


The historic Parrott Family of Kinston, Part 2 — Neuse News

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Aug 3 Olde Kinston Gazette: The historic Parrott Family of Kinston, Part 2

Editor's note: Neuse News is reprinting selected articles from the archives of the Olde Kinston Gazette. Some light edits have been made from the original reports.

Enjoy!

Original story by Bonnie Edwards

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READ PART 1

([HTTPS://WWW.NEUSENEWS.COM/INDEX/2019/7/26/THE-HISTORIC-PARROTT-FAMILY-OF-KINSTON-PART-1](https://www.neusenews.com/index/2019/7/26/the-historic-parrott-family-of-kinston-part-1))

From the Parrott family, which came to the New World from England to make a new life as simple farmers, sprung a long line of physicians.

As a matter of fact, this is the first year since 1894 there's been no doctor named Parrott in Kinston. The most famous were Drs. James Marion and William Thomas Parrott, who lived in Kinston around the turn of the century. The brothers were among North Carolina's pioneers in the field of medicine. "Dr. Tom," as he was called, was Marion Parrott's father.

Dr. Tom studied in Germany under Dr. W.K. Roentgen, who invented the X-ray. On his return to Kinston, Dr. Tom promptly assembled the state's first X-ray machine with the help of a Mr. Frank from Jones County. In 1923, he treated former Gov. Thomas J. Jarvis of Greenville for cancer on his hand. Dr. Tom later lost his own left hand from overexposure to radiation.

The doctors also pioneered in malaria research and gave the first typhoid serum ever used in North Carolina to A.C.L. Hill, a city tax collector.

Dr. James was born in the Falling Creek township in about 1873 and died in 1934.

Dr. Tom was born in 1875 and died in 1948.

The doctors brought the first automobile to Kinston and North Carolina in 1903. Everybody in town turned out to catch a glimpse of the young doctors cranking up the horseless carriage.

In 1905, the Drs. Parrott bought the James A. McDaniel residence at the east end of Gordon Street and used it as a hospital. It was the first fully-staffed hospital in Kinston, named the Robert Bruce McDaniel Memorial Hospital, honoring McDaniel's son who had died the previous year. McDaniel's wife Laura, who was their cousin, helped the Drs. Parrott organize and operate the hospital.

Stipulated in the deed was a requirement that a portion of the hospital treat charity cases. The deed also stipulated the charity portion of the hospital be under the supervision of a board of managers. The board consisted of women who were Mrs. Abe Oettenger, Mrs. J.H. Parham, Mrs. T.C. Wooten, Mrs. C. Felix Harvey, Mrs. Susan Best, Mrs. N.J. Rouse, Mrs. S.C. Parrott, Mrs. E.B. Marston, Mrs. Mary Jackson, Miss Tiffany West, Mrs. W.T. Hines, Mrs. E.B. Lewis, Mrs. Lovit Hines, Mrs. L.P. Tapp, Mrs. J.J. Rogers and Mrs. C.W. Pridgen.

Under the Drs. Parrott, the hospital officially opened June 27, 1906, and the first Training School for Nurses was started. Miss Alice Hogdes, a native of Kinston, was the first nurse to graduate, and Miss Helen Hillard was the first Directress of Nurses.

The doctors continued operating the 20-bed hospital until it was sold in 1914. At that time, it was renamed Parrott Memorial Hospital.

Dr. James Parrot was known as one of the most versatile men who ever lived in Kinston. He was interested in everything concerning the community, the state and the nation. In addition to medicine, he took great interest in such things as good schools, good roads, the environment and people.

He went to Wake Forest and later studied medicine at the University of Maryland and Tulane University. He was licensed to practice medicine in 1899 and was chosen by the medical department of the U.S. Army to take charge of its hospital in Havana, Cuba as a specialist in smallpox and yellow fever.

He then turned down a position as surgeon with the Chinese Relief Expedition to Peking because he preferred to return to his practice in Kinston. He became State Health Officer in 1931. During his tenure, he reorganized the public health work of the state and established the Bureau of vital statistics.

The third Parrott to become a physician was Dr. Albert D. Parrott, a nephew of trailblazing innovators of the medical field. He was close to them in age and died in 1935.

Next came Dr. Mercer C. Parrott, who died in 1945.

Another Parrott to become a physician was Dr. John A. Parrott, who died several years ago. He was the son of Dr. Albert D. Parrott.

Marion's brother also became a doctor. Dr. W. Thomas Parrott, Jr. was born in 1916 and died last December. He was a graduate of the University of North Carolina and the medical school at John Hopkins University.

Dr. G. Fountain Parrott was the son of Dr. Mercer C. Parrott.

A nephew of Dr. Albert D. and Mercer C. Parrott was George Rosemon. A Kinston native, Dr. George Rosemond is currently Dean of the School of Medicine at Temple University in Philadelphia.

Marion Parrott, who chose the law profession rather than the medical profession, went to school at the Citadel long before it was stormed by women. He doesn't think much of women attending his alma mater.

After attending the law school at Chapel Hill, Marion became an attorney. He hasn't tried any cases in 35 years now.

Marion talks with pride about his five and a half years as an officer in the U.S Army during World War II and remembers the experience like it was yesterday, especially his escape after six months in a German prisoner of war camp. He said the Germans were cruel, often mistreating their prisoners. He said he went as much as eight days at a time with no food.

After escaping the camp, Marion said, with the help of some Russians, he hitchhiked back to France where he recuperated in a U.S. military hospital.

While still in the hospital, Maj. Marion Parrott was itching to get back into the fray, but the U.S. military said no. Marion said an escaped prisoner, under the Geneva Convention cannot go back into war against the same people from whom he has escaped.

There's a good reason for that rule, he said. An escapee from a POW camp tends to be a bit hard on the enemy.

"They were holding me in a hospital," he recalled. "I escaped from the hospital, forged orders and hopped a plane to Corsica. I got onto another plane to Marseilles and got caught. They called me a fool and put me on a plane for Nance.

"By the time I got back to my unit, the U.S. military had learned that they were not supposed to let me fight. The generals were glad to see me, but said they were going to have to send me back home. But two fire control officers had been killed that same day with that same shell."

After telling Marion he should be arrested "for being crazy," the generals tore up his orders for home and sent him back into the fight where he remained until the end of the war.

World War II veteran Marion Parrott, descendant of Revolutionary War veteran Thomas Parrott, was honorably discharged from the United States Army at the rank of lieutenant colonel.

Olde Kinston Gazette Editor's Note — Sources for this story include *200 Years of Progress* by the Lenoir County Board of Commissioners and the Kinston-Lenoir County Bicentennial Commission, *Kinston's Architecture Inventory* by Martha A. Dreyer and Kenneth E. Hill and Heritage Place at Lenoir Community College.