Vol. XVIII APRIL, 1919 No. 4

The North Carolina Booklet

GREAT EVENTS IN NORTH CAROLINA HISTORY

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DAUGHTERS OF THE REVOLUTION
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CONTENTS

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The North Carolina Booklet

Great Events in North Carolina History

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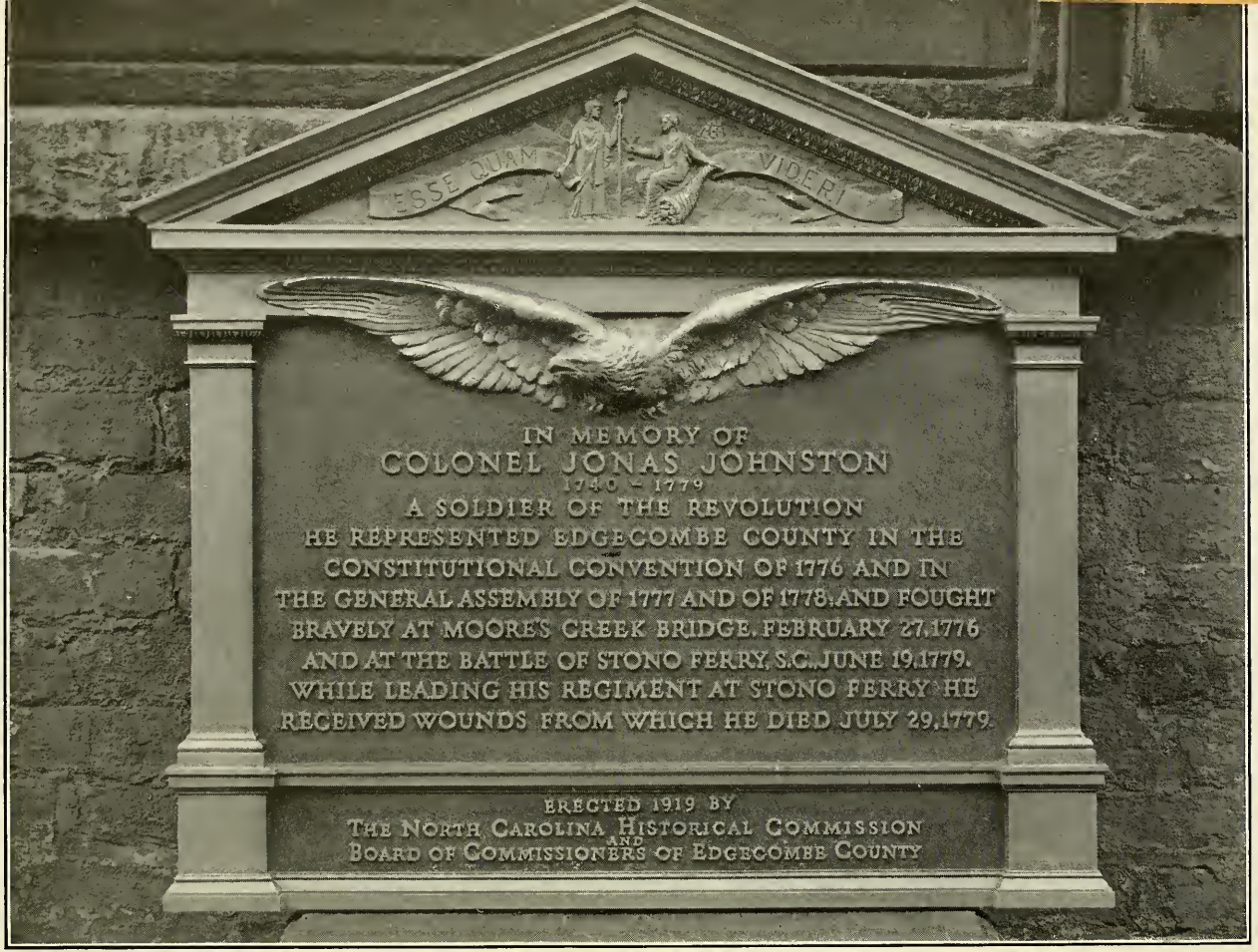

Tablet to Colonel Jonas Johnston in the courthouse at Tarborough, N. C. Unveiled by Miss Martina Carr, May 30, 1919.

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The
NORTH CAROLINA BOOKLET

"Carolina! Carolina! Heaven's blessings attend her!
While we live we will cherish, protect and defend her"

Published by
THE NORTH CAROLINA SOCIETY
DAUGHTERS OF THE REVOLUTION

The object of THE BOOKLET is to aid in developing and preserving North Carolina History. The proceeds arising from its publication will be devoted to patriotic purposes. EDITOR.

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John Steele

(Concluded)

By Archibald Henderson

V

As early as 1793, Steele was under consideration for national preferment. His talents were especially appreciated by Hamilton, who remained in correspondence with him. The fact that Steele, in 1792, though under thirty years of age, had been prominently pressed for the Senate, and again in 1795 had been the candidate of his party for the Senate, gave him strong claims to recognition by Washington, who was well acquainted with him and had a very favorable opinion of his ability. Upon the resignation of John Davis of Massachusetts as Comptroller of the Treasury, John Steele was appointed to that office, his commission bearing the date July 1, 1796.

Before taking up in more detail the career of Steele as Comptroller of the Treasury, some quotations from the correspondence of Steele and Hamilton may throw interesting sidelights upon important events and issues of the time. In a letter to Steele (Philadelphia, October 15, 1792), Hamilton makes a noteworthy pronouncement upon the presidential situation, which is of especial interest for its reference to Aaron Burr, Hamilton's evil genius.

> Mr. Adams is the man who will be supported in the Northern and Middle States by the friends of the Government. They reason thus—"Mr. Adams, like other men, has his faults and his foibles—some of the opinions he is supposed to entertain, we do not approve . . . but we believe him to be honest, firm, faithful and independent—a sincere lover of his country—a real friend to genuine liberty; but combining his attachment to that with the love of order and stable

government. No man's private character can be fairer than his. No man has given stronger proofs than him of disinterested and intrepid patriotism. We will therefore support him as far preferable to any one who is likely to be opposed to him."

Who will be seriously opposed to him—I am yet at a loss to decide. One while, Governor Clinton appeared to be the man. Of late there have been symptoms of Col. Burr's canvassing for it. Some say, one or both, of these will be played off as a diversion in favour of Mr. Jefferson.

I do not scruple to say to you that my preference of Mr. Adams to either of these characters is decided. As to Mr. Clinton, he is a man of narrow and perverse politics, and as well under the former as under the present Government he has been steadily since the termination of the War with Great Britain opposed to national principles. My opinion of Mr. Burr is yet to form—but according to the present state of it, he is a man whose only political principle is to *mount at all events*—to the highest legal honors of the Nation, and as much further as circumstances will carry him. Imputations not favorable to his integrity as a man rest upon him; but I do not vouch for their authenticity.

