



DUNCAN C. and JAMES A. SANDERS: "...to everybody that knew them, they were 'Ab' and 'Dunc'." (photo courtesy of Mildred Hyatt)

## James Albert Sanders and Duncan Crawford Sanders

by Mildred Hyatt and Pauline Ramsey

Mildred – My father was James Albert Sanders and Pauline's father, his identical twin was Duncan Crawford Sanders. But to everybody that knew them they were "Ab" and "Dunc". They were born down in Chesterfield County in the country. Granddaddy Sanders was a school teacher and in the summer and some of the winter he had a grist mill and a cotton gin on the river. Great Grandmother Sanders used to tell about a big ramp that one of the mills had that went up and across the stream, and she said when Papa and Uncle Dunc were just tiny little things about two years old and still wearing dresses, that she looked out one day and there they were going up that ramp hand in hand. But Granddaddy Sanders had already seen them and was standing at the top with his hands held out. Now that's where they grew up and then when they left there I think they went to Waxhaw and that was when textiles were just coming in and Papa and Uncle Dunc were helping put in machinery. So they stayed there a while and then came to Lando, and when they came to Lando, they were putting in machinery here too. They must have been in their early twenties.

*Pauline – Both of them married while they were living in Waxhaw.*

Mildred – My mama and Aunt Jane, Pauline's mama, were sisters. Mama was Sarena Long Sanders and Pauline's mama was Jane Long Sanders. They came from Tennessee originally and their mother was a York. They had an uncle that lived in N. C., Uncle Mose York, and that's how they got down to Waxhaw. Papa married a Guinn the first time – Mr. Bud Guinn's sister and she died.

*Pauline – After she died, my mama kept "Uncle Ab" and their little girl. Then it wasn't too long 'til the little girl died. Then later Uncle Ab married Aunt Reen.*

Mildred – My mother's father was Henry Brown Long and his wife was Mary Ann Long. About one of the first preachers to come to Lando was a friend of Granddaddy Long's, and he brought him to Lando and kept him at his house. Grandpa and Grandma were some of the first to start the Baptist church. They were originally Presbyterian, but there was no Presbyterian church there, so they became Baptists. They were big church workers. They'd go around in their wagon and pick up folks to take them to church.

Grandmother and Granddaddy Long came to Lando about the same time Papa and Mama and Uncle Dunc and Aunt Jane came. Now Granddaddy Sanders had already retired when he came here. Granddaddy Long was the butcher there in that little meat market. Papa later got to be overseer in the spinning room. Then they left Lando and came over across the trussel and started farming. They farmed that land that Manetta Mills owned – they share cropped, then later Papa and Uncle Dunc bought a good bit of land themselves. No I don't think they share cropped, they paid them in cotton.

*Pauline – That's right, they did because they stayed there a good many years 'til Howard and me were born. Mr. Heath went up to 20 bales of cotton on them. When Papa and Uncle Ab went there the land was so poor and they got the land built up and every year they made more cotton and Mr. Heath'd go up every year. That year Mr. Heath wanted 20 bales and they just refused to pay it and left and moved to Catawba.*

Mildred – They had done well there but then they sold all their land to the Hamiltons and went to Catawba to farm. They bought a big place over there, and they took about ten families that were kin to us with them from Lando. They took Aunt Myrt, and Uncle Luke, Uncle Will and his family, Uncle Dave Long and his wife, Uncle Walt Long and his family, Uncle Henry Long and his family, Brice Dawkins and his family and I can't remember who else. Well, that year it hailed, they had tornadoes and everything and they lost everything they had. They finally sold the farm for whatever they could get out of it. Then they moved into a new house over where the Ratterree's live. Mama said it was a beautiful house. A doctor in Rock Hill had built it and farmed a little bit and left. I was born there in that house. They stayed there maybe one year. Aunt Jane and those lived in the house right beside us where Laura Ratterree lives. Then we all moved back to Lando and that's when Papa went into the company store and Uncle Dunc went to the napper room. They farmed while we were there. Uncle Dunc really liked farming better than Papa did. Papa was kind of a dreamer. He was a thinker, and he always liked to fool with machinery. After that Uncle Dunc didn't stay that much at Lando.

