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ALAMANCE CHURCH.

A HISTORICAL ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT

The Dedication of its Fourth House of Worship,

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On October 18th, 1879.

By Rev. C. H. WILEY.

Published by the Congregation and other friends of the Church.

RALEIGH:
EDWARDS, BROUGHTON & Co., Printers and Binders,
July, 1880.

INTRODUCTION.

The occasion of this address occurred on Saturday of the Fall Session of Orange Presbytery, at Alamance Church. The dedication services had been assigned to me by the pastor and congregation, and consisted of a historical address in the morning, and a sermon in the afternoon, with devotional exercises; a very large crowd was present, and arrangements were made at once for the publication, in pamphlet form, of both the address and sermon. I spoke from notes, and the pressure of my heavy and exacting engagements prevented, for a considerable time, the preparation of these efforts for the press; and finally, acting on my own discretion, and solely with a view to convenience in the size of the publication, and to the saving of expense to my friends, I have concluded to have only the address printed, tho' I am aware that this will be a disappointment to many. I sincerely regret a delay I could not avoid, and hope that all concerned will concur with me that the pamphlet, in its present form, is large enough, and will serve the purpose chiefly designed, of being a memorial of Alamance.

C. H. WILEY.

WINSTON, N. C., April 21st, 1880.

ADDRESS.

GENERAL HISTORY AND EARLY SETTLEMENT.

Fidelity to the task assigned to me will not permit me to indulge in the expression of the reflections and emotions excited by the occasion. A mere narrative, in a condensed form, of the facts worthy of mention, will require all the time I should occupy, and yet I am constrained to advert to some of the circumstances of my position here to-day, and with which I am profoundly affected. Your speaker is the fourth in descent from the donor¹ of the land on which Alamance church was founded, a man whose family name has passed from this community, and yet his great grandson is the orator on this memorable occasion; and by his side, assisting in these services, is a young man² of the name and lineage of one³ who was among the first, if she was not the first person buried in the consecrated ground near us. This is one of the old churches of the State, and four generations have worshipped here, and nearly if not every one of those who planted it in what was then a wilderness is represented by kindred here to-day.

But while these first planters here of the church of Christ were, also, the first white occupants of the soil, they were not subjected to the privations and dangers often encountered by those who subdue new countries to the interests and institutions of civilized life. This region was then under the protection of local government whose authority was acknowledged and felt, and whose administrative machinery, tho' somewhat clumsy, and far less beneficent than what a statesman of this age could desire, afforded security to life and property to all communities within the present limits of the State. The province of North Carolina had

¹William Cusach.

²Rev. B. W. Mebane.

³Mary Mebane.

been laid off for a considerable time, and was first settled on its eastern border by slow degrees, and in various ways. In the east its government was first formed, and from its surroundings in the place of its origin and of its growth for years there was established a policy which was afterwards considered a source of grievance by the western settlers. The first home of power was jealous of its removal, and partly on this account, and partly for economy and convenience, it became the habit to lay off new counties over large areas—and when this section was settled what is now Guilford county was embraced within the limits of Orange and Rowan. The line ran some miles east of this place, and most of this congregation was in Rowan county.

As most of my hearers are aware, the province of Carolina, embracing what is now North and South Carolina, and extending westward to the Pacific Ocean, was granted by King Charles II. to eight Lords Proprietors—that these surrendered their right to the crown in 1729, one of them, Lord Carteret, afterwards Earl Granville, retaining his undivided interest in the soil, and that at this time two distinct provincial governments were established for North and South Carolina—and that in the year 1743 Earl Granville's interest was laid off in severalty, and embraced the northern side of North Carolina, and as far south as the present Montgomery line, or near to it, and thus included the lands in this congregation. Tho' this Proprietor retained no political power, his rights in the soil involved land offices and agencies, forming a sort of government within a government, and involving complications and burdens which added to those grievances which helped to prepare the way for Revolution. This was the political situation just before the settlement of this region by the whites. Colonization on the Southern Atlantic border had been largely confined to the coast region—there the governments were seated, and the power and hostility of the Indian tribes were met and overcome. There were the scenes of privation, adventure,

and border license and crime; and finally, political systems crystalized into fixed forms, the authority of law was established, and in the province of North Carolina, as already stated, was felt and respected over all the territory, as far at least as the present limits of the State extend. But the far greater portion of the country, even within our present boundaries, was without white inhabitants, and the beautiful middle region was the wide highway of traders from the eastern colonies of Virginia and North Carolina with the Indians west and south of them. A vast and grand country in the Piedmont regions of Virginia and the Carolinas was reserved by Providence for the planting of a race who were to be fixed in the morally strategic points of the continent, and thence to permeate a great coming nation with the outgrowth of their character; and at the appointed time the flow of this new life, a most interesting phenomenon in the history of human migration, began, and filled all its appointed channels.

I refer to what is called the Scotch Irish movement, too well known to require here more than a bare allusion, with the remark that it was reserved for a time, a set time and occasion, and for no other. This Scotch overflow seemed to have been ordered for the planting of good seed in vital centers of the American Continent, and since the settling of this country the population of Scotland has ceased to seek agricultural outlets, and has become largely a manufacturing people. When the overflow through Ireland, and thence to the northern parts of America was occurring, the Providential reservations for it in this region were becoming known on both sides of the Atlantic, and were to those contemplating a removal what the Great West is now.

And here it is proper to glance at the hill country of our State as it was when our fathers first took possession of it. Old writers describe it in glowing terms, and a Virginian¹

¹Col. Byrd.

who was on the Commission of 1728-'29, to run the boundary between his Province and that of North Carolina, entered a large tract, in what is now Rockingham county, and called it Eden. There was a charm to the eye as well as an economical value in the undulations of the surface, the air, as now, where it is not poisoned by an unwise system of culture and improvements, was salubrious, the alternations of the seasons delightful, and the resources of timber, of minerals, of water power, and of agricultural production varied and immense. There was no better watered land, and no purer water on the face of the earth; in spring, summer, and autumn nature was robed in flowers of every hue, and the great forests were vocal with the hum of bees and the songs of birds. There was everywhere rich pasturage for cattle, and a soil whose abounding wealth and capacity still show its power after many years of a careless and wasting husbandry.

The variety of woody growth was exceeded no where else in¹ the world, and much of the country was in forests of oaks of every species, of poplar, walnut, hickory, elm, gum, maple, ash, chestnut, beech, birch, and pine, with many smaller varieties, and with a profusion of flowering and fruit bearing shrubs and vines; and everywhere, in these primeval woods, with their trees of enormous size, game was abundant, and even in the small streams there was a good

¹The pamphlet called "Woody Plants of North Carolina," by the late Rev. M. L. Curtis, D.D., and published with our State Geological Reports, was prepared at my instance, and for me, on a plan of my suggestion, when I was thinking of publishing a Gazetteer of the State. The MS. was long in my possession, and given by me to the State, and in the first Preface, the learned author who was an accomplished and enthusiastic botanist, stated that the variety of indigenous trees and woody plants in North Carolina was twice as great as in the whole region from northern Virginia to eastern Main; and a scientific Englishman, who was in the VanBuren exploring expedition around the world, told me that he found more kinds of wild flowers in Guilford and the adjoining region than he had ever seen elsewhere.

