

Story of The Counties  
of North Carolina  
With Other Data

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## Story of the Counties of North Carolina

**T**HE first settlement in what is now North Carolina was made in 1585, and the first governor of what was then termed "Virginia," in honor of Queen Elizabeth, politely termed the "Virgin Queen," was Ralph Lane, appointed by Sir Walter Raleigh, who served from April, 1585, to June, 1586. The following year the colony which it was fondly hoped would be a permanent one, came over in charge of John White, as the second "Governor of Virginia," also appointed by Sir Walter Raleigh. He served in this capacity from April to August of that year and returned to England August 27, 1587, expecting to return with more colonists and with supplies. This second colony goes down into the utter mists of history as "The Lost Colony of Roanoke"; the first "City of Raleigh" having been royally planned to be on that island; where the only sign left of it is "old Fort Raleigh." It was 76 years before the next governor was appointed.

The first permanent white settlement in North Carolina was made probably as early as 1650, in the section eastward of the Chowan river, presently extending to and down Albemarle sound. A grant of lands to Roger Green was made in 1653, on Roanoke river and the south or west side of Chowan river, because he had secured the making of settlements there; settlements having already progressed on the north or east side of the Chowan. The earliest grant of which a copy now exists was made by the King of the Yeopim Indians to George Durant, March 1, 1662, for a tract of land on Perquimans river and Roanoke sound; now known as "Durant's Neck." The original deed was in existence in the court house at Hertford, Perquimans county, only a few years ago, but is now lost. The copy is in a deed-book. This grant set out that the eastern boundary of the tract adjoined one which the Indian King had before sold to Samuel Pricklove, but of the latter there is no record.

Many persons held grants prior to 1663 from the Governor of Virginia.

On the 20th of March, 1663, King Charles the Second of Great Britain granted "Carolina," which included what are now North Carolina, South Carolina and part of Georgia, to eight "Lords Proprietors:" Hyde, the Earl of Clarendon; the Duke of Albemarle; Lord Craven; Lord Berkeley; Lord Ashley; Sir George Carteret; Sir William Berkeley and Sir John Colleton. The King put in a section enabling persons who had grants from the Governor of Virginia to hold their lands. The Lords Proprietors also recognized the fact that lands had been purchased from the Indian inhabitants before their charter and that grants were issued and also the further fact that this early settlement had so grown that it needed a fully organized government of its own. This settlement in the Albemarle region is therefore the "Parent Settlement" of North Carolina and from it settlers spread southward. In 1690 a colony of Frenchmen left the James river settlement and went to the Pamlico sound section. In 1707 more colonists came from James river, also Frenchmen. In 1710 Germans under Baron de Graffenreid came over and settled at New Bern. In 1713 settlers had made their way as far southward as New river, in what is now Onslow county.

### THE EARLIEST COUNTIES

Albemarle was the first "county," and in October, 1663, the Lords Proprietors gave a commission to William Drummond as its "Governor," and he held that office until 1667. He then returned to Virginia, where in 1675 he took part in "Bacon's Rebellion," was captured and publicly hanged directly after he had been carried before Governor Berkeley, who was a Lord Proprietor.

On January 7, 1665, it was decided by what were called the "Concessions" that there should be eight "counties" in Carolina, each named for a Lord Proprietor, but only Clarendon, Albemarle and Craven were erected as separate governments. These county governments were ordered to be parts of an imperial government and Gov. Philip Ludwell in 1691 was directed to summon a "parliament" of 20 delegates.

### THE EARLY EXECUTIVES

The second executive, after William Drummond had served four years, was Samuel Stephens, likewise appointed by the Lords Proprietors, and then followed, beginning in 1670, Peter Carteret, John Jenkins, Thomas Eastchurch (who died before taking the oath), Seth Sothel (who on his way to "Carolina" was captured by pirates and detained several months), John Harvey, Philip Ludwell (governor of all Carolina, with headquarters at Charleston, governing North Carolina through a deputy, this plan being followed from 1689 to 1712), Thomas Jarvis, Henderson Walker, Robert Daniel, Thomas Cary, William Glover, Edward Hyde, Thomas Pollock, Charles Eden, William Reed, George Burrington, Richard Everard. Of these John Jenkins, Henderson Walker, William Glover, Edward Hyde, Thomas Pollock and William Reed held the office because they were Presidents of the Council. Samuel Stephens died while in office. The following held as deputy-governors: Thomas Jarvis, John Harvey, Robert Daniel and Thomas Cary.

Sir Richard Everard was the last of the governors under the Lords Proprietors, serving under them from July, 1725, to May, 1728. Edward Hyde was the first governor of North Carolina as a separate and distinct province, South Carolina having been set apart by the Lords Proprietors.

The other governors under the Crown were, after Everard, George Burrington, Gabriel Johnston, Arthur Dobbs, William Tryon, Josiah Martin, the last of the Royal "governors." Nathaniel Rice, Matthew Rowan and James Hasell acted as governors, as presidents of the council. Then came independence, with Richard Caswell as the first governor, from December 19, 1776.

### GOVERNORS OF THE STATE

The governors were elected by the legislature (called the General Assembly) from Caswell to Richard Dobbs Spaight, Jr., the latter retiring Dec. 31, 1836. The Constitution was changed in 1835 and the people began to elect the governor, Edward B. Dudley being the first to take office, December 31, 1836.

After Richard Caswell came the following governors:

Abner Nash, Thomas Burke, Alexander Martin, Samuel Johnston, Richard Dobbs Spaight, Sr., (who was killed by John Stanly in a duel at New Bern), Samuel Ashe, William R. Davie, Benjamin Williams, James Turner, Nathaniel Alexander, David Stone, William Hawkins, William Miller, John Branch, Jesse Franklin, Gabriel Holmes, Hutchings G. Burton, James Iredell, John Owen, Montfort Stokes, David L. Swain, Richard Dobbs Spaight, Jr., Edward B. Dudley, John M. Morehead, William A. Graham, Charles Manly, David S. Reid, Thomas Bragg, John W. Ellis, Henry T. Clark, Zebulon B. Vance, William W. Holden, Jonathan Worth, Tod R. Caldwell, Curtis H. Brogden, Zebulon B. Vance, Thomas J. Jarvis, Alfred M. Scales, Daniel G. Fowle, Thomas M. Holt, Elias Carr, Daniel L. Russell, Charles B. Aycock, Robert B. Glenn, William W. Kitchen, Locke Craig, Thomas W. Bickett, Cameron Morrison.

Some governors served several terms; Caswell 7; Martin 5; Johnston 3; Spaight, Sr. 3; Ashe 3; Williams 4; Turner 3; Alexander 2; Stone 2; Hawkins 3; Miller 3; Branch 2; Holmes 3; Burton 3; Owen 2; Stoke 2; Swain 3; Dudley 2; Morehead 2; Graham 2; Reid 2; Bragg 2; Ellis 2; Vance 3; Worth 2.

### COUNTIES FURNISHING GOVERNORS

The following counties have furnished governors:

Bertie, David Stone.  
 Bladen, John Owen.  
 Brunswick, Benjamin Smith, Daniel L. Russell.  
 Buncombe, David L. Swain, Zebulon B. Vance, Locke Craig.  
 Burke, Tod R. Caldwell.  
 Chowan, Samuel Johnston, James Iredell.  
 Edgecombe, Henry T. Clark, Elias Carr.  
 Forsyth, Robert B. Glenn.  
 Guilford, Alexander Martin, John M. Morehead.  
 Halifax, William R. Davie, John Branch, Hutchings G. Burton.  
 Lenoir, Richard Caswell.  
 Mecklenburg, Nathaniel Alexander, Z. B. Vance, Cameron Morrison.  
 Moore, Benjamin Williams.  
 New Hanover, Samuel Ashe, Edward B. Dudley.  
 Northampton, Thomas Bragg.

Orange, Thomas Burke, William A. Graham.  
Person, William W. Kitchin.  
Pitt, Thomas J. Jarvis.  
Randolph, Jonathan Worth.  
Rockingham, David S. Reid, Alfred Moore Scales.  
Rowan, John W. Ellis.  
Sampson, Gabriel Holmes.  
Surry, Jesse Franklin.  
Wake, Charles Manly, William W. Holden, Daniel  
G. Fowle.  
Warren, James Turner, William Hawkins, William  
Miller.  
Wilkes, Montfort Stokes.  
Wayne, Curtis H. Brogden, Charles B. Aycock.

### EXTINCT COUNTIES

*Albemarle* and *Clarendon* were the first two counties in North Carolina. The first cut into Albemarle, in 1672, created Chowan, Currituck, Pasquotank and Perquimans. Their names survive, but Albemarle and Bath are extinct. The other extinct counties are as follows:

*Bute*, formed in 1764, from Granville; named for the Earl of Bute, who had great influence with King George the Third and was so unpopular that an effigy of him was publicly hanged and burned at Wilmington October 25, 1765. In 1779 the county was abolished and became Franklin and Warren.

*Dobbs*, formed in 1758, from Johnston; named for Gov. Arthur Dobbs. Abolished in 1779, becoming Wayne and Lenoir.

*Fayette*, formed in March, 1784, from Cumberland by a strange error in the drafting of an act dividing Cumberland, making one half Moore, the other Fayette. In October the legislature repealed the act so far as Fayette was concerned and it existed only 6 months.

*Glasgow*, formed in 1791; named for Secretary of State James Glasgow, who in 1799 was convicted of gross frauds in grants of the public lands. Directly upon his conviction the county was abolished and from it Greene was formed.

*Tryon*, formed in 1762, from Anson; named for Gov. William Tryon. Abolished in 1779, and from it Lincoln and Rutherford were formed.



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## POPULATION FEATURES

The total area of the state is 48,740 square miles; total population 2,559,123; average number of persons to a square mile 52½. Only 9 counties, Buncombe, Gaston, Rowan, Mecklenburg, Forsyth, Guilford, Durham, Wake and Wilson have more than 90 to a square mile, while 4, Graham, Hyde, Dare and Tyrrell, have only 6 to 18. Fourteen of the 100 counties show a decrease in population since 1910, but in four cases this was due to reduction in area. Two new counties, Hoke and Avery, were organized since 1910.

The smallest county in area is Chowan, only 165 square miles (there being 640 acres in a square mile); the next smallest Mitchell with 213; Clay third with 220. The largest in area is Robeson, 990 square miles; next Bladen, with 976; third Columbus with 933. The smallest county as to population is Clay, with 4646; next coming Tyrrell, with 4849; third Graham, with 4872. The largest population is in Mecklenburg, with 80,695; next Guilford, with 79,272; third Forsyth, with 77,269.

The population of the state increased 352,836, or 16 per cent since 1910, while the average increase for the entire United States was 15 per cent. In 1820 the population was 638,829. In 1790, when the first U. S. census was taken, it was 393,751. The greatest increase in the state's population was in the period between 1870 and 1880, when it was 30 per cent; the smallest increase was between 1830 and 1840, when it was only 2 per cent.

The city populations are: Winston-Salem 48,395; Charlotte 46,338; Wilmington 33,372; Asheville 28,504; Raleigh 27,076; Durham 21,719.

Of the population 1,279,062 are males, 1,280,061 females, the latter being in the majority by 999. In the 10 years 1910-1920 the total population increased 16 per cent; males 16.4 per cent, females 15.5 per cent. Of whites there are 1,783,779, negroes 763,407; Indians (including those called Croatans) 11,924; Chinese 88; Japanese 24; Hindu 1. The white population increased 9.4 per cent. Of the white population only three-tenths of one per cent is foreign-born; numbering 7,099. This is by far the smallest proportion of foreign-born in any state.

### LOSSES OF STATE AND COUNTY RECORDS

The losses of state and county records, by fire and various other causes, is amazingly great. Up to the time that Raleigh was fixed as the permanent seat of government, there was one "capital" after another. Records were moved hither and thither and many were lost or damaged. The county court houses have suffered from 39 fires, as follows: Anson 1; Bladen 2; Buncombe 1; Cabarrus 1; Cherokee 2; Davidson 1; Davie 1; Gaston 1; Greene 1; Guilford 1; Harnett 2; Hertford 2; Iredell 1; Jones 1; Lenoir 2; Martin 1; Montgomery 1; Moore 1; New Hanover 3; Orange 1; Pasquotank 1; Pitt 1; Rockingham 1; Rutherford 1; Sampson 1; Swain 1; Washington 3; Watauga 1. Five of the fires were the work of incendiaries. One court house, that of Onslow, was blown away. Records from seven were taken out by troops or raiders and burned or damaged.

## Roll Call of Counties

### ALAMANCE

Area 492 square miles. Population 32,718. Formed in 1849 from Orange. Name Indian, old form Anamonsi; meaning unknown; some claim it to be derived from Allemania, because of the large number of citizens of German birth or antecedents, but there is little or no title for the latter idea. County seat Graham, named for General Joseph Graham of the Revolutionary army. Its first court house was built in 1849, of brick. It was remodeled in 1882, 1888 and 1889 and is yet in use. The will books and deed books begin in 1849 and there has been no loss by fire or otherwise.

