VOL. IV DECEMBER, 1904. NO. 8

# THE NORTH CAROLINA BOOKLET.

## GREAT EVENTS IN NORTH CAROLINA HISTORY

### RUTHERFORD'S EXPEDITION AGAINST THE INDIANS, 1776,

BY

CAPTAIN S. A. ASHE.

PRICE 10 CENTS $1 THE YEAR

ENTERED AT THE POST-OFFICE AT RALEIGH, N. C., AS SECOND-CLASS MATTER.

# THE NORTH CAROLINA BOOKLET

## GREAT EVENTS IN NORTH CAROLINA HISTORY

VOL. IV.

1. *May*—The Lords Proprietors of the Province of Carolina.
   Kemp P. Battle, LL.D.
2. *June*—The Battle of Ramsour's Mill.
   Major William A. Graham.
3. *July*—Rejection of the Federal Constitution in 1788, and its Subsequent Adoption.
   Associate Justice Henry G. Connor.
4. *August*—North Carolina Signers of the National Declaration of Independence: William Hooper, John Penn, Joseph Hewes.
   Mrs. Spier Whitaker, Mr. T. M. Pittman, Dr. Walter Sikes.
5. *September*—Homes of North Carolina—The Hermitage, Vernon Hall.
   Colonel William H. S. Burgwyn, Prof. Collier Cobb.
6. *October*—Expedition to Carthagena in 1740.
   Chief Justice Walter Clark.
7. *November*—The Earliest English Settlement in America.
   Mr. W. J. Peele.
8. *December*—The Battle of Guilford Court House.
   Prof. D. H. Hill.
9. *January*—Rutherford's Expedition Against the Indians, 1776.
   Captain S. A. Ashe.
10. *February*—The Highland Scotch Settlement in North Carolina.
    Judge James C. MacRae.
11. *March*—The Scotch-Irish Settlement in North Carolina.
12. *April*—Governor Thomas Pollock.
    Mrs. John Hinsdale.

---

One BOOKLET a month will be issued by the NORTH CAROLINA SOCIETY OF THE DAUGHTERS OF THE REVOLUTION, beginning May, 1904. Price, $1 per year.

Parties who wish to renew their subscription to the BOOKLET for Vol. IV are requested to notify at once.

Address MISS MARY HILLIARD HINTON,
"Midway Plantation,"
RALEIGH, N. C.

Arrangements have been made to have this volume of the BOOKLET bound in Library style for 50 cents. Those at a distance will please add stamps to cover cost of mailing.

EDITORS:

MISS MARY HILLIARD HINTON. MRS. E. E. MOFFITT.

VOL. IV. DECEMBER, 1904. NO. 8.

# THE

# NORTH CAROLINA BOOKLET

"Carolina! Carolina! Heaven's Blessings Attend Her!
While We Live We will Cherish, Protect and Defend Her."

---

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. Editors.

## OFFICERS OF THE NORTH CAROLINA SOCIETY DAUGHTERS OF THE REVOLUTION, 1903:

REGENT:

MRS. THOMAS K. BRUNER.

VICE-REGENT:

MRS. WALTER CLARK.

HONORARY REGENTS:

MRS. SPIER WHITAKER,
(*Nee* Fanny DeBerniere Hooper),

MRS. D. H. HILL, Sr.

SECRETARY:

MRS. E. E. MOFFITT.

TREASURER:

MRS. FRANK SHERWOOD.

REGISTRAR:

MRS. ED. CHAMBERS SMITH.

---

FOUNDER OF THE NORTH CAROLINA SOCIETY AND REGENT 1896-1902:
MRS. SPIER WHITAKER.

REGENT 1902:
MRS. D. H. HILL, Sr.

# RUTHERFORD'S EXPEDITION AGAINST THE INDIANS, 1776.

BY CAPT. S. A. ASHE.

The march of historical events has often been influenced by mountain ranges with their intervening valleys and their meandering streams; and it is convenient before entering on an account of Gen. Rutherford's expedition in September, 1776, to give some description of the territory which was the scene of operations.

While the three great mountain chains trending to the Southwest lie nearly parallel, towards the Virginia line the Smokies approach the Blue Ridge, but South of the French Broad they diverge leaving a wide plateau, high and mountainous, a region remarkable for its fertility and loveliness. Further west, between the Smokies and the Alleghanies, is an extensive valley, some sixty miles broad, running from Virginia to Alabama. It lies like a great trough in the mountain region. The Holston, the Clinch and the Powells rivers rising in Virginia flow down it, and being joined by the French Broad and the Little Tennessee form the Tennessee which continues in the same direction.

In this region was the home of the Cherokees,* whose chief

* The name Cherokee, it is said, seems to refer to "coming out of the ground". In many of the Indian languages the name by which this nation was known is said to have that signification. The old men of the tribe, as reported by Hewitt, (1778), held the tradition that they had lived from time immemorial in their mountain homes and had "originally sprung from the ground there". However, by their language they are now identified with the Iroquois tribes of the far North, and they are thought to have been the Rechahecrians, a tribe that came from the mountains to the falls of the James River and made war on the Virginians in 1656.

strongholds lay to the Southward, and who occupied some forty towns on the plateau from Pigeon River (near Waynesville) to the Hiwassee; many towns in the foothills of the Blue Ridge on the head waters of the Savannah river and a still greater number in the valley and beyond the Smoky Mountains called "the overhill towns." This numerous and powerful tribe had by treaty been awarded all the territory lying west of a line running from the White Oak Mountains (in Polk County) north to the waters of the Watauga, a branch of the Holston; beyond which white settlements were forbidden; and on the other hand, the Indians were not to cross that line without permission.

