of Sept., at night, 1846."⁷

The best account of the "hurricane," if indeed the storm was a true hurricane, came from the United States coastal survey brig *Washington*. The *Washington*, taking scientific measurements off the Gulf Stream current, encountered the storm off Nags Head early on the morning of 8 September. During that morning the *Washington* foundered:

when a heavy sea struck her, and, toppling over the side, poured a deluge of water down upon the decks, crushing the deck cabin, and tearing it and the berth deck from their fastening; throwing the vessel completely on her beam ends, and sweeping those on deck into the raging sea.⁸

Eleven men from the *Washington* were lost at sea, including Lieutenant Commander George M. Bache, the vessel's commander. Having lost her main yard, main mast, and foremast, the *Washington* managed to ride out the remainder of the storm and stay afloat until 17 September when the frigate USS *Constitution* towed her safely to Philadelphia, arriving on 24 September 1846.

Quidley noted that many families who resided on Hatteras where the inlet was created were quite surprised on the morning of the eighth to find nothing left of their homes, including Quidley's uncle's fig orchard and potato patch.

Further north on the Outer Banks, the storm caused great destruction and havoc. A local man who lived on Bodie Island, Mr. Midgette (first name unknown), stated that the storm broke through the beach creating an inlet. Subsequent flooding from Pamlico Sound covered all, save the highest knolls on Bodie Island, about five-and-a-half feet above sea level.

At first the breach measured only 20 feet across, and it was believed that the new inlet would soon close, but it is still open today as Oregon Inlet.⁹ Oregon Inlet derived its name from the first vessel to pass through the inlet in

The number of pilots residing at Hatteras, Ocracoke, and Portsmouth. The 1890 census records were destroyed in a fire.*

Year	Ocracoke/Portsmouth	Hatteras
1850	57	11
1860	27	35
1870	16	9
1880	0	26
1890	*	*
1900	2	0

1848, a small steamboat called *Oregon*. Due to the shallowness of the cut, it would never accommodate large draft vessels like Hatteras Inlet.

Even after the new Hatteras Inlet had been cut, it too remained unusable until a second storm in 1846 deepened it. The second storm, known as "The Great Hurricane of 1846," scoured the inlet out even more, making it suitable for large draft vessels.

Though this second hurricane caused only excessive high tides and the deepening of Hatteras Inlet in North Carolina, other states were not so fortunate. The storm caused a significant loss of ships, massive property damage, and serious flooding from New England and the mid-Atlantic states to Florida and Cuba.¹⁰

Once the storms increased the depth of the inlet sufficiently to accommodate large draft vessels, Redding Quidley piloted the first vessel to pass through it, the schooner *Asher C. Havens*, on February 5, 1847.¹¹

The new Hatteras Inlet grew steadily in maritime activity even though the older Ocracoke Inlet remained operable about 15 miles away. Several factors precipitated this transfer of maritime commerce from Ocracoke Inlet to Hatteras Inlet. By far the most important was the ability of Hatteras Inlet to keep a depth of 14 to 16 feet that allowed deeper-drafted vessels to enter it. The depth of Ocracoke, on the other hand, was subject to the shifting sands and severe shoaling consistent with the Outer Banks. In an 1884 letter to Welch, Quidley stated that he:

cannot give the exact time that vessels left off passing through Ocracoke. I was one of the first Commissioners of Navigation appointed for Hatteras Inlet, I think in 1852: there has been but very little passing through there [Ocracoke Inlet] now except perchance, that a vessel goes in case of distress of weather, on head winds, and draws light draught of water, 4 or 5 feet.¹²

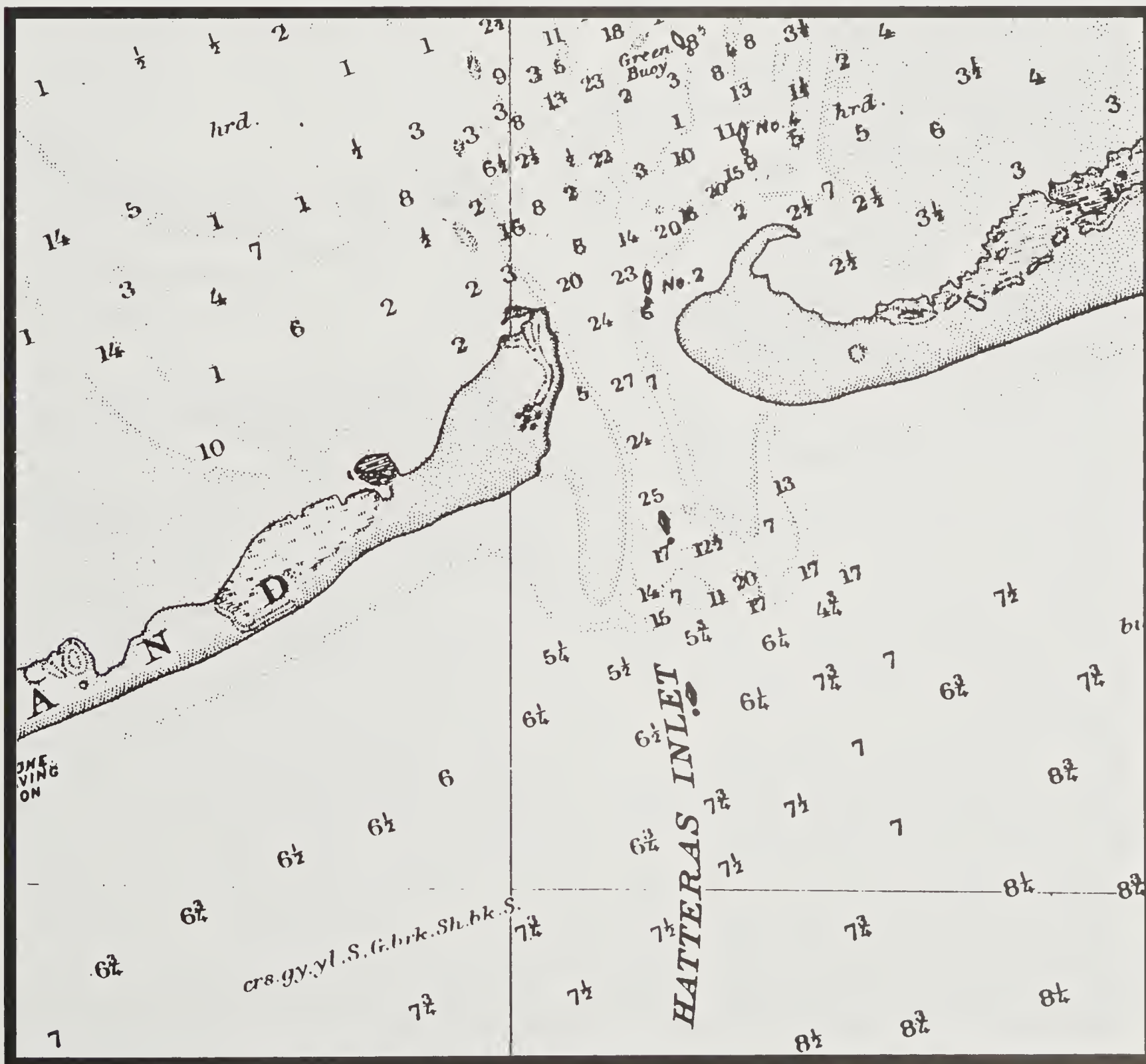
Prior to the opening of Hatteras Inlet, Ocracoke Inlet served as the passageway from eastern North Carolina's ports to the Atlantic. The federal government estimated two-thirds of the state of North Carolina's exports passed through Ocracoke Inlet during the late 1830s.¹³ The creation of Hatteras Inlet changed shipping patterns of North Carolina by diverting the maritime traffic from Ocracoke Inlet to Hatteras Inlet.

