

The Josias Locke Family Newsletter

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It's Reunion Season Again!

If you're one of the unfortunate **Locke** descendants who missed last year's family reunion, you're in luck! This year's gathering will be better than ever, and may even double in size. The **Boyce** reunion will be held on October 14, this year.. Mark your calendars for **Sunday, October 7**, at **1:30** in the afternoon, just after church or whatever you usually do on a crisp **Carolina** autumn day. We'll be invading **Ray and Bruce Howell's Huntersville** farm again, with more home cooking, sweet tea, and decadent desserts than it ought to be legal to enjoy. The row boats and the paddle boat are ready for the young folks, and **Debbie Fox** will have a return engagement of her amazing band and **Karaoke** machine. The family scrolls will be back, along with more antique family photographs, and artwork. The computer scanner will be revved-up and ready to copy those priceless images to share with everyone. There's a new map this year to make your trip a little easier. It's on the back of the newsletter. If it rains, we'll move inside the lake pavilion.

Please contact as many family members as possible, and bring them along with you. If you need a ride, call **Vann Helms** at **305-519-1934**, and he will match you up with someone from your area for transportation. Don't stay away because you would rather not drive. If you're coming from a little farther away, plenty of inexpensive hotel rooms are located just minutes from the farm. The **Panther** game will be on the big screen! Last year, many people stayed until sunset, and we plan to do the same again this year. The goats and "**Rooter**", the pot-bellied pig, didn't seem to mind.

The Oscar and Sadie Locke Winchester Family



In the last newsletter, this photograph was identified as **Walston and Ruth Locke** with two of their children. In the process, **Charles Winchester's** daughter, **Cheryl**, wrote with a correction.

Actually, this picture shows **Oscar Winchester**, his wife, **Sadie Locke Winchester**, and their two children, **Charles** on the running board, and **Orrin** standing on the ground. They lived on a farm in Union County near **Waxhaw, North Carolina**.

The original photograph was supplied by **Marie Locke Herres** of **Columbia**, and she assumed it showed her parents and brother. I know that Marie won't mind this correction one bit.

A Visit with Martha Helms Holcomb

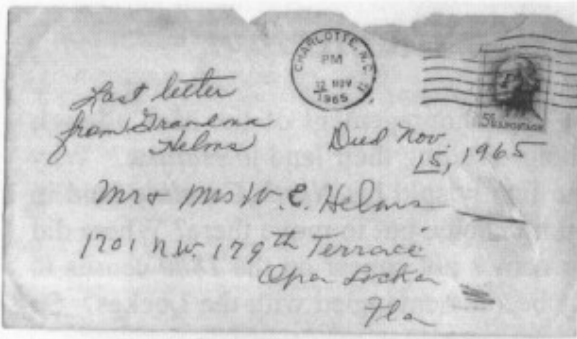


Just an hour's drive east of *Charlotte, North Carolina*, will take you to the historic town of *Albemarle*, and to the *Stanly Manor Nursing Home*, where you can find a beautiful woman named **Martha**. She is the daughter of **Harold and Grace Helms**, and grand daughter to **Martha "Mattie" Locke Helms**. Last year, she checked herself into the friendly facility because she wanted to give her daughter, **Belinda**, some well deserved breathing room. Speaking of breathing, **Martha** has the chronic condition, *C.O.P.D.*, and requires oxygen to make her more comfortable. As you can see from this Easter photograph, she stays in good spirits, and still can turn a few heads when she socializes in the home's common areas. Let's all keep **Martha** in our thoughts, and feel free to send her a card or letter, because they really can brighten her day.

The Earliest Photograph of Lonnie and Mattie Locke Helms- 1901



In the spring of 1901, a group of young people gathered in the yard beside the Walker home in southern Union County.



The Final Letter from Mattie Locke Helms...

It's amazing what you can find when rummaging through boxes of old family memorabilia. After my father passed away in 2003, it was my job to go through his papers and photographs. You can imagine my excitement when an old envelope appeared from amongst so many worthless financial documents that had familiar handwriting on the front. Immediately, I knew that it was a letter from my **Grandmother Helms**. At the top of the frayed envelope was another handwritten note in my mother's unique cursive that read, "Last letter from Grandma Helms!" Looking more closely at the faded postmark, I saw "12 Nov 1965", and a shiver came over me. Grandma had died on **November 15, 1965**, at age 83, in a **Charlotte** hospital, and I realized that this was most likely the last thing she ever wrote. The letter actually arrived in Miami after Grandma had passed away. What a treasure I held in my hands. I couldn't wait to read what was inside. Letters are much like works of art. A person's handwriting is as unique to them as **Picasso's** drawings are to his collectors. Every handwritten letter is a creation by the author, and this masterpiece by my grandmother was as valuable to me as any signed lithograph by any famous artist! I also realized that she had licked and sealed the letter and the stamp, preserving her **DNA** for future analysis. Because the handwriting is quite legible, I will not include a transcription of the original text **Vann Helms**

Wednes night,
 Hello everybody
 what has become of all
 of you, Haven't heard from you
 in 2 or 3 wks. Has Eddie gone
 in service yet. I hope not. I talked
 to Mrs Ratcliff to night and she
 said she hadnt heard any
 thing either. I hope you are
 not all sick. I have been feeling
 awfull bad every since I came
 back to Charlotte Sunday a wk
 ago but I think I feel some better
 to day so just about got back - but
 I think the trip home got the best
 of me, looks like I just cant get well,
 Helen was operated on Monday for
 Gastric ulcer of the stomach. she is
 in Richmond Memorial Hospital -
 Richmond she has been sick for 2
 month or more, Kelly said she was
 all the rest

are getting along very well. Margaret
 + Susan are still not too strong
 from that glandular fever. the
 Dr said it would take them
 a while to get over it. well
 there is not much news up
 this way. so I will close
 let us hear from you.
 Lots of Love.
 Mama + Grandma
 H



Exploring the Locke-McCullough-Culp Connection

Did **Josias** and **William Locke** move to *South Carolina* at the encouragement of the **McCullough** family? What would cause them to leave their aging mother before selling their land in *Halifax*? Why did **Josias** relinquish his rights to his mother's estate when he finally sold his *North Carolina* land in 1807? Did something happen in *South Carolina* that left them no choice but to move there? Where did they live once they arrived in *Chester County*? Why did their names not appear on the 1800 census in either *Halifax* or *Chester* counties? How did the **Culp** family become entangled with the **Lockes**? So many questions, so few answers.

