

"GLENNBURNIE"

By

Mary S. Royster

1938

Glennburnie

“Glennburnie” was a plantation house at Milton, North Carolina, on the Dan River, owned originally by Dr. W. L. Stamps.¹ The following is a reminiscence by his daughter, Mary Stamps Royster, of her childhood there.²

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Mary Stamps Royster

You have often asked me, my dear grandchildren, to tell you about myself, my home, where I lived, and where I was born. So now I am writing this little story for you and your children.

My father, Dr. William L. Stamps, and my mother, Elizabeth Bullock Jiggitts,³ both Virginians, were married at “Tall Grove”, my grandmother’s home in Mecklenburg County Virginia. The year I do not know, but my mother told me it was the same year and day in May that Queen Victoria in England was married. They

¹ Dr. William Lipscomb Stamps, M.D. (1816-1896). Buried at Cedars Cemetery in Milton, NC.

² Mary Rice Stamps (1855-1942) married Frank Sheppard Royster (1849-1928) in 1874.

³ Elizabeth Taylor Bullock Jiggitts (1820-1886) married William Lipscomb Stamps in 1840.

built themselves a home on my grand father's place and called it "Ingleside". They lived there several years, and several children were born to the.

My father was a graduate of Chapel Hill, and then studied medicine in Philadelphia. He was born in Halifax County, Virginia. My mother Elizabeth Jiggitts, daughter of Dr. David Edward Jiggitts,⁴ was born February 14, 1820 In Mecklenburg County, Virginia. My grandmother was Susan Bullock (born 10/8/1791, Granville County, North Carolina),⁵ and my father's mother was Anna Raglan [sic] Stamps.⁶

They lived at "Ingleside" several years, and then moved to Milton, North Carolina and bought a beautiful estate and called it "Glennburnie". As they entered this lovely home they knelt on the stoop and asked God's blessing on their home. In this beautiful Christian home, my dear grandchildren, your grandmother was born and reared.

Father gave up the practice of medicine after I was born. He had many plantations – "Mount Airy", "Sandy Creek", "Rat Castle", and "Glennburnie", and although he had his overseers, he had to look after things. He would have his horse brought up in the morning and would sometimes take me up behind him on the horse. We would go to one or more of the plantations, and what a good time I would have. Sometimes we would stay and eat dinner with the overseer and his family, and then trot back home. Father would get the mail, read his papers, after dinner take a nap, and his work was over.

Our father was very strict with us all. We never argued, and when he spoke to us we knew we had to do as he said. We always had family prayers both morning and night, and we were expected to always be there. I can see the picture now, in my mother's room – the fire burning in the fireplace, father on one side of the fire place, my mother on the other; my mother with her knitting, my father with his paper. And at night when the old clock ticked five minutes before nine, the candle stand was brought, put by my father's side, and the Bible brought and put on it; and when the clock struck nine, father opened the Bible and read a few verses from God's word, prayed, and then we kissed them good-night, and went to bed.

⁴ Dr. David Edward Jiggetts, M.D. (1791-1865).

⁵ Other records show the birth date as 8 October 1792.

⁶ Anna Beaufort Ragland (1777-1834) married Thomas Stamps July 2, 1809.

My father was quite a student, and a great reader. One winter when I was not well and kept out of school, five books in French were translated into English and read to me; also, Dickens and Scott and many others. He always expected his children to be first in their studies in everything. He told me once that he wanted me to recite the whole Shorter Catechism at one time to our pastor, so when the preacher came, I had to do so, and I think he was more nervous than I was.

My mother had twelve children, but raised only five: Anna R. Stamps,⁷ Edward Roe,⁸ Thomas Stamps,⁹ Preston Stamps,¹⁰ and myself.¹¹ We were quite a musical family. I have never seen anyone who loved music and flowers as my mother did. We had a band called "Stamps Band". My mother would be at the piano, my brother Ed with the flute, my little brother Preston with stirrup and stick, and your grandmother at the harp. Although my father and brother Tom could not sing very well, often we would get my mother at the piano and gather around and sing the old songs, like "Annie Laurie", "Way Down Upon the Swanee River" and many, many others. My father would stand and sing loudly the "Marseilles", and then all six of us would join and sing, "A Little More Cider, A Little more Cider, Cider." Oh, how happy we were!



Milton Presbyterian Church

My sister, Anna Stamps. Married Judge Howard of Tarboro, North Carolina; my brother, Edward Roe, married Betty Williams of Raleigh; brother Tom married Kate Walker of Raleigh, and brother Preston married Hattie McQueen. My father and brothers were all elders in the Presbyterian Church.

