

JOYNER LIBRARY-ECU

1710 by emigrants from the North Countys of this State, Virginia and some few from Mereland from which time for several Years they continued to live in a most retched State of poverty possessing few if any of the comforts of Life "But from prudance and industry that never failing source of domestick happinness the inhabitance of Greene County have been well fed and well clothed for many years past, and at this time participates in many Luxurys of Life.

Navigable Streams &c

The only Navigable Stream in Greene County is great Contentny³ a branch of Neuse, which rises in Nash County⁴ and passes through Edgecombe and Greene Countys and falls in to Neuse about thirty miles above Newbern, and is navigable for flats of one hundred and fifty barrels burden as high as the upper part of Greene County at a freight to Newbern of from 25 to 40 cents per barrel

Articles of Exportation &c

Pork may be considered as the Staple article about one forth part of what is made to Spare is generally drove to Virginia the ballance is either made into bacon or barreled, and generally find a market in Newbern also corn, pees, cotton, flour wax, tallow tar turpentine and Staves are made to Spare and generally find amarket in Newbern

Welth &c

Greene County contains about 500 familys⁵ and is about equal in Sise to eighteen miles Square which would be about 420 acres to each family, the everage welth would be about equal to \$5000 but as in all other places welth is very disproportioned Some possessing fare more and Some a great deal less⁶

Buildings &c

The inhabitance Generally live in framed houses with chimneys of brick which are comfortable but seldom eligant Horses Cattle and Sheep are raised the two former a sufficiant for home demand and the latter might with proper attention

Manufactoreys

There is no manufactoreys that deserve the name except of the house hold Kind where the principal part of the clothing of each family is made

³ Contentnea Creek.

⁴ Contentnea Creek rises in Franklin County.

⁵ In 1810 the population of Greene County was 4,867 comprising 2,970 whites, 1,842 slaves, and 55 free negroes. In 1860, the population was 7,925, 824 whites, 3,947 slaves, and 154 free negroes. *Ninth Census*, I, 52-54.

⁶ Greene County tax and other records have been destroyed for the most part. In 1790, Dobbs County, which comprised what later became Greene, had 1,915 slaves in a total population of 6,893. There were a few large slaveholders: James Glasgow, 50; Benjamin Sheppard, 71; Jesse Cobb, 42; Bryan Whitfield, 58; John Heritage, 38. *S. R.*, XXVI, 481-500.

Schools &c

The Greene Academy⁷ is the only incorporated School which was incorporated in the Year 1804 but for want of adequate funds as well as the want of attention of the Trustees, the Institution is not promising, which is much to be lamented as the inhabitance Generally appear to be desirous of procuring for their childred a good English education which most of them have often discovered the want of them Selves⁸

Religion

Episcopalians, Babtists & Methodists the latter are the most numerous, the Babtists and Methodists have each three meeting houses within the County

With high respect
I am Sir Your most Obd
Th. Holliday

LENOIR COUNTY

By JOHN WASHINGTON¹

Kinston May 1, 1810.

Gentlemen:

Your fav^r. of 30th ulto I receivd some 15 or 20 days ago which on account of my indisposition, I have been prevented from answering sooner.

Though I feel reluctant to engage in that which I am so badly qualified to perform yet it affords me pleasure to comply with your request, particularly as you express an opinion that it may probably be rendered servicable to the public.

With respect to the face of Lenoir County, it is generally level except near the river, (in some places) and on some of the creeks, which can by no means be called hilly, except as compared to the very level state of the rest of the County.

At the distance of a half to one or two miles from the river Neuse (much dependant on the breadth of the drownable lands) either on the one side, or the other of the river, there is generally found a ridge or rather a descent from the higher and level lands of about 20 to 30 feet, which in many places affords beautiful places for building.

The Neuse low grounds or those subject to overflow in this county is not very considerable, though it affords a border on the one side or the

⁷ The legislature of 1804, in view of "liberal subscriptions" already made by citizens of Greene County, designated Hymick Hooker, Thomas Holliday, Jacob Lassiter, Lawrence Carr, John Harper, Silas Lassiter, Samuel Hooker, Francis Kilpatrick, Roderic Powell, Isaac Ward, and Hugh Harper as trustees of Greene Academy to be erected in an old field near Hooker's Bridge on Great Contentney. In 1807, Jacob Lassiter, secretary of the trustees, advertised for a "Principal Teacher." He announced that the trustees were satisfied "at the progress of the Institution under their former Teacher, Mr. A. M. Rogers." *C. L. Coon, op. cit.*, 167; *Laws of North Carolina*, 1804, ch. 43.

