

Sunday, January 27, 1878.

CHAR. H. JONES, Editor and Proprietor.

"Free from the boring scruples that fetter our free-born reason."

MEMORIAL

TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES.

The Charlotte, North Carolina, chamber of commerce, speaking for the business men of Western North Carolina, the business interests of a large section of both North and South Carolina, respectfully call your attention to the following preamble and resolutions adopted at a regular meeting of the Charlotte Chamber of Commerce, on the 3d day of January, 1878:

Whereas, the State of North Carolina, as exhibited by official statistics, has paid into the Treasury of the United States since the 30th June, 1866, a sum of money exceeding twenty millions of dollars, and

Whereas, the insignificant comparative sum of only \$1,124,500 of the vast amount paid into the Federal Treasury, has been appropriated by Congress for public works of internal improvement in North Carolina, and

Whereas, the city of Charlotte, the third in the State of North Carolina in point of population, and the first in its actual purchase and sale of merchandise, and the most important railroad centre in the Southern States, next to Atlanta, Georgia, demands some consideration at the hands of the government;

Resolved, 1st, That the people of Charlotte, through the chamber of commerce, do petition Congress for an appropriation of dollars, for the purpose of erecting a postoffice building, which shall be more in accordance with the demands of our present mail business.

Resolved, 2d, That we petition Congress for the passage of the bill recently introduced into that body by the Hon. Robt. B. Vance, re-establishing the United States mint in this city as a mint of coinage, and for such an appropriation as will enable the mint here to be put on an equal footing with other United States mints under the direction of the general government.

Resolved, 3d, That a committee of three members of this chamber be appointed for the purpose of presenting these matters to our members of Congress, and of urging upon them the fairness and justice of our demands. Corroborating the first item in the preamble, it is learned from official sources, on file in the Treasury Department at Washington City, that from the 30th of June, 1866, to the 30th day of June, 1876, North Carolina had paid into the Federal Treasury, from direct internal revenue collections alone, \$15,490,736.33, and that during the same period there had been collected through the Federal custom houses in the State the sum of \$729,155.63. We have no figures at command which will officially give us the amount which the people of North Carolina have paid directly into the Treasury of the United States since the 30th day of June, 1866, by the people of North Carolina.

In return for this heavy burden of taxation the Congress of the United States has seen fit to return to us only:

Table with 2 columns: Item description and Amount. Includes Appropriations for Improvements at the Mouth of the Cape Fear River, for the Roanoke River below Weldon, for the French Broad River, and for the Erection of the United States Court House and Postoffice, Raleigh.

Making a total as recited in the second item of the preamble above, \$1,124,500. Or, in round numbers very little more than one-twentieth of the amount we have paid directly for the support of the common government.

This being a matter of public record, your memorialists would respectfully submit that the present session of Congress will but acknowledge the fairness and justice of our claim by granting the prayer of the Charlotte chamber of commerce, referred to in the list and 2d resolutions of the series as quoted above.

As to the necessity of the appropriation asked for, the building of a Federal court house and government postoffice, your memorialists submit that the present postoffice is totally inadequate to the wants of our people, and all of them: postal route agents are employed to distribute the mails, but that distribution would be much facilitated by having such accommodations for the mails as they arrive at our business centers in the State. Charlotte is now the distributing point for a large area of country, and in asking additional accommodations for our mail business, we speak for the people of this large section of country as much as we do for ourselves.

Charlotte being the centre of a large and flourishing trade, the importance of having the sessions of the Federal court here, in addition to Asheville, Statesville and Greensboro, is apparent, and your memorialists are of the opinion that

this is only a question of time, should this become an accomplished fact, the sessions could be as constructed as to accommodate both the postoffice and the Federal court.

In the second resolution, your memorialists respectfully ask that the bill recently introduced in Congress by the Hon. R. B. Vance, legalizing the re-establishment of the United States mint, in the city of Charlotte, as a mint of coinage, to be put on an equal footing with other United States mints, and that the general government, the necessity for which would seem to be apparent, now that gold and silver are once more about to take their places in the currency of the country.

