

NORTH CAROLINA'S

North Carolina's Beginnings

North Carolina's history began thousands of years ago as Native American tribes settled throughout the state. Pre-Columbian Native American history in North Carolina was, of course, unwritten. But the state's first inhabitants left behind tangible signs of their existence, including sites as large and impressively engineered as the Town Creek Mound in Montgomery County.

North Carolina was an important boundary area between different Native American cultural areas, tribes and language stocks. The Algonquian-speaking tribes of northeastern North Carolina's Albemarle Sound region constituted the southern extremity of Eastern Woodlands culture. Further inland, Iroquoian and Siouan-speaking tribes such as the Tuscarora and the Catawba were more oriented toward the Southeastern cultural tradition. North Carolina's mountains were the homeland of the Cherokee tribe, Iroquoian speakers who would be driven from North Carolina, save for a small remnant, during the winter of 1838-39 by federal troops. Those Cherokee who survived the "Trail of Tears" settled in what later became Oklahoma. The descendents of those Cherokee who managed to avoid capture and relocation still live today in their mountain homeland and are known as the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Nation.

First European Contacts

The first known European exploration of North Carolina occurred during the summer of 1524. A Florentine navigator named Giovanni da Verrazano, in the service of France, explored the coastal area of North Carolina between the Cape Fear River area and Kitty Hawk. A report of his findings was sent to Francis I, and published in Richard Hakluyt's *Divers Voyages touching the Discoverie of America*. No attempt was made to colonize the area. Between 1540 and 1570 several Spanish explorers from the Florida Gulf region explored portions of North Carolina, but again no permanent settlements were established.

Coastal North Carolina was the scene of the first attempt by English-speaking people to colonize North America. Two colonies were begun in the 1580s under a charter granted by Queen Elizabeth to Sir Walter Raleigh. The first colony, established in 1585 under the leadership of Ralph Lane, ended in failure. A second expedition under the leadership of John White began in the spring of 1587 when 110 settlers, including seventeen women and nine children, set sail for the new world. The White Colony arrived near Hatteras in June, 1587, and went on to Roanoke Island, where they

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found the houses built by Ralph Lane's expedition still standing. Two significant events occurred shortly after the colonists' arrival — two friendly Indians were baptized and a child was born. Virginia Dare was the first child born to English-speaking parents in the new world.

The colonists faced many problems. With supplies running short, White was pressured to return to England for provisions. Once in England, White was unable to immediately return to Roanoke because of the impending attack by the Spanish Armada. When he was finally able to return in 1590, he found only the abandoned remnants of what was once a thriving settlement. There were no signs of life, only the word "CROATAN" carved on a nearby tree. Much speculation has been made about the fate of the "Lost Colony," but no one has successfully explained the disappearance of the colony and its settlers.

Permanent Settlement

The first permanent English settlers in North Carolina emigrated from the Tidewater area of southeastern Virginia. The first of these "overflow" settlers moved into the area of the Albemarle Sound in northeast North Carolina around 1650.

In 1663, Charles II granted a charter to eight English noblemen who had helped him regain the throne of England. The charter document contains the following description of the territory which the eight Lords Proprietor were granted title to:

"All that Territory or tract of ground, situate, lying, and being within our Dominions in America, extending from the North end of the Island called Luck Island, which lies in the Southern Virginia Seas and within six and Thirty degrees of the Northern Latitude, and to the West as far as the South Seas; and so Southerly as far as the River Saint Mathias, which borders upon the Coast of Florida, and within one and Thirty degrees of Northern Latitude, and West in a direct line as far as the South Seas aforesaid; Together with all and singular Ports, Harbours, Bays, Rivers, Isles, and Islets belonging Into the Country aforesaid; And also, all the Soil, Lands, Fields, Woods, Mountains, Farms, Lakes, Rivers, Bays, and Islets situate or being within the Bounds or Limits aforesaid; with the Fishing of all sorts of Fish, Whales, Sturgeons, and all other Royal Fishes in the Sea, Bays, Islets, and Rivers within the premises, and the Fish therein taken;

