

Many stories have been written about women of earlier times but the life of Mattie Bushong Good must be told as it stands out in the world of the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia because of her courage under adverse conditions and hardships. She kept an extraordinary daily diary of her life, giving us an intimate glimpse of what life was like for a woman living during the early turn of the century near New Market, Virginia and raising a child alone.

Born in 1877, Martha Florence Bushong, but called "Mattie", was the daughter of an early pioneer family in the Shenandoah County Virginia area the first Bushongs having arrived in the Virginia area in the mid 1750's. Her heritage includes Abraham Brubaker who gave the land for the Courthouse at Woodstock, her great Uncle being Peter Bushong, a wheelwright who came to the area of New Market in 1792 and bought land on the River, and her great grandparents being Henry Bushong and Barbara Lohr who bought the Battlefield property. Her parents were Anderson Bushong and Delilah Bowen, and her grandparents were Jacob Bowen and Catharine Bailey, on her mother's side and the notable Jacob Bushong and Sarah Strickler, on her father's side, who built the New Market Battlefield Home around which the VMI cadets fought so bravely and died that May 15, 1864. The home and land are now owned by Virginia Military Institute and can be visited along with the Museum honoring those cadets who fought in the "War of Northern Aggression." Many do not know that on the same property was another home and farm, separated now by Interstate 81, facing the Old Valley Pike known as Route 11. That home was built in 1898 by Anderson Bushong, one of Jacob and Sarah Bushong son's and although Mattie was born in the small 1818 home on her grandfather's property, she spent most of her adult life living in the home and farm facing Route 11. After her death and the death of her daughter Evla 6 months later, the home was willed to Henry Buhl who had helped Mattie and Evla around their farm in their later years. It is because of Henry Buhl that we now have these diaries which he preserved for the Bushong family.

Mattie was the only child of Anderson's second marriage to Delilah Bowen after the death of his first wife Elizabeth Swartz. Mattie, born 15 October 1877, grew up with loving family support, those of her grandparents, her parents, her half-siblings and other family and church friends. Her siblings were Sarah Caroline "Carrie" Bushong who married Lewis Franklin Hupp, William Franklin "Will" Bushong who married first to Emeline Zirkle and then to Kellie Summers, and Jacob Edgar "Jake" Bushong married to Emma Belle Rothgeb. Mattie refers to them many times in her daily diaries along with her many nieces and nephews and various cousins. Because her father was a Trustee of the Cedar Grove Cemetery, Mattie was involved in the activities of the Brethren Church near by but also visited other churches in the area with her friends and family.

Mattie was a beautiful lovely young woman when she married and was well known in the New Market community and surrounding area.

In a surprise wedding 16 November 1898, Mattie married Isaac Timothy Good, son of Samuel Good and Susanne Wampler who lived not far from the newly built home of Anderson Bushong facing the Valley Pike north of New Market. The Good Farm was on Smith Creek Road, as that Road is known today. After their marriage they lived with his parents.

We find the account of their marriage in the following newspaper account:

### **A VERY QUIET WEDDING**

**"At the home of the bride's father, Mr. Anderson Bushong, one mile north of this place, Miss Mattie only child by his last marriage was married at five o'clock yesterday evening to Mr. I. Timothy Good, youngest son of Mr. Samuel Good, Rev. W. B. Yount, president of Bridgewater College, officiating, the groom having formerly filled a professorship in that institution. It was a very quiet wedding and only attended by the bride's and groom's parents and sister, and perhaps several others of the close kindred. Whilst it was known there was some sparking, yet their wedding was so quiet and unexpected it will prove a surprise to their numerous friends and acquaintances. They left on this morning's train for Washington, where they will spend their honeymoon. They are a most worthy couple, and we, united with their numerous friends in extending hearty congratulations. It is suggested that 308 will please console 646, Washington, D. C."**

The writer of the article in the newspaper must have known that both Mattie and Timothy had other suitors thus the comment about the consoling each other. We know that one of the suitors was Milton Gochenour.

Seventeen days short of their first wedding anniversary, I. Timothy Good was taken suddenly from the Good home with his death from lockjaw complicated by diabetes. It was a shock to Mattie and the extended family and friends. At the time Mattie was pregnant and faced raising a child alone. Because of her loving family, Mattie moved back to the home of her parents, Anderson and Delilah Bushong, near the Battlefield home on the Valley Pike, later to become the home of Henry and Catherine Buhl.

A newspaper account of Timothy's death follows:

31 October 1899

#### DEATH OF MR. I. T. GOOD

"The announcement of the death of Mr. I. Timothy Good on Tuesday evening shocked his numerous friends who were unaware of the insidious disease lurking in his system. He was in New Market on last Saturday, was confined to his bed on Monday, and died on Tuesday at 1.05 p.m., diabetes complicated with other diseases causing his death. Though the deceased was in impaired health for several months, he still moved about his father's premises and around in this vicinity; hence, his death was unexpected.

