

Carolina Watchman.

THURSDAY, MARCH 27, 1890.

This issue of the WATCHMAN is a memorial of its late Editor, whose family are not unkindly of the many kind words said by the press and those who knew him best.

JOHN JOSEPH BRUNER, Editor.

BY REV. J. RUMPLE, D. D.

THE WATCHMAN to-day comes out without the name of J. J. Bruner, who for fifty-one years has shaped its course, as associate editor, editor, and proprietor, and it is due the public that an account of his life and labors should be published. It is impossible to estimate the influence such a man in such a position, and for such a length of time, has exerted upon the thinking and active of his constituency. Of one thing we may be said, the WATCHMAN never gave forth an uncertain sound, but faithfully and fearlessly watched over the interests of the people, and advocated the claims of justice and virtue, in high places and in low. The town and country have been benefited, and not injured by his life, for it was his constant aim to do good.

JOHN JOSEPH BRUNER was born in Rowan county, N. C., on the Yadkin river, about seven miles from Salisbury, on the 12th of March, 1817. He was the son of Henry Bruner and Edith, his wife, who was the youngest daughter of Col. West Harris, of Montgomery county, N. C. Col. Harris married Edith Ledbetter, of Anson county.

When the subject of this sketch was a little over two years old, his father died, and his mother returned with her children to her father's house in Montgomery.

In the year 1825 he came to Salisbury, under the care of the Hon. Charles Fisher, father of the late Col. Chas. F. Fisher, who fell at the battle of Bull Run. Mr. Bruner's first year in Salisbury was spent in attending the school taught by Henry Allemand. This was about all the schooling of a regular style that he ever received, except a few months after he had grown up. The remainder of his education was of a practical kind, and was received at the case and press of a printing office.

At the age of nine years he entered the printing office of the *Western Carolinian*, then under the editorial control of the Hon. Philo White, late of Whitestown, N. Y. The *Carolinian* passed into the hands of the Hon. Burton Craige in 1830, and then into the hands of the Maj. Jno. Beard, late of Florida. Mr. Bruner continuing in the office until 1830. In 1830 the late M. C. Pendleton, of Salisbury, and Mr. Bruner, purchased the WATCHMAN and edited it in partnership for about three years. The WATCHMAN had been started in the year 1832, by the late Hamilton C. Jones, Esq., father of Col. H. C. Jones, of Charlotte. The WATCHMAN was a Whig and anti-nullification paper, and was intended to support Gen. Andrew Jackson in his anti-nullification policy.

In 1842, Mr. Bruner retired from the WATCHMAN, and travelled for a while in the Southwest, spending some time in a printing office in Mobile, Ala. Returning home, he was united in marriage to Miss Mary Anne Kincaid, a daughter of Thos. Kincaid, Esq. The mother of Mrs. Bruner was Clarissa Harlowe, daughter of Col. James Brandon, who married Esther Horah, an aunt of the late Wm. H. Horah, so long known as a leading bank officer in Salisbury. Col. James Brandon was the son of Wm. Brandon, who settled in Thytira as early as 1752, and whose wife was a Miss Cathey of that region. Having married, Mr. Bruner prepared for his life work by repurchasing the WATCHMAN in partnership with the late Samuel W. James, in 1844. After six years this partnership was dissolved, and Mr. Bruner became the sole proprietor and editor of the WATCHMAN, which he continued to publish until the office was captured by the Federal soldiers in the spring of 1865. After a few months, however, Mr. Bruner was permitted to re-occupy his dismantled office and resume the publication of the WATCHMAN. Three years later Lewis Hanes, Esq., of Lexington, purchased an interest in the paper, and called it the *Watchman and Old North State*. Retiring for a time from the paper, Mr. Bruner entered private life for a couple of years. But his mission was to conduct a paper, and so in 1871 he repurchased the paper, and the WATCHMAN has made its regular appearance weekly until this date. The WATCHMAN to-day is the oldest newspaper in the State, and Mr. Bruner was the oldest editor in the State. No one now living in Salisbury, and few elsewhere in the State have had such an extensive personal acquaintance and knowledge of men and things in the early years of this century. Names that have almost

