mington Rifle Guards, to assemble fully armed and equipped this afternoon" [15th], which orders were promptly obeyed.

On the morning of the 16th the Governor telegraphed Colonel Cantwell to proceed at once to the forts, "and take possession of the same in the name of the State of North Carolina. This measure being one of precaution merely, you will observe strictly a peaceful policy, and act only on the defensive." The force under Colonel Cantwell's orders moved promptly. It consisted of the Wilmington Light Infantry, Capt. W. L. DeRosset; the German Volunteers, Capt. C. Cornehlson; the Wilmington Rifle Guards, Capt. O. P. Meares; and the Cape Fear Light Artillery, Lieut. James M. Stevenson, commanding. At 4 p. m., United States Ord. Sergt. James Reilly surrendered the post at Fort Johnston, where Lieutenant Stevenson, with his company, was left in command. The remainder of the battalion, under Col. J. L. Cantwell, proceeded to Fort Caswell and took possession at 6.20 p. m., Sergeant Walker, of the United States Army, being placed in close confinement in his quarters "in consequence of the discovery of repeated attempts to communicate with his government."

Officers and men worked with vigor to mount guns and prepare for defense, and the work never ceased until the fall of Fort Fisher in 1865, and the necessary abandonment of the defense of the lower harbor. The Wilmington Light Infantry were soon after sent to Federal Point, where, in Battery Bolles, they began the first defensive works, which afterwards grew into Fort Fisher and its outlying batteries.

Thus was war inaugurated in North Carolina more than a month prior to the act of secession; and it is a noteworthy fact that the news of the act dissolving connection with the Union, and the call upon her sons to arm themselves was first made known to the pioneer troops of the Cape Fear on the parade ground at Fort Caswell.



## EARLY WAR TIMES.

The day following the fall of Sumter, Maj. W. H. C. Whiting hastened to Wilmington and by courtesy took command of the defenses of the Cape Fear. He at once formed a staff, organized the Quartermaster and Commissary Departments, and assigned Capt. F. L. Childs, of the old army, to duty as chief of Artillery and Ordnance, and he appointed S. A. Ashe a lieutenant, and assigned him to duty with Captain Childs. Capt. John C. Winder, who bore a commission from Governor Ellis as chief engineer, reported to Major Whiting. So all of the departments were speedily organized, and the work of preparing for defense was begun. It was a time of unremitting work.

To command New Inlet, Capt. C. P. Bolles threw up the first battery on Confederate Point. It was called Battery Bolles. The Wilmington Light Infantry, Capt W. L. DeRosset, which had been drilled at the cannon at Caswell, was its first garrison. The most interesting of these early batteries was a casemate battery constructed by Captain Winder out of railroad iron and palmetto logs cut on Smith's Island. It was located near the river bank and a short distance higher up than Battery Bolles. Captain Winder's plan of defense for Confederate Point embraced a strong fortification to command the inlet; and in order to guard against a land attack there was a redoubt at the head of the sound, another halfway to the point, and a covered way was planned from the sound to the point, affording protection from the guns of the fleet to the riflemen while they should be engaged with any force that might attempt to land.

Major Whiting was soon promoted to the rank of general and ordered to Virginia, and Col. S. L. Fremont had general charge of the Cape Fear. After some months, Colonel Brown of the Regular Army succeeded Colonel Cantwell. Captain DeRosset was promoted and ordered to Virginia, and Maj. J. J. Hedrick had command at Confederate Point. This officer early became distinguished for energy and efficiency, and was especially remarkable for his skill in erecting batteries. His work at Confederate Point and also at Fort Johnston excited admiration. In October, 1861, when an attack was expected, Gen. Joseph R. Anderson, of Richmond, an old West Pointer, was assigned to the command of the district, and brought with him a full staff of Virginians. Major Lamb, of Norfolk, was assigned to the