

## Raising Some Question Marks

I shall not go into the story of the shutting down of the Enfield municipal light and power plant and the making of a contract with the big power company by the town council. I merely raise the question as to whether there is something rotten much nearer than Hamlet's Denmark.

After a visit to several of the Halifax county towns a question mark has robustly risen in the editor's mind as to the probability of an undue and harmful influence emanating from the great Roanoke industrial quarters and from the offices of the power and light company operating in that section of the State, which is largely controlling the political destinies of Halifax county and of the Halifax towns.

Either there was something rotten in the recent Halifax county primary or people other than defeated candidates have been making some statements that should damn themselves. There has either been some powerful political shenanigan in old Halifax or some mighty big lying.

The matter of powerful corporations using unlimited funds and unveiled hints of loss of jobs to attain their business and political aims (which in the long view accord in purpose) is a matter of more than one county's concern.

## Some Halifax County History

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materials necessary for the prosecution of war and all the while it moved from place to place, keeping in touch with the Continental Congress and its fingers on the pulse of the State. It was an efficient body.

### Jones Opposes Ratification of U. S. Constitution.

On July 21, 1788, a convention met at Hillsboro to reject or ratify the Federal Constitution. Willie Jones was, of course, a member. He was opposed to the adoption of the Federal Constitution because it contained no Bill of Rights, and on the further ground that it would provide for such a strong central government that the State government would ultimately be sacrificed. As a mark of esteem Samuel Johnston, the old leader, was elected president by a unanimous vote of the 284 delegates present. As soon as the convention was opened for business, Jones moved that a vote be taken, saying that all delegates had determined their vote already, but the Federalists, who recognized that they were in the minority, wished to debate the Constitution and the anti-Federalists showed a disposition to hear them. So a discussion of the Constitution was taken up. At first the anti-Federalists advanced no inclination to debate the matter though they later were drawn in, though Jones himself never spoke. Iredell and the other Federalists argued with eloquence for the Constitution, but to no avail. Jones' ranks could not be broken. The Federalists attempted to put the question direct, either to ratify or to fail to ratify, but failed. At the conclusion of the debate the convention by a vote of 184 to 84 declared itself unwilling to ratify the amendment until a Bill of Rights had been backed and approved of in several other particulars so as to guarantee certain powers to the State. The Bill of Rights and the amendments for which Willie Jones contended pursuant to a letter to Thomas Jefferson was afterwards written into the Federal Constitution.

Jones had fought his last political fight. More than anyone else he had held North Carolina out of the union until certain fundamental rights and liberties were guaranteed to the citizens and the State. He was willing to quit the State and enjoy a mental rest in the last years of his life. He was one of the commissioners who decided the site of the State capitol and approved its plans and until his death was a trustee of the University. He was never active in politics. He spent the remaining days of his life attending to his large duties as a planter, dividing his time between his homes, "The Grove" at Halifax, and in the City of Raleigh. He died at his residence in Raleigh in 1801. He was buried according to instructions set out by him that "no priest or any other person is to insult my corpse by uttering any impious observations over it. Let it be covered up snug and warm and there's an end. My family are not to mourn my death even with a black rag, on the contrary I give to my wife and three daughters a bolt of quaker colored silk to wear at my funeral." Such were the last wishes of a man who had played so dominant a part in the early history of our State.

### How John Paul Became John Paul Jones.

And now as to John Paul Jones. He was born in the parish of Kirkbean and the stewardry of Kirkcubright, Scotland, on the estate of Aroingland, belonging to Robert Craik, a member of Parliament. His father, John Paul, was a landscape gardener in Craik's employ; his mother, Jean MacDuff, was a daughter of a Highlander. When 12 years of age only

