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Mr. E. S. Moffatt

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*GREAT EVENTS IN
NORTH CAROLINA HISTORY.*



Moravian Settlement in North Carolina.

—BY—
Rev. J. H. CLEWELL.



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Moravian Settlement in North Carolina.

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

INTRODUCTION.

The literature concerning the Moravian Church in general is so extensive that it forms a library in itself. The information concerning the Moravian Church in North Carolina is contained in thousands of pages of valuable manuscripts preserved in two rooms of the Historical Building in Salem, N. C. These manuscripts, covering one hundred and fifty years, are of the utmost importance to the historian of North Carolina. Our story embraces the memorable visits of Governor Tryon to Wachovia in 1767 and 1771. Every story must have an introduction and a conclusion. We preface the narrative by a few items in regard to the Moravian Church in general, and we will conclude our monograph with a rapid glance at a few of the events in the subsequent development of this important colony in Western Carolina. For general and detailed information see "History of the Moravian Church," Hamilton, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. For a full account of one hundred and fifty years in our own State see "History of Wachovia in North Carolina," Clewell, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, 365 pp., 32 maps and illustrations.

THE MORAVIAN CHURCH.

The Moravian Church is well known, and little known. Both statements are true. On the one hand to the student of church history the work of four and a half centuries, with the bright lights of noble work, and the dark shadows of persecutions, forms a grand picture. On the other hand there are many who scarcely know the name of the church. In what we say we will assume that to the general reader the facts of the Moravian Church history are not well known.

In the year 1415 the great reformer, John Huss, was burned at the stake. From the ranks of his followers came the little band which, in 1457 organized the "Unitas Fratrum, or "Unity of Brethren." The Moravian Church is thus the oldest Protestant denomination. The purity of their doctrine, the godliness of their lives, and the energy of their work caused the denomination to spread rapidly, in Bohemia and Moravia. From the latter country has come the name "Moravian Church," though the official name of the denomination is "Unitas Fratrum." Hundreds of churches were established, thousands of members were received from the high and the low of the land, and with the membership made up of learned professors in the Universities, the nobility and the wealthy, as well as those from the more humble walks of life, the Unitas Fratrum caused beautiful Moravia and Bohemia to flourish as it has never

done since the destruction of the church organization by persecution.

Then came the thirty years' war. General history relates how the cruel and bigoted Ferdinand crushed out the Protestant church of the *Unitas Fratrum* with fire and sword, with torture and persecution, by banishment and by death; the Bohemian-Moravian branch of the *Unitas Fratrum* suffered, till in 1627 its church of one hundred and fifty thousand souls ceased to exist as an organization. No more thrilling and terrible page of history exists than that which covers these years of sorrow and suffering.

We will not follow the weary years of the church in exile. The sorrowful life of the great Moravian Bishop, John Amos Comenius, will serve as a type of the church in these years. Bishop Comenius prophesied that the Moravian Church would not only be re-organized, but that it would be restored to its home land; the former prophecy was realized in 1727; the latter is being realized in a remarkable manner in our own day. The bishops carefully preserved and perpetuated the Episcopal succession, which through the Waldenses comes to the present day in unbroken succession from the apostles. In 1727 the church was renewed on the estates of the good Count Zinzendorf, in Saxony and the prophecy of many aged fathers of the denomination was fulfilled.

The membership of the renewed Moravian Church realized that the wonderful preservation carried with it the obligation to do some special work, and following the leading of Providence they entered upon the two great spheres of missionary effort and of education. In these the church

is best known in our day and time. So widespread around the world are its mission fields that it can be said of them, as it is said of the British flag, the sun never sets upon them. Its schools too are found in many parts of the world, and they always enjoy the confidence of the sections in which they are located.

THE MORAVIANS IN NORTH CAROLINA.

In the year 1752 a large tract of land was purchased in what is now Forsyth county. This tract was about fifteen miles long, and ten miles wide. It contained nearly one hundred thousand acres. The object of the purchase was to provide a home free from the persecutions which they experienced in some of the European lands. In addition to this they wished to establish a strong and prosperous colony from which enlarged missionary efforts could be made.

Full and complete records of the events that followed were made, and this history is preserved in the Archive House in Salem. Each event in itself furnishes material sufficient for the pen of the historian or novelist. The good Spangenberg and his surveying party nearly lost their lives in the mountain wilds north of the present towns of Morganton and Hickory; the first company of a dozen or more settlers journeyed laboriously through the forests of Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia, to their new North Carolina home. The first year was one of labor and toil with exposure, hardships and dangers. There were able men in the party, men who became known to the scattered settlers all about them as persons skilled in medicine, able in fi-

nancial matters, thrifty in the trades, and true and honest in their dealings. The best leaders in the Moravian Church at large were interested, and came to visit them, and advise with the little colony. Spangenberg, the wise theological writer, Boehler, (the spiritual friend of Wesley) Zeisberger, known as the apostle to the Indians, and many others.

