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The JOURNAL OF THE NEW BERN HISTORICAL SOCIETY is a semiannual publication of the New Bern Historical Society, a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of the rich heritage of New Bern. Articles, letters, photographs, and memorabilia relevant to the history of New Bern and Craven County may be submitted to the editor for review. (Post Office Box 119, New Bern, North Carolina 28563)

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THE DILEMMA OF THE FIRST NEW BERN SETTLERS

Fred Sloatman

Two contingents of settlers embarked from England in 1710 to make a new home in North Carolina. The 650 German Palatines were the first to depart in January. In July 100 Swiss paupers, escorted by the new settlement's leader Baron Christoph von Graffenried, set sail. The two groups were finally united in late summer at the confluence of the Neuse and Trent rivers. An ill-fated crossing, hunger, disease, and exhaustion had taken the lives of half the Palatines. Together the remaining people set about to build shelters in and around their town named New Bern. Winter lay ahead and food supplies were scarce. By the grace of God most survived starvation.

Came spring, the industrious group were clearing fields and planting crops. Hard times had just begun. An epidemic of yellow fever broke out decimating more of their number. The final wrath came on September 22, 1711. Without warning Tuscarora Indians attacked the settlers. In the long months ahead many were massacred, their shelters burned, and their fields laid to waste. By March 1713 the Indians had been put down, and the weary group of immigrants resumed their laborious work.

Their leader Graffenried was now mentally and financially a broken man. On Easter of 1713 he set sail for England with hopes of raising additional funds. The attempt was to no avail, and he returned to his native Switzerland, never to see the American colony again. His Swiss and German settlers now learned that they did not own the property that Graffenried and his associates had allotted to

them. Their dream of owning land had been a driving incentive to endure the overwhelming hardships.

There was obviously a misunderstanding. In exchange for money received from the Crown, Graffenried and associates agreed to transport and feed the Palatines, set aside 250 acres for each family free of quitrent for five years and thereafter to be held for a rent of two pence yearly. The terms continue as to supplying them with food for the first year which was later to be repaid, the issuing of livestock, the value of which was also to be repaid, etc. The Swiss government, we should note, also supplied transportation money, but there was no mention of giving the land to the people. It appears that Graffenried and company were setting up a feudal system much like that of the Dutch patrons which still existed in the New York and New Jersey colonies.

Graffenried and partners had purchased large tracts of property from the Lords Proprietors of North Carolina for which they were given a title deed. When Graffenried sought money to buy desperately needed provisions for his settlers, he used the deed as collateral to secure a loan. The lender was kindhearted plantation owner Thomas Pollock. When Graffenried departed in 1713, Pollock waited for the baron to return with his money. When he did not, Pollock felt cheated and betrayed. As time went on, the only way he could recoup his financial loss was to take charge of the properties. Pollock tried to attract more settlers to New Bern by offering building lots at 20 shillings each with provision they be built upon. He also bought other property in the vicinity.

Thomas Pollock died in 1722, leaving 12,700 acres to his three sons. Two of the sons passed away in 1733, leaving all of the property holdings to the remaining brother Cullen Pollock. He was the man who would later try to collect rent from the Swiss and German settlers.

As a group the Palatines sincerely believed the acreage allotted to them was theirs outright. Perhaps they confused the agreement with an indenture contract which was a

popular way to get passage to the New World. Upon arrival at port the captain would sell the contract to regain his travel costs. The contract holder was now the owner of the passenger for a period of about three years. It was slavery, indeed! At the end of the term the person was set free with clothing and provisions. It was true that in the beginning the settlers were strict followers of Graffenried's command. If they did believe they were indenture servants, their servitude would have been fulfilled with Graffenried's departure. This may have accounted for their conviction that the land was theirs. For 25 years they continually petitioned the local government to honor their claim, but the Judicial Council would not act.

In 1742 Jacob Schulz and a delegation appeared before their local council, once again seeking their property rights. They presented a copy of the agreement Graffenried had made over 30 years before. A year later Cullen Pollock appeared before the same council to display his father's legal deeds. In conclusion the council would not act on the petition Schulz presented.

It was now that Cullen Pollock took action to collect rent which had not been paid through the years. He ordered the Swiss and German settlers off his property unless they would sign a bond promising payment in arrears. The time was deliberate. It was in the cold of winter, and the people had no other place to go. They no doubt signed, but this was not the end.

The Palatines continued their fight by presenting their case in London to the Board of Trade. The Board ordered the colonial governor to make a full report on their grievances. The report was returned from North Carolina, the governor pointing out that Pollock's demand for back rent would impose undo hardship on the Swiss and Germans. The Board did not set aside Pollock's claim, but as a result of Governor Johnston's recommendation, saw to it that the local council on October 11, 1749, issue 250 acres of property to each claimant.

The settlers, of course, accepted the new tracts of land.

Unlike the parcels that Graffenried had distributed in a concentrated locale, the new acreage was dispersed over a wide area. The 1749 date marks the end of the Swiss and German colony as a unit.

The Swiss and Germans moved onto their new lands, developed them and prospered. These nationalities melded into the North Carolina population, and many of their heirs are among us today. Their identity has not been forgotten, for had it not been for these courageous and determined people, there may never have been a city in North Carolina called New Bern.

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TAXATION
IN THE COLONIAL PERIOD OF NORTH CAROLINA

Mary Baker

The process whereby people, not always willingly, pay for the costs of their government is called taxation. From earliest times, in even the simplest of societies, there has been a need to maintain order and dispense justice, and these services have required money—taxes.

