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LOUISBURG, N. C. FRIDAY, MAY 16, 1902.

COLLEGE NOTES. Who Was Lawver Falconer ?

President Davis of the College for nishes us the following interesting

A very interesting article appeared n the North Carolina Law Journal few months ago from the pen of the Hon. K. P. Battle which gave a short history of the life of his grand father, the late Kemp Plummer. In this ar ticle mention is made incidentally of "one lawyer Falconer." I had seen that name in print severl times before, but it was always "one lawyer Falconer" and nothing more. In one of his annual reports to the Governor Ex.Superintendent Mebane refers to this man as "a whimsical, but able old bachelor lawyer, Falconer." I quote below an extract from Dr. Battle's ar ticle. Speaking of his grand-father Plummer, he says: "His facetiæ only expressed in rhyme, were quoted the counties of his circuit long after his death. His witticisms were entirely without stings. For example riding one day with a friend, an elderly, grave, sardonic lawyer of Scotch birth, Falconer, by name, whose mount was thick-set pony, known far and wide as "Shandy," Mr. Plummer sang out

Yankee doodle, doodle, doodle, Yankee doodle dandy, Little men ride little nags

And Falconer, he rides Shandy. He had not learned from Rev. Sidney Smith that it takes a surgical operation to get a joke into a Scotchman's head. The irascible Falconer leaped from his pony and challenged the surprised improvisateur to a combat. Mr Plummer gently replied: "Why! Falcoper!" The dark cloud of anger gathered. "Say no more about i Falconer, and they rode on together what I have been able to learn of the a cedar hedge to prevent the bouses character of this man Falconer, I feel from flying the track. These cedars quite sure that his behavior on that oc casion was wholly misunderstood. He them were standing within the memwas not the sort of man to get mad ory of persons now living. At his when made the butt of a joke. He and this is just what Falconer did on that occasion. His action was simply the spontaneous outburst of a keen plete surprise was the climax of Falco-

Dr Battle makes the tollowing statement in reference to his illustrious ancestor : "The estimation of his fairness and high tone as a practitioner by the the Rev. and Hoh. Green Hill, and community of his circuit is best shown by the fact that he was universally honest lawyer." History records the names of two such, Kemp Plummer, "the honest lawyer" and "honest" [oe Davis. There may have been others of the same sort whose names histori-

ans have overlooked. But who was lawyer Falconer? That's the question I set out to discuss. Wishing to know something of the history of this man, I consulted several prominent lawyers of the Louisburg bar, but not one knew anything of him. The first man I approached was lawyer B. Well, Mr. B. said I, can you give me any information about "one lawyer Falconer," who used to practice in the courts of Franklin and adjoining counties? "I cannot," was the laconic reply, "as I do not know which way he went when he left these diggings." A gentleman who happened at that moment to be standing near, remarked, (with a mischievous twinkle in his eye,) "Mr, B. you certainly ought to know that, as all lawyers, when they close out business here, take the same road and go to the same place." Just then Mr. B. remembered that he had urgent business elsewhere and took French leave with the corners of his mouth banging about an get any information from the lawyers I ventured to consult two elderly ladies of my acquaintance, Mrs. S. T. Wilder and Mrs. W. H. Allen. These good ladies are the daughters of the 1863 at the ripe old age of 84, hon I found these ladies well posted in Falsoner's history and they gave me more information in an hour than all the lawyers in Louisburg could give in week, and to them I am indebted for most of the facts stated in the fol lowing brief sketch of Faiconer's lite.

During the first two or three dewere four prominent lawyers who practiced in the courts of Warren, Frank. In and adjacent counties. These were Mr. Charles H. Macon. cades of the nineteenth century there John Hall, Kemp Plummer, John The last clause in Fasconer's will with their work with the with their work with the with their work with the with the with the with the work with the wi The names of Hall and Plummer pc. appoint my friends John Hall, Kemp & F. B. Pie