I do not ever remember seeing my mother idle, my father had a large number of slaves, and my mother, twice a year, I think, would take her seamstress, Aunty Patsy, and go to "Sandy Creek", Rat Castle", Mount Airy, and the home place "Glennburnie", and see to having their clothes cut out and made. All the shoes were made on the place, also the wool from the sheep were woven for clothes and carpets. During

⁷ Anna Ragland Stamps (1842-1901) married George A. Howard, Jr. (1829-1905) 1861 in Caswell County, NC.

⁸ Edward Roe Stamps (1844-1891) married Betty Vines Williams (1856-1925) 1876 in Wake County, NC.

⁹ Dr. Thomas Stamps, M.D. (1849-1934) married Minnie Judson Hazeltine (1857-1909).

¹⁰ Preston Stamps (1861-1915) married Hattie McQueen (1868-1908) 1897 in Robeson County, NC.

¹¹ Two children are known to have died young: William Stamps (1856-1861); and Ida Stamps (1859-1860).

the war the rugs were sometimes made into blankets for the soldiers, and also mats to put under the saddles of the horses.

My mother like to entertain her friends. When they came to “Glennburnie” to see her she would call the butler, tell him to bring some cake and wine, then call me, “Mary, come and play”, and I would stand on the floor by the piano and play my little pieces. She had in the bureau drawer at home a clipping from a paper calling me “the little singing nightingale”. My mother would go to the Springs in the summer and started taking me with her when I was about two years old.

I often think of what my mother had to go through during the war. My father volunteered and was a surgeon under Jackson. My brother Edward Roe, who was at college at Hampton Sidney, left before he was of age and volunteered, and was in the army during the whole four years. He was a Captain. He was taken a prisoner at Point Lookout and was a prisoner for eighteen months. My mother who loved to play so, did not touch the piano the whole time he was gone—He was her idol. She was a bright & cheerful person always; loved her home and church, and was great worker during the war, in taking what wore called “tracts” to the needy. She was always happy giving from her beautiful garden, her flowers to others. Her servants were very faithful to her during the war, especially Uncle Ben, the coachman, who buried her silver for her, and helped her in many ways. My mother always carried her black-key basket around on her arm.

I was so young during the war that I don’t remember much about it, but I do remember when my brother Ed was a prisoner, she never touched the piano. My father lost everything but his land; but he was determined he would give his children an education if he could give them nothing else. My two older brothers were graduates of Hampton Sidney College (my father was a trustee), and my younger brother, Preston, was a graduate of Chapel-Hill. As a little girl my father could not give me much, but when I got on a white dress and tied a ribbon around my waist, I was just fixed. I did not have all the things you have today, my dear grandchildren, but I was just as happy and enjoyed everything. I never went anywhere that I didn’t have a good time – and I didn’t have to have hats and stockings to match!

Milton, the little town that your grandmother was born in, is situated among the hills in the Piedmont section and had a reputation for culture and refinement.

One has but to venture around in some of the various walks to admire the beautiful scenery, especially as seen from the old gate leading into the old cemetery and, also a panoramic view from the lovely old home “Glennburnie”. It is a joy to the beholder! From these two points the hills of Virginia may be seen beyond the Dan River, and farther in the distance the Blue Ridge Range.¹²



Glennburnie

The lovely old home, “Glennburnie”, was built of red brick sometimes in the seventeenth hundreds, about a half mile outside of Milton on the Yanceyville road. I wish I were an artist and could paint for you a picture of “Glennburnie”! As you drive in from the road in

your carriage drawn by two beautiful horses with old Uncle Ben, the negro coachman, on the box, you pass through the grand Big Gate (a large gate in the center for carriages, and one on each side for pedestrians) then down a long avenue with trees on each side, then to the yard gate (fence painted white) and into the wide gravel walk to the house, where steps lead up to the columned porch where you pass through double front doors into a lovely Christian home, where God was loved and honored. As you enter the hall, the parlor was on the left and the sitting room on the right, both with fireplaces and high mantles, deep fluted recesses, pier glasses in gold frames, above marble topped tables; on one of these lay the big Bible given to my father by Dr. Drewry Lacy¹³ and from which family prayers were read when we had company – on the other was a silver tray with silver pitcher and goblet. The sitting room was a very beautiful room, where

¹² Here the author took geographic license as the Blue Ridge Range cannot be seen from Milton, NC.

