

**MELANCHOLY OCCURRENCE.**—It is our painful duty to announce the sudden and dreadful death of Dr. Thomas H. Averett, of this place. He was in his library on Saturday evening last, reading and writing, surrounded with books and newspapers. A gentleman riding by observed a light in the room, and suspecting that all was not right, jumped from his horse and rushed in, and, horrible to tell, discovered the doctor with all his clothes nearly burnt off him. He called for assistance, and medical aid was immediately sent for. But it was all over, and he died in about thirty minutes, in great suffering. The doctor being alone, as usual with him when in his study, it is impossible to say how the fire originated. He had not long before called for fire to light his pipe, and it is conjectured that, having lighted it, he laid down on his couch, which was considerably burnt, and fell asleep, and that, whilst in that situation, his pipe fell from his hand and ignited his clothes, which were very thin and light. It is also supposed, and very reasonably, that he was unable to call for help sufficiently loud to be heard, as he was laboring under the effects of a paralytic attack of some months' standing, which affected his speech very much.

*[Halifax Court House (Va.) Advocate.]*

From the DAILY UNION (Washington, DC), 22 July 1855, THURS.

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**DEATH OF AN EX-MEMBER OF CONGRESS.**—The Lynchburg Virginian mentions a rumor that Dr. AVRETT, of Halifax, Va., formerly a member of Congress, went to his study, a few days ago, with a lighted cigar and laid down on a lounge, when, probably falling to sleep, his cigar set fire to a thickly wadded dressing gown which he had on. He was soon enveloped in flames, and, either from suffocation or the inhaling of flame, expired.

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The Daily Intelligencer, Washington, DC  
7 July 1855

AVERETT Family Tree

Thomas Hamlett

BOLD Caps = Presidents  
Bold lc = Teachers / Board

William A. Averett ----- m. ----- Elizabeth Hamlett

Elizabeth Averett  
b. 1809  
d. Mar. 17, 1891  
m. Elisha Betts 6/28/1855

William B. Averett  
m. Narcissa Faulkner  
2 children

Joseph C. Averett  
b. ca. 1806  
d. July 27, 1886  
m. 1) Margaret B. Carter  
m. 2) Sarah A. Taylor  
m. 3) Mary I. B. Young

Thomas Hamlett Averett-----m. January 3, 1822-----Martha Coleman Wootton  
b. July 20, 1800, near Halifax in Prince Edward Co. b. Sept. 19, 1803  
d. June 29, 1855 lived at "Sedge Hill" d. ca. 1896, or Nov. 12, 1880

William Penick

1. Edmund Berkeley Averett, Dr. b. 1823 d. ca. 1858
2. Thomas Hamlett Averett, Jr. b. Aug. 29, 1824 d. July 27, 1826
3. Jessie Wootton Averett b. July 2, 1826 d. Sept. 21, 1826
4. **JOHN TAYLOR AVERETT** b. Dec. 24, 1827 d. 23 Feb 1898-----m. Louisa Frances Penick-----  
  - a. Martha E. "Miss Pattie" Averett b. 1853 d. Oct. 22, 1916
  - b. Janie Wootton "Miss Janie" Averett b. 1870 d. Mar. 20, 1953
  - c. William Penick Averett b. Jun. 26, 1859 d. Mar. 17, 1927 m. Mary Ella Wilson
  - d. Sue Berkeley Averett b. 1857 d. Jun. 26, 1939 b. 1862 d. 1941
  - e. Thomas H. Averett
  - f. Edmund C. Averett b. Jul. 11, 1864 d. Jun. 16, 1907
5. William Wootton Averett b. 1831 d. after 1859
6. **Joseph James Averett** b. 1832 d. pre-1897-----m. Rosa Celestia Averett  
  - a. Emma W. Averett b. 1833
  - b. Martha Bedford Averett b. April 21, 1836 d. July 31, 1836
7. Jane Elizabeth Averett b. 1833
8. Martha Bedford Averett b. April 21, 1836 d. July 31, 1836
9. **SAMUEL WOOTTON AVERETT** b. March 1, 1838 d. Sept. 20, 1896  
  - a. Mary Averett b. 1875
  - b. Berkeley Averett b. Dec. 13, 1877 d. Sept. 21, 1878
  - c. Elliott Averett b. Dec. 13, 1877
  - d. Kate
10. Harriett Maria Averett b. April 26, 1841 d. Sept. 17, 1846

Susan Barksdale Penick  
m. **WILLIAM A. TYREE**

m. **NATHAN PENICK**

FF 3753

*Plain Teachers  
Averett & Coles*

FF3753

**Virginia Election.**

*New York Daily Times* (1851-1857); Oct 30, 1851;  
ProQuest Historical Newspapers New York Times (1851-2006) w/ Index (1851-1993)  
pg. 2

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**Virginia Election.**

Richmond, Wednesday, Oct. 29.

From returns thus far received from the Third District, there seems little doubt of the election of Thomas H. Averett, Democrat, to Congress.

The Fifteenth District is not yet settled, but returns are now in favor of George W. Thompson, Democrat.

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### Recent Deaths.

**DR. THOMAS H. AVERETT** died last week at Halifax, Va., aged nearly fifty-five years. **DR. AVERETT** first took a prominent part in politics upon the removal of the deposits by Gen. JACKSON, in 1832. This measure he ardently advocated, through the press and before the people; and, though opposed by a large portion of the talent and influence of the country, he carried it with him by a decided majority. He then made an impression on the county, and the Congressional District of which it is a part, which has never been effaced. What amount of labor he performed during that time, both mental and physical, may be estimated when it is known that this took place while his immense professional business was at its height. His habit was to visit his patients during the day, entertain his company until bed-time, and read and write until 2 or 4 o'clock in the morning. In the year 1848 the people called for the service of **DR. AVERETT** in the Councils of Virginia, and he was elected to the Senate for the session of 1848 and '49. He made them a vigilant and faithful representative, watching the public treasury, particularly, with the eyes of Argus. During his membership in the State Senate he was invited by a District Convention to become the candidate of the Democratic party for Congress. He accepted the call, and after an arduous canvass, and a three days' election, was returned by a majority of nine votes. The district had been previously represented by a Whig. He was subsequently reelected by a large majority, staking his election upon an unyielding opposition to the compromise measures of 1850. He was afterwards an independent candidate, in opposition to two other gentlemen, but was defeated. He then retired from public life, and devoted his time to the peaceful pursuits of agriculture.

**MR. CHARLES W. HUNT**, comedian, died a few days since in the hospital at Mobile. **MR. HUNT** was an Englishman by birth, but had been connected with the American stage during the past twenty years. He was a very excellent farce actor, and a particular favorite in Boston. He was once a member of the Park Company, and for several seasons played at the St. Charles Theatre, New Orleans. His widow is a teacher of dancing at Providence R. I.

**HON. JOHN WOODS** died at his residence in Hamilton, Ohio, on the 30th ult. **MR. WOODS** has been a very active and useful man. He served two terms in Congress, and held the office of State Auditor for one term. In both of these positions he acquitted himself most honorably, laboring with great energy to promote the interests of his constituents and the State. He has been largely identified with the works of public improvement in the State, and to his industry they have been largely indebted for their success.

**CAPTAIN FRANCIS BROWNING**, a soldier of the Revolution and a former member in the Virginia Legislature from Russell, died on the 18th ult., aged 101 years. He voted for the famous resolution of '98-'99.

**DR. JOHN C. CALHOUN**, third son of the late **HON. JOHN C. CALHOUN**, died of consumption at Winnsboro', S. C., on Tuesday last.

**DEATH OF AN EDITOR.**—**MR. JAMES B. SYME**, assistant editor of the Worcester Spy, died in that

# SOCIAL and PERSONAL

**A** sleep yesterday in the home of the bride, on the crest of a hill overlooking the town of York Union, in Plumas county, prominent in the American Revolution, and her father, Charles Goodrich Sneed, had the unusual distinction of being made by General Sherman to be a general in the army of the late General Grant. He is the son of the late General Grant. He is the son of the late General Grant. He is the son of the late General Grant.

The bride, through both mother and father, is connected with historic Virginia families. She is a descendant of Colonel Fairfax Payne, of Cepeshire county, prominent in the American Revolution, and her father, Charles Goodrich Sneed, had the unusual distinction of being made by General Sherman to be a general in the army of the late General Grant.

The marriage ceremony was performed by two uncles of the bride, the Rev. E. Hatcher, D. D., and William H. Hatcher, D. D. The brides were the bride's brothers, Messrs. Ellis and George Sneed. Another brother, Mr. William Overton Payne Sneed, was best man.

Little Marian Bruce Daniel, the flower girl, wore white mull and valencian lace. The maids of honor, Misses Beesie Travers Sneed and Mary Judson Averett, were attired in hand-wrought linoleum gowns, in princess, with emerald shades of pale green chiffon, and carried sweet peas.

The bride, wearing an empire gown of white satin mesaline, on train, came down the broad stairway and entered from the hall with her father. Her veil was caught with a diamond hoop, the groom's bride roses and lilacs were a shower of gifts, and her flowers of the valley. She was met at the altar by Mr. Averett and his best man.

Miss Edith Hatcher, at the piano, played the wedding march from "Love's Progress" and, during the ceremony, sang "Liebestraum" and Herbert's "Love Song."

After a shower of congratulations had been offered the bride and groom, guests were invited into the dining hall and enjoyed, along with an elaborate menu, the fine flavor of old Virginia hospitality for which Mr. and Mrs. Sneed are noted as dispensing.

At 3 P. M. Mr. and Mrs. Averett left for Canada, where the honeymoon will be spent. They will have their home in New York after the first of October.

# CASTORIA

for Infants and Children.

Castoria is a harmless substitute for Castor Oil, Farcortic, Drop and Soothing Syrups. It is Pleasant. It contains neither Opium, Morphine nor other Narcotic substance. It destroys Worms and allays Feverishness. It cures Diarrhoea and Wind Colic. It relieves Teething Troubles and cures Constipation. It regulates the Stomach and Bowels, giving health and natural sleep. The Children's Favorite—The Mother's Friend.

The Kind You Have Always Bought Bears the Signature of

## Charles Hatcher

In Use For Over 30 Years.

### Record-Making Savings on Stylish Shirtwaist Suits

- Beautiful \$4.00 White Lawn Shirtwaist Suits; July Sale price..... \$1.50
- Beautiful \$1.50 White Lawn Suits; July Sale price..... 59c
- Beautiful \$2.00 White Lawn Suits; July Sale price..... 79c

### Shirtwaist Bargains

- White Lawn Waist, slightly soiled, that sold from \$1.00 to \$1.50; July sale price..... 79c
- Allover Embroidery, small, neat patterns; 50c value..... 29c
- Remnants of Black Orandy, 3 yards wide; 80c value..... 12 1/2c
- Remnants of Figured Lawn and Orandy, that sold from 10c to 25c, cut to..... 5c

### FAULKNER & WARRINER CO., First and Broad Streets

of a Cape Henry house party celebrated last week by Mr. and Mrs. R. E. Sneed. Mrs. Aubrey Young and little daughter are visiting Mrs. Starkey, of Roanoke.

Miss Virginia Jefferson, of Louisville, Ky., and her grandmother, Mrs. George P. Stacy, are guests of Miss Anne Turner in Newport News.

Misses Marie and Susie Jones are visiting Mrs. E. C. Madison, of Denton.

Mrs. Mehogan and Miss Margaret Kellogg are guests of friends in Norfolk.

Mrs. Reid and daughter, Miss Hatfield E. R. D., are at Avondale, the home of Mrs. N. D. Hiseck, in Albemarle county.

Mrs. George Wynna Anderson and children are spending the summer at Mrs. Charles Bowcock's, near Keswick.

Miss Mamie Blackburn visited the Peaks of Otter on Saturday last with a party from Roanoke under the chaperonage of Mr. W. E. Elliott, of Roanoke.

Miss Mary McCarty has returned from a visit to her aunt, Mrs. Lawrence, of Roanoke.

Miss Edna Turpin, of Mecklenburg county, passed through Richmond Tuesday on her way to Christiansburg. Miss Turpin will also visit Mountain Lake before returning home.

Mrs. A. W. Handker, her son and mother and her two nieces, Misses Marion and Martha Ware, will spend the remainder of the summer at Cuckoo, Louisa county.

Dances at Scottsville. [Special to The Times-Dispatch.] SCOTTSVILLE, VA., July 22.—The most enjoyable dance of the summer was given on Friday evening in the auditorium of the High School building. The music was furnished by Charlottesville performers. Those present were Miss Lucie Harrison Powers, with Mr. J. B. Strother, of Lynchburg; Miss Clara Pitts, with Mr. Charles R. Dorrier, of Richmond, with Miss Martha Martin, of Richmond, with Mr. Z. R. Lewis, Miss Helen Harris, with Mr. W. S. Danney, of the University of Virginia; Miss Marjorie Harris, with Mr. Reave Nicholas; Miss Lottie Pitts, with Mr. Newman, of Arvonia; Miss Lindsay Powers, of Richmond, with Dr. P. M. Strother; Miss Fannette Briggs, with Mr. Willoughby Rhodes; Miss Irene Briggs, with Mr. Marion Pitts; Misses Bertie Fox, Katy Lynch, Peachy Woodson, of Florin, Alexina Harrison, Mesars. Daniel Lewis, John Lynch, Cary Moon, Pierce, Evans, H. G. Harris, Dr. Glover, of Arvonia; Dr. Emory Hill, of Philadelphia; Mrs. Virginia Boyles, Mrs. Sena, Mr. E. Lansing Fox, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Parkerson, Mr. and Mrs. J. V. Pereira, Dr. and Mrs. J. P. Blair.

[Special to The Times-Dispatch.] UPPERVILLE, VA., July 22.—Miss Ruth Lightfoot, eldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Fraser, was quietly married yesterday at 9:30 o'clock at the home of Mr. Jackson near R. F. Land, William B. Parker, near R. F. Land, the Rev. J. E. Lake, of this place, performed the ceremony. In the presence of a few invited guests. After a most

of August they will have their home at No. 10 Deep Run Street, this city. Personal Mention. Miss Sarah Madison Chamberlayne is the guest of her sister, Mrs. James Beverly Harley, of Cincinnati.

Miss Lou Carter Ryland has recovered completely from her recent illness, and she has returned to her home in Petersburg.

Mrs. D. J. O'Neil and family, accompanied by Mrs. O'Neil and Mrs. O'Neil, returned home after a delightful trip to Philadelphia, Atlantic City and Camden, N. J.

Mr. and Mrs. Moses M. Myer, of No. 100 East Broad Street, will leave for Atlantic City this week.

Mr. and Mrs. O. E. Hill will leave this week for Blue Ridge Summit.

Mrs. E. J. Whitbread, of Farmville, Va., who has been visiting her brother, Mr. G. C. Vainwright, on South Street, Portsmouth, left evening for Providence, R. I., to spend a month.

Miss Genevieve Elliott was a member

Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Perkins, Jonesboro, Tenn.; Mr. and Mrs. C. Vornon Snyder, Washington, D. C.; the Misses Williams, of Arvonia.

Entertained at Bridge. Mrs. John C. Easley, who is visiting her parents, Colonel and Mrs. Cary Woodbridge, at Aspen Hill, Philadelphia, has returned home with a beautiful bride gown and other things on the card table arranged prettily in the piazza and lighted with Japanese lanterns.