⁸ The first Greene County graduate of the University was Octavius Wright Hooker, class of 1845. *K. P. Battle, op. cit.*, 800.

¹ John Washington was a commissioner of Kinston in 1806 and 1809 and postmaster in 1823. *The North Carolina Register*, 1823, 68; *Laws of North Carolina*, 1806, ch. 42; *Laws of North Carolina*, 1809, ch. 90.

other of the river generally, of from a quarter to a half a mile and upwards, which being generally narrow and much cut to pieces with sloughs (though in certain places and on ridges sufficiently high for cultivation) is together by the gradual rise and fall, with the relative height of the water rendered generally unfit for cultivation, indeed, I believe the soil, though much stronger than the up lands, is yet by no means as rich as the low lands of many of the rivers of this State, this I infer in some degree from the growth, which is smaller than that of several of the rivers with which I am acquainted, nor do I believe that it is so productive of most.

The growth of the river low grounds is generally, Oak, Gum, Poplar, Birch, with some Cypress and the usual small growth, there is but little Cypress fit for timber nor indeed does it afford much Oak that is fit for staves &c. In the uper end of the County and on the North side of the river there are some pretty extensive oaken swamps which affords excellent range for Hogs and cattle, they are interspersed with ridges of good land high enough for cultivation.

The lands lying above Kinston to falling creek,² and above (near the river) is generally very level and inclined to be light and sandy and is generally held to be pleasant and good corn land, as is the case with all or the greater part of the lands from Kinston down to the lower end of the County, indeed all the lands lying broad off from the river (on the north side) to the line of the County and below Kinston in what is termed Contentney neck, or the fork of Neuse and Contentney is generally good, much of which no doubt is stronger than the river lands.

These, off, lands having a clay'y bottom is well adapted to receive manure and is good for wheat as well as corn,

The lands lying off on the same side of the river and above Kinston to falling Creek are also pretty good, but the lands lying above falling Creek and a little off the river are very sandy and of thin soil.

The lands on the South side of Neuse in this County are (generally) by no means as good as those on the North, being near the river considerably sandy and barren except in some places a narrow border of necky land close on the river.

The back lands on this side of the river falls off into a flat, low, and stiff piney woods which is by no means productive.

The growth of the lands of this County say, the better land near the river is generally, Oak, Hickory, dogwood, and short leafpine, with other small growth peculiar to such lands in this state, and that of the lands lying off on the north side (of the better kind) is oak, Hickory, with long and short leaf pine mix'd &c. and of the sandy lands on this side, long and short leaf pine mixed with a little oak and much black jack.

On the S^o. side of the river, the sandy lands hath a growth similar to that of the North, and the off and flat lands generally Thick set with long lief pine with some under growth as common.

The product of this County is mostly Indian corn and pease with some

² Falling Creek is a northern tributary of the Neuse a few miles above Kinston.

Cotton, sweet potatoes, wheat and Rye, The former of the two last articles is much increas'd within the last ten years, farmers that then raised but small patches, now sow large or considerable fields.

Pork being the staple article of this County, a part of the Corn crop with a little of the Wheat (in flour) is sent to market, and the residue (perhaps) much the largest part of the Corn crop, as well as wheat and all the Rye and nearly all the pease and potatoes is given to the Hogs for fating.

Observe that notwithstanding I have represented our soil as pleasant and of good quality for the production of these articles, yet I do not conceive that any deserves to be called rich, for I am sure that the average crop of our good lands does not exceed 10 bushels of Indian Corn p acre, the best when fresh not exceeding 15 to 20 bushels. However the soil of our better lands being of a happy medecrity between the fine and the coarse, the hot and the cold, perhaps no part of the State is generally more favourable to the production of vegetables and herbage.

As to the Water of this County, I know none in the lower part of this State that is better, for notwithstanding the Inhabitants have their share of the local complaints, yet no person pretends to attribute it to the Water for that is generally light, pure, and palitable, particularly in and near Kinston.

