

Governor Craig's Message Read to Legislature.

ACCOUNT OF STEWARDSHIP RENDERED LEGISLATURE BY RETIRING GOVERNOR

Reviews Accomplishments of His Administration, Picturing the Advancement the State Has Made, and Suggesting Legislation He Deems Wise to Keep North Carolina in Step With Progress.

Among His Recommendations to the New General Assembly Are Better Pay for State Officers, New Building for Department of Agriculture, More Money and Larger Authority for Highway Commission, Continuation of Enlargement of School Facilities and a Law to Allow Families to Share in Earnings of Prisoners—Urges State to Resist Cuban Bond Claim to the Last and Lauds President Wilson for His Foreign Policy.

To the Honorable the General Assembly of North Carolina.

The days of my administration are accomplished. In obedience to the constitution and in compliance with you will, I speak to you my last word as the Governor of the State of North Carolina.

Four years ago you invested me with the responsibilities of this high office. I have welcomed every opportunity for service, and my strength and energy have been devoted to the State. I have administered this office steadfast in the resolve to do exact justice to all—to the rich and to the poor, to the strong and to the weak, without regard to race or politics.

In delivering up this place to my able and patriotic successor, it is with regret that I have not been able to do more for the people that conferred upon me the honor and the trust to be the Chief Magistrate of the State. I acknowledge with gratitude the hearty and co-operation, the faithful work of all my associates and assistants in office.

I reflect with some pride and satisfaction that the people, by an overwhelming majority, have placed the seal of approval upon my administration, and have declared their confidence in my successor and his administration.

I do not come with a full program for your consideration; that task will be performed by my successor.

Salaries of State Officers.
In my opinion, the salaries of State officers should be increased. The constitution forbids any increase of the salary of Governor and officers created during their terms of office. Any increase for them must be before the Legislature. The greatly increased cost of living has made all salaries less valuable. It seems but reasonable that we should pay our Chief Executive as much as the Federal Government pays the Senators and Representatives in Congress. The Governor cannot live in the mansion provided by the State at the present salary and do the things expected of him, and which he must do in accordance with established custom and the requirements of hospitality. I know whereof I speak. He must provide the means from other sources, and this the State does not desire.

The same observation applies to all the State officers, but the Legislature will have full time for consideration of remuneration to all of them except the Governor and the members of his council. I have able, conscientious officials. They are worth more, they earn more than they receive. The people of North Carolina would willingly pay a reasonable and just compensation for efficient service.

All the officers and all the places in our government have been administered all suggestions of negotiations with the view to securing a withdrawal of this suit by the Republic of Cuba. These bonds are not like the South Dakota bonds. It is inconceivable to me that the action can be maintained in any jurisdiction, or that their payment by this sovereign State can be enforced by any power. I have employed able counsel to assist the Attorney-General. The case is set for argument in the Supreme Court of the United States on Monday, the 8th of January. We will fight it to a finish. I am convinced that the State of North Carolina will prevail in the great case now pending, and that this last cloud of Reconstruction which has threatened for fifty years upon our horizon, will disappear forever.

Condition of the State.
I rejoice to declare that the State is in better condition than at any period in her whole history, that the governing party that placed me here is stronger and more secure than ever in the loyalty and harmonious union of its members, and that by the long continuation of a government of integrity and devotion to the public we are justified in the confidence and trust of the people.

In our memory there are years of darkness and hardship with tempests of war for a background, when political might prevailed and the law went forth to plunder and to devour, when fields were barren, when schools were closed, when people were poor and discouraged, and when opportunity was denied. This was indeed a land of sorrows and acquainted with grief. We, ourselves, have been witnesses and partakers in the transformation of a State and her people. Out of the darkness of Reconstruction, there was the day of the people girded their loins to overcome adversity. They re-established a government of law and security. They rehabilitated the State and her institutions. They opened the university and built the school.

During the sixteen years of this century, North Carolina has made more progress than in all the years of her preceding history. In substantial development she has surpassed by no State of the Union, nor by any civilized country whose history we know. Her growth and accomplishment is like a tale of Arabian romance.

Agriculture.
We are an agricultural people, and agriculture measures our National progress. By the intelligent cultivation of the soil, the yield of all staple crops per acre has been about doubled. The acreage of tillage has increased until now the State, once far behind, ranks in agriculture among the first of the Union. The prosperity of the farm appears to the passer-by in improved fields, improved dwellings, and all the appointments of the farm.

The College of Agriculture and Mechanical Arts and the Department of Agriculture have been potential agencies in this wonderful development. The college must be manned and equipped for its larger usefulness. It should have 5,000 students. Its alumni will go to all sections of the State, and of the country trained captains of industry for the practical and scientific cultivation of the soil and for the higher development of the profession of agriculture.

The Department of Agriculture has stimulated farming to increasing activity. It has protected the farmers from imposition, it has ascertained and encouraged the most profitable crops by methods of intelligent experiment and demonstration. The building now occupied by the Department is not fit. In its stead there should be erected a building commensurate with the requirements, typifying the finest and the greatest of all of the industries of North Carolina.

