

THE ALLEN HISTORIAN

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ALLEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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George Shivers, Editor

In Memoriam: Mary Hope Harcum

George Shivers



We mourn the loss of Mary Hope Harcum, who died at her Norfolk home in August just a few weeks shy of her 97th birthday. Mary Hope was born on August 30, 1913, the only child of Oren Lloyd Harcum and Christie Barker Harcum. The Harcum family lived at White Hall on the Wicomico River for generations, so her Allen roots were deep. As a child, she visited her grandparents at White Hall, as well as her uncle and aunt, Clifford Huffington and Dorothy Harcum Huffington in Allen. She was also a frequent summer visitor to her best friend, Pauline (Polly) Phillips (Best) and her parents, George and Emma Phillips. She also had a strong attachment to her home in Norfolk, where she lived virtually her entire life, except for periods of service with the Red Cross in Korea, Japan and Vietnam.

Mary Hope attended Mary Washington College in Fredericksburg, VA and trained as an elementary school teacher, a profession which she soon abandoned for social work, and for most of her career she was employed by the

American Red Cross in service to the Military Installation Division. During World War II she served military personnel in Norfolk, and in subsequent years she did tours of duty in Korea, Japan and Vietnam. She spoke of being in Saigon during the Tet Offensive and coming face-to-face with a Viet Cong soldier in the stairway of her hotel! She also told of her pet rat in a Saigon hotel, who appeared each morning in her shower! She even gave her visitor a name! In another Vietnam story, she spoke of having been uncomfortable in the hotel to which Red Cross workers were assigned - I don't recall if this was the same hotel where the pet rat resided, although that would explain her concern! In any case, a GI in the dining hall heard her complaining and gave her a phone no. to call. She assumed it was some lower-level officer in charge of Red Cross housing. She was shocked and embarrassed on learning that the voice on the other end of the phone line was that of General William Westmoreland, commanding general of the U.S. Army in Vietnam.

A moment she enjoyed recalling of her service in Korea was the time she was able to visit the room where the truce was signed and to actually sit at the table where the negotiations took place - not during the negotiations, of course!

After the death of her Aunt Dorothy in 1985, Mary Hope inherited her home in Allen and divided her time between Norfolk and our village. She became a member of our Historical Society from the moment of its conception and supported us enthusiastically. She was also an enthusiastic attendee at all village events: church bazaars, the Lions beef dinners and July 4th celebrations, and meetings and events of the Historical Society.

Mary Hope had an indomitable spirit. Even in recent years when she could no longer make the drive to Allen, when she had suffered several falls, and experienced heart problems, she continued to plan for the future, especially for

visits to her beloved Allen. We will miss you, Mary Hope.

Community Events

Saturday, Sept. 11, 15th Annual West Wicomico Heritage Ride. 9:30am-3:30pm. Begins and ends at Pemberton Historical Park . Cost: \$55. Includes map, cue sheet, marked route, sag service, 3 rest stops and lunch. Helmet required.

Sunday, Sept. 12, 1:00-4:00pm. Celebrating Clara Gunby Huffington, an exhibit of her paintings and other memorabilia at Poplar Hill Mansion in Salisbury.

Sunday, Oct. 3, 3:00pm. Meeting of the Allen Historical Society. Place to be announced.

Sat. and Sun., Oct. 16 & 17, Maryland Autumn Wine Festival at Pemberton Historical Park. Hours are Sat. from 11:00am until 6:00pm and Sunday from 12:30pm until 6:00pm.

Sunday, October 24, 11:00am, Annual Homecoming Service at Asbury United Methodist Church, with luncheon to follow at the Community Hall.

Saturday, Oct. 30. Third Annual Cemetery Walk, sponsored by the Allen Historical Society. Walk begins at 4:00pm at Asbury United Methodist Church. Dinner to follow at the Allen Community Hall. (See article later in this newsletter.)

Saturday, Nov. 6. Symposium sponsored by the Lower Delmarva Genealogical Society at the Holiday Inn, 300 South Salisbury Blvd., Salisbury, MD. Reservations made by September 30 at \$40. The late registration fee is \$50. Vendors will be on hand with genealogical books and materials. Coffee, pastry and water included in the cost. A buffet lunch will be available at the Holiday Inn Restaurant at an additional cost of \$12 , including gratuity and tax. Registration begins at 8:00am. Program begins at 8:45am. Surnames are being collected in advance of the symposium, so that a list will be available on Nov. 6. This is to aid people in finding and meeting others who are researching the same families. Surnames will not be collected on Nov. 6. Each person may submit up to four names. Contact the Lower Delmarva Genealogical Society at P.O. Box

3602, Salisbury, MD 21802-3602 for information and/or registration forms. You may also email Joseph Ballou, treasurer of the Allen Historical Society, at jcballou@earthlink.net or phone at 410-548-9839. He can also send you a registration form for the LDGS Symposium.