There was a time, when I should have balanced between Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Adams; but I now view the former as a man of sublimated and paradoxical imagination cherishing notions incompatible with regular and firm government.*

On April 8, 1793, Edmund Charles Genet, the accredited representative of the new French Republic, landed at Charleston. It was with a feeling little short of consternation that the American people noted his extraordinary activities in enlisting seamen, commissioning officers, and fitting out privateers, for the unconcealed purpose of preying upon British commerce. One week after Washington issued his Proclamation of Neutrality (April 22, 1793), Genet was at Salisbury, North Carolina, on his way northward; and the following extract from a letter written by Steele to Hamilton (Salisbury, April 30, 1793) contains a vivid pen-picture at close range of Citizen Genet at this stirring period in American history:

This morning Mr. Genet, the French Minister, set out from this place for Philadelphia. . . . You have heard much of *this citizen*, no doubt, and therefore anything of him from me will seem super-

* For a copy of this letter I am indebted to the courtesy of Judge H. G. Connor.

fluous; but as I am writing of the man that we are all afraid of, permit me to say that he has a good person, fine ruddy complexion, quite active, and seems always in a bustle, more like a busy man than a man of business. A Frenchman in his manners, he announces himself in all companies as the minister of the republic, &c., talks freely of his commission, and like most Europeans, seems to have adopted mistaken notions of the penetration and knowledge of the people of the United States. He is, or affects to be, highly gratified by the affectionate treatment he has thus far experienced from the Americans, except of Charleston, where an insult was offered to a French seaman, which he attributes to the merchants, who seem in his opinion almost wholly attached to the British. The minister, notwithstanding his good-nature, spoke angrily of this insult, and for a moment deviated from his system, which I think is to laugh us into the war, if he can. The best informed men in this State, who are wholly disinterested, continue uneasy, from an apprehension that our political connection with France, and our commercial intercourse with England, will place the United States in a delicate, if not a dangerous situation during the war.

I have often said, on proper occasions, that the friends to neutrality and peace would find in the Secretary of the Treasury an able and zealous friend. . . . The best men in this country rely chiefly upon your talents and disposition to avoid the rocks which lie upon the right hand, and upon the left, ready to dash our young government to pieces upon the least unskillful pilotage.

VI

On November 15, 1796, Steele sent to the General Assembly of North Carolina his resignation both as Justice of the Peace for the county of Rowan and as Major General in the Fourth Division of the Militia of North Carolina—in consequence of the assumption of his new duties and of his removal to Philadelphia. Early in July of that year he had formally taken charge of the office of the Comptroller of the Treasury, in which office he had been preceded by Nicholas Eveleigh of South Carolina, Oliver Wolcott, Jr., of Connecticut, Jonathan Jackson of Massachusetts, and John Davis of Massachusetts. For the next six years, Steele assiduously devoted himself to the onerous and taxing duties of that office.

The accounting system of the Treasury Department, designed to concentrate all accounting agencies in that department, was created by Alexander Hamilton, the first Secretary

of the Treasury. In the original organization of that department, by the act of September 2, 1789, provision was made by the first Congress for a Secretary of the Treasury, an assistant to the Secretary, a Comptroller, an Auditor, a Treasurer, and a Register. Under the terms of that act, it was the duty of the Comptroller to superintend the adjustment and preservation of all public accounts; to examine all accounts settled by the Auditor and certify balances arising thereon to the Register; to countersign all warrants drawn by the Secretary of the Treasury, which were warranted by law; to report to the Secretary the official forms of all papers to be issued in the different offices for collecting the public revenue, and the manner and form of keeping and stating the accounts of the several persons employed therein; to provide for the regular and punctual payment of all moneys which may be collected and to direct proceedings for all delinquencies of officers of the revenue and for debts due the United States.

Steele took up his quarters in Philadelphia at Francis's Hotel; and in a letter to his wife, written shortly after his arrival in Philadelphia, he thus describes the routine of his daily life:

> It will no doubt be some satisfaction to you to know the nature of my office duties, and other minutiae relative to my situation. The papers are kept in a large house in Chestnut Street, about the center of the city. The Secretary of the Treasury and his clerks occupy the lower story, the comptroller and his clerks the rooms of the second story, and the Register of the Treasury and his clerks the third story. . . . Under my direction there are thirteen clerks and a doorkeeper, and indeed there is business enough for the whole. *Writing, writing, writing* in this department is the whole duty of man, and at this you know I can do a reasonable share. I go to the office every morning after an early breakfast, continue there until three o'clock, dine, and after dinner return to business again until sunset or dusk. The clerks are all at liberty after three o'clock, tho' some of them return and do business in the afternoon from choice. These are allowed an additional compensation.

In the first days of his residence in Philadelphia, he wrote his wife: "In leisure books shall be my companions"; but

it was not long before his duties became so onerous that he was kept regularly at his office until nine o'clock in the evening. "Even on Sundays," he says, "I have not leisure to go to church, except now and then when I understand a person of particular eminence is to preach. Besides other vast cares upon my mind, not one dollar can go in, or out of the Treasury of the United States without my name and that of the Secretary of the Treasury."

VII

An interesting picture of social life in Philadelphia and in Washington, during the early sessions of Congress in the two capitals, are found in the letters of General Steele and his daughter, Ann Nessfield, written home from time to time to Mrs. Steele at Salisbury. Mrs. Steele seldom accompanied her husband to either place; and her associations with Philadelphia were saddened by the death of her infant son, whom she lost there in 1798. A few brief extracts from the letters must suffice to give us a glimpse or two of the social happenings of the day. A corner of Steele's heart, revealing his deep and intense love for his wife—the "Polly" of his letters—is portrayed in the following extract from a letter to her, written from Philadelphia (January 31, 1793), in which he mentions dining with Washington:

> I dined to-day at the President's in a very large company of ladies and gentlemen. On such occasions, without you, I feel like Captain O'Blunder, "Alone in the throng." The truth is, I feel every day more and more disposed to believe that there is no happiness to be found out of a man's own house. Any mortal who thinks that honor and fame will confer that inestimable boon called happiness, in the end like Solomon will find himself grossly mistaken. Believing in that opinion I rejoice with all my heart that my political course is almost finished. . . . The President today asked me to drink a glass of wine with him. This is considered here a great honor. It may be so; but I would have been more highly gratified in drinking a glass with my own dear Polly.

During the year 1801, General Steele was accompanied to Washington by his sprightly and witty daughter, Ann Ness-

field; and they took quarters at a Miss Beall's in Georgetown. A few quotations from her letters home carry the piquancy of interest which attaches to experiences associated with personages of historic note. Writing to her mother on November 4, 1801, she says: "I dined at Mr. Madison's both last Sunday and today—nothing uncommon in any of the dinners—not a bit better than your own, and in no more style. . . . As for fashions, every thing is Crazy Jane, and the more you can imitate a crazy person the more fashionable you are." On Christmas day, 1801, she writes: "In the morning we visited the Roman Catholic Chapel in this place (Georgetown), and were entertained with a great quantity of show but very little substance. We returned home to dinner, and drank tea with Mrs. Orr from whence we have just returned. . . . I was in company with Mrs. Murry (William Vans Murray?) the evening before last and must positively give you a description of her head-dress. Well, it was a colored cotton handkerchief, red and spotted with yellow. . . . I don't know what to call it for it would be highly improper to call it a handkerchief." At times, too, Ann wrote with precocious solemnity of her father's affairs; and the following extract must be regarded as only partially explaining the reasons which actuated General Steele in his retirement from office. "The other evening," writes Ann to her mother, not long before her father resigned the Comptrollership of the Treasury, "I had a long conversation with Papa respecting his resignation and I have concluded that it is better for him to retire from public business. He says that as we are situated now we spend all his salary and it will appear very singular if we should continue to live, part of the family in Carolina and the other part in Washington; and as to our living, all of us, here, it is out of the question, for we could not even live comfortably on less than five thousand dollars, which is just twice as much as his income."