Manufacture and Commerce.
Manufacturing is prospering as never before, and is developing in every section of the State. The cotton mills alone require for their operation 17,000 horse-power. The textile manufacture all the cotton that we produce and more. The value of their product for the last year was \$100,000,000.

The utilization of waterpower is assuming large proportions. On a 20-mile section of the Yadkin River, 250,000 horse-power is now in course of development. From one end of the State to the other are electric lines through the mountains, the transformed power of the French Broad, the Catawba, the Yadkin, the Pee Dee, the Cape Fear and the Roanoke, delivering exhaustless energy to the centers of population, cities and towns, and driving millions of wheels and spindles. The commercial advancement of our towns and cities is keeping pace with manufacturing and agriculture.

Rural Conditions.
The country home is no longer a place of isolation and desolation. Improved farming brings the comforts of life: the telephone, the mail box, good schools, and good roads enlarge and illumine the horizon of country life. As rural conditions improve, ambitious youth and manhood will abide and grow in the free and pure atmosphere for the breeding of a robust race. The country home should be provided with all modern appliances of comfort and economy. Rural communities should be empowered by statute to incorporate themselves for the purpose of securing water and light, and availing themselves of public utilities. Running water in the home is the most desirable of all modern conveniences. It saves women and children from drudgery in the heat and in the cold. It brings comfort and cleanliness. It preserves health. Every farmer of modern means can have this convenience. It is not an expense. It is an economy. With screens in the windows and pure running water in the house, the home is clean and sanitary, and the people who dwell therein will be cleaner, healthier, stronger and better.

Vacant Lands.
We have always the perplexing question of taxation. The condition makes the solution difficult. The large per cent of the personal wealth of the State is not listed for taxation. One cause for this is the alleged undervaluation of the land.

The Corporation Commission made an intelligent and courageous effort to equalize the tax values of the State, and have accomplished much, but the situation is by no means satisfactory. There are in the State vast areas of unused land held for speculation. The owners neither use it nor intend to use it. These lands are listed for taxation at a very small part of their sale value. In assessments, the discrimination is in their favor and against the lands that have been improved. These unused lands should not be favored by the tax assessor for their owners are appropriating the value—the unearned increment created by the growth and enterprise of the whole community. If there be any discrimination let it favor the man who has improved by industry his holdings and made his land productive; not to the man who refuses to improve and who prevents the natural development. A proper assessment of the vacant lands, the holding of vacant land for purposes of speculation, and encourage the industrious and the energetic to buy their own

GOVERNOR CRAIG DELIVERS BIENNIAL MESSAGE TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY



GOVERNOR LOCKE CRAIG.

This is especially true of city and suburban property. There is nothing that contributes more to the strength and patriotism, the highest development of citizenship, than the ownership of homes. A proprietor is independent. He cannot be a serf. Every farmer in North Carolina should determine to own the land upon which he lives, though the acreage be small. He will then have a firm dwelling place, a steadfast interest in country and Government.

The Federal reserve act has destroyed the money monopoly. The farm loan bank recognizes the land as security upon which money can be obtained on long and easy terms. Land in North Carolina is comparatively cheap. A man of energy and determination can own his home if he will.

Good Roads.
Good roads have been a potential agency for the welfare of the State. In obedience to the dictates of common sense, business requirements and the progressive spirit of the age, the people of North Carolina have determined to have good roads. During the last four years, we have built twice as many miles of improved highways as in all our preceding history. We now have about 15,000 miles of well graded, surfaced roads. In January, 1913, we had about 5,000 miles. We have built 10,000 since then.

During the last four years, the Central Highway has been built from the Atlantic Ocean to the coastal plain, over the hills of the Piedmont, over the Blue Ridge to the Canyon of the Great Rocky Mountains. The section of this road from Old Port to Ridge Creek and a section in Madison County were built by State convicts. Within the last four years, the highway from Charlotte to Asheville has been completed. The State convicts built that difficult section from Chimney Rock to Hickory Nut Gap. Similar highways have been built across the State and into every section. Road building goes on with increasing momentum. No community will be without them. They are satisfied to deny itself the improvements of modern life in this day of enlightenment and progress. The old country road of rocks and mud and steep hills, consuming energy, forbidding progress, is past. With good roads communities are correlated, markets are available, schools and churches are accessible, land rises in value, progress is inevitable. Our highways are immeasurably finer than "the king's highway" of old, and they are the tracks for the swift and powerful vehicles.

The automobile is the modern machine for local transportation. They are rapidly coming into universal use. We cannot get along without them, and they cannot get along without the good road. Their indispensable efficiency is not available without the graded, surfaced highway. They are monopolizing the roads, and they make road building and road maintenance far more expensive. They should bear a large part of this burden. The tax on them might be increased, and their owners would not complain provided the money be applied to the betterment of the roads.

Highway Commission.
The State Highway Commission was established by the General Assembly in 1913. This commission has justified its creation. Its usefulness has been limited by lack of funds. The revenue from automobiles might be largely administered by the commission. The modern highway is no longer a neighborhood affair, but

abolished. This is demanded for the utility of the road, for the economy of the railroad, and in the interest of safety and human life. The railroads are now more prosperous than ever before. Their net earnings are greater. For the last fiscal year, the net earnings of the railroads of the South were approximately \$5,500 per mile. They have already realized the duty which they owe to the public of removing this inconvenience and danger. They have begun the work and should proceed with all possible expedition while the expense can be easily borne.