With regard to price (I think) our lands are as high as in any part of the State (all things considered) That range laying on the N^o. side and near the river (which I call necky) is generally estimated at 10 to \$12½ p acre, indeed considerable of it has laterly sold at that which no doubt, on making proper deductions for the drownable and waste lands (such as cannot be rendered in anywise useful except for timber and range) must bring that part fit for cultivation in many instances to from 20 to \$30 p acre.

That which we term good lands laying off on the north side is generally estimated at 5 to \$7 and those poor sandy lands at from 2 to \$4

The lands on the S^o. side are not nominally so high tho. comparing their intrinsic value, perhaps equally so. The river lands of that side Would be estimated at from \$5 to 8 and perhaps higer, and those off, flat and piney lands at perhaps 1 to \$3.³

As to the time of settlement of this county, what now constitutes Lenoir may be said to have been settled between 80 and 90 years—, those amongst the oldest grants for land in the County bears date, 1716.⁴

Observe that Lenoir is not an original County, Craven having been the original was divided, Johnson was taken off the upper part, which comprehended what is now Lenoir, but Johnson being divided, Dobbs was taken off the lower end which also comprehends Lenoir. Dobbs being very

³ The average value of land per acre in Lenoir County as assessed for the federal direct tax of 1815 was \$3.63; and for the state tax of 1815, \$1.37. W. H. Hoyt, *The Papers of Archibald D. Murphey*, II, 165, 167.

⁴ The early Lenoir County records have been destroyed. The earliest of the meagre available records is dated 1737.

turbulent, split, divided and so confused by party and design,⁵ as to go near to subvert, as well the legal authority as all good order, harmony, and (in some instances) even safety was doubtful, so that the Legislature taking under consideration the situation of Dobbs, thought proper to pull it down, and raise out of its ruins Lenoir and Glasgow (now Green)⁶

Permit me further to observe that while Dobbs County existed, that the mobb, while some case was depending which they did not wish tried, thought proper to desolve the Court, and in another instance to set fire to and burn down the Comptrollers House in Kinston and many other acts little less daring and outrageous were occasionally committed.

Kinston was the residence of the Governor in the person of the late Richard Caswell⁷ as also the heads of department, and in the revolutionary war a rendezvous for Troops.⁸

Notwithstanding most of the inhabitants of the County of Dobbs were as sound in their politics as any other, yet there were a number disaffected to the cause of the revolution, which created some trouble.⁹

Lenoir is divided from East to West by Neuse River, into which falls several small creeks say, on the N^o. side (begining at the lower end) is Stonington, falling, and bear Creeks and on the S^o. side, S^o. West creek, the Head of Trent river also runs into this County.¹⁰

There are two Roads leading westwardly, one on each side of the River, and three cross Roads or rather from S^o. to North, say, one from Newbern crosses Neuse from Craven at Coxes ferry in the lower end of this

⁵ So bitter was the contest over the ratification of the Constitution of the United States that a riot occurred while the ballots were being counted in the court house at night in the election of delegates to the Hillsborough Convention of 1788. The Federalist ticket of prominent men (Richard Caswell, James Glasgow, Benjamin Sheppard, Bryan Whitfield, and John Heritage) was running behind the less distinguished but more popular Anti-Federalist ticket (Moses Westbrook, Jacob Johnson, Isaac Croom, Absalom Price, and Abraham Baker). Suddenly the light was extinguished and the ballot box disappeared. The Federalist governor "recommended" to the voters that they meet at the court house on an appointed day to elect delegates. Only 85 Federalists participated in the second election. The Hillsborough Convention unseated the Federalist delegation from Dobbs but refused to allow the Anti-Federalists candidates to be seated. Dobbs, therefore, was unrepresented in the Convention. Louise Irby, "An Old Time North Carolina Election," *Proceedings of the Twentieth and Twenty-first Annual Sessions of the State Literary and Historical Association of North Carolina*, 102-111.

⁶ Craven County was formed from Bath in 1712; Johnston from Craven in 1746; and Dobbs from Johnston in 1758. Lenoir and Glasgow replaced Dobbs in 1791; and in 1799 Glasgow was changed to Greene. Lenoir was named in honor of General William Lenoir, a hero of the battle of King's Mountain. *North Carolina Manual*, 1913, 567, 626, 667, 678; *S. R.*, XXIII, 495-496; *Laws of North Carolina*, 1791, ch. 47.

