

MARQUIS LAFAYETTE REDD

The subject of this sketch, Marquis LaFayette Redd, better known as " Mark," was born on Nov. 15 1824 and died March 13 1871. He was the son of Sigle and Susan Andrews Redd and was the oldest son in a family of nine children, all of whom were younger than he, excepting a half sister, Sarah, whose mother had died previous to her father's second marriage.

The childhood and youthful days of Mark were probably spent about like that of the youths whose fathers owned large plantations and large areas of forest land and owned numbers of slaves. There were miles of uninhabited forests in which he could hunt, and the broad expanse of the sparkling sound in which there was an abundance of oysters, fish and clams, sail boats and row boats for work, pleasure and adventure, and always in the fall, seine fishing on the beach where crews of men manned a huge surf boat to row out into the ocean and surrounded with nets and schools of mullets that ran close to shore in their journey to warmer waters for winter. These were salted away in barrels and kegs for use in the winter, re-sold to traders who carried them inland and sold or traded for fruit, woven goods etc.

There were neighborhood square dances, and it is said that Mark excelled in dancing. He grew to be a large, tall man and weighed over two hundred pounds, yet it is said he was the lightest on foot, and the most graceful dancer in the county round about.

There were few schools in those days, but Mark acquired a good education. Some of his writing that has been preserved shows what a wonderful penman he was, it is fine, delicate but very legible.

On October 8 1846 Marquis was united in wedlock to Emily Ann Sidbury, daughter of William and Rebecca Burnett Sidbury. The writer has been told that at one time the Redd and Sidbury families owned nearly all the land lying between Mill Creek in Pender Co., and Turkey Creek in Onslow Co., and from the Sound out to and beyond the highway that now traverses that region. One of the descendants yet owns a narrow strip from the Sound out to the highway, part of the original tract of the Sidbury land. Only a small part of the old Redd homestead remains intact as the gov-ernment a few years ago established a Camp Davis nearby and took over nearly all that remained of the plantation and forest.

To Mark and Emily Redd was born only one child, Susan Rebecca Redd who married Hill Everett King, a young confederate veteran, son of William Rufus and Winifred Lane King.

Prior to the Civil War, Mark was elected sheriff of Onslow Co. It is not known how long he served as sheriff, but before emancipation of the negroes, it became his gruesome duty to hang a slave, a young negro man who had outraged and murdered a young white woman, a Miss Taylor, who lived near Snead's Ferry. He was hanged in public in the Courthouse Square at Jacksonville, N.C.

Mark was a member of the Masonic order for several years prior to his death, and his wife was an Eastern Star member, then called "The Wives Degree." A great grandson, George LaFayette Corbett, now has his old Masonic Ritual manual.

When Civil War began, Marquis, along with the other young men of the County, began preparation to enter service. He mustered a body of recruits that became Company "E" 3rd Regiment of N.C. Southern Troops. He was elected Captain of the company. His roster now falling to pieces is in the Hall of History in Raleigh, N.C. and is available to anyone interested. His country-made war chest, with country-made hinges, lock and key, handles of rope, etc., has the following painted on the front in writing: "Capt. M.L.F. Redd, Co. E 3rd N.C.S.T. (North Carolina Southern Troops). It is owned by a grandson, T. LaFayette King, of Raleigh, N.C.

It is not known whether or not he was in any engagement in the war for soon after it started he and a number of his men were detailed to make salt, a very scarce commodity at that time in the Confederate States. Having lived by the Sound all his life, Mark knew where the saltiest areas of water were to be found. Barges were filled with salt water and then were poled by hand back to the mainland to be emptied into large shallow pans made of iron under which fires were kept burning day and night to evaporate the water. Years after the war, the writer saw these old pans filled with water, and geese playing around in them.

One of the characteristics of Mark was his kindness of heart toward the unfortunate. When his little brother Alonso, was only six years old, their mother died and he and his wife took Alonso and reared him as though he were their own son. The writer has a letter from a daughter of Alonzo, Mrs. Nattie Redd Jenkins in which she wrote: "I know my father thought he was wonderful for he loved so much to talk of him. He loved him a lot and Aunt Emily too. He would say she was the only mother he ever knew, as his mother passed on when he was six."

After the war the carpetbaggers took possession. They squandered the State's money and raised taxes to raise more. Nearly everyone that owned anything went broke and lost all they had. Among them was Mark, who, it is said, refused to sell the possessions of the people of the country and his father, who was on his surety bond, lost a great deal of what he owned. A few years after this, Mark and his wife moved to Pender County where he lived for a few short years before his death.

There is an incident pertaining to the aftermath of the war that may stir the memories of the older people or be of interest to the younger ones:

When the proclamation for the freedom of the negroes was issued, Sigle Redd, the father of Marquis, was very sick. The only one at home with him was the youngest daughter, Susan. His wife had been dead several years, the other daughters married and the sons away, some of them in the army. The negroes, with the master ill, had stopped work, even before the news of freedom was received, and some had become very insolent. As soon as the news came they went wild. The most insolent of all was Enoch, a burly black man who had had charge of the horses before the Federal Army came and took all worth taking. An older sister, Elda, visited her father as often as she could and she said it would frighten her when Enoch would come into the house.

He would look menacingly at them all and leer and look in such a way at Susan that she was afraid for her to be left with only the sick father, for fear he would harm her.

One day Enoch came and hitched up two old mules that had been left and proceeded to take all the meat, poultry and other provisions that he wanted and drove off to his home, about half a mile away. Late that afternoon he went back on foot through a pine thicket and went into the house and took all the blankets, quilts etc., that he could carry, and started back home with them. In the meantime news of what he was doing trickled out and of how he was boasting that he and family were starting north the next morning. There was no law for the white man, negroes and carpetbaggers were running the courts. The men knew they had to take the law into their own hands, like the Vigilantes of the West, so they bided their time. When Enoch started through the thicket on his way home, about dark, a volley of shots rang out and that was the last of Enoch. The men proceeded to his home and gathered up what he had stolen and carried it back to Mark's father's home. The negroes in that section gave little trouble after that. The writer was shown the spot where Enoch was killed and the old house he lived in.

The information was furnished to Leland W. Redd by Joe Frank Redd of Snead's Ferry, Onslow Co. N.C. Mar 15 1954. Joe Frank is the great grandson of Sigle Redd who was a first cousin of John Hardison Redd, our great grandfather.