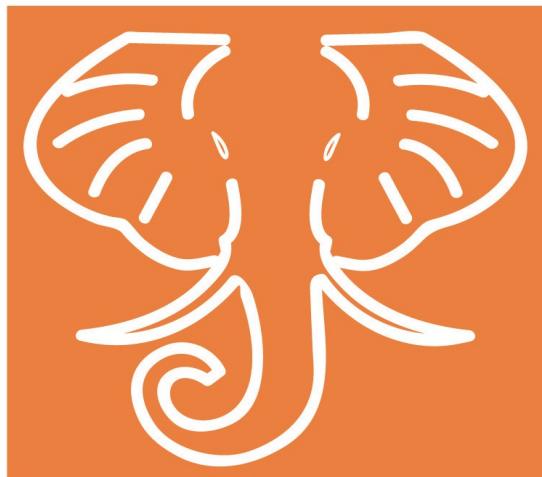


An address on the revolutionary history of Chatham County, N. C., delivered at the centennial celebration at Pittsborough, N. C., on the Fourth day of July, 1876.

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AN ADDRESS
ON THE
Revolutionary History

OF
Chatham County, N. C.,

DELIVERED AT
THE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

AT PITTSBOROUGH, N. C.,

On the Fourth Day of July, 1876,

BY HENRY ARMAND LONDON.

COLE PRINTING CO., SANFORD, N. C.



1894

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PREFACE.

By an Act of Congress and the President's Proclamation, the citizens of the United States were requested to assemble in their respective counties, on the 4th day of July, 1876, and appropriately celebrate the Centennial anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, and it was recommended that an historical address be delivered in every county on that occasion.

In accordance therewith, such a celebration was held at Pittsboro, N. C., which was attended by a large concourse of the county's best citizens. After music by the Pittsboro' Brass Band, an appropriate prayer was offered by the Rev. William Snipes, and the Declaration of Independence was read by the Hon. John M. Moring. Then the Hon. John Manning introduced the undersigned, to whom had been accorded the honor of delivering the historical address contained in the following pages. Its publication was urged at that time by many persons, and frequently since, but not until now, after the lapse of nearly twenty years, have I consented thereto. And it is published now only in order to preserve important facts connected with Chatham's history, which otherwise might be forgotten.

To my fellow-countymen this address is respectfully dedicated.

April, 1894.

H. A. LONDON.

Rept. #15, No. 1949-3-9

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: On this day, and at this very hour, the people of the United States, throughout their vast domain, have assembled together, in their respective counties, for the purpose of celebrating the one hundredth anniversary of their National Independence. It is very meet and proper that our citizens, on this day, should lay aside the cares of business and the duties of daily life, and meet together to commemorate so grand an occasion. When I look around upon this sea of up-turned faces, I feel more than ever before the responsibility devolved upon me by the Committee of Arrangements, and will trust rather to your kind indulgence and sympathetic interest than to my own ability to entertain and instruct you. This address will not give you anything like a history of our county, but will only hastily sketch the days and doings of one hundred years ago. Bear patiently with me, then, and hear the traditions of your forefathers.

It has been a task of no ordinary labor to obtain the information necessary for this occasion, and day after day, like a dutiful son gathering up the fond relics of his mother, have I searched into the old records of our county, and gleaned from them whatever might contribute to your entertainment and instruction. This to me, however, has been a "labor of love," which I gladly give to the county in which I was born and reared, and among whose citizens I hope to spend my allotted days on earth "with malice to none, and charity toward all."

This county, together with her twin sisters, Wake and Guilford, was formed by a division of Orange County in January, 1771. The Act establishing the County, ratified January 26th, 1771, described its boundaries as follows:

"Be it Enacted by the Govenor, Council and Assembly, That from and after the first Day of April next, the inhabitants of the County of Orange, lying to the South of a Point sixteen miles due South of Hillsborough, and bounded as follows, to-wit: Beginning at the aforesaid Point, running thence due

West to Guilford County Line; thence South along Guilford County Line to Cumberland County Line; thence along Cumberland and Wake County Lines to a Point due East of the Beginning; thence due West to the beginning, be erected into a distinct County by the name of Chatham County, and St. Bartholomew Parish."

History informs us that the immediate cause of this division was the troubles of the "Regulators," and it was thought that this would prevent the people from so often congregating at one point. The people of the northern part of this county were quite actively engaged in those troubles, and no doubt many of them were at the battle of Alamance, on the 16th of May, 1771, but it is impossible now to learn anything definitely as to the part our county acted in the days of the "Regulators." The county was named in honor of that great champion of liberty and of the rights of America, the distinguished Earl of Chatham.

The Court-house was first located about half a mile southwest of the present building, on the farm now belonging to Mrs. Nat. Hill, and the exact spot is still pointed out whereon it stood. This site was selected because of its central position, and the proximity of a most excellent spring of water, which to this day continues to pour forth its cooling stream. The Jail was built a little south of the Court-house, and the site is still shown, and is about 75 yards northwest of the dwelling.

At November Court, 1774, it is "Ordered that John Dillard be allowed the sum of ninety-one pounds proc. money for services done in building a Gaol and repairing the Court-house."

At May Court, 1775, it was "Ordered that the bounds of the Prison of this County laid off by Mial Scurlock and Richard Kennon be recorded as follows: Beginning at a small black oak just above the spring, running south $66\frac{1}{2}$ degrees east by a line of marked trees to a post in the yard; then north 8 degrees east 24 poles to a hickory stump below the store; then south 78 degrees west 30 poles to two small sassifras on the Spring Branch; then up the said branch to beginning, including the dwelling house and store, containing about three acres and a quarter."

The little black oak is now standing a mighty tree, but the “line of marked trees” has long since disappeared.

The Court records show that the Sheriff repeatedly protested against the Jail as being insecure, until at November Court, 1779, it is “Ordered that Mial Scurlock, John Birdsong, and Zach Harman be appointed Commissioners to let the building of a public Gaol, the dimensions to be twelve feet by fourteen in the clear, with a double logged wall up to the joist and above four feet to be filled with stones, with a cabin rough.”

At February Court, 1780, John Dillard is allowed fourteen hundred and forty pounds for building the Jail.