One of the most fascinating memoirs of the period is *The First Forty Years of Washington Society,* as portrayed by the

family letters of Mrs. Samuel Harrison Smith (Margaret Bayard). In a letter (July 5, 1801) to his sister, Mary Ann Smith, Mr. S. H. Smith draws a vivid picture, in which Steele incidentally appears and Jefferson is, of course, the central figure.

I cannot deny myself the pleasure of passing a few minutes with you, chiefly to draw a picture, which I know will give your patriotic heart delight, a picture of Mr. Jefferson in which he was exhibited to the best advantage. About 12 o'clock yesterday, the citizens of Washington and Geo. Town waited upon the president to make their devoirs. . . . We found about 20 persons present in a room where sat Mr. J. surrounded by the five Cherokee chiefs. After a conversation of a few minutes, he invited his company into the usual dining room, whose four large sideboards were covered with refreshments, such as cakes of various kinds, wine, punch, &c. Every citizen was invited to partake, as his taste dictated, of them, and the invitation was most cheerfully accepted, and the consequent duties discharged with alacrity. The company soon increased to near a hundred, including all the public officers and most of the respectable citizens, and strangers of distinction. Martial music soon announced the approach of the marine corps of Capt. Burrows, who in due military form saluted the President, accompanied by the President's March played by an excellent band attached to the corps. After undergoing various military evolutions, the company returned to the dining room, and the band from an adjacent room played a succession of fine patriotic airs. All appeared to be cheerful, all happy. Mr. Jefferson mingled promiscuously with the citizens, and far from designating any particular friends for consultation, conversed for a short time with every one that came in his way. It was certainly a proud day for him, the honours of which he discharged with more than his usual care. At 2 o'clock, after passing 2 hours in this very agreeable way, the company separated. At 4 a dinner was given at McMunn and Conrad's,* where all the civil and military officers attended, and a number of citizens, which, including the former, amounted to about 50. Everything here was conducted with great propriety, and it was not unamusing to see Mr. Gallatin, Madison, and Dearborn on one side directly opposite to Mr. Meredith, Harrison, Steele on the other. . . . Thus you see that we are here at least all Republicans and all Federalists.

VIII

Upon the accession of John Adams to the Presidency, Steele was retained in office as Comptroller of the Treasury;

* A boarding house near the Capitol.

and he continued to fill that office until the close of Adams's administration. In the year 1800 a division in the ranks of the Federalists seriously threatened the chances of Adams in the coming Presidential election. The Hamiltonian section of the party was out of sympathy with the President. Oliver Wolcott, although holding the office of Secretary of the Treasury, was deep in intrigues against Adams; and to McHenry, the Secretary of War, who was also in the cabal, he wrote (June 18, 1800): "The prospect is almost certain that the country will be freed from the greatest possible curse, a Presidential administration, which no party can trust, which is incapable of adhering to any system, in connection with which no character is safe." As soon as it became plain that Charles Cotesworth Pinckney could not be elected President, and believing it to be incompatible with honor and a suitable respect to his own character—as he put it!—to serve longer under Adams, Wolcott sent in his resignation on November 8, 1800, to take effect on the last day of December. Two days later (November 10), Adams accepted Wolcott's resignation.

In recognition of his great ability as a financier and of the skill, wisdom and discretion with which he had administered the office of Comptroller during two administrations, President Adams at once offered to Steele the post of Secretary of the Treasury. Steele was loth to accept the appointment so near the end of Adams's administration; and wrote to his close friend, John Haywood, of Raleigh, the State Treasurer, asking his advice as to the best course to pursue. In his reply, Haywood says: "The appointment now offered to you is completely gratifying and satisfactory to me; inasmuch as I consider it among the most distinguished and dignified in the gift of the Government. . . . As Secretary of the Treasury, you would be of higher grade, and more immediately of the President's constitutional advisers than at present. . . . I am clearly of opinion, you suffer yourself to be too far influenced by the principle of delicacy you state; as a proof of this, I am free to say, that I would as soon and as willingly accept from Mr. Adams, on the last day

of his administration, any appointment he might think proper to confer on me, of which I believed myself worthy, and which the world or those who knew me considered me equal, as at any point of his administration. . . . In every view of the business, I am clear you ought to accept." Unable to overcome his delicacy of feeling in the matter, however, Steele declined the distinguished honor proffered him by President Adams; and on December 30, the President nominated Samuel Dexter as Secretary of the Treasury.

IX

Upon his accession to office, Jefferson appointed Albert Gallatin to the post of Secretary of the Treasury; and Steele, whose conduct of the office of Comptroller had been conspicuous for efficiency, he persuaded to remain. Steele remained in office against his own inclination; for he was unable for financial reasons to remove his entire family to Washington and for many months his health had been troubling him. Writing to Jefferson on July 11, 1801, Steele says: "I have for some time past wished to obtain leave of absence from the seat of Government to visit my friends in Carolina, and by a temporary relaxation from business, shake off, if possible, a complaint which gives me great uneasiness." One year later, in a letter to his wife (June 26, 1802), he says: "Since the middle of September, 1800, I have enjoyed the society and comforts of domestic life but nine weeks, and during all that time my anxieties have been increased by a delicate state of health, and the incessant cares of a laborious office."

At some time prior to this, Steele had communicated to his close friend, Nathaniel Macon, his intention of resigning. On June 2, 1802, Macon, who was really the leader in Congress of the opposite party, wrote to Steele: "I am extremely desirous that you should not retire. . . . I cannot refrain from saying, that I do not know any person, that would be so generally acceptable as yourself, nor can a stronger proof be given in favor of any public character, than that in times when party runs rather high, he should by the faithful

& upright discharge of his official duty obtain the confidence of all candid men." Despite the urgency of Macon, of the opposite political party but his warm personal friend, Steele wrote as follows to Jefferson:

Sir, WASHINGTON, June 28, 1802.

About the 10th of next month, I wish to be favored with your permission to visit my family in Carolina. Hitherto a variety of considerations have restrained me from removing them to this place. Among others, a desire not to do anything which would render it inconvenient for me to conform to your views, whatever they might be, in relation to the disposition of my office. I thought it my duty also to postpone any communication of my sentiments to you on this delicate subject, until you should have had leisure to mature an opinion of my public conduct, and until Mr Gallatin, with all the assistance which I could give him in the mean time, should have become sufficiently acquainted with the forms, and principles of business in the Department to experience no inconvenience from a new appointment if that should be your intention, or if circumstances on my part should render a resignation necessary. After leaving the seat of Government with the permission which I now solicit, I am not certain that it will suit me to return: but if I should conclude to do so, my family will accompany me about the beginning of October, and in deliberating with them in the course of the summer on a step which must be attended with trouble, and the sacrifice of many domestic comforts, it will be extremely gratifying to me, to be certain that I understand your wishes. The politeness with which you have uniformly honored me since our first acquaintance, and a certain bias which is inseparable from the reflection, that we are citizens of the same Geographical section of the United States cannot but increase my reluctance to withdraw my services, if they are considered of any importance to your administration. Salary although necessary to me, in relation to my private circumstances is far from being my principal object in serving the public. In a country as free as this happily is, a man should have higher, and better views.—Mine are regulated by a desire, I trust an honest one, to be useful and in that way to acquire reputation, by deserving it. I am sensible, however that in times like the present, it is not possible for any man to continue in such an Office, with satisfaction to himself, or advantage to the public unless he can have reason to be assured that your confidence in his fitness is entire.