To the westward they claimed as their hunting ground the territory now embraced in Tennessee and Kentucky. To the Southward, they occupied the North-western portion of South Carolina. In Georgia and Alabama, were the Creeks and Choctaws; and to the Northward were the Shawnees, a tribe that originally inhabited lands on the Savannah, but was driven Northward, and at first located in Kentucky, but being expelled from that region by the Cherokees settled North of the Ohio, Kentucky becoming the debatable land of these war-like tribes and the scene of their constant warfare, and hence known as "the dark and bloody ground."

The Indians had long been used as allies by the Whites in their wars; the French occupying Canada and claiming the Mississippi territory had early engaged them in their warfare against the English Colonists, and in like manner the English had sought to enlist the friendly tribes for their own assistance.

For the purposes of trade and in order to control the Indians at the South, the British Government had for years

employed agents to reside among them, who reported to the general superintendent, Captain John Stuart, a distinguished British officer, who was intimately associated with the Cherokees from 1760 until 1777, when because of the disastrous result of the outbreak he inaugurated he returned to England where he died in 1779. He had great power over them as well as with the Creeks and Choctaws. His agent in the Uppertowns of the Cherokees was a Scotchman named Cameron, who had long resided among them and lived as an Indian, and exerted great influence over the Cherokee Nation. The lines between the colonies had not been established even to the Blue Ridge and all beyond was a wilderness—Indian country,—and the Cherokees living to the Northwest of Charleston traded there and had but little intercourse with North Carolina.

In the progress of settlement the lands of Western North Carolina were well occupied at the Southward beyond the Catawba and at the Northward along the Yadkin to the foot of the mountains; and in 1769 William Bean, a North Carolinian, crossed the mountains and built the first cabin occupied by a white man on the Watauga River, and shortly afterwards a stream of settlers from North Carolina, Virginia and Pennsylvania pressed down the Tennessee Valley and occupied the fertile lands of the Holston and on the Nollichunky (west of Mitchell county) following the Indian trail and the trading path from the Northward to the Cherokee towns. It is worthy of remark that this valley was a great open thoroughfare that nature had provided in the mountains and it was used as a war path and easy means of communication between the Northern and Southern Indians.

In our day commerce and traffic with its railroad line fol-

low the Indian trail of primeval times, and where the echoes of thundering trains are now heard the war whoops of the Delawares and of the Shawnees resounded in their forays against the Cherokees and the Choctaws and the Creeks. As the settlements on the Watauga and Holston and Nollichunky were within the territory accorded to the Cherokees, that Nation had become restless and in a measure hostile to the invading Colonists; and they naturally looked to the British Crown, with whom their treaties were made, as the only source of protection from the encroachments of the adventurous settlers.

In 1771 there had been in upper South Carolina an insurrection similar to that known as "the Regulation movement" in North Carolina. It was under the leadership of a man named Scovell, and although it was easily suppressed, discontent was felt by the Scovellites against the men who had defeated them and against the measures they proposed; and so when the troubles came on with the Mother Country many of the Scovellites threw themselves into the opposition, becoming active Tories. When the Revolutionary war had begun, in order to induce the Cherokees to entertain friendly sentiments towards the Colonists, following the usual custom a present consisting in part of ammunition was in the fall of 1775 sent to them; and as the pack-horses were passing through upper South Carolina, the Scovellites rose and embodied, and seized the powder, claiming that it was intended for the Indians to use in making war upon them. This led to a hasty movement on the part of South Carolina, in which the inhabitants of Rowan and Mecklenburg counties joined, to suppress the Scovellites and regain possession of those munitions of war.

Col. Alexander Martin, of Mecklenburg County, commanding two companies of Continentals, and Col. Rutherford, of Rowan, and Col. Tom Polk, of Mecklenburg, commanding detachments of militia, hastened into South Carolina and dispersed the malcontents, some of whom fled to the Cherokees and allied themselves with Cameron who was then stirring up the Indians against the Colonists. This expedition, undertaken in December, 1775, because of the heavy snow then on the ground, was known as the snow campaign.