The only building now remaining of all then standing is the dwelling house, which is well preserved, being weather-boarded with short boards riven out of oak logs and fastened with wrought nails. There was no town where the old Court-house was located, and the place was called “Chatham Court-House.” After the close of the war, and the cessation of hostilities, the public necessities demanded a town at the county-seat, and accordingly an act of the General Assembly, ratified Dec. 29th, 1785, appointed nine citizens of the county Trustees to lay off one hundred acres on the farm of Mial Scurlock, deceased, as a town, to be named Pittsborough. The preamble of this act gives the reasons for establishing the town as follows:

“ WHEREAS, It has been represented to this General Assembly that the lands belonging to the estate of Mial Scurlock, deceased, whereon the Court-house and other buildings in the county of Chatham now stand, is an exceedingly healthy, pleasant situation, well watered and commodious for commerce, being situate in a very rich and fertile part of the country, and sundry merchants and persons of distinction in the lower parts of the State are desirous that a town should be erected thereon, with a design of becoming purchasers of lots, and erect buildings for the reception of their families in the summer months; it will also greatly tend to the ease and convenience of the inhabitants of that county in particular, and the western parts of this State in general, &c.”

But the town was not laid off on the lands of Mial Scurlock, because his executors did not feel authorized to dispose of the same, and, therefore, the Trustees bought one hundred acres

from William Petty, lying on the north side of Robinson's Creek (so called from an old man residing on its head waters), and there laid out and established the town of Pittsboro. The General Assembly at its next session passed an act ratifying the action of the Trustees in locating the town on Petty's land, and appointing George Lucas, Joseph Stewart, Roger Griffith, Matthew Jones, Zachariah Harman, Patrick St. Lawrence, Nathan Stedman, James Massey and William Riddle as the first Commissioners of the new town.

As the county had been named in honor of the Earl of Chatham, so the County-seat was named in honor of his illustrious son, at that time Premier of England. A large number of deeds are found recorded, executed by Matthew Jones, in 1786, to different persons for various lots in the new town. It is a source of regret that none of the records of our Court can be found to furnish any information as to the building of the new Court-house, Jail, etc., but they were soon erected, and the old site abandoned.

The old Court-house was removed to the new town, and still stands as the store of Headen, Bynum & Co. In 1843 the wooden Jail was burnt, and the present brick one built, at a cost of \$3,500. And at the same time the old Court-house was torn down and the present brick one erected, at a cost of \$8,000. And just here a brief sketch of our town may not be inappropriate.

The first dwelling erected here was the one-story building now standing just east of the Methodist church. The next is the house now occupied by Mr. A. G. Headen, and known as the "Yellow House." This was erected by Patrick St. Lawrence (whose name is perpetuated by a P. O. where he once lived), and was built in such a substantial and costly manner as to have bankrupted the owner and the contractor who built it. The Methodist church was built in 1827. The Episcopal church was erected in 1833, and was called "St. Bartholomew's," because the county, in the act establishing it, was constituted St. Bartholomew's Parish, as heretofore stated. The Baptist church was erected in 1847, and the Presbyterian church was erected in 1851. The present male Academy is the same one in which Rev. Wm. Bingham taught seventy-five years ago, and in which were educated two boys

who afterwards became Governors of North Carolina, viz: John Owen and Charles Manly. Three newspapers have struggled through a brief existence in our town—the *Central Reflector*, published by Hugh McQueen in 1830; the *Communicator*, published by Wm. Potter (son of Judge Potter) in 1846, and the *Christian Sun*, published by Rev. D. W. Kerr in 1850. Two small papers were published here in 1866 and 1867—one called the *Semi-Monthly Record*, published by the students of the Pittsboro Scientific Academy, and the other by the young ladies of the Locust Hill Seminary, and called the *School Girl*.

Our town has always been appreciated for its pleasant society, and the hospitality and intelligence of its citizens, and though our prosperity is shattered, our homes dilapidated, and our business depressed, there is life in the old place yet, and we hope to regain its wonted prosperity.

In looking over the Minute Docket of the Court for the years 1774-5-6-7-8 and 9 are found many interesting entries. Among the first is an order at August Term, 1774, "that Daniel Murphy be allowed for five wolf scalps," and "that Wm. Murphy be allowed for one wildcat scalp," which is the last instance of a wolf or wildcat being found in Chatham County. This order refers to the old custom of paying for the destruction of wild animals. At August Term, 1779, an entry reads as follows: "Drewry Banks came into Court and motioned to have the following entry made, he having had a fight lately with one James Roe, had the misfortune in the engagement to have his right ear bit off by the said Roe; therefore, ordered that the same be admitted to the record of this Court." There are many entries similar to this, for the crime of perjury being punished by cutting off the ear, those who had their ears bit off desired it to so appear on the Court records.

In November, 1774, is an order allowing Mial Scurlock to build a mill on Robinson's Creek, some of the remains of which can still be seen at the old site in the field of Hon. Abram Rencher, about half a mile southwest of our Courthouse. Another mill on Robinson's Creek was built in 1786 by George Lucas, about half a mile above the mill now owned by Wesley Pendergrass. Inns or Taverns were called "Ordin-

naries," and licenses to keep them were granted by the County Courts, and the proprietors required to give bond with good security, and the Courts established the prices to be charged, which read rather quaintly now. For instance, at August Term, 1774, it is "ordered that the rates of the several Ordinary keepers in this County be as follows, to-wit:

West India Rum, pt.	£ 1s -d	Tenerief Wine, gallon	14
New England do.	" 8	Oats or Corn, qt.,	2
Good Peach Brandy, pt.,	8	Stablage with fodder	
Apple Brandy,	" 8	per night,	1
Whiskey,	" 6	Hot dinner with beer	
Crab Cyder, qt.	6	or Cyder,	1 4
All other kinds of		Cold dinner,	8
Cyder,	4	Breakfast,	1
Bristol Beer, Bottle,	2 8	Lodging in a good feather	
Madeira Wine, gallon,	16	bed, a night,	4

We might follow the example of our ancestors with much comfort to the travelers nowadays, and have the rates of our hotels regulated by law, for in our day hotels seem to be kept merely for the profit of the proprietor, without any regard to the comfort or pocket of the public. The above rates were established before the war began, but when the currency became somewhat depreciated, new rates were ordered at February Term, 1778, as follows:

For a Breakfast,	£— 3s	Brandy per gallon,	£2 0 0
For a dinner with		West India rum	
grog,	5—	per gallon,	2 — —
Lodging a night,	1—	Whiskey per gallon,	1 12 —
Oats and corn per gal.,	2—	Crab Cyder,	" 0 5 4
Fodder a bundle,	0 0 6d	Other Cyder	" 0 4 0

This shows that the "heroes of '76" had a care for the "creature comforts," and amply provided for the "inner man." The currency of the country became so depreciated that finally one dollar in specie was equivalent to 800 in paper dollars, for the Court records show that in 1782 and '83 judgments were rendered in the alternative at that rate.

