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Retrospect

News from the Louise Pettus Archives and Special Collections at Winthrop University

July 2016

Volume 12, Number 2



Cryptology at Winthrop

By Anna Lee, Special Project Archivist

In the fall of 1942, a class in cryptology, which is the study of codes and how to write and solve them, was proposed to the curriculum committee at Winthrop College. This course would be a class for seniors and those graduating before their senior year. The course was described as a national defense training course offered so the general college student could become useful to the Signal Corps. The course would have elements of coding, decoding, and a standard type of cycles. There were no formal prerequisites for the course which would be taught in the math department. The class began in the spring of 1943 with 34 enrollees and was taught by Dr. Ruth Stokes. It continued to be taught until the spring of 1945.



According to Dr. Stokes, 33 out of the 34 girls were offered employment with the Signal Corps. The class was never officially listed in the course catalogs, and there was no class roll. It has been suggested that a total of 60 to 100 girls went through the class while at Winthrop, but due to the secretiveness of the class, a total is not known.

Winthrop College was one of the few colleges in the country to teach cryptology. Dr. Ruth Stokes was very influential in getting the class started and teaching the class. She understood that women would be needed to help the war effort and that Winthrop could provide the women for these jobs. The women from Winthrop that worked in cryptology came from varying backgrounds and majored in subjects that included high math and language skills. It is unfortunate that, due to the secrecy behind their work, many of the women never spoke about what they did, and it is only in their obituaries that one finds out that they were involved in cryptology.

Louise Pettus (Class of 1946), the Archives' dear friend, benefactor, and namesake, put forth the idea that Winthrop alumnae serving as cryptologists would make a good research project. The Pettus Archives began the project in the Fall of 2015 to identify and chronicle the efforts of the Winthrop alumnae who worked in the field of cryptology during World War II. When the first phase of the project is completed in August 2016, a Digital Commons page will be unveiled to host the initial findings and oral history interviews. To find Digital Commons, the content management system for the Pettus Archives, simply go to the Archives [homepage](#) and click on the yellow button that reads Digital Commons or click [here](#). This will take you to the Archives content currently available.

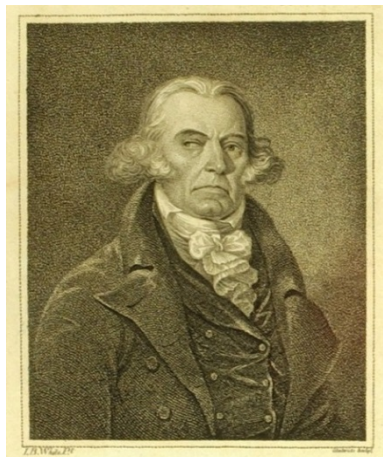
The Archives is seeking information and documentation to add to the growing knowledge and interesting stories as well as identification of other alumnae who participated. We are also in need of funds to assist with phase two of the project. Anyone having information or who is interested in contributing to the continuation of the project, please contact Gina Price White, Director of Archives at whitegp@winthrop.edu or 803-323-2334.



Rare Book Collection Spotlight

By Andrew Johnston, Asst. Dir. Of Archives and Special Collections

David Ramsay: Physician and Historian



David Ramsay was a physician and historian, born on April 2, 1749 in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania to an Irish emigrant. He graduated from Princeton in 1765 and earned his medical degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1773, settling in Charleston to practice medicine. He married 3 times, his third wife being Martha Laurens. During the Revolution, Ramsay was a member of the S.C Legislature (1776-1783), served with the Fourth South Carolina continental Regiment (Artillery) as a field surgeon, and was imprisoned in St. Augustine until he was exchanged. Ramsay also served in the Continental Congress (1782-1786) including serving as chairman in the absence of John Hancock (1785-1786) and served 3 terms in the S.C. State Senate in the 1790s. Ramsay was assassinated by a man whom he had examined and deemed deranged advising that it would be “dangerous to let him go at

large.” However, after a time, the man was released and on May 6, 1815 Ramsay was shot by him twice on Broad Street in Charleston. Before he died, he asked all present to bear witness that he considered the man a lunatic and was free from guilt. Ramsay died on May 8, 1815.