⁷ Richard Caswell (1729-1789) was born in Maryland but moved to North Carolina about 1746 where he rose to prominence in public life. He represented Johnston and later Dobbs in the lower house of the General Assembly, 1754-1775; was a member of the Provincial Congresses of 1775 and 1776; represented North Carolina in the Continental Congress, 1774-1776; was the first governor of the State after the adoption of the constitution of 1776, serving continuously from 1776 to 1780. After the Revolution, he served in the state Senate, in the Convention of 1788, and as governor, 1785-87.

Caswell's home was in Kinston. The Council of State met frequently in Kinston in 1777, 1778, 1779, and 1780. S. A. Ashe, *Biographical History of North Carolina*, III, 65-79. *North Carolina Manual*, 1913, 362, 369, 388, 397, 417, 454-457, 591-592, 877, 909; *S. R.*, XIV, 273, 274, 317; XXII, 929, 937, 939, 949, 951, 954-956, 962, 964.

⁸ *S. R.*, XI, 468, 587-588, 602-603, 620; XII, 132, 133, 294-295, 416-417; XIII, 245, 251, 267, 274; XV, 69-70; XVI, 483; XXIV, 413-417.

⁹ An association of citizens in upper Dobbs who resisted the draft, insulted officers, and wounded officials apprehending deserters caused the Council of State in 1779 to advise that the Governor order a detachment of Dobbs militia to capture the leaders. In 1781, numbers of Dobbs citizens joined the British. On August 20, General William Caswell wrote to Governor Burke that "Dobbs has part of it fallen into the Hands of the British and Three Companies out of Seven have to a Man joined them." *C. R.*, IX, 1127, 1241, X, 146; *S. R.*, XI, 731-732, XIV, 319, XV, 627, XXII, 568-569.

¹⁰ These water courses bear the same names today. Trent River flows through the southern part of the county into the Neuse at New Bern.

County, thence up Contentney, one that crosses at Jones's Bridge near Kinston, thence through Kinston towards Contentney or up the river on the North side (this is the most generally used road) also one that crosses at Rockford or Whitfields ferry, which leads in the same direction.

These ferries and Bridge, with one across contentney (at Brooks's) from Pitt County, are all of any note contain'd in the County.

Mines, there is some appearance of Iron oar in the County, tho. too small to be any way important; near the river, in several places is visible considerable quantities of Copperass oar¹¹ and in the river bank are some masses of lime-stone which affords good lime, also in one place in the bed of the river as well as the bank, there is an extensive bed of soft, light and flecky rock, which is said to be fullers earth,¹² but whether it is or not I am too little acquainted to say.

As to the product of this County, pork and Indian Corn seems to be the staple articles, but of the quantity sent to market, the means of knowing is so uncertain as to render it difficult to say, yet I suppose at least 2000 Barrels of Pork, 5 to 6000 do Corn, 50 or 60 Bales Cotton, a considerable quantity of Bacon, some flour, naval Stores pease &c.

A considerable part of the Pork is driven to Virginia and some to Newbern. Newbern is the only market for the cured produce of this County.

Wealth, notwithstanding it cannot be said to be very extensive, yet I conceive it to be equal if not superior to most of the Counties of the lower part of this State, being as small as this;

Though there are some wealthy men in this County, they are not numerous, they being generally of that happy medium which qualifies them to be useful, as well to each other as themselves and desirable and valuable citizens to their County.¹³

Kinston is the only Town in Lenoir, it is situated on Neuse River at a place formerly called Atkins's Banks, this Town was Laid out and established agreeable to an act of assembly, bearing date 1762 under the name of Kingston, but has by another act dated 1784 been changed to its present name.¹⁴ It is situated on a level, about 25 or 30 feet above the river at low water, and breaks off bluff to the Water,—

In point of health perhaps few Towns in the eastern part of the State have more advantages to boast of. It is blest with a pure air, and ex-

¹¹ Ferrous sulphate, a green crystalline substance.

¹² A soft earthy substance resembling clay, but not plastic. It is used in cleaning cloth and wool of grease and as a filter to clarify oils.

¹³ No tax lists of Lenoir are available. In 1810 the white population of 3,019 owned 2,440 slaves. After 1810, the number of slaves increased rapidly to surpass the whites in 1820. In 1860, there were 4,902 whites and 5,140 slaves. *Ninth Census*, I, 52-54.