Sunday, Nov. 14. Allen Lions Club annual pit beef dinner. Allen Community Hall. 12:00 - 4:00pm.

Asbury United Methodist Church Fall Bazaar at the Allen Community Hall. Date to be determined. Watch for community event announcements.

Events at the Nabb Research Center for Delmarva History & Culture:

(Events are free and open to the public, unless otherwise indicated.)

"Faces of the Eastern Shore" Exhibit, Aug. 30 - Oct. 22. Open on Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays from 1:00-4:00pm. Nabb Center Gallery.

"Exploration & First Contact" Exhibit. Portrays Delmarva from 1609 - 1732. Same time, same place as above. Aug. 30, 2010 - May 20, 2011

Thurs., Sept. 30 , 7:00pm, Nabb Center Gallery, "Kin & Sin, Early Settlers of the Eastern Shore," lecture by Vaughn Baker.

Sat., Oct. 2, 10:30am - 3:30pm. "Telling Your Story," A workshop with Joan Katz. Tickets: \$25. Nabb Center Gallery.

Thurs., Oct. 14, 7:00pm. "The Devil Is in the Details," A lecture by Dr. Michael Scott, dealing with politics, mapping of Delmarva and the John Smith Chesapeake Trail.

Friday, Oct. 29, 7:00pm, "African American Traditions in Voice", Slave Spirituals and Gospel Music Concert. Guerrieri Center, Wicomico Rm. Features Society for the Preservation of African- American Arts singers and the SU Gospel Choir.

Thursday, Nov. 4, 7:00pm, "Rebel Heels & Northern Scum," Maryland's Role in the Civil War. Lecture by Dr. Thomas Clemens. Guerrieri Center, Wicomico Rm.

professional career in the area of public health and environmental preservation was also noted. The tribute to George Shivers included his service as president of the Society since its founding in 1995, as well as work on the successful nomination of Asbury United Methodist Church for the National Register of Historic Places, and his authorship of books on the history of Allen and on the Huffington family.



George Shivers & Velmar Morris
(Jim Trader could not be present due to illness.)

Polk/Dorman Families Hold 32nd Family Reunion

Velmar Polk Morris

The Polk/Dorman families celebrated their 32nd family reunion during the weekend of August 6-8. Friday night's get-together and Saturday's banquet were held at the Shelton Garden Inn in Greenbelt, MD, and Sunday's cookout took place at Watkins Regional Park in Upper Marlboro, MD.

Polks, Dormans and Martins were present at the activities from Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, the District of Columbia, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Florida.

Families represented were those of Celestine Polk Church, Sarah Dorman Dennis, Velmar Dorman Polk, Ulysses Polk, Sr. and Irene Polk Martin. They all had an enjoyable time.

Velmar Polk Morris and Althea Church Chandler represented members from the Allen Historical Society.

In 2011 the reunion is being planned to take place aboard a cruise to the Bahamas on August 4 -7.

Update on the Huffington-Pollitt House Restoration

Last year an inspection of the premises by member Ron Walsh noted major structural problems in the 20th century addition to the HP house, in the area connecting the original wing to the garage. Problems with the roof were resulting in major leaking. Bruce Bright and Chris Judd did a temporary fix by covering the roof with a tarp.

In the spring of this year the Society received a \$2000 grant from the Wicomico Historical Trust which with funds already received enabled us to do the necessary repairs. That work was done during the summer, once again by Chris Judd and Bruce Bright.

The Society is grateful to the Wicomico Heritage Trust for their generous gift and to Chris Judd and Bruce Bright for the speed with which they completed the work.

Much remains to be done, however, before the house will be usable. We have not even begun interior renovations and cannot do so until the necessary funding is available. Available grants require matching funds and larger groups have priority. It is important for us to increase our membership and to raise the necessary matching funds to make it possible to apply for grants. Since the remaining work will cost in the neighborhood of \$60,000, to receive a \$30,000 grant we need to raise an equivalent amount from other sources. In kind contributions are also valued, so the matching funds do not have to be in cash. Time and labor also can be given monetary value as we apply for grants during the 2010 grant season.

The Spirits Will Visit Allen Once Again on Saturday, October 30!