Ramsay is best known as an author and historian, being one of the first to write a history of the American Revolution. In 1785, he published a two volume history of the Revolution in South Carolina, which was the first to receive a copyright in the United States. He wrote the first national history of the conflict when he published his two volume work titled, *The History of the American Revolution* in 1789. Dr. Ramsay’s works on the American Revolution offers a rare perspective as a participant during the conflict and, as such, the reader is able to read a firsthand account of the events through the eyes of a historian. Over the next 25 years he published numerous works of history, medicine, and biography.

The Pettus Archives holds *The History of the Revolution of South-Carolina: From a British Province to an Independent State* [2 vols. 1785]; *The History of the American Revolution* [2 vols. 1791 and 2 vols. 1793]; *The Life of George Washington* [1807 and 1811]; *The History of South-Carolina, from its First Settlement in 1670 to the year 1808* [2 vols. 1809]; *Memoirs of the Life of Martha Laurens Ramsay*, edited by Davis Ramsay [1812]; and *The History of the United States: From Their Settlement as English Colonies in 1607 to the year 1808* [3 vols. 1818].

For more information on the The Rare Book Collection, contact Andrew Johnston, Asst. Director of Archives and Special Collections at (803) 323-2334 or archives@winthrop.edu.



The Louise Pettus Archives is now on Facebook. If you are on Facebook please search for us under, Louise Pettus Archives and Special Collections at Winthrop University, and then like and follow our page. Please suggest our page to any friends or family who you think might find it of interest. If there is anything you would like to see on the Facebook page, we would love the input. We hope to be joining other social media outlets very soon and will let you know when we do.

Contact Brittany Pigford at archives@winthrop.edu for more information.

Quote of the Quarter

In a speech given at Winthrop College in June of 1922, Mary Elizabeth Frayser, Director of Extension and Mill Work at Winthrop said pertaining to women gaining the right to vote and their fight for equal rights:



“We women—the new rights which have come to us sound as if all the world were ours. Not so, tradition and the prevailing opinion are against our exercising many of them. Those that our male contingents have conceded, other than voting privilege are like all-day suckers, given us to keep us happy.” –Mary E. Frayser, June, 1922

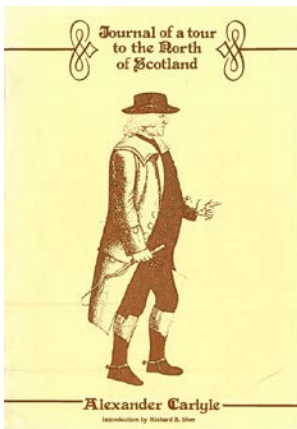
For more information concerning the *Quote of the Quarter* please contact Gina White at (803) 323-2334 or whitegp@winthrop.edu.



New Collection Spotlight

By Kaitlin Burdette, Archivist

New to our manuscript collection is Alexander Carlyle’s *Journal of a Tour of the North of Scotland*. In the publication, Carlyle chronicles his observations of the people and places he meets as he journeys in the North of Scotland in 1765. The journal entries are typically short and descriptive of the physical landmarks on his tour; however, some aspects of Carlyle’s personal viewpoints come through in his writing. As a minister in the Church of Scotland, Alexander Carlyle became a proponent of the “Moderate” party who believed in being well-educated and free-thinking without being overzealous or intolerant. These philosophies are evidenced in the excerpt below:



“Nature and scanty means have made them ugly – and as if that were not enough they have disfigured them [selves] more with superstition – to smile they seem to think beneath the gravity that becomes a Christian – How much to be condemned are those Clergymen who for the sake of their own popularity cherish such unhappy notions in the minds of the people.” – Alexander Carlyle, *Journal of a Tour of the North of Scotland*

The *Journal of a Tour of the North of Scotland* is a wonderful collection that provides us with a unique illustration of Scotland in the mid-1700s and the man who traveled there. Please come by the Louise Pettus Archives to view this interesting collection.

For more information, contact Kaitlin Burdette, Archivist at (803) 323-2334 or archives@winthrop.edu.



A College, A Coat, and A Queen



Did you know that Winthrop has a Coat of Arms? The Coat of Arms symbolizes Winthrop's commitment to academic excellence and its distinction from other universities. The process of acquiring our Coat of Arms was much more difficult than one might think. It took six years and had to be approved by the Queen of England, Elizabeth II.