the son was an apprentice to a shipmaster and taken aboard a ship which carried him to Virginia. Three voyages followed, gaining for the lad much sea experience. When his master failed, young John Paul obtained an acting Midshipman's berth for a brief period in the Royal Navy. Then he acted as third mate on a slave ship which carried him on two voyages between Jamaica and the Guinea coast. Next, he traveled on another slaver, this time as first mate, then only 17 years of age. After two years he became a slave trader, giving up his position and took passage on board ship for England. On the way the captain and first mate both died of fever and John Paul took command and brought the vessel safely to port. Forthwith, the owners made him master of the ship. After he had made two voyages to Tobago for them, his employers desolved partnership. John Paul purchased the vessel and again sailed for Tabago. Investing all his money in a cargo there, the young sailor next intended to delay payment of his crew until his cargo had been sold, but the crew mutinied. After a struggle John Paul killed the ring leader and left the ship. No Admiralty Court then set in Tobago, and rather than suffer imprisonment while awaiting his trial he fled from the island. Then follows a period of obscurity. During this period comes his appearance and meeting with Willie Jones in front of the Eagle Tavern about the year 1775. The history of that meeting has come down unchanged. "What is your name?" asked Willie Jones. "I have none." "Where is your home?" "I have none," was John Paul's reply. Willie Jones then entered into further conversation with the stranger and invited him forthwith to share his home, which he declared was large enough for both of them.

Legend and tradition seem to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that John Paul lived for awhile at Willie Jones' home, "The Grove" at Halifax. Col. Cadwallader Jones, of Rock Hill, S. C., left a genealogical record of his family and in this record he makes the statement that the illustrious Paul Jones adopted his name from his great uncle, Willie Jones, in token of his gratitude for the many benefactions received at his hand.

### Jones Tradition Well Founded.

Mrs. Willie Jones long survived her husband and resided at the "Grove" until her death. Cadwallader Jones, as a child, spent long months with his great aunt, who repeatedly told him the stories of how the famous Paul Jones had been befriended by her husband and had been received in their home. Besides the direct testimony of Col. Cadwallader Jones, there are many corroborative statements from other lineal descendants of the family. Miss A. J. Robertson, a great granddaughter of Allen Jones, contributed an article to the American Monthly Magazine of November, 1899, not only stating the traditional fact of Jones' adoption of their name, but adding the interesting account of the conversation which took place in Washington in the year 1848 between Mr. Loudon, nephew of Paul Jones, and the wife of Hon. E. W. Hubbard, a member of Congress from Virginia. Mr. Loudon was in Washington awaiting the long delayed award of a claim for prize money due from the government to Paul Jones. Mrs. Hubbard was a granddaughter of Willie Jones; she stated the facts of Jones' association with her family, and the account as she had herself heard it from her grandparents that he had adopted the name of her great grandfather out of gratitude for his services to him. Mr. Loudon admitted the veracity of her statements and added that in the possessions of his uncle, inherited by his mother and heir, there existed a portrait of Allen Jones. In a letter dated the 16th of December, 1844, from Charleston, S. C., Mr. Loudon states categorically that he took the name from Allen Jones. This letter was contained in an article contributed by Stephen B. Weeks to a periodical called the Southern History Publication in July, 1906.

Mrs. Hull, a descendant of Allen Jones, who lived at Tuxedo, New York, stated to Mrs. DeKoven that she had heard the facts in regard to Paul Jones, connection with her family many times related by her grandmother, Mrs. Long.

Mrs. Junius Davis, of Wilmington, N. C., who has contributed a careful study of this subject to the South Atlantic Quarterly of 1905, states that his father, the Hon. George Davis, told him it was a fact in universal credence among the men of his generation that Paul Jones met Willie Jones in Halifax soon after his arrival in Virginia; that he paid him a long visit at the "Grove"; and that in token of his affection for him his brother had added their name to his own.

Madam Combsult, great granddaughter of Mrs. Loudon, who was a sister of Paul Jones, and who died in Paris in the year 1912, stated to Mrs. Robertson that Paul Jones had been befriended by Allen Jones, Col. Wharton Green, one of the most brilliant men ever produced in Warren County, and the only member of his class at West Point who entered

the Confederate Army and did not become a general officer, stated that he heard Major Knox of Mecklenburg County, Virginia, state that while he was a guest of Willie Jones at Halifax in the year 1775 he saw Paul Jones there.

