

Wm. J. Graham Esq  
Hillsborough Nov. 2

# MINERS' & FARMERS' JOURNAL.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED EVERY MONDAY, BY NOBLE & HOLTON, CHARLOTTE, MECKLENBURG COUNTY, NORTH-CAROLINA.

I WILL TEACH YOU TO PIERCE THE BOWELS OF THE EARTH AND BRING OUT FROM THE CAVERNS OF THE MOUNTAINS, METALS WHICH WILL GIVE STRENGTH TO OUR HANDS AND SUBJECT ALL NATURE TO OUR USE AND PLEASURE.—DR. JOHNSON.

VOL. I.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 1830.

NO. 9.

## TERMS.

### THE MINERS' AND FARMERS' JOURNAL.

Is printed and published every Monday morning, at Two Dollars and Fifty Cents per annum, if paid in advance; Three Dollars a year, if not paid until after the expiration of six months.

ADVERTISEMENTS will be inserted at Fifty cents per square (not exceeding 20 lines), for the first insertion, and 25 cents for each succeeding week—or \$1 for three weeks, for one square.—A liberal discount will be made to those who advertise by the year. On all advertisements communicated for publication, the number of insertions must be noted on the margin of the manuscript, or they will be continued until forbid, and charged accordingly.

All communications to the Editors must come free of postage, or they may not be attended to.

## MECKLENBURG COUNTY.

FROM THE VARIETY AND CATAWBA JOURNALS.

### DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

By the citizens of Mecklenburg county, (then including Cabarrus,) North-Carolina, on the 20th day of May, 1775.

Estimating this transaction as giving the primary impulse to our national Independence; as directly operative in producing the declaration subsequently made by the Legislature of North Carolina; then by the Legislature of Virginia; and perfected on the 4th of July, 1776, by our National Congress; it becomes a matter of high importance to establish the fact, that the citizens of Mecklenburg county, through their delegates, on the 20th of May, 1775, drew up, signed, and promulgated a declaration of Independence on the British government, and transmitted the same to the Congress of the U. States for their approbation.

In claiming this as the patriotic achievement of our forefathers, we wish to derogate nothing from the patriotism and energy of any state, or of any individual on earth; but at the same time, we feel bound, by the most sacred obligations of truth and justice, to guard this our birth-right with vigilant vigilance.

To every ingenious mind, the difficulty is at once obvious of establishing by positive proof, such a transaction, 55 years after its occurrence; when no record of the transaction could officially be kept; when a long revolutionary war supervened; the place of its occurrence for a season being in the occupation of the enemy; when all the delegates are in the silent grave, and when the validity of the transaction has never been called in question until Mr. Jefferson, in a letter of his recently published, pronounced it "a spurious and unjustifiable quiz;" but difficult as the task may appear, we dread not to meet the closest scrutiny.

The first proof adduced, is a certificate signed by Gen. George Graham, William Hutchison, Jonas Clark and Robt. Robison, Esq. addressed to, and now, we presume, in the possession of Col. William Polk, of Raleigh. In this they state:—"We certify and on our honor declare, that we were present in the town of Charlotte, in the county of Mecklenburg, on the 19th of May, 1775, when two persons delegated from each captain's company in said county, met: that these said Delegates continued in session until the night of said day; that on the 20th they again met, when several resolves were formulated and signed by every member, and were read under the shouts and huzzas of a very large assembly of the citizens of said county; which resolves went to declare themselves and the people of the county, free and independent of the King and Parliament of Great Britain. We do certify and declare, that in a few days after, Capt. James Jack, of the town of Charlotte, was engaged to carry the resolves to Congress; and we do know that Capt. Jack executed the trust," &c.

Certificate of Capt. John Simson, addressed to Col. Wm. Polk:—He states, "that towards the close of May, 1775, pursuant to orders issued by Col. Thos. Polk to the Captains, to appoint two men from each company to represent them, who drew up the Mecklenburg declaration of Independence: the same committee also appointed 3 men to secure all the military stores for the use of said county. I was under arms near the head of the line, near Col. Polk, and distinctly heard him read a long string of grievances and the said Declaration, and the military order above stated."