The colony grew and prospered. Bethabara, established in 1753, was the first village, and is six miles north of the present Winston-Salem. A few years later (1759) Bethania was begun three miles northwest of the first settlement. Both of these were intended to be only villages. In 1766 the central town, Salem, was laid out, and more pretentious buildings erected. The administration officers were taken thither. The trades were varied and flourished. Within a few years a dozen or more enterprises were established which could not be called "factories" in the modern sense of the term, yet the amount of manufactured goods turned out by these "trades" brought customers from a distance of a hundred miles and more in every direction, and had wagon trains traveling to Charleston, S. C., and other towns.

The most trying event of the early years was the French and Indian war. A fort was erected at Bethabara, and many refugees from near and far fled to this fort after their homes had been destroyed, and many who were endangered came thither for protection. The yellow, musty manuscripts in the Archive House in Salem contain hundreds of pages describing the years 1753 to 1763, and if a future writer of "Indian Stories" arises within the Old North State and desires to use home material, he will find all that

can be desired in these same manuscripts. There are stories of sufferings and tortures; of terrors and horrors; of hair breadth escapes and merciless massacres; of men attending divine service with a trusty rifle upon the knee, ready for instant defence; of women and children wandering by night hither and thither through the forests, alarmed by the cry of the panther, but dreading the wild beast less than the merciless red man.

The days of the Indian war came to an end. The farming operations were enlarged, the old industries were strengthened and new trades started. The wagons of the Moravian colony went back and forth between Charleston, Cross Creek, Newbern and Hillsboro. It is not possible to give the number of inhabitants residing within the tract of Wachovia at the close of the Indian war, but it was doubtless five hundred or more.

TRYON'S FIRST VISIT, 1767.

Governor Tryon is a unique character in North Carolina history. His predecessor, Governor Dobbs, died in 1765. Tryon had been acting as Lieutenant-Governor before the death of Governor Dobbs. He was really a "royal Governor," for he established a miniature court where the elegance of the English court was imitated, and many of the evils. The ladies of the Governor's household were cultured, refined and popular, and they fascinated the lawgivers and legislators by the very atmosphere of the place, and this, more than anything else caused the wishes of the Governor to be carried out, often not wisely. To build his "man-

sion " and carry out his "court " plans, heavy taxes were imposed, and what was worse, every petty official copied the abuses of his royal master. A protest arose throughout the land, and gradually assumed the shape of the rebellion of the Regulators.

On the other hand Tryon was possessed of many qualities which endeared him to his people, and called forth their admiration. He was a brave man and a true soldier. He was genial and refined, though we know he could be cruel and relentless. Altogether he was possessed of such contradictory characteristics that the pleasant picture which appeared on the occasion of his visits to Wachovia was a natural result of one side of his nature, and the cruelty of the Hillsboro executions brought out the other side.

Naturally Governor Tryon desired to see this well-known and prosperous colony in Wachovia, and in 1767 news was received in Bethabara, (then the largest village) that he would visit them Friday, September 18. The roads over which he would pass had been repaired, and a carefully arranged plan was devised, with a view to make his stay as pleasant as possible. The Governor had with him Mrs. Tryon, the Counsellor, McKellock, three colonels, Fanning, Frohok and Banton, the Episcopal minister Micklejohn, from Hillsboro, and others. As the party drove into town they were greeted with music, for the village already boasted of its carefully drilled band.

The diary gives a detailed account of the manner in which the four days were spent, and the elaborate plan of entertainment challenges our admiration. A town or village of the present day would with difficulty surpass the

Moravians of ante-revolution days in according honors to the Chief Executive of the State.

A dinner was served in the public hall, after which the Governor in company with a number of gentlemen of the place, took a walk through the village, inspecting the various industries. He also examined the Constitution which governed the colony, and expressed himself as greatly pleased.

On the succeeding day Governor Tryon went to Bethania, three miles distant, and to Salem, six miles from Bethabara. He visited the large mill which was so important during the revolution; he rode across the great meadow and inspected the fields and orchards; finally he expressed his satisfaction by saying to the people that the colony had assumed such a degree of prosperity and importance that he recommended that they send a representative to the legislature to guard their interests in that body.