Pugh—Lindsay. The wedding of Miss Lucy Stewart Lindsay to Mr. James Howard Pugh was celebrated in the home of her sister, Mrs. E. B. Ford, of No. 201 North Meadow street, yesterday evening at 7:30 o'clock.

The Rev. John Moncure, D. D., officiated. The bride wore white chiffon, broadcloth and a white hat and carried lilacs of the valley. Mr. and Mrs. Pugh left immediately after their marriage for New York. After the first

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pany, fell from a shifting freight train on Union Street today, and was fatally injured. He sustained a fracture of the skull and had his arms broken in two places, besides numerous contusions on the face. Hawkins was about thirty years of age, and leaves a wife and two children.

**GETS EVERY DOLLAR DUE.** Lynchburg Shows Fine Record of No Delinquency in Paying Taxes. [Special to The Times-Dispatch.] LYNCHBURG, July 22.—Although the statement sent out from Staunton to the effect that the treasurer of that city collected every dollar of taxes due Staunton last year on reality has occasioned some surprise in the State, Lynchburg really holds the record in this respect. For in five years not a single tax ticket on real estate due in the city has been left uncollected. Mr. T. N. Davis, the city collector, vouches for the statement above.

Cobwell Cabell Accepts. [Special to The Times-Dispatch.] NOBLESVILLE, Va., July 22.—Colonel George C. Cabell, who has been expected to be a candidate in the next election, will gladly participate in the debate before the Seventh Ward Democratic Club, with the other three congressional candidates in the field, should the matter be arranged. President Deal will at once fix on a date agreeable

Soda Crackers  
**Unee**  
With meals  
**5c**  
NATIONAL

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The Bee  
DANVILLE (VA)  
10 Nov. 1928  
p. 1

# OLD CITIZEN PASSES AWAY AT HOSPITAL

Thomas Averett, Son of  
Noted Educator, to  
Be Buried Today

Funeral services will be conducted at half past three o'clock this afternoon for Thomas Averett, one of Danville's oldest citizens who passed away last night at Edmunds hospital at eight o'clock after an illness which had precluded an active life for the past eighteen years. Mr. Averett had been failing steadily recently and he had been removed to the hospital for treatment in the hope that he could be partially restored.

He was 72 years of age and had lived in Danville since he was a lad of sixteen years coming here with his father, J. T. Averett from Halifax county where he was born. He was thus lineally identified with the man who with S. M. Averett played a conspicuous part in the educational affairs of this city. It was J. T. Averett and S. M. Averett who a generation ago took over the Roanoke Female Institute on Patton street and did much towards its development. It was in commemoration of this life of service that the name Roanoke Institute was changed some years ago to Averett College.

Mr. Averett was in the book and stationery business for many years, later taking up insurance. Then came a stroke of paralysis nearly twenty years since. He overcame it gradually but never was active again and of recent years he had been a shut in devoting himself to reading and the development of a deep philosophy of life. He suffered his physical misfortunes with a broad spirit of resignation.

Deceased was a member of the First Baptist church and took a continuing interest in its affairs. He lived with his two sisters, Miss Sue Berkeley Averett and Miss Jane Wooten Averett and was unmarried.

Service at his home on West Main street will be followed this afternoon by interment in Green Hill cemetery.

Vannie E. A.

14 June 1924

John H. A.

18 Aug 1927

Leachy J. Averett  
15 Feb 1910

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## DR. THOMAS HAMLETT AVERETT

By Kenneth H. Cook

Few Halifax County families have distinguished themselves as have the Averetts. Dr. Thomas Hamlett Averett was a prominent local physician, state and federal legislator. His children carved their individual niches, particularly in the field of education. Sadly, they are virtually unknown in their native county.

Research for this article was accomplished off and on for nearly two years. The finished product, especially as it relates to Dr. Averett himself, seems so little for so much work, but to delay it further at this point seemed unwise.

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Thomas Hamlett Averett was born July 20, 1800, near Halifax, a son of William and Elizabeth Hamlett Averett. Following a custom of that time, he was named for his mother's father, Thomas Hamlett.

Little is known of his early life. He had at least one sister, Elizabeth, and two brothers, William and Joseph (to be discussed briefly at the end of this article). The family was of the Baptist faith and always quite active in the church. Young Thomas is said to have attended the "common schools."

#### WAR OF 1812

When he was just past his 14th birthday, on September 11, 1814, Thomas enlisted in the War of 1812 as a substitute for his

father, William Averett, disabled by illness. He entered service at Camp Mimms, near Richmond, served not quite three months and was honorably discharged. His service was that of a drummer boy.

According to application papers he filed years later for a land warrant, he stated that he was the drummer who served in the company commanded by Capt. Isaac Medley, afterward by Lt. Allen P'Pool, in the 4th Virginia Militia Regiment, 2nd Brigade, "in the War with Great Britain, declared by the United States on June 18, 1812." He was discharged December 1, 1814, at Elliott's Mills, Maryland.

The muster roll for Capt. Medley's company states that Thomas H. Averett was taken on September 30, 1814, and was present until October 7, and was one of 66 men, including officers, who marched from the 69th Regiment at Halifax. His service, two months 14 days in duration, netted him \$9 per month, for total pay of \$22.93.

For his service in the War of 1812 he received a land warrant of 160 acres. He appeared before George C. Holt, a Justice of the Peace for Halifax County, on March 19, 1855, to make application, which was approved on May 15, 1855.

#### HIGHER EDUCATION

Following the War of 1812, Thomas completed his secondary education and surely attended college, but it is not known where. Tradition has held that he attended Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia; this is so stated in his entry in the BIOGRAPHICAL DIRECTORY OF THE AMERICAN CONGRESS. However, a search of the records of Jefferson did not turn up his name.

According to the records of the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine at Philadelphia, Thomas did complete the first

year of medical school there, 1820-21, but did not graduate. It is not known if he transferred elsewhere.

The Philadelphia College of Medicine conferred an honorary M.D. degree on him in 1850. From the records of that time there is no indication of where or when he received his regular M.D. degree.

The question that naturally arises is did Thomas Hamlett Averett actually graduate from medical school? One must assume that he did, since he was thereafter referred to as "doctor." Also, he practiced in the most prominent families, including the Bruces of Berry Hill, and since there were other physicians in the county, one assumes they would not have used the services of a non-graduate.

#### MARRIAGE

On January 3, 1822, Dr. Averett was married, in Prince Edward County, to Martha Coleman Wootton (also spelled Wooten). The names of her parents are not known. She was 18 years old.

The ceremony was performed by the Rev. Joel Johns, "a minister of the gospel," after Dr. Averett and Thomas A. Filbert posted bond of \$150. Miss Wootton's guardian, Elisha Jeffress, had given his consent to the marriage on February 5, 1821, in a note to the clerk of Prince Edward County which read:

"Miss Martha C. Wootton has consented to marry Dr. Thomas H. Averett, and I, as her guardian, do give my consent to the same. You may therefore issue a license accordingly."

## CHILDREN

Ten children were born to Dr. and Mrs. Averett, all in Halifax County, as follows:

Edmund Berkeley Averett, M.D., born 1823, to be discussed later.

Thomas Hamlett Averett, Jr., born August 29, 1824, died July 27, 1826, buried in the Averett Square in Halifax Town Cemetery.

Jessie Wootten Averett, born July 2, 1826, died September 21, 1826, buried in the Averett Square, Halifax.

John Taylor Averett, born December 24, 1827, to be discussed later.

William Wootton Averett, born 1831, to be discussed later.

Joseph James Averett, born 1832, to be discussed later.

Jane Elizabeth Averett, born 1833, to be discussed later.

Martha Bedford Averett, born April 21, 1836, died July 31, 1836, buried in the Averett Square, Halifax.

Samuel Wootton Averett, born March 1, 1838, to be discussed later.

Harriett Maria Averett, born April 26, 1841, died September 17, 1846, buried in the Averett Square, Halifax.

## HOME IN HALIFAX

Dr. and Mrs. Averett and their family made their home in Halifax on what is present-day Maple Avenue. Their home, a large, white frame structure, stood on the site now occupied by the Murphy home, next to the home of Mrs. Will Lacy. According to Mrs. R. C. Edmunds and others, the Averett home was demolished when the Murphy home was built.

Dr. Averett purchased the house, "at present occupied by the said Averett," on October 27, 1835, from William H. Clark of Banister Lodge for \$800. The house and lot were allotted to Mr. Clark under the will of his father, Col. John Clark.

#### OTHER LANDS

Dr. Averett owned considerable property in Halifax County. His earliest purchase, in 1822, was lot 32 in the town of Meadsville. Other property included several lots in the town of Halifax, a tract of land on the Racetrack road, more than 200 acres on Terrible Creek and 302 acres on the Terry's Bridge Road. In all, he purchased over 1600 acres.

#### MASONIC HALL LOT

Dr. and Mrs. Averett, Thomas G. Coleman and James Young were the owners of the lot on which the Halifax Masonic Lodge was built prior to 1828. On April 28 of that year they sold, for \$3, that "certain lot or piece of ground near the Courthouse ... on which a hall has been erected for the use and accomodation of the Society of Free Masons, designated as the Halifax Hiram Lodge No. 96." No one knows exactly when the handsome Georgian-style Lodge was built.

#### DAN RIVER CHURCH

On July 22, 1843, Dr. Averett, his brother Joseph C. Averett and their wives sold seven-eighths ( $7/8$ ) of an acre, lying "between the roads leading from Halifax Courthouse to Terry's Bridge and Torian's Ferry," to John Jennett, James C. Cole, Allen

Willingham, John B. Carrington, Parham Moon and Henry C. Moon, trustees. The land was "for the use and benefit of the Baptist Church of Christ, called Dan River, and of the congregation assembling with said church to worship at Dan River Meeting House in Halifax County (and for no other use or benefit whatsoever)." The cost was \$1.

#### MEDICAL PRACTICE

Dr. Averett's medical practice was primarily at Halifax Courthouse and in the surrounding county, but he is said to have had patients in Charlotte County and in Person County, N. C., as well. Possibly so, since physicians in those days traveled long distances.

In April, 1839, the Court of Halifax County appointed him county physician, "to attend such prisoners in jail as may require medical attention."

Dr. Averett was also physician to the Bruce family at Berry Hill. He was with Anna Bruce, daughter of James Coles and Eliza W. Bruce, almost daily during her last illness. She died January 1, 1845.

Mr. Bruce was spending the winter of 1844-45 in New Orleans and Cuba for his health, leaving Mrs. Bruce alone with their children at Berry Hill. When she was able, nearly a month later, to write to her husband about it, she assured him that Dr. Averett had done everything he could for their daughter.

### MASONIC MEMBERSHIP

Dr. Averett was an active member of Halifax Hiram Masonic Lodge No. 96, which was chartered in 1813. He was initiated on November 24, 1823, passed on February 23, 1824, and raised on May 24, 1824.

On June 24, 1824, he was elected lodge secretary. Six months later, on December 27, he was named Senior Warden (Pro-tem). He was named Junior Warden (acting) on May 23, 1825, and Senior Warden (elected) November 28, 1825. Dr. Averett was Worshipful Master of the Lodge from March 26, 1827 to 1839. According to Masonic records, he was active until 1846.

### HALIFAX ACADEMY

In 1836 the Samuel Davies Institute, located at Halifax, was incorporated by the Virginia General Assembly as Halifax Academy. Eleven Trustees were initially named, one of them being Dr. Averett.

It should be noted here that one of Dr. Averett's sons, Joseph James Averett, called "Joe Jim," served as head of the Academy after his father's death. He succeeded Meriwether Lewis and preceded John Henry Powell, 1860 prior to the Civil War.

### LEGATEE

Two other Halifax physicians remembered Dr. Averett in their wills.

Dr. Granville Craddock, in whose home he lived early in his career, left "to William T. Craddock and Thomas Averett all of my medical books, surgical instruments, medicine on hand and shop

furniture, to be equally divided between them." His will was dated December 9, 1819, probated August 25, 1829.

Dr. Jeffrey Palmer, in his will dated September 28, 1835, proved November 23, 1835, made bequests to Dr. Averett and his son. "I give unto my friend Dr. Thomas H. Averett, as a small memento, my case of cupping instruments and my case of pocket surgical instruments. Also, I give unto Edmund Berkeley Averett, son of Dr. Thomas H. Averett, my silver watch."

#### LEGISLATOR

Dr. Averett represented Halifax County in both the Virginia and U. S. legislatures. In 1846 he was an unsuccessful candidate for the U. S. House of Representatives. He served in the Virginia State Senate in 1848 and 1849.

He was elected as a Democrat to the 31st and 32nd Congresses, serving from March 4, 1849, to March 3, 1853. During his terms, probably the two most important pieces of legislation were the Compromise of 1850 and the fugitive slave law. He opposed both measures.

He was an unsuccessful candidate for reelection in 1852, and after leaving Congress returned to Halifax to resume his medical practice.

#### CENSUS OF 1850

The Census of 1850, taken December 19, listed Dr. and Mrs. Averett and four of their children--Edmund, Joseph, Jane and Samuel. Real estate owned was valued at \$7000. An overseer,

Christopher Avery, age 21, was also listed as a member of the Averett household.

#### DEATH

Dr. Averett's health failed him in his last years, despite his being just in his mid-50s. In a letter to his son John, dated March, 1854, he wrote in an almost illegible hand:

"All here are well except my dim eyes. They improve too slowly for comfort, though they are improving somewhat."

Dr. Thomas Hamlett Averett died June 29, 1855, at his home in Halifax, and was buried in the family square in the town cemetery. He was just 21 days shy of his 55th birthday.

#### WILL

The will of Dr. Averett, dated October 11, 1854, with a codicil dated December 16, follows:

Although it seems that our courts and juries are in the habit of making wills for dead people, yet presuming that they will not dare to nullify the law of descents to which I wish to conform so far as the well being of my family, prudence and propriety will justify, I, Thomas H. Averett, do make this my last will and testament.

Clause first. I appoint my long time friend James Young as the executor of this my last will and testament having instructed him to burn that now in his possession.

Clause second. I appoint the said Young trustee for my son Dr. Edmund Berkeley Averett, it being my will that his share in

my estate be held in trust to be used and enjoyed at the direction of the said trustee so that the principal shall not be disposed of during the lifetime of my said son while he shall enjoy the income or profit therefrom at the discretion of his trustee as aforesaid.

Clause third. I hereby direct that there be deducted from the share of my said son in my estate the sum of \$1500 on account of the sums which I have expended in the prosecution of his professional studies. I have advanced to him other monies for which however I will not hold him accountable, neither for his board &c. as he has greatly aided me by gratuitous practice in my family and otherwise.

Clause fourth. It is my will that the share of my said son shall after his death be disposed of according to his last will and testament if leave any else to descend to his heirs if he have any legally begotten of his own body; if he leaves no such heirs then it is my will that his share shall return to my estate and be disposed of according to the provisions of this my last will and testament.

Clause fifth. I appoint my brother in law Col. Jesse Wootton of the county of Henry in this state trustee for my son William Wootton Averett, with like conditions and provisions as are annexed to the trusteeship of the said Young for my son E. B. Averett. But, if the said Wootton shall fail or refuse to act as trustee as aforesaid it is my wish that another trustee be appointed to act in his stead by Circuit Superior Court of Law & Chancery for this county or by such other court or tribunal as my supercede it in

its jurisdiction and functions under such sureties for fidelity as the said court may deem necessary and proper. And I do make the same provisions as to the trusteeship of friend Young in case he shall fail or refuse to act for my son E. B. Averett.