In the colonial period taxation was one of the first items considered by the General Assembly—as early as the 1600s. To us in the late twentieth century it seems mind-boggling, with our taxes on so many items, to discover that in this early period of about 100 years there was but one main tax: the poll tax or capitation tax. The word "poll" is a Middle English one and refers to hair on the head and from this to the head itself. Therefore we can define the poll tax as a head tax. However, not every person's head or poll was taxed. The Assembly in 1715 defined the people who would be taxed.

> All Males not being Slaves in this government shall be Tythable at the Age of 16 years And All Slaves Male or Female, either Imported or born in the Country shall be Tythable at the Age of Twelve Years. ["Tythable," English form of "tithable" means taxable.]

The rationale for these provisions was that a male of 16 should be a producing member of his household while slaves of 12 were customarily put to work and also became producing members. Anyone owning slaves was assumed to be financially able to afford the tax for his property.

The Assembly assigned to the courts in the counties of North Carolina the responsibility of deciding the amount of the tax for each of their counties to be based upon the need. The Assembly also levied taxes for the colony as a whole. In order to collect the taxes the head of each household was told to appear before the appropriate county court once a year to list his taxables. Needless to say, not everyone did.

In actual practice the county courts usually divided their counties into geographical districts called precincts and assigned a constable and a justice to each district. In 1715 all of North Carolina was divided into only six counties, therefore the areas could be huge. It was one of the constable's duties, between June 15 and August 5 of each year, to visit all households in his district to enumerate the taxables. These lists were then returned to the treasurer of the district. In case the constable deliberately omitted a name or names from his list he was to be fined for each name omitted. On the following February 10 he was to return and begin collecting the duly levied tax, both county and colony, which was again returned to the treasurer.

In 1749 the law defining taxables was changed somewhat. Added to the provisions were

> all Negroes, Mulattoes, Mustees Male or Female and all Persons of Mixt Blood, to the Fourth Generation, of the age of twelve years and upwards.

White females were not taxed unless they were widows or adult single women who were responsible for the tax on others in their households. Certain people were exempted from the tax as charity cases or indigents as declared by their county court, also clergy for the Church of England, the vestry of the church, the governor, precinct constables and patrollers or searchers. These last named people were the ones to find the noncompliers. They also helped with apprehending criminals.

As has been noted, the different counties levied differing amounts of tax, depending upon their needs. Accord-

ingly, the tax rate for Craven County fluctuated. In 1750 it was eight pence. In 1751 a bushel of corn sold to two shillings or 24 pence. In 1775 the rate was one shilling, two pence. During the war years a farmer could sell a bushel of corn for 100 shillings.

In 1715 the number of households in Craven was listed at 70. The number of taxables averaged 1.3 or about 91. In 1754 the number of taxables was 1646. Twelve years later, in 1766, the number had almost doubled to 2689.

We have noted county taxes. We must also, now, consider colony-wide taxes. In 1714-1715 there was a tax of 15 shillings to pay for the Tuscarora War, this in addition to the land tax. In 1748 the Assembly levied a one-shilling tax for eight years to build forts at Cape Fear and Ocracoke. In 1750 two pence was levied for four years to build circuit courts. These were not the only taxes for these years but were chosen for what they tell us about the duties of the colony at this time—safety, defense, and justice.

While the poll tax was the main tax during this period, it was not the only tax. Because of the financial strain of the Tuscarora War the Assembly levied a tax of land in 1715 of two shillings, six pence, per one hundred acres. For whatever reason, this land tax was abandoned in 1722. Not until 1777 was the land tax reintroduced. It has remained a part of revenue raising ever since.

In addition to land other property has been taxed since 1777 as well. On the list have been houses, slaves, money and money at interest, stock in trade, horses and cattle. In 1777 the Assembly levied one-half pence per each pound value. Because of the war this was raised to two pence and then three pence. Luxury goods as plate, jewelry, gold and silver watches, pianos, and pleasure vehicles—gigs, buggies, barouches, carriages, and sulkies--have also been taxed.

We must here mention the quitrent. While this was not a tax per se, no doubt most people looked upon it as another tax burden. The quitrent was a holdover from English practice. During the Middle Ages each holder of property

owed yearly work to his lord. As years and more years passed, a money payment took the place of this work obligation. This practice of a money payment for land was brought to the North Carolina colony. In the early years all owners of land owed a small sum per acre to the colony in lieu of work. This was payable in Proclamation money. By 1739 the quitrent was payable in certain accepted commodities.

We have considered the kinds of taxes and some amounts and suggested a value for these amounts from the early settlement of North Carolina to the Revolutionary War. We have mentioned the Tuscarora War and the building of forts for defense, also the building of circuit courts for administration of justice on the colony-wide level. We should now turn our attention to what the tax monies did in Craven County.

The largest proportion of tax monies was spent on public buildings, as courthouses and jails plus pillories, stocks, whipping posts and warehouses. It was in 1722 that the Assembly became concerned that county courts were meeting in private homes. Some people refused the use of their homes, often at the last minute, causing inconvenience to the justices and to the people seeking justice. In addition, court records became scattered or lost. Therefore the Assembly mandated construction of courthouses in counties and authorized a levy for construction. The size was also authorized, 16 by 24 feet.

