

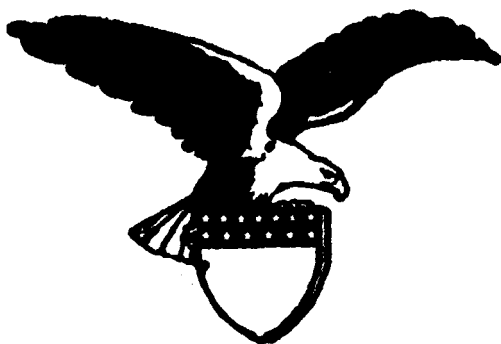
MECKLENBURG
in the
REVOLUTION
1740 - 1783



ANDREW JACKSON

The seventh President of the United States. Born in Mecklenburg County, near Waxhaw, March 15, 1769.

MECKLENBURG
in the
REVOLUTION
1740 - 1783



Written in honor of the
Sons of the American Revolution

Upon the occasion of their
42nd Annual Congress

At
CHARLOTTE
MECKLENBURG COUNTY
North Carolina

May 17 - 21, 1931

DEDICATION

TO THE HEROES OF THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR
WHEREVER THEIR DUST ENRICHES
THIS FREE SOIL
OR UPON A FOREIGN STRAND
A GRATEFUL PEOPLE, ENJOYING LIFE,
LIBERTY, AND THE PURSUIT OF
HAPPINESS
LIFT UP THEIR HEARTS AND SOULS IN
REMEMBRANCE AND A RE-DEDICATION THAT
THEY LABORED, SUFFERED AND
DIED
NOT IN VAIN
THIS VOLUME IS DEDICATED BY THE

SONS OF THE AMERICAN
REVOLUTION

IN THEIR 42ND ANNUAL CONGRESS
MAY 17 TO 21, 1931
AT CHARLOTTE, MECKLENBURG COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA
AND
BY THE AUTHOR

PREFACE

Because no single volume had ever been compiled, suitable for the occasion, containing the facts and dates regarding the part Mecklenburg county played in the War of the Revolution, it was decided to briefly, for the time was very short, cause to be written a sketch, covering the essential points and yet to go into little or no detail.

To gather these facts it required almost day and night reading of a dozen or more volumes; the examination and reading of many old documents and records, and the swift setting down and writing of these in chronological order.

Much minutiae has perforce been left unwritten. It was planned to cover the county in a swift survey, with slight reference to the old original county of Mecklenburg which took in Union, Cabarrus, Lincoln, Gaston, the present Mecklenburg, and perhaps bits of what is now South Carolina—a great, rough, unchartered region at the time our history opens.

With the exception of the Battle of Kings Mountain the story is confined to what is now Mecklenburg County—the other counties having a glorious history of their own. We do not enter the controversy as to whether or not

Kings Mountain, at the time of the battle was in this county, some say that it was, others declare that it wasn't—we satisfy ourselves by saying it was close to the line.

We selected Bailey T. Groome, well known Charlotte newspaper man and journalist, for the task, and if errors have occurred, we plead kindly consideration for him, for he did not have time to re-check the work; but had to work at high pressure, almost night and day to complete the copy.

J. E. S. DAVIDSON, M.D.

C. O. KUESTER,

The Committee for the S.A.R.

THE CRADLE OF LIBERTY

While there are several many so-called "Cradles of Liberty" the inescapable fact remains that Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, was the first place where the demand for liberty from the mother country was put into written English and signed by the citizens living in the community.

The further fact remains that not only did Mecklenburg declare itself free from Great Britain; but that while the Continental Congress in Philadelphia was still attempting some sort of a compromise, Mecklenburg had dissolved its relationship and was operating a government of its own, for a year before the other colonists took that step.

The further fact remains that not only did Mecklenburg break away from the mother country, but that she never returned and is therefore entitled to sign "and in the year of our independence" one more year than can the United States of America.

If, therefore, there is a cradle of liberty in America with rightful claim to that honor, it is the spot where the streets of Trade and Tryon cross in the center of the city of Charlotte and known locally as "Independence Square."

It can be readily understood why the Congress in Philadelphia did not consider these resolutions: it frequently happens that the real intent of a meeting is camouflaged so as to "put the other fellow in the wrong." Though indications and records show that the rest of the colonies were not sold on the idea of complete independence—there was a large and powerful element that desired to remain with the mother country, and get the tax situation adjusted without separation, and it was only when they saw that this could not be done that they agreed to the final divorce.



THE SETTLEMENT OF MECKLENBURG

The actual settlement of Mecklenburg County began about 1748, though there appears to have been a few immigrants about 1740. The earliest land grants are dated 1749.

In 1757 the Lord Selwyn grants were awarded and comprised territory of which the present city of Charlotte is a part. There were about 300 people here at that time, for the most part English, as a petition regarding some land shows. Names on this petition show the following proportions: English, 140; Scotch, 47; German, 7, and French, 6. There was also a scattering of Swiss.

The tide of immigration came from Pennsylvania and Virginia, being Scotch-Irish and German. The French and Swiss came from the vicinity of Charleston and the English for the most part came from eastern Virginia and eastern North Carolina, the coasts of both colonies being fairly thickly settled and having quite a number of small towns.

Practically all the people were artisans and belonged to the middle and lower classes.

Mecklenburg took its name from Mecklenburg-Strelitz, Germany, in honor of Charlotte, wife of George III, who came from Mecklen-

burg-Strelitz and the town was named for her. Incidentally there were many Germans here.

The Scotch-Irish came here with the influence of John Knox ringing in their ears, for liberty, which was later kept burning by Alexander Craighead, a Presbyterian preacher; many of the English were of that party in England who came here with the intention of establishing a republic in the first place; the French naturally hated everything English, while the Germans, born warriors, joined in to make it unanimous for liberty, many years before the actual break came.

Mecklenburg was so isolated it was a country to itself until almost the end of the war. There were no roads and there were no means of communication except by horseback, and so the people here lived to themselves, fostered their own institutions and lived their own lives until they became bothered by ever-mounting taxes and then they rebelled and seceded.

Some of the customs were rather interesting in the light of present-day beliefs and practices. For instance, it was perfectly all right to gamble and drink, especially was drink very profuse at funerals, being supplied by the family of the corpse, while profanity was punishable by very stiff fines. There were other practices equally as ridiculous when viewed in the light of modern rules of society and of law.

MECKLENBURG GETS CHARTER

Arthur Dobbs was the royal governor of North Carolina; James Haskell was president of the Council and John Ashe was speaker of the Assembly, when on December 11, 1762, Anthony Hutchins presented a petition from the citizens of Anson county for the formation of Mecklenburg County.

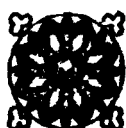
The only road that reached this county from the outside was an ancient buffalo trail, crossing the Yadkin at Salisbury and running through here to the Catawba nation, south of Charlotte on the Catawba river.

These pioneer people were not an idle people and many were skilled in industrial arts, their customs and industries being comparable to those of any colony which wrested a home and civilization out of the wilderness.

Trading centers were established in Paw, Steele and Sugaw Creeks, Hopewell, Providence and Rocky River.

Moses Alexander had one of the first saw and flour mills built on the Rocky River. Richard Barry operated a tan yard in Hopewell and Thomas Polk had a saw and grist mill in Charlotte before 1767.

John McKnitt Alexander, tailor, made a greatcoat for Andrew Bowman in January, 1767, and Jeremiah McCafferty set up a store in 1770. Early title deeds show that there were weavers, joiners, coopers, wheelwrights, wagon makers, tailors, teachers, blacksmiths, hatters, merchants, laborers, wine makers, miners, rope makers, surveyors, fullers and gentlemen.



SOME EARLY DIVERSIONS

The game of long bullets and horse racing were common diversions. Betting at Thom's or Campbell's race tracks was in evidence though profanity was forbidden and was punished by court procedure.

Almost every farm had its distillery and spirits were almost universally used. A punch bowl and glasses were among the effects of Rev. Alexander Craighead, and in 1767 seven gallons of whiskey were consumed at one funeral. Taverns sprang up along the public roads and there were several in Charlotte.

Exchanges of wares and opinions took place at the meetings of the four county courts. Provincial Assembly members were elected at an annual meeting, but the muster, nominally military but in reality a social and political assembly, brought together the largest number. It was here land and boundary disputes, vestry and marriage acts and all issues between this and the mother country were discussed.

Currency was scarce and varied.

A loan to Jean Cathey by George Cathey shows that ten silver dollars equalled four English pounds and "one doubloon in gold" was worth six pounds.

The children generally attended school six months each year for two or three years and there were a number of college-bred men in the community.

The wedding of George III and Princess Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz in 1761 was so favorably received that when in 1762 the new county was formed from Anson, it was named Mecklenburg and the town Charlotte in honor of the Queen. The act creating the county as stated was passed December 11, 1762. At the meeting of the Council, December 31, Alexander Lewis, Nathaniel Alexander, afterward Governor of North Carolina, John Thomas, Robert McClenahan, Paul Barringer, Henry Foster, Robert Miller, Robert Harris, Richard Barry, Martin Phifer, Robert Ramsay, James Robinson, Matthew Floyd, Abraham Alexander, Thomas Polk and James Polk were appointed "His Majesty's Justices of the Peace" for the new county, representing Rocky River, Clear Creek, Sugaw Creek, Waxhaw, Hopewell and Broad River settlements. On February 23, 1763, Moses Alexander became high sheriff and Robert Harris clerk of the court and register of deeds and the history of Mecklenburg including Cabarrus, a part of Gaston, Union and Lincoln counties began.

LAYING OUT CHARLOTTETOWN

Late in 1765 Henry Eustace McCulloh donated to John Frohock, Abraham Alexander and Thomas Polk as commissioners three hundred and sixty acres of land to be held in trust for the erection of a court house, prison and stocks. McCulloh, agent for Augustus Selwyn, holder of immense territorial grants which specified that they be settled with an average of one person to every 200 acres, foresaw the advantage this would be to his employer.

Court was being held at this time at Spratts, near Charlotte, and the plan was objected to by the people in the Rocky River section.

Martin Phifer and Thomas Polk, first Mecklenburg representatives in the General Assembly, favored the new town. In 1766 Phifer introduced a bill to enable the commissioners to lay out Charlotte in squares, streets and lots and erect a court house, prison and stocks, but as the location was not mentioned, Polk led the friends of Charlotte to oppose it and it was defeated.

In the same year an increasing population west of the Catawba proposed a new county and partisans of Charlotte erected a court house

at their own expense. It was a log structure supported by pillars ten feet high with an outside stairway leading to the court room above, while the lower space was used for a market. It was located at the intersection of Trade and Tryon Streets. Phifer succeeded in having a bill passed forming Tryon County, but Polk had it amended so that the courts of Mecklenburg should be held in this court house for seven years.

Previous to this, efforts to incorporate Charlotte failed, but objections were now withdrawn and a bill making it legally a town was enacted November, 1768. This act added Richard Barry and George Allen to the commissioners and the five men were instructed to lay out one hundred acres of the town in half-acre lots.

No provision for a town government was included, but Polk, as treasurer, was required to give bond and the law stipulated that one shilling be paid the treasurer for every lot taken and a dwelling be erected on it within three years on penalty of forfeiture.

AFTER THE COURT HOUSE

Such issues caused much partisan feeling and bitter strife. In 1769 Abraham Alexander succeeded Martin Phifer in the Assembly and he and Polk represented the county until 1773 when Martin Phifer and John Davidson were elected.

A bill introduced by Davidson for the erection of a permanent court house was passed by both houses, but vetoed by Governor Martin.

Phifer was succeeded by Polk the next year and the agitation favoring Charlotte continued.

The seven-year arrangement was nearing an end and action was necessary, so Polk introduced a bill December, 1773, to erect a permanent county seat and give Charlotte a town government, but no action was taken as Governor Martin dismissed the Assembly until the next session in March, 1774, when the question was settled, and the law requiring a building on each lot was repealed except on lots located on Trade or Tryon Streets. This put an end to the wide bitter contention the problem had engendered.

Jeremiah McCafferty, William Patterson and Isaac Alexander became commissioners in place

of some who had died or moved out of the county. The commissioners were empowered to require all taxable persons to work six days per year on the streets or pay five shillings for each day of failure to do such.

The government of the county was vested in a sheriff, clerk of the court, and sixteen justices of the peace.

Charlotte was governed by a board of town commissioners. Apparently there were few law breakers, the collection of quit rents and the settlement of claim disputes occupying the court almost entirely.

Mecklenburg's boundary lines were not settled with her creation. Practically all of her southern lines being left to dispute resulted in various troubles, caused by a lawless element, driven out of South Carolina and other provinces, who had drifted to this region because the disputes gave them protection. Approached by North Carolina officers they claimed to belong to South Carolina and vice versa.

REBELLION IN THE AIR

In June, 1764, McCulloh came to Mecklenburg to survey the Selwyn grants, give titles to worthy holders and eject those failing to meet requirements. Finding opposition to the running of these lines since "many of the settlers would hold to the south" he suggested that the "south" meet, select a committee and confer with him for peaceable adjustment. James Norris, Thomas Polk, James Flennigen and George Allen formed the committee and after conference reported to the people that the claims of Selwyn's agent were just, reasonable and acceptable, but surveyors were interfered with by armed men sometimes numbering 200 and often led by Polk in an attempt to focus the attention of the proper authorities on the fixing of the lines apparently, for in 1765 Polk became friendly with McCulloh and received appointment as a surveyor of Selwyn's.

Open war with the Cherokee Indians had ended in 1761, but the indefinite dividing line between the Cherokees and Mecklenburg continued to annoy and in 1767 Governor Tryon marched with 100 men to settle this matter. Colonel Moses Alexander of Mecklenburg was

among the subordinates and the military display had such a salutary effect upon the Indians that the lines were thenceforth accepted as run.

William Tryon as governor of the state had declared himself the servant of the people but his actions proved him more favorable to the Lords Proprietors. Troubles throughout the state brought resistance to state officers. Men organized themselves into groups called "Regulators" for mutual defense.

Mecklenburg was not afflicted by any of these troubles, but in August, 1768, Tryon came to Charlotte to review the troops here, being entertained by the Polks and Alexanders. He secured 300 volunteers to maintain order at the sessions of court in Hillsboro. They began march September 12, returning in October. An expected disturbance was averted and the governor complimented them upon their behavior. The situation between the governor and the Regulators, however continued to grow but a second call for volunteers netted only 100 men and these were turned back by a superior force of the Regulators, many of the latter being Mecklenburgers.

SERIOUS TROUBLE BREWING

While the cause of the Regulators was recognized as just, for a time the people prudently refrained from open resistance, though a decided feeling for independence manifested itself as early as May 17, 1771, developing by degrees into action.

Younger men of the county, however, were not so conservative as their fathers, and feeling a sympathy for the oppressed, when wagons of Colonel Moses Alexander, commissary to General Waddell, passed through the county laden with powder, they were captured. The powder was destroyed by nine boys, disguised with blackened faces, and thereafter known as "the Black Boys of Mecklenburg."

With Josiah Martin as Governor of North Carolina in 1771 dissensions in the Assembly were rife. After a three-day session he dismissed the Assembly in December, 1773, when Mecklenburg was represented by Martin Phifer and John Davidson.