Clause sixth. I direct that there be deducted from the share in my estate of my son John Taylor Averett the sum of \$2500 on account of monies which I expended in the completion of his collegiate education and on account of the property which I have given him since his marriage.

Clause seventh. I direct that there be deducted from the share of my son William W. the sum of \$800 on account of the monies expended by me upon him at Emory and Henry College, at the University of Virginia and otherwise. And as Mr. Ambrose B. Rucker, grocer of the town of Lynchburg, holds me charged with about \$55 for sundries furnished my son William after he had attained the age of 21 years, which charge I have repudiated from prudential consideration, it is now my will that the said Rucker be a legatee in my estate to that amount unless the said William shall himself pay it, with interest thereon from 1 October 1852. And I do further direct that the amount of the said debt and interest be a further deduction from the share of the said William W. in my estate.

Clause eighth. I have orally given my son Joseph James Averett my negro girl Jinny, daughter of Taner, which gift I hereby confirm. On account of which gift and on account of the monies which I have expended on him at the University of Virginia I direct that there be deducted from his share in my estate the sum of \$1050.

Clause ninth. I have already given to my daughter Jane Elizabeth and her husband Nathan Penick my negroes Sam, Sedge, his wife Jenny, Sally, daughter of Esther, and Charles, son of Turner, on which account and on account of the amounts expended in the completion of her education in Washington City and for her piano, I direct that the sum of \$2300 be deducted from her share in my estate.

Clause tenth. I freely give to my son Samuel Wootton Averett the monies which I have expended for his education thus far and it is my will that his education be completed at my expense either at the University of Virginia or the University of Pennsylvania, but the amounts expended for that purpose be deducted from his share of my estate.

Clause eleventh. I have contracted with Messrs. Kellogg & Co. for marble slabs for the graves of such of my children as have died, for a marble frontispiece for an enclosure enclosing the graves of all the Averetts whose remains be buried in the graveyard at Halifax Court House; and have obtained from my neighbor N. H. Poindexter the gift (orally) of a piece of ground at the said graveyard 30 feet long and 24 wide. It is my will that my executor have the same enclosed with a substantial rock wall at least two feet above the surface with a strong iron railing fastened thereon about one foot above the top of the wall with spikes to prevent the incursion of intruders, and with an iron gate at the entrance upon plans now in the possession of my said executor who will be pleased to take the proper deed from Mr. Poindexter securing the title to the ground.

Written with my own hand at my own residence at Halifax C. H., Virginia, with my seal annexed this 11th day of October 1854.

Thomas H. Averett

A codicil--as I have already given to my son John T. Averett and my daughter Jane and her husband Nathan Penick more than their equal proportions of my negroes and other personal property and as they have lands it is my will that they have no shares in my landed property.

16th December 1854.

Thos. H. Averett

The will was presented at court on October 2, 1855, by James Young, but was contested by William W. Averett and Edmund B. Averett; at a continuation on October 4, Joseph J. Averett also opposed it. Since it was not witnessed, several gentlemen were sworn to verify that it was in Dr. Averett's handwriting.

The court found that the will was proper, that Dr. Averett was of "sound and disposing mind and memory" and under no undue influence when he wrote it, and ordered it recorded. Bond was set at \$20,000.

#### INVENTORY

The following inventory of the personal property of Dr. Averett was taken December 4, 1855, valued at \$13,715.13.

China press, 2 divans, 2 half round tables, 10 cane bottom chairs, rocking chair, parlor carpet and rug, pair brass andirons,

pair shovel and tongs, 2 spittons, 2 glass bowls and pitchers, stone pitcher, clock and case, 4 window shades;

Globe lamp, hat rack, side board, writing desk, 16 chairs, rocking chair, large pine table, small pine table, 11 plain tumblers, 12 tumblers, 2 butter pots, cake mould, coffee mill, 2 pitchers and piggins, 3 bottles, pail, bucket, wash pan and noggin, pine table, brass kettle, ice box, bureau, chest, bowl and pitcher, 2 buckets and wash stand and tub;

Looking glass and table, candle stand, 3 window shades, bedstead and furniture, window shade, looking glass, pitcher and wash stand, shovel and poker, old trunk, walnut bureau, wash stand, bowl and pitcher, walnut table and cover, bureau, looking glass, towel rack;

Bed and furniture, walnut stand, bowl and pitcher, looking glass, pair andirons, shovel and tongs, lot of table cloths, lot of table ware, 8 silver tea spoons, 5 silver table spoons,  $\frac{1}{2}$  dozen silver dessert spoons,  $\frac{1}{2}$  dozen silver tea spoons, 2 sets common knives and forks, 1 set ivory knives, 2 walnut tables;

Bed, furniture and stead, looking glass, old table, 3 window shades, wardrobe, bedstead and bedding, pair andirons, wardrobe, looking glass, old pitcher, bedstead and furniture, "Congressional Library" (\$525), lot of old pamphlets, set of book shelves, medical journal for 35 years--1 number missing, balance of medical books--84 volumes, misc. library;

Book case, shelves and drawers in physic room, table, bed and stead, Buffalo robe, demijohns, pots and ovens, 2 spinning wheels,

old irons, old bedsteads and furniture, lot of agricultural tools, lot of old buckets, 2 pots and racks, buggy and harness, horse cart, ox cart, 15 slaves--\$8400, and piano--\$250.

Total value put on inventory--\$13,715.13.

#### DIVISION OF ESTATE

The court at its October, 1855, session named commissioners to go on the Averett property, with the assistance, if necessary, of a competent surveyor, and lay off 1/3 of same in value, to be assigned to Mrs. Averett as her dower. The remainder was to be divided into four shares equal in value, to be assigned to Joseph J. Averett, Samuel W. Averett, Dr. Edmund B. Averett and William W. Averett.

The 15 slaves were also to be divided, giving Mrs. Averett so many as to equal 1/3 in value. Those remaining were to be divided into six parts, taking into consideration the advancements made to several of the children as stipulated in the will.

Mrs. Averett was assigned 486 acres on Terrible Creek and Old Mill Road, while the four children received the following: Joseph J. Averett, 12½ acres on the corner of Courthouse and Mountain Roads, including Dr. Averett's mansion house; Dr. Edmund B. Averett, 127½ acres plus 10 acres; William W. Averett, 167 acres plus 11 acres of woodlands; and Samuel W. Averett, 100 acres plus \$600 from Joseph to make his share equal.

#### DIVISION CONTESTED

Following the division two of the Averett children, John T. Averett and Elizabeth Averett Penick (with her husband Nathan Penick),

contested the division, claiming an error in that they were not made equal with the four other children. Their father intended to make all his children equal, they said, but that the division had given the others a joint advantage of about \$7000.

John Averett and Jane Penick each received from the estate, including advancements, \$2369 each, they claimed, while their brothers received property valued at \$3619, a difference of \$1250 each.

John T. Averett married Louisa Frances Penick, a daughter of William Penick, while Jane Averett married her brother Nathan Penick. Mr. Penick gave his son and daughter each a tract of land, and it was this land Dr. Averett made reference to in his codicil when he directed that, inasmuch as John T. and Jane were each in possession of land, they should not receive land from his estate. Their lawyers made this statement:

"Dr. Averett did not advance one cent towards the land owned by John T. Averett and Nathan Penick...Surely Dr. Averett did not intend to charge his children with property advanced to them by their father-in-law, William Penick. Dr. Averett did not own a great deal of land and inasmuch as two of his children owned land he no doubt thought it best that his land should only be divided into four lots instead of six, therefore excluded the two owning land from any share of this land, expecting that their share would be made up to them in other property."

They asked that the estate be redistributed so as to make John and Jane equal to the other four children. The plaintiffs

emphasized they did not want any of the land, but only an equivalent amount in other property.

All parties agreed that the assets of the estate were sufficient to pay the debts of Dr. Averett and the cost of administration without having to resort to the sale of the slaves.

The court found in 1858 that there was no error in the order of October, 1855, for the division of the estate of Dr. Averett and overruled the petition of the plaintiffs. The report of the commissioners was also upheld.

Final disposition of the estate was made in September, 1866, when, on the motion of Nathan Penick, it was committed to the hands of the sheriff for administration.

#### MRS. AVERETT

Following her husband's death, Mrs. Martha Averett made her home at Halifax and in Danville. She did not remarry.

#### 1860 CENSUS

Mrs. Averett was listed in the Halifax County Census of Inhabitants, taken in 1860, as a farmer, age 56. Her real estate was valued at \$4000, personal estate at \$4750, and she owned five slaves.

#### MILITARY PENSION

In 1878 Mrs. Averett, then 75 and a resident of Danville, made application for a military pension based on Dr. Averett's service in the War of 1812, under the provisions of the Act of March 9, 1878. The application was filed in Culpeper County, where she was

living with the Nathan Penicks (they ran the Culpeper Female Institute there).

W. S. Penick of Alexandria gave the following affidavit:

"I do hereby certify that, from personal acquaintance with the family of Thomas H. Averett and Mrs. Martha C. Averett, for several years prior to the death of Dr. Averett in 1855, they lived together as husband and wife, and that I never heard ought to the contrary, not even a suspicion. That the said Thomas H. Averett was by profession a physician, and practiced in my father's family for a number of years. Later in life he was a member of the U. S. Congress from Virginia..."

Nathan Penick, her son-in-law, stated that he knew Dr. and Mrs. Averett for many years, that he and his wife, Jane E. Penick, were at the house in Halifax County at the time of Dr. Averett's death, and that he was at his bedside when he died and saw him die. He attended the funeral and burial. Mrs. Averett was ill at the time of his death but attended the services anyhow.

She was awarded a pension of \$8 per month, commencing on November 8, 1878.

The most fascinating thing about Mrs. Averett's pension application is her description of her husband, especially since no likeness of him is known to exist:

"He was about five feet eight inches high, brown hair, fair complexion."

#### MRS. AVERETT'S DEATH

The exact date of Mrs. Martha Coleman Wootton Averett's death is not known, nor is her place of burial. If she is in the

Averett Square in the Halifax Town Cemetery, her grave is not marked.

On January 30, 1896, on motion of Joseph James Averett in Halifax County Court, her estate was committed to the sheriff, C. C. Carrington, for administration.

#### THE AVERETT CHILDREN

The six Averett children who lived to adulthood all survived their father. Two are fairly obscure and will by necessity be treated only lightly; the other four worked together in education most of their adult lives and so will be treated more or less together.

#### WILLIAM WOOTTEN AVERETT

The fifth child, born in 1831, he was not listed in the 1850 census, but was most likely at Emory and Henry College. He also studied at the University of Virginia. His profession is not known, though it is assumed he was in education. He is not known to have married, and was living in Alexandria in 1859. His date or place of death are not known.

#### DR. EDMUND BERKELEY AVERETT

Dr. Averett, the eldest child, was born in 1823, and was listed in the 1850 census as a physician, age 27. Where he studied medicine is not known, but his practice probably was in Halifax. One assumes, because his father in his will appointed a trustee to manage his share of the estate, that he was a spendthrift. In the division of the estate he received 137½ acres plus slaves. He was not married.

Dr. Averett died between September 2, 1857, when his will was written, and April 26, 1858, when it was presented at court.

After the payment of his just debts, his estate was to be equally divided between his brother Samuel W. Averett and his sister Jane Penick. Asking that his books and watch not be sold unless absolutely necessary, he willed all his medical books "to my friend and kinsman, Leander Faulkner," other books to his brother Samuel and his watch to his brother-in-law Nathan Penick.

The estate, bonded for \$4000, was appraised on July 3, 1858, by J. T. McLaughlin, William G. Morton and T. C. Carter. Valued at \$2770, it included the following:

Two lots of land, \$1400; 1 Negro, Jackson, \$1100; saddle, round pine table, silver watch, walnut bureau, 2 shot guns, 104 volumes medical books--\$60, 170 other volumes--\$60, old medicine, syringes, mortar and slab (porcelain), bay horse, 15 bushels of corn and a rocking chair.

Dr. Edmund Berkeley Averett's place of burial is not known.

JOHN TAYLOR AVERETT  
JOSEPH JAMES AVERETT  
JANE AVERETT PENICK  
SAMUEL WOOTTON AVERETT

These four children, born fourth, sixth, seventh and ninth, will be discussed separately, then as a group.

JOHN TAYLOR AVERETT was born December 24, 1827, and was educated at Emory and Henry College. He married Louisa Frances Penick of Halifax County, sister of his brother-in-law Nathan Penick, on September 5, 1852. They first made their home at

Whitesville, in Halifax County, but by 1859 were living in Pittsylvania County.

John Taylor was an active Baptist, and during the 1850s was several times a delegate to meetings of the Dan River Baptist Association. He was the first lay moderator of the Roanoke (Pittsylvania) Baptist Association, serving 13 years in that capacity (1874-81, 1883-87).

According to the history of the Pittsylvania Baptist Association he helped the "good women of First Baptist Church of Danville, living in North Danville," get a Sunday School organized. This was functioning as an extension of First Baptist in 1877, and in 1887 was constituted as Moffett Memorial Baptist Church.

He served on the "Committee of 40" appointed to investigate and report on the Danville Riot of November 3, 1883, and was a member of Danville City Council from the first ward in 1885.

John Taylor Averett became a member of Danville's Roman Eagle Masonic Lodge No. 122 on September 19, 1869. He was junior warden in 1878, senior warden in 1879 and 1880, and master in 1881-83. In 1885 he was elected District Deputy Grand Master of Roman Eagle Lodge. On February 8, 1897, "Worshipful Brother John T. Averett was elected an honorary member of the Lodge."

John Taylor Averett died in 1898 at Danville.

JOSEPH JAMES AVERETT, called "Joe Jim", born in 1832, was like his brother educated at Emory & Henry College. His wife was Rosa Celestia, last name not known; they had one child, a daughter, Emma W. Averett.

He was principal at Halifax Academy in the mid-1850s, but moved to Danville in 1859 to become a teacher at Union Female College. In 1861 he enlisted in the 18th Virginia Regiment, Co. A, C.S.A., and was wounded during the war.

Like other family members he was an active member of the Baptist Church, both in the Dan River and Roanoke (Pittsylvania) associations. He, too, joined the Roman Eagle Masonic Lodge, on April 2, 1859.

Late in life he returned to Halifax County and lived at Sedge Hill, near Halifax. The fact that his wife was then living in Vance County, North Carolina, leads to the assumption they were separated.

Joseph James Averett was dead by 1897. His burial place is not known.

JANE ELIZABETH AVERETT, born in 1833, was educated in music at home and in Washington, D. C. Her husband, Nathan Penick, whom she married May 16, 1854, was a teacher. They moved to Danville from Halifax in 1858. Mr. Penick joined Roman Eagle Masonic Lodge on March 19, 1859, and was a captain of artillery in the Civil War. Sometime after the war they operated the Culpeper Female Institute at Culpeper Court House, Virginia.