By 1730 the Craven County Courthouse was built, probably on the corner of South Front and Craven streets. Nine years later in 1739 this building was in disrepair and needed much work. Within 10 more years Craven had returned to holding court in private residences. A new courthouse was begun in 1751, but due to many problems it was never completed. In or about 1762 another courthouse was begun at the corner of Broad and Middle streets. However, this building was not completed until 1770. Like many other courthouses it was used for other purposes—a market, balls, and under the arched pillars duels were fought. At

about the same time a new jail was built, for there was a note that Craven attempted to protect its jail "by ordering the sheriff to procure an Electrical Rod for the New Gaol in New Bern and have the same put up." In 1775 Craven finished a public wharf in New Bern and also constructed a pest house. In 1778 a poor house was built.

In addition to paying for public buildings, taxes had to pay the salaries of the public officers and, after 1749, pay to compensate jurors. Each county was expected to have a set of weights and measures for the public market, law books for the justices, and supplies for a powder magazine. In 1756 Craven was permitted to use tax monies to construct bridges. In 1758 and again in 1774 the county authorized using tax monies for people who had smallpox. They also bought supplies for ships which were quarantined off New Bern. On at least two occasions Craven County paid to have the Neuse Channel marked.

Probably the most interesting use of county tax money occurred in 1748 when the General Assembly ordered the County Commissioners to erect a fence around New Bern. The cost would be defrayed by an annual tax on residents of New Bern and of the county not to exceed four pence. The problem was that the town was still quite small. There were probably no more than 3500 people in the county and probably no more than 30 families in New Bern. Most everyone in town had a cow, perhaps a pig or two and certainly some chickens. The livestock roamed free in the streets and certainly encroached upon the countryside. Travelers had difficulty getting into town with all the livestock. Once the fence was erected the town was declared a public pasture. Unhappily the tax levy was not sufficient, and in 1750 the County Court ordered another four pence levy. By 1756 the fence was in need of repair, and the Assembly allowed another levy not to exceed one shilling to maintain it. Meanwhile New Bernians were limited to one cow and one calf, one horse and six sheep running at large. By 1769 the fence had all but disappeared. Apparently county residents opposed paying for New Bern's fence.

There are many other tax stories not covered here. The building of Tryon Palace is a fascinating one. The story of the Regulators is another one. Perhaps another time.

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FIRST MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

C. Edward Sharp

The history of First Missionary Baptist Church on Cypress Street in New Bern has been distinguished by a rich spiritual heritage, a strong pastoral lineage, a dedicated membership, and a profound commitment of service to God and the community. The church was founded as Cedar Grove Baptist Church under the leadership of the Reverend Henry Johnson in 1869, shortly after the emancipation of African-American slaves. The first church edifice was a small white frame building located in the southeast section of Greenwood Cemetery, and it faced what is now North Bern Street.

On January 3, 1895, the city of New Bern sold the church trustees the small lot at the corner of the cemetery for $50.00, expressing its "wishes to promote the cause of the Christian religion." The trustees at the time were J. F. Hamm, Mitchell Bryant, Albert Fields, Nelson Smith, Joseph Etheridge, Willie Gibbs, and Joseph Jackson. This belated transaction, apparently executed after the church had been on the site for 25 years, probably legalized an informal lease agreement whereby the church had been using city property.

Cedar Grove Baptist Church served as the site of the first session of the New Bern Eastern Missionary Baptist Association in 1875. This association, which included churches in Craven, Jones, Pamlico, Beaufort, and Hyde counties, grew out of the old Eastern Missionary Baptist Association established in 1865 in James City, a freedmen's settlement on the Trent River. Cedar Grove Church leaders evidently played a primary role in the organization of this new regional association of Baptist churches.

The service of the Reverend Alfred Leonard Edward Weeks as pastor of Cedar Grove from 1898 to 1912 encompassed the church's period of greatest crisis and triumph during its early years. When the Reverend Mr. Weeks arrived in New Bern, he found the educational opportunities for blacks to be lacking. He obtained a lot across from the church at the corner of Cypress and West streets where he led in erecting in 1902 the New Bern Industrial Collegiate Institute. The building was a two-story 45- by 65-foot frame structure with five classrooms on the first floor and an assembly room on the upper level. The elementary school became known as Weeks School, and it had an enrollment of 300 students.

In contrast to most of the schools established by Baptists for Afro-Americans during the period, this school was the product of individuals rather than the denominational church. Funding came from the Home Mission Society and the white and Afro-American people of New Bern. Black real estate developer and political leader Isaac Smith made the largest individual contribution.

The small frame church was destroyed by fire in March of 1905 even as planning had already begun for the building of a larger and more adequate edifice. The Reverend Mr. Weeks used his connections to raise money for a larger lot and new church, and many New Bern citizens contributed. He also solicited aid from his contacts in the North. Isaac Smith and the Citizens Bank of New Bern conveyed in 1906 a 100-foot-square lot just east of the school and facing the cemetery and the old church site to the trustees of the Industrial Collegiate Institute of New Bern. The school trustees in turn deeded the newly acquired property to the trustees of Cedar Grove Baptist Church, and the name of the church was changed at this time to First Baptist Church.

Construction of the new church began soon thereafter, and the cornerstone was laid in the same year, 1906. The current handsome Gothic Revival style brick church was completed in 1908, and it features an entrance tower on the east side and three large pointed arch windows in the front

FIRST MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH NEEDS RENOVATION. Photo by Conway.

nave wall. Brick buttresses accent the corners and separate the bays of the building. Each bay contains a single pointed arch window. Other Baptist congregations for many years used its early baptismal pool. As the architecturally significant church of a historic black congregation, the First Missionary Baptist Church building has recently been entered into the National Register of Historic Places.

