

THE ROBESONIAN

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WHOLE NO. 1929

LUMBERTON AS IT NOW IS.

With a Brief Sketch of Its Early Organization and the Origin of Its Name.

A Directory of the Many Industries, Showing the Manufactures, Business Enterprises, Schools, Colleges, Churches, Its Fine Artesian Waters, Lawyers, Doctors, Dentists, Druggists, Etc.

One hundred and seventeen years ago this month, to more exact on May 5, 1787, the plat of Surveyor Wm. Tatam verifying that of Jacob Rhodes, made two months earlier, was adopted as the plan of the town of Lumberton, showing the streets and lots thereof as laid off on the lands of John Willis situate on the high bluff, known as Red Bluff overlooking Lumber river from the east. Meager, indeed, is the information accessible concerning this period of the history of our county seat, no records are extant, and we have been unable as yet to ascertain the date of its incorporation. Tradition, however, has it that Lumberton, earlier known as Red Bluff, was an Indian trading post, where gathered the forerunners of our Croatan people on the river to which they had given the name Lumbe which, in the Indian tongue, means black, because of its dark waters. This name in time became corrupted into Lumber, the cause being the floating of lumber down its stream. Its beginning, therefore, is contemporaneous with that of Fayetteville, Averasboro, Harper's Ferry and other points throughout this section of similar origin.

Lumberton or Lumberton, as it is now called, the county seat of Robeson county, the largest and one of the wealthiest counties of the State, is situated near the centre of the county on the east bank of Lumber river, on the Seaboard Air Line railway, sixty-seven miles west of Wilmington and one hundred and twenty miles east of Charlotte, and is the northern terminus of the Carolina Northern railway.

For political reasons its area is circumscribed by narrow limits, which embrace less than a square mile of territory so that its population is predominantly white, and there are less than twenty colored voters in the town, while its actual population is quite twice as great as shown by the last census returns. Its social, moral and religious tone are elevated. No liquor is sold here, nor are other corrupting vices common, while our population is known as a church-going people. In the matter of public improvements Lumberton is second to none of its size anywhere. It has a complete system of water works and sewerage, which render the naturally sanitary conditions of the town perfect and makes destructive fires, such as have visited us in the past, well nigh impossible. Just completed is an electric light plant modern in its equipment, which furnishes light for the town and for private consumption. Its streets are well laid off, beautifully shaded and are being rapidly improved. But perhaps, that of which Lumbertonians are proudest is the abundant supply of artesian water, furnished by six flowing wells and several other wells of over one hundred feet in depth, which the State chemist has pronounced absolutely pure. This combined with the natural healthfulness of the locality make di-

sease and sickness from local causes almost unknown, and it is a matter of record that the mortality statistics as reported to the government from here some years since showed so small a percentage of deaths that they were returned for correction, but there were no correction to be made.

Mercantile.

Situated as Lumberton is, in the center of one of the finest agricultural sections of the South, it is not remarkable that since its first days it has maintained a steady and substantial growth as a mercantile center, relying in earlier times for its support on the turpentine industry, lumbering and agriculture and in later years almost exclusively on the latter. Now, these mercantile enterprises in the town, including only those which handle general merchandise or groceries, number twenty-six. They are conducted in establishments creditable to larger towns than ours and by men whose business ability makes them the peers of the merchant of any town. The oldest of these firms is that of O. C. Norment & Co., which was established in 1882. The firm was then composed of Messrs E. Godwin, O. C. Norment and T. A. Norment who succeeded E. Godwin & Co. About a year ago Mr. Godwin, who has been actively engaged in business for thirty-five years, sold his interest to the other partners who continued it. Since the death of Mr. T. A. Norment, Mr. O. C. Norment, the senior member, has continued its management. In addition to general merchandise the firm handles buggies, wagons, agricultural machinery and burial supplies.

During the year 1884 Messrs. R. D. Caldwell and W. W. Carlyle formed a copartnership for the purpose of conducting a general merchandise business. Both were young men of business experience, the former having served for a number of years as buyer and bookkeeper for the late Jno. H. Caldwell and the latter as salesman under the late A. C. Melke. They began business with small capital, which coupled with energy industry and sound business judgment formed the basis on which their present immense business was built. They handle almost every class of wares and merchandise sold on this market and their business includes a millinery department, employing the services of three milliners, which was added in 1899.

