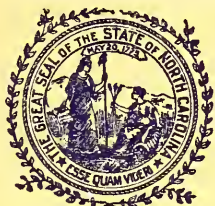


Vol. XII

JANUARY, 1913

No. 3

The
North Carolina Booklet



GREAT EVENTS
IN
NORTH CAROLINA
HISTORY



PUBLISHED QUARTERLY
BY
THE NORTH CAROLINA SOCIETY
DAUGHTERS OF THE REVOLUTION
RALEIGH, N. C.

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The North Carolina Booklet

Great Events in North Carolina History

Volume XII of THE BOOKLET will be issued quarterly by the North Carolina Society, Daughters of the Revolution, beginning July, 1912. THE BOOKLET will be published in July, October, January, and April. Price \$1.00 per year, 35 cents for single copy.

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Many numbers of Volumes I to XI for sale.

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

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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.

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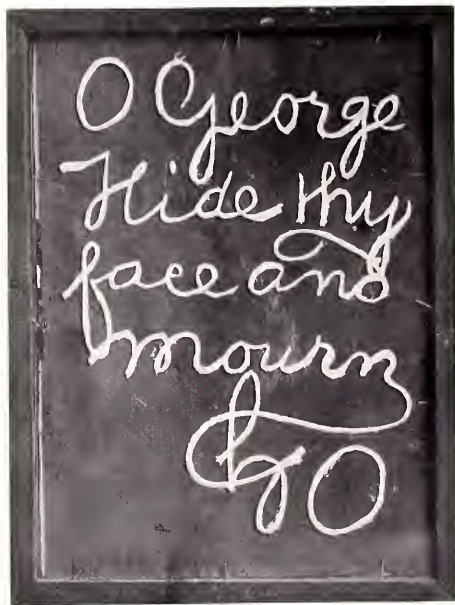
MRS. E. E. MOFFITT.

*Died December 12, 1904.

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King George III.



Inscription, in General Nathaniel Greene's handwriting, on the back of picture of King George III.



Queen Charlotte.

THE NORTH CAROLINA BOOKLET

Vol. XII

JANUARY, 1913

No. 3

JOHN MOTLEY MOREHEAD: ARCHITECT AND BUILDER OF PUBLIC WORKS¹

BY R. D. W. CONNOR.

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED IN THE HALL OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, DECEMBER 4, 1912, UPON THE PRESENTATION TO THE STATE OF A BUST OF GOVERNOR MOREHEAD BY THE NORTH CAROLINA HISTORICAL COMMISSION.

Along the line of the North Carolina Railroad, from its eastern terminus at Goldsboro to its western terminus at Charlotte, lie eleven counties embracing six thousand square miles of territory, now one of the most prosperous and productive regions in North Carolina. During the decade from 1840 to 1850, perhaps no other State on the entire Atlantic seaboard could have exhibited a stretch of country of equal area which presented to the patriotic citizen so discouraging a prospect or so hopeless an outlook. Such a citizen traversing this region would have found public roads and methods of travel and transportation that were primitive when George III claimed the allegiance of the American colonies. Delays, inconveniences, and discomforts were the least of the evils that beset the traveler who entrusted life and limbs to the public conveyances of that period.² The cost of transportation was so great that the profits of one half the planters' crops were consumed in getting the other half to market, and hundreds of them found it profitless to pro-

¹John Motley Morehead was born in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, July 4, 1796, son of John Morehead and Obedience Motley. In 1798 his parents moved to Rockingham County, North Carolina, where John grew to manhood. He was prepared for college partly under the private instruction of Thomas Settle and partly at the Academy of Dr. David Caldwell, near Greensboro. He afterwards entered the University of North Carolina, from which he was graduated in 1817. In his junior year he was appointed a tutor in the University. From 1828 to 1866 he served on the Board of Trustees, and in 1849 was President of the Alumni Association. Morehead was the sixth alumnus of the University to become Governor of North Carolina. After his graduation from the University he studied law under Archibald D. Murphey. In 1819, receiving his license to practice, he settled at Wentworth, county seat of Rockingham County, where he lived until his marriage to Miss Ann Eliza Lindsay, eldest daughter of Col. Robert Lindsay, of Guilford County. He removed to Greensboro which continued to be his home during the rest of his life.

²"The road [from Weldon to Gaston] was as bad as anything, under the name of a road, can be conceived to be. Whenever the adjoining swamps, fallen trees, stumps, and plantation fences would admit of it, the coach was driven, with a great deal of dexterity, out of the road. When the wheels sunk in the mud, below the hubs, we were sometimes requested to get out and walk. An upset seemed every moment inevitable. At length, it came."—Frederick Law Olmsted. "A Journey in the Seaboard Slave States," 1853-1854. Vol. I, page 348. "From personal observations, I have found the roads leading from Raleigh westward, for the distance of fifty or sixty miles, * * * decidedly the worst in the State."—Governor Morehead's message to the Legislature of 1842. Journal of the General Assembly, page 409.

duce more than their own families could use.³ In 1853 a traveler, within thirty miles of the State Capitol, saw "three thousand barrels of an article worth a dollar and a half a barrel in New York, thrown away, a mere heap of useless offal, because it would cost more to transport it than it would be worth."⁴

Under such conditions there could be, of course, no commerce, and without commerce no markets. Such commerce as the produce of the fertile valleys and plateaux of the Piedmont section created found its way to the markets of Virginia and South Carolina; and among the people who dwelt west of Greensboro, declared Governor Morehead in 1842, "Cheraw, Camden, Columbia, * * * Augusta, and Charleston are much more familiarly known than even Fayetteville and Raleigh."⁵ In all the region from Goldsboro to Charlotte, Raleigh, then a straggling country village, was the only town of sufficient importance to be noted in the United States census of 1850. This section, now the heart of the manufacturing region of the South, reported to the census takers of that year no other manufactures than a handful of "homemade" articles valued at \$396,473. The social and labor systems upon which the civilization of the State was founded confined the energies of the people almost exclusively to agriculture, yet their farming operations were so crude and unproductive that a traveler, commenting on the agriculture in the vicinity of Raleigh, found it "a mystery how a town of 2,500 inhabitants can obtain sufficient supplies from it to exist."⁶ This was not the view merely of an unsympathetic stranger. Calvin H. Wiley, attempting to arouse his fellow members of the Legislature of 1852 from their indifference and lethargy, after referring to the "magnificent capitol" in which they sat, exclaimed, "But what is the view from these porticoes, and what do we see as we travel hither? Wasted fields and decaying tenements; long stretches of silent desolation with here and there a rudely cultivated farm and a tottering barn."⁷

But more forcible than any other evidence, because incontrovertible, is the testimony of the United States census. The census reports of 1840 show that nearly one-third of the adult white population of the State could neither read nor write. The population of the State was at

³Speaking of the building of a turnpike, from Raleigh westward, Governor Morehead in his message of 1842, said: "Labor can not be difficult to obtain in a region now growing cotton at six cents per pound, corn at one dollar per barrel, and wheat so low that it takes one half to transport the other to market."—Journals of the Legislature 1842-'43, page 411. "A farmer told me that he considered twenty-five bushels of corn a large crop, and that he generally got as much as fifteen. He said that no money was to be got by raising corn, and very few farmers here [about ten miles from Raleigh] 'made' any more than they needed for their own force. It cost too much to get it to market."—Olmsted, "Seaboard Slave States," Vol. I, page 358.

⁴Olmsted: A Journey in the Seaboard Slave States. 1853-1854. Vol. I, page 369.

⁵Annual Message. Legislative Journals, 1842-'43, page 409.

⁶Olmsted.

⁷Speech in favor of his bill to appoint a State Superintendent of Common Schools.

a standstill. From 1830 to 1840, thirty-two of the sixty-eight counties of North Carolina lost in population, while the increase in the State as a whole was less than two and a half per cent.⁸ The best blood of North Carolina, refusing to remain at home and stagnate, was flowing in a steady stream into the vast and fertile regions of the South and West; and that brain and energy which should have been utilized in developing the resources of North Carolina was being forced to seek an outlet in other regions where it went to lay the foundations of Alabama, Mississippi, and Texas, of Ohio, Illinois, and Indiana. Dr. Wiley was guilty of no exaggeration when he declared that North Carolina had "long been regarded by her own citizens as a mere nursery to grow up in"; that the State had become a great camping ground on which the inhabitants were merely tenanted for a while; and that thousands were annually seeking homes elsewhere whose sacrifices in moving would have paid for twenty years their share of taxation sufficient to give to North Carolina all the fancied advantages of those regions whither they went to be taxed with disease and suffering. The melancholy sign "For Sale" seemed plowed in deep black characters over the whole State, and the State flag which floated over the Capitol was jestingly called by our neighbors of Virginia and South Carolina an auctioneer's sign. "The ruinous effects," said he, "are eloquently recorded in deserted farms, in wide wastes of guttered sedgefields, in neglected resources, in the absence of improvements, and in the hardships, sacrifices and sorrows of constant emigration."

Such was the view which Central North Carolina presented to the keen eyes of John M. Morehead when, in the closing days of 1840, he journeyed from Greensboro to Raleigh to assume his duties and responsibilities as Chief Magistrate of the Commonwealth. As desolate as the prospect was, however, Morehead's foresight saw in it not a little to give him courage. He must have realized that North Carolina was standing at the turn of the road and that much depended on the wisdom and prudence with which he himself directed her choice of future routes. Four years before a new Constitution, profoundly affecting the political life of the State, had gone into operation, from which Morehead, and other leaders who thought as he did, had prophesied great results for the upbuilding of the State. This new Constitution had paved the way for the work of a small group of constructive statesmen, of whom Morehead was now the chosen leader, who were destined to direct and lead the public thought of North Carolina during the quarter century from 1835 to 1860.

Among these men two distinct types of genius were represented. On

⁸Population in 1830, 737,987; in 1840, 753,409.

the one hand there were the dreamers,—men who had the power of vision to see what the future held in store for their country, who wrote and spoke forcibly of what they foresaw, but lacked the power to convince men of the practicability of their visions. On the other hand there were the so called practical men,—men who knew well enough how to construct what other men had planned, but lacked the power of vision necessary to see beyond the common everyday affairs that surrounded and engrossed them. Once in an age appears that rare individual, both architect and contractor, both poet and man of action, to whom is given both the power to dream and the power to execute. Such men write themselves deep in their country's annals and make the epochs of history.

