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A Nineteenth-century Soap Opera: *Eliza Lutterloh's Memoir*

Part II

[When we left Eliza, she had heard a rumor that her husband had been killed.]

As I had not seen a paper I was uncertain so I had to get on horseback and ride down to Mr Manly's but still could not hear the truth of the report[.] so that I was Kept in suspense. For three days. Mr Jones was absent from home, Mrs Hugh Campbell was at Mr Jones's and came over and stoped two days with me trying to comfort me, at the end of which time Mr Jones returned and sent me word that it was a Naval engagement in which two Lieutenants of the name of Ludlow and Budd were Killed[.] so you see I was kpt in anxiety and suspenche for three days. As the estate was divided, this place being allotted to Charles[,] I remained up here in the autumn of 1814[.]

[Another Frightening Experience. . .]

Mr Jones's family became very kind and friendly and I visited them frequently. On the 18th of May 1815 as I had received an invitation from Mr Jones to spend the day I Set off early in the morning with my little Charles in my lap and Oliver a little boy of 8 years old running on behind. I went a retired neighborhood road and when I had proceeded about two miles a Negro boy about 18 years old sliped from behind a tree, took hold of my left wrist and jerked me off the horse, Charles fell of course to the ground[.] the horse moved away only a few steps[.] Oliver ran back home and I stood still screaming and hollooring as loud as I could. Lisburn the boy never uttered one word, and after standing not more than two minutes ran off into the woods. He never laid a hand on me except as he pulled me off the horse, I then managed to get on the horse with the

child in my arms and rode on to Mr Jones's. When I got there I could not speak a word for sometime and they seeing that something strange had occured proceeded to apply restoratives. I then told them how Lisburn had behaved and as he had been uniformly a well behaved boy they thought it must have been some other boy very much like him. Mr Jones then called some of his Negros and told them to send Lisburn to him. They were some time looking for him and calling but at last he was brought in, as I immediately identified him he acknowledged it was him but would not give any reason for his Conduct untill Mr Jesse Meacham a respectable Magistrate questioned him privately, he then told Mr Meacham Lewis Lutterloh had persuaded him to Seize the first opportunity and Kill the child and me too if he could and injure me in any way that he could and he would give him an hundred Dollars and buy him and set him free. Mr Jones then sent Lisburn to Jail untill he could ascertain th[e] truth and have him legally punished.

Mr William Hooper went with me to Pittsboro to a private house where my deposition was taken before a magistrate and our good old Lawyer Mr Williams. But as Negro evidence can not be taken Lewis Lutterloh could not be convicted. There were several persons in Jail at the same time and one of them said that he heard Lewis talking to Lisburn and say to him "Stick to your trust my good fellow and I will give you a hundred Dollars" Mr Jones had the boy whiped and sold him to a speculator. After that I was for a long time afraid to let the child out of my Sight except with some grown person[.] and I was almost frighted to death if I heard that Lewis was anywhere in the neighborhood. My sister Ellen stayed with me constantly.

[Services to the Jones Family. . .]

Johnson Jones was born in Sept and Mrs Jones was ill for nearly two months, so that she could not nurse him, they enquired all over the County but could not

succeed in getting a nurse, So I told Mrs Jones that I would go and nurse the little fellow untill she could get one, she was very glad to hear it[.] so I broke up my little housekeeping and went and stayed and nursed Johnson with my little Charles for Five weeks at the end of which time they heard of a nurse so I came home.

In Dec^r Fanny was to be married and Mrs Jones wished me to go and stay and help to do the necessary sewing, I went and stayed a week made a suit Curtains and many other things and returned home and after all the useful assistance I had rendered I did not get an invitation to the wedding, there were many apologies and circumstances of mistakes made but the same oversight was repeated when Mrs Eccla [Eccles?] was married altho. frequently when Mrs Jones would say "and you" but I was so much accustomed to neglect that I was not at all surprised, however they were in many respects very kind and obliging.

[Charles returns. . .]