The 90-year-old church has been closed since July 1997 while funds are being raised for major restoration. In the meantime, the members of the congregation are using the chapel of First Baptist Church on Middle Street for Sunday worship, Sunday School classes, Bible study, and Wednesday prayer services. The church and family life center are occasionally used for larger events.

The 1908 history of Negro Baptists in North Carolina praised the Reverend Mr. Weeks's work as "the wonder of North Carolina," and lamented the opposition of many of the older Baptist ministers to this bold, young leader. During his ministry in New Bern, First Baptist Church was brought into the vanguard of efforts to improve opportunities for the race in the state. The noted black leader Booker T. Washington lectured at the church in the spring of 1907. The Weeks School prospered, but Mr. Weeks angered the local black community during a fund raising effort in 1909 when he made uncomplimentary remarks about eastern North Carolina Afro-Americans. The Reverend Mr. Weeks resigned as pastor in 1912, and the school closed when he left New Bern.

The Great Fire in New Bern on December 1, 1922, was one of the greatest disasters ever to occur in our old city. The fire burned 40 blocks which were primarily in Afro-American residential areas. The fire threatened the church, but the brick building escaped harm. Fire victims were even sheltered in the basement. The Great Fire left 1000 persons homeless, and damage was estimated at $1,000,000—an extraordinary sum in 1922.

The Reverend John L. Jordan came to First Baptist Church as pastor in 1916, and he was with the church at the

time of the Great Fire. He was an earnest and untiring leader, an excellent preacher, and an exceptional organizer. One of his primary goals was the liquidation of the church's indebtedness, and this was accomplished in 1924. In the meantime, a two-story frame parsonage had been built between the church and the school in 1920. It is of interest to note that one of the carpenters on this project, William Edward Hawkins, was the father of Mrs. Dorothy Bryan, Church Historian. Before tendering his resignation in 1926 the Reverend Mr. Jordan had realized the fruition of many of his dreams for the new church.

The First Baptist Church choir became well-known throughout the area during the 1910s and 1920s. The choir was led by the Cooke family of musicians from 1916 to 1922 and later by outstanding musicians Dan Reynolds and his mother Julianne Reynolds. A rarity in those days, the choir even had a violinist.

A few troubled years followed the resignation and departure of Mr. Jordan with dissension and disunity in the church. Many outstanding members left the congregation and joined other Baptist churches in the city. Still others left to reside in cities in the North and South. The remaining members were bewildered by the exodus, but the bonds of faith, devotion, perseverance, and love held the church together during the uncertain times. These years were also marked by a series of three brief pastorates. A real turning point took place in the life of First Baptist Church with the arrival of the Reverend Thomas L. Bynum as pastor in 1933.

The Reverend Mr. Bynum was a recent young graduate of Shaw University with little pastoral experience when he accepted the church's call to come to New Bern. However, he was eager to assume the responsibility of nurturing and building up the congregation which had lost some of its cohesive spirit. Many innovations were recommended and adopted for the significant benefit of the church; and, as the church grew, so did he. He was also available and willing to go beyond the call of duty in his ministry. It was never too early or too late for Mr. Bynum to go to the assistance of

those in need. The older people adored him; the younger people loved him. Whether in church, Sunday School, or prayer meetings, the young pastor was always present to nurture spiritual growth and provide guidance for the members of his flock. After serving the church and community faithfully for 19 years, the Reverend Thomas L. Bynum died following a brief illness. His death was mourned greatly by the people of the church, the school where he served as a principal, the city, and the county.

Deacons serving under Mr. Bynum were Messrs. Clark, chairman, J. R. Bryant, William Hawkins, J. Slade, Jones, Hatch, and Fields. Deaconesses were Mmes. Nancy Hatch, Hannah Sumner, Emmaline Rountree, and Minnie Hawkins.

First Baptist Church again began to take on new life with new goals and programs under the leadership of the Reverend J. H. Carroway, who became pastor in 1956. The first large-scale renovation and beautification of the interior and exterior of the church took place during this time. The kitchen was furnished and reopened with dinners again being served at the church. The system of pledge cards for the financial support of the church's program was introduced. A new organ was purchased to replace the old pipe organ which had been given to the church by First Presbyterian Church. Birthday rally proceeds provided a fund for scholarship assistance to young members going to college. Brick steps were built to provide direct access from the outside of the church to the pastor's study. Mrs. Bessie Jordan Cherry, daughter of a former pastor, organized the Pastor's Aid Circle, and Mrs. Dorothy Bryan served as its first president. These and many other improvements and additions took place at First Baptist Church during the sacrificial service and invaluable ministry of the Reverend Mr. Carroway which concluded in 1964.

First Baptist Church once more had a succession of pastors who served for brief tenures of two or three years in the 1960s and 1970s, but these were also years of accomplishment and growth. The church installed new carpeting,

and new pews were acquired. A central cooling and heating system was put in place, and a new piano was purchased for the Sunday School. Property adjoining the church was purchased, and a van was secured to bring non-ambulatory members and others who needed transportation to church.