Such was the situation when the British Government agreed to adopt the plan proposed by Gov. Martin, who had fled to Fort Johnston on the lower Cape Fear, for the subjugation of North Carolina and the Southern Colonies. This plan contemplated the use of a large British force on the Seaboard, the rising of the loyalists in the interior, and an extensive Indian warfare on the outlying district which it was expected would engage the attention of the inhabitants so thoroughly as to prevent any interference with the embodying of the loyalists and their juncture with the British troops on the Seaboard. Capt. John Stuart, the Indian Superintendent, who for several months in the Spring of 1776 was at Fort Johnston awaiting the arrival of Gen. Clinton's troops, said in his report of May 20th, that he had been cut off from any correspondence with his deputies, and that he had no instructions up to that time from Gen. Howe or Gen. Clinton to employ the Indians, yet he proposed to use his utmost endeavors to keep the Indians in temper and disposed to act when required to do so. In the meantime the Continental Congress had appointed agents to have a meeting with the Creeks and Cherokees and to engage them to remain neutral,

and Willie Jones was one of the Commissioners. They met with many of the Indians at Augusta and succeeded in obtaining their promise of neutrality; but still Capt Stuart reported that he did not despair of getting them to act for his Majesty's service when found necessary. Later however, the Continental Congress directed its Commissioners to form an alliance with the Indians and to engage their active aid, but before that had been done, the British arranged for the Cherokees and all the tribes from the Ohio to Alabama to begin hostilities against the Western borders. Towards the end of June, fifteen Shawnees were with the Creek Nation concerting measures in regard to the War, and the Cherokees received the war belt from the Shawnees, the Mingoes and the Delaware Nations. It was agreed that a force of five hundred Creeks, five hundred Choctaws, five hundred Chickasaws, and a body of troops from Pensacola together with all the Cherokee Nation, were immediately to fall on the frontiers of Virginia and the two Carolinas. Henry Stuart, a British agent, wrote to the settlers on the Watauga and Nollichunky recommending that whoever among them were willing to join his Majesty's forces should repair to the King's standard and find protection among the Cherokees; those who failed to declare their loyalty were to be cut off by the Indians.

At that period when the Provincial Congress of the State was not in session, the supreme direction of affairs, under some limitations, was committed to the Council of State composed of thirteen members. A messenger carrying the plans for the Indian rising to General Gage for his approval was captured, and information being received by the Council of

the proposed movement of the Indians, General Rutherford was directed to prepare to withstand them. It was at the end of June, just when the British made their assault on Fort Moultrie at Charleston, that the Indians began their murderous attack on upper South Carolina. President Rutledge on July 7th wrote to the North Carolina Council that on the 30th of June the Cherokees had made several prisoners, plundered houses and killed some of the settlers. He proposed a joint movement by which Major Williamson with about eleven hundred men should proceed from South Carolina against the Lower Cherokees, and a force from North Carolina should attack the middle towns, and being joined by Major Williamson should proceed against the settlements on Valley River and the Hiwassee, while a detachment from Virginia should come down the Holston and attack the Overhill towns. But in advance of his letter, North Carolina was aroused. The savages did not delay their operations, but struck quickly.

The Creeks had joined the Cherokees, and together they rushed up the valley of the Tennessee, intent on devastating the outlying districts. But from Echota, the Capital of the Nation, on the Little Tennessee, (some thirty miles west of Graham County), Nancy Ward hurriedly sent word of the intended invasion to the Whites on the Holston who fled to their forts for protection. This woman was a half-breed and a niece of Ata-kullakulla, (the Little Carpenter) one of the most noted of the Indian Chieftains of that period. In his younger days he had visited England, to confirm a treaty of peace with the King, and like Manteo, he had ever remained a faithful friend of the Whites. At the fearful massacre in

1758 at Fort Loudon,* he had saved the life of Captain John Stuart and had secretly carried him to Virginia and arranged for the ransom of the surviving captives; and at this period and later, he was a friend of the Colonists in their contest with the Mother Country. Echota, the capital, was "a peace town," "a city of refuge," and Nancy Ward, who bore the title of "beloved woman," was accorded the privilege of talking in the Councils of the Chiefs and of deciding on the fate of prisoners, and possessed much influence among the Indians; and upon several occasions she rendered the Whites great service. Because of her warning, the greater part of the settlers on the Holston and Watauga escaped from the irruption of the invading savages; but a Mrs. Bean, perhaps the wife of the first settler, and a boy, Moore, were taken alive. The boy was burnt at the stake and Mrs. Bean was also bound to the stake ready for the burning, when Nancy Ward interfered and saved her life.

In the Spring of 1776 the State had been laid off into

---

* There were two Fort Loudons; one near Winchester, Va.; and the other on the Little Tennessee at the junction of Tellico River, near where Loudon's Station on the railroad now is, a few miles to the west of Echota. This fort was constructed by the South Carolina forces about 1756 for the purpose of holding the Cherokees in check, and was garrisoned by 200 soldiers. In 1758, after a long siege, it was taken by the Indians; and the siege and the massacre of the garrison and of the whites who had taken refuge there form the basis of a very interesting and meritorious novel, the title being "Old Fort Loudon." The author closely follows the historical account given by Hewitt in his history of South Carolina, written in 1770. It is particularly commended to the readers of the Booklet. It is in the Raney Library.

The writer of this article takes this opportunity to acknowledge his indebtedness to the 19th Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, J. W. Powell, director, for much information.

military districts and Colonel Griffith Rutherford, of Salisbury, had been appointed Brigadier-General of the Western District. He was an Irishman, not well educated, but a man of courage, energy, and a born soldier. At the inception of the troubles, he was Colonel of Rowan County, and year by year he attained higher eminence and rendered more important services, until at the very last he drove the British garrison from Wilmington and freed the State from their presence. After the war he moved to Tennessee and died there.