After the inlet's creation, a port arose on Hatteras Island. There is evidence of significant maritime traffic from the West Indies that went through the port. Hatteras Inlet customs records from January 1, 1859 to July 1, 1861, provide a detailed listing of the maritime traffic

entering the inlet. During this period, 116 incoming schooners passed through the inlet.

Records kept by John W. Rolinson, customs agent at Hatteras Inlet, provide the destination, port of departure, cargo, vessel tonnage, and master for most inbound ships. Unfortunately, Rolinson did not record the number of outward bound vessels and local coastal trading vessels that used the inlet. It is believed that the same vessels traveling into North Carolina through Hatteras Inlet from the West Indies also traveled outward bound through the inlet.

During this brief period, only schooners from the West Indies returned through Hatteras Inlet. The tonnage



An enlargement of the 1883 Coast and Geodetic Survey Chart of Hatteras Inlet.

of the vessels ranged from 58 to 149 tons, though most of the schooners were approximately 100 tons.¹⁴ Throughout 1859 to mid-1861 the main West Indian trading ports included (decreasing in importance) St. Martin, Barbados, St. Kitts, Turks Island, and St. Thomas.

The schooners brought a variety of goods from the West Indies, primarily sugar products. Cargo included molasses, sugar, salt, rum, and different types of fruit, such as oranges, coconuts, pineapples, tamarinds, and bananas.

Not all of the schooners returned to North Carolina with goods, however. Out of the 91 schooners that have manifest lists, 26 returned only in ballast. Many schooners that returned in ballast also brought gold or silver specie that they obtained for the goods sold in the West Indies, although a number of vessels returned with both gold and a small import cargo.

On the export side of the West Indian trade, North Carolina exported naval stores and forest products such as tar, pitch, turpentine, lumber, and barrel staves. Elizabeth City, Edenton, Washington, Plymouth, and New Bern imported the most cargo through Hatteras Inlet from the Caribbean.

Elizabeth City was by far the foremost import city among the eastern North Carolina cities. During these two-and-a-half years, 10 different schooners carried goods from the West Indies to Elizabeth City on 40 separate trips.¹⁵ At least three different vessels—the *J.F. Debenport*, the *Lydia* and *Martha*, and the *Loucinth*—returned exclusively to Elizabeth City.

Unfortunately for the *Loucinth*, she wrecked five miles north of Hatteras Inlet on 25 June 1860, after at least five successful voyages to and from the West Indies. She carried 200,000 shingles when she went down, evidence that lumber products still constituted a principal export to the West Indies from North Carolina.

The most active schooner was the *J.F. Debenport*, which made 10 round-trip voyages to the Caribbean between January 1859 and June 1861. The time required for a round-trip voyage, obviously dependent upon the weather and the destination, appears to have averaged about two months.¹⁶

Many of the schooners operating in the North Carolina-West Indian trade from the smaller ports—such as Edenton, Washington, New Bern, and Plymouth—did not have a set trading route. They usually departed from the same eastern North Carolina port and sailed to various West Indian ports.

The number of pilots as well as the volume of cargo passing through the port are good indicators of maritime traffic. In the 1850 North Carolina census, four years after the opening of Hatteras Inlet, 57 pilots lived at Ocracoke and Portsmouth, while only 11 resided at Hatteras.

This figure reversed for the 1860 census, though the total number of pilots declined slightly. The number of

The most numerous types of cargo imported through Hatteras Inlet from the West Indies during 1859–1861. Out of the 91 schooners with manifest lists, 65 returned with the cargo listed below.

	1859	1860	1861	
SALT	11,111	31,701	9874	bushels
	803	731	448	barrels
MOLASSES	222	254	32	puncheons*
	123	7	44	hogsheads
	3	1.5	0	barrels
	0	0	1	cask
SUGAR	150	58	1	barrel
	100	0	0	pounds
	0	0	44	bushels
	0	0	3	hogsheads
	0	0	3	casks
FRUIT				
	tamarinds	9	29	2 kegs
	oranges	19,000	7800	2100 individuals
	coconuts	0	1450	0 individuals
	pineapples	0	1340	0 individuals
	lemons	0	5	0 kegs
bananas	0	20	0 bunches	

*A puncheon is a measure equal to approximately 120 gallons.

pilots at Hatteras increased three-fold to 35, while the number at Ocracoke/Portsmouth dropped by more than half to 27.¹⁷ While not conclusive, the number of resident pilots can be used as a significant indication of the relative importance of maritime activity at each port.

By the end of the 1850s, Hatteras Inlet reached its peak of commercial maritime activity. In addition to having economic importance, Hatteras Inlet became a place of military importance during the Civil War. The beginning of the Civil War brought devastating consequences to the area. Confederate privateers disrupted and captured northern commercial ships in 1861 and made Hatteras Inlet a haven for privateers and blockade runners.