¹³ Probably [Drury Lacy, Jr. \(1802-884\)](#).

hung the pictures of my mother's parents. From the center hall a lovely stairway led up to the large rooms which were the guest rooms, and from the window in the upstairs hall you could look down the avenue and see the beautiful gate.

From the front hall three steps led down into the colonade, where in summer the whole family (and a large family it was, with children and grandchildren home for the summer) would gather, bringing out sewing and books, and sit and talk and sew and read, before and after dinner. Oh, the sweet memories! It was a delightful place to sit, for we could get the breezes from the north, south, east, and west. The view was beautiful – the Dan River at the foot of the hills, with sweeping willows almost touching the water, and the swaying of wheat and oats across the Dan in Virginia. All was beautiful, lovely!

From the colonade on the left, was my mother's room, with high poster bed, and a little trundle bed under it. At night I slept in it as a little girl, and if I should wake up and be afraid of the dark, my mother would reach down and take my hand in hers and all would be well. High mahogany bureau, with glass knobs; a huge wardrobe – all lovely mahogany furniture. The little room next to hers we called the "little room". The passage came from the colonade to the back door, then the backporch.

The dining room was across from my mother's room; also a small room and a closet. Two rooms upstairs – one for my brothers and the other one, mine. The back porch was at the end of this hall. Facing the back porch was a large brick-smokehouse; on one side of it the meat was smoked, and on the other side my mother kept all her groceries – bags of sugar, coffee, flour; buckets of lard and other things. There were two very long, heavy boards that went from the ground to the door of the smoke-house, where all the hogs were cut into hams, spare ribs, sausage, and other parts for lard; and in the back yard was a big iron pot where the lard was made.

From the brick smoke-house, a little down in the yard, was the kitchen (also made of brick with big, long iron rods in the large fireplace, where the pots were hung to cook the vegetables. We children were not allowed to go into the kitchen. The cook said she would pin a dishcloth on us if we did. How my mother managed to have her cakes, waffles and biscuits get to the table hot, I don't know.

Christmas was a great time at “Glennburnie”. The servants would come in to sing and wish their master and mistress a Merry Christmas. And, Oh, the Christmas dinner! The table loaded down with good things – roasted pig with a red apple in his mouth at one end of the table; huge turkey, ham and all kinds of good things.

The garden was the most beautiful garden I have ever seen. As you opened the gate, on one side was a beautiful white rose bush on a high trellis; on the other side was a Cape Jasmine. The garden was laid off in the sha(pe) of the figure eight—the outside wide walks bordered with Japan Apples, Old Man’s Beard and Mock Orange, and inside were mother’s roses; then boxwood in circles, and in the circles were hyacinths, single and double. In the last small circles were choice double hyacinths which mother did not allow us to pull; and in the center where the circles met was a perfectly lovely mimosa tree, where my dear cousin Lizzie Lewis and I would play with dolls, and climb the trees for our up-stairs. There were two large circles, and beside these was the vegetable garden, where I used to go with my mother to cut asparagus, as she would not let any of the servants do it. Back of the garden was the stable with horses and wagons and mules and riding horses. The large yard surrounding the house was full of maple trees, mimosas, cedars, and other kinds. On one side was the ice house, where milk, butter, and melons were kept in summer; on the other side was mother’s greenhouse. Below the fence around the house were the negro cabins, where often I would steal down, open the gate and go and play with the little negro girls, which I enjoyed so much, because they would always do as I said.

Once or twice a year Uncle Ben the coachman would bring the carriage around, pull down the steps, and we would step in, and mother and children would drive seventy-five miles to Mecklenburg to see my grandmother.

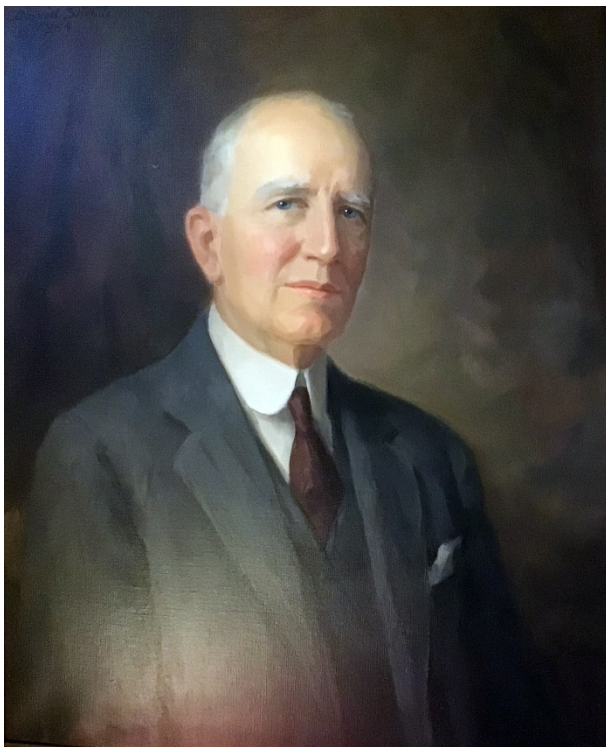
At the back and to one side of the lawn was the orchard with all kind of fruits. Oh, how I used to climb the cherry and pear trees and fil my basket, (also my stomach). One day the limb I was on broke and I, my basket and all, fell to the ground. No bones were broken but my basket was quite empty.



