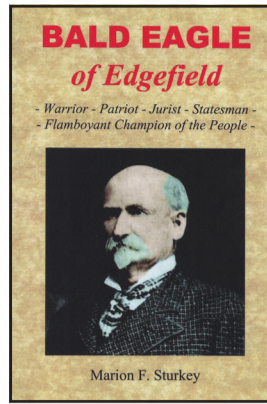


Book Review

By Bob Edmonds

The Bald Eagle of Edgefield, by Marion F. Sturkey, published by Heritage Press International, 515 pages, illustrated, appendixes, cover photograph digitally enhanced with facial color by Joey White.



Martin Witherspoon Gary was born in 1831 in the Mount Ariel community in Abbeville County, a son of Dr. Thomas Reeder Gary and Mary Ann Porter Gary, one of eight sons and three daughters.

When the American Civil War erupted in 1861, Gary became the captain of an infantry company in the C. S. Army. He did most of his recruiting in the relatively remote western part of Edgefield County along the Savannah River. He enlisted young men from the Dorn's Mines (later, McCormick), Cairo (later, Plum Branch), and Park's Store, later, Parksville) regions.

Within four years Gary rose to the rank of major general and commanded all Confederate cavalry forces north of Richmond. Bold and fearless, he refused to surrender with General Lee. Loyal to the last, he cut his way through enemy lines and escorted the Confederate president southward. He never surrendered, never was paroled, and never was pardoned.

Gary returned to his adopted Edgefield hometown penniless but resolute. He resumed his former practice of law and became one of the most famous legal advocates in the southern United States. In the South Carolina legislature he challenged thieving carpetbaggers and scalawag lapdogs. He championed the sharecropper, the common man, the tiller of the soil, the tax payer. Profane and controversial, Gary electrified audiences with mesmerizing oratory. He fought for accountability in government and vilified all who disagreed

with him. His devotees viewed him as an intellectual giant; a fiscal reformer.

Gary resolved to overthrow corrupt politicians and profiteers who were sucking the lifeblood out of southern states. He threw his heart and soul into the infamous electoral campaign of 1876. Desperate times demanded desperate measures. Gary's paramilitary Red Shirt militia used both education and intimidation to achieve political goals. His vision, leadership, audacity, and charisma turned the tide. South Carolina elected Wade Hampton as governor, Rutherford Hayes became the United States president, and federal occupation troops left the South.

More than any other man alive, Gary had led the political battle that ended the Reconstruction Era. Famous throughout the nation, he served in the South Carolina senate. Moderation, compromise, and reconciliation were not in his vocabulary. What he thought, he said. He was a man without guile, a leader with no disguise.

In the *Bald Eagle of Edgefield*, Marion F. Sturkey brings the full story of Martin Witherspoon Gary. In researching for his book Sturkey left no stone unturned; in authoring the manuscript he attained the superb quality that many writers of history only aspire to. Marion Sturkey's book sets a precedent for recording history.

Across the Savannah

A changing rural southland

By Tom Poland
A Southern Writer
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I've been writing about how the South is changing for a while now. That's why I was asked to take part in Smithsonian's traveling exhibit, "Crossroads, Change Comes To Rural America." By the time you read this I will have taken the stage at the Newberry Opera House in, where else, Newberry, South Carolina, to give two talks. My first talk is to 300 ten-year-olds. Well, change has come to kids too. They're used to all sorts of digital media, pads, tablets, and websites. If a silver-haired guy can keep their attention for an hour, it'll be remarkable. I think I can though. Later in the evening I'll address adults, a less-challenging audience for sure.

As for the kids, I plan to show them photographs of how things used to be. I doubt any of them have been in churches where ladies used funeral home fans to stay cool. Air conditioning ended that. And I am sure few have been in a genuine country store and fished a sub-zero Coke from the bottom of an ice-filled vat. Nor, I wager, have any walked roads picking up soft drink bottles to get a deposit. I bet none of them ever pumped gas at a country store to earn a few dollars either.