This mint was established by act of Congress on the 3d day of March, 1855. It was conducted successfully with the approval of the officers of the government until in July, 1854, when it was destroyed by fire. So important had its operations become that Congress almost immediately passed a bill for rebuilding it. It is situated in the centre of the mining districts in the South Atlantic gold field, which comprises parts of North and South Carolina and Georgia, and which is said, up to the year 1840, to have produced one-third of the gold ever produced in the United States up to that date, and the present improved methods of managing refractory ores, and the more systematic development of the wealth of our mines, is even more promising than ever.

In order to show that the establishment of the mint was a necessity in the first instance, and that the necessity exists to-day with even greater force, we propose to review, in a short, comparative manner, some facts in regard to the mining interests of North Carolina in the past, a short statement of the present condition of the mines, and something of what may be expected of them in the future, if an impetus can be given to this branch of our wealth by the re-establishment of our mint.

In the early history of the country, the South Atlantic gold field was known and recognized by the geologists and mineralogists of that era. It included a large area of North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia, and while gold was predominant in many sections of this area, silver, copper, iron and other metals were found in abundance, but so little attention was paid to the keeping of records of mining operations that little besides tradition has been preserved. The country known as the piedmont section of North Carolina is the best known of the area of which we speak because of its great extent and of the great number and relative richness of its mines. From statistics deemed entirely reliable, it is learned that gold is found here and there in at least one-half of the State, and that the portion productive on a large scale is considerably larger, embracing according to the fairest estimates, about one-fourth of the entire area—12,000 square miles. It extends from Moore and Franklin counties, on the east, nearly to the Tennessee line, on the west. Within these limits may be found illustrations of every mode of occurrence of gold, placers, gravel, washings, beds, veins, and bottoms of streams. Within this area, there are to be found, according to the reports of our State Geologist, at least three different geological formations, each furnishing ore with peculiar characters. The best known and most profitable mines which have been developed are upon the central belt of granite, stretching across the State of North Carolina, in a north-east and south-west direction, with a width of ten to forty miles, the towns of Greensboro and Charlotte being connected by it. In this connection it may be mentioned that this area is regarded by geologists as among the oldest on the North American continent.

To the east of this belt are to be found some mines of value, but they have been practically unexplored. Such as have been developed are found to abound in argillaceous slates, and are generally unprofitable. To the west of this belt, made up for the most part of gneissoid and schistose formations, and extending nearly or quite to the Tennessee border, but it is of the gold belt proper of North Carolina to which our attention will be directed.

In this belt it is highly probable that gold was mined to a considerable extent prior to the Revolutionary war, but the records have been so imperfectly kept as to be of little use to the present generation, and for our present purposes it was in the year 1799, that the now famous twenty-eight pound nugget at the Reed mine in Mecklenburg county was discovered and gave an impetus to the mining interest of this section of the country, but regular operations were not conducted until some years afterward. By the year 1826 the wealth of this belt becoming known, regular mining operations were commenced, and in 1839 a legislative report put down the official estimate produced at half a million of dollars per annum, and thus far comparatively little work had been done, except on placer mines, but the speedy exhaustion of these compelled the miners to explore the veins which had been the source of so much riches and the large number of veins discovered and worked put entirely new conditions to this now important industry.

It is in historical fact that, under the circumstances, not the knowledge or skill of that period were favorable to the operations planned on a scale or with success as we now witness in the States of the far West, but we believe had they been so, the entire industrial condition of the State would have been changed, for, to the present time, notwithstanding the incontestable mineral wealth which this gold belt is known to possess, nearly all the mining work has been of the most desultory character. In most cases the veins were worked by farmers, who (living in a healthy and salubrious climate, on a soil that was highly productive, did not have that incentive to increase their wealth by mining that is now known to exist, spent odd times in their enterprises, using their slave labor (otherwise unemployed) as miners. The waste attending such random or desultory work was enormous, but as ores were abundant and rich, and cheaply treated, there was no incentive economy. Experts and historians tell us that when the permanent water-line was reached—generally at the depth of 400 to 600 feet—the productive ores ceased to be treated, and as expensive hoisting and pumping machinery was necessary, and as all operations needed to be continuous, the work was then conducted ceased to be profitable, and mine after mine was discontinued, and the larger number of them remain abandoned even at this day.