SAMUEL WOOTTON AVERETT, youngest of the Averett children, was born March 1, 1838. Educated in home schools, he was graduated from the U. S. Naval Academy in 1859. He was assigned to the sloop of war "Wyoming" in the Pacific squadron and served there until the Civil War. Returning to Virginia, he served in the

Confederate Navy, rising to the rank of Captain. He was imprisoned at Johnson's Island during the war.

After the war, and after recovering his health, he went to Culpeper Court House where he joined his brother-in-law and sister, the Nathan Penicks, at the Culpeper Female Institute.

In August of 1872, Samuel was married to Janie Russell Miller, a Danville native. They had four children.

That same year the Averetts moved to Danville where he became associated with Roanoke Female College. In 1887 he left to become president of Judson Institute (now Judson College) at Marion, Alabama.

After he left Danville for Judson he was referred to as "doctor," but in a sketch of his life published by Judson after his death, no mention is made of where he received the LL.D. One assumes it was an honorary degree.

Samuel Wootton Averett died September 20, 1896, while still serving as president at Judson Institute. His wife lived in McLean County, Illinois, after his death.

#### A CAREER IN EDUCATION

In 1854 William J. Berryman established the Baptist Female Institute in his Patton Street home in Danville. The name was changed to Baptist Female Seminary in 1858, at which time Mr. and Mrs. Nathan Penick (Jane Elizabeth Averett) of Halifax County joined the school. It opened under the management of the Penicks on February 1, 1859.

Mr. Penick was the son of the Rev. William S. Penick, a

Baptist minister and an "eminent patron of education." The school, which continued to operate from the Berryman home, had the support of the Baptist churches of Danville and Pittsylvania County. The Penicks taught classes in English, Latin, French and music.

The name was changed to Union Female College, with its new charter being granted December 22, 1859. The united support of the school by the Dan River, Roanoke and Concord Baptist Associations gave it its new name.

The Rev. William A. Tyree, a relative of Nathan Penick through marriage, was named first president. A native of Amherst County, he was graduated at Columbian College, Washington, in 1851 and came to Halifax as second pastor of Beth Car Baptist Church in 1853. He served as pastor from October 5 to August 8, 1860, when he took over at Union Female College. He returned to Beth Car on January 1, 1867, remaining until September 6, 1873.

Following the plans of Mr. Penick, and despite the unsettling conditions then existing, money was raised and a new college building erected on a three acre lot on the corner of Patton and Ridge Streets. Completed in 1860, adjacent to the Berryman home, it was adequate for many years.

In 1859 Mr. and Mrs. Joseph James Averett left their posts at Halifax Academy to join the Penicks at Union College. Mr. Averett and Mr. Penick were professors, Mrs. Averett and Mrs. Penick instructors in music.

The Civil War brought the school to the brink of financial disaster, but it was able to survive, due mostly to the work of the

Rev. Tyree. During the war the name "Union" became a liability, and the school's trustees petitioned the General Assembly to change it to Roanoke Female College. This was done in 1864.

Rev. Tyree had resigned in 1863 to return to the ministry. His successor as principal, Isaac Lake, noted that the new name Roanoke "was chosen because of its geographic location (near the Roanoke River) rather than on account of its being under the special control of the Roanoke Baptist Association, and that its former name of Union was discarded partly because it was liable to be misapprehended to refer to the late political union."

(The name actually given in 1864 was Trustees of Roanoke Female College. This was shortened to Roanoke Female College in 1893 and to Roanoke College in 1904. In 1910 it became Roanoke Institute.)

After the Civil War the college was managed by co-principals, two or three at a time. One of these administrations, which took over in 1872, was composed of Professor A. Proot, J. J. Johnson and Samuel Wootton Averett. Mr. Averett had just returned from his position at Culpeper Female Institute.

In 1873 the college was leased to Samuel Wootton Averett and his brother John Taylor Averett, co-principals who divided the work between them. It proved to be a most successful arrangement, lasting 14 years.

"Mr. Jack" taught history, English and Latin and handled the school's finances. "Mr. Sam" taught mathematics, physics, chemistry and French. Two of John Taylor's daughters, Martha E. "Miss

Pattie" Averett and Jane Wootton "Miss Janie" Averett, also taught. His son, William Penick Averett, was on the Board of Trustees from 1898 to 1910, and a third daughter, Sue Berkeley Averett, taught in the public schools.

John Taylor Averett had been appointed principal of the Danville public school in 1871 and promptly merged it with the private school he had operated in the old Danville Female Academy building since 1867. His well-known reputation as an educator and his success as principal did much to establish confidence in the public school, and enrollment increased throughout his two-year tenure.

An 1877 report on education to the Dan River Baptist Association spoke highly of Roanoke College and the Averetts:

"...Of the eight excellent and worthy institutions for the education of young ladies ... we hope it will not seem invidious for us to commend as specially deserving and worthy the patronage of our Baptist parents having daughters to educate, the Roanoke Female College at Danville. Under the superior management of the Messrs. Averett--men of extensive learning, large experience and fervent piety--the college has been steadily gaining ground, and has now an enviable reputation, and is, we are assured, destined to do a great work for the cause of female education."

The Averetts also exercised considerable influence over the cultural life of Danville, it is said. It was during their stay at the college, in 1885, that Frederick Delius, the English composer, taught music there.

The Averett partnership was broken in 1887 when Samuel Wootton Averett left Danville to become president of Judson Institute, a girl's school in Marion, Alabama. He served there until his death on September 20, 1896.

When his brother left, John Taylor Averett became the first to assume the title of president of Roanoke Female College. Although stricken with paralysis in November, 1889, he ran the college from his wheelchair until 1892, when his health finally forced his resignation.

Thus did the Averett family's active association with the school, an association stretching back to 1858, come to an end. Jane Gray Hagan, writing in her STORY OF DANVILLE, described them as "educators of marked ability who had a prominent part in making Danville an educational center."

The college was moved to a new site on West Main Street when a new main building was completed in 1911. Here it has continued to expand and is now a major four-year liberal arts college.

On December 18, 1916, president W. W. Rivers offered a resolution proposing a change in the college's name. It read in part:

"Whereas the name Averett is honored in the history of the school, and revered by numbers of old students throughout this country, and whereas the school is doing junior college work and other schools of the same class call themselves colleges, I recommend that the name be changed to Averett College."

In April, 1917, the name was changed to Danville College for Young Women. The Alumnae Association passed a resolution May 27

asking that it be changed to Averett College. Only then was the name at last changed to Averett, to honor the family who successfully guided its fortunes for so many years.

#### BROTHERS AND SISTERS

That Dr. Thomas Hamlett Averett was not an only child is certain, but how many brothers and sisters he may have had is not known. He most likely was the oldest son, perhaps the oldest child.

#### ELIZABETH AVERETT

Elizabeth Averett was born in 1809, died on March 17, 1891, and is buried just outside the Averett square in the Halifax Town Cemetery. She was married June 28, 1855, to Elisha Betts of Snow Hill, her first marriage, his third. There were no children.

She is presumed to have lived in Halifax prior to her marriage, at Snow Hill from then to his death on October 5, 1872, and then to have moved back to Halifax. As a widow she was awarded a pension of \$8 per month for her husband's service in the War of 1812.

During the Civil War years Mrs. Betts was one of the active leaders of Beth Car Baptist Church. Her work was such that, when the present church was erected, she was one of four people honored with memorial windows.

For many years Mrs. Betts taught the infants class. A faithful church member until her death, it is said she never missed a service or prayer meeting when in Halifax. Hers was a familiar figure as she trudged to church, carrying her brass lantern.

The question has been raised as to whether or not Elisha and Elizabeth Betts may have been separated during their marriage. The basis for this is her active work in the church at Halifax, when her husband was similarly active at Black Walnut. Back in those days it was a good two hours' drive from Halifax to Snow Hill, quite a trip to make every Sunday and perhaps during the week as well. Also, even though she received a pension for his War of 1812 service, why wasn't she buried with him at Snow Hill, as are his first two wives?

There is no answer to this question of possible separation, and unless new information comes to light there won't be. The Betts descendants are as in the dark on it as anyone else.

#### WILLIAM B. AVERETT

Virtually nothing is known about William B. Averett, including his dates of birth and death. He was married to Narcissa Faulkner, and had at least two children, Mattie W. Averett Huht and Nannie Averett. They were named in the will of their aunt, Elizabeth Averett Betts. (4 Thomas H.?, of Lynchburg)

#### JOSEPH C. AVERETT

Joseph C. Averett was born c. 1806 and was married three times. His first wife was Margaret B. Carter, daughter of Nathaniel and Ann Stevens Carter; their marriage license was issued October 8, 1829. After her death he married Sarah A. Taylor (license issued February 12, 1868) of Pittsylvania County. He married thirdly Mary I. B. Young (license issued September 2, 1869) of Campbell County.

Joseph played the violin and taught his nephew, James Frank Carter, to play it when he was young. His third wife, Mary, was called "Aunt Mary" by his Carter nieces and nephews.

Joseph Averett was an active and valued member of the Baptist church, as evidenced by this memorial resolution passed by the Dan River Baptist Association at the time of his death in 1886:

"Very recently a veteran servant of God, for many years a true friend of this association, has fallen asleep. Joseph C. Averett, in his 80th year, died at his residence. For 40 or 50 years this wise, discreet, steadfast Christian and deacon, with undeviating devotion and fidelity to the cause of Christ, labored as Sunday School superintendent, and as a wise, prudent counsellor in the churches. One of the churches of this association had its origins in a bush Sunday School conducted by Bro. Averett. He loved his pastors and always gave them his cordial support. His consistent example, maintained so many years, was a standing proof of the Christian religion, and a shining example to allure men towards the path of righteousness. 'Mark the perfect man and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace.'" (Passed July 27, 1886)

--THA--

## APPRECIATION

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Mrs. Kathleen B. Williams, Danville; Miss Mary C. Fugate, retired Dean of Students, Averett College, Danville; Mrs. Willa F. Wilson, Danville; Mrs. Ellen C. Apperson, Richmond; Mrs. Pocahontas W. Edmunds, Halifax; and Mrs. Lightfoot B. Fourqurean, South Boston.

Ms. Nancy S. Groseclose, executive director, Alumni Association, Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia.

Ms. Victoria Bigelow, research associate, American Medical Association, Chicago.

Mrs. Carol MacLaren, Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, University of Pennsylvania Medical Center, Philadelphia.

Fred W. Troy, Deputy Grand Secretary, Grand Lodge of Virginia, Richmond.

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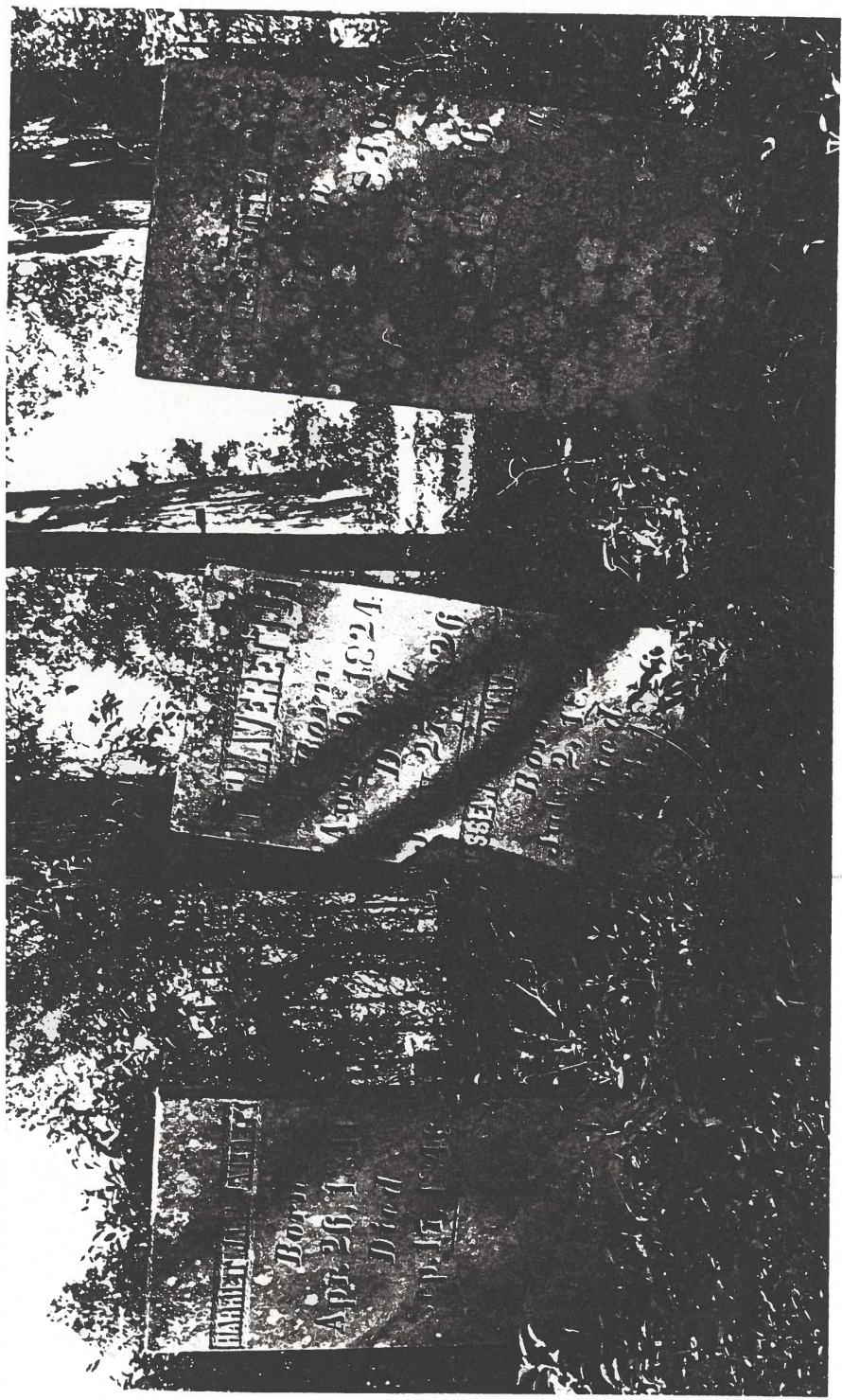
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(Note: The following obituary notice for John Taylor Averett was received too late to incorporate any of the information into the body of the article. Because of its importance it is printed here in full.)