ceased to be spoken on our streets were familiar to him. He knew such men as Hon. Chas. Fisher, Col. Chas. F. Fisher, Rowland Jones, Esq., Dr. Pleasant Henderson, Hamilton C. Jones, Esq., Hon. Burton Craige, the Browns, Longs, Cowans, Beards, Lockes, Hendersons, and hosts of others of a former generation. He sat under the preaching of every pastor of the Presbyterian church since its organization—Dr. Freeman, Mr. Rankin, Mr. Espy, Dr. Sparrow, Mr. Frontis (by whom he was married), Mr. Baker, and the present pastor. He was a scholar in the Sunday school when Thos. L. Cowan was superintendent, and was afterwards a teacher and superintendent himself. Thrown among strangers, while yet a boy, he knew little of the sweet influence of home, and his associates were the boys of the street among whom he lived, and struggled for himself. And yet his moral training was not entirely neglected. Col. Philo White, his early protector, was a high-toned, honorable, Christian man, and he so impressed himself upon his youthful ward, that he chose him for a model, emulated his example, and held his memory in cherished veneration to the end of his life. Through Col. White's influence, who was then a Presbyterian, Mr. Bruner was introduced into the Presbyterian Sabbath School, and later on, at the age of seventeen he was received into the communion of the Presbyterian church of Salisbury. In 1840 he was ordained a ruling elder in that church, and continued to serve in that capacity through the remainder of his life. He was a sincere, earnest, and consistent Christian, and faithful in the discharge of all private and public duties of the Christian profession. The family altar was established in his household, and he brought up his children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. His marriage was abundantly blessed by a faithful, diligent and affectionate wife, who bore him twelve children, seven of whom sleep at the feet of their father in Oak Grove cemetery, in the heart of Salisbury, while the five surviving ones with a number of grandchildren were permitted to be present when their father was laid to rest.

Mr. Bruner died, after a lingering illness, on Sabbath morning, March 23rd, 1890, just as religious services were opening in the various churches of the town. When the pastor of his church, before beginning the sermon, announced the death of the venerable and beloved ruling elder, there was the profound hush of a sacred solemnity in the church, and every countenance bore signs of emotion. On the next day, Monday the 24th, funeral services were held in the Presbyterian church. Dr. Rumble, the pastor officiating, attended by a large congregation of admirers of the good man, departed, and sympathizing with the venerable widow, bowed down with the weight of years of sorrows. His end was peace. As he gently passed away—so gently that it was difficult to tell when life ended and immortality began, a brother elder by his bedside repeated the lines,

How blest the righteous when he dies!
When sinks a weary soul to rest;
How mildly beam the closing eyes,
How gently heaves the expiring breast!

In many things Mr. Bruner was an example worthy of imitation. First, he was an industrious man. Of his seventy-three years, but a small fraction was spent in recreation or amusement, and none in idleness. He was a skilled typographer, and could put his hand to anything in the office, from the pen of the editor, to the lever of the Washington press, or the paste brush of the mailing clerk. For a number of years, however, he had devoted himself largely to the nicer and more tasteful department of work, in which he was an adept. There was nothing in ordinary printing which he could not do, from a common "dog-eared" to a railroad bond, with coupons attached. In these various lines he found constant employment, or if there was a leisure hour, he spent it in his garden and vineyard, where he cultivated the choicest varieties of table grapes. Perhaps, in the last quarter of a century he has spent half a dozen afternoons with his gun in the woods, in the pleasures of hunting. But his choicest recreations were in attendance upon the meetings of Concord Presbytery and of the Synod of North Carolina, where, besides the regular proceedings, there were hosts of old friends and new to greet him with tender affection.

He was emphatically a self-made man. His learning he acquired by his own unaided efforts, his property he earned by the sweat of his face, and his reputation he achieved by prudence, wisdom, and faithfulness, in all the duties of life. By his paper he helped multitudes of men to honorable and lucrative office, but he never helped himself. He was not an aspirant for public office—he was an editor and could not leave his post.