The history of the mining operations in North Carolina proves it to have been periodical, and the five years immediately preceding the late war, witnessed a revival of the mining

industry, and a real progress was made towards mastery of the methods of dealing with sulphurets, in an economical, effective and thorough manner, but with all the absorbing issues of that period, efforts to keep up interest in mining operations practically died, and at its close, every mine in North Carolina, with one fitful exception, was suspended.

The south end of the central belt has been the most explored, and the larger number of known mines are within a radius of 50 to 80 miles of Charlotte. For a more comprehensive statement of the various mines and their localities included within this gold belt of North Carolina, we refer to the following extract taken from a letter recently published by Prof. G. B. Hanna, assistant assayer of metals at the United States mint in Charlotte:

The south end of the central belt has been most explored, and the larger number of known mines are within a radius of 50 to 80 miles of Charlotte. The most prominent mine hitherto has been the Rudisill, it comprises two parallel veins—easily operated by the same shafts—which have an average combined width of 8 feet. This mine after being re-opened and new levels driven from the bottom of the old pump shaft, at a depth of nearly 200 feet. From personal inspection I think the vein at this depth is of somewhat greater width than usual; it carries a considerable amount of sulphurets, apparently of good grade. A small percentage of copper is found in the ore. The record of the past yield of this mine is defective, but is credited by persons familiar with its history, with a production of \$1,000,000.

The old Charlotte mine, to the north of the above, has been worked to the same depth; the production was large. The Carson mine, to the southwest of the Rudisill, has a wide vein and superior ore. Near by are the Sam Taylor and the Lecher mines. The extension of the Rudisill mine to the south is met with on the plantation of Mr. Howell; it has given some fine specimens. On B. F. Wilson's plantation, to the southeast, is an unusually promising vein unworked as yet; it extends to R. McDonald's plantation.

The Clark mine is about one mile west of the Rudisill. This mine has been a long time in operation. The Davidson mine, or group of mines, one and a half miles west of Charlotte, furnished an abundance of ore down to the water line; when abandoned the ore was said to have been of good grade, but too refractory to be profitably worked with the appliances of 20 years ago.

Similar statements may be made of the Trotter mine, to the southwest of the Clark. This mine is cut by the Atlanta Railroad. The Capps mine, five miles west of Charlotte, is another of the great mines of this section, and has yielded even more liberally than the Rudisill. The greatest depth reached is 200 feet. There are two converging veins, one of which at its north end passes into another property, and is known as the McGinn mine. Both veins are wide and strong, and have given superior ore. It is not worked at present. The McGinn mine is one of the few mines of this section now in operation, and is at present in "bonanza." The north end of the vein has yielded a high grade of copper ore, while the south end is for the most part surficial iron pyrites. The ore bodies at present are of unusual width and of good grade; the assays of it have been very satisfactory.

was found here in 1799, and for a period of more than 30 years it continued to be prolific of large nuggets of native gold, weighing from 1 lb. to 25 lbs.; the vein was worked to the depth of 90 feet.

About Salisbury, 40 miles north of Charlotte, are groups of mines, but none of them have attracted the attention which they deserve. The writer has little personal acquaintance with them, and is obliged to dismiss them with a bare allusion.

The Howie or Cureton, in Union county, and 22 miles southeast of Charlotte, has been worked with more success than any mine in North Carolina; the greatest depth reached having been 300 feet nearly. No record of the amount extracted is now known.

The Wyatt mine is two miles east of the Howie, and the Washington a little to the north, and near by is the Smart mine.

Charleston mines nearly southeast of Charlotte makes an interesting group—the Lemmonds, Folger Hill, Davis, Lewis and Phifer, the latter having yielded enormously rich pockets.

Fifteen miles east of Charlotte is the Stewart mine, which has given rich ore; galena and blende is frequently found with the ore.

Long and Crowell mines, in Cabarrus and Union counties, have more than 20 veins some of which carry copper and lead as well as gold.