It all started in 1974 when Winthrop President Charles Vail wanted a different symbol for Winthrop other than the seal that was currently being used. The seal at the time featured only a female figure and he wanted something to better represent our institution that was now fully coeducational.

There is only one place in the world that is acknowledged as being able to issue coats of arms and that is London's College of Arms. A governor is the only U.S. official that can request a coat of arms from the College of Arms, so in 1975 Governor James B. Edwards did so, on Winthrop's behalf. The Queen of England then had to approve the petition for the coat of arms. Once approved Mr. John P Brooke-Little, registrar of the College of Arms, was assigned to the project of coming to Winthrop, doing research and speaking to the Winthrop Community in order to create a coat of arms that best represented our institution. Finally in 1980, after many revisions, a coat of arms was created that all of Winthrop agreed upon and could be proud of. The Coat was presented in an official ceremony with Mr. Brooke-Little, pictured above with President Vail, presenting the new Coat to Winthrop. At the time, Winthrop was one of only five institutions of higher education with a coat of arms.

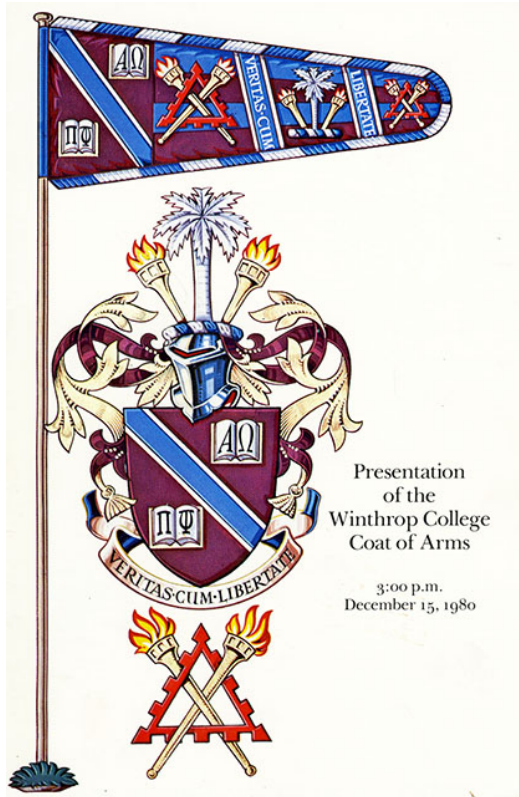


News Flash from Winthrop's Past

By Charlene Drummond, Archivist

In 1974 Winthrop began the process to obtain a Coat of Arms from the monarch of Great Britain. That goal was achieved six years later when the Registrar of the College of Arms presented it to the school. Following are excerpts from an article by Sue Anne Pressley that appeared in the *Charlotte Observer* on December 11, 1980.

Winthrop College Wins Symbol of Pride



Presentation
of the
Winthrop College
Coat of Arms

3:00 p.m.
December 15, 1980

Problems arose, of course, when Winthrop College began its determined campaign six years ago to get an official coat of arms from the queen of England. One problem was the matter of petitioning Queen Elizabeth to grant the Rock Hill college that rare designation.

Winthrop's assistant public affairs director Margaret Epperheim stated "not everyone has a coat of arms. The queen deemed us worthy". Another problem was that nobody at the College of Arms in London could visualize a palmetto, the official S.C. tree, which Winthrop officials agreed would have to be included on any meaningful symbol of the state-supported college.

"When they first drew up our coat of arms, the palmetto was distorted in size," said Winthrop President Charles Vail. "The fact that it didn't even look like a palmetto tree was one problem. They didn't even know what a palmetto was.... It was difficult to negotiate long distance."

Finally the palmetto was drawn to correct proportions, the school colors of garnet and gold placed across the shield, and the words "Veritas cum Libertate" (Truth with Liberty) curved around the bottom.

And now Winthrop's coat of arms is ready to be unveiled at a 3:00 pm ceremony Monday December 15 (1980) that will feature Gov. Dick Riley and John Brook-Little, registrar of the College of Arms and a great deal of pageantry. Everything appears ready. Then one question remains what does it all mean? "Perhaps the best way to approach the coat arms question", said Vail, "is to accept it as a symbol."

