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THE EBB OF THE GREAT REVIVAL

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At the turn of the eighteenth century a great upsurge of religious enthusiasm began to develop in the frontier regions of the South. Reaching tidal-wave proportions in Kentucky during 1800-1801, it swept eastward, overflowing the older communities of the Atlantic seaboard. Rightly this religious catharsis has been called the Great Revival, for it produced a revolution in the religious life of the South and the West. The background of this movement was a state of irreligion into which the Southern people had relapsed, due partly to deism, to the effects of the American Revolution, and to the rapid expansion of the frontier. The central idea behind the movement was an American crusade to save souls from hell—that terrifying illusion haunting the minds of the people. The agency used to effect this end was peculiarly suited to the rural population of that period—the camp meeting, which gathered tremendous crowds from scattered homesteads to listen to relays of ministers preaching a religion of high emotional voltage.¹

After 1805 the excitement of the Great Revival began to ebb, but revivals did not disappear from the mores of the ante-bellum South or from other sections of the country. Rather, they came at intervals and ran their courses. In 1857-58, for example, after a serious financial panic, a widespread religious revival took place in the Northern states. The last great revival in the South occurred among the gray-clad soldiers of the Confederacy following tragic reverses in battle. Frail human nature appears

¹ For studies of the Great Revival, see Guion G. Johnson, "Revival Movements in Ante-Bellum North Carolina," in *North Carolina Historical Review*, X, 21-43, and "The Camp Meeting in Ante-Bellum North Carolina," *ibid.*, 95-110; W. L. Grissom, *History of Methodism in North Carolina from 1772 to the Present Time* (Nashville, Tenn., 1905), I, Chaps. 18-20; and W. W. Sweet, *Revivalism in America; its Origin, Growth and Decline* (New York, 1944); Catherine C. Cleveland, *The Great Revival in the West, 1797-1805* (Chicago, 1916).

incapable of sustaining a high level of religious enthusiasm for any long period, but relapses into formalism or religious routine. Then, almost with an inevitable rhythm, the dormant forces of religious devotion revive. Nor does there seem to be valid reason to expect that this ebb and flow of religious feeling will ever be permanently stayed by human sophistication arising from the advance of science or the hardening effect of technology upon human emotions.

In studying the rise and decline of the Great Revival, the modern historian is confronted with a complex pattern of various interpretations. He may adopt a purely rationalistic view and laugh cynically at the emotional extravagances which characterized this movement. On the other hand, he may look beneath the tumult and excitement of the camp meeting to discern the craving of lonely frontier people for human companionship. He may be interested in the psychology of hysterical crowds, or the exhibitionism of fervid evangelists, or the effect of camp meetings on Southern oratory and on the music of the Negro spirituals. He may investigate the imponderable influences of the fever and the ague, the frequent deaths of frontier communities, and the solemn stillness of the wilderness in producing a religious sensitivity. But this paper is concerned only with certain significant by-products of the Great Revival: (1) the co-operation during this period of various sects, a harmony later to be dissolved in bitter denominational fights; (2) the ebb of the revival movement as illustrated in the career of one of the most colorful of the evangelists, Richard Hugg King, and (3) the residual effects of evangelical religion upon the Southern mind.

The co-operation of the Presbyterian, Methodist and Baptist churches during the period of the Great Revival is one of the most striking phenomena of this movement. From Clark County, Georgia, Thomas Grant wrote to Armelia Owen in Virginia, "The Presbyterians and Methodists commune, preach, and pray constantly together and are in great unison. I should rejoice to see a union among all."² A correspondent in Kentucky, describing the mammoth Cane Ridge Meeting of 1801, wrote: "thither as-

² Thomas Grant, Clark Co., Ga., to Armelia Owen, May 28, 1803. David Campbell Papers, MSS in Duke University Library.

sembled the religious of every denomination, some from one hundred miles distant, but more particularly the Presbyterians and Methodists who are in full communion with each other;—lastly the Baptists, who preach with each other, but do not commune.”³ The eccentric Methodist traveling evangelist, Lorenzo Dow, called “Crazy Dow” by the conventionally-minded, but “Cosmopolite” by himself, was surprised at the tolerance of the Presbyterians in North Carolina who placed their meeting-houses at his service.⁴

The conciliatory religious spirit of this period led to the proposal to unite the Episcopal and Lutheran churches in North Carolina. As a result of the disrupting effect of the American Revolution and other factors, the Episcopal Church was almost extinct in the early years of the nineteenth century. Adam Empie in 1814 corresponded with Robert J. Miller, then a Lutheran minister but later an Episcopal clergyman of Mary’s Grove, near Lenoir, North Carolina, suggesting a union between the two denominations. He wrote, “it rejoices me to hear you say that the Lutheran clergy would give such a proposition a favorable hearing.”⁵ As late as 1821 Empie wrote from Hillsborough that a delegation consisting of Judge Cameron, Reverend Bedell, and himself had been appointed to attend the Lutheran Synod. He requested from Miller a Lutheran Catechism that he might learn more concerning the doctrines of the Lutheran Church. His hope that both sides would show a conciliatory spirit and that the contemplated union between the Lutherans and Episcopalians would take place, however, never materialized.⁶

After the decline of the Great Revival, a bitter partisan spirit of denominationalism succeeded. Religionists began to fight each other over the correct path to take to heaven, the Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, or Episcopalian way. Instead of concentrating on the goal of the Great Revival, a rough and ready and immediate saving of lost souls from the yawning jaws of hell, they

³ W. W. Sweet, *Religion on the American Frontier; the Baptists, 1783-1830; a Collection of Source Material* (New York, 1931), p. 610.

⁴ [Lorenzo Dow], *The Dealings of God, Man, and the Devil; as Exemplified in the Life, Experiences and Travels of Lorenzo Dow* (New York, 1856), p. 142.

⁵ Adam Empie to Robert J. Miller, March 19, 1814. Robert J. Miller Letters, 1799-1831; MSS in the State Department of Archives and History. A typed copy of these letters with valuable notes by D. L. Corbitt is deposited in the State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, N. C.

⁶ Adam Empie to Robert J. Miller, May 4, 1821. *Ibid.*

quarreled over means and dogmas. Furthermore, the mundane struggle of power politics animated the preachers in a religious warfare that gave no quarter. In 1825 John Starke Ravenscroft, the first Episcopal Bishop of North Carolina, wrote: "People must be roused from the Delusion that all professions of Christian Faith are equally safe for Salvation."⁷ A little later he declared: "We must expect every effort to be made by the Presbyterians to hold their ground—they feel that the Blow [of extending the Episcopal Church] is a mortal one—and they are contending pro aris et focis. Their advantage, moreover, is great in the ignorance of the People—but this should stir us up to exertions to enlighten them."⁸ No wonder the witty and intelligent free thinker, Winifred Gales, described the Episcopal Bishop as "that Son of Thunder."⁹ Ravenscroft wrote to a fellow-sectarian in 1826 that he was engaged in composing a two-hundred-page reply to Dr. John Holt Rice, the Presbyterian champion of Richmond, Virginia.¹⁰

The diary of Peter Doub is an interesting document throwing side lights on this ecclesiastical warfare of the antebellum period. He was the son of a Pennsylvania-German tanner who had emigrated to Stokes County, North Carolina. Poorly educated, he was converted at a camp meeting and became a Methodist circuit rider for many years. By 1830 he was writing polemics to show that the Baptists were wrong in rejecting infant baptism, and two years later he was publishing articles in the Greensborough [N. C.] *Patriot*, combating the theology of the Presbyterians.¹¹ He finished his militant career by becoming a professor of Biblical Literature in Trinity College (now Duke University).

A revealing example of the importance attached to denominations in the Old South occurs in the letters of a Louisiana private during the Civil War to his wife. She had wounded his feelings by becoming a Baptist, and he begged her not to make Baptists of the children. He declared, "The ware [war] and the

⁷ John Starke Ravenscroft to Robert J. Miller, March 25, 1825. Robert J. Miller MSS.

⁸ Ravenscroft to Miller, Sept. 8, 1825. *Ibid.*

⁹ Winifred Gales to Jared Sparks, December 29, 1829. Jared Sparks MSS in Harvard University Library. Photocopies of these letters are deposited in the State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh.

¹⁰ Ravenscroft to Robert J. Miller, Feb. 25, 1826. Robert J. Miller Letters.

¹¹ Diary of Peter Doub, Entries of Jan. 8, 1830 and Jan. 17, 1832. MS in Duke University Library.

Baptist and the sickness is a nuff to make a man go crazy that don't have fare [far] to go no how. . . ." Later he wrote in a glow of triumph concerning a debate in his company: "It was on the subject of Baptist and clost communion. The scriptures was perused for proof of the doctrine. The Baptist was as completely wound up as I ever saw in my life. This debate lasted 3 or 4 hours. It wound up by the Baptist saying wee dident look at the scripuers right."¹² The spirit of denominationalism which flourished so luxuriantly from the decade of the 1820's until long after the Civil War seems to modern eyes to be an immense waste of energy on non-essentials.

The marvelous energy of the Great Revival and its subsidence are illustrated in the career of Richard Hugg King of Rowan County, North Carolina. The main sources for the study of this remarkable religious leader are a diary, some letters, and a manuscript biography entitled "Richard Hugg King and His Times," written by Reverend Eli Washington Caruthers. This biographer was a Presbyterian preacher educated at Princeton who for forty years preached in the Piedmont of North Carolina.¹³ Students of Southern liberalism will honor his memory for his opposition to slavery, which led to his dismissal from his church at Greensboro, N. C., in July, 1861.¹⁴ Among his compositions were a manuscript, entitled "American Slavery and the Immediate Duty of Slaveholders," which was never published; a life of the great Presbyterian teacher and divine, David Caldwell; and a historical work defending North Carolina's rôle in the American Revolution. His unpublished life of Richard Hugg King, written in 1862, was based principally on letters of contemporaries of the fervent evangelist written to the author. It is not a critical work and is marred by a lack of exactness in stating facts and by a practice of digressing in long passages of moralizing.

Richard Hugg King was, like Caruthers, a Scotch-Irishman, whose father had been a clothier in Ireland. His boyhood was spent on a farm in Rowan County, but his education was not neglected for he was taught in the famous academy, called Clio's

¹² John A. Cawthorn (ed.), "Letters of a North Louisiana Private to His Wife, 1862-1865," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XXX, 534, 545.

¹³ B. D. Caldwell, *Founders and Builders of Greensboro, 1808-1908* (Greensboro, N. C. 1925), pp. 65-69.

¹⁴ John Spencer Bassett, "Anti-Slavery Leaders of North Carolina," in *Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science* (Baltimore, June, 1898), pp. 56-60.

Nursery, and he was graduated from Princeton in 1786. His ambition to become a lawyer was thwarted by his pious Presbyterian parents who were bitterly prejudiced against the legal profession as a profane and debauched occupation.¹⁵ Consequently, King became a backwoods farmer near Snow Creek, Rowan County, North Carolina. In the presidential election of 1796 he was an ardent Federalist. His efforts in the campaign were rewarded, however, in a rather insignificant way for a man of his education by an appointment as excise collector for western North Carolina. In this job he gauged whisky barrels and casks, and collected the odious excise tax. His work made him very unpopular with the yeomen, who called him "Dick the Gauger." In fact, the acceptance of this invidious office blasted his political ambitions. In 1800 when he ran as a candidate for the legislature he was defeated by a man of inferior ability who belonged to the party of Thomas Jefferson. Deeply depressed by the ruin of his political prospects, he was now ripe for religion.

The Great Revival came at the right time to change the current of his life. In 1802 as he was going to a camp meeting at Bell's Cross Roads in company with some preachers, he was converted in a cataclysmic manner. His ecstasy was so uncontrollable that he went from tent to tent, praying, shaking hands, rejoicing, and staying up all night. When the preachers were on the point of leaving the camp ground after four days of fervid preaching, King strenuously opposed their departure. Unsuccessful in detaining them, he himself spoke to the crowd until they abandoned him. Shortly thereafter, at the age of thirty-four years, he applied for ordination as a Presbyterian minister. The Presbyterian Church demanded preparation from its ministers, and therefore required him to study theology for two years under an approved divine. But King refused at this late date to devote two years of his life to studying. He then applied to the Methodists, who were not fastidious about educational qualifications for their ministers but placed emphasis on being "called" by God. The Methodist Church did not hesitate to grant him a license to preach, and for over twelve years he served as a circuit

¹⁵ Richard Hugg King, Letter to a Judge of Christian Character trying to dissuade him from resigning his seat. Papers of Richard Hugg King—MSS in State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh.

rider in the western part of North Carolina.¹⁶ He was probably the only minister among the Methodist circuit riders of this region who had a college education. At this time Methodist circuit riders were paid eighty dollars a year, plus traveling expenses, a fact that made it necessary for King to combine farming with riding the circuit.¹⁷

King proved to be a very effective saver of souls. Caruthers, who heard him preach while he was at preparatory school, described the ardent evangelist as a tall, portly man, well over six feet in height, a little inclining to corpulency, having black hair and black eyes, a dark complexion, and with an intellectual and impressive countenance. When he preached, he spoke slowly and calmly at first, in a loud but musical voice. Then he gradually warmed up to his subject until his eyes became fixed apparently on every person in the house and soon he and the audience would weep together. The recurrent themes of his sermons were the redemption of sinners and the providence of God. To a man who had been beaten in political life it must have been sweet balm to his wounded ego to sway great crowds at the numerous camp meetings he attended.

But as he grew older King became tired of the constant traveling required by his Methodist connection. He had become very corpulent and he suffered from a disease of the leg that resembled elephantiasis. Furthermore, he had a large family of daughters who required much more money than the miserable salary of a Methodist circuit rider afforded.¹⁸ In 1816 he abandoned the Methodists and was ordained to preach by the Presbyterian Church after standing an excellent examination on Calvinistic doctrine. He then emigrated to eastern Tennessee, where he became the pastor of Ebenezer and Pleasant Forest churches. When he dismounted as a circuit rider and became stationed as a Presbyterian preacher, he developed an avid taste for books. In his latter years he was much handicapped by his great weight, for he weighed over four hundred pounds, and his swollen leg forced him to preach sitting in a chair. Nevertheless, he was a man of such ardent temperament, who could "in

¹⁶ Caruthers, "Richard Hugg King and His Times." MS in the State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh.

¹⁷ W. W. Sweet, *The Rise of Methodism in the West* (New York, 1920), pp. 46-47.

¹⁸ Caruthers, "Richard Hugg King and His Times," pp. 44, 49.

tones of thunder deal out the terrors of the law," that he would at times arise to his feet, to the alarm of his hearers, and appeal to sinners until he sank exhausted into his chair.

After he moved to Tennessee he purchased a plantation on credit, and to the end of his life he was troubled by financial worries.¹⁰ In 1819 nine of his female slaves died within less than a year. One of his male slaves ran away after he had chastised him "from a sense of duty," and he sold another one. His chief crops were flax, wheat, and oats, but in 1822 he notes in his diary that he had sent 520 pounds of cotton to the gin. In addition to his labor force of slaves, he occasionally employed a farm hand at ten dollars a month to plough. He raised hogs and slaughtered part of his pork but he also bought additional supplies of hog meat for his family and slaves.

Part of his distress in temporal affairs may have been due to the fact that he had too many irons in the fire. He ran a saw-mill by aid of water power and sent planks down the Nolichucky River to market. He also operated a grist mill, which earned twenty to thirty dollars a month despite the laziness of the miller he employed. He manufactured lime in his lime kiln, built boats, and kept a blacksmith shop. These activities did not prevent him from preaching, marrying young couples, and teaching school. Nor did his multifarious interests distract his attention from Tennessee politics. He seems to have been a conservative, opposed to the stay law and the inflationary measures advocated in Tennessee after the panic of 1819. He noted that a warm contest for governor was agitating the state in 1821 between William Carroll and Edward Ward. His diary comments in regard to this campaign: "All noise and no sense. I never saw weaker or worse written pieces relative to an election."²⁰ Like other backwoods farmers of his day, he practiced amateur medicine, treating his sore leg with iron wood leaves.

In the fall of 1822 his domestic affairs were going so "crooked" and his debts were so pressing that he took charge of a school. It was located at the Iron Works in Blount County, and, according to his account, he was paid well. He left his family on the

¹⁹ Diary of Richard Hugg King, July 8, 1819. MS in the State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh.

²⁰ Diary of Richard Hugg King, August 4, 1821.

farm near Maryville for five days in the week and returned on the week-ends, preaching on Sunday. His board cost him \$1.25 a week. In winter the school was well provided with fire wood, and he found that the business of teaching was not as irksome as he had expected. Toward the end of October, 1823, he quit his brief career as a school teacher and advertised his plantation for sale.

His religious life at the close of his career flowed serenely in comparison with his stormy and emotion-drenched years of the Great Revival and his circuit riding days. He had a consoling philosophy, a trust in the goodness of Providence. At times he suffered greatly from his diseased leg, and he felt that "Eternity draws nearer."²¹ He would sometimes preach in the groves sitting in his chair, the people "solemnly attentive." Occasionally he would go to Knoxville to attend a religious service or he would set out for sacraments held in lonely little places like Baker's Creek or Grassy Valley. Around him sickness raged, especially the typhus or epidemic fever, and the ague. His diary at times becomes a necrology, inducing a religious spirit in the contemplation of the death of his neighbors and relatives. On May 27, 1825, he died at Maryville in the home of a married daughter. A few months before his death he drew up a record of his worldly property, which consisted of two horses, three milk cows, two calves, twenty sheep, one wagon out of repair, one old carriage, a thousand feet of yellow poplar lathes, one cherry dining table, one plough, farming utensils, a cupboard, kitchen furniture, three bedsteads, and a dozen chairs.²² All of his tremendous energy and his superior intelligence had not brought him economic security in his old age. But he could count many souls "saved," and his life represented a full cycle of the flow and ebb of the Great Revival.

The effects of this great movement of evangelical religion on the Southern mind were profound but imponderable. The liberating idea of the Great Revival was the democratic concept that an individual was not predestined to hell or heaven but could exercise free will and become "saved." This doctrine fitted well into the frontier psychology of optimism and self-reliance and

²¹ Diary of Richard Hugg King, Dec. 31, 1820.

²² "Property of R. H. King, February 1825," Papers of Richard Hugg King.

gave dignity to the humblest human being. The evangelists emphasized the equality of the rich man and the poor man, the fine lady and the frontier woman in her linsey-woolsey dress, in the light of eternity. They encouraged the common man to relate publicly his "experience" in being converted from a sinful life, thus affording an outlet to his ego. An example of the democratic tendency of the Great Revival was the secession movement from the Presbyterian Church led by Barton W. Stone, pastor of the Cane Ridge Church in Bourbon County, Kentucky. Stone rejected the horrible doctrine that the mass of men were predestined to damnation, and during the Great Revival he became the exponent of a liberal theology. When the orthodox Presbyterian Church tried to discipline him for heresy he founded the Springfield Presbytery (1803) and later he was one of the founders of the Christian Church.²³

The revival movements accentuated a curious dichotomy that existed among the evangelical sects in regard to the exercise of human reason. The Great Revival emphasized the exercise of free will in attaining salvation and opposed an authoritarian church. At the same time the evangelists minimized the importance of education and the cultivation of the intellect. This attitude was reflected in the formation of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, an outgrowth of the Great Revival. The Cumberland Presbytery of eastern Tennessee and Kentucky ordained uneducated ministers and refused to accept the rigid Calvinism of the Westminster Confession. These issues led to a secession of the Cumberland churches from the orthodox Presbyterian Church.²⁴ The evangelical sects developed a strong suspicion of college men who freely exercised their minds in exploring the mysteries of religion. Winifred Gales refers to this prejudice of some of the evangelists: "There is a great revival amongst the students of Chapel Hill and Gossip Report says that the Preachers (missionaries) inculcate the idea that it is adverse to piety and devotion to study prophane [*sic*] subjects!"²⁵ This lurking suspicion

²³ F. G. Davenport, *Ante-Bellum Kentucky, A Social History, 1800-1860* (Oxford, Ohio, 1943), pp. 124-131; Dumas Malone (ed.) *Dictionary of American Biography*, XVIII, 71-72.

²⁴ Robert Davidson, *History of the Presbyterian Church in Kentucky* (New York, 1847), Chap. 9.

²⁵ Winifred Gales, wife of the editor of the *Raleigh Register*, to Jared Sparks, June 6, 1831. Gales MSS.

of free education partly explains the rise of church colleges in the South during the decades of the 1830's and 1840's.

In the North evangelical religion was partly responsible for "freedom's ferment," the rise of various reform movements, such as the antislavery movement and feminism.²⁶ But in the Southern states the revival movement tended to become anti-liberal in its social effects. It degenerated frequently into an intolerant mood against many of the harmless mundane pleasures of life, card playing, dancing, moderate drinking of wine and mint juleps. James W. Key wrote to Reverend Edward Dromgoole a letter quivering with indignation because a Methodist preacher, "a young ignorant coxcomb best fitted at the tail of a plow," had expelled his wife from church for wearing a gold ring and fashionable clothing.²⁷ The greatest period for the exercise of church discipline occurred during the decade of the Great Revival. Dr. Guion Johnson has studied the record of church discipline at Wheeley's Meeting House (Baptist) in Person County, North Carolina, 1791-1860. During this period there were 500 cases acted upon, of which drunkenness led the list by far, followed in order by disputing with a member, or quarreling, neglecting church service, and sex immorality.²⁸

The Great Revival had an important effect in hardening orthodoxy within the South. At the close of the eighteenth century deism and skepticism flourished among the upper classes.²⁹ Some of the Southern gentry remained within the fold of the Episcopalian Church, attending services and fulfilling the formal duties of church membership, but in actuality they were mild deists. The publication in 1794-96 of Thomas Paine's *Age of Reason* stirred the deists and skeptics to new activity and provoked the orthodox defenders, such as Reverend Samuel McCorkle of Rowan County, North Carolina, to virulent replies.³⁰ But this controversy was the last great battle in the ante-bellum

²⁶ See Alice Felt Tyler, *Freedom's Ferment, Phases of American Social History to 1860* (Minneapolis, Minn., 1944), Chap. 2.

²⁷ James W. Key, Jericho, Aug. 3, 1810, to Edward Dromgoole. Dromgoole Papers, Southern Collection, University of North Carolina.

²⁸ Guion G. Johnson, *Ante-Bellum North Carolina, A Social History* (Chapel Hill, 1937), pp. 450-451.

²⁹ Clement Eaton, *Freedom of Thought in the Old South* (Durham, N. C., 1940), Chaps. 1 and 12.

³⁰ The violent attacks against Paine and his *Age of Reason* were tinged with political partisanship, for Paine had written an ill-advised attack against President Washington, and was the friend of Jefferson, the storm center of American politics at the turn of the century. Charles Pettigrew to Rev. Nathaniel Blount, Aug. 25, 1803. Pettigrew Papers, I.

South between the religious liberals and the orthodox, for the fight against Horace Holley in Kentucky and against Dr. Thomas Cooper in South Carolina were localized. The revival movements had converted some of these skeptics and driven others to cover. Yet exclusive credit for the erasure of skepticism and deism from the ante-bellum South should not be given to the earnest evangelists and the camp meetings. Deism was already dying a natural death, for it was far too cold and intellectual a religion for the rural masses of the South. It offered no emotional excitement or compensation for lonely, poverty-stricken lives, nor could it sustain the average man during crises or offer him the certainty of immortality. The aftermath of the Great Revival was to narrow the intellectual life of the South by placing a taboo upon examining with free mind the mysteries of religion.

THE TRAINING OF RICHARD CASWELL

By C. B. ALEXANDER

Besides the records of the land office the only collections of early documents referring to Richard Caswell which throw much light on his public career are the *Colonial Records of North Carolina* and the *State Records of North Carolina*. Most of the biographical sketches of Caswell state that he was born in Cecil County, Maryland, but the parish register of St. John's Church in Harford County records his birth in that county on August 3, 1729. His father was a member of the assembly from Baltimore County from 1738 to 1743 and "Captain of the troop of horse and gunpowder hundred" for a number of years, as indicated in the *Maryland Archives*.

It is almost certain that young Caswell enjoyed the advantages of a good education according to the ideals and station of a gentleman of that day. Although we do not know what school he attended, it is clear from his letters that he had a good command of the English language, and we also know that he took up the duties of a deputy clerk of the court when only eighteen years old.¹ His accuracy in keeping accounts is shown by the fact that he later audited the public accounts in the assembly of North Carolina for many years, as his father had done in Maryland.

On May 16, 1748, Richard Caswell's name first appears on the records as deputy clerk of Johnston County before whom the will of John Fort was probated.² He was given full charge of the office as clerk of the court by September, 1749.³ Though this office was not one of great honor, it marks Caswell's entrance into the governing class of prominent planters and gentlemen. This work in Johnston County ceased that year, however, for the wills probated in 1750 were signed by a certain Rew as clerk. The next records of his activities show his appointment as first clerk of Orange County in 1753.⁴ No doubt it was while performing the duties of this office, recording the many details of court proceedings and copying and issuing all kinds of legal papers and writs, that he became familiar with the workings of the machinery of

¹ J. Bryan Grimes, *Abstracts of North Carolina Wills* (Raleigh, 1919), p. 125.

² Grimes, *North Carolina Wills*, p. 125.

³ Grimes, *North Carolina Wills*, p. 297.

⁴ Minutes of the Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, Orange County, 1753, p. 15. State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh.

the law and acquired that exact knowledge of the merits and defects of the system. This enabled him to champion the cause of court reform, the better regulation of fees, and the appointment of more trustworthy administrative officials. In 1753 he was also sheriff of his home county of Johnston. He seems to have fulfilled the duties of this office with more than the usual diligence, for he was allowed an extra reward of eight pounds for having rendered a full account of the taxes, the collecting of which made up such an important part of the sheriff's duties.⁵

Probably at this time Caswell was also reading law under the guidance of William Herritage, one of the most prominent attorneys of the colony and clerk of the assembly from 1738 to 1769. Herritage's daughter, Sarah, became Caswell's second wife, though the date of marriage cannot be determined as the records were probably burned with the courthouse at Kinston many years ago. It is certain that he became a very successful leader at the bar and took an active part in trying to raise the standards of the legal profession. He sympathized with the people who lost their property in suits in court because of the ignorance of lawyers who had bought their licenses for money without having much legal knowledge. One of the surest ways to rise to a position of eminence in politics and society was to serve as a clerk of the court for practical training and to become a successful lawyer.

Caswell was undoubtedly an active speculator in land all his life, as were most of the prominent men of that period. It was the most promising way to acquire wealth and social prestige without long years of toil and drudgery. The first grant of land to him was signed by Governor Gabriel Johnston on October 4, 1738.⁶ This tract of eighty-five acres was in Johnston County on the north side of the Neuse River. Near his home Caswell obtained grants and deeds aggregating 7,338 acres in Johnston and Dobbs counties—much more than in any other counties. Much of this land may have been purchased outright, as the quit rents were less on such patents than on grants, a consideration which made many prefer to buy their lands. Also the dates of the records of purchase and sale show that he did not own all of this land at any one time, but was continually buying and selling. The following

⁵ Minutes of the Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, Orange County, 1753, p. 35. State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh.

⁶ Land Grants, book 10, p. 188. Office of Secretary of State, Raleigh.

entries which were made in Caswell's name, but for which patents were not issued to him, may have been intended for immediate transfer to friends, as surveyors often aided others in this way to increase their land holdings; or they may indicate that his hunger for land and his ambition to rise in the community outran his ability to pay the fees or meet the legal requirements for receiving grants. On May 1, 1751, he entered 400 acres; on October 5, 1752, 200 acres; on April 2, 1754, 50 acres; on April 26, 1755, 160 acres; and on March 21, 1757, 200 acres.⁷ He was successful, however, in acquiring many tracts of land either by grant or by purchase: a total of 5,153 acres in Dobbs County, 2,185 acres in Johnston, 977 acres in Orange, 120 in Cumberland, 150 in Tryon, 640 in Carteret, 3,560 in Washington, and 557 acres in Greene.⁸

Like most of the leaders of that day he kept his interest keen on the fertile region beyond the mountains. On April 27, 1784, shortly before his death, Caswell wrote to his son, William, with whom he was associated in buying up Tennessee lands, that he was planning to make a trip to that distant river of the great bend.⁹ One of these plantations he owned jointly with John Sevier, the remarkable leader of the western settlers. Thus we find Caswell keeping up with the frontier to the very last. Governor Josiah Martin complained that Caswell was at the head of a "land grabbing expedition" which had been given encouragement, by the success of Richard Henderson, to form a similar project beyond the mountains. Caswell and his confederates, said Martin, were fitting out a vessel to go up the Mississippi and to treat with the Indians for purchase of land lying to the west of Richard Henderson's territory. "If a stop is not put to this, all the Indian country will be taken."¹⁰ A stop seems to have been put to this expedition to the Mississippi, for we hear nothing further said about it. No doubt the absorbing events of the Revolution in which Caswell took a leading part account for the giving up of the land enterprise.

To the large number of acres purchased should be added the lands which Caswell acquired by marriage as well as several slaves so necessary to the clearing and tilling of plantations. We

⁷ Land entries in papers of Secretary of State, Raleigh.

⁸ Land entries in papers of Secretary of State.

⁹ *State Records of North Carolina*, XVII, 138.

¹⁰ *Colonial Records*, X, 324.

do not know how many slaves Caswell owned, but he received about twenty in the will of William Herritage, and he named several to go to various members of his family, but he probably left the majority to be divided among the heirs equally with the rest of his personal property.

His home and social life was probably like that of most planters of the time. The name of his home was the "Red House." This was torn down after Caswell's death and rebuilt, in 1815, on higher ground for his daughter, Mrs. William Herritage. It stood about two and a half miles west of Kinston on the Tower Hill road. His plantation contained hundreds of acres of land on both the northern and southern banks of the Neuse River. Though the wide veranda overlooked the river, not far in the background were the forests, where bears prowled to steal hogs and cattle. Before the building of Kinston, where Caswell had a residence, much of the time must have been spent in lonely isolation with only a visit now and then from neighboring families, who were separated by many miles of forests and swamps along the river. Social intercourse must have been seriously hindered by these physical barriers. Yet the rarity of these visits made them all the more appreciated and the hospitality dispensed on such occasions all the more cordial. Since fox hunting was a favorite diversion in North Carolina as well as in Virginia and since Caswell's letters show that he was especially fond of good riding horses, it was doubtless his custom to take his guests on exciting fox chases with the hounds in full cry. Wild turkeys, deer and other game, then so plentiful in the woods where he spent much time as a surveyor, surely did not fail to appeal to his sportsmanship. The large number of fish-hooks of all sizes mentioned in the inventories of the period point to another pastime, most accessible to Caswell and his friends along the Neuse. Then, too, there were the famous horse races at Kinston, which attracted the picked men of the province to the town when, according to a newspaper of Kinston, Modock of Salisbury, champion of the west, ran against Culpepper of the east. King's Street (King Street), which is now the main street of the town, was then the race track; and it is noteworthy that in the bill against "deceitful gaming" introduced by

¹¹ *Colonial Records*, V, 873.

