



Journal

February 2015

Dear Aiken County Historical Society Member:

Thanks to Hallie Holland for speaking at our last meeting on the Pine Lawn Cemetery. It was great having him there and the other members of the Pine Lawn Cemetery Board. The historical marker we erected is located along Hampton Avenue in front of the Pine Lawn Cemetery. Please ride by and take a look at our 21st historical marker.

Speaking of historical markers, the ACHS has just applied for our next marker. The next one "in our sights" is for Banksia, the former Winter Colony home built in 1931 that is now the home of the Aiken County Historical Museum. If all goes well the marker should be ready by September or October- just in time for our Fall general meeting.

Thanks to all who have paid their 2015 membership dues. Without your support we could not continue our mission of preserving and documenting history in Aiken County. There is membership for in the Journal if you or a friend needs one.

On February 20th and 21st the annual State antique bottle show will be held near Columbia. If you are interested just give me a call at 649-6050 for directions and details.

Another annual event coming up will be the Battle of Aiken - the 150th anniversary edition. It will be held on February 20, 21, and 22. They do a great job with the reenactment each year. Hopefully they will have good weather.

I have to mention the recent passing of one our most dedicated members - Mrs. Helen Lide. She and her husband always came to our meetings no matter who was speaking or what the subject was. She will be greatly missed.

Finally, please make plans to come and hear Don Bozeman discuss his book about Eulalie Salley entitled "Blackberries in the Summer - Eulalie Salley and the Aiken Winter Colony." Don will have that book and his others ("Cassiopeia: Flight from Savannah" and "The Spelling Bee") for purchase after his talk. A reception will follow Don's talk.

Thank you for your support. I hope to see you on the 22nd.

Allen Riddick
President
Aiken County Historical Society

Excerpts from “Blackberries in the Summer - Eulalie Salley and the Aiken Winter Colony” by Don Bozeman

Ch.13 - The Tillman Affair

Julian Salley’s life was delineated by his own self-imposed regimens. He arose at dawn, had breakfast while consuming the local news, and left for his office by nine. He came home for lunch at one and was back in his office by two. At five he would have supper, returning to his office by eight. He would arrive back home again by ten and promptly retire.

During her long confinement with Julian, Eulalie embraced her husband’s routine of reading the newspaper every morning. In December 1909, while browsing through the legal section, she was drawn to an article that made her blood run cold. It described the heart-wrenching saga of a young woman fighting for the return of her children. The two children had been taken from her and given to her husband’s parents. That evening, when Julian came home for supper, Eulalie thrust the story of Lucy Tillman in his face and asked heatedly,

“Did you see this article this morning?”

Julian took the paper and scanned the article briefly.

“Why yeah, I saw it. What about it?”

Eulalie’s voice rose an octave or two in her response.

“Julian Salley, you mean to say you think it’s all right for a woman’s children to be taken away from her?”

Julian’s response was a clinically legal view—not exactly the one that Eulalie was expecting.

“If a law is on the books, it should be enforced. Woman is subject to man.”

The steam coming from Eulalie’s ears was almost visible. She couldn’t believe the man she married was such a Neanderthal when it came to women. Their heated back and forth was interrupted by a knock at the kitchen door. It was the maid from the neighboring family.

“Come in Vidalia. What can I do for you?” Eulalie said in a calmer voice.

“Miss Alice, she say dat ever since yore banty rooster’s been coming over into our yard, all the eggs done got smaller. She say y’all needs to keep that rooster to home.”

Eulalie listened intently. When Vidalia finished she said,

“Vidalia, you go tell your mistress that those eggs belong to me, and she must send them to me at once.”

Julian, jaw agape, stared at his wife.

“Whatever are you talking about?” he asked.

“I’ll tell you what I’m talking about. If Lucy Tillman’s children belong solely to the father, then the eggs laid by those hens belong to the rooster.”

“Well, I’ll be damned,” Julian grinned. The rooster had won the case for her.

Lucy Dugas was the granddaughter of Francis and Lucy Pickens of Edgefield. Pickens was governor of South Carolina during the Civil War. Prior to that, he was ambassador to Russia where his wife became the darling of the Czar’s court. The Czar showered her with gifts of jewelry and insisted that he and the Czarina become godparents to her daughter, who was affectionately called Douschka (Russian for darling). The Pickens returned to America when war became imminent. Francis was elected governor. They were witness to the shelling of Fort Sumter from the balcony of a home on The Battery in Charleston. Lucy was his beautiful and prominent first lady. She was lionized by the southern press for her efforts in support of the war. Hers was the only female likeness to ever grace a confederate bank note.