### ALEXANDER

Area 289 square miles. Population 12,212. Formed in 1847 from Iredell, Caldwell and Wilkes. Named for William Julius Alexander of Mecklenburg. County seat Taylorsville, named for General, afterwards President, Zachary Taylor. The first court house was built in 1848, of wood, at Taylorsville. The present one, of brick, was built in 1902. Some of the clerk's records were burned by Federal troops in April, 1865, of Gen. Stoneman's brigade of raiders. The first book of wills does not begin until September 1, 1868. The records in the register's office are complete, the first deed book beginning June 30, 1847. The first register of deeds was Moses Austin, a cripple who lived in the country and rode in a sled drawn by an ox. His records, written with a goose-quill pen, are faultless. The first clerk of court was R. Partee Matheson.

### ALLEGHANY

Area 234 square miles. Population 7,403. Formed in 1859 from Ashe. Named for the Alleghany Indians; old spelling "Allegiwi"; meaning "a fine stream." County seat Sparta; named for a famous province or state in

Greece. In April, 1859, fifty acres of land at Sparta were presented as a town-site and location for the court house and jail, but as the War Between the States soon came on no court house was built until 1867, the site having been accepted in 1866. The county voted with Ashe until the latter year. During the period from 1859 to 1867 the courts were held in Shiloh Methodist church, four miles west of Sparta. The first court house was of wood and very small. In 1878 it was replaced by one of brick. This was used until 1910, when the one now in use was finished. There have been no losses of records by fire or other causes. The will books and deed books begin in 1847; covering territory then in Ashe.

### ANSON

Area 556 square miles. Population 28,334. Formed September, 1748, from Bladen. Named for Lord George Anson, an English admiral, who lived in South Carolina several years. When formed the county embraced all the territory from where Lumberton now is to the Mississippi river, including all of what is now Tennessee. County seat Wadesboro, for Thomas Wade, who frequently represented the county in the legislature. The first court house was built in 1755, at Mount Pleasant, 12 miles from the present Wadesboro. Up to that date the courts were held in various private houses and many records were lost as a result. In 1785 this first court house was torn down and removed to Wadesboro and set up as a residence. The first name of Wadesboro was New Town, or Newton, and the first court house there was of logs, at the intersection of two streets. It was so large there were driveways through it. In this building Bishop Asbury held a notable service. It remained in use until 1830, when the third court house was built, of brick. This was burned in 1868, and all the records destroyed except the original wills and the will books in the clerk's office and the deed books in the register's office. In 1914 the present court house, spacious and handsome, costing \$114,000, was built. The will books begin August, 1751; county court minutes (damaged by fire) 1771, only three of them remaining. The deed books begin 1751.

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**ASHE**

Area 427 square miles. Population 21,001. Formed in 1799, from Wilkes. Named for Governor Samuel Ashe of New Hanover, a Revolutionary patriot and one of the first North Carolina judges. County seat Jefferson; named for Thomas Jefferson, Revolutionary patriot, author of the Declaration of Independence of the United States; U. S. Secretary of State; President of the United States; founder of the University of Virginia. A tract of 50 acres was deeded to the county as a site for Jefferson and the court house in 1800. The first court house was of logs. It was probably built in 1800; also a log jail. The second court house was of brick, built in 1833, when a brick jail was also built. This jail was burned by Federal raiders in April, 1865. The first county court was held in an old log church. The first record of the county court bears date May, 1806; that of the first superior court March, 1807. The act creating the county is perhaps the shortest on record: "All that part of Wilkes county west of the extreme height of the Appalachian mountains shall be a separate and distinct county by the name of Ashe." The present court house was built in 1904.

**AVERY**

Area 238 square miles. Population 10,335. Formed in 1911, from Caldwell, Mitchell and Watauga. The hundredth county in the state and the last one created. Named for Col. Waightstill Avery, of Morganton, who was challenged to a duel by Andrew Jackson, afterwards President of the United States. County seat Newland; named for lieutenant-governor William C. Newland of Lenoir, Caldwell county. The "Old Fields of Toe" [the Toe river] was chosen as the site, it having been "granted" by the state to Col. Avery November 9, 1783. The county was named in his honor August 1, 1911. The court house and jail were finished in April, 1913. In average elevation above sea level Avery is the highest county east of the Rocky Mountains. The will books and deed books begin in 1912.

### BEAUFORT

Area 840 square miles. Population 31,024. Formed in 1705, from Bath. At first called Archdale, for Gov. John Archdale, which name it held until 1712. Named for Henry Somerset, Duke of Beaufort, who in 1709 became one of the Lords Proprietors of Carolina, having purchased the share in the Colony formerly owned by the Duke of Albemarle. County seat Washington, the first place in the United States named for George Washington and which, before its charter, was called Pea Town; incorporated in 1782. The first county seat was Bath, the oldest town in North Carolina; incorporated in 1705. In it is St. Thomas Episcopal church; the oldest in the state; built in 1724 and in regular use ever since. The first court house was at Bath, built in 1706, of wood. The second one was built early in 1756, at the same place, but it had not been paid for and the officials declined to occupy it until a tax had been levied to meet the cost, so a commission, composed of Michael Coutanche, Wyriot Ormond, John Barrow and Richard Dunston, a carpenter, was directed to view the building and report. The county court in December of that year accepted the building and it was occupied. In November, 1785, Washington became the county seat, Col. James Bonner, its founder, giving the land for the court house and jail. No court houses have been burned but some records were lost during the War Between the States. A deed book was taken by a lawyer to his office and that night the office, he and the book were burned. In this book were recorded over 200 deeds, and great search was made for the originals of which over 100 were secured and recorded. The first will book begins 1720 and runs to 1842, containing 400 wills, all copied from those on file. Court dockets begin in 1794. There are many losses and many gaps in the records. The first deed book begins in 1700 and the sequence to date is complete.

### BERTIE

Area 703 square miles. Population 23,993. Formed October 2, 1722, from Albemarle. Named for James and Henry Bertie, two of the Lords Proprietors, who together owned a share, or one-eighth, of Carolina. Coun-

ty seat Windsor, named for the castle in England near London, for many centuries the principal residence of the reigning monarch. The first court house, of logs, was built in 1724, at St. John's, now in Hertford county. In 1743 the second court house was built, at Wolfenden, two miles north of Windsor, of wood. In 1750 Windsor became the county seat and the third court house was built there, of brick, in 1767. This was used until 1887, when the present court house was built. Some additions and improvements have since been made. No fires have occurred in court houses, but there are wide gaps in the will records, for the first will book does not begin until 1761, and of those for the 39 earlier years there is not a trace. From 1761 to date there are no gaps and all the books in use are originals. The records of inventories and settlements of estates begin in 1727 and are complete to date. The county court records do not begin until 1760. The first deed book begins October 31, 1722, only 29 days after the county was formed, and to date there are no gaps, all being originals. The records include some of Bertie precinct; a part of the once vast county of Albemarle.

### BLADEN

Area 976 square miles. Population 19,761. Formed in 1734, from Bath. Named for Martin Bladen, a member of the British Board of Trade and Colonial Affairs. County seat Elizabethtown, named for Queen Elizabeth. The first court house, of wood, on the Cape Fear river, a mile from the present site, was built in 1738. It was burned in 1800 and nearly all its contents were destroyed. In 1802 the second one was built, on the present site. It was burned in 1893 and nearly all its contents were destroyed. In the same year the present one, of brick, was built. It was remodeled and enlarged, in 1920. The number of original wills is very small, owing to the two fires. The first will book begins in 1778 and runs to 1832. The next one begins in 1860; both being copies, the originals having been destroyed. There are no county court records. The first deed book begins in 1784 and is a copy. Efforts were made to copy damaged books but in many cases this was impossible, as they were charred. There are many gaps.

**BRUNSWICK**

Area 790 square miles. Population 14,876. Formed in 1764, from Bath and New Hanover. Named for the royal house of which Kings George 1st, 2nd and 3rd were members. County seat Southport; the most southerly seaport in North Carolina. Its original name was Smithville, the change being made in 1890. The first court house was at Lockwood's Folly, of wood, built in 1764. In 1805 Smithville was made the county seat, and the following year the second court house was built, of wood, on brick pillars, which yet remain. In 1848 the third court house, of brick, was erected and is yet in use. In March, 1862, the county court ordered the clerk of court and register of deeds to remove the records to a place of safety, a Federal attack being apprehended. No fires have occurred, but a good many records were destroyed by the Federal troops after the capture of Fort Fisher and the evacuation of Fort Caswell, January 15, 1865. The will books begin in 1763, and are complete, the deed books beginning the same year and being also complete. The court dockets begin in 1781; marriage register 1810.

**BUNCOMBE**

Area 639 square miles. Population 64,148. Formed in 1791 from Burke and Rutherford. Named for Col. Edward Buncombe of Tyrrell county, over the door of whose home was the inscription "Welcome all to Buncombe Hall." The home faced Edenton Bay and only an outbuilding now remains. Colonel Buncombe, mortally wounded and captured in the Battle of Germantown, Pa., died a paroled prisoner in Philadelphia and was buried in a churchyard there. County seat Asheville, named for Gov. Samuel Ashe. The first court was held in April, 1792, in the home of Col. William Davidson, on the south bank of Swannannoa river, half a mile from its confluence with the French Broad, and there Buncombe was organized. In 1793 Morristown was chosen as the county seat; named for Robert Morris, a noted Revolutionary financier, who owned 80,000 acres of land in western N. C. The first court house was of logs in the middle of the street, in the public square, near the present site, and in it the first court was held in



July, 1793. The name of Morristown was soon changed to Asheville. The second court house was of brick. It was burned in 1830 and many valuable records were destroyed. The third court house, a handsome one, of brick, was burned January 26, 1835. In 1867 a small one, of brick, was erected on the same site. In 1876 the present one was built. The first will book begins in 1831. The county court minutes begin in 1798, but there are many gaps. All the marriage bonds are missing. There are many gaps in all the records prior to 1831 except deeds. The first deed book begins in 1789.

### BURKE

Area 534 square miles. Population 23,297. Formed in 1777 from Rowan. Named for Dr. Thomas Burke, governor and member of the Continental Congress. County seat Morganton, named for Gen. Morgan of the Revolutionary army. The first court house was of wood, at Morganton. It was torn down and the present one erected in 1820. In February, 1865, Gen. Stoneman's Federal raiders threw nearly all the records out on the court house square and burned them. Only one early book was spared, a "tryal docket," 1792-1804. A minute book of the county court, 1835-1841, remains. No fires in the court house have occurred. In the clerk's office there are no wills older than 1865, and only a few earlier than 1869. Will book No. 1 is for 1865, and contains but a few pages. In the register of deeds' office the first deed book begins in November, 1860.

### CABARRUS

Area 390 square miles. Population 33,730. Formed in 1792, from Mecklenburg. Named for Stephen Cabarrus, of Edenton, speaker of the state house of commons. County seat Concord, named for the opening battle of the Revolution, Concord, Massachusetts. The first court house was of wood, built in 1795, and it was removed in 1835, the second one being of brick, occupied that year. It had a shingle roof and in 1876 caught fire from a burning dwelling and was destroyed, but most of the records were saved. In 1878 the present court house was built. The first will book begins in 1843, and since then the

series is complete. The earlier books were all burned. The county court minutes begin in 1793 and show that court was held in January of that year, at the home of Richard Russell, to divide Cabarrus from Mecklenburg. The trial and execution dockets begin in 1797. The first deed book begins in March, 1793, and the series is complete to date.

### CALDWELL

Area 471 square miles. Population 19,984. Formed in 1841. Named for president Joseph Caldwell, of the University of North Carolina. County seat Lenoir, named for General William Lenoir, of the Revolutionary army, whose home is in the county, at Fort Defiance. The first court house was built of brick at Lenoir, in 1843, and was used until the completion of the present one, built in 1906. There have been no fires and the records are complete. The first will book and the first deed book begin in 1841.

### CAMDEN

Area 220 square miles. Population 5,382. Formed in 1777 from Pasquotank. Named for Charles Pratt, Earl of Camden. County seat Camden, also named for him. The first court house was built in 1780 and is now a dwelling and inn. It was succeeded by the present one, of brick, built in 1847; quaint and pleasing in architecture. No fires have occurred in court houses, but many records have been lost. The first will book is lettered C and begins in 1815. Books A and B were taken by a clerk of court to his home and the latter and these books were burned that night. Book A began in 1777. The superior court records do not begin until 1869. The first deed book begins in 1777 and the series is continuous to date.

### CARTERET

Area 573 square miles. Population 15,384. Formed in 1722, from Bath. Named for Sir George Carteret, who later became a peer of England under the title of Earl Granville, and who was one of the Lords Proprietors. When in 1728 the other Lords Proprietors

sold their shares in Carolina to the King he refused to sell, so in 1744 an immense area along the northern part of North Carolina was laid off as his share, and was called "Granville District." It caused no end of trouble. He lost it by confiscation when the Revolutionary War began in 1776, brought suit in the United States courts to regain possession and in 1799 the supreme court decided against him, and thus ended his claims forever. County seat Beaufort, named for the Duke of Beaufort. From an early date the town was guarded by a fort, and in 1776 by Fort Hampton, of 8 guns, built by Capt. Gratiot. This was replaced by Fort Macon, named for Nathaniel Macon. The first court house was built at Beaufort in 1722 and was also the custom house. The second was built in 1767, the third in 1832. The latter was sold and the present one built in 1907. No fires have occurred and the various court houses were torn down to make way for better ones. The first will books are really D and E and do not begin until 1739, while Book A is for the period 1836-1861. In Books D and E are recorded all wills between 1739 and 1866 except those in Book A. The first deed book begins in 1719 and there is a sequence to date.