Caswell in 1756, the stakes won at horse races were exempted.¹¹ Gentlemen regarded the encouragement of horse racing as public-spirited and as tending to improve the breed and size of horses.

In the meantime Caswell had become associated with Lord Granville, whose land comprised a wide territory, the northern boundary of which was the North Carolina-Virginia line and the southern boundary lying just south of the town of Bath and following what is now the southern boundary of Chatham, Randolph, Davidson, Rowan, Iredell, Catawba, and Burke counties. The land warrants and surveys show that Caswell was deputy surveyor for Lord Granville, but there are no records telling where he got his training for this responsible work. The matter of securing their titles to real estate concerned the people most vitally. Land was the chief source of wealth of the colonists and the possession of good plantations was their ruling desire.

Since much of Caswell's surveying was carried on during the most critical period of the French and Indian War, some writers have supposed that he was in danger of attacks from savages lurking in the forest, especially since they regarded the surveyor as the forerunner of the encroaching white men. But careful reports show that there were no hostile Indians in the counties where Caswell was deputy surveyor. There were plenty of other difficulties and dangers, however, to challenge the courage and tax the endurance of a stout heart. Caswell like all surveyors must have spent much time in the forests, and this experience developed his self-reliance and keen observation of his surroundings. His long tramps by day and frequent sleeping by camp fires at night constituted the best preparation for his later leadership in military affairs. To make close observations of the trees, plants, animals, birds, and snakes was a necessary part of his professional knowledge. Although Caswell did not write any account of his experiences that has been preserved for us, several other surveyors of the period wrote first-hand descriptions, thus making it possible to reconstruct scenes with which he was undoubtedly familiar and which must have made on his memory impressions never to be forgotten.¹²

¹² John Lawson, *History of North Carolina* (1718 edition); Adelaide L. Fries (editor), *Records of the Moravians in North Carolina*, II, 557-587.

Surveying offered special opportunities for advancement, and many energetic and ambitious young men of that period found this field of endeavor most promising. The surveyor was in a better position than others to know where the choicest lands still unappropriated were to be had and so to be claimed either for himself or for his friends. A greater opportunity was afforded by the surveyor's intimate knowledge of the most fertile and most favorably situated lands, purchasable at small cost. These selected plantations already improved could be sold to newcomers at higher prices. In 1755 Governor Dobbs tells us that the best locations on navigable rivers had been taken and the lavish grants of land had ended. Caswell showed fine judgment in buying thousands of acres of valuable land along the Neuse in Johnston and Dobbs counties, which were then fast filling up with immigrants. He likewise acquired three plantations in Orange County, thus following the course of settlement into the back country through the heart of the colony. In addition to the advantages of speculating in lands, which surveyors enjoyed, their profession gave profitable employment at that time when money was hard to get. When Caswell came to North Carolina, there was an unusually heavy demand for the services of surveyors. There were many thousands of Germans, Scottish Highlanders, and Scotch-Irish immigrants calling for lands to be surveyed in this decade from 1750 to 1760 when Caswell did most of his surveying. Young Caswell had come to North Carolina just when the wave of immigration from Pennsylvania and Maryland was setting strongly southward, a movement which was to continue until the Revolution, making North Carolina the "most rising part of the continent," as Governor Tryon put it.¹³

A letter Caswell wrote to William Bryan and other justices of Johnston County, February 22, 1778, shows the painstaking methods and care for details which he habitually observed.¹⁴ "I am sending a book for entries and have ruled one side to show how it ought to be done. I think there should be a waste book for rough entries which should be copied fair in this one. I want to serve the people I respect as of long and intimate acquaintance." Although there were a good many careless and dishonest survey-

¹³ *Colonial Records*, VII, 511.

¹⁴ *State Records*, XIII, 54.

ors, greedy for fees, the presence of these unworthy competitors brings out all the more clearly the honesty and integrity of Caswell and others on whose accuracy the property and vital interests of many citizens depended. Many were so corrupt and unscrupulous in their dealings with the settlers that great discontent and disturbances were produced. In 1756 Granville wrote to his agent Corbin that the persons he employed to make entries and surveys in the back counties were very extortionate in charging higher fees than was regular and he added that he did not receive his part of the quit rents. "Insinuations are made, too," he said, "that these extortions were connived at by my agents, for otherwise it is said, they could not be committed so repeatedly and barefacedly." ¹⁵

In the midst of all these avaricious land agents the only criticism of Caswell made by the committee of the assembly appointed to investigate complaints, was in connection with the case of one Moore and a certain Beckton which showed that fees were charged repeatedly for entering and surveying the same land. The report says: "It appears that Richard Caswell surveyed the land for Beckton where Moore was already in possession and on making his return Caswell made no mention of this circumstance which according to the duty of his office he ought to have done." ¹⁶ Previously Moore had paid the agent Halton for entering and surveying the land three pounds and nineteen shillings, no part of which was ever paid back to him. Corbin told Moore to have the land surveyed again in twelve months and he should have it. But Beckton had obtained the title to the land already and showed the deed. So when Beckton brought an ejectment suit, the court gave judgment against Moore.¹⁷ In this case, as often happened, it seems that Moore had entered the land under one agent, Halton, but before he could go through all the steps necessary to get a title, the agent was succeeded by another one who granted the tract to Beckton. These officials overlooked previous entries in order to obtain the fees.

Caswell had been in the assembly only a few days when he was appointed on a committee, December 19, 1754, to prepare and bring in a bill to remove some of the evils of this land system, to

¹⁵ E. Merton Coulter, *The Granville District*, p. 44.

¹⁶ *Colonial Records*, V, 1090.

¹⁷ *Colonial Records*, V, 1090.

secure the payment of quit rents due to the crown and to the Earl of Granville, and to quiet the freeholders in the possession of their lands.¹⁸ In the preamble to the law which he secured, it was stated that for want of proper officers to record the patents, deeds, and mesne conveyances, several tracts in the province had not been registered in the time limit required by law, and many had been lost by fire or by accident. Thereby the titles of rightful owners had been called in question by litigious persons to the great disturbance, molestation, and disquiet of freeholders. The remedy enacted was that all persons in peaceable possession of their lands for the preceding twenty years should be declared the rightful owners of such lands and subject to pay the quit rents of four shillings proclamation money for every 100 acres, when proof of their quiet possession was presented to the governor and council or to the county court. All deeds were to be approved and registered in the court of the county where the land lay, within one year, if the claimants had been in peaceable possession for three years and had paid quit rents. Again, all deeds, though not sealed or endorsed in due form, should be taken as valid and as if such "assignments" had been made. Other provisions for the benefit of landowners were made.¹⁹

Later, when Caswell was appointed on a committee to revise the law regarding surplus lands, he suggested a good reform: that each county court should appoint processioners instead of leaving it to the vestry of the parish to mark out the bounds of each freeholder's land, since the vestries had greatly neglected this work. He added that the appointing of jurors for this purpose of establishing the line had not been very successful since they regarded themselves as arbiters. After a man's land had thus been processioned twice or the marks had been verified, they could not be called in question and the title was secured on that land. This proposal was a wise one and was intended to stop many disputes over boundaries.²⁰

Governor Dobbs reported to the Board of Trade that the duties of the surveyor related only to the land office and to the court of claims, his business being to certify and enter all warrants for surveys previous to the issuing of the land grants. The most

¹⁸ *Colonial Records*, V, 243.

¹⁹ *State Records*, XXIII, 432.

²⁰ *Colonial Records*, IX, 500.

troublesome part of making the surveys was performed by deputy surveyors, of whom there was at least one in each county of the king's part of the province.²¹ Also Dobbs reported that the fees charged in the Granville office were nearly triple those paid into his majesty's office. The quarrels over the fees, quit rents, and fraudulent practices of the land agents finally produced the Enfield riots in 1759.

As Caswell lived near the dividing line between the Earl of Granville's land and the king's part of the province, where he did most of his surveying, he must have been familiar with the continual clashes between the land agents and surveyors on both sides. In 1764 he was one of the commissioners to run the boundary between his county of Johnston and that of Pitt on the north.²² This uncertainty of boundaries and the rivalry of agents claiming the right to grant lands and to collect quit rents led many people to become squatters on the border and to occupy lands without taking out patents or paying quit rents or taxes. The result was widespread disorder and this was a source of weakness to the government.

On the death of the first Lord Granville in 1763, his son closed the land office entirely, an action which retarded the settlement of the vacant lands. In the *North Carolina Gazette* for July 15, 1774, Governor Martin gave notice that there had not been since 1763 any person empowered to make surveys of vacant land in the Earl of Granville's part of this province and that every surveyor taking it upon himself to make such surveys would be prosecuted for such action. This closing of the land office probably explains why we find that Caswell's work as a surveyor ceased about that time.

In 1754 Caswell began serving as an officer of the militia in which service he continued for the next twenty years, rising from the rank of lieutenant to that of colonel of the regiment of the county of Dobbs.²³ As the minor officers of lieutenant and captain were chosen by the vote of the company, Caswell's occupying these positions for several years was proof of his popularity.

At the same time in 1754 he was "captain of the troop of horse" in Johnston County and continued to make his militia

²¹ *Colonial Records*, VII, 485.

²² *State Records*, XXIII, 629.

²³ *State Records*, XXII, 331.

returns for the company annually until 1767.²⁴ This cavalry organization appears to have been at first a voluntary one, for the law did not make provision for the cavalry until 1760. And yet in making his returns Captain Caswell was more punctual than most of the officers. A rather definite picture of Caswell riding at the front of his "troop of horse" may be constructed by referring to the law of 1760, which prescribed the outfit of the cavalry. The men must have good horses fourteen hands high, harnessed with bridle, saddle, breastplate, and crupper. They must also have holsters with pistols, a broadsword, a good carbine with belt, swivel, bucket, and boots. The governor was authorized to commission a captain, a cornet, and a lieutenant, if thirty to sixty men wish to organize and the colonel of the regiment consented. The cavalry was to muster as often as "the foot."²⁵ This militia act was continued with very few changes until the Revolution when it was found necessary to reorganize the whole system. Perhaps only a few of the wealthier men in the county were able to afford the expensive equipment required for the cavalry, for extreme poverty was given as the frequent cause for the lack of arms among the militia. Caswell was colonel of the regiment of Dobbs County in the general musters and commanded it at the battle of Alamance—experience which was valuable preparation for the larger operations in the Revolutionary War.

To the assembly which convened on December 12, 1754, the freeholders of Johnston County elected as one of their two representatives Richard Caswell, who was then only twenty-five years of age.²⁶ This confidence which the people placed in Caswell was repeatedly expressed during the next twenty years until the colonial assemblies came to an end. Before taking up other bills which Caswell presented, it may be mentioned that he was one of the legislative committee appointed to report on the selection of the seat of government. They favored Tower Hill in 1756, and Governor Dobbs purchased "Tower Hill" plantation to prevent others from speculating at the expense of the province. Accordingly on November 4, 1758, Caswell and Stephen Cade presented a bill for erecting a city on the Neuse at Tower Hill

²⁴ *State Records*, XXII, 306.

²⁵ *State Records*, XXIII, 535.

²⁶ *Colonial Records*, V, 231.

and for building there the governor's house and public offices.²⁷ But the Albemarle members and other rivals, who wanted the capital elsewhere, by a close vote got a petition passed praying the king to disallow their former action in favor of Tower Hill, and this was done in 1759. It was reserved for Governor Tryon in 1766 to get New Bern finally agreed upon as the capital, after twenty years of wrangling.

For clarity and convenience in studying Caswell's legislative career, it may be well to classify his activities under four topics: (1) trade and industry; (2) reforms of the court system and of its officials; (3) provisions for better finances and public defense; and, (4) humanitarian policies. In each of these subjects he came to be regarded as a leader by his fellow members.

In 1770 Caswell was selected as speaker of the house, a position at that time even more important than at present, as it made him spokesman of the popular party as against the governor and council. As regards trade and industry there was probably not very much that legislation could do to overcome the primitive conditions, except such measures as he proposed. One of the first bills Caswell introduced in 1754 established several ferries and required the commissioners of certain districts to make roads to the same,²⁸ and again in 1758, in a bill for improving the methods of building roads and in the bill cutting off Dobbs from Johnston County, there was a clause for the building of roads and ferries.²⁹ Further to encourage commerce and to promote navigation on the Neuse, Caswell got an act passed requiring the justices to build four warehouses.³⁰ To promote shipping a provision was made to exempt those who built and owned ships in the province from paying the duty on gunpowder and lead imported and exported.³¹ To prevent the export of trashy and unmerchantable tobacco, which had brought the tobacco trade into great decay, Caswell secured the requirement by law that all should take their hogsheads of tobacco to warehouses for inspection. However much he valued the blessings of trade and prosperity, he also valued human health and welfare, for on February 20, 1773, he introduced a bill to prevent the

²⁷ *Colonial Records*, V, 1021.

²⁸ *Colonial Records*, V, 230.

²⁹ *Colonial Records*, V, 1048.

³⁰ *Colonial Records*, VI, 148; *State Records*, XXIII, 507.

³¹ *Colonial Records*, V, 246, 274; *State Records*, XXIII, 401.

spread of malignant and infectious diseases by stopping the importation of "distempered" persons into this province.³² It seems that smallpox was "rife" in the eastern part of the colony, which may have been largely due to the fact that the merchants in 1760 had secured the repeal of the act to keep out diseased persons on the ground that it was prejudicial to commercial interests.³³

In 1765, in answer to Governor Tryon's message, Caswell's committee said that Parliament's encouragement of the culture of raw silk would meet with the hearty response here which such a worthy object deserved. A bounty was offered by Parliament for the secret of unwinding the cocoon of the silk worm, but nothing important in the silk industry seems to have developed in North Carolina. In 1768 Caswell presented a bill for encouraging iron works in Chatham County, but this industry does not seem to have developed much until 1777, when the stimulus of war was added.³⁴

Measures for improving the finances and the defenses of the province may be considered best under one head. Caswell took no active part in the campaigns of the French and Indian War, and his work was almost exclusively that of providing funds for the troops and for building and equipping forts. In fact, the financing of the war was the chief problem which North Carolina faced, because but little of the fighting was actually done within her borders, except Indian fighting on the frontier. All previous issues of paper money had been so poorly redeemed that they depreciated rapidly in value, and therefore Governor Dobbs, when assuming office, was instructed to permit no more bills to be emitted without a suspending clause.³⁵

In 1757, when Caswell was on a committee to raise £4,000 for the defense of the frontier, he recommended that treasury notes bearing interest should be issued, guaranteed by a poll tax of two shillings on each taxable and by taxes on liquors and other consumption goods. These treasury notes were redeemed and were so successful that this new policy was resorted to in several subsequent instances.³⁶ Public credit was thus faithfully main-

³² *Colonial Records*, IX, 518.

³³ *State Records*, XXIII, 515.

³⁴ *State Records*, XI, 489.

³⁵ *Colonial Records*, V, 116.

³⁶ *Colonial Records*, V, 847.

tained for the first time since the beginning in 1712 of the disastrous series of issues of paper money. Caswell was selected not only to raise this money, but to see that it was properly spent for defenses. In the summer of 1756 Caswell, Francis Brown, and Thomas Relf as a committee of the assembly undertook an arduous journey to inspect Fort Dobbs, which had been built under the direction of Colonel Hugh Waddell two miles north of Statesville as the sole defense of the settlers west of Salisbury. In the following December they reported that this fort was not adequate for the protection of the western settlers and suggested that a stockade be constructed for the safety of the Catawba Indians, probably at the site of the present town of Old Fort.³⁷ They also reported that the fort at Topsail Inlet was in no state for defense, having no guns, powder, or ball.

In December, 1758, Caswell introduced a bill for the apportionment of the £50,000 which Parliament had voted to reimburse the Southern Colonies for their expenses in the war. He tied this up with a proposal to fix the capital on the Neuse, which was a favorite idea of the Governor Dobbs.³⁸ This was a shrewd political move to secure the assent of Governor Dobbs, who insisted on regarding the money as a contingent fund on which he could draw at will and thus make himself more independent of the assembly. This caused much bad feeling and bitter recriminations on both sides, for only £7,789 finally came to North Carolina while Virginia got over £50,000. Altogether over £66,000 had been appropriated for the expenses of the French and Indian War, half of which was used for the defense of other colonies when many of these colonies had refused to contribute to the common cause outside of their own borders. Yet Dobbs was not satisfied with all these sacrifices and continued to call for more grants even after the serious dangers of the war had passed. These requests were firmly refused by Caswell's committee which drew up an answer.³⁹

Still another financial conflict with Governor Dobbs in which Caswell was involved as a representative of the assembly was over the auditing of the public accounts, which was entrusted to him and his committee for several years by the house. Instruc-

³⁷ *Colonial Records*, V, 46.

³⁸ *Colonial Records*, V, 1025.

³⁹ *Colonial Records*, VI, 228.

tions had been sent to the governor to have the accounts audited and attested by the auditor general and to have copies sent to England, but the assembly ordered the treasurer to pay out no money by order of the governor and council without the consent of the house. And in their secret resolutions against Dobbs drawn up by the assembly in 1761 as an indictment of his administration addressed to the Privy Council, they censured him for not laying before the house the accounts of monies paid out by his order and for failing to show for what purposes sums were drawn from the treasury.⁴⁰

When John Starkey, the treasurer of the southern district, died in 1765, the house nominated Caswell to succeed him. As a rival candidate for this important office the council nominated Lewis De Rosett, one of its members. There had been considerable contention between the house, the governor, and the council as to the right to choose the treasurer. The house, always jealous of any encroachment of its control of the public finances, warmly insisted on Caswell as their choice, but the council would not yield. After some fruitless negotiations, the two houses failed to agree, so that no treasurer was chosen at that session. On March 6, 1773, however, Caswell was appointed by the house as treasurer of the southern district.⁴¹ He gave bond for £50,000 for the diligent and faithful collection of the taxes from the sheriffs of the several counties to be paid to the assembly by him. This was no light task, for the sheriffs in some years did not pay into the treasury one-third of the taxes due, and in 1770 the aggregate indebtedness of all the sheriffs was £64,000.⁴² Still this office was so much desired and sought for that it may be well to quote what Governor Martin wrote to the Earl of Dartmouth, especially since these words of the chief executive give us his opinion of Caswell at that time, September 1, 1774:

My lord, alteration of the law of attachment has been more a spacious than a real ground for the opposition that has been so observable in the Assembly. The genuine cause was the disappointment of two candidates for the Treasurer's office. The House usurped the nomination to this office, so they tried to bring odium and reproach on Mr. Caswell,

⁴⁰ *Colonial Records*, VI, 410.

⁴¹ *Colonial Records*, IX, 592.

⁴² *Colonial Records*, VII, xvii; IX, 68.

one of the late appointed Treasurers, and a man of the fairest and most unblemished character in the whole country, who has acted as the commissioner of the court of oyer and terminer to the universal satisfaction and contentment of all the people. At the next appointment of treasurers, Mr. Caswell was to be sacrificed therefore on the ground where popular applause was erecting monuments to his honor. This was to be effected by impeaching the legality of the powers under which he had acted with reputation to himself and with so great advantage to the community. The common artifice of clamoring against the prerogative was played off with the usual effect. The leaders of the faction hurried for the time the current of popularity against Mr. Caswell. This, my lord, I believe was the true cause of opposition to these measures and that the courts of oyer and terminer would never have been brought into question if Mr. Caswell, the fittest man in the country, had not acted as judge in them, and been one of the Treasurers at this very conjuncture.⁴³

This opposition to the special courts of oyer and terminer was more probably due in large measure to the same cause that had led the assembly for years to prefer the discontinuance of the regular courts laws, unless the foreign attachment clause were included.

Regarding Caswell's humanitarian policies in the assembly it is impossible to say just how much credit should be given to him personally for the work done by the committees with which he served. It should be pointed out, however, that it was just at the time that he took part in framing and reporting these bills on the care of orphans and their estates and for the relief of poor debtors in prisons, as well as making provision for the orthodox clergy and vestries, that some of the most humane legislation of the whole colonial period was enacted.

In December, 1773, near the close of his legislative career, Caswell was a member of the committee that favored the continuance of the vestry act, with the amendment that if the vestry neglected the levy for the poor of the parish, the county court should be given the power to make the levy so that the poor be not neglected as they "ought always to be one of the principal objects of legislation."⁴⁴ In 1762 Caswell secured an amendment to the law of 1749 for the relief of insolvent debtors in prison.

⁴³ *Colonial Records*, IX, 1052.

⁴⁴ *Colonial Records*, IX, 785.

The amended act provided that the court should summon the attorney of the creditor in twenty days to show cause why the debtor should not be liberated when the creditor lived outside of the province, so that the debtor could receive the benefits of the act of 1749.⁴⁵ This securing of a speedy hearing for that large class of unfortunate debtors was not only more considerate of a man and his family, but also relieved the public of the expense of supporting persons in prisons in idleness. Another class of helpless dependents who appealed to the sympathies of Caswell were the orphans, as he repeatedly served on committees in their behalf, and in 1762 he got the most comprehensive law of the period passed. This law differs from previous acts in providing for a special session of court for orphans instead of the regular court of pleas and quarter sessions and in requiring the grand juries to take over the work formerly left to the church wardens—a significant step toward the colony's regarding it as its duty to care for the poor and the education of the young.

Perhaps the most important reforms with which Caswell identified himself throughout his twenty years in the assembly were those concerning the courts and the personnel of those who administered justice. Although the records do not set forth directly the names of those who drew up the court bill of 1762, it seems proper to give Caswell the chief credit, since he was the spokesman appointed to reply to the governor on that subject, and since again on November 17, 1762, he was on the committee to smooth out difficulties between the house and the council over the bill, when he said:

We are sorry that you make new difficulties over the court bill. We hoped that the increase in the salary of the associate justice of the Salisbury district would have obviated all objections. If the manner of their appointment had been such as to render the judges independent, they could be very useful. But it seems that we cannot appoint them and we cannot agree to your amendments.⁴⁶

One of the provisions which he inserted in both the superior and inferior court bills was for the better regulation of the office of the clerk, with the duties of which he was familiar. They were

⁴⁵ *State Records*, XXIII, 312, 588.

⁴⁶ *Colonial Records*, VI, 813.

to be skilled and discreet men and must take the oath that they had not given any reward, gratuity, or fee for their appointment. This was found advisable to prevent considerable graft, whereby the chief justice often charged an annual rental for appointing clerks of the district courts while these clerks in turn charged sums for appointing clerks to the inferior courts.⁴⁷ Clerks were to keep the records of wills and letters of administration in books for that purpose, making annual reports to the secretary of the colony. A bond of £2,000 was required for the faithful discharge of their duties.

The final clause of the court bill of 1762 regarding attachments authorized any justice of the peace to grant an attachment against the estate of debtors residing under any other government. When goods were attached the debtor could replevy them by giving bond with good security to the sheriff. Persons having lands in the province without having personal property sufficient to settle claims against them were liable to have such lands attached and sold at the next court by the sheriff.⁴⁸ Governor Tryon, who succeeded Dobbs in April, 1765, was too wise and tactful again to raise the issue over the control of the courts. Therefore throughout his administration the laws of 1762 were continued every two years with only a few minor changes. But when the new governor, Josiah Martin, came to the colony in August, 1771, he brought instructions from the crown to disallow the court laws unless the attachment clause were omitted. The struggle began anew in February, 1773, when the assembly reenacted the old court law without change. After the governor rejected this bill the house passed it again for a period of six months only, but the council rejected this temporary measure.⁴⁹ On February 24, 1773, Caswell and Thomas Person, one of the liberal leaders from the west, waited on Governor Martin to urge his acceptance of the court bill, but he refused to disregard his instructions.⁵⁰ The assembly next drew up a petition to the crown averring that the right of attaching estates of foreign debtors had long been exercised in this province as well as in others.

⁴⁷ *Colonial Records*, VI, 664.

⁴⁸ *State Records*, XXIII, 550 ff.

⁴⁹ *Colonial Records*, IX, xxiii.

⁵⁰ *Colonial Records*, IX, 533.

When the assembly met again in December, 1773, Caswell and several leading men were appointed to draw up the court bills.⁵¹ The selection of Caswell on this committee shows that he had not lost the favor of the popular party by serving as one of the three judges on the special court of oyer and terminer. The assembly still regarded him as one of the advocates of its rights. On December 21, on receipt of the court bills including the attachment clause, the council replied to the house that it would agree to them provided the house would strike out the words, "a right essentially necessary to their commercial interests," referring to attachments.⁵² Then it was the governor's turn to disagree, which he did in a vigorous speech, proroguing the assembly until the following March. He said that the prorogation was in order that the people might be consulted as to whether they preferred the attachment clause which would not affect one person in a thousand, rather than the establishment of the court system to secure their property and safety. "I hope that you will accept the modifications of the attachment clause, but if you will not yield, I hope you will no longer make that point the indispensable condition for passing the laws for the general administration of justice in comparison with which the matter contended for is of little consequence." He reminded the assembly that in no other colony was the attachment clause a part of the general court laws and that it had been woven into the system in North Carolina for a short time only.⁵³ When the assembly reconvened in March, 1774, they voiced their disagreement with spirit, answering each point in the governor's message with skill and ability.

Caswell was on the committee instructed to answer the governor.⁵⁴ They said they could not agree with his mode of issuing attachments, but that the assembly would pass laws regulating the criminal jurisdiction of the province. They had again consulted the people, who "had expressed the warmest approbation of our proceeding and have given us positive instructions to persist in our endeavors to obtain the process of foreign attachments upon the most liberal and ample footing. We would violate the sacred trust imposed in us if we adopted your modification of

⁵¹ *Colonial Records*, IX, 876.

⁵² *Colonial Records*, IX, 786.

⁵³ *Colonial Records*, IX, 831.

⁵⁴ *Colonial Records*, IX, 875.

that clause." They assured the governor that the people were aware of the importance of preserving the security of trade that they had hitherto enjoyed by reason of the foreign attachment clause, and that they knew too well their own interests to make a sacrifice of it. The inhabitants were convinced by the fullest experience that it was necessary to their commercial interests in proceedings against absconding debtors. As to the other colonies having the foreign attachment laws separate from the general court laws, these laws had the sanction of the government and were as fixed and permanent as the court laws on which they necessarily depended.

Thus the long controversy came to a deadlock between the governor, representing the crown, and the assembly, representing the people, both bound by instructions which neither could disobey. The result was that no courts were held from March 6, 1773, until December 24, 1777, when the new court act of the state of North Carolina went into effect. When the revolutionary movement gained headway by August, 1775, the committees of safety took over the functions that were indispensable to good order.

The house said that "the right of foreign attachment is a right essential to every well regulated system of police, and is a security inseparable from traffic."⁵⁵ The governor and the authorities in England, however, continued to insist on the elimination of the attachment clause, and thereby they drove the North Carolina lawyers and the general populace toward revolt.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ *Colonial Records*, IX, 779.

⁵⁶ Articles on Caswell's subsequent career by the same author, will be published in the April and July issues of *The North Carolina Historical Review*.

A FOOTNOTE TO SOCIAL HISTORY*

By HENRY MCGILBERT WAGSTAFF

Through the years I look back upon the institutions and customs of the countryside where I was born and where I had my early life. I have never been so far removed from it that my interest has faded. Yet I have gathered perspective as the years have passed by. I have come to appraise some of our customs¹ in a truer way than when I shared so intimately in them. There was the "revival," for instance, a characteristic and important feature of rural community life wherever the Methodists or the Baptists were strong.

In my community, overwhelmingly Methodist, the week of the revival was a peak of the year. It was staged in mid-summer by the circuit rider in agreement with the elders of the church when the crops had been well worked out and the harvest period not yet begun. It was a season of physical relaxation, of spiritual renewal, of social contacts and refreshment. Every day there was dinner in the grove of trees on the church grounds.

All looked forward to this week. It was almost as much a peak of the year in our community as was Christmas time. Apart from the serious business of religion when the tide was at its flood in a successful revival, the elders talked crops and matters of general interest. The women worked over the dinners and minded their babies and kept the very young in order. To the young generation the period was a continuous feast of exciting contacts.

The word "revival" and the institution it covered in Southern Methodism needs no definition to the Methodists of the past century. In the present era the institution has well-nigh passed out even in the rural districts of this church. Its theory was that the communicants in the church, that is, the officially inducted membership, needed periodically a re-stimulation of their religious zeal, a revivification of their faith, a re-affirmation of their vows of loyalty—in short, a spiritual boost. This concept and the use of the "revival" included two other accepted ideas of the period: one, the restoration to the arms of the church of all members who

* A paper read at the annual meeting of the State Literary and Historical Association, Dec. 7, 1944.

¹ The impressions here recorded were gathered in Person County, North Carolina, in the last decade of the nineteenth century.

had undergone the process known as "back-sliding" (or falling from grace); and two, the addition to membership of all whom the "revival" services "converted." The "back-sliders," a definitely recognized element in the church, were those persons who had at some former time been "converted," had become members by taking the vows of the church, and had afterward grown lukewarm, negligent, or wholly indifferent to the binding obligation of those vows. Stated somewhat more specifically, the "backslider" was a person who had reverted, both in his own conception and in the eyes of the community, to the classification of "sinner." He had "fallen from grace." In effect the point that distinguished a "backslider" from a regular "sinner" was that the former had neither been dismissed from the church membership nor had formally withdrawn his name. He was a reproach to the membership but was a straying sheep who must be kindly dealt with and recovered to the fold. This work of re-folding straying sheep was as much of the task of a "revival" as was the work of bringing into the fold the lost sheep, "sinners," who had never been inside. The technique was not essentially different—"conversion" for the sinner of the latter class, "re-conversion" for the "backslider." Yet the "backslider" might avail himself of simple re-affirmation of faith strengthened by renewal of vows. In other words he might resume where he had left off; while the plain sinner must run the whole course of conversion and induction. The great majority of the "sinner" class, as distinguished from "backsliders," was the up-coming generation, children and young people, the regular reservoir of recruitments to keep up and increase the membership. Among them, of course, was an occasional "hardened" sinner, a person who had reached adulthood or even passed into declining years without ever having yielded to social pressure and been "converted." Such an individual might be a good and right-living person or he might be a rank reprobate. Yet in either case he was a lost sheep unless and until he was enfolded in the arms of the church.