The late Rev. Francis Curmin, in a letter to the Hon. Nathaniel Macon, states: "at length, in the same year, 1775, the males generally of Mecklenburg county met on a certain day in Charlotte, and from the head of the Court-House stairs proclaimed Independence on English Government, by Col. Thos. Polk, their Herald. I was present and saw and heard it; as a young man, I was an agent in these things. Capt. James Jack, then of Charlotte, was sent with an account of these proceedings to Congress, and brought back to the county the thanks of Congress for their zeal, and the advice of Congress to be a little more patient, until Congress should take the measures thought to be best."

Capt. James Jack certifies, "That when the Resolutions were agreed on, they were publicly proclaimed from the Court-House

door, in the town of Charlotte, and received with every demonstration of joy by the inhabitants. I was then solicited to be the bearer of the proceedings to Congress. I sat out the following month, say June, 1775, and in passing through Salisbury, the General Court was sitting: at the request of the Court, I handed a copy of the resolutions to Col. Cannon, an attorney, and they were read aloud in open Court. I then proceeded to Philadelphia and delivered the Declaration of Mecklenburg Independence of May, 1775, to Richard Caswell and William Hooper, the Delegates to Congress from North-Carolina. Certified before John Weston, C. C. O. and James Oliver, attorney at law, Elbert County, Georgia."

The following certificates, &c. are in my possession:—

Wm. S. Alexander, late of Cabarrus county, has certified, "that he was in Philadelphia in the spring of 1775, on a mercantile concern: that on the day General Washington left that city to take command of the American army in the north, he met, in the great concourse on that day assembled, with Capt. James Jack, of Mecklenburg county, who informed him that that county had declared themselves independent of the government of Great Britain, and that they had sent him on express, with their declaration, to Congress, and that he had delivered it to our representatives."

The Rev. Humphrey Hunter, late of Lincoln county, in a biographical sketch of his own life, written by himself, on this subject states, "that orders were issued by Col. Thos. Polk, that a delegation of two men from each militia company should meet at the Court House in Charlotte, on the 19th May, 1775; who accordingly met: that Abraham Alexander was appointed chairman, and John McKnitt Alexander and Ephraim Brevard, Secretaries:—that after a full discussion, a number of resolves were entered into, after which bye-laws, &c. were entered into for the government of a standing committee of Public Safety, &c. A select committee was then appointed, to report on the ensuing day a full and definite statement of grievances and a more formal Declaration of Independence:—that on the 20th May, the delegation met; the select committee reported a statement of grievances and a formal Declaration of Independence, written by Doct. Ephraim Brevard, Chairman, and read by him to the Delegates. The resolves, bye-laws and regulations, &c. were read by John McKnitt Alexander, and all approved, without a dissenting voice, and finally the whole was read at the Court House door to a very large and approving assembly of the citizens. A copy was given in charge to Capt. James Jack, to be presented by him to Congress. On the return of Capt. Jack, he reported that Congress manifested their approbation, but deemed it premature to lay the proceedings officially before Congress. I was over 20 years of age and a deeply interested spectator of this transaction."

Gen. Joseph Graham, now of Lincoln county, certifies, "that on the 20th of May, 1775, besides two persons from each militia company, a much larger number of citizens attended in Charlotte than at any former meeting; the news of the battle of Lexington having produced a high excitement. The committee was organized in the Court-House, by appointing Abraham Alexander, Chairman, and John McKnitt Alexander, Clerk. After a full and free discussion, the question was taken and they resolved to declare themselves independent, and that their proceedings might be more formal, they appointed a select committee of three, viz. Doct. Ephraim Brevard, Wm. Cannon, an attorney, the other not recollected, to draft a declaration of Independence. Said committee retired, but the delegation continued their deliberations and transacted business of more local concern, until the select committee returned; and Doct. Ephraim Brevard read their report, as nearly as I can recollect, in the very words as we have latterly seen them in print:—this report was unanimously adopted; the whole proceedings were then read at the Court-House door and received with enthusiastic cheers. Thus far I state from personal knowledge and observation. I understood afterwards, that Capt. James Jack, then of Charlotte, went express with the proceedings to Congress, and that on his way, at Salisbury, Mr. Cannon, who was one of the committee who drew the Declaration of Independence, prevailed on Capt. Jack to have the proceedings publicly read, which was done, and generally highly approved of.—But two lawyers, John Dunn and a Mr. Booth, declared the proceedings treasonable and endeavored to have Capt. Jack detained; but he being well armed passed on. As soon as intelligence of this reached Charlotte, the chairman of the committee of Public Safety ordered a party of 10 or 12 horsemen to bring said lawyers from Salisbury to Charlotte, which was immediately effected; and on investigation before said committee, Dunn was discharged, on giving security, and Booth was sentenced to be removed to Camden, S. C. out of the sphere of his influence. My brother, George Gra-