In the first week of July, while the forts on the Holston were being attacked, bands of warriors crossed the mountains and fell upon the unarmed settlers on Crooked Creek (near Rutherfordton), and a large force established their headquarters on the Nollichunky, and came up the Toe, and, passing the Blue Ridge, invaded the frontier of Rowan, which then extended to the mountains.

The unexpected appearance of these murderous bands in the outlying settlements caused great consternation, and as the news spread the backwoodsmen were aroused to resolute action.

On the 12th of July, General Rutherford wrote to the Council that he had that day received an express that the week before there were forty Indians on Crooked Creek (in the vicinity of Rutherfordton) and that applications were made him daily for relief; and he plead for expedition. And on the next day, he again sent an express to the Council about the alarming condition of the country, stating that the Indians were making great progress in destroying and murdering on the frontier of Rowan County. "Thirty-seven persons," he said, "were killed last Wednesday and Thurs-

day on the Catawba River," and "I am also informed that Colonel McDowell and ten men more and one hundred and twenty women and children are besieged in some kind of a fort, and the Indians around them; no help to them before yesterday, and they were surrounded on Wednesday. I expect the next account to hear is that they are all destroyed. Pray, gentlemen, consider our distress, send us plenty of powder, and I hope, under God, we of Salisbury District are able to stand them; but if you allow us to go to the Nation, I expect you will order Hillsboro District to join Salisbury. Three of our Captains are killed and one wounded. This day I set out with what men I can raise for the relief of the district."

At that time there was a fort at "Old Fort," constructed twenty years earlier by the whites as a protection for the Catawbas against the Cherokees, these tribes being always at enmity. This fortification being on land owned by Colonel Davidson, was in 1776 known as Davidson's Fort; and in it the people of the vicinity found refuge. There was another on Turkey Cove; a third at Lenoir; a fourth at Warrior Ford on Upper Creek, north of Morganton, and several others in the exposed settlements of Burke County, and in these the inhabitants assembled.

The plan of operations suggested by President Rutledge was agreed on and it was arranged that General Rutherford should march to the Indian Country where he was to be joined on September 9th by Colonel Williamson, near Cowee on the Little Tennessee, and together they were to devastate the Indian towns. Colonel Williamson, who had with him some Catawba Indians, besides his force of 1,800 whites, moved with great promptness, and speedily penetrated to the

Lower Towns, about the head of the Savannah River, in the vicinity of Walhalla, which he destroyed, driving the Indians before him. But at the town of Seneca, Cameron and his Tories, the Scovellites who had joined him, and a large number of braves made a desperate stand, but were finally routed and dispersed; and Williamson found there and destroyed, besides other stores, more than six thousand bushels of corn. Having completed the destruction of the Lower Towns, he crossed through Rabun Gap* and hurried to the rendezvous. His route was north, down the Little Tennessee, through Macon County, but being delayed he did not make the juncture at the appointed place.

General Rutherford acted with that energy that ever distinguished him. On the 19th day of July, he had marched at the head of 2,500 men to protect the frontier of his County; for the men of Western Carolina had sprung to arms with zeal and avidity, and were animated by a great desire to inflict heavy punishment upon their murderous foe. The various North Carolina detachments under his command,

---

* Rabun Gap, at the Southern line of Macon county, was a natural gateway to the interior of the Indian country from the southward.

It may be interesting to note that the first expedition into the Cherokee country was made by Col. Maurice Moore, who, just after the Tuscaroras had been subdued, led a force of white men from the Albemarle settlement to aid the people of South Carolina, then threatened with extermination by the Indians. He passed up the Savannah river and through Rabun Gap and down the Little Tennessee, and a part of his force went even beyond the Smokies to Echota. That was the route of communication from the south to the Tennessee Valley. Col. Montgomery, in 1758, going to the relief of Fort Loudon, followed the same route and fought a battle near Franklin and was defeated and driven back by the Indians. A few months later he distinguished himself with Wolfe, at Quebec, and in 1775, being a Major-General in the Continental army, was killed at Quebec.

having organized at different points, concentrated at Davidson's (Old Fort). Leaving the main body there, on the 29th of July, with a detachment of 500 men, Rutherford crossed the mountains to dislodge a force of some 200 braves who had established themselves on the Nollichunky, from where they had made their incursions on the frontier.

As it was not until the 9th of September that he was to unite with Williamson at a point only eighty miles distant, he spent the month of August in protecting the exposed settlements and in preparing for the expedition. He was reinforced by a regiment of militia from Surry under the command of Colonel Martin Armstrong, among whose Captains was Benjamin Cleveland, with whom was William Lenoir, afterwards the well-known General, and William Gray, as Lieutenants. They joined Rutherford at Catchey's Fort; while another regiment of three hundred men from Surry under Colonel Joe Williams, crossed the mountains further north and joined Colonel Christian and his Virginians at Big Island on the Holston.

General Rutherford was skilled in Indian warfare and knew the advantage of swift and sudden movement, and the disadavantages of allowing the Indian enemies an opportunity of harrassing his army in the coves of the mountains while on the march. His men were well armed and equipped, and every precaution was taken to proceed with dispatch, and secrecy, and not only to make the expedition successful but to put an end to all apprehensions of any future trouble from the Indians. On the 23rd of August, the Council of State being then in session at Wake Court House, President Samuel Ashe wrote to General Rutherford by General Person, making suggestions, and Person found the army ready

to move, and on the 1st of September it entered Swannanoa Gap and pressed forward. In the meantime a regiment from Orange County, under Colonel Joseph Taylor, was dispatched to reinforce Rutherford, but on reaching the mountains about the middle of August its assistance was found unnecessary, and it was disbanded and the men returned home.

