

# LOG OF THE GOOD SHIP "MERCEDES."

## CAPT. CONSTINE GIVES AN INTERESTING ACCOUNT OF HIS TRIP UP THE RIVER.

Editor COUNTY RECORD:

I wrote you some time ago an account of my return trip from Georgetown up Black river to this place on my gasoline boat, the "Mercedes" (the name you gave to it). I think of making a change in the name of the boat, and if I do, I will call it the Pastime, as the boat is like company for me and when I am tired of the land I take to the boat and that is the best pastime I can have. So now I will begin to tell about my trip from here to the upper waters of Black river. My fortress is the good green-wood, my trust the cypress tree, and the great Brewington swamp my old time hunting and fishing grounds, something I like to talk about as well as the warm hearted friends I have on both sides of the river from Kingstree to Manning, Sumter on the west side, and from Kingstree to Brick church and Mayesville on the east. Many have gone to their reward, some of them long ago, and I will name some of them in this letter; some who were well-to-do and had an abundance of this world's goods and some in very humble circumstances, but all treated "Poor Conrad" kindly and gave him warm welcome whether he came at supper time or before breakfast.

Our boat left the landing at Kingstree at half past two p. m., April 27. I had for company Mr. Henry Reardon, of the Mouzon section, Harry Britton and Johnny Reardon, of this place. The boat glided along quite lively and we made the mouth of Montgomery lake, a distance of sixteen miles, in one hour and fifty eight minutes; the distance from Montgomery lake to Mouzon's bridge is said to be eight miles. The time made from Kingstree to Mouzon's was two hours and fifty five minutes. We would have made the run of twenty-four miles without a single stop, or the least slack of engine, but Mr. Henry Reardon had us to stop to get a mess of fine fish out of his traps. He lives near the bridge and his land joins the place that I owned once, but belongs to Mr. Wm. Young at present. We spent the night with Mr. Henry Reardon and his wife, one of the smartest little women, gave us a welcome and hot supper of fish and several cups of stimulating coffee. I was made to feel so much at home I had to practice old Mr. John Reardon's habit of pulling off my coat, shoes and socks and warming the bottom of my feet at the fire, as it had begun to rain and our shoes were pretty well soaked by the time we got to the house. We had had quite a pleasant night's rest, had a big feather bed all to myself and slept until awakened in the morning by the scent of fish in the frying pan. We had the kind of meal described by an Irishman by the name of John Kinney, from Sumter, who was a member of my company in the Civil war. John was a great talker and could palaver well, and when he would go out on a foraging expedition in the army in Virginia and would happen to get a good square meal in the country he would boast of getting a "beautiful dinner" that day. Poor John! He, like many others, gave his life for the Cause that was lost.

On April 28th we left Mouzon's bridge about half past 8 o'clock a. m. The river was pretty high at this place, but the boat could pass under the bridge, the engine missing the bridge stringers by two inches. We took our time and arrived at Epps' bridge in about a half hour's run. We blew our foghorn to let the folks know that we were coming. Mr. Dan Epps and some of his sons got on the boat at Honny Rock, a few bends below the bridge. Mr. Dan Epps is a son of Mr. James Epps, who was a well-to-do farmer, a brother of the father of Mr. D. J. Epps, of Kingstree. Mr. Dan Epps is also a brother of Col. J. P. Epps, of Cades, my old boyhood comrade and brother soldier in the war. We took dinner with Mr. Dan and boys. They did not fail to take up their

traps and his good wife gave a dinner that was "beautiful," including the fine fish that were good for a king. In fact, they partake of them, for is it not the duty of Black river readers may myself "Poor Conrad" a poor, wandering roving would visit the home of McElveen's mother (she was widow of Mr. John Epps) and she used to pity me and call me "Poor Conrad" and she was one lady that should have me when I shouldered the load and told them good by.

A monitor, to look away back of those times and the m... kind ones who are gone by to these old eyes that have seen ups and downs of many places in the world.

Well, after dinner, Dan, we bid them good-bye and up the river for Martin's lake. Young men joined us and we as Reardon's landing, where learned to paddle a canoe and where I went many times on a hunt or a fishing trip with my old friend, Mr. James Reardon, a son of Mr. John Reardon, who brought me up to this country from Charleston in 1850 on his return trip with cotton by wagon and team.

We met Mr. Wingate and his family at Reardon's landing, or the creek, as it is called by the people that live there. Our company then left us. Mr. Press Herrington being among the number had never seen the boat and came down to get a look and a ride. We then left for Martin's lake, passed through Conyer's lake, Stephen's lake, Ben's lake, and tied up at the Canoe lake about one mile between Martin's lake and walked out to my old friend's, Mr. Mitchell Epps, who thinks that there is no one like Conrad. He is a kind friend to me and so is his whole family. He is also a brother to Dan and J. P. Epps. He seems to feel that I am his best doctor. He dreads thunder and lightning greatly, but seems to feel more safe when I am near him. He makes me feel so much at home in his house. His daughter's house was a home for me, and his dear old mother often said to me: "Conrad, I think as much of you as my own sons." "Aunt Betsey," I used to call her. Col. Pete often laughs at something I said to his mother once. I think Pete and I had been out and as we came into the house I said, "Aunt Betsey, is dinner nearly ready?" "Are you hungry, Conrad?" "I said, no man, I only want to get dinner off my mind."

