into the United States in 1840; the government did not adopt their use, however, until 1847, although tentatively they were used in New York in 1845, and an adhesive stamp was used in St. Louis in the same year. It will readily be understood that few letters were written when 25 cents was the rate of postage, and that, as payment was required on receipt of the letter, the published list of uncalled-for letters was of extraordinary length. What were known as ship letters sometimes came by vessels into the port of Wilmington. They were required to be deposited in the post office, the conveyancer receiving part of the postage.

The mails early in this century were conveyed from place to place in express transmission, or on more important routes by post boys, with relays of horses at short distances. The stage-coach, perhaps at the same time, certainly a little later and until the advent of railroads, was used as the mail conveyancer. The route south from Wilmington was across the ferry at foot of Market Street and the causeway, via Georgetown, S. C., and Charleston. East, the route then and now—but not so well now—was and is known as the New Bern Road. North, the way seems to have been over Little Bridge, via Waynesboro (now Goldsboro), and so on. The blowing of the horn announcing the coming stage was a source of infinite delight to the small boys of the period, black and white alike.

The change in the character of business transactions in Wilmington between 1830 and 1850, though not nearly so great as that between 1870 and 1890, is nevertheless worthy of note. The exports in the early thirties were mainly, almost exclusively, lumber, shingles, and staves to the West Indies, and rice, naval stores, and cotton to the North; the importations, principally sugar, molasses, and rum, especially rum. One looking over the advertisements of those days can hardly fail to be struck with the amount of Jamaica rum and New England rum offered for sale. The Washingtonian temperance movement in the late twenties and throughout the thirties had undoubtedly a great effect in changing the habits of the people and so in diminishing the demand for liquors. In course of time the channel of West Indian trade became in a great measure diverted from Wilmington. The trade in the forties was not what it had been in the decade previous.

The means and manner of conducting business in 1840 were essentially different from what they became a decade or two later. In every countinghouse of any pretensions there was a

tall desk with slopes on all four sides and a plane surface on top to hold the necessary implements or articles for the transaction of business. Every desk had one or more boxes of wafers and a stamp for ordinary letter sealing, and sealing wax with the candle hard by for extraordinary cases. The pen used was usually the quill, for though the steel pen had been invented some time before, it had not come into general use; in fact, in 1840 was quite a rarity. Joseph Gillette patented his improvement in 1831, but it was slow work to supersede the goosequills which every school-teacher had to mend for his pupils, generally, and every boy had in time to learn to make and mend for himself. The box of sand to dry the manuscript—a most annoying device it was—took the place of blotting paper, which then had not come into use. Safes there were, of course, pretentiously dubbed "patent asbestos" and "salazuander," but they were infinitely inferior to the chilled-iron fireproof safes now in use.

A word or two now as to the way traffic, that is the ordinary buying and selling of merchandise, was conducted previous to 1840, and indeed through the forties and perhaps later. It must be recollected that most men of means owned slaves; especially did farmers and planters own many of them. Then, as now, planters had regular accounts with the dealers—dealers rather than factors—and these dealers furnished the planters with every article, large or small, that they needed. On the first of January of each year the account of the planter was made up and presented. He paid it if he chose or such part as he chose, and a note bearing interest at 6 per cent was given for the balance. The next year the same process was gone through. At intervals the entire debt was liquidated, if the debtor chose, or if the creditor compelled. In general, however, dealers of means kept their notes as an investment. Occasionally a note was transferred in the purchase of property, or the notes were "shaved" to enable a holder to raise cash under stress, but in many cases new notes with interest added (and thus compounded) were taken from time to time, usually every year, and no settlement was made. The death of the maker of the obligation, however, made a settlement imperative. When he who owed was found to be getting "shaky," the note was put in suit in order to collect, and some property had to be sold, a negro or two, not improbably, to satisfy the judgment.

The planter upon whose estate debt was thus accumulating was providing against the evil day by using his money to buy