When Rutherford moved, he proceeded with great rapidity and with such secrecy that he passed fifty miles into the wilderness without being discovered by the Indians. His route was said to have been across the Blue Ridge at Swannanoa Gap, then following the Swannanoa to its junction with the French Broad, across the latter river at Warrior Ford (below Asheville). His course was thence up Hominy Creek and across the ridge to Pigeon River; then to Richland Creek (crossing it just above Waynesville) and over the dividing ridge, between Haywood and Jackson Counties, to the head of Scott's Creek, which he followed to its junction with the Tuckaseegee.

All of this journey through the mountains was a very arduous and difficult performance. Without a road and sometimes without even a trail, he led his army over mountains and across streams, a hard undertaking even under favorable circumstances, and he pursued his way in momentary danger of attack by his wily foe. But so sagacious was he that every obstacle was successfully overcome, and it was not until he had penetrated two-thirds of his way into the forest that his movement was discovered. His men were in fine spirits, and keenly enjoyed the excitement of their march through the solitude of the mountains and were eager to meet the enemy. At length he reached a point only thirty

miles distant from the Middle Settlements on the Tuckaseegee. Here a detachment of a thousand men was sent forward by a forced march to surprise the Indians in their towns and fall upon them like a thunderbolt. Pursuing their quiet but rapid journey, they came upon some thirty Indians who disputed their progress; but after a short encounter the enemy fled, having wounded only one man and killed none. But they carried information of the invasion to the settlement, and when Rutherford reached the towns they had all been evacuated. Without losing time he began the work of destruction and speedily devastated the fields and burnt every house. When this was accomplished he took another detachment of 900 men, with ten days' provisions, and hurried along the Little Tennessee, and then on to attack the settlements on Valley River and the Hiwassee, destroying every town as he reached it.

Williamson was to have met him with the South Carolina force at Cowee, but not arriving, Rutherford proceeded alone. Without an intelligent guide he found great difficulty in making his way through that unknown country and was much embarrassed in his march. But even this circumstance proved fortunate. He missed the usual trail, and crossed the Nantahala Mountains at an unaccustomed place. The usual route lay through Waya Gap, where the trail crosses from Cartoogoya Creek of the Little Tennessee to Laurel Creek of Nantahala River; and there five hundred braves lay in ambush expecting to destroy his army, as they had beat back Montgomery's twenty years before. For several days they had lain in position awaiting his coming, and ignorant of his movement they still waited, while he crossed further down and reached the headwaters of Valley River.

In a brief diary kept by Captain Charles Polk, who commanded a company in this expedition, he says: "On Thursday, the 12th of September, we marched down the river three miles to Cowee town and in camp. On this day there was a party of men sent down this river (Nuckessey*) ten miles, to cut down the corn; the Indians fired on them as they were cutting the corn and killed Hancock Polk, of Colonel Beekman's regiment." On Friday, the 13th, they remained in camp in Cowee Town. On Saturday, the 14th, "we marched to Nuckessey Town, six miles higher up the river, and encamped. On Sunday, the 15th, one of Captain Irwin's men was buried in Nuckessey Town. On Monday, the 16th, we marched five miles—this day with a detachment of 1,200 men, for the valley towns, and encamped on the waters of Tennessee River. Mr. Hall preached a sermon last Sunday; in time of the sermon the express we sent to the South army returned. On Tuesday, the 17th, we marched six miles and arrived at a town called Nowee, about 12 o'clock; three guns were fired at Robert Harris, of Mecklenburg, by the Indians, said Harris being the rear of the army. We marched one mile from Nowee and encamped on the side of a steep mountain without any fire. (C. L. Hunter's sketches of W. N. C., p. 189.)

His route seems to have been southward of the present town of Whittier, and down Cowee Creek to the waters of Little Tennessee in the present county of Macon, and then across to Valley River. Every town upon the Tuckaseegee and the upper part of Little Tennessee, thirty-six towns in all, were destroyed, the corn cut down or trampled under

* Doubtless "Tuckaseegee".

the hoofs of stock driven into the fields for that purpose, and the stock itself killed or carried off. His army ascended Cartoogaja Creek, west from the present town of Franklin, to the Nantahala Mountains; and from the Nantahala (about Jarrett Station) the route lay across the mountains into the present county of Cherokee to Valley River, and down the Valley River to the Hiwassee, at the site of the present town of Murphey. The Indian braves being away, the towns on Valley River were destroyed each in turn, and it was as if a besom of destruction had swept over those settlements, so sudden and rapid was Rutherford's movement and so destructive his action. Two days after Rutherford's army had escaped falling into the ambuscade prepared for them at Waya Gap, Colonel Williamson with the South Carolina troops hurrying on and crossing by the usual trail, notwithstanding he had Catawba Indians as scouts, fell into the trap and lost twelve killed and twenty wounded. The Indians, however, suffered still more heavily and were finally put to rout. In destroying the Valley towns General Rutherford killed twelve Indians and captured nine, and he also took seven white men, from whom he got four negroes, considerable stock and leather and about one hundred weight of gunpowder and a ton of lead which they were conveying to Mobile. His own loss was slight. On the whole expedition he lost but three men. (Vol. 10, Col. Records, p. 861.) He had the good fortune to avoid a pitched battle, and with great skill he moved with such celerity that he was attacked but once on the route, and then only by some thirty Indians.