ham, and the late Col. John Carruth, were of the party who went on to Salisbury, and they and two others of said party took Booth from Charlotte to his place of destination. This was the first military expedition from Mecklenburg in the Revolutionary war, and it is believed to be the first in the Southern States."

Maj. John Davidson, now of Mecklenburg county, certifies, "that two men, chosen from each militia company in the county, met in Charlotte, and after the meeting or delegation was regularly organized, a motion was made to declare ourselves independent of the crown of Great Britain; which was carried. Doct. Ephraim Brevard was then appointed to draw a Declaration of Independence, which he did. James Jack was then appointed to take it on to Congress, with directions to deliver it to our representatives from N. Carolina; when Jack returned, he stated that our Declaration was highly esteemed, but that they thought the message premature. I am confident that the Declaration of Independence, made by the people of Mecklenburg county, was at least twelve months before that made by the Congress of the U. States."

Isaac Alexander, Clerk of the present County Court of Mecklenburg, certifies:—"I was present in Charlotte, on the 19th and 20th of May, 1775, when a regular deputation from each militia company in Mecklenburg county, met to consult and take measures for the peace and tranquility of the citizens; and who, after due consultation, declared themselves absolved from their allegiance from the king of Great Britain, and drew up a Declaration of their Independence, which was unanimously adopted; and employed Capt. James Jack to carry copies thereof to Congress; who accordingly went on with them."

Certificate of Samuel Wilson, of Mecklenburg county, who certifies, "that sometime in May, 1775, a committee from the different militia companies in this county, met in Charlotte, and after consulting together, publicly declared their Independence on Great Britain and her Government: this was done before a large collection of people, who highly approved of it. I was then and there present and heard it read from the Court-House door."

Certificate of James Johnson, of Knox county, Tennessee, the original of which is in possession of Doct. J. G. M. Ramsay. He certifies, "that in the month of May, 1775, there were several meetings in Charlotte, on various subjects; but one thing I do positively remember, that Mecklenburg county did meet and have a Convention, declared Independence and sent a man to Philadelphia with the proceedings."

I should have been gratified to have received from Col. William Polk of Raleigh, a statement on this subject, from a pamphlet published by Mr. Gales, in Raleigh, in 1822. I find Col. Polk was present and bears evidence of the Declaration of Independence by the citizens of Mecklenburg at that time, as a fact; but was too young to give the proceedings in detail. The fact is what is now denied; his certificate, as it is, is therefore important.

There is now a paper in my possession, written and signed by J. M. Alexander, and purports to be "extracted from the old minutes," &c. On this there is no date to show when these extracts were made: the introductory part is similar, as far as it goes, to that placed in the hand of Gen. Davie. The resolves entered into, are in this extract noticed as follows:—"1. We, (the county) by a solemn vote, dissolve our allegiance to King George, and the British nation. 2d. Declare ourselves a free and independent people, having a right and capable to govern ourselves, as a part of North Carolina. 3d. In order to have laws as a rule of life, for our future government, we form a code of laws, by adopting our former laws. 4th. And as there was then no officers, civil or military, in our county, we decreed every military officer in the county should hold his former commission and grade, and that every member present shall act as a justice of the peace, hear and determine all controversies, &c. 5th. Many other laws and ordinances, &c. &c." After reading and musing every part, all passed about 12 o'clock, May 20, 1775, &c. &c. All sent on by James Jack," &c.

I hold these papers, certificates, &c. subject to the inspection of any one desirous to examine them.