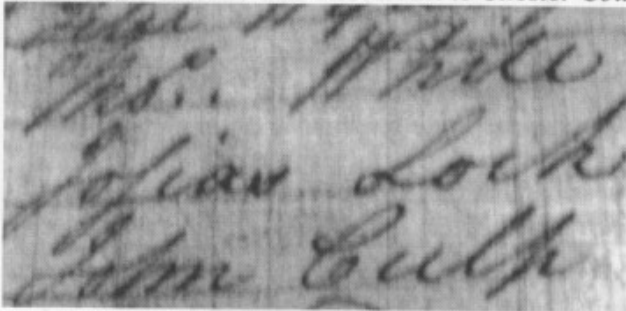
Because **Josias** and **Susanna Locke** named their third son, **Jesse McCullough**, we can be fairly certain that **Susanna's** maternal grandmother was a **McCullough**. In the *Halifax* census of 1785, the largest **McCullough** household was headed by **Benjamin**, and his older brother, **Alexander**. They managed a huge plantation and owned over 100 slaves. Eleven people lived in the larger of the two houses on the property. When the 1790 census was taken, the family had grown to twenty-one members, with over 120 slaves. A number of other **McCullough** families were living in *Halifax* in 1790. Was it a coincidence that **Josias** and **Susanna** named their fourth son, **Benjamin**? **Jesse McCullough** would name his last son, **Benjamin McCullough Locke**. Could **Benjamin** have been the father of **Susanna's** mother? **Josias** and **William's** grandmother on the **Locke** side was **Susannah Green**, and her father's name was also **Benjamin**. Tradition indicates that **Jesse McCullough's** wife, **Mary Hunter**, was also a **McCullough** descendent.

What was the origin of **Benjamin and Alexander McCullough** in *Halifax County*? Thank goodness for immigration records. In 1719, a ship landed in *Charleston* harbor with **Henry McCullough** and his family onboard. They had sailed for almost three months from *Ireland*. **Henry** was from *Randalstown, County Antrim, Ireland*. His father, **James of Grogan**, had lived on *Grogan Island*, northwest of *Randalstown*. **James** and his brother, **William**, had most likely come to *Ireland* from *Scotland* with their father in search of religious freedom. They were known as *Covenanters* (Presbyterians), and had fled their ancestral home to escape the heavy taxation and laws of the *Church of England*. **Henry** had come to the colonies to accept a land grant in *North Carolina* organized by the church. Over the next fifty years, he would accumulate thousands of acres of land, and would become one of the first land barons in *North Carolina*. It's highly likely that **Benjamin McCullough** was a descendent of **Henry** because of the large plantation and impressive number of slaves that he owned. Research will continue in this area.

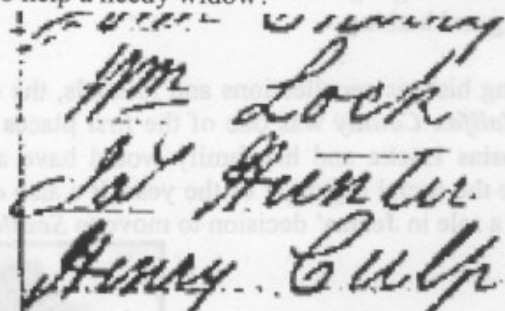
April found me at the *South Carolina State Archives Library* in *Columbia*, searching through actual census records. Because data on the internet is incomplete, many gaps needed to be filled. The exercise was a lucrative one. As with any investigation, we first need to list the facts we know about the relevant families. The **McCullough** name had a rich history in both *Halifax County* and in the border region between North and South Carolina. The earliest record of a **McCullough** in *North Carolina* dates to 1680, just sixty years after the Pilgrims landed at *Plymouth Rock*, with the birth of **Samuel McCullough** in *Rowan County*, near present day *Salisbury*. **Samuel's** son, **James**, was born in *Rowan* in 1705. Sometime before 1750, **James** and two of his sons, **Alexander** and **John**, obtained a land grant near *Salisbury*.

in *Rowan County* in *January, 1757*, it is not yet known where he actually died. In *1767*, **Alexander** sold his inheritance to **Archibald Elliott**. Elliott's son, **Daniel**, was living on the adjacent property with his wife, **Mary McCullough**. She was the daughter of **Isaac McCullough**, who lived in the *Waxhaw Indian Community* near *Lancaster District, South Carolina*. (Isaac is buried at the historic *Providence Presbyterian Church* near *Charlotte*.) In *1770*, property records showed that **James McCullough, Jr.**, owned land on *Fishing Creek* in *Chester County*. This was the same area that would be settled by the **Lockes** just thirty years later.