Also, the inlet constituted a strategic passage into and out of the sounds of North Carolina. Hatteras Inlet provided a direct link with many important mainland cities via the navigable sounds and rivers of the state. For these reasons, in August 1861, the Union captured the two forts, Hatteras and Clark, located adjacent to Hatteras Inlet. The inlet remained in Union hands for the remainder of the war.

It is apparent that during the 1850s, Hatteras Inlet emerged as an important maritime trading center along North Carolina's Outer Banks. After its creation, Hatteras Inlet quickly surpassed and replaced Ocracoke Inlet as the main maritime port on the southern portion of the Outer Banks. The inlet operated as the principal passageway into the sounds for vessels from eastern North Carolina port cities. Ships carried sugar products, salt, and fruit from the West Indies into North Carolina while they transported naval stores and lumber products in the other direction.

Hatteras Inlet's importance as a maritime commercial route was short-lived. Secession and the Civil War brought a temporary hiatus to the inlet's traffic. After the War, Hatteras experienced a resurgence of its maritime role, but by the end of the nineteenth century the inlet had lost its commercial importance to newly built railroads and canals. ❧

A breakdown of the number of vessels that returned to North Carolina and whether they carried cargo, ballast, or unknown freight.

	1859	1860	1861 [Jan-Jun]	Total
No. Schooners Returned with:				
CARGO	26	29	10	65
BALLAST	14	9	3	26
UNKNOWN	20	5*	0	25*
Total	60	43	13	116

*In 1860, two vessels were listed coming into Hatteras Inlet, but their recorded destinations were outside North Carolina. The *Hugh W. Fry* carried 116 boxes of precipitate copper and 133.5 tons of copper ore from Cuba to Baltimore. The *William T. Henden* carried 55 tons of guano from the Bahamas to Richmond, Virginia. Presumably, both vessels continued their voyages to their ports of call.

NOTES

1. William Welch, "Opening of Hatteras Inlet," *Essex Institute Bulletin* 17 (1885), 41.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Ibid.*, 38-39.
4. *Ibid.*, 42.
5. U.S. Congress, House of Representatives, *Committee on Commerce Report*, 27th Cong., 2d sess., 1-4.
6. A perigeon spring tide occurs when the moon and the sun are aligned on the same side of the earth and the moon is at the closest approach to the earth in its lunar orbit. This alignment causes a higher gravitational pull on the tides, therefore resulting in a higher high tide and a lower low tide.
7. Welch, "Opening of Hatteras Inlet," 40.
8. U.S. Congress, Senate, *Report of the Superintendent of the Coast Survey*, 29th Cong., 2d sess., 1846, 53-68.
9. U.S. Congress, Senate, *Report of the Superintendent of the Coast Survey*, 30th Cong., 1st sess., 1847, 76-77.
10. Fergus J. Wood, *The Strategic Role of Perigeon Spring Tides in Nautical History and American Coastal Flooding 1635-1976* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, 1976), 85; and David M. Ludlum, *Early American Hurricanes 1492-1870* (Boston: American Meteorological Society, 1963), 151-154.
11. Welch, "Opening of Hatteras Inlet," 40.
12. *Ibid.*, 41-42
13. U.S. Congress, House of Representatives, *Committee on Commerce Report*, 27th Congress., 2d sess., 1842, 1.
14. John W. Rolinson Collection, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, N.C.
15. *Ibid.*
16. *Ibid.*
17. Gary S. Dunbar, *Historical Geography of the North Carolina Outer Banks* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1958), 139.

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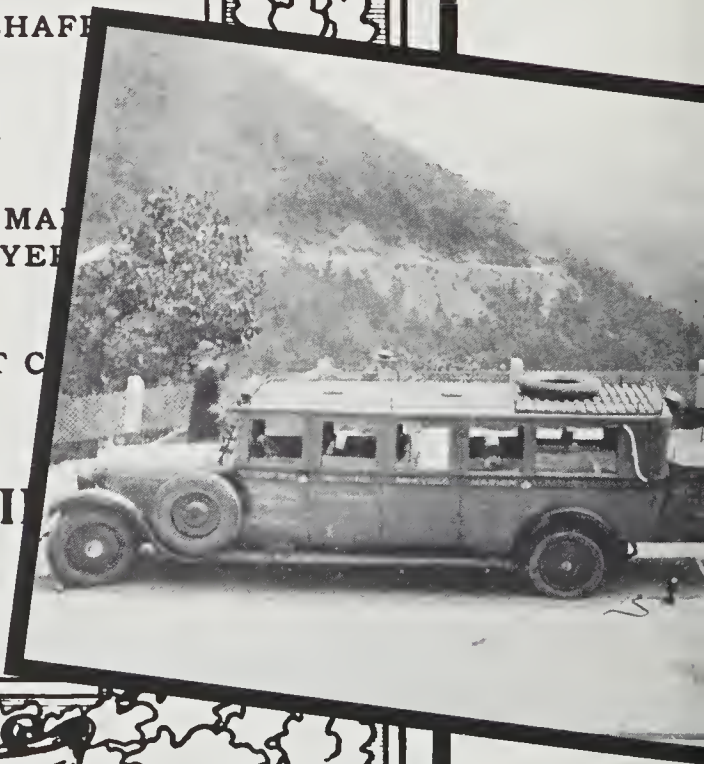
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(Inset: *The National Geographic Magazine*, May 1926)

A View of History: *Motor-Coaching Through North Carolina*

compiled by Rodney Barfield

Ever since William Byrd remarked on the wardrobe and living habits of a “Marooner” who lived on the Outer Banks, visitors to North Carolina’s barrier islands have felt compelled to comment on the nature of the flora, fauna, and inhabitants of the coastal sand bars.

A “Marooner,” Byrd sniffed, “that Modestly call’d himself a Hermit, tho’ he forfeited that Name by Suffering a wanton Female to cohabit with Him.”

Most observers of the Carolina coast, especially of the Outer Banks, have been quick to note the uniqueness of the area and its residents and have tended toward the use of superlatives in their descriptions. Even negative reports were apt to portray the people and their ways as larger-than-life.

Prior to the Civil War, descriptions of the Banks and its citizens were consistently negative. Visitors to the isolated reefs often quipped about the strange and stubborn ways of the people, the relentless blowing sand, the endless swarms of mosquitoes, and the shoaly waters that threatened maritime traffic.

The colony’s first governor, Edward Hyde, found the Bankers to be “naturally loose and wicked [,] obstinate and rebellious [,] crafty and deceitful...” Governor Gabriel Johnston referred to the coastal denizens as “indigent desperate outlaws and vagabonds.”

