

Albemarle And Colonies' Fight for Freedom - A Long Struggle

The portrayal I have seen on television and articles in newspapers and periodicals seem to suggest that the incidents leading up to the American Revolution occurred just a short while before the revolution; nothing could be further from the truth. The seeds of revolution were sown over one-hundred years before.

I believe there are millions of young and not so young who have no conception of the trials, tribulations and injustice imposed by England on our forefathers who were settling our coast from Massachusetts to Albemarle.

Many years had passed since 1584 when Amadas and Barlowe had sailed the inland waters of North Carolina. King James succeeded Elizabeth, Charles I had followed James and was beheaded as a traitor. Cromwell had lived, ruled and died. Charles II was on the throne and again royal bounties became possible.

There were two things Charles II had plenty of: debts and land; if he could exchange one for the other, his life of dissipation and frivolity could continue. He was known as "a gay; dissolute, shameless libertine who despised all that is valuable in human duties." As Lord Rochester remark-

ed, "he never did a wise thing or said a foolish one."

In 1663 his majesty Charles II, King of England, Scotland and Ireland, granted to George, Duke of Albemarle; Edward, Earl of Clarendon; William, Earl of Croven; John, Lord of Berkeley; Anthony, Lord Ashley; Sir George Carteret; Sir John Colleton, and Sir William Berkeley, as "Lord Proprietors," all of the territory south of the lands not already granted to the province of Virginia, down to the Spanish line in Florida. This territory was to be called "Carolina" as a compliment to King Charles IX of France.

Sir William Berkeley was governor of Virginia and the only one of the eight to ever rule in the new world. He was the embodiment of cruelty and religious prejudice of that age; he was a ruthless tyrant. Any religion other than Anglican would not be tolerated. King Charles said of him, "that old fool has taken more lives without offense in that naked country than I, in all England, for the murder of my father." Fortunately Berkeley's rule ended at the Albemarle Area.

In some New England colonies a Quaker coming into the province would have his tongue bored by a red hot

iron and then banished. Any person bringing a Quaker into the province was fined 100 pounds sterling (about \$500) and the Quaker was given twenty lashes and imprisoned at hard labor. Virginia was no exception; a monthly tax of \$100 was levied on each Quaker by the Virginia Assembly.

To avoid this persecution, all Quakers and Baptist slipped into Albemarle Precinct and settled around the sounds and rivers. Houses were far apart; the woods full of Indians, some friendly and many hostile. No schools, churches or courthouses existed. However, all of this was preferable to the persecution from Virginia to Massachusetts.

At the direction of the Lord Proprietors, Sir William Berkeley in 1663 appointed William Drummond as the first "Governor of Albemarle." He was a Scotch settler in Virginia and deserved the respect and confidence of the people he governed. He was plain and prudent and gave satisfaction where before no law existed. He had the support of the large land owners and the small.

Unfortunately in 1667 trouble occurred in Virginia, known as Bacon's Rebellion, causing Governor Drummond to return to Virginia.

Bacon was the leader of a force resisting the illegal authority of Governor Berkeley. Drummond, seeing the justice of the rebellion, joined the cause. Bacon died before the end of the rebellion. Many of his leaders were put to death and Governor Drummond was hanged within two hours of his capture. Governor Berkeley immediately confiscated all of his property from Mrs. Drummond and his five children, leaving them without home, food or clothing.

At the death of Berkeley, Mrs. Drummond sued Lady Frances Berkeley for recovery of her property. A verdict in her favor was given by a Virginia court.

George Durant who had bought land from the Yeopim Indians in 1661 was probably the leading citizen in wealth and influence and largely controlled the views of the Quaker sect.

The rivers were full of fish and with little trouble large supplies were caught in the nets and weirs. Indian corn, tobacco, lumber and its by-products were sent in vessels to New England and the West Indies. In return, sugar, coffee and rum were brought to the Albemarle. An active trade grew up which was almost wholly conducted by New England vessels. All passed through

the inlet of Nags Head, where, as late as 1729, twenty-five feet of water was found upon the bar.

Gover Stephens was sent over in 1667. He was a ruler of ordinary ability who probably did his best which was not enough. At the end of his rule and death in 1674, the Lords Proprietors took note of the lucrative trade New England ships had with all of the provinces up and down the coast. They

decided something had to be done. They broke out the old Navigation Act, passed under Cromwell to break up the outen trade. The colonists were informed that from now on, only English ships could be used to ship their produce from the farms, rorest and rivers. This Navigation Act continued for a century and only until the revolution of 1776 did American commerce become free.

In this century many

Bits

(Continued from page 6)

vance commemorating the official reading to the public of the Declaration of Independence; Tricorn Hat Tours for children visits to the gaol and the maze, the apothecary shop and the magazine, bowling on the green. Led by a costumed hostess, twice daily through Aug. 29; Craft Workshops—A dozen of Colonial Williamsburg's skilled craftsmen demonstrate and explain their work four times a day, except Sunday, in the Williamsburg Conference Center using film, sound, closed-circuit television to improve the presentation. Gunsmiths, silversmiths, coopers, bookbinders, musical instrumentmakers, printers, weavers and others alter-

nate daily, each giving two programs a week. And many other exciting scenes and attractions may be enjoyed by spending a day at Williamsburg, Va.

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The North Carolina Rural Safety Council announces that "The week of July 25 through 31 has been proclaimed "National Farm Safety Week." "This is an appropriate time to promote safety at all levels of the agricultural community. Parents should educate their children, set good examples, and get children involved in youth safety programs. Teachers should plan to include safety in vocational and manual arts classes. Farmers and ranchers should train their families and workers by reviewing familiar work practices and teaching new techniques. Let's all become actively involved in safety education and make 1976 the safest and most productive year ever." Ms. Carolyn Register, president, said.

Steep Area Has Special Plant Need

Garden tip: Certain types of low maintenance, easy-to-grow ground covers are available to put on steep slopes with full exposure to the sun.

North Carolina State University extension horticulturists suggest considering one of the following: Andorra, Shore Junipers, creeping Euonymus, low-spreading varieties of Cotoneaster, Memorial Rose and Hypericum. In some hot, dry places, Santolina and Lavender Cotton do well.

These ground covers are suitable where the slope is too steep to mow grass and too hot to grow some other types of cover. They will be both attractive and beneficial in helping stop erosion.

UNINTENTIONAL ART

Hazel Saunders of Rt. 3, Hertford, well known as a local artist, found some unintentional art recently. While riding to Elizabeth City, a large truck passed the car she was driving and a rock hit the back windshield causing a crack which soon spread. While some would have been extremely upset over such an incident, Ms. Saunders, the artist that she is, said, "It's really an unusual piece of art." (Newbern photo)



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