### CASWELL

Area 402 square miles. Population 15,759. Formed in 1777, from Orange. Named for General and governor Richard Caswell, of Kinston (Kingston); the first governor under the State Constitution. County seat Yanceyville, named for Bartlett Yancey, a noted public man of that section. The first court house was at Leasburg, while Person and Caswell were one county, and was of wood. The second, at Yanceyville, was also of wood, and was removed in 1858 to give place to the present one, of brick and stone, completed in 1860, and then and for many years afterward the finest court house in the state. No fires have occurred in court houses. During the "Reconstruction" period in 1870, the court house was occupied by the militia regiment commanded by Col. George W. Kirk of Tennessee. These troops piled all the records in one room, some were lost and others were damaged. The first will book begins in 1777 and is in the county court minutes. All the other wills are similarly recorded up to 1868, when the county court

system was ended by the new constitution of the state. The county court minutes are complete to that date. They carry also inventories of estates. The first deed book begins in 1777 and all are originals.

### CATAWBA

Area 408 square miles. Population 33,839. Formed in 1842, from Lincoln. Voted with Lincoln and Gaston until 1854. County seat Newton; named for Sir Isaac Newton, a famous English scientist. The first court house, built in 1844, is of brick and is yet in use. In 1905 wings, with modern vaults, were added. There have been no fires and no losses of records. The first will book begins in March, 1843. The first deed book begins in November, 1845.

### CHATHAM

Area 696 square miles. Population 23,814. Formed in 1770, from Orange. Named for William Pitt, Earl of Chatham, a devoted friend and supporter of the American colonists in the English parliament. County seat Pittsboro; also named for Pitt. The first court house was of wood and yet stands. It was half a mile from the present one and when Pittsboro was made the county seat it was moved in and converted into a dwelling. The second court house was of brick and very small and was removed to make way for the present one, which was built in 1882, of poor design. No court house has been burned but many records have been lost. The first will book begins in 1798 and contains also inventories of estates. The sequence is complete to date. Of the county court there is only one record, 1811-1816. The first deed book begins in August, 1771, and there is a sequence to date. The arrangement is awkward; the first set running from A to Z; the second AA to ZZ; the third BA to BZ; the fourth CA to CZ; and so on. The marriage bonds have all been lost.

### CHEROKEE

Area 454 square miles. Population 15,242. Formed in 1839, from Macon. Named for the Cherokee Nation, the most powerful Indian tribe in North Carolina. Coun-

ty seat Murphy, named for Archibald De Bow Murphey (not Murphy) of Orange county, the father of public education in this state, who is buried in the Presbyterian cemetery at Hillsboro. The first courts were held in a rented house. In 1841 the site for Murphy, 393 acres, was bought by the county. The first court house was built that year, of brick. It was burned in April, 1865, some days after Gen. Robert E. Lee's surrender at Appomattox, by Federal troops of a raiding party, but was at once rebuilt, the same walls being used. In December, 1892, it gave place to the third court house. The latter was burned in December, 1895, and its walls were utilized for the fourth court house, now in use, of brick and local marble, a beautiful structure, in 1896. The fire of 1865 destroyed the records in the clerk's office, but those in the register of deeds' office were saved. The first deed book begins April 6, 1836. After the fire of 1865 the wills were for a while recorded in a book in the office of the register of deeds. The first regular will book begins August 5, 1869.

### CHOWAN

Area 165 square miles. Population 10,649. Formed in 1672, from Albemarle. The latter was the first organized county in Carolina, probably organized by the assembly in 1666, the first minute docket of the court showing that the latter met in "called" session July 15, 1670, at the home of Samuel Davis, "for the County of Albemarle"; there being present Governor Peter Carteret, Lt. Col. John Jenkins, John Harudy, Maj. Richard Foster and Capt. Thomas Cullen, composing the "governor's council." A "general court" was held at Davis' house Sept. 27, 1670. Albemarle was composed of three "precincts," these being Carteret (embracing the territory now Currituck, Pasquotank and Camden); Berkeley (embracing what is now Perquimans and a little of Gates); Shaftesbury, later named "Chowan precinct" (embracing what are now Chowan, Gates, Hertford, Northampton, Bertie, Tyrrell, Washington and Martin).

Chowan is named for a tribe of Indians in that region, the Chowanoke; a Tuscarora word meaning "They of the South," or the "Southerners." County seat Edenton (first called "Queen Anne's Town"); site, 400 acres, bought in 1715 from Anna Peterson and named for

Charles Eden, governor of Carolina 1714-1722; and held its first name until 1726. The first church was completed in December, 1702, on the plantation now called "Hayes." The courts were held regularly, in private houses, there being no court house. There is an undated order by the "Grand Assembly," as the legislature was called, providing for the erection of a "Corte House 60 foot long, 20 foot wide, 9½ foot pitch; with a prison 30 foot long, in two roomes, the Corte House to have two roomes and an entry to the Secretary's office and one to the office of the "Clerke of the Assembly." Secretary of the Assembly Daniel Akehurst, Thomas Harvie [Harvey] and William Wilkinson were by the Assembly "assignated to agree with workmen to take care of the building of the Corte House." This must have been before 1706, as Wilkinson died that year. In 1712 the assembly ordered a court house and house for the assembly in the fork of Queen Anne's creek. There is no other record of this court house. The first one of which there is record was first used November 11, 1718. It was of wood and cost, as the accounts show, 287 pounds, 17 shillings and 6 pence. It was at Edenton and faced the site of the present court house; the jail being where the latter now stands. On the court house "lots" was a building called the "Councill Chamber," in which the assembly met. It was in rear of and near the jail, and was the first "legislative building" in North Carolina. There was also a "public warehouse" on the court house lots, at the water's edge on Edenton bay. The first court house was seen by Col. William Byrd, the Virginia member of the joint commissioners which ran the dividing line between that colony and this in 1729 and he said it had "the appearance of a common tobacco barn."

The present court house was certainly built after 1747 and most probably about 1767. It is by far the most curious and interesting of all in the state. Its court room and judge's seat or bench are unique. On the floor above is an "Assembly Room" where a famous ball was held at which the Prince of Wales danced with an Edenton belle in 1804; the Prince later being King William the Fourth of Great Britain. On this upper floor there is also a Masonic temple, in which is a chair used by George Washington as the Worshipful Master

of a Lodge. The building faces Edenton bay, the space between being the "Court House Green"; on the west side of the latter being the bronze teapot marking the site of the dwelling of Mrs. Elizabeth King in which the famous "Edenton Tea Party" was held October 25, 1774.

There are no records of fires in any of the court houses, yet the loss of records is great. There is a wealth of material, nevertheless. The first will book does not begin until 1760, that is 88 years after the county was formed. From that date to the present the series is complete. The county court docket begins in 1757, the county minutes in 1762, the superior court minutes in 1768. The first deed book begins in 1699, and the sequence to date is unbroken. Deed book No. 3 begins with a poem on its fly-leaf.

#### CLAY

Area 220 square miles. Population 4,446. Formed in 1861, from Cherokee; organized in 1864. Named for Henry Clay, of Kentucky, one of America's three greatest orators. County seat Hayesville; named for George W. Hayes, of the county, who secured its creation while in the legislature. An old wooden dwelling was used for a court house from 1861 to 1895, when it was removed and replaced by the present one, also of wood and very small. No damage by fire has occurred, but there are no records earlier than 1872. The first will book, begun that year, is yet in use. The first deed book begins in 1872.

#### CLEVELAND

Area 496 square miles. Population 34,272. Formed in 1841, from Lincoln and Rutherford. Named for Col. Benjamin Cleveland, noted partisan leader in the American army in the War of the Revolution, on the western North Carolina frontier, and one of the heroes of the Battle of King's Mountain. County seat Shelby, named for Col. Isaac Shelby of the Revolutionary army. The first two courts were held at the home of William Weathers, six miles southwest of Shelby and near Zion church; the house yet standing. He lived on the first floor and the courts were held upstairs, the house being a large one; chosen because it was almost precisely in the

centre of the county, on the old stage road between Lincoln and Rutherfordton and near a muster-ground at which the militia assembled. The first court house was built at Shelby in 1842, of logs, and was removed to give place to a brick one, built in 1874. The present one was built in 1905. The first will book begins in August, 1841. The first deed book begins on the same date. There have been no losses by fire or otherwise.

### COLUMBUS

Area 933 square miles. Population 30,124. Formed in 1808 from Bladen. Named for Christopher Columbus, the discoverer of the New World. County seat Whiteville, named for John White, the first governor of "Virginia," 1587 (now North Carolina), whose first capital was the "City of Raleigh," on Roanoke Island, in what is now Dare county, and who was the grandfather of Virginia Dare, the first child of English blood born in what is now the territory of the United States. The first court house was built of wood in 1809, on the present site, and in 1852 was replaced by a brick one. The latter gave way to the present spacious and handsome one, in 1918. No records have been lost by fire. The first will book begins in 1817, and there is a sequence to the present date. The county court minutes begin in 1818. The first deed book begins in 1810, and the sequence since is complete. The marriage bonds are all lost.

### CRAVEN

Area 660 square miles. Population 29,048. Formed in 1712 from Bath. Named for William Lord Craven, one of the original Lords Proprietors of Carolina. In 1705 Bath had been divided into three "precincts," one of these named Archdale, this becoming Craven. To it came the first settlers direct from Europe to this province. In 1707 French Huguenots made the first settlement, coming from a colony which had gone to Virginia in 1690. In May, 1710, a German colony, of "Palatines," arrived, and settled what the Indians called Chattawka at the junction of the Neuse and Trent rivers. In September, 1710, Christopher De Graffenried came with a Swiss colony and bought Chattawka from the In-



dians, changing the name to New Bern, he being from Bern, the capital of Switzerland. In 1713 he returned to his native country. In 1710 a colony of Welsh Quakers became settlers. De Graffenried had sold all his land holdings to Gov. Thomas Pollock. In 1766 the first school house established by the general assembly of the province was located at New Bern; it having begun in 1764, as the New Bern Academy. In 1770 the Royal governor, William Tryon, completed his "palace," as it was popularly termed, at a cost of \$100,000 in our money; the finest building in North or South America. For many years New Bern was the capital of the Province of North Carolina and the largest town. The assembly in 1723 made New Bern the county seat and passed a bill providing for the first court house there. That year the place was incorporated. Bath was the first incorporated place in North Carolina, Edenton the second. New Bern was the seat of the supreme court, superior court and court of chancery. The assembly met there for the first time in 1736. September 5, 1802, Gov. Richard Dobbs Spaight, Sr., was killed in a public duel in the town by John Stanly. The first will book begins in 1713 and there is a sequence to date. The court dockets begin in 1746, the records of land patents in 1772. The first deed book begins in 1739, so 27 years are missing. The earlier books cover six counties, including Beaufort, Carteret, Onslow and Pamlico. There is a sequence since 1739. Entries of vacant lands begin in 1728 and run in sequence to date.

### CUMBERLAND

Area 670 square miles. Population 35,064. Of its area 50 square miles are now in the Camp Bragg artillery camp reservation. Formed in 1754, from Bladen. Named for William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland, second son of King George the Third, who commanded the English troops at the battle of Culloden, in Scotland, in 1745, when the Scotch Highlanders suffered a crushing defeat; many of them later emigrating to America and settling in the upper Cape Fear section; their principal settlement being at Cross Creek, now Fayetteville; Cross Creek being so named because two streams actually crossed each other there. County seat Fayetteville, named for General the Marquis de Lafayette, of France,

who gave such great service with his army to America in the Revolution, and who in 1825 paid a special visit to the place thus named in his honor. The first court house was at the mouth of Lower Little river, near where the village of Linden now is. The second was at Campbellton, a mile east of Fayetteville, and on the Cape Fear river. The third, of brick, stood on Hay street, where the town market, now the community-house, now is. The present court house was built in 1893. No damage by fire has occurred in court houses, but some records have been lost; the will book from 1754 to 1784. In 1784 the legislature by an error in the wording of an act creating the counties of Moore and Fayette out of Cumberland entirely eliminated the latter and made the Cumberland court house serve that purpose for Fayette, but both counties went on and a few months later Fayette was abolished, having lasted only from June to October, 1784, the shortest life of any county ever created in the state. The first will book begins in 1797, and to date the sequence is unbroken. The original books are in use. The county court minutes begin in 1784 and include those for Fayette county. The first deed book begins in January, 1754, these including inventories of estates, and the sequence is complete to date.