Even as late as the 1850s, a Greensboro newspaper editor wrote of coastal North Carolina:

The men of the region—as had been reported and believed in the interior by many—were scaly, had broad tails and thorny fins growing from their backs, the result of living on fish and diving after crabs.

“GREENSBORO PATRIOT,” 1858.

Two major events changed the public perception of the Outer Banks and its inhabitants and of the coastal region in general. The first was literary. In 1849 Calvin H. Wiley, Superintendent of North Carolina Schools, penned a novella titled “Roanoke, Or Where is Utopia?” In that work of fiction, Wiley introduced an island utopia called Roanoke that described a pre-industrial society of natives who lived in harmony with nature and off the bounty of the sea.

The second momentous event that changed public perception of the Outer Banks was the Civil War and its aftermath. The Bankers were reluctant secessionists, and the federal government did not fail to reward the islanders with post offices, lifesaving stations, and lighthouses after the war. Union soldiers sent home stories of quaint coastal villages and seafaring people, mysterious shipwrecks, heroic sea rescues, and violent ocean storms.

After the war, northern sportsmen and capital flooded the secluded area, buying up huge tracts of land for exclusive hunt and gun clubs. The Outer Banks, in fact and in public perception, was changed forever.

By the time Melville Chater traipsed along the Banks, its image was a romantic story of pirates, Elizabethan ancestry, wild mustangs, and shipwrecks. Chater traveled for *The National Geographic Magazine*, but his literary style was heavily influenced by the “color writing” of the day—ornate descriptions of eccentric and exotic places. His “Motor-Coaching Through North Carolina,” written in 1926, presented a view of coastal culture that is often represented today—a bit soft and misty with a faint glow of the romantic and a large blush of the idyllic.

Some of the following images are taken from Chater’s journey along the North Carolina coast in 1926: Melville Chater, “Motor-Coaching Through North Carolina,” *The National Geographic Magazine*, Vol. XLIX, No. 5, May 1926. ❖

Banker Ponies

The horses of the Outer Banks, underfed and inbred nags, according to naturalist Edmund Ruffin, who visited the Banks in 1810, were described by Mr. Chater in 1926 as "Barbary ponies which were brought over by Sir Walter Raleigh's colonists."

Horse pennings are a venerable tradition on the Outer Banks. For generations the free-ranging animals were rounded up once a year for branding and for disinfecting. Today, the horses are part of the Banks' scenery under the care of the National Park Service.



LASSING AND CUTTING OUT COLTS ON BEAUFORT BANKS, 1926.

(The National Geographic Magazine, May 1926)



WILD HORSES OF THE CAROLINA DUNES. These kicking and squealing ponies have just been herded into Diamond Pen, Beaufort Banks. They are to be disinfected and selected for auctioning, and the foals are to be branded. *(The National Geographic Magazine, May 1926)*

Under-Utilized Seafood

Bankers practiced the eating habits and shared the diets of their mainland cousins, which tended to be conservative and basic. The more exotic catches, such as terrapin and dolphin, were shipped north to meet the more daring culinary tastes of their Yankee brethren.

A WORTHY CATCH. Three Down Easterns display an enormous loggerhead turtle caught in Cape Lookout Bight, ca. 1908. This threatened species continues to nest on the Outer Banks.

(North Carolina Maritime Museum)



NURSERY TERRAPINS at the U.S. Bureau of Fisheries at Beaufort, 1926. Seven hundred nine-month old “delicacies for epicures” destined for the New York and Philadelphia restaurant markets.

(*The National Geographic Magazine*, May 1926)



FISHING THE BANKS. A fishing hut near Cape Lookout, ca. 1885. Throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, fishermen from Harkers Island and Shackleford Banks built fishing huts and camps on the Outer Banks to scout for whale, dolphin, mullet, and other commercial fish. The huts were constructed of saplings and reeds and provided the fishermen's only shelter during the several months they fished the Banks' waters. Evidence recently discovered suggests African architectural antecedents. (George Brown Goode, *The Fisheries and Fishery Industries of the United States*, 1884–1887)

Shipwrecks

Shipwrecks were a widely accepted symbol of the Outer Banks from an early age. Most visitors to the area, beginning with Giovanni da Verrazzano in 1524, remarked on the violent storms along the coast and their toll on shipping. One of Walter Raleigh's early expeditions to the Banks foundered at Ocracoke Inlet.

It was not until the late 19th century and the increased use of steam engines that vessels sailing along the Outer Banks could consistently best the shoaly waters and tricky currents of the Graveyard of the Atlantic.



MEMBERS OF THE CREW of the *Priscilla* pose amidst the wreckage of their vessel. Surfman Rasmus Midgett of the U.S. Lifesaving Service received the coveted Gold Lifesaving Medal of Honor for his single-handed rescue of 10 survivors from the wreck.

