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PITT COUNTY AND ITS CAPITAL

No other Englishman, whether explorer, soldier, or statesman, has so many memorials in North Carolina as the Elder Pitt. Pitt county is named for him; Chatham is named for him as Earl of Chatham; Pittsboro is another memorial.

Pitt's first county seat was named for Governor Martin, but the Revolutionary troubles were brewing, and at Martinborough, the royal governor's own namesake, just 160 years ago today, August 15, 1774, at a general meeting of the freeholders of Pitt county, with John Hardee in the chair, the county was definitely launched upon the Revolutionary current. The following October another meeting was held and the following patriots were named as a standing committee to plan the county's movements during the contention between the colony and the king: John Hardee, Robert Salter, Edward Salter, William Bryant, Edmond Williams, Benjamin May, George Evans, and Amos Atkinson.

General James Armstrong seems to have been the most prominent military officer in the county for a long period. Away back in 1755, during the French and Indian War, he was major of the militia of that section, the historian ascribing him in that year as "major of the Pitt militia." He served as a member of Pitt's committee of safety during the Revolutionary period, and after peace was a member of the state council in 1784, and a member of the convention held at Fayetteville in 1789 to pass upon the U. S. constitution.

Despite the enforced retirement of Governor Martin, the capital of Pitt seems to have held his name till after peace was declared, when the name was changed to Greenville.

Among the prominent in the early days were Wm. Blount, who was a member of the Continental Congress in 1782-3, a member of the convention at Philadelphia which framed the U. S. constitution, governor of the territory south of the Ohio by appointment of President Washington, and one of the first two senators from Tennessee.

General Bryan Grimes won renown during the war of the sixties. His son, Bryan Grimes, Jr., was not so long ago the popular secretary of state for North Carolina.

Pitt's More Recent Notables.

Pitt's most distinguished citizen of all time was Governor Jarvis, though he was not a native of the county. Jarvis was soldier, teacher, lawyer, lieutenant-governor, succeeding Vance as governor when the latter was chosen senator, and being elected governor in 1880. Governor Jarvis thus served considerably over a four-year term. He served also as successor of Senator Vance as senator by appointment, and as minister to Brazil during the first Cleveland administration.

Harry Skinner was Pitt's most distinguished orator. He was one of the few elderly statesmen of the state who joined forces with the Populists in the nineties. He, Dr. Cy Thompson, and Marion Butler were a trio which could not be successfully opposed by the whole coterie of Democratic orators in the state. Harry Skinner served two terms in Congress. Possibly, though I do not recall, Rev. Dr. Thos. E. Skinner, long recognized as one of the South's strongest ministers, was a native of Pitt. Louis C. Latham was Pitt's only other member of Congress. He served as representative during the term beginning in 1881.

Pitt's High Rank in Agriculture.

Pitt county's fame in both agriculture and commerce is based upon tobacco. The flue-cured tobacco development lies well within the last half-century. But 150 years ago the tobacco business in that section afforded one of the two or three articles of foreign commerce. It was in 1784, just 150 years ago, that the legislature of the new state passed an act providing for the opening of Tar River and Fishing Creek for navigation. Martinborough, now Greenville, was designated as one of several points at which provision for the inspection of tobacco was made. The other chief articles of commerce were "tar, pitch, and turpentine." Washington, on his visit to that section in 1791, wrote in his diary as follows: "Greenville is on the Tar River, and its exports are the same as those of Tarborough, with a greater proportion of tar—for the lower down the greater the number of tar makers are here—this article is, contrary to all ideas one would entertain on the subject, rolled as is tobacco by an axis which goes through

both heads—one horse draws two barrels in this manner."

Pitt, the World's Great Tobacco Producing County.

Probably it was a very small amount of tobacco that went down the Tar and across the waters—certainly inconsiderable as compared with the vast volumes of bright tobacco now sold upon the markets of Pitt.

The county has ranked fourth in the United States for the money value of its crops, and it held that rank and its present rank almost wholly upon the strength of its tobacco crop. It is said now that Pitt produces more tobacco than any other county in the world. And now Greenville claims to have surpassed Wilson and is contending that it is the largest tobacco market in the world. Anyway, about 72 million pounds of the leaf was sold upon the fifteen acres of Greenville's warehouse floors last year. The shorter crop will reduce that amount this year, it is presumed, though the superior quality of this year's crop and the greatly higher level of prices this season will probably hold the value of the tobacco marketed there up to that of last season's sales. Wilson has not surrendered its claim to being the "greatest tobacco market in the world." Consequently, North Carolina has two cities boasting supremacy in that respect.

Farmville Sells Much Tobacco.

Greenville is not Pitt's only tobacco market. Farmville possesses three or four warehouses and sells more tobacco in a year than was made in the world we suspect, when those tobacco inspections were made 150 years ago. Those marts will be busy places after August 23, when the markets are scheduled to open.

