The Murfreesboro Enquirer.

"UPWARD AND ONWARD."

THURSDAY - FEBRUARY 8 1877

The Grand Duke Alexis is twenty-seven years old.

Martin F. Tupper the poet read in Petersburg on Tuesday night.

Grand Duke Alexis has been duck hunting on the Currituck Sound during the past week.

Colonel H. T. Douglas, has resigned the Presidency of the Petersburg and Weldon Railroad.

Hon. Jesse J. Yeates, will please accept our thanks for the speech of Hon. J. Y. Young, of Ky.

"Pleasant Hours" are again at hand, and are extremely interesting as are all Frank Leslie's publications.

Hon. S. W. Watts having resigned the office of Judge of the Sixth Judicial District, which took effect on the first day of February, Gov. Vance has appointed General William R. Cox, of Raleigh to fill the vacancy. He was formerly Solicitor of this district, which position he filled with credit and will give satisfaction to the people of his district.

As the ENQUIRER shall greet its readers again, the great and important question as to the presidency will probably be decided. The House, Senate and the committees are all at work to bring about the final result. The counting of the votes began on Thursday last, an good progress was made until the state of Florida was reached. Issue was made upon the vote of this State the decision which will virtually decides the great question, as to whether Mr. Hayes or Mr. Tilden is to the next president of the nation. We, with the people, await the decision.

The resignation of J. C. L. Harriss, Esq., of the Sixth district has been handed to Gov. Vance. We trust it will be accepted and further investigation ended; for while Mr. Harriss was probably over-blessed with party zeal, we believe him sufficient gentleman to merit the friendship of his many constituents.

The Raleigh *News*, justly says of him: "He is well-disposed, very amiable in temperament, and we have been informed has no enemy among the lawyers of this district. We can say for him what can be said of few Republican officeholders in this or any other State, that he has never prostituted his office to advance his political fortune or that of his party.

HISTORICAL SKETCHES OF HERTFORD COUNTY.

BY J. W. MOORE.

Chapter VII.

Gov. Dobbs died at his plantation, on Town creek, in Brunswick county, on the 29th of March 1765. He was a man of culture, and had been a member of the Irish parliament. Like the majority of his countrymen, he was mercurial temperament, and during the eleven years of his administration he had many contentions with the colonial House of Burgesses. He was succeeded by William Tryon, whose name is one of bad eminence in our annals. The second King Charles said of William Berkely, that he had shed more blood in Virginia, after the suppression of Bacon's rebellion, than he had in Great Britain, for the murder of his royal father. Old Berkeley was no more cruel or impracitable than was Gov. Tryon. The whole trouble of the Regulators grew out of a shameful neglect or guilty connivance on his part. The Frohocks and Fannings of that period, would not for a moment have ventured upon their extortions, had Gabriel Johnston still administered affairs. Herman Husbands was no more obstinate or rebellious than Samuel Adams. The only difference between the two, was that which has ever existed between successful and unsuccessful revolutionists. Hertford and the eastern counties, did not participate in the excitement and disorders growing out of that unhappy and bloody affair. But our people were far from being content. Eastern men marched with the governor and shed the blood of their countryman at Alamance, but the smouldering fires of deep resentment agitated their bosoms. They knew as well as we do, that the Regulators had suffered great and grievous wrongs, at the hands of public officers. That these extortioners should have been prosecuted and punished, is the solemn verdict of history. That the Regulators in their own acts, were violent and misdirected, is equally apparent. They waited not for the whirligig of time in its revenges, but in madness and folly, threw to the winds an opportunity, which under cooler management might have brought their leaders enduring fame.

In 1768 an act was passed by the General Assembly at New Berne which established the town of Winton upon the lands of Benjamin Wynns, on the Chowan river, William Murfree, John Baker, Mathias Brickell, Joseph Dickerson and Benjamin Wynns, were appointed directors. Under their suggestions, Godwin Cotton, of Mulberry Grove, then surveyor of Hertford county, laid off and plotted the village. It is beyond question it was named in honor of the Wynns family. They had been long seated in our limits, and prominent for wealth and influence. As early as 1723 George Wynns, as has already appeared, was a citizen of that portion of Bertie precinct, afterwards erected into the county of Hertford. Col. Ben. Wynns was one of four brothers, all of whom bore their full share of the honors, then within the gift of our people. His brother William, was a member of the provincial House of Burgesses, the year Winton, was ordered to be laid out upon his lands. In 1776 the Congress at Halifax made him the colonel of a regiment. With his command he marched to Great Bridge and Norfolk where he assisted in the expulsion of Lord Dunmore. He married a lady whose maiden name was Dean, whose family were residents of the West Indies.