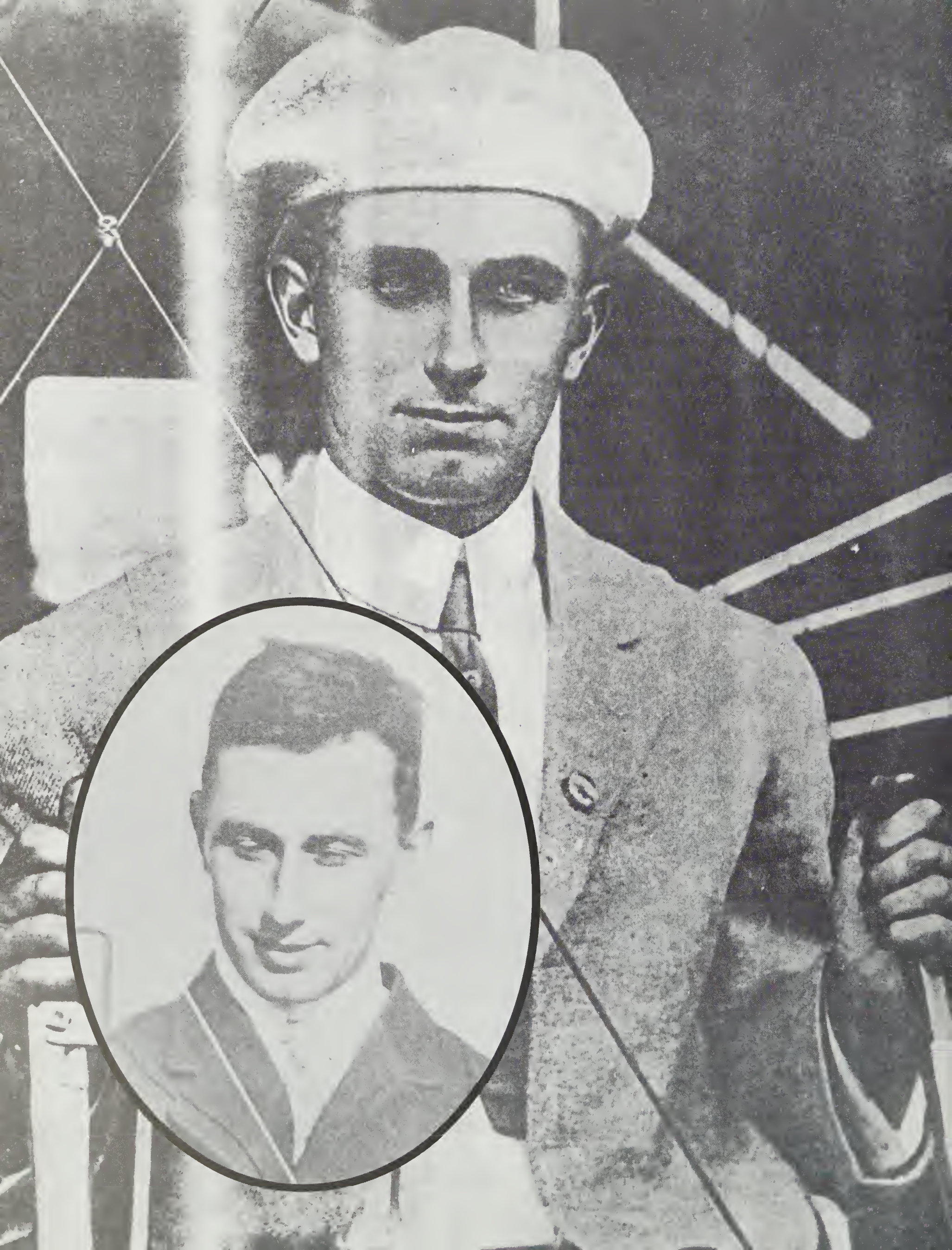
(Photograph by Charles Morgan, courtesy of the North Carolina Collection, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill)

THE WRECK OF THE *Priscilla*, August 1899, just south of Chicamacomico. The wreck was one of perhaps 50 vessels destroyed and grounded by the infamous hurricane San Ciriaco that ravaged the Outer Banks. (Photograph by Charles Morgan, courtesy of the North Carolina Collection at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill)



A VICTIM OF THE HATTERAS BANKS, The Wreck of the *Martha Spencer*.

(*The National Geographic Magazine*, May 1926)



The Carolina Aircraft Company

by Tom Parramore
First Flight Centennial Commission

All but lost in the maritime history of North Carolina is the fact that flying boats were manufactured in this state during World War I. Yet such craft were built in at least two eastern North Carolina communities, as were wings and perhaps other seaplane components which were shipped to assembly plants in other states.

This curious footnote to the state's past had its genesis in the ideas of a renowned airman of the early years of flight—Harry Nelson Atwood. A Massachusetts native and product of MIT, Atwood was a professional auto driver in the first years of this century. He turned to aviation, reportedly building an unsuccessful plane in 1910. In the following year he became associated with the Burgess-Wright Aircraft Company and in June 1911, set a cross-country nonstop flying record of 135 miles, four times farther than any previous American flight. He soon became the first pilot to fly over New York City and the first to land a plane on the White House lawn. (It is also the *last* such landing by any machine other than a helicopter.) Such feats made him one of the best-known and most-admired airmen in the world.¹

With Burgess-Wright, Atwood became familiar with flying boats and built one of his own design in 1913. Three years later, he formed a short-lived Pennsylvania firm for manufacturing seaplanes. For a year after America's entry into World War I in 1917, he headed an instructional program for military pilots operated by DuPont in Delaware. But Atwood's heart was set on becoming an industrial entrepreneur and in 1918 he saw his opportunity.²

In February 1918, with federal demand for airplanes at an unprecedented peak, Atwood drove from Boston to



Harry Atwood seated at right next to fellow aviator Charlie Hamilton ca. 1911.

(Bartlett Gould Collection courtesy of Howard Mansfield)

Charleston, S.C., in search of southern support for a firm to build seaplanes of his design. Stopping off at Raleigh, he found interest within the ranks of the Chamber of Commerce and delivered a well-attended public lecture on aviation's development and promise. The government, he pointed out, was "ready to purchase machines of almost any type" to fill its military needs. These needs were said to encompass "one hundred thousand airplanes, two hundred and fifty thousand motors, and a million propeller blades."³

Future Governor and U.S. Senator J. Melville Broughton and *Raleigh Times* publisher John A. Park were among Chamber of Commerce members most taken with Atwood's vision of Raleigh as a center for aviation. The city's mild climate and a suitable regional topography

Left: **Harry Nelson Atwood ca. 1911.**

(Inset: Bartlett Gould Collection courtesy of Howard Mansfield)



Atwood-modified Curtiss Model F flying boat ca. 1918 showing four sets of flying wires and demonstrating strength of wing covering material. Atwood is standing on trailing edge in the white shirt and tie. (Peter M. Bowers Collection)

were mentioned as points in Raleigh's favor, along with its proximity to inexhaustible supplies of wood and cotton.⁴

Broughton, Park, and other Raleighites accompanied Atwood north in March to see the Delaware school, which was using several planes of his construction in training students. A visit with the Aero Club of America in New York elicited encouragement for a Raleigh enterprise. A main selling point in Atwood's favor was assurance that the government would launch a major initiative in delivering mail by air at the close of the war.⁵

Within days, Park, Broughton, and other prominent Tar Heels had agreed to make substantial investments in a North Carolina factory for Atwood. The Carolina Aircraft Company (CAC) was chartered on March 31 with Raleigh businessman Howard White as president and Atwood as vice-president. The *News and Observer* announced that Atwood had already moved to Raleigh, bringing his own mechanics and work-force from the North. Several Raleigh shops were manufacturing metal and wood components for the planes.⁶