### CURRITUCK

Area 292 square miles. Population 7,268. Formed in 1672 from Albemarle. Named for a small Algonquian tribe of Indians. County seat Currituck court house. April 22, 1723, Robert Peyton gave bond for 140 pounds to the "precinct" court of "Carotuck" to "build for ye precinct a Court House of 30 foot length, 18 foot weadth, with a fashionable overfitt framed work standing upon Sedar blocks, ye roof to be shingled with Sypress shingles, not less than eight foot pitch, to be completed by the last day of March next." Peyton failed to comply with the building specifications, went to Bath county and in 1725 was sued there by the "justices of Carotuck" for damages. But there is not even a tradition as to the court houses before the present one, which was built perhaps prior to 1800, though there are no records showing the precise date. The records are extremely meagre, and the

greater part have long been lost. There are no records prior to 1735; a few dating from that year being in a deed book, mixed with the deeds of the period 1780-1804. It is asserted that no court houses have been burned. The present one was enlarged in 1898 and vaults built. The first will book begins in 1761, and the sequence since to the present date is unbroken. The earlier deed books are badly mixed. Thus the first book begins in 1762, the second 1768, the third 1739, the fourth 1780, the fifth 1785. For many years deeds were not recorded until long after they were made.

### DARE

Area 377 square miles. Population 5,115. Formed in 1870 from Currituck, Hyde and Tyrrell. Named for Virginia Dare, born on Roanoke Island August 18, 1587; the granddaughter of Gov. John White; the first child of English parents born in what is now the territory of the United States. The first courts were held in 1871-72 in a dwelling house at Manteo. In 1873 the first court house was built, of cypress-wood, this being now in use as the Bank of Manteo. The present court house was built in 1904, of brick. It is the only one on an island in the United States except that on Key West, which is a county in Florida. There has been no loss of records by fire or otherwise, but some former officials kept them imperfectly. The first will book begins in 1871 and is yet in use. The first deed book begins in 1871.

### DAVIDSON

Area 569 square miles. Population 35,201. Formed in 1822 from Rowan. Named for Gen. William Lee Davidson of the Revolutionary army. County seat Lexington, named for a Revolutionary battle. The first court house, of brick, was built in April, 1823, and was burned in 1865, by the carelessness of Federal soldiers, who were occupying it as quarters. Many records were thus destroyed. The walls of this court house were used in the construction of the present one, built in 1868. In 1918 the latter was greatly improved. The first will book begins in 1823 and the set is continuous to date. The county court minutes begin in 1822 and are com-

plete to 1868. The first deed book does not begin until 1868, but since then the records are continuous.

### DAVIE

Area 258 square miles. Population 13,578. Formed in 1836 from Rowan. Named for Gen. William Richardson Davie, of Halifax, of the Revolutionary army; the founder of the State University; special envoy of the United States to the first French republic. County seat Mocksville. Named for the Mock family, of that section. The first court was held in 1836, in the Methodist church at Mocksville. The first court house was built of brick, in 1837. In 1909 it was succeeded by the second one, of concrete and brick. The upper story of this was burned in 1916, while court was in session. The damage was repaired and the building is now in use as a community house; the former court room being a movie theatre; the county engineer and the health officer having rooms. The present court house, a handsome one, was built in 1917-18.

### DUPLIN

Area 790 square miles. Population 30,223. Formed in 1749, from New Hanover. Named for George Henry Hay, Lord Dupplin, an English nobleman. In some way the name has come to be here spelled Duplin. County seat Kenansville; named for the Kenan family. The first county seat was called "Old Duplin Court House" and was three miles from Warsaw. After Sampson county was formed, in 1784, out of part of Duplin, the second court house of the latter county was a mile from Kenansville, at James' Tavern, or Jones Cross Roads. The third court house was of brick, at Kenansville, and was used until 1911, when it was removed to make room for the present handsome and spacious one. There have been no fires in court houses, but many records have been lost. The first will book does not begin until 1775 and records are very irregularly arranged, none covering the 10 years between 1835 and 1845, so that there is a total gap of 36 years, including that from 1749 and 1775. One deed book is in Sampson county, from 1763 to 1767. The first deed book begins in 1780 and there is a

sequence to date. In colonial days the county was also St. Gabriel's Parish.

### DURHAM

Area 312 square miles. Population 42,219. Formed in 1881 from Orange and Wake. Named for Dr. Bartholomew Durham, of the county. The first court house was built in 1885, of brick, and in 1916 was replaced by the present one, which is one of the largest and handsomest in the state. There have been no fires and no loss or damage of records. The first will book begins February 6, 1882. The first deed book begins July 1, 1881.

### EDGECOMBE

Area 509 square miles. Population 37,995. Formed in 1735, from Bertie. Named for Richard Edgecumbe, who in 1742 became Baron Edgecumbe, of Edgecumbe Hall; a lord of the English treasury. In some unknown way the spelling has here come to be Edgecombe. County seat Tarboro; or town on the Tar river (proper old spelling Tau, a Tuscarora Indian word meaning "dark water"). The first court house was built in 1736, of wood; the second in 1790, also of wood; the third in 1850, and now in use, having been remodeled in 1912. No fires are known to have occurred. The first will book begins in 1759, so evidently the earliest records have been lost. The earliest books existing are in the minutes of the old county court and with them are inventories of estates. The county court minutes are complete from 1759 to 1868. The superior court minutes are complete except for one book. The first deed book begins 1759. Many marriage bonds were lost during the War Between the States. During that period many, if not most, of the records were removed from the court. Twenty-five years ago the existing marriage bonds were found by the register of deeds in a box outside the court house.

### FORSYTH

Area 376 square miles. Population 77,269. Formed in 1849, from Stokes. Named for Col. Benjamin Forsyth, United States army, a native of Stokes, killed in battle on the Canadian frontier during the second war

with Great Britain, June 28, 1814. County seat Winston-Salem; the former named for Col. Joseph Winston of the Revolutionary army, the latter meaning "Peace," being the noted old Moravian town. The first court house was at Germanton, 18 miles from Winston-Salem. The second one was also at Germanton. The third was built at Winston-Salem in 1850 and was removed to give place to the present one, built in 1895. No fires have occurred. The records are perfectly preserved and well arranged. The first will book begins January, 1849, and there is no break. The first deed book begins in 1849 and the set is complete.

### FRANKLIN

Area 468 square miles. Population 26,667. Formed in 1779, from Bute. Named for Benjamin Franklin of Philadelphia, a famous American patriot of the Revolutionary period. County seat Louisburg, named for the city and fort in Canada captured by the British and American Forces in the war with France, 1757. The first court house was built of logs in 1781, on a hill in the eastern part of Louisburg near the present one. The first deed recorded conveys 100 acres of land for the Louisburg town-site, court house and school. This court house was weatherboarded, and was used until 1852, when the present one, of brick, was built. In 1856 it was enlarged by an addition. There has been no damage by fire. All the records in use are originals. The first will book does not begin until 1785 and the sequence to date is unbroken. The first deed book begins in 1781.

### GASTON

Area 363 square miles. Population 51,242. Formed in December, 1846, from Lincoln. Voted with Lincoln and Catawba until 1854. Named for associate justice William Gaston of New Bern, also a member of the United States Congress and writer of the state song, "The Old North State." County seat Gastonia. The first courts were held at the home of Henry Holland, half-way between Dallas and Long Creek church. Dallas was the county seat until August, 1909, when Gastonia was decided on by popular vote. The first court house at Dallas was a temporary wooden structure, used until a

brick one was completed in 1848. The foundation was of granite, the walls massive, but the roof was shingled and in 1874 fire destroyed all the wooden part. The important books were saved but most of the loose records were destroyed. The walls stood and were used in building the second court house, which is now standing and is a public high school. The third court house, at Gastonia, was completed in 1910. The first will book begins in August, 1847, and since then the sequence is complete. The first deed book begins in 1847 and there is no break.

### GATES

Area 359 square miles. Population 10,537. Formed in 1778, from Chowan, Hertford and Perquimans. Named for Gen. Horatio Gates of the Revolutionary army, who commanded at the capture at Saratoga, N. Y., of the entire British force. County seat Gatesville, also named for Gen. Gates. The early courts were held at the home of Kader Riddick, three miles from Gatesville. The first court house was built at the latter place in 1780. The present one was built in 1836 and in 1884 vaults were constructed. No fires have occurred. The first will book begins in 1779, and contains also inventories of estates. The sequence is complete to date. The first deed book begins in 1780 and the set is unbroken.

### GRAHAM

Area 298 square miles. Population 4,872. Formed in 1872, from Cherokee. Named for William A. Graham of Hillsboro; governor, U. S. Senator, Confederate States senator and Secretary U. S. Navy. County seat Robbinville; named for a family in the county. The county voted with Cherokee until 1883. The first meeting of the county commissioners was held in the store of King & Cooper, on Cheoah river, in October, 1872. The first court was held in the Baptist church at Cheoah, a mile from Robbinville, in March, 1873. In December, 1873, the commissioners chose Rhea Hill as the county seat, but soon changed it to Robbinville. In October, 1874, the first court was held in Robbinville, the court house, of wood, having been completed. In 1886 it was replaced by the present one, also of wood. Near the court

house is an immense boulder of stone near which Junaluska, a famous chief and warrior of the Cherokee Indians, is buried; a tablet being set in the boulder. No damage to records by fire has occurred. The first will book begins in 1872 and is yet in use. The first deed book begins in 1872.

### GRANVILLE

Area 503 square miles. Population 26,846. Formed in 1746, from Edgecombe. Named in honor of Earl Granville, prime minister under King George II, who owned an eighth of Carolina, as one of the Lords Proprietors, the story of his ownership being told in the sketch of Carteret county. County seat Oxford, named for a famous university and town in England. The first court house was at Harrisburg, two miles from the present one, and was used until 1820, when Oxford was chosen as the county seat and was given a charter and the second court house was built there. It was succeeded by the third one, built in 1838 and yet in use. In 1886 there was a fire, but little damage was done, only one book, a record of settlements of estates, 1875-1881, having been destroyed. The first will book begins in 1772, and all the first nine books carry inventories of estates and other matters. All are originals. In 1825 there begins the entry of wills in a special set of records of the county court, this continuing until 1868. The regular minutes of the county court begin in 1786 and are complete to 1868. The deed books begin in 1746 and are complete to date.

### GREENE

Area 252 square miles. Population 16,212. Formed in 1799, from Glasgow. Named for Gen. Nathanael Greene, who commanded the American troops at the battle of Guilford Court House, near where Greensboro now is. County seat Snow Hill, named because of the white sand of a swelling hill. The first court house was of wood, built in 1800, on the present site. It was in 1848 replaced by a very small one of brick. In 1876 the latter was burned, the sheriff being the incendiary and starting the fire in the office of the register of deeds, whose records were entirely destroyed except one will



book. The present court house was built in 1876 and in 1909 vaults for the clerk and register were added, of concrete, steel and brick. The first will book begins August 10, 1868. All the county court minutes and the marriage bonds were consumed by the fire. The first deed book begins June 12, 1875, but it is copied from deeds which by request were brought in by the holders after the fire.

### GUILFORD

Area 691 square miles. Population 79,272. Formed in 1770, from Rowan and Orange. Named for Francis North, Earl of Guildford, an English nobleman. In some unknown way the "d" in the name of the county has been dropped. County seat Greensboro, named for Gen. Nathanael Greene of the Revolutionary army. The first court house was built in 1773, of logs, at Guilford Court House, five miles northeast of the present town of Greensboro. It was repaired in 1786 and a frame front added. In 1788 Governor Alexander Martin authorized the change of the name of Guilford Court House to Martinsville, in honor of himself. In 1807 a brick court house replaced the log and wood one and in the same year it was decided to locate the county seat at Greensboro, the geographical centre of the county, and 42 acres of land were bought there, for \$98. Part of this was sold for building lots, for \$1,700, and the third court house, of wood, was built in 1809. In 1820 this was replaced by a brick one, which in 1857 was remodeled. It was burned in 1872 but the loss of records was slight. The next year the fifth one was built, on the same foundation. In 1903 this was enlarged and vaults added. In 1918 this site was sold for \$170,000 and May 22 work began on the sixth court house, by far the largest and finest in the state, costing \$600,000, and it was completed in 1919. The first will book begins in 1799 and there is a complete set to date. All are originals and are in use. The county court records begin in 1798 and are complete to 1868. The first deed book begins in 1771 and the set is complete to date.

### HALIFAX

Area 676 square miles. Population 43,766. Formed in 1758, from Edgecombe. Named for George Montagu Dunk, Earl of Halifax, president of the British Board of Trade, which controlled the American colonies before the Revolution. County seat Halifax, also named for the Earl. The first court house was built in 1759 on a site a little north of the present one. The first jail, near this court house, yet stands and in it the husband of the noted Flora McDonald, General Allan McDonald, was imprisoned after his capture at the battle of Moore's Creek, in what is now Pender county, in February, 1776. In 1847 this first court house was torn down and the second was built, on the present site. The office of the clerk of court was in a small separate building, which yet remains. The second court house was torn down in 1910 to give place to the present handsome structure. The first will book begins in 1759 and from that date to the present there is a complete series. The county court minutes begin in 1837 and run to 1868. There are many old records; most of these in the old clerk's building. The first deed book begins in 1723 with "Bertie Precinct," and the records are complete to date.