The **Reverend John Simpson**, a prominent Presbyterian minister in the *Chester* and *Lancaster* region, kept a personal journal. In a *December, 1775* entry, he noted that "*Visitations on Fishing Creek were Samuel McCullough and Thomas McCullough and their wives.*" In the census of *1790*, three **Samuel McCulloughs** and one **Thomas McCullough** were living in *Chester County*. Also living in *Chester County* in *1790* were forty-one other **McCullough** individuals. By *1800*, that number had swollen to eighty individuals in *Chester* and newly formed *York* counties. It was into this large family community that **Josias** and **William Lock(e)** would bring their families between *1795* and *1800*. Because no **Locke** was shown in the *1800*, or any prior census, it's a good bet that **Josias** and **William** were temporarily housing their families inside one of the **McCullough** households. The *1800* census shows a number of **McCullough** households with over ten people, with a few being headed by women. Could the **Locke** men have been sent to *Chester County* to help a needy widow?



Jofias (Josias) Lock in the 1810 Chester Census

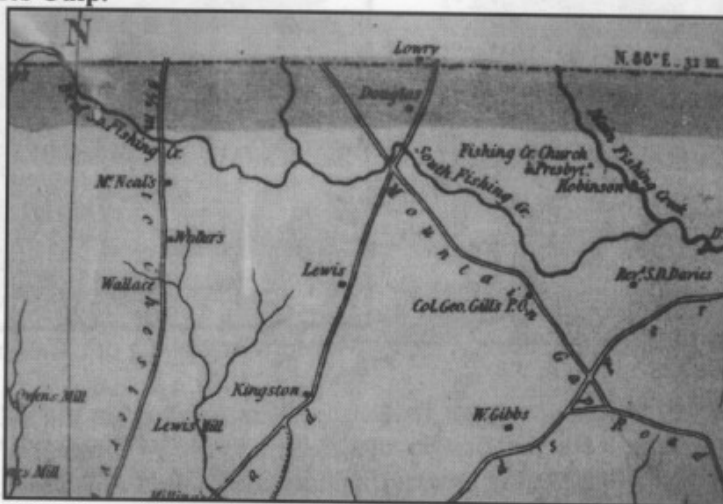


William Lock in the 1810 Chester Census

The above census records indicate that both **Josias** and **William** were living adjacent to **Culp** families. **Jesse McCullough Locke** and his wife **Mary Agnes Hunter**, named their second son, **Jesse Culp Locke**, after **Mary's** mother **Nancy Agnes Culp**.



Lt. Jesse Culp Locke C.S.A.



1825 Map of Chester County showing Fishing Creek area

The History of the “Camp Meeting” in the Carolinas

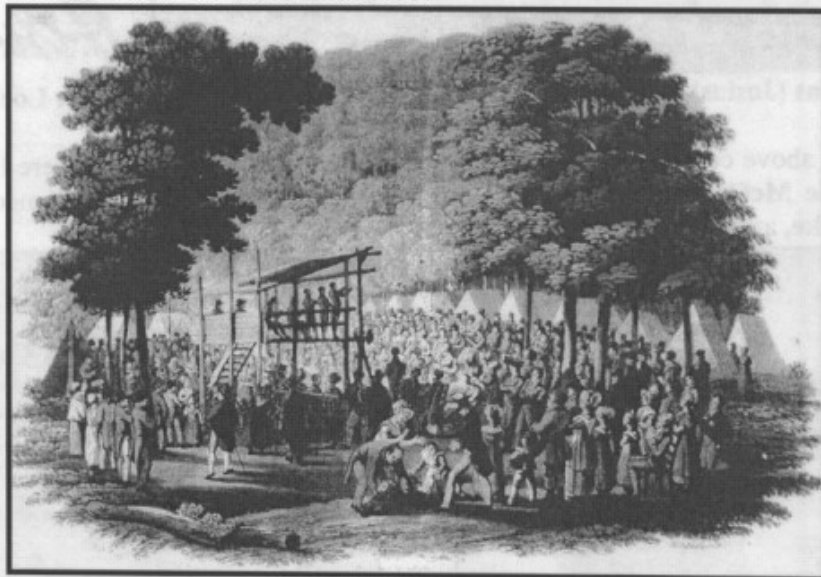
It’s impossible to discuss our family’s history without talking about religion. Most of us have vivid memories of Sunday school, vacation Bible school, Wednesday night prayer meetings, revivals, and the annual summer *Camp Meeting*, where entire families spent an entire week listening to traveling evangelist who wanted to make sure that we repented as sinners, and accepted a life guided by the teachings of **Jesus Christ**. Most of our ancestors came to America to escape persecution by authoritarian monarchs and tax-hungry clergy. Once settled, their churches became their lives. Everything educational, social, and recreational was centered in the church. Introductions for young hopeful brides and grooms were made at church, and children were required to follow the traditions of their parents.

In the middle 1700’s, there was a “*Great Awakening*” movement throughout the colonies, where all sinners were called upon to repent. *Circuit riding preachers* would move from community to community, where they would spend many days converting lost souls through the words of **Jesus**. Because distances were so far between farms and meeting halls, families would bring enough food for the extended stay, and would construct primitive tents for shelter from the summer storms. These “*Camp Meeting*” grounds were always near natural springs so that everyone had enough water for drinking and bathing.

By using historic recollections and journals, the entire story of these meetings in the Carolinas can be told. *Halifax County* was one of the first places that experienced these revivals, and it’s highly likely that **Josias Locke** and his family would have attended them regularly. In many cases, these events became the social highlight of the year. It’s also quite possible that these traveling ministers could have played a role in **Josias’** decision to move to *South Carolina* after 1795.



Circuit Rider on the Move...