John A. Park's newspaper busily fanned the flames of local excitement. "Within the next month or so,"

intoned the *Raleigh Times*, "a glance from the window may reveal a made-in-Raleigh aeroplane circling over the city, flirting with the church spires and terrorizing the old Confederate sentinel on top of the monument in capital square."⁷

It was not clear just what sort of plane CAC intended to build. One report mentioned that it would be a single-seat "war-machine" on which Atwood had "been working for some time." Another reported that it would be entirely of wood. The use of a special "veneered wood" appeared to be an innovation in the design. By June 21 the first Raleigh plane was assembled and was said to have met "all tests."⁸

The CAC by now had encountered its first down-draft. Efforts to negotiate orders from the Army Air Service had produced nothing despite CAC's professed readiness to build planes at 10 percent less than the government was paying and deliver up to 500 in 180 days. There was talk of hiring 2,000 workmen and building 25 planes a day. A letter, however, from John A. Park to North Carolina Senator F.M. Simmons, chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, evidently brought quick gov-

ernment action. By early August, CAC had a modest contract with the U.S. Navy to build seaplanes under license from the Curtiss Engineering Corporation of New York.⁹

By this time Atwood and his associates had decided to build their plant in Smithfield in association with F.K. Broadhurst's Smithfield Veneer Products Company. This firm was engaged in making plywood, which was in great demand for airplane fuselages, wings, and pontoons. An aim of the new partnership was to produce plywood of such durability as would support the weight of the planes in takeoff and landing on rough water and hold fuselages and pontoons together under adverse weather conditions.¹⁰

The CAC planes were to be experimental (veneered plywood) versions of the standard Curtiss F-boat, a mainstay in coastal vigilance against German U-boats. A second order from the navy, a few days after the first, was apparently the reason for the CAC soon opening a second plant in Goldsboro.¹¹

The Smithfield Veneer Products Company had a working relationship with a Smithfield lumber mill owned by Nathan M. Lawrence, Jr., a Tarboro native. A key operative in the business was J.F. Komp, an Indiana native brought in by Atwood because of his expertise in fabricating and water-proofing plywood.¹²

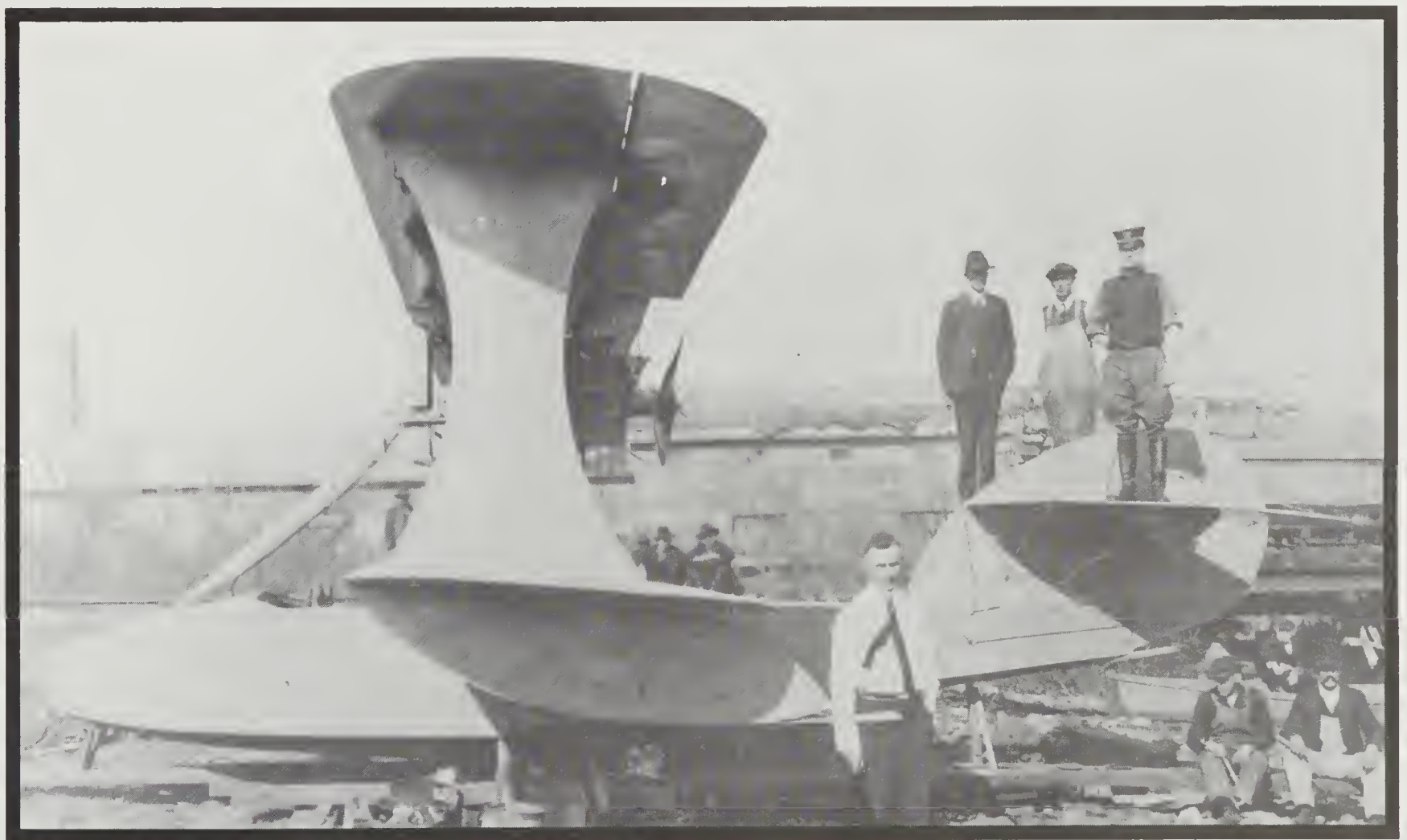
Smithfield residents came to know Atwood as a

flamboyant figure who raced about town in a big Cadillac touring car. He could cover the country dirt roads between Smithfield and Raleigh in 45 minutes, sometimes reaching speeds of up to 80 miles an hour.¹³

The F-boat was a biplane powered by a single 100-horsepower OXX engine. Its maximum range was 325 miles, and it could attain altitudes of up to 4,500 feet. Its 40-gallon fuel tank could sustain it in flight for up to four hours. Numbers of these craft were already stationed at a navy seaplane base at Morehead City, where they performed anti-submarine patrol, rescue service, and later, spotted rum-runners and schools of fish.¹⁴

Recently discovered photographs of one of the Carolina Aviation Company craft indicate some major modifications of the F-boat at the Smithfield and Goldsboro plants. Four sets of landing and flying wires show that the plane had four main spars instead of the normal two, with broad I-struts spanning the spars, unconventional for the time. There was evidently no fabric on the ailerons. A magneto between the cylinder banks at the propeller end indicate that the engine was a 100-horsepower Curtiss.¹⁵

But the Carolina Aviation Company fell far short of the early visions of Harry Atwood and his supporters. Only one F-boat appears to have been completed at



Elevation view of the same Atwood-modified Curtiss F-boat. Atwood is in the white shirt.