The Allen Historical Society will hold its 3rd Annual Cemetery Walk on Saturday, October 30, beginning at 4:00pm. The event will begin at Asbury United Methodist Church and cemetery,

where our guests will be introduced to this year's visiting spirits! Visitors this year will be the Reverend J.M. Plumer who served Asbury at the end of the Civil War in 1865 and whose sermons condemning the southern cause resulted in his being locked out of the church and driven out of town! Also present will be George and Emma Phillips, who kept a general store in the village in the early decades of the 20th century. William Dennis and his wife, Elizabeth, better known locally as Lizzie, were former slaves who lived well into the 20th century. They will be at the church to speak to our guests as well. The spirit of Laura Hitch will make a second appearance. Finally, Eliza Pollitt Huffington, whose home our Society is seeking to restore, will honor our visitors with her presence this year.

Following their visit with the spirits, Cemetery Walk guests will make their way to the Allen Community Hall for a country supper. Tickets should be ordered in advance and will be available soon at \$20.00 per person. Send your order to P.O. Box 31, Allen, MD 21810 or phone George Shivers at 410-749-9064 or Melissa Bright at 410-742-4085. Your check for the number of tickets you want should be made out to the Allen Historical Society, Inc. Be sure to include your return address! We are limiting ticket sales to 100 persons, so early reservations are recommended. We suggest that guests wear comfortable shoes! There is parking both in front of and behind the church and at the Community Hall a short distance away.

The Anderson Family of Upper Trappe

Recently Roy Pollitt, a member of our Historical Society resident in Florida, emailed me requesting information about Perry W. Anderson. He wrote that Perry W. Anderson was the father of Andrew Anderson and his sister, Mary Virginia Anderson. The latter was the second wife of Anthony Pollitt, Roy's great-uncle. Roy wondered if I might have information about the location of Perry Anderson's farm, since apparently several Andersons were buried on that farm in the early 1900's. Unfortunately, I have not been able to provide any enlightenment on the subject. Perhaps one of our members has some information that would help. If so, please contact me. In the meantime, Roy's request did spur further interest in the Anderson family on my part. The fact is that Andersons have lived in

the Allen area, or at least in Stepney Parish since at least the late 18th century. What follows is what I have been able to glean from various sources regarding that family. All the information that I have prior to James S. Anderson's story comes from a document in the Leslie Dryden file on the Anderson family, found in the Edward H. Nabb Research Center at Salisbury University.

The earliest location for the family was in Nanticoke Hundred where William Anderson was born between 1724 and 1728, the son of John and Mary Anderson. He married Margaret Sirman (Sherman) on July 7, 1749 (Stepney Parish Records). Their children were: William (born July 9, 1749 - died prior to 1776); James (born April 15, 1751 - died c. 1811); Isaac (born April 2, 1756); Joseph (born Oct. 15, 1758); John; and Joshua. William Anderson died prior to 1775.

James Anderson, son of William, had the following children:

1. William - Died before 1822. Married Betsey Moore on April 5, 1814. She was born on July 8, 1792.
2. James, Jr. - Died in 1830.
3. Betsey - Married Levin Crockett on Sept. 13, 1808.
4. John H. - Died before 1836. Married Anne Maria M. Jones on Dec. 24, 1810.
5. Peter - Married Polly Wilson on Dec. 25, 1834. Died before Jan. 9, 1836. His widow married Isaac Riggins on Jan. 9, 1836.

According to the 1798 Federal Assessment, James Anderson resided on a farm "lying within half a mile of Wicomico River on a road leading from the Upper Ferry to Princess Anne." This clearly refers to what is now the Upper Ferry Road. His house is described in the assessment as wood, two-stories, and "new and unfinished inside." It measured 38' X 18'. The detached kitchen was 20'X16'. Also on the property were stables, a milk house, and a smoke house. In the 1800 federal census Anderson appears as a male over 45 years of age, which corresponds well with his birth date of 1751. He owned three slaves. In April, 1811 his wife, Mary, was appointed guardian of sons James and William (Somerset County Orphans Court Proceedings,

1811 - 1823, p. 6). Mary had also died by 1814, and on March 8 of that year George Malone was named guardian of their son, James, Jr. and was instructed to sell "all his goods and chattels" at the time of the sale of Mary Anderson's estate (Somerset County Orphans Court Proceedings, 1811 - 1823, p. 39).

James Anderson, Jr. had the following children:

1. Polly - Married Benjamin Bailey on Nov. 19, 1818.
2. Sarah - Married Isaac Covington on Jan. 7, 1819.
3. Margaret (Peggy) - Born c. 1801. Married Henry Maddux on Jan. 14, 1834.
4. Eliza - Born c. 1803. Married Marshall McDaniel on July 22, 1830.
5. Nancy - Married an Adams. She died in 1838.
6. John D. - Born c. 1804. Married Leah Jane Adams on March 16, 1831.
7. William - Born c. 1806. Married Sarah R. Rencher (Renshaw) on Jan. 21, 1829.
8. James S. - Born c. 1811. Married Clementine Stanford. Died c. 1851.
9. Gillis S. - Born c. 1813. Married first Elizabeth Anderson on Jan. 11, 1827. Married second Eliza Jane G. Barkley on April 30, 1834. Married third Martha Simms on July 29, 1879.
10. Julia Ann - Born c. 1815. Married Edward H. Adams on July 16, 1831.
11. Stephen G. - Born c. 1820. Died before April, 1863.
12. Lucinda - Born c. 1822. Married first Thomas Morris on Feb. 21, 1837. Married second John Whayland on June 25, 1839. Married third Thomas J. Maddux on Feb. 12, 1850.

