



JOHN GUINN: "I remember settin' on that big rock and watching 'em surveying the railroad . . ." (Photo courtesy of Ruth Sanders.)

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The Barbers, they first owned that mill at Lando – Fishing Creek it was then. They lived out from Fort Mill about 7 miles. This Barber he had a brother lived at Richburg there – J. Barber. He had a controlling interest in that first mill that was built on that creek down there – cotton mill, it was. They didn't have but one spinnin' frame, two speeders and one card. That's all they had in the mill. They didn't have it full of machinery like they got it now. Wade Wallace lived in that big two story white house over there across the creek and he run that mill. That house is still over there – you can see it. He was what you call, I reckon, the foreman of the whole mill – kept it runnin' 'til it got so bad he couldn't run it. Barber couldn't sell the product fast enough to keep it running and pay his help. So he'd go up here to Mecklenberg Co. to his brother's house – he was a big farmer. He worked about fifty niggers all the time on his farm. And my daddy was the overseer of all them hands and they had a post office there at his house and, well, he carried the mail (that was Otis' brother) he carried the mail from there to Fort Mill on horseback every day.

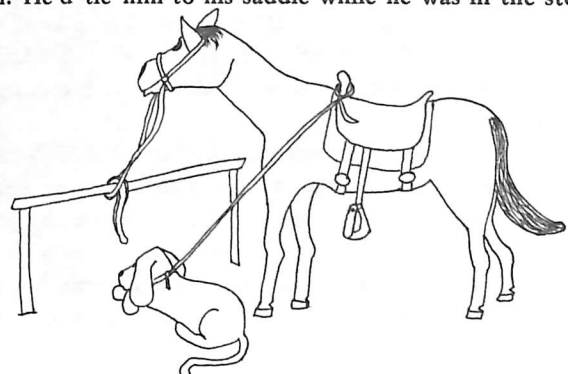
Well, this Barber come might nigh to breakin' point where he couldn't run his mill and Pa said he'd come up there to his brother and set on a stump out in the field and cry like a baby to borrow money. That other old Barber, he had plenty of money. See, he raised cotton all the time and got a pretty good price for it and had his own bank. His brother'd average going to see him 'bout every six months Pa said to borrow money. He finally told him said, "You get out of that mill

business now and go back to farmin' where you can make some money." Says, "You can't make nothin' out'a that thing". Says "You just throwin' money in the creek." He'd give it to him though and he'd come back and go on a while longer. He finally let it go and built him a house down here in Richburg. That's 'bout when the Heaths got it. The old man Ben Heath, Granpa Heath as I call him, I remember when he used to come down from Charlotte and walk around the mill. He was married twice.

I can tell you a little story that happened in the mill one day. Me and Ben Morrow we was weaving – he was up above me and I was right below him. We met in the middle where my job run right into his. One day old Mr. Heath come down there. He'd come 'bout every two or three weeks and he was comin' down the back alley between the looms and Ben Morrow come down there to me and said "Watch me bum him for some 'baccer" I said "I don't believe you will". He come along there lookin' up and down and 'round and everything. Got down there right below me, and Ben walked out in front of him and asked him said, "How 'bout a little 'baccer'?" He went down in his jacket pocket and pulled out a little piece of it. Now old Mr. Heath I know didn't recognize me. For he wouldn't a knowed me from nobody else in the mill, for there was so many hands then. I can remember just as good as anything just how he looked and everything for he'd come down thro' the mill and pass right by me. The hands knew he didn't never work none in the mill and he didn't know where they was doin' right or wrong. Sometimes he'd go up to some of the hands and speak a word or two, but he wouldn't make no long conversation. He kept everything, the floor and all, real clean.

Gilbert, Bascom and Ward, that's Ben's boys, all of 'em lived in that house right down there below Homer's. None of 'em wasn't married then. You'd be surprised to know if I tell you the last time I've ever seen Bascom. The first time they had automobile races in Charlotte, or next to Charlotte, Bascom and his wife come to the automobile race and I happened to be there that day. They sat up on top of the car and eat dinner – put a table cloth out and sat on top of the car. There was so many cars around it wasn't room to eat nowhere else. The automobile race then was new, you know, one of the first ones they had that I knowed of.

I remember Ward after he moved off from down there and married. He'd ride a big fine horse and come up to Lando a lot of times and tie him out by the store. He had a little old bull dog and I mean he would bite you too. You couldn't get close to him. He'd tie him to his saddle while he was in the store.