April 29th we had our breakfast and told good bye to Mitchell and his good little wife, quite a Christian lady, who never fails in prayers to God night and day. We were met by Mr. John Stephen Evans George Smith and several boys and young men were our company to Martin's lake, and after dinner at that landing they went with us to Brewington lake. Mr. J. E. Reardon, of Manning, drove up just as we had dinner done. Mr. Jimmy Burgess also threw open his fish traps to us and we had a fry that will not soon be forgotten. After dinner we left for Brewington lake, six miles up from Martin's lake. Mr. J. S. Evans and the other men and boys went with us as far as Brewington lake. We took their canoes in tow and after reaching the lake they came back down the river to their homes. Mr. J. E. Reardon also joined our company up the river, sent his buggy around, which met us at Brewington. I went home with him and spent the night and part of the next day in Manning visiting some friends. Manning has grown fast. My first trip there was before the streets were laid out.

On April 30th we had a fine "pine bark stew" and fry at Brewington lake. Mr. Sam Evans opened his fish traps also for us. We had Dr. Toad, his daughter, and Miss Herrington to spend the day with us. The doctor and the ladies came down the river as far as Martin's lake. I told them it would be a rough trip for ladies but said they were not afraid, so we spread all of our bedding on the floor of the boat and several times the ladies had to lie down to pass under the over-

hanging cent win buggy was doctor and he n and od bye much for they enjoyed

Corner, river makes a to the right or branch or prong called, makes the west from where one mile above mention old who had a wo smith, chair-making wheels and looms was his favorite fishing Monday was always his He was well educated a writer. He was also fond of Whenever he would fail any one he would write epitaph. Mr. Lawrence told me of a few lines Mr. wrote under the epitaph on a tombstone that stood near the road in the graveyard at Biggin's church, a few miles this side of Monck's Corner, on the public road. Mr. Fleming was on the road to Charleston with a waggon load of cotton, he saw the inscription on the tombstone and it read:

"Ye living men as you pass by, As you are now so once was I. As I am now so soon you'll be; Prepare for death and follow me."

Mr. Fleming went to Charleston and when he reached Biggin's church on his return he had some lines ready to place under the lines on the tombstone. I read in one of the Charleston papers about the time of the war something it said about the same: "To follow you I would not be content; I do not know which way you went. The roads do fork and none can tell. Whether you went to heaven or hell."

Mr. Fleming's father-in-law was an Englishman by the name of C. T. Winder. Mr. Fleming hated him and after the death of Mr. Winder Mr. Fleming wrote his epitaph. Mr. Winder was buried (I think) in his own yard under a large tree. The epitaph was as follows:

"Here lies beneath this tree An Englishman by name C. T. He was a guinea fowl's benefactor, An Ethiopian's friend; A cat's devil and a dog's end. His right hand was even, His left hand was odd The devil has got him by G—"

Mr. Winder had lost one finger of his right hand. Mr. Winder was fond of Guinea fowls and negroes. He hated cats and dogs and would kill any that came on his place. When I was a boy I would often go to Mr. Fleming's shop to hear him talk. He would never stop working to say or tell anything. He was kind to me and seemed to like me, so one day I asked him to write my epitaph. In a few days I went back to the shop and he had my epitaph ready. I was then working at the carpenter's trade helping to build a large dwelling house for Mr. D. E. Evans, a near neighbor of Mr. Fleming. My epitaph read this way:

"Here is the grave of poor Conrad. Father and mother he never knew he had. Reared up by strangers in this happy land. He had a soul to be saved or either damned. A carpenter was he by trade. The hardest lot God ever made. Freed from toil he's turned to clay. The God that made him called him away."

This epitaph was written in 1855, but was never placed on my tombstone. God has seen fit to let me live many years since the death of poor old "Siab," as he was familiarly called. At that time Mr. Fleming had a wife, six sons and three

daughters. All are dead but one daughter, so I heard a year or so ago. His daughter thought a great deal so that they had a pet dog for me. One day passing by the gate and old Fleming stopped me to tell of watermelon patch, and when so she said she called the dogs but they did not come to see her. "Here said she here Conrad, here Jack, here a son a b—"

"I passed by their old place I was up there but the oak where I used to sit and the girls while they were waiting for butter, the old well, the are all gone and cotton and are growing on the spot where at many happy hours. A wave swept over the place and all is gone.

May 1 we came down from Martin's lake to the Canoe lake, went and spent the night with J. S. Evans. This was also one of my boyhood homes. His mother is the widow of Mr. D. E. Evans, who I told you about in the first part of this letter. He was a noble, Christian gentleman and his good deeds live after him.