A number of books bearing upon the history of the church in various parts of the world were presented to the Governor and his good wife. Among them was a copy of the act of Parliament of England which acknowledged the *Unitas Fratrum* as an ancient Episcopal Church.

In order that the reader may have a glimpse of the delightful cordiality which existed between the visitors and the people of Wachovia, we give the following brief extract from the diary. This will show how carefully the entertainment was provided, and how cordially the visitors responded. We quote from "history of Wachovia in North Carolina" pp. 100, 101, which is an extract from the original diary:—

“Sunday, Sept. 20, 1767.—The Episcopal minister from Hillsboro preached from Hag. 2:6. The sermon of the Moravian minister was based on Gal. 5. The Episcopal minister then baptized the children of a number of members of his church who lived in the neighborhood of Wachovia. We had arranged for a quiet afternoon for our visitors, but Mrs. Tryon expressed a desire to play upon the organ, and as she played a number of the girls sang. This pleased her. She made the request of Graff to perform on the organ, and he did so. By this time the Governor became interested in the music, and came to the meeting hall from his room. An hour was pleasantly passed in this way. From the meeting hall Mrs. Tryon visited the room which specially belongs to the older girls, and she requested them to sing for her as they had done during the afternoon. While thus engaged, supper was announced, and the visitors seemed loath to have the little gathering broken up. Supper being over, a visit was paid to the home of the single men, (one of the largest and most important buildings in the village.) At the usual hour the Sabbath evening service was held, a portion of the exercises consisting of responsive singing. Governor and Mrs. Tryon were present, and manifested a devout interest, being specially pleased with the antiphonal singing. After the service Mrs. Tryon was presented with a copy of the ‘Berlin Sermons,’ preached by Count Zinzendorf. When the friends had gone to their rooms for the night, a number of the musicians gathered in front of the house and discoursed music as a pleasant way to express our ‘good night.’”

As a result of this visit a large lot of goods were sent

from the shops and stores of Wachovia, to Brunswick on the Cape Fear. These goods had been ordered by the Governor. When the wagons arrived at their destination below Wilmington, the Governor was absent. His representatives were evidently neither fair nor liberal in their dealings with the men from the western part of the State. As a result, the effort to establish a trade with Brunswick and the lower Cape Fear section was not a success, and the trade of Wachovia was diverted to Charleston, S. C., and to Cross Creek, and other North Carolina towns.

We pass over the history of the intervening years between 1767 and 1771. The opposition of Tryon's minions galled the people beyond endurance. The discontent began to crystallize. Enemies came together and formed groups. These groups came together and finally assumed the shadow of general organization. The object was the regulation of affairs so as to restore justice and to destroy oppression. Hence the members received the well known name of "Regulators." Little is known of these organized companies. It is probable that the first step was the gathering together into bands of those who were under the ban of the law. To these were added later those who suffered unjustly from oppressions, and still later many men from the masses joined the Regulators.

The difficulty was the absence of wise organization, and the presence of vicious influences. The culminating act of folly was the selection of a miserable leader, one Herman Husbands by name. When he became the head of the organization it was at once lowered to the standard of mob rule, and the logical result of all their efforts was naked

anarchy. Had the Regulators been successful in defying Governor Tryon, the state of the country under Regulator rule would have been worse than under the oppression of Tryon. It is not our object to discuss the Regulators, but to understand the position taken by the Moravians the above statement is necessary. Some have described the Regulators as American patriots. This is an error. Many good men were in their ranks; they were opposing injustice and oppression; but they were using means which were worse than the evils they sought to cure. The patriots of the eastern part of the State repudiated them, many in the western part were opposed to them, and as their errors became more and more apparent, the Moravians of Wachovia firmly refused to espouse their cause. They were always treated kindly by the people of Wachovia, but they could not unite with them.

Passing over the intervening developments we find the forces of Governor Tryon in battle array over against the forces of the Regulators, at Alamance, some distance from the present site of Greensboro, and perhaps fifty miles from Wachovia. The story of this battle is to say the least "hazy." Tryon's official reports were garbled to gain certain ends, and to try to justify certain unjustifiable deeds. The traditions which have been preserved are, like all traditions, unreliable.

The straightforward record of this event, contained in the Moravian archives is of the highest value, since the writer made his record on the very days that the events took place; he was free from bias, was the enemy of neither the Regulators nor of Governor Tryon, and yet received

full accounts from the participants on both sides. Hence the account alluded to should play an important part in deciding the disputed points connected with the battle of Alamance, and the events which followed.