From the preceding certificates, it appears most probable that there were drawn up by a select committee, a declaration of grievances and a formal declaration of Independence; which, if so, was the paper sent on by Capt. Jack to Congress; the original of which is lost to us, through the death, shortly afterwards, of Doct. Ephraim Brevard, the chairman of that committee, and by the occupation of Charlotte by Cornwallis, where the Doctor lived and where his papers probably were. But be this as it may, we have an authentic copy of those resolves and bye-laws mentioned in so many of the certificates, in the hand writing of John McKnitt Alexander, and certified by him as Clerk, which had been by him

deposited with General William R. Davie, for the use of some future historian; and after the decease of the General, procured and deposited with us, by Doct. Samuel Henderson, now Clerk of the Superior Court of this county. The resolves, &c. are, viz: The following resolutions were unanimously ordained:—

1. Resolved, That whosoever directly or indirectly abetted, or in any way, form or manner, countenanced the unchartered and dangerous invasion of our rights as claimed by Great Britain, is an enemy to this country, to America and to the inherent and inalienable rights of man.

2. Resolved, That we, the citizens of Mecklenburg county, do hereby dissolve the political bands which have connected us to the mother country, and hereby absolve ourselves from all allegiance to the British Crown, and abjure all political connection, contract or association with that nation, who have wantonly trampled on our rights and liberties and inhumanly shed the blood of American patriots at Lexington.

3. Resolved, That we do hereby declare ourselves a free and independent people, and of right ought to be a sovereign and self-governing association, under the control of no power other than our God and the General Government of the Congress: to the maintenance of which Independence, we solemnly pledge to each other our mutual co-operation, our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor.

4. Resolved, As we now acknowledge the existence and control of no law or legal officer, civil or military, within this county, we do hereby ordain and adopt, as a rule of life, all, or such and every of our former laws, wherein, nevertheless, the crown of Great Britain never can be considered as holding rights, privileges, immunities or authority therein.

5. Resolved, That it is further decreed, that all, each and every military officer in this county is reinstated in his former command and authority, he acting conformably to these regulations: and that every member present of this delegation shall hereafter be a civil officer, viz: a Justice of the Peace, in the character of a "committee man," to issue process, hear and determine all matters of controversy, according to said adoption of laws, and to preserve peace, union and harmony in said county, and to use every exertion to spread the love of country and fire of freedom throughout America, until more general and organized government be established in this province.

These resolves having been concurred in, bye-laws and regulations for the government of a Standing Committee of Public Safety were enacted and acknowledged, &c. &c. The whole proceedings of the Delegation, though interesting, are too long for this publication; but to show, in accordance with Gen. Joseph Graham's certificate, is to Dunn & Booth, that municipal authority was assumed and acted on by this Committee of Public Safety, I will only copy a certificate now in my possession, viz:

NORTH-CAROLINA, Nov. 28, 1775.

MECKLENBURG COUNTY. These may certify to all whom it may concern, that the bearer hereof, William Henderson, is allowed here to be a true friend to liberty and has signed the association.

Certified by ABM. ALEXANDER, C. M. Of the Committee of P. S.

Omitting a variety of documents incidentally bearing on the subject of our Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence, I will barely advert to that which must afford the highest gratification to every citizen of the State of North Carolina, by placing before them that resolve, or law, which stands the first legislative act on the subject of American Independence, in the United States.—This I will copy from the printed Journal of the Provincial Congress of North Carolina, held at Halifax, on the 4th day of April, 1776. On the 5th of April, a select committee of seven was appointed to take into consideration the usurpations and violences attempted and committed by the King and Parliament of Britain against America, &c. &c. On the 12th of April, the said committee reported a lengthy declaration of usurpations, violences, tyrannies and cruelties, &c. &c. and offered the following Resolve:—

Resolved, That the delegates for this colony in the Continental Congress, be empowered to concur with the delegates of the other colonies, in declaring Independence and forming foreign alliances, reserving to this colony the sole and exclusive right of forming a constitution and laws for this colony and of appointing delegates, from time to time, to meet the delegates of the other colonies, for such purposes as shall be hereafter pointed out; which was unanimously concurred in.

[Note. The word Resolved, was used as the enacting clause to every law passed by this legislature.]

The resolve so highly extolled, of the Virginia Legislature, was on the 15th of May, 1776, over one month after this, from which it evidently emanated. Here, then, we see a document, printed and promulgated to the world under all the solemnities of a law passed by the legislative authority of a State, on the 12th day of May, 1776, and circulated by the members through every section of the State, and being the first printed declaration made on the subject in the United States; which I will venture to say, never was reprinted in any publication, historical or periodical, previous to its insertion in the Catawba Journal, of October 19, 1824, at which time, it might be safely asserted, it was not known to one person in each 20,000 of the present citizens of N. Carolina; and it has been lately suggested by some, that there may not be another copy of the Journals of that Legislature to be now found.