All this important work of the revival rested more heavily upon the circuit rider (preacher) who served the particular church than upon any other. This was one of his main responsibilities. Some were especially fitted for the task and looked forward to the revival period when their special gifts as spiritual

leaders might be brought into play. Such special gifts varied, as did the technique of their employment, but a primary one was the "gift of tongues"—an ease of speech coupled with a close familiarity with the Scriptures. Imagination, logic, a fundamentalist faith, and a fervid zeal were other ingredients that made up the equipment of a successful revivalist. Many a Methodist preacher of that era had these qualities in high degree and could and did make his "revival services" the peak of his whole year's work. In such instances the local community was profoundly stirred; an emotional tension would grip the whole body of the membership and its waves extend outward to engulf the unredeemed.

An additional quality of the successful revivalist was his ability to wake the zeal, and therefore the aid, of the staunchest element of the church's membership—both men and women. This zeal and this aid were automatically held by many a member as automatically due, a part of their personal obligation to assist in saving souls. And I am sure it went even deeper, and tied up with the inherent tendency in human nature to set his neighbor straight in matters that concerned eternal salvation. So, in the church, in every local community, there were always to be found a zealous few who could be utterly depended upon by the preacher as his shock troops in a revival service. The way and manner of the exercise of this aid varied with the individual and with his or her predilections, special gifts, and standing in the community. Yet the rôle had evidently been evolutionary and, in the period here concerned, consisted in the main of some half-dozen different forms of endeavor.

First was the art of public prayer. In practically every Methodist church community there were to be found one or more men among the membership who were naturally gifted in this art, or had cultivated it from modest first attempts to a point where real eloquence, whipped up by religious zeal and profound emotional impulse, was not the infrequent result. Doubly effective was such a man whose piety and day-to-day religious life were things known to the community at large. Such a man commanded respect of his hearers when he talked to the Lord. Even fascination gripped many, and hearty "amens," and even sobs, were often wrested from the more emotional. The preacher, if he were a good

psychologist, and he often was, knew just the moment in a revival to employ this powerful aid, an aid the more effective because it rarely bore the taint of the least tinge of insincerity. Often, therefore, such prayers and their "offerers" were as effective, sometimes more so, than the logic, the imagery, or the fervid oratory of the preacher himself. Backsliders were reclaimed and sinners were converted under the powerful stimulus of such prayers offered in the simple faith that God heard the earnest appeal of his servant and directly intervened to turn the erring soul into the way of righteousness.

A second type of assistance to the end of making a revival truly successful was that furnished by especially zealous members who, when the moment was ripe (a period when emotional fervor had been got well under way, by the sermon, the appeal of the preacher, and the prayer which followed), passed about in the congregation and talked to sinners and backsliders. This rôle was usually taken by women, whom it seemed to embarrass less. This appeal to the individual was necessarily made in an undertone in order to keep the whole proceeding orderly. The object was to induce the sinner to take the "first step," which consisted in the routine of arising, going to the altar of the church, and there kneeling in penitence and asking forgiveness of God for his sins. At the altar attended other specialists who there took over the task of guiding the penitent through the miracle process of "conversion." This consisted in an arrival at the conviction that one's sins had been forgiven, that one's soul had been made clean and was now acceptable to God. This point, arrived at under the full tide of emotional waves beating upon the "seeker" and surcharging the whole group, was the climax for the individual, who arose and proclaimed that he was born anew. Nor can it be questioned that this was often true. I have in memory numerous instances in which this experience was a turning point in the moral life of particular individuals. Others, of course, were not long or profoundly affected. The process, despite all its embarrassments, brought most of the young people into the church and some older ones who had escaped, including backsliders. Some, of course, escaped again when the emotional upheaval had worn off, a few in fact becoming perennial backsliders—to the half-scandal of the staunchest portion of the truly Christian part

of the membership. Nevertheless this small group furnished continuing grist for the millstones of the revival until the mood and the concepts upon which the practice was founded had themselves in time worn away in face of a rising sophistication.

Congregational singing of inspirational and devotional hymns was another and very powerful method of sustaining a revival and rolling up the emotional momentum that made its objectives attainable. Psychologists have long understood the power of music to float the soul of the individual out of the orbit of self and unite the spirit of man in a common whole. Organized religion in all ages and in all stages of human evolution have used it to this end. Without it the majesty of the Christian church, of whatever division or creed, could never have been half so imposing. Hence it is no strange thing that congregational singing was a most intimate and effective part of Methodist revivals and that in this church, as in all others, it is so fundamental a part of worship that it must of necessity outlast all other practices.

In Methodist revivals of the past century the hymns for congregational singing were chosen with an eye to the particular stage of procedure, yet without any rigid adherence to that procedure. Improvisation, to meet a particular situation that might have arisen, was always possible. A song that would bite deep into the emotions at a critical stage, would raise the victory cry against the cohorts of evil; a song that would speak peace to a troubled and weary soul; one that would awaken memory of a departed loved one—the whole gamut of songs whose words and music drew away the self-consciousness of the individual impelled him to conform to the religious formula required for a righteous life. Many of our hymns were written by Charles Wesley, in the period of the rise of Methodism under the nurture and fervid zeal of John Wesley, the great organizer, founder, and inspirer of the Methodist movement in eighteenth century England. Conceding the power of music and lyrical poetry directed to an inspirational end, Charles Wesley must always have high place in any appraisal of the profound effects of Methodism upon the religious history of the past two centuries.

The picture of the Methodist practice of the "revival" would be incomplete were it not pointed out that the institution was not static in any period of its history. Like most institutions, religious

or secular, it was subject to the law of growth and change. It had reached its climax around the end of the nineteenth century and had begun a slow decline. For instance, as has been pointed out, it was the long-time obligation of the circuit rider (preacher), and even clergyman in charge of a station (one church in a town), to hold an annual revival at each of his churches. This entailed a very heavy burden upon the preacher in charge of a circuit of from three to five churches. The wells of spiritual zeal were likely to run dry, even in the case of the most gifted preachers. All the revivals were staged in the summer time, a period most suited to the convenience of a rural community. Hence this was, for the preacher, by far the heaviest period of his year's work. And yet it must be performed, in the earlier period, largely by himself in the central rôle, assisted by the spiritually-minded laymen (and lay women) in the individual church. Too, it must be observed that not every preacher in charge of a circuit, or even of a station, possessed the gift of tongues, the dynamic spiritual drive, and the psychological qualifications that were requisite for a successful revival.

Hence the practice grew up of the preacher-in-charge securing the help of another preacher in the conference connection to aid him in his week of revival at his individual churches. Such individuals were available mainly from the stations where each preacher had charge of only one church and therefore was obligated for only one revival of his own. Thus his summer was largely free as contrasted to that of the preacher in charge of a circuit. Of course not every preacher in charge of a station was indubitably qualified with the gifts of a successful revivalist. But many of them were. They had, oftener than not, attained the charge of a station by virtue of superior qualifications in education, zeal, and general equipment for leadership. The stations, all in the towns, were the better paid posts in the church, the church there generally being composed of a wealthier membership than that of a rural church. Hence such a church could readily support the cost of a full-time minister, while the rural churches must be grouped into circuit units and must divide the time of the preacher assigned to the circuit. Therefore the station preacher was likely to be the better prepared, the better paid, and the better provided with that leisure which was necessary for quiet study to

increase further his effectiveness. A natural consequence was that the ablest of such station preachers were much in demand by the circuit riders who needed assistance in holding summer time revivals. This assistance, oftentimes the actual leadership of the revival, was ordinarily furnished without expectation or offer of material reward. It was a labor of love, prompted by zeal for the cause of the church in saving souls. If, incidentally, it enhanced the reputation by advertising the spiritual power of the preacher, then that was a matter in conformity with the general law of life governing a successful career in one's chosen work.

In the end, however, the trail blazed by the abler and more zealous station preachers in assisting or assuming charge of revivals for less well-equipped or over-worked preachers, led to the rise of the professional evangelists. Indeed this type of preacher had been gradually emerging through much of the nineteenth century and was at the peak of influence in its last twenty years. Most church denominations in America experienced the influence of the evangelists, who were but a sublimated species of the revivalist. Of the larger denominations of Protestantism perhaps the Baptists and the Methodists (in that order) produced the greatest impulse toward Evangelism in the nineteenth century, this becoming a strong echo of the great Congregationalist movement of the eighteenth century crowned by the work of Jonathan Edwards in New England. Spurgeon was preeminent, and had no peer in the Baptist group, while Dwight L. Moody was preeminent among Methodists. Both had superlative powers in moving great masses of men. Both had many lesser imitators, some with scarcely less power and skill. Among the Methodists perhaps Sam Jones and Billy Sunday, after Moody, were the greatest exponents of the movement, possessing more of natural eloquence and knowledge of herd psychology than any of the hosts of other preachers attracted to this field. And their imitators scaled all the way down to cheap and insincere persons capitalizing upon the opportunity that the prevailing mood of religion presented.

But it is not here intended to dig into the history of the wide-sweeping revivalist movement in America, but rather to present the simple procedures of the Methodist Church that were common to all its individual units and particularly to the rural church

community in the late nineteenth century. It was in these units, basic in the whole church edifice, that the ground was unconsciously prepared for the all-embracing Methodist Revival on a nation-wide scale.

So, back in the simple Methodist revival in the average rural church, as in the station churches in the town, the spirit of commercialism crept in naturally when some preachers who formerly assisted, without pay, the over-burdened circuit rider in holding his annual revival, had made reputation enough, gained confidence enough, to pass into the ranks of the minor evangelists. They began to expect pay for their assistance and, at the same time, their prestige enabled them to assume chief direction of the revival, the regular preacher dropping into the rôle of assistant to the professional. The remuneration to the revivalist was necessarily on the contingent basis, dependent upon the depth to which the community was stirred in the revival and the sum total of the voluntary contributions the community would make when, at the climax of soul stirring, the touch was made.

This part of the business was tactfully left to the regular minister, with something of a behind-the-scene understanding between him and the revivalist in respect to the propitious moment. Also the regular preacher had normally felt out for the influence as well as the aid of the chief, or important members of the church. These were usually those who were best able to pay. These preliminary understandings arranged, the local preacher, at the strategic moment—always just before the announced close of the revival and when the emotional tension was at its height—would take charge of proceedings and make the appeal for contributions. He pointed out that the Spirit of God had been in their midst, that there had been a great harvest of souls for the Kingdom, that God had used his agent (the visiting revivalist) as an instrument to this end and that a laborer was worthy of his hire. Of course the laborer himself was present, seated behind the altar, looking benign and exhausted. The art of taking the contribution had many nuances and varying techniques. Sometimes the method was to call for individual initiative from the congregation. In such case the most materially solid members were expected to rise and mention the amount of their gifts. From these varying but largest amounts to be expected, the less

materially solid members ran down the scale to the smallest voluntary contribution. The sum total, paid in cash at the end of the service, constituted the pay to the visiting revivalist. Sometimes the preacher in charge, out of fear that a wholly voluntary first subscription of an able member might be too low, followed the procedure of himself moving a beginning sum. "Who had been so blessed, and seen his loved ones, his friends, and neighbors so blessed" that he would give \$200.00 to the cause of God? From such a sum the standard would be constantly lowered and fitted in with each individual's willingness and capacity to pay. Here, of course, now two forces were working: one, the exaltation of the emotional mood not yet subsided and, two, caution and practicality attendant upon gifts of money. Indeed it is not too much to say that at this stage in Methodist revivals in a rural church a hot and cold current came into sudden collision, with the consequent result of lowering the spiritual temperature, though certainly not immediately to the point of the pre-revival period.

There was always a residuum of effect lasting for longer or shorter periods. Some had actually been set on a new course in life; some had been brought to an awakening of thought processes; some had made new vows or new resolutions. Some walked more humbly before God out of sheer regard for consistency with protestations made in public. Some, of course, shed their recent exaltation within a month, or even a shorter time. A thoughtful few remained befogged mentally and spiritually, asking themselves what it was all about, how much of it was real and how much unreal. To the wholly thoughtless it had been an emotional "jag," the implications of which they understood not at all.

But along with these very mixed spiritual results there were other social results, possibly less obvious, or tangible, yet possessing their value to the community life as a whole. These were products of the physical relaxation, the social contacts of men, of women, of young people and children, before and after church, and especially the noon hour around the dinner tables in the shadows of the trees. The food was always well-prepared and good, each housewife vying with others as to the excellence of her basket or box of the best things the countryside afforded. There were always large platters of finely cured country ham,

of young fried chicken, brown and crisp, of many cakes of different varieties—baked in deep round molds, or in inch loaves, to be piled one on top of another up to six or eight, to be cut all the way through in wedge-shaped sections and taken off by the feasters in such thickness as appetite dictated.

And there were gargantuan appetites around most of the tables. Most of the men of our community worked hard on the land, either in its management or in its actual cultivation. All led out-door lives all the year round. Too, there were ordinarily not a few visitors from adjacent church communities, perhaps on the same circuit, having relatives, friends and acquaintances in our community. These were likely to come in the latter half of the week of revival, when the information had spread that a "real revival spirit" was present, that the preaching was good and the community profoundly stirred. Sometimes visitors came from the nearest village or town, the pious impelled by spiritual impulse, others by the opportunity for contacts and good food. Of this latter class of visitors, usually young people of both sexes, one unconsciously gathered a mixed impression of the effect of their presence. Our own young people, boys and girls alike, found pleasure in the visitors, deriving stimulation from the opposite sex in each group. This was normal for the reason that there was no wide gulf of a social sort between the best of our community and the best of the town. Perhaps a hardly perceptible difference in manners and dress, and a shade of difference in effects of the sun upon out-door skins and indoor skins, was all that set the groups apart—and youth took scant cognizance of these. Besides there was much of blood relationship between the town dweller and the rural dweller and this formed a solid basis for their intermingling.

Yet one other facet of this contact of the townspeople of the younger generation with the rural church in its revival week must needs be noted to make the picture truthful. This aspect was less obvious than merely felt. It consisted of a rising sentiment, mainly among the religious elders of the country community, that the young people of the town were less inclined to religious influence than the youth of the country; that their influence upon the latter was a thing to be suspected and watched to the end that it wrought no evil. The circuit preacher, and

sometimes the visiting preacher or the revivalist, undoubtedly shared, or even gave shape to this sentiment. These latter tended to regard the young of the town as more sophisticated and less amenable to the current of emotions they were seeking to effect. In short the implication was that the youth of the town were likely to impede the work of the spirit. Looking back upon the era of the country revival as I witnessed it, I now have the conviction that this attitude was rather strong, but that it mainly affected the religious leaders rather than the community as a whole. Certainly this was true of my own rural community—for it was healthful-minded enough in a social way to be unconsciously confident that it could absorb all comers.

One other feature of a rural community revival lingers in my mind as part of the picture that is now so rapidly fading from the memory of men. This feature concerns the changes of numerous sorts, wrought in the life of the countryside by the arrival of the motor car. The rural revival as partially pictured above, is a scene out of the horseback, and horse-and-buggy age. Its characteristic features began a transition all but simultaneously with the development of motor transportation, thus leading to the question whether the quickened tempo of life was the main factor that undermined the fundamentalist attitude in religion upon which the Methodist revival was so largely predicated. Whatever the answer to that question it probably would not, could not, represent the whole truth. But it is a well-recognized social fact that the last century rural revival as well as the great city revival, with its high-powered evangelist and all the paraphernalia of music leaders and choir singers, has, in this century passed into a decline that points toward early complete disappearance.

So the picture of the institution at its peak will be but a record of a past phase of social history, and that history would not be nearly complete unless the physical setting were painted in.

The average North Carolina rural church, of the Methodists as well as the other denominations, was usually set in a grove of trees, the grounds usually being well-chosen and containing several acres. The site had sometimes been bought by the group of persons who desired to form a congregation, erect a house for worship, and maintain it as a community center. Not infrequently the site was donated by a leader in the movement. Normally it

was large enough to provide space for a burial ground. This burial ground was laid off into plots assigned originally to individual heads of families. Space was left for later assignments when the need arose.

Here in these plots the elders lay first, by process of nature, men and their wives and children who died young. Sons who married and had families of their own were likely to acquire a separate plot from the unassigned area, and thus the community of the dead was constantly increased as the years passed by. In the earlier days the burial ground (later called the cemetery) was undifferentiated from the church grounds by fence or wall and for long was not very well kept. Later, with improving economic conditions, came greater attention to the burial ground. Fences, usually of "palings" painted white, and later walls of stone came to mark out the area. Simultaneously came the use of marble slabs (and rarely a monument shaft) to replace the crude stones set up at head and foot to mark the resting place of each of the dead. On these slabs were carved the name, dates of birth and death, and a pious inscription, sometimes a favorite verse from the Scriptures, sometimes a couplet from a favorite and familiar hymn. Here the dead rested, the memory of them gradually fading out as the generations came and went. The memory of a man, or woman, who had been especially marked in the community, or had gone out from it and made a career, of course lingered longest by virtue of natural community pride. A beautiful community custom nearly always existed of bringing flowers to church on preaching days and placing them on graves of departed relatives. This, however, was individual rather than general in application, depending upon the depth of memory and affection left in the hearts of those who yet survived.

The architecture of the rural Methodist church has undergone a rather slow evolution from quite crude to very much more tasteful and adequate buildings. This of course, is the product of economic changes reflecting themselves in increasing taste and greater pride. Better built houses for worship, with paint, and current for lighting and a furnace for heat, seem normal to the present generation. The cruder houses of the past century are but a fading memory. None except the very oldest in my home community remembers when the interior of our church had a built-in

panel down the longest axis, from the altar to the door. This divided the seating according to sex. This was in keeping with the old custom formulated in the early days of Methodism in the eighteenth century. Many other Protestant sects, especially those tinged with the spirit of John Calvin, followed the same custom. In my earliest memory of my own community church, this custom was beginning to break down, though it yet required something of a bold spirit for a young man and a young woman to march in and sit together on the same side of the panel. Curiously it was the young man who had to take the initiative in the breach of this custom and brazen it out on the woman's side of the church. Perhaps too that was natural—for thereby he offered proof to the young woman that he would dare all things for her favor.

The generous size of the grove and church grounds area was, in horse-and-buggy days, doubtless as much dictated by the need of room for vehicles and horses as by the cheapness of land. There, especially in revival periods, when attendance was apt to be large, horses and mules were detached from the vehicles and tied to limbs and trees furthest back from the church. Many of them, though not all, were fed by their owners during the dinner hour.

At our church it was custom to make sure that no visitor or other person, well-to-do or poor, who had not brought provision, should fail of invitation to some table. These tables in my earliest memory were individual family tables, and members of the family invited whom they would to eat with them. The individual tables were well-scattered over the grove under the shade of the trees. Sometimes several families, usually relatives, combined their food at a common table. This led to a larger crowd and greater sociability. Later the custom came to be to place all the tables together in a long row and the preacher, before the recess hour, delivered a general invitation for all present to partake of the generous and excellent food the women of the church always provided.

Being but a boy when these scenes of the past fixed themselves in my memory, I think I may be held guiltless of levity if I point out that dogs in our community seemed greatly to enjoy the revival season. They came in generous numbers, dogs of all descriptions, following their owners' wagons, carriages, or buggies—with a well-stuffed food basket or box inside. These

dogs had a social season of contacts, but the peak of their day was the dinner hour when they passed about among the feasters around the tables and received the wealth of bones and broken food thrown down by their human friends. Sometimes two dogs, desirous of the same bit, would come to clash, much to the interest of small boys in the group. But usually they were peaceful and courteous, proceeding on the assumption that where there was so much there would be plenty for all. And truly there was! For I have seen dogs at revivals with sides so distended they would pass over a discarded chunk of delicious cake with a disdainful sniff. I knew one dog whom I had reason to believe remained on the church grounds at night throughout revival week, not giving himself the trouble of journeying home and back again. Perhaps he was chagrined when a day came and the crowd did not return. But even so he had already well-lined ribs and the memory of glorious feasting.

Now and again some pet dog with a strong attachment for his master or mistress, or to a child, would slip through an open door of the church seeking out the object of its affections. His presence, thrust in upon the services, was likely to create a diversion, especially among the young fry and to the disgruntlement of the preacher. How could the spirit flow when attention was diverted by the uncertain actions of a puzzled dog? The picture here called up brings to mind a story told in my father's house by the Rev. G. W. Ivey. The latter at that time was in charge of the Leasburg Circuit of which our church, Concord, was a part. His was a strong and interesting personality, commanding respect and affection both as spiritual leader and man. For long years he was one of the most effective circuit riders in our denomination, serving charges from the mountains to the sea. On the occasion to which I refer he was conducting a revival at Concord church. Returned in the late afternoon from the arduous services at church he and my father were sitting in chairs drawn out on the lawn to catch the breezes. I sat on the grass and listened—for I knew him to be an interesting teller of stories. The talk turned to dogs in church, of which there had been an instance that very day.

Mr. Ivey said: "Once, when I was holding a revival on the Lenoir circuit, up in the mountains, the services were held in a

shady brush arbor built for the purpose. Dogs were pretty thick, but generally well-behaved. But one afternoon during my closing prayer a little fice dog strayed in up near the altar. He became excited at my voice and began to yap in competition. I suppose I *was* pretty fervid. As I continued my prayer the little dog drew closer and closer, raising such a clamor that it was quite confusing. Finally he was in reach of my hand. I reached out quickly and seized him by the neck. I went on with my prayer, forgetting the little dog. When I had finished and withdrew my hand the poor little fellow was dead!"

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY NEW BERN

A HISTORY OF THE TOWN

and

CRAVEN COUNTY, 1700-1800

By ALONZO THOMAS DILL, JR.

PART V

POLITICAL AND COMMERCIAL RISE OF NEW BERN

¶ If the Seat of Government Should ever happen to be established there, as it probably may, from its being nearly Central, it will become a place of Note very soon, and will outvie any other Town in North Carolina.

—LORD ADAM GORDON, 1765.

During the quarter-century between about 1740 and 1765, New Bern gained a political importance and commercial prosperity that made up for all the lean and hungry years the town had hitherto undergone. As the southern part of the province grew populous, New Bern found itself no longer on the fringe of colonization but in the middle of it. It enjoyed the enviable position of being a central town, convenient to both northern and southern settlers and therefore a logical residence for the governor and seat for meetings of the assembly. Such a place clearly had a future; and from northern provinces came merchants to establish themselves in it, dotting the broad mouth of the Neuse with the sails of schooners, sloops, and snows which brought modest fortunes to their owners and goods that meant a higher standard of living comfort to the inhabitants of town and county. But political preëminence, upon which to some extent this economic prosperity depended, was not won without sharp opposition from both Edenton, whose place as premier town in the province was threatened, and Wilmington, whose own bright prospects rivaled those of the town on the Neuse.

From the very first New Bern held one political advantage possessed by no other town—an advantage which seems to have made it the first one in the province to be represented by a borough member in the assembly. It was provided by a law of 1715 that Bath and the other towns thereafter to be founded might each elect an assemblyman to sit for them in the lower

house when they had attained a population of as many as sixty families.¹ An exception was specifically made in the case of New Bern, which was allowed a representative "altho' there should not be Sixty families Inhabiting in the said Town." This concession probably was made because of the need for representation of the sizable Swiss and German colony, which existed for the most part outside the confines of the town. Not until 1773 did Beaufort attain sixty-family status.² And since the assembly found it necessary in 1722 to confer borough rights on Bath and Edenton by another enactment, neither apparently having attained the requisite number of inhabitants, it would seem that New Bern sent to the assembly the first representative of any town and that for several years it possessed exclusively this privilege—a privilege which was confirmed several times through the century, by the constitution of 1776, for example, and which remained in force until 1835.³

This attainment of borough rights so early was prophetic of the political importance the town was to acquire. From the very first, New Bern was the logical place for the transaction of official affairs involving the inhabitants of the coastal midlands. In 1723 it had been designated as seat of the precinct, where elections and other precinct business were to be conducted.⁴ Some years later it became the place for the collection of quitrents in Craven.⁵ As time went on its convenience was recognized to such an extent that the sheriffs of surrounding counties met there to render account upon matters involving provincial business.⁶ Being the "most sentrical town in the province," as the French traveler described it, assured New Bern's political future in a larger sense.⁷ As early as 1735 the council met in New Bern, sitting as a court of claims for land disputes and for issuing land patents.⁸ Thereafter the council convened many times in the town, not only as a court of claims but also as governor's council, its primary function, and as the appellate court of chancery. So obvious was the wisdom of this that in 1736 Governor Johnston recommended

¹ *State Records*, XXIII, 79.

² *Colonial Records*, IX, 637.

³ *Colonial Records*, VI, 228, 263; *State Records*, XXIII, 980.

⁴ *State Records*, XXV, 204-205.

⁵ *State Records*, XXV, 217.

⁶ *State Records*, XXIII, 331, 349.

⁷ "Journal of a French Traveler in the Colonies, 1765," *American Historical Review*, XXVI (July, 1921), 734-735.

⁸ *Colonial Records*, IV, 61.

to the Board of Trade that a semi-annual court of chancery should be held at New Bern, "at present the most central place of the Province."⁹ He explained this by saying that Edenton was within thirty miles of the Virginia line and two hundred miles from Cape Fear, "where most of the Council have their habitations."¹⁰

I have not been able [he continues] to hold above two Courts of Chancery since I came into the Province upon this account. If there is any Law confining the Courts to Edenton it is more than I know but if there is . . . the Province is so much altered since by the Peopling of the Southern parts that it is highly proper to repeal it.

By law of 1722 Edenton had been made the seat of certain provincial officers and of the governor if he so chose; and thus in a legal sense but more strongly in a customary sense the town was the capital of North Carolina.¹¹ However, as Johnston said, there was nothing in the act requiring courts to be held at Edenton. The governor went further than his recommendation that courts should be held in New Bern. He also urged that the "offices of the Secretary and Surveyor [,] Receiver and Auditor General with all other offices be for the future kept in the said Town of Newbern." Alas, this was easier to propose than to bring about in the face of the opposition of the assembly-controlling Albemarle.

Edenton was indeed the capital if by capital one meant the seat of the governor and, more important, the meeting place of the assembly. Though New Bern did not become the residence of the governor until 1754, the town soon began to attract sessions of the colonial legislature. These from earliest times had convened in the Albemarle and from about 1722 had met in Edenton. It remained for Governor Johnston to end this long northeastern monopoly. At the height of his bitter controversy with the representatives over the method of payment of quitrents, he called the assembly to hold its first meeting in New Bern on March 1, 1737. The upper house, the council, convened on that date, but the lower house, at first without a quorum, apparently did not meet until March 4 and then only to gather in joint session and hear the

⁹ *Colonial Records*, IV, 206.

¹⁰ *Colonial Records*, IV, 204.

¹¹ *State Records*, XXV, 175-178.

irate governor dissolve them because of their opposition to the crown's wishes.¹² Thereafter, though the towns of Bath and Wilmington shared with Edenton and New Bern these sessions, the assembly convened more frequently at New Bern than at any other town.¹³

As a consequence, New Bern was the scene of many a political quarrel. Here was held the assembly's stormy impeachment of the arbitrary chief justice, William Smith, a trial in which figured several Craven politicians.¹⁴ Here, too, occurred a violent dispute between members of the town and county delegations, in which one of them threatened his fellow-member with a pistol, on the assembly floor, "for proffering a bill to this House before he consulted him."¹⁵ These and many other quarrels of which the records do not tell enlivened the daily courthouse gossip. Furthermore, many of the officers and employes of the assembly were residents of the town or county, and this added to the interest felt in things political. At one time the clerks of both houses and even the doorkeeper and messenger of the assembly were all of Craven County.¹⁶

Johnston did not press his suggestion of 1736 to a showdown until ten years later, when he determined that New Bern, in view of the continued growth of the southern regions and the inconvenience of Bath and Edenton, should be the capital. In June, 1746, a bill to fix the wandering seat of government met an impasse in the council, which, under the governor's influence, insisted that New Bern instead of Bath, which the lower house preferred, should be the capital.¹⁷ The governor then prorogued the assembly from New Bern, where it was meeting, to Wilmington, there to convene in November. This was a time most inconvenient for the northern members who were blocking his wishes. When the assembly convened anew, it lacked a quorum because of the non-attendance of the Albemarle members, but that did not prevent the speaker from declaring a quorum nor

¹² *Colonial Records*, IV, xvi (prefatory notes), 241, 271; *South Carolina Gazette* (Charleston), June 4, 1737.

¹³ See pp. 76-77.

¹⁴ "A True and Faithful Narrative of the Proceedings of the House of Burgesses of North Carolina . . . Met in Newbern, February 5, 1739/40," pp. 31-33, reprinted by W. K. Boyd, "Some North Carolina Tracts of the Eighteenth Century," *The North Carolina Historical Review*, II (January, 1925), 30-82.

¹⁵ *Colonial Records*, IV, 399.

¹⁶ *Colonial Records*, IV, 1174, 1176, 1190, 1192.

¹⁷ *Colonial Records*, IV, 1169-1170.

the "House" from enacting, on December 5, 1746, a bill making New Bern the capital.¹⁸ Along with it was passed a bill stripping the Albemarle of its traditionally preponderant representation—a move which brought the bitterested opposition from that section and ultimately resulted in the repeal of both acts.