And moreover, all Veins, Mines, and Quarries, as well discovered as not discovered, of Gold, Silver, Gems, and precious Stones, and all other, whatsoever be it, of Stones, Metals, or any other thing whatsoever found or to be found within the Country, Isles, and Limits"

The territory was to be called "Carolina" in honor of Charles I. In 1665, a second charter was granted in order to clarify territorial questions not answered in the first charter. This charter extended the boundary lines of Carolina to include:

"All that Province, Territory, or Tract of ground, situate, lying, and being within our Dominions of America aforesaid, extending North and Eastward as

far as the North end of Carahutke River or Gullet; upon a straight Westerly line to Wyonoake Creek, which lies within or about the degrees of thirty six and thirty Minutes, Northern latitude, and so West in a direct line as far as the South Seas; and South and Westward as far as the degrees of twenty nine, inclusive, northern latitude; and so West in a direct line as far as the South Seas.”

Between 1663 and 1729, North Carolina was under the near-absolute control of the Lords Proprietor and their descendants. The small group commissioned colonial officials and authorized the governor and his council to grant lands in the name of the Lords Proprietor. In 1669, philosopher John Locke wrote the Fundamental Constitutions as a model for the government of Carolina. Albemarle County was divided into local governmental units called precincts. Initially there were three precincts — Berkley, Carteret, and Shaftesbury — but as the colony expanded to the south and west, new precincts were created. By 1729, there were a total of eleven precincts — six in Albemarle County and five in Bath County, which had been created in 1696. Although the Albemarle Region was the first permanent settlement in the Carolina area, another populated region soon developed around present-day Charleston, South Carolina. Because of the natural harbor and easier access to trade with the West Indies, more attention was given to developing the Charleston area than her northern counterparts. For a twenty-year period, 1692-1712, the colonies of North and South Carolina existed as one unit of government. Although North Carolina still had her own assembly and council, the governor of Carolina resided in Charleston and a deputy governor was appointed for North Carolina.

Royal Colony

In 1729, seven of the Lords Proprietor sold their interest in North Carolina to the crown and North Carolina became a royal colony. The eighth proprietor, Lord Granville, retained economic interest and continued granting land in the northern half of North Carolina. The crown supervised all political and administrative functions in the colony until 1775.

Colonial government in North Carolina changed little between the proprietary and royal periods, the only major difference being who appointed colonial officials. There were two primary units of government — the governor and his council and a colonial assembly whose representatives were elected by the qualified voters of the county. Colonial courts, unlike today's courts, rarely involved themselves in formulating governmental policy. All colonial officials were appointed by either the Lords Proprietor prior to 1729 or by the crown afterwards. Members of the colonial assembly were elected from the various precincts (counties) and from certain towns which had been granted representation. The term “precinct” as a geographical unit ceased to exist after 1735. These areas became known as “counties” and about the same time “Albemarle County” and “Bath County” ceased to exist as governmental units.

The governor was an appointed official, as were the colonial secretary, attorney

general, surveyor general and the receiver general. All officials served at the pleasure of the Lords Proprietor or the crown. The council served as an advisory group to the governor during the proprietary and royal periods, in addition to serving as the upper house of the legislature when the assembly was in session. When vacancies occurred in colonial offices or on the council, the governor was authorized to carry out all mandates of the proprietors and could make a temporary appointment until the vacancy was filled by proprietary or royal commission. One member of the council was chosen as president of the group and many council members were also colonial officials. If a governor or deputy governor was unable to carry on as chief executive because of illness, death, resignation or absence from the colony, the president of the council became the chief executive and exercised all powers of the governor until the governor returned or a new governor was commissioned.