Mr. J. H. Caldwell, who had for twenty-five years conducted a mercantile business, died in 1893 and was succeeded by his son, Mr. L. H. Caldwell. With plenty of capital, trained from childhood in the mercantile business, he has made the prosperous establishment of his father more prosperous, enlarged it in every line, occupying at present four store rooms filled with all varieties of general merchandise, besides

using several large warehouses for storage purposes. He is the largest dealer in town and contributes more than any other to the tax coffers of the municipal government.

In 1894 Mr. W. J. Prevatt embarked in the mercantile business and since that time has continued to yearly increase in volume and grow in prosperity. He is a large dealer in farm supplies, carrying in addition the usual line of general merchandise.

Mrs. Fannie Peterson is the pioneer milliner of the town. In 1887 she first began the business and continued until a few years since, when Miss Josephine Breece became associated with her. The business is now conducted under the firm name of Mrs. Peterson & Miss Breece. This is the only firm in town handling millinery exclusively.

The above firms constitute the largest as well as what is known as the oldest firms of the town. Besides these are:

S. T. Freeman, groceries, established 1890.

C. B. Redmond, fancy groceries and confectioneries established 1894.

A. Weinstein, clothing and dry goods and gents furnishings, established 1899.

J. P. McNeill, general merchandise, established 1899.

J. H. Wishart, heavy and fancy groceries, established 1900.

Blacker Brothers, clothing and furniture, established 1900.

McAllister Hardware Co., (Inc.), hardware, established, 1900.

The French Grocery Co., (Inc.), wholesale groceries, 1900.

Orump & Floyd, general merchandise, established 1901.

Rozier & Andrews, general merchandise, established 1902.

James Jones, groceries, established 1902.

Co. was incorporated in 1904 with \$35,000 capital stock. Its officers are O. O. Norment, president; S. McIntyre, vice president; K. M. Biggs, secretary and treasurer.

Lumberton Telephone Company was organized in 1898. In addition to the system in town it owns several long distance lines. It is owned by Messrs A. E. White and A. W. McLean.

Lumberton Improvement Company was organized in the fall of 1903 with A. W. McLean as president and S. A. Edmund as secretary and treasurer. The original purpose was to build a hotel suitable to the demands of the town, but this purpose, having been accomplished the sphere of its activities, will be enlarged and other developments will follow.

Manufacturing Industries

The only lumber manufactory of the town is the saw and planing mills owned and operated by Mr. H. D. Williams.

Messrs W. P. and C. M. Barker constitute the firm of Barker & Son. This firm operate a newly installed brick making plant.

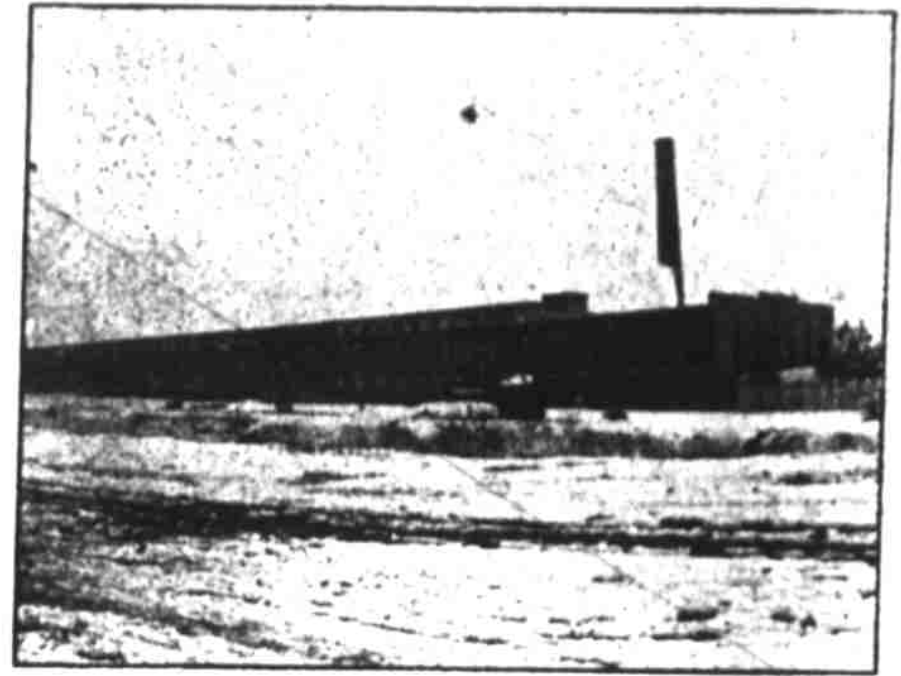
Mr. T. N. Higley is also engaged in the manufacture of brick.