He was an economical and unassuming man, always living within his income. If by chance he incurred a debt, he always paid it. He did not hold that the world owed him a living except as he earned it. Others might fail to pay for the WATCHMAN, or for printing, but he never failed. He never bought clothing, furniture, or luxuries, without the prospect of paying for them at the stipulated time. He was not only honest in financial matters, but he was the soul of candor and honesty in the expression of his opinions. He did not needlessly parade his opinions of men and things, but when he did express a judgment, it was an honest one. It is probable that he never consciously flattered a man in his life. His judgment may have been at fault, or he may have been imposed on by the false hood of others, but if he said an article was good, or a man competent, it was because he thought so.

He was a man of great moral courage, and did not fear to face and oppose able and distinguished men, if he thought they were wrong. In his boyhood he did not fear to withstand the little tyrants or champions of the streets, and in his manhood he did not fear to oppose distinguished leaders in church and state. Though never neutral in politics, morals or religion, but having strong party affinities, he would still upon occasion throw off the trammels of party, and speak forth his independent convictions. And yet he was humble, unpretending, and simple in his demeanor. He did not obtrude himself upon public notice, and was willing to take the lowest seat, unless there was a call for his appearance. He cared more to satisfy his own conscience and to please God, than to have honor of men.

The greater portion of his compositions were editorials upon political or practical themes of a public nature. These were plain, pointed and intelligible. He did not pretend to the graces of rhetoric, though from constant reading his taste had been developed in the line of a transparent, simple style. He had studied grammar, once upon a time, as taught in the schools, but his grammatical technicalities had all escaped from his memory. He could distinguish bombast and fustian from pure English at a glance.

But aside from his editorials, Mr. Bruner sometimes in leisure moments indulged in writing graceful little letters or essays, which he did not publish, but put into his drawer, there to lie for years. The following essay is evidently the production of one of these leisure hours. It was not intended for publication, nor was it re-written or corrected. It is given here to show, not so much his skill in composition, but the natural trend of his thoughts in a bit of moralizing. No one knows when it was written.

It is as natural for old people to look backward over the road they have traveled in the days of their vigor, as it is for young people to look forward to a world opening up, and inviting them to press forward and possess it. Of the two, looking back—the reviewing the life that is gone—considering the quality of its various actions, and weighing them by the rules of Divine judgment—is wiser than looking forward to joys and pleasures which beckon the young to press forward and gain them. At all events, reviewing the past is the natural inclination of those who have but little or no hope in the future; and such is the condition of those whose life-sun is casting long shadows towards the east. Their hopes of a blessed immortality, and their inability longer to enjoy the happiness of this life, compensate for the loss of hope of earth, and with a knowledge of God and the immortality of the soul, approaching dissolution would fill them with remorse and despair. Standing on the brink of time, waiting for the signal to depart from the scenes which have long engaged them here, it were strange indeed, if one glanced backward were not given the journey now ending. The dear ones with whom they started—where are they? The dear ones who have kept us company and shared our lot of weal or woe—where are they? Thought moves with electric speed, especially in an hour like this, and takes in its scope thousands of subjects which have left their impress on the heart. If the reviewer is conscious of sin, as he should be, let him cry to God for mercy and pardon. It is time his house was set in order—his accounts made up and the books closed. All is to be left behind—all that we have done, or said, or omitted to do or say. All the labor of our hands or head. All the accumulations of wealth—all the friends and beloved of earth—all are to be left on this side the dark river, and then we shall go to rest under trees of Paradise beyond. We must go as we came—naked and alone. With such reflections on the past, it will be profitable for those who lean on the arm of Jesus to cherish them and give the freest indulgence.

A very practical man, dealing with practical subjects, and pressed with the editor's incubus—the cry for "copy," not many of the fraternity are able to distinguish themselves as poets. Bruner was both an editor and a poet, but it is not certain whether his poetry was put to the editorial tripod, or the tripod to poetry. It is certain however that his fame will rest with posterity more upon "Thanatopsis," than upon the finest editorial he ever wrote. Mr. Bruner also, amid the labors of the office, found occasional times to "drop into verse." But it will not be claimed that he shines more brightly in this role than he does in the plain

editorial. The pieces subjoined were evidently jotted down at a sitting, and have not had the advantage of critical filing and resetting. And yet they indicate the possession of an imagination, which, had it been cultivated, might have led on to something excellent in the line of poetry. The following scrap, defective in numbers and rhyme, will give us a specimen.