In the history of North Carolina such a man was John M. Morehead. Those who have written and spoken of Governor Morehead heretofore have been chiefly impressed with his great practical wisdom,⁹ and this he certainly had as much as any other man in our history. As for myself, what most impresses me after a careful study of his life and works, is his wonderful power of vision. He was our most visionary builder, our greatest practical dreamer. No other man of his day had so clear a vision of the future to which North Carolina was destined, or did so much to bring about its realization as Governor Morehead. It is no exaggeration to say that we have not now in process of construction, and have not had since his day, a single great work of internal improvement of which he did not dream and for which he did not labor. He dreamed of great lines of railroad binding together not only all sections of North Carolina, but connecting this State with every part of the American Union. He dreamed of a network of improved country roads leading from every farm in the State to all her markets. He dreamed of a great central highway, fed by these roads, finding its origin in the waters of the Atlantic at Morehead City and finally losing itself in the clouds that hang about the crests of the Blue Ridge. He dreamed of the day when the channels of our rivers would be so deepened and widened that they could bear upon their waters our share of the commerce of the world. He dreamed of an inland waterway connecting the harbor of Beaufort with the waters of Pamlico Sound and through the opening of Roanoke Inlet, affording a safe inland passage for coastwise vessels around the whitecaps of Cape Hatteras. He dreamed of the day when the flags of all nations might be seen floating from the mast-heads of their fleets riding at anchor in the harbors of Beaufort and

⁹Kerr, John, "Oration on the Life and Character of John M. Morehead"; In Memoriam of John M. Morehead, Raleigh, 1868; Scott, William Lafayette, "Tribute to the Genius and Worth of John M. Morehead"; *Ibid*: Smith, C. Alphonso, "John Motley Morehead"; The Biographical History of North Carolina, Vol. VI, pp. 250-258; Wooten, Council, "Governor Morehead"; Charlotte *Daily Observer*, September 30, 1901.

Wilmington. He dreamed of a chain of mills and factories dotting every river bank in the State and distributing over these highways of commerce a variety of products bearing the brand of North Carolina manufacturers.

Such were his dreams, and the history of North Carolina during the last half-century is largely the story of their realization. It is this fact that gives to Morehead his unique place in our history. He had a distinguished political career, but his fame is not the fame of the office holder.¹⁰ Indeed, no other man in our history, save Charles B. Aycock alone, in so brief a public career, made so deep an impression on the life of the State. The explanation is simple. The public service of each was inspired by a genuine love of the State and consecrated to the accomplishment of a great purpose. The educational and intellectual development which Aycock stimulated was based on the material prosperity of which Morehead laid the foundation. It is, then, his service as architect and builder of great and enduring public works that gives to Morehead his distinctive place in our annals, and it is of this service that I shall speak today.

When Morehead began his public career the prevailing political thought of the State was, in modern political vernacular, reactionary. Representation was distributed equally among the counties, regardless of population. East of Raleigh, where the institution of slavery was most strongly entrenched, thirty-five counties with a combined population of 294,312, sent to the General Assembly sixteen more Commoners and eight more Senators than twenty-seven counties west of Raleigh which had a combined population of 50,205 more people. A property qualification was requisite for membership in the General Assembly and inasmuch as all State officials were elected by the Legislature, not by the people directly, Property, not Men, controlled the government. The theory of Property was that the best government is that which governs least. Adherents of this school of politics taught, therefore, that government had fulfilled its mission when it had preserved order, punished crime, and kept down the rate of taxation. But another school of political thought, originating in the counties west of Raleigh, where the institution of slavery had not secured so strong a foothold, was now beginning to make itself heard. Its adherents favored a constitutional

¹⁰In 1821 he represented Rockingham County in the House of Commons; in 1826, 1827 and 1858 he represented Guilford County in the House, and in 1860 in the Senate. He was one of the delegates from Guilford in the Convention of 1835. In 1840 he was elected Governor, and in 1842 was re-elected. He was the permanent presiding officer of the National Whig Convention, which met at Philadelphia, June 7, 1848, and nominated General Zachary Taylor for the Presidency. By the act establishing the North Carolina Insane Asylum he was designated as Chairman of the Board of Commissioners to locate and build the asylum. In 1857 he was elected President of the association organized for the purpose of erecting at Greensboro a monument to General Nathanael Greene. He was one of the delegates from North Carolina to the Peace Congress at Washington in 1861. In 1861-'62 he was a member of the Provisional Congress of the Confederate States. He died at Greensboro, August 27, 1866.

convention to revise the basis of representation, to give to the people the right to elect their chief magistrate, and in other respects to make the government popular in practice as well as in form; and they advocated internal improvements, geological surveys, the conservation of resources, asylums for the insane, public schools, schools for the deaf and dumb and for the blind, and numerous other progressive measures which all right thinking people now acknowledge to be governmental in their nature. These men were the Progressives of their day.

Morehead found his place among these Progressives. As a member of the General Assembly he was among the foremost in advocating a constitutional convention. He supported measures for the building of good roads, for the digging of canals, for the improvement of inland navigation, for drainage of swamps, and for railroad surveys.¹¹ He opposed a bill to prevent the education of negroes, moved the appointment of a select committee on the colonization of slaves, introduced a bill providing for their emancipation under certain conditions, and displayed so much interest in measures for the amelioration of the conditions of the slaves that his opponents, when he became a candidate for Governor, charged him with being at heart an Abolitionist.¹² He endeavored to secure the appropriation of funds for the collection of material for the preservation of the history of North Carolina¹³ and took a deep interest in all measures for the promotion of public education. In 1827, while he was chairman of the Committee on Education, a bill came before his committee to repeal the Act of 1825 which had created the Literary Fund "for the establishment of common schools." Morehead submitted the report of the committee, in which he said:

Your committee believe that the passage of that act [to establish common schools] must have been greeted by every philanthropist and friend of civil liberty as the foundation on which was to rest the future happiness of our citizens and the perpetuity of our political institutions. * * * From the very nature of our civil institutions, the people must act; it is wisdom and policy to teach them to act from the lights of reason, and not from the blind impulse of deluded feeling. * * * Independent of any political influence that general education might have, your committee are of opinion that any State or sovereign, having the means at command, are morally criminal if they neglect to contribute to each citizen or subject that individual usefulness and happiness which arises from a well cultured understanding. * * * Your committee can not conceive a nobler idea than that of the genius of our coun-

¹¹In the Legislature of 1821 he voted with the minority for a resolution providing for the calling of a Constitutional Convention; for a bill "to provide an additional fund for internal improvements"; in 1826, for a bill to improve the navigation of the Cape Fear River below Wilmington, and for a similar bill in 1827; for the survey of a route for a railroad from New Bern through Raleigh, to the western counties.

¹²The *Raleigh Standard* called him an Abolitionist because as a Member of the Legislature he "drew a report against the proposition of Mr. Stedman, from Chatham, forbidding the instruction of slaves." Quoted in the *Raleigh Register*, January 3, 1840.

¹³He introduced a resolution to advance money from the Literary Fund to be used "in aiding Archibald D. Murphey, of Orange County, in writing and publishing the History of this State," to be repaid from the proceeds of a lottery authorized by the Legislature for the purpose.

try, hovering over the tattered son of some miserable hovel, leading his infant but gigantic mind in the paths of useful knowledge, and pointing out to his noble ambition the open way by which talented merit may reach the highest honors and preferments of our government.

The committee, accordingly, unanimously recommended the rejection of the bill to discontinue the Literary Fund.¹⁴ The recommendation was accepted, the bill was lost, the Literary Fund was saved, and the foundation on which our common school system was afterwards built was preserved intact.

In the Convention of 1835, in which he represented Guilford County, Morehead supported the amendments offered to the Constitution designed to democratize the State Government. Two of these amendments in particular have had a far reaching influence on our history. One of them placed representation in the House of Commons on a basis of Federal population; the other took away from the Legislature the election of the Governor and gave it to the people. To this latter change we may trace the origin of two of the most important political institutions of our own day,—the party State Convention and the prælection canvass of the State by the nominees for State offices.

The first party State Convention ever held in North Carolina was the Whig Convention which met in Raleigh, November 12, 1839, and nominated John M. Morehead for Governor.¹⁵ Reading the contemporary newspaper reports of this Convention shortly after attending the last State Convention held in this city in June of the present year, one is greatly impressed with the marked contrast in the two bodies. They were typical of the political conditions of the two eras in which they were held. The latter with its more than one thousand cheering, shouting, declaiming delegates, uncontrolled and uncontrollable, was truly representative of the aggressive direct democracy of the twentieth century. The former with its ninety-one sober, orderly, deliberative gentlemen of the old school, thoroughly responsive to the mallet of their chairman, was just as truly representative of the staid, self-restrained, representative democracy of the early nineteenth century.

¹⁴Coon, Charles L.: Public Education in North Carolina, 1799-1849; Vol. I, page 376.

¹⁵Ex-Gov. John Owen, delegate from Bladen, presided. A General Committee of Thirteen, one from each Congressional District, was appointed "to take into consideration the purposes for which the Convention had assembled" and to report thereon. November 13th, this committee reported, among other resolutions, the following: "Resolved, That having been inspired with a deep and lively sense of the eminent practical vigor, sound Republican principles, unblemished public and private virtues, ardent patriotism and decided abilities of John M. Morehead, of the County of Guilford, we do accordingly recommend him to our fellow citizens as a fit successor to our present enlightened Chief Magistrate, Governor Dudley."—Adopted *unanimously*. The platform of the Convention favored: (1) Economy in government; (2) Reform in the revenue system; (3) Reduction in the number of government employes; (4) Selection of government employes "without discrimination of parties"; (5) An Amendment to the Federal Constitution to abolish the Electoral College; (6) One term of four years for the President; (7) A National Bank; (8) A division of the proceeds of public lands among the States on a basis of Federal population; (9) Public education; (10) Strict Construction of the Constitution. It opposed: (1) Jackson's Spoil System; (2) Appointment of Members of Congress to Federal offices during their terms in Congress; (3) Making judicial appointments for partisan reasons; (4) Interference of Federal Officers in elections; (5) Protective tariff; (6) The Federal Government's making internal improvements "except such as may be stamped with a national character"; (7) The Sub-Treasury scheme; (8) Federal interference with slavery.

