



Methodism in 19th Century North Carolina

By William Bryant

On Saturday, September 30 costumed staff and volunteers at Duke Homestead interpreted a 19th century Methodist revival for our "Catch A Fire" event. Visitors attended a revival service led by a circuit-riding preacher in the 3rd Tobacco Factory, followed by a question and answer session and a tour of the 1852 farmhouse of Washington Duke. Each room of the farmhouse displayed a theme related to the revival, including discussions of the life of a circuit-rider, the social importance of the event, food served at the event, an enslaved person's perspective of the service and its themes, and

the impact of the Methodist Church and revivals on the Duke family.

"Catch a Fire" interpreted a major evangelical movement in the Methodist Church during the early 19th century. Organized churches were not yet prevalent in rural Piedmont North Carolina, so preachers would ride on horseback, spreading the Gospel to the settlers on the frontier.

Each preacher traveled a spe-



Circuit rider on the cover of *Harper's Weekly*, 1867

cific region, or "circuit". These

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About GOLD LEAF

The Duke Homestead Education and History Corporation publishes *GOLD LEAF*. The Corporation is a non-profit organization dedicated to the development of the Duke Homestead State Historic Site and Tobacco Museum. The museum is open Tuesday through Saturday, from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. Visit the website, dukehomestead.org, for more information. This newsletter is published semi-annually and is available free of charge for digital subscribers. A paper copy can be received for \$5.00 a year.

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Financial Report

Mary Bell
Treasurer

The funds of the Duke Homestead Education and History Corporation as of , 2017 are as follows:

General Fund Savings: \$14,382.89

General Fund Checking: \$ 9,120.23

Scottrade Account: \$57,290.81

Total Assets: \$80,793.93

2018 Events

Stay tuned to dukehomestead.org for details on upcoming events!

Born at Duke Homestead

March 31

Does birth have a history? Absolutely. Join us to learn more about what it meant to be born at Duke Homestead.

Mythbusting Day—Historic Houses

May 19

We want to deputize you as a historic house myth-buster! Special themed tours all about common misconceptions of historic houses.

Family Days

June 16, July 28, September 8

Bring your family for historically-themed activities and a craft you can take home!

Pork, Pickles & Peanuts

July 14

A celebration of North Carolina food history and culture, and a fun-filled day for the whole family.

Mythbusting Day—Tobacco

August 18

Think you know tobacco? We are taking on some of the biggest myths about the history and biology of this crop via special guided tours.

Harvest & Hornworm Festival

August 25

See historic tobacco harvesting practices in action, and catch the only tobacco auction left in Durham.

Tobacco Basket-Making Workshop

September 15

Make your own mini tobacco basket!

Halloween Phantasmagoria

October 26

Explore the site in search of Victorian awe, wonder, and Halloween traditions.

Christmas by Candlelight

December 7 and 14

Kick off the holiday season with this annual favorite!

From the Site Manager's Desk

We have had a wonderful fall, and are gearing up for the Christmas season here at Duke Homestead.

This fall our staff was honored to once again support the NC State Fair Tobacco Heritage activities. These two weeks in October offer us the chance to learn from people who grew up farming tobacco, and to see buyers and auctioneers in action. Plus, this year I seized the opportunity to take a looping/stringing/tying lesson from Mrs. Ruth Coats. (She won the Looping Contest at our annual Harvest and Hornworm Festival this August, and has won at the State Fair before.)

Because of the fantastic support for professional

development from the Duke Homestead Education and History Corporation, our full-time interpretive staff were able to visit Washington, DC this September. We sought examples of excellence in interpretation and the latest in museum exhibiting to bring back to Duke Home-



stead. We visited the new National Museum of African American History and Culture, took a Museum Hack tour of the National Gallery of Art, toured President Lincoln's Cottage, and met with the Chief Curator of Work and Industry at the National Museum of American History about interpreting tobacco. It was an inspirational trip that will inform our work here for a long time. Thank you for making that possible.

I'm thankful for all the great people I get to work with, and their tremendous support for Duke Homestead. Wishing you a happy holiday season and New Year!

-Jessica Shillingsford

Looking for an event space?

Look no further. Duke Homestead is available to rent!

We have hosted meetings, DIY classes, family reunions, corporate retreats, and weddings/engagement parties.

Our rates are affordable, and all rental fees go directly to Duke Homestead. These funds go into site operations, historic preservation, site maintenance, and programming.

Plus, it's a great way to spread the word about the site.

If you'd like to rent Duke Homestead, please email duke@ncdcr.gov.



Methodism in 19th Century North Carolina, cont.

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preachers, called “circuit riders”, were generally young, single men that did not have a formal education. They rarely served longer than one year in a circuit, in order to prevent the temptation of growing too familiar with the local people and settling down.

