

## Chapter IX

### The Yellow Fever Epidemic of 1878

The Minutes of the Board of Supervisors of Grenada County show that on October 7, 1878, the following entry was made by the Clerk of the Board: "Because of Yellow fever at the Courthouse the Board met at the Bew Springs school house." This seems to be the earliest official public record which has reference to the most tragic period of the existence of Grenada. That period lasted a little over three months, and threatened to wipe out the majority of the people living in the stricken town. The period, of course, was the time which is known as the "The Yellow Fever Edidemic". The type of fever prevalent in Grenada during this period was of the most malignant form and no medical remedy seemed to be effective against the disease. In the course of the epidemic, about eighty per cent of the people who remained in the town after the outbreak of the fever contracted the disease. Accounts as to the number of deaths resulting from the epidemic vary, but none of the accounts attribute less than three hundred and sixty three deaths as the toll of the epidemic.

The disease struck without warning. The Minutes of the Board of Supervisors for the August meeting show no apprehension relative to an epidemic. In less than a week after the Board met the disease struck, resulting in panic, not only in Grenada, but in other towns up and down the railroad. Memphis, having experienced an epidemic a few years earlier, was very much concerned because of apprehension that the disease might spread to that city, and because, having experienced the devastatng effects of a similar epidemic, the people of the city wanted to render aid to the stricken people of Grenada. We learn from various letters, receipts, vouchers for expenditures and orders for payment of services rendered the fever victims, which records were made available by Miss Robbie Doak, that August 9th was the date where it first became apparent that there were cases of fever in Grenada. The papers made available by Miss Doak were preserved by the Reverend McCracken, Rector of All Saints Episcopal Church. Mr. McCracken was a member of a "Sub-Relief Committee." We shall have occasion to discuss the work of this committee. The full fury of the epidemic had run its course by the end of October, but there were still some cases of the fever in November. So far as we have been able to ascertain, there is no record on the Minutes of the City Government relating to the outbreak and course of the epidemic. This is understandable when we realize that the town government was practically non existent during the epidemic. The Mayor, Dr. J. L. Milton, was one of the early victims of the disease. Other town officials, along with many other heads of families, left the town to seek some place of refuge for their families. The only possible town official referred to in the papers mentioned heretofore was Sam Ladd who served as Town Marshall during the epidemic. We are not certain if he was the elected Marshall, or if he was merely an appointee of the Relief Committee which had general direction of the relief efforts made to render assistance to the victims of the disease. We are inclined to believe that Mr. Ladd had been elected to his position, and that he was the only representative of the Town Government present during the early days of the epidemic. He had charge of hiring men to do police and "watch" duties, as well as of employing grave diggers. He turned in to the proper officials of the relief committee bills for at least thirty nine full days of grave digging, as well as other bills for shorter hours of service. These bills, or vouchers, were made out to a number of different men who received two dollars per day for their service.

The first case of the dread disease must have begun developing in late July, or very early in August since rumors began to reach Memphis early in August about the presence of the disease in Grenada. The Memphis Board of Health sent Dr. R. F. Brown, Secretary of the Board, to Grenada to ascertain



if the rumors were justified in fact. The Doctor reported back to Memphis that the fever did exist in Grenada, and that it was in its most malignant form. Dr. Brown reached Grenada August 9th, and it is possible that it was he who first identified the disease. It will be remembered that old accounts of the epidemic report that the first death from the disease occurred on the same day that Dr. Brown came to Grenada. Help came pouring into the stricken town from various sources. The first help to arrive came from the Howard's Association. That association grew out of the organization of a group of young men in New Orleans who, in 1853, banded together to give help to people of that city who were suffering from yellow fever. The organization continued to grow, with its main objective being to give relief to victims of the fever which usually broke out at some place in each summer season. Relief to victims of such a terrible disease struck a responsive chord in the hearts of many generous people, not only in the South, where the disease was more prevalent, but throughout the whole nation. These people made such generous financial contributions to the Howard's Association that it was usually well supplied with funds and able to send immediate relief to stricken areas. The name of the association was chosen as a tribute to John Howard, the great English humanitarian. After the Epidemic, which Memphis suffered in 1867, a chapter of the Howard's was established in that city. It was from this chapter that immediate help came. On Sunday, August 11th, General W. G. Smith, Vice President of the Memphis chapter received the news of the outbreak of the fever in Grenada. He called together several members of the chapter and they decided that help should be sent at once. By seven o'clock P. M. of the same day experienced nurses had been assembled; equipment and supplies provided and a special train supplied by the Mississippi & Tennessee Railroad, stood ready to start for Grenada. Colonel B. P. Anderson, another officer of the Memphis branch of the Howard's Association, joined General Smith before the train left Memphis. The train arrived at Grenada about midnight. Both of these leaders were fated to contract the disease. Mr. Smith was returned to Memphis and eventually recovered. Col. Anderson died a few days after he went on duty in the stricken town.

The party from Memphis was housed for the night in the Chamberlain House, then the best hotel in Grenada. It was located just east of the present railroad station of the I. C. Railroad. It was located on railroad property, but was operated at the time by Dr. P. W. Peeples and J. C. Branum. The building had been erected by a Mr. Chamberlain who had a thirteen year lease from the railroad to operate the hotel, with the provision that, if services were unsatisfactory, the railroad company could terminate the lease by paying the value of the building. This lease had been transferred to the men who were operating the hotel at the time of the epidemic. The building had a waiting room for railroad passengers and a telegraph office. It is probable that it also had a ticket office. Since passengers had to transfer from the Mississippi Central (later the I. C. ) trains to make connection with the Mississippi and Tennessee lines it was desirable that a hotel be established near the railroad. A similar hotel, operating under lease from the railroad existed for a long time at Holly Springs, where the Frisco Railroad intersects the I. C. Railroad. The Chamberlain House became the headquarters for the members of the relief party sent in from Memphis.