James Anderson, Jr. served as trustee for the sale of real estate of William Anderson, deceased, to Joseph Moore for \$712. The tract was located on the south side of the Wicomico River near the Upper Ferry and contained 140 acres (Somerset County Deeds, JD 4, folios 236-237). This was

probably the farm described as belonging to James Anderson, Sr. in the 1798 federal assessment. It probably had been inherited by his eldest son, William.

There are many more references to James S. Anderson in the history of the village of Allen. On August 12, 1839 he purchased a farm from John Jones. Two years later, on March 4, 1841, he bought an adjoining tract from George Price. These two properties include what is today the farm owned by Arthur Widdowson and the property on which much of Passerdyke Village development lies. In 1842 the property was sold at public auction to settle a debt Anderson owed to George A. Dashiell and his wife Sarah. It was bought by his brother William for \$660.50, however, James continued to reside there, as he is so listed in the 1850 federal census, by which time he had apparently recovered financially and was a reasonably prosperous farmer with property assessed at \$1500. His household in 1850 consisted of his wife Clementine, daughters Emily and Nancy (ages 12 and 10 respectively) and son Elton S. (age 6).

The names of James S. Anderson and of his wife Clementine appear in the documents in December of 1844. After the death of George Adams Dashiell, owner of the Adams grist mill, the other heirs to that property sold their shares to Mr. Dashiell's widow, Sarah B. Dashiell. James and Clementine Anderson were among those heirs. (Somerset County Deeds, Liber BH, folio 368).

On March 10, 1848 James S. Anderson was among the group of men who founded a Sons of Temperance chapter in Allen. The purpose of the organization, as stated in the charter was "to shield us from the evils of intemperance, afford mutual assistance in case of sickness, and elevate our characters as men." The members pledged that they would not "make, buy, sell, or use, as a beverage, any Spirituous or Malt Liquors, Wine or Cider." (Richard M. Pollitt, unpublished history of the Pollitt family, 1991).

James S. Anderson died the following year, since on Aug. 19, 1851 Clementine E. W. Anderson, William and Sally Anderson sold the property to John W. Crisfield (Somerset County Deeds, Liber WP 6, folios 339-340). On March 16, 1858 Crisfield conveyed the farm to Thornton Phoebus for \$2400 (Somerset County Deeds, Liber LW 5, folio 545).

Another member of the Anderson family, who appears in the annals of our local history was Andrew W. Anderson. It would appear that he was not connected to those Andersons dealt with above, or at least I have not found a connection. I know little about him except that he apparently owned the farm which my family now owns. I say "apparently" because there is some confusion in the documents. On August 2, 1862 Robert Jones conveyed 187 1/2 acres to Anthony Pollitt and his wife Henrietta (Huffington) Pollitt for \$2500 (Somerset County Deeds, LW 7, folio 567). The same property is mentioned in the will of Andrew W. Anderson, who conveyed it to his daughter Mary Virginia Pollitt, wife of Anthony Pollitt. The will also indicates that Anthony and Mary Virginia Pollitt were already residing on the farm.

Henrietta Huffington Pollitt, daughter of Jonathan Huffington, Jr. and his wife Henrietta Adams, was born on January 15, 1836. She married Anthony S. Pollitt on January 15, 1856. She died on July 7, 1867, and Anthony Pollitt subsequently married Mary Virginia Anderson. Since her father leaves the property to her in his will, I can only surmise that he must have taken over a mortgage on the property from her husband.

It was Andrew W. Anderson along with Sarah Stewart who on September 12, 1929 conveyed to the trustees of Asbury Methodist Church the property on which that sanctuary was subsequently built (Somerset County Deeds, GH 5, folio 54-55). The price was \$50. He also appears in another land transaction in the 1830s, when he and his wife Eliza sold property to Sarah Fletcher for \$175. The property in question was on the west side of the county road leading from Salisbury to Princess Anne (Allen Road) (Somerset County Deeds, GH 9, folio 136).

Dr. John I.T. Long

For several decades Allen had its own resident physician, Dr. John I. T. Long. Dr. Long's full name was John Ignatius Theodore, according to information in a letter written by Mr. Fred Messick in 1951.