### HARNETT

Area 588 square miles. Population 28,313. Formed in 1855, from Cumberland, and voted with the latter until 1865. Named for Cornelius Harnett of Wilmington, a noted Revolutionary patriot; president of the Provincial Council, head of the Committee of Safety, delegate to the Continental Congress, author of the Halifax Resolves of April 12, 1776. County seat Lillington; named for Gen. Alexander Lillington of the Revolutionary army. The first court was held in 1855 at Summerville Academy, two miles northeast of Lillington, and it was then named Toomer, in honor of Justice Toomer of the supreme court, a native of Cumberland. A jail was built, of brick, but the academy was used for the courts until 1866, when Lillington was made the county seat and the first court house was built there, of wood. In October, 1892, it was burned by an incendiary and all the records in the clerk's office were destroyed and the first six deed books in the register's office. In 1893 the

second court house was built, also of wood, and this was entirely destroyed in February, 1894. This fire was also the work of an incendiary. The present court house, of brick, was built in 1898. The first will book begins in December, 1892, the first deed book in 1877.

### HAYWOOD

Area 546 square miles. Population 23,496. Formed in 1808, from Buncombe. Named for John Haywood of Raleigh, State Treasurer 1787 to 1827. When formed comprised all the territory west of Buncombe to the Tennessee line. Col. Robert Love, member of the legislature for Buncombe, introduced the bill to create Haywood and this became law December 23, 1808. March 29, 1809, the first court was held, at Mt. Prospect, near Waynesville, with Robert Love as its first clerk. The county officers were quartered in private houses and prisoners were sent to Buncombe jail. For several years there was no superior court, but the county sent six grand jurors to Buncombe. Colonel Love suggested the name of Waynesville for the county seat, in honor of Gen. Anthony Wayne, a daring officer of the Revolution, under whom he had served, but not until 1811 does the name appear in the court minutes. In December, 1812, the first court house and jail were finished, the court house being of wood. The latter was replaced in 1844 by a brick one, and this, two blocks west of the present site, is now used as a garage. The third court house, built in 1884, is yet in use. No fires are reported in the court house, but the jail was burned by Col. Kirk's Federal raiders May 11, 1865, the day after the last fight of the war in North Carolina occurred in the suburbs of Waynesville, on the grounds of the White Sulphur Springs. The first will book begins 1829; one will dating from 1819. There is a gap from 1846 to 1866. There are only two minute books of the county court, beginning 1849. The first deed book begins March, 1809, and there are no gaps.

### HENDERSON

Area 358 square miles. Population 18,248. Formed in 1838, from Buncombe. Named for Chief Justice Leonard Henderson, of the supreme court of North Carolina. County seat Hendersonville, named for the same

personage. Judge Mitchell King of Charleston, S. C., gave 56 acres for a site. The first court house was built in 1840, a rough wooden structure, and was replaced in 1845 by a brick one, which was used until 1904, when the present one was finished. In April, 1865, some of the equity records in the clerk's office were destroyed by Federal raiders, but with this exception the records are intact. There has been no fire. The first will book begins in 1842, the first deed book in 1841. The marriage records for a period of 20 years are missing.

### HERTFORD

Area 341 square miles. Population 16,294. Formed in 1759, from Bertie, Chowan and Northampton. Named for Francis Seymour Conway, Marquis of Hertford, an English nobleman. The word means the "ford of the deer," (the latter being called a hart or hert). County seat Winton, named for the De Winton family of England. There are no known facts as to the first court house. The one in existence in 1832 was burned by a man who wished to destroy an incriminating document in the clerk's office, but the clerk lived at Murfreesboro and there kept his most important records. The firebug was discovered, tried and publicly hanged on the court house grounds. In 1862 in a battle on land and water between Federal and Confederate troops the court house and most of the records were burned by shells from the cannon. The register of deeds lost all the early deed books except one. The clerk still kept his important records at his home in Murfreesboro. The fire of 1862 which thus destroyed the court house consumed every other building in Winton except a log cabin. The will books do not begin until 1830 and run complete to date. The first deed book begins in 1862, but the set to date is not complete, as six are missing.

### HOKE

Area 417 square miles, of which 138 are now in the Camp Bragg (U. S. artillery camp) area. Population 11,722. Formed in 1911, from Cumberland and Robeson. Named for Major General Robert F. Hoke, C. S. A., a native of Lincolnton; the officer chosen by Gen. Robert E. Lee to succeed him in command of all the Confederate ar-

mies in case Lee was disabled from any cause. General Hoke and his brigade captured Plymouth, N. C., from the Federal troops, taking as prisoners Brig. Gen. Wessels and the entire garrison, and for this notable victory received the thanks of Congress and was made a major-general. County seat Raeford; named for the MacRae family. Court house built in 1912. The will books and deed books begin in 1911.

### HYDE

Area 617 square miles. Population 8,386. Formed in 1705, from Bath, and called Wickham until 1712. Named Hyde in honor of Gov. Edward Hyde of North Carolina, a grandson of the Earl of Clarendon, and one of the Lords Proprietors of Carolina. The earl was also a cousin of Queen Anne of Great Britain. The first court house was at Woodstock, in what is now Beaufort county; the second at Germantown, in what is now Currituck; the third at Lake Landing, in Hyde; the fourth at Swan Quarter, the present county seat, named because of the multitude of swans, a large game bird. The last court house was built in 1850, and enlarged in 1878 and 1903. No fires have occurred in court houses but many records have been lost. The first will book does not begin until 1764, and there is a complete set to date. Many of these books contain also accounts and settlements of estates. The deed books begin in 1736, originals being in use up to 1783, the set complete save that one book (1824-26) was taken by a lawyer to his home and was there accidentally burned. There is a grant book from 1782 to date.

### IREDELL

Area 588 square miles. Population 37,956. Formed in 1788 from Rowan. Named for James Iredell of Edenton; a leader in urging adoption of the U. S. Constitution, 1788-89; associate justice U. S. supreme court. County seat Statesville—the "town of the state." The first courts were held in a house on the farm of William Duffy, two miles from what is now Statesville; the latter being then known as Fourth Creek Meeting-house. A map of 1773 shows 196 families living in ten miles of this church, which was so located because of several fine springs. In

1789 the legislature fixed the county seat on the lands of William Sloan, now Statesville, and in 1790 a log court house was built on the public square, with a log jail near by. These in 1819 were replaced by brick buildings, the court house, on the same location, being handsome. In December, 1854, fire, due to the overturning of a lamp in a store, swept away all the business houses, except one wooden one, and also the court house. In 1856 the third court house was completed. In 1899 its accommodations were so deficient that a jury had to meet in the snow and the county commissioners were indicted by the grand jury. They acted with great quickness and that year built the fourth court house, of brick and granite, and this is yet in use. There have been no losses of records by fire but many in other ways. The first will book begins 1807, and there is a complete set. The first deed book begins in 1788 and the series is unbroken.

### JACKSON

Area 494 square miles. Population 13,396. Formed in 1851, from Haywood and Macon. Named for Andrew Jackson, born in what was then Mecklenburg but is now Union, in a few hundred yards of the South Carolina line; a noted general of the U. S. army, who won the battle of New Orleans; twice president of the U. S. County seat Sylva. The first county seat was Webster. The first court house was built there in 1855. Webster was named for one of the three most famous American orators, Daniel Webster. The first courts were held in a rented house, of wood, from 1851 to 1855. In 1913 Sylva was made the county seat, and the court house now in use was built there; one of the most unique and imposing in the state; on a mountain side and reached by a triple flight of stairs, on one of the two landings being the county monument to its Confederate soldiers. There have been no fires or losses of records. The first will book and the first deed book begin in 1851.

### JOHNSTON

Area 807 square miles. Population 48,998. Formed in 1746, from Craven; parts of Duplin and Orange being added later. Named in honor of Gabriel Johnston, gov-

ernor of North Carolina 1734-52. County seat Smithfield; named for John Smith, the first governor of Virginia, 1607. The first court house was in the eastern suburb of what is now Clayton and was built of wood in 1747. In its courtyard a negro woman who had poisoned her master was publicly burned at the stake. The second court house was at Smithfield. Prior to 1760 jurors from Johnston were sent to Craven. In April, 1865, the Federal troops advancing on Raleigh threw out of the court house a number of records, but very few were lost. There have been no fires. The first will book begins in 1760. The entries are very irregular and not in any sequence up to 1868, but the set is complete. The minutes of the county court begin in 1784, but several books are missing. The marriage bonds are indexed and copied in a special book, from 1760 to 1868. The first deed book begins in 1759 and the set is complete except for the year 1800.

### JONES

Area 417 square miles. Population 9,912. Formed in 1778, from Craven. Named for Willie Jones of Halifax, president of the Council of Safety during the Revolution, and who brought about the rejection of the Federal Constitution by the State Convention at Hillsboro in 1788. County seat Trenton, named for the town and battle of that name in New Jersey. The first court house, of wood, was built in 1780. It was succeeded by a brick one, which in 1862 was burned during a battle between Federal and Confederate troops. In 1865 the present one, of wood, was built. Near it a small brick building contains the offices of the clerk and the register of deeds. The first will book begins in 1770. There is a gap of six years, between 1807 and 1813, and another between 1866 and 1869. The first deed book begins in 1770 and the set is complete. Only two books of county court minutes remain. There are many gaps in the court records, the oldest beginning 1826.

### LEE

Area 261 square miles. Population 13,400. Formed in 1907. Named for Gen. Robert E. Lee, the most famous hero of the Southern Confederacy. County seat

Sanford; named for a civil engineer who surveyed the Seaboard Air Line railway in that section. The corner stone of the court house, a spacious and handsome building, was laid July 4, of that year, at a point midway between Sanford and Jonesboro. In 1908 the building was accepted. The first will book begins February 18, 1908. The first deed book begins on the same date.

### LENOIR

Area 390 square miles. Population 29,555. Formed in 1791, from Craven and Dobbs. Named for Gen. William Lenoir of the Revolutionary army. County seat Kinston (properly spelled Kingston—the King's Town). The first court house, of wood, was built there in 1792. It was replaced by a brick one in 1845. The latter was set on fire by a clerk of the court in 1878, and nearly all the records were destroyed. The few saved were removed to a leased store near by and a few nights later the same man burned this building and of all the records only four books remain, none of any value or interest. The incendiary was sent to the penitentiary. The present court house was built in 1880. The first will book and the first deed book begin late in 1878.

### LINCOLN

Area 299 square miles. Population 17,862. Formed December 17, 1779, out of part of Tryon; the latter county having been abolished. Named for Gen. Benjamin Lincoln of the Revolutionary army. County seat Lincolnton, named for the same person. The first county seat was Tryon Court House. In 1783 court was held at the home of Christian Mauney, the jail being an upper room; this place being 9 miles from Lincolnton. In 1784 court was held at the homes of Nicholas Freitag (Friday) and Henry Dellinger, at the latter place the upper room of the "spring house" being the jail. In 1785 Lincolnton was made the county seat, commissioners "entering" 300 acres of vacant land as the town-site and reserving an acre of this for the court house and jail. The first court house and jail were built on this, of logs. In 1788 this court house was replaced by a frame one, filled in between the planks with earth. Its



exterior was painted a vivid red and it was greatly admired, being known in all that region as the "red court house." In 1810 it was removed and converted into a dwelling and the third court house was built. This was in 1853 succeeded by a building of most pleasing architecture, of brick and stone, with a stately cupola covered with lead. The fourth court house, large and spacious, was built in 1921, of concrete and stone. Though no fires have occurred in court houses there has been a large loss of records, notably of will books, all prior to 1824 having gone without a trace. But the original wills are preserved and have recently been copied, beginning in 1769, there being 455 of them prior to 1824. Since the latter date the sequence is complete. The minutes of Tryon county court begin December 5, 1769, with the "charter" of that county. The first clerk of court was Ezekiel Polk, grandfather of President James Knox Polk. The first deed book for Tryon begins April 10, 1769, and the first for Lincoln in 1779. The sequence is complete to date.

### MACON

Area 513 square miles. Population 12,877. Formed in 1828, from Haywood. Named for Nathaniel Macon, of Warren county, speaker of the United States House of Representatives, U. S. senator, president of the State Constitutional Convention of 1835. County seat Franklin; named for Jesse Franklin. It is on the site of the "Sacred City" of the Cherokee Indians, marked by a great mound. The first court house was built of wood at Franklin in 1828, and was replaced by a brick one in 1868. No fires have occurred, but many records are lost or damaged. The first will book begins in 1870, there being no trace of the earlier ones. The first deed book begins in 1832.

### MADISON

Area 436 square miles. Population 20,083. Formed in 1851, from Buncombe and Yancey. Named for James Madison, fourth President of the United States. County seat Marshall, named for Chief Justice John Marshall, of the U. S. supreme court. The first name of Marshall was Lapland. The legislature directed that the county

seat should be named Marshall, but to be not nearer than 2 miles of the French Broad river. The commissioners chose Jewel Hill or Walnut and the courts were held in a log house there until late in 1859. Yet in 1853 Marshall was chosen and David Vance gave 50 acres for the town-site. In 1856 a brick court house and jail were ordered to be built. They were not finished until 1857. In 1907 the court house was torn down and the present one built, on the same site. There have been no fires or losses of records. The first will book begins in 1851 and so does the first deed book.