sought political promotion. TM

Some time in the latter part of the eighteenth century, Alexander Falcoper, a talented | young | haven | came from Virginia and settled in Franklin county, N. C., pine miles north Louisburg on the Warrenton road. He was not a Scotchman as has been stated, and as "a whimsical old backelor," he was a signal failure as will be seen from the following paragraph copied from his will: "And whereas have expended the sum of \$800, on ne education of my son Robert more than I have expended on my other children, I do direct that that som b deducted from the share of my estate berein before bequeatned to him." In his general character. Falconer was not grave, sardonic nor whimsical, bu ust the reverse. He was an Epicurean in faith and practice, and lived in the world just for the pleasure that he could get out of it, expecting noth ing beyond. He was has of wealth acquired partly by inheritance, but mostly by marriage. He was what the preachers would call a man of the world, social, genial, kind hearted, liberal to the poor, a favorite with the rich and popular with all classes, but the religious element in his make up was entirely wanting. Such a man could not but exercise a powerful influence in the community, but more especially over the minds of young men, all of whom looked upon him as a paragon of excellence. This fuflu ence was not always salutary in its effects, as his tastes led him into certain kinds of dissipation. He was emphatically a sporting character and kept race horses, fox dogs and game chick

ens. He constructed a race course on his own premises and enclosed it with house the turf men for miles around would meet on stated occasions, and spend the day in their lavorite sport of horse racing, and the night in other and perhaps, less ignocent amusements. It is said that Falconer's pernicious inmany years after his death. In early life he wooed and won the heart and hand of the rich young widow Freer This lady, whose maiden name was Wynne, was the grand-daughter of the aunt of the late Ino. E. Thomas, who was for many years the standing called the honest lawyer." Well, now candidate of the old Whig party for loss of deep and Constant speaking I had it is really refreshing to read of "an the Legislature, though elected only once. Falconer's mode of life was not once. Falconer's mode of life was not but these bottles of Electric Bitters to calculated to put money in his coffers me all right. It's the best all around day of his marriage than he was on

the day of his death. Late in life he tality from Electric Bitters. Try them. On began to realize his mistake and made ly 50c. Guaranteed by. M. K. & F. R. an honest effort to retrieve his sinking course, sold his blooded horses and the limits of his abilities and the dogs and devoted the remainder of his possibilities of his capacities. life to the practice of his profession law school and Matthew Dickinson. pupils. This Matthew Dickinson was the uncle of David Dudley Field, Cy- Our olkest little girl would call lustily for rus W. Field and others, also the great uncle of Don. M. Dickinson of Michigan, formerly a member of President Cleveland's Cabinet. A few years by what is given to others instead later, Dickinson, then a member of the of by what is ground from them. Louisburg bar, was forced to give up his law practice on account of failing health, and the kind hearted Falconer took him out to his country residence where he was tenderly cared for during a protracted illness which terminated in death in the year 1800. He was buried in Falconer's private cometery inch below the horizontal. Failing to and nine years later (1818) Falconer's body was laid to rest in the place. There they lie in the sar in life-companions in the graveawaiting the great resurrection morn. late Toliver Terrel, who was Falconer's I visited this spot not long since and his estate as executor. Terrel died in marked by a marble slab sent from Connecticut by his nephers, the Pield ored and respected by all. This writer knew him well during his latter unmarked, nor is it certainly known in years. As I had hoped and believed, which one of several his body her botters an sound and well. ored and respected by all. This wri. brothers; but the grave of Falconer is After his death his two sons and two

> down and moved five miles nearer to Louisburg to a point known as "Lo-

their ancestors, and their subsequent

history is unknown. The house in

which he lived and reared his family

passed into other hands and was taken

here, but Falconer and Haywood are last will." He must have had unthe duty of settling up the estate deto serve with one honest farmer is not matter of record and must, therefore

be left to confecture. John Haywood, Jr., was the very able lawyer of the same name, lead when I say that an abler lawyer than John Haywood never appeared at he bar not sat on the bench in blotth Carolina," John Baywood, Jr., inperited much of his father's talent and in his day was one of the leading law. vers in this section of the state. He ived about four miles north of Louis ourg, where he owned a large landed estate and there is a church in that vi. cinuty now that bears the name. Haywood's," from the fact that ionated the land on which it built. His will was probated in 1826 and in it he bequeaths to his shildeen much seal estate in Franklin county. N. C., and in Tennelsee; the latter, no doubt, inherited from his father's es The history of John Haywood r , is not as well known as it should be, and my efforts to collect facts and incidents connected with his life have not been very successful.

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No Loss Of Time

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