

GOLDSBORO'S GREATEST GALA DAY

(Continued from page one.)

A. C. Davis, of the city bar, as their spokesman, and in eloquent words and forceful gesture and in a fitting climax, as he performed the duty assigned him amid great enthusiasm and applause, the Junior Order being in attendance in full numbers and regalia.

Judge D. H. Bland, of the County Court, had been selected by the committee to receive this flag, and he, in his own always graceful manner of speech, accepted it in the following words:

JUDGE BLAND'S ACCEPTANCE.

In accepting the U. S. flag, Judge D. H. Bland, of our County Court, said: On behalf of the Board of County Commissioners who are the custodians of this beautiful building, as well as the guardians of our county affairs generally, it gives me much pleasure to accept from you this flag of our country, the Junior Order of American Mechanics, as the name suggests, is distinctly an American Society. In the history of fraternity it will be noted above all others, that for its teaching a genuine patriotism, too often neglected among a free people, and for its constant display and reverence for the emblems of our Nationality. The fear of God and love of country are the two great stones upon which the society has erected a splendid structure and it is determined that no effort shall be spared to impress these great principles, so essential to the welfare of our Republic, upon the citizens of our State and Country.

This beautiful Court House is in a very real sense, the property of the citizens of Wayne county, and yet it also belongs to our State, of which our county is an important part, and also to our Nation, of which our State is a distinct and important unit. With no blush or apology to make for our past history, we feel a just pride in the great influence our State has wielded in the Nation's development today, and we are looking forward with confident anticipation to a yet more brilliant future. It seems to me, therefore, to be eminently fitting that this stately building, the capstone of the County of Wayne, should be adorned with the flag of our Nation, along with the flag of our State, which has just been presented. This flag represents those principles of government which our fathers won and obtained through blood and tears, and of which we are the inheritors without effort and without price—those principles which are proclaimed in our National and State Constitutions and which guarantee to every man the right to personal liberty, private property and equality before the law. Our system of government is founded upon a recognition of the rights of the individual. It seeks its authority in those inalienable rights which God has given to every man. Its stability rests upon that sound discretion, innate honesty and natural sense of justice which exists, in varying degree, in every man. This is the temple of justice, the rights are asserted and maintained, or forfeited, according as the law framed by our countrymen, applicable to the facts as found by our countrymen may direct.

Is it not, therefore, fitting and proper that this new and stately Court House should be adorned with the flag of our great Nation? Its inspiring colors should be a constant call to every county officer to render in every instance the best service of which he is capable that our system of government may attain its most successful end. It should be a constant reminder to every Judge, in those inalienable rights which God has given to every man, within these portals at least, that degree of honesty and integrity upon which only a government such as ours can be successfully maintained, and which will insure to our people a nearly perfect justice as can be administered by human hands.

Gentlemen of the Fraternity, in the name of our Commissioners and the citizens of our county, I thank you.

Following Mr. Bland, Mrs. C. F. Taylor, of the David Williams Chapter Daughters of American Revolution of this city, was introduced, and in the following eloquent words presented the Bible provided by her Chapter:

PRESENTATION OF BIBLE BY MRS. CHAS. F. TAYLOR, FOR DAVID WILLIAMS CHAPTER D. A. R.

Mr. Chairman and Board of Commissioners of Wayne County, N. C. Gentlemen: On behalf of the David Williams Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, of Goldsboro, North Carolina, we present this token of our interest in and love for the Institution and the characteristic features and color frequently observed in the descendants of former slaves. The names of the heads of families are for the most part those best known to this generation.

The largest slave owner was Joseph Green, who had 70. The Whitfields, Needham, William, William, Jr., and Lewis owned about 30 each; Alice Base, Jr.; 24; Edward Base, 10; Richard Base, 26; Charles Holmes, 16; David Jernigan, 26; Stephen Jernigan, 24; Richard McKinnin, 16; Mary McKinnin, 16; John Adkinson, 10; William Rhodes, 15; Elieha Pipkin, 14; David Cogdell, 21; Thomas Carraway, 12; James Tinsley, 10; Burwell Moorings, 16; Jehu Lane, 6; William Howell, Sr., 13; James Hanley, 8; Ethelred Howell, 10; William Sheridan, 24; James Edmundson, 19; William Fort, 10; John Sherrad, 16; John Minshew, 10; Isaac Woodard, 19; Ephraim Hanley, 11; William Aycock, 3; Shadrach Dickinson, 14; Bridget Cobb, 15; James Cobb, 14; Nathan Cobb, 21; John Barefoot, 25; William Hooks, 14; Charles Hopkins, 10; John Herron, Sr., 20; Sarah Ward, 17; Sarah Pope, 16; John Hanley, 11; William Aycock, 11; Robert Hood, 11; John Copeland, 11; Moses Stanley, 12; and Ezekiel Slocumb—(an officer in the Continental Army), 1.

