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Quickly, methodically, to the chuckling of her rigging blocks she lowers and clews her sails. At last she rides close to Brunswick's banks, her portholes grinning and her 20 guns exposed. Atop her tallest mast billows the flag of the Mistress of the Seas.

Captain Phipps notes, with surprise, that the little town seems unusually lively and expectant. Why? He soon finds out. A considerable body of armed men line the streets and cluster at the landing places. He is told that two experienced soldiers, Col. Hugh Waddell and Col. John Ashe, with the armed militia of Brunswick and New Hanover counties, have, with consternation, been awaiting the arrival of the Diligence. Now, the two Americans, bold and grim-faced, confront the English ship captain. The conversation is animated. The province's chief assemblyman and military leader come to the point: "We will resist the landing of the stamps and will fire on anyone attempting it."

Here is treason, open, flagrant and in the broad light of day; British subjects armed and drawn up in battle array, belligerently defying one of His Majesty's sloops of war!

Captain Phipps, though only 21, is a man of experience. Wisely he concludes that it is useless to attempt to land stamps in the face of such a threat, backed by such a force. Curtly, in cool but courteous English, comes his reply, "I will comply with the demands of the people."

But again words are not enough. Visible proof of the patriots' success is needed. Some of the Sons of Liberty seize one of the boats of the Diligence.



AN EFFIGY WAS HANGED on the Wilmington courthouse lawn October 19, 1765, in protest to the stamps. Similar demonstrations occurred at Cross Creek (Fayetteville), Edenton and New Bern.

Mounting it in a boat they leave a detail to guard Brunswick, then march away to Wilmington. On arrival at that bustling port, there is a triumphant procession through the streets, followed that night by the general illumination of the town.

The citizens of the Lower Cape Fear soon again make clear their stand regarding the despised stamps. In January, 1766, Captain Jacob Lobb, of the British man-of-war Viper seizes two merchant ships, the Dobbs and the Patience, because their clearance papers are not stamped.

Retaliation is swift and sure. Cape Fear leaders, most of all, the merchants, refuse to permit supplies to go aboard the Viper when her commander, Lobb, requests them. Instead, they throw into jail the crew of the vessel that comes for them.

Now, with business and trade at a standstill (no ships have cleared since Nov. 1; under the new law no ships can legally leave port, no cargoes be landed, no courts of law be opened), financial ruin faces the people.

On Feb. 18, at a meeting in Wilmington, "the principal gentlemen, free-holders, and inhabitants," of several counties (Brunswick, New Hanover, Duplin and Bladen) form an "association" and spiritedly sign an agreement: "We will at any risk . . . unite . . . in preventing entirely the operation of the Stamp Act."

Quickly, they choose the men who are to guide, govern and direct them. Forming the "Directory" are John Ashe, Alexander Lillington and Col. Thomas Lloyd. Their first determination? They'll march to Governor Tryon's house, wrest from him a request for the surrender of Captain Lobb.

And now, on Feb. 19, nearly a thousand strong, the Preservers of Liberty are galloping towards Brunswick Town. In their cocked hats, with their long queues, their knee-breeches, their shining shoe-buckles, and mounted on their well-groomed horses, what a colorful cavalcade they make!

There's Wilmington's mayor, Moses John DeRosset, surrounded by Cornelius Harnett, Frederick Gregg, John Sampson, and the other aldermen and officers of the town. There are the venerable Sam and John Swann; the versatile John Ashe, with his brother Sam, his brothers-in-law, James, George and Maurice Moore; and other planters and statesmen. Leading the armed men, arranged in companies and marching in order, are the Cape Fear's military leaders, Hugh Waddell, Robert Howe and Thomas Lloyd.

They Are 'Rebels'

Totally committed to the patriots' cause, with hearts as resolute as iron, they are leaving behind them their allegiance as loyal British subjects. They are "rebels," ready to face open war to insure their rights. And there

can be no turning back! They enter the avenues of the governor's grounds and in orderly fashion surround his house. Two assemblymen, Cornelius Harnett and James Moore, detaching themselves, confront the governor eye to eye in his doorway. Harnett assures him "adequate protection," but at the same time persists in his demand for the surrender of Lobb, commander of the Viper. Tryon, in lofty tones, declares that Captain Lobb is not at Russelborough.

A delegation of the dreaded "armed inhabitants" (a term much used by the governor), leaving him to "stew in his own juice," now calls on William Dry, collector for the province. In his presence they break open his desk and seize the papers of the interned Patience and Dobbs. On the following day they go aboard the Viper and there demand of its commander directly, that the two vessels be released, regardless of their lack of stamps.