Historic engraving of a *Camp Meeting* in the early 19th Century

The actual “*awakening*” got its start in *New England* in the 1720’s. The *Separate Baptists* and the *Presbyterians* were the first to use these traveling “*specialists*” to excite the flock. **John Wesley** founded *Methodism* right around this time, and it didn’t take long for the new religion to spread south into *Virginia*, and the *Carolinas*. No one could have predicted how *powerful* its influence would be.

The Reverend Devereux Jarratt

Devereux Jarratt, an Anglican minister from *Dinwiddie County, Virginia*, and a forerunner of *Methodism* in *North Carolina*, came from *Virginia* preaching a peculiar doctrine in a peculiar manner. He spoke of the necessity of a new birth obtained through "*the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins.*" He did not confine his labors to the *Sabbath* or to his Parrish church. Day and night, in private house and in chapel, in *Virginia* and in *North Carolina*, he went about "*testifying the gospel of the grace of God.*" At various times between 1763 and 1775, **Reverend Devereux** reported that revivals of religion rewarded his efforts to awaken the people. Between 1776 and 1783, he regularly came into *Northampton, Halifax, Warren, Franklin, and Granville* counties in *North Carolina*. In 1775, when he and **Thomas Rankin**, a fellow minister, made a tour into *North Carolina*, they preached to large crowds wherever they stopped. "*Many testified,*" wrote **Rankin**, "*that they had redemption in the blood of Jesus, even the forgiveness of sins. While some were speaking their experience, hundreds were in tears, and others vehemently crying to God for pardon or holiness.*"

The *Methodist* philosophy was ideally adapted to preparing the way for the *Great Revival*. "*Our call is to save that which is lost,*" the *Methodist* preachers declared at the first conference of the newly organized Church in 1784. "*Now we cannot expect them to seek us. Therefore we should go and seek them. Whenever the weather will permit, go out in God's name into public places, and call all to repent and believe the gospel.*"

The *Methodist* circuit riders followed the example set by the New England preachers in the *Great Awakening* and adopted a peculiar manner of speech when addressing their congregations. Like the *Separate Baptist* preachers, they found that such a style obtained results.

The *Great Revival* had its beginning in services known as *camp meetings*. In the new settlements, buildings large enough to house even small audiences could seldom be found; so many preachers began holding their meetings in the open fields and in brush *arbors* or straw pens in the woods. For miles around the people came, bringing their food and drink, their children, slaves, and dogs, as much for the pleasure of getting together, gossiping, and love-making with their far-scattered neighbors as to hear the preaching.

The *Presbyterians* in *North Carolina* also "*trembled before the Lord*" in revivals prior to the awakening at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The **Reverend George Whitefield**, the great evangelist and founder of the *Calvinist Methodists*, visited *North Carolina* in 1739. People "*came a great many miles to hear him.*" **James McGready** was the immediate forerunner of the *Great Revival* among *North Carolina Presbyterians*. From 1788 until he moved on to *Kentucky* in 1796, this "*Son of Thunder*" alarmed piedmont *North Carolina*. People wept under his preaching. In an eyewitness account, one attendee remembered that "*A wave of emotion swept over the congregation like an electric shock. Sobs, moans, and cries arose from every part of the church. Many were struck down, or thrown into a state of helplessness if not of insensibility... Bating the miraculous attestations from Heaven, such as cloven tongues like fire and the power of speaking different languages, it was like the day of Pentecost and none was careless or indifferent.*" The congregation spent the rest of the day in singing, prayer, and exhortation, and it was midnight before they would return home. During *Communion* season in October, which lasted from Saturday until Monday, people insisted on staying until Tuesday or Wednesday to hear the preaching. That's where the need to build camps originated. People traveled long distances by wagon and brought provisions for a long stay. At the union meeting held near *Statesville, North Carolina*, in January, 1802, one *Baptist* and two *Methodist* ministers were

present. One of the *Methodist* ministers had this recollection. "*From Saturday till Tuesday... the cries of the wounded, and singing, continued without intermission; near one hundred were apparently under the operation of grace at a time.*" Methodists were also present at the *Morganton* meeting two weeks later, and at the *Iredell* meeting held in March.

Methodists now began to appoint camp meetings of their own, which they held in connection with their quarterly conferences. One of the first met at *Rutherford Courthouse* in *June, 1802*, where "*thousands were present*" and "*many poor sinners felt the power of God.*" At a quarterly meeting held at *Hanging Rock* the last of June, 3,000 people and 15 ministers, *Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian*, attended. The *Reverend James Jenkins*, presiding elder of *Camden Circuit, South Carolina*, described the meeting in a letter to *Bishop Daniel Asbury* as follows:

The work began in some degree on Saturday night. The preachers were singing, praying, or preaching, all the night. Saturday evening it began again at the stand. Sabbath evening, at the close of the sacrament, some fell to the earth; and the exercise continued the whole night. Monday morning the people came together again, and began singing and exhorting: the Lord wrought again, and this was the greatest time. They were crying for mercy on all sides.

The practice of holding camp meetings at the time of quarterly conferences had now become a *Methodist* custom. The *Methodists* had so enthusiastically taken over the idea of the camp meeting and they used it so effectively that people had to be reminded that the *Presbyterians* had really made the movement popular. "*A Methodist Brother,*" writing in the *Raleigh Register, August 2, 1811*, says, "It will be remembered that our worthy brethren, the *Presbyterians*, were among the first movers of *camp meetings*. . . .". But it was the *Methodist Church* which saw in the camp meeting an opportunity to spread the gospel rapidly. From *1802* until the extremities of the *Civil War* temporarily put an end to them, the *Methodists* regularly held annual encampments in most of the circuits in *North Carolina*.

