

In 1917, Rock Hill lined up to enlist in prewar Red Cross

More odds and ends: **On the home front:** The United States declared war on Germany on April 6, 1917. Four days before the declaration of war the Rock Hill Red Cross Chapter was founded in a public meeting at St. John's Methodist Church. The next day a Winthrop College chapter was formed with more than 300 students volunteering. By June the Rock Hill chapter had 725 members.

The major work of volunteers in the first few months was making bandages and sewing hospital gowns for the overseas wounded along with meeting troop trains that stopped in Rock Hill and providing snacks and entertainment.

In September it was announced that Charlotte would be a cantonment with temporary barracks for soldiers awaiting overseas assignments. The Rock Hill group was asked to supply some personnel to help clean up Charlotte so that the city would be attractive to the western troops who has been assigned there. It seems that the western troops were composed of "governors, legislators, congressmen, bankers, and men from all vocations" and Charlotte was embarrassed for them to see the

condition of the city.

Art appreciation: Some time around 1892 a large house that had been built by Allen Morrow in the Indian Land section of Lancaster County was divided and half was moved several miles to "Osceola Hill." The moved section became the home of Morrow's daughter Clara and her husband, John James Perry.

On the ceiling of one of the Perry house bedrooms there was a large picture of a grinning possum hanging in a tree. The picture was "smoked" on the ceiling in a most unusual manner. The artist had used a burning pine knot (rich in resin) and, waving it, drew his picture freehand.

Who was the artist? It could have been Perry, who was remembered by grandchildren for ably sketching birds, rabbits, squirrels, etc. for their amusement. Or perhaps the artwork was done by an itinerant artist (an old Mecklenburg County house also boasted "smoked ceilings").

The origin of this unusual art expression seems to be lost. Unfortunately, the Perry half of the Morrow house no longer exists.

Historic church: It is believed by some that the oldest African American church in this area was established off S.C. 49 south of Sharon in York County. Blue Branch Presbyterian Church, the "mother church" of other black churches, was founded by Ellison Sanders, who was killed in 1884 for posses-

sing "Democratic Principles."

Regular services are no longer held at Blue Branch, but a camp meeting is held yearly on the spot the first Sunday afternoon of September.

Creating jobs: Before there was a WPA there was the FERA (Federal Emergency Relief Administration). The New Deal agency lasted from 1933 to 1938 and was a combination of aid for the unemployed and drought legislation. York County didn't have a drought but had plenty of the unemployed.

FERA turned out to be quite creative in finding jobs for the needy in ways that would be beneficial not only for the unemployed but for society as well. One example: In 1934 York County received federal funding for free classes for 151 women textile workers at Winthrop College in the areas of history, literature and social sciences. Winthrop College juniors and seniors received credit on their tuition bills in exchange for teaching the students.

Our own 'continental divide': The town of York is situated on a north-south ridge. It is said that rain that falls on the front of the courthouse joins a stream that eventually reaches the Catawba River; the rain from the opposite side of the courthouse flows into the Broad River.

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