supply of fish. The generation next before me remembered when shad ascended the North Buffalo within the bounds of this congregation, when deer were still lingering within their old haunts, and when bears revisited them in the chestnut season, and the wild turkeys are still here, and will stay if we are wise. This was the place of habitation prepared by the God of Nature for our fathers, and hither they came, not as adventurers or hunters, not as outlaws and wanderers, but intelligent immigrants with a fair knowledge of the country, in solid ranks, with good worldly substance, with needed implements of industry, with the arts of civilization, and with the institutions of Christian society. The first movement was about the years 1750-'53, from Pennsylvania, through what was called the Nottingham Company, which purchased a body of land within the limits of the present counties of Rockingham and Guilford. Others soon followed, flowing southward, and purchasing lands directly from Earl Granville, and settling the region of this congregation; and in a short time there was a comparatively compact society, fixed in comfortable and peaceful homes, entirely self-sustaining, and having opened farms, mills, shops and stores. A new country, up to that time, had never been more rapidly, quietly, safely, justly, and completely possessed; the land was bought at fair purchase, and not a title was stained by fraud or violence to the original owners; there were no wars with savages, no border ruffians, no refugees from justice and the restraints of law. The main body of colonists was Scotch-Irish and Presbyterian from Pennsylvania, swelled by accessions from Virginia and Ireland, and this was fringed on the east by Germans, and on the west by the people of the Society of Friends. These settlers were probably neighbors in Pennsylvania, and at all events they were largely affected by the same motives which brought the Scotch-Irish. The mass of all were intelligent, sturdy, well-to-do farmers, with a keen eye for good land and a fine climate, of fixed religious

faith, and devoted to self-government and religious freedom. The three classes, each, at base, of sterling metal, were of mutual service, and helped to repress in each other those one-sided views, narrow sympathies, and extreme conservatism which spring from isolation. The Alamance community was then all Scotch-Irish, and, as far as I have been able to ascertain, the first settlers came here in 1753, at least this is the date of the earliest deeds I have examined among the records of the Secretary of State in Raleigh. The deed to my mother's grandfather, Wm. Cusach, who gave the land for this church, was from Earl Granville, dated in 1759, and for 635 acres; and within seven or eight years from the first location there was a considerable and thriving community, though some of the farms were large, and neighbors were often several miles apart. Wm. Cusach and Thos. Wiley married sisters, and with them came their mother-in-law, Mary Mebane, and thus three of the old names were planted here together, and this Mary Mebane was one of the first, if she was not the first, who was buried in our grave-yard, as I have already stated; and I refer to those parties only because I am more familiar with the history of my relatives than with that of other families, and not because I deem their history of more importance. The general character of these first settlers may be inferred from what has been already said, but it is due to the occasion to present a fuller view of its salient points. As their history shows, they came here not merely to live and to gain as men of the world. They brought to this fair land that without which any place is a desert, and with their first plantings were the seeds of moral truth, with their earliest efforts to provide for material wants were thoughts for religious privileges which were with them essentials of life, never to be dispensed with. There were few, if any, illiterate colonists, no desperate characters, and no paupers. Most of the settlers were men of means and of character, and in the whole history of this community, now some century and a quarter

old, there have been fewer great crimes than have marked the progress of some colonies in a decade of years.

There were no great Bible Societies till this century, and it is well known that before the year 1810 there was a comparative scarcity of the Holy Scriptures, even in the most christian lands, and that Bibles were vastly more expensive than now; and yet in my more than ten years of experience of active official service in three States, in the now immense, omnipresent, and glorious appliances for the universal dissemination of the Word, when Bibles are sold for 25 cents and Testaments for 5 cents, and when they are freely given to all unable to buy, I have found no communities which were better supplied than this seems to have been at its first settlement. The Divine Word was a necessary part of the pioneer's outfit, and old Bibles found all over this congregation will testify to what I say. The colony was planted on the Word of God, this was the Law, the school book, the political and social economy of the colonists, and there have descended to me quite a number of well-thumbed copies of different sizes and styles, and I suppose many here have similar inheritances. With the Bible was found a literature rooted in it, a spiritual and intellectual pabulum far superior to that which is now most common even in christian communities. Many of the first families had respectable libraries of standard works, chiefly religious, and consisting of such books as The Confession of Faith, Larger and Shorter Catechisms, The Pilgrim's Progress, the works of Boston, of Doddridge, of Baxter and Watts, Fox's Book of Martyrs, The Afflicted Man's Companion, and the Balm of Gilead. I am the inheritor of two old copies of The Confession of Faith, with the Catechisms, and the Sum of Saving Knowledge, and one of them containing also Covenants, National and Solemn Leagues, Directories, Form of Church Government, &c. One, in boards was published in Glasgow in 1746, the other in the same city in 1764. At the time of the settlements formed here there was some dis-

sension among Presbyterians, growing out of the preaching and movements of the celebrated George Whitefield, and those who adhered to the revival doctrines of the great preacher were called Whitfieldians, and New Lights, and the colonists in North Carolina embraced both of these classes, and their settlements were formed according to their leanings in this matter. The people of Alamance were of the New Light, the communities north of them of the old habits; and when both of these classes were formed into one pastorate, under the ministry of a man who was an adherent, nominally, of the anti-Whitfieldian ways, but who was of fervent piety and of eminent prudence, there was a blending of the better elements of both sides, a quiet resistance to extreme tendencies either way, and the development of a spirit of active and conservative religious life. The fires early kindled here were controlled, not smothered, by their surroundings, and their light and heat have ever remained, and this church has always been distinguished for its revival spirit and work.

AREA OF ALAMANCE CONGREGATION.

The community which united in this church reached from the South Buffalo to the Great Alamance, extending over an area of at least sixteen miles across, and embracing the country now occupied by the congregation of Bethel, (Presbyterian,) of Piney Grove, (Meth. Prot.,) of Mt. Pleasant, (Meth. Ep.,) of Mt. Moriah, (Meth. Prot.,) of Pleasant Garden, (Meth. Ep.,) and of Tabernacle, (Meth. Prot.,) and of part of the Greensboro' and other congregations, and a spirit of law and order, and a community of feeling and purpose pervaded the settlement. The best lands, and the best sites for habitations and mills¹ were soon occupied, and some of the first mills have successors still occupying the old positions, and many of the old homes are occupied to this day, while

¹The Young Mill, near here, now Hannah's, and originally Cusack's, is nearly as old as this church, and was seized and operated by the soldiers of Cornwallis.

a great majority of the family names have representatives before me now, and some families whose names are extinct have lineal descendants here.

And just now is a good time to glance at our

ANTIQUITIES.

The origin of the name of Alamance is involved in obscurity, and we are left to conjecture. Col. Byrd, one of the members of the commission from Virginia appointed to run, in conjunction with a commission from North Carolina, the boundary line between the two provinces, wrote a diary of his work, travels, and observations. He was on the commission till late in 1729, but it is not known when he wrote out his work, probably not till some years afterwards. Toward its conclusion, in describing the trading path from the white settlements in Virginia and North Carolina to the Indian towns in South Carolina and upper North Carolina, he alludes once to the ARAMANCHY river, and in a way to make it probable that the reference is to the Great Alamance. It is not known that Aramanchy is anywhere else used except in Morse's Gazetteer, published first in 1799, and long after the settlements here, and when no such word was known among this people. There is not a trace of a tradition of any other name of the waters from which the church was called than the present, and tradition among an intelligent people whose descendants occupy the old homes, and where only four generations have lived, is of high authority. I have desired to trace our beautiful name to an Indian origin, but the authority is very slender. Col. Byrd was a decided egotist, and manifested a contemptuous opinion of North Carolina; and it is possible that if he had heard the traders speak of an Alamance he would have inferred that it was a North Carolina vulgarity for Aramanchy, just as Morse calls the Great Alamance Aramanchy, nearly half a century after the name was well established. I have examined quite a number of original grants from

the offices of Earl Granville for lands on these waters, and all use one word, spelling it with two l's, sometimes Alle-
mance, and sometimes Allamance, and I have, also, seen
old writings in the congregation, each using the same word,
and none showing signs of transition from another.

The earliest grant I have seen is dated in 1753, but there
were, probably, some before this date; and deeds for land
are so called, because they are supposed to be a man's most
deliberate and solemn business transaction, and they are
high authority for what they name, and certainly in the
offices of Earl Granville there must have been some knowl-
edge of the natural features of the country ceded by his
grants to settlers. As it is known, there are two Alamances,
one called Alamance, and one the Great Alamance—on the
former, a tributary of the latter, this church is located, and
on the lower part of the latter was the center of German
colonists. Is it possible that Allemence was an Anglicised
form of *Allemand* or *Allemania*, the French and Spanish for
German? This supposition will rest somewhat on the date
of the first German settlers below us, and on this I am not
prepared now to speak—and in my judgment the origin of
our name is still a matter of conjecture, but the word itself,
aside from all its great and dear associations, is one of the
sweetest terms of our language.

EARLY INDUSTRIES.