Although a committee of nine citizens were appointed to carry on correspondence with similar committees in other provinces, the governor was determined that the assembly should not

meet until the people were in agreement with him.

John Harvey, however, was authorized to call a congress of the people at his own discretion and Benjamin Patton was elected to represent this county in this Provincial Congress which took place in New Bern in 1774.

Embarrassed over his waning power Governor Martin called the Assembly to meet in New Bern in April, 1775, and Harvey called the second Provincial Congress for the same time and place. Mecklenburg did not send a representative.



GOOD RIFLE FACTORY HERE

Political independence was said to be more pronounced among religious dissenters, which doubtless explained the attitude of these people for it is likely that there were fewer adherents to the Established Church here than in any other place in the colonies.

Of special interest at this time was the development of a weapon serviceable in aggression. From the New England blunderbuss the people were evolving a long well-made rifle of superior type and at the outbreak of the war *one of the three* colonial rifle factories was in Charlotte.

The iron was blasted near High Shoals. The barrel was shaped, bored and rifled, the wooden stock extended to the end of the four-foot barrel. Excellency of the firearm was an important factor in the war, and later brought forth praise from General Washington when one was presented to him on his visit to Charlotte in 1787.

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

The Charlotte Court House was the regular meeting place for this section during these perplexing months. There was no semblance of Royal Government in the state for a time before it ended in June, 1775. Leading citizens of the county often met for discussions in regard to the status of affairs and the taking of definite action on a form of government.

Thomas Polk, military commander, and recognized leader was authorized to call delegates from every militia district when he deemed it wise and he issued a notice for each district to elect two delegates for an assembly to be held in the Court House May 19, 1775.

There should have been eighteen delegates, but when the assembly met so many influential men were present that a dispute ensued and twenty-seven were seated as delegates, while many others obtained seats in the room or remained near.

Abraham Alexander was made chairman of the meeting and John McKnitt Alexander was chosen secretary.

Memoirs of Rev. Humphrey Hunter state that he was present, along with half the men of the county. Excitement ran high. The

proclamations of the King and Governor demanded some action, but the importance of deliberate consideration was in due evidence. Rumors of offending legislation, efforts to subdue colonists and quench their spirit of liberty were abundant. War was impending and a decision between England and America must be made. Mecklenburg chose promptly with the assurance that war must come for a purpose and not for grievances. The addresses of the convention prove that the people were sincerely striving to arrive at the truth.

Rev. Hezekiah J. Balch and Dr. Ephraim Brevard and Colonel Kennon were among those speaking. Chief considerations were given to the threatened condition of the province which was not arming itself; restraint on provincial and export trade; unjust taxation and the immediate need of some form of government.

While they were thus intently occupied, a horseman galloped into town shouting the news of the battle of Lexington. Amazed, men crowded about him to hear every detail.

With sympathy aroused over the patriots' sacrifice and encouraged over the rout of the British a stroke for liberty was incited. Cautious men now shouted for "A Declaration of Independence."

With all doubt conquered, Brevard, Kennon and Hezekiah Balch were appointed a committee to draw up resolutions for the consideration of the convention.

During their absence an inquiry arose as to how the oath of obligation imposed, following the defeat of the Regulators, could be foregone. After some debate the consensus of opinion was that the King had absolved this obligation by declaring America in a state of insurrection and out of protection.

Following careful consideration the committee submitted its report after midnight. It was read by the secretary and adopted at 2:00 A.M. May 20, and signed by the delegates.



THE MECKLENBURG DECLARATION
OF INDEPENDENCE SIGNED AT
CHARLOTTE, N. C.,
MAY 20, 1775

1st. Resolved, That whosoever directly or indirectly abets or in any way, form or manner, countenances the invasion of our rights as attempted by the Parliament of Great Britain, is an enemy to his country, to America, and the rights of man.

2nd. Resolved, That we, the citizens of Mecklenburg County, do hereby dissolve the political bands which have connected us with the mother country; and absolve ourselves from the British Crown, adjuring all political connection with a nation that has wantonly trampled on our rights and liberties, and inhumanely shed the innocent blood of Americans at Lexington.

3rd. Resolved, That we do hereby declare ourselves a free and independent people, that we are and of right ought to be a sovereign and self-governing people under the powers of God and the general Congress, to the maintenance of which independence we solemnly pledge to each other our mutual co-operation, our lives, our fortunes and our most sacred honor.

4th. Resolved, That we do hereby ordain and adopt as rules of conduct, all and each of our

former laws, and the crown of Great Britain cannot be considered hereafter as holding any rights, privileges, or immunities among us.

5th. Resolved, That all officers, both civil and military, in this county, be entitled to exercise the same powers and authorities as heretofore; that every member of this delegation shall henceforth be a civil officer, and exercise the powers of a justice of the peace, issue processes, hear and determine controversies according to law, preserve peace, union and harmony in the county, and use every exertion to spread the love of liberty and of country, until a more general and better organized system of government is established.

6th. Resolved, That a copy of these resolutions be transmitted by express to the President of the Continental Congress assembled in Philadelphia, to be laid before that body.

EPHRAIM BREVARD
HEZEKIAH J. BALCH
JOHN PHIFER
JAMES HARRIS
WILLIAM KENNON
JORN FORD
RICHARD BARRY
HENRY DOWNS
EZRA ALEXANDER
WILLIAM GRAHAM
JOHN QUERY

HEZEKIAH ALEXANDER
ADAM ALEXANDER
CHARLES ALEXANDER
ZACCHEUS WILSON
WAIGHTSTILL AVERY
BENJAMIN PATTON
MATTHEW McCLURE
NEIL MORRISON
ROBERT IRWIN
JOHN FLENNIGIN
DAVID REESE
JOHN DAVIDSON
RICHARD HARRIS
THOMAS POLK
ABRAHAM ALEXANDER
JOHN McKNITT ALEXANDER



READ TO THE PEOPLE

On agreement Thomas Polk read it before several thousand people from the steps of the Court House at noon May 20 and Captain James Jack was deputized to take copies to the President of the Continental Congress and the North Carolina representatives then in session at Philadelphia.

He was induced by Colonel Kennon to tarry in Salisbury in order that it might be read in the court in session there, where it was met with approval, with the exception of two lawyers—Dunn and Booth, who attempted to foil Captain Jack and were afterwards brought to Charlotte and punished for "unfaithfulness to the common cause." George Graham and Colonel J. Carruth were among a dozen men who arrested them.

Captain Jack arrived in Philadelphia, June 23. The same day Washington left to become commander of the Continental Army. William Alexander of Mecklenburg was in Philadelphia on business at the time and often told in his old age of Captain Jack's arrival there with the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence.

The document did not receive public consideration because Congress was preparing the address to the King, which on July 8, 1775, declared loyalty to him with no desire for independence.

Captain Jack reported these views upon his return; but Mecklenburg was free and independent of Great Britain from that good day.

On June 30, Governor Martin sent a copy of the *Cape Fear Mercury* containing the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence to the Earl of Dartmouth and wrote him that the proceedings of that convention "surpasses all the horrid and treasonable publications that the inflammatory spirits of this continent have yet produced, and your lordship may depend its authors and abettors will not escape my due notice, whenever my hands are sufficiently strengthened to attempt the recovery of the lost authority of government. A copy of these resolves, I am informed was sent off by express to the Congress at Philadelphia as soon as they were passed in committee." August 8 he issued a proclamation denouncing the action of the Mecklenburgers as "most infamous and treasonable."

Since the committee of May 20 had made no provisions for the government of the county, an adjourned meeting was held May 31 when twenty resolutions were adopted and were known as the "resolves" while those of May 20 were termed the Declaration. The original documents and minutes of these meetings were in the possession of the Secretary, John McKnitt Alexander, and were lost in a fire which destroyed his house in 1800. However, several copies of the Declaration had previously been made. One, sent to Dr. Hugh Williamson, historian, was lost, but another sent to Judge Martin and known to have been in his possession in 1793 was preserved. A copy rewritten from memory by Alexander shortly after the fire is almost a complete reproduction word for word of the Martin copy and shows the Secretary's familiarity with it.

Historians generally and through all times, have written things as they wish they had occurred—they don't always stick to the facts, because it doesn't always suit their purposes, and many historians have chosen to ignore the fact that Mecklenburg was the first section of the country to declare itself free and to set up a government of its own; but the facts cannot be denied that they did so, and however much Jefferson may have desired to have been

the author of the immortal declaration of independence and no matter how much historians have chosen to ignore the Mecklenburg documents and expressions, the facts are that a tailor, a preacher and a lawyer of Mecklenburg County wrote the first one, and Jefferson wrote the second one.



THE MECKLENBURG RESOLVES

"From State Paper Office, London, Geo. Vol. 218 G. Bancroft's Collection, 1775, page 107.

"Gov. Wright to Secretary of State.

"Savannah, in Georgia, the 20th June, 1775.

(In his own handwriting)

"By the enclosed paper your lordship will see the extraordinary resolves by the people in Charlotte town, in Mecklenburg County, and I should not be surprised if the same should be done everywhere else.

I have the honor to be with perfect Esteem,
My Lord, your Lordship's most
Obliged and obedient servant,

JAS. WRIGHT.

To Earl of Dartmouth, &c., &c."

Here is what he sent him:

Extract from the *South Carolina Gazette and Country Journal*, of June, 1775, No. 498—printed at Charlestown by Charles Crouch, on the Bog corner of Elliot Street.

"Charlottetown, Mecklenburg County, May 31, 1775.

“THIS DAY the Committee of this county met and passed the following resolves:

Whereas, By an address presented to His Majesty by both Houses of Parliament in February last, the American Colonies are declared to be in a state of actual rebellion, we conceive that all laws and commissions confirmed by or derived from the authority of the King and Parliament are annulled and vacated, and the former civil constitution of these colonies for the present wholly suspended. To provide in some degree for the exigencies of this county in the present alarming period, we deem it proper and necessary to pass the following resolves, viz.:

I—That all commissions, civil and military, heretofore granted by the crown to be exercised in these colonies are null and void and the constitution of each particular colony wholly suspended.

II—That the Provincial Congress of each Province, under the direction of the Great Continental Congress, is vested with all legislative and executive powers within their respective provinces, and that no other legislative and executive power does or can exist at this time in any of these colonies.

III—As all former laws are now suspended in this Province, and the Congress has not yet provided others, we judge it necessary for the better preservation of good order, to form certain rules and regulations for the Internal Government of this county, until laws shall be provided for us by the Congress.

IV—That the inhabitants of this county do meet on a certain day appointed by the Committee, and having formed themselves into nine companies (to-wit: eight for the county and one for the town), do choose a colonel and other military officers, who shall hold and exercise their several powers by virtue of the choice, and INDEPENDENT of the crown of Great Britain, and former constitution of this province.

V—That for the better preservation of the peace and administration of justice, each of those companies do choose from their own body two discreet freeholders, who shall be empowered each by himself, and singly, to decide and determine all matters of controversy arising within said company, under the sum of twenty shillings, and jointly and together all controversies under the sum of forty shillings, yet so as their decisions may admit of appeal, to the Convention of the Select men of the

County, and also that any of these men shall have power to examine and commit to confinement persons accused of petit larceny.

VI—That those two select men thus chosen do jointly and together choose from the body of their particular company two persons to act as constables who may assist them in the execution of their office.

VII—That upon the complaint of any person to either of these select men, he do issue his warrant directed to the constable, commanding him to bring the aggressor before him to answer said complaints.

VIII—That these select eighteen select men thus appointed do meet every third Thursday in January, April, July and October at the Court House in Charlotte, to hear and determine all matters of controversy for sums exceeding 40s, also appeals; and in case of felony to commit the person convicted thereof to close confinement until the Provincial Congress shall provide and establish laws and modes of proceedings in all such cases.

IX—That these eighteen select men thus convened do choose a clerk, to record the transactions of said convention, and that said clerk, upon the application of any person or persons aggrieved do issue his warrant to any of the

constables of the company to which the offender belongs, directing said constable to summon and warn said offender to appear before said convention at their next sitting, to answer the aforesaid complaint.

X—That any person making complaint, upon oath, to the clerk, or any member of the convention, that he has reason to suspect that any person or persons indebted to him in a sum above 40 shillings intend clandestinely to withdraw from the county without paying the debt, the clerk or such member shall issue his warrant to the constable, commanding him to take said person or persons into safe custody until the next sitting of the convention.

XI—That when a debtor for a sum above forty shillings shall abscond and leave the county, the warrant granted as aforesaid shall extend to any goods or chattels of said debtor as may be found and such goods or chattels be seized and held in custody by the constable for the space of thirty days, in which time, if the debtor fail to return and discharge the debt, the constable shall return the warrant to one of the select men of the company, where the goods are found, who shall issue orders to the constable to sell such a part of said goods as shall amount to the sum due.

That when the debt exceeds forty shillings, the return shall be made to the convention, who shall issue orders for sale.

XII—That all receivers and collectors of quit rents, public and county taxes, do pay the same into the hands of the chairman of this committee, to be by him disbursed as the public exigencies may require, and that such receivers and collectors proceed no further in their office until they be approved of by, and have given to this committee good and sufficient security for a faithful return of such moneys when collected.

XIII—That the committee be accountable to the county for the application of all moneys received from such public officers.

XIV—That all these officers hold their commissions during the pleasure of their several constituents.

XV—That this committee will sustain all damages to all or any of their officers thus appointed, and thus acting, on account of their obedience and conformity to these rules.

XVI—That whatever person shall hereafter receive a commission from the crown, or attempt to exercise any such commission

heretofore received, shall be deemed an enemy to his country;

and upon confirmation being made to the captain of the company in which he resides, the said company shall cause him to be apprehended and conveyed before two select men, who, upon proof of the fact, shall commit said officer to safe custody, until the next sitting of the committee, who shall deal with him as prudence may direct.

XVII—Any person refusing to yield obedience to the above rules shall be considered equally criminal, and liable to the same punishment as the offenders above last mentioned.

XVIII—That these resolves be in full force and virtue until instructions from the Provincial Congress regulating the jurisprudence of the province shall provide otherwise, or the legislative body of Great Britain resign its unjust and arbitrary pretensions with respect to America.

XIX—That the eight militia companies in this county provide themselves with proper arms and accoutrements, and hold themselves in readiness to execute the commands and directions of the General Congress of this province and this committee.

XX—That the Committee appoint Colonel Thomas Polk and Dr. Joseph Kennedy to purchase 300 pounds of powder, 600 pounds of lead, 1,000 flints for the use of the militia of this county and deposit the same in such place as the committee may hereafter direct.

Signed by order of the committee.

EPH. BREVARD,
Clerk of the Committee.

The *North Carolina Gazette*, of June 16, 1775, published at New Bern, carried a copy of the resolves and was mailed by Governor Martin to the Secretary of State of Great Britain (State Paper Office, London, America and West Vol. 204. Bancroft's Collection, 1775, 153.)

Proceedings of the May 31 meeting were also published in the *Cape Fear Mercury*, June, 1775, but the only known copy of this paper was borrowed in 1837 from the British Colonial office by Hon. Andrew Stevenson, U. S. Minister to Great Britain and never returned.