The greatest single achievement during this period was the opening of the first Black day-care center in the New Bern area in 1970. Johnny Floyd, a former deacon, became increasingly aware that many working parents did not have anyone to take care of their children while they were at work. He presented a plan to the church for a children's day-care program to meet this great need, and he was the driving force in the further planning and organization which resulted in the opening of the center in the basement of First Baptist Church. Both Black and white children were enrolled. Bessie Davenport Williams was the first director, and those who participated in the successful operation of the day-care center were Constance Evans Bronner, Frances Hatch Jones, who taught for 15 years, Agnes Bizzell, Renee Adams Dillahunt, Aylice Attmore, Debbie Bryant, Vanessa Cooper, Mattie Bettis, and Barbara Taylor. After 17 years of splendid service to the church and community, First Missionary Baptist Church Day Care Center closed in June 1987. The center was well-known and respected for the quality of its program and for the positive influence it had on the lives of hundreds of little children.

The General Baptist State Convention took action in the early 1980s to incorporate the word "missionary" in the name of all of its member churches. And so First Baptist Church, which had been organized in 1869 as Cedar Grove Baptist Church and later named First Baptist Church, became First Missionary Baptist Church.

It has been a long pilgrimage from the church's founding 129 years ago until the incorporation of its historic church building in 1998 into the National Register of Historic Places. Now that handsome structure requires major restoration, and the faithful congregation—once again

without a pastor and now meeting as guests in the facilities of a sister white Baptist church—seeks new pastoral leadership and must raise a great amount of money for the renewing of their old church structure. But, as always in times of adversity and challenge, the members of the congregation are undaunted in the certainty that their faith and faithfulness will bring them to victory. In this phase of their history they know that "we are and shall continue to be because God is and shall ever be."

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JOHN LAWSON – A MAN OF INFLUENCE

Fred Sloatman

A young courageous Englishman,
Three hundred years ago,
Came to Carolina,
Its wilderness to know.
He built himself a cabin,
By the rivers Trent and Neuse,
And lived among the Indians,
His time he put to use.
He wrote about this strange new land,
Traveling here and there,
Ventured to the unknown,
Where others did not dare.
He did not seek out riches,
For learning was his game,
He left behind a legend,
John Lawson was his name.

If one person can be dubbed "most influential" in founding the city of New Bern on two rivers in North Carolina, the honor should be bestowed on the Englishman John Lawson, Gentleman and Surveyor-General. He came to America to study this new and mysterious land and its people. His early exploration and observations became fuel for a book. His works enlightened curious people far across the ocean who yearned for a land of opportunity. It was in part his influence that brought many oppressed people to the Carolina shores. His devotion to his cause for mankind was unfaltering, risking his own safety to enlighten others. He served the Queen of England, Colonial Governors and

courts of law, the landgrave Baron Christoph von Graffenried and his many followers. Ironically, the Indians whom he had studied, trusted, and lived among were the ones responsible for his untimely death. Let us learn more about this remarkable man.

John Lawson was born in England on December 27, 1674. He was the only son of Dr. John Lawson and his wife Isabella Love. Dr. Lawson was of noble lineage, the nephew of the Vice-Admiral Sir John Lawson. The family owned estates in the vicinity of Kingston-on-Hull, Yorkshire. This is where young John Lawson attended Anglican schools. When older, he attended lectures at Gresham College located near the family residence in London. In addition to his academic course, John was intrigued with mathematics, natural sciences, travel, and invention. It is most interesting to note that the Royal Society met at Gresham. Its purpose was to pursue the advancement of scientific methods and the verification of knowledge in the natural sciences. Membership in this prestigious group came only by accomplishment and merit. There is no doubt that John Lawson aspired to being accepted one day into this elite circle.

We are told that in the year 1700 our young graduate was in route to Rome, Italy, to attend the Pope's Jubilee when he met an older, worldly gentleman who had traveled to India and to the American colonies. He convinced John Lawson to seek his adventure and exploration in the Carolina colonies. Lawson wasted no time, and by May first was aboard a ship in the Thames, destined for Carolina. By mid-August he arrived in Charleston.

His first assignment was to collect and send to England certain specimens for a botanist and apothecary in London. He was next called upon to learn more about the various Indian tribes and to foster a healthy relationship between the Europeans and the natives. It was on the day after his twenty-sixth birthday in the cold of winter that Lawson and five other young Englishmen, accompanied by five Indian guides, set out from Charleston to explore the Carolina wilderness. The trek in the form of a horseshoe covered 550

miles, lasting two months and ending on the shore of the Pamlico River. The group encountered and mingled with many different Indian tribes. Lawson diligently made detailed maps, records, and sketches. He studied the vegetation, animals, fish, and fowl. He learned about edible roots, nuts, and berries. He even compiled a dictionary of different tribal words. All of this exacting information would one day be compiled and published in a book entitled *John Lawson's History of North Carolina.*

In the eight years that followed Lawson would continue his exploration in between his many other activities. He became an accomplished surveyor, mapmaker, and served as a clerk of the court and public register in the county. He acquired tracts of property, some by grants and some he purchased. In 1706 he was one of the founders of Bath, the first established town in North Carolina.

It was about this time that he was granted 640 acres at the "fork of the Neuse." The term referred to the land between the Neuse and Trent rivers. Here he set about to build a cabin on the bank of a creek that to this day honors his name. It is said that he lived here for three years with his bulldog and Indian male servant. Most likely it was here that he compiled a manuscript for his book mentioned earlier.