The act of 1746 fixed the court of chancery, the general court, their clerks' offices, and the secretary's office all at New Bern.¹⁹ It also levied a tax of four pence per poll for two years to pay for the public buildings which it was planned to erect at New Bern. However, the governor and council soon wavered in their choice of a capital. They debated

. . . whether instead of New-Bern the present seate of government, it would not be more Eligible to make and establish the same upon Trent River the publick Buildings not being yet erected at New Bern pursuant to Act of Assembly in regard of the known unhealthiness of the former place from the badness of the water and other Causes, And the want of proper Accomodations in the said Town.²⁰

Where they considered erecting the buildings on Trent River does not appear, but it is not important since nothing further was done, though the council did agree "there was sufficient Reason for removing the Seat of government." By early in 1750 this action had been forgotten, and when a bill was enacted increasing the public buildings tax, which had proved insufficient, these buildings were again being projected "at New Bern Town."²¹ At the same time, both houses agreed on the sort of buildings which were to be put up. It was planned to erect three structures: a courthouse fifty feet long, thirty feet wide and fifteen feet high; a house for the use of the council thirty feet long, twenty feet wide, and twelve feet high; and a third building of the same dimensions for the use of officials and clerks.²²

The passive but effective resistance of the Albemarle members to the two acts of 1746 thwarted Johnston's plans for a permanent capital. The northern members spread it about that as soon as the crown restored their full representation, the seat of government would be removed from New Bern.²³ This report had a very depressing effect on the town. Many of its inhabitants, realizing

¹⁸ *Colonial Records*, IV, 836-837, 843.

¹⁹ *State Records*, XXIII, 347-348.

²⁰ *Colonial Records*, IV, 898.

²¹ *State Records*, XXIII, 347-348.

²² *Colonial Records*, IV, 1062-1063.

²³ *Colonial Records*, IV, 1166.

the need for accommodations in the new permanent meeting place of the assembly, had rushed to convert their homes into ordinaries or taverns. Indeed, in 1746 alone thirteen of these ordinaries were licensed by the county court, nine of them at least in the town itself. This number exceeded the licenses issued for any other one year prior to 1765; and the licenses issued from 1746 to 1749 exceeded those for the next ten years, so great was the expectation of a business boom at this time.²⁴ However, the stand of the northern members completely dampened these prospects. As Johnston put it:

One mighty inconvenience we have to struggle with at present is, That nobody cares to lay in Provisions for Man or Horse at Newbern, tho' it is the most central and fruitful part of the Province; . . . nobody cares for advancing Money for the entertainment of the Publick, so that in a fortnight or three weeks time, we are obliged to seperate for want of the necessaries of Life.²⁵

The "necessaries of Life" in so far as council and assembly were concerned completely depended on the ordinary-keeper or "victualler." Hence the strict regulation of these home-taverns by the county court, which required each of them to keep "good wholesom and clean Diet and Lodging for Travellers" and adequate fodder for their beasts, while at the same time strictly forbidding any gaming or tipping on Sundays.²⁶ And yet, oddly enough, it was not unheard-of for an ordinary to be licensed "at the Publick Goal!"²⁷ Occasionally, but only rarely, ordinary licenses were revoked for violation of the court-prescribed price schedule or for "keeping a Very Disorderly and Irregular House."²⁸ It was not unusual for women to be mistresses of these houses, and on the other hand some of the most prominent men also were ordinary-keepers, for example the patriots Thomas Sitgreaves and Richard Cogdell.²⁹

Despite the depression caused by the "unarmed rebellion" of the Albemarle, there were certain advantageous results of Johns-

²⁴ All figures are based on tables compiled from the Craven Court Minutes, 1745-1765.

²⁵ *Colonial Records*, IV, 1166.

²⁶ *State Records*, XXV, 358-359. Ordinary bond of Thomas Bowers, March 12, 1784; Miscellaneous Material, Craven County, in archives of State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, N. C.

²⁷ Craven Court Minutes, September, 1774.

²⁸ Craven Court Minutes, April, 1762; March, 1768.

²⁹ Viz., Elizabeth McIntosh, Eleanor Welsh, Mary Howard. Craven Court Minutes, May, 1752; February, 1755; August, 1756; August, 1757; October, 1761.

ton's irregular effort to establish by law the capital at New Bern. One of these was the settling in New Bern of James Davis, the first printer in the province, who arrived in 1749 probably from an apprenticeship in the office of the Williamsburg printer, William Parks. Attracted to North Carolina by an assembly act promising him an annual salary of £160 as public printer, Davis lost no time in making a place for himself in the affairs of the town and province.³⁰ Soon after his arrival, he wed the widow Prudence Hobbs, daughter of William Carruthers, of Beaufort County, and began to acquire property.³¹ Among these acquisitions was Lot No. 1 on the southwest corner of Broad and East Front streets, where his printing office stood for many years.³² However, it was from a shop "near the Church" that Davis's early work was done.³³ Here in 1751 was printed the first copy of *The North Carolina Gazette*, the first newspaper in North Carolina.³⁴ A year later he issued the first printed revision of the laws.³⁵ From 1749 to 1760 no fewer than thirty-two imprints came from his press, *The Journal of the House of Burgesses* (1749) being the earliest of these.³⁶ All the While Davis was pursuing an active political career. In 1753 he became a member of the county court and served on it for the remarkable term of twenty-five years.³⁷ A year later he was chosen sheriff of Craven County, and during his incumbency was elected to represent the town in the assembly, but upon being refused his seat because of this dual office-holding, he gave up the former position after only ten months.³⁸ In 1755 he was again elected, and sat in the lower house for the next five years, serving on several important committees and introducing some vital legislation.³⁹ In 1755 Davis was appointed to set up a post route between Suffolk and Wilmington, and by this means supplemented his slender salary as public printer, which he called "not above half what every other

³⁰ *Colonial Records*, IV, 984; *State Records*, XXIII, 314-315.

³¹ Craven County Deeds, I, 531; IX-X, 41. Hobbs died about 1747. Craven Court Minutes, June, 1747.

³² Craven County Deeds, II, 347-348.

³³ *The North Carolina Gazette*, November 15, 1751. This is the earliest extant copy.

³⁴ C. C. Crittenden, *North Carolina Newspapers Before 1790*, James Sprunt Historical Studies, XX (1928). The first issue, according to Crittenden, was August 9, 1751.

³⁵ *Colonial Records*, IV, xiv (prefatory notes).

³⁶ Douglas C. McMurtrie, "The First Twelve Years of Printing in North Carolina, 1749-1760," *The North Carolina Historical Review*, X (July, 1933), 214-217.

³⁷ Craven Court Minutes, February, 1753, and *passim* to 1778.

³⁸ Craven Court Minutes, August, 1754; May, 1755; *Colonial Records*, V, 245.

³⁹ *Colonial Records*, V, 529, 689, 716, 843, 889, 903, 1007, 1051; VI, 95, 145, 362.

Public Printer in America has." ⁴⁰ Shrewd and apparently acquisitive, Davis built up a modest estate in slaves and real property, including a plantation at Green Spring, to divide among his four sons at his death in 1785.⁴¹ But his quick temper—he was described by a fellow-townsmen as being a man of "prejudices and passions"—probably hindered his political career.⁴² Nonetheless he was an ardent patriot from the beginning of the Revolution. At an early date he was a member of the Friends of American Liberty, and later he served as chairman of the Craven Committee of Safety, as New Bern borough representative in two provincial conventions, and even on the council of state.⁴³

Another beneficial consequence of the act of 1746 was the impetus it gave toward the building of Craven County's first brick courthouse. It was the assembly's original plan to erect in New Bern a courthouse fifty feet long and thirty feet wide.⁴⁴ To finance this and other public buildings, a tax of four pence per poll was to be levied for two years; but when this proved insufficient the assembly authorized the issuance of more than £21,000 in paper money to begin the work.⁴⁵ In pursuance of this encouragement, lots were purchased in New Bern as a site for the proposed courthouse and perhaps for the council house and clerical offices as well. By deed dated April 17, 1750, Jeremiah Vail, John Starkey, and Edward Griffith, the building commissioners, had conveyed to them Lots No. 248, 249, 250, and 251, being the southern half of the block upon which the present courthouse stands; and by October of the following year, at the latest, the work had been commenced.⁴⁶

It was more than a decade before the courthouse was at last ready for use—a fact which shows the difficulties and delays of colonial public building. The financing of the work was slow and uncertain. The order issued by the crown in 1754 disallowing the act of 1746 and leaving the colony again without any legally fixed capital seems to have prevented the issuance of the £21,000 in public bills. The four-penny tax collections came in so slowly that Commissioner Starkey wanted to begin suits against the delin-

⁴⁰ *Colonial Records*, IV, 1344-1345; V, xxvi (prefatory notes), 516.

⁴¹ Craven County Records, Will Book A, 81.

⁴² *State Records*, XIII, 142-143.

⁴³ *Colonial Records*, IX, 1027, 1144, 1179; X, 166, 826; *State Records*, XV, 417.

⁴⁴ *Colonial Records*, IV, 1062-1063.

⁴⁵ *Colonial Records*, IV, 836, 1064; *State Records*, XXIII, 252-267, 347-348.

⁴⁶ *Colonial Records*, IV, 1274; *State Records*, XXIII, 364-365.

quent sheriffs but was prevented from doing so by the assembly.⁴⁷ This revenue apparently was the mainstay of the financing prior to the disallowance of the act of 1746, for we know that certain funds from this tax were turned over to the commissioners and presumably spent to forward the work.⁴⁸ Another fact which may be taken as evidence of financial difficulties is that the original specifications set by the assembly were scaled down by the county court, evidently when it became apparent that, with the impending disallowance of the act, the entire burden of the building would be thrown on the county. In the latter part of 1753 the justices specified, instead of a building fifty by thirty feet, a brick structure forty by twenty-five feet, to be raised on twelve-foot pillars.⁴⁹ (The court's order also provided for a prison thirty by twenty feet, two stories high, and "Built of Brick, and Sealed, with Two Inch Oak Plank.") A tax of one shilling per poll was to be levied throughout the county, payable to John Williams and James Davis, who were named commissioners for the construction. Thus the problem, from being the concern of the province, had narrowed to becoming merely a county one. And the burden of taxation on the county during the period of construction was extremely severe, especially at a time when the province was laboring under the levies made necessary by the Seven Years War.⁵⁰

From 1751 to 1761 little was done to further the work. That is apparent from the amount of legislation passed in an effort to facilitate the construction. One can picture the partly erected building, from time to time abandoned by the masons, as it grew old in sun and rain before ever becoming the "new" courthouse!

In 1754 the assembly passed a bill empowering the county court to sell the original wooden courthouse, which by this time had "fallen greatly to Decay," and to build a prison on the rear of the lots bought for the new, brick courthouse, which was rising at the intersection of Broad and Middle streets.⁵¹ A few years later, work apparently having halted again, another act was passed

⁴⁷ *Colonial Records*, IV, 1292.

⁴⁸ *Colonial Records*, V, 965.

⁴⁹ Craven Court Minutes, August, 1753.

⁵⁰ A table showing these taxes, county, public building, and provincial, has been compiled by the writer from the court minutes for the article, "Public Building in Craven County: A Local Government Problem, 1722 to 1835," *The North Carolina Historical Review*, XX (October, 1943), 321.

⁵¹ *Colonial Records*, V, 208; *State Records*, XXV, 265-266.

naming John Fonveille the sole commissioner to complete the building.⁵² In 1758 he reported that he had spent £306:3:9 on the prison and on laying foundations for its office, but he says nothing as to what had been done on the much-delayed courthouse.⁵³ In January, 1760, the assembly again took notice of the situation at New Bern. The act it passed at this session declared the partly finished courthouse "now lies in a ruinous condition and the Work not carried on, by reason of a Commissioner [Fonveille] wholly neglecting the same."⁵⁴ It named seven commissioners to let out the work to the lowest bidder, who should give bond and contract to do the work within a specified time. In spite of the assembly's censure, Fonveille was included among the seven new commissioners. A little more than a year later this act was repealed by another which again enlarged the dimensions of the building. Perhaps this meant that the foundation on which work had already begun was to be abandoned and a fresh start made. At any rate, this bill, as it appeared before the lower house, proposed a structure fifty by thirty feet, as had the assembly ten years previously; but the council went this one better by amending it to provide a courthouse sixty by forty feet, "as such alteration," said the council, "will make it much more convenient for the sitting of the Courts and Jury rooms And also be attended with very little more expence."⁵⁵ The act as finally passed recited the usual complaint against the commissioners for neglect—a familiar refrain in early public building acts—and authorized a two-shilling poll tax for three years in Craven County, to be paid to Richard Speight, Joseph Leech, and John Fonveille, who were appointed "new" commissioners to carry on the work.⁵⁶ Actually both Speight and Fonveille had been members of the former commission. The act provided that the courthouse might be built either on the public lot "nearly opposite Mr. Rice's red house" or on the one at the intersection of Broad and Middle streets, "where a courthouse is already begun." The commissioners chose to continue the work on the site already selected, though

⁵² *State Records*, XXV, 358-359.

⁵³ *Colonial Records*, V, 969.

⁵⁴ *Colonial Records*, VI, 184; *State Records*, XXV, 401-402.

⁵⁵ *Colonial Records*, VI, 652. New Bern at this time was the seat not only of the county court but the three-judge superior court of New Bern District as well; and by Governor Tryon's administration a few years later a court of admiralty also convened there, though whether in the courthouse does not appear.

⁵⁶ *State Records*, XXV, 462-463.

whether they used the same foundation that had been laid back in 1751 is not known. As a consequence, the northeast corner of this Broad and Middle intersection remained for more than a century the site of the Craven County courthouse.

While the courthouse was rising, New Bern, too, was rising—from a coastal hamlet to a place of importance in the fast-growing province of North Carolina. Here again we see that Johnston's effort to fix the capital was not entirely without result, for when his successor, the elderly Arthur Dobbs, arrived in 1754, he took the oath of office and established his residence in New Bern.⁵⁷ During the four years he lived there, all sessions of assembly were held in the town, so it was at this period indisputably the capital.⁵⁸

In keeping with this distinction, some badly needed improvements in both the government and appearance of the town were planned by James Davis. In October, 1756, the assembly passed a bill introduced by him which was the first municipal election and tax act.⁵⁹ Hitherto, each able-bodied resident who could not send a slave in his stead had been liable for call for work on the streets. But James Davis's law permitted the inhabitants to tax themselves up to ten shillings per poll to defray such expenses, thus excusing the taxpayers from this compulsory labor.⁶⁰ This provision was repealed in a few years, but Davis's reform was not altogether in vain, for this later act did set a limit of twelve days on the period in which a man might have to work.⁶¹ Another provision of Davis's act concerned the town commissioners, who up until this time had been appointed by the assembly. The new law provided instead for election by the freeholders, on the second Tuesday of November each year, of five such commissioners, who should choose one of their number as treasurer. To qualify for election as commissioner, a man had to possess an estate of at least £100 proclamation money and a house at least twenty-four by sixteen feet in dimensions, with a brick chimney. Furthermore, the act authorized the commissioners to require all wooden chimneys to be pulled down on six months' notice and replaced by

⁵⁷ *Colonial Records*, V, iv (prefatory notes); VI, 1.

⁵⁸ *Colonial Records*, V, 231, 495, 688, 829, 889, 998.

⁵⁹ *Colonial Records*, V, 687, 710; *State Records*, XXIII, 451-456.

⁶⁰ *State Records*, XXIII, 452.

⁶¹ *State Records*, XXV, 402.

brick ones. It also authorized a general clean-up and improvement in the town's appearance by permitting the commissioners to require the drainage of lots and removal of rubbish in the streets, and to restrict the unconfined wandering of livestock. (An act a year later expressly forbade hogs to run at large and allowed anyone to seize and kill such animals!⁶²) Clearly, New Bern was growing up. In 1757 the citizens petitioned the council to make the town a borough of charter.⁶³ However, not until three years later was the petition granted. On May 13, 1760, Halifax and Edenton received charters, and two days later approval was likewise given to New Bern's petition, which asked for similar incorporation "Except that the number of Common Councilmen be eight instead of twelve."⁶⁴ With the adoption of this new system, the town administration had grown considerably more complex than when it consisted merely of three assembly-appointed commissioners; and within a few years there are newspaper references not only to a common council but to a mayor, recorder, and aldermen as well.⁶⁵ Unfortunately, little or nothing is known of the working of this early government due to the loss or destruction of its records.

Though Governor Dobbs was carrying on all official business at New Bern, he had determined soon after his arrival that it was to be only a temporary capital. He wanted the seat of government on Neuse River because it would be centrally situated, but he intended to fix it well above New Bern so it would be nearer the western settlements and would eliminate, for the sake of the Albemarle members, the wide ferries at Edenton and Bath.⁶⁶ In 1755 Dobbs made a trip up Neuse and selected as the site of the future capital a bluff at Stringer's Ferry known as Tower Hill.⁶⁷ The governor himself purchased the site to make sure it would be available for his purposes. Meantime, he found all kinds of fault with the situation at New Bern. Like Johnston, Dobbs noted the poor accommodations which the town afforded, though indeed he was sensible enough to perceive that this was the result of the uncertainty as to where the capital would be located:

⁶² *State Records*, XXV, 358.

⁶³ *Colonial Records*, V, 812.

⁶⁴ *Colonial Records*, VI, 333-334.

⁶⁵ *The North Carolina Magazine*; or, *Universal Intelligencer*, December 21-28, 1764.

⁶⁶ *Colonial Records*, V, 147.

⁶⁷ *Colonial Records*, V, 341-342.

We have no convenient houses here [he wrote] but most indifferent houses not 30 feet long and 20 wide exposed to the Weather and none can be undertaken until the place is determined.⁶⁸

As in the time of his predecessor, Dobbs found no fit offices and no suitable place for assembly and council to meet in, the courthouse not yet being ready and these bodies being forced to convene in private homes.⁶⁹ Most of the assemblymen naturally put up in private dwellings, and their perennial complaint with New Bern, throughout the eighteenth century, was the difficulty in finding a place to lay their heads.⁷⁰ Indeed, two assemblymen to a bed was the usual rule.⁷¹ Another objection was the scarcity of provisions. It was said that "the insufficiency of the markets" in the fall months made food somewhat less plentiful when the scores of assemblymen descended on the town.⁷² But the chief complaint, certainly so far as the ageing Dobbs was concerned, was that the low ground, bad water, and autumn humidity made the town decidedly "aguish."⁷³ A French traveler's comments on New Bern are interesting in this connection. The fact that it was "afflicted with feavors," he wrote, was due to the stagnation of waters that depended on wind rather than tide or current for their movement.⁷⁴ During hot calm days, it was not unusual to see on the rivers dead fish and a thick scum, "which occasions," he said, "a Disagreeable Stensh."

Prejudiced against New Bern and obsessed by his failing health, Dobbs communicated his dissatisfaction to the assembly, which in 1756, on motion of a Northampton member, resolved that the town was unfit and unhealthy, and named a commission to choose a new site for the capital.⁷⁵ In the spring of 1758, Dobbs himself left the town, writing querulously that he had been living "in a small House at a high rent which I was obliged to pay without either garden or field to keep either horse or Cow in a low unhealthy situation in which I had several relapses in Fevers and

⁶⁸ *Colonial Records*, V, 573.

⁶⁹ *Colonial Records*, IV, 243. The Assembly seems to have convened at various times at Richard Cogdell's and earlier, possibly, at George Bould's. *Colonial Records*, VI, 743; *State Records*, XXII, 401. The Council convened on at least one occasion at a Mrs. Lister's. *Colonial Records*, IV, 751.

⁷⁰ *State Records*, XVII, 631.

⁷¹ Griffith J. McRee, *Life and Correspondence of James Iredell* (New York, 1857), I, 357.

⁷² *Colonial Records*, IX, 686.

⁷³ *Colonial Records*, V, 439, 573.

⁷⁴ "Journal of a French Traveler," *American Historical Review*, XXVI (July, 1921), 735. The writer is mistaken about the lack of current and tide at New Bern.

⁷⁵ *Colonial Records*, V, 705, 716.

agues.”⁷⁶ He moved to Cape Fear, whither the enterprising residents lured him with offers of “a new convenient house . . . in a healthy dry open situation.” Dobbs believed to his dying day (which was not far off) that his health by this change had been reestablished.⁷⁷ He congratulated himself, too, that since a quorum of the council lived in the Cape Fear section, he could call them together easily. He began to hold courts of chancery and assembly sessions in Wilmington and transferred there the records of the secretary’s office which had previously been in New Bern.⁷⁸ In December of the year he left New Bern, the assembly agreed upon Tower Hill as the site for the capital and proposed to build a town upon this barren bluff to be known as George City.⁷⁹ This was indeed a blow to New Bern. Richard Cogdell wrote to the merchant, John Campbell of Bertie County, about the letdown suffered by the town and its trade, and Campbell replied, perhaps all too justly:

The account of the dullness of your Town & buissness in it I am sorry for but the unthinking People in and about it must thank themselves who drove away the Gov^r & officers. These People could not bear a little flow of money, but Grew So Proud & Insolent they will feel the reverse and now may reflect on themselves when too Late.⁸⁰

Thus did the town go into political eclipse. Fortunately, this was only temporary.

During its political preëminence, New Bern developed in a commercial and mercantile way to an extent which observers of earlier years had not foreseen.⁸¹ This came despite grave natural handicaps—handicaps which were partly offset by the fact that New Bern, according to usage at least, was regarded as the capital.⁸² Therefore, merchants wishing to engage in business in North Carolina naturally selected as a place to settle “the first town” or the prospective “first town” of the province, where the assembly was meeting most of the time and much of the official business was being transacted.⁸³ In increasing numbers, the shipping of these men arrived at the wharves of the Neuse and Trent

⁷⁶ *Colonial Records*, VI, 1.

⁷⁷ *Colonial Records*, VI, 300.

⁷⁸ *Colonial Records*, VI, 301, 601.

⁷⁹ *Colonial Records*, V, 1036; *State Records*, XXV, 373-378.

⁸⁰ *Colonial Records*, VI, 580.

⁸¹ For example, it never occurred to Burrington or Brickell that New Bern would ever become a port, though both predicted such a future for Brunswick. *Colonial Records*, IV, 169; John Brickell, *Natural History of North-Carolina*, p. 9.

⁸² *Colonial Records*, V, 760-761.

⁸³ Compare Martin’s statement, *Colonial Records*, IX, 636-637.

with valuable cargoes from the British Isles and West Indies and departed laden with products of plantation and forest. As trade thrived, modest fortunes accumulated, and in town and county men of substance began to appear. In short, a port came into being—a small one, it is true, but nonetheless a busy one, and one that was to render great service in peace and war.

It would be a mistake to think of New Bern and her sister towns as either large or wealthy in comparison with the principal ports along the Atlantic seaboard. The coast of North Carolina was never destined to invite safe and extensive navigation, even in the days of shallow-draft vessels. Each of the ports was cursed with some hindering defect. Nowhere did nature give advantages without stint. If Wilmington and Brunswick could boast a lordly river which made trade with the interior easy, the dangerous cape and ten-foot depth at the bar could be scored against them.⁸⁴ If Beaufort enjoyed as much as a twelve-foot depth at Old Topsail Inlet, it lacked waterway connections with the interior. If New Bern and Edenton could point to Ocracoke Inlet's thirteen- or fourteen-foot depth, they must have admitted, too, that larger vessels had to navigate the swash, where there was but eight and a half or nine feet, and that these vessels often had to unload part of their cargoes into lighters in order to cross the bar. Besides, both towns were far from the open sea; and in the case of New Bern, at least in the early days, the rivers which served it were considered inferior to the Cape Fear and even the Pamlico in navigability.⁸⁵ Furthermore, none of these inlets was notably safe, and Ocracoke, with its exposed roadstead, was particularly dangerous. It was not unusual for a master to wait there two weeks for a favorable wind or for storms to abate, and as many as fourteen vessels were driven on the bar at one time during a spring squall.⁸⁶ As a consequence, the risks and costs of navigation off North Carolina were apt to be high, and notices such as these not altogether rare in the New Bern newspaper:

The Snow Dorothy, Capt. Graham, who loaded here lately for Europe, and had been sailed about 19 days, is ashore at Core-Sound; chief of the cargo will be saved.

⁸⁴ These depths are all low-tide soundings. A discussion of this is contained in C. C. Crittenden's *The Commerce of North Carolina 1763-1789* (New Haven, 1936), pp. 3-5.

⁸⁵ John Brickell, *Natural History of North-Carolina*, p. 7.

⁸⁶ *Commerce of Rhode Island 1726-1800*, Massachusetts Historical Society Collections, Seventh Series, vol. IX (Boston, 1914), I, 489-490.

There are also cast away on Cape Hatteras, two brigs, one from Boston, and the other from New York, both bound in here: A Vessel has been sent to their Assistance, and 'tis imagined chief of their Cargoes will be saved.⁸⁷

As if this were not enough, the shipping was troubled at times by freebooters, and though this may not have been peculiar to North Carolina, it certainly added to the disadvantages under which the ports already labored. A news item in the New Bern newspaper relates how a schooner captain with a cargo of slaves from Barbados was

. . . chased many Hours by a fine clean Sloop, who both rowed and crouded all she could to come up with him, and was so near that the Shot she fired went over him: This great Curiosity of the Sloop, in Time of Peace, to speak with Capt. Williams, excited his Diligence to avoid her, which a lighter Pair of Heels enabled him to do.⁸⁸

Often this "lighter pair of heels" meant the difference between a safe and a lost cargo.

If a choice had to be made of the North Carolina ports, Wilmington and Brunswick were better endowed by nature than New Bern or Edenton, yet they themselves could not compare as ports with the great harbors of Virginia and South Carolina.⁸⁹ Charleston, for example, had flourished almost from the day of its founding. In 1680 as many as sixteen vessels at a time could be seen in the harbor, which one traveler said could contain 500 with ease.⁹⁰ Before the Revolution, 150 vessels sailed weekly with an export trade in rice and indigo that was said to amount annually to nearly a million pounds.⁹¹ Like Charleston, Virginia's principal ports, on Hampton Roads, were both safe and near the sea. As early as 1728, William Byrd counted twenty brigantines and sloops riding at the wharves of Norfolk.⁹² This place, enjoying the benefit of one of the world's finest natural harbors, had at the time, said Byrd, "most the ayr of a town of any in Virginia."

⁸⁷ *The North-Carolina Magazine; or, Universal Intelligencer*, January 11-18, 1765.

⁸⁸ *The North-Carolina Magazine; or, Universal Intelligencer*, September 28-October 5, 1764.

⁸⁹ As to the North Carolina ports, compare Johnston's statement, *Colonial Records*, IV, 418.

⁹⁰ Edward McCrady, *The History of South Carolina Under the Proprietary Government 1670-1719* (New York, 1897), p. 185; W. C. Watson, editor, *Men and Times of the Revolution; or, Memoirs of Elkanah Watson* (New York, 1856), pp. 55-56.

⁹¹ Edward McCrady, *The History of South Carolina Under the Royal Government 1719-1776* (New York, 1899), p. 397.

⁹² W. K. Boyd, editor, *William Byrd's Histories of the Dividing Line* (Raleigh, 1929), 52.

A good port meant wealth—a fact which Byrd perceived so keenly when he wrote that “for want of Navigation and Commerce the best Estate affords little more than a coarse Subsistence” in North Carolina. Time and the earnest development of such natural gifts as North Carolina could command removed some of the fatalism of Byrd’s observation. But geography, like justice, is inexorable and blind, and as late as 1765 the French traveler so often quoted here found most of the North Carolina wealth consisting of land and “few if any rich people in the whole province.”⁹³ By European standards of wealth, this was probably correct, though there were planters and merchants in every locality who were rich according to colonial ideas and well off in any man’s eyes.

New Bern developed as a port from obscurity and insignificance. Up until about 1730 it was a part of the Port Bath District, the Neuse and Pamlico rivers being included in one customs collection. After that date it was added to the Port Beaufort District, the collection for which was fixed at Topsail Inlet.⁹⁴ Thus, strictly speaking, New Bern was “Port Beaufort.” Governor Burrington found much fault with this arrangement, though he did not succeed in changing it.⁹⁵ The shipmasters, he pointed out, usually entered customs at Bath, sailed to Neuse River (if they traded there) to load and discharge, then returned to Bath to load and clear. In this way they passed through only one customs district. However, if they chose to continue trading with Neuse River under the new arrangement, they had to ride forty miles overland upon reaching New Bern to enter and clear inspection at Beaufort.⁹⁶ On the other hand, those masters trading entirely with Neuse River and not in the Pamlico could, under the old plan, ride but twenty-three miles overland from New Bern to receive their papers at Bath. In the early days, when vessels were extremely shallow in draft, most of them being between twenty and fifty tons burden, they could visit each plantation landing with ease, and there was scarcely any need for “ports,” meaning towns, except as points for customs collections. Even Bay River, little more than a good-sized creek, had a trade which, according

⁹³ “Journal of a French Traveler in the Colonies, 1765,” *American Historical Review*, XXVI (July, 1921), 738.

⁹⁴ *Colonial Records*, IV, 169.

⁹⁵ *Colonial Records*, IV, 170.

⁹⁶ The overland trip was of course much shorter than the trip by water.

to Brickell, was "not despicable."⁹⁷ With no necessity for shipping to be localized in towns, it is not surprising that New Bern was unheard-of at this time as a port. Indeed, as Burrington's complaint would indicate, the Neuse was considered subordinate in trade to the Pamlico. Brickell, too, hints at this when he says the latter river was superior to the Neuse in navigation.⁹⁸

However, as the century wore on, New Bern outstripped Beaufort, Bay River, and even Bath as a port, and drew to itself the trade these places had formerly shared. All declined in importance as New Bern grew. In 1739 the assembly passed the first of a long series of acts designed to facilitate navigation between New Bern and Ocracoke Inlet by marking the channel and setting up a system of pilotage.⁹⁹ From this may be dated the rise of New Bern as a port town. In 1746, recognizing its growing importance, the assembly established a customs office in the town in addition to the one at Beaufort or Topsail Inlet, and in time the newer office seems to have supplanted the older one.¹⁰⁰ In 1752 commissioners to mark the channel with stakes and beacons were appointed for Port Beaufort, and all three were Craven County men—John Williams, Joseph Balch, and John Clitheral, members of the county court.¹⁰¹ About this time, the name of New Bern begins to appear in the newspaper shipping columns of such a port as Charleston, so it is evident that the trade was becoming more extensive.¹⁰² Meanwhile Bay River had dropped into complete obscurity. Bath had declined to the point where, in 1759, its trade had decreased so that the duty collected was insufficient to defray the port's share of maintenance cost for aids to navigation.¹⁰³ The steady decline of Bath is shown just prior to the Revolution by the greater political importance attached to the position of collector of Port Beaufort than to collector of Port Bath.¹⁰⁴ After the Revolution, Bath ceased to grow almost entirely. The town of Beaufort also lost, or rather failed to gain, in importance. As late as 1765 there were no more than a dozen houses in the town, and

⁹⁷ John Brickell, *Natural History of North-Carolina*, p. 6.