Mr. C. P. Brasington owns and operates a bottling plant. It has only been in operation a few months, but it is developing rapidly. It is under the management of Mr. L. B. Blackburn. Soft drinks only are handled.

Mr. T. W. Hutchinson, proprietor of the Hutchinson Machine Shops, owns the only extensive repair shop in operation here.

Mr. H. C. Freeman, the cabinet maker, is engaged in the manufacture of furniture, mantels, scroll and turned work.

Mr. B. Edwards is a manufacturer of harness and leather goods.



THE LUMBERTON COTTON MILLS.

The firm name is now Allen & Castlebury.

Live Stock Dealers

Fuller Brothers composed of Messrs C. M. and H. B. Fuller established here and in Bennettsville sixteen years ago a horse and mule business which is the largest of its kind, probably in the two States. The management here is under the control of Mr. C. M. Fuller while that in Bennettsville is in the hands of Mr. H. B. Fuller.

Messrs W. I. Linkhaw and Frank Gough compose the firm of W. I. Linkhaw & Company, which was established in '97. They are also engaged in the horse and mule business and carry, in addition in their commodious sales rooms, the largest line of buggies, wagons, harness and driving equipment to be found in the town.

Mr. A. E. White has for a number of years handled horses and mules, and recently has added a line of wagons, buggies and harness. Those doing a livery and feed stable business are Messrs E. D. McNeill, W. W. Carlyle and J. T. Barker.

Other Organizations.

A Building & Loan Association was organized in 1901, of which Dr. R. M. Norment is president and Dr. R. T. Allen, secretary and treasurer.

A Board of Trade and Industry was organized during the fall of 1902. The officers elected were R. D. Caldwell president; Frank Gough, secretary and treasurer. The membership of the Board numbers most of the business men of the town and is a strong factor for the encouragement of desirable enterprises and though young has already been instrumental in securing some progress in this direction.

Besides a number of private boarding houses Lumberton has three hotels. The oldest of these is the Columbia which is under the efficient management of Mr. J. A. Barker. Second in point of age is the Lumberton Hotel, which is run by Mr. W. J. Pate. The newest is the Waverly, a model modern hostelry, supplied with desirable comforts and conveniences. The hospitable proprietor is Mr. W. A. Slocum.

In the matter of secret orders Lumberton is not behind other towns, it has a lodge of Masons, Knights of Pythias, Odd Fellows, Knights of Honor, Junior Order of American Mechanics and Bankers Union.

Two tobacco warehouses for the sale of leaf tobacco are to be enumerated among the industries, which have contributed to the prosperity of our town. The oldest of these the Lumberton Tobacco Warehouse has been in operation six years and is owned by Messrs R. D. Caldwell, L. H. Caldwell and Q. T. Williams. The Farmers Tobacco Warehouse is owned by

Messrs T. F. Reeves and W. M. Worley, of Asheville, and has been operated only during three seasons.

Lumberton has two insurance agencies, one under the management of Mr. Q. T. Williams and the other under the control of Messrs A. E. White and Ira B. Townsend. Both are doing a prosperous and increasing business.

The Lumberton Bar has always ranked high in ability in the courts of the State and the lawyers, who today compose it, furnish no exception to its past reputation. Its membership at present numbers eleven, all of whom are actively engaged in practice. They are Capt. W. S. Norment; Col. N. A. McLean, Messrs A. W. McLean and J. G. McCormick composing the firm of McLean, McLean & McCormick; Hon. Stephen McIntyre and Mr. R. C. Lawrence, the firm of McIntyre & Lawrence; Messrs Wade Wishart and D. P. Shaw; Mr. R. E. Lee; Mr. R. B. Morrison and Mr. E. J. Britt.

Schools and Churches.