While the stories told by the refugees are most interesting and thrilling, we must pass them by with a brief mention, in order that we may come to the visit of Tryon. The battle was fought. Governor Tryon had troops well armed, well drilled, and he was an able leader. The band of Regulators over against him were unorganized, many were without arms, and though some fought bravely, many of them seemed to consider the entire situation as an interesting scene to study, rather than the eve of a battle. Thus they confronted each other at Alamance. At the sound of the artillery many fled or were shot down. Of course they could not successfully resist Tryon and his well drilled army. The latter drove them into the woods, then set fire to the leaves and undergrowth, and cruelly burned to death the poor wounded men. Some of the captives were executed at once, others were put in irons and carried with the Governor to Wachovia, whither he marched to hold a form of "court," and to receive the defeated Regulators. As he journeyed towards Salem he wreaked his vengeance by utterly destroying the houses and farms of the deluded Regulators.

In the meantime strange scenes were transpiring in Wachovia. Herman Husband, the leader of the Regulators, deserted his people early in the battle. In person he went to Wachovia, and begged Dr. Bonn to go to the place where some of the wounded had been taken, in order to minister

to their needs. This of course could not be done. They did not know their visitor. Still the report was later circulated that he had been assisted in Wachovia, and it was proposed to send a division of cavalry from the camp of the Governor and utterly destroy the colony. Fortunately Tryon's visit in 1767 had made him acquainted with the people, and he advised against the hasty destruction of Wachovia. The Governor later expressed his great gratification at having suppressed the hot headed plan of destruction.

It is a thrilling account of fleeing men, terrorized by the dangers which surrounded them, and again the modern writer can find new and fresh material of unquestioned veracity, but which has been buried, lo, these many years. We pass these by, and find Governor Tryon again in Wachovia.

TRYON'S SECOND VISIT TO WACHOVIA, JUNE 4-9, 1771.

The second visit was different from the first. On the latter occasion he was surrounded by one hundred officers and officials, the leading men of the State. He had with him three thousand soldiers, who encamped near Bethabara, and satisfied their hunger with the ample provisions to be found in Wachovia. He also had a company of miserable prisoners chained together, two and two, who were confined in the large Bethabara barn, temporarily used as a prison.

Here the Governor set up his court. The proclamation granting conditional pardon to the defeated Regulators, is

still to be seen in the Salem Historical rooms. It has attached to it a great seal, as large as a small saucer. The Regulators came and took the oath. Some the Governor refused to pardon till they had been subjected to the later court martial. Three or four days were occupied in this way. The Wachovia records show that the period between the battle of Alamance and the executions at Hillsboro centered in Wachovia. The general history of the State has entirely lost sight of this important time and place, when the large body of Regulators met the Governor, took the oath and were pardoned. This again is an important link in history, which the old archives offer to the North Carolina historian.

Aside from the troubled nature of the visit, Tryon was happy to renew his friendship with the Moravians. He recognized their clear cut principle of obeying the existing powers, and by virtue of this friendship the Moravians were able to secure the release of some of the prisoners who would otherwise have been taken to Hillsboro in chains.

Again we will quote from the original diary to bring as vividly as possible before the reader one of the characteristics of the visit. "History of Wachovia in North Carolina," pp. 114-117.

"June 6, 1771.—We had a conference early this morning in order to discuss the question of sending a formal address to the Governor, to express our submission to the existing government, and we felt that the occasion of the King's birthday would be a fitting time. The Governor had not required us to take the oath of allegiance. Having decided to send the address, we consulted the Secreta-

ry, Mr. Edwards, and he referred the matter to the Governor. The latter was much pleased with the idea, and appointed as the time the close of the review of the troops.

“The celebration of the King’s birthday was after the following manner :—

“At ten o’clock in the morning all the troops came out of their camp by companies. Our musicians furnished the music for the review. The soldiers marched to the field beyond the barn. The army was drilled for several hours, and the manoeuvres of the battle of Alamance were repeated. Volley after volley was fired, both from the musketry and the artillery until the houses in the village trembled and shook. This display of an army of 3,000 men, under the command of selected officers, was a grand and imposing sight. At two o’clock the manoeuvres were finished and the army marched back to its quarters.

“Meanwhile the Governor’s tent had been erected in the public square. After returning from the drill ground he entered his tent with a number of his more distinguished officers. Then Marshall, Graff, Utley, and Bagge were received in the tent by the Governor and his staff, and Marshall read the formal address. At the mention of ‘His Majesty, or ‘His Excellency’ they made a low obeisance.

“*To His Excellency, William Tryon, Esq., Captain General and Governor-in-Chief in and over the Province of North Carolina.*

“May it please your Excellency.