*Pauline – We farmed out there next to Buddy Martin's and then we moved to Mount Holly. They went there to paint the dam at River Bend and then we came back and lived in the brown shingle house on the other side of Edgemoor.*

Mildred – Papa worked in the store in Lando most of the time that we lived there. For about 4 or 5 years he had a store

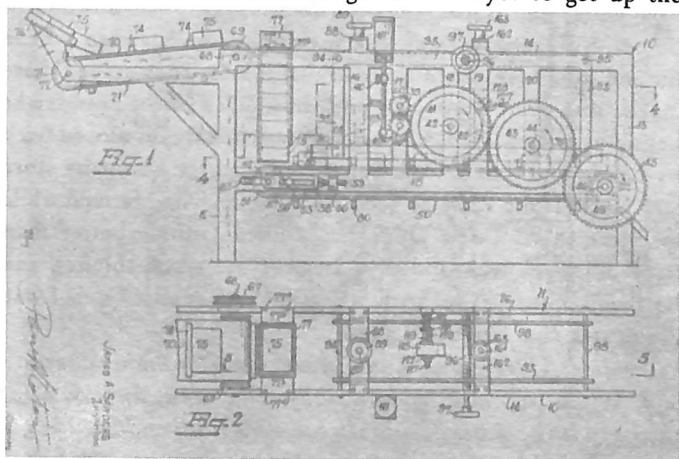
across the street from where Cletus Brooks used to be – right in front of that old cotton gin. He went there about 1926, '7 or '8 and that was when the great depression came. Well, he tried to feed as many people on credit as he could. The mill was running so bad and the people didn't have anything. So he kept it open until he just went completely broke. Then we went back to the store at Lando and stayed there.

It was while he was working in the company store that he got the idea for his cigarette stamping machine. Down in the basement, they had to put federal stamps on cigarettes and they had to do it by hand. That was when they had a huge business. They sold everything that anybody needed. It was a tedious job to put all those stamps on by hand and, since they sold so many cigarettes, it was time consuming. So this idea came into his mind and he got to work on it. Naturally, Mr.



JAMES ALBERT SANDERS, Inventor: "I don't know how Papa learned to make things like that, but he was just marvelous with figures...." (Photo courtesy of Mildred Hyatt)

Gilbert Heath had to help him. He couldn't have done it on his own. Mr. Heath financed him to get his patent. I know most that he did, because Mr. Eaton, a lawyer in Charlotte, did it and Mr. Gilbert owned lots of property up there and Papa would go with him a lot of times to see about it or to get his rent. So he was the one that got that lawyer to get up the

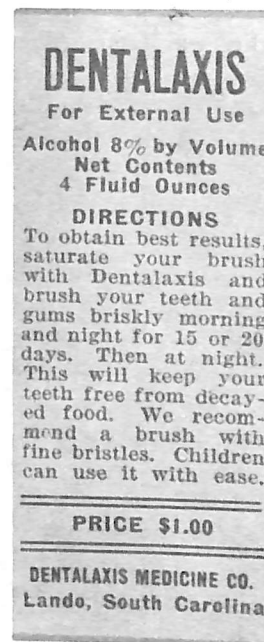


BLUEPRINT for Cigarette Stamping Machine (Courtesy of Mildred Hyatt)

patent for his machine. Papa got this nephew of his, Heyward Long, to draw up the blueprint. Papa had gotten all kind of offers for his machine. Oh, he'd bring in letters where they'd offered him thousands and thousands of dollars for it, because it would have just revolutionized things. They used it some down at the store and it just stamped the cigarettes so fast and saved them so much time. But before he completed his patent and got it sold, they changed to a little small stamp that you slide off onto the pack. The machine was set up for a stamp about the size of a postage stamp. He maybe could have converted it to fit the new stamp, but he was so disappointed he never did even try to change it. Now we don't even know where the machine is. I don't know how Papa learned to make things like that, but he was just marvelous with figures and things. Things, that to me, would have taken a college education to know, he just knew. He had a brilliant mind. He could help us with all of our high school math. Now he may not come to it the same way, but he always came up with the right answer.

Pauline – We used to get out and walk in the field with Papa and Uncle Ab, and Uncle Ab showed us this weed in the field and said, "My Granddaddy and Grandmother told us when we were children to chew this weed because it was good for our gums." So he got us to chewing it. He showed us how to pick it from the other weeds and sure enough we've had good strong teeth.

Mildred – So I guess that's where he got the idea for making his Dentalaxis. Dr. Crowder, a dentist in Chester,



"I've often thought that if it could be made into a paste it would be a wonderful thing...." (Label from patent courtesy of Mildred Hyatt.)

really believed in it. Papa sold it around here, but he didn't have the money to back it or get the publicity it should have. But I've often thought that if it could be made into a paste it would probably be a wonderful thing, cause it was so good for the gums. I don't know how Papa came up with the name Dentalaxis. I think I would recognize that weed even now be-

cause we helped him pick it. I've always felt if he could have gotten more publicity and gotten it marketed more he could have made some money, but he always said it wasn't meant for him to ever have any money, he'd rather give it away. But he always had a happy life.