At Nov. Term, 1781, is an entry "that James Williams, Esq., be allowed the sum e' twc thousand four hundred dol-

lars for a blank-book for the use of the Court." Even our Confederate money was not so worthless as this. It may be of interest to give the amount of taxes collected in this county in those early days, and make a comparison with the present. At Feb. Term, 1775, is found an entry stating "that the Court proceeded to settle with Elisha Cain, Esq., Sheriff for the years 1771 and 1772," from which it appears that the taxes for 1771 (the first year of the existence of the county) were £118-10-0, or about \$600, and for 1772 £86-10-5, or about \$450. The total amount of taxes collected in this county last year (1875) was \$29,803.87, of which \$17,330.15 were for County purposes, and \$12,473.72 for the State.

In the early records many orders are found to lay out the public roads of the county, but only a few of those roads are now used, others having been opened. It is to be noticed, however, that those old roads were much more direct and more convenient to the public than the new roads, for the former were laid out to save distance and travelling, while the latter appear to be laid out for the purpose of going by some person's mill or store, without consulting the public convenience at all. And in mentioning roads, it is proper here to state that the present highways of Chatham County are a disgrace to any people pretending to be civilized, and our prosperity will ever be retarded until "our ways are mended."

There were several ferries established at an early day—one at "Redfield," about one mile below the present Bynum Factory, on Haw River; one over the Cape Fear River, called Avent's Ferry, which is still used, and bears the same name. At Nov. Court, 1781, it is "ordered that John Avent be allowed the following rates for ferriage across the Cape Fear River, viz:

"For wagon and team loaded, 400 dollars. For cart and horses loaded, 200 dollars. For man and horse, 50 dollars." This was when specie was worth 800 for 1. There were various other ferries and fords in the county over the different streams, among them Williams' and Crow's, on Haw River, and Rigden's, on Deep River.

The first bridge ever built in the county was across New Hope, and was called Sypart's (or Cypert's) Bridge, and was located where is now Prince's Bridge, on the road to Raleigh,

about nine miles east of Pittsboro. It was near this place that the University of the State was first located, and then changed to Chapel Hill. The date of building this bridge cannot be ascertained, but at Aug. Court, 1777, it is "ordered that Elisha Cain and Francis Sypart be appointed Commissioners for letting to the lowest bidder the repairing of New Hope Bridge, near the said Francis Sypart's." The future historian may desire to know our present number of bridges, and their locations, and they are mentioned, therefore, for future information: On Deep River are three bridges, located as follows, viz: At Lockville, Egypt, and the Gulf; on Rocky River, one at Wm. White's; on Haw River are six, as follows: at Love's Mill, Pace's Mill, Bynum's Factory, Henley's Mill, Moore's Mill, and at Haywood, and on New Hope four, viz: at Farrington's Mill, Prince's, Baldwin's Mill, and at Johnson's store: a total of fourteen bridges, besides small ones over creeks, etc. In January, 1865, a heavy freshet swept away every bridge on Haw River, which at the time was considered a great calamity, but which resulted in being a blessing, for in April following the plundering bands of bummers from the Federal army were prevented from crossing the river, and much property thus saved.

And now let us proceed to consider the political history of our county during the Revolutionary War, and what part her citizens acted in those days that tried men's souls. In doing so, I will as much as possible avoid repeating those events recorded in history, and endeavor to bring new matter to light, as gathered from the Court records. The first and most important fact to be mentioned is the time at which the year of the King's reign was omitted from the record of the proceedings in our Court. The record of the Proceedings at each Term of the Court had the following heading, viz: "At an Inferior Court, &c., held at the Court-House, &c., on the second Monday, &c., in the —— year of his Majesty's reign, &c." The year of his majesty's reign was always inserted until after August Term, 1775, and at *Nov. Term, 1775, and ever afterwards* it is omitted. Be it ever remembered, then, that the people of Chatham County in this manner renounced the sovereignty of George III. the year before the Declaration of Independence was signed!

The first record of an election of members of the General Assembly was made at Feb. Term, 1779, and is as follows: "Ordered that the Sheriff of the County advertise at the most public places in the County, that on the 10th of March next, the Inhabitants of the County are ordered to meet at the Court-House of said County to choose two Burges and one Senator to represent them in the next General Assembly of this State, and that he summon John Auld, Rich. Kennon and John Montgomery, Esquires, to superintend said election."

It will thus be seen that there was only one voting-place in the County. Now there are sixteen voting-places. History informs us that Chatham sent delegates to Hillsboro in Aug., 1775, to the Congress at Halifax in Nov., 1776, and to the General Assembly in 1777 and 1778. At May Term, 1777, the record states that "Ambrose Ramsey qualified as Col. of this County, Jeduthan Harper as Lieut.-Col, Mial Scurlock as First Major, and Mathew Jones as Second Major."

The record of August Court, 1778, shows the following captains of the militia, viz: Alexander Clark, Abner Hill, John Nall, William Goldston, Thomas Hill, Presley George, John Birdsong, James Kendrick, Joseph Crump, Edward Edwards, ✓ James Herndon and Josiah Rogers. No record can be found to show any account of the troops from Chatham in the regular Continental Army, and it was supposed there was no organized company from the county. The bold depredations, of the Tories in this and the surrounding counties kept our militia quite actively employed at home.