I began to think the Government would never make peace so after thinking and writing and hoping altho I had letters every two weeks I thought one day in July I would go over to Mr Jones's and hear what news there was[.] so I started with Phoebe my Cook and when I got just in sight of the house I met two Gentlemen from Hillsboro who told me that I was just in time for my husband had just arrived and was there in Mr Jones's house, you may guess I was so much rejoiced that I Scarcely believed it, when I got to see him he was lying on a bed so sick that he could scarcely sit up, he had been confined in a Hotel in Lexington in Virginia for two weeks quite unable to travel[,] having chills and fever every other day, so after some little favourable change he determined to set out altho he could only ride half the day[.] after this the Jones's were very attentive and very cordial, Lewis knew better than to come near.

[Memoir ends. . .]

Mr Jones' daughters have ever been kind and affectionate to me and all of mine and his nieces the Misses DeBernier were equally so. But Mr Jones was so uniformly cross and harsh to me that I never could get over the feeling of dread and fear in his company[.] and altho I was perfectly sensible of the debt of gratitude I owed him I could never love him tho his family thought I did, they always seemed as fond of my children as if they were related, but we were never invited to any of their special parties altho they borrowed my silver and China to set off the table, my life then was a life of servitude, I have often thought they saw or fancied them, saw some disagreeable traits of

character in me that made me unworthy, but be that as it may I served in that house so faithfully as I could have done in my own Mothers and had nothing allowed me but base food and poor raiment

[From here there may have been words for about ten lines before letters faintly appear again. This may be something added by Washington Lutterloh, who signed the page.]

Eliza Comerford Lutterloh lived a long life, apparently remaining on the family plantation. The traditional site of her burial is on the land belonging to the Lutterloh family about eight miles north of Pittsboro,



Broken marker that may mark the gravesite of Eliza Comerford Lutterloh

preserved in the Chapel Ridge residential community and golf course. The Lutterloh family cemetery is near the thirteenth fairway.

It may be safe to say that the rest of her life was not quite so exciting as the first twenty years that she describes in her memoirs.

Comments

Below are brief descriptions of people and places named in the memoir that may not be understood without elaboration. The sources are limited and do not always agree on the facts. Names that occur in the memoir are shown in boldface type. Abbreviations used are:

DNCB – *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, edited by William S. Thompson, 1979-1996.

StB – St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church Register.

AHCC – *The Architectural Heritage of Chatham County, North Carolina*, by Rachel Osborn and Ruth Selden-Sturgill, 1991.

CCNC – *Chatham County, 1771-1971*, edited by W.H. Hadley, D.G. Horton, and N.C. Strowd, 1971.

SHC – Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

ROD – Chatham County Register of Deeds, Pittsboro.

CC – Chatham County Clerk of Court, Pittsboro.

HL – Dr. Hayden Lutterloh, Jr., interview April 2005.

The progenitor of the Lutterloh family in Chatham County was **Heinrich Ludwig Lutterloh** (Henry Lewis, 1723-1797), who emigrated from Germany to England, where he married Elizabeth Grantham. Emigrating again about 1783 to North Carolina, Lutterloh established himself as a merchant in Wilmington. He first bought land in Chatham County from Thomas West in 1787 and eventually owned over 1,000 acres of land between today's Silk Hope and the Haw River. "Letlow" is still a common mispronunciation of the name. (CCNC, HL)

Elizabeth Lutterloh left a will dated 1812; it names only three sons, Charles, Henry, and Lewis, among whom her estate was divided in 1814. Which son was the eldest is in question. The will names Charles as Lewis's guardian, if necessary, and is jointly responsible with Basil Manly for Henry, if Henry is not in the country. A descendant names Henry as first-born on the basis of German tradition. (ROD, CC, HL)



Pittsboro Methodist Church cemetery, Pittsboro

Charles, probably their eldest son, was born in England in 1784 and, as Eliza's memoir relates, was commissioned and served in the War of 1812. His name is listed in census records for Chatham County from 1800 through 1850. He received 300 acres of land and a Pittsboro town lot in the division of his mother's estate in 1814.