I'm pretty sure none have used a fly swatter like our grandmothers did. Windows and doors stay shut in this era of central air and heat. A "See Rock City Barn roof?" No way they have seen any of those. Many are gone and those left are fading fast. I plan to tell them about the excitement you felt hunting for arrowheads, swinging in an old tire hanging from an oak limb, and what a character the Goat Man was. Shoot, if the Goat Man came along today folks would put him in an institute pretty fast. Crazy they'd say he was. And climbing a fire tower to get a great view of

the land? I doubt kids do that anymore.

Today, many folks live in communities managed by rule-obsessed homeowner associations. Why if they buried old tires in the ground along their driveway and painted them white, they'd pay a huge fine.

It wasn't that long ago I wrote about eating snow ice cream. I suspect today's brand of kids is happy eating those Dippin' Dots, a sorry excuse for ice cream if there ever was. I'll show them an old-fashioned checkerboard too, one where old timers used Royal Crown cola caps instead of checkers.

Change. According to the folks at Smithsonian, the percentage of Americans living in rural areas since 1900 has dropped from 60 to 17 percent. I believe it. I grew up in the country but have lived on the fringes of a city for a long time myself. Yes, we stand at a crossroads all right. Behind us we see the past. In front of us looms a future in which people will be more helpless than ever. Someone will grow food for them and make clothes for them too. Well, we do have to pump our own gas now. There was a time, though, when service station attendants would pump it for you. Today's kids wouldn't know anything about that would they?

We old folks were lucky to grow up in a time when we had to entertain ourselves. We didn't sit on the sofa with an iPad in our hands all day. We weren't obese either. We played outside in fresh air and sunshine and now and then some of us would work an old hand pump to get cold water to drink. Now water comes in plastic bottles that litter the land wherever you look.

"Crossroads, Change Comes To Rural America." Yes change sure came to rural America didn't it. Well, I don't like much of it, and I suspect you don't either.

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"Mericle" by Chris McMullen is on display at the MACK as part of the Annual Students Art Exhibition.

Adult student art exhibit can inspire

By Liz Williams

Who says you can't teach an old dog new tricks? The artwork at the 11th Annual MACK Students Art Exhibition was created by 13 adults who study at the McCormick Arts Council at the Keturah (MACK). The exhibit, which opened on Friday night, Jan. 11, showcases the students' representations of animals, flowers, and landscapes, as well as several portraits. Linda Huber, an autoharpist, provided musical entertainment.

The MACK's art instruction includes painting with acrylics, watercolor, drawing, pottery, photography, and portrait study. It offers instruction for a variety of mediums and for all levels of ability. Once attaining some competence, students have the opportunity to exhibit their work and transition into the role of instructor or retail artist. Several of the paintings on exhibit are for sale, ranging in price from \$150 to \$350. Many are not for sale and were done for the artist's enjoyment.

Some of the students had an art

background; others did not. Kim Farnsworth, who displayed two paintings, has a B.A. in studio art. Chris McMullen, who teaches and studies at the MACK, had no art background but has studied on and off for eight years with instructor Clint Scott. "I've improved by at least 60 percent since I began taking lessons," said Chris. She enjoys portraiture, of both people and animals. Lois Stricklin, who creates about two paintings a year, plans to leave them to her children. And Diane Azarano paints scenes from her and her husband's travels as reminders of her trips.

All exhibitors sang the praises of instructors Clint Scott, a retired graphic artist who had his own business, and Pat Meyers. According to the students, the instructors are patient and help the students work through any difficult spots in their compositions. If you're thinking about taking art lessons, the month-long exhibit offers inspiration to get started.

Geechee Gullah Ring Shouters to perform on Feb. 2

The Mims Community Center #3 and the Wellington African American Cultural Center proudly present the nationally known Geechee Gullah Ring Shouters at their Black History Dinner and Show on Saturday, Feb. 2 at 5 p.m. at the Mims Community

Center, 2458 Highway 81 in Willington.

Tickets are \$20/per person and must be purchased in advance. Contact Sarah Moss 391-2296 or Dorothy Rivers 391-2095 for further information.

Kitty's Korner

By Kitty Craig - Jackson

Giving is an important element of life – it's something that can give us great satisfaction, can make us feel better about ourselves, and can make other people in our lives feel very positive about life and living in general. It's a shame, though, that we often put little thought into what we give, or that we so often give what we think a person should want instead of what would really make the person happy.