In 1705 a Swiss stock company was being formed called George Ritter & Company whose purpose was to foster a settlement in the American colonies. Mr. Ritter was an altruistic man, dreaming of glory for Switzerland. Some of his associates, such as Franz Ludwig Michel, had other motives, namely to acquire riches. The men went about seeking settlers, financial backing, a leader, and a location to settle. Enter here the Swiss nobleman Baron von Graffenried, heavily in debt and desperate to seek fame and fortune. He met Franz Michel, who convinced him to join their group as a leader. Part of his lure was the promise of finding silver deposits in this undeveloped land.

Finding settlers was the easy part. The Swiss government was anxious to rid itself of debtors and other "unde-

sirable" people. The English Crown had opened its doors to thousands of German Palatine refugees and was hoping to locate them in the American colonies. Both countries would contribute settlers as well as pay their passage to the New World.

As for a location the North Carolina Colony had been slow in developing. The Lords Proprietors who stood to gain offered large tracts of land at most reasonable prices. They would even make special concessions to foreign groups.

Here in sequence are the events that eventually brought settlers to the "fork of the Neuse." The year was 1709 and John Lawson, accompanied by two colonial gentlemen, was in London to promote publication of his book. He was introduced to the Baron who was most interested in his tranquil Carolina home. Lawson allowed him to read his book. When the Ritter group purchased 1200 acres adjoining Lawson's homestead property, the die was cast.

The Lords Proprietors of North Carolina approached John Lawson and his fellow travelers and asked if they would accompany a group of 650 Palatines to their American colony. They were told that the Baron must stay behind to await the arrival of a Swiss group. Lawson and companions agreed, and in January 1710 the group set sail for America. The 13-week crossing was a harrowing experience. The confined passengers suffered from disease and starvation. To add to their woes, they watched their separate supply ship being captured by a French privateer just off the Virginia coast.

From Virginia the weary people made their way over land and water to the chosen location on the Neuse River. We are told that it was in April that Lawson arrived in North Carolina with the bedraggled German group. He had not been given authority to begin the settlement. His instructions were to keep the settlers intact and to await the arrival of von Graffenried. It must have been extremely frustrating to watch the sickly group biding time, day after day. Months later the Baron did arrive with his 100 Swiss

paupers. Only half of the Palatine group were alive to greet him. The people began to build shelters while the Baron sought provisions to get the settlers through the winter.

Lawson's big job now began. He assisted von Graffenried in negotiating with the Neusiok Indians to buy their village Chattookau, which is now the site of Union Point Park. Next, he and the Baron laid out the streets of this new town called New Bern. Lands by the Neuse and Trent rivers had to be measured out and allotted to the farmers. It can be assumed that Lawson imparted with these new arrivals his knowledge of local edible foods that would help to hold them over.

In addition to being commissioned to serve with the state of Virginia in laying out the boundary between Virginia and North Carolina, Lawson continued to work with the Baron. In late summer of 1711 Lawson and von Graffenried were headed up the Neuse River to determine its source when they were captured by a band of Tuscarora Indians and taken before their King Hancock. At one point both men were set free only to be taken prisoner again when another tribal chieftain appeared on the scene. Von Graffenried was let go, but John Lawson was put to death. The reason for the hostility can best be summed up as an accumulation of grievances. It was the beginning of an Indian uprising which would take the lives of many settlers.

At the age of 36 John Lawson's life was over. To remember his deeds New Bern has named a creek, a city park, a secondary street, and a bridge in his honor. The bridge will soon be gone. We are well reminded of our ties to Bern, Switzerland. Decals with Bern bears are seen on our city vehicles while the Bern bear adorns the front of City Hall and the downtown fire station. Perhaps next to the bust of von Graffenried, whose likeness stares across Pollock Street, a bronze statue of a bulldog might be placed to keep watch over our fair city. Beneath the dog a plaque might read, "In memory of my master, John Lawson, a valiant Englishman, instrumental in locating New Bern in North Carolina at the fork of the Neuse."

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BOOK REVIEW

General Robert F. Hoke: Lee's Modest Warrior, by Daniel W. Barefoot. (Winston-Salem, N. C.: John F. Blair, Publisher, 1996. 452 pp. $24.95.)

Robert Frederick Hoke (1837-1912) was born into a distinguished family that had deep roots in western North Carolina's Lincoln County. After receiving a rigorous secondary education, he attended Kentucky Military Institute for one year but then was called back at the tender age of 16 to help run the family business.

When the Civil War began in 1861, Hoke returned to Lincoln County from his work and law studies in Washington, D. C. and was commissioned a Second lieutenant in a local unit of the Confederate Army in Lincolnton. His company trained in Raleigh where native New Bernian and former U. S. Senator and Secretary of the Navy George Badger made a prophetic statement after observing the young Confederate officer: "There is a man who will make his mark before this war is over." His North Carolina unit was promptly transferred to Richmond and then dispatched to Bethel on the peninsula where the first shooting encounter of the war occurred.

By January 1862 Major Hoke found himself stationed in New Bern, and shortly thereafter Lieutenant Colonel Hoke's regiment, the famed 33rd North Carolina, was in the thick of the fighting here on March 14, 1862. Indeed, one-half of the Confederate soldiers killed in the battle of New Bern were from his regiment.

Twenty-two months after his enlistment, Robert Hoke was promoted to brigadier general and was subsequently

promoted to major general shortly after his brilliantly successful effort to retake Plymouth, N. C. At the time of this final promotion he was all of 26 years old. As the youngest major general in the Confederate Army, Hoke's performance as a field commander is without parallel on either side.

How can one explain this modest young man's remarkable ability to command the devotion of hard-bitten and fiercely independent Confederate troops? Daniel Barefoot skillfully draws on diaries, regimental histories, and contemporary accounts of Hoke's campaigns to portray how he achieved such unusual dedication and loyalty from his men.

