

ONE TIME BELLE OF CAPE COUNTY DIED IN POVERTY

MRS. MARY ELIZABETH HALE
PASSED AWAY AT COUNTY
FARM, AGED 83.

Jackson, January 27

Out on the county farm, the home of the friendless, on Sunday, the 26th, Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Hale passed out into the great beyond at the age of 83 years. The funeral was held at the Pleasant Hill Presbyterian church today.

Back of this brief notice is a story of human interest, a pathetic story, worthy of the pen of the writer of fiction, a romance of real life stranger than fiction. Mrs. Hale was Miss Mary Elizabeth Chambers and was a scion of one of the first families in the county at that time, of pure Anglo-Saxon stock, and, tradition says, a recognized beauty during the fifties of the last century.

Captain Leemon Hale, who was a young farmer with a good deal of fine land on Indian Creek, in the northeast part of the county, wooed and won the hand and heart of Miss Chambers, and they were united in holy wedlock on Sept. 10, 1857, Rev. A. Munson officiating. The wedding was a society event, and all the countryside participated in the festivities.

Young Hale established his bride in what was then known as a pretentious mansion on the banks of Indian creek around which lay the fertile acres of the Hale farm. The Hales were popular and always kept open house for their friends. A saw-mill was erected on the creek, and soon the place became a community center.

Then came the dark days of the civil war. Young Hale, fired by the true patriotism of the real American, wanted to get into the affray at once, but here was his young wife and his home and property, and he did the next best thing to joining the army, he organized a company of state militia and became its captain.

This company of Home Guards did good service in ridding the county of "bushwhackers" and horse-thieves, and remained in the service until the close of the war, whereupon Captain Hale returned to his home and again took up his duties as ruralist and lumber manufacturer. His place grew in popularity and was soon known as "Leemon" in honor of the Captain, and is known as such until today.

The farm, or what is left of it, is today the property of John T. McNeely, but the sawmill has disappeared.

During the reconstruction days

Captain Hale was the oracle for the entire neighborhood of Leemon. Late, when the Captain had become financially able to hire men to do his work, he would hold "circle" for the neighbor who would gather around him on the log pile near the mill, where they would swap yarns, and the Captain was known as the st story teller in the crowd.

During all this time Mrs. Hale was a gentle home maker and true companion of the Captain. This idyllic life was rudely interrupted about thirty years ago, when death called the Captain away to join the great army of the beyond. There were no children, and Mrs. Hale was soon overtaken by adversity and, having never been versed in the management of a farm and business, lost all.

The ravages of old age, together with physical ailments, finally compelled the venerable lady to seek the help of charity, and a few years ago she was admitted to the county farm, where death came, and she passed out into this life, peacefully and tranquilly, into a better world, to join her gallant soldier husband.