The colonial assembly was made up of men elected from each precinct and town where representation had been granted. Not all counties were entitled to the same number of representatives. Many of the older counties had five representatives each, while those formed after 1696 were each allowed only two. Each town granted representation was allowed one representative. The presiding officer of the colonial assembly was called the speaker and was elected from the entire membership of the house. When a vacancy occurred, a new election was ordered by the speaker to fill it. On the final day of each session, bills passed by the legislature were signed by both the speaker and the president of the council.

The colonial assembly could meet only when it was called into session by the governor. Since the assembly was the only body authorized to grant the governor his salary and spend tax monies raised in the colony, it met on a regular basis until just before the Revolutionary War. There was, however, a constant struggle for authority between the governor and his council on the one hand and the general assembly on the other. Two of the most explosive issues involved fiscal control of the colony's revenues and the election of treasurers. Both were privileges of the assembly. The question of who had the authority to create new counties also simmered throughout the colonial period. On more than one occasion, elected representatives from counties created by the governor and council without consulting the lower house were refused seats until the matter was resolved. These conflicts between the executive and legislative bodies were to have a profound effect on the organization of state government after independence.

The Struggle for Independence

On April 12, 1776, North Carolina authorized its delegates to the Continental Congress to vote for independence. This was the first official call for independence from any of the colonies. The 83 delegates present in Halifax at the Fourth Provincial Congress unanimously adopted the Halifax Resolves, which indicted the colony's royalist government in blunt fashion:

The Select Committee, taking into Consideration the usurpations and violence attempted and committed by the King and Parliament of Britain against America, and the further measures to be taken for frustrating the same, and for the better defense of this province reported as follows, to wit,

It appears to your Committee that pursuant to the Plan concerted by the British Ministry for subjugating America, the King and Parliament of Great Britain have usurped a Power over the Persons and Property of the People unlimited and uncontrolled and disregarding their humble Petitions for Peace, Liberty and Safety, have made divers Legislative Acts, denouncing War, Famine and every Species of Calamity daily employed in destroying the People and committing the most horrid devastation on the Country. That Governors in different Colonies have declared Protection to slaves who should imbrue their Hands in the Blood of their Masters. That the Ships belonging to America are declared prizes of War and many of them have been violently seized and confiscated in consequence of which multitudes of the people have been destroyed or from easy Circumstances reduced to the most Lamentable distress.

And whereas the moderation hitherto manifested by the United States and their sincere desire to be reconciled to the mother Country on Constitutional Principles, have procured no mitigation of the aforesaid wrongs and usurpations and no hopes remain of obtaining redress by those Means alone which have been hitherto tried, Your Committee are of the Opinion that the house should enter into the following Resolve, to wit,

Resolved that the delegates for this Colony in the Continental Congress be empowered to concur with the other delegates of the other colonies in declaring Independence, and forming foreign Alliances, resolving to this Colony the Sole, and Exclusive right of forming a Constitution and Laws for this Colony, and of appointing delegates from time to time under the direction of a General Representation thereof to meet the delegates of the other Colonies for such purposed as shall be hereafter pointed out...

The Halifax Resolves were important because they were the first official action calling for independence from Britain and they were directed at all of the colonies that had taken up arms against the crown. Virginia followed with her own recommendations soon after the adoption of the Halifax Resolves and on July 4, delegates at the Continental Congress meeting in Philadelphia signed the final draft of the Declaration of Independence, North Carolinians William Hooper, Joseph Hewes and John Penn among them. In early December, 1776, delegates to the Fifth Provincial Congress adopted the first constitution for North Carolina. On December 21, 1776, Richard Caswell became the first governor of North Carolina under the new constitution.

Early Statehood

On November 21, 1789, the state adopted the United States Constitution, becoming the twelfth state to enter the federal union. In 1788, North Carolina had rejected the Constitution because it lacked the necessary amendments to ensure freedom of the people. The Bill of Rights satisfied the concerns of antifederalists enough to ensure the state's adoption of the Constitution a year later.