Hetty Cary Pegram

I went away to school when I was fourteen, to “Edgeworth” in Greensboro;¹⁴ then to Miss Cary’s school in Baltimore, called the “Southern Home School”. Mrs. Pegram was principal of the school and a most beautiful woman. She was General Pegram’s widow. I took both singing and instrumental music, also lessons on the harp. I know you all have seen my harp; it has been in the family almost a hundred years. It is a difficult instrument to play and keep in tune.

I was raised always to go to church – it never entered my head not to; and from the time I could go to church I had to behave myself and be quiet. I united with the Presbyterian Church when I was young, played the organ and taught in the Sunday School.



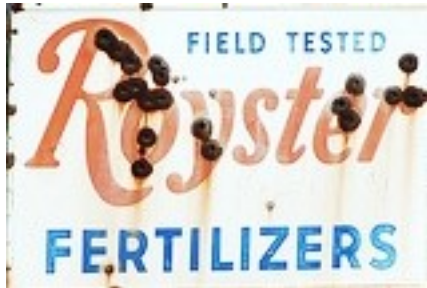
Frank Sheppard Royster

When I left school, I was eighteen, and soon after returning home I visited my sister, the wife of Judge Howard, in Tarboro. I went down to visit my sister for a few weeks, and so enjoyed having beaux and good times that they all drew up a petition and sent it home to my mother asking her to let me stay longer – which she did – and there I met the one whom I loved, your grandfather, whom you all knew and loved, and who was so devoted to you all. We were married Nov 5, 1874. He would have been 25 on Dec. 24th and I twenty on Feb. 4th. He was a partner of Mr. Farmer in Tarboro but was born in Granville County, North Carolina. We married in my mother’s parlor at

“Glennburnie”; a beautiful wedding, with music, and many people there. Dr.

¹⁴ Edgeworth Female Seminary was an all-female institution founded by Governor [John M. Morehead](#) in nineteenth-century Greensboro. The school, opened in 1840, was destroyed by fire in 1872.

Ephraim Harding¹⁵ performed the ceremony. We all stayed up all night and we left the next morning on the little narrow gage road to Southlands,¹⁶ then took the train to New York. I had never been to New York. We went to the Fifth Avenue Hotel. How grand I thought it was! No hotel has ever looked any grander to me. When we came back to Tarboro and boarded with Mr. Farrar in his new home.



Four years later he went into business for himself and formed the F. S. Royster Guano Company.¹⁷

Soon we built our own home. How pretty we thought it was and how we loved it, for we were so happy! We lived there twenty-two years.

Your grandfather was a fine Christian man, and I thank God every day that he was spared to us for fifty (years).

God gave us nine children, and spared us four, and we loved them dearly. I have never seen a father love his children more. I was at White Sulphur Springs a few years ago, and the first person I met was Mr. Henry Taft,¹⁸ who came to me and patting me on the shoulder said “Mrs. Royster, I don’t think I have ever seen a more devoted father to his family than your husband.”

Oh, my dear grandchildren, what Christian heritage has been left to us all, for my home was a home where God was loved and honored, and that all your homes may be the same is your grandmother’s prayer.

Now, my dear grandchildren, God in his mercy has spared me to live to see my eighty-third birthday, and to know you all, and I want to tell you I am proud of

¹⁵ Presbyterian minister Reverend Ephraim Henry Harding (1832-1923).

¹⁶ Query whether this is not Sutherlin, VA. Also, the narrow-gauge railroad in Milton was not thought to have run as early as 1874. The earliest date seen is 1878.