(Peter M. Bowers Collection)



This photo shows Harry Atwood at the wheel of the flying boat he built at Smithfield in the late summer of 1918. The craft was being tested in the vicinity of Morehead City for possible use by the U.S. Navy. (Peter M. Bowers Collection)

Smithfield. This machine was trucked to Morehead City and tested there by Atwood himself. The craft proved to be too heavy for its engine and smacked back down onto the water after a short flight.¹⁶

The plane was taken back to Smithfield for inspection, perhaps modified, and delivered on September 21 to the navy at Coconut Grove, Florida. Late and overweight, it was rejected by the navy after unsatisfactory trials in 1919. Three other F-boats, evidently built at the Goldsboro plant, were thereupon cancelled, the need for them having vanished with the close of the war in Europe. Between July 1917 and March 1919, 144 F-boats were built by or under license nationwide from the Curtiss Corporation.¹⁷

The principals in the Carolina Aviation Company enterprise scattered quickly to the four winds. Atwood, by December 1918, was off on another scheme, this time to attempt a transatlantic flight in a new plane of his invention. He undertook further ventures in bonding plywood and veneered materials, built “an all-metal molded and bonded airplane” in 1935, worked on plywood PT boats during World War II, and died in retirement at his mountainside home in Murphy, N.C., in 1967.¹⁸

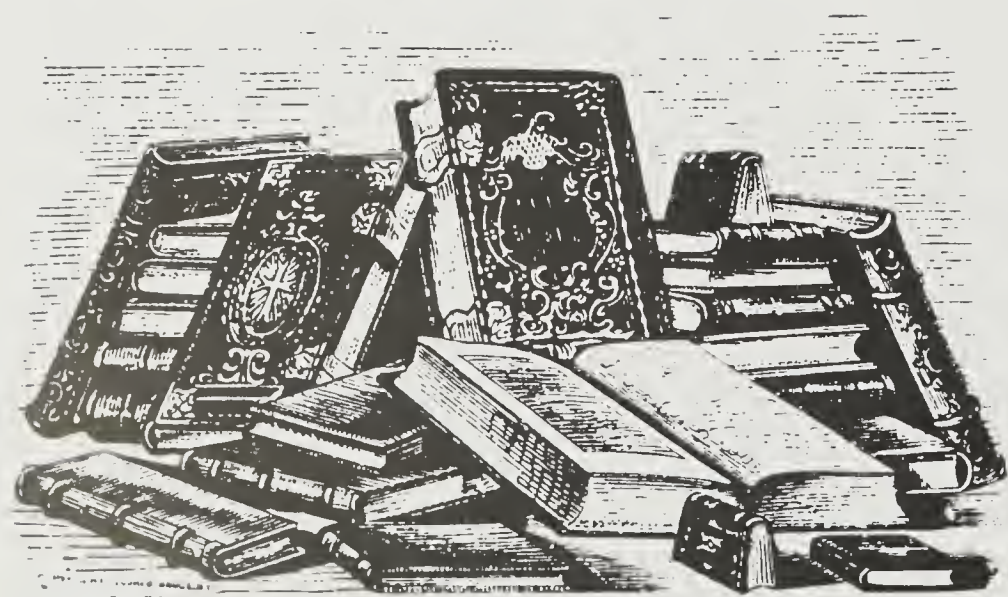
The government tools and machinery at the Smithfield Veneer Products Company were sold at auc-

tion in 1919, the uninsured plant itself burning down in late 1922. All that remained of the CAC was a single seaplane propeller, which was owned at last report—1966—by Dr. Cleon W. Sanders of Benson, who rescued it from the Smithfield plant as a boy in 1919.¹⁹ ❖

NOTES

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4. *Raleigh Times*, Mar. 1, 1918; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), Mar. 27, 1918.
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17. Coats, "Smithfield's Airplane Industry"; "Aircraft Record, Des. No. A- 4346."
18. *News and Observer*, Dec. 20, 1918; "Harry N. Atwood," NASM; Ed Baker, "His White House Feat May Stand," unidentified clipping, Harry N. Atwood folder, NASM Library.
19. *Smithfield Herald*, Nov. 28, 1922; Coats, "Smithfield's Airplane Industry"; Morehouse, "Harry N. Atwood."



Book Review

William C. Fleetwood, Jr. *Tidecraft: The Boats of South Carolina, Georgia and Northeastern Florida, 1550–1950*. Tybee Island, GA.: WBG Marine Press. Nd. 356 pages. (\$47.50 hardcover).

reviewed by Lawrence E. Babits

The small boats of the coastal southeast have been recognized only recently for their important role in the settlement, development, and maintenance of the region because most authors have concentrated on the Chesapeake or the northeastern states. “Rusty” Fleetwood and the

Coastal Heritage Society undertook to correct this deficiency when they published the first edition of *Tidecraft* in 1982. The first text was immediately recognized as a unique contribution and sold out within a short time.

The updated version has little in common with the original text except its focus on little boats and the ordinary people who worked them. The second edition is greatly expanded and extensively illustrated. The new edition is also hardbound, has twice the text, more illustrations, more Spanish material, and, most importantly, cited sources for quotations and illustrations.

A great deal of archaeological information drawn from recent excavations in coastal waters is included. Four appendices discuss early sail vessels, oyster sloops, rice culture boats, and Fleetwood’s personal thoughts about dugouts and bateaux.