Circuit riders had a simple plan of evangelism: They went where the people lived, and they ministered to their needs. Often, one of the first visitors to a family who had just arrived on the frontier was a Methodist circuit rider. He would offer religious instruction to the family and to any neighbors who wished to join them.

These meetings were an integral part of rural society in 19th century North Carolina, providing a focus for community life. Beyond the family, religious institutions were responsible for shaping one’s conscience and culture. North Carolinians were likely to develop their most viable and intimate personal relationships through the church.

Francis Asbury, the first Methodist circuit rider to visit North Carolina, visited the home of John Taylor Duke, grandfather of Washington Duke, on June 21, 1780. In his journal, he wrote:

“Wednesday, 21st (June) – I had to ride alone better than twelve miles to Mr. Duke’s; when I came there, found about thirty people, and they quite ignorant. After preaching I took dinner, and in talking found three or four of them tenderly serious; gave them advice: the man and his wife have had conviction, and have sinned it away. They say it was the disputes of the Baptists that turned them aside. I then rode home with a Mr. Green, a Presbyterian, and was much blessed in reading Watt’s first volume of sermons.”

William (“Uncle Billie”) Duke was the oldest of Washington Duke’s nine siblings and a powerful influence on his younger brother. He was also a Methodist lay preacher, and taught Washington to have a profound appreciation for the Methodist faith. “Uncle Billie” also used his property to hold large revivals prior

to the establishment of permanent church buildings in the Durham area.

Outside of his family, clearly the most important institution for Washington Duke and the one that exerted the greatest influence on him from childhood was the Methodist Church. The Church emphasized the desirability, even the necessity, of giving on the part of those who were able. Thus, the seeds planted in the Duke family by the Methodist Church and her circuit-riding preachers profoundly influenced the philanthropic endeavors of the Duke family for generations to come.

Later in life, Washington was known to say with regularity that, “If I amount to anything in this world, it’s because of the Methodist Church and her circuit preachers.”

Team Updates

Many of you know that our longtime staff member (most recently Assistant Site Manager), **Julia Rogers**, left Duke Homestead in September 2017. She fulfilled a long-term goal of moving to Ottawa, Canada. We miss her passion, creativity, and dedication to Duke Homestead, but, she is doing great in Canada!

Our Historic Interpreter II, **Katie Vanhoy**, was promoted into the role of Assistant Site Manager. Congratulations, Katie! Katie is settling into her new position, and we know she's going to do a great job working with our part-time staff, interns, and volunteers.

We welcome our new Historic Interpreter II, **Caitlin Avinger** to the team! Caitlin will lead our education program and interpretive efforts. She comes to us from the Houston Maritime Museum, and earned a Master's degree in Museum Studies from the Cooperstown Graduate Program.

That means that we have a fully staffed team. Please stop by any time to say hello!

If you haven't visited in a while, you may see some new faces. We are lucky to have some talented people on board!

Ashley Adams, part-time Historic Interpreter, and **Kinue Beugre**, student intern, are both NCCU Eagles. That makes 3 Eagles to rival our 3 Wolfpack staff members... **Hannah Marley** joined our team as a part-time Historic Interpreter this July.

Brooke Csuka, **Bobby Jahn**, and **Lauren May** are all giving time to Duke Homestead on top of their 'day jobs.' You may see them giving tours, helping us to research and develop special events, working behind the scenes, or greeting you in costume.

And you may know that we lured a volunteer from Bennett Place to join Duke Homestead. **Bill Bryant** is a wonderful storyteller, and has also helped us to develop some of our recent events. (And wrote a newsletter article!)

Thank you to everyone who supports Duke Homestead. It's no exaggeration to say that we couldn't do it without you!

Looking to get more involved?

We love working with volunteers. You can learn new skills with us or put your talents to work for us.

Volunteering with Duke Homestead might be a good fit if any of the following applies to you...

You love working with people. You love working with kids. You love telling stories. You love research. You love organizing. You want to learn more about local history. You are crafty. You can sew. You are creative. You are passionate about Duke Homestead and want to do more, even if you're not sure what that means! **Email duke@ncdcr.gov to volunteer with us!**

WE  **OUR**
VOLUNTEERS



GOLD LEAF

Duke Homestead Education and History Corporation

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Durham, NC 27705

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E-mail: duke@ncdcr.gov

Non-profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Durham, NC

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Day Phone Evening / Mobile Phone

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Please use my Credit Card: _____

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Security Code: _____ Exp date: _____

New Member: ____

Renewal ____

Member #: _____

Please mail application with your check or credit card information to:

Duke Homestead Education and History Corporation

Duke Homestead State Historic Site

2828 Duke Homestead Rd.

Durham, NC 27705