Morehead's election as Governor followed a campaign that is memorable in the history of North Carolina as the first in which candidates for public office ever made a canvass of the State.¹⁶ But in other respects also his election and inauguration as Chief Executive marks a turning point in our history. He was the first Governor to sit in this Capitol, in itself typical of the new era then dawning upon the State;¹⁷ and, what is more important still, he was the first of our Governors to discard the old *laissez faire* policy which his predecessors had followed since the Revolution, and to come into office with a distinct program in view. This program he outlined in very general terms in his Inaugural Address before the Members of the General Assembly, in the course of which he said:

I shall be happy to coöperate with you in bringing into active operation all the elements of greatness and usefulness with which our State is so abundantly blessed. Other States have outstripped us in the career of improvements, and in the development of their natural resources, but North Carolina will stand a favorable comparison with most of her sister States in her natural advantages,—her great extent of fertile soil, her great variety of production, her exhaustless deposits of mineral wealth, her extraordinary water-power, inviting to manufactures, all, all combine to give her advantages that few other States possess. Whatever measures you may adopt to encourage agriculture and to induce the husbandman while he toils and sweats to hope that his labors will be duly rewarded; whatever measures you may adopt to facilitate commerce and to aid industry in all departments of life to reap its full rewards, will meet with my cordial approbation. * * * It is equally our duty, fellow citizens, to attend to our moral and intellectual cultivation. * * * It is to our common schools, in which every child can receive the rudiments of an education, that our attention should be mainly directed. Our system is yet in its infancy; it will require time and experience to give to it its greatest perfection. * * * I doubt not, in due time, the legislative wisdom of the State will perfect the system as far as human sagacity can do it. And no part of my official duty will be performed with more pleasure than that part which may aid in bringing about that happy result.¹⁸

¹⁶Morehead's opponent in 1840 was Romulus M. Saunders. The vote was, Morehead 44,484; Saunders, 35,903; Morehead's majority, 8,581. In 1842 Morehead's opponent was Louis D. Henry. The vote was, Morehead, 37,943; Henry, 34,411; Morehead's majority, 3,532. The falling off in Morehead's vote is attributable to the disorganization of the Whig party following the death of President Harrison, and the defection of President Tyler. Morehead's first inauguration was January 1, 1841; his second, December 31, 1842.

¹⁷Referring to this fact in his Inaugural Address before the General Assembly he said:

"You are the first legislative body that ever had the honor to assemble in its splendid halls. I am the first Executive who ever had the honor to be installed within its durable walls. It will endure as a monument for ages to come of the munificence, the liberality and taste of the age in which we live. There is a moral effect produced by the erection of such an edifice as this,—it will serve in the chain of time to link the past with the future. And if ever that proud spirit that has ever characterized us, which has ever been ready to assert its rights and to avenge its wrongs, which exhibited itself at the Regulation Battle of 1770 [1771], which burnt with more brilliance at the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence in 1775, and which boldly declared for independence in 1776,—if ever that proud spirit shall become craven in time to come, and shall not dare animate the bosom of a freeman, let it look upon this monument and remember the glorious institution under which its foundations were laid, and the noble people by whom it was reared, and then let it become a slave if it can. May it endure for ages to come—may it endure until time itself shall grow old; may a thousand years find these halls still occupied by freemen legislating for a free and happy people."—*Raleigh Register*, January 5, 1841.

¹⁸*Raleigh Register*, January 5, 1841.

But we should not expect a man of Governor Morehead's great practical wisdom to content himself with general observations. To reduce these general observations into a concrete, practical system was the work of his first two years in the Governor's office, and when the Legislature of 1842 met he was ready with a message outlining a complete system of internal improvements.¹⁹ His scheme embraced the further extension of the railroad lines already built in the State, the improvement of our rivers and harbors, the construction of extensive lines of turnpikes, and the linking of all three together in one general system of transportation. One of the ablest public documents in our history, this message, for its practical bearing on the problems of our own day, still repays a careful study. With reference to the great inland waterway now nearing completion, of which the connection between Pamlico Sound and Beaufort Harbor forms an important link, he said:

Turning our attention to the eastern part of the State, two improvements said to be practicable, assume an importance that renders them national in their character. I allude to the opening of Roanoke Inlet and the connection of Pamlico Sound by a ship canal with Beaufort harbor. Frequent surveys of the first of these proposed improvements * * * establish the feasibility of this work. The advantages arising from this improvement to our commerce are too obvious to need pointing out. But the view to be taken of its vast importance is in the protection it will afford to our shipping and the lives of our seamen. The difficulty and dangers often encountered at Ocracoke Inlet render the connection between Pamlico Sound and Beaufort harbor of vast importance to the convenience and security of our commerce and shipping. It will be an extension of that inland navigation, so essential to us in time of war, and give access to one of the safest harbors on our coast, and one from which a vessel can be quicker at sea than from any other, perhaps, on the continent. In these improvements the commerce of the nation is interested; it becomes the duty of the nation to make them, if they be practicable and proper. I therefore recommend that you bring the attention of Congress to the subject in the manner most likely to effect the object. * * * We should assert a continual claim to our right to have this work effected by the general government. * * * You would be saved the trouble of this appeal if the nation could witness one of those storms so frequent on our coast—could witness the war of elements which rage around Hatteras and the dangers which dance about Ocracoke—could witness the noble daring of our pilots and the ineffectual but manly struggles of our seamen—could see our coast fringed with wrecks and our towns filled with the widows and orphans of our gallant tars. Justice and humanity would extort what we now ask in vain.

¹⁹This message is published in the Journals of the Legislature, Session of 1842-'43, pp. 405-422; also in the Public Documents of the same year. Doc. No. 1.

Of the conditions of transportation and travel in the central section of the State, he said:

I would respectfully invite your attention to the public highways generally. * * * From Fayetteville, the highest point of good navigation, westward to the Buncombe Turnpike, a distance of some two hundred and fifty or three hundred miles, what navigable stream, railroad, turnpike, or macadamized highway gives to the laborer facilities of transportation? None! Literally none! This vast extent of territory, reaching from the Blue Ridge in the west to the alluvial region in the east, and extending across the whole State, it is believed, will compare with any spot upon the globe for the fertility of its soil, the variety of its productions, the salubrity of its climate, the beauty of its landscapes, the richness of its mines, the facilities for manufactures, and the intelligence and moral worth of its population. Can another such territory, combining all these advantages, be found upon the face of the whole earth, so wholly destitute of natural or artificial facilities for transportation?

“What scheme, that is practicable,” he asked, “will afford the desired facilities?” And in answer to this query he made two recommendations.

The remedy for these evils is believed to be in good turnpikes. * * * I therefore recommend that a charter be granted to make a turnpike road from the city of Raleigh to some point westward selected with a view to its ultimate continuance to the extreme west. * * * Should this road be continued to Waynesboro [now Goldsboro], which might be done at comparatively small expense, the farmer would have the choice of markets, of Wilmington by the railroad, or New Bern by the river Neuse.

Further he recommended:

That a charter be granted to make a turnpike from Fayetteville to the Yadkin River at some point above the Narrows, or, if deemed more expedient, to some point on a similar road leading from Raleigh westward, thus giving the west the advantages of both markets. * * * Should this road ever reach the Yadkin, no doubt is entertained of its continuance across the Catawba westward—thus giving to this road the advantages which will arise from the navigation of these two noble rivers.

Nearly seventy years were to pass before the State was ready for the execution of these plans, and it was left for the engineers of 1912 to realize what the statesman of 1842 had dreamed. A vaster work was waiting the constructive genius of Morehead.

Turning his eyes farther westward, Governor Morehead foresaw the future development of the mountainous section of North Carolina. To make this region more interesting, he declared, we have only to make it more accessible, and continuing, he said:

The sublimity and beauty of its mountain scenery, the purity of its waters, the buoyancy and salubrity of its atmosphere, the fertility of its valleys, the

verdure of its mountains, and, above all, its energetic, intelligent and hospitable inhabitants, make it an inviting portion of the State. * * * When good roads shall be established in that region, it is believed the population will increase with rapidity, agriculture improve, grazing will be extended, and manufactures and the mechanic arts will flourish in a location combining so many advantages and inviting their growth. The improved highways will be additional inducements to the citizens of other sections of our State to abandon their usual northern tours, or visits to the Virginia watering places, for a tour much more interesting among our own mountains, much cheaper, and much more beautiful—a tour in which they will inspire health in every breath and drink in health at every draught.

Governor Morehead did not expect, indeed he did not desire that the General Assembly should proceed to put all of his recommendations into immediate effect. He realized only too well that such a procedure would require enormous outlays far beyond the resources of the State, and he never forgot that debts contracted today must be paid tomorrow. Sufficient warning of the effects of such a course was not lacking. Many of the Southern and Western States embarking in wild and extravagant schemes of internal improvements had made such vast expenditures that their treasuries had become bankrupt and their people oppressed with obligations which they could not meet; and to extricate themselves they had resorted to the very simple but very effective means of repudiation. If Governor Morehead loved progress much, he detested repudiation more; and the most vigorous passage in his message is that in which he warns the Legislature against such a course. Said he:

I would recommend that whatever schemes of expenditure you may embark in, you keep within the means at the command of the State; otherwise the people must be taxed more heavily or the State must contract a loan. The pressure of the times forbids the former—the tarnished honor of some of the States should make us, for the present, decline the latter. The mania for State banking and the mad career of internal improvements, which seized a number of the States, have involved them in an indebtedness very oppressive, but not hopeless. American credit and character requires that this stain of violated faith should be obliterated by our honest acknowledgment of the debt, and a still more honest effort to pay it. I therefore recommend the passage of resolutions expressive of the strong interest which this State feels in the full redemption of every pledge of public faith, and of its utter detestation of the abominable doctrine of Repudiation. That State which honestly owes a debt and has or can command the means of payment, and refuses to pay because it can not be compelled to do so, has already bartered Public Honor, and only waits an increase of price to barter Public Liberty. This recommendation will come with peculiar force from you. North Carolina has been jeered for sluggishness and indolence, because she has chosen to guard her treasury and protect her honor by avoiding debt and promptly meeting her engagements. She has yielded to others the glory of their

magnificent expenditures and will yield to them all that glory which will arise from a repudiation of their contracts. In the language of one of her noblest sons, "It is better for her to sleep on in indolence and innocence than to wake up in infamy and treason."