⁹⁸ Brickell, *Natural History of North-Carolina*, p. 7.

⁹⁹ *Colonial Records*, IV, 506.

¹⁰⁰ The New Bern collector in 1746 was James Mackilwean. *Colonial Records*, VII, 499; *State Records*, XXIII, 270.

¹⁰¹ *Colonial Records*, IV, 1348; *State Records*, XXIII, 375-378. Williams and Balch were justices at the time, Clitheral a few years later.

¹⁰² "New Bern" begins to appear after 1750 in the files of the *South Carolina Gazette*.

¹⁰³ *State Records*, XXIII, 506-507.

¹⁰⁴ *Colonial Records*, VII, 535.

the scant trade consisted almost entirely of the export of naval stores.¹⁰⁵ The inhabitants were quite poor and were said to live "mostly on fish and oysters, which they have here in great plenty." Just before the Revolution, Governor Josiah Martin summed up the relationship between New Bern and its neighboring community:

It is true . . . the Town of Beaufort, is advantageously situate for commerce, but there are no persons of condition or substance in it, and the Trade that was formerly carried on through that Channel, is now derived almost entirely to this Town [New Bern], since it became the seat of Government, which has promoted its growth exceedingly, by inviting many considerable Merchants to settle in it.¹⁰⁶

As New Bern's trade swelled, it found itself one of the four chief ports of the province. Its rivals in commercial as in political matters were Wilmington, Brunswick, and Edenton, and the gentlemen of the day debated at the drop of a hat the relative merits of these places. Typical of their somewhat impressionistic observations is this dandy's letter, written soon after his arrival in Wilmington, to a well-known resident of Edenton:

I have not yet had time to take a minute Survey of this Town; But from what I Have yet seen, it has greatly the preference in my esteem to New Bern. I confess the Spot on which its Built is not so Level nor of so good a soil, But the Regularity of the Streets are Equal to those of Philadelp[hi]a. and the Buildings in General very Good. Many of Brick, two & three Stor[i]es High with double Piazas w[hi]ch. make a good appeara[nce]. But I Cannot yet find a Social Co[mpany]. who will Drink Claret & Smoke Tobacco till four in the morning. I Hope, However to make some proselytes soon.¹⁰⁷

In 1760 Dobbs pronounced Wilmington "the most opulent town in the Province."¹⁰⁸ However, New Bern seems to have ranked not far behind, for five years later the French traveler adjudged "Cape Fear, Newburn, etc.," the chief North Carolina ports, omitting to mention Edenton or Bath (certainly unjustly in Edenton's case).¹⁰⁹ Unfortunately, shipping and commercial rec-

¹⁰⁵ "Journal of a French Traveler in the Colonies, 1765," *American Historical Review*, XXVI (July, 1921), 733.

¹⁰⁶ *Colonial Records*, IX, 636-637.

¹⁰⁷ Peter du Bois to Samuel Johnston, Jr., February 8, 1757; Hayes Collection transcripts, in the archives, State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh.

¹⁰⁸ *Colonial Records*, VI, 300-301.

¹⁰⁹ "Journal of a French Traveler in the Colonies, 1765," *American Historical Review*, XXVI (July, 1921), 738.

ords of pre-Revolutionary North Carolina are extremely scarce, and such of those as exist make difficult any statistical comparison of the relative importance of these ports. During the period from about 1740 to 1755, the ship movement of Port Beaufort seems, on the basis of incomplete figures, to have averaged roughly eighty per cent of that at Port Brunswick (Wilmington and Brunswick) or Port Roanoke (Edenton).¹¹⁰ However, in subsequent years it is evident from its increase in population and from contemporary testimonials as to its growth that New Bern considerably lessened this gap and probably even surpassed its rival towns. There was a great boom in shipping in the years just before the Revolution, and New Bern, then at an expansive stage, probably benefited to an unusual degree. For example, Port Beaufort's thirty vessels entered annually in 1739 and 1740, an average of eighty entered over the period 1748-1754, became in 1764 a total of 127 vessels entered—obviously a remarkable increase.¹¹¹

But what of the men behind this trade, the merchants? The records concerning them, though meager, do nonetheless give us a glimpse into their lives. Their principal investment, of course, was shipping. The firm of Assheton & Batchelor, one of the most prosperous of its day, with a store prominently situated on Union Point, held part interests in two sloops and one schooner; owned three-quarters of the overseas trading ship *Harmony Hall*; and possessed in entirety another ship, a sloop, and a schooner.¹¹² But perhaps these extensive holdings were not entirely typical: Edward Batchelor, one of the most well-to-do New Bern merchants, was wealthy enough at his death to leave his wife and four children £1,500 each. The colonial merchant usually owned a storehouse or two and a wharf adjoining them. A lease of the period gives us an idea of this type of riverfront property. It stipulates that the lessee

. . . shall be oblig'd to Extend the Ground into the River after the manner of a wharf at least twenty foot more to the southward and thereon build a Stanch new fram'd Warehouse of sound and good Mate-

¹¹⁰ "An Abstract of the Shipping & Tonnage & number of negroes Enter'd in North Carolina at a medium of 7 years ending ye 1 Janry 1755," *Colonial Records*, V, 314. Port movement tables for the five ports, 1739-1740, British Museum, Additional MSS, vol. 33023, folio 400; transcripts in the archives of the State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh.

¹¹¹ "Imports and Exports at [Port] Beaufort 1764," *The North Carolina Magazine*; or, *Universal Intelligencer*, October 12-19, 1764.

¹¹² Will of Edward Batchelor, 1777, reprinted in J. Bryan Grimes' *North Carolina Wills and Inventories*, 30-32. Batchelor died November 27, 1777, a "Gentleman of singular Hospitality and Benevolence of Heart." *The North-Carolina Gazette*, November 28, 1777.

rials Equal at least to twenty four by sixteen and eight feet high from Joist to Top of the Sleepers.¹¹³

The smallness of this particular warehouse does not altogether give a true impression as to the amount of goods kept on hand. Frequently the merchants stocked the cellars of their own homes with their imports. The cellar of the well-to-do Samuel Cornell, for example, held at one time eighty hogsheads of rum, several pipes of wine, and two hundred hogsheads of molasses.¹¹⁴ In addition to this property, most merchants, like Cornell, owned a "ready money store," which they would leave in charge of an assistant who sold goods for them at retail prices. The principal merchants were held in high esteem in the community. A few of them even were influential in the province at large—Cornell, for example, who served as a member of the governor's council from 1770 to 1775.¹¹⁵ They were usually spoken of as men of considerable wealth, with hints as to the rapidity with which this wealth was acquired in so thriving a town. Cornell, even at forty years of age, possessed a "genteel and easy" estate.¹¹⁶ And David Barron was referred to as "a gentleman, who, in the course of a few years, with great industry and assiduity, has acquired a handsome fortune."¹¹⁷

Besides Batchelor, Barron, and Cornell, there was another prominent colonial merchant, about whose life in New Bern something can be told, thanks to the preservation of certain documents in English archives. This was John Edge Tomlinson, whose self-confessed habit of "keeping by me a Great Deal of Cash or what is called there [in North Carolina] Hard Money," earned him the nickname of "Hard Money" Tomlinson.¹¹⁸ A native of England, Tomlinson came to America in 1749 and settled in New Bern about 1760.¹¹⁹ He lived, according to the affidavits of New Bernians, "in a Great House by the Waterside." His place of business was a store opposite the church, and here he carried on

¹¹³ Lease of [Rev.] Alexander and Elizabeth Stewart to Robert Williams, [merchant], of a house then occupied by Thomas Sitgreaves, January 25, 1769; Miscellaneous Papers, 1742-1836, Craven County, archives of the State Department of Archives and History.

¹¹⁴ *Colonial Records*, VIII, 73-74.

¹¹⁵ *Colonial Records*, VIII, 226; IX, 1229. His daughter Sukey wed a Mr. Leroy of New York and became the mother of Daniel Webster's second wife. Griffith J. McRee, *Life and Correspondence of James Iredell*, I, 166.

¹¹⁶ *Colonial Records*, VIII, 167.

¹¹⁷ *The North-Carolina Gazette*, February 13 1778.

¹¹⁸ British Public Record Office, Audit Office, Class 13, Bundle 124; transcripts of the file on Tomlinson being in the archives of the State Department of Archives and History. Tomlinson's nickname served to distinguish him from a planter near New Bern of that name.

¹¹⁹ British Public Record Office, Audit Office, Class 12, Bundle 36; Class 13, Bundle 123.

a trade whose profits, he asserted with some corroboration, enabled him to live better than upon £500 per annum in England.¹²⁰ Indeed, he said he allowed his wife and children that much yearly for living expenses. Tomlinson later stated that he owned at the time of the Revolution seven slaves and 6,700 acres of land in Onslow, Dobbs, and Craven counties; household furniture, plate, carriage and horses worth £800; livestock valued at £300; cash and debts amounting to £2,220; eighteen hogsheads of tobacco worth £3,000; a schooner valued at £1,175; and unsold merchandise on hand amounting to £3,000—in all, an estate valued by himself at more than £12,600.¹²¹ Even considering the fact that this is Tomlinson's own estimate, his wealth obviously was enviable. There were doubtless other merchants who could boast of an income and trade of similar proportions. Certainly there were many others about whom we know little or nothing.¹²²

These merchants dealt with other merchants in (1) New England, (2) the West Indies, and (3) the British Isles; as well as with (4) the settlers of the North Carolina interior, and (5) the planters and turpentine-gatherers of the neighboring coast. Of these five categories, the first two were the most important.

Like other parts of colonial North Carolina, New Bern developed a profitable triangular trade with the busy provinces of the north and the tropical islands of the Caribbean. So thriving was this trade that an inbound New England skipper records how he hailed another, outbound, on his way to the bar, only to find still a third taking on cargo at the town wharves.¹²³ Shipowning merchants in Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, New York, and other provinces made New Bern a regular port of call for their vessels, where they loaded hogshead or barrel staves and heading, shingles and boards; tar, turpentine, and pitch; and corn, hogs' lard, salt pork, or hams.¹²⁴ In return, they brought to the town slaves, salt, rum, sugar, and molasses from the West Indies; as well as their own products—cheese, for example—and

¹²⁰ British Public Record Office, Audit Office, Class 12, Volume 103, Folio 9; Class 13, Bundle 124.

¹²¹ British Public Record Office, Audit Office, Class 13, Bundle 123.

¹²² Crittenden gives a partial list including Robert Williams, James and Bernard Parkison, Robert Evans, Richard Ellis, James Green, William Thompson, McLin & Burroughs, Thomas Pyott, Alexander McAuslan, and others. C. C. Crittenden, *The Commerce of North Carolina, 1763-1789*, p. 97.

¹²³ William English to A. and A. Lopez, March 16, 1770, *Commerce of Rhode Island 1726-1800*, I, 318.

¹²⁴ *Commerce of Rhode Island*, I, 296, 393, 413-414.

some manufactured goods received in their own bottoms from Europe.¹²⁵ North Carolina having no merchant fleet of a size to challenge them, the northern merchants more or less dominated this trade. Many of the New Bern merchants themselves were northerners. Samuel Cornell, for example, was a New Yorker.¹²⁶ Occasionally a New Bern firm consisted of a partner living in the town and another in a northern city—notably the firm of Assheton & Batchelor, Thomas Assheton being a resident of Philadelphia.¹²⁷ The place names that appear in the advertisements of New Bern merchants—"Rhode Island" cheese, "Philadelphia" or "New York" rum or beer, and "Newtown" (Pennsylvania?) apples—testify to the products sold by northern merchants to the tidewater North Carolinians, and sold, one may be sure, at their own price.¹²⁸ One New Bern merchant, selling "London-made nails" and other articles manufactured abroad and obviously imported by way of the north, advertised that his goods were being offered "at very near New-York price."¹²⁹ This premium which went into the pockets of merchants elsewhere was the price New Bernians paid for not being able to satisfy completely, and directly from Europe, their demand for such necessary articles.¹³⁰

Nevertheless, there was an overseas trade directly from New Bern, though it was subordinate to the New England-West Indies business and seems to have been restricted to the ports of the United Kingdom entirely. In 1769 the Welsh merchant John Owens was advertising "a fresh assortment of Goods" just imported from London in the brig *Peggy* "at Robert Williams's ready money store."¹³¹ Williams and Samuel Cornell also imported goods from England, advertising on one occasion shipments from Bristol.¹³² William Thompson offered Irish linens and other textiles "imported from Europe," but it is not certain

¹²⁵ *Commerce of Rhode Island*, I, 313, 318, 413-414. For example, the *St. Andrew* "from London, but last from Boston," had imported in 1759 a quantity of goods which a merchant was offering at Beaufort. *The North-Carolina Gazette*, October 18, 1759.

¹²⁶ *Colonial Records*, VIII, 167.

¹²⁷ Will of Edward Batchelor, J. Bryan Grimes, *North Carolina Wills and Inventories*, 30-32.

¹²⁸ *The North-Carolina Magazine; or, Universal Intelligencer*, December 21-28, 1764; January 4-11, 1765. *The North-Carolina Gazette*, February 24, 1775.

¹²⁹ Advertisement of Hutcheson Crozier, *The North-Carolina Magazine; or, Universal Intelligencer*, December 21-28, 1764.

¹³⁰ In 1736, Burrington was complaining that North Carolinians lost "the value of half their goods by trading with the people of Virginia and New England" because they were forced to "buy and sell at the second hand." *Colonial Records*, IV, 171-172.

¹³¹ *The North-Carolina Gazette*, November 10, 1769.

¹³² *The North-Carolina Magazine; or, Universal Intelligencer*, October 19-26, 1764.

that he brought these over in his own vessel.¹³³ Considering the size of the vessels, they made good time over the rough Atlantic. A voyage from Bristol required about seven weeks, one from London about eight.¹³⁴ And in the holds of these little merchantmen were stowed an amazing variorum of wares. Cornell's schooner *Sally & Betsey*, for example, brought in:—textiles; felt, castor, and beaver hats; buttons, thread, needles, pins; writing paper; pewter ware, knives, locks, axes; carpenter's, shoemaker's, and cooper's tools; bridles and other sadlery; gunpowder, lead, and shot; kitchen utensils, spices; ivory combs; jugs and glassware; cordage and sailmaker's twine; razors; slates and pencils; spelling books, primers, psalters, Bibles; and Gloucester cheese and bottled beer.¹³⁵ All sorts of metal objects—snuffboxes, buckles, spurs, and brass warming pans—were offered for sale by the colonial merchant at his bazaar-like store, and these, whether or not they were specified as such, were most always imported articles, made in England.¹³⁶ The assortment of stock was curiously varied, ranging from patent medicines to "onions by the bunch." One merchant, in 1764, offered this odd mixture for sale:—one hundred-and-six-gallon still with pewter worm; two barrels of tallow; some barrels of soft soap; Madeira wine; "and a plate handle Sword, with a belt."¹³⁷ The manifest of Edward Batchelor's ship *Harmony Hall*, long in the overseas trade, would read like a roll call of useful household and ship-board articles. Included in one cargo were:—superfine flour, ship bread, white biscuit in kegs, loaf and muscovado sugar, cordials, cheese, butter in kegs, silver watches, silk handkerchiefs, men's silk hose, cravats, women's silk mitts, leather gloves, and "a few sets" of Leland's *History of Ireland*.¹³⁸ It also brought in bar iron, a most essential import to a place where metal was not naturally available to shoe beasts of burden and repair agricultural implements.

Finally, there was the trade with the interior and with the inhabitants of the surrounding countryside. Much of this trade

¹³³ *The North-Carolina Magazine; or, Universal Intelligencer*, December 21-28, 1764.

¹³⁴ *The North-Carolina Magazine; or, Universal Intelligencer*, October 19-26, 1764; *The North-Carolina Gazette*, July 14, 1775.

¹³⁵ *The North-Carolina Magazine; or, Universal Intelligencer*, October 19-26, 1764.

¹³⁶ *The North-Carolina Magazine; or, Universal Intelligencer*, December 21-28, 1764. (Advertisement of Hutcheson Crozier.)

¹³⁷ *The North-Carolina Magazine; or, Universal Intelligencer*, December 21-28, 1764. (Advertisement of Bernard Parkison.)

¹³⁸ *The North-Carolina Gazette*, February 24, 1775.

was diverted by the backwoods' settlers' practice of shipping their products to the Virginia river cities or to Charleston, "where they get a better price than here [New Bern] or in any other porte in the province."¹³⁹ Nevertheless, a traveler crossing the Neuse by ferry might see at one time several flatboats coming downstream laden with pitch, tar, corn, shingles, or other products. Neither the Neuse nor the Trent was navigable above the town for anything of much greater draft than these flatboats or piraguas—much to New Bern's advantage, said the French traveler, "as all the trade is thereby Caryed on in the place."¹⁴⁰ Wagon trains, too, brought down products from the interior. The industrious Moravians, for example, loaded up their carts with quantities of butter and such articles of their own making as leather breeches, and sent them rolling toward New Bern and other port towns. Sometimes they started for Cross Creek (later Fayetteville), but went on to New Bern in hopes of a better price; or, again, they might start for New Bern but, hearing business there was dull, proceed on to Wilmington to sell their wares.¹⁴¹ In return for their products, the Moravians received goods for their stores and salt for curing meat and making butter.¹⁴² In addition to butter and other home-made articles, the Moravians probably brought down some of the commodities which New Bern merchants, in their advertisements, were offering to buy. These products included salt pork or hams, corn, deer—or fur skins, beeswax, myrtle wax, and snakeroot.¹⁴³ Naval stores, however, were the chief commodities purchased by merchants, and quantities of these were bought from the tar-burners and turpentine-gatherers of Craven, Carteret, Beaufort, and other near-by counties. Other commodities exported through New Bern and probably bought in by the merchants included beef, livestock, flour, tallow, tanned leather, rice, and (just before the Revolution) a little indigo.¹⁴⁴ Barter was quite the usual thing, and commodi-

¹³⁹ "Journal of a French Traveler in the Colonies, 1765," *American Historical Review*, XXVI (July, 1921), 735.

¹⁴⁰ "Journal of a French Traveler in the Colonies, 1765," *American Historical Review*, XXVI (July, 1921), 735.

¹⁴¹ Adelaide L. Fries, editor, *Records of the Moravians in North Carolina* (Raleigh, 1925), II, 820; IV, 1579. Later they sent down tobacco to New Bern.

¹⁴² Adelaide L. Fries, editor, *Records of the Moravians in North Carolina*, III, 1075, 1080, 1088.

¹⁴³ *The North-Carolina Magazine; or, Universal Intelligencer*, December 21-28, 1764. The merchant Robert Evans advertised in this issue offering to purchase such commodities "at the Height of the Market."

¹⁴⁴ "Imports and Exports at [Port] Beaufort 1764," *The North-Carolina Magazine; or, Universal Intelligencer*, October 12-19, 1764. *Colonial Records*, IX, 281.

ties were almost coin of the realm. So acceptable were they that even such a valuable and costly item as freshly imported African slaves were offered to the planters "for Cash or Country Produce."¹⁴⁵

New Bern's waterfront must have presented a picturesque appearance at this period. The principal commercial street was Craven, at the foot of which the first county wharf was completed in 1775.¹⁴⁶ Here and at other wharves along the Trent, vessels drawing as much as nine feet could dock, while those up to 200 tons burdens could approach the town and lie at anchor in the channel.¹⁴⁷ About Craven Street clustered many of the merchants' stores, where one could buy anything from a pound of tea to a passage to Barbados. So busy was this busy little port that sometimes there was no store vacant in which an incoming shipmaster might dispose of his cargo. One skipper, with a load of salt on his hands, wrote that he and his crew had searched for a place of business without success, "so," he says, "we was ableag'd to make a Store of the Sloop."¹⁴⁸ Into this sea-going emporium flocked the planters of Craven to buy of this much-needed commodity. On this street, too, were in all probability many of the tradesmen's shops. A variety of craftsmen and artisans were in New Bern at this time, judging from the apprenticeships that were legalized by the county court. In addition to the ordinary trades of cordwainer, cooper, and house carpenter, there is mention in the court minutes of a tailor, weaver, skinner and glover, sadler, tanner and currier, and turner.¹⁴⁹ In the decade prior to the Revolution, there is mention of a cabinet-maker, baker, hatter, barber, and perukier. The coming to New Bern of such skilled tradesmen testifies to the broadening of everyday comforts and conveniences and to the development of these crafts from a domestic to a professional status. "White-collar" ap-

¹⁴⁵ *The North-Carolina Gazette*, February 24, 1775. There were few large slave-holders in Craven. In 1769, out of 1,238 white taxables, only fifteen owned as many as fifteen slaves. Those owning as many as two dozen could be counted on the fingers of one hand. One Jacob Mitchell was the largest slave-holder, with fifty-nine blacks. "List of taxables for 1769," *Miscellaneous Papers, 1742-1836*, Craven County, in archives of the State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh.

¹⁴⁶ Craven Court Minutes, June, 1775. "New county wharf" in 1826 was at the foot of Middle Street. Craven Court Minutes, August, 1826.

¹⁴⁷ Lida Tunstall Rodman, editor, "Journal of a Tour to North Carolina by William Attmore, 1787," *James Sprunt Historical Publications*, XVII (1922), 19. "Journal of A French Traveler in the Colonies, 1765," *American Historical Review*, XXVI (July, 1921), 735.

¹⁴⁸ Waters Hannars to Aaron Lopez, March 6, 1770, *Commerce of Rhode Island 1726-1800*, p. 313.

¹⁴⁹ Prior to the Revolution, there is only one mention of the bricklayer's trade!

prenticeships, too, begin to be evident about this time. In 1774 Samuel Cornell undertook to train a lad in the "art of a Merchant," and a year later Christopher Neale was to teach a youngster "the Duty of a Clerk."¹⁵⁰ About the business section clung the smell of oakum and the flavor of seafaring life, and in the streets walked the brown men with tarry pigtails who, judging from this quaint newspaper item, all too often met watery deaths, mostly at sea but sometimes even in port:

NEWBERN, August 24.

A few Days since, as two Sailors were going on Shore with their Boat, being very much in Liquor, one of them fell overboard; and the other not being able to help him, he was drowned, and went out of the World drunk.—A Warning to such Wretches who live as if they were to perish with the Brutes!¹⁵¹

A word remains to be said about the early industries of Craven County. The most important were lumber and naval stores. The exports of naval stores alone in 1764 were worth far in excess of £20,000.¹⁵² The French traveler wrote that "great quantities of tarr and pitch [were] raised in this part of the Country; indeed more than in any other part of America."¹⁵³ By "this part of the country" did he mean the section around New Bern or the province as a whole? Whatever his intent, the statement indicates the importance of naval stores. As for the lumber industry, sawmills were not unknown even in the earliest days. Burrington remarked that a number of these had been erected, by 1733, "in the South Parts" of the province, referring chiefly to Cape Fear.¹⁵⁴ Two years later Colonel William Wilson was building a sawmill on a branch of Brice's Creek.¹⁵⁵ By 1765 these mills dotted the countryside. Wherever, says the French traveler, there was a stream that could be dammed up to as much as a five-foot depth, there was usually a little mill, busily cutting the timberlands into boards, scantling, heading, staves, shingles, and other products of the forests.¹⁵⁶ The water wheel was

¹⁵⁰ Craven Court Minutes, September, 1774; March, 1775.

¹⁵¹ *The North-Carolina Magazine; or, Universal Intelligencer*, August 24-31, 1764.

¹⁵² "Imports and Exports at [Port] Beaufort 1764" and "Prices Current in Newbern," *The North-Carolina Magazine; or, Universal Intelligencer*, October 12-19, 1764.

¹⁵³ "Journal of a French Traveler in the Colonies, 1765," *American Historical Review*, XXVI (July, 1921), 733.

¹⁵⁴ *Colonial Records*, III, 432.

¹⁵⁵ *Colonial Records*, IV, 61.

¹⁵⁶ "Journal of a French Traveler in the Colonies, 1765," *American Historical Review*, XXVI (July, 1921), 735.

usually undershot, and quite small, being only about three and a half feet in diameter. More often than not there was a "tub mill" near by for grinding corn; indeed the combination of grist mill and sawmill was almost the rule, since the planters depended so much on this grain, rather than on wheat, for food. Millwrights were greatly in demand, but apprenticeships in this trade are all too rare in the minutes of the county court. In 1764 James Davis, who owned a sawmill on Slocumb's Creek, advertised for someone who could tend it and also for a millwright who would undertake the building of another one and "making a tumbling Dam over a very rapid Stream."¹⁵⁷ There were a number of these mills on the upper Trent, as if in continuance of the tradition of the Palatine-born colonists, who erected some of the county's earliest water-powered machinery in their enterprising urge to make the most of the new world's resources.¹⁵⁸

There were other industries but they were of minor importance. Shad, drum, and such fish were caught in the rivers and sounds, but since so little apparently was exported, most of this fishing industry must have been devoted to the home market.¹⁵⁹ There was also a small amount of weaving done, but this, too, was mostly a "home" industry.¹⁶⁰ Shipbuilding was not unknown on the Neuse and Pamlico and perhaps at Beaufort, but it did not become important until during and after the Revolution.¹⁶¹ Most of the ship carpentry seems to have gone into the overhaul and repair of vessels, for the cost in labor and materials was unusually high.¹⁶² Efforts made to promote or subsidize industry were not successful. In 1769 a bill was introduced in the assembly to encourage Maryland investors in constructing an "Iron Manufactory" on the Trent thirty miles above the town. Though it was passed by the lower house, the legislation died in the council, and before the year was out the project was aban-

¹⁵⁷ *The North-Carolina Magazine; or, Universal Intelligencer*, July 20-27, 1764. A branch of Slocumb's Creek is referred to as Mill Creek as early as 1716, Land Grant Records, II, 343.

¹⁵⁸ See Part Two, "The Founding of New Bern," *The North Carolina Historical Review*, XXII (April, 1945), 171. In 1738, Johan Martin Franck and John Jacob Scheibe were preparing to erect mills on the upper Trent. Craven Court Minutes, June, 1738. Compare *Colonial Records*, VIII, 10.

¹⁵⁹ "Journal of a French Traveler in the Colonies, 1765," *American Historical Review*, XXVI (July, 1921), 735.

¹⁶⁰ The trade of a weaver is mentioned in the court minutes, but it is rare. Compare *Colonial Records*, VII, 429-430.

¹⁶¹ "Journal of a French Traveler in the Colonies, 1765," *American Historical Review*, XXVI (July, 1921), 736.

¹⁶² Sailcloth was especially costly. *Commerce of Rhode Island 1726-1800*, I, 401.

done.¹⁶³ A few years later, "a manufactory of pot and pearl ashes" was being established in New Bern under the direction of a New York man, but this, too, soon faded out, though it had the benefit, as the Maryland promoters had not, of some encouragement from the assembly.¹⁶⁴ However, New Bern could claim a goodly share of such industry as had been established in the province. There were two tanyards, owned by Dr. Thomas Haslen and Colonel Joseph Leech, and a rum distillery, owned by Samuel Cornell, in the town at a time when there were not more than five or six of the former and perhaps two of the latter in the whole province.¹⁶⁵ There were about half a dozen hatters in North Carolina, and at least one was manufacturing his wares in New Bern.¹⁶⁶ There was also a brickyard, though it probably operated only intermittently.¹⁶⁷ This was at Lawson's Creek just off what is now New South Front Street. As late as 1854, the brickyard, which is now quite "forgotten," was a landmark of the area. A deed of that year refers to certain lots on Norwood and Crooked streets as being "near [the] old Brickyard."¹⁶⁸ A rather deep depression may be seen today where New South Front Street joins Pembroke Road, and this undoubtedly was the place where brick-clay was mined for such early structures as Christ Church.

Along with commercial prosperity, New Bern again acquired political preëminence. The majority of assemblymen grew impatient with meeting in so out of the way a town as Wilmington, and early in 1761 protested to the governor that the sessions should be held in a more central part of the province.¹⁶⁹ Dobbs, in reply, pointed to the resolution of 1756 condemning New Bern as unhealthy and unfit to be the capital.¹⁷⁰ A year later the assembly repeated its protest and prepared an address to the crown, which was read out by Alexander Elmsley, member from New Bern, asking that his town be fixed as the seat of government and that the act of 1758 be repealed, since Tower Hill had

¹⁶³ *Colonial Records*, VIII, 10, 154, 496.

¹⁶⁴ *Colonial Records*, IX, 270, 443; *State Records*, XXIII, 923-924.

¹⁶⁵ *Colonial Records*, VII, 429-430; VIII, 74-75.

¹⁶⁶ The first apprenticeship to a hatter occurs in 1772 in the court minutes.

¹⁶⁷ This brickyard is shown on the "Plan of the Town of Newbern / in Craven County / North Carolina / . . . Survey'd and Drawn in May 1769 by C. J. Sauthier." British Museum, King's Maps, CXXII-60. Photocopy in Library of Congress.

¹⁶⁸ Craven County Deeds, LXII, 107-108.

¹⁶⁹ *Colonial Records*, VI, 666-667.

¹⁷⁰ *Colonial Records*, VI, 669.

proved so difficult of access and no inhabitants had settled there.¹⁷¹ The governor and Cape Fear members of the council turned a deaf ear to all these remonstrances, and refused to join in the assembly's petition. In December, 1762, another effort was made to obtain agreement between the two houses on the question of a capital, and this met with success, though by a narrow margin. A similar petition was approved by the assembly—and carried in council by a four-three vote, the presiding officer casting the deciding ballot.¹⁷² Even then the Cape Fear councilmen did not cease their fight, but drafted a lengthy dissent calling special attention to the narrow margin in the upper house and hinting that the petition was approved in the lower house "we suppose . . . but by a small Majority."¹⁷³ Meanwhile, the Tower Hill proposal had become involved in a procedural technicality involving the king's prerogative and the potentially scandalous fact that Dobbs was the owner of the land which the assembly was to have bought.¹⁷⁴ At any rate, the idea died a natural death. Dobbs was compensated for his purchase, and the assembly majority turned their full effort toward making New Bern the capital. But to the bitter end the governor opposed this, "having been thrice at death's door," he wrote, "from its low stagnated situation & bad water."¹⁷⁵

The rivalry of New Bern and Wilmington reached a remarkable intensity at this period. The trade of the former was threatening the position of "the most opulent town in the Province" to such an extent that, a few years later, Josiah Quincy, Jr., noted in his travel diary:

It is made a question which carries on the most trade, whether Edenton, New Bern, Wilmington, or Brunswick. It seems to be one of the two first.¹⁷⁶

Furthermore, New Bern had behind its claims to being the "first town" of North Carolina a quarter-century of being the capital *de facto* if not *de jure*. Between 1737, when the assembly first broke its habit of meeting at Edenton, and 1765, when Dobbs's administration was terminated by his death, there were

¹⁷¹ *Colonial Records*, VI, 832, 834-835.