Agriculture was the leading pursuit of our fathers here,
and with our present staples were cultivated flax, indigo,
and probably hemp; and large quantities of butter and
honey were made. Within my recollection there was re-
maining part of the track of a highway called the *old butter
road*, from the quantities of firkin butter hauled over it to
distant markets; and this was literally a country of milk
and honey, and from the latter was made a drink called
metheglin, which, with stronger beverages, was much used—
this people not being free from the national weakness and

sin of the Scotch. Our ancestors wore finer linen than we do, and linen sheets, table cloths, and towels, were common, and there remain to this day specimens a hundred years old of the embroidered and neat handiwork in flax of our mothers. Most of the arts needed by the pioneers were early followed, and the original settlers were far less dependent than we are on foreign manufactures. There were smiths, hatters, shoe-makers, carpenters, joiners, weavers, mill-wrights, tailors, coopers, tinkers, tanners, and even cloth-printers—indeed, on many of the farms were made most of the things of common use, and on nearly all were tanneries and shoe-maker's tools. Within my recollection hat shops were common, tho' from the first the Sunday head-tire of the men was imported, made of genuine fur, generally esteemed elegant in proportion to the height, and breadth at the top, and expected to last a year for each dollar of cost. Genuine English broad-cloth was worn, but the fine gear for boys, and mostly for men except on State occasions, was a fulled woolen cloth, made at home, and very neat and durable. Looms abounded, and there were professional weavers of much skill, and the music of the spinning wheel, and the songs of the spinners, with the mingled sounds of the breakers and scutchers of flax, are associated with my early memories.

SOCIAL HABITS.

Partly from the necessity of the times, and partly from neighborly principles, there was a great deal more of mutual help than at present, and the social gatherings of the people were almost always both for work and for pleasure, and were so composed of all ages that they completely represented the family with all its happy influences and restraints. As a general thing, the younger people travelled on horse-back, singly, double and treble, according to age and condition—the gift of a saddle to the youth expanding to manhood being what his spurs were to the page in the

days of knighthood, and a side-saddle was an indispensable part of a gentlewoman's dowry when given in marriage. Illiptical steel springs were not known, and what we now call buggies and Jersey wagons are of modern origin; and in this region there were very few carriages for families, the ancient type of which may be seen occasionally among cast-away relics of the past. The vehicle chiefly in use with the well-to-do, was the lofty stick gig or double-seated sulky, swung on leather straps, and far from safe with an unskilful John; and this was the turn-out of the newly married, and of fathers and mothers, while families often travelled in wagons, but every aspiring gallant and dashing miss came seated on a horse gaily caparisoned, and trained to spirited action. Ladies of all ages went long distances on horseback, not unfrequently with a lad or girl behind, and a child in front; and even when I was a boy the gathering in to church, and the dispersion of the crowd presented scenes which would now be considered as picturesque and exciting. There were the roll of wagons well loaded with all ages, and rapidly driven, the dashing and caracoling of steeds gracefully managed by young men and maidens in pairs and troops, the cautious gliding of the gig, ever winding about to keep out of the way, the slow jog of beasts, one with a father and a lad behind, another with the mother and an urchin or two, and others with two and three youths not yet promoted to saddles, mounted on blankets, the younger with heels to the brute's flanks and thoughts only of safety, the older looking anxiously at the saddle-seated and with legs dangling out to preserve the pants, and show preparation for stirrups. The thronged highway was fringed with respectable pedestrians, and in the vicinage of the church were retired resting places where the younger ones stopped, as they came and went, to don and doff their Sunday stockings and shoes.

MISCELLANY.

The bureau of my step-grandmother, some seven feet high, and brought from Pennsylvania, was to me a museum of curiosities, among which were her well remembered round beaver riding hat, and her handsome whip; and among still preserved papers of my grandfather, I find the prices of various articles, and the names of early settlers on subscription and assessment lists, in pounds, shillings and pence. Linen, Irish and home-made, was about as cheap as now, English broadcloths not much dearer, and groceries, especially sugar and molasses, which are bulky and had to be hauled in wagons long distances, cost twice to four times the present prices. Here is a subscription to the pastor's salary, some 100 years old, and many of the family names now represented here are on it, and not a few of the baptismal prefixes are still preserved, and some that have disappeared from our church rolls have lineal descendants on the mother's side among us, others are found and are respected among our Methodist neighbors, and some have made a record in distant regions.¹

ECCLESIASTICAL REVIEW.

The first settlers of Alamance were trained to the public as well as to the private worship of God, and among their first movements was the planting of the church and of its institutions; and to understand this part of their history it is necessary to have a general view of the position and progress of the ecclesiastical system with which it was connected. The Synod of Philadelphia was originally the highest court of the Presbyterian church, in what is now the United States; afterwards there was another Synod, that of New

¹Among these is the name of McMinn, a branch of the Tennessee McMinn's after whom were named McMinn county in Eastern, and McMinnville town in Middle Tennessee.

York, and then a union of these two, and from 1758 to 1788, the United Synods of Philadelphia and New York formed our highest ecclesiastical Court. In 1788 the General Assembly was constituted, and also the Synod of the Carolinas, and in 1813 this last was divided into the Synods of North and of South Carolina. Till September, 1770, Hanover Presbytery embraced the country south of the Potomac, and therefore, the Presbyterian elements of this section were, at first, under the care of the Synod of Philadelphia, and of the United Synods of Philadelphia and New York, and of Hanover Presbytery.

When Dr. David Caldwell was installed pastor of Buffalo and Alamance churches, in March, 1768, a petition was sent up to the United Synod to have a new Presbytery south of Virginia, or of the waters of the Roanoke in Virginia, to be called the Presbytery of Orange; and this prayer was granted, and at Hawfields, in September, 1770, Orange Presbytery was organized, and included a large scope of country, and churches which are now in several States. Thus it was in a charge of which Alamance is a part that this old and historical Presbytery was started, and at this church, in October 1813, the Synod of North Carolina held its first meeting. When the southern and southwestern settlements of Presbyterians were formed their religious wants were made known to the Synods of Philadelphia and New York, and the records of these latter show a constant and watchful care for the distant and scattered colonies of their faith. From time to time ministers were sent out to preach, to administer ordinances, and to organize churches, and this and other Presbyterian communities similarly situated never acted or felt like people without an ecclesiastical home. This church was organized by one of the ministers thus sent out, Rev. Henry Patillo, probably in the year 1762; and its first minister was Rev. David Caldwell, a native of Pennsylvania, and of the region whence came many of the settlers of Alamance and Buffalo, who located within the

bounds of the Buffalo congregation, and was installed pastor of the two churches in March, 1868.

CHURCH EDIFICES.

Public religious services in this settlement were nearly, if not coeval, with its settlement, and as it is proper to recur to these at the beginning of the organic religious life here, it will simplify the order of historical narrative to give, in this place, a sketch of the various church edifices of Alamanca. I cannot state the exact year of the erection of the first building, but it was very probably before the year 1762, and it was erected on the plateau just north of the graveyard, and on the site occupied by its immediate successor. This locality was then clothed with its grand and solemn primeval growth, a forest of huge and stately trees, and under the thick canopy of their leafy boughs a company of the settlers conducted the first public worship of the Triune Jehovah on this consecrated ground. The land for a church was given by Wm. Cusach, and his spring was that first used by the congregation; and on a day appointed, the people, each with an axe, came together and it was proposed by Andrew Finley, a devout man, and a leader in public religious exercises, that before they began their work they should kneel in prayer for the Divine blessing on their pious enterprise. The axes were laid down, every head was bared, and under a great tree, in nature's own Temple, these sturdy pioneers knelt while Mr. Finley voiced their humble and earnest supplications to the Throne of Grace. This was the first assembly of the saints in the old and shady wilds for long and dark centuries the haunt of savage beasts and of savage men, and to be thenceforth vocal with the sweet sound of prayer and praise; and to these brief and affecting religious exercises succeeded a busy and animating scene, the dense forest was soon opened, and a log house was erected and devoted to the worship of Almighty God. It is not certainly known how long this house was used, but tra-

dition fixes the time till the close of the century, and this is confirmed by a paper before me, being a subscription to Marshall McLean, Robert Shaw, Andrew Magee, (McGhee,) David Wiley, and William Wiley, Sr., Trustees, for expenses incurred for church repairs, and dated August 23d, 1800. It is probable that what was begun as repairs ended in the SECOND BUILDING, which stood on or near the site of the first, and marks of the foundation of which are still visible. This was a historic edifice, a fine structure for its day, and was an interesting specimen of the church architecture of the age. It was a frame building, painted dark yellow, with four doors, one at each end, and two on the south side, over each of which was an ornamental shed or portico roof supported by brackets from the wall. There were many large windows and a gallery around three sides, reached by two stairways, and in the centre of the north side, and the center lengthways of the building, was the pulpit. The aisles and pulpit divided the building below into five compartments, and there were three above, and one of those below, in the eastern corner, and as comfortable and well-finished as any other, was allotted to the colored people, and was generally filled with cleanly dressed and orderly hearers of all ages. The eminent John Matthews, D. D., who was from this congregation, and educated by Dr. Caldwell, was a joiner by trade, with a genius for mechanics, and I have a letter from one of his sons, himself a D. D., who tells me that he has heard his father speak of a fine pulpit which he made and gave to his pastor and teacher for Alamance church. Doubtless this was that elaborate and huge but elegant work of art which was the pride of the congregation when I was a boy, and which was to me an object of sacred interest. It was of black walnut, with a profuse carving, according to the fashion of the times, and the younger part of my hearers will hardly realize what I mean when I say it was three stories high. The minister certainly had a lofty position, reached by a regular stairway with a balus-