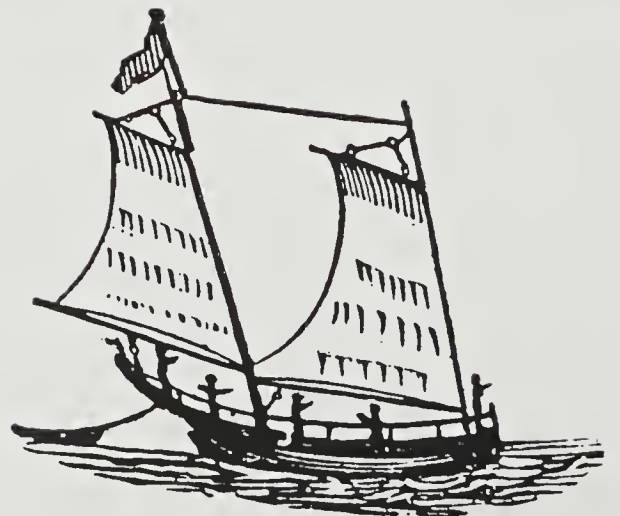
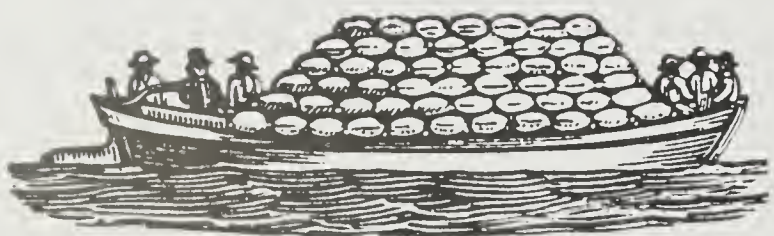
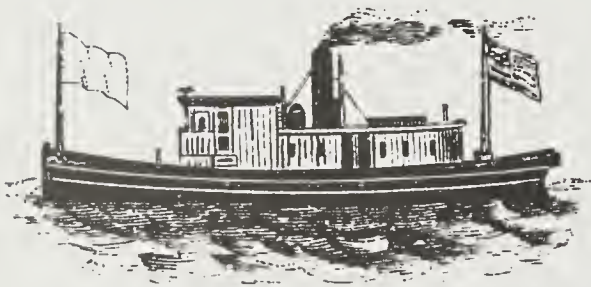
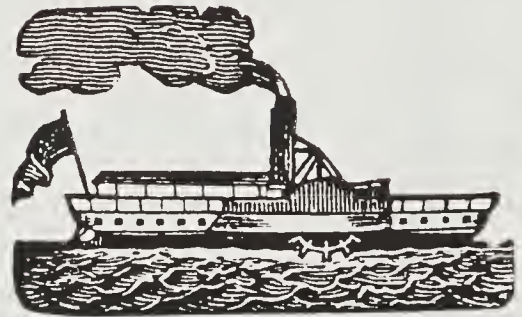
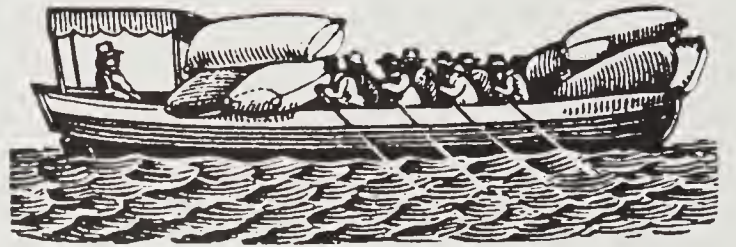
The author discusses various vessel types in a chronological format but includes special topic chapters on specific vessel types such as the periauger, plantation boats, pleasure craft, and boats used in the fishing industry. He draws heavily from recollections by older men and women who worked the vessels and from photographs and documentary materials in private collections.

Although the subtitle of the book names only South Carolina, Georgia, and northeastern Florida, some North Carolina boat types are also represented. An effort similar to *Tidecraft* should be made to document North Carolina craft which have their own history. North Carolina boats represent a generalized dividing line between Chesapeake Bay and southeastern watercraft traditions, but their complexity has frequently relegated their histories to footnotes or less.

Fleetwood describes the evolution of boat types and their contemporary shapes. The approach is somewhat eclectic in that it tries to cover all of the working and pleasure craft that make up any maritime community.

Tidecraft will be welcomed by historians, archaeologists, teachers, and recreational sailors because it provides a connection between small boats and our cultural heritage.

The text is well written, down-to-earth, and fun reading as Fleetwood takes the reader into the maritime past. This classic book belongs on the shelf of anyone interested in the maritime southeast. ❖



North Carolina Register of Historic Vessels

THE NORTH CAROLINA MARITIME MUSEUM and the North Carolina Maritime History Council have jointly initiated a state registration program for historical boats and ships. Similar to the national program that recognizes historically significant ships, this program focuses on significance at the state level.

Applications are distributed from the museum, which also administers the program. Vessels that qualify will undergo a process to document their history and current status. Documentation could include vessel surveys, photography, document searches, oral histories, and other background work.

To be considered historically significant, a vessel must:

- be associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of the history of North Carolina; or
- be associated with the lives of persons significant in North Carolina's past; or
- embody characteristics that;
 - are distinctive of a type, period, or method of construction in North Carolina; or
 - represent the work of a North Carolina master; or
 - possess high artistic value attributable to North Carolina artisans or traditional practices; or
 - represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction but have significant North Carolina associations; or
- have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in North Carolina's prehistory or history.

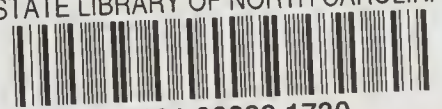
These criteria also recognize several special cases. For instance, vessels built in North Carolina for owners and/or service outside the state can qualify in certain conditions. Likewise, vessels with origins outside North Carolina may be eligible if they meet at least one of the above criteria.

Historical replicas and reconstructions may be eligible for listing on the North Carolina Register. They will be evaluated on the basis of what they are intended to represent, using the eligibility standards for historic vessels, and on the research upon which the reconstruction was based.

The above criteria are adapted from the Secretary of the Interior's "Standards for Historic Vessel Preservation Projects" (May 1990). In their original form they are meant to apply to vessels of national historical significance and are treated in more detail in National Register Bulletin #20, "Nominating Historic Vessels and Shipwrecks to the National Register of Historic Places." The wording of the criteria for historical significance has been modified to restrict the criteria to vessels associated with North Carolina. ❖

For more information, or to make application for a vessel, contact the North Carolina Maritime Museum, 315 Front Street, Beaufort, N.C. 28516, or call 919-728-7317.

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