Gold Hill mine, in Rowan county, 15 miles from Salisbury, was discovered in 1842, and has been more extensively worked than any mine in the State; only two of its veins have proved of workable value—the Earnhardt and the Barnhardt, the former being exploited to a depth of more than 700 feet, and the latter, which has been found to its very lowest point; a small percentage of copper is an almost invariable constituent. The large bodies of ore have allowed this mine more than 20 years of continuous work, for the most part, profitable work. During the war work was suspended, and since the surrender the operations have, from lack of capital, been too desultory to do justice to this fine property. The production of Gold Hill has been at least \$2,000,000.

Ten miles north of Gold Hill is Silver Hill, notable as being the only lead mine in North Carolina thus far deemed workable; the lowest workings are more than 600 feet in depth. The ore is argilliferous galena, with a large percentage of blende. There are other localities near Silver Hill which promise to yield ore of a similar character.

The counties of Montgomery and Stanley are known to abound in the precious metals, but being remote from the highways of commerce, little has been done in the way of exploration. The Steel and the Russell mines are the only ones of more than local importance; the latter yields an enormous body of low grade ore.

The gravel mines of Montgomery are attracting deserved attention; the mining of them is imperfect and sometimes expensive reduction works put up, produce unsatisfactory results. The establishment of reduction works at or near Charlotte, near which are many valuable mines, and the opening of six railroads which center in that city, would give great facilities for the supply of ores to such works and would enable the proprietors to realize good profits from the operations.

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The Crowder Mountain mine, about four miles distant, has also large bodies of ore, but they have been too little worked to justify any assertion of their value.

On the High Shoals property (to the northwest of the King's Mountain mine) are three mines—Long Creek, Asbury and Dixon, or High Shoals. From all of these, in past years, the production has been large. Recently they have been re-opened, and preparations for re-working have been vigorously pushed, and good bodies of ore have been discovered.

The High Shoals property, on which these mines are situated, is worthy of a passing notice on other grounds. It is a tract of 14,000 acres, is traversed by two railroads, and is quite near a third. It comprises several iron mines, and has upon it a blast furnace and a rolling mill. Its chief value, however, lies in its unrivalled water power (that of the south fork of the Catawba river) the fall is 23 feet, and the discharge 200,000 gallons per minute. Rarely does one tract combine so many advantages.

Other mines in Gaston county are the Oliver, the Rhodes, the Rhyne, Duffie and the Burrell Wells.

The Canister and Shuford mines are in Catawba county. Vein mining in the mountains has been little followed, the veins rarely being of any size that would yield a profitable return. The Bakers mine, on John's river in Caldwell county, is an exception, and the Nichory mine, near by, has acquired some reputation.

Gravel and placer mines, however, have been worked more extensively here than in any other part of the State. The most noted localities are in Brindletown, Brackettstown, Whitesides and Jamestown, in McDowell and Cabarrus counties; the Whitesides and Paecole River, Polk county; Fairfield Valley, Jackson county; Valleytown and Vengeance Creek, Cherokee county.

The Gap Creek mine, in Ashe county, has given some remarkably beautiful ores, rich in copper, gold and silver. It has reached the depth of 40 feet. It is one of a group of mines, but the others have never been explored. Prior to the war the old fashioned Carolina gold mill was the chief ma-

inery relied on for milling, and with attention to the details of its work did not yield equal to it has since been introduced. After the war the California stamp battery was generally substituted, but with an exception here and there it has proved lamentably inefficient. Hereafter the prosperity of our mines will largely depend on metallurgical establishments; whether these will employ mechanical, chemical or smelting methods, or a combination of them, is, as yet, a matter of conjecture. Three points of Charlotte, Salisbury and Greensboro are conveniently situated to accommodate their respective sections, and the railroad system of the State is now sufficiently extended to afford fair facilities for shipping, etc.

Charlotte, N. C., Dec. 27, 1877. Further testimony as to the character and value of our mining interests is added to what has been already said in the following extract from a report of the Hon. J. Ross Snowden, who was sent out last March, by the Director of the Mint, to examine into this very subject. It is as follows:

To the Director of the Mint: In accordance with your instructions, I investigated the condition of the mines in the neighborhood of Charlotte, with a view to give some estimate of their capabilities to supply gold bullion to the mint in the event of coinage operations being resumed.