Danville Weekly Register

February 24, 1898





MARGARET  
BORN  
APR 26 1821  
DIED  
OCT 15 1896

MAYBERRY

BORN  
APR 26 1821  
DIED  
OCT 15 1896

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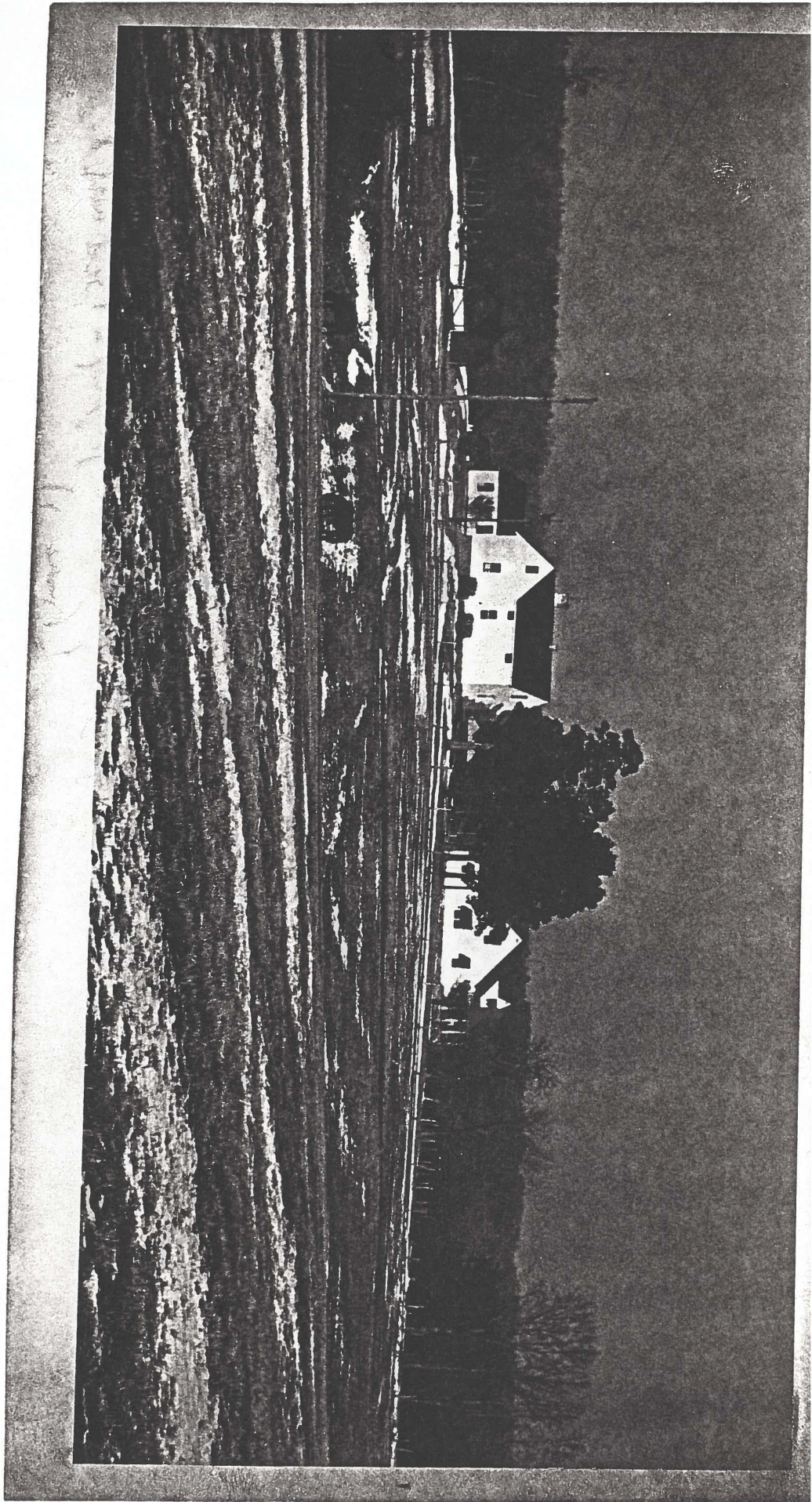
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# ROANOKE FEMALE COLLEGE,

*Danville, Virginia.*

S. W. AVERETT,  
*Graduate U. S. Naval Academy,* } Principals.  
JOHN T. AVERETT,

J. T. AVERETT,  
ANCIENT LANGUAGES, ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE, HISTORY, MORAL  
PHILOSOPHY.

S. W. AVERETT,  
MODERN LANGUAGES, MATHEMATICS, NATURAL SCIENCES.

WILLIAM L. JOHNSON,  
MUSIC.

MRS. A. F. JOHNSON.  
DRAWING AND PAINTING.

MISS PATTIE E. AVERETT,  
ASSISTANT IN MUSIC AND ENGLISH.

MISS LIZZIE C. MILLER,  
PREPARATORY DEPARTMENT.

The next Session begins September 2nd, 1874, and ends June 2nd, 1875.

Pupils received at any time during the session, and charged from the date at which they enter.

Charges for the entire session: Primary English Branches, \$40; Advanced English Branches, \$50; Ancient and Modern Languages, each, \$20; Music, \$50; Oil Painting, \$50; Drawing \$25; Use of Piano for Practicing, \$10; Incidental Expenses, \$10; Board without lights or washing, \$150.

Payments are required strictly in advance—one half at the opening of the session, the balance on 1st February, unless other satisfactory arrangements shall have been made.

A discount of 50 per cent. on all tuition fees is allowed to ministers and teachers: of 12½ per cent. to any patron who sends two pupils from the same family.

Address either of the Principals for Catalogues.

[From the Religious Herald]

ROANOKE FEMALE COLLEGE, DANVILLE, VA.—Under the charge of the two Averetts, Roanoke Female College, at Danville, Va., will doubtless continue to prosper. They are gifted teachers, and have also the gift, we hear, of knowing how to manage the affairs of the establishment. The Roanoke Female College has rendered a most important service to the influential region from which it has drawn its pupils. It has awakened an interest in behalf of female education among thousands who would not have been so easily reached by other schools. We sincerely hope that this admirable school will enjoy a more generous patronage next session than during any former session. It is worthy of the enthusiastic support of the friends of education in Virginia and North Carolina.

*paste up as 3-col-*

for our own sake, and for sweet learning's sake, that we should spend an hour here today, so near to the cherished scene of his latest and most arduous labors, in this dear old church where he so loved to worship, an reminding ourselves and telling to all we can reach what a man he was and what a work he performed.

A Sketch of His Life.

To that end, let us give heed to a simple sketch of his life:

Samuel Wooten Averett, the youngest son of Thomas II. and Martha C. Averett, was born of a sturdy old Virginia family, at Halifax Court House, Va., March 1st, 1838. His father was a practicing physician most of his life, but was called to represent his people in the Virginia Legislature and in the United States Congress. The son's home training was of the strictest and best, and in the highest sense Christian. He received thorough academical instruction in the schools of his own State, and then took a course in the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis, graduating from that institution with distinction in 1859. He was at once assigned to duty on the sloop of war, Wyoming, of the Pacific Squadron. He served there until April, 1861, when, in response to the call of Governor Letcher for the sons of Virginia to rally to her help, he resigned his post as midshipman and started South. In company with General R. B. Garnett and Engineer George D. Loring, he made his way home, via Cuba, having to evade Federal sloops and gunboats in running the blockade at Fernandina, Fla.

\* In other records & the spelling as Wooten & from his grand daughter's from the Memorial Booklet published by Anderson College (the

Service in the Confederate Navy.

Early in the summer he reported at Richmond for duty and was commissioned a lieutenant in the Confederate navy. He was first assigned to duty at New Orleans, in command of the Watson. Subsequently he was made executive officer of the Jackson, and later of the steamer General Polk. At a still later date we find him in command of the floating battery "New Orleans," at island No. 10. As a result of the Confederate reverses on the Mississippi, Capt. Averett was made a prisoner and sent to Johnson's Island; but on being exchanged in August following, he again reported at Richmond for duty, and was assigned to the command of the Confederate warship Florida, and ordered to Mobile. He rendered varied and effective service in that capacity, being some valiant work in Mobile Bay, until May, 1864, when, on account of failing health, he was put at Bermuda Islands and ordered home for rest and recuperation. He confidently expected to return to the ship with a reinforcement of officers and crew, but the state of his health forbade it, and he never again engaged in active military service.

In the School Room.

When the war was over, like his great commander, he laid down his arms, and like him also, he enlarged the arena of arms for the school-room. He gradually recovered his health and eyesight (he had suffered greatly with ophthalmia), and went to Charlottesville, Va., where, with the late Professor Nathan Matthews, he took charge of the Culpepper Female Seminary. It was there that he met and married Miss

Janie Russell Miller, daughter of the late John G. Miller, Esq., and sister of the Hon. H. K. Miller, of Danville, Va.

In 1872 Capt. Averett went to Danville, Va., and in company with his brother, Prof. John T. Averett, soon took charge of the Roanoke Female College. He served in this relation with increasing usefulness and reputation until 1887, when he was called to be the successor of Dr. Robert Frazer, as president of the Judson Institute. Of his faithful services in that honored position until the day of his death we are all informed.

#### A Normal but Notable Career.

His life, you see, was not altogether uneventful, but it was for the most part free from startling incidents and changes, and had a normal development. His student life, especially at Annapolis, his term of service as a soldier, especially in the Confederate navy, and his three terms as a school president, are the three salient points, the three important epochs, of a career that ended while he was yet in his prime. In each of these life periods he was a man of note. The strictness of his rearing and the severe military training that he had at Annapolis and in the harder school of war, made their mark upon his character and both broadened and strengthened his intellect. But more: they did much to determine the spirit and method of his work as teacher and disciplinarian. They tended to make that work, certainly more vigorous, possibly too military. His matured life, however, showed that it had assimilated all the elements of his checkered experience, and become, truly, a

harmonious whole—a ripened product—of rare completeness and beauty. It is to that ripened product that our attention should be chiefly directed.

#### A Character that Defies Analysis.

All true greatness and goodness, of course, inheres, not in what a man *does* so much as in what he *is*. It is a subtle thing that defies analysis. Even when in the familiar contacts and associations of personal intercourse, we have felt it, and have come to believe that we have traced it to its hiding place, and so can lay hold of it and convey it to others, we no sooner attempt it than we find how elusive it is—how it slips through the meshes of our verbal representation.

Dr. Averett, with his fine physique and military bearing, his unquestioned intellectual power, his rare teaching talent, his marked executive ability, and his other qualities which we had come to recognize, may not in any one of them, or in all of them combined, have been markedly beyond other men with whom we might compare him. But after all he impressed us, he commanded our homage, as few of them ever did. For behind and above these recognized and definable qualities was a power and charm of personality, a subtle aroma of character, which we can no more analyze than we can analyze the fragrance of the flowers, or the glory of sunset. The finer qualities that excite love and trust, reverence and admiration, elude description—cannot be put into words. In saying they exist, all is said that can be. The character that combines them needs no expounding—it needs only to be seen and known; to be allowed to speak for itself.

## Averett cutlines

### 3 col. cut line

THE AVERETT SQUARE in the Halifax Town Cemetery is surrounded by a strong iron fence, now rusted but ~~now~~ otherwise intact (except for a gate off its hinges). The marble plaque bearing the words "The Averetts" was called for in the will of Dr. Thomas H. Averett.

"SISTER BETTS"--The grave of Mrs. Elizabeth Averett Betts, sister of Dr. Averett, is located just outside ~~x~~ his family square in the Halifax Town Cemetery. She was married to Elisha Betts of "Snow Hill."

### 2 col. cut line

DR. AVERETT--The inscription on the tombstone of Dr. Thomas Hamlett Averett does not mention his service in the State Senate or the U. S. House of Representatives; his earned title, "Dr.," isn't even there. Besides his name and dates, there is only his Masonic emblem. (Photo & Camera Shop Photo)

### 4 col. ~~cut~~ cut line

THE CHILDREN--of Dr. and Mrs. Averett~~s~~ who died young ~~and~~ are buried with their father in the Averett square in the Halifax Town Cemetery. From left the~~s~~ stones are of Harriet Maria Averett, ~~##~~ T. H. Averett Jr. and Jesse Wootton Averett (same stone), and Martha Bedford Averett. Are these the stones mentioned in Dr. Averett's will? (Photo & Camera Shop Photo)

## Sedge Hill

Sedge Hill, located north of Halifax on highway 501, is still known to some older Halifax residents as the Averett place, even though members of that family have not lived there in this century.

No one is certain when the house was built, or by whom. Dr. Thomas H. Averett acquired the property, including the house, in 1838. The 246½ acres, on Terrible Creek, were purchased from James Coles Bruce, executor of the estate of James Bruce, his father.

Dr. and Mrs. Averett are said to have spent part of the time here and part at their home in Halifax. After his death in 1855, the court assigned Mrs. Averett 486 acres on Terrible Creek as her dower in the estate; Sedge Hill was included. She did not live there, however, choosing instead to make her home first in Halifax and then in Danville.

One of the Averett sons, Joseph James, took up residence at Sedge Hill about 1870, having retired from education work in Danville. He lived here until his death, prior to 1897.

Mrs. Averett's date of death is not known, but after that time her sons Joseph James and Samuel Wootton Averett became the owners of the Terrible Creek land. In 1892 they agreed to a division, in which Samuel got 107.27 acres of the Sedge Hill tract on the west side of the Houston-Lynchburg Road and Joseph 135.81 acres on the east side, including the Sedge Hill house.

On November 6, 1897, Rosa Celestea Averett, widow of Joseph J. Averett, and Emma W. Averett, their daughter and only child, both of Vance County, N. C., sold Sedge Hill, containing 135.81 acres, to John S. Llewellyn for \$425.

Mr. Llewellyn died prior to March, 1942, when his wife, Jeanette, died. Their children, A. C. Llewellyn, Betty Llewellyn Tate, R. L. Llewellyn, J. S. Llewellyn, Ruth Llewellyn Adams and Laura Llewellyn Coles, sold the property to Elbridge G. Coles (husband of Laura).

Elbridge G. and Laura L. Coles sold Sedge Hill to Robert Edward and Charlie H. Chambliss on November 13, 1942. It remains the property of the Chambliss family.

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The land on which Sedge Hill stands can be traced back to September 20, 1759, when William Powell of Halifax County patented a tract on the north side of Banister River.

On May 15, 1777, he sold to John Pankey of Cumberland County, for 40 pounds, "all that Messuage plantation tenement tract," containing 150 acres on the north side of Banister River and embracing "all houses, outhouses, edifices, buildings, yards, gardens, fences, orchards, trees, woods, underwoods, ways, waters and watercourses, profits, commodities, advantages, hereditaments and appurtenances whatsoever."

1778--John Pankey, then of Halifax, to Harris Carter of Dinwiddie County, 180 pounds, 150 acres on Banister River.

1804--Harris Carter, of Sussex County, to Hardaway Chandler of Halifax County, \$600, 150 acres on Banister River.

1830--James Adkisson and Samuel Williams, trustees for Hardaway Chandler, to James Bruce, \$300, 120 acres "lying in the fork of Banister River and Terrible Creek." (Sold November 28, 1829 to settle debts owed to James Bruce, surviving partner of John Chappell and Co. and James Easley and Co., by said Chandler.)

An article in the October 5, 1959 issue of the "Danville Register" dealt with the recollections of alumnae of Averett College of its past history. One item is of interest here:

"Even as far back as Mrs. Joshua H. (Annie) Flippen can remember, and at 88 she is Averett's oldest graduate and unfailing inspiration, some of the girls dared to talk to boys.

"Why, I remember one time," said Mrs. Flippen in a hushed tone after debating whether to repeat such a scandal, "we were taken to a concert at the beautiful Majestic Theatre, and Capt. Jack Averett saw a girl talking to a boy. Capt. Jack walked over there and slapped him!"

"Wouldn't that make a scarlet page in Louisa May Alcott?"

According to the book, **OFFICIAL RECORDS OF THE UNION AND CONFEDERATE NAVIES IN THE WAR OF THE REBELLION**, Samuel Wootton Averett was master of the New Orleans naval station in 1861, 1862 and 1863.

He was also a lieutenant at Jackson station in April, May, June and September, 1862, and March, 1863.