When the Memphis party reached Grenada, General Smith and Colonel Anderson conferred with a number of Grenada citizens at the hotel, and then went to the town square where they had another meeting with citizens. From these two conferences the Memphis leaders learned of the panic which existed among the people to the extent that most people, who were able to do so, had already left town, or were in the process of doing so. Many of these refugees were going to visit relatives in other parts of the state. Some of them went to the Gibbs Springs resort about a mile and one half southwest of town. This was a rustic summer resort which had a few cabins and a central cookhouse and dining



hall. Others found a place of refuge on the Montevello plantation of Oscar Bledsoe which was located just west of the town of Grenada. Nurses were placed on duty the night they arrived, and the following day General Smith sent telegrams to New Orleans, Mobile and Memphis for doctors and nurses who had experience in attending yellow fever patients. The Howard Association Branches from these three cities sent twenty one nurses in answer to the call. Other organizations began to help. The Masonic order sent in four nurses and the Odd Fellows sent three. As the need for help of all kinds was made known to the nation, help in the form of money, equipment and supplies came from many parts of the country. A sum of money was sent from Liverpool, England. The Howard's of Mobile sent Dr. J. H. Beatty, and from New Orleans the Howard's sent Doctors W. R. Mandeville and H. A. Veasy, Dr. Ringold was the county health officer. Dr. Gillispie and Dr. Campbell were two local doctors who joined Dr. Ringold and the out of town doctors in attending the yellow fever patients. It is possible that there were other local doctors serving but we have found no confirmation of the fact. From a communication which Rev. McCracken received relative to money being sent to care for the children of Dr. May it is possible that a doctor of that name may have served and lost his life during the course of the epidemic. We do know that both Dr. Ringold and Dr. Gillispie died of the disease. Among the papers preserved by Rev. McCracken there is, in beautiful handwriting a schedule of the assignment of the available doctors to specified sections of the town. This schedule, written on stationery of the Chamberlain House, made the following listed assignment of doctors: Dr. Beatty-All north and west of Dr. Hughes Residence. (We know that this man was a druggist, and it is possible that he was as M. D., although it was a frequent practice of the time to apply the courtesy title "Doctor" to druggists); Dr. Ringold-All south of General Wathall's and east of Main street; Dr. Veazie-All west of Line street between Dr. Hughes and the Baptist Church; Dr. Wallace-From Public Square East to the Railroad and north to the River; Dr. Warren Stowe-All between Line and Main streets; Dr. C. H. Stowe-All east of Main street between Depot street and the street south of the College. There were other doctors, including Dr. Mandville, serving during the epidemic but we do not know their assignments. The list given above was drawn up soon after the arrival of the relief train from Memphis, and may have been changed later. Rev. W. C. McCracken, Rector of All Saints Episcopal Church, evidently had considerable to do with the assignments set out above. In a letter to Rev. McCracken, dated March 12, 1881, during the course of a controversy between Rev. McCracken and members of the Relief Committee (John Powell, Robert Mullin and Judge Watson), relative to a misunderstanding which arose between the General Relief Committee and a Sub-Relief Committee composed of Rev. McCracken, A. Weigart and Dr. Campbell, Thomas J. Rogan who identifies himself as "Officer of the Howards Association 1878", Mr. Rogan writes: "It (the assignment of doctors) was done after the meeting on the square, held I believe, in a Dentist's office, in which we agreed on the plan of districts. Mr. Coan and I worked in our respective districts one day only. Col. Anderson was taken sick on the 18th of August; Mr. Coan a few days later. All the general visiting work done after that date was preformed by you solely and alone. I know it to be a fact that you walked over the town carrying baskets and bundles containing medicine for the sick for four consecutive days (possibly a week or more) before you were furnished a horse and buggy with which to continue your charitable and distinguished service. My services after the sickness of Anderson were confined exclusively to the office." From this letter we assume that the districts assigned doctors had volunteer helpers like Rev. McCracken who rendered services other than medical to the sick people of those districts.

Soon after the arrival of the Howard Association Relief Train the people still remaining in Grenada, by some method not on record, selected John Powell, Robert Mullin and Thomas Walton to act as a Relief Committee, which committee was to have general supervision of the several different types of relief which were being given to the people of the town. The first official record, now