Certainly, his personal bravery was unquestioned. Time after time, he took great risks in battle in order to accomplish his objectives. But many much less successful officers on both sides did the same. Combat leadership of the sort exhibited by Robert Hoke also involves a concern for the welfare and safety of his men. Hoke was a master of military strategy. Whenever possible, he avoided the brutal and costly frontal assault so favored by his contemporaries. Instead, Hoke devised elaborate and complex battle plans which involved coordinated attacks designed to minimize his own losses and confuse and demoralize his enemy. His plan for the retaking of New Bern is a case in point.

His abiding concern for the welfare of his soldiers was not limited to combat settings. Take, for example, a serious shortage of soap that developed in the Confederate Army between campaigns in Virginia. In contrast to other Confederate units, Hoke's regiment was awash in soap, a fact that prompted a nearby Texas regimental commander to complain to General Lee of favoritism. When Lee investigated the matter, he found that Hoke's soldiers had manufactured their own soap using the carcasses of animals killed on the battlefield and kettles Hoke had procured on his own initiative. Hoke's regiment was able to deliver wagonloads of surplus soap to nearby units.

Another, seemingly trivial, episode helps reveal why Hoke was held in such high esteem by his men. During another winter lull in the fighting in Virginia, a heavy snow

fell. Hoke launched a surprise snowball attack against a much larger Georgia regiment. Since the Georgia boys were from the Savannah area, Hoke assumed that the Georgians would have had little experience with snowballs. The Savannah boys were initially routed and fled but counterattacked, and "captured" Hoke. The young commander of the Tarheel regiment was given a lengthy rolling in the snow prior to release.

Since Hoke was involved in many of the campaigns which took place in eastern North Carolina, Barefoot's well-researched biography of General Hoke also provides us with insights into this immediate area's plight during the Civil War. Hoke's 1864 activities included the recapture of Plymouth and Washington, N. C., as well as his aborted attack on New Bern.

The question remains: Would General Hoke's campaign to retake New Bern have been successful if Robert E. Lee had not urgently called for Hoke's army to return to Virginia shortly after Hoke had launched his attack on New Bern? Barefoot is convinced that Hoke's experienced and disciplined army—flush with victories and fighting on the soil of their native state—would have prevailed had they not received the fateful orders to return to Virginia. Hoke had penetrated the outer defensive perimeter of New Bern, and there was little hope for reinforcements of the Federal forces defending the town when the recall was issued.

Even as his troops were pulling out of their offensive positions around New Bern and beginning their foot-cavalry race to Kinston to board waiting trains for Petersburg, Hoke demanded the unconditional surrender of New Bern. Apparently the ploy almost worked, because the Federal commanders huddled together for three hours to discuss a possible surrender. They refused only after Federal scouts reported the attacking Confederate Amy was leaving their positions. One wonders what New Bern would be like today if Hoke's audacious bluff had succeeded. Most likely New Bern would have suffered the same fate as Washington where the retreating Federal forces burned a good por-

tion of that town.

After the war Hoke returned to his home in Lincolnton. The family businesses were in ruins. Hoke promptly hitched up his old warhorse to a plow and began farming. Later he prospered, married, raised a family, and was instrumental in the rapid industrialization of North Carolina.

Once the war was over, it was over forever for Hoke. During the next 47 years, he refused all honors, gifts, and titles associated with his military career. He would not attend Confederate reunions nor did he accept any of the invitations offered to him to run for political office. He never talked in public of the war nor did he write of his wartime experiences. Robert Hoke was "the epitome of reserve."

Barefoot's biography of Robert Hoke should attract a wide readership among Civil War buffs, because Hoke's military accomplishments have been severely neglected by academic historians. Hoke's refusal to speak on his military career, coupled with his relatively low rank at the beginning of the war, his youth, and the fact that many of his fellow Civil War generals readily wrote and spoke--sometimes ad nauseam—of their achievements, have contributed to the neglect. Ironically Fort Bragg is known everywhere, but few know that most of this huge and famous military installation is located in Hoke County. By most standards Braxton Bragg was grandly incompetent as a Confederate leader, whereas the much less known Robert Hoke was a star in that ill-fated cause. You do not, however, have to be a Civil War devotee to enjoy this book. Anyone interested in nineteenth century North Carolina will profit from reading Daniel Barefoot's account of Hoke's life.

I believe the reason I enjoyed this book so much involves the fact that I've been lucky enough to have known several men—and women as well—who remind me of Robert Hoke. Unfortunately, they were all born in the nineteenth century, and they are all dead now. Sadly, the Robert Hokes of this world may be close to extinction.

Richard Lore

CORRIGENDA

The May 1998 issue of the *Journal* seemed to have more than its share of things that could go wrong.