Some of the mines near Charlotte, I personally visited, and some at more distant points—for example the mines at King's Mountain and others. As my time would not permit a more extended examination, I obtained from Gen. T. Drayton, who has a real estate office and mining agency at Charlotte, a statement of the production of gold from the mines in question. From these statements it appears that these mines in North Carolina have hitherto produced about \$12,000,000 in gold.

I incline to the opinion that this amount is understated. Mr. Cowles, the officer in charge of assay office, in his communications to me, puts the production at \$20,000,000. At all events, the statistics show that large amounts of gold have been produced from these mines under the imperfect system then in use for the exploitation and reduction of these ores.

It is now well known that the mode of reduction of these ores does not usually produce more than 25 or 30 per cent of the gold they contain. The tailings from the stack below the stamp mill at King's Mountain, Gaston county, on an accurate assay, showed a gold value per ton of \$41.91, and silver contained therein of the value of \$14.44; total per ton \$56.35.

Assays of some other tailings show a value per ton of \$57.96. Prof. Raymond, United States commissioner of mining statistics, speaking generally of the operations of stamp mills, which is the chief mode of reduction used in North Carolina, says: "It is impossible to state accurately what per cent of gold is lost in milling, as few assays are made either of the crude ore or the tailings, but that a very large amount is lost cannot be doubted, and this loss probably varies from 30 to 70 per cent, according to the nature of the ore."

Prof. Gen. of the University of Pennsylvania, after a careful examination, reports in 1871, that down to this year, only 20 per cent of the gold in the ore treated was obtained by the Chilian or other processes used from the beginnings.

The mines are so numerous in North Carolina, that it is desirable that the production and exploitation of the ores should be separated from their reduction, that is to say, the present plan of imperfectly opening the mines and having at each mine an imperfect and sometimes expensive reduction works put up, produce unsatisfactory results.

The establishment of reduction works at or near Charlotte, near which are many valuable mines, and the opening of six railroads which center in that city, would give great facilities for the supply of ores to such works and would enable the proprietors to realize good profits from the operations.

Whatever modes may be adopted hereafter, and even with the present manner of opening the mines and reducing the ores there will be large amounts of gold annually produced. Prof. Gen. says that if properly operated he thinks \$200,000 per annum is a fair estimate. King's Mountain or Gaston county produces not less than \$500,000 if the deposits held out, of which there seems to be no doubt from personal examination of the mines, and if it is worked to its full capacity.

If the placers were properly worked the North Carolina gold production should be, what it was before the gold deposits in California were discovered—between \$1,000,000 and \$2,000,000 per annum.

Some of the South Carolina mines, such as the Brewer, Hale and others, would send their bullion to Charlotte, but none of these mines are in operation at present. The amount of gold and silver deposited at the mints and assay offices to the close of the fiscal year ending June 30, 1876, from the South Atlantic gold field is, according to the report of the Director of the Mint for 1876, page 91, as follows:

Table with 2 columns: Location and Amount. Includes North Carolina (\$10,325,209.31), Georgia (\$7,379,495.91), and South Carolina (\$1,381,521.06).

Total, \$19,096,226.28. It thus appears that the mines of this region have heretofore contributed a considerable amount of the precious metals to the minting institutions of our country, and it further abundantly appears that these mines are rich in gold-producing ores, and that many of them are yet undeveloped, and thus are capable of yielding a large increase to the annual supply of gold in our country. Very Respectfully, (Signed) J. ROSS SNOWDEN.

With this exhibition of the mineral wealth of the gold belt of North Carolina, your memorialists are of the opinion that to re-establish the mint in Charlotte, and to have mining operations an impetus that in time would return a hundred fold to the government, in the increased wealth of its citizen, the availability of its resources, and the employment of the labor which seeks for work at the hands of the guardians of their interests, and whose voices are to be heard in the halls of Congress.