in existence, of any action on the part of that Committee is found in a letter from members of the Committee to General Smith and Col. Anderson (we do not know if the titles were military titles of officers in the Howard's Association, or merely the courtesy titles freely used at the time) in which it is stated that a rumor was prevalent that these two leaders might be re-called to Memphis. The letter contained an urgent plea that these two men remain in Grenada to direct the relief efforts of the Howards Association. The letter was dated August 15, 1878, and signed by John Powell and Robert Mullin. For some reason Judge Walton is not mentioned in any of the actions taken by the Relief Committee. In answer to this appeal the Two Howard Officers agreed to remain in Grenada, conditioned upon the full co-operation of the people of the town who were not afflicted with the fever. Three days after this agreement to remain in Grenada, Col. Anderson was down with the fever and dead within a few days; Gen. Smith soon fell a victim to the fever and rendered incapable of directing relief work. It is very probable that this unfortunate removal of the two leading officials in the Howards in Grenada, contributed, in large measure, to the unfortunate misunderstandings which were to arise between the members of the General Relief Committee and the Sub-Relief Committee. The Sub-Relief Committee was organized on September 9, 1878, about three weeks after the organization of the General Relief Committee. Rev. McCracken left this record of the organization meeting: "At a meeting of the convalescent citizens of Grenada to take action concerning the relief of their destitute fellow citizens the following resolution was offered and adopted. On motion of Rev. McCracken the President of the meeting, Col. Townsend, was requested to appoint a committee of three to act as a Sub. Committee in conjunction with the Relief Committee of Mullins and Powell. The President of the meeting appointed as said Sub-Committee W. McCracken, Doctor Campbell and A. S. Weigart." It will be noted that in its reference to the General Committee Mr. Watson is not named. Something, perhaps illness or death, seems to have prevented him from taking any active part in the relief efforts. Members of both committees were sincere men who wanted to serve their town. The fact that they were selected in such a time of stress is indicative of the regard in which they were held by their fellow citizens. John Powell was interested in several local businesses as well as being an important member of the New Orleans Cotton Firm of Chaffee & Powell. An honored Civil War soldier, he had recouped his war business losses and was quite well-to-do at the time when he was selected on the Relief Committee. Robert Mullin, born in Belfast, Ireland, had come to this country as a young man. He settled briefly in Kentucky, and about 1835 came into Mississippi and went in business in the town of Troy. He prospered in his business, and just before the Civil War, he built a beautiful house on his plantation about four miles northwest of Grenada. That house is still in existence. The war ruined his dream of retiring from business and becoming a large scale planter. Returning from the war, he came to Grenada and re-entered business, and became prosperous again. Of the Sub-Relief Committee, we know Rev. McCracken to have been an energetic and compassionate, if somewhat contentious, pastor and friend to the people left destitute by the ravages of the epidemic. Dr. Campbell served as the director of the hospital which was set up in the County Court House, and which served both white and colored patients. The courthouse, at the time of the epidemic, was an old store building located just east of the present site of the Grenada Theater, which building had been purchased soon after Grenada became a county in 1870. A. S. Weigart was an old Union soldier who had come to Grenada in the years following the Civil War. He was a blacksmith by trade and a Republican in politics. He was appointed Post Master at Grenada in 1904.

The differences between the two committees arose over the proper method of expenditure of relief funds. In their endeavor to aid the suffering people in Grenada, people were in some confusion as to the proper agencies through which to channel their aid. The Howard Association of Memphis had made available generous financial relief which could be expended only by the approval



of the General Relief Committee. This committee was supposed to adhere strictly to the Howard regulations as to how these funds could be expended. Since the General Relief Committee had been formed during the early days of the epidemic, before the distress of the people of Grenada had been widely publicised, very few people outside of Grenada knew about the existence of this committee. On the other hand, by the time the Sub-Relief Committee was organized, people all over the nation knew about the desperate situation in Grenada. Organization of the Sub-Relief Committee, with Rev. McCracken named as chairman, got nation-wide publicity. It was, therefore, a very natural occurrence that much of the money and other forms of relief should have been directed to Mr. McCracken. The first evidence of a possible clash between the two committees came in an incident occurring at Torrence, a small railroad stop a few miles north of Grenada. Because of the epidemic, trains did not stop at Grenada, going through the town with all windows closed. Money and supplies sent by rail were unloaded at Torrence. Money came by mail and express. John Powell was in Torrence and learned that the express agent there had a sum of money directed to Rev. McCracken. Mr. Powell offered to take the money to Grenada. Before he had left Torrence the express agent received a telegram from Rev. McCracken which read as follows: "Please do not deliver any money or supplies sent to me except to me, or to persons authorized by me to receive the same." The agent then wrote Rev. McCracken as follows: "Dear Sir: Your telegram of the twenty first received and would say there has been none of the packages addressed to you individually delivered to any person. Captain Powell called upon me for some packages addressed to you as Chairman of the Sub-Relief Committee, saying that he was Chairman of the General Relief Committee and was going to Grenada and would take them in and turn them over. I did this thinking the money was needed and that Captain Powell was a responsible person and that it would be alright. After receiving your telegram I showed it to him, whereupon he returned the package to me saying that he did not want to cause any trouble about it. They are here now ready for delivery at any time you wish them. Hoping that this is satisfactory I remain yours respectfully, D. Ewing, Acting Agent."

The next disagreement came over the refusal of the General Relief Committee to approve some bills against Howard Association Relief funds for nursing services which had been sent in by the Sub-Relief Committee. In explanation of this failure to approve the bills a letter addressed to Rev. McCracken, and signed by John Powell and Robert Mullin, reads as follows: "In regard to the claim for nursing Mrs. Sherman we have to state that in the commencement of our work, it was agreed by Colonels Butler and Anderson (deceased) then directing, that no nurses were to be paid only on doctors certificates, and that the sick who are able, are to pay their own nurses. You can see that a great many claims will be pushing upon us and on that account we think it important to adhere for the present at least to instructions. When all are paid and there be money over, we can then get instructions again from proper authorities and pay all doubtful claims if it is advisable." The claim which caused this disagreement reads as follows: "This certifies that Henry Young (colored) nursed faithfully Mrs. Ed Sherman for twenty five days at \$2.00 per day for twenty five days \$50.00." It was signed by E. T. Sherman. The following notations were a part of the bill: "Dr. Gillispie attending physician dead, and we are unable to get his signature, and approved by Rev. McCracken. If Mr. John Powell advises payment I will pay. Signed: W. C. McCracken." It would seem that, among his other duties, Rev. McCracken had authority, after proper approval of the General Relief Committee, to make payment on all claims submitted. The Rector stated that the reason that he would not allow anyone other than himself, or his authorized representatives, to receive funds directed to him as Chairman of the Sub-Relief Committee, was that he was responsible for making a proper account of all such funds. So far as we have been able to determine the only records still existing relative to disbursement of relief funds are the rather voluminous files of received bills and letters to and



from members of the Relief Committee. These receipted bills are for all sorts of things; food, medicine, nursing, tons of ice, coffins, police duty, night-watching, grave digging, telegraph charges and a host of other items.