trade, and just above his head, when standing, and a part of the pulpit and ornamented like it, with an oval front of carved wood, was the sounding-board, which was hollow, and but a little way from the high ceiling. Some idea of the altitude of this desk may be formed when I say that in front of it was that of the clerk who led the singing, whose seat was some five or more feet high, and whose head, when standing, was below the place of the pulpit Bible. When I was a boy there were two of these clerks¹ who led alternately, one, on each Sabbath, standing and lining out the hymns, and who, to older persons than myself, were men of weight and unction, and associated with the solemnities of the pulpit. It is not too much to say that they seemed to feel the dignity of their position, and I know that in my mind there was a sacred atmosphere enveloping the whole of this part of the house, from the first step upwards, and even the large closet under the stand was a solemn place, and for no consideration would I have peeped in at the door. The house when packed would hold, perhaps, 900 or 1,000 souls, and it was generally pretty well filled, and the ingathering to the morning service, thro' the four doors and up the stairway, was a lively scene. My mind still retains the picture of the thronging multitudes deploying to their places, at various gaits according to age, earnestness and vanity, of the clatter of feet over the sounding, uncarpeted aisles, and after the subsidence of the first confused noise the showy entrance of parties who, in that day as in this come to church to be seen, and *to be heard* too. It was then an essential of the highest mode, to have creaking shoes, and to know how to manufacture creaks was a requisite in a fashionable shoemaker; and it was the habit of dandies, who belong to all ages and races, to enter last, and on the opposite side from their seats, and to attempt a sensation by a deliberate march

¹The person who led the singing in Presbyterian churches was called a *clerk*, pronounced *clurk*, and when hymn books were comparatively scarce it was important to line out the hymns.

across the house and over the galleries, with a sounding creak at every step. The high-backed pews, decorously designed to hide all but the heads of their occupants, enabled many a drowsy soul to indulge in easy slumbers, but were much in the way of the criticism of dresses during the services; and at my first recollection, the pastor, Dr. Caruthers, preached in summer in a short black Geneva gown with which he was robed when he entered church. Generally, the attention was good, and the singing was inspiring, its volume and pathos greatly aided from the colored quarter; and all my memories of the worship in that grand old house, and of its surroundings, are reverential. Everything wore to me a solemn, tender and antique air, inducing to reverie; and it was my delight to arrive early on the ground and to sit under the venerable trees, and with the church, ancient looking and to my juvenile mind immense and eloquent with silence, on one side, and the gray stone walls of the grave-yard on the other, listen musingly to the mingled songs of birds which thronged the leafy coverts around me. The boys and hunters had then game more worthy of their guns than these gay creatures which gathered here in numerous and varied congregations, partly attracted by the remains of basket dinners and of grain fed to horses; and the sweet melodies of the deep and ancient woods, and the blue skies of the still Sabbath mornings of June will ever be associated with my recollections of Alamance. But innovations came, and the typical Alamance house of worship had to go to the ideal past, tho' every piece of timber in it was ready to assert its soundness; and in 1843-'44 was erected, on the side of the hill, just east of the present edifice,

THE THIRD HOUSE OF WORSHIP, of brick, the pulpit at the north end, and a gallery at the south. The materials of this building were inferior, and it became unsafe, and in 1874-'75 it was taken down, and

THE FOURTH EDIFICE, the house we are now in, was erected and occupied, but was not entirely finished and

furnished within, in its present state, until this year. It speaks for itself, and it and its surroundings and this audience proclaim the growing vigor of Alamance after the flight of a century and a quarter of years. When we consider the state of the country for the last 20 years, and the fact that there is no debt on this handsome edifice of brick, so neatly and conveniently furnished, we can estimate the zeal and vitality of the congregation which worships in it; the facts need no comment, and we can and do all rejoice to see this old historical church exhibiting outward and substantial signs of still growing vigor.

While on the subject of church erections, it is proper to advert to the land dedicated to congregational uses, and to the graveyard. As before stated, Wm Cusach gave the land for the church, and the deed was afterwards made by his son, Jedediah Cusach, and the form and extent of the area, which was originally large enough, was afterwards changed by exchange and purchase, and the property is now ample for all congregational uses.

The graveyard was laid off at an early date, but I cannot say when it was first enclosed with stone. The wall looked old from my earliest recollection, but rock walls of the kind have generally an ancient appearance; and a tablet at the gate to the memory of Adam¹ Lecky, who was probably the

¹He was one of the original body of elders, and an old tablet of slate at the graveyard gate, to his memory, has this inscription, author unknown:

IN HAC AREA JACIT SEPULTUM
CORPUS ADAMI LECCI, HUIC
ECCLESIO AMICI, & PER EJUS
PECUNIAM HIC MURUS ENCEPTUS ERAT.

THO' ADAM LECKY QUILTS THE FRAME
THAT TO CORUPTION FALLS,
YET ALAMANS WILL MIND THIS MAN
A FRIEND TO ALL HER WALLS.

FEB'RY 9TH, A. D. 1803.

first builder, and also, an elder, and tradition are our only guides in the premises. The first headstones were of slate and soapstone, and some of them are very old, with quaint inscriptions and devices, and from boyhood I have loved to study these ancient and sacred chronicles. There was no general plan for the graves, and shortly before the recent war between the States it was found important to enlarge the grounds to their present extent, and the new part was laid off on a general plan, furnished by myself, with walks, and family lots which were drawn for and marked, and the arrangement will be convenient and furnish opportunities for becoming adornments.

SPIRITUAL HISTORY.

It is known that the early records of Orange Presbytery were lost by fire, but probably they contained but meagre statistics from the churches. In a manuscript book called "Records of Orange Presbytery," which seems to have been officially prepared to replace the lost records, but largely from memory and tradition, it is said that this church was organized with 22 members, and according to this the average membership was about 70 to 80 till the year 1830. This is in part a guess, and evidently includes only communing members, and not baptized children, and probably the number was larger; and in 1829 there was a great revival which profoundly impressed my boyish heart, and in 1830 the communicants were reported at 120. I am inclined to the opinion that it was about at this era when children, or young persons, began to flock into the fold; and before this, while the minors of the congregation were carefully raised and catechised, and were religiously impressed, there was a timidity and caution about their open profession of faith. It is not necessary to give the membership at different dates, but only to say, in general terms, that amid all the mutations of the times, and while the area of the congregation has been much contracted, and many

other churches have been formed on its original territory, the total, not relative, number of communicants has been on the increase, and is now 185. These statements contain food for thought, and show a considerable relative increase of professors of religion; in other words, they prove that a far greater number of the members of the congregation are now members of the church than in former times, and that the proportion of outside hearers has been regularly diminishing. Our observation confirms this teaching of figures, and we know that as the country grows older the ratio of church communicants increases, whatever may be said as to the progress or deterioration of morals.

The original type of Alamance Christianity was fervent, and it has so remained, and the history of the church has been marked by

REVIVALS.

These have occurred at frequent intervals, but I shall mention only those which have acquired a historical importance. In 1791, there was one which extended through several counties, and its influence was felt here; and in 1801 there was a revival over a large part of the United States, and reaching with power this congregation. In 1829 there was a gracious out pouring of the Spirit here, and the results were wide-spread and lasting, and may be visibly traced down to the present time. I could mention some of these, if time permitted, and show the infusion of new influences into the church, and the beginnings of new family and individual histories, some of which have exerted a beneficent power in other States. The entire community was moved, and for days and nights the church, the tents, and all the surrounding woods resounded with prayer and praise, and religion was the absorbing theme; and about forty persons were added to the membership of this church, and former professors seemed to begin their Christian life anew.