"Don't look at it as just a colorful emblem drawn on thick sheepskin and presented in an atmosphere of academic regalia. See it as a symbol of pride and identity and spirit that eventually will be incorporated on the college's stationary and diplomas and official invitations. We want the coat of arms to be of great importance" said Vail. "We've come through some pretty tough times over the past few years (specifically, coeducation in 1974) and now the college is back to strength and identity equal to anything in the past, but not departing from the spirit of the past. The coat of arms shows again that we hold a very high position in higher education. It's a reflection of that and a commitment to it."

A Winthrop spokesman said Winthrop College will be the only one in South Carolina with a coat of arms.

For more information on the Winthrop newspaper files in the Archives contact Charlene Drummond, Archivist at archives@winthrop.edu.



Recently Processed Collections

Dr. Ross A. Webb Papers Available for Research in August

By Steve Blankenship, Archives Graduate Student Intern



The Ross A. Webb papers (Accession 1135), is a collection describing the history of Winthrop College and its relationship to the surrounding community. Dr. Ross A. Webb, a native of Nova Scotia, Canada, earned a bachelor's degree in history from Acadia University in Nova Scotia and master's and doctoral degrees from the University of Pittsburgh. He joined the Winthrop Department of History faculty in 1967, serving the university in a variety of capacities, including vice president for academic affairs and chair of the history and geography departments. Until his death in 2004, Dr. Webb was also an ordained Episcopal minister.

In 1984, The Winthrop Board of Trustees authorized an official college history in anticipation of its centennial celebration. In 2002, Dr. Webb, a Winthrop Professor Emeritus and University Historian, completed this 284-page history titled *A Torch is Passed* from a collection supported by 38,500 resource pieces and 68 books.

One of Dr. Webb's many contributions to Winthrop was to secure the University a Coat of Arms. Few universities have such a distinction as Winthrop. Symbolic of the college's commitment to excellence, it was researched, produced, and registered by the College of Arms under the direction of the Queen of England. On December 15, 1980, Dr. Webb planned the elaborate convocation for the presentation of the Coat of Arms, personally delivered by Ulster's King of Arms, J. P. Brooke-Little. Among the numerous topics within the collection's files include, in addition to Winthrop history, research on Kentucky native, politician and lawyer Benjamin Helm Bristow. Dr. Webb published a book on him titled *Benjamin Helm Bristow: Border State Politician* in 1969. In addition, The Ross A. Webb collection is a wealth of resource materials that include rare documents, photographs, class notes, and outlines for the history classes taught by Dr. Webb.

Betty Buff Papers Now Available for Research

By Carson Cope, Archives Graduate Student Intern



The Betty Buff Papers (Accession 1009) are now available for research. Please see the finding aid for the collection in Digital Commons by going to the Archives [homepage](#) and click on the yellow button that reads Digital Commons, then search for Betty Buff or by clicking [here](#) to see the entry.

Betty Buff is a South Carolina, national and international club woman and activist. She has worked extensively in organizations that are geared towards improving the lives of rural farm women and encouraging the active role of women in farming. Mrs. Buff has served in the National Extension Homemaker's Council, the South Carolina Extension Homemaker's Council, the National Master Farm Homemaker's Guild, the Associated Country Women of the World, and the Country Women's Council just to name a few. She also helped create the National Volunteer Outreach Network in order to connect the Country Women's Council and Associated Country Women of the World member societies. Since 1982, Mrs. Buff has represented Clemson University as a member of the Council of Agriculture, Research, Extension, and Teaching. She has met with U.S. representatives and senators in support of national legislation, policy, and funding to benefit the Clemson land grant system. She received the Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award for 30 years of service as a Clemson Extension Service volunteer. The Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award is given in recognition of the recipient's excellence in maintaining high

ideals of living and genuine service to others. Mrs. Buff has truly lived a full life and has contributed significantly to improving the role of women in farming through her efforts in the above organizations. Her papers provide researchers insight into both the organizations she served in as well as her own personal contributions to each of these organizations. Researchers will find handbooks, histories, conference materials, meeting materials, and letters of correspondence in this collection of her papers. This collection is invaluable to anyone studying women's history particularly the dynamic role that women have played in agriculture and farming.

For more information concerning the Pettus Archives Collections contact the archives at (803) 323-2334 or archives@winthrop.edu.