In the foregoing list may be found the names of many of our citizens of today. There were many other slave owners whose descendants still live among us who owned from one to twelve slaves. The principal business of the country was hog and cattle raising, and the principal crop was corn, though a small quantity of cotton and tobacco was grown and the turpentine industry was beginning. A great epidemic in 1760 destroyed seven-eighths of the cattle of the

State. The cleared areas were small, except in a few instances. The oldest clearing in the county, and probably at the time the largest, was the farm of Josiah Sasser, upon which the first court was held, which is now owned by Messrs. I. F. Ormond and E. B. Borden, and which has been, according to the established tradition, in continuous cultivation since 1775, and probably prior to that date.

ADDRESS BY JUDGE FRANK A. DANIELS.

Delivered at the Opening of the New Court House in Wayne County, Goldsboro, N. C. November 30th, 1914.

On this the 134th Anniversary of the holding of a Court of Justice in Wayne County, I regard it appropriate to refer briefly to the history of the county from its establishment in 1779 by virtue of an act of the General Assembly held at Halifax during the administration of Richard Caswell, then Governor of the State of North Carolina.

This act provided that Dobbs County (named after one of the Royal Governors) "should be divided by a line run through the middle part from north to south the western part of the county to be called Wayne county" in honor of General Anthony Wayne, a distinguished officer in the Continental Army, and that the first session of the Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions should be held on the second Monday of January, 1780, at the home of Josiah Sasser on Little River. Commissioners were appointed by said act to select a site and have built a court house, prison and stocks.

A traveler, writing just before the Revolution, says: "There is but little specie in circulation, there being no occasion for it; for a planter raises his own meats, beef and bacon, his own corn and bread, his drinks, cider and brandy, his wool and flax, his leather and the skins and fur of wild animals being utilized for the purpose."

I note that an item of North Carolina Export Trade in 1783 was 30,000 pounds of cotton. In 1784, 17 bags of cotton weighing 225 pounds each were exported to England from Charleston, there being no export of cotton from any other port, and seized by the English Government on the ground that the United States could not produce so much.

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The cotton gin had a late introduction in this county; and before its advent, cotton was picked by hand from the seed around the fire at night, and a shoe full was the task for each member of the family from supper until bed time. My friend, Capt. J. B. Edgerton, informs me that he engaged in this pleasant pastime as late as 1848, when he grew up in the middle of the 40's, hauled his cotton to Fayetteville to be ginned. He remembers quite vividly, that, as a boy, he accompanied his father's wagons on this long journey.

Some plantation gins operated by hand were in use. The cotton was on a wheel and the loom were necessities in every well regulated house, and of the matron of that day it might have been written as Solomon wrote in praise of the good wife:

"She seeks the wool and flax, and worketh willing with her hands." "She layeth her hands to the spindle and the distaff."

"She looketh well unto the ways of her household and eateth not the bread of idleness."

In 1790 there were only four post offices in the State—Edenton, New Bern, Wilmington and Metters. There were no post routes. Letters were carried by travelers from plantation to plantation and forwarded as promptly as practicable, but the means of communication were inadequate and unsatisfactory. Commerce was carried by messengers or special carriers on horse back and at great expense. In 1755, upon the recommendation of Gov. Bobbs, James Davis, Printer, was employed for the sum of one hundred dollars to furnish a monthly meeting, to be held in Johnston and Dobbs by the Quakers prior to the Revolution, at which time they numbered 1,000 in this State.