### MARTIN

Area 438 square miles. Population 20,828. Formed in 1774, from Halifax and Tyrrell. Named for Josiah Martin, the last Royal governor of North Carolina. The name would have been changed, no doubt, but for the great popularity of Alexander Martin, who was governor in 1782. In Colonial times the county was "St. Martin's parish." County seat Williamston; named for William Williams, a prominent citizen of that section. Before it was thus named it was a little hamlet called Skenarky. The first court house, built in 1775, was of wood. The second was built in 1835. In 1884 it was burned, but of the records in the clerk's office only the special proceedings docket and the judgment docket were destroyed, while none were ruined in the register of deeds' office, though some were slightly damaged. The first will book does not begin until 1774. The first five books are in the minutes of the county court and the set to date is complete. The first deed book begins in 1722 and the set is complete. All the marriage bonds are lost.

### MCDOWELL

Area 443 square miles. Population 16,763. Formed in 1842, from Burke and Rutherford. Named for Col. Joseph McDowell, of the Revolutionary army. County seat Marion, named for Gen. Francis Marion of S. C., a notable and daring officer of the Revolutionary army. The first court was held in a rented building, used until the first court house was finished in 1844, the latter being of brick and still in use. There have been no

fires or serious losses of records. The first will book and deed book begin in 1843.

### MECKLENBURG

Area 597 square miles. Population 80,695. Formed in 1762, from Anson. Named for Duchess Charlotte of Mecklenburg, Germany, the wife of King George the Third of England. County seat Charlotte, named for the same person. The first court house was built in 1763, in Charlotte, at the intersection of Trade and Tryon streets. The second one was in a block of this location and was built in 1836 and torn down in 1897 and replaced by the present one. No fires have occurred in court houses and no loss of records. The first will book begins in 1763 and there is no break to date. The county court minutes begin in 1763 and each of the ten books is indexed. They run complete to 1868 and so do the execution dockets. The deed books begin in 1763 and are complete to date. Each of the old registers of deeds put his name and the number on the back of the books during his term of office; Robert Harris 1763-92, nine books, four bound in one volume and five in the other; John McKnitt Alexander and W. B. Alexander 1792-1808; W. B. Alexander 1808--36; F. M. Ross 1836-70.

### MITCHELL

Area 213 square miles. Population 11,278. Formed in 1861, from Yancey, Watauga, Caldwell, Burke and McDowell. Voted with Yancey until 1868. Named for Dr. Elisha Mitchell of the faculty of the University of North Carolina, who first ascertained the height of Mt. Mitchell, the loftiest mountain east of the Rockies, and in one of his explorations of it with a party of his students lost his life. His burial-place is the summit of the mountain. County seat Bakersville, for a family of that locality. The first county seat was Calhoun. In October, 1861, fifty acres were conveyed "for the court house, jail, public school and graveyard and sites for Episcopal, Presbyterian, Methodist and Baptist churches." Calhoun was near Spruce Pine. It was later called Childs ville, for Childs Bros., who conveyed the site. People never liked the location. In 1866 Davis was made the county seat. In 1868 the legisla-

ture changed its name to Bakersville. The first court house was a small one, of brick, built in 1868, at Bakersville. The present one, of concrete, was built in 1907. The clerk of court and register of deeds appear to have shared their office together (or perhaps there was only one office) for a number of years, as the wills were recorded in the office of the register, and prior to 1886 the records in the clerk's office are very scant. The first regular will book therefore begins in 1887 and is yet in use. The first deed book begins in 1861, and ends in 1869. In the earlier ones all sorts of items are mixed, including wills, deeds, court records, marriages and reports of various sorts, the record of marriages beginning in July, 1861. None of the other records except the first deed book go back further than 1869. There are some skips during the Civil War period, during most of which conditions were greatly unsettled in this then new border county.

### MONTGOMERY

Area 498 square miles. Population 14,607. Formed in 1778, from Anson. Named for General Richard Montgomery of the American army, who was killed in the battle of Quebec, in 1775, while attempting to conquer Canada. His nephew, Rev. Richard Montgomery Bostic, aged 92, lives at Biscoe, in the county. County seat Troy, named for the ancient capital of the Trojans, which was captured by the Greeks. The first court house was at Lawrenceville, 12 miles from Troy. It was burned in 1835 and some of the clerk's records and most of those of the register of deeds were destroyed. A rented building was used until the second court house was built, at Troy, in 1855. In 1886 it was torn down and replaced by a large wooden building of queer design. In 1904 a brick annex, with vaults, was constructed. This court house was replaced in 1921 by the third one, very handsome and spacious, of concrete and stone, costing \$150,000. The first will book begins in 1843; those before that date, a period of 65 years, having been burned or lost in other ways. Since 1843 the sequence is complete. The minutes of the county court do not begin until 1827. All the marriage bonds were destroyed. The first deed book begins in 1838, thirteen earlier ones having been destroyed.

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MOORE

Area 639 square miles. Population 21,388. Formed in 1784, from Cumberland. Named for Capt. Alfred Moore, of Brunswick county, a Revolutionary officer and later an associate justice of the supreme court of the U. S. County seat Carthage, named for a city destroyed by the Romans, after a famous defense by the Carthaginians. The first court house was built in 1786, of wood. It was replaced by the second one in 1821. The latter was burned in 1883 and all the records in the clerk's office except a few were destroyed. The present court house, of brick, was built in 1884. The first will book begins in 1784, in the minutes of the county court, and there is no break in the set to date. The other county court minutes were all burned, and so were the marriage bonds. The first deed book begins in 1788.

## NASH

Area 586 square miles. Population 41,061. Formed in 1777 from Edgecombe. Named for Gen. Francis Nash of the Revolutionary army, who was mortally wounded while fighting at the battle of Germantown, Pennsylvania, under command of Gen. Washington; a noble arch having been erected on the battleground of Guilford Court House by the United States at a memorial of him. County seat Nashville, also named for Gen. Nash. The first court house was built in 1784, near the present site, and was removed in 1833, to make place for the second one, which in 1921 was replaced by the third, of concrete and brick. There have been no fires and but few losses of records. The first will book begins in 1780, also the county court minutes, and the first deed book begins in 1784.

## NEW HANOVER

Area 216 square miles. Population 40,620. Formed in 1729, from Bath, being the last taken out of that county, which with Albemarle and Clarendon formed North Carolina until 1672. Named for the Kingdom of Hanover, in Germany, the Elector of Hanover becoming the King of England, with the title of King George the First. County seat Wilmington, named for Spencer Compton, Earl of Wilmington, a British nobleman and a devoted

friend and patron of Gabriel Johnston, governor of North Carolina, the latter naming the town for him. The first court house was built about 1730, was oval in shape and was at the intersection of Front and Market streets; about 50 feet across Front and about 75 feet across Market. It is shown in Sauthier's map of 1769, as then standing. It was of brick, painted bright yellow, and was partially burned April 2, 1798, and again in 1819 and some of the books and papers were greatly injured by water as well as by fire, but not destroyed. The early wills and deeds were mixed together and all kept in the office of the register, this fact facilitating their hasty removal. In 1840 there was a third fire and again the books and papers were saved, but in a damaged condition. That year the second court house was built, on Princess street, between Second and Third streets. By an act of the legislature in 1756 court houses were to be used for all public purposes, but about 1844 the county court ordered that this one be not used for political meetings, but this was overruled by the state. Late in the War Between the States all the important records in the court house were sent to Lumberton and stored, for safekeeping from possible destruction by the army of Gen. Sherman and some were burned. In 1884 the court house was in great danger from a fire which destroyed the jail near by. In 1892 the present court house was built on what had been the city "pound," in which stray animals were kept, the site being a boggy meadow, and great numbers of piles had to be driven to support the building. The damaged records have been copied as far as possible, but in some cases could not be read, so there are skips. The first will book begins in 1798 and from that date to this there are no gaps. The county court minutes are incomplete. The first deed book begins in 1731 and the set is complete to date. The marriage bonds, save a few score, were destroyed.

### NORTHAMPTON

Area 504 square miles. Population 23,184. Formed in 1741, from Bertie. Named for George, Earl of Northampton, a British nobleman, father of Spencer Compton, Earl of Wilmington. County seat Jackson, named for Gen. Andrew Jackson of the U. S. army, and President of the U. S. The first court house, built in 1742, was of

wood. In 1825 a brick building was erected for the offices of the clerk, register and sheriff. In the latter during the slave insurrection headed by Nat. Turner, a slave, in the adjoining county of Southampton, Virginia, the militia, called out for defense, were quartered, to prevent the expected march of the slaves into North Carolina. It was ordered that an alarm was to be given only by the firing of a musket. A militiaman's gun was accidentally discharged, the bullet striking the ceiling, and the people of the town were thrown into a panic. In 1890 another building, of brick, with modern vaults, was erected near the court house, for the clerk and register, the court house being regarded as unsafe from fire. The court house is of beautiful design, with stately columns, immense windows and very lofty ceilings. The peak of its roof is the dividing line between the waters of the Roanoke and the Chowan rivers. There have been no fires, and the records are nearly complete. The first will book does not begin until 1759, and is complete from that date to this. The county court minutes do not begin until 1829 and thence run complete to 1868. The first deed book begins in 1741 and the set is complete to date. All the will and deed books in use are originals.

### ONSLOW

Area 743 square miles. Population 14,703. Formed in 1734 from Bath. Named for Arthur Onslow, for over 30 years speaker of the British House of Commons. County seat Jacksonville; named for General and President Andrew Jackson. The first court house was at Court House bay, on the west side of New river, and at the mouth of Poplar creek. It remained until the population moved further up the river and inland. The second court house was at Johnston, now called Town Point, on New river 9 miles below Jacksonville. In 1786 a great storm swept this building away and carried much of it and most of the records entirely across the river, there four miles wide, but some fell into the river. Many of the latter were saved, though some were greatly damaged. Near where the court house was thus dropped on the opposite bank of New river there was found a little boy who had been taken there by the cyclone. When asked his name he would only say "Had not," so the location was named Hadnot's Point and the boy was adopted. An-

other court house was built on the land of Edward Howard and this was used until 1800. Then Jacksonville, at first named Onslow Court House, was made the county seat, and in 1801 the fourth court house was built there. It was torn down and the fifth one built in 1885. The latter was torn down in 1904 and was replaced by the present one. Onslow is the only early county which has never been cut up or divided, and it stands today as it was when created. The first will book begins in 1784, and the series is complete to date. The first deed book begins in 1782; the originals yet in use. There are many loose sheets, in bad shape, which were recovered from the river. The earliest record is a book half missing, another beginning in 1746 and another in 1743.

### ORANGE

Area 390 square miles. Population 17,895. Formed in 1753 from Bladen, Granville and Johnston. Named for Prince William of Orange, in the Netherlands, who became King William the Third of England and one of the greatest of the British Kings. County seat Hillsboro, for the English Earl of Hillsboro. The first court was held in 1753 at the home of James Watson. In 1754 Hillsboro was established and made the county seat, and lot No. 1 was set aside as the court house site. In 1755 the first court house, of wood, was built there. In 1781, on the approach of the British army under Lord Cornwallis the records were removed to a place in the woods some miles away and buried for ten days, the army remaining six days at Hillsboro. In 1782 authority was given to build a brick court house. This was burned in 1789 but no records were damaged and none destroyed by the fire. Some had been lost by reason of their burial. The third court house, built in 1790, was of wood. It was removed to give place to the present one in 1846. All the records in use are originals. The first will book begins in 1757 and there is a sequence to date. The trial dockets begin in 1753, and so do inventories of estates, state dockets and equity dockets, and the county court minutes. The latter are complete to 1868. The first deed book does not begin until 1784 and since then the series is complete. The marriage bonds before March, 1781, are missing.



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### PAMLICO

Area 350 square miles. Population 9,060. Formed in 1872, from Craven and Beaufort. Named for a tribe of Indians (old form Pampticough) which gave its name to Pamlico sound and river, there having been a Pamlico "precinct" as early as 1705. County seat Bayboro, named on account of its location on a bay, in a region where the bay tree, the Carolina magnolia, is extremely luxuriant. The court house was built in 1873 and the first will book and the first deed book begin that year. There has been no loss of records and no fires.

### PASQUOTANK

Area 223 square miles. Population 17,670. Formed in 1672 from Albemarle. Named for a tribe of Indians in that region. County seat Elizabeth City, named for Queen Elizabeth of England. The first court house was two miles down the Pasquotank river, from Elizabeth City, and is now the home of J. M. Winslow. The second was at Nixontown, built in 1770. In 1840, when Elizabeth City became the county seat, the third court house was built there. In 1862 as the Federal fleet was approaching Elizabeth City the sheriff set fire to his own dwelling, a wooden building, near the court house, and the latter, a brick structure, was burned and some of the records, George D. Pool, aided by men sent from the Federal fleet, removing most of them in an ox-cart. The present court house was built in 1866. The first will book begins in 1752 and there is only one break (1776-1782) since that date. The books for 80 years were destroyed. The first deed book begins in 1700, and there is only one break since (this being 1761-1768).