Although the *Great Revival* reached its height about *1804*, the revival movement continued. *Bishop Asbury* thought that *1808* exceeded all former years in the number of camp meetings which the *Methodists* held. "*I rejoice to think,*" he wrote from Ohio, "*there will be perhaps four or five hundred camp-meetings this year; may this year outdo all former years in the conversion of precious souls to God!*"

After a short period of "*religious coldness*" another revival movement got underway in *North Carolina* about *1829* and continued until about *1835*. It was in *1829* that the *Pleasant Grove Campground* was founded in *Union County, North Carolina*.

The Camp Meeting Scene

It was the *Great Revival* which developed the idea of *annual Camp Meetings*. No rural community was sufficiently large to accommodate all who attended a four- or five-day meeting. "*All who wish to make any progress in Religion, . . . are requested to come with Tents, prepared to stay on the Ground during the Meeting, and not be dependent on their friends, so as to perplex them with secular matters, when they should be employed in the worship of God,*" warned the preachers in announcing a camp meeting. Rarely did the managers undertake to furnish lodgings other than rudely constructed tents. In *1808*, however, Elder *Phillip Bruce* and *Enoch Jones* obtained the use of *Gates County Courthouse* for the accommodation "*on reasonable terms of those who came unprovided.*"

The tents which the people provided for themselves at the first camp meetings were mere makeshifts, for, as the **Reverend James Jenkins** pointed out, "*In those days we understood very little about the proper method of constructing tents. Some of them were of common cloth; others mere shelters covered with pine bark--none of which would keep out the rain.*"

After a few years, church organizations began erecting rude log or plank shelters for the encampment. In 1822 the tents at *Ebenezer Church in Randolph County* were made of poles in wigwam style. The doors were so small and low that the occupants had almost to crawl inside.

The following description of a camp meeting comes from a number of similar articles, and from actual letters written by attendees. The language may seem dated, but it captures the reality of our religious heritage.

On the first day of a camp meeting in North Carolina all roads leading to the grounds were clotted with people hurrying to the meeting, some on foot carrying their shoes in their hands; others on horseback with a child in front and a bundle of provisions behind; still others in wagons and carts, some drawn by horses, others by oxen, vehicles crowded with women and children and piled high with equipage. The camp ground was heavily wooded; near by was a creek and spring of water. Men and women were tethering horses, erecting tents, cooking meals for the day. Children were frolicking about, in and out among the wagons, frightfully near the horses' heels.

Not far off women were already beginning to find their places on the rude plank seats in front of the "stage." They were leaving vacant a few seats in front. Those were the "anxious benches." Here the "convicted" would come to be prayed for when the preacher issued the invitation for "mourners." The only covering over the arbor sheltered the pulpit. On the stage was a knot of men solemnly shaking hands and conversing. On all sides of the arbor, row after row of vehicles crowded one another. Men were standing everywhere. The music struck up, quavering; mostly female voices singing two lines at a time as the deacon read them off. After another hymn, a preacher arose and the men came filing in, taking their seats on the opposite side of the arbor if the women had not filled them all; or crowding into the aisles and back of the seats occupied by their women folk. The minister, an ordinary looking man, dragged out an ordinary address while whispered conversations hummed louder and louder. Infants wailed fretfully. A dog fight started somewhere among the wagons.

At length the evangelist arose. At once the congregation was electrified. "And what come ye out into the wilderness for to see?" he asked, fixing his eyes upon the congregation. His voice rose powerfully, "Ayr! ye are come as to a holiday pageant, bedecked in tinsel and costly raiment. I see before me the pride of beauty and youth; the middle-aged, . . . the hoary hairs and decrepit limbs of age;--all trampling--hustling each other in your haste--on one beaten road--the way to death and judgment! Oh! fools and blind! slow-worms, battenning upon the damps and filth of this vile earth! hugging your muck rakes while the Glorious One proffers you the Crown of Life!"

Women were in tears. "*That's preaching!*" shouted a gray-haired man.

With words of doom yet upon his lips, the preacher suddenly stopped. A female voice began a spiritual. With a mighty roar the congregation burst into the chorus. The preachers had come down from the stage. "Sinners come home!" they shouted above the surge of the song. They went through the congregation shaking hands, singing as they went.

Nerves were taut. The tumult rose. Shouts of thanksgiving and wails of despair joined with the ever recurring pulse of the song. Now a minister was praying; now he was shouting, "Washed in the blood of the Lamb!" One after another, weeping mourners arose and flung themselves in front of the anxious seats.

It was now two o'clock. After a brief intermission, while the ministers and their helpers continued to labor with the seekers, there would be prayer and exhortation. At candle-light pine torches would be lighted and there would be preaching again. So far, no one had "come through." The ministers had hardly expected it. That would not come until the third or fourth day of the meeting.

Newly made converts were frequently so at peace with the world that they smiled constantly at all who looked their way, but when they laughed openly, involuntarily, and for long periods at a time, they were said to have the laughing exercise. Barking like a dog and mewing like a cat were less frequent phenomena of the Great Revival. The person so affected would get down on all fours and go about the congregation barking or mewing as the case might be.

In a few instances, congregations in North Carolina were subject to extreme exercises, such as the marrying exercise, and the "impression" exercise. One afflicted with the marrying exercise professed to have a revelation that the Lord wished him to marry a certain person, and the person thus designated felt compelled to consent to the marriage for fear of being damned. "Thus," wrote the Reverend Joseph Moore to the Reverend Jesse Lee in 1806, "many got married, and it was said some old maids, who had nearly gotten antiquated, managed in this way to get husbands."