State Constitution of 1835

The convention opened on June 4, 1835, in Raleigh. The new constitution provided for popular election of the governor, as well as fixing the governor's term in office to two years per term and no more than two consecutive terms. It established a more equitable method of representation in the General Assembly. The new constitution fixed the terms of several offices in the Council of State, equalized the poll tax, banned the legislature from considering private bills, established new legislative procedures for divorce and other matters of civil law and created a new structure for impeaching public officials. The new state constitution also created a mechanism that would allow successive General Assembly sessions to propose constitutional amendments for popular ratification. The Constitution of 1835 passed when submitted to a popular referendum.

The Drift Toward War

North Carolina was not a leader in talk of Southern secession as the mid-1800s came to a close. A popular referendum held in February, 1861, on whether to call a convention on secession was defeated by a very slim margin. Many of North Carolina's political leaders looked for ways to mediate between the Union and the emerging Confederacy, to settle the secession question peacefully. But news that Confederate troops had seized Ft. Sumter in Charleston Harbor and President Lincoln's call for militia troops from North Carolina to assist in putting down the incipient rebellion ended most North Carolinians' reluctance to choose sides in the conflict. The state seceded from the Union in May, 1861.

Once a member of the Confederacy, however, North Carolina provided more than its fair share of manpower and other resources to the war effort. One out of every four Confederate battle casualties was a North Carolinian. Union forces seized much of the Outer Banks and northeastern North Carolina in 1862, leading to constant, small-scale warfare in that region until the end of the conflict.

One of the last major battles of the war occurred in March, 1865, at Bentonville, where Confederate troops under the command of Joseph E. Johnston tried to smash the left wing of Union Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman's army. Instead, Johnston's troops hammered at the Union lines for nearly three days in some of the worst combat of the war. Unable to break the Union Army, Johnston retreated through Raleigh and surrendered his remaining troops near Durham on April 18.

Engulfed by a war not of its making or choosing, North Carolina suffered terribly. At the end of the war, property damage throughout the state was immense. The loss of lives on battlefields in Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania left many families grieving.

Constitution of 1868

The Constitution of 1868 provided for universal male suffrage. State and county officials would henceforth be elected by popular vote and the terms for governor and lieutenant governor were extended to four years. Most of the state's judges would likewise be elected by popular vote to eight-year terms. The new state constitution created extensive public services for North Carolinians with disabilities, provided for public orphanages and improved public access to higher education. North Carolinians could no longer be imprisoned for debt under the new state constitution and women, while still not given full citizenship rights, gained considerable new property rights. The constitution also ended the archaic network of county justices, replacing them instead with county commissions and establishing townships in each county for administrative purposes.

The Progressive Era

The dawn of the 20th Century brought changes to North Carolina's economy and society. The state benefited from strong, progressive political leadership from governors such as Charles Brantley Aycock (inaugurated in 1901). Aycock persuaded the General Assembly to undertake the most sweeping expansion of the state's public education system in nearly a century. Many North Carolina counties gained access to local public education for the first time ever between 1900 and 1920. Governor Aycock also convinced the General Assembly to make school funding and maintenance, including hiring and paying teachers, a state function.

North Carolina's state government made other progressive changes during the first two decades of the new century. The state's park system was founded in 1915 with the opening of Mount Mitchell State Park. Led by Governor Cameron Morrison (1921-25) the state finally addressed its abysmal transportation network through the creation of a state highway commission and funding of new road construction through a series of statewide bond referenda. Morrison also coaxed the General Assembly into spending more money on public health throughout the state and funding vast improvements in the state's public schools and public universities and colleges.

Morrison's successor, Angus McLean (1925-29), continued the pattern of expanding the administrative scope and expertise of state government and funding badly-needed improvements in public infrastructure. McLean promoted the expansion and diversification of the state economy, both in the industrial and agricultural sectors. Under McLean's guidance, the state also began systematic efforts to attract new capital investment to North Carolina.