### PENDER

Area 815 square miles. Population 14,788. Formed in 1875 from New Hanover. Named for Major General William Dorsey Pender of the Confederate States Army, a native of Edgecombe, who was killed in battle and is buried at Tarboro. General Pender received the last order ever given by "Stonewall" Jackson: "You must hold your ground, General Pender; you must hold your

ground!" he cried as he was carried off after having been mortally wounded by North Carolina troops whom he had posted to guard a road, with strict orders to fire on any persons who appeared on it. County seat Burgaw; named some say for a family in that section, Dr. James Sprunt of Wilmington holding that it was for a small tribe of Indians. The court house was built in 1876 and is yet in use. The first will book and deed book begin that year. No records have been lost.

### PERQUIMANS

Area 252 square miles. Population 11,137. Formed in 1672 from Albemarle. Named for a tribe of Indians in that region. County seat Hertford, named for the Marquis of Hertford. The first court house was of wood at what was known as the Point, on Perquimans river, near Hertford. It was replaced in 1824 by the present one, of brick. No damage by fire has occurred, but many records have been lost. The first will book does not begin until 1762, so that 90 years are missing. Since 1762 there is a sequence to date. The first deed book begins in 1685, and there is a perfect sequence to date. In a deed book of 1867 there is a gross forgery. A man of Hertford conveyed to himself two pieces of land. He made the entry on the index book and having made an error in his first copy, cut out half of that page and began at the top of the next one. He was tried and convicted.

### PERSON

Area 391 square miles. Population 18,973. Formed in 1791 from Caswell. Named for Thomas Person, general in the Revolutionary war, member of the Council of Safety and trustee of the State University, who gave a large sum to the latter, which named Person Hall there in his honor. County seat Roxboro, named for the Roxburghe (or Roxboro) family. The first courts were held at Payne's Tavern, four miles from Roxboro, and the first court house was of logs, at Roxboro; located on six acres of land between two springs. Of the six acres barely an acre now remains for the court house, the other having been lost to persons who "squatted," without titles or deeds, on the property. The second court house was very

small and contained only the court room and jury room, the offices of the clerk, register and sheriff being in another small building in the yard. The third court house, built in 1873, is yet in use. No fires have occurred. The first will book begins in 1791 and up to 1868 all the wills are in the minutes of the county court, which contain also inventories of estates and much other matter. All the originals are in use, but they are not numbered consecutively. Properly numbered they run to this date without a break. The deed books in use are also all originals and begin in 1794, leaving a gap of three years.

### PITT

Area 627 square miles. Population 45,569. Formed in 1760, from Beaufort. Named in honor of William Pitt, Earl of Chatham, who gave his name also to Chatham county. County seat Greenville, named for Gen. Nathanael Greene, who also gave his name to Greene county. The first court was at a village called Log Town, 3 miles east of what is now Greenville, all the houses being of logs, built in 1760. The second court house was at Greenville and was burned in 1857; all of the clerk's records save one book were destroyed and all those of the register of deeds were saved except two books. In 1910 the present court house, costing \$100,000, spacious and well equipped, was built. The first will book begins in 1858 and since there is no gap. The trial docket for 1823-1828 is the one saved from the fire. The first deed book begins with 1762, the first book, 1760-1761, having been destroyed by the fire. There is no break since 1762.

### POLK

Area 250 square miles. Population 8,832. Formed in 1855, from Rutherford and Henderson. Voted with Rutherford until 1868. Named for Col. William Polk, of Raleigh, of the Revolutionary army, who was wounded at the battles of the Brandywine, Germantown and Eutaw Springs. County seat Columbus, named for Christopher Columbus, the discoverer of America. The first court house was built in 1855, of wood; a temporary structure for use until one of brick was finished

in 1858. This is yet in use. There have been no fires or losses of records. There have been only four clerks of court since the county's formation—R. S. Alexander for 31 years; N. B. Hampton 8; S. B. Edwards 4; John P. Arledge 23; a total of 66 years. The first will book begins in 1855 and the second one is now in use. The first deed book begins in 1855.

### RANDOLPH

Area 803 square miles. Population 30,856. Formed in 1779 from Guilford. Named in honor of Peyton Randolph of Virginia, president of the first Continental Congress. County seat Ashboro, named for Gov. Samuel Ashe; in some way the "e" having been improperly dropped. The first court house was built in 1781, the second in 1835, the third in 1908. No fires have occurred or important losses of records. The first will book begins in 1773 and there is an unbroken set to date. The county court minutes are complete from 1773 to 1868. The marriage bonds are all lost. The first deed book begins in 1782 and the records are complete to date. All will and deed books in use are originals.

### RICHMOND

Area 521 square miles. Population 25,567. Formed in 1779, from Anson. Named in honor of Charles Lennox, Duke of Richmond, principal Secretary of State of Great Britain, a great friend of the American colonies and the mover of the resolution in the House of Lords that they be given independence. County seat Rockingham, named for Charles Watson Wentworth, Marquis of Rockingham, for whom Rockingham county and its county seat, Wentworth, were also named. The first court house was built at Rockingham in 1780 and was removed in 1884 to make room for the present one. At the close of the War Between the States some of the records were defaced by Federal "bummers," who threw them out of the building, cutting a few both in the clerk's office and that of the register of deeds. The first will book begins in 1779 and there is no break, all the originals being in use. The county court minutes begin in 1779 and are complete to 1868. There is no trace of the marriage bonds. The first deed

book begins in 1784 and the records are complete since that date. There is no trace of the deeds from 1779 to 1784. All the deed books in use are originals.

### ROBESON

Area 990 square miles. Population 54,674. Formed in 1786, from Bladen. Named for Col. Thomas Robeson of the Revolutionary army, a leader in the battle of Elizabethtown, in Bladen, in April, 1781, where the Tories were so defeated that their organization in that section was never revived. County seat Lumberton, named for the Lumber river; proper spelling Lumbee. The first court house was built at Lumberton in 1787, of wood; the second in 1828, also of wood; the third in 1860, of brick; the fourth, which is now in use, in 1908, spacious and handsome. No fires have occurred, but there are losses of records, there being no trace of the marriage bonds. The first will book begins in 1787 and there is a complete series to date. The first deed book begins in 1787 and the set is complete, but the arrangement in sets, by letters, is extremely awkward. A begins in 1787, and now the set AAAAAAA—ZZZZZZZ is in progress.

### ROCKINGHAM

Area 579 square miles. Population 44,149. Formed in 1785, from Guilford. Named for Charles Watson Wentworth, Marquis of Rockingham, leader of the party in the British parliament which advocated American independence and prime minister when the Stamp Act was repealed. County seat Wentworth, named for the same nobleman. The first court house was at Jackson, or Eagle Falls, four miles from Wentworth, and was of wood, and its fate is unknown. The second was of brick at Wentworth in 1824, the site for it and the jail being a gift by Charles Galloway. It was removed to give place to the third, of brick, stuccoed, in 1850. This one was practically rebuilt in 1882 and in 1906 was burned. The fire destroyed only a few important records, as in 1903 vaults had been provided. The present court house was built in 1907. The first will book begins in 1814, so there is a gap of 28 years. The county court minutes begin in 1786 and are complete to 1868. The

first deed book begins in 1787 and the set is complete to date. This county has the youngest clerk of court in the state, J. Erle McMichael, aged 23, who served in France and Belgium in the 120th Regiment, 30th Division.

### ROWAN

Area 489 square miles. Population 44,062. Formed in 1753, from Anson. Named for Matthew Rowan, a leader in North Carolina before the Revolution, who for a short time after the death of Gov. Gabriel Johnston acted as governor. County seat Salisbury, named for the Marquis of Salisbury. The first court house was built in 1753, at Salisbury, of wood, in the middle of the street; the second, of brick, in 1790. The third is now the county home, in the eastern suburbs. The fourth was built in 1912 and is one of the most complete in the state, having more space than any other for the clerk and register. There has never been a serious fire. A few records were destroyed in 1865, during Gen. Stoneman's raid, but only one book of importance. The first will book begins in 1757, and there is a perfect sequence to date. The county court minutes begin in 1763 and run to 1868, the one from 1753 to 1763 having been destroyed in 1865. The clerk has a cross index of marriage bonds, from 1753 to 1868; a few bonds are missing, destroyed in the Stoneman raid. The first deed book begins March 24, 1753, and there are no gaps to date. In 1910 an explosion of gas in the register of deeds' office nearly killed that official.

### RUTHERFORD

Area 544 square miles. Population 31,426. Formed in 1779 from Tryon and Burke. Named for Gen. Griffith Rutherford, a leading Revolutionary patriot, who led the expedition against the then hostile Cherokee Indians in 1776. County seat Rutherfordton, also named for Gen. Rutherford. The courts were held in private houses until 1802, when the first court house was built, of logs, at Shepherd's (now known as Holland's creek). The second one was of brick at Rutherfordton, built in 1834. It was burned on Christmas day, 1907, and some records destroyed. The present one was built in 1908. The first

will book begins in 1782, and there is a sequence to date. The first deed book begins in 1779 and there is a sequence to date. The county court minutes begin in 1780, but there are two gaps, of 12 years.

### SAMPSON

Area 886 square miles. Population 36,002. Formed in 1784, from Duplin and New Hanover. Named for Col. John Sampson, a member of the Council of Gov. Alexander Martin. County seat Clinton; named for Gov. De Witt Clinton of New York. The first court house was built in 1785, of wood, a square from the present one, on land given by a natural son of Col. John Sampson. It was removed in 1853 and the second one built on the present site, which is embraced in the Sampson gift. In 1905 the present one was built, of brick, small and of poor design. In 1865 Federal "bummers" threw out a great many records from the offices of the clerk and register, the latter losing most. Some of the material was gathered and preserved. On the 3d of May, 1921, a fire which started in the floor under the court room and above the clerk's office damaged records which had been left out of the vaults, but these can be repaired. The first will book does not begin until 1819, so 34 years are missing. For some unknown reason there are no entries between August, 1864, and November, 1865. The county court minutes begin in 1784, but 34 years are missing. All the marriage bonds are lost. The first deed book begins in 1763 and is from Duplin, covering Sampson territory. Since 1784 the set is complete.

### SCOTLAND

Area 349 square miles. Population 15,600. Formed in 1899, from Richmond. Named for the country of Scotland; a large proportion of the population being descendants of early Scotch settlers. County seat Laurinburg, named for the McLaurin family. The first court house was built at Laurinburg in 1901, of brick, and is in use. No fires have occurred and no loss of records. The first will book and deed book begin December 10, 1900.

### STANLY

Area 416 square miles. Population 27,429. Formed in 1841, from Montgomery. Named for John Stanly of New Bern, several times speaker of the House of Commons, who killed Gov. Richard Dobbs Spaight, Sr. in a duel at New Bern. County seat Albemarle, named for the first county created in North Carolina and named for General George Monk, Duke of Albemarle, one of the first Lords Proprietors of Carolina. The first court house, built in 1842, is yet in use. No losses by fire or otherwise have occurred. The first will book begins in 1841, and so does the first deed book.

### STOKES

Area 480 square miles. Population 20,575. Formed in 1798, from Surry. Named for Col. John Stokes of the Revolutionary army, who was dangerously wounded at the Waxhaw massacre, when Buford's regiment was cut to pieces by Col. Tarleton's dragoons, and who was appointed by President Washington judge of the Federal court in North Carolina. County seat Danbury, named for the Dan river, on which it is located. The first court house was built of wood, at Danbury, in 1800, and in 1904 it was replaced by the present one, of brick and concrete. No fires or losses have occurred and the records are intact. The first will book begins in 1792 and all the books in use are originals. County court minutes begin in 1790 and are complete to 1868. The deed books begin in 1788 and the first contains many land grants.

### SURRY

Area 520 square miles. Population 32,464. Formed in 1770, from Rowan. Named for Lord Surry, who in the British House of Lords opposed the taxation of the American colonies. County seat Dobson, named for Col. Dobson of the Revolutionary army. The first court house was of wood, at Old Richmond. The present court house, at Dobson, is the fourth and is spacious and handsome, built in 1918. No records have been destroyed or damaged. The first will book begins January 18, 1771, the first deed book the same date.



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SWAIN

Area 553 square miles. Population 13,244. Formed in 1871, from Jackson and Macon. Named for David Lowrie Swain, Governor, and for many years president of the State University. County seat Bryson City, named for Col. Thaddeus Dillard Bryson. Bryson City was for 16 years known as Charleston. The first court was held in a log house, five miles west of Bryson City. The first court house was built in 1872 at the latter place; the lower part of logs, the upper of planks. In the upper part the courts were held and in it were the offices. In the lower part was the jail, the dungeon or cage being a log room inside another log room, the space between filled with stones. A padlocked door in the top of this cage was the only entrance, and was reached by a ladder lowered from the floor above. This court house was burned and a good many records destroyed. The present court house was built in 1880 and is of brick. The first will book begins in 1871; the first deed book in September, 1872.