Gift-giving is definitely a talent, and I see this truth when I encounter someone who's really, really good at it. There are many people who have gift-giving down to an art, and those people light the way for the rest of us. These are people who really listen when people tell them what they want; they pay attention to who the person is, and they aren't swayed by what they think the person should be. I want to be like that – I want to see the people I love in their true light, and being able to give them gifts that

they'll truly enjoy and appreciate, not gifts that they'll have to be polite about and thank me for even if the gifts aren't really what they wanted or can use.

It's all about paying attention to the people in our lives. Getting to know them, understanding them and listening to them when they speak. Watching them live their lives to see their likes and dislikes. And not imposing our own likes and dislikes on others.

Sometimes it may even mean giving a gift that we never thought we'd give to someone else simply because we know that the person would really like it. When we give "lovingly and well," we share our love with others. We tell another person that we've cared enough to pay attention and to get to know them. And what better message can we give to important people in our lives?

Knowing that the circle of giving is also receiving, I am grateful for all that I give and all that I receive.

Messin' Around

\$86,400

Imagine there is a bank account that credits your account each morning with \$86,400. It carries over no balance from day to day.

Every evening the bank deletes whatever part of the balance you failed to use during the day. What would you do? Draw out every cent, of course.

Each of us has such a bank. Its name is TIME.

Every morning, it credits you with 86,400 seconds.

Every night it writes off as loss, whatever of this you have failed to invest to a good purpose.

It carries over no balance. It allows no overdraft. Each day it opens a new account for you. Each night it burns the remains of the day.

If you fail to use the day's deposits, the loss is yours. There is no drawing against "tomorrow".

You must live in the present on today's deposits. Invest it so as to get from it the utmost in health, happiness and success!

The clock is running! Make the most of today.

To realize the value of ONE YEAR, ask a student who failed a grade.

To realize the value of ONE MONTH, ask a mother who has given birth to a premature baby.

To realize the value of ONE WEEK, ask the editor of a weekly newspaper.

To realize the value of ONE HOUR, ask the lovers who are waiting to meet.

To realize the value of ONE MINUTE, ask a person who just missed the train.

To realize the value of ONE SECOND, ask someone who just avoided an accident.

To realize the value of ONE MILLISECOND, ask the person who won a silver medal at the Olympics.

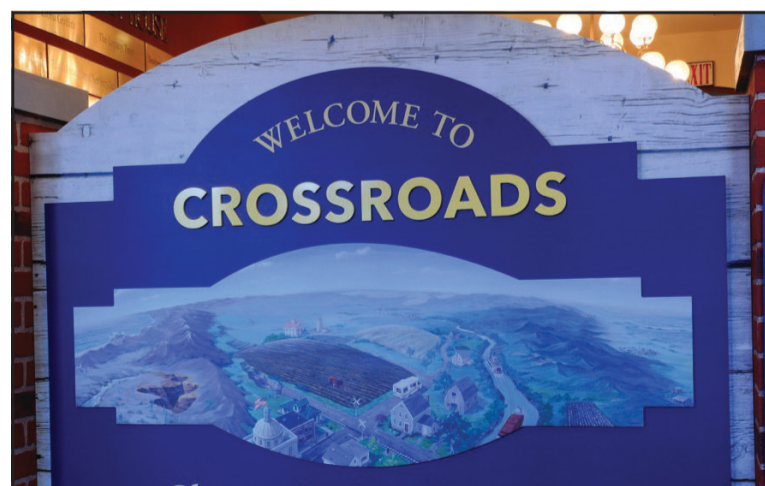
Treasure every moment that you have! And treasure it more because you shared it with someone special, special enough to spend your time with. And remember time waits for no one.

Yesterday is history. Tomorrow is a mystery. Today is a gift. That's why it's called the present.

-Contributed by
Angela Campbell,
Ball Ground, Ga.



Newberry Opera House. -Tom Poland photo



Crossroads. -Tom Poland photo



Exhibit. -Tom Poland photo

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