The authorities of the State have the right to compel the abolition of grade crossings. I do not mean that the whole evil should be remedied at once. Due consideration should be given to the transportation companies, but in the location and the building of our highways we should avoid the grade crossings. The State Highway Commission might designate, after consultation with the Corporation Commission and with the companies, what crossings should be abolished.

Federal Aid for Road Building.
Through the Highway Commission, the State is enabled to receive the benefits of the Federal aid road bill, which places at our disposal for road construction \$115,000 for the present year, and an increasing amount for each succeeding year. One of the provisions of this Federal act is that funds must be provided for the maintenance of roads upon which the Federal money is expended. The State must therefore provide maintenance fund if we are to take advantage of this Federal aid, and co-operate with the Federal Government.

Railroad Building.
It has been the recognized policy of the State to aid in the construction of certain railroads in the Piedmont section and across the Blue Ridge Mountains. Convicts have been furnished to the Statesville Air Line Railway, the Elkin & Alleghany Railway, and to the Watauga & Yadkin Valley Railway. These convicts are not paid for in cash, but as authorized by law, are paid for in stock of the companies. This stock has no market value. But the consideration is not the value of the stock, but the value to the State of that magnificent country west of the Blue Ridge. These railroads, when built, will connect that country with the State. It is a trade in commercial intercourse. It is cut off from North Carolina by impassable mountains and has been forced to trade with the cities of Virginia, and send to them its valuable products. This is a section with a splendid destiny. We need the fertile lands and vast forests. It is equal in beauty and natural richness to the

famous southwestern Virginia section which it adjoins. As a matter of justice to the patriotic citizenship that dwells in the counties of Alleghany, Ashe and Watauga, the State should aid in securing for them railroad transportation for their development and for our mutual benefit.

Freight Rates.
At the beginning of my administration, freight was hauled from the North and the Northwest through the State of North Carolina and delivered to the cities of Virginia at a lower rate than the carriers would stop this same class of freight and deliver it to the cities of North Carolina. By this lower rate, the merchants of Virginia were enabled to sell goods in the State of North Carolina cheaper than the merchants of North Carolina could sell the same class of goods at their very doors. Business was obliged to leave the State. The cities of Virginia flourished at our expense.

The Federal Government had jurisdiction of this question. The injustice was indefensible. The people of North Carolina had borne it for many years. In 1913, this unjust discrimination was remedied to a large extent. Public opinion was the compelling power. It found expression through the just freight rate association and encouragement in a General Assembly that was ready to go to the limit to compel justice and secure the rights of the people of North Carolina. Earnest men held meetings in various cities. The wrong was exposed, the General Assembly was called in extra session. The difficulties were great, and while complete equity was not obtained, the remedy was substantial. Under present conditions, North Carolina whole-sale merchants have the advantage in our territory over competitors in any other State. By this extra session of the General Assembly of 1913, a statute was passed for the reduction of intrastate freight rates. In accordance with the power conferred upon the Governor, a commission was appointed to fix transportation charges within the State. The report of this commission was accepted by the people, by the carriers, and by the General Assembly. The railroads have sought before the Interstate Commerce Commission to raise some of our State schedules, but in all controversies the State has prevailed, and the rates fixed by the commission are now established.

By the reduction of inter-State rates and intra-State rates, our people have saved by careful estimate \$5,000,000 a year. The spirit of progress has been relieved from unjust

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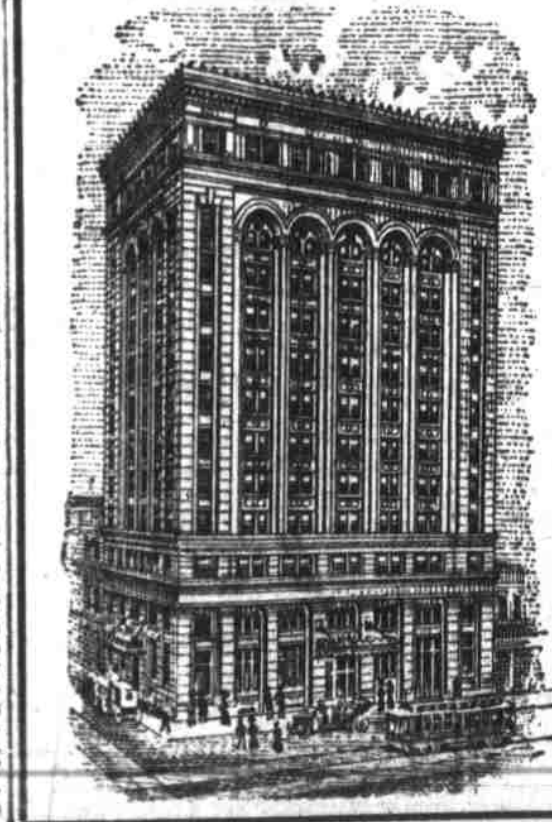
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