Dr. Long was born in St. Mary's County, MD in 1853. He graduated from Johns Hopkins Medical School. According to his obituary, published in the *Salisbury Advertiser* on July 18, 1918, he came to the Eastern Shore as a young man and

settled in Upper Trappe. He was married twice, first to Annie Williams of Allen. He had a son by that marriage, Mark L. Long, who at the time of his father's death was living in Philadelphia. His second wife was Cora Belle Disharoon, a daughter of William W. Disharoon, a local farmer who resided in Allen (then Upper Trappe). Mr. Disharoon lived on the "Doll House" property in the village. Dr. Long and Cora Belle D. Long had seven children. His sons Guy E. Long, John Bryce Long and Conrad O. Long owned a mercantile firm, known as Long Brothers, in Fruitland at the time of his death. Another son, Curtis W. Long was States Attorney in Salisbury in 1918. Yet another son, Hilary W. Long, lived in Washington, D.C., and there were two daughters, Mrs. Lester Shields and Mary Long, both of whom lived in Fruitland at the time of their father's death.

The Longs lived in a house on a lot next door to the home of Benjamin Franklin Messick. That house was destroyed by fire in 1933. Dr. Long lived and practiced medicine there until 1910, when poor health led him to retire and move to Fruitland. Sadly, the Messick house was razed this year.

After the Allen Brothers store burned in 1894, Dr. Long and his wife purchased the property, which they sold to George M. and Emma H. Phillips on December 6, 1900 (Wicomico County Deeds, J.T.T. 28, folio 466).

His obituary described him as "a man of thought and culture," and noted that he was "a close student and reader and wrote several books of value, which were published and sold." During the 1880s and 1890s he wrote the Allen news column for the *Salisbury Advertiser*. Mr. Fred Messick, in the letter mentioned earlier, writes that Dr. Long was active in the local debating society, formed prior to 1894. It met in the upper room of the Allen Brothers' store. Mr. Messick wrote, "He loved an argument and used to rehearse by the hour his oncoming speech in his little office that stood in the corner of his yard right by our big front gate."

Dr. Long's funeral was held in his home in Fruitland, and he was buried in Parsons Cemetery in Salisbury.

The Messick Family of Allen

As our village mourns the loss of the house built in 1883-84 for Benjamin Franklin Messick, it seems appropriate to review the contributions of the Messick family to our community's history.

The first member of the Messick (sometimes spelled "Mezick" in early documents) of whom we have documented evidence was Phillip Messick. It appears that he owned much of the property on the east side of the county road through the village (then Upper Trappe) in the early 19th century. He purchased two acres of the tract known as "Monsham" (patented by John Christopher as 95 acres in 1695) from George Drura on February 15, 1820 for \$250. It seems likely that George Drura resided on or very near the property where the Eliza Huffington house was built in 1883, since a Drura family graveyard is in that vicinity. The tract he purchased is described in the deed as at the corner of John Jones's land at head of Wicomico Creek "from there with a straight line to a marked post standing on the East side of the County Road that leads from Adams Mill to a place called the Trappe..." (Somerset County Deeds, Liber JD5, folio 351). In that year (1820) the federal census records Phillip Mezick living in Wicomico Hundred, district 2. It further records one white male between age 26 and 45 and one white female in the same age bracket, as well as one slave in the household. Nearby households were those of Patty Brereton (Brewington), Scott Brereton (Brewington), Sarah Stewart, Robert Hitch and George Malone. This places Messick clearly in Upper Trappe.

In 1840 the census records Phillip Mezick with the following members of the household: one male between ages 0 and 5, one between ages 5 and 10, one between ages 50 and 60 and one female between ages 30 and 40. Again it records one slave. Living nearby were William W. Allen, Sarah Fletcher and again Scott Brewington. We know that William W. Allen resided in the house currently owned by the Taylor family and lying between Whittington Hall and the Methodist parsonage. Messick's wife's name was Eleanor and they had two sons, Benjamin and Phillip, Jr. According to Carrie Messick Jennings, recorded in *Messick Annotated File, 1664 - 1988*, Eleanor Messick was the daughter of John Disharoon. This information is suspect, however, since Jennings records her as having been married to William H.B. Messick, rather than Phillip. Since she also records their two children as Benjamin and Phillip, however, it is possible that her

information about Eleanor's parentage may be correct. On September 24 in 1842 Phillip Messick sold part of his property to John Disharoon for \$400. It is described as "all that tract of land upon which Philip Mezick now resides at the Upper Trappe, except the right to the Mill Pond adjacent to same, having been heretofore conveyed to Mrs. Sarah B. Dashiell; and also that lot which said Philip purchased from George Malone on the road leading from Upper Trappe to the mouth of Wicomico Creek" (Somerset County Deeds, Liber AH, folio 330). Messick was in fact involved in several land transactions in and around the village of Upper Trappe between 1820 and 1842.