Charles's will and estate sale papers, as well as family deeds and letters, are in the "Washington J. Lutterloh Papers" at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The children named in Charles's will were Charles, Thomas, Edward, William, Washington, Fred, Sophia [Palmer], Ellen [Alston], Louisa [Hunt], Nanna (Joanna) [Rogers], and Catherine [Smith]. (SHC)

A second son, Henry, went to sea early; he is not listed in any census, though he was present for the 1814 division of Elizabeth's estate. He is reported to have introduced silk worms from China to his plantation near Silk Hope, part of 459 acres received in the division of Elizabeth's estate. Four of his sons bear the interesting names Mississippi Jackson, Osage Missouri, Arkansas Independence, and Columbus Washington.

The youngest son, Lewis, received 302.5 acres of

land, including the family cemetery, in the estate settlement. A family historian reports that he had a large family and moved to Alamance County. He is not listed in the Chatham census after 1830. (HL, CC)

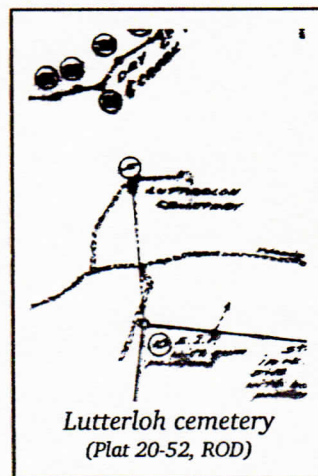
Edward Jones, 1762-1841, emigrated to America about 1783. He began his study of law in 1788 after unsuccessful business ventures in Philadelphia and Wilmington. He served in the North Carolina House of Commons from 1788-1791, at which time he was appointed solicitor general of North Carolina, an office he held until 1827.

In 1790 he married Mary Elizabeth Mallett (1773-1837), daughter of Fayetteville merchant Peter Mallet. By 1815 he owned 1,600 acres in Chatham County, naming his plantation Rock Rest, where his wife Mary Elizabeth operated a private girls' school until 1830, when it was moved to Pittsboro. Jones continued to be active at the bar and was on the board of trustees of the University of North Carolina.

Of nine children, four sons and a daughter died in infancy or at an early age. Four daughters married well: Charlotte married William Hardin and they continued the girls' school, now called Kelvin, in Pittsboro; Frances [Fanny] married William Hooper, clergyman and educator; Louisa married Abraham Rencher, territorial governor of New Mexico; and Elizabeth [Betsey] married John Eccles of Fayetteville. Capt. Johnston Blakely, lost at sea during the War of 1812, was a foster son. The family burial plot is in St. Bartholomew's cemetery, Pittsboro. (StB, DNCB, CCNC, AHCC)

George Hooper, 1744-1821, was a Wilmington merchant and married to Katherine Maclaine (b. 1755), only daughter of lawyer Archibald Maclaine. His older brother William was a signer of the Declaration of Independence and Chatham County's first Clerk of Court. George's son, Archibald Maclaine Hooper (1775-1853), lawyer and editor, married Charlotte deBernier, and their son, John deBernier Hooper (1811-1886), married William W. Hooper's (1792-1876) daughter, Mary Elizabeth.

Peter Mallett, Fayetteville merchant, was a delegate to the North Carolina House of Commons in 1778. His daughter Elizabeth, 1773-1837, married Edward Jones. (StB, NCG)



Lutterloh cemetery
(Plat 20-52, ROD)

Misses deBernier were daughters of John deBernier, a British officer of Huguenot descent who emigrated to America to be near his wife's brother, Edward Jones. A John deBernier bought and sold property in Chatham County in the early 1800s. The Hooper, Maclaine, Mallett, Jones, and deBernier names are intertwined in their family histories. (DNCEB, StB, ROD)

Mr. Snipes was probably Thomas Snipes, who is named in Elizabeth Lutterloh's 1812 will as executor and Lewis's guardian if needed. He represents Charles in the division of her estate in 1814.

