

# THE COURTHOUSE

North Carolina is geographically divided into three belts—the Mountain District, the Piedmont Plains, and the Coastal Region. In these sections there are one hundred counties, varying in size from 165 square miles to 990 square miles. One thing common to all of these 100 counties is that each has a county seat and a courthouse, around which is centered the operation of executive, legislative, and judicial branches of the local government. It is a very important cog in the wheels of our much cherished democracy.

In days gone by the courthouse was, and in some sections still is, the central meeting place for the entire area. Today our courthouse is used for more social, civic, and business meetings than any other place in the county.

Transylvania was made a county from parts of Buncombe and Henderson Counties by an Act of the State Legislature in January 1861, and in May of the same year it was formally organized. The organizational meeting was held in the B. C. Langford home which stood near the entrance to Camp Sapphire. A map of the Town of Brevard was drawn up and an area set aside for the courthouse. This map showed the town

extending 3 blocks on the Greenville, S. C., highway, 3 blocks toward the present railroad, 1 block toward Ecusta, and 3 blocks toward Rosman. The deed to the town was made over to the Chairman of the County Court.

At that time the County Court was made up of all the Justices of the Peace in the county, and it was the governing body. It performed the duties of operation, appointed committees, selected officials, operated the schools, maintained the roads, etc. The setup of our present local government was started in 1868.

The original plan stipulated that the courthouse was to occupy the area which we now call "The Square"; and the streets were to go around the structure similiar to the courthouses in Moore, Alexander and several other counties. At that time the funds were insufficient to carry out the plans, so a small building was erected on the back of the lot of the present courthouse. The jail was in the building now occupied by the telephone exchange.

In 1878 the front part of our courthouse was built. The back was not completed until 1919. At the

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