I have the honor to be, Sir
With sentiments of perfect respect
Your most obt servant
Jno Steele

Thomas Jefferson Esq
President of the United States.

In his very courteous reply, written two days later, the President says, among other things: "I am happy in the occasion it (your letter) presents of assuring you unequivocally that I have been entirely satisfied with your conduct in office, that I consider it for the public benefit that you should continue, & that I never have for one moment entertained a wish to the contrary. I will add, and with sincerity that I should with reluctance see any circumstance arise which should render your continuance in office inconsistent with your domestic interests or comfort, the possibility of which is intimated in your letter. Your deliberations with your family therefore on their removal hither may be safely bottomed on the sincerity of these dispositions on my part; and I shall be happy if they should have the effect of determining their & your resolutions to that measure." To this letter of the President, Steele made the following reply:

WASHINGTON, July 1st 1802.

Sir,

I am extremely gratified, and obliged by your favor of yesterday. It has determined me to postpone my journey to Carolina until the last week of this month which is the more agreeable to me, as my absence will then correspond with the general arrangements of the Executive.

If my private affairs can possibly be made to admit of it, a sense of gratitude for what I consider equivalent to a new appointment will induce me to return: but whether in or out of office, I pray you to be assured, that I shall always consider it a flattering distinction to be honored with your confidence, and that it will be my study and my pride to merit the favorable opinion which you have had the goodness to express to me.

I have the honor to be, Sir
With the highest consideration
Your most obedient servt
Jno Steele

Thomas Jefferson Esqre
President of the United States.

Upon his return to Salisbury on August 17, and after consultation with his family, all of whom like himself were in poor health, General Steele sent in his resignation to the President.

Sir, SALISBURY, September 30th 1802.

After leaving the seat of government on the 6th of Augt last with the permission which you did me the favor to grant to me I arrived at this place on the 17th where I found my family in their usual health; but I had been at home only a few days before nearly the whole of them (Mrs Steele of the number) were taken down with a fever which prevails very generally among the inhabitants of this part of the country. Scarcely a single family in our neighborhood can be said to have escaped. Mine continues to be so much indisposed that I am under the necessity of relinquishing (for the present) the intention of removing them to the seat of government, and consequently of requesting that you will be pleased to accept my resignation of the office of Comptr of the Treasury. With my resignation you will I hope also have the goodness to accept an assurance, that I am duly sensible of your polite treatment and that in future it cannot but be a source of pleasing and grateful reflection to me to have been invited by you to continue in the public service.

I have the honor to be, Sir
With perfect consideration
Your mot obt & hume servant
Jno Steele.

Thomas Jefferson Esqre
President of the U. States.

By this same post, Steele sent a letter to Nathaniel Macon, in which he says: "Since the last of Augt my family has been so much indisposed (Mrs. Steele of the number) that I have not in my power to make any arrangements in my private affairs preparatory to their removal to the seat of Government, and it is too irksome to live there as I have done for some time past without them. Thus circumstanced I have found myself under the necessity of relinquishing (for the present) the intention of returning. The mail which carries this carries also a letter to the President requesting him to accept my resignation." At the same time, in a letter to the Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Gallatin, he says: "In conducting, for six years past, the business of an office distinguished for the labor and responsibility which it imposes my first object has constantly been fidelity to the public, the second, a respectful deportment toward those with whom it was my duty to maintain official intercourse. It will afford me no small degree of gratification to understand that I have succeeded in these to your satisfaction."

The genuine regret which Macon felt over Steele's resignation is expressed in the following quotation from a letter to Steele, written from Buck Spring, Macon's plantation, on October 10, 1802: "Yours of the 30 ultimo has been received, and it is with real sorrow that I learn of your determination to resign. The reason which produces the resignation is surely a cogent one, but I think it probable that the season is approaching which will restore your family to health, and then you might with convenience have removed them to Washington. The office of Comptroller is surely among the most important in the U. S., especially as it relates to revenue; besides this, the settling accounts with foreigners, is one in which both the interest and honor of the nation are concerned; nor can I close this sentence without repeating my sincere regret at your resignation; who will be your successor I cannot even guess. No doubt many may be found willing enough to accept the office who know nothing of the duties; and I devoutly wish that a successor may be found, adequate in all respects to the office; I know from the best authority that the President was highly pleased with your conduct . . . "

The incident closes with Jefferson's letter to Steele (December 10, 1802), accepting his resignation, in which the President pays Steele this gracious tribute:

> Although in a former letter I expressed to you without disguise the satisfaction which your conduct in office since my coming into the administration had given me, yet I repeat it here with pleasure; and testify to you that setting just value on the able services you rendered the public in the discharge of your official duties, I should have seen your continuance in office with real pleasure & satisfaction and I pray you to be assured that in the state of retirement you have proposed, you have my prayers for your happiness and prosperity, and my esteem and high consideration.

X

Upon a number of occasions, General Steele was called upon by both the national and state governments, to exercise his diplomatic and executive talents as boundary commis-

sioner. In 1797, Tennessee addressed a memorial and remonstrance to the United States upon the subject of the Indian title to lands within that State. Following a discussion in Congress, President Adams appointed as commissioners for concluding a treaty with the Indians John Steele, Alfred Moore, and George Walton. After preliminary negotiations were conducted in midsummer, 1798, the definitive treaty was concluded at Tellico on October 2, 1798, the Hon. George Walton and Lieut.-Colonel Thomas Butler acting as commissioners on behalf of the United States—Moore having returned to North Carolina and Steele having returned to Philadelphia to resume his duties as Comptroller of the Treasury.

Pursuant to a resolution passed by the State of North Carolina in 1801, the correspondence between the governors of North Carolina and South Carolina resulting therefrom, and the passage of certain acts of the general assembly of North Carolina in 1803 and 1804, Governor James Turner in October, 1805, appointed as commissioners on the North Carolina-South Carolina boundary line General John Steele, Colonel John Moore, and General James Wellborn. After a series of meetings between the commissioners of the two States, an extended conference was held at Columbia, S. C., in July, 1808, and articles of agreement were drawn up. Disagreement arising over the third article of the "Conventional Agreement," another set of commissioners was appointed in December, 1812, by Governor William Hawkins, to wit: John Steele, Montfort Stokes, and Robert Burton. Following a series of conferences with the South Carolina commissioners, a provisional article was entered into on September 4, 1813, which was ratified by the two States; and the line was accordingly run and marked. General Steele, who played the leading part in this difficult and delicate negotiation, gained universal approbation for the ability, tactfulness, and skill which he displayed throughout.