Greenville's Greatest Historical Event.

Few historians have the measure of historical events. A paragraph or two in any United States history suffices to cover the history of the coming of Whitefield and the Wesleys to this country. Yet their coming has had, possibly, a greater influence upon the current of life in this country than the whole Revolutionary war had.

Yet in such sketches as I have seen of Greenville's history, I see no mention of the organization of the Baptist State Convention in that town a little more

than a hundred years ago. Yet the Baptist State convention has largely revolutionized the religious life of North Carolina. The edifice of the city's First Baptist church was built as a memorial of that event by the aid of the Baptists of the whole state.

Education in Pitt.

Pitt early had an academy chartered by the legislature, but like all other North Carolina communities education was a matter largely governed by the size of the purse of the parents of the children. The most of them for 150 years or more got very little or none. But those old-time academies were marked by wonderful achievements of learning on the part of some of the youth who could afford to attend them.

About a half-century ago, W. H. Ragsdale became school master in Greenville and conducted an unusually high-type school, retiring to become superintendent of county schools when the public funds had made public education a matter of moment.

At Winterville, A. G. Cox, a few years later, established an academy, or high school, which became the rendezvous of hundreds of ambitious youths. Of this school, G. E. Lineberry, now at the head of the State's school for the blind, was principal for a number of years. The Primitive Baptists established a college at Ayden, which did good work for a number of years.

East Carolina Teachers' College.

But the pride of Pitt, and especially of Greenville, is the East Carolina Teachers' College, only 25 years old, yet developed into an institution possibly larger than any existing in the state at the date of its inception as the East Carolina Teachers' Training School. It is stated that W. H. Ragsdale was one of the earliest promoters of the idea of establishing such a school and especially of the attempt to secure it for Greenville. Pitt county and Greenville each voted \$50,000 in bonds as an inducement for the school to go to Greenville. They have a right to feel proud of the development of the institution.

Greenville has grown into a city of ten thousand people, boasting its college, great public schools, fine churches, immense industrial and commercial plants, yet it has no traffic lights on its streets, an example, certainly, for smaller towns, if not larger ones.

A CODE FOR LABORERS SUGGESTED

By JOHN B. ANONYMOUS

Presumably every industry of this country is, in this good year of our Lord Nineteen Hundred Thirty-Four, operating under government license as to minimum wage, hours of labor, as well as quantity and quality of labor personnel. That is, the erstwhile "individualistic" owner must circumscribe his business to conform to government regulations by code authorities, and is policed by government sleuths to check up on compliance, and any violation turned up by these government sleuths is swiftly punished with withdrawal of license and a subtle boycott is directed against continued operations.

Our "Capitalistic" economic structure that was brought to this country prior to our independence and that has survived many devastating "depressions," several foreign wars and a civil war lasting for four years, is founded upon free possession and use of property and wealth by those who were capable, or "just" able to obtain its possession. Each of our citizens have been "capitalists" in the past. Few persons, even the lowliest, but have had "investments" in a life annuity or a "burial" society policy. The farmers are all of the "capitalistic" stripe and his tenant has, since time immemorial, gambled upon the success or failure of a crop. The industrialist, the banker, and the landed proprietor have, in the common concept, constituted the "capitalistic" group. Labor, as such, has never been considered as "capitalistic."

Organized Labor as Capitalist.

Organized Labor must be included in this category. How else could the dues collected from members be "invested" and preserved for enhancement and use as funds for propagating strikes and making strikes successful? Moreover, all labor must be included in the capitalistic class. An industry is induced, because of some favorable circumstance, to build its plant in Podunk. Laborers must leave their former

home, investing a surplus in the venture of moving to the new location, gambling upon the success or failure of the new enterprise which offers sufficient inducement, else labor would not elect to take the chance and make the investment.

If government regulation is required to guarantee the proper functioning of the group of "capitalists" consisting of those whose individual wealth is invested in industry, why is it not just as essential and more than reasonable to require government regulation of each and every phase of our economic life and all groups in our capitalistic structure. If a code authority is required for "capital" regulated by the government, why not a code authority for labor under government supervision?

Under existing laws and regulations each industry has its code for regulating use of "capital." General Johnson is expected to "crack down" when there is any violation of the code.

Why not have each industry's labor under a code with government supervision and if there are grievances the two governmental agencies certainly could adjust the differences equitably, without the civil strife that is now menacing many lives each day and that is impeding the efforts of the Administration, looking to recovery.

Who Decried Such Discrimination in Awards?

Many things could be accomplished by placing a Code authority, under government supervision, over the labor of each type of industry. There exists a certain ratio of rates of hourly pay of one class of worker to another class. For example, a highly skilled steel worker receives \$1.50 per hour, a rivet heater receives about \$1.00, and a common steel laborer receives 50c. The laborer receives one-third of the amount paid the highest paid worker and one-half of the other class worker. Who has determined

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