“Blackberries” continued

In the waning years of the old century, the governor’s granddaughter, Lucy Dugas, married the son of United States Senator Benjamin R. Tillman of Edgefield, South Carolina. B. R. Tillman, Jr. was reputed to be an alcoholic, a womanizer, and abusive to his wife. Tillman, Sr. arranged a patronage job for his son, and the family moved to Washington. The change of scenery did not bring a corresponding change in the character of young Tillman.

Both the Pickens and the Tillmans were prominent families in Edgefield. Each had generous land holdings and each was politically powerful. The Pickens were viewed as educated and cultured members of the highest level of southern society. The Tillmans on the other hand were seen by the gentry as boorish, redneck, holdovers from the pre-war era. The senator’s reputation as a “woolhat” during Reconstruction gave him political credibility among the common people of the state. He supported General Wade Hampton’s “Redshirts” and was present at the Hamburg riots where he vowed to kill as many blacks as possible. He became a demagogue of the first order and earned his nickname, Pitchfork Ben Tillman, by promising to go to Washington and stick a pitchfork into the rump of President Grover Cleveland.

An strong undercurrent of animosity ran between the families. When Lucy announced her intention to marry B. R., that seething resentment rose to the surface. Lucy’s parents made every effort to dissuade her from marrying into the Tillman family, but to no avail. The wedding took place, and the feared marital difficulties began almost immediately. The Tillman enmity toward the Pickens surfaced. The senior Tillmans were dismissive of Lucy. They thought she brought the Pickens family prejudices to the marriage. The easily swayed B. R., Jr. soon came to view his wife in the same manner. It was a witch’s brew that, together with B. R.’s character flaws, would bubble until it erupted and destroyed the young family.

Shortly after the family moved to Washington, Lucy became pregnant with their third child, which she lost in a miscarriage. She was hospitalized and then bedridden for several weeks. Upon returning home, she asked for her girls, Douschka and Sarah.

“They ain’t here,” B. R. said. “They went home to Edgefield with Ma.”

“B. R., why? You knew I was coming home today. Why aren’t they here?”

“They won’t be coming home again, Lucy. They’ve been given to my folks by the court.”

Lucy slumped back in her bed, dumbfounded.

“What do you mean?” she demanded.

“They ain’t here,” B. R. said. “They went home to Edgefield with Ma.”

“B. R., why? You knew I was coming home today. Why aren’t they here?”

“They won’t be coming home again, Lucy. They’ve been given to my folks by the court.”

Lucy slumped back in her bed, dumbfounded.

“What do you mean?” she demanded.

“The courts have ruled you unfit to be their mother and have given custody to my parents.” Lucy fought back the rage and the tears. She wanted to remain calm and in control.

“No! That’s not possible! I’m their mother! They belong to me! They can’t do that!”

“I’m afraid they can Lucy. And they have,” he said. “South Carolina law gives the husband total and complete control of his family. I could have taken them myself, but I thought Ma and Pa were in better shape to raise them.”

As her husband left the room Lucy fell into a fit of uncontrolled sobbing. The next day she moved to the home of a



“Blackberries” continued

cousin in Washington. She needed time to think and to seek advice on what course of action to take. Senator Ben Tillman retained lawyers who interpreted the South Carolina statutes to his benefit, and his powerful allies on the state court upheld him. Alva Depass, representing Lucy Tillman, argued that the intent of the legislation creating the law was limited to the father’s right only in determining the custody of his children in the event of his death. On the court’s interpretation of this point hung the fate of Dousckha and Sarah Tillman. Lucy moved to Columbia and lived with a relative, Dr. Francis Pickens Carter, throughout the trial proceedings.

For three years the debate raged back and forth—from Edgefield, to Washington, to Columbia—and then back again, as the children remained with their grandmother. Senator Tillman, as the respondent to Lucy Tillman’s petition for redress by the South Carolina Supreme Court, brought to bear all his powers as a political force. His lawyers maintained that Lucy would likely remarry and take the children away, thereby depriving the Tillmans of their parental rights. His son, having deeded the children to his parents, took a passive role in the proceedings. On February 13, 1910, the court rendered its decision—the children must be returned to their mother. This was a bold move by a court beholden to the Democratic Party in South Carolina, especially in light of Ben Tillman’s status in the party. On the other hand, it was a legal recognition of the age-old right of a mother when it came to her children.

One other factor weighing heavily on the minds of those black-robed justices must have been the hornet’s nest of opposition created by the brazenness of the Tillmans. From Kankakee to Key West there was near universal condemnation of the Tillmans. Newspaper editorials and opinion pieces across the nation were scathing in their denunciation of the Tillman’s actions.