After spending a pleasant night we left Saturday morning for Kingstree. We stopped at Mouzon's bridge. The water was several inches higher than when we went up so we had to pass around the bridge over the road. We intended to cook dinner there and rest, but we blew a gale from the foghorn and Mr. Reardon's wife heard it. The Reardon's half a mile from the bridge Reardon was away from that smart little wife of his. He started telling us to come up. We praised the Lord and accepted the invitation. After eating a good dinner, which was also "beautiful," we bid them good-bye and arrived at Kingstree long before sundown, making the run of twenty-four miles in two hours and in time to still find Mr. Henry Reardon in town and to tell him we had the pleasure of eating dinner at his house.

The Mercedes behaved nobly the whole round trip, and we have had the pleasure of taking small parties out up and down the river since the return of the boat from the upper waters. Among the parties was quite a number of Kingstree's prettiest ladies, and I feel quite proud and feel honored to have them ride in my boat. If this letter deserves space in THE COUNTY RECORD I will feel honored also by the gentleman editor. Very truly yours, CONRAD CONSTINE. Kingstree, May 18, 1908.

**COMFORTING WORDS.**  
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To have the pains and aches of a bad back removed; to be entirely free from annoying, dangerous urinary disorders is enough to make any kidney sufferer grateful. To tell how this great change can be brought about will prove comforting words to hundreds of Kingstree readers. Mrs. R. B. Smith, Logan Street, Kingstree, S. C., says: "Doan's Kidney Pills have proven very beneficial to me and I heartily recommend them. I had kidney trouble for some time and suffered a great deal from dull, nagging backaches. Headaches and pains in the region of my kidneys were of frequent occurrence and I always had a tired, worn out feeling. Recently I bought a box of Doan's Kidney Pills at Scott's drug store and taking them as directed was quickly relieved of all the difficulties. My strength and energy also returned and my condition was improved in every way."

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### DISPENSARY FIGHT WAXES HOT.

#### Movement for Rum Shop at Harper's, on County Line, Stirs up Trouble.

GEORGETOWN, May 14.—A bitter wrangle exists at Harper's, on the Georgetown and Western railroad, partly in Williamsburg and partly in Georgetown counties, over the question of establishing a dispensary at that place. At a meeting of the interested parties to the controversy on Tuesday afternoon the strongest language was hurled back and forth between the opposing factions. Crimination, recrimination, innuendoes and threats were indulged in and a general scrimmage was imminent. The Williamsburgers want a dispensary, the citizens of the Georgetown side do not. Charges were made that the stores and shops in Harper's are virtually blind tigers, which were answered with the lie and counter charges of corruption and immorality. The intendant of Harper's, Mr. W. S. Catlin, and the Rev. Mr. Thrower, of the Methodist Church, engaged in a heated argument, which came near ending in blows. The meeting adjourned without settling the question, to meet again at a later date. The people of the nearby town of Rosemary, in Georgetown county, threaten to open a dispensary at that place should one be established at Harper's. Rosemary is a thriving and growing village, where the big railroad shops of the Atlantic Coast Lumber Corporation are located, and as most of the dispensary patronage would naturally come from there, this threat on the part of the Rosemary people may put a quietus on the aspirations of the people of Harper's.—News & Courier.

When the baby is cross and has you worried and worn out you will find that a little Cascasweet, the well known remedy for babies and children, will quiet the little one in a short time. The ingredients are printed plainly on the bottle, contain no opiate. Sold by W. L. Wallace.

#### Baseball at Morrisville.

MORRISVILLE, May 12.—The opening game of the season was pulled off on the local diamond Saturday when our boys and the Dauntless club, from near Kingstree, crossed bats. The game was a close one, resulting in a score of 2 to 3 in favor of the visiting team. Mr. Silas Nesment acted as umpire and the game passed off pleasantly. The Dauntless boys are a gentlemanly set and our boys will be glad to have them come back any old time.

Our boys are preparing to give Spring Gully a licking next Saturday. The Morrisville team is about the same as last season. Very few changes, only that the "baby pitcher," as some of the visitors termed him last year, has grown to be a big boy, wearing "long britches" and bouquets. But when he gets in the box it's another scrape of "Casey at the Bat."

With kindest regards to THE RECORD, I will ring off, BLUNDERBUSS.

Plan your work—then work your plan.

Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm. Use your head to think with. Hat racks can be gotten at the 10-cent stores.

"Health Coffee" is really the closest Coffee Imitation ever yet produced. This clever Coffee Substitute was recently produced by Dr. Shoop of Racine, Wis. Not a grain of real Coffee in it either. Dr. Shoop's Health Coffee is made from pure toasted grains, with malt, nuts, etc. Really it would fool an expert—who might drink it for Coffee. No 20 or 30 minutes tedious boiling. "Made in a minute" says the doctor. Sold by People's Mercantile Co.

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**W. Leland Taylor,** DENTIST. GREELYVILLE. S. C.

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