The most difficult of all the boundary disputes which

General Steele was concerned in settling was the famous controversy between Georgia and North Carolina over the "orphan strip," a tract of territory some twelve miles wide in Buncombe County, North Carolina, which Georgia in 1803 erected into the county of Walton. This territory lay south of the thirty-fifth degree of latitude, as then located; but grave doubts were raised as to the proper location of this line. North Carolina scientists having located this line far to the south of where it was supposed to run, North Carolina served notice upon Georgia in 1805 of her claim to the territory as part of Buncombe County. Following disturbances in the territory, Governor Jared Irwin of Georgia wrote Governor Nathaniel Alexander of North Carolina, suggesting the appointment of commissioners to settle the disputed boundary. On January 1, 1807, Governor Alexander appointed John Steele, John Moore, and James Wellborn as commissioners; and the Rev. Joseph Caldwell, President of the University of North Carolina, acted as scientist for the State in making the observations. When the thirty-fifth degree of latitude was run, it was found to be "twenty-two miles within old Buncombe"—much to the astonishment of the Georgians; and it was agreed by all that the actual line ran a little south of Cæsar's Head. The provisional agreement entered into by the commissioners on June 27, 1807, led to an extended controversy, which was finally productive of considerable bloodshed. North Carolina ratified the agreement; but Georgia refused to accept the findings of her own commissioners. Having once already appealed to Congress for settlement, Georgia again in 1807 appealed to Congress, but unsuccessfully—Congress paying no attention to the matter. For the next three years, Georgia persisted without success in her efforts to retain the territory; and finally North Carolina had to dispatch a company of State militia in December, 1810, to take possession of the county of Walton. Two pitched battles, and some small skirmishes, in which a number of lives were lost, were fought before the Georgians were finally

ousted and the so-called county of Walton, Georgia, was finally merged into Buncombe County, North Carolina.

XI

When General Steele resigned his post as Comptroller of the Treasury, it was his intention to devote his leisure to the pleasures of polite literature, in particular the reading of French works in which he was proficient; to improvements in agriculture on a scientific and intensive basis; and to the calm enjoyments of domestic life in the bosom of his family, which had so long been denied him. "These," he observed to Macon, "will fill up my time to the exclusion of politicks, and with them I trust every passion which could disturb a virtuous and tranquil retirement." General Steele had quite extensive land holdings, including plantations and town lots. The two major properties were the beautiful plantation of eight hundred acres, "Lethe," on the Yadkin River below the Trading Ford and next to Albert Torrence's plantation; and "Lombardy," the estate near Salisbury where his family resided, including upwards of nine hundred acres. The dwelling house, which was erected in the first years of the last century on the latter property, is today in excellent preservation, although modernized in appearance.

The members of the Steele family, as their letters show, were on terms of delightful ease and informality in their intellectual intercourse with each other—a relationship somewhat unusual in an age marked by stilted language and formal deportment. Ann Nessfield was educated at Dr. Van Vleck's famous Moravian School at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania; and she spent a good deal of time with her father. Mrs. Steele seldom went on to Washington or Philadelphia; and General Steele's enforced absence from home for long periods of time was a source of continuing regret to all the family. Of the children of General and Mrs. Steele, three died in infancy—one born at Salisbury who died without a name in the summer of 1786; a son, William, who was born

at Salisbury on March 18, 1793, and died August 18, 1794; and another son, born in Philadelphia on January 4, 1798, who died May 4 following without a name, the body being interred in the Pine Street Meeting House burying ground. Three daughters survived: Ann Nessfield, born January 27, 1784, who was married to General Jesse A. Pearson on February 13, 1804, and died October 4 of the same year; Elizabeth, born August 5, 1795, who was married on June 28, 1814, to Colonel Robert Macnamara, a prominent citizen of Salisbury, and died at Annsfield, near Salisbury, November 28, 1834; and Margaret Gillespie, born January 31, 1790, who was married to Dr. Stephen Lee Ferrand, a distinguished physician of Salisbury, on March 3, 1819, and died, as did her infant also, on May 13, 1824.

After his retirement from public life, General Steele assiduously devoted himself to that course of general reading which, as he expressed it to Macon, "keeps me employed with the hope of becoming a more intelligent and useful member of society." After the model of Washington, he carried out experiments in improved modes of agriculture; managed his estate with efficiency and economy; and in particular, devoted no little attention to the rearing and racing of blooded horses. He was a leading figure in the Salisbury Jockey Club; and the annual races run there were conducted according to regulations which he drew up. Probably the most famous of his racing horses were the blood-bay, "Statesburg," whose performances on the turf were pronounced by contemporary authorities to "have equalled if not surpassed those of any horse of his size on the Continent"; and "Midas," another famous racing horse of wonderful speed. These and others of his blooded horses ran in the big races of the day—at Salisbury, Cheraw, Camden, and Charleston.

While living the life of the gentleman farmer, who assiduously read the classics and the standard works of polite literature, and carried on an extensive correspondence with the leading men of the day, General Steele was by no means

divorced from public activity during the last decade of his life. There were the onerous and exacting duties of boundary commissioner, which involved considerable correspondence and the writing of voluminous reports. Moreover, General Steele was frequently called upon to represent the Salisbury District in the House of Commons. He served in the Legislatures of 1806, 1811, 1812, and 1813, sometimes as Speaker of the House; and he was elected for another term on the day of his death, August 14, 1815.

XII

John Steele is said to have been one of the most versatile men North Carolina has ever produced. Grave in temperament and of a serious bent of mind, he always conducted himself with great dignity; and he was seldom seen to smile. The portrait of him, made by the famous miniaturist, James Peale, in 1797, portrays a man both handsome and bland. At the height of his career he was credited with being the most popular man in North Carolina.

The inscription upon his tombstone and contemporary obituaries speak best of the man and the place he filled in the life of the time. The marble shaft in the private burial ground at "Lombardy," now known as "Steeleworth," bears the following inscription:

In the Memory of
GENERAL JOHN STEELE
Died, Aug. 14, 1815
Age 50
Consecrated by Conjugal
and
Filial Affection
An Enlightened Statesman
A Vigilant Patriot
An Accomplished Gentleman.
The Archives of his Country testify the services of his
short but useful life. Long will that country
deplore his loss, but when will this sequestered
spot cease to witness the sacred sorrow
of his Family and Friends.

The following obituary (*The Star* of Raleigh, August 25, 1815) requires no commentary:

"A great man has fallen in Israel."

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The North Carolina Booklet

Great Events in North Carolina History

Volume XIX of THE BOOKLET will be issued quarterly by the North Carolina Society, Daughters of the Revolution, beginning July, 1919. THE BOOKLET will be published in July, October, January, and April. Price $1.00 per year, 35 cents for single copy.

EDITOR:
MISS MARY HILLIARD HINTON.

BIOGRAPHICAL EDITOR:
MRS. E. E. MOFFITT.

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The Old Borough Town of Salisbury—Dr. Archibald Henderson.

----------Mr. Frank Nash.

Brief Historical Notes will appear from time to time in THE BOOKLET, information that is worthy of preservation, but which if not preserved in a permanent form will be lost.

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The following obituary (*The Star* of Raleigh, August 25, 1815) requires no commentary:

"A great man has fallen in Israel."

Died, a few days ago, at his seat near Salisbury, *General John Steele,* long known as a distinguished statesman.—General Steele was a member of Congress soon after the adoption of the Constitution, contributed his full share to the establishment of the Government, and to give effect to those measures and policies which were pursued under the first administrations. He was afterwards for several years Comptroller of the Treasury of the United States, and has since occasionally been a Member of the Legislature of his native State. . . . The knowledge of General Steele was various and profound, and his reasoning powers great. Among the political sages of our country he has left a chasm that will not easily be filled.

Life and Services of Colonel Jonas Johnston*

By Kemp Davis Battle

When I received Miss Hinton's cordial invitation to take part in these interesting proceedings, there were two things in her letter which I particularly noted: first, that my address was to be read; second, that it was to be, to use her tactful language, "not of great length." I shall give myself the benefit of the first provision and I shall try to give you the benefit of the second.