Unquestionably John Paul came to Halifax, seeking asylum from the English courts. He was truly a man of despair, without a name, a home, or a country, and it can readily be seen how Willie Jones, the man of the world, seeking amusement, new ideas, new conservation in the then isolated town of Halifax, would have his full fancy caught by John Paul. From all that has been written and said of John Paul, he must have confided quickly in his new found friend, who gave him a haven of rest and peace. John Paul at that time, on account of his frame of mind, inflamed against the British government, unquestionably entered readily into Willie Jones' revolutionary ideas and activities. There has been no written proof on the part of the Jones family, being a tradition handed down from father to son that he, Jones, kept his friends confidence throughout the years.

John Paul, during his stay with Willie Jones at the "Grove" in Halifax had impressed Jones with his knowledge of nautical affairs to such an extent that Willie Jones recommended to Joseph Hewes that John Paul be commissioned in the new American Navy. Through Joseph Hewes, who at that time was a member of what is now the Naval Affairs Committee, John Paul received his commission. This is the striking personality which now emerged from nameless obscurity to play a brilliant part in the fortunes of America.

This is a portrait of John Paul from the pen of the wife of John Adams, who at the time was one of the American Commissioners in Paris: "John Paul Jones you have heard much of—he is a most uncommon character. From his intrepid character in the American Navy I expected to have seen a rough, stout, warlike Roman—instead of that I should sooner think of wrapping him up in cotton wool and putting him into my pocket than sending him to contend with cannon balls. He is small of stature, well proportioned, soft in his speech, easy in his address, polite in his manner, vastly civil, understands all the etiquette of a lady's toilette as perfectly as he does the masts, sails and riggings of his ship. Under all this appearance of softness he is bold, enterprising, ambitious and active. He has been here often and dined with us several times; he is said to be a man of gallantry and a favorite among the French ladies."

A French duchess, a true grande dame, called him "The untitled knight of the sea," "The wrathful Achilles of the ocean," and "The Bayard afloat."

Benjamin Franklin said he was not a man but a nor'wester.

The remainder of the life of John Paul Jones is history—hero of well nigh impossible exploits and battles fought by moonlight in sight of the shores of England. His name passed into the realm of romantic legend. His reply to Capt. Pearson, of the Serapis, from the deck of the doomed and sinking, Bonhomme Richard, expressed in his characteristic simple phrase, "I have not yet begun to fight" has become a national battle-cry, and is John Paul Jones' password to the company of heroes.

Many of his characteristic sayings deserves to be preserved: "I will not have anything to do with ships which do not sail fast, for I intend to go in harm's way." "I may not win success, but I will endeavor to deserve it." "I have ever looked out for the honor of the American Flag." "I can never renounce the glorious title of a citizen of the United States."

He is the most renowned naval officer of the Revolution, and was the dominating figure in the infant navy. He never sailed a ship of war whose efficiency he did not improve, nor fought a sea battle that he did not win. Preeminent among all the early defenders of the United States, John Paul Jones fought her unequalled battles and won a place for her among the powers of the world. For this a grateful government recorded those things in the most significant and glorious encomium ever passed upon him "He had made the flag of America respected among the flags of other nations."

We commemorate here today the memory of these two remarkable men whose lives touched for a brief time at the "Grove" in the little town of Halifax. Unlike in almost everything they were as one in indomitable purpose to dare all and to risk all in defense of threatened rights and liberties more precious to free men than life itself. That purpose Willie Jones achieved greatly and successfully in the council halls of North Carolina, and that purpose John Paul Jones achieved on the high seas in sea battles that have become classic. Both deserved well of North Carolina, yet until the bronze tablets are unveiled here today, our people

"Carved not a line, and raised not a stone  
But left them alone with their glory."