In the Fall of 1858, there was another great work of grace, and I was then a licentiate, and was here and laboring from the commencement to the close of the protracted and glorious meeting, except for a few days when I was called away by public duties. A marked characteristic of the services was the absence of ambitious pulpit displays, a feeling demonstration occurring after the first sermon, and a sustained interest being kept up for a long season with few ministers present. This revival, like that of 1829, brought new families into the fold, and an increased vitality that has been manifested ever since; and the Divine beneficence was the more conspicuous in the time of this blessed visitation for it was just before that era of desolations—the war between the States. Of the many young men who then made a profession of faith in Jesus Christ, a number now sleep in that grave yard, slain in battle,—and two of these were thinking of the ministry, were personally very dear to me, one of them my nephew, and still another had been in my employment. Three others, dating their conversion from that time, are now in the ministry, and a fourth, now middle-aged, is a candidate for the sacred office. There have been many other and great manifestations here of the Spirit's power, occurring at comparatively brief intervals, and Alamance has been so characterized by such gracious manifestations that natives of the congregation and others have come here from distant places expressly to obtain good from the moved waters. For many years the protracted meetings drew large crowds, and the services had to be conducted in the open air: and I can say, from personal experience, that there was a flocking to these Feasts of Tabernacles from a feeling of devotion, that multitudes often realized that it was good to be here, and that order and sobriety characterized these great assemblies.

INSTITUTIONS.

1. SABBATH SCHOOL. The Sabbath School, as a fixed in-

stitution of the church, was established here in a vigorous form about the year 1825, and John Finley, son of Andrew, and generally called Master Finley, was its first Superintendent, and long devoted himself to it with great zeal and piety. It was his pet, and he seemed to love all the children as his own, and apparently his supreme wish, as he often, often said, was to meet them in heaven. There was preaching on alternate Sabbaths, and on the others Master Finley held his School, having a session morning and afternoon, with an intermission for a basket dinner. There was a large attendance, and much of the afternoon session was passed in devotional exercises, during which Master Finley nearly always became excitedly happy; and I can well remember his white hairs and his tender tones as he passed from pew to pew singing of the better land, and grasping the hands of the children and patting them on the head. On preaching days there was a Bible class before service, generally of adults and heads of families, taught by the pastor: and the Sabbath School has continued, with short intermissions, to the present time.

2. FEMALE BENEVOLENT SOCIETY. This was organized about the year 1823, with Mrs. Wm. Woodburn for President, Mrs. Anne Wiley, (my mother,) Secretary, and Mrs. Joseph Rankin, Treasurer, and was a source of no little good. At first and for some time it convened monthly, with concert of prayer, and then once a year, some of the members having to come long distances and a number of them having families of young children. The circumstances of this devoted band of Christian workers were far different from those of such societies now, even in the country, not to speak of those in cities and towns; the congregation extended over a wide area, there were not such easy modes of travel, and mothers had to bring their children, sometimes on horseback, and the church was not heated, tho' there was a session house with chimney and fire place. My mother would sometimes bring me, and leave me to

while the time as I could, my boyish imagination impressed with the solemnities of my surroundings; and at a very early age my curiosity was excited about the character and state of the nations of the earth by the old *Missionary Herald* which was read at the meetings. This society, under its first organization, raised over \$500, money made by the labor of the ladies themselves, and not pressed out of their husbands and fathers, nor collected thro' the agency of fairs, suppers, and other such appliances of modern times; and by its funds it aided the Elliot Mission, (Indian,) educated an Indian, named after Dr. Caldwell, made Dr. Caruthers a life member of the American Tract Society, replenished the Sunday School Library, and assisted in the education of young men preparing for the ministry. After a faithful and useful career it was suspended, but was revived again into vigorous life in 1873, and some of its useful fruits are now before us. By the industry of its members it has raised considerable sums of money, has made liberal contributions towards the finishing and furnishing of this neat edifice, and it follows in the old paths, and earns its resources by legitimate means.

Early in this century, Samuel Porter, son of Elder James Porter, who never married, and who was drowned, brother of my step-grandmother, left \$300 for the purchase of a

(3) CHURCH LIBRARY, a liberal sum for that day, and with which, and possibly with other means, a well selected stock of books was bought, a great, and at the time, unusual advantage. In this library were many standard religious books, and some of the best of the English classics, and I can testify to the importance and usefulness of these literary treasures. They appeared to me as an invaluable store, and I must confess, excited my cupidity. Often did I feast my eyes on their titles, and they were worth to me more than an inheritance, though in my day they were going the way of all such libraries, and, till I left for boarding schools, I

was too young to fill the office of my first and great ambition, that of Congregational Librarian.

(4.) PROTRACTED AND CAMP MEETINGS may be said to have been, for a long time, institutions of this church. They were a necessity of the age of their origin, when settlements were comparatively sparse, and when entire families, living at a distance from the church, could not attend its services together. When there was a desire to carry the gospel to all the people, and to each member of every household, and churches could not be erected for small areas of territory, annual encampments were established, first and for a considerable period, of tents only, and afterwards of board houses, with many of the conveniences of home. There were camp meetings both at Alamance and Buffalo, and within my recollection all the Presbyterian churches of the county, including that of Greensboro, had a union camp ground, with pulpit, arbor, and seats, in the woods south of the present Poor House, and where the meetings were attended by many ministers. The first out-of-doors stand at this place was on the declivity west of the old framed church under a great poplar, with seats running back to the church. When the first brick edifice was erected, the arbor was moved to the woods just east of it, and the pulpit or stand still remains. Camp-meetings were still held at Alamance long after they were discontinued at other churches in our connection, in this region, generally on alternate years, and down to the late war between the States. There was a protracted meeting every year late in the summer or early in the fall, and I speak of my own knowledge when I say that these were productive of happy influences. They were never marred by more disorder or levity than are incident to any large gatherings of the people, and generally a more than usual solemnity seemed to pervade all this consecrated ground. Families from long distances, and all ages were enabled to attend every service, and for a series of days, a great privilege in the country where there cannot be weekly

congregational prayer-meetings, and where many have to stay at home on the Sabbath; fraternity and social amenities were promoted, and barriers and prejudices caused by isolation were broken down and sympathies were widened, and neighborly kindnesses developed and fostered. Old sores were healed, pastor and all his people were made to feel as one family, the hold of the world was broken, and the entire community, severed for a time from worldly cares, and worldly scenes, pulled out of its old and frozen ruts, became a band of pilgrims, with their faces towards the Heavenly Jerusalem, their hearts fed with its manna, and their mouths filled with the sweet songs of Zion. The entire time was given to spiritual things, prayer and praise were heard on all sides, day and night, a cheerful air pervaded all the solemnities, many pious souls were refreshed and built up, and many were the subjects of converting grace. The last great revival here was at a camp-meeting, and I remember one case of nearly a whole family of campers, including the parents, who left here rejoicing in hopes to which they were strangers when they came. The last day was always a sad one, and people who came with little interest in each other parted with tears and affectionate embraces. These protracted meetings long held the hearts of distant Alamancers to the old spiritual home, and of the great crowds who annually gathered here some came from other counties to visit the scenes of old and dear associations, and some to bring new generations to the ancestral church, and to ancestral graves.

5. ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS were once a characteristic of this church, a habit which I had established and kept up as a fixed one when I was an Elder, in which all the affairs of the church were discussed, and which were undoubtedly productive of important benefits.

6. GOOD SECULAR SCHOOLS sprung naturally and flourished vigorously in this soil, being the outgrowth of the religious character of the people. The classical school of Dr.

Caldwell, the first pastor of this church, and located within the bounds of the Buffalo congregation, is known to history, and was one of the foundations, under God, of the moral power and greatness of the country. From this fountain flowed fertilizing streams over a very wide area; here were trained and equipped leaders of thought who went out to impress the genius of this nursery of religion and learning over the vast expanse of the South and West, and to crystalize their chaotic elements into conservative society. Laborious and useful ministers of the Gospel, leading statesmen, lawyers, and physicians, and good citizens were poured from this reservoir into many States, and it would require volumes to detail the results, still manifest and multiplying, of this famous institution, the humble seat of which was distinguished by no architectural embellishments.

In the woods, some half a mile from this place, long stood a log tenement, with not one material sign to denote its eminence, a building associated with many dear memories, and with historic names, and known as

The Old Red School House, from the color of the clay with which it was daubed. For many years the Alamance people kept up here a flourishing English School, and several generations were trained within these humble walls for lives of usefulness, and in not a few instances of high distinction—members of Congress and of State Legislatures, professors in colleges, high State officials, and ministers of the gospel, were taught at that ancient seat, and if those venerable oaks could speak, what a story they could tell of names now known far hence, and once familiarly called under their deep shadows in life's young and happy dawn! It is proper here to refer to the instruction and religious training of the colored people. This race was well-cared for in the ministrations of the sanctuary, and it was the habit in old Presbyterian families to teach the slaves to read, and to furnish them with Bibles. I can speak knowingly for one, and of my first mission as a teacher; and perhaps

it is not generally known that Orange Presbytery had for years, in the old days of slavery, a

A COLORED LICENTIATE. His name was *John Chavis*, and I find it on the roll from 1806 to 1815, when it disappears, and probably from the death of the licentiate.

