



BROTHERS IN SERVICE



Zebulon and Robert Vance Birthplace



Here were born two notable Buncombe County brothers, Zebulon Baird Vance (1830–1894) and Robert Brank Vance (1828–1899).

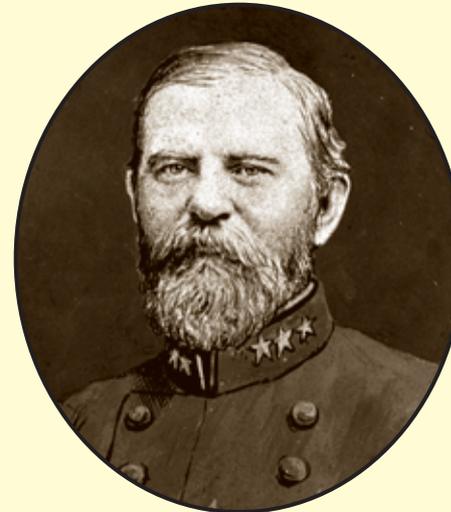
Zebulon Vance was a Whig and supporter of the Union who opposed secession until the last moment. At the outbreak of war in 1861, he resigned his seat in the U.S. House of Representatives, returned home, and raised the “Rough and Ready Guards” (Co. F, 14th North Carolina Infantry) for the Confederate army. Elected colonel of the 26th North Carolina Infantry, Vance served in the field until elected governor in 1862. His administration was marked by efforts to balance the needs of his people with those of the Confederacy, promising “the wife & child of the soldiers who are in the Army doing his duty, shall share the last bushel of meal & pound of meat in the State.” His leadership and concern for North Carolinians ensured his place in their hearts. At war’s end, on his 35th birthday, he was



Zebulon B. Vance

Courtesy North Carolina Office of Archives and History

“If war must come, I preferred to be with my own people. ... [I]t was better, right or wrong, that communities and States should go together and face the horror of war in a body.”
— Zebulon B. Vance, North Carolina’s Civil War Governor



Robert B. Vance

Courtesy North Carolina Office of Archives and History

arrested and briefly imprisoned in Washington, D.C. Pardoned in 1867, he was reelected governor in 1876, and then elected to the U.S. Senate in 1879. He died in office in 1894. Vance remains to this day the most popular leader that North Carolina has produced.

Robert Vance, who like his brother maintained strong Unionist sympathies, volunteered for Confederate military service in 1861 when North Carolina seceded. He was elected colonel of the 29th North Carolina Infantry and later was pro-

moted to brigadier general commanding Confederate forces in western North Carolina. Despite geographical obstacles he and his men succeeded in moving artillery through the Smoky Mountains. He was captured by Union forces in East Tennessee in 1864, then paroled by order of President Lincoln and allowed to return home. In 1872, he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, serving until retirement in 1896.