In order, then, to invalidate the authenticity of this first, this bold and patriotic resolve of our Legislature, which stands and will forever stand, the first legislative corner-stone of American Independence, how easy would it be, (were this copy burned,)

to revert to Mr. Jefferson's interrogatories and exposition throughout, and pronounce that this too is "a spurious and an unjustifiable quiz," and thus throw a disreputable vesture over that section and those citizens who deservedly stand pre-eminently distinguished for originating that fearless and patriotic declaration, which only has been and hereafter only can be imitated, until despotism ceases to oppress the human race.

If Mr. Jefferson were living, I should feel bound to investigate his letter, with that reprehension it appears to merit; but he is now in the silent tomb—calm be his repose. I feel no disposition to disturb the sanctuary of the grave:—"to err is human frailty," is a shade blended with the highest human attainments.—Let us rather view Mr. Jefferson's denial of this our birth-right, as the result of a kind providence, enabling us, before it is yet too late, to establish our just claim to these patriotic deeds of our fathers and of placing them safe where misfortune cannot tarnish, or even the malignant breath of envy blast this our noblest boast, the fairest inheritance of an American citizen.

JOSEPH MCKNITT ALEXANDER.

P. S. Should not some measure be taken to perpetuate these evidences of our Declaration of Independence, and render them more perpetual than the short lived existence of newspaper publications?

## VARIETY.

CIDER.—As the time for laying in Cider has come, I would observe, that Mustard Seed put into new cider will keep it much better than any other thing I have tried. I put a half pint common mustard seed into a barrel of new cider, last fall, and let it remain on the lees without drawing off, till it was all used, and it kept it perfectly sweet till the last—not the new sickly sweet, but more like mellow old wine: the cider tasted a little of the mustard, but some gentlemen who drank it, thought it was improved by it. As the last year was the first time I put in the seed, I cannot say that it will always have the same effect; but so simple a thing is worth trying—for my cider was decidedly the best I ever drank.

Sick Peach Trees.—It was mentioned some time since, by a correspondent in the papers of this city, that certain facts had lately come to his knowledge, which were stated, inducing the belief, that powdered charcoal strewed about the roots of peach trees, would be a great preservative against disease, produced by insects, worms, &c. The Boston Courier in a recent notice of this subject, corroborates the above opinion, by his own experience; and adds that, trees planted in burnt land are universally healthy and free from worms at the root.

Apple Jelly.—It is not known, perhaps, so generally as it ought to be, that apples make an excellent jelly. The process is as follows:—They are to be pared, quartered, the core completely removed, and put in a pot without water, closely covered, and placed in an oven or over a fire. When pretty well stewed, the juice is to be squeezed out thro' a cloth, to which a little of the white of an egg is to be added, and then the sugar. Skim it previously to boiling, then reduce it to a proper consistency, and an excellent jelly will be the product.

Willow Bark.—It is stated, in a letter from Rome, that the French medical men in that city continue to administer, with great success against intermittent fevers, the bark of the willow. These gentlemen assert that it has more power than Peruvian Bark.

Gin.—A London editor affirms that twenty-four millions gallons of gin were consumed last year in England, "enough to form a river a yard deep, twenty yards wide, and 5 miles in length."

Rochester, N. Y.—The village of Rochester is situated on the Genesee River, seven miles south from Lake Ontario. This village, which, for population, extent and business, may soon rank among our cities, was not settled until about the close of the last war; its progress was not very rapid until about the year 1820, from which period it has rapidly improved until the present day. It now contains a population of 12,000 inhabitants. The first census of the village was taken in December, 1815, and the number of inhabitants then was three hundred and thirty one.—*Set. Bul.*

Long Dresses.—At the "celebration" Ball the other night, I overheard a gentleman observe to another, "How very long that young lady's dress is." Long, said the other, I think it is, the very shortest in the room. You don't take, said the first, I mean it's long from the ankles.

Mr. Francis Granger, we understand, declares that all the ladies are on the side of Anti-Masonry; they hold that associations for keeping a secret are unlawful.