He'd come up there and spend a half a day talking with Gilbert sometime. But he finally died. He was between Gilbert and Bascom.

Gilbert stayed here and tended to the mill and the others still had stock. Gilbert never did work a day in the mill. But Harry and Allan both worked in the mill and I tell you Mr. Bascom Heath he had the controllin' interest of the money and everything that operated around Lando. He was general manager over there at that time. Well, they said he dealt in stock a lot in New York. Well, I've seen him come out there in front of the mill – why he'd be out there by 8:30 or 9:00 and he'd walk from the boiler room up the railroad to the end of the weave room and walk back down there all day long. Now he was studyin' then and puffin' at a cigarette every little bit and I wondered then what he walked about but I found out when I got older that he dealt in stocks all the time and a lot of times he'd make it and a lot of times I imagine he'd lose it.

Gilbert lived in the house there on the corner where Jake lives now till he built in Chester. The children were all born in Lando. You look at Allen's face real good and you'll get the picture of Bascom. Allen favors his grandpaw some too.

Gilbert's wife why I remember her when we used to go to school right there in Lando. She was a little stringy haired girl. He thought more or as much as anybody in the world 'bout his chaps. He kept their picture setting on his desk all the time. Everytime I'd talk to him about anything I'd notice 'em. And I asked him one time I said "Where is Bill at now, Mr. Heath?" and he rubbed his head and he said "I'll tell you, John, I sent him off to college over here 'bout Greenville and he wound up way up 'bout Maryland and his trunks and books and everything's in Florida." He was spendin' money travelin' while they thought he was in school.

My mother and father came from the Little River area up near Fayetteville. They farmed. We lived 8 miles from a store and we got up one morning and had no coffee. My daddy walked 8 miles in the snow, got that coffee came home and we had coffee. There wasn't no ridin' days then, you either had to ride a mule or walk.

You know that old hill that starts up there at the post office and goes towards the mill – when we first moved to Lando in 1901 – when the wagons'd get up there on top of the hill, you'd have to stop and take a chain and tie both the hind wheels for the mule to be able to hold the wagon. They'd get cotton in them wagons in the fall of the year and they'd a stock it up out there in front of the mill and it'd be as high as the mill.

Most of the lumber to build the houses in Lando come from back of Lancaster and down towards Camden. There was one of the Heaths here drifted off from Lando and went down to Camden and married a rich girl.

I was big enough to pull a wagon and haul the water when most all them houses was built. That line of houses right there in front of the Methodist Church, along Main Street, was the first houses built. Then they built down in there behind where the store is, Frog Town they call it. Then after they got done, then they moved up 'bout where the Holiness Church is now and started building up on that side. I carried

the carpenters water every day. And I remember settin' on that big rock down there at the end of the trussel 'cross the creek and watching 'em surveying the railroad that they put in. It was along about 1903 or 1904.

I carried the water from the well, but before the wells was dug they had to carry water from the factory spring – even to the mill water. It's covered over with cement block now, but it stayed full all the time. The company ruin't it whenever they put a pump in it and tried to pump water into the mill so they wouldn't have to carry it. I worked then in the mill from 1907 'til 1968.

I had a brother a right smart older than me and he'd done learnt weavin', you know. Well, I'd go down there a evenin' after school and stay with him till I got to where I could do it. That's the way the whole generation in Lando learned what they knowed – by the older generation. They'd take a hand down there and put him with somebody and let him stay maybe two or three days. Well, then they'd take the old hand off and put him somewhere else and put this fellow on his job.

They raised their own help. Practically all the help that's ever worked the mill was raised around here. You take back them days people took more interest in what you was doin' 'cause that's what you got paid for. The better you done your job and stayed on your job, unless you was sick, the longer you had a job. Now they'll just walk off and quit.

We had a 6 room house and Mama kept boarders. Then, Mama run our boarding house, we could go down to the store there and get a 20 or 30 pound ham and get it for about 3 or 4 dollars. And she'd feed 'em good, and everybody that come there seem like wanted to stay there. She didn't charge 'em but \$2.50 a week for board.

Two of the peddlers stayed all night Saturday and Sunday at our house every week when they come to Lando. They peddled all over the factory hill and out in the country. They sold all kinds of jewelry, scarves, and neckties. They carried perfumes, all kinds. They had one sack they carried clothes in kept buckled down and strapped on their back. Then they had a little one where they carried jewelry. They traveled by foot carrying them things on their back. ■



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