The schemes outlined in Morehead's message of 1842 were laid before a Legislature controlled by the Democratic party, and the policy of that party was hostile to internal improvements. Morehead accordingly was forced to wait upon events for the consummation of his great schemes. In outlining these schemes he had given evidences of his extraordinary power of vision; the next few years were to bring him an opportunity to demonstrate his ability to transform his dreams into actual realities. This opportunity, for which he had so long waited, came with the passage by the Legislature of 1849 of the act to charter "The North Carolina Railroad Company." The history of this measure—the long and bitter contest between the East and the West over the proposed railroad from Charlotte to Danville, the statesmanlike compromise of its advocates in accepting the road from Charlotte to Goldsboro, the prolonged struggle and ultimate victory in the House of Commons, the dramatic scene in the Senate wherein Calvin Graves immolated his own personal ambition on the altar of public duty,—all this has been described so often that it is not necessary to repeat the story here. The act authorized the organization of a corporation with stock of \$3,000,000, of which the State was to take \$2,000,000 when private individuals had subscribed \$1,000,000 and actually paid in \$500,000. North Carolina had long stood at the turn of the road hesitatingly. By the passage of this act she finally made her decision. The enthusiasm of Governor Morehead, who was not usually given to picturesque language, was too great for plain speech. "The passage of the act," he declared, "under which this company is organized was the dawning of hope to North Carolina; the securing its charter was the rising sun of that hope; the completion of the road will be the meridian glory of that hope, pregnant with the results that none living can divine."²⁰

For the next five years, during which the private subscription of \$1,000,000 was secured, the charter obtained, the company organized, the route surveyed, and the road constructed, the dominant figure in its history is the figure of John M. Morehead. In this period he performed his greatest service to the State and enrolled his name permanently among the builders of the Commonwealth. The experience of North Carolina in railroad building up to that time had not been encouraging. Both the Wilmington and Weldon and the Raleigh and Gaston railroads

²⁰Report of the Directors of the North Carolina Railroad Company: Legislative Documents 1850-'51, Executive Document No. 9.

were bankrupt for the want of patronage. In the face of this fact, it was no slight achievement to raise a million dollars in North Carolina for another similar enterprise. Yet this is the task to which Governor Morehead now set himself. On June 15, 1849, he presided over a great Internal Improvements Convention at Salisbury at which measures, largely suggested by himself, were adopted for securing the stock.²¹ Placed by this convention at the head of an executive committee to carry out these measures, he pushed them with a vigor, determination, and wisdom that aroused the enthusiasm of the whole State and inspired confidence in the enterprise. Speaking of his work at a convention held in Greensboro, November 30, 1849, in the interest of the road, the Greensboro *Patriot* declared that "the determined spirit of this distinguished gentleman touched every heart in that assembly and awoke a feeling of enthusiasm and anxiety, deep, startling, and fervent as we have ever witnessed."²² On March 6, 1850, Morehead was able to announce to a convention at Hillsboro that only \$100,000 remained to be taken to complete the private subscription, and then announced his willingness to be one of the ten men to take the balance. Nine others promptly came forward, subscribed their proportionate part, and thus ensured the building of the road.²³ "It is worthy of remark," declared Major Walter Gwyn, the eminent engineer whose skill contributed so much to the construction of the road, "that the whole amount was subscribed by individuals, without the aid of corporations, the largest subscription

²¹This convention was attended by two hundred and twenty-five delegates from twenty-one counties and Norfolk, Virginia. Among those present were, ex-Gov. D. L. Swain, ex-Gov. W. A. Graham, ex-Gov. John M. Morehead, John W. Ellis, afterwards Governor, John A. Gilmer, Rufus Barringer, Victor Barringer, James W. Osborne, Calvin H. Wiley, Hamilton C. Jones. Morehead was unanimously elected president. The correspondent of the *Raleigh Register* wrote that the meetings of this convention "had been looked to for some time past with the most intense interest, by the friends of the Central Railroad, as determining, to a considerable extent, the probable success or failure of that enterprise." He declared that "the Convention in every respect—the numbers, intelligence and respectability of its members, its zeal and its harmony of action—was all that even the most sanguine would have desired * * * The address of the President was, in all respects, worthy the importance of the occasion and the high reputation of the man." A Committee of Thirteen was appointed "to consider of and report upon the measures to be acted on by the Convention." This committee recommended a plan, which the Convention adopted, for securing stock subscriptions and the appointment of an Executive Committee of three to carry it into effect. Morehead was made Chairman of this Executive Committee. The other members were George W. Mordecai and Dr. W. R. Holt.—*The Raleigh Register*, June 23, 1849. Similar Conventions were held at Greensboro, November 29, 1849; Raleigh, December 15, 1849; Goldsboro, in January, 1850; and Hillsboro, March, 1850. At the Greensboro Convention Governor Morehead "passed a high eulogium upon Calvin Graves, of Caswell, who had given the casting vote by which this charter of the N. C. Railroad Company had been passed," and then nominated him for president. Morehead was appointed chairman of the committee on subscriptions. He reported subscriptions of \$190,800. John A. Gilmer suggested that one hundred men come forward to take the balance in equal parts. Morehead headed the list, but the requisite number was not secured. After several addresses had been delivered, Morehead rose and said "that as the speaking seemed to be over, he reckoned we had as well get to work now, and take the remainder of the stock." As only fifty-one men had taken up Mr. Gilmer's suggestion, Morehead agreed to double his subscription, if the others would. The proposition, however, was not accepted.—*Raleigh Star*, December 5, 1849. On December 15, Morehead addressed the Convention at Raleigh at which about \$40,000 of stock was subscribed. He was also at the Goldsboro Convention. At the Hillsboro Convention the subscription was completed, and a meeting of the stockholders was held at Salisbury, to organize the company.

²²Quoted in the *Raleigh Star*, December 5, 1849.

²³The others were George W. Mordecai, of Wake; John W. Thomas, of Davidson; Dr. (Edmund) Strudwick, of Orange; Paul Cameron, of Orange; William Boylan, of Wake; Alonzo T. Jerkins, of Craven; Dr. A. J. DeRosset, of New Hanover; Giles Mebane, of Alamance; and a group of ten individuals in Orange who subscribed the last ten thousand.—*Raleigh Star*, March 20, 1850.

thus made to any public improvement in the Southern country." The editor of the *Raleigh Star*,²⁴ announced the completion of the private subscription with the following comments:

We must be permitted to remark that the State owes much to that sterling man, Governor Morehead, for success in this enterprise; and that he who has heretofore been styled a "wheel horse" in this matter, may be justly entitled to the appellation of a "whole team." Whilst we pen these hasty lines, the deep-mouthed cannon is pealing forth from Union Square commemorative of this great deed for North Carolina. We are not of a very excitable disposition, but we must confess that it makes our blood run quicker at every peal, so that we can scarcely restrain ourselves from responding to its notes, "Huzza! Huzza! for the railroad."

On July 11, 1850, the private stockholders met at Salisbury and organized the company.²⁵ The board of directors unanimously elected John M. Morehead president. He was continuously reëlected president until 1855, when declining further election he was succeeded by Charles F. Fisher. During these five years of President Morehead's administration the North Carolina Railroad, truly described as "the greatest of all enterprises so far attempted by the State of North Carolina in the nature of a public or internal improvement," was constructed and opened to traffic. The surveys were commenced August 21, 1850; on July 11, 1851, at Greensboro, in the presence of an immense throng, ground for the laying of the rails was broken;²⁶ on January 29, 1856, the road was ready for cars from Goldsboro to Charlotte, a distance of two hundred and twenty-three miles. In his last report to the board of directors, Engineer Gwyn said that the breaking of ground for this railroad "may be justly regarded as an event which will ever be memorable in the annals of North Carolina—an era which marks her engaging with

²⁴March 6, 1850.

²⁵The following Directors were elected: William C. Means, John B. Lord, John I. Shaver, Francis Fries, John W. Thomas, John M. Morehead, John A. Gilmer, William A. Graham, Benjamin Trolinger, Romulus M. Saunders, Armand J. DeRosset, Alonzo T. Jerkins. The Directors elected the following officers: President, John M. Morehead; Secretary-Treasurer, John U. Kirkland; Engineer, Major Walter Gwyn.

²⁶This ceremony followed the regular annual meeting of the stockholders. The correspondent of the *Raleigh Register* gives the following account of it:

"A crowd of people appeared, ready for the celebration, such as we may safely say was never seen in our town before for numbers. It was one universal jam all out of doors. The young gentlemen who acted as marshals had hard enough work of it, to persuade this vast and unwieldy crowd into marching shape; but they at length succeeded to a degree which at first appeared impossible. The procession was formed on West Street, the clergy in front; then the stockholders; then the Orders of Odd Fellows and Free Masons, who turned out in great numbers and in full regalia; closing with the citizens generally. This immense line moved down South Street to a point on the Railroad survey nearly opposite the Caldwell Institute building, where a space of a hundred feet each way was enclosed by a line and reserved for the ceremony of the day. The north side of this space was occupied by the ladies, whose smiles are always ready for the encouragement of every good word and work. The other three sides were soon occupied by the male portion of the assemblage, from ten to twenty deep around. You may imagine, then, the difficulty which the 'rear rank' encountered in getting a glimpse of the proceedings within.