Rev. McCracken not only had to keep up with all expenditures from the regular relief funds, but he was also entrusted with, and authorized to spend, funds provided by church and fraternal organizations for the benefit of their members who were sick or destitute. His responsibility for church funds is indicated by two letters to him from Bank officials of the N. O. Canal and Banking Company. One dated September seventh reads: "Yours of the 5th instance with checks amounting to \$475.18 (four hundred and seventy five and 18 one hundredths dollars) which we will collect and place to credit of your church as directed. I trust you and your family will escape. Kind regards to your wife. My children are at Mississippi City, and all well." The second letter reads: "I am in receipt of your favor of the 4th instant enclosing two thousand dollars (2,000) currency which I put as directed to the credit of "All Saints Church". Enclosed I send you some blank checks. Rev. McCracken had considerable business with the Masonic Fraternity. Early in September he received the following letter from the Masonic Committee of Newport, Kentucky: "Dear Sir: Enclosed please find fifty dollars (\$50.00) being an offering from the Masonic Fraternity of Newport, Kentucky to the afflicted sufferers of the South under your jurisdiction. Trusting that our mite, like the widow's, may do some good, and hoping to hear that it has reached its destination, I am yours respectfully, John J. Raibe, Chairman of Masonic Committee". In late September the Rector received a letter from the Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Mississippi which letter is quoted in part: "My Dear Sir and Brother: I am in receipt of your esteemed favor of 25th, giving me the information that I wanted about the families of our brethern, Masons and Odd Fellows. I note your statement that 'so many leave as soon as they are strong enough, the call for help will come a little later'. Anticipating this I shall reserve funds for their benefit. To relieve the necessities of those within your reach, I send you \$500.00 by today's express. Please hand Mrs. J. C. Ayres \$200.00; reserve \$100.00 for the care of Dr. May's children and expend it in their behalf as you may deem best, until they can further be provided for. If Brother Coffman's children are within reach expend \$50.00 for them. I have sent Mrs. McCampbell \$150.00, and will help the families of other ministers if you will let me know their necessities and how to reach them. I send \$150.00 for your own use-having done the same for ministers in Port Gibson and Vicksburg. This calamity is especially hard on ministers, whose congregations are scattered or dead, and who have no resources. I fear that we are in for an epidemic here. Have had only two cases-both died. This morning one of my printers has black vomit." The letter is signed by J. L. Power and mailed from Jackson, Mississippi.

While Rev. McCracken was dealing with financial matters connected with the epidemic A. J. Weigart was in charge of the commissary, located near the railroad station, in which food and other supplies had been accumulated through gifts and donations. It was from this place that tons of ice, ordered from a town in Illinois, was distributed to the fever victims. Vinegar was distributed as a possible disinfectant, and hundreds of paper bags, presumably for use as the victim reached the "black vomit" stage of the disease. This was also the distribution point for coffins for the dead. Mr. Weigart was a very busy man and needed much help as evidenced by numerous orders he signed for payment of people who worked with him. Dr. Campbell, the third member of the Sub-Relief Committee, was busy at the hospital which was filled to overflowing. He requisitioned beef, ice, various drugs, bedding, sheets and towels. There can be no doubt that the three members of the Sub-Relief Committee rendered inestimable service to the fever victims of the town, but, in their earnest efforts to render aid, they seem sometimes to have gone beyond the limits of their authority as set out by the General Relief Committee. The members



of the General Relief Committee seem to have been overworked and, at times, sick of ills not connected with the yellow fever. A number of letters from John Powell to members of the Sub-Relief Committee indicate that he is unable to contact them in person because of being under the care of a physician. As indicated earlier, Judge Walton seems to have served only very briefly on the committee to which he had been appointed. The headquarters for the General Committee was Lake Brothers Store. Many letters written to the members of the Sub-Committee are dated from that store. Perhaps the lack of personal contact between the members of the two committees was largely responsible for the lack of close co-operation between them. About the middle of September Mr. Powell and Mr. Mullin wrote the members of the Sub-Committee suggesting that henceforth all unsettled claims be settled by the General Relief Committee, since, under existing conditions, there was a possibility that some of the bills might be paid more than once. Soon thereafter the Rev. McCracken tendered his resignation, and an accounting of his stewardship during the time he acted for the committee. A little later came a brief note from A. Weigart announcing his resignation. He gave neither reason, not justification of himself in any way. Dr. Campbell, so far as we can ascertain continued as the surviving member of the Sub-Committee. The worst of the epidemic had passed by the time these resignations occurred. Perhaps the resigning members felt that there was no longer a need for their services. Rev. McCracken seems to have felt that he had been badly used, since as late as 1882, he was writing various individuals relative to his activities during the epidemic, and requesting that they confirm his own recollection relative to certain facts stated by Rev. McCracken in his letters to the individuals who received these letters from the Rector. Some of the letters confirmed some of the statements in the letters; other, in their desire to satisfy Rev. McCracken confirmed some statements made by the rector, which we know from other sources, to be incorrect, such inaccuracies probably being due to the confusion of the period of epidemic; other letters regretted that the writer was unable to confirm the Rector's statement. Mr. Rogan, the Howard Association official heretofore quoted, seems to have been very much in sympathy with Rev. McCracken, and knowing very little about the service of people not coming into direct contact with him, was ready to accept accusations against some of these people at their face value. In a letter written in 1882, about four years after the period of the epidemic, he makes this statement: "I do not remember ever having met Mr. Powell. Mr. Mullins I saw once or twice before he 'lit out for the tall timber', where he engaged in the laudable business of trying to embarrass men who were rendering some service to his fellow citizens, by writing notes and telegrams (specimen and copy enclosed) in which he appeared to be morbidly sensitive on the subject of money. Seemed to be afraid of any of the abundant means contributed by a charitable public would be expended for the purposes for which it was contributed, and pursued throughout the whole affair a kind of shuffling policy." This statement by Mr. Rogan does a great injustice to a man who contributed much to the relief efforts rendered to his fellow citizens. We know from a number of letters dated from Lake Brothers Store, and signed by Mr. Mullin, that both he and Mr. Powell spent considerable time in town during the epidemic. Since both these men were in general charge of relief matters in Grenada and vicinity, it was no doubt necessary for them to be in and out of town. At the time of the death of Mr. Mullin, several years after the end of the epidemic, the Grenada Sentinel printed an article relative to the fine services rendered by Mr. Mullin during the course of the epidemic. The account stated that, after Mr. Mullin's death a letter was found among his papers which evidently had been written during the early days of the epidemic. The letter which was printed stated, in substance, that the Relief Committee of Mullin, Powell and Watson, during the Yellow Fever Epidemic of 1878 had, without legal authority, used money from the Lake Brothers to take care of the sick and dying. All such use of money was correctly entered on the Lake Brothers Books. Mr. Mullins requested that if he should lose his life during the epidemic, Mr. Powell and Mr. Watson, if they survived, should not be condemned for the joint action of