Mr. Good graduated at the Rochester, N. Y., Business University, August 24, 1894, and for several sessions discharged the duties of a professor in Bridgewater College, Va., teaching book keeping and commercial law. On November 16, 1898, he was united in marriage with Miss Mattie, only child of Mr. Anderson Bushong by his last marriage, the happy couple making their home with his parents Mr. And Mrs. Samuel Good, residing about two miles and a half northeast of this place, he being their youngest child.

Mr. Good was aged 26 years, 5 months, and 16 days, and thus in the full development of manhood he has been suddenly stricken down by death with all the possibilities of a useful life unexpectedly shortened. For Timothy Good was an upright and worthy citizen whose death will be lamented by a large circle of kindred, friends, and acquaintances. To the young widow and the aged parents we extend heartfelt words of condolence.

His funeral, which was attended by near 700 persons, took place from Cedar Grove German Baptist church, of which he was a most exemplary member, this morning at 10 ½ o'clock. All the family were present, including his three brothers Messrs. Saylor and William Good, of Roanoke, Va., and Casper Good, of Bluefield, W. Va., who arrived yesterday.

A sermon, full of love, kindness and consolation, was preached by Rev. Prof. Walter Yount, of Bridgewater, (Rev. B. W. Neff taking part in the ceremony), which touched the nobler and better parts of all present.

The pall bearers were: Messrs. Frank Hupp, Milton Gouchenour, John Garber, Milton Neff, David Beaver and Carson Neff."

Isaac Timothy Good was buried at Cedar Grove Church of the Brethren Cemetery on Route 11 just north of New Market and near where the Good family lived. In 1955 his widow Mattie and child Evla would also be buried there since the family was also Brethren.

Mattie and Timothy's child Evla Bushong Good was born 28 January 1900, "a healthy baby girl," according to Mattie's first diary entry in 1900. She gives us an intimate look at her pregnancy and progress of her baby in the following pages.

"I was well all through pregnancy excepting the first couple months. During the last three months before my child was born I felt real well, would get a little stiff sometimes if I sat to long at a time. I had a real good appetite. Could eat anything, was always hungry. I did not swell any worth talking about and I could get around very good all the time.

Saturday. On Jan. 27, 1900 I felt real good, better then I ever have I believe. Was busy all day helping to bake bread and pies, cleaning up, feeding chickens, hunting eggs and other little things not worth mentioning. In the evening after supper I helped Mary with her lessons untill bedtime, brought water in the room for Papa to wash then I sat down by the stove and nooded a while. After I waked up I taken a good wash all over then Mama and I talked awhile before going to bed. It was about 11 o'clock when we retired. We had been in bed some time and I had nearly gone to sleep when I began to have pains in my stomach they were not very hard at first but kept getting harder and harder. We got up and after Mama had fixed the bed I laid down but could not rest very well. Felt better up so I staid up most of the time till between three and four o'clock. At 5 o'clock Sunday morning my baby was born. We did not try to take the afterbirth and it came all right itself.

Aunt Sarah was not at home and we did not get a docter so Mama was all the help I had. I did not have to suffer very much and everything went along as well as it could I think. Mama did the work as well as Aunt Sarah or any one else could.

On the forth day I got up and combed my hair. On the eighth day I staid up nearly all day and the tenth day I staid up all day.

I wore my bands four weeks. Had my sickness on me two months and a half. The babys nabal healed up nicely the cord came off in 3 days. She wore her little bands 6 weeks. The baby weighed 8 pounds when she was borned, 11 pounds when she was 4 weeks old. She began to laugh when 4 weeks old and to notice things at 6. Weighed 13 lbs when eight weeks old and began to coo. 14 lbs when 12 weeks. Evla weighed 17 lbs when 4 ½ months old. Put her in short dress today June 21, 1900.

Taken Evla to church for the first time July 1, 1900 and she cried nearly all the time.

Taken her to S. S. the next Sunday and she was real good. Went down to B. Jakes in the evening.

Evla could sit alone when six months old.

Fell out of bed one evening after supper while we were canning peaches when only seven months old.

Began to hold her out then too. Began to crawl real well when 9 months old and tries to pull up by chairs.

Got her first tooth when eleven months old.

Evla had two teeth when one year old. Could get up by her self in the middle of the floor and stand alone. Mock the cats and John the dog try to crow like a chicken and say bye bye real plain. Could walk right good when 13 months old.

Evla weaned herself when only fifteen months old.

June 11 Evla was very sick last night. We think she nearly had a spazem. She is real hot and feverious yet. She is teething.

Evla has five teeth now. Two below which she cut first, two above and one Jaw tooth. I think she will soon have some more. She is 17 months old now.

Evla has eleven teeth through now. She is 18 months old.

Evla is two years old now has 16 teeth, can talk nearly everything plain. Weighs 30 lbs. Had her pictures taken Mar. 27, 1902.

Evla has all her teeth now. She has had them for some time.

She was taken sick last Sunday at the supper table Aug. 3, 1902 and has been sick all week. She is some better today Friday. She has had summer complaint or something like that."