John T. Averett home

Part of the home of John Taylor Averett is still standing on the side of county road 603 between Lennig and Whitesville, shaded by a huge sycamore tree.

The house and farm were given to Mr. Averett by the Rev. William Penick, his father-in-law, on August 5, 1854; he and Louisa Frances Penick were married September 5, 1852, and were living here as early as March, 1854.

When the Averetts moved from Whitesville to Pittsylvania County is not certain, but is thought to have been about 1859.

The Averetts held the property until February 27, 1884, when they sold the house and 558 acres to Charles A. Noel of Halifax County for \$850.

On March 22, 1884, the Noels gave a deed of trust on the property to William R. Barksdale, trustee, to secure a \$500 debt he owed John B. McCormick.

The Noels sold the property, then containing 255.57 acres, to R. Holt Easley on February 17, 1887. Mr. Easley in turn sold it to W. I. and John H. Johnson on June 9, 1888.

W. I. Johnson sold 89.55 acres of the tract to Richard Cabell Hill on January 7, 1893.

Mr. Hill and his wife, Sallie Birch Hill, were living here as early as January 14, 1888, when their daughter, Annie Laurie Hill, was born. She married Phillip Melvin Owen in 1910, and the house is presently owned by their daughter, Mrs. Maud O. Gwynn of Henderson, North Carolina.

### CITY AND STATE DEPARTMENT.

**IMPROMPTU CELEBRATION.**—An impromptu celebration of the fourth was gotten up and held by our citizens in Dudley Hall on the night of that day, which passed off in a most satisfactory manner, and proved to be highly interesting and creditable. The following was the order of proceedings:

- 1st. Prayer by Rev. Mr. Walker.
- 2d. Music by the Lynchburg Orchestra.
- 3d. Declaration of Independence, by A. McDonald.
- 4th. Music by the Orchestra.
- 5th. Address by Mr. Bryce of New York.
- 6th. Music by the Orchestra.
- 7th. Address by Rev. Mr. Walker.
- 8th. Music by the Orchestra.
- 9th. Address by Gen'l Nettleton.
- 10th. Music by the Orchestra.

The addresses of the occasion were interesting, eloquent and patriotic—breathing a spirit of true devotion to the country, and deep desire for its continued prosperity and renown. They were all made at scarcely a moments warning and entirely without previous preparation; but, notwithstanding, were of such a character as to reflect high credit upon the orators, as well as prove most interesting and entertaining to the audience.

The Musical Association, who kindly volunteered their services, added greatly to the interest of the occasion by their excellent and soul-stirring music. The patriotism of the audience was raised several degrees by the inspiring notes of "Hail Columbia,"—breathed forth in exquisite strains from the Orchestra.

Many of the "fair daughters and brave men" of Lynchburg were present, to all of whom the entertainment seemed a source of real enjoyment. Although gotten up entirely on the spur of the moment—the creation of a very sudden ebullition of patriotism on the part of a few gentlemen—the celebration was doubtless as appropriate and as much enjoyed as though it had been preceded by grand preparations, inaugurated with show and pageantry and conducted with "pomp and circumstance."

**SUNDAY SCHOOLS.**—The Sunday Schools being prevented by the rain from making their exercises on the fourth, some of them had their cel-

cluding stopages at all the depots on the line, in the space of six hours and a half.

**HON. THOS. H. AVERETT.**—We regret to learn that the Hon. Thomas H. Averett died suddenly at his residence in Halifax County, on Saturday evening last.

#### Died.

On Thursday, 21st June, in this place, ANNA CORA, infant daughter of Thomas N. and Adaline Priddy, aged one year and 22 days. "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of Heaven," says our Saviour.

Died in Prince Edward, on Tuesday, 3rd of July, JOSEPH, infant son of John R. and Cornelia Wilson of Lynchburg, aged 6 months.

"No soul of earth, is on thee angel sent,  
Pure and stainless as when first thou wast given,  
Is rendered back thy soul to God in Heaven!"

#### ARRIVALS at the WASHINGTON HOUSE. UP TO 3 O'CLOCK YESTERDAY

WM. W. LEFTWICH, Proprietor.  
Jas Miler, Franklin; W E P Smith, Wytheville; R C James, W Ferguson, & 2 daughters, Miss Penick, Pittsylvania; Jas W Vaughan, Dinwiddie; S B Camett, R Fielder, Grayson; Jas B Smith, Central Depot; J B McClelland, Nelson; W A Helonon, Philadelphia; E J Early & son Campbell; E A Langhorne, city; J Alexander, Miss Lille Wembish, Miss J E Graham, G W Thornhill & lady, Campbell; R F Harris, Buckingham; J M Miller, W T Nell, city; G A Burton, Thos Wilkinson, Bedford; S A Reed, J E Calhoun, C W Morris, J Williams, T C Jordan, Jno Lunstord; W Stratton, W A Strother, Mr Damon, city; O Austin, Warren, N C; M A Virning, St Louis; H D Speers, Petersburg; J S Thurman, Daniel Langhorne, city; E C Booth, Franklin; L W Gray, city; J A James, B A Dickinson, Miss James, Miss Dickinson, Nelson; C H Bryant, Montgomery; R C Mitchell & lady, Bedford; A W Womack, Pittsylvania; N M Read, Henry; R A Mays, Danville; P Saunders, Franklin; Dr J M Shelton, Robt J Morgan, Nelson; Thos W Woodin, L C Woodin, S E Woodin, L Gilbert; J Gilbert, M Dews, H Holland, T J Jones, B Jones, L Payne, C Gilbert, W Dews, J O Terrell, R F Harris, W E Harris, Pittsylvania.

#### Pic Nic.

The Scholars of the Sunday School of St. Paul's Church are requested to meet at the Church at 6 1/2 o'clock Saturday morning, instead of Friday morning.

#### RELIGIOUS NOTICES.

The funeral of Captain James Lampkin will be preached by Bishop Early at Bethlehem, Am.

not offence that any officer could commit, greatly more heinous than defalcation or robbery.)—but that they had a slight Conservative taint! Their place, I said, are to be filled by real *Loco Foco*.

At a meeting held in Huntingdon county, Pennsylvania, in which county resides David R. Porter, the *Loco Foco* candidate for Governor of the State, this resolution was adopted: "Resolved, that we cannot support David R. Porter for governor, because we know him!" A very good reason, may be; but certainly not a very flattering one.

The May No. of the *Southern Literary Messenger* is received—and, judging from the varied and mingling rich table of contents, we think we are horized in saying that it presents strong evidence of increasing excellence, and of additional claims to the patronage. We are glad, by the way, to see amongst its list of paying subscribers, the names of many of our distinguished men. It is a testimony to the merits of the work, which cannot be without influence upon the public mind. It also affords pleasure to hear that the subscription list of the *Messenger* is rapidly increasing.

The New York Express states that a petition, vigorously signed, is in circulation, asking Mr. Idle to establish a Bank in that city, under the provisions of the general banking law, recently enacted. The Globe's proof of Biddle's insolvency seems to produce but little effect. People will believe in his insolvency, as well as in his sagacity and integrity.

The DUELLING REPORT has been read on the table, by a vote of 103 to 78—the administration members voting for it, and the friends of Messrs. Graves and Wise against it. Do the majority of the Committee intend to rest under the imputation of having garbled, perverted and suppressed testimony?

The Charter election in the city of Troy, N. Y. has resulted in the election of Whig Counmen in every Ward. Reaction! reaction! Only it till "next year."

On the 10th inst. agreeably to the imperative requirements of law, the Banks of New York, throughout the State, resumed specie payments.

The Sir Lionel Smith, steamer, is advertised to sail from New York for London—making the first steam vessel which has left that port for England in 12 days.

A large business.—The following advertisement, copied from the New Orleans Bee, shows that Senator Walker, of Mississippi, does business on a large scale; whether honourably or not, we have only the evidence of his debtor, whose testimony may not be entirely unprejudiced:

TAKE NOTICE.—All persons are hereby forbidden to trade for, buy, or receive in any manner whatever, three negotiable notes given by me to J. Walker, of Mississippi—each for the sum of fifteen thousand five hundred dollars, and bearing date on or about the 24th of August, 1836, and payable at the Union Bank Louisiana; one on the 1st of March, 1839; one on the 1st of March, 1840, and one on the 1st of March, 1841. Also

OBITUARY.

Departed this life, on the 6th inst. at the residence of his brother, Dr. Averett, at Halifax Courthouse, after a protracted illness of nearly a year, Mr. JAMES H. AVERETT, aged 26 years and 6 months. Mr. Averett had for several years been a resident of Lynchburg, where he was first seized with the fatal malady which carried him to an early grave. About 11 months ago he removed to Halifax Courthouse to have the advantage of medical advice from his brother, where there remained to the day of his death. He was afflicted with the Scrofula; and though, from the hold which the disease had taken upon his system, little hope had been long entertained of his recovery, though for months his friends were in expectation that each day would be his last, yet his death had inflicted a pang among his relatives, and his extensive circle of friends and acquaintances, which time will not easily eradicate. Mr. Averett had been for several years one of the most prominent members of a Debating Society in this place, where, as a debater, he exhibited talents far above the ordinary stamp. To a strong judgment he united a fruitful imagination, and while expressing his opinions, either in common conversation, or in debate, there was about his manner that unfeigned earnestness, which, even upon the most ordinary topics, excites the interest of an audience, and fills them with confidence in the sincerity of the speaker; but which, upon subjects which appeal to the lofty and finer feelings of the human heart, and call out the powers of a lively imagination, is all-important to give power and magic to its creations. Enthusiasm in whatever cause he undertook seemed to be his distinguishing characteristic, and whatever doctrine or opinion he embraced he entered into it with all the spirit and ardour of his soul. As a speaker, his gesture and action had the unstudied air of nature, and owed their grace, (if grace he aspired to,) mainly to the sincerity which seemed stamped upon every word which he uttered. No one could listen to Mr. Averett while engaged in an animated discussion, without, to a certain extent, being moved by the power of his appeals; and however averse they may have been to side with him in opinion, all were satisfied that he was convinced of the truth of the principles which he maintained. To the powers of mind with which nature had endowed him, he united a generous heart, an amiable disposition, and a blandness of manner which won the esteem and attachment of all who cultivated his acquaintance. But he possessed other qualities, in which genius is too often lamentably deficient—qualities without the possession of which the lights of great minds are like the deceitful and unsteady glare of the ignis fatuus, tending only to bewilder the beholder with a false lustre, and by their vacillating career, to conduct themselves and those who come within their influence into fatal labyrinths, where both become hopelessly entangled. He possessed a character for steadiness, morality and virtue, which none could call in question. These, while they rendered him a worthy and estimable member of the community, and a fit example for his associates, threw around his talents a pure and beautiful lustre, and, united to the capacities which nature had given him for the attainment of greatness, would have made him an ornament to the most prominent station in society. He has been cut off, though, in the prime of life. A young wife has been deprived of an affectionate and devoted husband, a numerous circle of friends and acquaintances of one to whom they were ardently attached, and society of one whom nature seemed to have marked out for distinction. The friends, who pay to his memory this last tribute of his affection and regard, is conscious that whatever remarks are made in compliment to the dead, are by many received as the representations of partial associates, too fond of eulogising those whom they have lost; but he feels fully assured that amongst those to whom the deceased was known, there are none who will not cordially testify to those abilities and virtues which he has attempted willingly, though feebly, to pourtray.

on Wednesday the 2d inst. MATTHEW P.



ON Tuesday the 17th inst. died at Lynchburg, Virginia, of Cholera, Mrs. Mary Ann Averett, wife of the late Mr. James H. Averett, aged 40 years. She was a native of the State of Virginia, and was the daughter of the late Mr. James H. Averett, and will be buried on the day previous to the day of her decease.

March 17  
A valuable...  
I WILL on Sunday the 17th inst. sell at my office a valuable...  
May 17

WHEREAS, the Circuit Superior Court of Law and Chancery of the County of Bedford, on the 6th day of May, 1838, in a certain cause pending, of John M. Harvey and Stephen Harvey, and another, against Matthew Harvey, doth

Thomas Steptoe and William L. Steptoe, with the will annexed of James C. Steptoe, and Robert C. Steptoe, William C. Lefevre, and Thomas Steptoe in his own right, James S. Poe, William M. Burwell and Frances C. Steptoe, formerly Frances C. Steptoe, Edward D. Steptoe, and Catherine Steptoe, Deft. Among other things, doth order and decree that a commissioner of the said Court, to take account of the outstanding and unsettled debts due from the estate of the said James C. Steptoe, deceased, designating the grade and character of each of such debts, and to enable him to take and return, a commissioner is directed, previously to taking the same, to publish, for two months successively, some newspaper printed in the town of Lynchburg, a notice, requiring the creditors of said deceased to exhibit before him, at the time and place specified in said notice, the evidence of their respective demands.

Now, therefore, notice is hereby given to all persons holding outstanding & unsettled debts against the estate of the said James C. Steptoe, deceased, to the said designated, commissioner of said Court, within Thursday the 10th day of July, 1838, at the hour 10 o'clock in the morning, at his office in the town of Liberty, Bedford county, to proceed to take the account directed by said decree, at which time and place all the creditors of said James C. Steptoe, deceased, are required to exhibit before him the evidence of their respective demands. JNO. A. WILKINSON, C. Liberty, May 17

**SPLENDID LOTTERIES.**  
**TO BE DRAWN THIS WEEK!**  
TALBOT'S LOTTERY AND EXCHANGE OFFICE,  
Lynchburg, May 17th, 1838.  
1 Grand Capital of \$20,000!  
40 Prizes of 500!  
VIRGINIA STATE LOTTERY  
CLASS No. 3, FOR 1838.  
For the Benefit of the Monongahia Academy.  
To be drawn at Alexandria, on Saturday, the 18th May 1838, Drawing received at this Office on Tuesday, the 22d inst. at 12 o'clock, P. M.  
**SPLENDID SCHEME.**  
1 Prize of 30,000 } 40 Prizes of 250  
1 do of 10,000 } 50 do of 250

more, that the rope is main said to him, before the of Pierce's Cabinet reach you one man that will be in H be Mr. Campbell of Penn- er of the Catholic church!" of a bargain with Bishop st such humiliation that the is Fayetteville Observer re-

a most remarkable revela- source which cannot be ques- ot think that Mr. Rayner' act is at all over-strained.— Roman Catholics have been ections and other political years past, led to suspicions tampered with in the Presi- l these suspicions appear to by the fact stated by Mr. man Catholics move togeth- e will of one man, the head of country, the same Archbish- unscrupulous character has exposed in the late contro- ks. There is no other de- United States which moves in ections. There is no other mainly of foreigners. And as why such a strong feeling n has arisen throughout the ey are the reasons also why has taken them by the hand; Administration is constantly ants to confer offices on mem- ination; and why we hear eve- lidate for office, or political ending the Roman Catholics. tism of those good and great such as Gaston and Taney, well of their country.

**NOTES DUE 1ST DAY OF**  
From and after this date all accounts come due twice a year, viz: the 1st of the 1st day of July. All persons made previous to 1st of July, and I please come forward and pay endent on collections and cash sales useful prosecution of our business. spelled to pay for our purchases that we are excused for requiring **GEORGE M. RUCKER & CO.**

beg leave to remind our custom- o, we announced to them that our ue semi annually, i. e., on the 1st of July of each year. In accordance at they will be waited on in a few **PAYNE & CHRISTIAN.**

**OF CONCERN.**  
I having taken the house formerly & N. B. Steptoe, two doors above an's old stand, and next door to Main street, Lynchburg Va., bega ention of his friends, and the public w stock of Groceries, Liquors, &c., in low for cash or in exchange for

land, &c., J L T Holland. 28. Prince Edward, Charlotte, &c., Wm Farmer. 30. Greenville, Brunswick, &c., Wm Williamson.