LOVE—WHAT IT DOES.

It garners the words of those who in youth into our ears poured sympathy's balm. It cherishes every sweet action of truth. That won us to love and drew us from harm. It brings up afresh the visage and form. The smile of delight—the look of alarm: It revises to the eye the scenes that were born of affection, interest, and integrity's calm. It softens the heart, and subdues the will. And leaves willing captives virtue to choose. It strengthens and fires the heart's menial still. For deeds of renown or the pen of the Muse.

Another loose and crumpled leaf, all yellow with the tints of time, furnishes some lines that

"Run along in such beautiful metre
That I'm sure no poetry 'er could be sweeter."

MEMORIES—WHAT THEY ARE LIKE.

Like the dim trace of the meteor's glare;
Like fragrance of lilacs so sweet and so fair;
Like the rose that fades when the day is done;
Like the calm of the field when the warriors are gone;
Like the footfalls of one to our hearts most dear,
As departing he leaves us in doubt and in fear;
Like the eagle in his heavenward flight,
Or the blush of the morn when scented with
The hymns of the birds they are wont then to sing.
Like a soft beaming star in the heavens blue,
As it seems to look down in pity on you;
Like the zephyrs of eve in gentleness blowing,
Or a stream smoothly glide when naught hinders
flowing.
O, memories precious! O, memories dear!
Dim lines of the gone! how delightful ye are!
The gold of the mine, or the pearls of the sea
Were vain as an offering to buy them from me.

Once more, another yellow and frayed leaf contains an unnamed poem, which has evidently received more care and attention, and may be styled

SONG OF THE VOYAGE OF LIFE.

We are here to-day, but who can tell
Where to-morrow we may be!
The river time with ceaseless swell
Flows on and to the sea we flee.
On its current, broad and deep,
Like leaves we're floating down;
Speeding away—awake, asleep—
To thine great ocean bound we run.
'Tis hailing time with you and me
As downward we are borne;
But not so ever shall it be—
We soon shall go alone.
The leaves which on the river fall
Droop not along unwept;
But tell of love and life and thrall,
Float onward unconquered.
Then while I may I greet you, friend,
With words of true affection;
God bless you, dear and true, to lend
His arm of strong protection.
And as the current sweeps along,
Each follow onward driving,
We'll cheer our hearts with word and song,
Our hope of heaven surviving.
Assured of bliss with Christ above,
Where life's prepared a place,
We'll carry thence His lesson, love,
Exulting in His grace.
The best employ of those who gain
From every ill secure repose,
Will not forbid our smiles again,
But give them heavenly rest.
Oh! there we'll join our loved ones dear,
From every ill secure repose,
No griefs, no sighs, no sorrows there,
While God and heaven endure.

This sketch of the life and labors of our departed brother may fitly be closed with the following, written last year at the beginning of the present volume of the WATCHMAN, by himself:

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CAROLINA WATCHMAN.

The first copy of the CAROLINA WATCHMAN was issued on July 25th, 1832, by the late Hamilton C. Jones, Esq., its editor and proprietor. The design of its establishment was to combat the nullification movement of that time, started in South Carolina under the inspiration of John C. Calhoun and other of the distinguished statesmen of the Commonwealth. The late Hon. Burton Craige was then editor of the *Western Carolinian*, published in this place, and was a zealous advocate of the views of Mr. Calhoun; and his vigorous editorials were producing a rousing influence in Western North Carolina, which alarmed the Unionists and induced active opposition on their part to the spread of the violent remedy proposed by the South Carolina movement, and the establishment of the WATCHMAN was the result. Mr. Jones continued to publish the paper for several years after the settlement of the exciting question which gave birth, ending his connection with it on the 25th of July, 1839, by a sale and transfer of the printing office, subscription list and good will to Mace C. Pendleton and J. J. Bruner.

Under the firm name of Pendleton & Bruner the paper was continued for three years, at the end of which time the junior partner withdrew, for the purpose of collecting a considerable amount due the firm and paying off accumulated debts. This was accomplished in the course of eighteen months, during which time the paper was continued under the management of the late Mr. Pendleton as editor and proprietor. And finding the business more difficult than he could well bear, he sold out to J. J. Bruner and the late Samuel W. James, in January 1844.