¹⁴ In 1762, Francis M'Levean, Richard Caswell, Simon Bright, Jr., John Shine, and David Gordon were designated by the General Assembly as directors and trustees to design, build and govern the town of Kingston on 150 acres of land belonging to William Heritage at Atkins' Ferry, Dobbs County. Francis Macklewean was appointed treasurer. *S. R.*, XXV, 468-470. In 1784 an act of the General Assembly changed the name to Kinston and appointed Richard Caswell, Jesse Cobb, William Caswell, Isaac Wingate, Richard Caswell, Jr., John Heritage, and John Sheppard as trustees and directors. *S. R.*, XXIV, 613-616. The General Assembly of 1806 appointed Bryan Whitfield, John Washington, John Gatlin, Jesse Cobb, Sr., Jesse Cobb, Jr., and Ambrose Jones as commissioners. *Laws of North Carolina*, 1806, ch. 42. Three years later the law of 1806 was repealed and Bryan Whitfield, John Washington, John Gatlin, William Croom, Lewis Whitfield, John Harrell, Frederick Jones, and Josiah Hancock were designated as commissioners. *Laws of North Carolina*, 1809, ch. 90.

cellent Water which flows from a stratum of coarse sand with which the whole Town appears to be underlaid.

This discharge of Spring Water from the Bank is just above the surface of the river, and so general and extensive as to have done material injury to the Bank.

This Town once bid fair to flourish, but from County commotions, and no doubt, other causes perhaps the badness of the navigation, it dwindled and become very low, as indeed it now is, as will appear by the number of inhabitants, which is comprehended in ten Families, though it certainly is mended from what it has been.

It contains the Court House, which is of Wood, and in tolerable order, and sufficiently large (for the size of the County) with the Clerk & Registers offices, and is situated about 33 miles the nearest Road from Newbern tho' 60 by Water.

The buildings of this County are by no means eligant, yet there are some instances of good wood buildings, which are the only kind, the prevalent ambition seems not run this way, but more to the Spirit of accumulation.

Agriculture, though not in that state of high improvements that is observable in some places, nor indeed is it prosecuted very methodically at all, yet such is the industry and exertions of the Farmers, that few Counties in the State (when taking into consideration the quality of the Soil) can boast of fuller crops or a greater product to the hand.

This branch is greatly improved for the last Ten years—as well by the change of crops and the use of the Spade as by an increase of industry—

The practice now (much) prevails of laying down the fallow Lands to small grain which is found to answer the double purpose of affording a salutary crop to the Stock as also of rest to the Land and to fit it for the succeeding crop.

The domestic animals of the County are such as are common in the lower part of this State, and are of a midling quality no way remarkable.

Horses, Mules and Oxen, are used in farming and plantation purposes—Mules are growing into use and are much approved where fairly tried.

Manufacturing of clothing, though not carried on extensively (there being no extensive or regular establishment) yet it is conducted with much prudence and saving, being wrought only by the disaffected hands or those not qualified for field labour, which is found to be sufficient to afford a supply for much the greater part of the Clothing for both Whites and blacks.

There is one whisky distillery in the County with some Brandy Stills occasionally used, but as there are but few fruit Trees, the use of them is but Small, nor is the whisky distillery extensive.

Lenoir has in it about 16 or 17 grist mills, most of which have saws attached to them, and five or Six Cotton Ginns that go by Horses and perhaps some few by Water.

The commerce of this County is by no means extensive and confined

entirely to retail, and almost exclusive on a credit of 6 to 12 months, there are four Stores (say 3 at Kinston and 1 at Rockford) at which Stores perhaps the amount of sales may run to 25 or \$30,000, but I am persuaded that it will not exceed it, or but little if at all.

This County is not well adapted to commerce it being for one reason, too near Newbern, to which market the bulk of the produce is carried by the farmers themselves, and for another the navigation is so extremely bad as to be a considerable part of the year useless.

As to Shiping, this County has only a river craft, which consist in a description of flat bottomed Boats or Scows Which seems to be peculiar to this and Tar River, The flats are generally open and carry from 50 to 200 Barrels, drawing from 18 to 36 inches, they are wrought with poles by from 3 to 7 hands, who act on ways or walks, constructed on the side of the flat, and is steered with a sweep or large oar attached to the Stern that Swivels on an erect post.

These flats mostly have a round House or Cabin a baft with a scuttle door.