¹⁷² *Colonial Records*, VI, 859-860.

¹⁷³ *Colonial Records*, VI, 878-879, 968.

¹⁷⁴ *Colonial Records*, VI, xxlii-xxv (prefatory notes).

¹⁷⁵ *Colonial Records*, VI, 967.

¹⁷⁶ *Colonial Records*, IX, 612.

forty-six sessions of the assembly, and of these twenty-nine were held in New Bern as against only ten in Wilmington, four in Edenton, and three in Bath. Nevertheless, Wilmington was a powerful and alert rival. In October, 1764, arrived at Brunswick one William Tryon, a young officer who had been appointed lieutenant governor to allow the feeble Dobbs to return to England.¹⁷⁷ Even before he set foot on Carolina soil, the citizens of Wilmington began to bid for his residence—and just as swiftly did the New Bernians act to outbid them, as this fiery little leader in James Davis's newspaper testifies:

The good People of Wilmington, ever intent on the Good of the Province, and always foremost in every Scheme for its Welfare and internal Quietude . . . [have] engaged a large House in Wilmington for the Reception and Accommodation of the Governor on his Arrival in the Province, upon a Certainty that he will settle among them there. But the People of Newbern, having, for their Disobedience, drank largely of the Cup of Affliction, and intirely depending on the Goodness of their Cause, have engaged a large Genteel House in Newbern, for the Governor's Residence; upon a Supposition he will settle rather in the Centre of the Province, than at Cape-Fear, a place within Fifty Miles of the South Boundary of a Province almost 300 Miles wide, and the Passage to it gloomy and dismal, through hot parching Sands, enliven'd now and then with a few Wire-Grass Ridges, and Ponds of stagnant Water: and where, on your arrival, not as *Dr Watts*¹⁷⁸ says:

*Sweet fields, beyond the swelling Flood,
Stand drest in living Green;
So to the Jews old Canaan stood,
While Jordan roll'd between,*

But as the Passage, so the Entrance, dismal;—a Turkey 15 s. a Fowl 2s. 8d. a Goose 10s. Butter 2s. 8d. and so *pro Rata* for every Thing else. —Terrible Horribility! ¹⁷⁹

Tryon's friends lost no time in letting it be known that in accordance with the assembly's wishes, he intended to use his influence to establish the capital at New Bern. Then indeed did the zealous Davis exult:

Mourn, Mourn ye *Wilmingtonians*, and put on Sack cloth and Ashes, for the Measure of thy Good Things is full, and the evil Day is coming

¹⁷⁷ *Colonial Records*, VI, 1045, 1049.

¹⁷⁸ Isaac Watts (1674-1748) was, with Charles Wesley, foremost among the hymn-writers of his time.

¹⁷⁹ *The North-Carolina Magazine; or, Universal Intelligencer*, August 10-17, 1764.

upon thee! Mr. TRYAN, if we have Skill in Augury, is coming to live in PEACE among us, and deliver us from unleavened Bread; which nothing but his RESIDENCE on the GRASSY PLAINS can restore and accomplish.¹⁸⁰

Thus did the new Canaan of the "grassy plains" await in high hopes the coming of its benefactor-to-be. Once arrived, Tryon made no secret of his plans, judging from Lord Adam Gordon's comment in his journal about New Bern, which he wrote after he had visited and talked with the new lieutenant governor.¹⁸¹ Between these plans and their fulfillment stood only the ancient Governor Dobbs, and death soon was to remove him from the trials of a fever-ridden tidewater climate.

¹⁸⁰ *The North-Carolina Magazine; or, Universal Intelligencer*, September 28-October 5, 1764.

¹⁸¹ See the quotation at the beginning of this part. Newton D. Mereness, editor, *Travels in the American Colonies* (New York, 1916) contains Gordon's journal of 1764-1765, p. 401. *Colonial Records*, VI, 1320. Compare also the "Journal of a French Traveler in the Colonies, 1765," *American Historical Review*, XXVI (July, 1921), 738.

LIFE OF ALFRED MORDECAI IN MEXICO IN 1865-1866
AS TOLD IN HIS LETTERS TO HIS FAMILY

Edited by JAMES A. PADGETT

PART IV

IMPERIAL MEXICAN RAILWAY.

Chief Engineer's Office. Miss Laura Mordecai

Mexico, Febry 27th 1866.

M^o. 18.

My dear daughter

Your mother must allow me to address this N^o to you, to thank you for your nice letter which accompanied hers by the last steamer, & for the kind evidences of affection which it contains— I am very glad to hear that your school labors are more remunerative this year; but I hope very much that you will be able to discontinue them another year— To enable you & yr sisters to do so & to have some enjoyment, at least of ease, in your young lives is the greatest inducement for me to retain my present employment, & I trust that nothing may occur to interrupt it— I am pleased to hear that Gussie & Gratz are doing well at their schools, but I should like to have some particulars as to what they are studying, &c— Tell Gratz not to be too easily discouraged about Drawing: None of my father's family had any *talent* for it, but by dint of painstaking I managed to acquit myself pretty well at the Mily. acady., especially in instrumental drawing, which altho' not the most agreeable branch, is perhaps the most useful in common life— I hope however that Gratz does not *neglect French*, as it would be a pity for him to lose what he has acquired in it— Augustus will be interested in the map of our Railway which I send by this steamer, to be posted in N.York, together with a photograph of the Metlac bridge (Puente Maximiliano) that is to be. Let M^r Levis show them to M^r Leuffer— I hoped to have a large drawing of the bridge for M^r L. but have been unable to obtain it yet— The photograph was made from a painting which M^r Lloyd had made here, & I suppose all but the iron work is from fancy, at least as regards the details of the view— The monogram on the back is that of the amateur photographer, Pepe being the abbreviation of *Joseph*: Joesphine would be called Pepita here. I sent a copy of one of the groups you have to Sister E., & Rutson Maury was attracted by Miss Maury's photograph, taking it for the Empress because he had been told that the Empress was like his niece Sarah; I do not see the resemblance between Miss Mary & Sarah Maury, any more than that to M^{rs} Riggs— Miss M. has a very good face, but she is dark, as they nearly all are— I hope you

will have an opportunity of seeing her & Miss Fanny, as they leave here on the 2nd March, to take the steamer for N.Y. & expect to stop in Phil^a on their way to Washⁿ— M^{rs} T. left here a week ago, in a wagon, with the Col. & Charles, going on the line of railway. I had a telegram from the Col. this morning, from San Andres Chalchicomula, which you will find on your map of the road— The ladies will be accompanied to N.Y. by some gentlemen that came out lately on invitation of the Emperor, I believe. The Austrian Consul in N. Y. & M^r Hurlbut⁹⁷ one of the editors of the N.Y. "World": a man that knows every body ever where— He was kept in prison in Rich^d a long time, at the beginning of the war, on suspicion of being a spy— He is going to write his impressions & observations during his very brief stay here, & you had better look out for them; they will not be in the World probably, but in a little book. His remarks will perhaps be unfavorable, altho' he has been much fêted here by some of the principal people— He befriended Col. T. in N.Y. & I have met him out there. M^{rs} McLain [*sic*] gave him a pic-nic (with her husband & two others only) under the Montezuma Cypresses at Chapultepec, last Sunday, which he said was the pleasantest day he had spent in Mexico; They came over afterwards to Tacubaya, where I had gone, as usual; to breakfast for the last time with the travelers. The sun is getting pretty hot now, but the nights & the shade are cool and pleasant, & the trees & flowers are coming forward rapidly; this is the real summer season now approaching. M^r Oropesa sent me the nice mats which M^{rs} Stevens left at V. C.— one of them is under my candlestick on my night table by the bedside, & the others on the washstand, where they are quite an improvement to my room.

March 2nd — I went yesterday afternoon to Tacubaya to take leave of the young ladies, & I staid there until this morning to take care of the house & the children whilst all the family came to town to dine & stay as late as possible with the travelers who went off at 3 o'clk this morning, with M^r Hurlbut & two Austrian soldiers as escort— With them & their mother many of the charms of the Casa Amarilla have departed, & the two married ladies will have a lonesome time of it, with only one

⁹⁷ William Henry Hurlbut was born in Charleston, South Carolina, on July 3, 1827, and died in Italy on September 4, 1895. He graduated at Harvard University and at its Divinity School; studied abroad; preached for a few years in the Unitarian Church; entered Harvard Law School; in 1855 became a writer for *Putnam's Magazine* and the *Albion*; joined the staff of the *New York Times* in 1857; and while visiting the South in 1861 was arrested by a vigilance committee in Atlanta, Georgia, and was imprisoned for a time. He was then released, but was refused a passport except on conditions with which he would not comply. He escaped in August, 1862, through the Confederate lines and eventually reached Washington; became connected with the *New York World* in 1862; purchased the *Commercial Advertiser* in 1864, intending to publish it as a free-trade paper; but he and his associates failed to agree so in 1867 the paper was sold to Thurlow Weed. Hurlbut went to Mexico in 1866; was invited to the capital by Maximilian, where he spent some time; represented the *New York World* at the World's Fair in Paris in 1867, and the Centenary Festival at St. Peter's at Rome; was taken to Santo Domingo with the United States commission in 1871; and then published the most complete history of the island in any language. He was editor in chief of the *World* from 1876 to 1883. He went to Europe in 1883, where he continued to reside most of the time, writing for British and American magazines and publishing books. *Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, III, 328.

husband & he in town most of the day— There is nothing new or interesting to fill my sheet with; so I will bid you good bye here with my love & blessing for you & your dear sisters & brothers—

Yr affte father A M—

IMPERIAL MEXICAN RAILWAY.

Mexico, Feby 14th 1866.

Ash Wednesday,

Chief Engineer's office.

N^o.

My dear Sister

I am not very bright to-day, for I was at a *masked ball* at the opera until nearly 3 o'clk this morning, winding up the carnival; but as it is a leisure day & near mail day for the steamer, I shall devote part of it to you— It is only about three days past that the festivities of the carnival have excited much attention; chiefly on Sunday & yesterday, when the whole population crowded the principal streets, & the Paseo (public drive) was thronged with equipages, & the Toras (Bull fights) in full blast— I went with a party of gentlemen to one of the better, to gratify the curiosity of a *lady*; but it was rather a dull affair— still the lady was amused to see the manner of the thing & the large crowd which filled the amphitheatre— Our street was a sort of centre of display in the evening, on account of the theatres near us— The one opposite to our house was brilliantly illuminated with colored lamps & chinee [sic] lanterns & the latter were suspended in rows on cords across the street— The illumination was further aided by the little blazing fires kept up by the numerous venders of fruits & drinks along the curb stones— A party of us, with our lady, took a box at the other theatre, the opera, to see the humors of the market ball— The pit & stage floored over furnished a large ball room, with the orchestra at the end of the stage, & the usual grotesque exhibitions of fancy dresses, masks & dominoes were displayed, but with no great spirit; there were many more gentlemen in plain dress than in costume among the dancers— One of the gentlemen who spent part of the evening in our box was Mr Hurlbut whom you had in prison in Rich^d about 6 months, at the beginning of the War— He is now one of the editors of the "World" of N. Y. & has come out here with the Austrian Consul for N.Y. who was sent for, I believe, by the Emperor; I don't know what for— He is amusing because he knows ever body, every where, & talks well. I showed Maury the newspaper scrip you sent me about Maximilian & he says it is true what is said about schools, &c— I have no doubt that he is doing all that can be done by means of decrees &c; but I have great doubts about his measures being carried out by his ministers & Maury is more hopeful about emigration, especially from U.S. in consequence of the condition of

things in the south, present & prospective— He was to go on a visit to his family in England, but could not get off by the French steamer which sailed yesterday; he will go by the English of the 1st of March— One cause of his detention was to be enabled to answer a letter from Dr Hawkes,⁹⁸ enquiring how a Missionary Bishop or Episcopal Minister would be received here— Maury saw the Emp^r. & was able, I believe, to give the Dr a satisfactory reply to most of his questions; how the *support* of such a minister could be provided for I do not know— Mrs Talcott & her two unmarried daughters will go to England by way of N.Y. in the steamer of 8th March; not having been able to get off either by the French steamer— I shall send by them a sketch⁹⁹ of our road which will show you the position of Orizava & other places; I cannot imagine what kind of map of Mexico you can have that does not show the position of that important town, & the snow capped mountains of the same name near it— Chas. Talcott is not strong yet, but he is going next week down the road with his father. I wish very much that Edmund had come out; he could be of real service to the Col.; but he had better not bring his baby. Mrs Charles had a curious fright a few nights ago— Her wet nurse went out with the baby about 5 o'clock in the afternoon & never made her appearance again— With the assistance of the police the baby was found early next morning in the hands of the nurse's sister— The nurse had perhaps got tipsy or was seduced away by some man, or both— Mrs Chas. has taken another Mex. woman over whom she will keep a better watch, no doubt— Imagine the night she passed.

Since the beginning of this month I have been taking my meals with the McLains [*sic*] & Mr Blake,¹⁰⁰ so we have a nice little mess, we live plainly & economically & I hope it will not cost me more than at my restaurant; but cannot be sure, as it is difficult for a lady with a very imperfect knowledge of the language & the people to manage the house-keeping Dept: as a general rule it is considered that the Mexicans are thieves & liars, & the system here gives such characters great facilities for the exercise of their propensities— There is no such thing as "keeping fresh beef, milk & butter" at all— butter there is none, or so little &

⁹⁸ He refers to Doctor Francis Lister Hawks or his brother Cicero Stephens Hawks. They were both born in New Bern, North Carolina, the former on June 10, 1798, the latter on May 26, 1812. They both graduated from the University of North Carolina, studied law but left it for the ministry. The former practiced law with noted success, served in the legislature, and was North Carolina Supreme Court Clerk. He held various positions in the church such as rector in many places like Philadelphia, Connecticut, New York, and New Orleans; was historiographer for the church and conservator of its documents; declined to become bishop in Louisiana, Arkansas, and Florida, in Mississippi, and in Rhode Island; was the first president of the University of Louisiana; received the degrees of Doctor of Divinity and Doctor of Laws from the University of North Carolina. His brother also held many rectorships; was bishop in Missouri; and was a noted civic worker. They were both outstanding preachers and writers. *Appletons' Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, III, 121-122.

⁹⁹ The sketch or chart was a blank map with the railroad marked on it in red ink, and many of the distances and elevations given as well as other notes written in ink.

¹⁰⁰ William Phipps Blake (June 21, 1825-May 22, 1910) was an outstanding geologist and mining engineer. After receiving an excellent education he built up a reputation as a mining engineer and lecturer; was a mining engineer in Japan from 1861 to 1863; explored Alaska; was mineralogist of California; was professor of mineralogy and geology in California College; became commissioner for California to the Paris Exposition in 1867; and in 1871 was chairman of the scientific corps of the United States to Santo Domingo. He also held many other offices of profit and trust. *Dictionary of American Biography*, II, 345-346.

so dear that very few persons use it; nor is it required, for breakfast & dinner are very much alike, meat, vegetables, fruit & coffee— & lard is used for cooking & used with great skill, so as not to be offensive— Meat & vegetables are procured in the market or at shops which abound all over the city, as do bakers shops which furnish all the bread; hot bread or cakes being almost unknown. The common people eat chiefly *Tortillas*, thin cakes made of corn soaked in lime water & mashed on a stone in a peculiar way, just as their ancestors did before the conquest— I used to think in travelling that they were pretty good— especially when I could get no other bread— The way M^{rs} M^eL., (& housekeepers generally,) manages is to give the cook in the evening as much money as she wishes to spend for meals the next day & tell her what to get, including *charcoal* to cook with— usually a clean sweep is made every day, or any little left over & not required for the servt is put away in a closet— nothing need be kept in the house except coffee, sugar &c, which are usually purchased in small quantities— Our coffee is made on the table with a peculiar french coffee pot & a spirit lamp— tea could be made in the same way, but we never have it. We have but one servant, who is a very good cook & always delighted to be permitted to exercise her talent— she has \$ 7 a month & 12½ cts a day (rations) for her breakfast, getting her dinner from our table— she has the native talent for making dulces (every day) (preserves) & makes excellent chocolate, when required— Milk is bought every morning “al pié de la vaca” “at the cow’s foot:” that is to say, the cows are brought in to some open square & the customer sees the milk drawn— at other times it can be bought from shops. Eggs, a great resource here, are always to be had fresh at 2 cents a piece— We had a nice little supper last night, about 10½, before going to the ball— Wild ducks, chicken salad made with lettuce, which is always in season, fruit & punch— The ducks cost 12½ to 37½ cts a piece according to size; they are abundant in the Lakes at this season; beef 18 cts a pound— white sugar 12½ to 15 cts—

I cannot tell you what a business man could do here— There are Confederates very anxious to do something, but it is difficult without capital— Many of them are on the Railroad either as Engers or contractors— One who has no employment yet is young Meire late of the Marine corps, who married a daughter of Admiral Buchanan—¹⁰¹ She is not

¹⁰¹ Franklin Buchanan was born in Baltimore, Maryland, on September 17, 1800; was appointed to the Navy in 1815; became a lieutenant in January, 1825 and master commander in 1841; organized the Naval Academy at Annapolis in 1845; served as the first superintendent until 1847; helped capture Vera Cruz in the Mexican War; was with Perry on his trip to Japan in 1853; became captain in 1855; and was made commander of the Washington Navy Yards in 1859. Thinking that Maryland was about to secede, he resigned on April 22, 1861, but when he found that Maryland would remain in the Union he withdrew his letter, but Welles would not restore him. On account of this he enlisted in the Confederate States Navy in September, 1861. He superintended the construction of the equipment for the *Merrimac*, and was commander when she destroyed so many boats in Hampton Roads, but he was wounded so he could not command in the engagement with the *Monitor*. For this he was thanked by the Confederate Congress, and was made an admiral and senior officer of the Navy. In 1863 he was assigned to the defense of Mobile by water, where he built and equipped the ironclad *Tennessee* and commanded it in the battle of August 5, 1864; he was made a prisoner, but was exchanged in February, 1865; served as president of Maryland Agricultural College for years after the close of the war; and then served as agent for a life insurance company, before he died in Maryland, on May 11, 1874. *National Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, IV, 38.

here— he is a son of Gustavus's (& my) former teacher in German— A book store has been lately opened here, with an agency for English & American books, by a Mr Barksdale, a Yankee I believe— I am told he is doing well, but I never go into his shop— There would certainly however be no room for another of the same kind—

The “farming utensils used in cultivating the land” are generally of the crudest kind; a crooked branch of a tree is the most usual plough; a *crow bar* is often used for digging & if the earth is to be carried away it is scraped up with the hands & put into a sort of basket made of the fibre of the maguay. You may see it carried through the streets in such baskets, of larger size, hung on both sides of a donkey— flag stones are strapped on donkeys, one on each side— &c— The English contractors on the railway are introducing wheel borrows, carts & shovels, but a great deal of the work in easy ground is done as I have described.

The Emperor & Empress are at Cuernabaea, in the “tierra caliente,” south of this city about 60 miles, & a small party of us took advantage of their absence, the other Sunday, to visit Chapultepec, & we were charmed with the beauty of the situation & the lovely view over the valley— much has been done to improve the roads & grounds, but a great deal yet remains to carry out the Empr's plans to make the buildings & grounds take an Imperial character, which they are very capable of— his great passion is for this kind of work— The day was lovely as all days are here; spring seems to have fairly set in, & tho' we have had no rain since the middle of October, the trees are putting out green leaves, which they have been deprived of about 6 weeks, & the hot weather will soon begin; the time from this to the beginning of the rainy season, about June, being the hottest of the year— The roads are, as you may imagine, thick with dust, which gets into the houses, altho' there is seldom any wind— March is windy, I am told, & must be exceedingly disagreeable— I always said I should regret the rainy season; but all are delightful.

I note what you say about every body & read it with interest, tho' I have not room to say much about them— I wrote Mrs Butler, intending to send by Maury, but as he did not go I sent my letter otherwise— Give my love always to my cousins & to Rose & her family; & to my brothers & Emma & all, when you write.

Feby 15th — closed for the mail.

Ever Your affte brother A. M.

IMPERIAL MEXICAN RAILWAY.

Chief Engineer's Office.

Mexico, March 15th 1866.

No. 19. My dear Wife

I am delighted to see the improved tone of the supplementary sheet of your last letter & to know that your pleasure was caused by my ex-

pressions— Though I cannot now remember what these were I know that I think constantly of you & our dear children, & lament our separation & desire earnestly that it should be terminated; but without being able exactly to see how— I shall look anxiously for your answer to my suggestions on the subject, & until I receive it I will say nothing more about the matter— Magruder returned a few days ago from V. Cruz, bringing his family just arrived from England— They had an uncomfortable & tedious journey up. & Mrs M. has not been well since her arrival: I have consequently only seen the son & daughter who make a favorable impression, especially the daughter, quite & lady like tho' not at all handsome— They have a roomy & comfortable house, just near our office; but I imagine they are not the sort of people to enjoy the novelties of Mexico much, I do not predict a long stay for them— Magruder stopped some time at Cordova, where the U. S. colony is established, & he speaks favorably about them; but we understand that measures have not been taken for providing lands for a considerable number of emigrants lately arrived & I fear the authorities here do not appreciate the importance of making a good beginning in this respect, or else are not sincerely disposed to do so. The effect of the reports which may be made by these new comers on this subject & on the too frequent acts of violence which occur even on the main road to the coast, may be to check the spirit of emigration to this country which late reports, even from my friend Rutson, represent to be very rife in the Southern States— You will have seen perhaps in your papers an account of one of the most flagrant acts of violence which occurred recently— a party of Belgian officials who had come out to bring a message of condolence to the Empress, were attacked on the morning of the very day they left the palace on their return & one of them, Baron D'Huart was killed— This morning's paper announces the arrest of some of the robbers, but punishment seems scarcely to deter others— I shall send you the paper on account of the publication, made by the Emperor's authority, to explain the Iturbide business. Yesterdays paper's contained an account of the Montholon's¹⁰² grand ball, translated from the Nat. Intelligencer,¹⁰³ which Laura spoke of in her letter— Thank her & Rosa for the letter which, however, I shall not answer this time otherwise than in this to you— Rose will have seen that I did *not* forget her birthday

¹⁰² Doubtless he here refers to the son of Comte Charles Tristan de Montholon, who was born in Paris on July 21, 1783, and died on August 21, 1853. He was a noted French general and companion of Napoleon at St. Helena and one of the executors of Napoleon's estate. He was also a writer and editor. *Century Dictionary and Cyclopaedia*, IX, 703.

¹⁰³ *The National Intelligencer* was a tri-weekly, weekly, and later a daily newspaper of Washington, D. C. It was begun in Washington by Samuel H. Smith on October 31, 1800, as the official organ of the Jeffersonian Party. It began as the *National Intelligencer and Washington Advertiser*, but in 1810 it was called the *National Intelligencer*. It was made a daily in 1813 and continued publication until 1870. In 1810 Smith sold his interests to Joseph Gales, Jr., who in 1812 took William W. Seaton into partnership, which lasted until Gales died in 1860. Under the administration of Andrew Jackson it became the Whig organ. *Dictionary of American History*, IV, 60.

although I could not send her anything but good wishes: I hope she has long before this recovered from her cold, & is able to relieve Laura from the task of darning her stockings— Mine have got along so far without darning, owing to the very modest exercise that I take— a short walk perhaps before breakfast & another before dinner— my shoes are about as good as they were when I left you— as to Rosa's *correlative* question about the books I am reading, I am almost ashamed to say— almost none. Immediately after breakfast I come to the office & by the time dinner is over it is 7 o'clk & generally one or two gentlemen come in to talk or play cards until bed time— I do not care much about reading, of which I believe I have done my share, & I am very willing to pass the time in some other way; but now & then I regret not having access to books, especially in Spanish, & I have thought of taking a Master in that language, simply that I may feel compelled to study it— I should like to find a teacher that would come to me in the morning before I am up, as the little priest used to do the few days I was in Florence; for I wake very early & lie in bed because I have nothing else to do— To-morrow morning I think I shall rise early & go to the cathedral to hear the mass which is to be performed on the tenth anniversary of the birth of Louis Napoleon's son,¹⁰⁴ at the celebration of whose birth I "assisted" in Paris in 1856— The emperor's going off to Cuernavaca yesterday looks as if he wished to avoid it: why I don't know.

I am glad to hear that the boys are so attentive to their studies, as I never doubted they would be; but I really wish they would pay more attention to physical education; they will regret the neglect hereafter, when they find themselves unable to do things which their companions, of inferior intellectual capacities, understand well. It seems odd that Gratz should take a notion to be a miner; for it is a rugged occupation, hardly suitable, I fear, for his rather delicate frame. But the notion is by no means *ridiculous*, as you suppose; for besides the profits of such a profession if successful, the preparatory studies are very interesting & of a high order— Geology, Minerology, Chemistry, Theoretical & practical Mechanics & surveying are all necessary to an accomplished miner. One of the largest & best buildings in this city is the "Mineria," or School of Mines; of its merits as a school I know nothing— I should have, therefore, no objection to indulge Gratz's taste, if it continues, so far as regards the course of studies; but I confess I should prefer for him, in practice, a less laborious pursuit. I hope Alfred may be with you, to rece[ive] my love, when you receive this letter, or soon after, as Rosa Laura thought he might. . . . I depend on your letting him hear

¹⁰⁴ Napoleon Eugène Louis Jean Joseph Bonaparte, son of Napoleon III of France, and Prince Imperial of France, was born at Paris on March 16, 1856, and was killed in Zululand, South Africa, on June 1, 1879. *Century Dictionary and Cyclopaedia*, IX, 168.

from me, or of me, & am surprised . . . you should not say more about him, which I attributed to the uniform . . . of his life at W. P^t., & not to the reason you mention— I do not pretend to send . . . messages to your aunt, because I know that it is useless so far as she is concerned, She probably does not know or recollect when I am— I am glad to hear of Henry's having been to his brother's, & hope with you that he will continue to go there— Mr Postell¹⁰⁵ told me yesterday that he had a letter from one of Octa. Cohen's daughters, who was in Phil^a, & he thought from the account that the Savannah people were getting into business again; I hope it is so. At this distance I do not like to advise my dear daughters about their bonds; but I do not relish the idea of their losing the accumulated interest, & if the interest due on them should be funded I suppose the original Bonds & the interest bonds would command a good sale. It is strange that I do not hear from Mr Roy to whom I wrote some time ago— is he in the country, or abroad?—

I am much obliged to you for thinking of me about the Purim beef— It would be a treat indeed to enjoy some of your home "fixings" again; but *eating* is a matter which never gave me a serious thought, except when I had to go to market, with very little money; whenever & wherever any body else can eat, I can. I should like to send you, for your Etage^{re}, a figure which a man has this moment brought in to sell— a Mexican dandy on horseback, with all his trappings complete— The horse's skin filled with "a permanent dinner of wood," & the man made of rags (a sort of rag-maché) in which these people are very skillful, as also in wax— Col. Talcott is still absent, Mr^s T. & daughters, who sailed on the 9th. I hope you will see. I shall probably go out to Tacubaya to stay for a week or so, whilst Boteslawski goes to V.C. to escort the Austrian N.Y. Consul on his way back— The latter is about to establish, as you will see, a line of steamers to N. Orleans, a great convenience. I shall close this, as usual, for the ordinary mail, to-day, as there is none the day after to-morrow: The mail leaves this city at 3 o'clock in the morning.

Thank Margaret Meade for her kind message of recollection & give her my love in return. Chal. Talcott has been sick again, with chills & fever, at Orizava; The country does not agree with him.

Believe me always truly & faithfully Y^r affte husband

A. M.

In Mercantile style, I may repeat here that I sent Rutson M. a remittance for you by the last steamer.

¹⁰⁵ Doubtless he refers to a descendant of Benjamin Postell or of his brothers Major John or Colonel James Postell of Revolutionary fame. Benjamin Postell (1760-1801) of Charleston, South Carolina, was a lieutenant in the army; was made prisoner in 1780; became a member of the legislature; and served under Francis Marion and rose to the rank of colonel. *Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, V, 85.

Mrs. Alfred Mordecai
 1825 Delancey Place
 Philadelphia Pa

IMPERIAL MEXICAN RAILWAY.

Mexico, March 30th 1866.

Chief Engineer's Office

N^o. 20 My dear Wife

This is a holiday ("Good Friday") & I take advantage of this quiet in the office to write my letter for the next steamer, lest I should not have much time to-morrow when it ought to go to the post office. I have commenced on this large sheet, which happened to be lying before me; taking it for one of the *half sheets* on which I write most of my official letters, & which I thought would be large enough to contain all that I have spirits to write to you, since the receipt of your last fragments of letters. I could easily fill a large sheet with an account of the humors of Easter here & of the feet washing by the Emperor & Empress which I witnessed yesterday at the Palace; but I believe it would not interest you & I have no spirits to write to you about the Mummery that is going on; Indeed I should not write at all, but to spare you the worry of uneasy imaginings, until I get your answer to the letter which you had just received when you wrote last- Without feeling confident about any arrangement which I may have suggested for your consideration, to enable us to be again together, I wished to give you as much time as possible to consider the matter & do not write to me about it & receive my answer before deciding, which there is still time enough to do; but it seemed to me absolutely necessary to make a decision before I return to the U.S., as our landlord ought to be informed early in August, at the latest, whether we will retain the house for another year, or give it up; & as I do not propose to leave Mexico before the beginning of August. There seems to be a sort of uneasy feeling in the air here, with regard to the stability of public affairs, under the present arrangements of Government, & there are other circumstances connected with the work on which I am employed, that have given me of late a less easy feeling than I have had before- I did not wish to say anything to you about this before, & I do not wish anything said of it at all out of the family; but I hope that before I leave here all uncertainly on these points will be removed. If it were possible to engage the house in Delancey Place for a quarter after Sept^r 1st, with the privilege of continuing the lease or giving it up on a month's notice or so, it would be well to do so; but it is not of much use for me to speculate without knowing what you are willing or able to do- So I leave the subject for the present.