The South Carolina Gazette and Country Journal published the resolves in June and

copies of this, paper are now preserved in Charleston as well as in London. These resolves drawn up by Dr. Brevard and signed by him at the authorization of the committee extended the actions of May 20.

Accepting the separation from England, the fourth and fifth resolves of that date were superseded and the Declaration of Independence supplemented by defining the authority under which the county should be governed.



THE NEW GOVERNMENT

With independence previously declared the resolves state the reason for the establishment of a form of government contained therein. They cite that all previous laws and commissions are suspended since they were established by the king, who had now declared the colonies out of protection. These former laws could not again be effective without reestablishment of the King's authority.

The legitimate authority of the Continental and Provincial Congresses was recognized and laws and regulations were enacted "for the internal government of the county until laws shall be provided for by the Congress."

Rents and public and county taxes were paid to the chairman for disbursement "as required by public exigencies."

The militia was advised to equip itself in readiness to execute the commands of the congress or the committee while Thomas Polk and Dr. Joseph Kennedy were instructed to order 300 pounds of powder, 600 pounds of lead and 1,000 flints.

If this was not the setting up of a free and independent government then there never has been one.

The government was strong and efficient and encountered little opposition. Provisions for debt collections were ample. Persons owing 40 shillings could be prevented from leaving the county and property levied on for this amount, any selectman being allowed to issue the warrant on the oath of the creditor.

A certificate stating that the person was a friend to the "common cause" was necessary for leave taking of the county.



THE ENTIRE STATE ORGANIZES

Mecklenburg was represented at the third Provincial Congress in Hillsboro, August 20, 1775, by Thomas Polk, John Phifer, J. McK. Alexander, Samuel Martin, Waightstill Avery and James Houston, when a provisional government for North Carolina was instituted. With Cornelius Harnett at the head, the state was divided into six general militia districts.

During the trying years 1776-1780 the men of Mecklenburg proved themselves noble and true patriots and the women were zealous in providing clothes for the soldiers, nursing the sick and wounded and encouraging the weak by sacrifice.



NORTH CAROLINA FIRST FOR LIBERTY

John Phifer, Robert Irwin and John McK. Alexander, representing the county in the Congress of April 12, 1776, were instructed to declare for independence. This Congress was the first of thirteen to instruct her representatives in Philadelphia to declare for independence.

December 18, 1776, the Constitution of North Carolina was adopted providing that committees of safety should govern each county which action was superseded at the May, 1777, convention.

The government of Mecklenburg was not modified.

Three classes of military troops were arranged for by the Provincial Congress of August, 1775. The first two were Continental Regiments. George Davidson and George Graham, of Mecklenburg, became officers under Colonel Moore. Six batallions of minute men were provided for, each batallion to consist of two companies with fifty men each. Mecklenburg's levy was one hundred men.

Colonel Thomas Polk, Lieutenant-Colonel Adam Alexander, Major John Phifer and Second Major John Davidson were the officers of the county militia.

April, 1776, additional Continental Regiments were organized with Colonel Polk as commander of the Fourth Regiment.

The militia was reorganized at the same time as a result of resignations or disloyalty and the Mecklenburg officers were promoted. Geo. A. Alexander became Second Major.

November, 1775, a company of volunteer rangers was authorized with Ezekiel Polk, Captain, and Samuel Watson and Wm. Polk, Lieutenants.

Thos. Polk, one of the most active men in the state, and William Kennon were members of the committee to prepare a temporary government.

Waightstill Avery was a member of the Provincial Council of Thirteen.

Hezekiah Alexander and Benjamin Patton represented Mecklenburg in the Salisbury District Committee, one of the six District Committees of Safety.

Two companies of "Light Horse" were raised in this district with Martin Phifer as captain of the second.

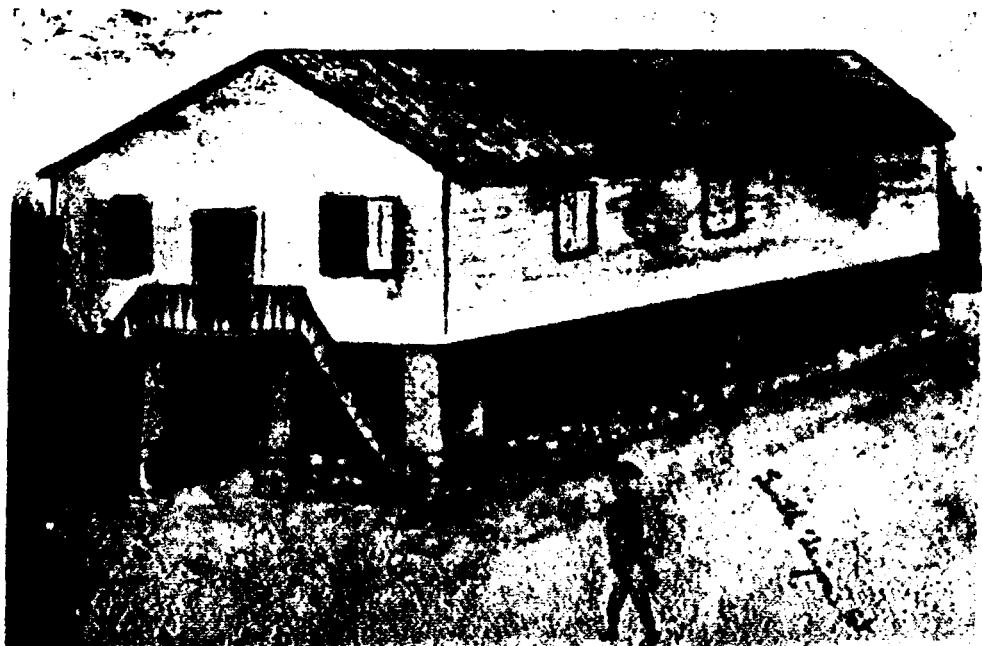
Hezekiah Alexander became a member of the State Council of Safety May 11, 1776, when it superseded the Provincial Council.





QUEEN CHARLOTTE

Wife of George III of England and for whom this city was named.
She came from Mecklenburg, Germany, and hence
the name for the county.



MECKLENBURG'S FIRST COURT HOUSE

From the steps of this building on the morning of May 20, 1775, Col. Thomas Polk read the immortal Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence to "half the citizens of the entire county." Here also was fought the Battle of Charlotte.



COURIER FROM BOSTON

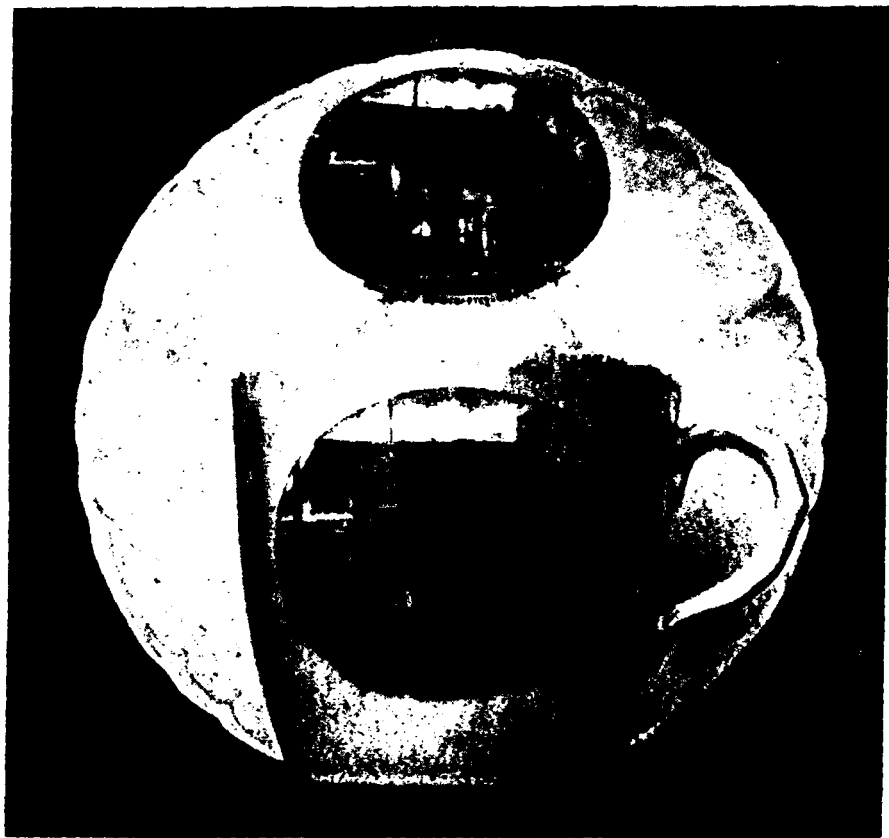
On the 19th of May, 1775, a courier reached Charlotte and told of the Battle of Lexington. It so inflamed the Patriots that they demanded a Declaration of Independence and it followed in the late hours of the night.

AUTOGRAPHS

OF THE

SIGNERS OF THE MECKLENBURG DECLARATION.

Alex^r Alexander. Eph^r Brainerd
 Tho^s. Polk Sam^l. Alexander
 David Rees J^{rs} Alexander
 Hoz^r Alexander John Puffer
 Rob^t. Jones Rich^d Berry
 Wm^m Kenner
 Benjamin Patton John Board
 John Davidson William Graham
 John^s. Lemmitte. Knightstill. Avery
 Charles Alexander
 Henry Dorris Rob^t Harris
 Ezra Alexander Niles Morrison
 James Harris



CHINA WARE. SHOWING CORNWALLIS' OLD
HEADQUARTERS



LORD CORNWALLIS

Who led the army of England into Charlotte and who
remained here two weeks.

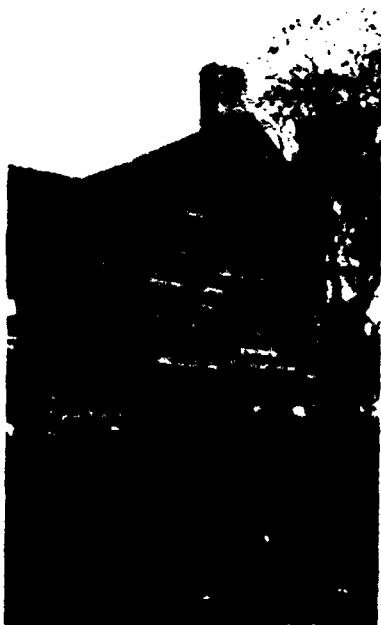


GENERAL NATHANAEL GREENE

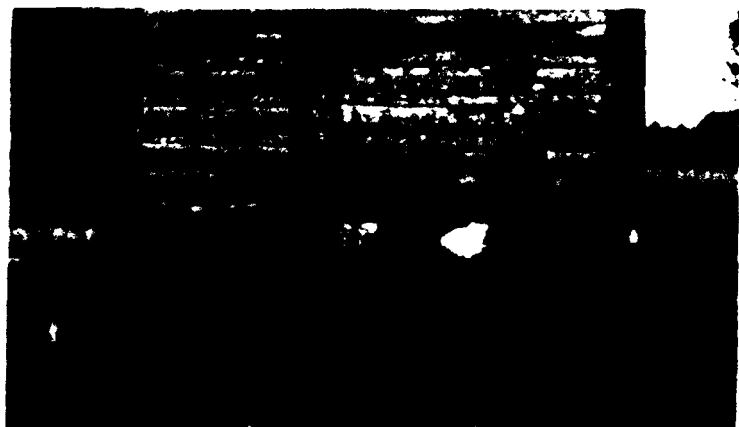
Commander of the Southern Continental Armies, who took charge at Charlotte, following the defeat of Gates at Camden. General Greene and Lord Cornwallis met at Guilford Court House and fought the bloodiest battle of the Revolution.



BRITISH CAPTAIN KILLED
IN DOORWAY



MCINTYRE'S FARM-HOUSE
MAY 1, 1931



CHALK MARKS SHOW BULLET HOLES
FIRED BY PATRIOTS IN 1780



BATTLE OF KINGS MOUNTAIN

Turning point of the Revolution, fought October 7, 1780.

Deckboard
under Gold Whaler

Heating

OVER



UNDER



GEORGE WASHINGTON

He visited Charlotte, May 25, 1791, on his tour of the South following the end of the war and his election to the Presidency.



JAMES KNOX POLK

Born in Mecklenburg County, eleven miles south of Charlotte, at the town of Pineville. He was the eleventh President of the United States.

LOCAL WARFARE STARTS

In December, 1775, Colonels Rutherford, Graham, Caswell (later governor of North Carolina), Martin and Polk led 600 men to South Carolina to assist General Richardson against the "Scovelites," a band of men defying all authority. This was called the "Snow Camp Campaign" because of the heavy snow falling during the march. The young ladies of the county resolved to receive the attention of no young man who had not volunteered for this march.

Captain Chas. Polk commanded a company of Mecklenburg militia accompanied by Dr. Ephraim Brevard in the summer of 1776 in General Rutherford's expedition against the Cherokee Indians near Franklin. Colonel Adam Alexander, Lieutenant-Colonel Phifer, Major John Davidson and Jesse A. Alexander also participated.

Waightstill Avery, having been active in preparing the state laws and constitution, was made attorney general immediately after their adoption December 18, 1776.

MECKLENBURGERS WITH WASHINGTON

When the North Carolina Brigade of 9,400 men was formed in Wilmington, July, 1776, Wm. Davidson was Lieutenant-Colonel of the Third Regiment; Wm. Polk, Major in the Ninth; Chas. Alexander was Lieutenant in the Fourth of which Thos. Polk was Colonel.

This brigade remained in North Carolina and South Carolina until March, 1777, when it was sent north and arrived in Philadelphia, July 1.

The Mecklenburg troops were in the Battles of Brandywine and Germantown. Major Wm. Polk was wounded in the latter.

They spent the winter with Washington at Valley Forge and in May, 1778, when consolidated into four regiments they numbered only 1,157 men and officers. Three thousand militia men were then drafted for nine months in the continental service and with Washington took part in the winter campaign of 1778-1779.

Colonel Polk resigned his commission at the consolidation of the regiment and returned home to become active in county affairs and

the defense of the home people being appointed September 15, 1780, Commissary General by General Greene.

Money being scarce, he spent all of his private funds in this office though a portion of it was returned to him at a later date.

Captain Thos. Polk, Jr., was killed in action at Eutaw Springs, September 8, 1781.

In February, 1779, David Wilson commanded a successful light horse company in a Tory insurrection in Tryon County and May 1, Mecklenburg gave further aid to the cause by supplying the levy of 72 hats, 144 pairs of shoes and stockings, 304 yards of linen and 144 yards of woolen or double-woven cloth.

April, 1779, the term of the North Carolina soldiers expired and the majority returned home.

The General Assembly directed the governor to draft 2,000 militia most of whom were to go to Charleston.

April 10, Governor Caswell and the State Council reviewed the troops in Charlotte and April 11, General Butler began the march with 700 men.

At this time Wm. R. Davie was made lieutenant in the Light Horse Company of which Wm. Barringer was captain.

With the surrender of Charleston on May 12, 1780, Buford retreated toward Charlotte, but was intercepted at Waxhaw by Tarleton and his detachment was cut to pieces May 29.