ECCLESIASTICAL MEETINGS HERE.

This was a favorite resort for our venerable Presbytery in early times, and when it covered a vastly larger territory than at present. It met here September 26th, 1798, with Rev. Wm. Thompson as Moderator; Sept. 24th, 1800, Rev. Jas. H. Bowman, Moderator; Sept. 28th, 1802, same Moderator; Oct. 3d, 1803, Rev. Leonard Prather, Moderator; Sept. 26th, 1804, Rev. J. H. Bowman, Moderator; Sept. 24th, 1806, same Moderator; Sept. 28th, 1808, Rev. Danl Browne, Moderator; Sept. 26th, 1811, Rev. Murdoch McMillan, Moderator; and not again, as far as I know, until now.¹ The first meeting of the Synod of North Carolina was held here, beginning Oct. 7th, 1813, opened by appointment of the General Assembly, by Rev. Jas. Hall, D. D., and Moderated by Rev. R. H. Chapman, father of Rev. R. H. Chapman, D. D., now living. On this occasion, the members of what is now Fayetteville Presbytery, came for the last time as delegates from Orange, and about this time that new ecclesiastical body was formed.² The leading ministers of the Scotch region embraced in Fayetteville were well known here, and our people parted with the genial and fervent generation of Mc's with sincere regret. Their name here was long like the savor of ointment poured forth; and my early recollections are associated with anecdotes and incidents the old people were wont to tell with glowing interest of the good Scotch preachers of broad accent, and broader sympathies, of quaint humor and fiery zeal. There was a natural affinity

¹Rev. C. H. Wiley, Moderator, elected by acclamation.

²Concord Presbytery was laid off from Orange in 1795.

between these ministers and our people, and the advent of a Scotch Mc. marked the beginning of those earnest services and that social heartiness in which Alamance delighted.

PASTORS AND SUPPLIES.

The first pastor of this church was Rev. DAVID CALDWELL, D. D., installed at Buffalo in March, 1768. His eventful history is recorded in the biography which was a work of love of his successor and has been widely read. He was born, educated, licensed and ordained in Pennsylvania, was married in North Carolina, and lived a long life of useful activity, leaving a family of ministers and distinguished citizens, an honored name, and a moral monument which is ever growing. He was an able divine, a faithful and successful pastor, a leader of thought and action in the formative era of the Revolution and of republican constitutions, one of the best and most laborious teachers of his day, and as a physician and neighbor added to the benefactions of his multiform labors. His pastorate lasted over half a century, and he died in his 100th year, and was buried at Buffalo, and a tablet was erected at this church to his memory.

He was succeeded by Rev. ELI W. CARUTHERS, D. D., a native of Rowan county, N. C., who received his theological Education at Princeton, New Jersey, and who had conferred on him the title of D.D. at the University of North Carolina in the time of President Swain, but whose modesty and solid worth would hardly now win a degree when literary institutions seem to regard the privilege of bestowing honorary distinctions as a means of advancing their interests. His charge in Guilford was his only one; he was, for a short time, associated as an assistant of Dr. CALDWELL, and was installed pastor of Alamance and Buffalo in 1821¹; and in the year 1846, the union between the two congregations was

¹Probably at Buffalo in November, 1821. Dr. Caldwell ceased to preach about 1820, and died in 1824.

dissolved, and Dr. CARUTHERS remained pastor of Alamance. In July, 1861, he asked the congregation to unite with him in a request to Presbytery to dissolve the pastoral relation, and the request was acceded to in a congregational meeting which unanimously passed resolutions testifying to his fidelity, and the application was passed by Presbytery at its next session. Dr. CARUTHERS was now in infirm health, and did not again engage in any active and regular ministerial work, and finally, in November, 1865, after a lingering decline, he passed in peace from the labors and cares of earth, and was buried here, and has here a fitting tablet commemorating his long and useful pastorate. He was never married, and without a family of his own, he freely devoted his time and of his means to the education of the offspring of others. He was a steady and life-long friend of general education, and like his predecessor, kept abreast of the progress of general events, and was a warm advocate of public improvements. He was a solid divine, whose opinions on theological questions had weight with his cotemporaries, and was an authority on the distinctive tenets of his church, and yet he took comparatively little part in things merely ecclesiastical, and had no sympathy with ecclesiastical martinet; and in his religious work he fraternized with the Methodist and other churches around him, especially in his latter years. As a preacher he was earnest and instructive, he was a diligent student all his life, and engaged in every subject of intellectual enquiry; his opinions were his own, his convictions decided and courageously maintained, and he was in all senses a strictly honest man, honest in opinion, and honest in dealing. His specialty, outside of his ministerial work, was the Revolutionary history of his native and beloved State, and his patient and careful researches resulted in several valuable works which have enriched our local literature. This was a labor of love which he prosecuted with untiring zeal, and whatever the urgency of a present engagement, if

revolutionary game crossed his path he was off on instant chase till he ran it down.

Like many others, when he saw war through the haze of time and distance, he failed to realize the horrors with which it is ever associated, even in its mildest forms; but when he was in its midst, in his latter years, its desolations deeply grieved him, and he was more impressed by these than by the heroism, self-sacrifice, and devotion which threw a halo over its bloody and repulsive features. His pastorate and that of his predecessor lasted some 93 years, and this fact reflects the character of ministers and people in the strongest light, and is in broad contrast to the present spirit of change manifested in nearly all our churches. It indicates good and able service on one side, and appreciation and forbearance on the other; it speaks of character standing the test of long and varied trial, and of a people who, conscious of their own faults, did not expect perfection on the part of their ministers, who felt that something depended on themselves as well as on their pastors, and who were not intent on youth, novelty, and sensation in their pulpit ministrations. It ought to be the rule and not the exception that a head grown gray in public service is most honored where its cares have been borne, and is a crown of glory in the eyes of those over whom it has watched till thus whitened by time and trial; but as hoar hairs are now generally a crown of thorns where they tell of long labor and endurance, and are a paramount reason for uprooting because all the man's hopes, memories and interests are there rooted, the long pastorates here are shining examples, and illustrious because most rare.

The church was vacant for a time after the conclusion of the pastorate of Dr. CARUTHERS, and was served by Rev. P. H. DALTON as stated supply, your speaker often preaching here as his public engagements permitted, from the time of his licensure in 1855, till after the installation of the present pastor. On the 3d Sabbath in November, 1863, Rev. WIL-

LIS L. MILLER was installed pastor, and it is not improper to refer to Mrs. Miller, though she is still living, as a writer of deserved celebrity, and to say that some of her sweetest poems, under the well known signature of *Luola*, are associated with her Alamance life and experience. In 1865, this pastorate was dissolved by the mutual consent of minister and people, Mr. Miller desiring to connect himself with the northern branch of the Presbyterian church, and in December of the same year, Rev. WM. B. TIDBALL was employed as stated supply. On March 3d, 1867, he was elected pastor, and on the 4th Sabbath of October of the same year, was installed. After 1846, Dr. CARUTHERS gave all his time to this church, Rev. Mr. DALTON preached here twice a month, Rev. Mr. MILLER was elected for all his time, and so was Rev. Mr. TIDBALL, but by subsequent arrangement, still existing, services have been and are held here on alternate Sabbaths.

It is impossible, perhaps, to furnish a perfect list of

THE ELDERS OF THIS CHURCH, from the want of early records. I give the following names, and think it possible that there are others of whom I have not heard: *Samuel Nelson, David Kerr, Adam Lecky, William Cusach, Thos. Wiley,*¹ *Andrew Finley, Wm. Mebane, John Forbis,*² *Hugh Forbis, John Thom, Robert Paisley, John Paisley, Samuel Allison,* (generally spelled Ellison) *James Porter, — McCann, Joseph McLean, and Wm. Smith,* down to 1820. (In old records Paisley is spelled Peaseley, McLean, McLane and McClaine, Cusach, Cusick.)