I have been rather surprised that you did not mention Dallas Bache's¹⁰⁶ condition before, as I had no idea whether he had even got back to the U. S.; I consider, from your expression, that his disease of the brain has gone on increasing.

I hope you have seen some of the Talcotts— none of the sons have gone back— Charles, who has been talking to me a good deal since I began to write, has just gone to his room to take quinine, not having recovered entirely from a bilious attack at Orizava— he has had no more bleeding from the lungs, but is not strong or free from cough. He returned a few days ago from V. Cruz, & his father soon after, looking very well indeed.

March 31st — We had last evening just before the eclipse of the moon, the unusual phenomenon of a thunder shower which was a damper to the festivities in the streets, but has made to-day only the more pleasant; a cool soft air & the dust laid in the streets— I ought perhaps to mention that there are some persons here who are going to Phil^a. by the next steamer— Dr Prevost,¹⁰⁷ a resident in Tacatecas since the War with the U.S., & married to a Mexican lady, takes his children to be educated; he is a brother of Col. Provost¹⁰⁸ who lives in Pine St below 18th I believe; & Dr Davis¹⁰⁹ also a resident of Tacatecas, who will visit his friend Dr P. in Phil^a & promises to call on you— I have seen but little of either of them, but have thought favorably of both— Dr P. & perhaps both of them will probably, if you see them, give unfavorable accounts of the prospects of the Empire, unless he is restrained from speaking freely by regard for his connections & large interests here, being engaged in a profitable mining business: his wife speaks a little English & understands it; the children not at all. I do not send anything by them.

I saw the Magruders yesterday: as I conjectured, the ladi[es] are very insensible to the attractions, such as they are, . . . country, & hardly hesitate to say that they regret their mo[ve] They are not the sort of people to derive amusement or instruction from the society, or

¹⁰⁶ Dallas Bache of the District of Columbia and Pennsylvania became assistant-surgeon on May 28, 1861; major surgeon on August 5, 1867; lieutenant-colonel surgeon on February 9, 1890; and colonel assistant surgeon-general on April 18, 1895. He was brevetted captain and major on March 13, 1865, for faithful and meritorious service during the war; retired on January 1, 1902; and died on June 2, 1902. *Heitman Register*, I, 178.

¹⁰⁷ Grayson M. Prevost of Pennsylvania became assistant surgeon in the Army on December 31, 1845; resigned on June 7, 1848; and died on May 1, 1896. *Heitman Register*, I, 806.

¹⁰⁸ Charles Mallet Prevost of Maryland and Pennsylvania became captain and assistant adjutant-general of volunteers on May 1, 1862; resigned in August, 1862; became colonel of the 118th Pennsylvania infantry on August 28, 1862; was raised to colonel of the 16th Veterans' Reserve Corps on September 29, 1863; brevetted brigadier-general of volunteers on March 13, 1865, for meritorious service; was honorably discharged on June 30, 1866; and died on November 5, 1887. *Heitman Register*, I, 806.

¹⁰⁹ William Bramwell Davis was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, on July 22, 1832; graduated from Wesleyan University in 1852 and from Miami Medical College in 1855, being professor of therapeutics there after 1873. He was surgeon of the 137th regiment of Ohio volunteers and of the West End Military Hospital in Cincinnati. He was a civic leader and held many offices of profit and trust in Cincinnati; travelled in Europe in 1872; and wrote a number of medical treatises. *Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, II, 107.

the country— Mrs M. spoke kindly of your sister & her husband's family & remembers you.

With dear love to my good children & blessings on their heads & yours my dear wife,

Every truly
Y^r affte husband
A. Mordecai

The gentleman who has charge of Rosa's parcel, which Rutson M. mentions has not yet made his appearance.

Mrs. Alfred Mordecai
1825 Delancey Place
Philadelphia Estados Unidos del Norte
Vapor Mexico— Americano

IMPERIAL MEXICAN RAILWAY.

Mexico, April 18, 1866.

Chief Engineer's Office.
No.

My dear Sister

If I were inclined to avail myself of your considerate permission to let a mail pass without writing to you, I should do so now; for I have foolishly waited for the last day of the "ordinary mail," (by which I always send, except in *extraordinary* cases,) to commence my letter, which I might as well have done weeks ago; but it is not fair that you should be deprived, by my negligence, of any pleasure which, as I am very willing to believe, my letters may afford you. Moreover, I may very well take a little time to-day, for Col. T. went down the road yesterday, & you know the old proverb; when he is away I have generally less to do & more time to do it in, as I have no one to consult but myself about the business of the office. You are right in thinking that I would advocate your accepting our kind friends' invitation to visit them & I hope this letter will find you in N. York, where you cannot but be amused with the extravagance of life as well as interested in the society of your friends— I wish you would say to Mr Maury that Col. T. answered Mr Glenn's letter immediately, telling him that there was no place for him on the Railway, with the arrangements which he was then making— The Col. wants now only a few good constructing engineers, men of experience & ability in the supervision of work, & these he hopes to get very soon. Charles's health is better, but by no means reestablished— My own health, about which you ask me to speak, is uninterrupted & mere existence continues to *be* an enjoyment to me in this delightful climate. The pleasant arrangement of lodgings which I

have had for some months past is about to be broken up at the end of this month, by the removal of Mr & Mrs McLean to Orizava, where Mr McL. will be employed still on the railway— I cannot yet tell what new arrangements I may make; I should be less embarrassed if I had not purchased the furniture for my room, which I do not like to sacrifice.

Since I last wrote to you the Easter holy days have passed, & among these simple, ignorant & withal priest-ridden people, whose religion consists so much in external observances, the ceremonies of Passion Week are celebrated with great observance— All labor nearly is interrupted; on the principal days the shops are closed & not vehicles or beast of burden are allowed to circulate in the streets, where a curious silence in consequence prevails, although the pavements & foot walks are crowded with people— The Liquor & pulque shops are shut, but the corners of streets & other available places are occupied by booths decorated with fragrant greens (vanilla grass) & flowers, in which fruits & simple drinks are sold— On Friday, when etiquette requires all “gentes finos” to dress in black, I attended mass at the cathedral, where it was celebrated with military pomp by the French troops— The finest ceremony of this kind that I have seen here, or one of the finest, was on the birth day anniversary of the son of Louis Napoleon, the celebration of whose birth I “assisted” at in Paris ten years ago; but perhaps I mentioned that in my last letter, for it seems more than a month ago— One of the ceremonies of Easter Week which is kept up by the Austrian Dynasty & has been brought with them to this country, is the washing of the feet of the poor by the Sovereigns on Holy Thursday, You may remember my account, or some body else’s, of that ceremony as performed by the Pope & the nobles, in Rome, when I was there *32 years ago*— Mrs McLean being very desirous to see it & also to have an interview with the Princess Iturbide, I wrote that lady a note proposing to call on her, & in the course of our visit Mrs McL. introduced the subject of the feet washing & the next day the Princess sent us four tickets for the occasion— The ceremonies of the week are celebrated by the court in the palace & the programme issued by them forms a folio book of some 20 pages, in which the order of arrangement for each of the four days, (Thursday to Sunday,) is minutely prescribed, showing where each person of the court is to stand or sit, who are to take the Emperor’s sword & the Empress’s gloves & fan, preparatory to the washing of the feet; who is to take the dishes for the supper of the poor, off the tray & to whom he or she is to hand them to be presented to their Majesties who place them on the table & take them off— These minutia sound very ridiculous when read out of great type on large fine paper, but they have the good effect of introducing perfect order in a ceremony which confusion & blunders would make ludicrous— The courses for the meal, which preceded the washing of feet, were brought in on wooden trays by the fine looking Palatine guards in full

dress, red coats; steel & brass mounted helmets & high boots, & their majesties performed their part as gracefully as if they had been graduated head waiters— The guests were not expected to eat much, I believe, but the numerous courses were successively brought on & after a short interval taken away, to be sent to the houses of the guests— When the priests who were intoning the appropriate Gospel (Luke?) in Latin, came to the words about girding himself with a cloth, the sovereigns standing in front of their respective suites, tucked on their apron towels & proceeded to their lavatory operations— The spectators who were not more than about 250 were provided with places & even with seats, towards the upper part of the saloon of Iturbide, about 300 ft long by 50 ft wide, in the middle of which the tables &c were arranged, & the whole thing passed off as well as possible— I only marked the omission that the head waiter did not bow to the company when they turned to retire— You will laugh at *me*, I am afraid, & think I am cheating you, to pretend to fill up a sheet with such stuff, about which in fact I intended to say but a few words & refer you to the enclosed piece which I cut out of a newspaper.

I have been very quiet since Easter, always finding enough to occupy my days in the office, & sleeping well enough at night, unless, as I did last evening, I take too long a nap on the sofa after our 6½ o'clk dinner— Rutson will sympathize with me there— Last Sunday, instead of going as usual to Tacubaya, I borrowed Col T's engineer wagon, holding seven persons besides the driver, & drawn by four mules, with which & quite a pleasant party I made an excursion to the "Canada," a little gorge in the mountain that shut in the valley on the south— The owner of the lower part of this valley has made some rural walks, not at all artificial looking, along the bank of the mountain stream which even at this dry season rolls a considerable body of clear water over its rocky bed. On the sides of this walk are placed roses & other flowers, many of which, except the Calla Lily, we might see in a similar locality in Virg^a or N^o C^a; nor does the character of the trees impair the illusion of country, for you find the birch, the oak &c, the dry leaves of which rustling under our feet united with the pleasant & now unusual sound of running water, to carry us back to the scenes of other times & climes, & I sat on a rock & began to change the "regimen" of the stream by throwing stones into the water. In returning we stopped at a pleasant house, kept by a Texas man & a Florida woman, in the village of San Angel to have a dinner, al fiasco, over which we sat so long that it became quite dark before we reached Tacubaya & we had some difficulty in finding our way. Between San Angel & the Canada we passed under the hill of Contreras, & one of our party was Genl. Magruder who commanded the Battery of Artillery which was engaged in the fight at that place during the Mex. War— another of which was engaged in the fight at that place during the Mex. War— another of the party was an Amer-

ican named Grayson,¹¹⁰ who self taught has devoted some 10 years to the ornithology of Mex. especially the Pacific coast, & his portfolio of life sized & colored drawings is almost, if not quite, equal in execution to Audubon's¹¹¹— he hopes that the academy here may enable him to publish them; but money is very scarce.

After six months of drought you might suppose that driving is not pleasant; it was dusty in the morning, but the air, under shelter, is never hot, and the approach of the rainy season is already indicated by the frequent cloudy afternoons with sometimes a smart shower, & but for the darkness our drive back would have been very pleasant— When we reached Tacubaya we could not get places in the first train to the city, but an acquaintance of mine, an English bachelor gentleman who has a very nice place in the room, happened to meet us & took us up to his house where he entertained us very pleasantly, with tea, &c, until 10 o'clock, making a complete day of it; & all the party went home delighted. An unpleasant & melancholy thought connected with the excursion, which you must not mention to Rutson, was that the gentlemen thought it prudent to buckle on our loaded revolvers, to go some 10 or 12 miles from the city— I don't think I have any thing to make it worth while to take another half sheet— I have just been to pay a "party call," at the Magruder's— The ladies & young Henry, who have lived almost always, in Europe are not at all charmed with Mex. & are not of a disposition to make the best of any thing— The young people are very good musicians &c— Rev. Tucker¹¹² & his wife have arrived at V. C. but have not yet reached the city— Their son is in our office— I see by our papers that you have a new edition of "Who Killed Cock Robin"— Kind remembrance to the Maurys from yr affte brother

A. Mordecai

¹¹⁰ Doubtless he here refers to Andrew J. Grayson (1819-1869), the author of *Natural History of the Tres Marias and of Socorro*. The caption title of this work was: "On the Physical Geography and Natural History of the Islands of the Tres Marias and of Socorro," by Col. Andres J. Grayson. Ed. by George N. Lawrence. . . . From the Proceedings of the Boston Society of Natural History, June 7, 1871. Boston, Press of A. A. Kingman, 1871. (Library of Congress Card Catalogue.)

¹¹¹ John James Audubon, the noted naturalist, was born near New Orleans, Louisiana, on May 4, 1780, and died near New York City on January 27, 1851. He was reared in Santo Domingo and Louisiana and was educated in France; was taught the love of nature; and early began to draw pictures of plants and animals, but he made bonfires each birthday because his art was so poor. His father placed him under the celebrated artist David, and he was then sent to a farm near Philadelphia. His home at Mill Grove, near Philadelphia, soon became a museum. He moved to Kentucky in 1808 with a stock of goods and tried various kinds of business; but, after going broke more than once, he turned to natural history, the first love of his youth. He even gave drawing lessons for a living. Perhaps his greatest work was *The Birds of America*. He became famous in his later life and more so after his death. *Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, I, 117-119.

¹¹² Henry Holcombe Tucker was born in Georgia on May 10, 1819, and died in Atlanta on September 9, 1898. He was graduated from Columbian College, Washington, D. C., in 1838, after studying in Philadelphia and at the University of Pennsylvania; studied law and was admitted to the bar in 1846, but quit practicing in 1848 to enter Mercer University so as to become a Baptist minister; and preached while he was professor at Mercer. After the reorganization of Mercer, following the close of the war, he was president of that college. He was quite a voluminous writer and traveller. *Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, VI, 172.

IMPERIAL MEXICAN RAILWAY.

Chief Engineer's Office,
San Juan de Letran N^o. 13.

Mexico, April 20th 1866.

My dear Sister

When I had closed my letter to you the other day I went to make an evening call on the Princess Iturbide & something that was said there reminded me that my account of the Easter festival was like the old story of the "Prince of Denmark" omitting the part of Hamlet! for I had omitted the peculiar feature of the celebration here; the use of rattles of all sorts & sizes: angels, cupids, dolls, Judase's, household furniture of all kinds, from a bedstead to a slop pail, are mounted like watchmans rattles & all the children as well as many of the Indians are furnished with them; disturbing on certain days the otherwise silent streets— some of these rattles are as large as a small carriage wheel & the children roll them on the pavement, generally with a hideous figure of Judas perched on the shaft or handle— The newspapers attempt to give an explanation of the origin & significance of these toys, but nothing very satisfactory is elicited. It was formerly the custom to burn the effigies of Judas in the streets, but this year that practice & the firing of crackers were prohibited— The newspaper carrier, who chooses this season to bring round his doggrel rhymes, asks for a little money to buy "his rattle, his *chia* (for making "dulces," or sweetmeats,) his Judas" & something else which I forgot— another circumstance which I intended to mention was the visit of the Emperor & Empress, on *foot*, in the hot afternoon of Good Friday, to the principal Hospitals of the city; they were attended by a very small suite & not a large crowd of ragamuffins; the people here are the most impassive I ever saw— Nothing seems to excite their curoosity,— at least nothing of the kind which generally attracts in other countries— It looks very much as if the disfavor with which the masses are thought to regard the Imperial Govt had its share in this; but I believe that habitual apathy has more.

I should not have thought that the preceding pages were of sufficient importance for an "extraordinary" letter; but the papers this morning confirm a piece of news which I heard yesterday & which to Rich^d Maury & others is "extraordinary." M^r Langlais, a frenchman of ability, who was sent out here to rearrange the financial affairs of this embarrassed country, obtained the adoption of executive measures of economy & reform in the administration— He died suddenly of apoplexy [*sic*], a few weeks ago; but it seems that some of his measures are to be carried out, & among them is the abolition of the colonization Bureau & Land surveying office— Maury & Magruder were therefore notified yesterday that their offices would be discontinued on the last of this month— This is a

distressing thing to them; here in a foreign country, without any means of support— Charles Talcott is a good friend of Maury's & will do something for him if possible— I shall take one of his rooms I think, which you know adjoin our office.

What the Magruders, or rather the Genl. will do I have no idea— He has been at some expense in furnishing a nice house & they gave quite a handsome little ball a few nights ago— The ladies & Maury will no doubt make their way back to Europe, & will hardly regard as a misfortune an event which it attended with such a result— Rich^d Maury writes to Rutson to-day which gives me an opportunity of sending you this supplementary dispatch, with the love of Yr affte brother

A. Mordecai

IMPERIAL MEXICAN RAILWAY.

Chief Engineer's Office.
N^o. 22

Mexico, May 3^d 1866.

My dear Wife

Owing to the loss of the "Vera Cruz" I am obliged to begin another letter to you without being able to acknowledge the receipt of one. We hope to have the mail of the V.C. with that of the "Manhattan" which is due at V.C. on Sunday 6th— We have scarcely any thing more about the disaster than the information of the loss of the steamer on the coast of N^o C^a, & the saving of the passengers, crew & mail. I wrote to Rutson by the British steamer, viz Havanna, to tell him how to send my letters, in case of a continued interruption of the regular communication with N.Y., which will take place at any rate in July & August; You have only to send your letters to him as usual.

My last letter informed you of the contemplated breaking up of our little household, by the transfer of Mr McLean to Orizava; he went down on Monday the last day of April, & before night the house was stripped & Blake & I were installed in two adjoining rooms in our office building: They are the first rooms in the back building under Maury's rooms; they are large (about 20 ft X 18) but not well ventilated, having no opening but the door-windows, which cannot well be left open, on account of the publicity of the corridor on which it opens— This is a very common arrangement of houses here, I may say the most common; but it is not pleasant, & we were remarkably fortunate in our late dwelling in having windows in every room— I have returned to my mode of life after the breaking up of our little mess in Maury's room at the San Carlos; & if you could see me taking my solitary cup of chocolate in the morning & my lonely meal at the Restaurant of the "Ciudad de Mexico"; with no cheerful parlor, but only my close bed room, to retire to after my evening walk, I think even you would regret the break up of

our little party— Blake is a very quiet, upright & amiable man, & although he is by no means bright, I may consider myself very fortunate in my companion; our rooms communicate— & it is convenient to leave the door between us open. We had engaged rooms in the house of Mr Benfield, a paper manufacturer, an Englishman, whose wife is a Kentucky woman— They have been very kind to us, but the rooms are very small & inconvenient, & as the Prussian Minister who occupies a part of the house, wanted them for his secretary & would give a better rent than we, we gave them up without reluctance. Mrs B. is from Lexington; her maiden name was Moffit & she is nearly related to some Hunts; do you know anything of them— Rev. Tucker & his wife have taken Maury's two office rooms for which the latter has no further use; as among the measures of economy recently adopted by the Govt. is the abolition of Maury's & Magruder's offices. A decree this morning announces a great reduction in the personal expenses of the court; so I suppose other people cannot complain. The Tuckers were so unfortunate as to lose all the baggage they had with them on the stage; it was cut off, & some parts of other baggage that was dropped at the same time has been recovered; but they have not as yet heard anything of theirs— My package from Rosa, which Mr Crutchfield brought, was probably lost too; what did it contain?

Young Hill, a nephew of Clem. Hill's, brought me a kind letter from J^{no} Lee which I was glad to receive— The young man is discouraged, I believe, & intends returning in the next steamer, I understand; he was here but a few days— Things generally do not look very bright just now for emigrants or for the Govt in Mexico, nor anywhere else it would seem from the papers. I had one of Mrs Butler's usual kind letters by the last steamer, in answer to one I wrote in Feby. to go by Maury; she does not say anything about the Fenians¹¹³ or the state of the country.

We have had some sad scenes here lately among the U.S. people— Govr Allen of Louisiana, the editor of the "American Times," who has been ill for some weeks, died a most painful death, from attacks of epilepsy, & was buried last Monday week— The day before (Sunday) I made an excursion up the canal towards Chaleo, with a small party, one of whom was Judge Austin from Albany— His son is purser of the Manhattan & the father going down to see him before he sailed the last trip, was induced to get on board the steamer for a trip to Havanna & then to Mexico & was amusing himself here, expecting to return on the next trip of the steamer; but last Saturday evening a gentleman who had been a good deal with him came to tell us that Mr A. had just died

¹¹³ Fenian is a name applied, in Irish tradition, to membership in certain tribes who formed a militia of the ardrigh or king of Eire. The Fenian Brotherhood was founded in New York in 1857 with a view to securing independence for Ireland. It spread over Ireland and then United States and absorbed the Phoenix Society. It also spread to the Irish inhabitants of England, and made several attempts to gain independence for Ireland. Its plan was to start an insurrection in Ireland and an invasion of Canada from the United States. It was organized in district clubs called circles. Between 1863 and 1872 eleven national congresses were held by the Fenian Brotherhood in the United States, after which time it continued as a secret society. *Century Dictionary and Cyclopaedia*, IX, 385.

suddenly, with neuralgia of the heart, & on Sunday we performed the last rites for him— I had hardly got back from the funeral when I heard of the death of another Louisianian, an old gentleman named Blane, whom I had observed to be much affected at Gov Allen's funeral; but I did not know him— These incidents took place in the U.S. cemetery, a small lot of ground on the western confines of the city, which was purchased by Congress after the Mex. War: It is quite a neat spot, adjoining the English cemetery, & is planted with willow & ash trees.

Thursday May 3^d— After an intermission of showers for several weeks, it has clouded up this afternoon & a light rain is falling— I am closing this letter for the ordinary mail to-morrow, without having any thing special to add— Col. T. is still absent & will remain so probably for a week or two longer, as he has to meet some gentlemen from England on matters relating to the Railway— I shall look anxiously for your next letters, as indicating the arrangements which y[ou] may wish to make for the immediate future, & I hope very [soon] to be able to reply definitely by the last of this month or the first of next; I shall write by way of Havanna if there is any delay in the direct line— I trust to hear that you & our dear children were well; it is a long time since I heard from any of the children directly; with best love & kisses to them, be assured my dear wife of the constant affection of

your loving husband

A. Mordecai

M^{rs} Alfred Mordecai
1825 Delancy Place
Philadelphia Pa

IMPERIAL MEXICAN RAILWAY.

Chief Engineer's Office.
No. 25

Mexico, June 17th 1866.

My dear Wife

If I could hope that my letters would give you any other satisfaction than that of knowing that I am well, I should take great pleasure in devoting to your entertainment this cool, quiet, summer Sunday morning, when I am not subject to any interruption from business, visitors or opportunity of amusement— I have, not yet resumed my Sunday excursions to Tacubaya, although Mr Southgate is well enough to have been in town yesterday & Col. T. has been staying out there for a week or so— Mr S. is going away next week & the house will be re-established in some regular manner— Charles T. will probably move out there with his family; he has been quite unwell lately, tho' not with any attack

of the lungs, & perhaps change of air & country air will do him good— I have just been in to Mr Tucker's room to give him a dose of my cholera medicine. He & his son have been both affected pretty severely & there is a good deal of premonitory *cholérine* about, altho' the cholera itself has not made its appearance in this country— As the last accounts from the U.S. say nothing about it, I hope the alarm there has passed off. I am thinking of you as pleasantly installed in housekeeping for our son¹¹⁴ at W.P^t. where I hope your [*sic*] are permitting yourself to enjoy the pleasure which a visit to that place always used to give you— My dear, there is no "*twist*" between us, except that which your disordered imagination has contrived to make, & I hope & trust there will never be any more embarrassing than to be twined in a loving embrace, as we have so often been. That I feel obliged to defer this happiness is a cause of real grief to me; but I see no remedy just now— I have told you already of troubles in the affairs of the Railway; the disturbances in the political & financial circles of Europe have naturally combined with other causes to bring these troubles to a crisis, & orders have now been given to suspend a great part of the work which was going on with great vigor— Operations are continued on the line between this city & the Puebla Junction & it is hoped that at least so much of the road will be completed & put in operation by the month of August, through means obtained by French cooperation with this Government, whose failure (no doubt almost unavoidable) to comply with its engagements to the company is one of the principal causes of the present embarrassments— What measures can be taken for the further prosecution of the works will probably not be definitely known until the action of the general meeting of the stockholders in London which takes place in August— In the mean time the suspension of work throws a great number of people out of employment, not only of the natives, who soon accommodate themselves to these changes, but of foreigners, engineers & contractors, who have few resources at present in this country— As the head office must be kept up & I can be useful to the Col. I do not wish to leave here in this uncertain state of things & to incur the discomfort & expense of a long voyage, until I can see what the final result of the difficulties is likely to be; & therefore, I am sorry to say, I think it best to defer my departure until the Autumn— If any thing should occur soon to change these views I may resume my original plan of returning to you by the steamer of the 23^d July; but this I do not expect— One of the most unpleasant consequences to me of this change of affairs is its effect on the position of our dear girls, whom I had hoped to release, for the ensuing year, from the drudgery

¹¹⁴ Alfred Mordecai, Jr., was twice instructor at West Point Military Academy, spending in all eleven years instructing the students. *National Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, X, 443; Heitman, *Register*, 1, 724.

of keeping school; but in the present condition of things I am obliged to recommend to them to continue their occupation, as a necessary resource in case I should be thrown out of employment here, without an opportunity of making other arrangements for the support of my family. That they have stout hearts & bear their burthen cheerfully makes me proud of them & grateful for their love & affectionate patience, but does not diminish my sorrow at having to inflict this labor on them: May a father's love & blessing lighten it for them, & encourage them to persevere!

I am provoked with myself for having omitted to write to Sister Ellen, or to ask you to write to her, to go to Phil^a. & wait with you until the Maurys were ready to receive her; for I believe I had time to do so after I heard of her acceptance of their invitation— I am sure she would have been glad to do so, & if she passed through Phil^a, (which she had *not* when you wrote,) without stopping it would be only because of the difficulty & inconvenience, travelling alone as she expected to do. By the bye, M^{rs} Talcott & Miss Mary both made s[ome] excuse in their letters about not seeing you, as they intended, on th[eir] way back to N.Y.; bad weather & loss of your address— they did not stop— The[ir] conduct to you in N.Y. has quite alienated my feelings & I have never even enquired about them; but I know that they are charmingly situated at Ventnor (see "Harts Ease") in that most lovely spot of earth, the Isle of Wight. With the diminution of work on the Railroad, my time will, I fear, be less occupied & will hang more heavily on my hands. I have still had enough to do in the day time; but with sickness & the reduction of our little circle at N^o 13, the evenings are sometimes hard to get through— Blake & I go one or two evenings in the week to Mr Benfield's where the old gentleman & his wife, who live alone, are always glad to see us & to give us a cup of tea & a game of whist— They are not interesting people, but they are kind; & I now value kindness more than brilliancy & wit— I have found, our mess has found, the French woman's cooking & provisions too much for us, & went back yesterday with great satisfaction, to my solitary dinner at the "Ciudad de Mejico," content to run the risk of the rains, which however have not yet regularly commenced— Our French paper announces the death of Genl. Scott,¹¹⁵ with a very suitable notice of him, taken I suppose from the French paper in N.Y.— I do not write to any one else by this mail,

¹¹⁵ Winfield Scott was born in Virginia on June 13, 1786, and died at West Point, New York, on May 29, 1866. He studied at William and Mary College; was admitted to the bar in 1806; entered the army as captain in 1808; and served in the War of 1812. He became brigadier-general and brevet major-general in 1814; commanded in South Carolina during the nullification controversy in 1832-1833; served against the Seminoles and Creeks in 1835-1837; became major-general and commander-in-chief in 1841; and then commander-in-chief in Mexico in 1847; defeated the Mexicans in several battles; and occupied Mexico City on September 14, 1847. He was defeated for the Presidency in 1852 on the Whig ticket; was brevetted lieutenant-general in 1847; and retired from active service in 1861. He also wrote on military affairs. *Century Dictionary and Cyclopaedia*, IX, 912.

except a note to Rutson M., so you must send this to the girls and boys to read, or a copy of it, if you do not wish them to see all of it— Give my best love to our son Alfred & to Miriam, in person, & send it to all the others.

Ever truly

Y^r affectionate husband

A. Mordecai.

Your last letter received was by the steamer of 25th ult.

M^{rs} Alfred Mordecai
care of Col^o. A. Mordecai
West Point Orange C^o:
State of New York

(Rec^d. 4 p.m. 6 July R.M.)

IMPERIAL MEXICAN RAILWAY.

Chief Engineer's Office.
N^o. 28

Mexico, August 13th 1866

My dear Wife

The French steamer has brought me no letter, by way of Havana; but I hardly expected one, neither did I write by her, as there was nothing new to say— I received your letter from W. Point & Laura's from Phila & Sister E's from Barrytown by the last N.Y. steamer which did not get in until near the end of the month, being quarantined in Havana, on account of cholera in N.Y.

I do not wish to say anything unpleasant to you, my dear, I have endeavored to avoid it all along, as much as possible; for this sort of unnatural & unnecessary controversy between us is most painful to me. Being obliged to assist Col. T. lately in a controversy on official matters, I said to him: "I do not know two men to whom such a task could be more unwelcome than to you & me"— How much more so with my own wife— It is really dreadful, & I am perfectly at a loss to understand how you can deliberately sit down & harp continually on unpleasant topics, in writing to me. You complain of my letters; but as I t^old you before, I have no spirits to make them other than they are, when I think of the captious spirit in which you read them— I take little notice of what you say, in my replies, because I always hope that the next letter will be different; but so far have hoped in vain—

Col. Talcott went down the road about a fortnight ago, in his wagon, & as there was so little prospect of anything to do here, for a month or two, I proposed to accompany him & go on to the U.S. But after I commenced packing (he was to go the next day,) we both thought the departure was rather too hurried & our business could not be arranged in time: so I gave up the trip for the present month; but time hangs so heavily & idly on my hands that I regret having done so— I have just

received a despatch informing me of the Col's arrival at Apan & he will probably be here to-morrow— He is accompanied by Randolph & his wife & by Rich^d T.— The difficulties of travel & transportation of baggage at this season of the year are so serious that I was not unwilling to defer the journey; though there is no probability of their being less whilst the rainy season lasts; but I hope to be able, before I close this, to fix the time of my return— I think with you that Sallie M's explanation was a very imprudent one; but I hope, under your guardianship, that no evil may have resulted from it— Thank Laura for the neat little memorandum book which I shall take care of, though I cannot give up yet the shabby old one which I have carried so many years & which you gave me. You must give my best thanks & love too to aunt Becky & to Josephine for their unceasing kindness to our children. I trust to hear that Laura has had her trip to Newport, with kind M^{rs} Wharton's aid— She asks me about Alice Iturbide's story: It is strange that nothing seems to reach you except my letters; I sent by some one a newspaper with a 3 ct stamp on it, to be mailed in N.Y. containing the contract for giving up the child, signed by herself, & an explanation of all the circumstances— I have seen the little boy frequently— His aunt (& guardian) occupies very handsome apartments in the Palace where I see her occasionally in the evening— The child is very handsome & stout & well behaved— quite different from the fretful, spoiled & not very healthy boy that he was in the hands of his parents & uncles— If I recollect right the separation from his parents was limited to *five years*; but events may very likely change all that much sooner— I have sent other newspapers in the same way, & parcels of stamps for Rosa, only one of which seems to have been received.