Captain Lobb does not have the stubborn, unyielding disposition of many of his brethren of the British Royal Navy. His show of spirit by offering to surrender just one of the vessels soon wears thin. Weary of the whole disturbance and frightened by the belligerent colonists, he abjectly surrenders the ships. More than that, he orders to be disabled the guns of Fort Johnston. Could they not be trained upon the Viper, his own cruiser, while at anchor?

Tryon finds the captain's conduct insufferable, "a breach of sworn duty." But on the patriots' side it serves well. These zealots for independence now determine to be good finishers as well as good beginners. Once more (Feb. 21) they invest the governor's house. Once more Harnett and Moore stand face

to face with the doughty Tryon. This time they seek William Pennington, His Majesty's comptroller. (Dame Gossip says he is hiding under the governor's bed.)

Tryon and Harnett are stubborn men. Neither swerves an inch from the line of his pledged duty. It is Pennington, quailing within the house, who decides the issue. Noting the formidable array of armed men around the mansion, he writes out his resignation, descends the staircase, faces the "Americans" and agrees to accompany them, all to the great disgust of the governor.

One Final Task

One thing remains. The detested stamps are still on the Diligence. Could not some loyal officers of Tryon yet use them? The ex-comptroller and all other officials whose duties require the use of stamps (except the governor himself) now stand in the midst of a large group of the "armed inhabitants" and solemnly swear not to sign or execute any stamped paper in the province, ever. Once more cheers ring out. The matter is settled. Restrictions on the commerce of the river are removed. Ships can enter and clear the Cape Fear without hindrance — and without stamps.

The "offensive stickers" may be in use in some of the provinces, but they are out in North Carolina because of the leading of the men of the Lower Cape Fear. Repeal of the Stamp Act soon follows — on March 17. And there is great rejoicing!

Thus nobly upon North Carolina's great river of history closes the first act of the great drama of Revolution. Nowhere else in America was there a pro-

ceeding similar to that which took place at Wilmington and Brunswick.

Nowhere else was the standard of liberty committed to the care of a governing board, even though its creation was for a temporary purpose; nowhere else was there an army organized, under officers appointed, and led to a site where a battle might have ensued.

And these stirring events occurred more than 10 years before the Declaration of Independence, more than nine before the battle of Lexington, and almost eight before the Boston "Tea Party."

The tea was destroyed in the nighttime by men disguised, and the fame of the act is worldwide, it is blazoned in every history book; but the acts beside the Cape Fear were done in open day by well-known leaders of their section. They stood boldly with arms in their hands, before the King's Royal Governor and under his flag. Indeed, had the British officers been of a different temper or less pliant, the American Revolution would have started at Cape Fear!

Yet little has been written of these courageous Carolinians and their gallant stand. To the world they are lost in the yellowed pages of old records and in the gray mists of old time.

New Duty

MSgt. W. D. Webb has been transferred to the 4th Combat Spt, Grp (TAC) at Seymour Johnson AFB, Goldsboro, where he will be NCOIC of Special Services. His duty will be managing sports and recreation facilities at the base.

VOTE FOR E. J. "Jimmy" Prevatte HE KNOWS THE PEOPLE



Jimmy Prevatte who grew up on the farm he still owns, worked his way through Wake Forest College and received a degree in Business Administration and Education. He understands the problems of education today. He holds a Grade A teacher's certificate.

After completing his undergraduate work, he then worked his way through the Wake Forest Law School and is licensed to practice law.

He is a member of the North Carolina Bar Association and is licensed to practice in Federal Courts.

He is the president of the Brunswick County Bar Association, past president of the Thirteenth Judicial District Bar Association and a member of the North Carolina Academy of Trial Attorneys and the American Judicature Society. He has practiced law in Southport for 30 years, and is local director of Waccamaw Bank & Trust Company.

Jimmy Prevatte is a man who has given of himself in service to mankind. He is past president of the Southport Parent-Teacher Association, and has been chairman of the board of Trustees of the Brunswick County Hospital for ten years.

For 30 years he has been a member of the Southport Baptist Church, serving as a deacon and superintendent of the Sunday School, and teacher of the Men's Bible Class.

He was moderator (presiding officer) of the Brunswick Baptist Association for three years, and for eight years a member of the executive committee of the General Board of the Baptist State Convention.

He is vice-chairman of the Board of Trustees of the North Carolina Baptist Hospital.

Jimmy Prevatte has served his profession with distinction as an attorney for the City of Southport. He was County Attorney for Brunswick County for 20 years. He has been Solicitor of the Brunswick County Recorders Court and served as judge of the Brunswick County Recorders Court.

He is married to the former Amaretha Bennett and they have a daughter who is married to Kenneth Maynor.

He is a Mason and Shriner, Past Master of his lodge and past president of the Southport Lions Club, and a member of the Woodmen of the World.

In Times Like These, We Need A Man Like
Jimmy Prevatte To Represent Us In The
North Carolina House Of Representatives

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DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATE

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