It will be seen that his operations were entirely within the limits of the present State of North Carolina; still the Valley settlements were so distant that at that time it was a very

arduous undertaking for Rutherford to lead his expedition through the unbroken forests of the mountains to the banks of the Hiwassee.

It had been expected that the two armies would unite on the 9th of September on the Little Tennessee, but Williamson being delayed, Rutherford crossed the Nantahala Mountains, and it was not until the 26th that Colonel Williamson effected a junction with Rutherford's force on the Hiwassee. The work had then been done. All the towns, the corn and everything else that might be of service to the Indians of that region had been entirely destroyed, and the Valley settlement was obliterated.

A fortnight after General Rutherford had begun his march, the Council of State, which had adjourned from Wake Court House to Salisbury so as to be nearer the scene of operations, sent Colonel Avery, provided with an escort, to confer with the General and to carry directions that he should, after destroying the towns, erect some forts in the Indian Country and send a detachment to assist Colonel Christian in his operations against the Overhill towns, and on his return he should cut a road through the mountains for future use.

On the arrival of Colonel Williamson's force a conference of officers was held and the subject of assisting Colonel Christian was considered, but it was deemed utterly impracticable to cross the Smoky Mountains, for the gap through those mountains was found to be impassable for an army in case of opposition; and it was agreed that having expelled the Indians and accomplished all they could they should return home.

Their work indeed had been fully performed. As the

army advanced every house in every settlement had been burned, ninety houses in one town alone, and the fields were utterly devastated. The Indians were driven, homeless refugees without food or raiment, save what they wore, into the dark recesses of the Nantahala, or to more remote localities beyond the mountains. Some sought shelter at the Overhill towns, but the greater number turned to the southwest and found a temporary home on the Coosawatchee River with the Creeks, and others made their painful way to their British allies in Florida, where 500 of them were received and supplied with food during that winter. Indeed the effect upon the Cherokees of this invasion by more than 4,000 well armed men was appalling. Nearly all of their towns and possessions east of the Smokies were effaced; and desolate wanderers they were, fugitives and outcasts, like wild animals without shelter and dependent on acorns and chestnuts and wild game for subsistence. Satisfied with the result of their operations, which had been so well conducted that there had been but little loss of life, Williamson and Rutherford now turned their faces homeward. Rutherford on his return pursued the same route by which he had advanced, and the road he cut through the mountains has since been known as "Rutherford's Trace." The time occupied was rather more than a month, and he reached Salisbury early in October and attended the meeting of the Provincial Congress, which met on the 12th of November at Halifax, he being an important member of that body.

Further to the northward Colonel William Christian assembled his men on the Holston in August, there being among them the regiment from Surry County under Colonel Joseph Williams, Colonel Love and Major Winston. He pressed

cautiously along the great Indian war path to the crossing of the French Broad, and then advanced without opposition to the Little Tennessee, where early in November he was proceeding to destroy the towns one after the other. So swift and strong had been the action of the Colonists that the Indians, unable to resist, now sought terms of peace; and Colonel Christian was the more willing to be lenient as he hoped to draw their trade to Virginia and away from South Carolina. He sent out some runners, and several of the head men came into his camp and agreed to surrender all their prisoners and to cede to the whites all the disputed territory occupied in the Tennessee settlements. On their solemn promise that such a treaty should be made when the tribe could be assembled, Christian suspended hostilities and withdrew his force. An exception was made, however, as to two towns, especially the town of Tuskeegee, which had been concerned in the burning of the Moore boy who was captured along with Mrs. Bean, which was destroyed; but the peace town of Echota was not molested.

Colonel Williams was not pleased with Colonel Christian's action. From Citico town on the Little Tennessee under date of the 6th of November, 1776, he wrote to the President of the Congress as follows: "Agreeable to instructions from General Rutherford, I marched three hundred men from Surry County and joined the Virginians against the Overhill Cherokee Indians, the whole commanded by Colonel William Christian. We arrived in Tomotly (one of their towns) the 18th ultimo, and have been lying in their towns till this day; nothing done except burning five of their towns, and patched up a kind of peace (a copy of which you have en-

closed). I propose waiting on you myself as soon as I return to North Carolina, at which time will endeavor to give a more particular account. I have this day obtained leave to return with my battalion."

Another letter from him to the Congress from Surry County, dated the 22nd of November, says: "I sent a copy of the articles of peace; I now send you a copy of a letter from Colonel Christian to Colonel Russell; both of which are convincing proof to me that some of the Virginia gentlemen are desirous of having the Cherokees under their protection, which I humbly conceive is not their right, as almost the whole of the Cherokee Country lies in the limits of North Carolina and ought, I think, to be under their protection, and hope will be the opinion of every member belonging to this State. As our frontiers are inhabited far beyond where the Colony line is extended, in order to avoid further disputes, it would be well for commissioners to be appointed from each Colony and have the line extended, otherwise by all probability there will be great contentions in our frontiers."

