"The next we hear of the Cape Fear River is through Wheeler's *History of North Carolina* (extracted from the *London Magazine*), giving an account of the most violent equinoctial storm which had ever occurred along the coast, forcing open an entrance into the river at a point known as the 'Haul-over,' now known as the New Inlet. This storm commenced on the 20th of September, 1761, and lasted four days.

"This inlet, from long neglect, has become formidable, detracting a large portion of the river water from its legitimate outlet, to the great detriment of the river and lower harbor.

"In 1775, a map of the Cape Fear River, more accurate in its details than the two first alluded to, was published in London, which laid down the New Inlet, but did not materially vary the harbor, outlet, or draught of water upon the bar, or the channel of the river up to the town of Wilmington.

"At a meeting of the Safety Committee of Wilmington, held on the 20th of November, 1775, John Ancrum presiding, the following preamble and resolutions were passed:

> " 'The committee, taking into consideration the damage with which the inhabitants of the Cape Fear River are threatened by the King's ships now in the harbor, and the open and avowed contempt and violation of justice in the conduct of Governor Martin, who, with the assistance of said ships, is endeavoring to carry off the artillery, the property of this province, and the gift of his late Majesty of blessed memory, for our protection from foreign invasion, have
>
> " 'Resolved, That Messrs. John Forster, William Wilkinson, and John Slingsby, or any one of them, be empowered to procure necessary vessels, boats, and chains, to sink in such part of the channel as they or any of them may think proper, to agree for the purchase of such boats and other materials as may be wanted, and to have them valued, that the owners may be reimbursed by the public. And it is further ordered, that the said John Forster & Co. do consult the committee of Brunswick on this measure and request their concurrence.'

"A knowledge of the men of that period, with the boisterous circumstances which surrounded them, is sufficient evidence that this order was implicitly obeyed and effectually executed, no report of their action being required or expected.

"Tradition assures us that these obstacles were placed across the channel at Big Island. We therefore feel justified in saying that the channel, as laid down by all previous maps, was, at that time and place, obstructed agreeably to the order, as subsequent events would seem to imply. From time to time, logs, stumps, and other drift matter brought down by freshets

lodged against the obstructions, backing up nearly to the narrows and forming what is known as the flats or shoal of logs, which, as it increased, gradually forced the water through an opening on the west side of Big Island, and in course of time scoured out a channel sufficient to accommodate the commerce of the port, and so remained until the year 1826.

"In the year 1797-8, a survey and map of the Cape Fear River, its harbors and outlets, was made by Joshua Potts. At this time, thirty-seven years after the breaking out of New Inlet, we find very little alteration in the harbor or outlet—the bar representing 20 feet of water (supposed at mean low tide), while the channels of the river up to Wilmington had undergone material change, and very much depreciated."

A report of the same committee, made four years earlier than the one just quoted, refers to the Potts survey, and says:

"Older charts than this exhibit a greater draught of water, particulars of which, however, are not accurately remembered by your committee. Many old citizens now living remember to have seen at our wharves vessels drawing 15 to 18 feet of water. But about the year 1820, as the depth of water increased on New Inlet, in like proportion it diminished on the Main Bar, maintaining upon both the aggregate of about 25 feet. The late Capt. Thomas N. Gautier, who was a merchant of this place during the period of time included between the years 1790 and 1810, told one of your committee that during that period, among many others, he had loaded one ship to 30 feet draught, which proceeded down the river to sea, on her voyage to London, without difficulty or interruption. These facts in the history of the past are conclusive evidence, in the minds of your committee, that the true and real cause of the present alarming condition of the navigation of our bars and river is to be found in the existence of the New Inlet, and that alone."

A report of Alexander Strauss to the mayor and aldermen of Wilmington, under date of March 6, 1870, says:

"The bar in the Old Ship Channel has shoaled 2½ feet in the last five years, and therefore any procrastination in the work will be injurious to our commerce, as I believe it can be shown that year by year since 1840 the obstruction has increased, and unless speedy action is taken it will result in the total destruction of our harbor. I base my opinion on data gained from different surveys made from the year 1733 to