Frequent mention is made of certain persons being brought before the Court charged with disloyalty, and upon their refusing to take the oath of allegiance to the State were ordered to leave. So very zealous were our citizens to suppress every symptom of disloyalty and disaffection, that men were arrested for even speaking words inimical to the new government; for at Aug. Court, 1777, there is an entry that "Robert Sellers, Esq., one of the Justices of this Court, being brought into Court by virtue of a warrant, and being charged with having spoken words inimical to the United States of America, and in violation of an act of the General Assembly of this State, on the evidences being sworn in behalf of the State to support the charge against him, it was solemnly adjudged

by the Court that he was not guilty of the said charge, and that he be discharged accordingly." The arrest of deserters which was the cause of so much trouble in the late civil war, was frequently done by the "Rebels of '76." An entry made at Aug. Term, 1777, reads as follows: "James Walker, being brought before this Court and examined upon suspicion of having deserted out of the service of the 6th Regt. of South Carolina forces, he is ordered to be committed to the public goal for the district, to be dealt with as the law directs." So it seems that the "Rebels" of the late war had a precedent set them by the "Rebels" of the Revolution, and only followed their illustrious example in arresting and imprisoning men who deserted from the service of their State. As we were called "Rebels" in the late war, so were the patriots of the Revolution stigmatized as "Rebels," and their resistance to British oppression called a "rebellion." Truly hath the poet said:

"Rebellion! foul, dishonoring word,
Whose wrongful blight so oft has stained
The holiest cause that tongue or sword
Of mortal ever lost or gained.
How many a spirit, born to bless,
Hath sunk beneath that withering name,
Whom but a day's, an hour's success,
Had wafted to eternal fame!"

The Rebels of the Revolution were more violent and extreme than ever we were, for they compelled every citizen to take a test oath, or leave the State. At May Term, 1778, certain Justees were ordered "to administer the oaths by act of Assembly prescribed, to the people in general in their respective districts, and make a list of all those who neglect or refuse to take the same."

In other words, a test oath was required to be taken by every person, and those citizens who refused to renounce allegiance to their King and take the oath to support the new government were to be reported to the Court, so that they might be arrested, their property confiscated, and they and their families removed from the State. Surely the late "rebels" did not attempt more high-handed measures. A bill was intro-

duced into the Convention in 1861 to require a similar test oath, and it was voted down by an overwhelming majority.

The property of all those who adhered to the King was confiscated, and our records abound with repeated references to this subject. For instance, at May Term, 1780, it is ordered "that John Ramsey, Mial Seurlock and John Nall be appointed Commissioners to take into their possession the confiscated estates of this county, agreeable to an act of Assembly, passed at Halifax, 18th day of October, 1779."

Hearing these things should cause every person to have more tolerance and charity to the late "rebels" for proceeding as they did, and as after the close of the Revolutionary War the Whigs and Tories settled down in peace and amity, and forgetting their differences united together in building up this great country, so let us emulate their glorious example of reconciliation, and laying aside the passions and prejudices excited by the late war, let us unite together for the common good of a common country. In this Centennial Year of Jubilee, let us forget and forgive the wrongs inflicted and the sufferings endured, and profiting by the sad experience of the past, press forward with the hope of a glorious future for us all. The soldiers who wore the blue and those who wore the grey are now alike engaged in the more congenial pursuits of peace, "who hath her victories more renowned than war," and are together building up our waste places, so that peace and plenty may again bless our beloved country.

"No more shall the war-cry sever,
Or the winding rivers be red:
They banish our anger forever,
When they laurel the graves of our dead!
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the judgment day,
Love and tears for the Blue,
Tears and love for the Grey."

It is almost impossible to give even a brief sketch of the most distinguished citizens of Chatham living one hundred years ago, for with many of them their very names are forgotten, and they have passed away as bubbles on the current of time. But

"We shall *revive* their names, and in fond memories
Preserve and still keep fresh, like flowers in water,
Their glorious deeds."

ELISHA CAIN was the first Sheriff of the county, and afterwards one of the leading Justices; was a delegate to Hillsboro' in Aug. 1775, and after the war a member of the Legislature; resided on the northern side of Haw River. Wm. Hooper was the first Clerk of our County Court. Richard Kennon was a prominent Justice of the Court for many years, whose name is repeatedly mentioned in our records. He lived, died and is buried near the present residence of Wm. White, on Rocky River, and though hundreds of our citizens, continually pass by the former residence and grave of this man, who was so prominent in days of old, yet how few, if any, have ever heard his name ever mentioned! *Sic transit mundi gloria!*

AMEROSE RAMSEY was Col. of the militia, a prominent Justice of the Court, the owner of the mills where Cornwallis crossed Deep River, and, after the war, for many years in the State Legislature. JOHN RAMSEY was for many years a Justice of the Court, and afterwards Clerk. MATHEW RAMSEY was Captain of a company of light-horse, was captured by Fanning at Chatham C. H., was carried prisoner to Wilmington, whence he escaped and rejoined his company. He owned and lived at what is now called Green's Mills, on Rocky River. He was a brother of Ambrose and John, and the grandfather of the Ramseys lately living here. MIAL SCURLOCK owned the dwelling at the old C. H. and was Clerk of the Court from May, 1777, until his death, in May, 1781. MATHEW JONES was one of the first Justices of the Court, was Major of the militia, and, after the war, in the Legislature. He lived, died and is buried near the Asheboro road, about five miles west of Pittsboro, and when this town was laid out, bought many lots in it. He is the Grandfather of Mrs. John E. Nettles. Maj. JOHN NAUL, or Nall, and JOHN LUTTRELL are the only two officers who were killed in battle. They were both killed at Cane creek in the attempt to release Gov. Burke, whom Fanning had captured and was carrying to Wilmington. They were both Justices, Luttrell living near Haw river, and Nall near the present Bear Creek Baptist church. Major Nall was the great-grandfather of Mr. Elbert D. Nall. Major Nall was a gallant and brave officer, and a good and useful citizen, whose untimely death was a public loss. ROGER GRIFFITH was for many years Sheriff of the county, a Justice of the Court,

and Major of the militia, and lived near the old road, about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile southwest of Pittsboro'.