Mr. and Mrs. Bingham. Hiram Bingham, 1754-1826, schoolmaster and professor, moved his school from Pittsboro to Hillsborough in 1809. (DNCEB)

Richard Stanford, 1767-1816, served ten terms as Republican member of Congress.

Capt. Basil Manly moved to Chatham County from Bladen County after the Revolutionary War, building his home, Oak Mount, northwest of Pittsboro (near the site marked "R. J. Powell" on the Ramsey map). His sons were Charles, a lawyer and politician who served as North Carolina's last Whig governor from 1848-1850; Basil, a clergyman and president of the University of Alabama; and Matthias, lawyer and Justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court. (CCNC)

"Our good old Lawyer Mr. Williams" was most likely James Williams, Chatham County's first resident lawyer, and "dear old Mrs. Williams" was probably his wife. (CCNC)

Phoebe "my Cook" was originally purchased from William Snipes by Edward Jones, using the estate of Eliza Comerford and her half-sister Ellen Anderson. Jones offered them, separately, for public sale on 1 January 1816. An 1817 deed records the purchase of Phebe and her children Oliver, Harriet, and Mary by Charles Lutterloh for \$925. (SHC, ROD)

Nicknames

by Walter "Corkey" Harris*

So, let me ask you a question. This is a classic question from Bynum. What does R-A-T-H O-L-E spell? Let's have a show of hands. Whoever knows first. What? Rathole - you're right. Well, it leads me to this point. The guy who was asked this question couldn't answer it - so guess what his nickname was? "Rat." We called him "Rat" for short.

"Corkey". (By the way, it is C-O-R-K-E-Y. Everybody leaves the E off. I don't know why. Except for an aunt

I had who always spelled it C-O-R-K-I-E, and I said that is the feminine version. But, anyway.)

Listen to these names because - each one is a legitimate person and many of you will know who they are. Rat, Mule, Hammer (which is short for Hammerhead). His real name was Ambrose. I mean, what would you prefer? Itchy, Shag, Pogo, Pune, Punk -- they've married, Pune was married to Punk. They had two children. I always wanted to call them Puddin and Pie but that didn't catch on. Jaybird.

Some names were not friendly. Well, Hammerhead was not friendly. But Fat, Tuck, Skinny, Monk, Skin. Monk and Skin, twins, twin girls. Beula and Eula. Sure, let's call them Monk and Skin. Weesie, Skin's husband, Ortney. J.C. Campbell was his real name. Dub, his brother Sam. Wait a minute, Sam isn't a nickname. Yes, it is, if your name is [garbled].

Little Shine. Bug, and son, Bob -- he got top billing even though he was the second-born child. Kayke, Sleepy, Nub (a one-armed man). We lived on Nub's Knoll. Don't say, "Oh?" It was the little hill and Mr. Floyd lived next to us and we called it Nub's Knoll. He had a daughter named Bugger Bear.

Shube, Dauber, Pepsi, Partner -- they were brothers -- Rusty, Tadpole, Stokey, Niser. I think Niser was his real name, wasn't it? I never heard anything but Niser. Slab. Here are some more family names, Goo, Hobo, Cat, Snookey, BoPeep. Tell me what you think about BoPeep. What would BoPeep look like? He gave me my first haircut. Shrimp, Jughead, Cubey, and Corkey.

That is about fifty names of people and their nicknames. Just some of the names. They're not their real names. Each one of them had a real name. When the minister said "We've got three people joining the church this coming Sunday: Carolyn, Walter, and Billy Hughes." People said "Who the heck is 'Walter'?" Nobody knew who Walter was. I got to pick and choose what my name would be after I got grown. So, Corkey. I tell people you may not be surprised at what I've been called. You may be surprised I've answered to it.

**This is an excerpt from a presentation by Bynum native Walter Harris on 14 April 2005 as part of CCHA's "Cozy Up to History" lecture series.*

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