About this time Andrew Jackson's mother moved to Sugaw Creek and Andrew Jackson was often in Charlotte.

Patriots here were discouraged as almost the entire military force had been surrendered at Charleston and Charlotte was undefended against approaching invaders.

General Rutherford was watching General Rawdon with a small body of troops at Hanging Rock when a Tory uprising occurred near Ramsaur's Mill.

Unwilling to have Charlotte unprotected he ordered Colonel Francis Locke to raise troops to quell the Tories. With 400 men Colonel Locke fell upon 1,100 Tories June 20, inflicting defeat. General Rutherford arrived in time to render valuable assistance.

William and Ezra Alexander were captains in General Davidson's batallion at this event.

GENERAL DAVIDSON TAKES COMMAND

Joining Gates at the battle of Camden, August 16, Rutherford was taken prisoner and the command of his brigade fell upon General Davidson, who camped eight miles below Charlotte for the recuperation of his troops. Davidson and Davie, with an inferior number of troops, were now all that opposed the entry of Cornwallis into the state. They did all within their power to retard his progress.

Alarmed at the capture of their spies and sentries the British soon got to the point that they would not send out less than a regiment for foraging purposes. Rifle shots always greeted them from nearby wood and did much to discourage the conquering army.

Major Davie surprised the British at Captain Wahab's near the South Carolina line September 21, killing and wounding sixty men. Continually near the British army, he attacked and routed small bodies of foragers and guards on a number of occasions and with General Davidson annihilated a body of Tories two miles from the enemy's camp at Waxhaw.

At this time Davidson with 400 men was located on McAlpin's Creek eight miles south of Charlotte.

BATTLE OF CHARLOTTE

September 25 Davie entered Charlotte with 150 calvarymen. Here he was joined by Major Jos. Graham.

Cornwallis entered Charlotte, September 26 at 11:00 o'clock by way of the South. Davie and Graham had made every preparation to repulse the invaders though outnumbered 15 to 1.

Graham in command of a company advanced along the street protected by houses, trees and fences. Another company was dismounted and placed behind the stone wall which surrounded the space underneath the court house while the remainder were held in reserve.

Tarleton's Cavalry under Major Hangar formed a line within three hundred yards of the court house supported by a solid flank of infantry.

When the order to charge was given and obeyed, the Americans, who had remained silent, returned a galling fire which so confused the invaders that they galloped back.

A second and third charge was similarly repulsed, but the British Infantry continued to

advance steadily so the defenders were forced to retreat, escaping capture only under cover of nightfall.

Lieutenant-Colonel Locke and four privates were killed.

Major Graham and five privates were wounded while the enemy had 45 killed or wounded.

Graham and Locke with a few soldiers made a stand at the cross roads at Sugaw Creek Church. Locke was literally hacked all to pieces with sabre cuts, and Graham was left for dead with three bullets in him and six sabre cuts on his body.

Cornwallis remained in Charlotte sixteen days and Colonel Tarleton was given full justification for naming the town "The Hornet's Nest."

October 3rd Cornwallis sent Major Doyle with 450 cavalrymen and 40 wagons on a foraging trip. Capt. Jos. Thompson and Capt. Geo. Graham with about twelve armed men followed them to McIntyre's farm. When the foragers began to load the best supplies to be found, a dog set in pursuit of a chicken overturned a beehive and the bees in turn attacked the soldiers.

Watching from ambush a redfaced British captain standing on the doorsteps of the house, one of the Americans said:

"I cannot wait any longer, let every one pick a man, the captain is mine."

A fusillade followed. The British suspecting ambuscade formed military lines and Major Doyle hastened back to Charlotte. Patriots along the route took up the fight precipitating a rather disorderly flight.



THE BATTLE OF KINGS MOUNTAIN AND DEATH OF COLONEL FERGUSON OCTOBER 7, 1780

Marching to the west in early September, 1780, Colonel Ferguson had 300 British regulars, several hundred militia and carried in addition 1,000 stand of small arms to be distributed to the Tories expected to join his standard.

He was sent by Cornwallis to stop Colonel Clarke and the mountaineers who had swarmed down as far as Garden Hill, where they had taken a large amount of goods the British had intended as gifts to the Indians to keep them loyal and against the Whigs.

Ferguson marched through upper South Carolina and a detachment went as far as Morganton in North Carolina. They spread the word that Whig settlements were to be wiped out. It was expected that this would have a chilling effect upon the Patriots. It had the opposite effect.

On September 14, General William Lee Davidson ordered Armstrong, Cleveland and Locke to unite their forces and stop Ferguson.

Other leaders were moving and they decided to trap and destroy Ferguson.

Campbell of Virginia joined Shelby and Sevier at Watauga. The combined force was 900 men.

On September 25 they crossed the mountains coming east and met with Colonel McDowell with 160 additional men. On the 30th the growing army was further reinforced by the addition of 350 men from Surry and Wilkes counties under Cleveland.

They were marching South looking for Ferguson.

On the evening of October 6th they were joined by Colonel Williams with 400 more men, the junction taking place near Cowpens, where later Morgan was to wallop Colonel Tarleton so severely.

They learned that Ferguson was near the Cherokee Ford of the Broad River, a point some thirty miles distant from the now rather formidable American army.

A council of war was held and it was decided to set out that night with 900 picked horsemen, riding the best animals and that the others should follow as rapidly as they could. The enemy was within striking distance and they did not wish to take any chance upon his escaping.

HE PICKED A DEATH TRAP

They marched all night and until three o'clock the following day, October 7, before they reached the vicinity of Ferguson's army. Ferguson had had previous notice of the approach of the Whigs and marched from the Cherokee Ford a distance of 12 miles and took up his position for battle on the top of Kings Mountain, a rather abrupt hill some 1,700 feet above sea level. He declared that "all the rebels in hell could not drive him from that position."

He could not have chosen a more undesirable place for the maneuvering of trained regulars, especially against trained mountaineers. The mountain men had every advantage, the training of the regulars went for naught because they could not effectively use the bayonet, the terror of all untrained troops. The ground was too rough for coördinated action—it was every man for himself.

It was a perfect death trap.

No escape was possible, in any direction, either by horse or by foot.

A kind Providence must have guided his footsteps there to create a bright spot to sorely tried America!

The assailants were formed in three divisions and dismounting and tying their horses among the bushes, proceeded to ascend the mountain from three directions. It was a wet day and the tread of the mountain men was noiseless as they walked over moist twigs and leaves. They surprised the British sentries and took them.

The Washington and Sullivan regiments gained their position first and began the attack on the front and left flank. The North Carolinians, under Winston, Sevier and Cleveland, attacked the rear and other flank. Campbell on the center opened a deadly fire; but Ferguson gave them the bayonet along the level plateau and forced him back over the crest.

As the British were about to take advantage of Campbell's orderly retreat, Shelby poured in a deadly fire from another direction and Ferguson turned and swept towards the new foe again using the bayonet; but Shelby's men would not give ground and instead they drove Ferguson along the plateau where Cleveland was posted and the men under Cleveland also refusing to yield ground stopped the British regulars.

THE JAWS OF THE TRAP CLOSE

Ferguson did not lose confidence in either himself or his men. He had never yet had to yield to the raw American troops and he did not intend to now. He rallied his men and the regulars and Tories fought gallantly; but the Americans had every advantage, they attacked him from three directions. Again and again Ferguson gave the Patriots the bayonet, sometimes forcing a slight retreat; but immediately the pressure from another quarter became severe and the British were recalled to battle at a new angle, and this was the signal for the withdrawing Patriots to advance again. The American lines were snapping back like rubber bands when the pressure is removed and all this time the deadly rifles of the mountain men were cutting down the British and Tories.

Seeing that the day was lost, Ferguson decided upon cutting his way out with a few men and escaping the fast closing net; but somewhere a rifle cracked among those 900 men and the leaden pellet found its mark in the heart of the Britisher and he fell from his horse, dead.

The Tories, robbed of their leader, and half the regulars, upon whom they relied, put up a

spiritless battle for a few minutes and then surrendered unconditionally.

The Americans lost very few men, a total of 28 killed and 60 wounded; but they lost Colonel Williams, Major Chronicle and Captain Mattocks. The fight had lasted only one hour; but it had been a hot one.

It was found from the British provision returns for that day (found in their camp), that the whole force consisting of 1,125 men, sustained the following losses: Of the regulars, one major, one captain, two lieutenants, and fifteen privates killed; thirty-five privates wounded—left on the ground unable to march; two captains, four lieutenants, three ensigns, one drummer, and fifty-nine privates taken prisoners.

Losses of the Tories, two colonels, three captains, and two hundred and one privates killed; one major, and one hundred and twenty-seven privates wounded and left on the ground unable to march; one colonel, twelve captains, eleven lieutenants, two ensigns, one quartermaster, one adjutant, two commissaries, eighteen sergeants, and six hundred privates taken prisoners, with 1,500 stand of arms. Total loss of the British, 1,105.

THEY HANGED TWENTY TORIES

The Americans slept on the battlefield and the following morning convened a court martial and condemned and hanged 20 Tories. There was not enough rope, and grapevines were used for that purpose.

Not only did the victory at Kings Mountain electrify the whole country; but it forever silenced the Tories in Western North Carolina.

A few days after this battle, Colonel Wright, a Loyalist, raised 300 Tories at Richmond in Surry County and started to Charlotte to join Cornwallis; but General Davidson and Sumner, hurried detachments against them, defeating and dispersing them.

Cornwallis was so hemmed in at Charlotte by Davidson and Sumner that he had no word of the Battle of Kings Mountain for several days. Every courier who started to Charlotte was captured on the road and all who went out from there were taken. Cornwallis was isolated.

He declared it "the most rebellious section of America."

Tarleton spoke of Charlotte as "a veritable hornet's nest."

CORNWALLIS LEAVES CHARLOTTE

On October 12, however, Cornwallis having learned of Ferguson's death and the annihilation of his corps, left Charlotte and returned to South Carolina.

General Davidson who had been at Camp McKnitt Alexander in the northern part of the county, ably assisted by Davie, Graham and others greatly impeded his progress.

General Rutherford, having been released about this time, began raising troops and aided by Colonel Robt. Irwin and Major Jos. Graham he defeated a body of Tories at Raft Swamp, another near Wilmington and finally Colonel Gagney at Lake Waccamaw.

In December Major Graham with fifty riflemen captured British guards at Hart's Mill and was with Lee Pyle's "Hacking Match" at Clapp's Mine and with Colonel Washington at Whitsell's Mill.

THE BATTLE OF COWPENS

General Greene, accompanied by "Light Horse" Harry Lee, reached Charlotte December 2, 1780, and took charge of the activities of the troops in Virginia and the Carolinas.

He at once moved into South Carolina to attempt to repair the damages created by the victory of Cornwallis over Gates at Camden.

His command was divided into several mobile units so that he could worry the British army. He did not dare risk an engagement with the main British army, but contented himself with capturing foraging parties, cutting off supplies and intercepting couriers.

He was greatly aided in this by General Morgan and by General Davidson.

Cornwallis, however, decided to press the advantages won at Camden and to separate more widely and destroy in detail the several corps under Greene. Accordingly he hurled Tarleton against Morgan at Cowpens, just across the North Carolina line in South Carolina, the forces meeting on January 17, 1781.

Tarleton was completely defeated by Morgan and the remnants of his column fled to the protection of Cornwallis.

Morgan took 400 prisoners, mostly infantry. He also captured all the artillery and 800 muskets, two standards, 35 baggage wagons and 100 horses from the British dragoons.

This loss, together with that at Kings Mountain, was a severe drain on the British general, who could not make replacements of these trained soldiers, and he resolved to quickly follow Morgan and retake his prisoners as well as annihilate Morgan's column.

Greene, foreseeing what would be the probable action of Cornwallis, started at the same time to annoy Cornwallis and aid Morgan in escaping with his prisoners.

Greene sent General Huger to Salisbury with the main army and with a few dragoons hastened to the scene of operations.

Morgan sent General Stevens with the militia and the prisoners north beyond South Mountain towards Morganton. Stevens turned east and forded the Catawba near Statesville and rushed on towards Virginia, crossing the Dan river and getting away with the whole outfit.

General Greene, with the Continental troops and Morgan moved by a lower route and crossed the Catawba at Sherrill's Ford.

BATTLE OF COWAN'S FORD

On the 28th Cornwallis reached Beattie's Ford and rested a day or so. In order to make light infantry of the army he ordered all personal baggage destroyed and set the example by destroying his own personal effects.

On the 31st General Greene came to Beattie's Ford which was just across the river from the British, and there found Morgan waiting for him by appointment.

His game was to prevent Cornwallis from crossing the river, or at least to delay the passage as much as possible so as to give Stevens time to get away with his prisoners.

Greene ordered General Davidson, who had about 500 men, to divide his forces and guard two fords. Greene took 200 infantrymen and went to guard a small horse ford some two miles below Cowan's Ford.

At dawn February 1st, the British began the movement to cross the Catawba. The first movement was at Cowan's Ford. It was a dark and dismal day, the forerunner of a cloudburst that fell the next day and sent the rivers into flood stage, an event that allowed Greene to escape later at Salisbury when the Yadkin went out of its banks.

The light infantry of the British, under Colonel Hall first entered the water. They were followed by the grenadiers and the battalions.

The picquet of General Davidson challenged the enemy and receiving no reply, the guard fired.

This shot turned out the whole guard of some 200 men and the firing at the advancing column became general. The Tory guide, who had been showing the British the way across the river became alarmed and ran back towards the west bank. This act while probably disgusting to the British, probably saved them from a severe discomfort and probably the loss of many lives, for General Davidson had posted his men facing the ford, expecting the army to emerge there; but when the guide fled, the British officer in command came straight across the river, when as a matter of fact the ford swung away at a considerable angle.

General Davidson, therefore had to hastily re-arrange his men to meet the invader at a different point on the river bank. He withdrew them from the open flats of the river's banks and placed them some 50 yards back where trees and underbrush made a better covering.

In the meantime, however, the first units of the British were gaining the bank.

Colonel Hall, who led the army straight across when the guide fled, was shot down dead when he reached the eastern bank. The horse under Cornwallis was also shot down in mid-stream but managed to reach the bank where it too fell dead. Three privates in the British advance guard were killed and 36 wounded.



GENERAL DAVIDSON KILLED

General Davidson, riding out in the open from the real entrance of the ford, to the place where the British actually reached the eastern bank, was shot through the heart and fell dead from his horse.

His body was recovered by Richard Barry and David Wilson two of his men and he was buried by torchlight in Hopewell cemetery, not six miles distant from the scene of the action.

General Davidson was shot by a Tory and not by the British, for an examination showed him to have been killed by a rifle ball, and not by a musket bullet. The British were all armed with the musket, while the Tories were armed with rifles.

His death left his detachment leaderless and they retreated to the east, where they were united and joined Greene in his masterly retreat through North Carolina, passing through Guilford Court House, where later he was to give battle to Cornwallis with such terrific results that the power of the British was broken in the south.

The loss of General Davidson was a hard blow to this section of the country. He with, Morgan, Sumner, Graham and others, had

made it wellnigh impossible for Cornwallis to function with any degree of comfort in this section of the country. He knew the country well and he was able to harry the British on all occasions. The people had confidence in him and he could raise troops when others could not.

