

BIOGRAPHY OF A. E. FLOYD

Confederate Soldier, Former County Treasurer, Recorder of Fairmont District and Well-Known Citizen.

GUS FLOYD CHAPTER U. D. C. NAMED IN HIS HONOR

(Mr. Floyd died at his home at Fairmont on the night of May 22, 1929, in his 88th year. The following sketch of his life was written several years ago and several years after it was written he voluntarily retired from the office of Recorder of the Fairmont District.)

By Agnes Powell Ashley, former historian of Gus Floyd Chapter U. D. C.

Augustus Evander Floyd, youngest son of Francis and Crissie Williams Floyd, was born March 8, 1842, five miles south of Ashpole Baptist Church, now known as Fairmont Baptist Church. That territory is now embraced in Fairmont Township, Robeson County.

He had six brothers and five sisters. As a boy he lived a happy carefree life. He played, fished, hunted, swam, plowed, or most anything he wanted to do, because he had plenty of servants. His father with several neighbors employed a teacher for their children. In this way he received most of his education. He went to Red Springs High School one session. His father died in 1856, and his slaves were divided among the children. From this time till the close of the Civil War, he owned several slaves.

When he was eighteen years old, he left home and went to Fair Bluff to clerk; also acted as postmaster for several months for his employer, who had gone to the war. (While there he had a sweetheart named "Susie." It was a custom among the soldiers to call their guns by pet names, so when he volunteered July 20, 1861, he called his gun "Susie.") He was also called "The Little Sergeant." He joined the Robeson Rifle Guards Co. D. 8th N. C. Volunteers. In September they were sent to Pocotalogo, S. C. They were ordered in New Bern in March to keep the Yankees from taking it. When they reached Kinston the news reached them that New Bern had already been taken. So they remained at Kinston for a while. Here his Company was re-organized in April and known as C. D. 18th N. C. troops. In May this regiment was ordered to Virginia. On May 27, 1862, he fought his first battle at Hanover court house, where Col. Robert H. Cowan acted very wisely in saving the lives of his men. He flanked them into a pine thicket, where they fought the Yankees for three hours. Only thirty-five of their men were killed.

After that they were organized into the army of Northern Virginia, Robert E. Lee, commander-in-chief; T. J. Jackson's corps, A. P. Hill's division L. O'B. Branch's brigade. Branch's brigade was the first to cross the Chicahominy river to attack McClellan. They fought the Seven-Days battle around Richmond and drove McClellan's army under cover of the gunboats in the James river. Then Jackson's corps went around Pope's army and captured long trains of quartermaster commissary and ordinance stores.

After Longstreet's corps came they fought the second battle of Manassas. From there they went to Cedar Run and fought a battle. Here they heard for the first time the song "Maryland, My Maryland." They forded the Potomac at Leesburg, Va., and marched through Maryland. Jackson's corps was then ordered back to Virginia and captured Harper's Ferry with 12,000 prisoners. This is the place where John Brown captured the U.S. arsenal, after which Gov. Wise took him by surprise and sent him to the happy land of Canaan.

From Harper's Ferry they marched back to Maryland and fought the battle of Sharpsburg, then went into winter quarters on the Rappahannock river. On December 13, 1862, while the ground was covered with snow, Burnside's army crossed this river and attacked them at Fredericksburg and they drove them back. In 1863 the campaign opened at Chancellorsville, Va., better known as the Wilderness. Here Stonewall Jackson was mortally wounded. Then they crossed the Potomac, went through Maryland and Pennsylvania and fought the battle of Gettysburg on the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd of July 1863. On the last day while near the enemy's line, he was wounded in the thigh by a cannister shot. He was hauled on a wagon along with the other wounded soldiers to Staunton, Va. Here they boarded a train and went to a temporary hospital at Lynchburg. After about ten days he was given a furlough home for sixty days.

In the fall he went back to the regiment and they soon went into winter quarters. The following spring he was in various fights and skirmishes on the retreat to Richmond and Petersburg, Va. Arriving at Petersburg about the first of July, 1864, Grant's army drove them out of their fortifications as they were deployed twelve paces apart. Then they fell back to the old Beauregard fortifications around Petersburg and stood their ground till night. Then they retreated across the

Appomattox river by way of Farmville to Appomattox courthouse. On Sunday morning April 9, 1865, they surrendered to General Grant. The Yankees gave them food on the afternoon of the 10th, having had nothing to eat since the 1st except a cup of meal and a slice of meat on the 5th. They fried the meat and put the meal in grease and made mush.

From Appomattox he and five other soldiers hiked home. They fared sumptuously every day at the hands of the good women by the wayside. After he came home he farmed. He joined the Ku Klux Klan in 1868, which organization did much good at that time. In the spring of 1870 he joined the Baptist church. He married Adelia Malvina Pittman September 15, 1870. To them were born twelve children. Eight of them are now living: two daughters - Christine and Dinabel, and six sons - Frank, Marcus, Patrick, Dudley, Fulton and Giles. Three of the children died in infancy and one son, Augustus, died April 1912, leaving one daughter, Pauline. They lived on a farm and he taught school in the winter for several years. His pupils testify to this day that he did not believe in sparing the rod and spoiling the child.

He was elected county treasurer of Robeson in 1879 and served two years. (Since 1895 he has been justice of the peace.) He moved his family to Fairmont in 1910. His wife died May 3, 1913. He was elected judge of the recorder's court June 1, 1913, and has held this office ever since. Mrs. Sallie Ussery Weill became his second wife December 7, 1918.

On the 22nd of February, 1922 thirty women in Fairmont organized the Gus Floyd Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, which they named in his honor. About a month afterward he celebrated his eightieth birthday.