the Relief Committee, but that the citizens of Grenada who had benefited be reequested to make up the money. Fortunately relief funds soon came in whereby the Lake Brothers funds could be replaced. This letter does not bear out Mr. Rogans' statement that Mr. Mullin had fled town and that he was reluctant to spend available funds. In connection with the funds of Lake Brothers being used in this way, we should explain that at the time of the Epidemic the Lake Brothers had as a part of their business operations, a private bank which served the people of Grenada pretty much as incorporated banks now serve them. The only other bank in Grenada at the time was another private bank operated by N. C. Snider & Son. Both of these banks were to fail within six years after the end of the epidemic. Considerable loans secured by Deeds of Trust on lands, and mortgages on personal property and growing crops, overextended the credit of the banks during a period of bad crops and low prices. In 1883, a little over a year before Mr. Mullin died, the Rev. McCracken severed his connection with his church and at a last service was eulogized for his services during the epidemic. This action seemed to terminate a misunderstanding which must have caused serious concern to all parties concerned, and which would have been entirely forgotten except for the various letters and other papers so carefully preserved by Rev. McCracken.

A letter addressed to R. Mullin, Relief Committee, Torrence, Miss., and signed by J. P. Smith, Secretary H. A. would seem to indicate that Mr. Mullin and Mr. Powell spent considerable time at that place, evidently with the understanding and probable consent of the Howard Association. It will be remembered that since no trains stopped in Grenada to deliver mail and express, it was necessary for members of the Relief Committee to keep in close contact with the Post Office and Express Agent at Torrence. The letter dated, Memphis, Tennessee reads as follows: "Since Col. Anderson's death there is no member of our Association at Grenada. Messrs. Rogan and Coan were sent by us to assist there and are yet there and we are sending them all supplies ordered. You can rely on them. If you need money draw on us. Mr. S. P. Reid, Cashier of M. & P. Bank here, says there is sixty five hundred to your account subject to your draft. We will keep separate account of your expenses and receipts. You should have someone at Grenada to receive contributions sent there. If they were sent here we would keep your account separate."

With so many people dying daily, it became necessary for the Relief Committee to furnish coffins for people who left no surviving relatives able to pay for such expenses. In a letter to Rev. McCracken, Mr. Powell states that Mr. Mullen had made an agreement with a certain firm to furnish coffins at five dollars each. In order to explain the cheapness of such coffins Mr. Powell stated "Of course when it devolved upon our committee to furnish coffins and pay for them in such cases we could only furnish the cheapest, and treat all alike." This letter may have been written in connection with a bill which Mr. McCracken received from A. P. Saunders & Company on Sept. 16, 1878. The bill indicated that the company had furnished coffins and hearse service for ten different individuals. They were H. M. Jones, Dr. Ringold, Mrs. Ringold, W. V. Cole, Mrs. W. T. Cole, Mrs. Kettle, Mrs. Mary Huffington, Marion Huffington, Sallie Huffington, and Minnie Huffington. The total bill was for the sum of three hundred seventy five dollars. On two of the itemized statements a penciled note comments "Two much. \$35.00." These items had a charge of fifty dollars. Two other items had this notation "Nothing to do with this". On December 10, 1878, almost three months after the date of the first bill, a bill was sent to Rev. McCracken, listing the same items by reducing the charge to \$240. The company acknowledged payment by Rev. McCracken. He, before paying the bill, had written in as a part of the transaction: "It is understood that Rev. W. C. McCracken is responsible to A. P. Saunders & Co. for no other coffins ordered by him than the above list. Neither is said Rev. W. C. McCracken responsible for anything else ordered by him during the epidemic than above." It is possible that Rev. McCracken, not understanding the policy of the Relief



Committee, was ordering a better class of coffin for some people than for others, or it may be that the list which he paid for may have been from funds available fraternal or church sources which he could spend for members of families belonging to either his church, or one of the fraternal members. We have confirmed from other sources that most, if not all, the people whose names appeared on the list of coffins for which Rev. McCracken paid were members of his church.