So keenly was his loss felt that the Continental Congress voted a monument to him and expressed sorrow at his death.

Davidson College, some six or seven miles east of Cowan's Ford, was named for him and he passed into history as one of the great patriots who gave his all for his country; but who did not live to enjoy the fruits of his sacrifices.



CHARLOTTE BOY IN TROUBLE

When Andrew Jackson, senior, died at Waxhaw, Mrs. Jackson moved near Charlotte with her family and continued to rear the children here. Cornwallis was spending a great deal of time in and near the Waxhaw settlement and this was a safer place for her.

Andrew Jackson, junior, appears to have inherited his Irish father's desire to travel and see the world as well as to have inherited the natural Irish trait of loving a fight for the sake of the fight.

However that may be, he ran away at the age of fourteen years and went to war with the other Mecklenburgers who were fighting in upper South Carolina in the vicinity of Hanging Rock. Here he had the misfortune to be captured in 1781.

Owing to his youth he was not put with the other prisoners; but was kept in the British camp as a camp worker.

One morning he was instructed by a British dragoon to clean his boots and when he refused the dragoon gave him a sabre cut across the forehead. Jackson carried the scar to his grave.

It is said that this act embittered Jackson against the British to such an extent that he never forgot it throughout his entire life and when at New Orleans he won one of the world's greatest victories against them, he reaped complete satisfaction.

This Charlotte boy, who became the seventh president of the United States, was admitted to the bar at Salisbury, practiced law at McLeansville, near Greensboro, and was appointed solicitor for the then western district of North Carolina, but which is now Tennessee, and he moved to Nashville. Tennessee was later made a state and hence Jackson was elected President from that state.



LIBERTY FINALLY COMES

The Battle of Kings Mountain and the departure of Cornwallis from Charlotte, practically closed the war so far as this city was concerned. The Tories were intimidated and the British were active in other sectors. Mecklenburg, however, continued to send troops to all parts of the country, especially to South Carolina where General Greene was operating and where the South Carolinians were not over-enthusiastic about the war.

Charlotte lost a man when Lieutenant Polk was killed in the battle of Eutaw Springs, September 8, 1781, and a number of private soldiers who fell in the same action.

July 12, 1781, Ephraim Brevard was elected to the Continental Congress.

On October 19, 1781, Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown and the news was soon brought to Charlotte. While there still was some fighting in scattered sections of the country, and while it was not until 1783 that formal peace was signed and the colonies were in fact free, Mecklenburg might be said to have been free following the departure of Cornwallis from Charlotte, for she was never disturbed again.

The transition in the form of government was not noticeable. The county had had a government of nine companies since 1775, this was enlarged to 17 companies in 1777 and to 19 from 1784 until the close of the century. This county simply continued the form of government it had adopted May 31, 1775, after it had become a free and independent people on May 20, 1775.

So Mecklenburg from that good day until now, celebrates its independence on May 20th and not on July 4th.

Because they did it, and there's no rubbing it out!



REVOLUTIONARY MARKERS AND THEIR LOCATION

BIRTHPLACE OF JACKSON

The hearthstone and stones from the chimney of the house he was born in are imbedded in the monument which marks the spot where Andrew Jackson, seventh president of the United States was born March 15, 1767, near Waxhaw, Mecklenburg County.

GENERAL DAVIDSON

Davidson College, 22 miles north of Charlotte, named for General Davidson, killed at Cowan's Ford, while attempting to prevent Cornwallis from following Morgan. Markers: Cowan's Ford, Beatties Ford Road and Hopewell Cemetery.

BATTLE OF CHARLOTTE

Marker in churchyard of the Tabernacle, A. R. P., East Trade, or Elizabeth Avenue.

Marker at Sugaw Creek Church, in honor of Gen. Joseph Graham and Colonel Locke.

INDEPENDENCE SQUARE

Large iron plate in the junction of Trade and Tryon streets where the Declaration of Independence was written and signed May 20, 1775.

McINTYRE'S FARM

Beattie's Ford road, seven miles from Charlotte, to mark the skirmish with the British there, when 13 men put to flight a foraging party of 450 British.

CORNWALLIS' HEADQUARTERS

East Trade Street, just off Independence Square, marking where the British general stayed while in Charlotte.

FIRST COURT SITTINGS

On Crescent Avenue, a marker to show where the first local Colonial courts were held.

CAPTAIN JAMES JACK

Marker on West Trade Street block west of Independence Square to show where Captain James Jack mounted his horse to carry the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence to Philadelphia.

LIBERTY HALL

Marker at South Tryon and Third streets where the first college stood, "Queen's Museum" later "Liberty Hall," and the parent of Queens College of today.

LOCKE'S HOLLOW

At Locke's Hollow a marker to commemorate the name of a hero cut to pieces by Tarleton's dragoons.

SUGAW CREEK CHURCH

Marker at the old Colonial cemetery to commemorate that ancient burying ground in which sleep so many early heroes.

JANE PARKS McDOWELL

Jane Parks McDowell rode 12 miles alone to notify the people of Charlotte of the approach of the British under Cornwallis. A marker commemorates the deed. It is in front of John McDowell's home, near Steele Creek Church.

COL. THOMAS POLK

First Presbyterian Church burying ground in rear of that church. Grave of this patriot is marked.

RURAL HILL BURYING GROUND

Handsome marker to Major John Davidson at Rural Hill, 14 miles up Beatties Ford Road.

EARLY CHURCHES OF THE COUNTY ALL PRESBYTERIAN IN VICINITY OF CHARLOTTE

All the pre-revolutionary churches within a radius of 15 miles of Charlotte were Presbyterian, further out there were the Lutherans and Reformed congregations.

Sugaw Creek was the parent of the others. It was at the cross roads here that Graham and Locke were cut down following their retreat from the defense of Charlotte. The present church is the third building erected by the congregation. The Colonial cemetery is several hundred yards from the present church.

On the 17th of May, 1765, a committee appointed for the work reported to Synod that they had finished the work of organizing the following seven churches: Steele Creek, Providence, Hopewell, Center, Rocky River, Poplar Tent, Sugaw Creek.

SUGAW CREEK

The Sugaw Creek burying ground is marked by a monument, the chief stone in the monument being the door stone of Squire David Parks' old home on North Tryon Street. Many of the first settlers are buried in this graveyard:

One more noted than others is the grave of Alexander Craighead, first pastor of this congregation. He was borne to his grave on two green sassafras poles on which as a bier his coffin rested. The poles being thrust into the ground at the head and foot of the grave, grew into trees which lived for nearly a century. He was buried in March, 1776.

A monument was erected in Elmwood cemetery by the citizens of Charlotte to honor his memory.

Alexander Craighead was an ardent, patient and a zealous preacher for righteousness and an ardent advocate of Independence and Liberty and by his constant preaching and speaking fired the men of Mecklenburg into action consummated in the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence.

Hezekiah Alexander, a signer of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence, is also buried here.

HOPEWELL

Hopewell Church is located eleven miles northwest of Charlotte.

In the graveyard adjoining the churchyard lie buried many Revolutionary heroes: General

William Davidson, John McKnitt Alexander, Richard Barry, and others.

From the seven Presbyterian churches of Mecklenburg went ten out of twenty-seven ministers and elders to sign the Declaration of Independence, the 20th of May, 1775.

STEELE CREEK

On the Steele Creek road ten miles southwest of Charlotte is a handsome brick church known as Steele Creek Church. This church has no record of its early history, but in the graveyard adjoining the church are found grave stones giving names of Colonial and Revolutionary patriots. Robert Irwin, a signer, is also buried here.

PROVIDENCE

Providence Church is on the Waxhaw road some fifteen miles out from Charlotte. There are many Colonial and Revolutionary heroes buried in the cemetery nearby and also in the church yard.

CENTER

Center Presbyterian Church is located above Davidson, some 25 miles due north of Charlotte on State Highway No. 26. Many heroes of the Revolution are buried here.

ROCKY RIVER

Rocky River Church is near Harrisburg, on the main line of the Southern Railway and State Highway No. 15, towards Salisbury, and some 10 miles from Charlotte. Here also lie buried a number of Revolutionary heroes. John Phifer, a signer of the Mecklenburg Declaration is buried here.

POPLAR TENT

Poplar Tent Presbyterian Church is on the Mallard Creek road some 15 miles northeast of Charlotte. It is in Cabarrus County now. Here also are buried a number of patriots who lost their lives in the war for liberty. Rev. Hezeikiah Balch is buried here.



LIBERTY HALL AND EARLY EDUCATION

As early as 1765 teachers were established in this county, and by 1775 Charlotte, Providence, Hopewell, Beattie's Ford, Steele Creek, and Sugaw Creek had buildings in which to conduct classes in the "three R's."

Elizabeth Cummins, in 1774 taught a four months term, being the first woman teacher in Mecklenburg, of record.

December 5, 1770, a bill was presented to the Assembly for the establishment of a college here. The charter was passed and approved by Governor Tryon, January 15, 1771; but in July, 1773, Governor Martin gave notice that the charter was disallowed.

There were too many Presbyterian elders on the board it was declared.

In April, 1777, the General Assembly granted a new charter under the name of Liberty Hall, and the college flourished as such.

It was here that plans for the Declaration of Independence were formulated and other political discussions took place when the classes were not meeting.

The institution stood at the corner of South Tryon and Third streets.

The British, when they took Charlotte, used it as a hospital and a number of British troops who died here were buried nearby.

Queens College, in Myers Park, is the descendant of this early institution. The government of Great Britain has changed somewhat since then, but Presbyterian elders still rule Queens College.



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ADDENDA

DAVIDSON COLLEGE
LIVING MONUMENT
TO GEN. WILLIAM LEE DAVIDSON

(*By* BAILEY T. GROOME)

Without a peer among the galaxy of institutions of similar size that dot the United States, here and there, Davidson College is a dynamic personality in the territory that shelters it and she reaches out her arms with an eager militant, compelling power that has, and always will make her influence felt afar.

It seems almost that her men, whether on the athletic fields or in collegiate debate, have imbibed that feeling that animated the man for which it was named, who fought and bled from Valley Forge to Colston's mill, and from Germantown to Cowan's Ford, a bulwark for Liberty and the right, who when he finally fell, fell with his face to the enemy.

Yet she is quiet and unassuming, intense and yet of a power that is felt rather than seen by fanfare and colorful parade—Davidson College has always appealed to the young men who wanted to be and to do and her men have fulfilled for about 100 years this ideal.

Woodrow Wilson went to school there!

Others, too numerous to mention, have gone there and come forth to reach the top in their many and varied professions.

Her men have been a mighty force in the development of Mecklenburg County and of North Carolina and who can say what may have entered the mind of Woodrow Wilson, who during earth's greatest crisis, so far as we know it, was placed at the helm of world affairs and who in the final analysis, gave to oppressed peoples everywhere—Liberty and autonomy!

Certain it is that Davidson College imparts this spirit to all who come into contact with her and there can be no doubt but that General Davidson himself would be content with this living moment to his valor and as a reward for the liberty he died for and never lived to enjoy.



HISTORICAL SKETCH

Davidson College was founded in 1837 by the descendants of those sturdy Scotch Presbyterians who came to America by way of North Ireland, and thus came to be known as the Scotch-Irish. The Scotch have for centuries been noted for their love for education and for their high educational standards. While Davidson was founded by these Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, it has never been sectarian in its teachings. The original charter, which was granted in 1838, states that the purpose of the College is "to educate youth of all classes without any regard to the distinction of religious denominations, and thereby to promote the more general diffusion of knowledge and virtue."

The Scotch-Irish began to settle in this beautiful, piedmont section of the Carolinas, in considerable numbers, as early as 1750. They built a large number of churches, and practically every church had in connection with it a good classical school. There were a score of such schools in the general territory in which Davidson College is located. Some of them became very noted.

In due time this zeal for higher education resulted in a determination to found a Christian college of high rank. At that time there was

no college of any kind in the Western half of the Carolinas. Accordingly, in March, 1835, Concord Presbytery enthusiastically passed a resolution approving of the founding of a college. It is well to remember that at that date Concord Presbytery covered the whole of the Western half of North Carolina. It included the territory which has since been set off into Mecklenburg and Asheville Presbyteries. A few months later Bethel Presbytery, which covered the upper and western parts of South Carolina, joined the movement to establish a college. In more recent years the presbyteries of South Carolina and Georgia have withdrawn to build their own institution. As the years went by all the presbyteries in North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida united in the ownership and control of the College.

The leader of the movement to found a college was Rev. Robert Hall Morrison, pastor of historic Sugaw Creek Church, near Charlotte, N. C. He and Rev. P. J. Sparrow, of Salisbury, N. C., raised \$30,000.00 for the proposed College in an incredibly short time. The new institution was named Davidson College as a tribute to the memory of General William Lee Davidson, a Presbyterian Revolutionary hero, who was killed at Cowan's Ford, only a few miles from Davidson College, as he op-

posed Lord Cornwallis. The land on which the College stands was secured from General Davidson's son, who, in turn, became a large contributor to the support of the College.

The corner-stone of Davidson College was laid on April 7, 1836, "in the presence of a large concourse of people." The original buildings were erected on the four sides of a rather small quadrangle, on the front side of the present campus. Five of those original buildings are still standing and still serving useful purposes. The main building stood on the north end of the quadrangle. It contained the classrooms and the chapel, where daily chapel exercises and the church services were held. It came to be known as the "Old Chapel." In 1902 it was enlarged by the use of money contributed by Dr. J. B. Shearer, and then rededicated as "Shearer Biblical Hall." The Eumanean and Philanthropic Society Halls stood, and still stand, on the south end of the quadrangle. Oak Row stands on what was the west side of the quadrangle, and Elm Row on the east side.

On March 1, 1837, Davidson College began its career as an educational institution, with three professors (including the president), and sixty-five students. Rev. Robert Hall Morrison, D.D., was the first president. He resigned in 1840 on account of ill health, but continued

to serve as a trustee of the College for a number of years. At first the College had a compulsory, manual labor feature, but this feature proved to be unsatisfactory and was dropped at the end of four or five years.

We may anticipate here and say that the following is a complete list of the names of the presidents of Davidson College. The dates indicate their tenure of office:

Rev. Robert Hall Morrison, D.D. (1836-1840.)

Rev. Samuel Williamson, D.D. (1841-1854.)

Rev. Drury Lacy, D.D. (1855-1860.)

Rev. John Lycan Kirkpatrick, D.D. (1860-1866.)

Rev. George Wilson McPhail, D.D., LL.D. (1866-1871.)

Prof. John Rennie Blake, A.M., Chairman of Faculty. (1871-1877.)

Rev. Andrew Dox Hepburn, D.D., LL.D. (1877-1885.)

Rev. Luther McKinnon, D.D. (1885-1888.)

Rev. John Bunyan Shearer, D.D., LL.D. (1888-1901.)

Prof. Henry Louis Smith, Ph.D., LL.D.
(1901-1912.)

Prof. William Joseph Martin, Ph.D., M.D.,
LL.D. (1912-1929.)

Rev. Walter Lee Lingle, D.D., LL.D.
(1929-.)