A second but more far reaching outcome of the case was its profound influence on the suffrage movement in the United States. It is no coincidence that just ten short years after Lucy Tillman won her children back, American women won the right to vote. The nineteenth amendment to the constitution was ratified in 1920. It is also no coincidence that a major force in the drive to suffrage was Aiken’s own Eulalie Salley who had been so moved by the plight of her neighbor from Edgefield. The seeds of indignation and outrage sown by the Tillman episode took root in her conscience. In time they would blossom into a passion for justice that knew few bounds.



Eulalie vowed that she would not stand idly by and see women’s rights trampled anymore. She saw an advertisement in the Columbia, S.C. paper.

“Membership in the Equal Suffrage League. One dollar.”

She sent her dollar in for membership. She would later say that, “it was the best dollar I ever spent.” She immediately became involved in local efforts to enroll women in the movement and to petition the state legislature to approve an amendment to the U.S. Constitution allowing women to vote. Her involvement included raising funds for the various campaigns, funds she could ill afford from her own pocket. She joined in bake sales and other functions to raise money, but there still was not enough. If she was

going to play a major role in the movement she would need to earn her own money.

Eulalie cajoled Julian into bringing law books home for her to read. Her ulterior motive was to find something in South Carolina law that would prevent more Tillman sagas. She began to think she might try to become a lawyer herself but gave up that idea as unworkable. She couldn’t stand the idea of wading through those musty old tomes for the rest of her life. But she had to do something to earn money.

Ch.14 - Into the Fray

Eulalie, frustrated by Julian’s preoccupation with his law business and unwilling to enter it herself, began to consider other avenues to expand her own personal horizons and to earn money for the suffrage movement. The pointless social activities engaged in by most of her contemporaries held no appeal for her. Through Julian’s business affairs, she began to interact with many of the winter visitors to Aiken. She realized that most of his clients had neither the inclination nor the time required to navigate through the multitude of details required to purchase or build a home—especially from hundreds of miles away. She began to formulate a plan.

“Blackberries” continued

“Julian, what do you think about me starting a business of my own?”

Julian dropped the paper he was reading onto the breakfast table and stared at his wife in amazement.

“I think it’s the most darn fool idea I’ve ever heard. What kind of business do you think you can get into? The only women I know who work are teachers, nurses, secretaries or maids. I don’t reckon you qualify for the first three and I don’t expect you want to take on that last one. Don’t you have enough going on here at home with your mother and sister and the children to keep you busy. If you’re bored I’m sure the folks over at St. Thaddeus could use some help with their charity work.”

“You don’t understand a thing about me and how I feel, do you Julian Salley? How would you like to sit here every day listening to the idle chatter of women who have no concept of life outside the four walls of their homes? I imagine it would drive you insane. Well I’m no different. There’s only so much I can stand of it, and I aim to do something about it.”

Julian had been married to Eulalie long enough to recognize when discretion was the better part of valor. He wasn’t about to pick a battle with her over something he knew would blow over in a few days anyway. He decided to hear her out and bide his time.

“Exactly what kind of business do you have in mind?” he asked, being careful to take the condescending edge off his voice.

“I’m not sure,” she said. “I’ve been looking into the possibility of getting into real estate or insurance or something like that. I’ve noticed that you are getting more involved with people from up north coming here to buy property. I think I could help with that.”

“Eulalie, there are half-a-dozen very capable men who seem to be handling the real estate business in town quite well. I don’t think they would take kindly to your trying to horn in on their business.”

That last statement really got Eulalie’s dander up. She fixed Julian with a penetrating stare that said, “Don’t mess with me, Julian Salley. I’m going to do what I want to do.”

“I don’t give a fig what those men think,” she shot back, coming as close to swearing as she was capable. “It’s women who make the final decisions on most house purchases anyway. Who’s out there that understands the women’s side of things. I can tell you. No one. Do you think George Mathers has any idea what a woman looks for in a house? No! She wants to know where it’s located; where the schools are; what the neighbors are like; the style of the house; what kind of furniture goes well in it. Why, there are a hundred things they’d like to know that old George never thinks about, and I know I’m better suited to give it to them than he is.”

Julian raised his palms toward Eulalie in surrender, signaling defeat.

“Very well, my dear. I will not stand in your way. But don’t come back to me in a few days complaining about the cruel world out there.”

At eight o’clock on Monday morning, Eulalie Salley walked through the door of the licensing office in the Aiken municipal building, after having to maneuver around the portly chief of police who was leaning against the door-frame.

“Mrs. Busch,” she said, “I want you to read me a list of all the licenses that are available.”