At the outset, I desire to acknowledge my obligations to Miss Hinton for furnishing me the material for this modest sketch. She has manifasted the enthusiastic and patient diligence of the historian in assembling every available record and reference bearing upon the life of her distinguished ancestor. Indeed, what I say today adds very little to a paper read by her before the North Carolina Society of the Daughters of the Revolution.

The biographical data in reference to Colonel Johnston's life is comparatively meager. He was born in Southampton County, Virginia, in 1740, the son of Jacob Johnston and Mary Waller Johnston. During his early youth, his parents removed to Edgecombe County, which was thenceforth his home. In estimating his talents and character, it is important to remember that Jonas Johnston was raised a plain, simple, hard-working farmer, with no education save that which strong minds are able to extract from the stream of practical experience. In 1768, at the home of Aquilla Suggs, near Tarboro, he was married to Esther Maun or Maund, of Norfolk County, Virginia, a woman who, in good sense, in resourcefulness, and in strength of character, seems to have been quite his equal. Both parties had in ample measure

* Address by Kemp Davis Battle, a descendant of Major Amos Johnston, delivered at the presentation of a tablet to Colonel Jonas Johnston by The North Carolina Historical Commission and the Board of County Commissioners of Edgecombe, to the County of Edgecombe. It was accepted by the Chairman, William G. Clark. Published by request.

that self-reliance, that ability to rise to any emergency, that capacity to maintain one's footing no matter how fast may flow the stream of difficulty or adversity, in a word, that "spiritual toughness" which makes the lives of our pioneering forefathers so entrancingly picturesque.

Emergencies seem always to produce or to discover men of unusual strength to deal with them, and so it was with Jonas Johnston. To us who live in an age when electric communication has girdled the globe; when our morning newspaper chronicles every significant happening from one end of the earth to the other; when the jungles of Africa, the steppes of Russia, the plains of Tibet and the pampas of Argentine alike seem almost around the corner; when man travels with equal ease under the sea, through the air, and upon the crust of the earth; when the telephone and the telegraph are beginning to seem archaic, as wizard inventors weave us fantastic tales of individual automatic wireless telephones carried like a bunch of keys in the pocket; when the automobile, having vanquished the horse, begins to tremble at the advent of the aeroplane; to us, I say, it is almost impossible to comprehend the material and physical difficulties with which our forefathers contended at the time of the Revolution. Communication was by coach, by carriage, by wagon, by horseback or by foot. The roads, measured by present standards, were impassable. Public schools were unknown, education was the boon of the favored few. When we bear these conditions in mind, it should excite equally our humility and our amazement to contemplate the intelligence, the comprehension, the wisdom, the foresight and the idealism of that noble band of patriots who builded our Republic. In that great task, Jonas Johnston, unlettered plowboy, but endowed by nature with strength of character and of mind buttressed with courage and determination, played a man's full part.

Espousing from the beginning the cause of liberty, Johnston, who was then in his thirties, early became a leader. He

was conspicuous at the battle of Moore's Creek Bridge, where he manifested the coolness and intrepidity under danger which characterized his brief but gallant military career. In those early days, the struggle which finally terminated in our independence, bore largely the earmarks of a civil dispute. The Tories were numerous, influential, and bold. A preliminary period of strife was necessary before the colonies were able to organize a comparatively united front against the English arms. Johnston did yeoman's service in this work. On one occasion he organized at Tarboro a band of volunteers which he led down to the Cape Fear River where a Tory uprising was causing grave anxiety. The expedition was entirely successful and it was probably in recognition of his services that he was given a commission as First Major by the Provincial Congress at Halifax. This was on April 22, 1776. From that time on he was constantly engaged in the fight for freedom. It is true that he missed a good deal of time from the military forces while attending various sessions of the Provincial Congress, of which more hereafter. His necessary absence from his regiment and his early death doubtless prevented him from attaining the reputation as a military leader which would otherwise have been his. Nevertheless, his record in that respect is one of which his descendants may well be proud.

But before actual fighting could begin, there was much preliminary work to be done. Johnston was not found wanting. When the Council of State met at New Bern, September 2, 1777, the Governor laid before the board the resolve of Congress to divide the States into districts with one person in each district to recruit men to fill the regiments raised in such State. For Edgecombe, Jonas Johnston was appointed. (State Records 22, page 926.) The Provincial Congress at Halifax, April 19, 1776, appointed Henry Horn and Jonas Johnston "to receive, procure, and purchase firearms for the use of the troops." (State Records 10, page 525.) When the Council of State met at Kinston, December, 1778, Col. Jonas Johnston laid before the board an account for sundries

furnished the militia marching from Edgecombe. The Governor advised the board to grant a warrant on Treasury in favor of Col. Johnston for 400 pounds. (State Records 22, page 942.) A letter written by Major Johnston (now a Lieutenant-Colonel) to Governor Caswell, under date of November 24, 1778, and found in State Records 13, page 298, is so illuminating as to the difficulties which our hero was encountering and so eloquent of his resourcefulness and determination, that I venture to quote it in full:

May it please your Excellency: I have herewith sent you the Commissions of Capt. Davis and Ensign Gay, resigned, the former through infirmity, the latter through cowardice and as no Ensign offers to supply the place of Gay our detachment is without any Captain. Lee who now heads the Company, is a volunteer, who accepted the office in the room of Davis resigned, and as I have no blank commissions he is without. One Absolum Barnes, our Lieutenant, has a commission. I am sorry to inform your Excellency of so many resignations at present, but it is out of my power to help it. I have furnished Capt. Lee with 934 lbs. of beef, 2 barrels of meal, and 8 pots and 8 axes, and am happy to inform your Excellency that the men are mostly in good health, and now on duty; are in high spirits and resolved to encounter every difficulty. I can only add, I am sorry that more of our old Captains would not go with them, as I think so large a detachment deserves a good Captain and so no more at present but Sir I still remain,

Your Excellency's mo. huml. servt.,

JONAS JOHNSTON.

N. B.—The other detachment is now drafting, and will march as soon as possible. J. J.

One can form from the foregoing disconnected incidents some slight estimate of the patriotic and valuable work performed by Colonel Johnston in the immensely important task of raising and equipping and drilling the troops which were to test their mettle with the British. Indeed, a little reflection leads to the conclusion that this harassing and sometimes disheartening work was more far-reaching in its results than gallantry on the field of battle. At length, however, Colonel Johnston took command of his regiment, and with Colonel Caswell marched to South Carolina where help was greatly needed. The best record of his activities there is contained

in a series of letters written by him to the Governors of North and South Carolina. These letters bear unmistakable evidence of the man's statesmanlike judgment and indomitable will-power. His career ended with the Battle of Stono Ferry, fought June 20, 1779. In this engagement he greatly distinguished himself by his personal courage and the skill with which he handled his men. Tradition has it that the title of General was conferred on him by the War Department for bravery in the Battle of Stono Ferry, but this cannot be verified. The wound which he received that day deprived the country of a leader of very great promise. Suffering both from wounds and sickness, he was granted a furlough and started on his journey home. His wife set out from Edgecombe to meet him, traveling in a gig, and attended only by a colored servant. He reached the home of a Mr. Amis on Drowning Creek, S. C., where on July 29, 1779, he died. The sword which he wore at Stono Ferry and which had been captured from the Hessians, was inherited by Governor Elias Carr and is now in the Arts and Industry Building, Smithsonian Institution, in Washington.