"Having the misfortune to be among the outsiders, our situation was of course unfavorable for hearing, and seeing was impossible. But we did hear nearly every word of Governor Morehead's clear, sonorous voice, as he introduced the Hon. Calvin Graves to the vast assemblage. He did this in terms eloquent and singularly appropriate to the occasion. After alluding to the necessity so long felt by our people for an outlet to the commercial world—to the inception of the great scheme, the commencement of which we had met today to celebrate—to the vicissitudes of the charter before the two houses

earnestness in honorable competition with her sister states in the great work of internal improvement which is to raise the State to that rank which the advantages of her situation entitle her to hold," and continuing, he said :

From this memorable day, July 11, 1851, there has been no faltering or despondency; all have been united heart and hand in the great undertaking; the whole State, her entire people, catching the enthusiasm which it engendered, have come forth in their might and majesty, battling in the cause of internal improvement, those heretofore signalized as laggards now pressing forward in the front rank. * * * The contractors on the North Carolina Railroad were all stockholders, and with only two or three exceptions entirely destitute of experience in the work they undertook; they commenced their contracts very generally in January, 1852, and on the first of January, 1853, without the aid of a single dollar from the treasury of the company, but relying entirely upon their own credit and means, their united labor amounted to \$500,000, which, carried to the credit of their stock subscription, fulfilled the second condition of the subscription on the part of the State and brought her in as a partner in the great enterprise. This (coupling the subscription of a million of dollars by individuals, chiefly farmers, and working out a half a million on their own resources) is an achievement unprecedented in the annals of the public works of this or any other country, and wherever known (and it ought to be published everywhere) will disabuse the public mind and vindicate the energy, enterprise and industry of the citizens of the State. I have repeatedly said publicly, and perceiving no impropriety in it, I avail myself of this occasion to say that in my experience, now exceeding thirty years, I have not found on any public work with which I have been connected a set of contractors more reliable than those with whom I have had to deal on the North Carolina Railroad, and none with whom my intercourse has been so pleasant and agreeable.

It is no small tribute to the wisdom and constructive genius of President Morehead to be able to say that, of all the contracts which, as president of the road, he had to make, the only one about which any controversy ever arose, or any charge of favoritism was ever made, was one

of the General Assembly, and the fact that it at last hung upon the decision of the Speaker of the Senate, and that its fate was decided in the affirmative by the unflinching 'Aye' of that Speaker, Calvin Graves,—he said that no other citizen of North Carolina could so appropriately perform the ceremony of removing the first earth in the commencement of this work on which the hopes of the State so vitally depend, as to the man who pronounced the decisive 'Aye.'

"It was impossible for us to catch the full connection of Mr. Graves' speech. Some sentences we heard, glowing with that patriotic feeling which has so long distinguished him as one of the first and best sons of old North Carolina. We could only judge generally of its effect by the waving of parasols and handkerchiefs among the ladies, and the frequent and hearty applause that arose from the inner ranks of the citizens.

"At the conclusion of Mr. Graves' speech he 'broke' ground on the Railroad by digging up and depositing in a box prepared for that purpose a few spadeful of earth.

"Governor Morehead remarked that this was deposited in the box, to remain a hundred years, and then be reopened for our inspection! The crowd laughed at the ludicrousness of the idea and so did we. But it naturally awoke a graver thought. Before a tenth of a century shall pass, we dare say that numbers of those present will see the railroad cars swiftly traversing the spot where this interesting ceremony occurred. * * *

"The annual meeting of stockholders closed on Friday morning. Nothing of importance was done during the afternoon sitting. * * * The apprehension felt by a few that something fatal to the road would happen at this meeting was very agreeably dissipated. Conciliation and harmony, and a disposition to prosecute the enterprise with all power to a successful termination marked the proceedings."—The Raleigh Register, July 16, 1851.

which the State Directors, for partisan political purposes, took out of his hands and referred for settlement to a committee of their own choosing.²⁷

The North Carolina Railroad was only one link in the great State system which Morehead contemplated. As he himself expressed it this system was to include "one great leading trunk line of railway from the magnificent harbor of Beaufort to the Tennessee line." Writing in 1866, he attributed the conception of this scheme to Joseph Caldwell and Judge Gaston, adding:

Charter after charter, by the influence of these great men, was granted to effect the work, but the gigantic work was thought to be too much for the limited means the State and her citizens could then command, and the charters remain monuments of *their* wisdom and our folly, or inability to carry them out. A more successful plan it is hoped was finally adopted—to do this great work by sections. The North Carolina Railroad * * * was the first [section] undertaken.²⁸

The other sections were to be built between Goldsboro and Beaufort

²⁷This controversy was an incident in one of the most memorable events in Governor Morehead's career. Before the passage of the act to charter the North Carolina Railroad Company, the people of the Central section of the State had asked the Legislature to charter a company to build a railroad from Charlotte to Danville, Va. The people of the East opposed this charter, and in 1849 its advocates accepted in its place the railroad from Charlotte to Goldsboro. Nearly ten years passed, therefore, before anything more was heard of the Danville Connection. In 1858 the advocates of the Danville Connection again brought forward their scheme, and asked for a charter for a company to build a road, without any aid from the State, to connect the North Carolina Railroad at Greensboro with the Richmond and Danville at Danville. The bill was introduced in the House of Commons in 1858 by Francis L. Simpson, of Rockingham, but everybody understood that it was in reality Governor Morehead's bill and he was its principal champion. The members from the East, supported by the *Raleigh Register* and the *Raleigh Standard*, immediately assailed the project as inimical to the interests of the North Carolina Railroad. The debate continued several days. It was participated in by some of the ablest debaters in the State, and was extended to embrace the whole subject and history of the State's policy toward railroads. Governor Morehead's administration of the affairs of the North Carolina Railroad was bitterly assailed. He was charged with mismanagement and with a breach of faith and betrayal of the interests of the State, his opponents claiming that, while soliciting subscriptions to stock in the North Carolina Railroad Company, he had expressly promised to abandon forever all advocacy of the Danville Connection. No more formidable attack, perhaps, has ever been made on any public man in the history of North Carolina. Arrayed against Morehead, besides the two newspapers mentioned, were Robert R. Bridgers, of Edgecombe; W. T. Dortch, of Wayne; Pride Jones and John W. Norwood, of Orange, and Dennis D. Ferebee, of Camden, and others scarcely less distinguished for ability. Morehead's defence is still remembered as one of the really great forensic triumphs in our history. Mr. J. S. F. Baird, who represented Buncombe County in that Legislature, and who was not of Governor Morehead's political faith, under date of April 29, 1912, writes of the contest:

"After the lapse of fifty-four years it is impossible for me to recall many of the incidents of the debate but this much I do remember, that Colonel Bridgers' attack on Governor Morehead was futile and did the Governor no harm, for he vindicated himself in the most thorough manner."

Two other members who themselves participated in the debate have left their testimony. John Kerr, of Rockingham County, said of Morehead's defence:

"Never was a more brilliant victory won than he achieved that day. His assailants were driven from all their positions, were pursued and routed, 'horse, foot and dragons' * * * They were *strong men*, and the House felt the shock of battle while the conflict lasted. But when he closed his defence his assailants bore the air of deep dejection and discomfiture. The House was enraptured with the display of power on the part of Governor Morehead, and no further charges were heard against him." Hon. Thomas Settle said: "For a time the attack seemed overwhelming, and Governor Morehead's friends feared that he would not be able to repel it. For five days he sat and received it in silence, but when he arose and as he proceeded with his defence, friend, foe, and everybody else was struck with amazement. We could scarcely realize that any man possessed such powers of argument and eloquence. His vindication was so complete that his assailants openly acknowledged it." Mr. C. S. Wooten, who did not hear the debate but remembers the impression it created in the State at the time, says of Morehead's effort: "I know of but one other instance in American history that can parallel Morehead's fight and that was when Benton, solitary and alone, made his fight against Calhoun, Clay and Webster in favor of his resolution expunging from the records of the Senate the resolution censuring General Jackson. There never has been such another instance in the history of the State of such moral courage, such heroic firmness, and such a grand exhibition of iron nerve." In the heat of the contest the Danville Connection was almost forgotten in the attack on Morehead. The former was defeated by a strictly sectional vote; but Morehead achieved, according to all testimony, both contemporary and subsequent, a great personal triumph. The newspaper reports of the debate are too meager to give one anything like an adequate idea of the speeches on either side.

²⁸Letter to the Stockholders of the North Carolina Railroad Co. Proceedings of the Seventeenth Annual Meeting, July 17, 1866.

and between Salisbury and the Tennessee boundary. In accordance with this plan the Legislature, in 1853, incorporated "The Atlantic and North Carolina Railroad Company," and "The North Carolina and Western Railroad Company," to which Governor Morehead referred as "the contemplated extensions of the North Carolina Railroad." Immediately after the passage of these acts, Governor Reid ordered President Morehead and the Directors of the North Carolina Railroad to make the necessary surveys. In an open letter to the Greensboro *Patriot*, Governor Morehead said of this order:

I desire to give this pleasing intelligence to the friends of these enterprises, through your valuable paper, with an assurance that the work will be commenced at as early a day as practicable. * * * Not a moment is to be lost. The deep, deep regret is that these extensions are not now in full progress of construction. The giant strides of improvement around us should arouse us to action. The ignominious and pusillanimous complaint that Nature has done so little for us is a libel upon the old dame. Let us see if it is not. * * * We have at the eastern terminus of one of these extensions one of the finest harbors, at Beaufort, for all commercial purposes, on the whole Atlantic coast. And if the improvements at the mouth of Cape Fear shall succeed, as it is hoped they will, we shall have another port surpassed by few, if any, in the South. * * * But it may be asked, what commerce have we to require such a port as Beaufort? Let the answer be, the commerce of the world. Look at the location of this port—placed at the end of the North Carolina coast, which projects like a promontory into the Atlantic, midway and within sight of the great line of navigation between the North and the South, and within thirty minutes' sail of the ocean. Nature made it for a stopping place of commerce—the halfway house between the North and the South, where steamers may get their supplies of anthracite, semi-bituminous and bituminous coal. * * * But let us take a western view of these extensions. The road running from Beaufort along the Central Railroad [the North Carolina Railroad] and to the Tennessee line and thence along the lines already in progress of construction to Memphis will not vary one degree from a due west course. Extend the same line westward (and I predict it will surely be done) to the city of San Francisco, which is to become the great emporium of the East India trade, and who can doubt that the trade of the Mississippi Valley, as well as that of the East Indies and China, will crowd our port.²⁹

Under Morehead's supervision, the work of both the Atlantic and North Carolina Railroad, and the Western North Carolina Railroad was inaugurated.³⁰ On June 17, 1858, the former was completed and

²⁹Raleigh Register, June 25, 1843.