You can see from this passage taken from her diaries that she was a woman committed to keeping an account of her life. She was committed to her family, her friends and her Lord. She lived and worked side by side with her parents, and then after her father Anderson's death in 1904, her Uncle Frank, she and her mother Delilah assumed the daily chores of farm life with the help of the various relatives. Uncle Frank Bushong had returned to New Market about 1899 after he had lost his land in Nebraska from a drought that was plaguing the West at that time. Frank would live until 1927. Mattie buried Frank along side his parents in Emanuel Lutheran Church Cemetery in New Market, Virginia. Mattie was an extremely generous and gracious woman who would give the shirt off of her back to anyone in need and feed a group of family, friends, and workman whenever it was necessary. Mattie and Evla were expert seamstresses and did beautiful needlework and quilting. Many of their quilts were sold at the Henry Buhl auction at New Market in April of 2005. They also did much baking and canning for the community and family, as they were quite good at doing those things. Mattie and Evla would both live until 1955 going about their daily lives and in an unusual twist of fate, they both died about 6 months apart. The Shenandoah Valley newspaper reported their deaths and burial was at Cedar Grove Cemetery across from the church where they spent so much of their time. Her father Anderson Bushong had been appointed a Trustee of the cemetery. The newspaper obit summed up their lives in a lovely tribute. Thus with the close of their lives, the loss of a generous family ended, having endured and seen many

hardships but happy and with much faith in their Lord who guided them along the way as they walked the walk of the Christian life.

### MISS MATTIE GOOD DIES LAST EVENING

"Sorrow has come to this community on the death of Mrs. Mattie Florence Good at her home, just north of New Market, at six o'clock, Wednesday evening, June 1, 1955, following an illness of two days. Mrs. Good's friends and close neighbors learned of her passing with profound sorrow for her entire life had been spent in this community where she was held in highest esteem by all who had known her throughout life. Mrs. Good had not enjoyed the best health for some years but was able to be about in her home doing light work daily, living a quiet but happy life with her only daughter Miss Evla Good, attending church services regularly, visiting with neighbors and friends and likewise entertaining them in her home. Born on October 15, 1877, she was the daughter of the late Anderson M. and Delilah Bowen Bushong. She was born in a house which stood nearby to the old Battlefield House with both houses being in the midst of the heavy firing between Confederate and union troops during the Civil War Battle of New Market fought on May 15, 1864. Her father was twice married and she was the daughter of his second wife Delilah Bowen Bushong. She had two step-brothers and a step-sister who preceded her in death. On Nov. 16, 1898, she was united in marriage with Isaac Timothy Good, a childhood friend who was born and reared in the same community. Her husband lived less than a year following their marriage, as his death was on October 30, 1899. Their daughter, Evla B. Good, was born in January 1900. A faithful member of the Cedar Grove Church of the Brethren since early girlhood, Mrs. Good led a Christian life full of good deeds, love for her fellowman, understanding and sympathy for those experiencing sorrow and in trouble, and with kindness to all. Mrs. Good's motherly heart reached out to take into her home a young girl, Clare Snead, (whose married name is now Mrs. Anderson and living in Richmond, VA.) who for eight years was given a mother's love and care in the Good home. Mrs. Good is survived by only the one daughter, Miss Evla B. Good, at home.

Funeral services will be conducted on Friday afternoon at two o'clock from the Cedar Grove church of the Brethren, north of New Market, with her pastor the Rev. N. J. Miller, in charge. Burial will be in the Cedar Grove church Cemetery.

Pallbearers will be Carl Estep, John Buhl, Henry Tusing, Robert Dove, David Good and Fred Neff.

The body will remain at the Theis Funeral Home until Friday afternoon at one o'clock when it will be placed in the church to lie in state until the hour of the services."

### EVLA BUSHONG GOOD DIES SUDDENLY

"The news of the death of Miss Evla Bushong Good on Wednesday, December 14, 1955, came as a shock to the New Market community as she appeared to be in good health a few short days before her body was found.

The Rev. N. J. Miller, her pastor, accompanied by Mrs. Miller called at her home about 5:30 p. m. on Wednesday and not finding her about the house looked about the premises for her. Her body was discovered in the barn and it was thought that she expired in the morning as a result of a heart attack when she went to the barn to milk a cow.

Miss Good was the daughter of the late Timothy Good, who died on October 30, 1899, three months before the birth of his only child on January 28, 1900. Her mother was the late Mrs. Mattie Florence Bushong Good, who died on June 1, 1955, so the deceased was the last surviving member of her family. The whole of her life was spent at her home just north of New Market. She enjoyed a close and loving relationship with her mother and after the mother's death last June, she bore the grief, her mother's passing with true Christian resignation. She lived alone following the death of her mother but made frequent trips into town where she had many old friends.

Miss Good was a devout member of the Cedar Grove Church of the Brethren. Funeral services have been planned for 2 p. m. on Friday from Cedar Grove Church of the Brethren with burial to follow in the Cedar Grove Cemetery.

Pallbearers are to be Carl Estep, John Buhl, Henry Tusing, R. S. Dove, David Good and Fred Neff.

The body is now at the Theis Funeral Home and will be moved to Cedar Grove Church at 1 p. m. on Friday, one hour before the services are to take place."

With the close of this biographical sketch of Mattie Bushong Good's life, we now look into the past as she speaks through her many diaries.