

Early History

Deep in the Sandhills of North Carolina, in the southern-most part of Moore County, lies the quiet and friendly town of Pinebluff. Rich in lore, it reflects the characteristics and cultures of its founders. Its beginning was unique and today this uniqueness is still present as is shown by the village-like qualities and contemporary outlook. People are still migrating to the community even as they did long before its first charter was established.

Just over 200 years ago Peter Blue, a then recent arrival from Scotland, became the first settler. He had been given a land grant of many thousands of acres, including the present site of Pinebluff. Mr. Blue, reputedly a man of great wealth, was a cattleman and race-horse dealer. While few actual facts can be verified about Peter Blue, legend has it that he built a home near the millpond (now Pinebluff Lake) and established a farm there. Judging from the old buildings found on the property many years later, he grew and cured tobacco. A portion of the acreage was devoted to the raising of around five hundred cattle. This operation was often referred to as "Blue's Cow Pen."

Blue was developing his farm during the American Revolution, a war in which Moore County played a creditable part. Many of the old dirt roads crisscrossing the county were used by the British as well as the Americans. One famous soldier, "Light-Horse Harry" Lee, led his cavalry southward as rear guard protection for General Greene's retreat through the Carolinas. He followed the old Pee Dee Road just west of Pinebluff and then turned west at Blue's Bridge, just south of the town.

Another war which touched the area surrounding Pinebluff was the War Between the States. In 1865 General Kilpatrick, on his way to join Sherman at Fayetteville, passed through a portion of Moore County. Kilpatrick and his staff commandeered the farm of the McLeod family overnight. This farm was about three miles south of the site Pinebluff now occupies. No one in the McLeod family was harmed, but they were

forced to relinquish half of their home to the General. Speculation has it that the next morning, Kilpatrick's troops passed through Pinebluff, somewhere west of the present water tower.

Peter Blue, or his family, left this area sometime in the early nineteenth century, but because of the loss of many old deeds and documents in the courthouse fire of 1889 in Carthage, little is known of the subsequent owners of the Blue land until 1880. On January 31 of that year was registered in Carthage a deed from A. B. Andrews of Raleigh serving as trustee, and nine other persons, conveying a tract of land containing about 760 acres to Luther C. Speare. The price, \$3040.

Speare established a home on the site of the old Peter Blue homestead, using the original Blue home as his residence. Though having no intention of becoming a permanent resident, he did remain in the area for four years — the amount of time it took to clear the land of its saleable timber. Felling some of the huge pine trees for lumber and boxing others for turpentine were prosperous enterprises then, aided by the proximity and easy access to the nearby railroad at Keyser (now Addor).

In March of 1884, Speare bought from J. D. McLeod of Robeson County an additional twenty-two and three-fourths acres which adjoined his original acreage. This deed of sale is interesting in that it refers to the present Pinebluff Lake as Peter Blue's Millpond, which according to the deduction of David Packard, was in existence at least prior to 1880.

In the same year, 1884, J. T. Patrick bought 772 acres from Speare and his wife Mary S. for \$1000. He also purchased the 22 acre mill property, including the millpond. Patrick had originally come to Manly from Wadesboro, Anson County, as the State Commissioner of Immigration. Being an active and enterprising young man, he went to work with much enthusiasm, first laying out the town of Southern Pines and attracting a few families there, and then