During the first twenty years of its existence the young college had one prolonged financial struggle. It had a good faculty and the student enrollment was satisfactory, but there was no endowment and no adequate income for current expenses.

A sudden turn came in the affairs of the College when, in 1856, it received nearly a quarter of a million dollars, through the bequest of the late Maxwell Chambers of Salisbury, N. C. That was a large sum of money for those days. New and enlarged plans were made for the College. A new quadrangle of noble proportions was planned, about one hundred and fifty yards east of the old quadrangle. One unit in the new quadrangle was erected in 1857, at a cost of about \$90,000, and named "The Maxwell Chambers Building." It contained class-rooms, auditorium and dormitories. The Old Chambers, as it came to be known, was a handsome building, and served a large purpose in the life of the college for a period of sixty-four years.

The Maxwell Chambers bequest also gave the College a real endowment, which greatly relieved the financial distress. The College started upon a new career. Then came the Civil War. The student attendance was greatly decreased and the greater part of the endowment was lost. Practically all the students and alumni of the college who were physically qualified enlisted in the army, and many of them lost their lives. After the war came the reconstruction period, with all of its demoralization. But in spite of this the College began to build up a stronger faculty than it had ever had in its history. Between 1868 and 1877 the following unusually able men became members of the faculty: Dr. Charles Phillips, Col. W. J. Martin, Dr. James F. Latimer, Dr. A. D. Hepburn, Dr. William M. Thornton, Dr. John Russell Sampson, and Dr. William W. Carson. Few institutions of that day could boast of such a group of men. As these men retired, other strong men took their places, and from that day to this the members of the faculty have ranked high in scholarship and in personality.

However, there was no large increase in the number of students, or in the endowment, between 1870 and the close of the century. The South had been impoverished by the Civil War. With the beginning of the Twentieth Century

there was an educational revival in the South. Prosperity had also begun to return to this impoverished section. Under the energetic leadership of a new president, the College entered upon a period of expansion. The student attendance grew. The endowment was increased. New dormitories and other buildings were erected. The faculty was enlarged. In the campaigns for increased endowments the General Education Board in New York made a number of handsome contributions and thus made the success of the campaigns possible.

On November 21, 1921, the Old Chambers Building was burned. It had stood there as the center of College life so long that its destruction seemed a mortal blow. But through the indefatigable labors of the president and his capable associates, the money was raised and a New Chambers Building erected at a cost of more than Six Hundred Thousand Dollars. This building was completed in 1929 and dedicated at Commencement in 1930. The General Education Board and several loyal alumni made large contributions towards the erection of the New Chambers.

The year 1926 marks the beginning of a new era of expansion for Davidson College. In that year Davidson College began to receive five per cent of the income of "The Duke Endow-

ment." Thus far this has increased the income of the College nearly seventy thousand dollars annually. That has enabled the College to enlarge its faculty and increase its student body. The Duke Endowment was created by the late James B. Duke of Charlotte, N. C., and New York, with a capital of Forty Million Dollars. The fact that a business man of such large affairs should, without solicitation, remember Davidson College in providing for the distribution of the income from his endowment, is in itself a tribute to the College.

It is impossible to condense the history of Davidson College into a few pages. The full history has been written by Miss Cornelia Shaw in a book of over three hundred pages. The College is now nearly a hundred years old. Each generation has contributed something in love, in loyalty, in money, and in ideals to make its spirit finer than it was before. The infant institution of 1837 has grown into a strong College with an able faculty of over forty men, and a student enrollment of six hundred and twenty-five. The grounds, buildings and equipment are worth approximately Two Million Dollars. The endowment which it holds in its own name amounts to about Nine Hundred and Fifty Thousand Dollars. The income from The Duke Endowment, which is held by The

Duke Endowment Trustees, represents an additional endowment of approximately \$1,175,000.00. The annual current expense budget of the College amounts to about \$300,000.00. The standing of the College in the Educational World is indicated in some facts which are stated in the paragraph which follows:

Davidson College is a member of the Association of American Colleges, is on the list of colleges approved by the Association of American Universities, is a member of the Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools of the Southern States, and a member of the Presbyterian Education Association of the South. Davidson also has a chapter of the Phi Beta Kappa Society.



GENERAL WILLIAM LEE DAVIDSON IN MANY BATTLES

North Carolina has much of which she may justly be proud. She bears her honors with great modesty—perhaps too great.

On her soil the flag of England was first displayed in the United States and when this flag became a yoke of oppression instead of a shield of defense, her Provincial Congress on April 12, 1776, was the first of the sister colonies to take steps to remove it and plant in its stead the stars and stripes.

In these trying days the people of Mecklenburg by many acts had shown their bitter feeling towards parliament and this and Rowan were regarded in England as the most hostile counties in America. In 1750 Davidson came into this section of the State a lad of four years. He had been born in Pennsylvania—the home of John McNitt Alexander, Maj. John Davidson, Generals George and Joseph Graham, Capt. "Black Bill" Alexander and many others who preferred the genial climate of North Carolina and did such valiant service for her. Educated at Queen's Museum in Charlotte, the very centre of this hostility, he imbibed the spirit and the desire for liberty, and independence became second nature with him. At the



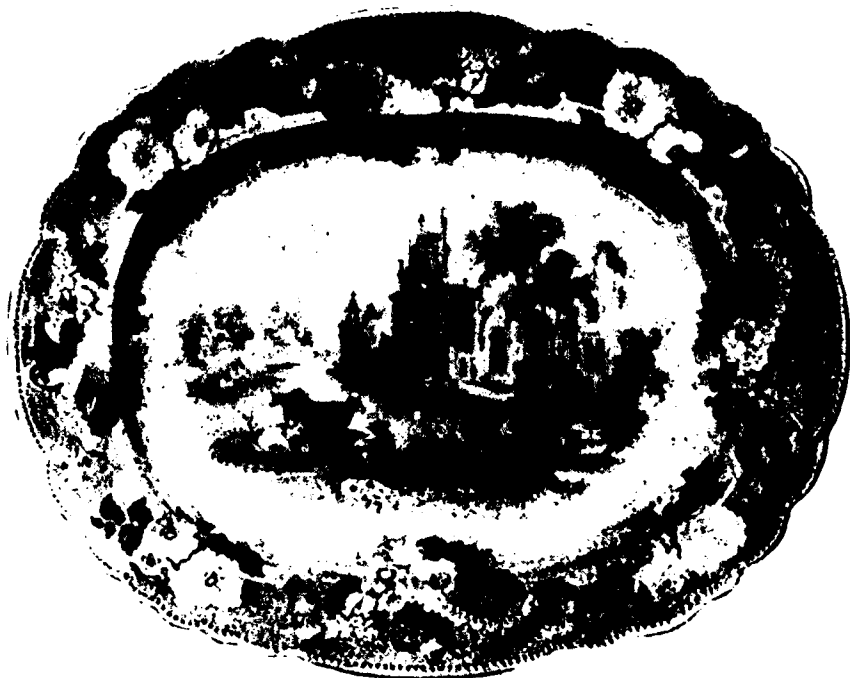
ONE OF THE OLDEST BUILDINGS

This beautiful classic structure, one of the first units of Davidson College, is now used by one of the literary societies of the institution.



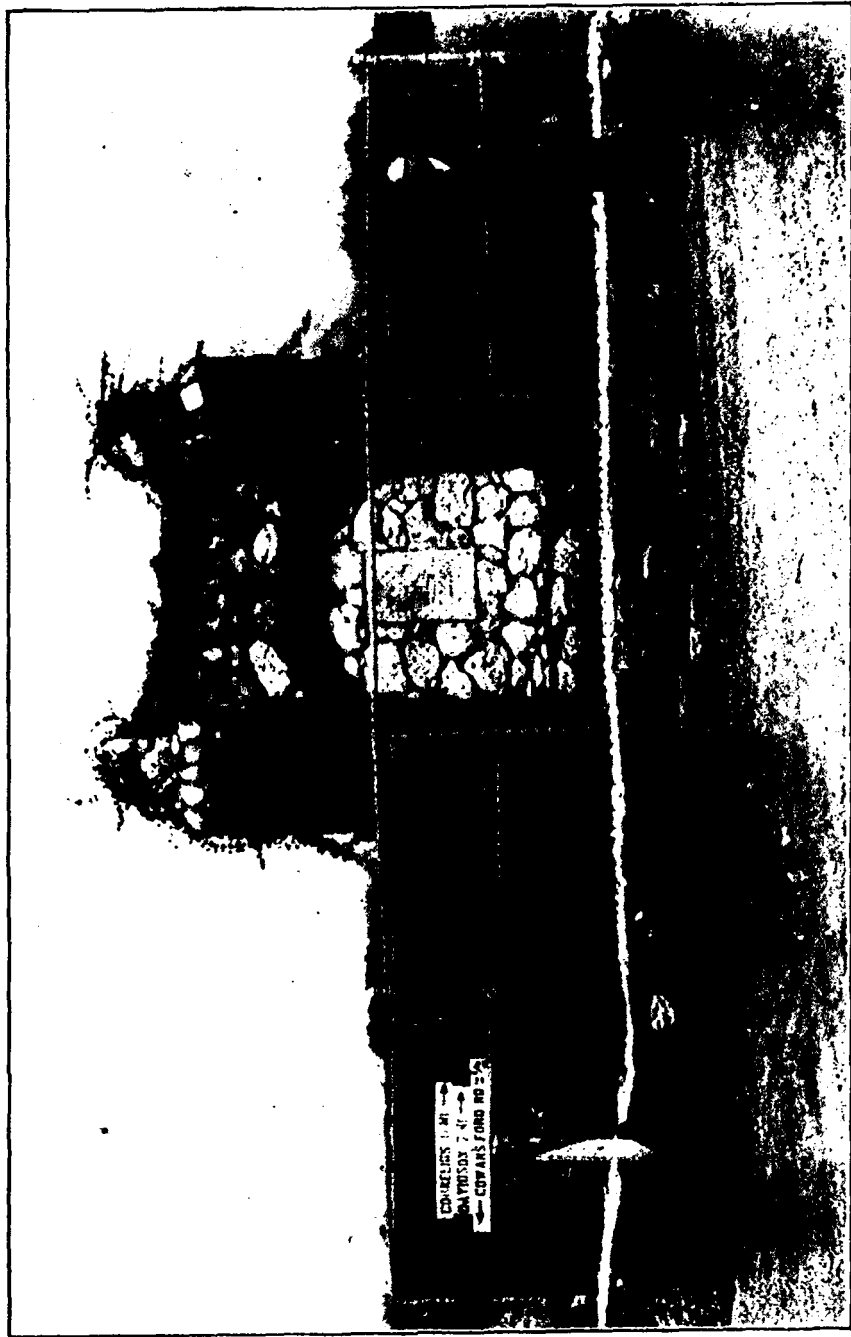
CHAMBERS HALL

Most recent addition to the buildings at Davidson College, completed at an approximate cost of one million dollars—the Chapel contains a magnificent pipe organ.



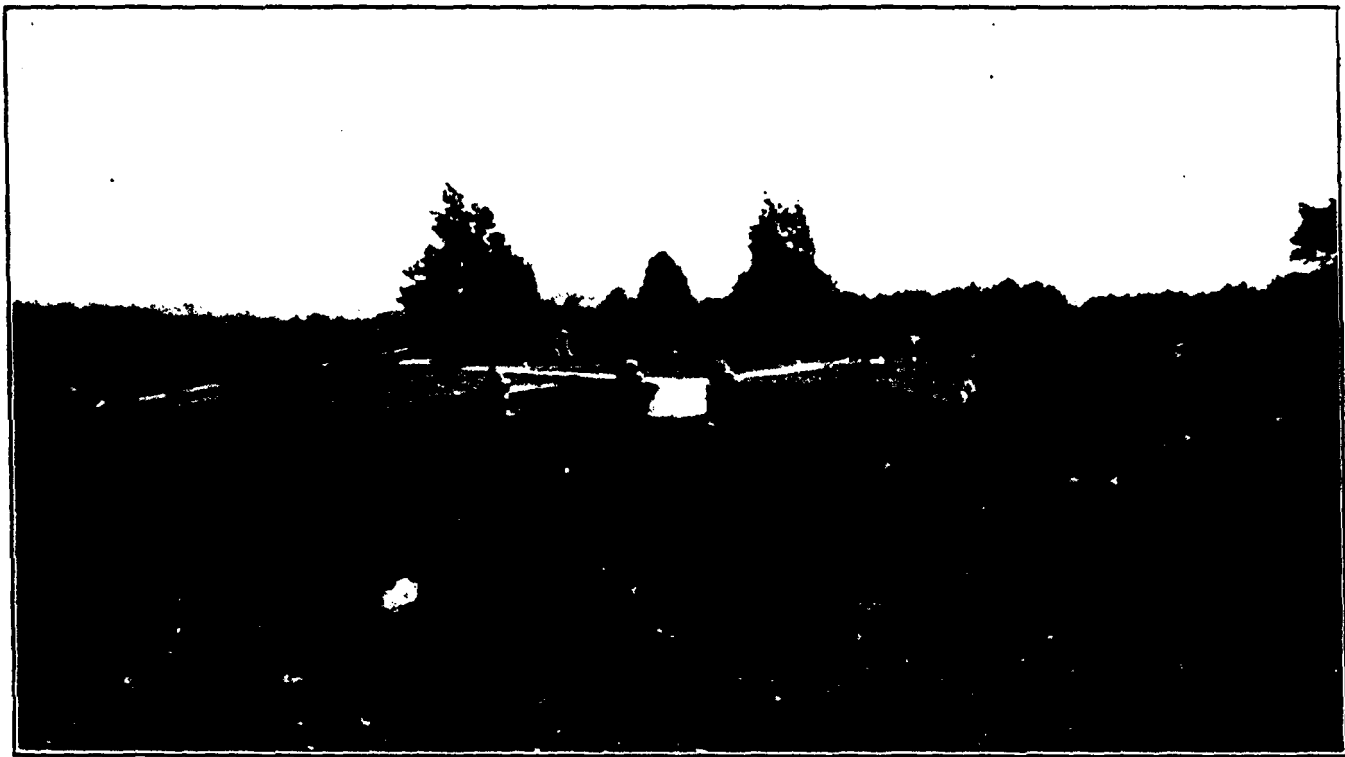
GEN. DAVIDSON'S PLATTER

A handsome piece of china purchased by Col. E. L. Baxter
Davidson and presented to the museum of
Davidson College.