The "impression" exercise was similar to the marrying exercise in that the person under the influence of this exercise had an impression that the Lord wished a certain thing to be done. The congregation at Knobb Creek, a Presbyterian church in Rutherford County, was the only congregation in North Carolina which seems to have been especially subject to this exercise. On one occasion an old woman in the congregation had an impression that one of her neighbors should break her crop of flax, and he accordingly broke the flax as the Lord directed. At the evening meetings the congregation might assemble at two or three different places in one night because one of the members might suddenly have an impression that they ought to go elsewhere. While most persons who were subject to the revival phenomena were exercised at a meeting, many were seized while at home or at work.

The *Great Revival* era lasted until the *Civil War*, when more pressing issues occupied everyone's time. Most campgrounds that had been founded prior to that time continued with their annual meetings, held mostly in August. Today, all across the Carolinas, you can still find a *Camp Meeting* in progress from the end of July to the middle of August. If you haven't had the pleasure of experiencing one of these Southern celebrations, this is the summer to start. *You won't regret the decision.*

The History of Pleasant Grove Campground

The following history of *Pleasant Grove Campground* located in *Union County, North Carolina*, near the town of *Mineral Springs*, was written in 1954 by **George Winchester**, a descendent of **Thomas Winchester**, an original trustee of the camp. Today, the **Winchester** family, headed by **Charlie** and his wife **Myrtle Biggers**, still camps in one of the oldest "tents" standing on the grounds. Charlie's father was the late **Oscar Winchester**, and his mother was **Sadie Locke**, daughter of **Absalom and Lizzie**.



In *August, 2002*, **Buddy Helms** made his last visit to *Pleasant Grove Campground*. Here he enjoys a light moment with his childhood sweetheart, *Helen Todd*. She plans to attend this *August* at the young age of *89!*



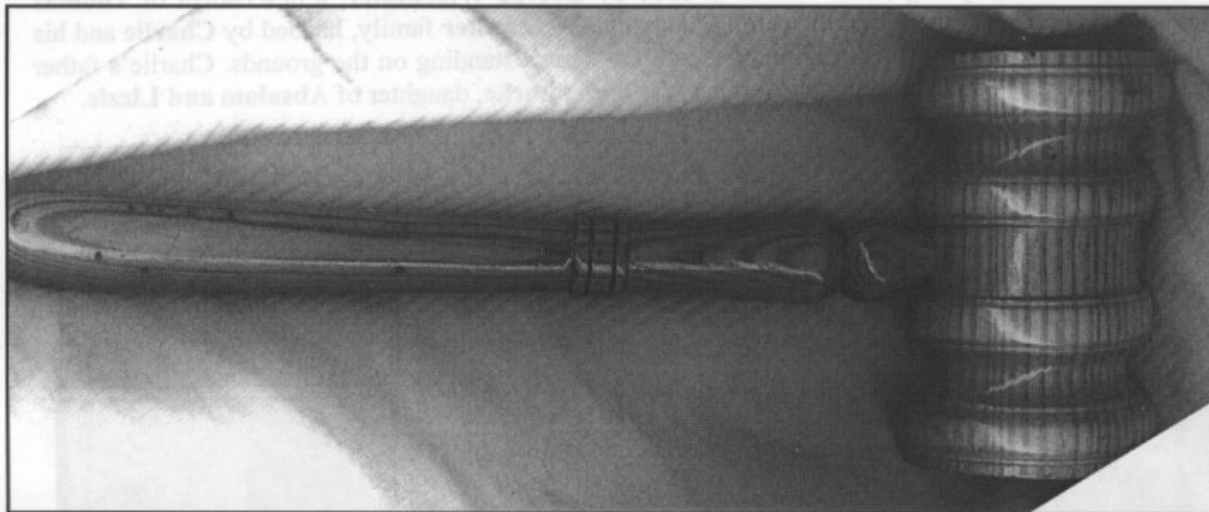
The historic Arbor of Pleasant Grove Campground during a revival

The first meeting was held under a brush arbor in October, 1829. After the decision to build a camp, a deed of 24 acres of land was given by Matthew McCorkle for a sum of \$60.00 (sixty dollars) to nine trustees and their successors, namely: Arch Brown, Jack Starnes, Wm. Irby, Peter Wolfe, Michael Polk, Robert Howey, Robert G. Howard, Thomas Winchester, and John Lawton.

After the grounds were cleared of undergrowth the place was so beautiful that it was decided to call it Pleasant Grove. John Rape received the contract to hew out the frame of the arbor with an ax, to mortis and fit it together and cover it all for the good sum of \$125.00. He soon learned that this was not enough and so his good neighbors came to his rescue and helped him to complete the arbor. Even at this time it would be a task to raise a plate 8 by 10 inches square and 50 feet long and place it on a line of posts 8 inches square and 16 feet high.

There were more than 200 tents on the grounds before the Civil War. In 1830 a good part of North Carolina belonged to the South Carolina conference and at that time Pleasant Grove belonged to the Wateree circuit of South Carolina. The presiding elder was Wm. M. Kennedy; circuit preacher, Jacob Ozier. After 1830 pastors were J. H. Robinson, E. Calloway, A. McPherson, R. Adams, P.W. Glenny, T.L. Potter, etc.

Souvenir Gavel of Pleasant Grove Arbor



In the early 1950's, a new pulpit was constructed under the original *Arbor*. As a way to conserve the historic wood being removed, the *Camp Meeting* committee decided to sell souvenir gavels made from that wood. **Oscar Winchester** used his lathe to make the gavels, and finished them with multiple coats of shellac and varnish. The gavel pictured above was a gift from **Walston Levi Locke** to **Vann Helms** in 1987. The following text was included with each gavel sold.

Souvenir gavels, constructed from a part of the frame work of the original arbor pulpit of *Pleasant Grove Campground*, are being sold by W. S. C. S. of *Pleasant Grove Methodist Church*. Some of this material still has the mark of the woodman's ax.