In 1820, when the records begin, *Wm. Smith, Wm. Mebane, John Paisley, and Joseph McLean,* appear as Elders, and on Nov. 21 of that year *John Finley* was ordained. Feb. 25, 1826, *Jas. Thom, Nathaniel Kerr* and *Thos. Rankin* were added, and *Levi Houston* was ordained about this time, date unknown. May 16th, 1830, *Wm. Doak, Wm. Rankin, Joseph Rankin,* and *Jas. Wharton,* came in, *Finley Shaw, Rankin Donnell,*

¹Called the peacemaker.

²Not certain.

and *Roddy Hannah*, (often spelled *Hanner*,) May 28, 1842, and *Joel McLean*, Aug. 21, same year. Aug. 21, 1851, *Jas. Paisley* and *Joseph W. Gilmer* were added. Sept., 1854, *John W. McMurry* was received from *Bethel*, and Oct. 22d of that year *Calvin H. Wiley*,¹ was ordained. May 27th, 1866, *John A. Pritchett* and *Samuel Rankin* were added, and on April 30th, 1871, *Allen H. Scott*, *William F. Thom*, and *Wm. Anderson*, who, with *Messrs. Jos. W. Gilmer, John W. McMurray*, and *John A. Pritchett*, constitute the present bench of ruling elders.

I have not been able to find the names of any

DEACONS, before the year 1844. Trustees probably acted in their place, for in 1800 there was a Trustee's book on which there were subscriptions, as I find from my grandfather's papers, and *Marshall McLean, Andrew McGehee*, (spelled, *Magee*), *John Thom, David Wiley, and Wm. Wiley, sen'r*, were Trustees.

In 1844, *David C. Stewart and David Whitt* were elected Deacons—the first named long continuing active and faithful in the service. To these, still living, were added in 1859, *Allen H. Scott* and *John Donnell*, in 1866, *Jas. Gannon* and *Jas. Thom* (the latter is now in Tennessee,) and in 1871, *Oliver L. Boon, Robt. S. Phipps, and Geo. M. Glass*, and every Deacon elected is still here, except *Jas. Thom*.

As might be expected from so old a communion, of such religious vitality, there is a long roll of

MINISTERS FROM ALAMANCE.

Quite a number of different denominations and in various States have sprung from *Alamance* stock, who were not born here, and I mention as an instance, *Rev. Jas. H. McNeilly*, pastor of the *Moore Memorial Church, Nashville, Tenn.*, who exhibited to me in the handwriting of *Dr. CALDWELL*, when tremulous from age, the certificate of his grand-

¹His office was vacated, as was supposed, by his ordination to the full work of the gospel ministry in April, 1866.

mother's dismissal; and I shall have occasion to allude to others. My purpose is, however, to confine myself mainly to ministers born here, and I will add, that my list of those not Presbyterian is not full, but not for want of effort on my part to make it so.

1. Rev. JOHN MATHEWS, D.D., was born here in 1770,¹ was educated by Dr. Caldwell, and died in New Albany, Ind., in 1848. He was originally a joiner by trade, possessed a fine mechanical genius, and during all his life amused himself with the study and construction of delicate and intricate machinery. Some of his work in wood still exists in this congregation. His first charge was in North Carolina, and afterwards he preached for years in Shepherdstown, Va., married his first wife in Virginia, and in later years moved to Indiana, and founded and was Professor of Polemic Theology in the Theological Seminary at New Albany, afterwards merged in the North-western Theological Seminary, now located and ably conducted in Chicago, Illinois. Thus the light that now so brightly illumines the far north-western skies may be said to have been kindled from a coal taken from Alamance fires. Dr. Mathews was the author of "The Divine Purposes," which has been long a Presbyterian standard, and was an able and voluminous contributor to Presbyterian reviews and newspapers, and a friend and correspondent of Dr. Hoge, the elder, Dr. Rice, and other representative men of the time. He was as able and eminent in the pulpit as with his pen, and his preaching power is well remembered; and one of his sons, himself a Doctor of Divinity, his oldest son, in one of his letters to me, says with filial but honest enthusiasm, "I am now entering on my 75th year, and have been preaching 50 years, but I have failed to see just such a man as my venerable father. His memory is embalmed with the sweetest fragrance." His

¹The facts concerning Dr. M. are taken mostly from recent letters to me from his sons, Rev. Wm. Caldwell Mathews, D.D., of Louisville, Ky., and Rev. John D. Mathews, D.D., of Wade's Mills, Ky.

oldest daughter is the wife of a minister, Rev. John M. Harris, near Romney, West Virginia, and he has three surviving sons, ministers, Rev. W. C. Mathews, D.D., of Louisville, Ky., of the Northern Presbyterian Church, Rev. J. D. Mathews, D.D., of Wade's Mills, Ky., of the Southern Presbyterian, and Rev. R. C. Mathews, D.D., of Monmouth, Ill. of the Northern Presbyterian Church.

2. Rev. WM. PAISLEY,¹ born and raised in this congregation, has left a memory that will be long and widely cherished and honored. He was, under God, the founder and first minister of the Greensboro Church, did much evangelistic work, largely of his own volition, and was a very earnest, laborious, fervent preacher, full of fire in the pulpit, courageous for the truth, meek and tender in his disposition, and long spared to serve the Master with single-hearted devotion. He was useful, esteemed, beloved, and prominent as a minister and citizen, and his walk in all his long life ever appeared to be with God.

3. Rev. SAMUEL PAISLEY was also of Alamance, was an impressive and solemn preacher, who labored in various places in North Carolina, and who died not long ago in Moore county in a good old age.

4. Rev. JAS. KERR was a son of elder Nath. Kerr, but I am not familiar with his ministerial life, knowing only that he had the name of a good preacher, and of a faithful minister.

5. Rev. SAMUEL McADOO,² who, after his licensure, moved to Kentucky and joined, in its infancy, the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, which now has a Presbytery named for him.

¹Ordained in 1798.

²For facts in the lives of Rev. Samuel McAdoo, and of Rev. Robert Donnell, and Rev. Geo. Donnell, I am under obligations to Rev. Richard Beard, D.D., Theological Professor in Cumberland University, at Lebanon, Tenn. He is well posted in the history of his church, and has taken much interest in that of ours, and his interesting communication to me indicates his love for the memory of men of Alamance lineage.

6. Rev. JOHN McLEAN, of whose labors I have no facts, son of elder Joseph McLean, moved to the southwest, and died there.

7. Rev. JOHN PAISLEY, son of elder John Paisley, preached at the Red House Church, North Carolina, and died young.

8. Rev. ADDI THOM went to Virginia and thence to Tennessee, and finally to Texas, where he was a Professor in the first Presbyterian College there, and where he died, a man of mark.

9. Rev. DANIEL G. DOAK, son of elder Wm. Doak, preached first in Virginia, then and for a long time at Zion Church,¹ near Columbia, Tennessee, where his name is held in high regard, and went thence to Sardis, Mississippi, where he recently died. He taught and preached, and was earnest tender, and laborious.

10. Rev. DAVID K. THOM was once a Missionary to the Indians, afterwards joined the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, and finally became somewhat erratic in mind.

11. Rev. JOHN H. COBLE, now of Fayetteville Presbytery, stated supply of Laurinburg and Montpelier Churches.

12. Rev. JOHN WOODBURN, located at Hendersonville, N. C., preacher and teacher.

13. Rev. L. A. T. JOBE, of Clarendon, Arkansas, preacher and teacher.

14. Rev. ELIAS F. PRITCHETT, now of Lawson, Missouri, preacher and teacher.

15. Rev. DAVID C. RANKIN, now Principal of the General Assembly's Institute for the training of colored ministers, at Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

16. Rev. CALVIN H. WILEY,² your speaker.

¹The colored membership of this church was large and well trained, and long remained in it after the late war, as I know from observation, and finally, after a union of counsel of both races, and with good feeling in both, formed a separate church of their own.

²Licensed at the Fall Session of Orange Presbytery, 1855, while State Superintendent of Common Schools. Continuing in public office till the close of the war between the States, he was not ordained until the Spring Session of Presbytery, 1866.

17. Rev. CALVIN DENNY, who joined this church from Bethel shortly before his licensure, and who connected himself with the German Reformed church while still a licentiate.

18. Rev. CALVIN GANNON, of the N. C. Conference of the Meth. Ep. ch. South.

19. Rev. HUGH A. WILEY, of the N. C. Conference of the Meth. Ep. ch. South.

All these, except CALVIN DENNY, were born, raised and trained here, and to them should be added of ministers born here:

20. Rev. THOS. H. NELSON,¹ the founder and first minister of the First Presbyterian church of Knoxville, Tenn., where he died.