For several generations, the Wynns family were much given to sea-faring life; and as late as the emancipation of the slaves by Great Britain, some of them generally resided at Bermuda and Turks Islands, while others commanded vessels that sailed between Hertford county and those places. Col. Wynns left four sons. The eldest, Capt. Ben. Wynns, was long a sailor and resided in Murfreesboro, until his removal to Florida, where he died. His second son Thomas Wynns never lived in Hertford after manhood. William B. Wynns was wealthy and influential and was for years the sheriff of Hertford county. He left two sons, the eldest Thomas P. Wynns and his brother, James M. Wynns, are at present, still residents of the county. James Dean Wynns, the youngest of Col. Benjamin Wynns' sons, was a member of the House of Commons from Hertford in 1821.

Maritime life was in the olden time, a calling of much repute among the people of Hertford. General who engaged in it became men of wealth and importance in the community. Capt. Arthur Cotton, of St. John's was the pioneer in this honorable and lucrative business. In his day Spanish hostility and exclusiveness shut the West Indian ports to the colonial trade. It is more than probable that some of the Wynns family, even at that early day were engaged in the same occupation. Captain Lewis Meredith, who lived at the place where Murfreesboro was afterwards built, was for many years the master of vessels that brought him much wealth and consideration. Captain James Anderson was another of these successful adventurers. He lived near St. John's, and was the progenitor of the family still resident in Winton. The last of these ancient mariners, who attained much success, was Capt. Daniel, of Pitch Landing. These men were all founders of prominent houses in our midst, but alas, times change and we are changed with them. With the progress of events, our direct trade with foreign ports fall into the hands of Yankee skippers, and our merchants after the opening of the Dismal Swamp canal, transferred their trade to the Seaboard cities.

It does not appear from the statutes, at what precise time Winton became the shire town of our county. Hertford was erected nine years before the town was laid out. It may be, however, that the court house was at Winton previous to the incorporation of the place in 1768. No judge of the superior court ever presided in Hertford county until the established of the supreme court in 1810. There were but five superior courts held in the State. Twice a year, the three judges attended by all the sheriffs of each district, met in Edenton, Halifax, Wilmington, Hillsboro and Salisbury, for trial of graver causes. It was the duty of three sheriffs to be in constant attendance on the sessions of the court. They were further required to escort their honors, the judges, with drawn swords to and from the court house. The members of the court, both bench and bar, always appeared in full-bottomed wigs, and black silk gowns. What a grave and mighty thing, an ancient supreme court must have appeared, to the awe-stricken rustics who witnessed its proceedings. Alas! all their pomp and circumstance have been long hidden in the the dust and oblivion of relentless years. The noisy lawyers at last grew silent, and nought is left but their worm-eaten parchments and the echo of their names.

Chapter VIII.

As the ominous days preceeding the revolution rolled slowly away, the shadow of the coming storm was more and more clearly projected across the political heavens. Good men in both hemispheres deplored the increasing evidences, that the time was near at hand, that should witness the sundering of the municipial ties, which had so long bound the American colonies to the mother country. Lord North, though never a tender-hearted man, was far from being a cruel one; King George the third in his private morals was above reproach: and yet between these two, in their timid assertion of perogative, the rupture became inevitable. In all truth with a century behind us in which the passions of that era have had time to cool, there was no solution of the problem.