By a treaty made in South Carolina, the following May, the Lower Cherokees surrendered all their remaining territory in South Carolina, except a narrow strip, and in July by treaty at the Long Island, as had been arranged by Colonel Christian, the Middle and Upper Cherokees ceded all their possessions east of the Blue Ridge, together with all the disputed territory on the Watauga, Nollichunky, Upper Holston and New River; and an agent was appointed to represent the whites and to reside at Echota and prevent any movements unfriendly to the American cause.

General Rutherford reached Salisbury early in October,

and to destroy some towns not in his route, and perhaps to aid Colonel Christian, then beyond the Smokies in the Tennessee Valley, he directed Captain William Moore to collect his company of Light Horse and to join Captain Harden of the Tryon Troops, and to return into the Indian Country. Captain Moore's account of this expedition has been preserved. (Vol. 10, Col. Records.) The entire force numbered about one hundred horsemen. They left Cathey's Fort on the 29th of October and pushed on down to the Tuckaseegee River, but on arriving at the Tuskaseegee and in the vicinity of the town of Too Cowee (which was situated over the Cowee Mountain on the exact ground recently occupied by the residence of Hon. W. H. Thomas, for many years the Senator from Jackson County and well known as the Chief of the Cherokee Tribe), Moore pressed on with great vigor, hoping to reach the town before night. But the distance proved greater than he expected, and he did not reach it until next morning. The enemy having become alarmed had all fled, and the town, consisting of twenty-five houses, was destroyed, together with the orchards and fields of the Indians. The location of this settlement is said to be just above the present railroad bridge of Whittier in Swain County. A detachment left the main body and pursued the fugitives northward on the other side of the river to Oconaluftee River and Soco Creek. This detachment was under Captain Moore, and after many experiences it finally crossed "a prodigious mountain where it felt a severe shock of an earthquake," and then steered a course east and south two days through "prodigious mountains which were almost impassable and struck the road in Richland Creek Mountains and returned to Pigeon River."

The murderous warfare of the savages begot a similar spirit of fierce revenge on the part of the hardy spirits who had to struggle with them in the distant mountains, and the life of an Indian was seldom spared unless for the purpose of converting him into a slave. The whites practiced the art of scalping with equal skill as the Red Man, and boasted of their prowess by exhibiting their bloody scalps. When Captain William Moore's horsemen were returning and arrived at Pigeon River, a dispute arose between him and the whole body of officers and men concerning the sale of the prisoners. He deemed it his duty to submit the question to the Congress whether they should be sold as slaves or not, but "the greater part swore bloodily that if they were not sold slaves upon the spot, they would kill and scalp them immediately," upon which the Captain was obliged to give way. In his report, he says: "The three prisoners were sold for 242 pounds, while the whole amount of plunder amounted to above eleven hundred pounds." "Our men," he adds, "were very spirited and eager for action, and were very desirous that your Honor would order them upon a second expedition."*

---

The following relative to General Rutherford may be of interest: The Rutherfords were originally Scotch, and for centuries they were classed among the most ancient and powerful families in Teviotdale, on the borders of England. One of the most distinguished of the name was Rev. Samuel Rutherford, who, in 1644, published his "Lex Rex," which gives him a prominent place among the early writers on Constitu-

* Moore's report is sometimes improperly quoted as giving an account of Rutherford's expedition. Moore's expedition was a subsequent foray into the Indian country.

tional Laws. On the Restoration this work was ordered to be burnt and he was charged with high treason, but died in 1661 before he was brought to trial. Later some members of his family removed from Scotland to Ireland, where John Rutherford married a Miss Griffith, a lady from Wales. Their son, Griffith Rutherford, sailed from Ireland to America in 1739, accompanied by his wife and their only son, Griffith, then about eight years of age. The parents died either on the voyage or soon after their arrival, and young Griffith Rutherford fell to the care of an old German couple. He came to Rowan county, North Carolina, probably about 1753, along with the early settlers, being then about 22 years of age.

In 1756 he purchased from James Lynn two tracts of land on the south fork of Grant's Creek, about seven miles southwest of the little settlement of Salisbury, and adjoining the land of James Graham, whose sister, Elizabeth, he married about that time. Their son, James Rutherford, killed at the Battle of Eutaw, was a Major in 1780 and was born probably in 1757. Although General Rutherford's education was not a finished one, it was not so deficient as to be a hindrance to him in public life. His association was with the best people of his section and his residence was in the center of the Locke settlement.

A man of strong character, resolute and determined and of unusual capacity and sterling worth, he early attained a position of prominence. He was a member of the Assembly as early as 1769, and about that time, perhaps earlier, he was Sheriff of Rowan County. He was in the Assembly of 1770 and 1771, and at that time was Captain of his militia company from his section of Rowan.