Vacancies have occurred in the following Dis- tricts, which will be filled on the 20th September next. Applications should be addressed to the 'Chairman of the Faculty.'

District 9. Frederick, Jefferson and Clarke. 17. Madison, Greene, Culpeper, Orange and Rappa- hanock. 20. Caroline, Essex and Spottsylvania.

**DEATH OF DR. AVERETT.**—We briefly an- nounced, in a recent issue, the death of Dr. Averett of Halifax The Southside Democrat gives the following particulars of the melancholy event:

"Dr. A. had gone to his study with a lighted cigar and laid down on a lounge, when probably falling to sleep, his cigar set fire to a thickly wad- ded dressing gown, which Dr. A. had on. He was soon enveloped in flames, and either from suffocation or the inhaling of flame, expired."

**TELEGRAPH LINE TO STAUNTON.**—Messrs C. M. Ottinger & Co., telegraph builders, have been over the route from Richmond to Staunton with the view of ascertaining the practicability of erecting a House Printing telegraph line between the two places. The work has been decided as practicable, and should stocks enough be taken in Staunton and Charlottesville—where there will be offices; it will be commenced.

**VIRGINIAN ARTIST.**—The Fredericksburg News says that Walter Gould, of Virginia, who is now in Florence, stands high among the artists there. It is informed by a naval officer, that du- ring the visit of Commodore Mayor of the U. S. fri- gate Constitution, to the Grand Duke's palace in Florence, he was standing before a picture which he had employed Mr. Gould to copy, for \$100, and mentioned the fact. An Italian Artist standing by, said to him "you could get it copied for \$25, but Mr. Gould will give you a picture well worth a hundred dollars."

**IMPROVEMENT.**—The Petersburg Council have appropriated \$2,500 to improving the fair ground there.

**HARVESTING.**—The Norfolk Herald says, not a drop of ruin has fallen in that region since the 25th ult., and the farmers have a glorious time for harvesting.

Mr. Jesse W. Jones has been chosen Director of the Farmers' Bank, Charlottesville, in the place of Mr. Wickliffe-Hutchinson, resigned.

han let in the United establi-hed. Address H. G. Farrell as a panied with good reference us to character ty. &c. ju

**In this mammon-worshipping age,** find a man place his usefulness to the pub- lic interest. During a late visit to the 'City' we were presented by a professional friend- brated Chemist, DR. J. C. AYER, whose perhaps, more familiar than any other, a of sickness, in this country. Knowing- dented popularity of his medicines, and sale of them, we had expected to find him and rolling in wealth. But no, we found- boratory, busy with his laborers, among- alembics, and retorts—giving his best pe- the compounds, on the virtues of which t- for health. We learned, that notwithsta- business, and its prompt returns in cash- not rich. The reason assigned is, that t- cesty, and he persists in making his prep- pensively, that the nett profit is small.— mer. Phil.

**THE prevalence of incorrect notii** subject of medicine, is a great cause of r- cal practice should be governed by princ- deduced from the contributions of long- close observations. How im- ortant, ther- cine should be taken by invalids, unless i- the hands of men of talent, judgment, a- probity. Hooff's German Bitters, pre- M. Jackson, Philadelphia, is a prepara- from one of the most celebrated practiti- times, and one of the greatest medical w- ever produced. This article is now in ab- dence that the article is prepared carefu- ly, it is producing the effect the original- ed. It is used by many of the leading- Philadelphia in cases of debility of the c- and bilinary apparatus, and the diseases- from. We therefore recommend this r- tering invalids. See advertisement.

**"WAR with all its horrors,"** is a- less an enemy to our race as those fell c- la, Syphilis, Rheumatism, the impruder- ry, and other affections arising from a- pure state of the Blood. CARTER'S SP- is the only remedy which will drive the- esses from the system. Many have l- health, who but for its timely aid, wou- despair. Do not delay, b it try it time.

**SEBASTOPOL NOU TAL**  
S- ply the troops in the Crimea I- country net WOOLEN SOCKS for wh- ket prices will be given. In order to- have determined to sell the who'e of m- Dry Goods, at reduced prices—Need- description, Ribbons, Silks, Mitts, Kid- dered-Muslin, Swiss and Jaconet Co- Lawns, French Corsets, a beautiful art- pair, worth \$3 00. Please give me a- yourselves at JOHN ABR- July 10-ts Cash Di-

**BALL AT the BUFFALO**  
B- The subscriber takes pleasure- his friends, and the public generally, t- for this season will commence on We- inst., and continue four days. He wi- ready at Bethel, on that day, to meet- at 9 o'clock A. M. Fare from Bethel- \$1—Ball Wednesday night \$2, and \$

# 3753

DR. THOMAS HAMLETT AVERETT;  
PHYSICIAN, MASON, LEGISLATOR

by

Kenneth H. Cook

Note to reader:  
(Each page of newsprint has been cut into four parts.  
The article, for the most part, cannot be read page  
by page but must be read by column. Such as, column  
one is continued in column one of the next page. The  
original column is completed in two pages.)

The News and Record  
South Boston, Virginia  
October 6, 1977

# Section D

News & Record, South Boston, Va., October 6, 1977 3D

**Dr. Thomas Ha**

## Physician, Ma

By Kennet

Few Halifax County families have distinguished themselves as have the Averetts. Dr. Thomas Hamlett Averett was a prominent local physician, state and federal legislator. His children carved their individual niches, particularly in the field of education. Sadly, they are virtually unknown in their native county.

Research for this article was accomplished off and on for nearly two years. The finished product, especially as it relates to Dr. Averett himself, seems so little for so much work, but to delay it further at this point seemed unwise.

arises is did Thomas Hamlett Averett actually graduate from medical school? One must assume that he did, since he was thereafter referred to as "doctor." Also, he practiced in the most prominent families, including the Bruces of Berry Hill, and since there were other physicians in the county, one assumes they would not have used the services of a non-graduate.

### MARRIAGE

On January 3, 1822, Dr. Averett was married, in Prince Edward County, to Martha Coleman Wootton (also spelled Wooten). The names of her parents are not known. She was 18 years old.

The ceremony was performed by the Rev. Joel Johns, "a minister of the gospel," after Dr. Averett and Thomas A. Filbert posted bond of \$150. Miss Wootton's guardian, Elisha Jeffress, had given his consent to the marriage on February 5, 1821 in a note to the clerk of Prince Edward County which read:

"Miss Martha C. Wootton has consented to marry Dr. Thomas H. Averett, and I, as her guardian, do give my consent to the same. You may therefore issue a license accordingly."



Thomas Hamlett Averett was born July 20, 1800, near Halifax, a son of William and Elizabeth Hamlett Averett. Following a custom of that time, he was named for his mother's father, Thomas Hamlett.

Little is known of his early life. He had at least one sister, Elizabeth, and two brothers, William and Joseph (to be discussed briefly at the end of his article). The family was of the Baptist faith and always quite active in the church. Young Thomas is said to have attended the "common schools."

c

# Hamlett Averett

# Son, legislator

H. Cook

## SONIC MEMBERSHIP

Averett was an active member of Halifax Hiram Lodge No. 96, which chartered in 1813. He was elected on November 24, 1823, and died February 23, 1824, and buried on May 24, 1824.

June 24, 1824, he was elected lodge secretary. Six months later, on December 27, he was named Senior Warden (term). He was named Junior Warden (acting) on May 1825, and Senior Warden (elected) November 28, 1825. Averett was Worshipful Master of the Lodge from March 26, 1827 to 1839. According to Masonic records, he was active until 1846.

## HALIFAX ACADEMY

In 1836 the Samuel Davies Institute, located at Halifax, was incorporated by the Virginia General Assembly as the Halifax Academy. Eleven trustees were initially named, of whom Dr. Averett was one. It should be noted here that one of Dr. Averett's sons, Joseph James Averett, called "Jim," served as head of the Academy after his father's death. He succeeded whether Lewis and succeeded John Henry Powell

are improving somewhat."

Dr. Thomas Hamlett Averett died June 29, 1855, at his home in Halifax, and was buried in the family square in the town cemetery. He was just 21 days shy of his 55th birthday.

## WILL

The will of Dr. Averett, dated October 11, 1854, with a codicil dated December 16, follows:

Although it seems that our courts and juries are in the habit of making wills for dead people, yet presuming that they will not dare to nullify the law of descents to which I wish to conform so far as the well being of my family, prudence and propriety will justify, I, Thomas H. Averett, do make this my last will and testament.

Clause first. I appoint my long time friend James Young as the executor of this my last will and testament having instructed him to burn that now in his possession.

Clause second. I appoint the said Young trustee for my son Dr. Edmund Berkeley Averett, it being my will that his share in my estate be held in trust to be used and enjoyed at the direction of the said trustee so that the principal shall not be disposed of during the lifetime

Clause fourth. It is my will that the share of my said son shall after his death be disposed of according to his last will and testament if leave any else to descend to his heirs if he have any legally begotten of his own body; if he leaves no such heirs then it is my will that his share shall return to my estate and be disposed of according to the provisions of this my last will and testament.

Clause fifth. I appoint my brother in law Col. Jesse Wootton of the county of Henry in this state trustee for my son William Wootton Averett, with like conditions and provisions as are annexed to the trusteeship of the said Young for my son E. B. Averett. But, if the said Wootton shall fail or refuse to act as trustee as aforesaid it is my wish that another trustee be appointed to act in his stead by Circuit Superior Court of Law & Chancery for this county or by such other court or tribunal as may supercede it in its jurisdiction and functions under such sureties for fidelity as the said court may deem necessary and proper. And I do make the same provisions as to the trusteeship of friend Young in case he shall fail or refuse to act for my son E. B. Averett.

Clause sixth. I direct that

of the town of Lynchburg, holds me charged with about \$55 for sundries furnished my son William after he had attained the age of 21 years, which charge I have repudiated from prudential consideration, it is now my will that the said Rucker be a legatee in my estate to that amount unless the said William shall himself pay it, with interest thereon from 1 October 1852. And I do further direct that the amount of the said debt and interest be a further deduction from the share of the said William W. in my estate.

Clause eighth. I have orally given my son Joseph James Averett my negro girl Jinny, daughter of Taner, which gift I hereby confirm. On account of which gift and on account of the monies which I have expended on him at the University of Virginia I direct that there be deducted from his share in my estate the sum of \$1050.

Clause ninth. I have already given to my daughter Jane Elizabeth and her husband Nathan Penick my negroes Sam, Sedge, his wife Jenny, Sally, daughter of Esther, and Charles, son of Turner, on which account and on account of the amounts expended in the completion of her education in Washington City and for her

birthday, on September 11, 1814, Thomas enlisted in the War of 1812 as a substitute for his father, William Averett, disabled by illness. He entered service at Camp Mimms, near Richmond, served not quite three months and was honorably discharged. His service was that of a drummer boy.

According to application papers he filed years later for a land warrant, he stated that he was the drummer who served in the company commanded by Capt. Isaac Medley, afterward by Lt. Allen P'Pool, in the 4th Virginia Militia Regiment, 2nd Brigade, "in the War with Great Britain, declared by the United States on June 18, 1812." He was discharged December 1, 1814, at Elliott's Mills, Maryland.

The muster roll for Capt. Medley's company states that Thomas H. Averett was taken on September 30, 1814, and was present until October 7, and was one of 66 men, including officers, who marched from the 69th Regiment at Halifax. His service, two months 14 days in duration, netted him \$9 per month, for total pay of \$22.93.

For his service in the War of 1812 he received a land warrant of 160 acres. He appeared before George C. Holt, a Justice of the Peace for Halifax County, on March 19, 1855, to make application, which was approved on May 15, 1855.

#### HIGHER EDUCATION

Following the War of 1812, Thomas completed his secondary education and surely attended college, but it is not known where. Tradition has held that he attended Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia; this is so stated in his entry in the BIOGRAPHICAL DIRECTORY OF THE AMERICAN CONGRESS. However, a search of the records of Jefferson did not turn up his name.

According to the records of the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine at Philadelphia, Thomas did complete the first year of medical school there, 1820-21, but did not graduate. It is not known if he transferred elsewhere.

The Philadelphia College of Medicine conferred an honorary M.D. degree on him in 1850. From the records of that time there is no indication of where or when he received his regular M.D. degree.

Ten children were born to Dr. and Mrs. Averett, all in Halifax County, as follows:

Edmund Berkeley Averett, M.D., born 1823, to be discussed later.

Thomas Hamlett Averett Jr., born August 29, 1824, died July 27, 1826, buried in the Averett Square in Halifax Town Cemetery.

Jessie Wootten Averett, born July 2, 1826, died September 21, 1826, buried in the Averett Square, Halifax.

John Taylor Averett, born December 24, 1827, to be discussed later.

William Wootton Averett, born 1831, to be discussed later.

Joseph James Averett, born 1832, to be discussed later.

Jane Elizabeth Averett, born 1833, to be discussed later.

Martha Bedford Averett, born April 21, 1836, died July 31, 1836, buried in the Averett Square, Halifax.

Samuel Wootton Averett, born March 1, 1838, to be discussed later.

Harriett Maria Averett, born



DR. AVERETT--The inscription on the tombstone of Dr. Thomas Hamlett Averett does not mention his service in the Virginia State Senate or the U. S. House of Representatives; his earned title, "Doctor," isn't even there. Besides his name and dates there is only his Masonic emblem. (Photo and Camera Shop Photo)

#### OTHER LANDS

Dr. Averett owned considerable property in Halifax County. His earliest purchase, in 1822, was lot 32 in the town of Meadville. Other property included several lots in the town of Halifax, a tract of land on the Racetrack road, more than 200 acres on Terrible Creek and 302 acres on the Terry's Bridge Road. In all, he purchased over 1600 acres.

#### MASONIC HALL LOT

Dr. and Mrs. Averett,

B. Carrington, Parham Moon and Henry C. Moon, trustees. The land was "for the use and benefit of the Baptist Church of Christ, called Dan River, and of the congregation assembling with said church to worship at Dan River Meeting House in Halifax County (and for no other use or benefit whatsoever)." The cost was \$1.

#### MEDICAL PRACTICE

Dr. Averett's medical practice was primarily at Halifax Courthouse and in the surrounding county, but he is said to have had patients in

April 26, 1841, died September 17, 1846, buried in the Averett Square, Halifax.

#### HOME IN HALIFAX

Dr. and Mrs. Averett and their family made their home in Halifax on what is present-day Maple Avenue. Their home, a large, white frame structure,

stood on the site now occupied by the Murphy home, next to the home of Mrs. Will Lacy. According to Mrs. R. C. Edmunds and others, the Averett home was demolished when the Murphy home was built.