¹⁷ In 1881 he founded in Tarboro the firm of Royster and Strudwick to provide general supplies to farmers and to manufacture and sell fertilizer. Ten years later he established and became president of F. S. Royster and Company, in Norfolk, Va., as a wholesale dealer in flour, sugar, and provisions. The firm also began producing fertilizer on the premises rented from M and M Steamship lines. From this humble beginning S. Royster and Company became the largest independent, closely held fertilizer firm in the country, with some twenty-five manufacturing plants in the southeastern and middle western United States. See: [Frank Sheppard Royster](#)

¹⁸ Possibly Henry Waters Taft (1859-1945), brother of President William Howard Taft.

you, and do love you dearly. I thank God that you all love Him and try to serve Him, and, as the years go by, may you remember your grandmother, for she has never ceased to pray for you. May God bless you all!

MARY STAMPS ROYSTER
1938

Notes at End of Main Text (Some Handwritten)

JOHN STAMPS, son of Thomas Stamps, and Mary Stamps of Fanquier County, Virginia, in 1767 was living in Camden Parish, Pittsylvania County, Virginia. In 1776 he and his brother Timothy were ensigns in the Pittsylvania County Militia. On Aug. 30, 1777, John Stamps renounced his allegiance to the British Crown. He married Leannah Wilson. The U. S. census 1782-85 lists him as a planter, with a family of nine. He owned a large plantation in Pittsylvania County, near Rock Spring Church + (Sandy River) not far from Sutherlin. He died in 1812 and his wife in 1817. His will, probated Dec. 21, 1812 (dated Nov. 2, 1812), Pittsyv. Co., names his wife and the following children:

1. Capt. William Stamps, (born Jan. 6, 1761, married Mary Wall, Dec. 28, 1787. He died June 24, 1825. His wife Mary, born March 20, 1768, Died May 11, 1825. Both buried in the old Stamps cemetery.

2. Timothy Stamps (married (1) Dec. 19, 1803, Leah the dau. of John Wilson; married (2) Mary (Polly) Ho(L)son Carter 1811 widow of William Carter of Halifax County. (note: Elizabeth M. Carter, dau. William & Mary Ho(L)son Carter, married Thos. Terry Williams 1824 and their son Samuel Carter Williams (Capt) married Betty Ann Fallin (whose grandmother Betty Stamps Walters was sister of Timothy Stamps) & had Jenny Lee Williams who married Edw. Fal. Hodges). Note: Timothy was first clerk of Sandy Creek Church he + wife Polly became members 1824, the year it was organized.

3. John Stamps, Jr., married 1808, Nancy Slade. His will on record in Caswell County, North Carolina.

4. Thomas Stamps, (born 1781, married Anna Raglan, both joined old Sandy Creek Church, 1824, the year it was organized. He died March 25, 1835. She, born 1777,

died Jan. 9, 1834. Both buried in Stamps section of the old cemetery on what is now known as the "Old Hogue Place" near Sutherlin. His will, dated 1834, probated 1835 names:

(a) William L. Stamps (married Elizabeth Bullock Jiggitts. Dr. William Lipscomb Stamps was born 1816, died 1896. His wife Elizabeth Jiggitts Stamps was born 1820, died 1888. They lived at "Glennburnie", Milton, North Carolina and both are buried in the in the old Milton cemetery. It was their daughter Mary, the wife of F. S. Royster of Tarboro, N.C. who wrote "Glennburnie" for her grandchildren.

(b) Thomas Stamps, Jr. Note: Thos. Stamps Jr. born Sept. 18, 1818. Died March 11, 1855; buried at Old Hogue place—was member of Sandy Creek Church - his father willed the Hogue Plantation of 486 acres to him-

(c) Mary Ragland Stamps Rice

(d) Elizabeth Frances Stamps Watkins

5. Catherine (Cathey) Stamps, (married Archer Walters, Oct. 16, 1798. Their dau. Leannah married Hugh H. Fallen 1827, and their daughter Elizabeth (Betty) Ann married Capt. Samuel Carter Williams Dec. 20, 1853; and their daughter Virginia (Jenny) Lee married Edward Falconer Hodges, Dec. 16, 1853; and their youngest child was Samuel Carter Hodges (Sr.) "This is is my great great grand mother."¹⁹ Their son Samuel Carter Williams 1886, Their daughter Ruby born Nov. 2, 1886 married Jacob S Barnes Dec. 23, 1903.

6. Molly Married _____ ? Eckhols

7. Nanny (Nancy) Married Rev. Elias Nov. 23, 1785

8. Lydia Married Spiers Walters Dec 29, 1812

9. Rhoda Married Martin Wilson - 1800

"I have been told that Glennburnie burned."

¹⁹ This was part of the handwritten notes and shows that the author of these notes was not Mary Rice Stamps Royster. Catherine Stamps and Archibald Walters had at least eleven children.