*Pauline – If Mildred's daddy had two dollars and I needed one, I'd get it just as soon as she would.*

Mildred – The children were each other's children. Even the people around here could never keep us straight. Dr. Gaston took Pauline's sister Thelma to our house one time when she got sick at school. He thought he'd taken her to her home. The principal went to Aunt Jane's to see how Thelma was and Aunt Jane said, "Well, she's still at school." He said, "No, she isn't. Dr. Gaston brought her home." She said, "Well, he must've taken her to Ab's". So he went to the store and asked where Thelma was and Papa said, "Dr. Gaston took her up to my house. He didn't know the difference and Reen put her to bed." So the principal went to Mama's and got Thelma and took her home.

That's just the way they always were. They farmed together and stayed in houses right close together and Aunt Jane would help more out in the field and Mama would stay in with the children and they always had colored help in the house to help, too.

*Pauline – My mama helped to put in the jack spinning down at Lando. Before she married, Mama worked in the spinning room at Waxhaw and Aunt Reen did too. So when they put that spinning in at Lando it was a new type and they came and asked Mama if she would go down there and teach some young people. She worked maybe a year or two and she took my sister with her. Louise worked then in the summer and she said, "I can tell you one thing, if I ever get out of school I'll never work in a cotton mill." When we went to the field she was the one who stayed home to do whatever had to be done. And when we'd get in, she had polished her fingernails, she had creamed her face. At that time we were having a pretty hard time and they were playing for dances. Louise played the piano, Lelia, my sister that's dead, played the violin and Dewey played the guitar and Bud played the Mandolin and Maurice could play the piano too. But that was about the extent of Louise's work.*

Mildred – One year when Uncle Dunc and those were up at Mount Holly painting that dam, we all went up to spend Christmas at Uncle Dunc's. When we got home there were these sooty looking footprints all across the bed going up to the fireplace and there sitting on the hearth was a Red Riding Hood baby doll – the prettiest thing you ever saw. Santa Claus had gone in through the window, across the bed to the fireplace and left that baby doll. Lois was the most thrilled thing you have ever seen. But there beside the baby doll was a box covered in sooty paper and it had sooty candy, one orange and maybe an apple. And it had Papa's name on it. Oh, Lois fussed about that. To think that Santa Claus would do her Papa like that. Papa loved cutting up. He was forever doing things like that. Even during the depression when times were bad, he always made Christmas a very special time – even though we may not get very much. It was such a happy time.

*Pauline – I remember one Christmas Thelma got a carriage and I got a doll. We learned a lot about sharing that Christmas.*

Mildred – Papa lived on at Lando until he was about ready to retire. He moved to Pageland and was head machinist there for a few years. Then he retired and moved back to Richburg and stayed there until they came to live with me, and both of them were with me when they died. Mama died in 1960 and Pauline's mother died in 1961 and Papa and Uncle Dunc died in 1962. They were 83 years old. Papa fell and for 6 months before he died, he couldn't walk. Then it was just a few months when Uncle Dunc died the very same way.

Right after Papa fell, I went up to Edna's to see Aunt Jane and I was telling her about what a terrible time I had had with Papa on a Tuesday night the week before – He was up and I couldn't get him to bed. He kept going to the window and saying, "I've got to go see Dunc." Finally I got him to sleep. But I just mentioned that to Edna and she said, "You know, Papa was doing the very same thing that night. Just walking the floor and telling me to take him to see Ab." Then the night that Papa died, Uncle Dunc didn't even know he was worse because they had gotten to the place that their minds weren't that clear. Well, that same night, they had to call the doctor out to Uncle Dunc because they couldn't do a thing with him. He was just in a frenzy. Dr. Frank didn't know what was wrong with him. They gave him all kinds of medicine to make him rest, but they never got him to sleep until after Papa died. Dr. Frank said he couldn't explain it, that he'd given him enough to put five people to sleep. They were so close that he realized that Papa was dying and we was going through death with him. It was a sort of ESP.

Papa and Uncle Dunc never had lots of money to give us things with but they gave us all the important things. They were intangibles like integrity, love and humor.



*PAULINE RAMSEY (L) and MILDRED HYATT: "Papa and Uncle Dunc never had lots of money to give us things with, but they gave us....integrity, love and humor."*