This discription of Boats has not been in use on this river more than 10 or 12 years, there was before in use a discription of flat bottomed keel Boats, the present plan is preferred for this shoal river—

The fisheries of this County are by no means extensive for though there are perhaps twenty Seins or upward, the whole Fish taken in the County are but few compared with the Fisheries of some other rivers.

I cannot think the whole Fish taken in this County would average in amount p sein more than 1 to \$200 and in many instances would fall much short, and of some springs owing to the flowing of the water few or no fish are caught Shads principally with a few Rocks, Sturgeons and a few Shucking fish (or mullets) are almost the only fish taken in seins, there does a few Herrings come into the river but as high as this, no person has yet thought it an object worth preparing a sein to take them—

Neuse owing to its shallowness or some other cause is by no means well supplied with fish of any kind compared to many other rivers, for besides the scarcity of Fish of foreign growth it seems to be barren for fresh water fish, which are principally comprehended in those kinds, cat fish, a Small variety of perch, a few chubs, blackfish and pikes &c.

Our game consists principally of Deer, foxes, Rabbits & Squirrels (of two Kinds) say Fox and Cat) Squirrels are numerous but the other articles are not.—We have also raccoons, Opossoms, otters & muskrats &c. indeed as to the list of wild animals there is nothing remarkable in it, it being such as is peculiar to Other Counties similarly situated.

Society and civilization, though not in a very refined or advanced State, yet I believe that it is as well as in most of the State possessing no greater advantages than this County does.

Lenoir has an Academy, with some small schools, this Academy is at

Spring Hill, and has been about 6 or 8 years established,¹⁵ and has [] trustees, elected annually,

At first the provision as well as the care of this School devolved upon the Trustees, but at present and for 3 or 4 years past the provision has depended upon the Teacher.

This school, at present is (and has for some time been) conducted by Mr. Joseph Eliot with considerable applause, it has generally about 40 or (a little upwards) Students.

The English, Latin and Greek Languages, with Writing and Arithmetic (perhaps the Mathematicks) are principally taught at this School.

This Academy has a healthy situation and is known by the name of the Spring Hill Academy, Its teacher Mr. Joseph Eliot is (I believe from Windham, Connecticut)

As to men of Talents, I do not know that this County can boast of any extra ordinary portion nor do I know that it is inferior to others in a comparative view.

There are but few professional men, none of the Law and only two of Physic who practice, and they not of very long standing.¹⁶

Lenoir, though it cannot claim any considerable advancement in Literature yet (not withstanding the disadvantages under which the present Adult inhabitants laboured, occasion'd by that want of schools which so generally prevail'd at the time they were raising) appear disposed and desirous to educate their children as well as the nature of their convenience and circumstances will admit of—and as to the comparative difference between the present time and twenty five years ago, altho' I do not think that the County has more literary characters¹⁷ (if as many) as it then had, yet the mass of the people certainly must be much improved.

Altho it must be admitted that there are some of the white inhabitants that can neither read nor write, yet I hope that the number is small, but my knowledge will not admit of my pretending to form an estimate of the proportion.

With respect to societies or libraries, there are none (except of a private nature) which I am constrained also to say of those for humane purposes, yet as to general hospitality, as also humanity from the Master to the slave, it abounds on a comparative view, as much in this County as any in the State.

Religion, though by no means as flourishing in this as in some other Counties, yet it has certainly experienced a considerable growth for the last few years.

¹⁵ After private subscriptions had been made for a school, the General Assembly of 1802 established the "Spring Hill Seminary of Learning" with Bryan Whitfield, Needham Whitfield, Major Croom, Matthew Mosely, Richard Croom, Lewis Whitfield, William Croom, William Blackledge, and Barnaba McKinny as trustees. *Laws of North Carolina*, 1802, ch. 36. Joseph Elliott was still in charge of the school in 1823. Spring Hill was at this time a postoffice. N. B. Whitfield was postmaster. *The North Carolina Register*, 1823, 63, 68.

¹⁶ In 1823 there were no resident practicing attorneys in Lenoir. The resident physicians were Lewis G. Haywood, Abraham Croom, John H. Parker, and Chancy Graham. *The North Carolina Register*, 1823, 47, 56.

¹⁷ The earliest graduate of the University of Lenoir County was Hardy Bryan Croom, class of 1817. K. P. Battle, *History of the University of North Carolina*, I, 789.

There are two sects of Baptists in this County (the United Baptist and free will or ana Baptist) and Methodist which are the only sects that associate in worship, yet no doubt there are those of other societies, but they have no church established in this County.