By the time of the 1850 census Phillip Messick had died and his widow had remarried. Given his age bracket as stated in the 1840 census, we can estimate that he was born between 1780 and 1790. Ellen Messick married Stephen Drura (Drury), possibly the son of the aforementioned George; however, records indicate that Stephen Drura also had a brother George. Ellen Messick Drura's sons Benjamin and Phillip had been born in 1840 and 1843 respectively, Benjamin on May 24 and Phillip on November 27. Stephen Drura owned a store in the village, which I believe stood next to the home currently owned by Norris and Barbara Howard and which later served as the village post office, when Herschel Wallace was postmaster. The building was razed some years ago. Drura died in 1859, and his will was probated on January 5. In it he releases to his widow "all the right, title and interest in and to the estate, real, personal and mixed, which she had or was in any way entitled to, at the time of my intermarriage with her. . ." (Somerset County Wills, Liber JP 5, folio 320). He also left her his family Bible, \$100 and "my Negro woman Rose together with her bedding and household effects." In return his widow was to renounce "all her dower interest" in the rest of his estate. Thus, it is clear that Eleanor Messick Drura defended well her sons' inheritance from their late father, and the family thus retained all the property in the village which their father had acquired during his lifetime. It seems likely that Stephen Drura was laid to rest in the Drura family graveyard, but unfortunately there is no longer a marker there bearing his name. The only marker still visible is that of his wife.

Benjamin Franklin Messick married Mary Isabelle Porter on April 19, 1865. She was born on June 13, 1846, the daughter of George Jackson Porter and of Anne Isabelle Twilley

Porter. George Jackson Porter was born on February 9, 1819 and died on May 12, 1898. Anne Isabelle Twilley was born September 27, 1824 and died on April 20, 1911. George Jackson Porter was the son of George Porter (born in 1762) and Betsy D. Disharoon. B.F. Messick engaged in agriculture, carpentry and commerce during his lifetime *Atlas of Wicomico, Somerset and Worcester Counties* show that his residence was on the west side of the Allen Road. At that time he and his wife were living in a house that in all probability he had inherited from his parents. At the time of the 1870 federal census he is listed as a carpenter with real estate valued at \$1,000 and personal property valued at \$200. The 1877 On March 11, 1875 he purchased the Allen grist mill, which he owned until 1886. During that time the millwork was apparently done by William T. Turner. By 1883 Messick's enterprises had prospered sufficiently that he decided to build a new and larger residence on the same site in which his current house stood. Therefore, he had the old house moved to a lot across the road. The story goes that the move was not completed before night fell, so the house remained across the road until the job could be finished the next day! Clearly traffic through Allen then was not what it is now! The *Salisbury Advertiser* announced on April 14 in the Allen News column that "Mr. B.F. Messick has transplanted the dwelling he now occupies to his lot on the opposite side of the road, preparatory in the erection of a fine edifice upon the old site." A few months later on September 15, the same column reported that "Mr. B.F. Messick's dwelling is being pushed forward to an early completion and promises to be the most commodious and inspiring structure in the village." Sadly this fine old home was recently razed, and the older Messick house, which stood on the site across the road to which it had been moved in 1883, was also razed about a decade ago.

On June 20 of 1885 the "Allen Letter" columnist reported in the *Salisbury Advertiser* that "The congregation of the M.E. Church, South, at this place proposes to resume repairs to the church in a few days. The church, when completed, will be a gem. It has an entirely new and modern roof. A recessed pulpit has been added. It will also have a large tower and steeple, which when completed, will be about 75 feet from 'tip to tip.' They also expect to add a large bell." We know that this major construction at the church was carried out by Benjamin F. Messick and Peter A. Malone. Mr. Messick was serving as a trustee of

Asbury Methodist Episcopal Church in 1882, when a lot was purchased for the purpose of building a parsonage. The lot was part of land that had formerly belonged to Mr. Messick's father, Phillip Messick. The parsonage had apparently been constructed several years before the actual purchase of the property took place, since the 1877 Atlas shows it as the site of a "Methodist Episcopal Parsonage" and church records show that the first resident pastor came in 1871.

The land records for Passerdyke Cottage, the site of our Historical Society museum and library, indicate that B.F. Messick and his wife had once owned that property as well, since they sold it on June 11, 1887 to Martha Phillips Mills, wife of William Mills.

On December 20, 1898 B.F. Messick, along with his son Harry, purchased the store property on the corner of Allen Road and Cottman Road from James Dashiell (Somerset County Deeds, J.T.T. 24, f. 45). Two years later on August 15, 1900 they conveyed it to another son, William F. Messick and his wife Minnie (Somerset County Deeds, J.T.T. 34, f. 208). That building also has been recently removed from our village's landscape.