War and Sacrifice

The Japanese Navy's attack on Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941, launched a new period of sacrifice for many North Carolina families. Coastal residents, particularly on the Outer Banks, had an uncomfortably close view of the horrors of modern war throughout 1942 and 1943 as German submarines torpedoed and sank ships, sometimes within sight of land. Many North Carolina civilians risked their lives to rescue sailors from these sinkings and hospitals along the coast treated many injured and burned survivors. More poignantly, the state's coastal residents collected the bodies of dead sailors that washed ashore and buried them next to generations of their own kin in local cemeteries.

North Carolina played a significant role in the American war effort. Fort Bragg, which dated back to World War I, swelled in size, while Cherry Point Marine Air Station and Seymour Johnson Air Force Base were founded to train pilots for both the European and Pacific theaters. By the end of the war, military bases scattered throughout North Carolina had trained more men for combat than any other state in the Union.

Over 360,000 North Carolinians served in the U.S. Armed Forces during World War II. More than 4,000 of them died in combat. Hundreds of thousands of other North Carolinians who remained in the state during the war worked long hours and often went hungry to support the war effort.

The Humble Giant

The living standards of most state residents improved steadily following 1960 as North Carolina's investment in public higher education, unrivaled by nearly any state south of the Mason-Dixon Line, produced large numbers of skilled workers and professionals. By 1990, for the first time in its history, almost half of the state's residents lived in urban areas. Economic diversification, a better-educated work force and shrewd public sector investments such as the Research Triangle Park in the Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill area led to mushrooming population growth in the state's cities. North Carolina, by 1980, had become one of the ten most populous states in the United States.

The Mecklenburg Declaration of 1775 *

Officers

Abraham Alexander, Chair

John McKnitt Alexander

Delegates

| | | |
|------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Col. Thomas Polk | Ezra Alexander | Waightstill Avery |
| Ephraim Brevard | William Graham | Benjamin Patton |

| | | |
|-------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| Hezekiah J. Balch | John Quarry | Mathew McClure |
| John Phifer | Abraham Alexander | Neil Morrison |
| James Harris | John McKnitt Alexander | Robert Irwin |
| William Kennon | Hezekiah Alexander | John Flenniken |
| John Ford | Adam Alexander | David Reese |
| Richard Barry | Charles Alexander | Richard Harris, Sen. |
| Henry Downs | Zacheus Wilson, Sen. | |

The following resolutions were presented:

1. *Resolved.* That whosoever directly or indirectly abetted or in any way form or manner countenanced the uncharted and dangerous invasion of our rights as claimed by Great Britain is an enemy to this country, to America, and to the inherent and inalienable rights of man.
2. *Resolved.* That we the citizens of Mecklenburg County, do hereby dissolve the political bonds which have connected us to the mother country and hereby absolve ourselves from all allegiance to the British Crown and abjure all political connections contract or association with that nation who have wantonly trampled on our rights and liberties and inhumanely shed the blood of American patriots at Lexington.
3. *Resolved.* That we do hereby declare ourselves a free and independent people, are, and of right ought to be a sovereign and self-governing association under the control of no power other than that of our God and the General Government of the Congress to the maintenance of which independence we solemnly pledge to each other our mutual cooperation, our lives, our fortunes, and our most sacred honor.
4. *Resolved.* That as we now acknowledge the existence and control of no law or legal officer, civil or military within this County, we do hereby ordain and adopt as a rule of life all, each and every of our former laws - wherein nevertheless the Crown of Great Britain never can be considered as holding rights, privileges, immunities, or authority therein.
5. *Resolved.* That it is further decreed that all, each and every Military Officer in this County is hereby reinstated in his former command and authority, he acting conformably to these regulations. And that every member present of this delegation shall henceforth be a civil officer, viz., a justice of the peace, in the character of a "committee man" to issue process, hear and determine all matters of controversy according to said adopted laws and to preserve peace, union and harmony in said county, and to use every exertion to spread the love of Country and fire of freedom throughout America, until a more general and organized government be established in this Province.