Generally speaking, most of the people involved in the tragic period behaved in a creditable way. Of course there were a few who sought to take advantage of the situation to gain personal advantage, but these cases seem to have been small in comparison with the number of people who went all out to render relief to the fever victims. There were some complaints relative to the nurses sent in to help during the epidemic. It was charged that some of them drank to excess and were negligent in their attention to their patients. This may have been true on a few occasions, but we do know that many of the patients who recovered, and the relatives of patients who did not survive, wrote notes to the relief authorities commending the fine service rendered by various nurses. The pay of five dollars per day was rather small remuneration for nurses who were risking their lives to nurse the epidemic victims. With the daily task of burying the overnight victims reminding everyone of the uncertainty of life, Grenada must have been a gloomy place in which to live. The death of three hundred sixty three people in a period of about eighty five days was a tremendous shock for a town of the size of Grenada. Almost everyone in town had relatives and close friends who were victims of the epidemic. People who had never before thought it necessary to do so now began to make out wills. We will give short excerpts from two of the wills written during this period. The first, by William M. Redding, reads in part: "Last will and testament of William M. Redding - August 8, 1878; I, Wyatt Redding, being of sound mind but sick of yellow fever, do make the following bequests which are my last will and testament." The second will by W. W. Hall reads: "August 25, 1878. In view of the unprecedented fatality of the present epidemic of yellow fever, I deem it proper to make this, my last will and testament." But, despite the fear and anxiety of the time, some people continued to carry on their business. One evidence of this is a statement dated Oct. 18, 1878, sent by Gus Wolfe to Dr. J. H. Campbell. It will be remembered that Dr. Campbell was in charge of the hospital set up in the Courthouse. Mr. Wolfe sends a bill for four bottles of champagne at Two dollars per bottle; one bottle of whiskey at one dollar and fifty cents; and a single order of one bottle of champagne at two dollars. Total bill eleven dollars and fifty cents. This bill was approved by Dr. Campbell, and paid by the relief committee.

The Odd Fellows cemetery, and the old "Yellow Fever" cemetery east of the I. C. Railroad tracks are the last resting places for many of the yellow fever victims. Many of the colored victims were buried in a now abandoned cemetery north of Odd Fellows Cemetery. Although many of the victims were so humble and obscure that they were buried without any sort of permanent marker being erected to mark their resting place, many of the leading citizens of the town and community died during the epidemic, and many of them had lasting markers erected above their graves by relatives or friends. It is unfortunate that conditions were such that we have no record of the names of all the fever victims. Although the list must necessarily remain incomplete, the writer will list hereafter the names of yellow fever victims which names he has verified by grave markers, and from other sources. Dr. Ringold, County Health Officer, Dr. Gillispie, practicing physician; Dr. J. Milton, dentist whose office in 1870 served as the first meeting place of the Board of Supervisors (Dr. Milton being a member) when the county was created, and also as the place where on August 11, 1878, a meeting was held between Members of the Howards Association and Grenada Citizens to work out relief plans; Captain Saxton S. Angevihe, a well liked Civil War soldier; Oliver Perry Sanders, about whom we have no information; Boyd M. Doak, Father of Robert Doak who founded Doak



Hardware Company; Robert Stevenson whose grave marker has this bit of information: "Born in Airshire, Scotland"; Ralph Coffman, who began his business career in 1835 when he became associated with Joseph Coffman in a mercantile business in the town of Pittsburg. He soon bought out Joseph Coffman who moved to Arkansas. Ralph Coffman was a respected citizen and influential business man until the time of his death; Eliza S. Coffman, wife of Ralph died just four days before her husband; Rev. Hiram T. Haddick was the pastor of the Grenada Baptist Church. He was out of town when the epidemic broke out, but returned, against the advice of members of his church, to minister to the sick members of his flock until he became a victim of the deadly disease; Lida R. Hughes, probably the sister of Mrs. Ralph Coffman; Dr. William Wood Hall, who had written his will in anticipation of possible death during the epidemic, and whose tomb is marked with the tribute "Died at his post of duty"; Mary Koen Hall, wife of W. W. Hall; James G. Hall, one of the original members of the Baptist Church of Grenada, and one of the early pastors of the church. Mr. Hall earned his living from farming and other activities, and preached for no compensation; Harriet J. McLean, member of a prominent Grenada family which once owned much city property including the lot on which the present Grenada County Courthouse is located; J. S. Payne, about whom we have no information; Alice Walters, wife of an early editor of the GRENADA SENTINEL; wife and son of J. G. Stokes; Dr. W. E. Hughes, druggist, and possibly an M. D. of whom it is related on his tomb, "Died at his post of duty"; Mary Hughes, wife of Dr. Hughes; Jane, wife of W. E. Long, about whom we have no information; Clara Hart, wife of Dr. Jacob Snider who had died several years earlier. The Snider family first settled in Coffeetown and came to Grenada preceding the Civil War where they set up a private banking company; and finally there is the marker which simply states this to be the resting place of "Fenner Hugo, born in Germany, died of yellow fever in Grenada Miss. Sept. 1, 1878, age 51 years.

Although the epidemic was over by late fall of 1878, it had created an atmosphere of fear among the surviving population to the extent, that for several years after the epidemic of 1878, unusual precautions were taken to isolate Grenada from any area in which there was an outbreak of the fever. In 1897 a severe epidemic of the fever occurred in Ocean Springs, and Grenada County and City Officials began to take measures which they hoped would avert another epidemic in the area. One newspaper report of the time states: "Grenada is not at home to visitors at Present; call again". The Board of Supervisors passed an order making it a trespass for any stranger to come into the county unless that stranger could produce proof of not having been in or near any fever infested area. In commending the Board for this action Editor J. W. Buchanan, of the GRENADA SENTINEL, observed: "If heroic efforts and a strict quarantine will keep the 'dengue' fever from Grenada it will never get here."