When in 1771 the Regulators of Rowan County questioned the legality of the fees taken by the officers of that county, Rutherford and Frohawk and Alexander Martin and other officers agreed to refer the matters in dispute to a committee of prominent citizens, some being chosen from among the leaders of the Regulation and others so respectable as to have the entire confidence of the people, such as Matthew Locke and Thomas Person. This agreement was entered into at Salisbury on March 7, 1771, and was entirely satisfactory to both officers and the people, and if it had not been interfered with, but had been carried into effect, it probably would have been the entire solution of the questions then agitating the people. But Governor Tryon disapproved of it as being unconstitutional and pressed forward his military movement that resulted in the Battle of Alamance. Rutherford, being Captain of the militia company, was active in enforcing law and order and restraining the excesses of the Regulators, and he led his company into General Waddell's camp, but it was by his advice that Waddell retired before the Regulation forces and avoided a battle with the people. Immediately after the Battle of Alamance he, along with Waddell's other troops joined Tryon's army and he continued on that service as long as necessary. Yet it is to be observed that if the course agreed upon by Rutherford in March had been adhered to and not disallowed by Governor Tryon, the Regulators would probably have been entirely satisfied and the country pacified, and there would have been no conflict and no necessity to resort to force in order to maintain law and the authority of government.

The people continued to elect Rutherford to represent them in the Assembly, and he was a member in the Legislature of

1773 and 1774, and he was elected a member of the Provincial Congress of 1775 and was appointed a member of the Committee of Safety for Rowan County, and Colonel of that county. He was in all the subsequent Provincial Congresses and assisted in forming the State Constitution. Indeed, for years he had been one of the prominent and strong men in the Legislature, active and always forward in important business. In April, 1776, he was appointed Brigadier General for the Western District, and was Senator from Rowan from 1777 to 1786, except when a prisoner of war in 1781 and 1782.

During the Revolution he was among the most active and enterprising military men in the State. He led the Rowan Regiment to South Carolina against the Scovellite Tories in the "Snow Campaign" in December, 1775, and conducted the expedition against the Indians in September, 1776. The following years quiet reigned in North Carolina, but in 1779 he carried his brigade to the Savannah to the aid of General Lincoln; and in June, 1780, he suppressed the Tories at Ramseur's Mills and threatened Lord Rawdon in South Carolina, and dispersed the Tories on the Yadkin. Indeed, he was ever a terror to the disaffected and maintained the authority of the State with great activity. He marched with Gates to Camden, where he fell badly wounded, and being taken prisoner was confined at St. Augustine. In the summer of 1781 he was exchanged, and at once calling his brigade together, he resolutely marched against Major Craig at Wilmington. On his way, he drove the Tories before him, and about the middle of November, approached the town; but Major Craig had then heard of the surrender of Cornwallis,

and he hurriedly evacuated Wilmington, retired from the Cape Fear and escaped.

In 1786 General Rutherford moved to Tennessee, where he settled in Sumner County, and in 1794, upon the organization of the territory south of the Ohio, President Washington appointed him a member of the Legislative Council for the Goverment of the "Territory of the United States South of the Ohio," and he was elected President of that body. Six years later, in 1800, he died at his home in Sumner County, much lamented in Tennessee. His son, John Rutherford, married a daughter of Matthew Locke, the founder of the Locke family of Rowan County, and Mrs. E. A. Long, of Memphis, Tenn., is one of his descendants.

# North Carolina Historical Commission.

Established by Laws of 1903.

---

MEMBERS.

Mr. W. J. PEELE, Chairman, Raleigh, N. C.
Mr. R. D. W. CONNOR, Secretary, Wilmington, N. C.
Rev. Dr. J. D. HUFHAM, Henderson, N. C.
Dr. R. H. DILLARD, Edenton, N. C.
Mr. F. A. SONDLEY, Asheville, N. C.

## PRIZES.

The Commission offers three prizes of $100 each, as follows:

1. Best Biographical Sketch of a North Carolinian.

2. Best History of any Decade from 1781 to 1861 (excluding 1791-1801 and 1831-1841).

3. Best History of any County in North Carolina.

The conditions under which the contest is held will be furnished upon application to the Secretary of the Commission.

The Commission will be glad to be apprised of any valuable unpublished manuscripts, letters, documents or records relating to the history of North Carolina.

# GENEALOGICAL DEPARTMENT.

UNDER AUSPICES OF THE

## NORTH CAROLINA
## SOCIETY DAUGHTERS of the REVOLUTION,

*YOUR NORTH CAROLINA ANCESTRY CAN BE CAREFULLY TRACED.*

The Colonial Records of North Carolina, records of the different counties, family papers and State histories will be readily examined for parties desiring to have their ancestry traced. Their ancestors must have resided in the State of North Carolina during the Revolutionary and Colonial periods.

Fee for such researches, $5.

Write for particulars, enclosing stamp for reply, to

Mrs. Helen DeBerniere Hooper Wills,
Corner Person and Polk Streets,
Raleigh, North Carolina.

COATS OF ARMS EMBLAZONED AT REASONABLE RATES.
PICTURES OF OLD HOMES AND PORTRAITS SECURED IF OBTAINABLE.
For Coats of Arms, etc., address

Miss Mary Hilliard Hinton,
"Midway Plantation,"
Raleigh, North Carolina.

E. M. UZZELL & CO.,
PRINTERS AND BINDERS,
COR. WILMINGTON AND MARTIN STREETS,
RALEIGH, N. C.