The Baptists came early to the State, the first churches organized were Shiloh and Meherrin, and the next Kehuka Creek in 1742. Soon their ministers began to preach in this county, and by 1776 had established churches in every county in the State. The Methodist church began in North Carolina with the ministry of Joseph Pilmon in 1772. In 1777 John King, John Dickens and Edward Pride were assigned to the Circuit of North Carolina, and at the end of the year returned to the Conference before the bounds of their circuit 930 members. It is probable that some of these preached in this county, but I am unable to find any record of it.

In 1790 the Contentenca Circuit was formed of Greene, Edgecombe and Wayne, the ministers preaching mostly in private houses. The earliest Methodist preacher in the county, of whom I have been able to learn, was Phillip Hooks, who was a local preacher at Waynesboro in the early part of the 18th century.

About 1830 there was built in Waynesboro a church which was used by all denominations. A striking illustration of the conditions existing at the time is found in the fact that when Dr. Eliza Mitchell, Presbyterian minister and professor in the State University, on his travels through the State in 1827, spent Sunday in Waynesboro, he writes that on that day he "collected a little congregation, and held forth to them at the Tavern."

Most sections of the country were destitute of religious instruction, and at this time none of the fine and uplifting influences emanating from the churches had been present long enough to have much effect upon the inhabitants of the county. The people, however, were of English stock with all the virtues and vices of that great race, with its glorious history behind them and the promise of a splendid future in this new land before them, with stout hearts and sound heads, with resources unknown elsewhere, many of which they themselves did not dream of; and here they set out to conquer the forests, till the soil and build homes for generations to come.

An unfringed writer (Chalmers) says of them that they were "destitute of the kindly influences of religion, and of law—and during the year 1749 North Carolina was found to be

little better than an asylum for fugitives—such was the unpleasant incident, which occupies the story of an inconsiderable settlement that gradually filled with people as the law afforded protection to the vagabond, as everyone lived without control and enjoyed in security what a trivial labor had gained. On the other hand, the impartial historian, Bancroft, writes of them: "They were men who had been led to the choice of their residence from a hatred of restraint and had lost themselves among the woods in search of independence. Are there any who doubt man's capacity for self-government, let them study the history of North Carolina, its inhabitants were restless and turbulent in their imperfect submission to a government imposed on them from abroad. The administration of the Colony was firm, humane and tranquil, when they were left to take care of themselves. Any government, but the only one, was imposed on them."

North Carolina was oppressed by the freest of the free, by men to whom the restraints of other colonies were too severe; but the settlers were gentle in their tempers, of serene minds, unexcitable to violence and bloodshed. Freedom, entire freedom, was enjoyed without anxiety as without guarantees; the charities of life were scattered at their feet like the flowers in their meadows, and the spirit of humanity maintained its influence in the Arcadia of the Colonies. It was the "Rogues and Rebels" in the Paradise of the Quakers."

It must be remembered that the county was born in the throes of the Revolutionary War. Before its formation and while it was a part of the County of Dobbs, a company of eighty of its citizen soldiers under the leadership of Ezekiel Slocumb marched from his home, at the call of Col. James Oglethorpe, to join the Continental forces in their attack upon the Tories and British at Moore's Creek, and, according to our historians, were a part of the division that made the final charge across the Creek, and through the swamps, that completed the rout of the enemy and gained the first victory for American Arms in that great contest.

It was at this time that one of the most interesting incidents connected with our Revolutionary struggle took place, when Mary Slocumb, the wife of Capt. Ezekiel Slocumb, being left at home with an infant child, fearful of the fate of her husband and his comrades, was unable to sleep and rising in the night, saddled a fine mare and rode from near the present site of Goldsboro, through the forest in the direction of Moore's Creek, about 100 miles, until she came within hearing of the cannon announcing the beginning of a battle, when quickening her pace she soon arrived at a clearing in the woods near the Creek and found here the wounded of her husband's command. She was greatly distressed at the sight of an apparently lifeless body covered with her husband's blood, but upon removing the cloak, discovered that, instead of her husband, the wounded man was Frank Cogdell. Her husband soon appeared and remonstrated with her for her daring conduct. She remained a short time nursing the wounded, and then returned to her home. At one time a British colonel had quartered his troops on her plantation and remarked in her presence that it would make a fine estate after the war for some British officer; to which she replied that if he would ever get her plantation would measure only two by six feet. Captain Slocumb was present as a Continental officer at the surrender of Yorktown by the British. He and his wife, who was a sister of Charles Hooks, the Representative in Congress from the Wilmington District, lived far into the 19th century, honored and respected; the husband serving in the House of Commons from Wayne in the years 1812, 1814, 1815, 1816 and 1818. They owned a large tract of land south of the Neuse River, and the site of the C. L. Railroad, and lie buried in the family burying ground between Goldsboro and the town of Dudley.