Evidently people who had not experienced the horror of yellow fever could not understand the precautions taken by Grenada, which precautions included refusal to allow trains to discharge and take on passengers. This feeling was reflected in another comment in the GRENADA SENTINEL: "There are numerous cases of 'sour grapes' reported of people who didn't want to stop at Grenada anyway. Again we have this report from the SENTINEL: "Unless the yellow fever news takes a decidedly more favorable turn for the better, it is more than likely that the Public Schools of Grenada will be temporarily suspended. The following report would seem to indicate that restrictions relative to trains discharging passengers had been slightly modified: "Mr. W. P. Ferguson and Mr. A. S. Bell are the inspecting officers for Grenada, and it takes a smooth one to escape their vigilance. They meet every train and examine all who get off here". Mr. Ferguson was to pay for his close attention to railroad passengers. A report came to Grenada of the death of a railroad conductor who had stopped off at Grenada. The cause of the death of the railroad employee was diagnosed as yellow fever. Mr. Ferguson and other individuals who had been around the railroad station, and had come in contact with the unfortunate



conductor, were ordered to the quarantine station two miles outside of Grenada to remain there for a period of ten days. Reported outbreaks of the fever in Oxford and Taylor led to an order by the Board of Aldermen that no members of a train crew were to leave trains at Grenada, and all trains passing through the corporate limits of Grenada should do so with all windows closed. Soon the State Board of Health ordered all railroad traffic stopped between Grenada and Holly Springs. Company K, a Grenada company of volunteers who had served in the Spanish-American war was being transported back home, and had to go into quarantine near Elliott for a number of days. All approaches to town were guarded. The SENTINEL had the following observations: "All ministers of the city were detailed for guard duty last Monday and every one of them responded promptly", and "If you see numerous small holes punched in your mail it is an indication that the same has been fumigated." Another report by the above mentioned paper reads: "No sickness to speak of in Grenada except sudden rheumatic pains that strike a man when he sees his name posted for guard duty. While a number of Grenada's good citizens have taken to the woods during the yellow fever scare, most of them are women and children who were sent away by husbands and fathers who believe in taking no chances. Consequently there has been no noticeable decrease in population. Very different is the case at Jackson, the State Capital, for it presents the appearance of a deserted city. Mr. E. S. Wilson writes to his paper THE NEW ORLEANS PICAYUNE, that on a drive down the most prominent residential street in Jackson, at noon on Wednesday he did not see a single white face. All the residences are closed and left in charge of servants. A number of stores are also closed. Mr. A. C. Lee collected \$77.00 for yellow fever sufferers at Biloxi. People in Hardy subscribe \$19.50 for the same purpose." The SENTINEL also printed the following diagnosis of yellow fever: "First stage, chills and fever; second stage, dengue; third stage, suspicious ease; fourth stage, suspicion emphasized; fifth stage, death from yellow fever." Perhaps this somewhat frivolous "diagnosis" indicated the frustration of a people who had painful memories of a disease which, at that time, was so mysterious that no one knew its cause or any effective remedy for it. The passage of time, and scientific research, have resulted in the discovery and the cause of the disease, and effective public health service has all but eradicated the disease in our country, so that most residents of present day Grenada have little idea of the devastating effect of the Epidemic of 1878. In order to give an idea of the great apprehension which the outbreak of the epidemic brought to the people of the community we quote hereafter the letter, already referred to, which Robert Mullin had written to General Walthall explaining the use of certain funds of the Lake Brothers Bank. This letter was written to be delivered to the General if both Powell and Mullin should fail to survive the epidemic. It was never delivered to General Walthall, and was found years later among the papers of Banker J. W. Griffis, son-in-law of Mr. Mullin. The letter reads: "Gen. E. C. Walthall: The chances are that we shall never meet again. When all things get quite I request that you will have the citizens hold us harmless in any private endorsements or guarantees that we (John Powell, Thomas Watson and myself) have given to receive money that was directed to other parties. You will see from Lake Brothers books that we have applied the funds correctly, but, in my opinion, not according to the law. Get the citizens to hold a meeting, examine our vouchers and, if paid out morally right, then have the citizens foot the bill. We had no time to act carefully. People dying, laborers and nurses coming for their pay every night, and everything in confusion. All of Gus Lake's family down; John Powell's brother sick, and all the writing and talking fell on Walton. His office is our headquarters. Powell and myself have been there as much as we could, but that not a great deal at first, so Walton had to receive and check money out without our presence, and I here say that Judge Walton deserves the everlasting thanks of all citizens of every class. He is entitled to more thanks than Powell and myself both, for he had a buggy and horse here and in six hours could have been out of danger, and I here request that in case of Powell's and my death that you will insist that the people shall



show by their acts that they appreciate Walton's noble work. He has risked his life, given his money and name without limit. He, Powell and myself may all be dead when you get this, but I select you, from what I think is the right grit, to have us made whole for any outside liabilities that we may have laid ourselves liable for, and have the citizens pay it back so far as you see and think right. The masses will not look at this fairly, but I believe you will. We have kept receipts and vouchers so far, but should we all die there is no one to take hold and fill our places. All the best people are gone, sick or dead. The bank check we give will show what we paid out, and the book account will show what we have received. If Walton is taken off I cannot tell what to do for a man to write, and I have to do a great deal of talking and arranging, and as you know I am a poor scribe at best. If there is any deficiency in the account have the citizens to protect Walton whether he lives or dies, if you even let Powell and myself suffer. I sincerely believe that this will be right. If we all die anyone that gets possession of this letter will please hand it over to some good citizen that will act and carry out this request. If Walton lives I have no fears about the right thing being done. The chances are that none of us will live through. Later: Night, August 24, 1878, Judge Walton, poor fellow, is down. He had done his work up to this time nobly. Is very ill now, and is still trying to advise and assist, but his symptoms are bad, and I fear he is gone. I want him to have all the credit that it is possible for us to give him, and it cannot be too much." This letter which, because of the survival of Mullins, was never delivered to General Walthall, was found in 1885, after the death of Mullins, and printed in the Grenada Sentinel. I think that one reason for Mr. Mullin's insistence on all due credit being given to Judge Walton was that the judge was not very popular with his fellow townsmen. He was one of those men who had been old line Whigs and who, after the destruction of that party, had joined the Republicans rather than the Democrats. Some of these men were rewarded with public office during the Reconstruction Era, and it is possible that Judge Walton had received such an appointment. In an issue of the Grenada Sentinel, published soon after their termination of the epidemic, Judge Walton is listed among the dead. Both Mullins and Powell survived to make personal explanation of their actions, but the letter of Mullins to General Walthall is the only written evidence which we have today of the heroic and unselfish service of Judge Walton. It also serves to answer the question raised earlier in this paper as to why Walton took no part in the controversy with Rector McCracken. His death, so early in the epidemic, left the burden of the General Relief Committee upon Mullin and Powell. An issue of the Grenada Sentinel published soon after the termination of the epidemic listed the following white people who died during the epidemic.