The United Baptist have two churches and also use the Court House as a place of worship

The anna Baptist have also two churches, and as to the Methodist they have no church but use the Court House regularly for Worship.—

As to diseases and remedies, they are too complicated and foreign to my capacity for me to pretend to illustrate upon, yet I think that I am authorised to say that there is nothing in them peculiar, or materially different from what is met with in other Counties of similar locality,

Sporting clubs we have none of, and as to amusement I believe nearly the same may be said of that, there being none but such as each mind individually points out, indeed the inhabitants of this County seem to be so engaged in extensive pursuits as to have but little relish for what the world calls pleasures.

By the Tax list of 1808. I find that the quantity of land given in was 192715 acres, though the clerk of the Court says that he supposes it to be short, and that about 200000¹⁸ is nearest the Quantity, by which you will be better enabled to come at the size of the County than any thing that I have it at present in my power to offer you—

By the same list the number of free holders is 369—At the last Congressional Election there were 499 votes taken in the County,¹⁹ and though this is the only means by which I am at present enabled to offer you an estimate, yet, you are sufficiently acquainted with the manner of conducting Elections as well as taking the list of Taxable property, to know how subject their estimates are to error, and will accordingly (no doubt, act as your judgment may dictate.

My Dear Sirs, notwithstanding I have already written in reply to your letter, perhaps, more than you could have expected to receive, or may in any wise be necessary for you to notice, on the subject of so small a County, partaking in many respects, so much of the general face of the lower part of this State, yet I beg leave to make some few observations relative to objects, in which I think this County as well as others are materially interested, and in which I think it probable that your paper might be rendered usefull.—

You must be aware how important the improvement of inland navigation must be to all countries, and particularly to that part where the produce is almost exclusively confined to a market laying at the entrance of its river or creek, and how little sensible or regardfull the mass of people appear to be of the effect that the improvement of this kind of navigation would have in enhancing the value of their property—whether from habit

¹⁸ In Lenoir, 205,372 acres of land were assessed for taxation in 1815. W. H. Hoyt, *The Papers of Archibald D. Murphey*, II, 167.

¹⁹ In 1810 the white population of the county was 3,019. *Ninth Census*, I, 52-54.

we are become reconciled to submit to difficulties and inconveniences which in themselves would be so easily amended or obviated, it is hard to say, but such is the fact—

Neuse affords the only navigation that Lenoir, Wayne & Johnson hath and certainly no River in which boats at all ply can be much more blocked up and foul than this river is and has long been

From Kinston for nearly half the distance to Newbern, Neuse is so blocked up with trees & rubbish that whenever The Water is low, the river is rendered almost useless to Boats of any size, there being many places (that where Boats can pass at all for trees and rubbish) there is not more than from 10 to 12 Inches of Water whereas in other places there is 10 to 15 and perhaps 20 feet of Water.

The bed of this river being generally sandy and the current in this County and above as well as some distance into Craven, always running one way, whenever a tree falls into the river or any body adheres to the bottom, the sand is certain to drift or collect against it so as to form a shoal and block up the river, indeed so many of these Trees has fallen into the river as to render it dangerous even in high water,

Besides these obstructions that are produced by natural causes there are many Trees cast into the river by clearing seine Beaches and in some instances Brush and wood thrown into the river for the purpose of forming shoals and thereby leveling the bottom by which the place is improved for drawing a sceine,

There are things that no doubt promote the Interest of a few individuals, but certainly it cannot be good policy to prostrate the Interest and convenience of the community to the views of a few individuals (should it be lawfull) which I should be sorry to believe.

It is true that this navigation cannot be opened without some expence, but it certainly would be very trivial compared to its utility.