## TRANSYLVANIA

Area 379 square miles. Population 9,903. Formed in 1861, from Henderson and Jackson. Voted with Henderson until 1868. Its name is a combination of two Latin words, "trans," across, and "sylva," the woods. County seat Brevard, named for Col. Ephraim Brevard, a Revolutionary patriot. The first court was held in a store in Brevard. The first court house was of wood, built in 1866, and the jail was also of wood. Both of these buildings were removed and the present court house and jail built in 1874. The first will book begins October 24, 1864, the first deed book January 8, 1867. There have been no fires in the court house and few losses of records. The court house was remodeled in 1920.

## TYRRELL

Area 390 square miles. Population 4,849. Formed in 1729, from Albemarle. Named for Sir John Tyrrell, at one time a Lord Proprietor of Carolina. County seat Columbia; the "pet name" of the United States, in honor of Columbus, the discoverer of America. On the Sta

June, 1748, Stephen Lee gave a deed for a court house site on Kendrick's (now Mackey's) creek, near what is now Roper and the first one was built there. In 1758 William Denning leased to Evan Jones a site, on condition that no "strong drink" was sold. July 27, 1798, Benjamin Spruill sold to the county a site for a court house on J. Pinner's "Colonial Farm." March 1st, 1800, Thomas Hoskins and Zebedee Hassell sold the present site, "in the town of Elizabeth," this being the first name of Columbia, and in July of that year a plat was made of the location "in Elizabeth Town." The name was changed to Columbia in 1810. No court house has been burned. The present one was built in 1903. Evidently some records have been lost. The first will book begins in 1750, so there is a gap of 21 years. There is also a gap between 1790 and 1798. The originals are in use. The first deed book begins 1736 and there is only one gap, 1756-1761.

### UNION

Area 565 square miles. Population 36,029. Formed in 1842, from Anson and Mecklenburg. Named for the American Union. County seat Monroe, for President James Monroe. The first court house was built in 1842 and was removed in 1886 to give place to the one now in use. There have been no fires. The first will book begins in 1842 and the sequence is complete to date. The county court minutes begin in 1842 and run to 1868. The first deed book begins in 1842. The marriage bonds have all been lost.

### VANCE

Area 279 square miles. Population 22,799. Formed in 1881, from Granville, Warren and Franklin. Named for Zebulon B. Vance, member U. S. House of Representatives; the "War Governor" of North Carolina, 1862-1865; again governor 1877-1879; then U. S. Senator until his death in 1896. County seat Henderson, for Chief Justice Leonard Henderson, of the state supreme court. The courts were held in a rented building from March 14, 1881, until December, 1883, when the first court house was occupied. It was remodeled in 1908 and is now in use. No losses of records have oc-

curred. The first will and deed books begin in April, 1881.

### WAKE

Area 824 square miles. Population 75,155. Formed in 1770, from Johnston, Cumberland and Orange. Named for the Wake family; Margaret Wake, of Bloomsbury, then a suburb of London, and now a park in that city, being the wife of Gov. William Tryon, New Bern being then the seat of government. Tradition holds that the county is named for Esther Wake, a lovely sister of "Lady Tryon," as the governor's wife was called, and that her popularity prevented a change of name after the Revolution. County seat Raleigh; named for Sir Walter Raleigh. The entire county was constituted a "parish" of the Church of England, under the name of St. Margaret, and there are now in the county the townships (formerly called precincts) of St. Mary, St. Matthew and St. Mark. The site for the court house was bought from Joel Lane and the county seat named Bloomsbury. The first court was held in Joel Lane's residence, which yet stands, June 4, 1771; Lane being one of the justices of the peace who formed what was known as the county court, the court of pleas and quarter sessions. At this court the act creating the county was read and was announced as a "Charter from Gov. Tryon." Later that year the first court house was built, in rear of the Lane mansion and quite near it, of logs on a brick foundation; at the intersection of the two most important highways: that from New Bern to Hillsboro and that from Petersburg, Va., to Cross Creek, now Fayetteville. In this court house was held March 5, 1776, the last court under royal rule and June 3, 1777, the first one under state authority.

In 1781 the General Assembly met in this court house. In 1787 the legislature requested the people to instruct their delegates to "fix on the place for the unalterable seat of government." The convention of 1788 decided to place the permanent capital as near as possible to the geographical centre of the state and so instructed the legislature to locate it within 10 miles of the plantation of Isaac Hunter in Wake. This Hunter tract is 3½ miles northeast of Raleigh, on the Louisburg road. Fayetteville was the main opponent of the Wake location. In

1788 the senate passed the bill and the house on two readings and then it was dropped. In 1789 the bill passed the house only by the casting vote of the speaker, and failed in the senate by the casting vote of the speaker. In 1791, by a close vote, the act was passed by the legislature at New Bern and 9 commissioners were named to select the location and 10 to build the capital. The legislature prescribed that not over 1,000 acres of land should be bought, the area of the city of Raleigh to be 400 acres, at least 20 acres to be reserved for the State House and other public buildings. Five of the commissioners met at Isaac Hunter's home but left at once for Joel Lane's home at Wake Court House, the popular name for "Bloomsbury." The next day they viewed the lands offered, spending 8 days in this task and inspecting 17 tracts, 8 of them being on Neuse river north or east of where Raleigh now is. March 30th Joel Lane's tract was chosen. For the 1,000 acres £1,378, or \$2,756, was paid. The survey of the city occupied 4 days, and the commissioners named the public squares and streets.

In 1793 it was ordered by the county court that a "large and eligant" [thus spelled] court house be built in Raleigh. Theophilus Hunter and James Bloodworth gave the site. This second court house was of wood, like an old country church. In 1837 it was sold and removed bodily a block southeastward and was used as a dwelling and later as a hotel. The third court house, of brick, was built in 1837, and in 1882 was remodeled. The present court house was occupied in October, 1915, and was then by far the finest in the state.

No fires have ever occurred in the court house, but in 1826 a store owned by the register of deeds, a block northward, was burned by his clerk, a thief, and 19 of the deed books were destroyed. A little later the register of deeds committed suicide, by hanging. The first will book begins June 15, 1771, the second document being the so-called "charter of the county," the original of which is lost. There is no break in the sequence. The county court minutes begin June 4, 1771, and the set is complete. The first deed book begins November 8, 1783, all the 16 previous ones having been burned, and also three others after 1816.

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**WARREN**

Area 425 square miles. Population 21,593. Formed in 1779, from Bute. Named for Gen. Joseph Warren of Massachusetts, a brave soldier of the Revolution, who fell while fighting at the battle of Bunker Hill. County seat Warrenton; named for the same soldier. The first court house, built in 1783, was on the present site, and in 1907 was replaced by the one now in use. No fires have occurred in court houses, but one register of deeds kept some books in his residence and the latter was burned, destroying deed books 14 and 15. The first will book begins 1764, and ends in 1774, covering Granville and Bute, and is badly moth-eaten. The second book is also for Granville and Bute, 1774-1779. With the third book the record for Warren begins and then follows a remarkable set of books, with wills and inventories in each; each covering usually only 2 years, and ending in 1859. The sequence is unbroken to this date. The first deed book begins with Bute, 1764-1766, the next one covering 1765-1767.

**WATAUGA**

Area 303 square miles. Population 13,477. Formed in 1849, from Ashe, Caldwell, Wilkes and Yancey. Named for an Indian tribe, the proper spelling of the latter being Watagi, meaning unknown. County seat Boone; named for Daniel Boone, America's first and greatest pioneer and explorer, who for ten years had his hunting camp where Boone now is, there being a monument to him, erected by a direct descendant. The first court was held in July, 1850, in an old barn on the Hardin farm, a mile from Boone, and it was formally opened by E. C. Bartlett, the sheriff of Ashe county. The first jury was drawn by James W. Horton, of Vilas, and from that date to this he has never failed to attend a session of the superior court; a period of 71 years. The first court house was built of brick in 1850, and was burned in 1873, the destruction of records being total. The second court house, built in 1874, was converted into a bank and store in 1904, when the present one was erected. In 1858 there was a legislative campaign on the issue of moving the county seat to Brushy Fork. Marcus Holsclaw, who favored removal, was elected by one vote, introduced the

bill and it passed the house, but it never got to a vote in the senate. The first will and deed books begin in 1784.

### WASHINGTON

Area 327 square miles. Population 11,429. Formed in 1799 from Tyrrell. Named for George Washington. County seat Plymouth; named for a noted place in England and the place of first settlement in New England in 1620. The first court house was built in 1800, of wood, and was burned in 1862, during the bombardment of Plymouth by the Federal army, which captured the town, which in 1863 was recaptured with General Wessels and its entire garrison, by a Confederate force commanded by Gen. Robert F. Hoke. The second court house, built in 1865, was burned by a white man, a "Carpet Bagger," in 1869, in order to destroy records incriminating him, and all except two will books were destroyed. The incendiary escaped conviction. In 1870 the third court house was built and in 1881 a third fire destroyed the few records which remained in the clerk's office. This fire was accidental. The present court house, a handsome one, was built in 1918. The first will book begins in 1873. The first deed book begins in 1800 and the set is complete to date.

### WAYNE

Area 571 square miles. Population 43,460. Formed in 1779, from Dobbs and Craven. Named for Gen. Anthony Wayne of the Revolutionary army; so daring an officer that the British called him "Mad Anthony." County seat Goldsboro, named for an official of the Wilmington & Weldon railway; the first built in North Carolina. The first county seat was Waynesboro (named for Gen. Wayne) on Neuse river, a mile from the present court house, and there the first court house, of wood, was built in 1782. In 1840 the second, of brick, was built at Goldsboro, then just established. This in 1912 was replaced by the present edifice; one of the best in the state. No fires have occurred. The first will book begins in 1782. There is a set unbound and not numbered, in small sections, ten of these containing also inventories of estates. The regular will books begin in 1810 and the set is complete to date, all in use being orig-

inals. The marriage bonds have all been lost. The county court minutes begin in 1787. The first deed book begins in 1780 and the series is complete to date.

### WILKES

Area 735 square miles. Population 32,644. Formed in 1777 from Surry and Burke. Named for John Wilkes, elected to the British Parliament, who violently opposed the Tories, the latter not allowing him to take his seat. County seat Wilkesboro, named for the same person. The first court was held at Brown's "in the Bent of the Yadkin river, March 2nd, in the year of our Christ, 1778, and in the second year of American Independence;" this being the county court of pleas and quarter sessions, meeting four times a year; William Lenoir clerk, Richard Allen sheriff. The first court house was built at Mulberry Field (now Wilkesboro) of logs. It was removed in 1830 and used as a stable until 1900. The second court house, built in 1830, was removed in 1902 and replaced by the present one. No fires have occurred; but records in the clerk's office have been lost. The first will book begins in 1781, and there is a sequence to date. The county court minutes begin 1796. The first deed book begins in 1779 and the first paper recorded is a state land grant to Col. Benjamin Cleveland, for 3,400 acres, the tract being called "Old Roundabout," because it was in a sharp bend of the Yadkin river, where the village of Ronda now is; hence Cleveland came to be called "Old Roundabout."

### WILSON

Area 373 square miles. Population 36,813. Formed in February, 1855, from Edgecombe, Nash, Johnston and Wayne. Voted with Edgecombe until 1868. Named for Louis D. Wilson of Edgecombe, who served many terms in the legislature, was in the war with Mexico, 1846-1847, and died of fever at Vera Cruz. County seat Wilson, named for the same person. The first court house was built in 1855, of brick, was remodeled in 1902 and is yet in use. There has been no damage by fire. The first will book begins in February, 1855, and the sequence is complete. The first deed book begins in March, 1855, and the set is complete.

### YADKIN

Area 324 square miles. Population 16,391. Formed in 1850, from Surry. Named for the Yadkin river, (an Indian name, old form Reatkin), which traverses the county. County seat Yadkinville, named for the same reason. The first court was held in 1851, in a rented building. The first court house was built in 1855, of brick, and is yet in use. No fires have occurred. The first will book and deed book begin in 1851.

### YANCEY

Area 298 square miles. Population 15,093. Formed in 1833, from Burke and Buncombe. Named for Bartlett Yancey, many times a legislator, speaker of the Senate and member of Congress; an early advocate of a public school system. County seat Burnsville; named for Capt. Otway Burns of Carteret county, commanding the U. S. privateer "Snapdragon," in the second war with Great Britain, 1812-15. The first court was held in January, 1834, in Caney River church, the act creating the county requiring that it should be in five miles of the home of James Greenlee, a mile from this church. Daniel Angel was appointed sheriff pro tem., Amos L. Ray clerk, Joseph B. Ray register of deeds, Burgess S. Gaither solicitor (county attorney). The first sheriff was convicted of murder and hanged and the first clerk was the first man found guilty of crime by a Yancey court. The first act of the court was to grant license to William Carson and David Baker to sell whiskey. The first two men fined by a court were Reuben Keith and S. Byrd; the fine being a gallon of cider from each; and it was paid. In April, 1834, commissioners named in the legislative act creating the county bought 100 acres for a town-site, now Burnsville, as the county seat. For two years the courts were held there in a temporary wooden building, until the first court house, of brick, was built late in 1836. In 1908 it was replaced by the present one of concrete. No fires have occurred or losses of records. The wills and deeds are together in the deed books until 1878, when the first regular will book begins. It is yet in use. The first deed book begins in January, 1834.