Mrs. Fields  
 Harry Fields  
 Thomas Fields  
 Kattie Shephard  
 Mrs. Wilson  
 Mrs. Davidson  
 Mrs. Irene Bakewed  
 Mrs. Doak  
 Miss Lula Doak  
 W. F. Beauchamp  
 J. W. Beauchamp  
 Mrs. McMillan  
 Mr. McMillan  
 Mrs. L. French  
 T. E. Peacock  
 Miss Mammie Peacock  
 Mr. DeJarnett  
 George Cromwell

Mrs. H. S. Derrick  
 Mrs. M. Huffington  
 Miss S. Huffington  
 Miss M. Huffington  
 Miss M. Lacock  
 Miss Alice Lacock  
 Miss Addie Bishop  
 Miss Belle Bishop  
 Mrs. J. M. Bishop  
 Mrs. E. Shankle  
 Pete Kirby  
 Mrs. Pete Kirby  
 Mrs. McLean  
 Miss Lula McLean  
 De. C. Bristol  
 Miss Emma Bristol  
 M. Conley  
 Miss Kate Clark

Samuel Kendall  
 Sammie Marshall  
 John P. Eason  
 G. W. Campbell  
 Frank Mitchell  
 Dr. Walfork  
 Fred Finner  
 R. S. Bowles  
 Mrs. Scanlin  
 Mrs. Dr. Ringold  
 Mrs. McDonald  
 Lunwig Hummel  
 Cawein S. Child  
 Mr. Shaw  
 Mrs. Bailey  
 Charles Yates  
 Rev. Haddick  
 Sallie DeJarnett



George Cromwell  
John Cromwell  
Miss Marie Mole  
George W. Lake  
Mrs. Lake  
Miss Annie Lake  
Delia Lake  
Mrs. Sadler  
Miss Rosa Sadler  
Walter Sadler  
John E. Sadler  
Robert Sadler  
A. W. Ayres  
W. I. Ayres  
Miss Jennie Ayres  
Miss Lizzie Ayres  
E. W. Hughes  
Mrs. Hughes  
Mrs. J. E. Hughes  
Ralph Coffman  
Mrs. Coffman  
Charles Coffman  
Mrs. Charles Coffman  
Miss Kate Coffman  
Price Carl  
Miss Ella Carl  
German Carpenter  
Dr. J. R. Wilkins  
Mrs. R. Irwin  
Robert A. Young  
Mrs. Young  
Miss Lulla Kendrick  
Bob Mayhew  
S. S. Abgevine  
Miss M. Angevine  
Jacob Pottevent  
Mrs. Pottevent  
Miss M. Pottevent  
Wyatt M. Redding  
Tom R. Marshall  
Miss Sallie Leidy  
Mrs. Kettle and child  
Charles Hall  
Alex Rafalsky  
Mrs. J. A. Morrison  
Dr. Gillespie  
R. A. Irwin  
J. W. Knox  
Thomas Powell  
Dr. W. W. Hall  
Mrs. W. W. Hall  
Rev. J. G. Hall  
Mrs. J. G. Hall  
Mrs. J. C. Stokes  
John Stokes  
James Stokes  
Judge J. C. Gray  
Ed Gray  
Mrs. Ingram  
Eugene Ingram

Miss Florence Ingram  
Prof. Welsh  
Miss Sidney Welsh  
M. Wile  
Mr. Strang  
Emanuel Wile  
W. E. Eskridge  
Eskridge child  
Walter Eskridge  
Fox Eskridge  
Dr. W. B. May  
Mrs. W. B. May  
Dr. Hankins  
Mrs. Hankins  
Miss Fannie Peebles  
Henry Ratafsky  
O. B. Rollins  
Ben Gage  
Two children of Dr. Gage  
Mrs. Hooks  
B. M. Doak  
David Hooks  
James Benke  
Scanlin child  
William Chandler  
R. A. Collins  
Tom Irby  
Dave Moore  
Mr. River  
Dr. J. L. Milton  
John Morrow  
Barry Rose  
F. K. Hall  
Hugh Goham  
Sherman infant  
Robert Stevenson  
Harry Hart  
T. P. Baines  
John Thomas  
H. M. Jones  
Jos. A. Morrison  
A. Gerard  
Mrs. Alice Signaigo  
Judge Tom Walton  
Thomas Kendall  
Samuel Flippin  
Hugh R. Davis  
S. L. Davis  
Colly Davis  
Mrs. I. S. Parker  
Miss Jennie Satterfied  
M. Friedman  
Mrs. Smith  
I. K. Wood  
Rev. John McCampell  
Samuel Marshall  
Mrs. Cary  
A. P. Sanders  
Charles Weigert  
Mrs. W. A. Belew

Frank Holly  
Rev. J. K. Armstrong  
Mrs. E. E. Vinson  
Charles Newell  
J. A. Williams  
Tom Phillips  
Dr. Ringold  
Coleman Armstrong  
Abb. Garner  
Mary Lacock  
G. T. Coan  
Sam Flippin  
Willie Bea  
Mrs. Howell  
E. J. Eli  
Ida Rosser  
Mrs. Spence  
Joseph Newell  
Mrs. Beasley  
Henry Burt  
Robert Shankle