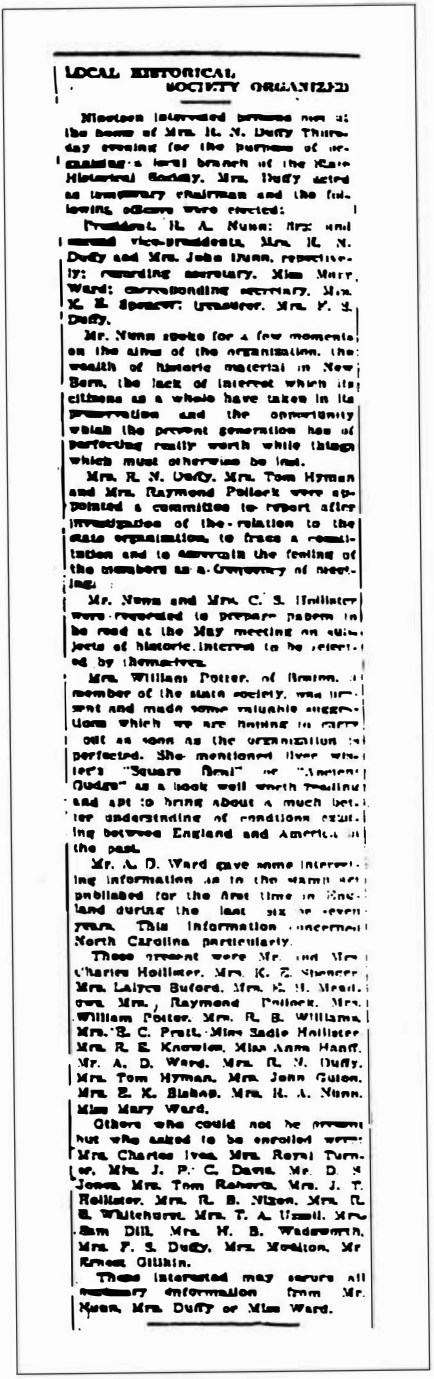
The following paragraph was inadvertently left out of Richard Lore's splendid article. It should have appeared just above the heading *The Modern Era* on page 28.

The "beauty of large brown eyes," was Frances Claypoole, a New Bern girl, who became Mr. Royster's wife. New Bern certainly might have appeared "even more lovely (in 1931) than it does today (in 1973)." The raw scars of the recent riverfront renewal project were still there and in that four-decade period, hundreds of houses and buildings had been demolished. Note that this is an address to be spoken, not written. Still his journalistic skills are evident. The entire text of his talk is contained in the Society's minutes, complete with Mr. Royster's handwritten corrections.

While inserting a page break for the picture in Mary Baker's article, the computer ate two lines of text. The paragraph at the bottom of page 42 should read as follows:

While as a youngster he may have lost his interest in formal education, as an adult he took great interest in the subject following the death of his mother. He served on the New Bern Board of Education and for many years was chairman. When Libby Hodges, his granddaughter, graduated in 1960, Dr. Richard Spear, then Principal of New Bern High School, asked Mr. Taylor to present her diploma.

The illustration on page 5 was improperly copied. The way it should have looked appears on the following page.



LOCAL HISTORICAL
SOCIETY ORGANIZED

Nineteen interested persons met at the home of Mrs. R. N. Duffy Thursday evening for the purpose of organizing a local branch of the State Historical Society. Mrs. Duffy acted as temporary chairman and the following officers were elected:

President, R. A. Nunn; first and second vice-presidents, Mrs. R. N. Duffy and Mrs. John Nunn, respectively; recording secretary, Miss Mary Ward; corresponding secretary, Mrs. K. E. Spencer; treasurer, Mrs. F. S. Duffy.

Mr. Nunn spoke for a few moments on the aims of the organization, the wealth of historic material in New Bern, the lack of interest which its citizens as a whole have taken in its preservation and the opportunity which the present generation has of perfecting really worth while things which must otherwise be lost.

Mrs. R. N. Duffy, Mrs. Tom Hyman and Mrs. Raymond Pollock were appointed a committee to report after investigation of the relation to the state organization, to frame a constitution and to ascertain the feeling of the members as a temporary of meeting.

Mr. Nunn and Mrs. C. S. Hollister were requested to prepare papers to be read at the May meeting on subjects of historic interest to be selected by themselves.

Mrs. William Potter, of Raleigh, a member of the state society, was present and made some valuable suggestions which we are hoping to carry out as soon as the organization is perfected. She mentioned over Wheeler's "Square Deal" or "Ancient Quidge" as a book well worth reading and apt to bring about a much better understanding of conditions existing between England and America in the past.

Mr. A. D. Ward gave some interesting information as to the stamp act published for the first time in England during the last six or seven years. This information concerned North Carolina particularly.

Those present were Mr. and Mrs. Charles Hollister, Mrs. K. E. Spencer, Mrs. Lalyce Buford, Mrs. R. H. Meadows, Mrs. Raymond Pollock, Mrs. William Potter, Mrs. R. B. Williams, Mrs. E. C. Pratt, Miss Sadie Hollister, Mrs. R. E. Knowles, Miss Anna Hanff, Mr. A. D. Ward, Mrs. R. N. Duffy, Mrs. Tom Hyman, Mrs. John Guion, Mrs. E. K. Bishop, Mrs. R. A. Nunn, Miss Mary Ward.

Others who could not be present but who asked to be enrolled were: Mrs. Charles Ives, Mrs. Royal Turner, Mrs. J. P. C. Davis, Mr. D. S. Jones, Mrs. Tom Roberts, Mrs. J. T. Hollister, Mrs. R. B. Nixon, Mrs. R. S. Whitehurst, Mrs. T. A. Uzzell, Mrs. Sam Dill, Mrs. H. B. Wadsworth, Mrs. F. S. Duffy, Mrs. Moulton, Mr. Ernest Gillikin.

Those interested may secure all necessary information from Mr. Nunn, Mrs. Duffy or Miss Ward.

Sun Journal article of April 20, 1923, announcing the start of a "Local Historical Society".