A donation made by the late A. C. Melke furnished the nucleus for raising a fund for the establishment of Robeson Institute, Mr. B. Godwin furnished the lot and the present building was erected. Prof. John Duckett was the first superintendent of the school and carried on the work for several years until he was succeeded by the late Prof. M. H. Ackerman, who served in this capacity for two years, when Prof. J. J. Peterson took charge, after which the school came under the management of Prof. P. S. Vann, the present superintendent. So capable has been the present management that an enlargement of facilities was found necessary and a commodious dormitory building has been erected to supply the demand.

Besides Robeson Institute the Misses Rowland have for several years past conducted with signal success a private school, to which the number of pupils admitted to attendance was limited.

There is no public school building in the town, but a lot has been purchased, whereon a modern building will in the near future be erected.

We should overlook a most creditable institution, did we fail to mention Whitin Normal School, a school for the colored race, conducted by Prof. D. P. Allen, a negro of sterling character and worthy ideals, who is by precept and example lifting his people to loftier purposes.

Thompson Institute, on the outskirts of town, is another school, which though younger is accomplishing a good work under the management of Prof. W. H. Knuckles.

As we said before the people of Lumberton are a church-going people.

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ARTESIAN WELL NO. 2.

Townsend Brothers, gent's furnishings and general merchandise, established 1903.

K. M. Biggs, general merchandise, established 1903.

P. C. Blake, general merchandise, established 1903.

G. W. Jones, confectioneries and groceries, established 1903.

A. R. Phillips, groceries, established 1903.

U. M. Edwards, bicycles, established 1903.

J. A. Branch, groceries, established 1903.

R. L. Pollard, ice and groceries, established 1903.

W. O. Thompson, general merchandise, established 1904.

Incorporated Enterprises.

The Bank of Lumberton was incorporated in 1897 with \$20,000, of capital stock paid in. Judge T. A. McNeill was elected president and Mr. J. B. Townsend, cashier. When Judge McNeill was elected to the bench, he resigned as president and was succeeded by Mr. A. W. McLean. The officers at present are A. W. McLean, president; R. D. Caldwell, vice president; C. B. Townsend, cashier; J. P. Stansel, assistant, cashier; A. O. Osborne, teller. From its organization this institution has been most successful, has never lost a dollar on investments, and its stock cannot be purchased.

Lumberton Cotton Mill incorporated in 1900 with a capital stock of \$75,000, which has since been increased to \$175,000. It began business with 5,000 spindles, to which 6,800 have since been added making a total of 11,800 spindles. Its officers are R. D. Caldwell, president; A. W. McLean, vice president; H. B. Jennings, secretary and treasurer; J. W. Kaefer, superintendent.

Lumberton Cotton Oil and Ginning

Mr. H. G. Webster manufactures tin and metal goods, roofing, etc.

Mr. H. C. Boylin handles jewelry and conducts a repair department.

Mr. W. L. Skipper is engaged exclusively in the repair of watches, clocks and jewelry.

Mr. C. L. Hyatt, the only photographer the town affords, has an excellently equipped studio which is creditable alike to himself and the town.

Physicians, Druggists and Dentists.

Lumberton has four practicing physicians and three drug stores. Dr. R. M. Norment, the oldest physician, has been actively engaged in practice here almost continuously since the civil war.

Dr. J. D. McMillan came here in 1876 and began the practice of his profession. In 1878 he opened a drug store in connection with his practice and has since continued that business.

Dr. H. T. Pope & Company began business in 1894. The firm is composed of Dr. H. T. Pope and Mr. I. L. Pope.

Dr. R. G. Rozier, the youngest member of the profession, entered upon the practice of medicine and opened a drug store in 1901. He is also the manufacturer of several proprietary medicines, which he is pushing with increasing success.

In this connection might also properly be mentioned.

Dr. W. O. Edmund, a licensed veterinary surgeon who does an extensive business in horse, hog and cattle remedies of his own discovery and manufacture.

Dr. J. D. Regan began the practice of dentistry here in 1899 and has since his profession continuously since.

Dr. E. T. Allen opened up his rooms in '99 and continued the practice alone until 1904, when he associated with himself Dr. C.



NORTH MAIN STREET FROM THE INTERSECTION OF FOURTH.



SOUTH MAIN STREET FROM THE INTERSECTION OF FOURTH.