Current Exhibitions

By Gina Price White, Dir., Archives and Special Collections

Their World at Their Time: Books of the Past

Astrophysicist Neil deGrasse Tyson has written that “Half of my library are old books because I like seeing how people thought about their world at their time.” The Pettus Archives new exhibit showcases some of our “old books” that give us insight into the people who wrote them and the time in which they lived.



Oliver Goldsmith [1728-1774] was a British novelist, playwright and poet who after neglecting his medical studies in Edinburgh, left school to travel to London where he, among other odd jobs, became a freelance writer. He succeeded due to his readable style and believable characters. On exhibit is a 1791 copy of his *The Vicar of Wakefield: A Tale*.

Most South Carolinians have heard of the brutal Col. Banastre Tarleton who wreaked havoc in the state during the American Revolution. Known in South Carolina as the “Butcher” and “The Green Dragoon”, Tarleton has been vilified by generations of the state's citizens. However, a reader gets a quite different account of his war experiences in his *A History of the Campaigns of 1780 and 1781, In the Southern Provinces of North America*. He portrays himself and his actions in the Carolinas very favorably and even questions some of Gen. Cornwallis' decisions. There is a copy of the 1787 book on display.

Authors include David Ramsay, Tobias George Smollett, Thomas Wotton, and John Faucheraud Grimké among others.

The exhibition will be available during regular archives operating hours through August 30. The Archives summer hours are 8:00-5:00 Mon-Thurs, 8:00 to noon on Friday. The Archives will be open from 9:00 to 1:00 on Saturday, July 23 and Saturday, August 6.

For more information, contact the Pettus Archives at (803) 323-2334 or archives@winthrop.edu.



Collegiate Contemplations

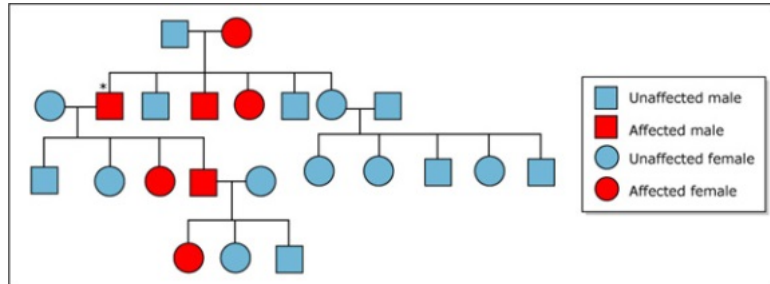
By Gina Price White, Dir., Archives and Special Collections

As noted in previous issues, *The Winthrop Journal* was Winthrop’s literary publication from 1902 through 1960 and published three to six times per academic year. In 1960 *The Anthology*, a yearly publication, replaced it. Jean Brown, Class of 1947, wrote a poem describing a sojourn in a biology class. It was published in the May 1944 *Winthrop Journal* and poses the reader an interesting question.

In A Biology Class

By Jean Brown (Class of 1947)—*The Winthrop Journal*; May, 1944, p. 6.

There are the charts.
Obvious and understandable.
Neat, concise, complete.
Dispassionate and cold.
Where is the warmth, the life,
The glow?
Where is the immortal story?

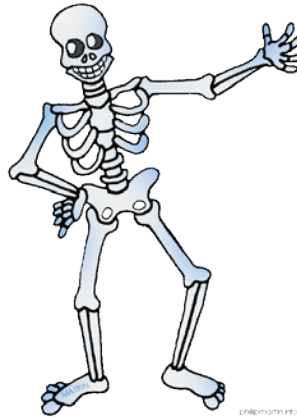


Also in the May 1944 issue Jean Brown wrote another poem that the reader can surmise must have been written about the same biology classroom.

The Ultimate

By Jean Brown (Class of 1947)—*The Winthrop Journal*; May, 1944, p. 6

There you hang.
What is left.
Stripped of your covering of flesh,
Bared to all eyes
The very fundamentals.
Is that a reproachful look
In your left eye socket?



For information on the Archives’ collections and holdings, how to donate historical material, or how you can help, contact:

Louise Pettus Archives and Special Collections
Telephone: (803) 323-2334
E-Mail: archives@winthrop.edu Website: www.winthrop.edu/dacus/archives/

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