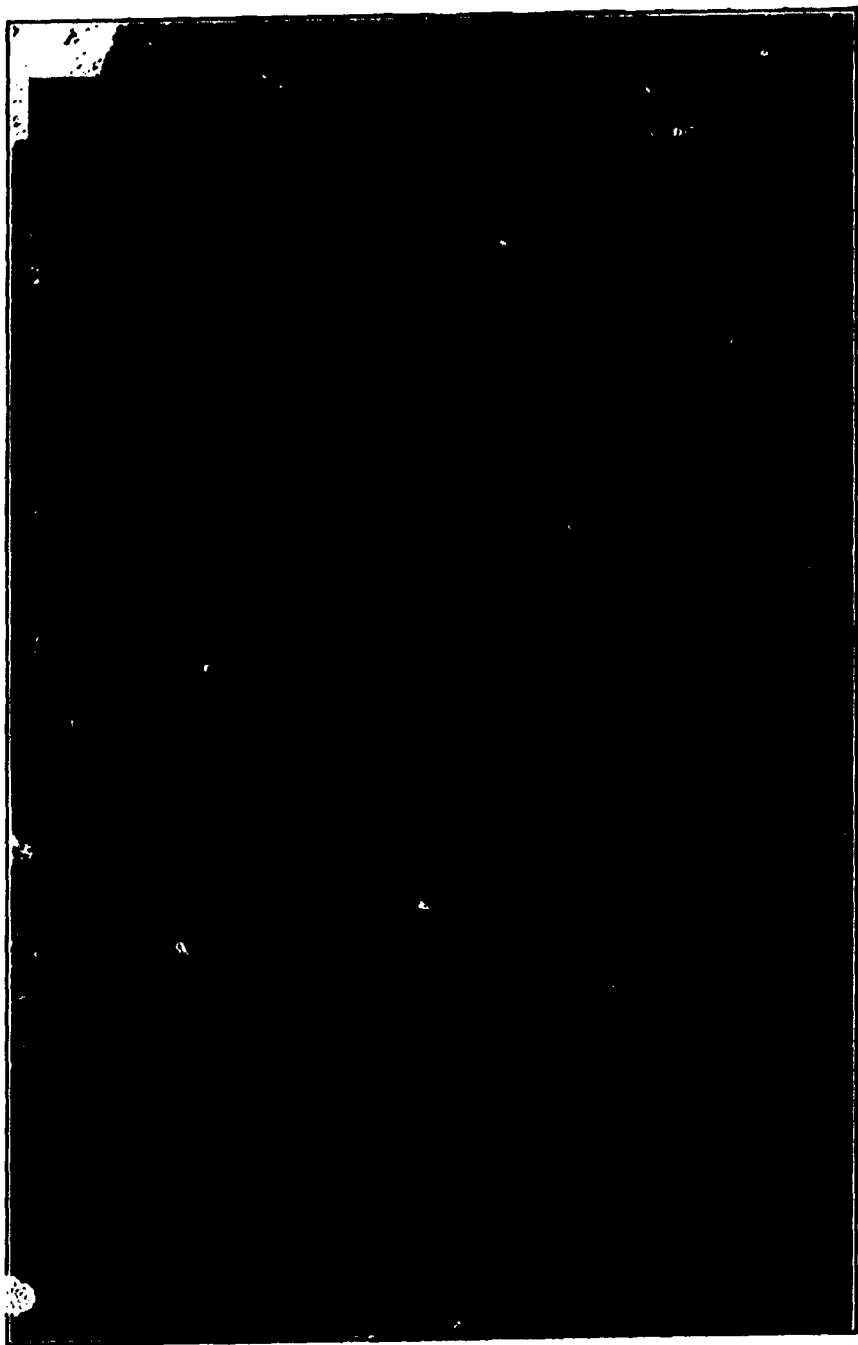
GEN. DAVIDSON MARKER

Cenotaph erected on Beattie's Ford Road by Col. E. L. Baxter Davidson.



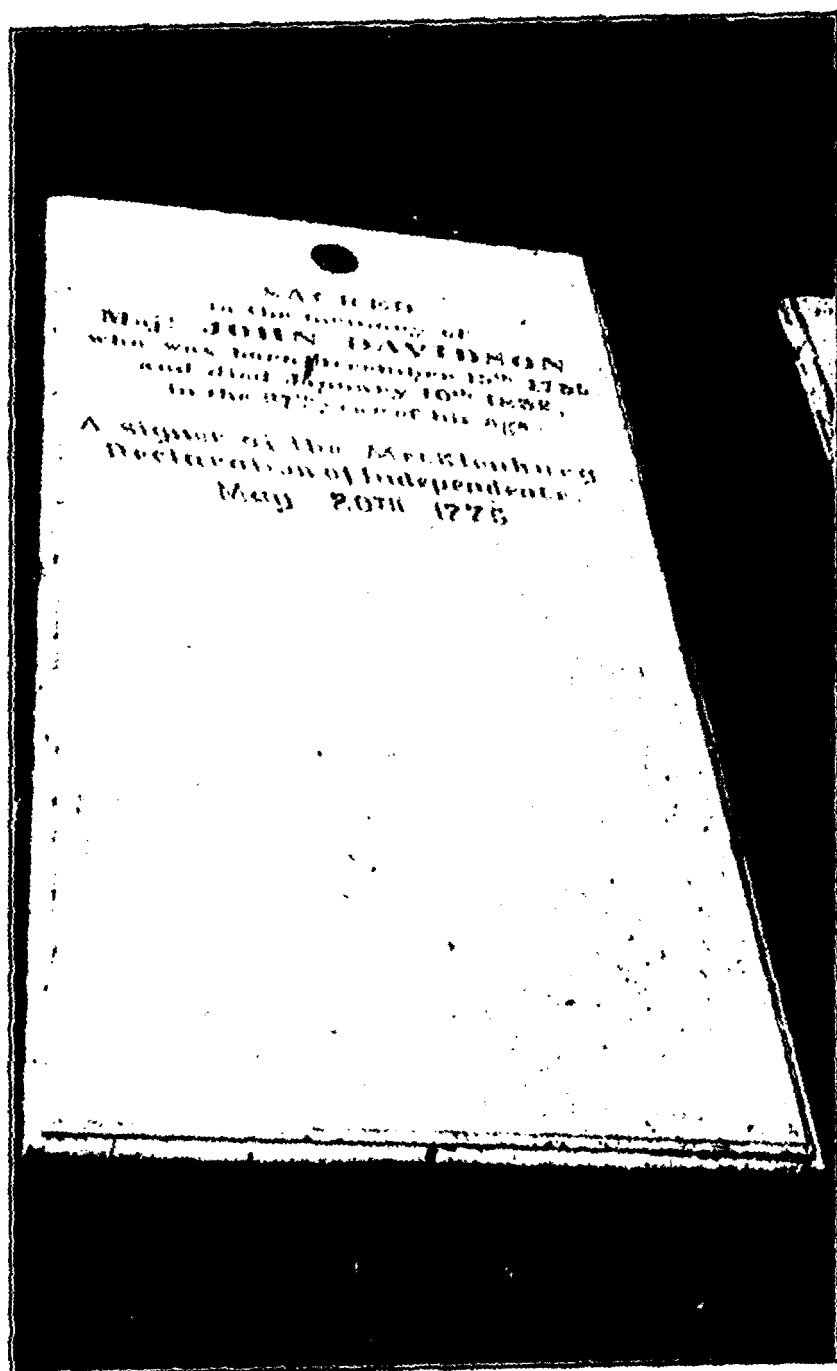
"RURAL HILL BURYING GROUND"

Herein lie buried the forebears of Col. E. L. Baxter Davidson, namely Major John Davidson, "a signer of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence," and his wife, Violet Wilson Davidson, and others. *In the background are two of the most magnificent yew trees in America.*



TABLET MARKING

"Rural Hill Burying Ground." Design at the top is a yew tree.



TOMB OF A "SIGNER"
"Rural Hill Burying Ground."



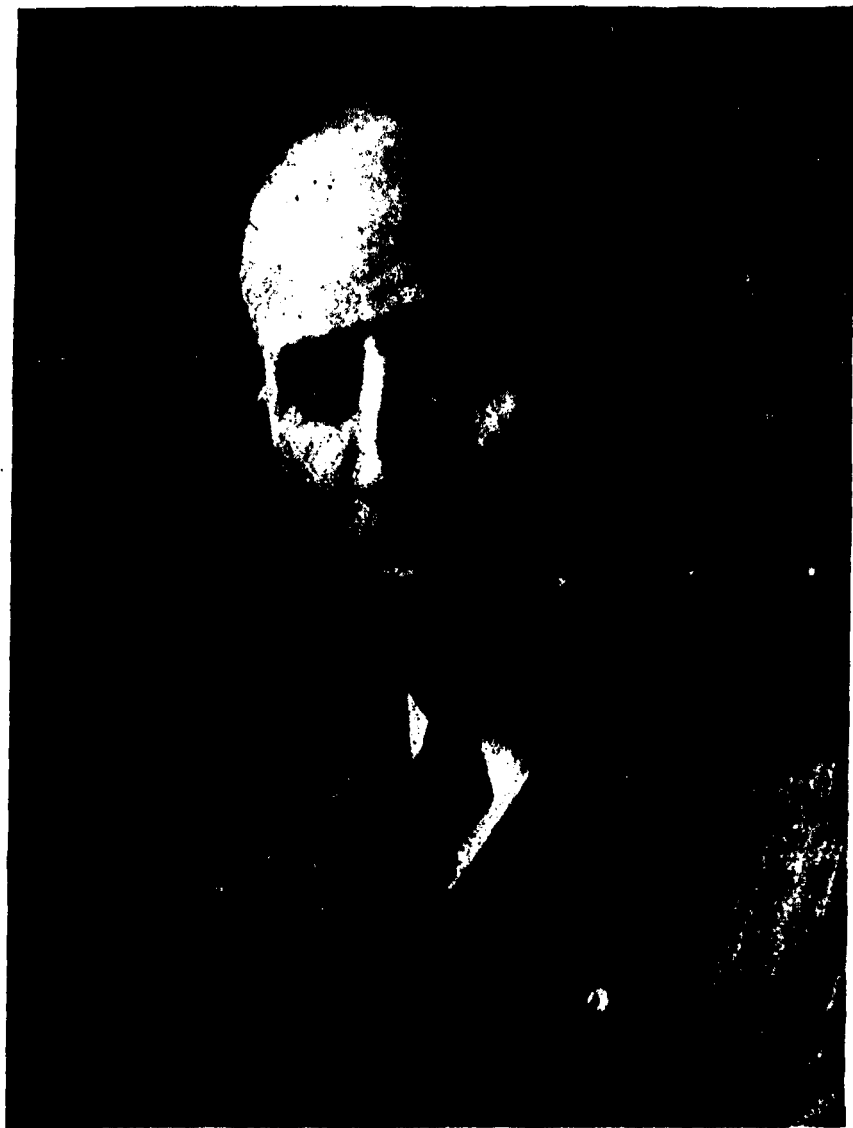
COL. E. L. BAXTER DAVIDSON

Colonel Davidson is a direct descendant of Major John Davidson and a kinsman of General William Lee Davidson. He has spent a fortune in the last half century in placing monuments, markers and in buying and preserving historic volumes, documents, etc., etc. He is president of the Mecklenburg Chapter, Sons of the American Revolution, host to the 42nd annual Congress, Sons of the American Revolution.



DR. JOHN E. S. DAVIDSON

Historian of Mecklenburg Chapter S. A. R. in charge of the
publication of this volume.



CLARENCE O. KUESTER

Through whose efforts Kings Mountain Battlefield has been made a National Park and where the Congress will spend \$225,000 in creating a national shrine. Mr. Kuester was general chairman of the recent celebration there when President Hoover was the principal speaker.

formation of the committee of safety for Rowan County we find him one of the first members, with Griffith Rutherford, Matthew Locke, John Brevard, etc. We find him serving on leading committees in this body and that he is captain of the "up river" company of militia.

When the Provincial Congress at Halifax, in April, '76 determined to raise four additional regiments to the first and second, already in service, Davidson was appointed major in the fourth, of which Thomas Polk was colonel and James Thackston, Lieutenant-Colonel. Under the command of General Nash, he at once marched North to join the army of Gen. Washington, at that time in a feeble condition and despondent. The first and second battalions became veterans and the four others, though not of equal experience, maintained the reputation of North Carolina troops. They participated with credit in the battles of Princeton and Brandywine but in the bloody encounter at Germantown, October 4, 1777, their valor was to be conspicuously approved. On this field of trial Davidson was promoted a Lieutenant-Colonel for gallantry. He was also in the battle of Monmouth and the other battles of the North till November, 1779, when he was ordered South to reinforce General Lincoln at Charleston. He left the Northern army with

the commendation of Washington for his bravery on the field.

In passing through North Carolina he obtained permission to visit his family that he had not seen for three years and when he reached Charleston it was surrounded by the British, so he could not join his regiment and he therefore, escaped being taken prisoner. He returned at once to Mecklenburg, where he was active in subduing Tory insurrections, which had become numerous since the recent success of British arms. A very severe engagement took place with them at Coulson's Mills, and in the encounter Davidson received a wound which kept him two months from the field and came near ending his life.

On surrender of General Rutherford at Camden in August, 1780, Davidson was commissioned Brigadier General in his stead, and given command of the militia in the district of Salisbury. Special endeavors were made by him for the reinforcement of Greene, who was opposing Cornwallis' march in pursuit of Morgan, who was making his way across North Carolina with a number of prisoners to be taken to Virginia.

When Cornwallis reached the Catawba River on January 28, 1781, he found it much swollen

by recent rains so that he could not pass for three days. He was expected to pass the river at Beattie's Ford, which is by far the best ford on the Catawba, and here the main force was stationed to oppose his passage. Sherrill's and Tool's fords were also guarded and on the afternoon of the 31st Davidson with 300 men was stationed at Cowan's Ford, a quite difficult and not much used ford six miles below Beattie's Ford. Cornwallis sending scouts to the different fords and finding all guarded but Cowan's, he determined on a passage here. On the first of February, before daybreak, he arrived here with all of his army but the few men sent as a feint at Beattie's Ford. He was quite surprised at seeing the camp-fires on the opposite bank, but determined to attempt crossing anyway, as a drizzling rain was falling and the river would shortly be too high again for his passage. The Americans kept up a galling fire from the bank, but as the British were below the real ford their fire was oblique and did not have its full effect, there being only forty British killed and wounded. General Davidson, rallying his men and moving down the river to the place where the British were landing, was pierced by the fatal bullet and fell dead from his horse at the head of his men.

The passage in the night was a brilliant plan of Cornwallis'. Had he chosen the day instead, Cowan's Ford might have been a second Thermopylae.

Richard Barry and David Wilson carried the body of their beloved commander to the house of Samuel Wilson, Sr., where it was prepared for burial. His family were sent for, and that night the procession moved by torchlight to Hopewell church, where the remains of our hero were deposited.

"Light Horse Harry" Lee says: "The loss of General Davidson would always have been felt at any stage of the war. It was particularly detrimental in its effect at this period, as he was the chief instrument relied upon by General Greene for assembling the militia.

A promising soldier was lost to the country in the meridian of life, at a moment when his services would have been highly beneficial to us. He was a man of popular manners, pleasing address, active and indefatigable."

The people of North Carolina, in 1822 through their General Assembly said, in recognition of the gallant services of General Davidson, "We shall cut off a part of Rowan county and name the new county for him."

In 1835 the Presbyterians of North and South Carolina said: "We will honor ourselves by naming our college for this hero."

The Continental Congress on September 20, 1781, passed the following resolution:

"Resolved, That the Governor and Council of the State of North Carolina be desired to erect a monument at the expense of the United States not exceeding in value five hundred dollars to the memory of the late Brigadier General Davidson, who commanded the militia of the district of Salisbury, in the State of North Carolina, and was killed on the first of February last, fighting gallantly for the defense of the liberty, and independence of these States."