Dr. Averett purchased the house, "at present occupied by the said Averett," on October 27, 1835, from William H. Clark of Banister Lodge for \$800. The house and lot were allotted to

Thomas G. Coleman and James Young were the owners of the lot on which the Halifax Masonic Lodge was built prior to 1828. On April 28 of that year they sold, for \$3, that "certain lot or piece of ground near the Courthouse ... on which a hall has been erected for the use and accommodation of the Society of Free Masons, designated as the Halifax Hiram Lodge No. 96." No one knows exactly when the handsome Georgian-style Lodge was built.

#### DAN RIVER CHURCH

On July 22, 1843, Dr. Averett, his brother Joseph C. Averett and their wives sold seven-eighths ( $\frac{7}{8}$ ) of an acre, lying "between the roads leading from Halifax Courthouse to Terry's Bridge and Torian's

Charlotte County and in Person County, N. C., as well. Possibly so, since physicians in those days traveled long distances.

In April, 1839, the Court of Halifax County appointed him county physician, "to attend such prisoners in jail as may require medical attention."

Dr. Averett was also physician to the Bruce family at Berry Hill. He was with Ann Bruce, daughter of James Coles and Eliza W. Bruce, almost daily during her last illness. She died January 1, 1845.

Mr. Bruce was spending the winter of 1844-45 in New Orleans and Cuba for his health, leaving Mrs. Bruce alone with their children at Berry Hill. When she was able, nearly a month later, to write to her husband about it, she assured him that Dr.

Two other Halifax physicians remembered Dr. Averett in their wills. Dr. Granville Craddock, in whose home he lived early in his career, left "to William T. Craddock and Thomas Averett all of my medical books, surgical instruments, medicine in hand and shop furniture, to be equally divided between them." His will was dated December 9, 1819, probated August 25, 1829.

Dr. Jeffrey Palmer, in his will dated September 28, 1835, proved November 23, 1835, made bequests to Dr. Averett and his son. "I give unto my friend Dr. Thomas H. Averett, as a small memento, my case of dressing instruments and my case of pocket surgical instruments. Also, I give unto Edmund Berkeley Averett, son of Dr. Thomas H. Averett, my silver watch."

**LEGISLATOR**

Dr. Averett represented Halifax County in both the Virginia and U. S. legislatures. In 1846 he was an unsuccessful candidate for the U. S. House of Representatives. He served in the Virginia State Senate in 1848 and 1849.

He was elected as a Democrat to the 31st and 32nd Congresses, serving from March 4, 1849, to March 3, 1853. During his terms, probably the two most important pieces of legislation were the Compromise of 1850 and the fugitive slave law. He opposed both measures.

He was an unsuccessful candidate for reelection in 1852, and after leaving Congress returned to Halifax to resume his medical practice.

**CENSUS OF 1850**

The Census of 1850, taken December 19, listed Dr. and Mrs. Averett and four of their children--Edmund, Joseph, Jane and Samuel. Real estate owned was valued at \$7000. Overseer, Christopher Avery, age 21, was also listed as a member of the Averett household.

**DEATH**

Dr. Averett's health failed him in his last years, despite his being just in his mid-50s. In a letter to his son John, dated March, 1854, he wrote in an almost illegible hand: "All here are well except my

Clause third. I hereby direct that there be deducted from the share of my said son in my estate the sum of \$1500 on account of the sums which I have expended in the prosecution of his professional studies. I have advanced to him other monies for which however I will not hold him accountable, neither for his board &c. as he has greatly aided me by gratuitous practice in my family and otherwise.

which I expended in the completion of his collegiate education and on account of the property which I have given him since his marriage.

Clause seventh. I direct that there be deducted from the share of my son William W. the sum of \$800 on account of the monies expended by me upon him at Emory and Henry College, at the University of Virginia and otherwise. And as Mr. Ambrose B. Rucker, grocer

my son Samuel Wootton Averett the monies which I have expended for his education thus far and it is my will that his education be completed at my expense either at the University of Virginia or the University of Pennsylvania, but the amounts expended for that purpose be deducted from his share of my estate.

Clause eleventh. I have

(Continued on page 2D)



THE AVERETT SQUARE--in the Halifax condition. The marble plaque bearing the

# 'He was about five fe



THE CHILDREN--of Dr. and Mrs. Averett who died young are buried with their father in the Averett Square in the Halifax Town Cemetery. From left they are Harriet Maria Averett, T. H. Averett Jr. and Jesse

Wootton Averett (same stone), and Martha Bedford Averett. Are these the stones mentioned in the will of Dr. Averett? (Photo and Camera Shop Photo)

(Continued from page 1D)

contracted with Messrs. Kellog & Co. for marble slabs for the graves of such of my children as have died, for a marble frontispiece for an enclosure enclosing the graves of all the Averetts whose remains be buried in the graveyard at Halifax Court House; and have obtained from my neighbor N. H. Poindexter the gift (orally) of a piece of ground at the said graveyard 30 feet long and 24 wide. It is my will that my executor have the same enclosed with a substantial rock wall at least two feet above the surface with a strong iron

wall with spikes to prevent the incursion of intruders, and with an iron gate at the entrance upon plans now in the possession of my said executor who will be pleased to take the proper deed from Mr. Poindexter securing title to the ground.

Written with my own hand at my own residence at Halifax C. H., Virginia, with my seal annexed this 11th day of October 1854.

Thomas H. Averett

A codicil--as I have already

husband Nathan Penick more than their equal proportions of my negroes and other personal property and as they have lands it is my will that they have no shares in my landed property. 16th December 1854.

Thos. H. Averett

The will was presented at court on October 2, 1855, by James Young, but was contested by William W. Averett and Edmund B. Averett; at a continuation on October 4, Joseph J. Averett also opposed it. Since it was not witnessed, several gentlemen were sworn

Averett's handwriting.

The court found that the will was proper, that Dr. Averett was of "sound and disposing mind and memory" and under no undue influence when he wrote it, and ordered it recorded. Bond was set at \$20,000.

### INVENTORY

The following inventory of the personal property of Dr. Averett was taken December 4, 1855, valued at \$13,715.13.

China press, 2 divans, 2 half round tables, 10 cane bottom chairs, rocking chair, parlor

# et eight inches high...'

andirons, pair shovel and tongs, 2 spittons, 2 glass bowls and pitchers, stone pitcher, clock and case, 4 window shades;

Globe lamp, hat rack, side board, writing desk, 16 chairs, rocking chair, large pine table, small pine table, 11 plain tumblers, 12 tumblers, 2 butter pots, cake mould, coffee mill, 2 pitchers and piggins, 3 bottles, pail, bucket, wash pan and noggin, pine table, brass kettle, ice box, bureau, chest, bowl and pitcher, 2 buckets and wash stand and tub;

Looking glass and table, candle stand, 3 window shades, bedstead and furniture, window shade, looking glass, pitcher and wash stand, shovel and poker, old trunk, walnut bureau, wash stand, bowl and pitcher, walnut table and cover, bureau, looking glass, towel rack;

Bed and furniture, walnut stand, bowl and pitcher, looking glass, pair andirons, shovel and tongs, lot of table cloths, lot of table ware, 8 silver tea spoons, 5 silver table spoons, 1/2 dozen silver dessert spoons, 1/2 dozen silver tea spoons, 2 sets common knives and forks, 1 set ivory knives, 2 walnut tables;

Bed, furniture and stead, looking glass, old table, 3 window shades, wardrobe, bedstead and bedding, pair andirons, wardrobe, looking glass, old pitcher, bedstead and furniture, "Congressional Library" (\$525), lot of old pamphlets, set of book shelves, medical journal for 35 years--1 number missing, balance of medical books--84 volumes, misc. library;

Book case, shelves and drawers in physic room, table, bed and stead, Buffalo robe, demijohns, pots and ovens, 2 spinning wheels, old irons, old bedsteads and furniture, lot of agricultural tools, lot of old buckets, 2 pots and racks, buggy and harness, horse cart, ox cart, 15 slaves--\$8400, and piano--\$250.

Total value put on inventory--\$13,715 13

Edmund B. Averett, 127 1/2 acres plus 10 acres; William W. Averett, 167 acres plus 11 acres of woodlands; and Samuel W. Averett, 100 acres plus \$600 from Joseph to make his share equal.

## DIVISION CONTESTED

Following the division two of the Averett children, John T. Averett and Elizabeth Averett Penick (with her husband Nathan Penick), contested the division, claiming an error in that they were not made equal with the four other children. Their father intended to make all his children equal, they said, but that the division had given the others a joint advantage of about \$7000.

John Averett and Jane Penick each received from the estate, including advancements, \$2369 each, they claimed, while their brothers received property valued at \$3619, a difference of \$1250 each.

John T. Averett married Louisa Frances Penick, a daughter of William Penick, while Jane Averett married her brother Nathan Penick. Mr. Penick gave his son and daughter each a tract of land, and it was this land Dr. Averett made reference to in his codicil when he directed that, inasmuch as John T. and Jane were each in possession of land, they should not receive land from his estate. Their lawyers made this statement:

"Dr. Averett did not advance one cent towards the land owned by John T. Averett and Nathan Penick... Surely Dr. Averett did not intend to charge his children with property advanced to them by their father-in-law, William Penick. Dr. Averett did not own a great deal of land and inasmuch as two of his children owned land he no doubt thought it best that his land should not be divided into four lots instead of six, therefore excluded the two owning land from any share of

They asked that the estate be redistributed so as to make John and Jane equal to the other four children. The plaintiffs emphasized they did not want any of the land, but only an equitable amount in other property.

All parties agreed that the assets of the estate were sufficient to pay the debts of Dr. Averett and the cost of administration without having to resort to the sale of the slaves.

The court found in 1858 that there was no error in the order of October, 1855, for the division of the estate of Dr. Averett and overruled the petition of the plaintiffs. The report of the commissioners was also upheld.

Final disposition of the estate was made in September, 1866, when, on the motion of Nathan Penick, it was committed to the hands of the sheriff for administration.

## MRS. AVERETT

Following her husband's death, Mrs. Martha Averett made her home at Halifax and in Danville. She did not remarry.

## 1860 CENSUS

Mrs. Averett was listed in the Halifax County Census of Inhabitants, taken in 1860, as a farmer, age 56. Her real estate was valued at \$4000, personal estate at \$4750, and she owned five slaves.

## MILITARY PENSION

In 1878 Mrs. Averett, then 75 and a resident of Danville, made application for a military pension based on Dr. Averett's service in the War of 1812, under the provisions of the Act of March 9, 1878. The application was filed in Culpeper County, where she was living with the Nathan Penicks (they ran the Culpeper Female Institute there).

W. S. Penick of Alexandria

with the family of Thomas H. Averett and Mrs. Martha C. Averett, for several years prior to the death of Dr. Averett in 1855, they lived together as husband and wife, and that I never heard ought to the contrary, not even a suspicion. That the said Thomas H. Averett was by profession a physician, and practiced in my father's family for a number of years. Later in life he was a member of the U. S. Congress from Virginia..."

Nathan Penick, her son-in-law, stated that he knew Dr. and Mrs. Averett for many years, that he and his wife, Jane E. Penick, were at the house in Halifax County at the time of Dr. Averett's death, and that he was at his bedside when he died and saw him die. He attended the funeral and burial. Mrs. Averett was ill at the time of his death but attended the services anyhow.

She was awarded a pension of \$8 per month, commencing on November 8, 1878.

The most fascinating thing about Mrs. Averett's pension application is her description of her husband, especially since no likeness of him is known to exist:

"He was about five feet eight inches high, brown hair, fair complexion."

## MRS. AVERETT'S DEATH

The exact date of Mrs. Martha Coleman Wootton Averett's death is not known, nor is her place of burial. If she is in the Averett Square in the Halifax Town Cemetery, her grave is not marked.

On January 30, 1896, on motion of Joseph James Averett in Halifax County Court, her estate was committed to the sheriff, C. C. Carrington, for administration.

## THE AVERETT CHILDREN

The six Averett children who lived to adulthood all survived their father. Two are fairly

# Edmund B. Averett also a physician

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four worked together in education most of their adult lives and so will be treated more or less together.

## WILLIAM WOOTTEN AVERETT

The fifth child, born in 1831, he was not listed in the 1850 census, but was most likely at Emory and Henry College. He also studied at the University of Virginia. His profession is not known, though it is assumed he was in education. He is not known to have married, and was living in Alexandria in 1859. His date or place of death are not known.

## DR EDMUND BERKELEY AVERETT

Dr. Averett, the eldest child, was born in 1823, and was listed in the 1850 census as a physician, age 27. Where he studied medicine is not known, but his practice probably was in Halifax. One assumes, because his father in his will appointed a trustee to manage his share of the estate, that he was a spendthrift. In the division of the estate he received 137½ acres plus slaves. He was not married.

Dr. Averett died between September 2, 1857, when his will was written, and April 26, 1858, when it was presented at court.

After the payment of his just debts, his estate was to be equally divided between his brother Samuel W. Averett and his sister Jane Penick. Asking that his books and watch not be sold unless absolutely necessary, he willed all his medical books "to my friend and kinsman, Leander Faulkner," other books to his brother Samuel and his watch to his brother-in-law Nathan Penick.

The estate, bonded for \$4000,

JOSEPH JAMES AVERETT, called "Joe Jim," born in 1832, was like his brother educated at Emory & Henry College. His wife was Rosa Celestia, last name not known; they had one child, a daughter, Emma W. Averett.

He was principal at Halifax Academy in the mid-1850s, but moved to Danville in 1859 to become a teacher at Union Female College. In 1861 he enlisted in the 18th Virginia Regiment, Co. A, C.S.A., and was wounded during the war.

Like other family members he was an active member of the Baptist Church, both in the Dan

River and Roanoke (Pennsylvania) associations. He, too, joined the Roman Eagle Masonic Lodge, on April 2, 1859.

Late in life he returned to Halifax County and lived at Sedge Hill, near Halifax. The fact that his wife was then living in Vance County, North Carolina, leads to the assumption they were separated.

Joseph James Averett was dead by 1897. His burial place is not known.

JANE ELIZABETH AVERETT, born in 1833, was educated in music at home and in Washington, D. C. Her husband, Nathan Penick, whom

she married May 16, 1854, was a teacher. They moved to Danville from Halifax in 1858. Mr. Penick joined Roman Eagle Masonic Lodge on March 19, 1859, and was a captain of artillery in the Civil War. Sometime after the war they operated the Culpeper Female Institute at Culpeper Court House, Virginia.

SAMUEL WOOTTEN AVERETT, youngest of the surviving Averett children, was born March 1, 1838. Educated in home schools, he was graduated from the U. S. Naval Academy in 1859. He was assigned to the

(Continued on page 4D)

## ROANOKE FEMALE COLLEGE,

Danville, Virginia.

S. W. AVERETT,  
*Graduate U. S. Naval Academy,* } Principals.  
JOHN T. AVERETT,

J. T. AVERETT,  
ANCIENT LANGUAGES, ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE, HISTORY, MORAL  
PHILOSOPHY.

S. W. AVERETT,  
MODERN LANGUAGES, MATHEMATICS, NATURAL SCIENCES.

WILLIAM I. JOHNSON,  
MUSIC.

MRS. A. E. JOHNSON.  
DRAWING AND PAINTING.

MISS PATTIE E. AVERETT,  
ASSISTANT IN MUSIC AND ENGLISH.

MISS LIZZIE C. MILLER,  
PREPARATORY DEPARTMENT.

The next Session begins September 2nd, 1874, and ends June 2nd, 1875.

Pupils received at any time during the session, and charged