* The Mecklenburg Declaration was reportedly adopted on May 20, 1775. This

document is found in Vol. IX, pages 1263-65 of the *Colonial Records of North Carolina*; however, the authenticity of the declaration has long been – and continues to be – a source of controversy among historians. The text was recalled from memory by the clerk some twenty years after the Mecklenburg meeting was supposedly held. The original notes had reportedly been lost in a fire.

The Halifax Resolves of 1776*

The Select Committee taking into Consideration the usurpations and violences attempted and committed by the King and Parliament of Britain against America, and the further Measures to be taken for frustrating the same, and for the better defense of this province reported as follows, to wit,

It appears to your Committee that pursuant to the Plan concerted by the British Ministry for subjugating America, the King and Parliament of Great Britain have usurped a Power over the Persons and Properties of the People unlimited and uncontrouled; and disregarding their humble Petitions for Peace, Liberty and safety, have made divers Legislative Acts, denouncing War Famine and every Species of Calamity against the Continent in General. That British Fleets and Armies have been and still are daily employed in destroying the People and committing the most horrid devastations on the Country. That Governors in different Colonies have declared Protection to Slaves who should imbrue their Hands in the Blood of their Masters. That the Ships belonging to America are declared prizes of War and many of them have been violently seized and confiscated in consequence of which multitudes of the people have been destroyed or from easy Circumstances reduced to the Lamentable distress.

And whereas the moderation hitherto manifested by the United Colonies and their sincere desire to be reconciled to the mother Country on Constitutional Principles, have procured no mitigation to the aforesaid Wrongs and usurpations, and no hopes remain of obtaining redress by those Means alone which have been hitherto tried, Your Committee are of Opinion that the house should enter into the following Resolve to wit,

Resolve that the delegates for this Colony in the Continental Congress be empowered to concur with the delegates of the other Colonies in declaring Independency, and forming foreign Alliances, reserving to this Colony the Sole, and Exclusive right of forming a Constitution and Laws for this Colony, and of appointing delegates from time to time (under the direction of a general Representation thereof) to meet the delegates of the other Colonies for such purposes as shall be hereafter pointed out.

* The resolves were adopted on April 12, 1776.

The Mecklenburg Resolves

This day the Committee of this county met and passed the following resolves:

Whereas by an address presented to his majesty by both House of Parliament in February last, the American colonies are declared to be in a state of actual rebellion, we conceive that all laws and commissions confirmed by or derived from the authority of the King and Parliament are annulled and vacated and the former civil constitution of these colonies for the present wholly suspended. To provide in some degree for the exigencies of this county, in the present alarming period, we deem it proper and necessary to pass the following resolves, viz.:

1. *That all commissions civil and military heretofore granted by the Crown to be exercised in these colonies are null and void and the constitution of each particular colony wholly suspended.*
2. *That the Provincial Congress of each Province under the direction of the great Continental Congress is invested with all legislative and executive powers within their respective Provinces and that no other legislative or executive power does or can exist at this time in any of these colonies.*
3. *As all former laws are now suspended in this Province and the Congress has not yet provided others we judge it necessary for the better preservation of good order, to form certain rules and regulations for the internal government of this county until laws shall be provided for us by the Congress.*
4. *That the inhabitants of this county do meet on a certain day appointed by the committee and having formed themselves into nine companies... eight in the county and one in the town of Charlotte do choose a Colonel and other military officers who shall hold and exercise their several powers by virtue of this choice and independent of the Crown of Great Britain and former constitution of this Province.*
5. *That for the better preservation of the peace and administration of justice each of those companies do choose from their own body two discreet freeholders who shall be empowered...to decide and determine all matters of controversy arising within said company under the sum of twenty shillings and jointly and together all controversies under the sum of forty shillings that so as their decisions may admit of appeal to the convention of the selectmen of the county and also that any one of these shall have power to examine and commit to confinement persons accused of petit larceny.*
6. *That those two select men thus chosen do jointly and together choose from the body of their particular body two persons properly qualified to act as constables who may assist them in the execution of their office.*
7. *That upon the complaint of any persons to either of these selectmen he do issue his warrant directed to the constable commanding him to bring the aggressor before him or them to answer said complaint.*