But time and space would fail me to even briefly mention all the leading characters of that early day, for there were John Birdsong, John Montgomery, Baalam Thompson, Jeduthan Harper, William Kinchen, Joseph Brantley, Joseph Hinton, James Sellers, Thomas Gregory and others, who were Justices of the Court, and men whose names should be revered by a grateful posterity, though they have long since passed away and finished their course. Let us emulate their virtues and shun their vices, and so "act our part in the world's broad field of battle, in the bivouac of life," that when another hundred years shall have rolled by the men of 1976 may recall our names with grateful love and reverence, and we be held up as exemplars of virtue and patriotism.

See to it, men of Chatham, that ye be not degenerate scions of noble sires, but be faithful to every trust, sincere in every opinion, and true in all things. Let not the little, petty, differences that divide you as individuals hinder you as the common citizens of a common country from uniting together in your efforts to build up that country. This Centennial year of our National Independence should mark a "new departure" in our national growth and prosperity. It should be the beginning of a new and brighter era dawning on our whole country. It is the dividing line between the old and the new. It should be as some mighty breakwater dashing back the angry waves of hate and passion which have so long been seething and surging in our distracted country. This year and these celebrations, which to-day are participated in by the whole American people, will have lost their force and significance unless we are taught the grand lessons of peace and reconciliation, of love of country, and of charity to our fellow-man. Let us learn to be more tolerant of the views and opinions of those who differ from us, and bear in mind that no man is perfect.

But to proceed, while a large majority of the citizens of Chatham were zealous for the new government, and gladly joined in the cause of liberty and independence, yet there were others, and many of them highly respectable citizens, who saw no good or sufficient cause to throw off the sove-

reignty of Great Britain, and who refused to join in what they considered a dreadful rebellion, and to-day their descendants are among our most reputable citizens. But during the war the passions of whigs and tories were so excited that a most murderous and destructive species of warfare was carried on among neighbors and former friends. The tories were led by a man, of whom a sketch will here be given, as he is so closely interwoven with the history of those days.

The most conspicuous character of the Revolutionary days was Col. DAVID FANNING, whose name is still familiar in our own time, and about whose bloody deeds and murderous exploits our old people still talk with horror. Tradition has so enveloped him as to make it almost impossible to separate the true from the false. Rev. E. W. Caruthers, in 1854, published his work entitled "The Old North State in 1776," in which he devotes much space to the traditions concerning Fanning, and notwithstanding his diligent efforts to arrive at the truth, are found many inaccuracies and mistakes. Fanning himself wrote a narrative of his adventures, which was not published until the year 1861, and then only fifty copies, and they for private distribution. It is from reading this narrative that I am enabled to correct the mistakes of Mr. Caruthers and others. He was born in Wake or Johnston county, in the year 1754; was bound as an apprentice, but owing to harsh treatment, ran away, and engaged in trafficking with the Indians in South Carolina. Upon the commencement of hostilities he became a tory and was engaged in many adventures in South Carolina until after the fall of Charleston, in May, 1780, he came to this county and lived with a noted tory, John Rains, on Brush Creek. In a letter to the University Magazine, in March, 1853, Gov. Swain incorrectly states that Fanning came to Chatham in 1778. He remained quiet at this place until 1781, when, with a few followers, he commenced a predatory warfare on his neighbors, many of whom were murdered; and finally, when in the month of June a general meeting of the loyalists was called to appoint a commanding officer of the militia, he was elected colonel, and immediately set off for Wilmington (160 miles distant) to receive his commission from Maj. Craigg, the British officer commanding that post, which commission read as follows:

"By James Henry Craigg, Esq., Maj. in his Majesty's 82d Reg., commanding a detachment of the King's troops in North Carolina, &c., &c.

To David Fanning, Esq.:

These are to appoint you to be colonel of the loyal militia in Randolph and Chatham counties, who are directed to obey you as such in all lawful commands whatsoever; and you are authorized to grant commissions to the necessary persons of known attachment to his Majesty's person and government, to act as captains and subalterns to the different companies of militia aforesaid. As colonel, you are hereby fully empowered to assemble the militia, and lead them against any party of rebels, or others the King's enemies, as often as necessary; to compel all persons whatsoever to join you; to seize and disarm, and, when necessary, to detain in confinement all rebels or others acting against his Majesty's government, and to do all other acts becoming a King's officer and good subject.

Given at Wilmington, this 5th of July, 1781.

J. H. CRAIGG,
Maj., commanding the King's Troops."

Empowered with this authority, he returned from Wilmington on the 12th of July, and ordered a general muster at Cox's Mill, at which place he established his head-quarters. This mill is now owned by M. J. Swift, and is situated on the western side of Deep River, at the mouth of Mill creek, in Randolph county, about five miles from the Chatham line. He organized his forces and appointed officers, whose names would here be given, but the descendants of many of them are among our respectable citizens, and might dislike their tory ancestors to be named. His first exploit after organizing was his descent upon Chatham Court-House, on the 15th of July, as Caruthers has it, or on the 18th, as Wheeler states. Mr. Caruthers is mistaken in saying that it was a court of pleas and quarter sessions which Fanning there captured, and Gov. Swain makes the same mistake in his letter to the University Magazine. Those courts were held then at the same time, as they ever since have been held, until their abolition in 1868, *i. e.*, on the 2d Mondays in Feb., May, Aug. and

November, so that this court was not in session in July. Fanning's narrative states explicitly that it was "a general muster, and the day following were to call a court-martial for the trial of several loyalists who had refused to bear arms." And Fanning proceeds to give an account of his raid (page 23) as follows: "Upon receiving this intelligence, I proceeded towards the Court-House, 17 miles, that night with the men I had named, and the morning following, by seven o'clock, I arrived there. I surrounded the place where they were. I expected to find members of the court-martial, but they had dispersed the evening before, and were to meet at eight o'clock. I then posted pickets on every road, and within two hours took 53 prisoners, among them the colonel, major, and all the militia officers of the county, except two, who had not attended, and also one continental captain, with three of their delegates to the General Assembly. I immediately marched them to Cox's Mill, and paroled all except 14, whom I knew were violent against the government. Those I conducted to Wilmington, and delivered to Major Craig."