Special gavels have handles made of chestnut wood taken from the frame work of *Uncle Adam Wolfe's* tent, which, it is said, was moved from the *McWorter Campground* and was among the first built at *Pleasant Grove*.

A percent of the proceeds from the sale of these souvenirs will go to the campmeeting fund.

Made by R. Oscar Winchester, Waxhaw, N.C., R-1

A correspondent of the *Raleigh Star* of *September 10, 1819*, attributed the success of a camp meeting to its environment. "...there is no form of worship," said he, "so well calculated to work upon the feelings or sympathies of the obdurate, as the nightly devotional exercises practiced at a *Methodist Camp Meeting*: for if the reasoning and persuasive powers of the preacher prove abortive, there are attending circumstances, which never fail to produce the desired end." Of the physical manifestations of camp meetings, the **Reverend Nathaniel Blount** wrote in 1805 to his friend the **Reverend Charles Pettigrew**, "...when people work themselves up to a very violent agitation of mind, it is no wonder if it should have some very *extraordinary* and *surprising* effect on the body."

A Memoir by Wyatt Cooper, father of Anderson

In 1978, "*A Mississippi Memoir*", was published in *Town and Country Magazine*. The author was Wyatt Cooper, who was married to Gloria Vanderbilt, and had two sons, Carter and Anderson. For those of you who watch CNN, Anderson Cooper would go on to become one of the most popular news anchors on television. His father, Wyatt, would pass away shortly after finishing this remarkable piece about growing up in the South, but his recollections could have come from any of us who were born and raised south of the Mason-Dixon Line. Reprinted here is just the first paragraph of his memoir.

Mississippi. Not, for me, just a stretch of land with political boundaries drawn out upon a map, but all my beginnings, all I remember—the first faces, blue eyes peering down, the smiles, the soft singing voices, then more: high blue skies with clouds of brilliant white, fields of green, forests with trees reaching for the sun. Heat, the parching, destroying heat of the summer and the soft cool of shade, the raw smell of the earth freshly turned by the plow, cows standing in lazy clumps in the pasture; the mystery of streams, the laughing water gurgling over scattered stones while small bits of life darted about within, spring coming with sudden bursts of color in the woods, yellow school buses on red clay roads that are wet and slippery in winter and that send up clouds of choking dust in summer. Learning the names of places, not knowing yet which were biblical and which were Indian—*Antioch, Hebron Ridge, Tallyboghe, Archusa*; white wooden schoolhouses, white churches with graveyards behind them, graveyards in which lay the bones of generations of my people, their names gradually fading from the marble markers above; watermelons still on the vines so that you thump them, listening for the sounds of ripeness; tomatoes plucked with the dew still on them, eaten that way, still in the garden, with salt brought from the kitchen in your open palm; marigolds growing along faded picket fences; zinnias placed in fruit jars. Then company coming: kinfolks, *Grandma's* house and family gatherings with baskets and baskets of food; Sunday school, and dressing up in long pants and white shoes, and "all day sings" with dinner on the ground with still more food: banana puddings, all kinds of cakes, fried chicken and ambrosia; revival (or protracted) meetings with wild-eyed preachers shouting about *Hell* and the eternal fire that could not be vanquished. And finally the mournful hymns sung by nonmusical voices, voices that had in them the pain of rough weather and hard labor and tough times, along with hope and faith and determination. These songs would be about *Jesus* saving wretched souls such as we, and some of us would get saved while the rest of us trembled and worried about the harsh and judgmental but merciful *God* of song and sermon, a *God* that sounded credible enough for us, for already our experience and observation had told us that that's what our world was like, would be like, harsh and judgmental, the suffering, punishment, with all that, we knew also that life was touched by magic, by glimpses of glory, by a kind of natural majesty that might as well be called by the name of *God* as by any other we knew, like chance or accident or fate.

Buddy's 1946 Hudson to be in Museum

In June of 1949, *NASCAR* pioneer **Buddy Helms**, son of **Mattie Locke Helms**, entered his 1946 *Hudson Super Six* sedan in the very first sanctioned *NASCAR* race in *Charlotte*. By October, he had taken on the driving duties, and ran many races over the next three years. In *November, 2003*, he was honored as the oldest living *NASCAR* driver in festivities at Miami's *Homestead Motor Speedway* at the last *Winston Cup* race. Less than two weeks later, he was dead at age 87 from injuries he received in a fire at his home while working on a faulty fuel pump. This past May, the directors of *Homestead Speedway* informed the family that they planned to restore one of **Buddy's** old *Hudsons* to its original 1949 condition, and enshrine it inside a new racing museum being planned for the *South Florida* facility. Their plan is to have it "racing ready" in time for the *Nextel Cup* race in *November, 2008*, and take it around the track for a ceremonial final lap. **Buddy's** dream of being recognized for his contribution to stock car racing looks like it will finally become a reality. Keep your fingers crossed.



Buddy Helms behind the wheel of his 1946 Hudson Super Six during a race in 1949



Leading on a turn in Atlanta, November, 1949



Son Eddie in Charlotte, June of 1949

We Need Your Photos and Stories



Boyce-Strickland Wedding- 1978
Locke, Verla, Vicki, J.P., Keith, Ann, Amy
Front: Chuck and Holly Bartlett



Mamie Locke Boyce, Mae Helms Howell
Margaret Helms McCauley, Vann 1976



Rick Howell
Mae's Grandson

This newsletter can only be as interesting as you allow it to be. Please find those old family photos that have been stored away for so long, and either scan them, or make a color Xerox copy at Kinko's, and send them to me so that they can be shared. Someone out there has access to an old family bible that has priceless information written on its delicate pages. What you might think is insignificant, will be a treasure for someone else in the Locke family who is searching for answers.