8. *That these eighteen selectmen thus appointed do meet every third Tuesday in January, April, July and October, at the Court House in Charlotte, to hear and determine all matters of controversy for sums exceeding forty shillings, also appeals, and in cases of felony to commit the person or persons convicted thereof to close confinement until the Provincial Congress shall provide and establish laws and modes of proceeding in all such cases.*
9. *That these eighteen selectmen thus convened do choose a clerk to record the transactions of said convention and that said clerk upon the application of any person or persons aggrieved do issue his warrant to one of the constables...directing said constable to summon and warn said offender to appear before the convention at their next sitting to answer the aforesaid complaint...*
10. *That any Person making Complaint upon Oath to the Clerk, or any Member of the Convention, that he has Reason to suspect that any Person or Persons indebted to him in a Sum above Forty Shillings, do intend clandestinely to withdraw from the County without paying such a Debt; the Clerk, or such Member, shall issue his Warrant to the Constable, commanding him to take said Person or Persons into safe Custody, until the next sitting of the Convention.*
11. *That when a Debtor for a Sum below Forty Shillings shall abscond and leave the County, the Warrant granted as aforesaid shall extend to any Goods or Chattels of the said Debtor as may be found, and such Goods or Chattels be seized and held in Custody by the Constable for the space of Thirty Days; in which Term if the Debtor fails to return and Discharge the Debt, the Constable shall return the Warrant to one of the Select Men of the Company where the Goods and Chattels were found, who shall issue Orders to the Constable to sell such a part of the said Goods as shall amount to the Sum due; that when the Debt exceeds Forty Shillings, the Return shall be made to the Convention, who shall issue the Orders for Sale.*
12. *That all receivers and collectors of quit rents, public and county taxes, do pay the same into the hands of the chairman of this committee to be by them disbursed as the public exigencies may require, and that such receivers and collectors proceed no further in their office until they be approved of by and have given to this committee good and sufficient security for a faithful return of such monies when collected.*
13. *That the committee be accountable to the county for the application of all monies received from such public officers.*
14. *That all the officers hold their commissions during the pleasure of their several constituents.*
15. *That this committee will sustain all damages that ever hereafter may accrue to all or any of these officers thus appointed and thus acting on account of their obedience and conformity to these resolves.*
16. *That whatever person hereafter shall receive a commission from the Crown or attempt to exercise any such commission heretofore received shall be deemed an enemy to his*

country and upon information being made to the captain of the company in which he resides, the said company shall cause him to be apprehended and conveyed before the two selectmen of the said company, who upon proof of the fact, shall commit him the said offender to safe custody until the next sitting of the committee, who shall deal with him as prudence may direct.

17. That any person refusing to yield obedience to the above resolves shall be considered equally criminal and liable to the same punishment as the offenders above last mentioned.
18. That these resolves be in full force and virtue until instructions from the Provincial Congress...shall provide otherwise or the legislative body of Great Britain resign its unjust and arbitrary pretensions with respect to America.
19. That the eight Militia companies in this county do provide themselves with proper arms and accoutrements and hold themselves in readiness to execute the commands and directions of the General Congress of this Province and of this Committee.
20. That the committee appoint Colonel Thomas Polk and Dr. Joseph Kennedy to purchase three hundred pounds of powder, six hundred pounds of lead and one thousand flints for the use of the militia of this county and deposit the same in such place as the committee hereafter may direct.

Signed by order of the Committee,
Eph. Brevard, Clerk of the Committee

On May 31, 1775, a committee of Mecklenburg County citizens drew up a set of resolves, declaring that all commissions theretofore issued by the Crown were to be considered null and void. They proceeded to re-organize their local government, saying they should "hold and exercise their several powers by virtue of this choice and independent of the Crown of Great Britain and former constitution of this province." These resolves were printed in the *North Carolina Gazette*, New Bern, June 16, 1775.

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