“Upon this most solemn occasion the celebration of the birthday of our most gracious King, the United Brethren in Wachovia inviolably attached to his Majesty’s Govern-

ment, esteem themselves particularly favored by the presence of this representative of the Province in the person of your Excellency. With hearts full of the warmest sentiments of allegiance give us, leave, Sir, to lay before your Excellency our most fervent wishes to the Lord, by whom Princes rule, to pour down His choicest blessings upon the sacred person of our Sovereign, King George III and all his Royal Family, and to establish his kingdom to the latest posterity over the British Empire.

“ ‘May the troubles which have of late unhappily torn this Province, be the last that shall ever give uneasiness to the paternal breast of the best of Princes, and may this very day be the blessed period from which this Province shall date her future happiness through the good success of your Excellency’s measures, as well as in the reward of the dangers your precious life was eminently exposed to in his Majesty’s service. The kind protection this settlement has enjoyed during your Excellency’s administration will ever leave the deepest impression of gratitude in the minds of the thankful people and combine their prayers with all well wishers of this Province for your Excellency’s prosperity in your future government.’

“After this address had been communicated the Governor graciously read his answer, and then handed it to Marshall.

“*To the Ministers and Congregations of the United Brethren :*

“GENTLEMEN :—I return thanks for your loyal and dutiful address. I have already had the pleasure to acquaint his Majesty of the zeal and attachment which his subjects

of Wachovia have on all occasions shown to his government and the laws of this Province.

“I am obliged to you for your congratulations on the success with which it has pleased Almighty God to bless the army under my command, and cordially wish with you that it may lay the foundation of peace and stability of this country.

“Your affectionate regard for my particular welfare I gratefully receive.

WM. TRYON.

Moravian Campe,

Bethabara, June 6, 1771.’

During the reading of these papers it was noticed that there was special attention and a sympathetic feeling displayed by the Governor. This was spoken of by officers later. The four who presented the address to the Governor were invited to dine with him, and all accepted the invitation except Utley, who was unable to remain. There were several toasts during the dinner, and to each of the toasts the response was a loud :—

“‘Hurrah! Hurrah!’

Our musicians furnished music while the dinner was in progress. The last toast was

“‘For the prosperity of the United Brethren in Wachovia!’

“The Governor was specially gracious to Marshall and placed him at his right hand during the meal. Next to Marshall sat Graff.

“The remainder of the day was spent in a happy and cheerful manner. As soon as it was dark there was a dis-

play of fireworks in front of the Governor's tent by order of his Excellency, and the homes around the square were brilliantly illuminated."

The Governor seemed loath to leave these friends, his servant declaring that it was as if the Governor were leaving home. But he did leave, with his army, and with his poor prisoners, and at Hillsboro his severity was such that the executions brought upon him the hatred and condemnation of the people of the State. Still we must admit that aside from the crimes and wrongs described, he was an able soldier and leader, and a polished gentleman with magnetic powers.

The history of Wachovia continued to develop in interest. There was not a movement of importance in the Southern campaign of the war of the American revolution but that Wachovia was directly or indirectly associated with it. The diaries are again filled with matters of thrilling interest. It is probable that a thousand or more people lived in Wachovia at that time.

Then came the close of the century, with unusual zeal and energy abroad. A notable event was the founding of

SALEM ACADEMY AND COLLEGE,

the famous school for girls and young women, known all over the United States, and which has educated ten thousand and more pupils.

Missionary work engaged the attention of the people, and trades and industries increased.

In the dark days of the civil war the Moravians sent

many soldiers to the front, and they were among the bravest of the brave North Carolina men.

Then came the advent of the new era. Winston, the twin sister of old Salem was founded, grew and flourished. The two towns, divided only by a street, have joined hands, and have formed the Twin City, with its 15,000 to 20,000 inhabitants. The county of Forsyth, somewhat larger than the original Wachovia, and embracing it, now has taxable property listed at \$10,000 000.

The growth of the religious work in Wachovia has been such that the congregations now number between five and six thousand members, and the Sunday-schools have a list of more than four thousand children. The Moravian church is only one of the many churches on the original sight of Wachovia, but in many respects it stands in a unique position. While its past history is great and beautiful, its present work is just as interesting, and we close this sketch with the closing words of "History of Wachovia."

"The past is sometimes emphasized at the expense of the present. This is an error. The true student will find that the day of enlarged work for the Master is now dawning for the Moravian Church of Wachovia. Its pure doctrine, its beautiful customs, its inspiring history, its successes in the past and in the present, its consecrated ministry, its devoted membership; all these things point forward to a bright and successful future which will not only bring bright jewels of success to the church here on earth, but will gain for it the smile of approval of the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords."