At the present time, Colonel Johnston is usually thought of as a soldier, but it was probably in civil life that he achieved greater eminence and made a greater contribution to his country. And here I must again call to your attention the fact that he never received a formal education and that his success was purely the result of his natural strength of mind and integrity of character. I quote from an article in the *North Carolina University Magazine* of April, 1861, written by Jeremiah Battle, M.D.: "Although he was almost destitute of education, he was a considerable orator; and whenever he rose to speak in those public assemblies the greatest attention was paid to his opinions, as they ever carried the strongest marks of good sense. His language was bold and nervous; well adapted to incite the people to patriotic exertion. He was modest, yet competent, prompt and decisive." It is to be understood that the word "education" is used in the sense

of "schooling." Using the word in its widest sense, he did have an education. Colonel Johnston was a member of the Provincial Congress from 1776 to 1779, inclusive, and took a promient part in its affairs. It may be interesting to name some of the committees on which he served, as follows: Committee on Enquiry; on Consideration of Messages from the President of the Congress; Claims and Accounts; to Establish Courts of Justice of the Peace; on the Disposition of the Public Salt; on the Erection of a State House, Land Office, and Treasurer's Office; to Examine the Accounts of the Paymaster-General; to Devise Means for Paying for a Quantity of Cannon brought in by the Ship Holy Jesus; and the Committee to Raise Men to March to the Southward." He must have taken the last appointment very much to heart, as he ended by marching southward himself—to his death.

Among the bills which he introduced were the following: "A bill to regulate the fees of Justices of the Peace and Clerks of the Superior Court;" "A bill to construct a bridge over Contentnea Creek;" "A bill to dock the entails of land;" and "A bill for emitting 850,000 pounds in bills of credit for discharging debts incurred by the State in raising men to reinforce the battalions belonging to this State in the Continental Army; and calling in all former emissions and for other purposes." To me there is something very impressive in the picture of this unlettered Edgecombe farmer introducing the financial measures for meeting the State's needs in those anxious and trying times. We find him voting in the affirmative on the bill to confiscate the property of all those inimical to the United States. He voted "yea" on "A bill for levying a tax for the year 1779, that the bill be amended by levying a tax of three pence on each pound of taxable property instead of two pence." It sometimes takes as high a quality of courage to face popular disfavor by voting to increase taxes as it does to face a cannon volley. These fragmentary references to Colonel Johnston's legislative career do not purport to do more than cast a flickering spot-

light on his manifold activities. I think they do, however, suffice to present to us a man of progressive ideals, respected among his fellows for his practical knowledge and experience, successfully active in a variety of fields, a substantial, forceful, forward looking patriot.

As we are largely indebted for this occasion to Colonel Johnston's descendants, it seems permissible to give some account of his family and connections. His wife, Esther Maun, must have been a woman of great strength of character. When the war came, Colonel Johnston had just started to erect a residence. The frame dwelling had been completed on the outside, and the laths within were ready for the plastering. Work was necessarily suspended and was not resumed during the owner's lifetime. Colonel Johnston was less than 40 years of age at his death and had given too much of his time and attention to public matters to have accumulated any considerable property. Mrs. Johnston was left with a small farm and five small children. Devoting all her energy and resources to the education of her children, she abandoned all plans for completing her home and did not resume the work until each child had received what was for that age a good education. By industry and economy she met with entire success the responsibilities which her husband's death imposed upon her and won the respect and admiration of all her neighbors. For the last 15 years of her life she was paralyzed but reached the ripe age of 89 years. She is buried on the Johnston plantation, now belonging to the Cobbs of Vinedale. The grave is marked by a tombstone erected by Jonas Johnston Carr, the railing by the Ruffins. I quote the words of one who knew her: "Her own dissolution she looked to without fear, though helpless in body she was strong in faith, and her lamp burned clearer as her sun of life shed its last rays on the fleeting pleasures of this world."

The only children of Jonas Johnston and his good wife which survived and left descendants were four daughters:

Elizabeth, who married first, John Bell, second John Andrews; Celia, who married first, Jesse Hines, and second Elias Carr; Prudence, who married Peter Hines; and Mary, who married Samuel Ruffin. Among their descendants are the names of the following families: Bell, Hines, Carr, Prince, Blount, Vines, Cobb, Ruffin, Andrews, Barnes, Horne and Hinton.

Among those who have attained distinction of various kinds are the following: Hon. Richard Hines, Congressman from North Carolina; Jonas Johnston Carr, of "Bracebridge Hall," southern planter; Dr. Peter Evans Hines, Surgeon Provisional Army Confederate States; Col. A. B. Andrews, railroad builder; Governor Elias Carr; Mrs. David Hinton, a representative of the best Southern Womanhood; Miss Mary Hilliard Hinton, personally known to all present; R. A. Blount, son of R. E. Blount of Paris, a Lieutenant of the Foreign Legion, and a wearer of the Croix de Guerre with Palms for gallantry at Verdun; and William Kearny Carr of Washington, D. C., who died some two or three years ago. W. K. Carr was a scientist and student of the very highest rank. In my opinion he possessed probably the most comprehensive and powerful intellect which Edgecombe County has ever produced.

And so, ladies and gentlemen, I hold it altogether fitting that we should meet to pay a tribute of respect to this sturdy patriot. By his heavy labors in raising and equipping troops to fight in the cause of freedom, by his wise statesmanship in our legislative assemblies, by the sacrifice of his life in defense of our common country, and by his useful and distinguished posterity, he has put the State of North Carolina as well as the county of Edgecombe very much in his debt. It is good that this tablet will adorn our courthouse as his memory adorns our history.

Mr. Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners, it is my high pleasure and distinguished privilege, on behalf of the State Historical Commission, the County Commissioners,

and Colonel Johnston's descendants to present through you to the county of Edgecombe this memorial to her worthy son. May future generations of her citizens by it be inspired to emulate his example and to cherish his memory.

NOTES BY THE EDITOR

Family tradition claims that Colonel Johnston's father came to America from the north of England. The family is not of Scottish origin.

Governor Henry Toole Clark was well versed in the genealogy of the prominent families of his county (Edgecombe). It was he who compiled and arranged the "Johnston Family Tree," some copies of which are today carefully preserved by the descendants of the hero of Stono Ferry.

Colonel Jonas Johnston was an Episcopalian. His Prayer Book is in the possession of descendants in North Carolina.

At the General Assembly held at New Bern November, 1777, "Mr. Jonas Johnston presented a petition from a number of inhabitants of Edgecombe County, praying to have the same divided."

In 1776 the Convention established "An ordinance for appointing Justices of the Peace, Sheriffs and Constables for the several counties in this State, for erecting County Courts for the purposes of holding sessions of the Peace, and putting into execution the laws relative to Orphans, Guardians, and highways until provisions shall be made by the General Assembly for the same." Jonas Johnston was appointed a "Justice for keeping the Peace in Edgecombe. The other J. P.'s appointed for Edgecombe at the same time were: Aquila Sugg, Edward Moore, Samuel Ruffin, Duncan Lamon, Elisha Battle, William Haywood, Sherwood Haywood, Henry Erwin, Joseph Williamson, John Thomas, Matthew Drake, Noah Sugg, Robert Bignall, Nathan Bodie, Exum Lewis, William Hall, Isaac Sessums, Jacob Dickinson, Arthur Arrington, and Joseph Pender, Esquires."