Among those captured, Mr. Caruthers states, was John Williams, attorney-at-law, commonly called London John (having come from the city of London), but this is a mistake, as our Court records show that he was admitted to practice law as an attorney at February Term, 1785. He should have said James Williams, Esq., who had been an attorney in the county for many years, and who was paroled after being carried to Wilmington, as our records further show, and who, on his return home, wrote a letter to Gov. Burke in behalf of the other prisoners. (See Caruthers, page 168). Upon Fanning's return from Wilmington occurred his attack upon and capture of Col. Philip Alston, and twenty-five men. As Mr. Caruthers gives a full account of this fight, (page 180), it is here merely mentioned. The house is still standing in a good state of preservation, and the holes made by tory bullets are still plainly visible. It is situated on the northern bank of Deep River, and known as the "Chalmers' Place."

Fanning's next exploit was the capture of Gov. Burke and others at Hillsboro', which, however, belongs to the history of Orange county. Fanning, after this, continued his depredations, and even after Cornwallis' surrender, in October 1781,

he still bid bold defiance to the "rebels," and ruin and death marked his footsteps, until June, 1782, he left the county for South Carolina, thence going to Florida, and finally to Nova Scotia, where he died in 1825.

While we condemn the principles of this man and abhor his bloody murders, yet we must admire his wonderful boldness, displayed on the most perilous occasions, and his unflinching devotion, even in defeat, to the cause he had espoused. Another leading tory was Col. John Pyle, who lived on the public road about equi-distant from Pittsboro' and Graham, near the present residence of Jesse S. Henley. He is first mentioned as a prisoner at the battle of Moore's creek, near Wilmington, but will always be known as the leader of the tories at "Pyle's hacking match," 25th Feb., 1781, whom Col. Lee so completely cut to pieces. While no important battle was fought in Chatham county, yet the armies of Lord Cornwallis and Gen. Greene marched through the centre, from the northwestern to the southern borders. A few days after the battle of Guilford C. H., on the 15th of March, 1781, Cornwallis took up his line of march for Wilmington, and on the night of the 22d encamped on Cane creek in Chatham county, at Dixon's mill, which mill is still owned by the Dixon family, and remained two days at this place. There are many pleasant local traditions connected with this encampment. The chair in which Cornwallis sat while there still remains in good preservation, and is now owned by Mr. Thomas C. Dixon. Several of these traditions are preserved in some jingling verses, written by a son of one of the eyewitnesses. Upon leaving Dixon's Mill, the British army marched to Chatham Court-House and spent the night, Cornwallis occupying as his head-quarters the house in which Mrs. Nat. Hill now resides; cut in the weather-boarding of this house are still to be seen the names of many British soldiers. Fanning, in his narrative, mentions that he met the army at Dixon's Mill, and that he gave Cornwallis information as "to the situation of the county and disposition of the people, and then returned to Deep River to conduct more men to the protection of the British arms, and after two days rejoined the army at Chatham C. H." From this place the army marched to Ramsey's Mills, known now as Lockville, and encamped in

Glascock's old field, Cornwallis having his head-quarters in the same building now occupied as a hotel. Here they remained two days engaged in building a bridge across Deep River. While here several soldiers were shot by Thomas Riddle and a few other daring whigs concealed on the other side of the river. Some of our oldest citizens remember old "Tom Riddle," and delight to tell how he shot down the British soldiers, and his narrow escape from capture. Foraging parties were sent out in the surrounding country, and one party visited the farm of the father of Mr. Benjamin Johnson, near Rocky River, who is still living and distinctly remembers seeing them. He was then about twelve years old, so that this old man is now about 106 years of age! He is the oldest man now living in Chatham county, and yet is well preserved in body and mind. He was about thirty years old when he married, and his first child was born in 1801. He is the last remaining link connecting the past with the present, the only one of our citizens who was living at our nation's birth, and celebrates its centennial. Who of us will live to see the second centennial?

Cornwallis pushed forward the building of the bridge at Ramsey's Mills as rapidly as possible, for Gen. Greene was in hot pursuit, and had reached Rigden's ford, on Deep River, but had hesitated to cross, not knowing whether Cornwallis would cross Haw River and go down to the east bank of the Cape Fear, or cross Deep River and go to the west side. The location of Rigden's ford is incorrectly stated by Mr. Caruthers (on page 182, second series) as being forty miles above Ramsey's Mills, but Simms, in his "Life of Gen. Greene" (page 205), locates it correctly as being only twelve miles. After diligent inquiry and search, I am satisfied the latter is correct. At February Court, 1779, is the following entry: „Ordered, that (on complaint of John Wilcox) the dam on Deep river is a nuisance by overflowing his mill and destroying the ford at the Gulf contrary to the Act of Assembly, and that John Montgomery, John Thompson, Samuel Temples, Balaam Thompson and Isaac Brooks, Esqrs., enquire into the said complaint, and if they find the said dam to be a nuisance, that they direct Stephen Rigden to remove the same.” It is well known that John Wilcox had a mill at the Gulf, and this

dam of Stephen Rigden must have been below that point a short distance, and no doubt it was removed in obedience to the above order, for I am informed by Mr. Jordan Tyson, Sr., who is now in his eightieth year, and has always lived near there, that when a boy he well remembers seeing the remains of a dam and a mill about three miles below the Gulf, and just above the present Egypt bridge. I have found in our Court records repeated mention of the road to Rigden's, and in every instance corresponding to this location.

Early on the morning of the 28th of March General Greene hastened from Rigden's ford, hoping to overtake the British, but was just too late. The army of Cornwallis was the only hostile army that ever passed through Chatham, but in the late civil war the people of Chatham made a much more narrow escape than they imagine, for if Gens. Johnston and Sherman had delayed their armistice one day, our county would have been swarming with hostile troops. In the "Report of the Secretary of War in 1865-1866," page 1209, Gen. Sherman states that Major General O. O. Howard was to turn to the left by Hackney's cross roads, Pittsboro, St. Lawrence, and Asheboro'; Major Gen. H. W. Slocum to cross Cape Fear river at Avent's ferry, &c. Gen. Howard had reached Cary, and Gen. Slocum Holly Springs, *en route* for these points, when the truce for ten days was agreed on, followed by the surrender of Johnston's army on the 26th of April.

The only allusion to Gen. Greene's army which can be found among our records is mentioned in the inventory of the estate of Peter Dunken (Duncan?), "one ticket for 2 heifers Gen. Greene's army took," which ticket it is hoped was finally paid.