Under the firm name of Bruner & James the WATCHMAN had a successful run of six years, to July 28, 1850. Mr. James then sold his interest to the present proprietor and drew out, since which time there has been no change in the ownership of the office.

Stoneman's raiders had possession of the office while here on the 12th and 13th April, 1865, and after printing an army news sheet, turned the office upside down, wrecked the principal press and destroyed all they well could. Upon the arrival of the Federal army after the surrender, the commander took possession of it, detailed printers from the army to gather up type and held possession until about the 4th of July. When at last they turned over the shattered establishment to the owner, he commenced the work of repairing it, which occupied him to January 8, 1866, at which time the publication of the WATCHMAN was

resumed. But it had only a brief run of eight weeks, when fire broke out in C. F. Baker's tin shop (Feb. 20th) and extending to other buildings near, finally reached the WATCHMAN office and destroyed about half of the stock, and reduced the paper to a half sheet. In this form it was published for twenty-three weeks, until a new press and material could be obtained to issue a full sheet.

On the 10th of January, 1868, the WATCHMAN (as an experiment thought advisable at the time) was consolidated with the "Old North State," and run under the name of "Watchman and Old North State." [The "Old North State" was a weekly paper started here in 1863, by the late Hon. Lewis Hanes.] This arrangement continued only one year, when by an agreement with Mr. Hanes in respect to the business of the office, the WATCHMAN retired, leaving the entire field to Mr. Hanes, who, in January 1869, changed the name and re-established the "Old North State." Mr. Hanes continued to publish his paper in the WATCHMAN office until the 15th Sept. 1871, (one year and nine months) and then sold out his interest, J. J. Bruner becoming the purchaser, who immediately re-established his old paper, the WATCHMAN, and has continued it without a break to the present day.

Before the war the WATCHMAN was a Whig paper, and remained so until Lincoln's proclamation came out, calling on the State for troops to coerce the seceding States. It was then devoted to the Confederate cause and zealously supported it during the war. After the war it most naturally took sides with the Conservative party, which embraced both Whigs and old Democrats, and which, after a while, dropped the name "Conservative" and adopted "Democratic" as being more expressive of the political character of those ranging under it. Nearly all the white people of the South, without regard to old party names before the war, united in forming the Democratic party after the war, and this paper had no other home to go to.

The paper has been self-sustaining. It has had no other reliance than the patronage of the public, and it has been constantly devoted to what its editor believed to be the best interest of the people. It has doubtless erred at time in judgment. Certainly it has offended individuals and parties, and had to sustain loss by it. But these were never of disturbing importance, but passed as a trifling ripple on the current of its onward way. It has had not less than fifty competitors since its commencement, and some of them very ably conducted—a few deliberately designed to supplant it. Its proprietor is profoundly sensible of the favor by which it has been sustained under every trial, and feels an increasing weight of obligation to make the paper acceptable to those who have stood by it through all the changes and vicissitudes of the past.

A TRIBUTE FROM HON. JOHN S. HENDERSON.

The memory of one so dear to this community as John Joseph Bruner, who has so recently departed this life, must ever shine out as one of the purest, sweetest, best elements of the past. His character was singularly beautiful and upright. His life was an unwritten sermon, inestimably precious to those of us who will heed the lessons which it teaches, and to whom grace may be given to follow his good example. On the day of the funeral I heard a saintly and venerable Christian minister say that he knew of no better subject for a eulogy than the life and character of such a man. Now that he is gone, he will be appreciated at his true worth, as one of this world's noblest men. I knew Mr. Bruner all my life, and I always admired and revered him. Sometimes I disagreed with him in opinion, but in doing so I always felt that possibly I might be wrong, knowing as I did that while he was slow in coming to a conclusion, when once his opinion was formed, he adhered to it with an undeviating and inflexible fixedness of purpose. He was a just man in all his dealings and conscientious and truthful always. In politics, he was always true to his convictions and to his party principles—but he was anything but a time-server. He had a perfect horror of duplicity. As an instance of this, I remember once, when I was in the Legislature, a petition had been forwarded to the Governor requesting the appointment of a certain man to an important public position. Mr. Bruner was imported to sign the petition, and did so reluctantly, but being convinced that he had made a mistake and that the man was unworthy, he would not be satisfied until he had cleared his skirts of all responsibility in the matter. He notified the friends of the candidate that he wished to withdraw his signature from the petition. The reply was that it was too late, the petition had been sent to the Governor. He then wrote to me to call upon the Governor and ask him to erase his name from the list of petitioners. I complied with the request, and I now remember that the Governor was very courteous and made the erasure instantly, with his own hand. Politically, Mr. Bruner never faltered in his allegiance to those principles which he believed every true southern man should adhere to. Up to the very last he was unflinching and unwavering in