Coming back to the questions bearing on the present position of the mint in Charlotte, as conducted successfully from 1838 to 1861, we submit that its total cost was \$5,068,575.14. The total production of gold as officially recorded in the books of the institution up to the 30th June, 1877—excluding two years when the mint was being rebuilt—1844-1845, and four years when its business was suspended—1862-1865, was \$10,415,285.51.

North Carolina, \$10,415,285.51. South Carolina, \$1,381,521.06. Georgia, (not reported).

Total, \$11,797,084.78. This sum is evidently far below the actual production, for it is certain that a very large part of the yield of the Carolina mines never found its way to the mints, but was used in the arts, and much that did reach the mints was not properly credited on account of the erroneous and careless reports on the part of depositors. A single calculation will show that this statement is highly probable, according to the report of the Director of the Mining gold bullion was deposited from North and South Carolina as follows:

Table with 2 columns: Location and Amount. Includes North Carolina (\$10,415,285.51), South Carolina (\$1,381,521.06), and Georgia (\$1,000,000.00).

Which added together shows a total recorded yield of \$12,796,806.57 for the past six years, or about \$112,000 per annum, which is certainly not more than two thirds of the production if indeed it be one half. It will not therefore be an exaggeration to put the actual yield of the precious metals of the Carolina mines since the mint was put in operation.

Should the mint be now re-established its operations would not be confined to the bullion produced in the Carolina mines. The bill as introduced into Congress by Gen. Vance, and the intentions of its promoters, looks to the sending of silver and gold bullions to this point just as it is now sent to Philadelphia, and other United States mints, and the amount coined there in the future, would be limited only by the capacity of the building, which is equal to the mint at Philadelphia, and the machinery to be erected.

The statement is often made that this mint could not be made to pay expenses, while other mints and assay offices pay a profit. This statement is untrue, because if the profits properly belonging to the commercial operations of the Treasury Department, viz: the gain from minor coin, be credited to this mint, just as it is now done to other mints, the business here would undoubtedly show the same per centum of profit. As a complete answer to this statement, Dr. Linderman, director of the mint of the United States (annual report for 1877, page 60) shows that the mints have been a perpetual expense to the government for twenty-seven years, not including the gains from minor coin and seigniorage. If, however, these gains be put to the credit of the mints, there is no reason why the mint at Charlotte should not pay equal per centum of profits, thus making the balance largely the other way.

During the greenback era through which the country has passed, say 1869, your mint has been dismantled by authority of the officers of the government, and the machinery was carried to Philadelphia, where your memorialists are informed it now lies, probably ruined by exposure to the weather, at any rate perfectly useless in its present position and locality. In the present position and locality in the Carolina mines never found its way to the mints, but was used in the arts, and much that did reach the mints was not properly credited on account of the erroneous and careless reports on the part of depositors.

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The statement is often made that this mint could not be made to pay expenses, while other mints and assay offices pay a profit. This statement is untrue, because if the profits properly belonging to the commercial operations of the Treasury Department, viz: the gain from minor coin, be credited to this mint, just as it is now done to other mints, the business here would undoubtedly show the same per centum of profit. As a complete answer to this statement, Dr. Linderman, director of the mint of the United States (annual report for 1877, page 60) shows that the mints have been a perpetual expense to the government for twenty-seven years, not including the gains from minor coin and seigniorage. If, however, these gains be put to the credit of the mints, there is no reason why the mint at Charlotte should not pay equal per centum of profits, thus making the balance largely the other way.

During the greenback era through which the country has passed, say 1869, your mint has been dismantled by authority of the officers of the government, and the machinery was carried to Philadelphia, where your memorialists are informed it now lies, probably ruined by exposure to the weather, at any rate perfectly useless in its present position and locality. In the present position and locality in the Carolina mines never found its way to the mints, but was used in the arts, and much that did reach the mints was not properly credited on account of the erroneous and careless reports on the part of depositors.

A single calculation will show that this statement is highly probable, according to the report of the Director of the Mining gold bullion was deposited from North and South Carolina as follows:

Table with 2 columns: Location and Amount. Includes North Carolina (\$10,415,285.51), South Carolina (\$1,381,521.06), and Georgia (\$1,000,000.00).

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