21. Rev. ROBT. DONNELL,² who was raised in Tennessee, where he became an able and very influential minister of the Cumberland Presbyterian church.

22. Rev. GEO. DONNELL, raised in Tennessee, a Cumberland Presbyterian Minister, held in high esteem, the founder and first minister of the Cumberland Presbyterian church at Lebanon, the seat of Cumberland University. He died in the meridian of life, much lamented by his people.

The late Rev. WM. NELSON MEBANE, whose precious memory we all cherish, was of Alamance stock; and so was the late PAISLEY WHARTON, who died young and promising, and so were quite a number of worthy brethren whom I could name, of the Meth. Ep. and Meth. Protestant churches.

Finally, this church has now two candidates for the gospel ministry, JOHN A. GILMER, Jr., and WM. F. THOM, and may soon have a third, and many of its old family names are represented on the ministerial roll.

It has given a man to the gospel of Jesus Christ for every

¹I am indebted for facts of his life to Rev. Thos. W. Humes, LL.D., of the Ep. ch., President of Knoxville University, who was born in the congregation of Mr. Nelson, and when young attended his church.

²See note on notice of Rev. Samuel McAdoo.

six years of its existence, and her sons and descendants have proclaimed the glad tidings of Salvation in many places in North and South Carolina, and in both Virginias, in Georgia, Kentucky, Tennessee, Indiana, Illinois, Ohio, Arkansas, Missouri, Alabama, Mississippi, and Texas.

SECULAR HISTORY.

As already stated, this congregation was originally in Orange and Rowan counties, and then in Guilford. It was in two parishes of the Episcopal church, established by law, but with no Episcopalians within its territory, and it has been under two local and three national governments. It was originally in the Province of North Carolina, under the authority of the British Crown, then it was in the United States of America, then in the Confederate States, and is now again in the United States. It has passed through three domestic wars, that is, wars waged in whole once, and in part on two occasions in this State, and decisive events in each occurred near to it.

THE REGULATORS' WAR was an uprising of the people of Middle North Carolina against the exactions and lawless oppressions of local authorities under the British Crown, and was based on the principles which caused the great revolution of 1776, and was in fact the beginning of that grand struggle.

The agitation of the Regulators or "Sons of Liberty," which were the dawn of American freedom, were manifested openly in 1766, and had their center in what was then Orange county, and extended some distance west and south of the county limits. On the 16th of May, 1771, they culminated for the time in the battle of Alamance, near the waters of the Great Alamance Creek, in the present county of Alamance, about thirteen miles south of east of this place; on one side was an equipped army, on the other a tumultuous assembly of people without military leaders, and largely without arms, and the military result was a disaster to the

latter, the *moral* and *political* a final triumph to the cause for which the blood of patriots was there first shed. The people of this congregation were in deep sympathy with the movement of "The Sons of Liberty," and a number of young men¹ from here were in the crowd that confronted Tryon's forces, having gone to the scene of conflict as outsiders, so to speak, but with a fervor that could not rest at home at such a crisis; and they beheld and were then ever fixed in their convictions when the cause of equal rights first confronted the storm of battle.

Of those who fell here, and of the field, the poet² has said,

"Immortal youth shall crown their deathless fame,
 And as their country's glories still advance,
 Shall brighter blaze, o'er all the earth, thy name -
 Thou first fought field of freedom, Alamance!"

This county was the scene of closing and memorable events in the succeeding Revolution. The pastor and people of Buffalo and Alamance early espoused the patriot cause, and adhered firmly and unitedly to it to the end. Each congregation contributed able officers and brave soldiers to the cause, and the women and children were deeply imbued with its spirit, and heroically ministered to it, and suffered for it. No tories were produced by these communities, but each of them was hated, and watched, and assaulted by the marauding bands of these domestic pests; and many authentic traditions come down to us of privation, suffering, loss, and courageous endurance and adventure among our people.

The armies of Greene and Cornwallis were twice in the county, and the latter was once encamped in this congregation, on the premises of Ralph Gorrell, one of its members. The battle of Guilford Court House, the decisive engagement of the war, was eleven miles from here, within the bounds

¹My grandfather Wiley, then quite a youth, was present as a spectator.

²The late S. W. Whiting, of Raleigh, N. C., who wrote the lines on the battle of Alamance at my request.

of Buffalo; and thither were gathered many of our male members, refugees from home when Cornwallis and the emboldened Tories dominated the county, and there they fought as volunteers, while the pious women at home, in hearing of the guns of that great day, were engaged in prayer for them and their cause, to the God of battles. The captain of this willing force, John Forbis,¹ was mortally wounded, and over his remains in that graveyard stands a monument to his memory by public subscription. At its erection, July 4th, 1860, there was present a company of volunteers whose soldierly bearing was the subject of general remark. This was the GUILFORD GREYS, composed mostly of young men, and this was one of the three companies first called out by the Governor in the late war between the States. Its ranks were swelled by Alamancers, and sons of Alamancers, and they were thinned on many a dreadful field of carnage, and the bodies of a number of them, who were members in good standing in this church, slain in battle, repose in the consecrated ground near us. This congregation contributed to the war at least 25 men, and of these some 10 or 12 were killed and died in service.

In the mercy of God our people were united in each of the three conflicts that were in the nature of civil wars, and when the last was brewing, were *all* conservative, and *anxious* to see peace preserved; and they passed through the fiery ordeals without any of those lasting sores which often afflict the scenes of such extreme trials. The Divine Head of the church has preserved it from wounds and rents and from

¹ Capt. John Forbis, who lived on the Alamance, was there with a company of volunteers, the Allisons, the Kerrs, the Finlays, the Wileys, and others, most of whom were his neighbors, and a braver band of militia was not on the ground. He (Forbis) was mortally wounded, and several of his men were also wounded, of whom Wm. Paisley, father of Rev. Samuel T., was one. A number of individuals of Buffalo congregation volunteered that morning, and put themselves under officers of known valor. *Dr. Caruthers' Life of Caldwell*, page 133.

political dissensions, and that, too, while the congregation has ever exercised an important influence in public affairs.

In the Convention at Halifax, April, 1776, which placed the State in military organization, one of the three delegates from Guilford was Ralph Gorrell, a member of Alamance church, and John Paisley, another member was made Lieut. Colonel; and in the Convention at the same place, of November, 1776, which formed our first State Constitution, and one under which we long lived, Mr. Gorrell was a delegate, and so was Dr. Caldwell, the pastor of the church. The congregation has given four State Senators who served the county in some fifteen or sixteen terms of the Legislature, and some twelve members of the House of Commons who served in some thirty-two sessions. It has furnished in the service of the State one Superior Court Judge¹ whose son² is now a U. S. District Judge for North Carolina, and a State Judge³ now serving is the son of an Alamancer, bearing one of the old names here: one member of Congress,⁴ and two members of the Confederate Congress,⁵ a State Geologist⁶ who has held his position over fourteen years, and the first Superintendent of Common Schools⁷ who was seven times elected to terms of two years each. To those should be added the head of the Engineering Department⁸ of the Confederate States, my intimate companion at the Old Red School House, and many others of note and influence in secular affairs in other States.

¹Hon. John M. Dick.

²Hon. Robt. P. Dick.

³Hon. John A. Gilmer, the second, son of Hon. John A. Gilmer, deceased.

⁴Hon. John A. Gilmer the First, who was also once the nominee of the old Whig party for Governor of North Carolina.

⁵Hon. John A. Gilmer the first of that name, and Hon. Jas. R. McLean, born in Alamance congregation.

⁶Prof. W. C. Kerr.

⁷Rev. C. H. Wiley.

⁸Gen. J. F. Gilmer, now of Savannah, Ga.

CONCLUSION.

But all the good which has sprung from here, and all the privileges and happiness which have been enjoyed here, have grown from one root--the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. How devout and grateful ought this people to be! A century and a quarter have wrought their changes in the world since our ancestors were Divinely led to this goodly region, and nearly all their names are represented here to-day. Political and financial convulsions, wars, and revolutions have failed to break, scatter, or divide you; at old homes and on old plantations the same names are still known, and you live, and work, and worship near the graves of your ancestors, and in the midst of dear and sacred associations and memories. From generation to generation the church has flourished, and been open, and the gospel has been preached, and its ordinances administered; and to day we dedicate to this blessed service a fourth edifice, the handsomest of all, and by the buried dust of ages a strong congregation seems springing into new life and energy. God has done great things for you, and may you and your children, and your children's children--may all of us and our posterity, through all time, be found in His service, and abide under his shadow!

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