The clerk looked at the thirty-one year old wife of the mayor in puzzlement but did as she was asked.

“Attorney, barber, general merchandise, insurance, physician, real estate...”

“Stop right there,” Eulalie said. “I’ll take a real estate license and an insurance license.”

“For you?” Sarah Busch asked.

“Blackberries” continued

“Yes. I can do twice as well as the people that have been showing me houses. It’s a woman’s job to sell women houses. How much will that be?”

“Twenty-five dollars,” Mrs. Busch said.

Meanwhile, the police chief was taking this improbable little vignette in with a broad grin on his face.

“It’s nothing but a joke—let’s just give them to her,” he said. Eulalie left the office a licensed real estate agent and a licensed insurance agent and with all her money intact.

“Well Julian, I did it,” she announced when he came home for lunch.

“What did you do?” he asked.

“I went down and got my licenses for real estate and insurance this morning.”

“I’ll be damned,” he said. “I didn’t think you’d go through with it. I tell you what. I’ll bet you a hundred dollars that you can’t earn a hundred dollars in commissions during the first six months.”

“You’re on,” she said.

Eulalie marched back down Laurens Street to the selfsame building housing Julian’s law offices and rented one for herself. She installed a telephone, hired a secretary and bought furniture on credit. She was in business, owed money, and didn’t have any customers.

“Everyone in town thinks I have lost my mind,” she said. “One of my cousins said, ‘Julian knows he can’t stop her, so he’s just giving her her head.’ They all think I will fail. But I’ll show them.”

2015 ACHS MEMBERSHIP FORM

DUES ARE NOW BEING ACCEPTED.

Anyone wishing to join the Aiken County Historical Society is cordially invited to do so.

Please complete the application below and mail it with your dues to:

Aiken County Historical Society
P.O. Box 1775
Aiken, SC 29802

Patron:	\$25	Benefactor:	\$500
Corporate:	\$50	Life:	\$1000
Donor:	\$100		

Name: _____ Membership Type: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____ Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

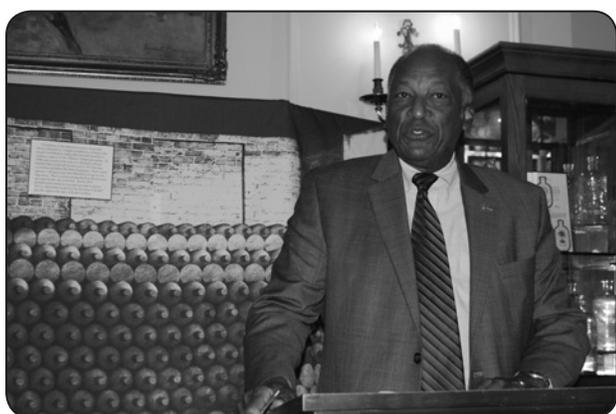
One Time Donation: \$ _____

The one time donation is for those members who have already paid their dues, but would like to contribute directly toward our Historical Marker Fund. We also encourage others who may not want to become an ACHS member, but would like to make a contribution to our organization.

Aiken County Historical Society September 2014 Meeting



The Pine Lawn Cemetery Board with the historical marker.



Featured speaker Hallie Holland.



The crowd.



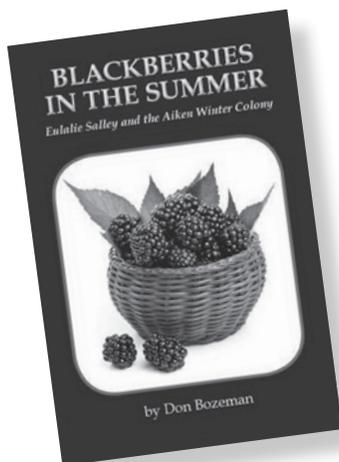
ACHS Treasurer Michael Norton tightens down the Pine Lawn Cemetery historical marker to the post while Channel 26 sets up for an interview. Mattie C. Tolliver stands on the hill taking in everything.



ACHS Board Member Colleen Reed works the reception.

Aiken County Historical Society
P.O. Box 1775
Aiken, South Carolina 29802-1775

Visit <http://www.aikencountyhistoricalsociety.org>



AIKEN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
WINTER GENERAL MEETING
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2015
3:00 PM
AIKEN COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM



Don Bozeman will discuss his book about Eulalie Salley entitled "Blackberries in the Summer - Eulalie Salley and the Aiken Winter Colony." Don will have that book and his others ("Cassiopeia: Flight from Savannah" and "The Spelling Bee") for purchase after his talk.

A reception will follow.