But even before the Battle of Moore's Creek, the inhabitants of Dobbs were called upon to furnish soldiers to the Royal Governor Tryon for the subjugation of the Regulators. There is no evidence, however, that they responded to the call, or that any part of this section took part in the battle of Alamance. It seems that they resolutely refused. I am unable to ascertain whether they refrained, because they did not understand the quarrel, or because they were unwilling to take part against the persecuted and rebel Regulators.

I find in the Colonial Records a copy of a letter written at the time the inhabitants of Dobbs were ordered to muster for service in that campaign, in which it is stated that only seven men in all the county responded. I find also that after the battle two of the Regulators escaped to Dobbs and upon resisting arrest, one was killed by the Sheriff and the other captured. I am sure the failure of our people to furnish soldiers to the Royal Governor against their fellow citizens was not due to their reluctance to fight. They furnished their full quota to the Continental Army, a number of them were wounded, and after the close of the war some of these were pensioned by Congress.

Organization of the County. In the midst of the stirring scenes of the Revolutionary War the County of Wayne was organized, and court was held, as the records show, on the first Monday of January, 1780, at the home of Josiah Sasser, of the General Assembly. The following Justices were present: Robert Simms, Ethelred Ruffin, Jesse Jernigan, John Handley, Thomas Williams, Stephen Cobb, Joseph Sanderson and John Sheppard. Little business was transacted.

On January, 1781, the Court appointed Thomas Grey, Stephen Cobb, Joseph Sanderson, and Needham Whitfield, inspectors of paper money. During the same session, having elected Robert Simms as first Sheriff of the County, and James Cobb, Clerk of the Court, it was ordered that Thomas Grey, Stephen Cobb and John Handley, Esqs., be appointed commissioners of concealed property for this county, and their bonds were fixed at 200,000 pounds each (which is equal to \$1,000,000 each of our money) from which it may be seen that paper money was abundant but cheap, and that the few Tories in the county were in great danger of losing their property.

Jurors were drawn to attend the Superior Court to be held at New Bern, and this entry appears of record: "Court adjourns in-course to Mr. Josiah Sasser's on Little River."

The Court again held its session at Josiah Sasser's January 1782, and one of the most interesting orders is as follows: "Ordered that Needham Whitfield and Samuel Blythe be appointed to inspect the pool for the Insuing Election. A session of the Court was held on the 17th of January, 1782, at the home of Mr. John Herring on Little River, an adjournment having been taken at the previous meeting 'in-course' to Mr. Daniel Herring; there is no explanation why the Court should have adjourned to Mr. Daniel Herring's; the court should have been held at Mr. John Herring's. At this term the will of Josiah Sasser was proven and Elizabeth Sasser, his widow, qualified as his executrix.

The Court again met the second Monday in July 1782 at John Herring's on Little River, and among other things William McKinnin was appointed Commissioner to collect the Specific Provision Tax as provided by Act of Assembly.

October 14, 1782, the Court was held at Mrs. Elizabeth Sasser's, and among other things the following entries appear of record: "A deed of sale from John Grantham to David Jernigan for an acre of land in the County of Wayne, the oath of David Jernigan was given to be registered." "An account of sales of the estate of Josiah Sasser, deceased, was turned into the Court by the Sheriff and ordered that same be recorded."

Our ancestors seem to have extended their views of independence and to have spelled according to the dictates of their consciences. The interesting record also appears at this satisfactory to them, and whose wife and daughter, complaining that he had abused and threatened them, prayed the peace of the State against him, he appeared and cross-examined his daughter Sabra, and, not liking some answer, assaulted and beat her in the presence of the court. He was adjudged in contempt and sentenced to three months in jail, and to give a bond for \$1,000 in specie for his good behavior."

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