August 14th — A steamer arrived yesterday from Havanna brings the great news of the successful laying of the Atlantic Cable¹¹⁶ & of the conclusion of peace in Europe, both of which I hope may be true: but she brings also intelligence of serious ravages of the cholera in N. York, which I hope may not prove true— The establishment of peace in Europe¹¹⁷ may have an important influence on the destinies of Mexico, & perhaps on those of our Railway Company; but it will be

¹¹⁶ After Cyrus W. Field refused to give up urging the practicability of an under-sea cable from the United States to Europe a company was formed in 1854 to survey the routes. The United States and England loaned the ships and the work of laying the cable was begun in 1857, but it broke. In June, 1858, it broke again. Another attempt was made in July, 1858, and on August 5, 1858, it was finished. Early in September, 1858, one of New York's greatest celebrations took place in honor of Field. However, on September 1, 1858, it broke or ceased to function properly. Still Field and some of his supporters refused to quit. In July, 1865, the *Great Eastern* began laying a new cable, but it too broke after about two-thirds of it had been laid. The larger and stronger cable laid in 1866 was a success. The material in the 1865 cable was salvaged after it was pulled from the bottom of the ocean. *Dictionary of American History*, I, 135.

¹¹⁷ This was the time when Bismarck was waging wars for the unification of Germany. In 1864 Austria and Prussia waged war on Denmark over the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein. In 1866 occurred the Six Weeks War between Austria and Prussia relative to the control over these two provinces. Prussia completely defeated Austria, thereby leading to the North German Confederation. Bismarck was not satisfied yet, so he alienated France from her friends and allies and then brought on the Franco-Prussian War, 1870-1871, which resulted in the crushing defeat of France and the formation of the German Empire early in 1871. Ernest F. Henderson, *A Short History of Germany*, II, 385.

some time before that influence can be known here, & in the mean time the affairs of neither the country nor the railway are proceeding very harmoniously.

August 16th — Yesterday I again attended at the Cathedral the celebration in honor of the fête day of the Emperor of the French:¹¹⁸ It will have been a proud day in Paris from the high & commanding position which the Emperor & his country now occupy in Europe— Here it seemed chiefly to remind me that I have been more than a year in this city, absent from you & our children, & I am sorry to say that I c[an] not appoint positively a time for my return— I now [regret] very much that I did not carry out my original int[ention] of returning in the last steamer in July; but it is usele[ss to] regret— Col. T. returned day before yesterday & he has now all his family with him except those who are in Europe so unnecessarily & foolishly— as you will say perhaps abou[t] my being in Mexico— & I am here, however, embarked in this business, I think it probable that I shall stay until something definite is known about the future arrangements of the work; but you may rely on seeing me— D. V. as Sister E. would say— before the cold weather— In the meantime, as we are not busy, I hope to make some excursions about here to interesting places which I ought to see, being so near; & which in younger days I would have seen before this— You & my dear children must console each other & be sure that I do not wantonly or wilfully prolong my absence, without reason— The distance is so great & the journey so difficult at this season, that before undertaking it I should like to know exactly what I am to expect as to the future. With best love to all our children & ardent wishes for their prosperity & happiness & for yours, believe me ever

Yr faithful & loving husband
A. Mordecai.

I send Rosa some old Mexican Stamps & some of a new emission, just issued, which will be still more valuable— I have got but few yet—

I hope to send a remittance for you to M^r Maury, by the extraordinary on Monday.

M^{rs} Alfred Mordecai
1825 Delancey Place
Philadelphia Pa

IMPERIAL MEXICAN RAILWAY.
Chief Engineer's Office.

Mexico, Sept 17th 1866

N^o. 29. My dear Wife

I take this last sheet to-day, because I have very little to say; but I hope that little will give you pleasure. I sent off my heaviest baggage a week ago, to be ready for me at Vera Cruz, where I hope to be in the

¹¹⁸ He here refers to Napoleon III of France, who was defeated and captured by the German armies in 1870 and then deposed by his own people. Henderson, *Short History of Germany*, II, 434-435.

beginning of October, to take the first steamer for N. York in that month— I am counting on the steamer to sail of the 8th as advertised, but it is so long since we had any reliable intelligence from the U. S. that I cannot tell whether there is any truth in the rumors which throw doubt on the line bei[ng] [disco]ntinued even to that time— However, I sh[all] tak[e [so]me steamer early in October, & hope that [I shall] not have an opportunity to write you another letter from Mexico— I am afraid you will not be sorry to hear that my life here, lately v^ery dull, is likely to be even more so during the rest of my stay: for Col. Talcott was going off this morning with a party of engineers on the line of the Railway: but reports of disturbances by guerillas or robbers, at one of the principal towns on the line have detained him— When he goes I shall have nothing to do but sit all day in the office, without occupation; but I shall try to get books of some kind— The near approach of my time of departure does not make me more patient.

We hear nothing of the steamer that was to leave N. Y. on the 1st Sept^r. & must wait for letters by the one which is to take this— I did not expect to witness here another celebration of the 16th Sept^r. & am very sorry I can't be with you by the 27th—

With best love to the children

Ever yr affte Alfred

Write to Alfred to meet me in N. York
if he can, & go to Phi^a with me—

M^{rs} Alfred Mordecai
1825 Delancey Place
Philadelphia

Rec^d. per *Manhattan* 3 p.m. 10 Oct— in a letter to R. M. telling me as he does you, that he is to embark from V. C. this month Hurrah!

Vera Cruz October 13th 1866

No 30.

My dear Wife

I did not expect to date another letter for you from Mexico, but being detained here to await the sailing of a steamer I may as well commence a letter to you, to be mailed as soon as I get to the United States. The derangement of the N. York line induced me to take the steamer for N. Orleans, & I accordingly reached here day before yesterday, as yesterday was her proper day of sailing; but the French Packet, with which she corresponds, having only arrived last evening the N. O. steamer will not sail until to-morrow. This is the usual uncertainty & delay in this country, & one must be content to put up with it, however annoying— A norther was blowing when we got here & the sea breeze was perfectly delightful; but to-day the wind has got round & the sea is smooth, but

the weather exceedingly hot— There is very little sickness here at present & no uneasiness is felt on that account; but the change from the delightful temperature of the plains is very remarkable & one can hardly realize that the latitude is the same— The journey down from Mexico was really frightful & I thought all the time how impossible it seemed that you could bear it, & what a standing miracle it is that the trip should be made every day, without serious accident— I thought it bad enough going up last year in the rainy season; but I really think that it is much worse coming down in the dry season: such jolting & bruising & fatigue can be borne only by reason of the rest which we get at night, when nothing untoward happens— We lost the greater part of our first night's repose— Just as I turned the page & wrote that word a letter was most unexpectedly brought to me, from Rutson M. enclosing one from Sister E., & one from our son Alfred informing me of the important step in life which he is about to take— It is hard, my dearest wife, that I cannot sincerely congratulate him on this occasion; but my only serious objection perhaps is the want of fortune on both sides; I shall enclose in this a note for you to forward to him— Rutson had sent the letter to Hav^a. whence it was sent by the French steamer, directed to Mr Oropesa whose office is just under Col. Talcott's rooms where I am writing & staying; they are only a few yards from the sea & as pleasant as any place can be in this hot climate & season— I was going to tell you how we came to be late at Puebla on the first day of our journey; it was by being upset, in the only mud hole on the whole road; We went over very easily, so that no one was hurt & I being on the upper side, escaped the mud pickle also— We had 9 inside & 3 out besides the conductor & the coachman— My fellow passengers were good humored people coming down for the French steamer— 3 women— & all behaved well— coming down the cumbers & other hills would have been entirely too much for you— Besides being killed by the jolting & fatigue, you would have been frightened to death by the fearful descents. I have been fortunate in meeting a pleasant companion in a N. Y. gentleman who came with me from Mexico & is going also to N. Orleans—

St Charles Hotel, N. Orleans, Octr 21st: Here I am at last, my dear wife, having reached this city last evening; too late for the Mobile steamer & there is none to-day, so I must be content to wait until Monday, to-morrow— I should have been glad to go on immediately & finish my journey; but the interval of rest ought to be acceptable; to restore my system after an uncomfortable little voyage— We got off from V. Cruz on the 14th, just a week ago this minute— The weather was good, but the steamer small & slow & badly managed— If I had not been able to spend the nights on deck I don't know how I shd have got through. When we entered the river our troubles were not over, for we were kept a day & night among the mosquitoes at Quarantine, & I shall not even now be able to get my things through the Custom House until

to-morrow- Then I hope it will be plain sailing- I shall stop a day each at Mobile, Raleigh & Richmond, & from the latter place I will write or telegraph you exactly when to expect me- Write to me there, care of Gustavus Myers, or telegraph to me, if necessary on account of Alfred's arrangements-

Don't be angry with me on account of my detention, or for any shortcomings in this poor letter; my head is still light from sea sickness & want of comfortable sleep; for even last night, in a good bed, I could not sleep, & the only comfort I have had since leaving V.C. was a good breakfast just now- Not even a bath, a fire last night having used up all the *cold* water-

I write a line to Ruston, in case sister E. should not have left N. York-

With warmest love to you, my dear, & to all around you I bid you once more for a short time, I hope, adieu-

Yr affectionate husband

A. Mordecai

BOOK REVIEWS

Florida during the Territorial Days. By Sidney Walter Martin. (Athens: The University of Georgia Press. 1944. Pp. ix, 308. Illustrations, maps. \$3.00.)

A hundred years have passed since Florida became a state in the Union. Dr. Martin's history of territorial days in that commonwealth was not prepared as part of a centennial celebration, though the timely publication of a meritorious account of pioneer years may serve to focus attention of Floridians on their early heritage. A doctor's dissertation at the University of North Carolina, the present study reflects credit upon the author. It appears in pleasing format, an accomplishment of one of the younger Southern university presses.

Spanning the transitional period from Spanish colony to American statehood, the book touches all phases of life in the territory. An initial chapter is devoted to the diplomacy of acquisition; five of the twelve chapters trace the political history of the period, with special attention to the administrations of Governors Andrew Jackson, William P. Duval, and Richard K. Call; the others discuss internal improvements, the development of urban centers, the land question, social diversions and economic life, religious organizations and educational beginnings, and Indian relations culminating in the Seminole War.

Dr. Martin has done a good job in indicating the conflicting nationalistic, geographical, and political groups that struggled for control of the territory. He has not been so successful in relating a number of issues and trends, common to all frontier communities, to the broader movements elsewhere in the United States. Perhaps agricultural life in the territory has been handled least satisfactorily. The author's statement that "Every farm, large and small, raised some corn, since it was indispensable as a food for the slaves," leaves the impression that all agrarian families owned Negroes; and the assertion that "Agriculture and plantation life dominated the economic scene in Florida, especially in Middle Florida," raises a question as to his definition of "plantation life."

It is regrettable that so excellent a study should not have received from the author or the Press, or both, the careful, meticulous editing it deserved. Sundry errors in quoting should have been corrected; footnote forms should have been harmonized; Merriam-Webster should have been employed to correct perhaps a hundred misspelled words; and some awkward expressions and superfluous words should have been eliminated. These imperfections stand in sharp contrast to the evidences of judicious scholarship that appear on every page.

Wendell Holmes Stephenson.

The University of Kentucky,
Lexington, Kentucky.

HISTORICAL NEWS

An oil painting of Willie Person Mangum, United States Senator from North Carolina and president pro tem of the Senate, March 1, 1845, when a joint resolution was passed annexing Texas to the United States, has been added to the Texas Memorial Museum on the University of Texas campus in Austin for display during the Texas centennial for statehood. The painting was loaned by the Dialectic Debating Society of the University of North Carolina.

Colonel Cornelius O. Cathey has returned to his teaching duties in the history department of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill after five years in the United States Army.

Dr. J. A. McGeachy, associate professor of history, has returned to Davidson College and has resumed his teaching duties after three and one-half years in the United States Army.

Dr. Chalmers G. Davidson, associate professor of history and director of the library, has returned to Davidson College after two years in the United States Navy.

Dr. Henry S. Stroupe has returned to Wake Forest College as an assistant professor of history. Mr. W. B. Yearns has been elected an instructor in history at the same institution.

Dr. Thomas J. Wilson III has been elected director of the University of North Carolina Press succeeding Mr. William T. Couch, who resigned to become director of the University of Chicago Press. Dr. Wilson has recently been discharged from the Navy where he had the rank of commander.

Dr. Arnold K. King, professor of education and advisor in the general college of the University of North Carolina, has been appointed associate dean of the graduate school at the University.

Professors K. C. Frazer and W. S. Jenkins, who during the war have been in the service of the United States government, have returned to the University of North Carolina. Both men teach in the field of political science.

Mr. Kenneth Chorley, president of Colonial Williamsburg, Incorporated, on December 3 announced the appointment of Dr. Edward P. Alexander, superintendent of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, as educational director of Colonial Williamsburg. Dr. Alexander will take up his new duties February 1.

Mr. David Cushing Duniway has been appointed State Archivist of Oregon. He was connected with The National Archives, Washington, D. C., in various capacities, 1937-1945, and he served as secretary-treasurer of the American Association for State and Local History, 1940-1945.

On October 16 the state officials of the United Daughters of the Confederacy met in Greensboro at a meeting which took the place of the 1945 convention. Plans for the 1946 convention were formulated and awards of prizes were announced. The 1945 officers will serve until the 1946 convention. Numerous awards were made for the varied activities of the Division.

On November 17 the North Carolina Society of County Historians met at Chapel Hill. Postwar plans for the Society were discussed and it was voted to hold a "history week" in the public schools of the state at some future date. Plans were tentatively formulated to conduct tours of various historical sections of the state. Mr. R. E. Wicker of Pinehurst was elected president for next year, succeeding Professor Phillips Russell of Chapel Hill. Dr. D. T. Smithwick of Louisburg was elected vice-president, and Mr. L. M. McDonald of Olivia was chosen secretary-treasurer, succeeding Mr. Malcolm Fowler of Lillington. The next meeting of the Society will be held on June 15-16 in Louisburg.

The North Carolina Society of Mayflower Descendants, at a meeting held in Winston-Salem on November 17, elected Ralph B. Cort of Greensboro governor, succeeding Dr. Wallace E. Caldwell of Chapel Hill. Mr. Morton La Baron Church of Charlotte was elected deputy governor. Mr. Gaylord C. Shepherd of Asheville was elected secretary-treasurer, Mr. Burnham Standish Colburn of Biltmore Forest historian, Mr. Samuel E. Ervin,

Jr., of Morganton counselor, and Rev. Douglas L. Rights of Winston-Salem elder. Elected to the Board of Assistants were: Mrs. Thomas J. Byerly of Winston-Salem, Mrs. Gerry D. Pettibane of Charlotte, Dr. Sturgis E. Leavitt of Chapel Hill, Mr. Macon R. Dunnagan of Raleigh, Mrs. Alonzo R. Perkins of Greensboro, Mrs. Charles F. Bryant of Asheville, Mrs. Philip W. Delano of Wilmington, and Mrs. Curtis Bynum of Asheville. Mr. Frederick A. Van Fleet of Cleveland, Ohio, made the principal address at the meeting.

The North Carolina Symphony Society held its annual business meeting in Raleigh December 11. The election of officers was postponed until some future date, and the following officers were continued in office: Dr. Benjamin F. Swalin, Chapel Hill, music director; Mr. Kermit H. Hunter, Chapel Hill, manager; Governor R. Gregg Cherry, chairman ex officio of Board of Directors; Dr. Clyde A. Erwin, Raleigh, ex officio, a member of the Board of Directors; Mr. Harry F. Comer, Chapel Hill, president; Mrs. Charles E. Johnson, Raleigh, vice-president; Miss Nancy N. Harris, Winston-Salem, secretary; and Mr. A. C. Hall, Raleigh, treasurer.

The nineteenth annual session of the North Carolina State Art Society met in Raleigh December 12. Governor R. Gregg Cherry presided at the first session and Mrs. Katherine Pendleton Arrington, president, of Warrenton, brought presidential greetings. Mr. James W. Lane, member of the curatorial staff of the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C., gave an illustrated lecture, "A Short Survey of American Painting Since 1750." After the lecture a reception was held and there was a preview exhibition of "The American Scene from 1750," a collection which was brought to Raleigh by Mr. William F. Davidson, vice-president, M. Knoedler and Company, Inc., New York City. On the morning of December 13 a general business meeting of the society was held, and in the afternoon officers were elected for the ensuing year. Mrs. Katherine Pendleton Arrington was re-elected president, and Mrs. Henry M. London was elected executive secretary.

The Archaeological Society of North Carolina held its annual meeting in Raleigh on December 13. Mr. William Franklin Stinespring, associate professor of Old Testament at Duke University, delivered an address entitled "The Near East in Archaeology," and Mr. Harry T. Davis of Raleigh read a paper entitled "A Survey of North Carolina Archaeology to Date." A reception was held by the Woman's Club for all members and guests of the societies. The following officers were elected for the ensuing year: Mrs. J. B. Derieux, Raleigh, president; Dr. L. E. Hinkle, Raleigh, vice-president; Dr. Raymond Adams, Chapel Hill, secretary-treasurer; and Mr. Harry T. Davis, Raleigh, editor. Mr. A. G. Phelps of Hilton Village, Virginia, and Dr. John Gillin of Durham were elected to the Executive Committee.

The fifth annual session of the North Carolina Society for the Preservation of Antiquities was held in Raleigh on December 13. Mrs. Charles A. Cannon of Concord brought presidential greetings and Dr. and Mrs. Benjamin F. Swalin of Chapel Hill rendered a musical program. Miss Gertrude Carraway of New Bern introduced the guest speaker, Mr. Thomas Tileston Waterman of Washington, D. C., who delivered an address entitled "The Huguenot Builders of the Carolinas." After the election of officers for the ensuing year, a reception was held for the members and guests of the society. The following officers were elected: Mrs. Charles A. Cannon of Concord, president; Judge Richard Dillard Dixon of Edenton, first vice-president; Mrs. Gordon W. Lovejoy of Raleigh, secretary-treasurer.

On December 14 the forty-fifth annual session of the State Literary and Historical Association was held in Raleigh. At the morning session Dr. Clement Eaton of Easton, Pennsylvania, read a paper, "Edwin A. Alderman, Liberal of the New South"; Dr. Norman Foerster of Chapel Hill read a paper, "Iowa, North Carolina, and the Humanities"; and Mrs. Charlotte Hilton Green of Raleigh reviewed North Carolina books and authors. After these papers were read a business meeting was held at which time the following officers were elected: Dr. Robert B. House, Chapel Hill, president; Mrs. Ford S. Worthy of Washington,

first vice-president; Dr. J. Harold Wolf of Gaffney, South Carolina, second vice-president; Mrs. Sidney McMullan of Edenton, third vice-president; and Dr. Christopher Crittenden of Raleigh, secretary-treasurer.

At the evening session Governor R. Gregg Cherry presided and Dr. Wallace E. Caldwell of Chapel Hill presented the Mayflower Society Cup to Mr. Josephus Daniels for his book entitled, *The Wilson Era; Years of Peace 1910-1917*. Mr. Aubrey L. Brooks of Greensboro delivered his presidential address entitled, "America in a World Democracy," and Mr. Armstead M. Dobie, United States Circuit Judge of Charlottesville, Virginia, delivered an address "Law and Language." A reception was held for members and guests of the Association immediately after the conclusion of this address.

On December 17 ceremonies were held at Wright Memorial Monument atop Kill Devil Hill, observing the forty-second anniversary of man's first aeroplane flight. Lieutenant General James Doolittle delivered the principal address. During the ceremony United States Army and Navy planes roared through the air in salute.

The library of the Woman's College of the University of North Carolina on January 5 opened an exhibit entitled "The American Press, an Instrument of Freedom," which traced the history of the newspaper in America. The exhibit was open to the public and remained open until January 22. It was made up of twenty-five panels and included original material as well as photocopies, silhouettes, murals, and photographs. The main periods covered were the colonial, Revolutionary, Civil War, World War I, and World War II.

The American Historical Association held its annual meeting, without a program, in Washington, D. C., on December 27. A business meeting was held and the presidential address was delivered. The council also held its annual session.

On December 31 the 1945 Baruch University Prize of \$1,000 was awarded to Dr. Harold S. Schultzy of the department of

history at Elon College for his work entitled, "South Carolina and National Politics, 1852-1860: A Study of the Movement for Southern Independence." The award is given by Mr. Bernard Baruch in memory of his mother, Mrs. Simon Baruch, and is awarded under the auspices of the United Daughters of the Confederacy.

Pioneering a People's Theater, by Dr. Archibald Henderson, has been published. It is one of the seventeen volumes in the series of sesquicentennial publications being issued during the year by the University of North Carolina. The volume is dedicated to Frederick H. Koch, the founder of the Carolina Playmakers at the University.

On November 11 a portrait of Thomas Jordan Jarvis, governor of North Carolina (1879-1885), was unveiled at ceremonies held in the Hall of Representatives in the Capitol. The portrait was given by Mrs. Nina Cleve of New York, a niece of Governor Jarvis, and was unveiled by his grandniece, Miss Florence Jarvis Cleve. Governor R. Gregg Cherry accepted the portrait on behalf of the state, and Mr. Benjamin Bruce Sugg of Greenville delivered a tribute to Governor Jarvis. The ceremonies were planned and arranged by the Department of Archives and History; Dr. Christopher Crittenden, director of the Department, presided; and the Department issued an illustrated pamphlet (12 pages) by Mrs. Joye E. Jordan, head of the Hall of History, entitled, *Thomas Jordan Jarvis*. The pamphlet may be had gratis as long as the supply lasts.

On November 4 and 5 the veterans of the 81st (Wildcat) Division held a two-day meeting in Raleigh. Major General Gustan Franche of Camden, South Carolina, was the guest speaker and former Governor J. Melville Broughton and Mr. Josephus Daniels also made addresses. The concluding ceremonies were held on Capitol Square on November 5, when Governor R. Gregg Cherry delivered an address. After the address the ceremonies were adjourned to the Hall of History to view the Japanese trophies, captured by the Division, which had been placed in the custody of the State Department of Archives and

History. In this connection the Department issued an illustrated pamphlet (12 pages) by Mrs. Joye E. Jordan, entitled *The Wildcat Division*, which was distributed during the exercises. This pamphlet is for free distribution as long as the supply lasts.

Dr. Cecil Johnson, an associate professor of history in the University of North Carolina, was designated to represent the University at the centennial celebration of Limestone College at Gaffney, South Carolina, on November 4-6. Dr. Johnson was formerly a member of the faculty at Limestone College.

Mr. Kay Kyser and his mother, Mrs. Emily Royster Howell Kyser of Rocky Mount, have presented to the library of the University of North Carolina the private library of Edward Vernon Howell, former dean of the school of pharmacy of the University. Dean Howell was the first dean of the school of pharmacy and served in that capacity for thirty-four years. This library contains over 3,500 items, many of which deal historically with North Carolina and the South during the War for Southern Independence.

Misses Cecil B. and Eugenia A. Burroughs of Savannah, Georgia, have presented to the Southern Historical Collection in the library of the University of North Carolina a collection of the papers of John Macpherson Berrier, who was a member of the United States Senate from Georgia and was Attorney General of the United States.

Among the men who have been awarded highly prized Kenan Professorships at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is Dr. Fletcher M. Green, professor of history. The Kenan Professorship Endowment and Reserve Fund was established in 1917 by the will of the late Mrs. Mary Lily Kenan Bingham in memory of her father, William R. Kenan, and her uncles, James G. Kenan and Thomas S. Kenan, who were graduates of the University.

The Historical Society of North Carolina was organized in Chapel Hill on November 17, largely through the efforts of Dr.

Archibald Henderson. At this meeting a constitution and by-laws were drawn up and adopted, and the following officers were elected: Dean Alice Baldwin of Duke University, president; Dr. Frontis W. Johnston of Davidson College, vice-president; and Dr. Cecil Johnson of the University of North Carolina, secretary-treasurer. The members elected to the executive council are as follows: Dr. Archibald Henderson of the University of North Carolina; Dr. Christopher Crittenden of the State Department of Archives and History; Mr. William T. Polk of the *Greensboro Daily News*; and Dr. James W. Patton of State College. Following the business meeting, a dinner was held, and afterward Dr. Frontis W. Johnston read a paper on "The Military Career of Zebulon Baird Vance."

Memories of an Old-Time Tar Heel, by Kemp Plummer Battle, former president of the University of North Carolina, was published in November by the University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill.

The Duke University Press, Durham, announces the publication of *Government Assistance in Eighteenth-Century France*, by Shelby T. McCloy.

The Albert J. Beveridge Memorial Fellowship has been established by the American Historical Association, and will be awarded annually for the best original manuscript, either completed or in progress, on American history. The Fellowship will be administered by the Committee on the Albert J. Beveridge Memorial Fund, and has a cash value of \$1,000. The manuscript will be published on the Albert J. Beveridge Memorial Fund, and the author will also receive a five per cent royalty. Each annual award will be announced at the annual meeting of the American Historical Association in December.

Former Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins has given the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library a collection of addresses and articles by herself and others on the subject of labor in the United States, 1932-44, together with letters and resolutions

addressed to her as Secretary of Labor from 1940 to 1942 on various subjects growing out of the problem of national defense. Additional personal papers for the period 1933-38 received from Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt include materials relating to inaugural ceremonies and family weddings. Other materials acquired include fifteen sound recordings of addresses by President Roosevelt and recordings of other important speeches and events of his administration; forty photographs made on his visit to Ottawa, Canada, in August, 1943; a number of books and pamphlets on subjects related to his Presidency; and a variety of museum objects. In the last-mentioned group are two dry-point portrait engravings of the President made in 1944 by Walter Tittle.

On September 12, 1945, a few days after they were flown to the United States from General MacArthur's headquarters, the Japanese surrender documents signed on board the battleship *Missouri* were placed on view in The National Archives, where the German surrender papers, which have been transferred to the permanent custody of the Archivist, were already on display. General Jonathan M. Wainwright opened the exhibition in a ceremony witnessed by diplomatic and military representatives of the United Nations. Subsequently the Joint Chiefs of Staff transferred the surrender documents signed in the Philippines, at Singapore, in southern Korea, and on Saishu-To, and these were also placed on display. From November 1 until December 15 all the surrender documents were on a Victory Loan tour. They are now exhibited in The National Archives.

The instruments of surrender and other papers signed at Luneburg, Reims, and Berlin have been published in facsimile by The National Archives in *Germany Surrenders Unconditionally*. This forty-one-page booklet also contains an introduction briefly describing the documents and the circumstances of their signing and the radio script of the ceremonies opening the exhibit of them on June 6. A similar publication, *The End of the War in the Pacific*, containing facsimiles of the Japanese surrender documents, is in press.

On October 25 Governor R. Gregg Cherry appointed on the Tryon's Palace Commission the following persons: Mrs. J. E. Latham of Greensboro, Miss Gertrude Carraway of New Bern, Mrs. Charles A. Cannon of Concord, United States Senator Clyde R. Hoey of Shelby, former Governor J. M. Broughton of Raleigh, Senator D. L. Ward of New Bern, Mrs. A. B. Stoney of Morganton, Mrs. John A. Kellenberger of Greensboro, Mrs. J. Wilbur Bunn of Raleigh, Mrs. Richard N. Duffy of New Bern, Miss Virginia Horne of Wadesboro, Mrs. Peter Arrington of Warrenton, Mrs. Richard J. Reynolds of Winston-Salem, Mrs. William H. Belk of Charlotte, Mrs. Paul L. Borden of Goldsboro, Mrs. E. L. McKee of Sylva, Mrs. Lawrence Sprunt of Wilmington, Mr. A. H. Graham of Hillsboro, Senator Carroll P. Rogers of Tryon, Mr. S. Clay Williams of Winston-Salem, Mrs. P. P. McCain of Sanitorium, Dr. Fred Hanes of Durham, Mrs. Lyman A. Cotten of Chapel Hill, Mrs. J. S. Mitchener of Raleigh, and Judge Richard Dillard Dixon of Edenton. Ex officio members are Mr. Harry McMullan, Attorney General; Mr. R. Bruce Etheridge, director of the State Department of Conservation and Development; Dr. Christopher Crittenden, director of the State Department of Archives and History; Mr. L. C. Lawrence, mayor of New Bern; and Mr. George W. Ipock, chairman of the Craven County Board of Commissioners.

On November 6 the Tryon's Palace Commission met in Raleigh and elected Governor R. Gregg Cherry honorary chairman; Mrs. J. E. Latham of Greensboro, chairman; Mrs. J. A. Kellenberger of Greensboro, vice-chairman; Mrs. Charles A. Cannon of Concord, second vice-president; and Miss Gertrude Carraway of New Bern, secretary. Mr. Charles M. Johnson, State Treasurer, was elected treasurer of the Commission to handle contributions to the restoration project.

Among the sesquicentennial volumes of the University of North Carolina published during the fall and winter of 1945-1946 to which the history department made considerable contribution are the following: *A State University Serves the Humanities*, which was edited by a committee of which Professor

L. C. MacKinney was chairman. Professor W. E. Caldwell contributed a chapter, "The Humanities at the University of North Carolina, 1795-1945," and Professor J. L. Godfrey contributed a chapter, "History and Its Relation to the Humanities"; and *Library Resources of the University of North Carolina*, which contains sections by Professors W. E. Caldwell, L. C. MacKinney, M. B. Garrett, J. L. Godfrey, Phillips Russell, A. R. Newsome, and W. W. Pierson.

Books received include Rembert W. Patrick, *Florida Under Five Flags* (Gainesville, Florida: University of Florida Press, 1945); and Charles E. Rush, *Library Resources of the University of North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1945).