There was but one more building that I can recall belonging to the public. The Innes Academy, later known as the Old Academy Building, was a great brick structure, the first floor of which was used as a theatre and the second as a schoolroom. In the latter, Ghost Elliott, a famous teacher in the early days, at one time taught. It was in this building that the comedian Joseph Jefferson partially laid the foundation of his distinguished career as an actor.

The New Custom House.

The first government building in Wilmington, the custom house, was built in 1846. It contained the post office, the room used by the Federal Court, and the offices of the collector. In 1891 a new post-office building was erected. Now a new custom house is being built.

In the year 1902 a bill was introduced in Congress to make New Bern the principal port of North Carolina and Wilmington subsidiary thereto. Whatever may have been the purpose of this action, it was followed by an immediate revival of the commerce of Wilmington as the chief port of North Carolina. One of the arguments in favor of New Bern was the fact that the Wilmington Custom House was not paying the cost to the government of its expenses, the salary of the collector, Mr. B. F. Keith, being then $1,000, with commissions increasing it to $1,400 or $1,500. Now the salary is $2,500, and a balance over and above all expenses has been returned to the Treasury Department for several years.

In 1903, the aggregate receipts of the Wilmington Custom House were $4,760, the value of exports $14,966,754 and the imports were $290,822. The cost to the government to collect $1.00 was $1.41. In the year 1913 the aggregate receipts were $24,934, the value of exports $19,510,926, and the imports were $3,460,419. The cost to the government to collect $1.00 was $0.26.

From the above it appears that the receipts of the port of Wilmington increased 423 per cent, the value of exports increased 30 per cent, and the value of imports, 1,089 per cent within ten years.

The following official table illustrates in a condensed form the commerce of the port of Wilmington during the years from

1899 to 1915 inclusive. It will be observed that the European War greatly reduced the volume of trade in the port year of 1915.

Fiscal Year, June 30	Vessels Entered, Foreign	Vessels Entered, Coastwise	Vessels Cleared, Foreign	Vessels Cleared, Coastwise	Entries, Merchandise	Total Receipts	Value Exports	Cost to Collect $1.00	Number Employees	Value Imports
1899	69	92	107	65	33	$ 11,093	$ 7,586,526	$ .631	4	$ 158,887
1900	69	85	108	65	31	8,846	10,975,511	.754	4	109,614
1901	71	88	102	70	35	9,053	12,013,659	.773	4	131,475
1902	56	83	88	78	43	7,835	11,102,171	.893	4	258,358
1903	38	101	80	71	23	4,760	14,966,754	1.412	5	290,822
1904	37	95	73	71	27	8,933	19,085,221	.718	5	264,550
1905	30	96	64	78	23	4,598	17,481,566	1.416	5	415,295
1906	33	96	60	78	47	9,588	18,466,929	.663	5	381,890
1907	29	107	53	79	61	22,581	18,566,468	.304	4	805,203
1908	36	88	64	78	63	22,686	30,291,681	.299	4	878,952
1909	27	66	52	71	84	33,093	20,479,726	.227	4	1,228,945
1910	42	60	39	100	113	32,684	20,922,398	.208	4	2,355,253
1911	47	65	45	96	156	43,639	28,804,785	.169	4	3,205,407
1912	54	75	55	90	161	41,272	28,705,448	.172	4	3,159,043
1913	63	39	32	96	154	24,934	19,510,926	.25	4	3,460,419
1914	52	75	35	92	231	28,844	25,870,850	.252	4	4,174,745
1915	47	90	30	109	152	18,786	11,308,535	.39	4	1,990,755

The collector of the port during nearly all of that time was Mr. B. F. Keith, who has recently resigned, and his successor, Col. Walker Taylor, appointed by President Wilson, has assumed charge. A good account will be given of him, for he is one of our foremost men in a progressive age. Of the former incumbent there is much to be said, particularly with respect to his sagacity and industry in carrying to a successful issue his scheme, supported by our commercial people, for a new Federal building and extensive grounds in keeping with the dignity of the port of Wilmington.

Collector Keith first persuaded the Secretary of the Treasury to purchase the adjacent property, from the present custom house building to Princess Street up to Wright's Alley. He then showed him a sketch which indicated the ground purchased surrounded by dilapidated buildings, detracting from the value of the location. This led the Secretary to send several special agents to Wilmington, and they reported favorably upon the collector's suggestion that the government purchase all of the