his love for the South and in his adherence to the very best ideas and traditions of the land of his nativity. At no time during his life did he ever "crook the pregnant hinges of the knee" that thrift might follow fawning." In the very best sense of the word, he was a Southern gentleman of the old school. The old South and the new was all one to him—the same old land, the same old people, the same old traditions, the land of Washington, of Jefferson, of Calhoun and Jackson, of Pettigrew and Fisher, of Graham and Craige, of Stonewall Jackson, of Robert E. Lee and Jefferson Davis.

An old line Whig before the war, reared and educated in that political school, since the war he adhered with unwavering fidelity to the Democratic party which he believed was the only hope and refuge of the true friends of liberty anywhere in America. His paper, the WATCHMAN, upheld the true principles of Democracy with ability and courage and nothing disappointed Mr. Bruner more than to see the party or any party leader vary a hairs breadth, whatever the pretext or alleged expediency, from the straightforward, time-honored, historic traditions of Jeffersonian Democracy. His death is a personal loss to very many, whom he has left behind him, outside of the mourning ones of his own family and household. In life no motto would have suited him better than this: "Cursed is he that taketh man for his defense and in his heart goeth for the Lord"—In the language of another we may well believe, that such a "spirit like that of Jonathan, that 'swearth to his own hurt and changeth not,' will rest upon God's holy hill when earth's crowns and earth's ambitions have passed away."

IN MEMORIAM.

Reader pens than mine will do loving tribute to the stainless character and blameless life of J. J. Bruner.

Others will tell of his early struggles with fortune, his indomitable will, his tenacity of purpose, his faithfulness as a friend, his studiousness as an opponent, his connection with politics and contemporaneous history.

I bring a feeble tribute to his memory, as I knew him for many years.

The first newspaper I ever read was the WATCHMAN.

More than a third of a century ago, it was a welcome weekly visitor to my father's fireside, as in later years it has always been to mine.

During all these years the strong individuality of its editor has always been impressed upon its columns.

For so long the record of our progress, the chronicle of our joys and sorrows, no issue of it ever went out which was not faultless in moral tone, or which could not be safely placed in the hands of the youngest and most guileless.

Independent in forming his opinions, Mr. Bruner was frank and fearless in their expression, and his positions once taken, were modestly, but firmly, and sometimes almost obstinately maintained. No man ever doubted, or had cause to doubt, his absolute integrity of life and purpose, and his physical courage was well proven doubtless. If the WATCHMAN ever unwittingly did any man injustice, he was always ready to avow the responsibility, and when convinced of the error, the *amende-honorable* always came readily and gracefully.

Mr. Bruner was eminently conservative. He was old-fashioned enough to believe that the great high-road of human welfare lay along the old high-way of steadfast well-doing, and the wise admonition of Solomon, "whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might," found in all his life a practical application.

Blameless and exemplary in all the relations of life, a Christian gentleman, he met all the requirements of the highest citizenship, and what higher eulogy can any hope to merit?

The great work laid upon his three score years is done, and well done. If we drop our tears we mourn no blighted hope or broken plan. With him whose life stands roundly and approved in the full growth and stature of a man.

THEO. F. KLUTZ.

PRESS NOTICES.

Raleigh News-Observer.

We regret to chronicle the death of Mr. J. J. Bruner, the editor of the WATCHMAN, who, born in 1817, passed away at his residence in Salisbury on Sunday last, at the ripe age of seventy-three.