The great European wars in the time of William the third, had laid the foundations of the English national debt. The ambition of Louis the XIV not only threatened British ascendancy in America, but in Europe became as terrible as that of Spain, in the time of Philip II. The wars of the three first Georges were mainly undertaken to destroy the naval and colonial power of France, Canada and the great dominion in the West, then known as Louisiana which were objects of British terror. When all the territory, east of the Mississippi river had been wrested from the French, the public debt had grown to be enormous in its proportions. The Chancellor of the Exchequer found it each year, harder to make up a budget, that would not raise a storm against the government. America was still calling for fresh millions of expenditure, even in times of profoundest peace. The colonies except in the matter of trade, were a dead expense to the home government. If armies were to be maintained for their defense, it was insisted that they should contribute their fair proportion of the general expense. The vast majority of leaders in Parliament held that they had full power to impose direct taxes upon the colonies. Shirley, a renegade American in the House of Commons was the first to propose the Stamp Act, Pitt, Burke, and Camden were the leaders of a formidable opposition, who maintained that no legislative body under the British constitution could impose taxes, unless the people taxed, were therein represented. Schemes of colonial representation in Parliament failed. It was then proposed that the colonies should be left to contribute their quota in their own way: but this was rejected.

No human wisdom could have adjusted the differences to suit either the tastes or interests of the contestants. Had America been allowed her demand of only taxing the colonies as they saw fit, then in all truth, America would have been in effect independent. On the other hand, had our fore-fathers been admitted to representation in Parliament on any equitable basis, by this time the Western people would have controlled the policy of the whole empire. England had found herself in the dilemma of Normandy after the conquest. It was better that war should come and separation be effected and so in the providence of God the Revolution ensued.

Hertford county was not represented in the provincial congress which met in New-Berne in 1774. This was the first assemblage of those revolutionary bodies. Both the King and Gov. Martin were bitterly opposed to this movement, and at this date, it appears extraordinary that our fathers should have restored to such an expedient. They had full and free choice of men to represent them in the House of Burgesses. This body was the custodian and mouthpiece of the masses, and it would seem in its representative capacity, could have accomplished everything that was desirable, in the appointment of committees of safety and delegates to the continental congress. There was no legislative body in America representing all the colonies, so the Philadelphia assemblage was both necessary and proper; but it seems, at this day, that there was both wisdom and prosperity in Hertford's declining to participate in this useless double representation. As a general thing the same men, who that year served as Burgesses, were delegated to the provincial Congress. Col. John Harvey was both the speaker of the House of Burgesses and president of the new body.

Upon the transference of Gov. Tyron to New York, Josiah Martin had been commissioned and succeeded him in 1771. Like his predecessor Gov. Martin, had been bred a soldier and had risen to the rank of Major in the English army. When on the third of April 1774 both the General Assembly and Provincial Congress assembled at New Berne, His Excellency was at his wits end. He was far from being a bad man and was in grief for the recent loss of his son. The people's representatives were in such temper, that he speedily dissolved their session. Bidding adieu in 1775 to his beautiful and costly palace, he took refuge first in Fort Johnston, and then on board a British cruiser in the lower Cape Fear. The condition of North Carolina was deplorable. With her chief magistrate a fugitive; her people torn by faction; the courts all closed; the future was all dark and uncertain. Out of this chaos and confusion they were left to pilot themselves.

In those trying hours there was no uncertainty as to the course of Hertford county in the great struggle so near at hand. A vast majority of her people were open and loud in their denunciation of the King's policy. James Fraser a Scotch merchant with an insignificant following alone disturbed the unanimity of their councils. He was wealthy and influential and doubtless honest in his loyalty, but made small impression upon the pervading patriotism of our people. Painful and slow were the hours while Hertford was nerving herself for the seven years of horror and bloodshed which lay before her. A proud and noble part was to be hers in that gory period. No community has ever surpassed her in devotion to duty, when in the opinion of our people, life itself should be staked for the preservation of liberty. Anxious crowds repaired to Winton for consultation upon public affairs. Sermons in the chapels at St. John's, and Buckhorn and also at the new Baptist church at Meherrin, were full of allusions to the duty of the people. The ancient sentiment of loyalty to the crown was still paramount in the hearts of our ancesters. They reverenced the King, but were well nigh unanimous in their determination to resist unto death, the policy of his wicked ministers. Thrice noble and chrivalrous men were they, to take up arms against a mighty monarchy, when to all reasonable conjecture the result at best could be but one of doubt.

To be continued.

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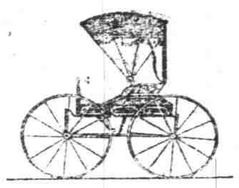

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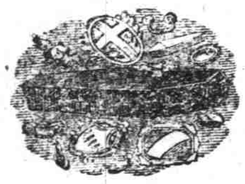

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