Benjamin Franklin Messick and Mary Isabelle Porter Messick had the following children:

1. Louis Fairfax Messick, born October 5, 1866; died July 31, 1867.
2. Edgar Messick, born February 26, 1868; died May 10, 1870.
3. Harry Thomas Messick, born January 15, 1872; died March 16, 1931.
4. William Franklin Messick, born November 22, 1873; died June 27, 1973
5. John Frederick Messick, born September 2, 1875; died October 6, 1951

Both William F. Messick and later his brother Harry Messick operated a tomato canning factory near the milldam, approximately where the Douglas D. Nichols Park now stands. The following announcement appeared in the Allen news column of the *Salisbury Advertiser* on April 28, 1906: "The canning factory at this place, which was idle last season, will be operated this season by Mr. W.F. Messick. Mr. Messick is an up-to-date canning man and by operating the factory here this season will give employment to a great many of our residents, which will be a big boon to our community. We wish him success." Harry Messick operated the

business until 1926, when it was destroyed by fire.

Harry Messick married Mary J. Brewington, who was born on October 5, 1884. They had the following children:

1. Linda Messick, born July 29, 1903; died ?
2. Lala Messick, born August 16, 1905; died ?
- 3-4. Harriett Messick and Jane Messick (twins), born March 5, 1919. Jane died on January 20, 1943.

Linda Messick married Ray Ludwig on June 17, 1925, and they had one child, Gene Marie Ludwig, born on May 18, 1934. She married Terrell Lee Randall on April 24, 1954. He was born on July 17, 1931. Ray Ludwig was born on July 16, 1901

Lala Messick married Russell Walls on September 13, 1928. He was born on December 25, 1908. They had no children.

Harriett Messick married Paul Hishmeh on June 22, 1940, and they had one child, Paula Jane Hishmeh, who was born on October 30, 1949. Jane Messick married James Richard Burbage on June 6, 1942. Their son, James Richard Burbage II, was born on January 20, 1943.

William F. Messick married Minnie E. White on April 26, 1899. His wife was born on June 29, 1874 and died on June 9, 1933. In 1900 he began to operate the store purchased by his father and brother Harry two years earlier. Then in 1905 he began to work for the Jackson Lumber Co. in Salisbury. That company transferred him to Alabama, and his departure was announced in the Allen news column of the *Salisbury Courier* on April 8, 1905: "Mr. and Mrs. W. F. Messick left Wednesday via steamer Virginia for their future home in Alabama." Mr. Messick went on to found and operate the Messick Ice Company in Salisbury. He and his wife had three children:

1. Marie Elizabeth Messick, born January 3, 1904; died August 16, 1905.
2. Anne, born November 15, 1906, died ?
3. Ruth Estelle, born November 9, 1910; died ?

William F. Messick married a second time to Alice Higgins Smith, widow of Clifford Smith, on January 23, 1941. She was born on February 18, 1895 and died on September 23, 1986. His daughter Anne married Gerald Desmond on November 15, 1935. Mr. Desmond was born on November 11, 1898 and died on ?. They

adopted a son, William Perry Desmond (Bill) on May 15, 1937. He was born on June 20, 1933. Anne Desmond inherited the house built by her grandfather in 1883 and lived there until her death. Her son Bill lived there after her death until very recently. As noted earlier in this account the property was sold and the house razed in 2009.

Ruth Estelle Messick married George O. Hendrickson on January 23, 1944. He was born on July 25, 1909. They resided in Salisbury and had two daughters, Patricia Anne Hendrickson (born on August 29, 1941) and Georgene Hendrickson (born on April 3, 1945).

Fred Messick was apparently quite popular with the young girls of Allen, judging from a letter written by Agnes Elliott Dodd to Ruth Jones Wilkins in 1951. She wrote as follows: "I was 12 the first year Irma Huey went to Allen for the summer. She was 13 and had known the joys of playing she had a beau for Seaford was quite a town compared with Federalsburg. We did not even have electric lights and houses were far apart - ours was a mile from the center of town . . .