In the spring of 1778 Colonel Johnston was appointed entry taker for Edgecombe, which office he accepted. This prevented his holding his seat in the General Assembly, according to the twenty-fifth section of the Constitution, which did not allow "a receiver of public monies" "a seat in the General Assembly." On April 28, 1778, a motion was carried to fill the seat "vacated by his acceptance of the entry taker's office." However, on August 3, 1778, he appeared as a member of the General Assembly, so he must have resigned the county office.

"At a Council held at Kinston, the 9th September, 1779,

"Resolved, The Governor be advised to appoint Henry Hart, Esq., Colonel of the Company of Edgecombe, in the room of Colonel Johnston, deceased; Isaac Sessums, Lieutenant-Colonel; Henry Horne, First Major, and Amos Johnston, Second Major."

A Composition by John Graham

Afterwards Dr. John Graham, as a Student at Queen's Museum, Charlotte, N. C., July 30, 1776

A DECLAMATION

My worthy Auditors: Sensible of my inability to appear as a publick speaker before you here today with approbation, I would request this of you before whom I have the honour of declaiming from this stage, that if the subject which I shall treat of, be not discussed to as great perfection as it might be (which I confess is the case) you will judge of my performance with mildness and candor.

I have often wondered that learning is not thought a proper ingredient in the education of women. For seeing they have the same improveable and docile minds as the male part of the species, why should they not be cultivated by the same method? Why should reason be left to itself in one of the sexes and be cultivated with so much care and diligence in the other? Why should man's reasonable companion be left to wander in the dark Vale of Ignorance whilst he is permitted to glide along in the flowery Paths of Learning?

There are several reasons why learning seems equally adapted to the female world as to the male. As in the first place, because they have more spare time on their hands and lead a more sedentary life. Their employments are for the most part of a domestic nature and not like those of the other sex, which are often inconsistent with study and contemplation, as being harrassing and disturbing to the mind.

A second reason why women should apply themselves to the study of useful knowledge as well as men is because they have that natural gift of speech, that velocity of the little

* Dr. Graham was an older brother of Gen. Joseph Graham. Upon his graduation in 1778 he was awarded a diploma, which is the only diploma granted by Queen's Museum now in existence.

machine called the tongue, in much greater perfection. And seeing they have so excellent a talent, such a Copia Verborum, or plenty of words, it is a pity they should not put it to some commendable use.

If the female tongue will be in motion, why should it not be set to go right? Could they discourse on philosophical subjects, or on the revolutions of antiquity, it might possibly divert them from publishing the faults, disclosing the secrets, and blemishing the character of their neighbors: could they talk of the different aspects and conjunctions of the planets, they need not be at the pains to comment upon oglings and clandestine marriages. In short, were they furnished with matters of fact out of the arts and sciences, it would now and then be of great ease to their invention.

There is another reason why those especially who are women of quality should apply themselves to letters, namely, because their husbands are sometimes strangers to them; and it seems to me to be a matter truly lamentable that there should be no knowledge in a family either by the father or mother.

To what is it owing, unless to the illiterateness or neglect of parents, that we see so many impudent, ill-bred children, who not being restrained in their childhood from, but rather indulged in, their youthful fancies; arriving at manhood and their licentiousness increasing proportionably, they become rude and insolent to their superiors, subject neither to ministers or magistrates, not even to parents themselves, but, as the celebrated Mr. Young says:

"Ripe from the tutor, proud of liberty,
He leaps enclosure, bounds into the world;
The world is taken, after ten years toil,
Like ancient Troy; and all its joys his own.

"Alas, the world's a tutor more severe,
Its lessons hard, and ill deserved his pains;
Unteaching all his virtues Nature taught,
Or Books (fair Nature's advocates) inspired."

From whence proceeds this misfortune, that so many flourishing branches, who might have become useful members of society, an honor to their parents, and an ornament to their country, should shoot up as it were into so many cumbersome trees, spending their life in inactivity and sloth, lying by among the number and refuse of mankind, unless from a bad or rather no education?

Another reason why women ought to be educated proceeds from the many advantages which are consequences therefrom; for the tutelage of children being almost solely in the hands of mothers, they have the most excellent opportunity of infusing the noblest principles into them, of rooting out the very seeds of vice, and by turning off the stream at the fountain into proper channels, before that the water may have worn deep the natural channel with its swift running current; they might by this means convey the stream between rocks and precipices into foreign lands, and distant nations receive the benefit of the increasing rivulet, and reap the advantages of it a thousand years hence.

If we look into the histories of famous women, we find many eminent philosophers of this sex; nay, we find that several females have distinguished themselves in those branches of philosophy which seem almost repugnant to their natures.

There have been famous Pythagoreans, notwithstanding most of that philosophy consisted in keeping a secret, and that the disciple was to hold her tongue five years together. I need not mention Portia, who was a stoic in petticoats: now Hipparthia, the famous she-cynick.

Learning and knowledge are perfections in us, not as we are men, but as we are reasonable creatures, in which order of beings the female world is upon the same level with the male. We ought to consider in this particular, not what is the sex, but what is the species to which they belong. At least, I believe every one will allow me, that a female philosopher is not so absurd a character and so opposite to the

sex, as a female gamester; and that it is more irrational for a woman to pass away her time at cards or dice, I might likewise have said in immoderate dressing, than in laying up stores of useful learning. This therefore is another reason why I would recommend the study of knowledge to the female world, that they may not be at a loss how to employ those vacant hours that lie heavy on their hands.

I might also add this motive to my fair auditors, that several of their sex, who have improved their minds by books and literature, have raised themselves to the highest posts of honor and fortune, but I shall conclude this head with the history of Athenais, which is a very signal example to my present purpose.

The Emporor Theodosius being about the age of one and twenty and designing to take a wife, desired his sister, Pulcheria, and his friend, Paulinus, to search his whole empire for a woman of the most exquisite beauty and highest accomplishments. In the midst of this search, Athenais, a Grecian virgin, accidentally offered herself.

Her father, who was an eminent philosopher at Athens, and had bred her up in all the learning of that renowned place, at his death left her a very small portion, in which also she suffered great hardships from the injustice of her two brothers.

This forced her upon a journey to Constantinople, where she had a relation who represented her case to Pulcheria in order to obtain some redress from the Emperor. By this means that religious princess became acquainted with Athenais, whom she found the most beautiful woman of her age and educated under a long course of philosophy in the strictest virtue and most innocence. Pulcheria was charmed with her conversation and immediately reported to the Emperor, her brother, Theodosius. The character she gave made such an impression on him that he desired his sister to bring her away immediately to the lodging of his friend, Paulinus, where he found her beauty and her conversation beyond the highest

idea he had framed of them. His friend, Paulinus, converted her to Christianity and gave her the name of Eudosia; after which the Emperor publickly espoused her, and enjoyed all the happiness in his marriage which he had promised himself from such a virtuous and learned bride. She not only forgave the injuries which her two brothers had done her, but raised them to great honours; and by several works of learning, as well as by an exemplary life, made herself so dear to the whole empire that she had many statues erected to her memory and is celebrated of the church as the Ornament of her Sex. JOHN GRAHAM.

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