Your family stories can be so interesting to others. Send me your memories or old newspaper clippings, or magazine articles, and I'll include them in future newsletters. Maybe it was a special vacation you took, or an event you were a part of, or an historical happening that really stands out in your mind. Please share those memories with all of us. Don't be shy. Get involved.

Thank you to all those people who have sent me their e-mail addresses, and those of family members who want to be included in our group. Not only will they be able to see this newsletter in full color, but they can make copies and send them to people who might not be on our mailing list. Let me hear from you at vann@miami-art.com.

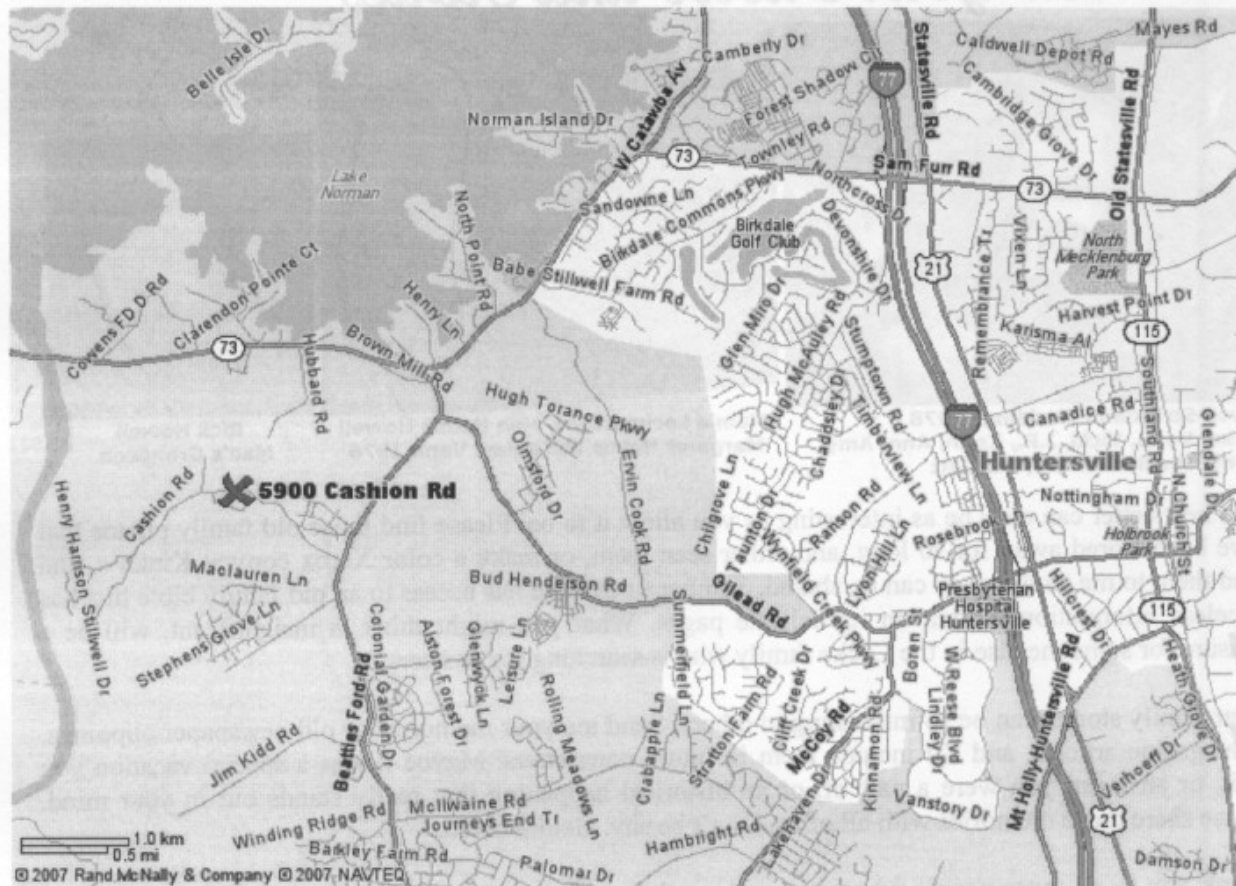
Also, thank you so much to those many people who have made donations to keep these newsletters coming. We now have over 175 names on our mailing list. Each edition costs about \$200 to print and mail. More e-mail addresses will bring that cost down. A special thanks to my sister, **Nancy Helms**, who has underwritten the entire cost of two newsletters so far! Without her help, and the help of many others, this project of love would never happen. *Vann Helms 5281 Sw. 95 Avenue Ft. Laud., 33328*



A Special "Thank You" to the Howells...

I can't say enough about these wonderful cousins. Ray Howell is the son of John and Mae Helms Howell, and the grandson of Lonnie and Mattie Locke Helms. Lucinda "Bruce" Davis comes from an old Huntersville family. Their generosity in offering their farm for our reunions is most appreciated!

Directions to the Howell Farm on Cashion Road



From *Interstate 77*, north of *Charlotte*, take exit 25 west, which is N.C. highway 73, and also *Sam Furr Road*. Go west toward *Lake Norman*, and stay on *Highway 73*. After about three miles, you will turn left onto *Beatties Ford Road*, and drive south about 1½ miles, until you see *Cashion Road*, and you will make a right turn. Follow the *LOCKE REUNION* signs to *Ray and Bruce Howell's* home about ¼ mile on your left. Park at the top of the hill, and walk down to the lake house. If that short walk might be a little too much for some of our loved ones, you can drive them down the hill directly to the pavilion. Of course, bring your favorite meat, veggies, biscuits, and desserts!