Mr. Bruner entered the printing office of Mr. Philo White, who then published the *Western Carolinian*, as an apprentice in 1826, and from that date, with some slight intermissions, he continued in the newspaper business up to his death. When sixteen years old he became interested in the WATCHMAN, and his name has been associated with that paper ever since. In those early days but few papers were printed in the State, and only two or three were published west of Raleigh. Mr. Bruner's paper had an extensive field and a great influence, for he was a man of sincerity and truth, and possessed the confidence and esteem of all who knew him. He lived to see half a hundred papers spring up in the territory once occupied almost solely by his own journal, such have been the mighty changes in the progress of the western part of the State since he entered life. May he rest well after his labors.

Davidson Dispatch.

We regret to chronicle the death of our venerable brother editor, Mr. J. J. Bruner, which occurred at his home in Salisbury last Sunday morning. He had been ill for some time. He had been publisher of the WATCHMAN for 53 years, and was 73 years of age. He was a good and faithful editor and citizen.

On last Sabbath morning at 11 o'clock Mr. J. J. Bruner, the able and greatly esteemed editor of the *Salisbury Watchman*, died at his residence in this city.

A simple announcement like the above would be sufficient to carry sincere sorrow to the hearts of thousands of good people who know and loved this venerable, honest and upright man, but his life has been so fraught with good deeds and his character built upon such everlasting corner stones of integrity and uprightness as to deserve more than a passing notice, yes, more than a dozen well filled columns, from the feeble pen of this writer. For more than half a century Mr. Bruner has been at the head of our esteemed neighbor, the *Watchman*, and through its columns and in the other walks of a well spent life he has impressed his high attributes of character upon the good people, not only in this town and section, but throughout the State. A fluent, able and conservative writer, with but one hope or purpose—to serve his State and people faithfully and honestly—he has steered his journal from year to year, from decade to decade, from the morning of one century almost to the morning of another, until he had made of himself and his paper honored landmarks of this age and section. He was firm in his convictions, a bold and fearless advocate of the rights of the people, but at all times characterized by a degree of liberality and conservatism that won for him respect and friendship even from those who might differ with him in matters of church or State. He has recorded truthfully and without envy or prejudice the birth and downfall of political parties. He has—inspired by a united effort to Americanize and weld together every section of this great union—grown eloquent in praise of wise and sagacious leaders, and then he has blotted with a tear the paper on which he wrote of sectional strife and discord. He has chronicled with sober earnestness the birth of a new republic, and like the other loyal sons of the South, raised his arm and pen in its defence. He has watched with unforgotten interest its short and stormy career, and then wrote dispassionately of the furling of its blood-stained banner. He has ever been found fighting for what he believed to be the best interest of his people, and advocating such men and measures as seemed to him just and right. An old line Whig before the war, he aspired not to political preferment or position, but only to an honored station in the ranks of a loyal and beneficent citizenship. Joining in with the rank and file of the white men of the conquered South he was content to lend all his talent and energy in aiding them in the upbuilding of an improvised section.

Mr. Bruner was a native of Rowan county and at his death he was seventy-three years and eleven days old. Beginning life as a poor boy he forged his way into the front ranks of North Carolina journalists, and while he seemed never to care for riches a competency came to him year in and year out, the natural reward of diligent action and honest effort. He had been a resident of Salisbury for more than half a century and was very greatly esteemed by all our people. A friend to all classes, to the black as well as to the white, his death is mourned by all, and his memory will be cherished by all. He was a consistent member of the Presbyterian church, and as the bell that had so often called him to his pew in the sanctuary was tolling for services on Sunday morning the soul of this venerable Christian went to a greater and grander union of saints. An aged widow, two sons, three daughters and several grandchildren are left to mourn the loss of a loving husband, father and grandfather. With them the *HERALD* joins in its sincerest sympathy.

Funeral services were held in the Presbyterian church at four o'clock Monday afternoon, and were conducted by Rev. Dr. Rumble, who had been Mr. Bruner's pastor and friend for more than thirty years. The remains were buried in the English cemetery.

Goldsboro Headlight.

Mr. John J. Bruner, the editor of the *Salisbury Watchman* died at his home in Salisbury Sunday morning, March 23rd, 1890, at the age of seventy-three years. He was born in Rowan county, N. C., in 1817, and was therefore seventy-three years old. A good man has passed to his reward. May his ashes rest in peace!