In those days no Superior Courts were held in this county, and not until 1806. The Superior Court was held at Hillsboro' twice a year, and jurors drawn from the surrounding counties composing that district. Our County Court ordered certain jurors from Chatham to attend every Superior Court at Hillsboro', and, it seems, paid their expenses, as the records repeatedly mention that such an one be allowed his ticket as juror at Hillsboro'. As a matter of curiosity, I have searched up an old bill of costs to show what "lawing" cost in those days. Richard Barry *vs.* Wm. Bynum, May Term, 1772. Warrant and all services, nearly \$20.

“1st Continuance,	£-	14 -
2nd do.,	-	18 -
Province Tax,	-	5 -
Subpœna,	-	8 -
Attorney’s Fee	1	5 -
Sheriff,	-	8 4
		<hr/>
	£3	18 4”

It is no wonder that the people complained so much of Court charges and costs, which was the main ground of complaint by the “Regulators.” These county courts were established in 1767, and were abolished in 1868, and have

generally been known as the people’s courts. The earliest lawyers who practiced in our courts were William Hooper, James Williams, Brumfield Ridley, John Kinchen, Alfred Moore, Ralph McNair, Henry Gifford and others. John Rand was the King’s Attorney, and at Aug. Term, 1774, “it is ordered that Wm. Dillard be allowed for making a clerk’s table and chair for the King’s Attorney one pound five shillings.” James Williams was State’s Attorney after Independence was declared, until he resigned at Feb. Term, 1785. He was very prominent during those days, and lived somewhere near Haw river, and a ford was called by his name. At Feb. Term, 1775, is the following entry: “Alfred Moore, Esq., came into Court and produced a commission from his Excellency, the Govenor, empowering him to practice as an attorney in the several courts in this province, thereupon he took the several oaths by law directed, and subscribed the test.” It is to be hoped that some person will at no distant day give a sketch of the Bar of Chatham County, and perpetuate its traditions.

In concluding this imperfect sketch of the earlier days of our county, I have deemed it not inappropriate to annex a brief statement of the military companies furnished by Chatham to the Confederate army, giving the number of men enlisted therein, the number who died from disease or were killed in battle, and the names of the officers who commanded them, so that this may furnish correct information to our future historian. For, though only eleven years have elapsed since the close of the war, yet it was only after careful and most searching inquiries that the *data* for this statement have been obtained from the surviving members of these companies. This allusion to the late war is not made for the pur-

pose of awakening your passions, or exciting your feelings, but merely to gather up materials for the history of our county. The first company organized in this county was the "Chatham Rifles," which immediately after the fall of Fort Sumpter tendered its services, and after drilling some time at Pittsboro' and receiving their uniforms and tents, on the 28th of May 1861, amid the tears and lingering adieus of the loved ones at home, took up their line of march for Raleigh. The officers were the following: Ross R. Ihrie, captain, and at the organization of the regiment elected lieutenant-colonel; John Manning, first lieutenant, and at the organization of the regiment appointed adjutant; Oscar M. Neal, second lieutenant; Wm. L. London, third lieutenant, who was elected first lieutenant to fill the vacancy occasioned by the promotion of first Lieut. Manning, and at the reorganization in May, 1862, was elected captain, and shortly thereafter assigned as A. A. General to Daniel's brigade, and was wounded at Malvern Hill, Gettysburg, and Winchester. Upon the promotion of Capt. Ihrie, John W. Taylor was elected captain of the company. The officers elected or appointed thereafter were as follows, viz: Clarence C. Poe, third lieutenant, who died of disease; Leonidas J. Merritt, first lieutenant, who was killed at Malvern Hill; James T. Rogers, 2d lieutenant, who was wounded at Malvern Hill, and disabled from duty; J. Thomas Eubanks, third lieutenant, who was killed at Spotsylvania, and W. H. H. Tyson, first lieutenant and afterwards captain. The company was at first Co. "M" of the 15th regiment, but in August, 1862, was transferred to the 32d regiment as Co. "I." They numbered at the outset one hundred and ten men, and the total number during the war amounted to 188 men. A number of the members of this company became officers of other companies. The losses of this company were two officers killed in battle and one died of disease, and twenty-one privates killed and thirteen died of disease, a total of thirty-seven. The "Chatham Guards" organized in May, 1861, were attached to the 26th regiment as Co. "E." Their officers were Wm. S. Webster, captain, who resigned; W. J. Headen, first lieutenant, who was elected to the legislature in 1862 and resigned; Bryant Dunlap, second lieutenant; S. W. Brewer, third lieutenant and afterwards captain, wounded

and captured at Gettysburg; Oran A. Hanner, third lieutenant, wounded and captured at Gettysburg; W. J. Lambert, second lieutenant, and E. H. McManus, third lieutenant. Total number of men belonging to the company altogether during the war was about 204. Losses, one officer killed, twenty-five men killed on the battle field, eight died of wounds, and thirty-four of disease, a total of sixty-eight. At the battle of Gettysburg this company lost, in killed and wounded, eighty men out of eighty-three who went into the fight. The "Chat-ham Boys" was organized 10th of June, 1861, and became Co. "G," 26th regiment. Their officers were W. S. McLean, captain, who resigned; John E. Mathews, first lieutenant, who died; George E. Underwood, second lieutenant, who resigned for disease; H. C. Albright, third lieutenant, afterwards elected captain, and killed at Petersburg; John R. Lane, elected captain and promoted to be colonel of the regiment, and wounded at Gettysburg; John A. Low, third lieutenant, died of wounds received at Bristow Station; A. R. Johnson, second lieutenant, and promoted to captain; Wm. G. Lane, third lieutenant and promoted to first lieutenant; and S. E. Teague, third lieutenant. The total number during the war was one hundred and seventy-five men. Losses were two officers killed and died from wounds, one officer from disease and thirty-four men, and twenty-eight men killed and died from wounds, a total loss of sixty-five. At the battle of Gettysburg they lost fourteen men killed and forty-three wounded. The officers of Co. "D," 35th regiment, were Hardy J. Lassiter, captain, who was killed at Malvern Hill; Robert E. Petty, first lieutenant, promoted to be captain, and then Major; James R. Gibson, second lieutenant, who resigned; C. A. Boon, third lieutenant, who resigned; G. W. Avent, elected captain; James A. Lasater, first lieutenant, and died from wounds; A. D. Burnett, second lieutenant; and Thaddeus Marks, third lieutenant. Their losses were two officers killed and died from wounds, and sixteen privates killed, and twelve died from disease, and six from wounds. Total number enlisted in the company 143 men. The officers of Co. "G," 48th regiment, were W. H. Jones, captain; A. G. Headen, first lieutenant, who resigned; J. A. Thompson, second lieutenant, who was wounded and disabled at Bristow Station; E.