³⁰Morehead was the pioneer in developing our system of internal improvements and was the leading spirit in the building of the North Carolina Railroad. He was President for four years of the Central Road and was the Chief Contractor in building the road from Morehead City to New Bern. * * * Badger was an abler lawyer, Bragg a more astute reasoner, Graham more polished and graceful, but Morehead, as a man of affairs, for broad scope and grasp of intellect, for vigor of thought, for practical common sense, for managing vast financial enterprises, was greater than either. He could stuff his pants in his boot legs, splash through the mud and build railroads while the others would rather recline in easy chairs in some cosy office and attend to their law practice, discuss literature, or talk on social topics. While building the road from New Bern to Morehead, I have seen him dressed as I have described, and his boots besmeared with the red mud of Guilford County."—C. S. Wooten.

ready for trains from Goldsboro to Beaufort Harbor; and a few months thereafter found trains running over the latter to within four miles of Morganton, while the entire route to the Tennessee line had been surveyed and partly graded. In 1866 a bill drawn in accordance with the original plan, was introduced in the Senate to consolidate these two roads and the North Carolina Railroad under the name of "The North Carolina Railroad Company." Morehead, now approaching the end of his long and useful career, strongly endorsed and supported this measure. One of his last public utterances was an appeal to the stockholders of the North Carolina Railroad Company to throw their powerful influence in favor of the consummation of the great plans for which he had given the best service of his life. After giving a brief résumé of the railroad work done in the State he said:

Here let us pause and take a survey of what has been done in *seven* years towards this great work. From Beaufort harbor to Goldsboro the Atlantic and North Carolina Railroad Company have built ninety-six miles. From Goldsboro to Charlotte you (the North Carolina Railroad) have built two hundred and twenty-three miles. From Salisbury to within four miles of Morganton the Western North Carolina Railroad have built seventy-six miles * * * making in all three hundred and ninety-five miles, from which deduct forty-three miles from Salisbury to Charlotte, and we have actually built of this great line three hundred and fifty-two miles in one continuous line. Think of it! Seven years! In the lifetime of a State or nation seven years is but as a moment in its existence. It would not cover the dawning of its existence. In the great day of a nation's improvements seven years would not be the sunrise of that day. We have done this great work in the twilight of our great day of internal improvement—a day which dawned so beautifully upon us, but which became enveloped in that gloom which shrouds the nation in mourning. But let us not despair. The day which dawned so beautifully upon us will yet reach its meridian splendor. Then let us be up and doing * * * and then the hopes, the dreams of the great and good Caldwell and Gaston will be realized. * * * You have the honor of being the pioneers in this great work executed in sections. Do yourselves now the honor to consolidate the whole and complete the original design. You, the most powerful and most independent of the three corporations, can, with much grace, propose to your sister corporations consolidations upon terms of justice and equity manifesting selfishness in naught but your name. Yield not that. The new consolidated corporation should be still "The North Carolina Railroad Company." This will be a corporation worthy of you, of your State, and of the great destinies that await it.²¹

What this great destiny was no man had foreseen so clearly as he. The traveler of 1912 along the line of the North Carolina Railroad sees the fulfilment of Morehead's dreams of 1850. He finds himself in one of the most productive regions of the new world. He traverses it from one end to the other at a speed of forty miles an hour, surrounded

²¹Letter of July 17, 1866, to the Stockholders of the North Carolina Railroad Company.

by every comfort and convenience of modern travel. He passes through a region bound together by a thousand miles of steel rails, by telegraph and telephone lines, and by nearly two thousand miles of improved country roads. He finds a population engaged not only in agriculture, but in manufacturing, in commerce, in transportation, and in a hundred other enterprises. Instead of a few old fashioned handlooms turning out annually less than \$400,000 worth of "homemade" articles, he hears the hum of three hundred and sixty modern factories, operating two millions of spindles and looms by steam, water, electricity, employing more than fifty millions of capital, and sending their products to the uttermost ends of the earth. His train passes through farm lands that, since Morehead began his work, have increased six times in value, that produce annually ten times as much cotton and seventy-five times as much tobacco. From his car window instead of the four hundred and sixty-six log huts that passed for schoolhouses in 1850, with their handful of pupils, he beholds a thousand modern schoolhouses, alive with the energy and activity of one hundred thousand school children. His train carries him from Goldsboro through Raleigh, Durham, Burlington, Greensboro, High Point, Lexington, Salisbury, Concord, Charlotte,—villages that have grown into cities, old fields and cross roads that have become thriving centers of industry and culture. Better than all else, he finds himself among a people, no longer characterized by their lethargy, isolation and ignorance, but bristling with energy, alert to every opportunity, fired with the spirit of the modern world, and with their faces steadfastly set toward the future.

The foundation on which all this prosperity and progress rests is the work done by John M. Morehead or inspired by him. No well informed man can be found today in North Carolina who will dispute his primacy among the railroad builders of the State. The North Carolina Railroad, the Atlantic and North Carolina Railroad, the Western North Carolina Railroad, the connecting link between the North Carolina and the Richmond and Danville railroads from Greensboro to Danville, all bear witness of his supremacy in this field. In one of the finest passages of his message to the General Assembly in 1842 he urged the building of good country roads; today there are five thousand miles of improved rural highways in North Carolina. He recommended the building of a Central Highway from Morehead City through Raleigh to the Tennessee line; today we have just witnessed the completion of a great State Highway piercing the very heart of the State almost along the very route he suggested seventy years ago. He suggested plans for extensive improvements of our rivers and harbors; today a "thirty foot channel to the sea" has become the slogan of our chief port and the National Government is

spending annually hundreds of thousands of dollars in the improvement of the Cape Fear, the Neuse, the Pamlico and other rivers of Eastern North Carolina. He urged the construction by the National Government of an inland waterway for our coastwise vessels through Pamlico Sound to Beaufort harbor; seventy years have passed since then, this enterprise has become national in its scope, the Federal Government has assumed charge of it, and the whole nation is anticipating the completion in the near future of an inland waterway from Maine through Pamlico Sound and Beaufort Harbor to Florida. First of all our statesmen Morehead realized the possibility of establishing at Beaufort a great world port; and although this dream has not yet been realized there are not lacking today men noted throughout the business world for their practical wisdom, inspired by no other purpose than commercial success, who have not hesitated to stake large fortunes on the ultimate realization of this dream also. A twentieth century statesman sent before his time into the world of the nineteenth century, Governor Morehead, as a distinguished scholar has declared, "would have been more at home in North Carolina today than would any other of our antebellum governors. He has been dead forty years, and they have been years of constant change and unceasing development. But so wide were his sympathies, so vital were his aims, so far sighted were his public policies, and so clearly did he foresee the larger North Carolina of schools, railroads and cotton mills, that he would be as truly a contemporary in the twentieth century as he was a leader in the nineteenth."³²

³²See sketch by C. Alphonso Smith in the "Biographical History of North Carolina," Vol. 2, pp. 250-59.

ADDRESS OF PRESENTATION

BY J. BRYAN GRIMES, CHAIRMAN OF THE NORTH CAROLINA
HISTORICAL COMMISSION.

Ladies and Gentlemen :

It is the good fortune of the North Carolina Historical Commission to be able to offer to the State a marble bust of Governor John Motley Morehead, a memorial gift from his grandsons, J. Lindsay Patterson and John Motley Morehead. Governor Morehead's career has been so ably and amply reviewed by Mr. Connor that it is unnecessary to recount his many services to his State. He was one of those remarkable men who left an indelible impression upon his people, and we should hold his memory in most grateful esteem. Far sighted beyond his time, he saw the needs of his State with seerlike wisdom, and with rare acumen he planned a great industrial commonwealth, and his popularity and power over the people enabled him to put into operation policies whose influence was far reaching and whose benefits are still accruing. Plans that might have been regarded as the dream of a visionist, under his master mind and great executive ability became realities. His administration was distinguished for the development of commerce, agriculture, the growth of the common schools and the establishment of an institution for the deaf and dumb and blind, but it was most famed for the great system of internal improvements with which his name is inseparably linked. His greatest achievement was the building of a trunk line of railroad from the mountains to the sea—from Morganton to Morehead City. He was the father of its development and was its first president.

This road is the State's greatest single financial asset, valued today at more than \$7,000,000 and built without a cent of taxation of the people. The North Carolina Railroad as planned by him to connect the Mississippi with the Atlantic at Beaufort Harbor was one of the greatest projects of the middle of the last century. His heart and brain were absorbed in uniting the East with the West, establishing a community of interest and making a homogeneous people, bound together with ties of steel. Its inestimable service in acquainting the sections and unifying our people have been its greatest value to our State. Its worth can hardly be overestimated.

Mr. Joyner, to you, representing the State, I, as Chairman of the North Carolina Historical Commission, have the honor to offer a bust of this master builder and great constructive statesman, John Motley Morehead.

ADDRESS OF ACCEPTANCE

BY J. Y. JOYNER, SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen:

To me has been assigned, in the absence of the Governor, the pleasant duty of accepting, on behalf of the State of North Carolina, this marble bust of John Motley Morehead.

"Peace hath her victories no less renowned than war." This man whose memory we are met to honor today, is *facile princeps* among North Carolina's great leaders of those silent revolutions by which alone are won the greatest victories of peace.

Father and builder of the North Carolina Railroad, pioneer manufacturer, promoter of inland waterways and public highways, successful champion of public education and of charitable institutions, able advocate of all that was best industrially, morally, and intellectually for his people, gifted with the vision and enthusiasm that characterizes every truly great soul, endowed with common sense, wisdom, courage, force of character, strength of will and devotion to duty that made him a great leader and a great executive in public and private business, he has won and merited his place in North Carolina history among "the few, the immortal names that were not born to die." His bust deserves this honored niche in the Westminster Abbey of our State.