My playmates had been boys, because only boys lived near me, but that they were of a different sex never entered my mind. There were no magazines exploiting sex then and our Mother didn't tell us. Irma had always spent her summers at our house and Robert had gone to Auntie Price's. This summer for some forgotten reason she did not come to us, but her Mother wanted her to have a vacation and Auntie Price was chosen. Irma met Fred Messick. I hope Fred will never read any of this, for at this late year I like to tell it as it really was. Fred was in Johns Hopkins and had brought a fellow student home with him. Irma had known and heard enough about boys and love to fall head over heels in love with Fred Messick or with the ideal of puppy-loving some boy. When she returned from Allen, she did come to our house for a few days and every second of every minute of the day and night hours she talked of Fred, of love, of Allen as a background and she had a hazy idea of Auntie Price and home. She declared I must go the next summer and she also would go. She wanted to introduce me to love and since she had found it in Allen, there also must I find it. We talked at great length about how we both couldn't love one boy but Irma and I had always divided everything equally at my insistence, so, though she was first on the field, she must now divide Fred Messick with me. That anyone could fall in love with anyone else but Fred was

inconceivable. Love and Fred were synonymous. Right then and there we decided we would go to Allen the next summer."

She went on a bit later in the account to write: "Either Fred could not put up with kids for more than a little while in the evenings or else he had work to do. He was in Johns Hopkins, remember, and I now know that university lads are quite knowing people, so he must have been quite knowing and to him we were just children playing at being grown up, but he did a good job of pretending and made us very happy. He had with him one year a George Brumbley, or nearly that. We liked him quite well, though we did not love him - Irma had taught me that only Fred was love. The night we had George though we had quite a nice time. You can see we were paired off just in our minds for we usually spent the evenings together. There was a different man another year, but him I have forgotten."

Still further on Mrs. Dodd described a typical scene of "promenading" at the Siloam Campmeeting in which, again, Fred Messick had a major role: "Why walking around the dusty circle with a boy was fun I do not know, but I do know it was fun. You counted the times around with each boy and you counted the number of boys and you bragged about how many times you went around and you were popular or a wall flower just as later you were at dances. Since our arrangement of every other night with Fred would bring one the camp night every time we made it two nights running during camp period, so that one night I would ride in the buggy with Fred and we would just giggle all the way and I would be in heaven and the next time I would ride with the guest and giggle just as much but determinedly stayed on this earth for it was not in the game to like him much. When the promenading began, Fred would go round about five times with the one he had brought and felt his duty was done. His guest would then take her and Fred would take the other one around five times and wash his hands of her. The rest of the time we had to go round with just ordinary guys. I remember I secretly adored Purnell White. He was one of the big boys, older even than Fred, I imagine, and was a dashing fellow with all the older girls. I thought I would be consumed with divine fire if he would ever notice me and I did everything I could to attract his notice and a few times managed to get him to walk me around. He had a brother George about my age who would gladly have walked me around but that wasn't so romantic. Ah, the good, good times we

had at camp! Many romances that ended in marriage began on that camp ground."

After graduating from Johns Hopkins, Fred Messick had a career as a college professor at Randolph Macon College in Virginia. He married Epie Blackwell on June 18, 1913. They had no children.

Phillip Nelson Messick, the younger son of Phillip, Sr., married Martha E. Turner on November 27, 1866. She was born on March 20, 1846. On November 13, 1862, the *Herald* of Princess Anne reported that a draft took place to provide soldiers for the Union forces in the Civil War. Among those drafted from Trappe District was Phillip Messick. We don't know whether he actually served, or perhaps purchased a substitute, as that was allowed at the time. On June 10, 1865, however, he was involved in a land transaction. By that time, of course, the War had ended. At that time he joined his mother, Eleanor Drura, his brother, Benjamin F. and his brother's wife, Mary, in selling part of their property to William Turner. This property is the parcel currently owned by the Norris and Barbara Howard and upon which Phillip Messick's step-father had his store. In the deed it is noted that it is the property on which Turner then resided. Fifteen years earlier, in the federal census of 1850, a William Turner is listed in the village as a shoemaker. By the time of the 1870 census Turner was listed as a storekeeper, and then in 1880 as a millworker, no doubt at the Allen grist mill. Phillip Messick's wife Martha, whom, as noted earlier, he married in 1866, may have been the daughter of William Turner.

By the time of the 1870 federal census, Phillip Messick was a farmer with real estate valued at \$1,000 and personal property valued at \$150. On June 20, 1878 he sold part of the tract he had inherited from his parents to John and Caroline Huffington. This property and the house built at that time for the Huffingtons is now owned by the Prestilio family. Martha E. Messick died on June 1, 1885, Phillip ten years later on August 5, 1895.

We invite you to join the Allen Historical Society. Annual dues are:

- Individual - \$20**
- Family - \$25**
- Patron - \$40**
- Sustaining - \$250**

As noted earlier in this newsletter we are also actively seeking funding for the restoration of the Huffington-Pollitt House to become our headquarters and the location of our museum and archives, as well as a place for meetings and receptions open to the entire community. Your gifts will not only help us preserve an important piece of Allen's past, but will also provide a useful and attractive facility for the future. Any gift, large or small, will be appreciated and well used! Remember, your gifts are tax-deductible.