Neither this nor any other monument marks the grave of General Davidson.* A movement will be made in the present Congress to obtain an appropriation sufficient for erecting a monument worthy of General Davidson, and which would in part compensate for the neglect of a little more than a century.

With the permission of the living relative I think it would be well to exhume the remains and re-inter them at Davidson College, which was named for him and which is about 10 miles distant.

*Congress has since erected a magnificent arch to General Davidson on the Battlefield of Guilford Court House, near Greensboro. (ed.)

The college authorities have expressed a desire for this. I give the letter below and also letters I have received from Senator Z. B. Vance and Congressman Samuel J. Randall, who have promised to introduce bills for the purpose named in the Senate and House.

These letters are as follows:

"We learn with great satisfaction that you are moving to secure from Congress an appropriation to erect the monument to the memory of General William Lee Davidson, the hero of Cowan's Ford, which was voted by the Continental Congress in 1871. We heartily second your petition for this act of recognition of the merits of one of North Carolina's devoted patriots. And if the monument shall be erected, and it shall be the wish of the authorities to put it here, I can promise beforehand that it shall have a hearty welcome on the beautiful campus of this college named after him and almost within sight of the field where he met a soldier's death.

"In the name of the faculty of Davidson College and by their authority."

(Signed) W. J. MARTIN,
President pro tem.

"It will afford me great pleasure to coöperate with you in the matter of the Davidson monument. I have filed your letter to be taken to Washington, and when I reach there, will proceed at once to take such steps as may be necessary in the matter."

"Very truly yours,

"Z. B. VANCE."

"I have your favor of the 17th inst., and have noted with interest its contents.

"I heartily sympathize with the movement you have inaugurated to fittingly mark the burial place of General Davidson and shall cordially co-operate with yourself and Governor Vance in securing the passage of the necessary legislation on the part of Congress to carry into effect the resolution of the Continental Congress, and to this end I will, as soon as practicable, introduce a bill."

"Very truly yours,

"SAM J. RANDALL."

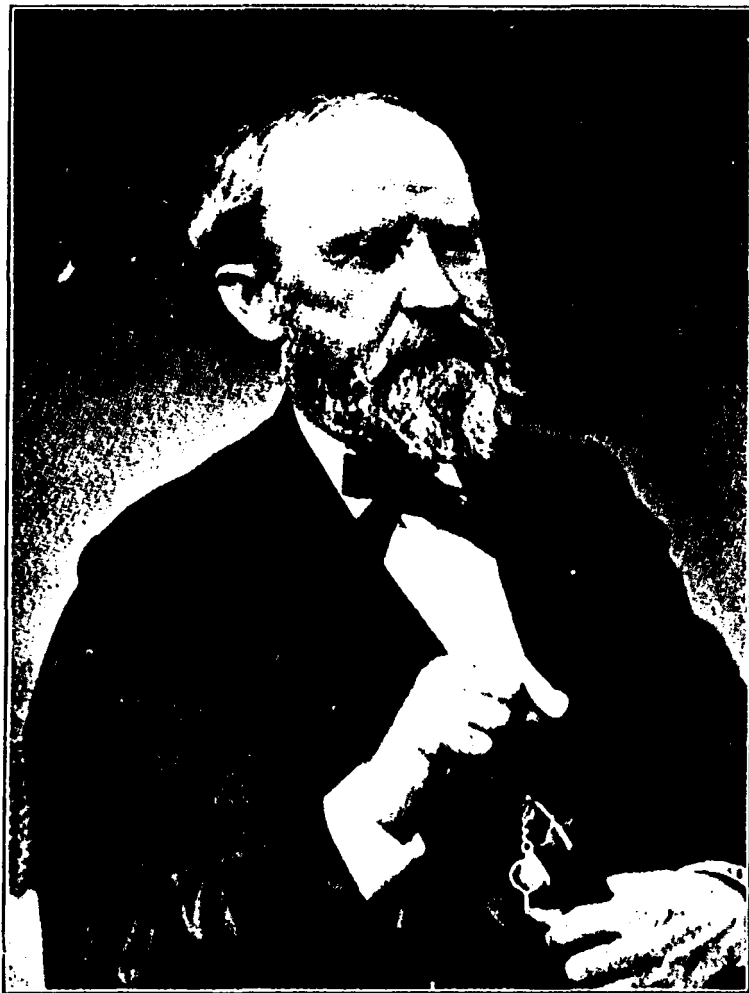
I have also received letters of co-operation and sympathy for the movement from Governor Scales, Congressmen Simmons, Nichols, Rowland, Henderson, Cowles and Johnston, Hon. Kemp P. Battle, Hon. D. Schenck, Hon. Robert B. Vance, Gen. D. H. Hill, North Carolina His-

torical Society, Statesville *Landmark*, Charlotte *Home and Democrat*, and *News and Observer*.

With such a beginning does not the movement bid fair to receive sufficient endorsement to secure the appropriation desired?

W. A. WITHERS,
Davidson College, 1888.





ADAM BREVARD DAVIDSON

Adam Brevard Davidson was 24 years of age when his grandfather, Major John Davidson, died. He made affidavit that his grandfather frequently told him that he was at Charlotte May 20, 1775, and that he signed the "Declaration of Independence" adopted at that time.



GENERAL JOSEPH GRAHAM

As a student at Queen's Museum in Charlotte, at the age of 15 years, General Graham was present and saw the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence signed May 20, 1775, and made an affidavit to that effect, now in the War Department at Washington.

At the age of 18 years he volunteered as a private and rapidly arose to the rank of Major.

He fought in 15 battles and skirmishes.

In the Battle of Charlotte, he was wounded nine times and left for dead on the battlefield, at Sugaw Creek Church, where he made a stand to stop the pursuing British.

His company was the only one that retired in order from the Battle of Cowan's Ford, and he protected the retreat of that corps after General Davidson was killed.

He was the great grandfather of Hon. William A. Graham, President of the North Carolina Division, Sons of the American Revolution, and North Carolina Commissioner of Agriculture.

GENERAL JOSEPH GRAHAM

General Joseph Graham, Hero of the Battle of Charlotte and of 14 other battles and skirmishes in the Revolution, was a major at 18 years of age. He was born in Pennsylvania, October 13, 1759, and moved to Mecklenburg when he was seven years old. He was educated at Queen's Museum and at the age of 15 years was present and saw the Mecklenburg Declaration signed May 20, 1775, in Charlotte. His affidavit is in the War Department files in Washington.

It would be impossible to cover here the active life of this great patriot. Suffice it to say that he laid the foundation for a family, honored and revered throughout North Carolina for more than a century, a family that has given heavily and honorably to service of every sort for the upbuilding of the commonwealth.

In a spectacular fight in the streets of Charlotte when Lord Cornwallis took this city, General Graham, as a young captain, was assigned the difficult rôle of fighting the rear guard action against the trained dragoons of the British. Making a stand at Sugaw Creek Church, four miles from town, he was shot down and hacked to pieces, with three bullets in his thigh, a sabre thrust in the side, one cut on the back of the neck (severing his silver stock buckle) and four sabre cuts upon the forehead, from one of which brains exuded—yet the next few days saw him mount a horse and ride to Davie County to escape from the British and allow his wounds to heal.

At Cowan's Ford his company stood its ground and held the British at bay, again fighting the rear guard action and saving that detachment from annihilation.

He served seven enlistments under commission.

ADAM BREVARD DAVIDSON

Adam Brevard Davidson, the father of E. L. Baxter Davidson, together with Colonel Davidson, forms one of the closest links between the actual signing of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence, May 20, 1775, and the present day. Mr. A. B. Davidson was a grandson of Major John Davidson, who signed the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence and he frequently talked with Major Davidson about that event.

He made affidavit to that effect as follows:

State of North Carolina,
Mecklenburg County, S. S.

Personally appeared before me in the courthouse of said county and state at Charlotte, North Carolina, the 8th day of June, A.D. 1896, Adam Brevard Davidson, of said county and state, who being duly sworn, deposes and says that he was born at Rural Hill Farm in said county and state, situated on the Catawba River near Toole's Ford, on the 13th day of March, 1808.

That he, the said Adam Brevard Davidson, is one of the sons of John Davidson, of said county and state, and Sally Harper Brevard, wife of said John Davidson. That John Davidson, the father of this deponent, died on the 26th day of April, A.D. 1870, in the ninety-seventh year of his age.

That the said John Davidson, popularly known as "Silver-headed Jacky" because of a surgical operation of trephining in his head when a young man, was the second son of Major John Davidson, of said county and state, who was a major of the Mecklenburg Militia in the War of Independence, and who was one of the signers of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence, and who signed that document in the courthouse at Charlotte in said county and state on May 20th, 1775, A.D.

That the said Major John Davidson was the grandfather of the deponent whom this deponent knew personally and intimately as his grandson for nearly 24 years.

That the grandfather of this deponent, the said Major John Davidson of the Revolutionary War, and who died and was buried at the family burying ground on Rural Hill farm, of said county and state, January 10, 1832, in the 97th year of his age, frequently conversed with the deponent concerning the events of the War of Independence, and that he was a signer of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence on May 20, 1775, A.D. That this deponent was the owner of the horse pistols of the said Major John Davidson, who told him that he the said Major John Davidson, had carried them in the service as major of the Mecklenburg Militia in the War of Independence. That the said pistols were destroyed by fire in the old homestead at Rural Hill Farm, said county and state, in November, 1886 A.D.

That this deponent was present at the burial of his grandfather, Major John Davidson, on January 10, 1832 A.D., and that his remains are to this day in the family burying ground on the said Rural Hill Farm, said county and state, over which is a marble slab, containing the name of Major John Davidson, aforesaid, and the date of his death. That my mother was Sally Harper Brevard, who died on January 18, 1864 A.D., that she was the daughter of Adam Brevard, of said county and state, who was the brother of Dr. Ephraim Brevard, whom my grandfather informed me in his lifetime was the author of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence, promulgated at Charlotte, said county and state, A.D. 1775, on May 20th, of said year.

A. B. DAVIDSON.

Sworn and subscribed to before me this 8th day of June A.D., 1896, by Adam Brevard Davidson, who is personally known to me to be the deponent in the above affidavit.

SEAL

(Signed) J. M. MORROW,

Clerk of Superior Court, Mecklenburg County, North Carolina.

Mr. A. B. Davidson was born in Mecklenburg County, March 13, 1808. He was born and reared at

Rural Hill near the Catawba River and the battlefield of Cowan's Ford and was one of the most successful planters and business men ever produced in the county. He was elevated to the highest position in every business organization, religious body or educational institution with which he was connected. He was a man of noble and kindly disposition, though he had a determined mind and would not yield his opinions when he believed himself to be right and he usually was. On April 20, 1836, he was united in marriage with Mary Laura, the daughter of Honorable John Springs of York District in South Carolina. They had 15 children. In 1876, Mr. Davidson married a second time; his wife being Cornelia C. Elmore, the daughter of Honorable Franklin Elmore of South Carolina. In 1872, after making an outstanding success as a southern planter, he moved to Charlotte, where he spent the remainder of his life as one of the most active citizens of this community.

He was president of the Mecklenburg Agricultural Society for 15 years until that society came to an end at the beginning of the Civil War.

In 1847 he was elected one of the twelve board of directors for the C. C. & A. Railroad. He was on that board when he died. He was a bank director, a director in manufacturing concerns and interested in other financial enterprises of a large nature. Mr. Davidson was a prominent member of the Presbyterian Church and was an elder for half a century. He gave largely of his means to church affairs. In 1856 he was a delegate to the old school general assembly, which convened at New York City.

For more than 25 years he was a Trustee of Davidson College and was one of the heaviest contributors to the educational institution. He sawed and delivered the lumber from which the first buildings of Davidson College were erected.

He was a large contributor to the Theological Seminary of Columbia, S. C., and for 15 years was a Trustee of that institution. He was also a Trustee of the Union Seminary of Richmond, Va.

COL. E. L. BAXTER DAVIDSON

Col. E. L. Baxter Davidson is a direct descendant of Major John Davidson of the American Revolution and a kinsman of General William Lee Davidson, who was killed in the Battle of Cowan's Ford a few miles above Charlotte on the Catawba River.

Col. Baxter Davidson, as he is best known, can be called "Defender of the Faith" where anything historical is concerned, for during the past half century he has contributed lavishly of his funds in the erection of monuments and markers, historical publications, family heirlooms and other valuable historical data to the extent of something like \$75,000.

Among his possessions, and he has been pre-eminently successful in business, he numbers the property formerly the home of Col. Thomas Polk and the headquarters of the British General Lord Cornwallis, during his brief stay of two weeks in Charlotte. Today, the offices of Colonel Davidson occupy the same ground as that of the English Lord.

Among some of the outstanding contributions to the cause of keeping alive and fresh in the memory of the citizens of this community, the sacrifice of those early heroes of

the Revolution, might be mentioned his large contributions to Davidson College, named in honor of General Davidson.

At heavy expense he caused to be erected a wall around the Rural Hill Burying Ground, containing the sacred remains of his forebears and making it one of the most beautiful burying grounds in the state.

Colonel Davidson has purchased and had suitably erected half-a-dozen handsome bronze tablets, scattered about all over the county from Sugaw Creek to McIntyre's Farm to mark the site of historic events.

A handsome cenotaph and steel fence with an unusually handsome bronze marker has been erected by Colonel Davidson in honor of General Davidson, it being half way between Davidson College and the spot where the hero fell while attempting to stop Cornwallis in his passage of the Catawba River.

At Hopewell church he also caused to be erected a great bronze marker at the grave of this Revolutionary leader.

On the Beattie's Ford road and the Statesville road he has caused to be erected large cast-iron mile posts, carrying the well known Hornet's Nest emblem. On the County line sepa-

rating Iredell and Mecklenburg he has had erected large stone monuments, with the names of the county in bronze facing the traveler as he enters the respective counties.

These are but a few of his activities. Colonel Davidson has purchased rare volumes, pictures, china-ware, old documents and photographs too numerous to mention and he has never failed to contribute heavily towards any movement having for its design the perpetuating of the memory of those who gave themselves for liberty.

As president of the Mecklenburg Chapter, Sons of the American Revolution, he has always been leader in the activities of this organization.

For five years he has been donor in the national society, contributing the sum of \$2,500 towards this fund in that time.

In the cause of education and of the church he has been a most liberal contributor, being one of the few wealthy men who believe these things to be an investment he has never been backward in pulling out his check book.

His well known signature in worthy causes is a familiar sight to Charlotte bankers.

Largely through his efforts the 42nd annual Congress, Sons of the American Revolution, was brought to Charlotte, May 17-21, 1931, and he has been one of the financial stand-bys in this great undertaking.

Not only in the cause of the Revolution, but in all civic activities of whatever sort, Colonel Davidson is an active citizen, being a staunch supporter of the Chamber of Commerce and all its activities.

He has had more to do with the suitable marking of historic spots in this county than any other individual and wherever he thought one ought to be, he had it erected and paid for it, and in all of it he has been rather modest, as most big men have a habit of being.



ROSTER

SONS OF AMERICAN REVOLUTION

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