As his tongue was the first to proclaim from the granite halls of this Capitol North Carolina's declaration of commercial and industrial freedom, and to point the way thereto, may the spirit of the man, incarnate in this sculptured image, speak, trumpet-tongued, through these marble lips to the countless generations of noble youth that reverently pause before it, and hearten them for high endeavor and noble achievement.

In the name of the people of the State that he served with such distinguished ability, I now accept, with gratitude to the donors, this artistic image of one of her greatest Governors and noblest sons.

A SPRIG OF ENGLISH OAK

Lieutenant Colonel Wilson Webster, of His Majesty's 33d Regiment of Foot, 1781

BY REBECCA CAMERON.

One of the stories which I never wearied hearing my mother tell, was of the gallant and unfortunate Colonel Webster, of the English Army, who died in consequence of a wound received at the battle of Guilford Court House, in 1781; and was buried at Bellefont, in Bladen County; the residence of my mother's uncle-in-law, Major Hugh Waddell.

Lieutenant-Colonel Wilson Webster was one of the most brilliant and attractive figures in the army of Lord Cornwallis during his campaign in North Carolina. The son of a clergyman—the Reverend Dr. Webster, of Edinburgh,—he united to a thorough knowledge of the profession of arms all the graces and virtues of civil life, extreme personal beauty, and the most daring and conspicuous gallantry.

The following story of his courage and coolness is still told in the farm houses in Alamance.

Lord Cornwallis left Hillsborough on the 26th of February, 1781, and moving his forces southward, encamped on the fertile Alamance. On the 6th of March, he made a move to entrap that wary and remarkable officer, Colonel Otho Williams, of Maryland.

In the manœuvres that followed, a circumstance occurred which gave great *eclat* to an English officer.

Above thirty picked King's Mountain riflemen were ambushed in Wetzell's Mill, on Reedy Fork. They saw a British officer, mounted on a beautiful black horse, slowly approach the bank of the stream, and carefully ford the

current, apparently busied with directing the movements of a detachment of soldiers.

He was in fair rifle range all the time; and these picked men, all of whom could cut a hair at ordinary rifle distance, took deliberate aim at him, and fired thirty shots without striking either man or horse!

The officer showed no atom of fear, quietly sitting on his horse in mid-stream, while the rifle balls hissed all around him; and when the operations he was superintending were finished, as quickly riding away.

I remember hearing that one man said he was so amazed at Webster's not being struck by any of the balls, that he began to have a superstitious feeling about him, and when he fired his last shot at him, his hand was shaking so that he had to rest his rifle on one of the timbers of the mill; and even then, firing from a rest, saw his bullet fall short of the mark for which it had been aimed.

Upon asking some prisoners which officer rode a black horse in the affair at Wetzell's Mill, the reply was that it was the gallant and chivalrous Lieutenant Colonel Wilson Webster of the 33d, one of Lord Cornwallis's favorite officers. At the battle of Guilford Court House (fought March 15th, 1781) Webster commanded the 33d and 23d regiments, and opened the battle, leading his men right across an open, rolling field, as if he bore a charmed life against shot and shell, and hurling them impetuously upon the gallant 1st Maryland, whose exploits at the Cowpens the English had not forgotten, for they recoiled at their deadly fire, and gave way before the Maryland advance.

Webster, who had been severely wounded in the right knee at the first fire, rallied his men in a skirt of woods, and gallantly came back to the charge, finally routing the Marylanders with great loss, and saving the field to the British arms.

He had given his life for the day, however, for the wound he had received, although not considered fatal at first, was destined to terminate his brilliant career. He fainted on being taken from his horse, and his boot was found full of blood.

Cornwallis had his wounded moved by easy stages towards Wilmington so as to have them taken aboard his ships.

It was slow journeying over rough country, and Webster's wound, which had shattered the patella, or knee pan, took on violent inflammation, and he became so ill that on reaching Bladen County he could go no farther, and was quartered with his attendants at Bellefont, the residence of Major Hugh Waddell (who, still a minor, was then absent at an English University). Here he grew rapidly worse, and lock-jaw ensuing, he died in great agony three weeks after the battle.

He was buried on the Bellefont plantation, a mile from the dwelling house, and perhaps the same distance from Elizabethtown,—the post town and court-house of Bladen County.

* * *

The war was ended, thirty years of peace had cooled the fierce anger of the outraged colonists. Many of the victors and vanquished had "died in their beds like good Christians," and a new generation had arisen to inherit the memories, but not the animosities of the late internecine strife. Judge Alfred Moore—who as Captain Moore had shared the dangers of the Guilford battlefield—died strangely enough, as the gallant Webster had done, at Bellefont, on his way to his winter residence at Buchoi, near Wilmington.

Dying on the 15th of October, 1810, his remains were temporarily interred at Bellefont until such time as they could be removed to the family vault at Buchoi. It was decided to make the removal in the spring of 1812, and a party

of gentlemen composed of the immediate family, connections, and personal friends of the late Judge left Wilmington and made one day's drive towards Bellefont, stopping for the night at Newfields, the residence of Mr. John Waddell, who had married Judge Moore's beloved and only niece, General Frank Nash's daughter, Sallie. The party consisted of the following gentlemen: Judge Moore's two sons, Colonel Maurice Moore, of Springfield, and Alfred Moore, of Buchoi; his family physician, and friend, Dr. A. J. DeRosset, of Wilmington; Judge John D. Thomas, Major Duncan Moore, and John R. London, also of Wilmington; Captain Jack Grange, of The Grange, and Mr. John Waddell, of Newfields. The Newfields plantation is twenty-seven miles from Wilmington, and on the Cape Fear river.

During the evening, my grandfather, Mr. Alfred Moore, read aloud to the company from a copy of the *European Magazine* an account of the death and burial of Colonel Webster, thirty years before, at the Bellefont plantation.

The article excited a great deal of interest and comment, especially when someone present stated that it was currently reported that a Dr. Morse, living at Elizabethtown, had disinterred the remains, articulated the skelton, and then had it in his office. This story (although absolutely without foundation) so aroused the ire and indignation of the fiery Colonel Maurice Moore, that he exclaimed vehemently:

"If Dr. Morse has done this thing I will cut both his ears off!"

Fortunately, Dr. Morse had not committed the atrocity, so the impetuous colonel did not have to amputate his ears.

To determine the truth of the matter, however, the gentlemen decided to make search for Colonel Webster's forgotten grave, and investigate the condition of his remains. The

next morning they took boats, and accompanied by Mr. John Waddell, were rowed up the Cape Fear river to Bellefont.

It was remembered in the family that Colonel Webster had been waited upon during his last illness by one of Major Waddell's family servants, a negro man named Lisburne. (This name had been given him by General Hugh Waddell, the Major's father, it being the name of the post town, on or near General Waddell's family estate in Ireland.)

"Old Lisburne," as he was then called in contradistinction to his son and grandson of the same name—was summoned, and, upon being questioned, gave a succinct account of Colonel's Webster's last hours, the preparation of his body for burial, and the exact location of the grave.

The next morning, under Lisburne's guidance the company started on their search, and about a mile from the house, on a wooded hill came to the spot where Lisburne said the grave had been made. Thirty years had passed since the April day when the gallant young Englishman had resigned his soul to the God who gave it, and had been laid to his long, dreamless sleep beneath alien skies, and the rapid growth of a Southern forest had hidden the mound beneath a cunning network of vines and shrubs.

Two axe hands had been brought along, and in a short while the undergrowth was all cleared away, and the mossy, leaf-strown earth bared to view.

"Here is the grave, sir, right here," said old Lisburne. One of the gentlemen took an iron ramrod and sunk it down in the soft rich loam at the point indicated by Lisburne, and after one or two trials succeeded in striking what seemed to be a box or coffin.

The earth was carefully removed, and the coffin presently laid bare once more to the blessed light of day. It was in perfect preservation, and was carefully lifted out of the grave, and some of the gentlemen present proceeded to re-

move the top. The description of what followed I give, as nearly as I can recall, in the words of my grandfather's oldest daughter, the late Mrs. Hugh Waddell, who had been allowed to accompany the party :

"It was a beautiful spring day; the wreaths of yellow jessamine now festooning every tree and shrub with their fragrant blossoms; countless butterflies and bees added their bright wings and cheery hum to the sense of life and joyousness that was thrilling the vernal air.

"A mocking-bird was singing in a jessamine vine just above the open grave; and singing as if all joy and life beat in his small heart. The gay, brilliant revelry of song, gay mockery of the open grave, fascinated my childish gaze until a sudden exclamation: 'Good God! How very extraordinary!' caused me to look round.

"I saw my dear father's eyes fill up with sudden tears, as he lifted his hat, and reverently bent his head before the Majesty of Death. All eyes were bent upon the open coffin, wherein was a sight I shall never forget.

"The coffin had been uncovered, and lying within it was the rather small but elegant figure of a young and exceedingly handsome man, of apparently twenty-eight years of age. He was dressed in the gorgeous scarlet uniform of a British officer, his beautiful abundant dark brown hair was dressed in a queue, the powder still resting lightly upon its glossy dark masses; his face was pale, calm, and beautiful. The face of a sleeping youth would not have been more tranquil, or sweeter than that of the dead soldier, who had slept within the heart of Mother Earth for full thirty years.

"Upon his heart lay his cocked hat and gloves; upon his small delicate feet were a pair of riding boots well polished, with a pair of gold spurs buckled on the heels. The glitter of his epaulettes, and the gold lace on his uniform was as brilliant as if freshly burnished. Had he just dressed

himself for morning parade, and lain down to sleep he could not have been a more life-like, or more beautiful picture. The silence was intense for a few minutes, then slowly as we gazed a sort of film or veil-like mist seemed to rise between us and the sleeping hero, and in a moment the beauteous counterpart of life dissolved before our very gaze, a little handful of grey ashes settled in the coffin, and the gallant and beautiful Webster was but a poor handful of immaterial dust."