The only provision made by law at present is vested in the County Courts, which has long been the case without any effects having been yet produced, not do I think that any person can justify the idea that the County Courts will so act as to effectually operate together,—How useless would it be for Johnson, or Johnson and Wayne to clear to their limits unless Lenoir and Craven would, or even for Lenoir to clear unless Craven would, this has even been the language and it is hardly to be hoped that these Counties will so unite as to engage in, and carry on this desirable work at the same time, particularly, when we take a view of the manner in which the public business of the respective Counties is generally done, The number of Magistrates being so increased as to produce such a fluctuation on the bench as to render it very uncertain whether the magistrate that proposes any business will remain on the bench long enough to finish or even to bring it to sistem, or whether he can find others of sufficient leisure to engage in it with him,

So that unless the legislatrue will interfere so as to pass some law that

shall produce the co operation of the different counties at the same time, there can be but little hopes of a speedy and effectual remedy²⁰—

I will not apologise for the errors of diction and arrangement of the subject, being confident that you will make proper allowances and correct as your better judgment may dictate

I am

Gentlemen

Your Mo. obt. sevt

John Washington

P. S.

It may not be a miss, to observe, that while (the present) Lenoir was Dobbs, the public contemplated fixing the Seat of Government in this County, and for that purpose did purchase a piece of Land laying about three miles below Kinston, on the North Bank of Neuse river, which place has been known since by the name of Tower Hill,²¹

This Land remained public property until since the seat of Government was established at Raleigh, when it was sold and became private,²²

Why this plan was not carried into effect I pretend not to know unless, it was the preponderating influence of the west

Tho Henderson & Co

[To be continued]

²⁰ While John Washington was one of the few whose written opinion is preserved, he was doubtless but one of a growing number in the State who believed that the State should undertake a program of internal improvements. Internal improvements became an important political issue after the War of 1812. Between 1816 and 1819, Archibald D. Murphey, in several reports to the General Assembly, supported the policy and stimulated discussion and action. Before 1819, the State had employed an engineer, procured surveys of rivers and proposed canals, authorized subscriptions of \$112,500 to the stock of navigation and canal companies, and created a fund for internal improvements and a board to direct the newly adopted policy. The history of the State's action is sketched in W. K. Boyd, "The North Carolina Fund for Internal Improvements," *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, XV, 52-67; J. A. Morgan, "State Aid to Transportation in North Carolina—The Pre-Railroad Era (1776-1835)," *The North Carolina Booklet*, X, 122-154; C. C. Weaver, "Internal Improvements in North Carolina previous to 1860," *Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science*, Series XXI, nos. 3-4.

²¹ Governor Arthur Dobbs, in the instructions which he brought with him in 1754, was directed to report to the Board of Trade a suitable place for the seat of government. He selected a bluff at Stringer's Ferry on the north side of Neuse River about 50 miles above New Bern called Tower Hill, purchased the site, and later offered it to the Assembly for the purchase price with interest. He reported his selection to the Board of Trade in 1755. The Board suggested that the opinion of the next General Assembly be secured. In 1758 the General Assembly provided for the fixing of the seat of government on the 850 acres owned by Dobbs at Tower Hill and the building of a home for the Governor and a State House. The capitol, George City, was to be built on 400 acres of the tract. The remaining 450 acres were to constitute a common. John Dawson, Lewis DeRossett, Richard Spaight, John Starkey, John Ashe, John Fonville, Joseph Bryan, John Campbell, and Benjamin Wynns were constituted a committee to arrange for the construction of the buildings and to lay off streets and one-half acre lots for sale to purchasers who must erect thereon houses of certain specifications within five years. Dobbs was paid £450 with interest for the entire tract of 850 acres. The committee was not to proceed until it was known that the Colony's proportion of the £50,000 grant of Parliament to North and South Carolina and Virginia for aid in the French and Indian War was paid to the agent of North Carolina. In 1760, the governor was rebuked for assenting to an act fixing instead of recommending the site.

The question of locating the seat of government involved sectional interests and prestige. The northern part of the Colony was alarmed by Dobbs' removal of his residence from New Bern to Wilmington in 1758 and supported the act of 1758 fixing the seat on the Neuse. Dobbs was opposed to New Bern on account of its alleged unhealthfulness and its distance from the centre of population. In 1762 the Assembly petitioned the King to disallow the Tower Hill act and designate New Bern, though three southern members of the Council protested against the choice of New Bern. According to Dobbs, the question provoked "a great deal of caballing and management" in the General Assembly.

In 1766, New Bern was made the seat of government and Tryon began the construction of his palace. *C. R.*, VI, xxiii-xxv, 1-4, 37, 834-835, 887, 927-928, 940, 959-960, XXV, 373-378; *The North Carolina Magazine or Universal Intelligencer*, August 17-24, 1764.

²² The General Assembly of 1798 appointed William White as commissioner to sell the Tower Hill land at public auction. *Laws of North Carolina*, 1798, ch. 9.