L. Tysor, Jr., second lieutenant, and C. C. Clegg, elected second lieutenant to fill vacancy. Their losses were twenty-three killed and twenty-one died of disease.

The officers of Co. "E," 44th regiment, were R. C. Cotten, Sr., captain, who was elected lieutenant-colonel of the regiment and resigned; C. M. Stedman, 1st lieutenant, then captain, and major, and wounded at Bristow Station; James Philips, second lieutenant and afterwards captain, and died of disease; J. J. Crump, second lieutenant, promoted to captain, and wounded at Ream's Station; Richard C. Cotten, second lieutenant, and resigned; Sidney Tally, second lieutenant, and Nathan Hilliard, second lieutenant. Total number of enlisted men 150, of whom forty were killed and died of disease.

Co. "B," 49th regiment, was organized in April, 1862, and the officers were: E. H. Ward, captain, who resigned; John Bennet, 1st lieutenant, then captain, and died of disease; Young A. Oldham, second lieutenant and afterwards captain; and W. E. Oldham and James H. Horton, elected lieutenants to fill vacancies. One officer died of disease and twenty-two men, and ten men were killed. Number of men enlisted about 75. In Feb., 1863, this company was transferred to the 15th regiment as Co. "D." Co. "D," 61st regiment, was organized in Aug., 1862. Its officers were: N. A. Ramsey, captain; Wm. S. Ramsey, 1st lieutenant, who was wounded at Fort Harrison, losing his left arm; James Ellington, second lieutenant, who was killed at Fort Harrison; Richard C. Cotten, Jr., second lieutenant. This company lost thirty-five men, who were killed or died of disease.

Co. "E," 5th N. C. regiment of cavalry, was organized in the summer of 1862, and its officers were as follows, viz: Thomas W. Harris, captain; John L. Haughton, first lieutenant, who died of disease; Dewitt C. Harris, second lieutenant, who died of disease; N. F. Muse, Jr., second lieutenant, killed in 1864; and their vacancies were filled by Atlas P. Gilbert, Josiah Tysor and John F. Atwater. This company enlisted about one hundred and fifteen men; and lost two officers, died of disease, and one killed, and ten men killed or died of disease. Co. "G," 5th regiment of cavalry, was organized about the same time as Co. E., and had the following

officers: John B. McClenahan, captain, who resigned; Wm. McClenahan, first lieutenant, who resigned on account of bad health; Samuel Ellington, second lieutenant; Cicero Hadley, Jr., second lieutenant. The last company organized in Chatham was Co. "H," 70th regiment of "Junior Reserves" (as the seventeen-year-old boys were called). This company was organized in May, 1864, and numbered 87 boys, with W. H. Carter, captain; Carson Johnson, first lieutenant; J. J. Watson, second lieutenant; and W. Y. Fulford, third lieutenant.

In addition to these companies, Chatham furnished many men for companies organized in other counties. Co. "I," 6th regiment, enlisted fifty-seven men from Chatham, R. W. York being captain, and promoted to major, and T. M. Jenkins appointed second lieutenant. Of these, seventeen were killed or died of disease. About thirty men enlisted in a battery of artillery, commanded by Capt. A. D. Moore, who became colonel of the 66th regiment, and was killed near Richmond. Of these, six were killed and died of disease. Twenty joined Capt. Jennings' Co., in the 11th regiment, and ten Co. "G," 28th regiment. About twenty-five Chatham men enlisted in Co. "D," 3d cavalry regiment, and of them Thomas Brooks was first lieutenant and then captain, and D. M. White second lieutenant. Fifteen men joined Co. "I," 3d regiment of cavalry, and others were attached to various commands, which cannot now be ascertained. Lieutenant Joseph A. Hill was attached to the battalion on guard at Camp Mangum, and was killed at the battle of Kinston. John R. Haughton was in the Signal service, and died at Smithville of disease, and others of Chatham's sons fill unknown graves. It will thus be seen that Chatham county did her full duty, having furnished the Confederate army nearly two thousand of her best and bravest sons, of whom more than four hundred shed their life's blood and yielded up their precious lives in obedience to their country's call. Whether the cause in which they died was right or wrong, does not diminish our estimation of their noble deeds of daring, their unyielding devotion to duty, and their patient endurance of wounds and disease. Their cause is lost, but let us not lose the remembrance of their glorious deeds. They are dead, but let not their virtues die with them. For them no grateful country erects the monumental brass and

stone, with inscriptions of their heroism, but let their monument be the loving hearts of their surviving comrades, and on them be forever inscribed the memory of their virtues. And as their whitening bones now lie scattered on every battle field,

“Ye winds of Heaven, o'er them gently sigh,
And April showers fall in kindliest rain,
And let the golden sunbeams softly lie
Upon the sod for which they died in vain.”

And speaking of the late war, let it ever be remembered that the colored people, who were then slaves, remained true and faithful to their masters, and who, while nearly the entire white male population was absent in the army, quietly and industriously tilled the soil, and by their labor furnished the provisions to feed not only the unprotected women and children at home, but the soldiers in the armies. In their praise, be it ever said that no hand was raised in servile insurrection, but many went with their young masters to the “tented field,” and with them shared a soldier’s sufferings.

And now my task is done, yours not yet begun. My task was to gather up the traditions of the past; yours is to profit by them, so that you may be enabled the better to live in the future. If you should be aided in doing so by anything you may have this day heard, “then is my labor not in vain.” And now standing to-day upon the threshold of the new century of our national existence, and looking backward upon the old, let us exclaim:

“Oh! checkered train of years, farewell,
With all thy strifes and hopes and fears;
But with us let thy memories dwell,
To warn and lead the coming years.”