* * *

Out of the coffin was taken two copper coins that had been used to close the eyes; the rifleball that had shattered the knee pan, and ranged upward in the limb; a lock of the beautiful rich brown hair, and the gold spurs. These articles were given to the British consul—a Mr. Manning, I believe—at Wilmington, to be transmitted to Colonel Webster's surviving friends. The coffin was closed, and replaced in the grave; my grandfather reciting the commitment sentence of the burial service as it was being once more resigned into the custody of the common mother of us all. The grave was filled and turfed, and my grandfather had a pillar of heart pine hewed and erected at the head of the grave to mark the spot in case any of his family should desire to reclaim the ashes of the gallant dead.

But the outbreak of the war of 1812 or some other cause hindering, no claim for the remains was ever made; and the noble young warrior still sleeps in an exile's tomb in the land that gave him an enemy's welcome, but a soldier's grave.

It was said that Colonel Webster was engaged to be married to a lovely and accomplished young Englishwoman, who died of a broken heart a few years after his death.

The following verses written by my grandfather, shortly after the events herein described, may be of some interest in connection with the foregoing narrative.

ODE

WRITTEN BY A. MOORE, WHILST SITTING AT THE GRAVE OF LIEUTENANT-COLONEL WEBSTER OF THE 33^D REGIMENT, JUNE, 1812.

Thy war cry is done, in the stillness of death;
 The trumpet's shrill sound, or morning's first breath,
 Alike are unheeded by thee.
 Thy last pang is o'er, and that spirit so high,
 Which rose all on fire when danger was nigh,
 From care and from pain is set free.

Wild and chill blow the winter winds over thy grave,
 And loud wars the stream as it dashes its wave
 At the foot of the hill where ye lay;
 Night's stillness is broke by the wolf's savage howl,
 Respondent, the low solemn note of the owl,
 Till silenced by wakening day.

Though far from thy home, and no mother's dear hand
 Dressed thy wound, and then tenderly tightened the band,
 Or wiped the death damps from thy brow—
 O'er thy grave waves the pine, and the firefly's lamp
 Burns around it the brighter in darkness and damp,
 And hallows thine ashes e'en now.

Brave foe of my country, and pride of thy race,
 Who the red glare of battle so oft looked in the face,
 Whiles thou cheered up thy faltering band,
 Accept from the son of thy foeman a tear,
 A Hail! to thy spirit, if lingering near,
 A sepulchre raised by his hand.

BELLEFONT, *June, 1812.*

A. MOORE.

THE FIRST ALBEMARLE ASSEMBLY—HALL'S CREEK, NEAR NIXONTON

By CATHERINE ALBERTSON.

(Regent Sir Walter Raleigh Chapter D. R.)

In 1663 King Charles II granted to eight noblemen of his court a tract of land reaching from the northern shores of Albemarle Sound to the St. John's River, in Florida, and from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean. A small strip extending from the north shore of Albemarle Sound to the southern boundary of Virginia was not included in this grant, but nevertheless the lords proprietors, of whom Governor Berkeley, of Virginia, was one, assumed control over this section, and in 1663 these noblemen authorized Berkeley to appoint a governor to rule over this territory, whose ownership was a disputed question for several years.

In 1665 this Albemarle region, as it came to be called, comprising the four ancient counties, Currituck, Pasquotank, Perquimans and Chowan, had become very valuable on account of the rich plantations established therein by such men as George Durant, of Perquimans, and Valentine Byrd, of Pasquotank, and the lords proprietors, as the ownership of Carolina were called, begged the king to include this strip of land in their grant. This the king did, ignorant of the vast extent of the territory which he had already bestowed upon the lords.

William Drummond, whom Berkeley, of Virginia, had appointed to govern this Albemarle country, came into Carolina in 1664 and assumed the reins of government. To assist him in his arduous duties, the lords authorized Berkeley to appoint six of the most prominent men in the new settlement to form what came to be known as the governor's council. This body of men, with the governor, acted for many

years as the judicial department of state, and also corresponded to what is now the Senate chamber in our legislative department.

That the liberty loving pioneers in Carolina might feel that they were a self-governing people, every freeman in the settlement was to have right of membership in the General Assembly, which was to meet yearly to enact the laws. After the governor, councilors and the freemen or their deputies had passed the laws, a copy of them was to be sent to the lords for their consideration. Should they meet with the approval of the proprietors they went into effect; if not, they were null and void.

In the fall of 1664, Governor Drummond began organizing the government of his new province. And on February 6th, 1665, the "Grand Assembly of Albemarle," as these early lawmakers styled themselves, met to frame a set of laws for this Albemarle colony.

The place chosen for the meeting of this first legislative body ever assembled in our State, was a little knoll overlooking Hall's Creek, in Pasquotank County, about a mile from Nixonton, a small town which was chartered nearly a hundred years later.

No record of the names of the hardy settlers who were present at this Grand Assembly has been handed down to us, but on such an important occasion we may be sure that all the prominent men in the Albemarle region who could attend would make it a point to do so.

Governor Drummond and his secretary, Thomas Woodward, were surely there; George Durant, Samuel Pricklove, John Harvey, all owners of great plantations in Perquimans, doubtless were on hand. Thomas Relfe, Timothy Biggs, Valentine Byrd, Solomon Poole, all large landowners in Pasquotank, must have been present; Thomas Jarvis, of Currituck, and Timothy Biggs, of Chowan, may have repre-

sented their counties. And all, the dignified, reserved Scotch governor, his haughty secretary, the wealthy, influential planters and the humble farmers and hunters must have felt the solemnity of the occasion and recognized its importance.

We may imagine the scene. Under the spreading boughs of a lordly oak, this group of men were gathered. Around them the dark forest stretched, the wind murmuring among the pines, and fragrant with the aromatic odor of the spiey needles. At a little distance, a group of red men, silent and immovable, some with bow and arrow in hand, leaning against the trees, others sitting on the ground, gazed with wondering eyes upon the pale-faces assembled for their first great pow-wow.

Down at the foot of the knoll the silver waters of the creek rippled softly against the shore, on its waters the sloops of the planters from the settlements near by, here and there on its bosom an Indian canoe moored close to its shores.

As to the work accomplished by this first Albemarle Assembly, only one fact is certain, and that is, the drawing up by the members of a petition to the Lords Proprietors, begging that these settlers in Carolina should be allowed to hold their lands on the same conditions and terms as the people in Virginia. The Lords graciously consented to this petition, and on the 1st of May, 1668, they issued a paper known to this day as the Deed of Grant, by which land in Albemarle was directed to be granted on the same terms as in Virginia. The Deed was duly recorded in Albemarle, and was preserved with scrupulous care.

There is a tradition in the country that the assembly also took steps for preparing for an Indian war then threatening, which broke out the following year, but was soon suppressed.

Doubtless other laws were enacted such as were necessary for the settlement, though no record of them is extant. And then the business that called them together having been

transacted, and the wheels of government set in motion, these early lawmakers returned home, to manor house and log cabin, to the care of the great plantations, to the plow and the wild, free life of the hunter and trapper; and a new government had been born.

There seems to be no doubt in the minds of such historians as Colonel Saunders, Captain Ashe, D. H. Hill, Martin, Wheeler, et al., that the first Albemarle assembly did convene in the early spring of 1665. As for the day and the month, tradition alone is our authority. An old almanac of Henry D. Turner's gives the date as February 6, and in default of any more certain dates, this was inscribed upon the tablet which the Sir Walter Raleigh Chapter Daughters of the Revolution have erected at Hall's Creek church.

As to the statement that the place marked by the tablet was the scene of the meeting of our first assemblymen, tradition again is responsible. But such authorities as Captain Ashe and various members of the State Historical Commission accept the tradition as a fact. And old residents of Nixonton assert that their fathers and grandfathers handed the story down to them.

An extract from a letter from Captain Ashe, author of Ashe's History of North Carolina, to the regent of the local chapter Daughters of the Revolution may be of interest here:

"Yesterday I came across in the library at Washington this entry, made by the late Mrs. Frances Hill, widow of Secretary of State William Hill: 'I was born in Nixonton, March 14, 1789. Nixonton is a small town one mile from Hall's Creek, and on a little rise of ground from the bridge stood the big oak, where the first settlers of our county held their assembly.'"

Other documents in possession of the regent of our local chapter Daughters of the Revolution, go to show that the place and date as named on the tablet at Hall's Creek are

authentic, and that Pasquotank County may claim with truth the honor of having been the scene of the first meeting of "The Grand Assembly of Albemarle."

The Biographical Sketches will be continued in the April *Booklet*.

INFORMATION

Concerning *the Patriotic Society*

"Daughters of the Revolution"

The General Society was founded October 11, 1890,—and organized August 20, 1891,—under the name of "Daughters of the American Revolution"; was incorporated under the laws of the State of New York as an organization national in its work and purpose. Some of the members of this organization becoming dissatisfied with the terms of entrance, withdrew from it and, in 1891, formed under the slightly differing name "Daughters of the Revolution," eligibility to which from the moment of its existence has been *lineal* descent from an ancestor who rendered patriotic service during the War of Independence.

"The North Carolina Society"

a subdivision of the General Society, was organized in October, 1896, and has continued to promote the purposes of its institution and to observe the Constitution and By-Laws.

Membership and Qualifications

Any woman shall be eligible who is above the age of eighteen years of good character, and a *lineal* descendant of an ancestor who (1) was a signer of the Declaration of Independence, a member of the Continental Congress, Legislature or General Court, of any of the Colonies or States; or (2) rendered civil, military or naval service under the authority of any of the thirteen Colonies, or of the Continental Congress; or (3) by service rendered during the War of the Revolution became liable to the penalty of treason against the government of Great Britain: *Provided*, that such ancestor always remained loyal to the cause of American independence.

The chief work of the North Carolina Society for the past eight years has been the publication of the "North Carolina Booklet," a quarterly publication of great events in North Carolina history—Colonial and Revolutionary. \$1.00 per year. It will continue to extend its work and to spread the knowledge of its History and Biography in other States.

This Society has its headquarters in Raleigh, N. C., Room 411, Carolina Trust Company Building, 232 Fayetteville Street.