

May C. Kelly

Centennial Addresses

SYNOD OF NORTH CAROLINA



*Delivered at Alamance Church, Greens-
boro, N. C., October 7, 1913*

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Delivered at

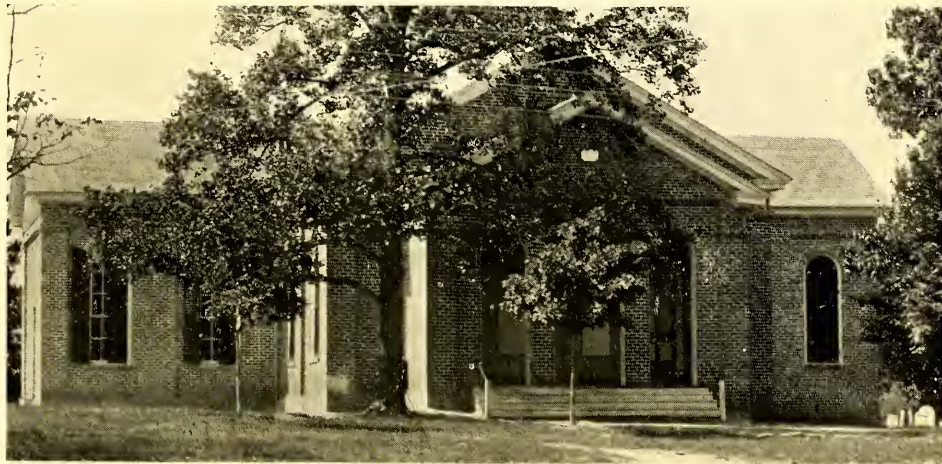
ALAMANCE CHURCH

GREENSBORO, N. C.

OCTOBER 7, 1913



In the church
on this spot
THE SYNOD OF
NORTH CAROLINA
was organized
OCT. 7th 1813



ALAMANCE CHURCH

THE BEGINNINGS AND DEVELOPMENT OF PRES- BYTERIANISM IN NORTH CAROLINA TO 1863

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It is not my purpose today to address myself to those who know the history of the Presbyterian Church in North Carolina. That would be entirely unnecessary. Besides, this is not a meeting of a historical society. I wish the rather to speak to those who do not know it and especially to the young people who are present. I shall therefore not consider it necessary to make apologies to the historians who are present if I deal with some things which may seem elementary to them. With this brief statement let us proceed at once with the subject assigned for this hour.

I. OUR PRESBYTERIAN ANCESTORS

The earliest Presbyterian settlers in North Carolina were Scotch-Irish and Scotch. Not only so, but from the beginning to the present hour the Scotch-Irish and Scotch have constituted the predominant element in the Presbyterian Church in North Carolina.

Who were the Scotch-Irish?

Since I was invited to make this address, I suppose I have asked this question of a dozen intelligent people, but have not received a satisfactory answer.

The story is a long one but is full of thrilling interest from start to finish. It really begins back in the days of Henry VIII, King of England. Henry came to the throne in 1509, only eight years before the Reformation began under the leadership of Martin Luther. At that time England, Scotland and Ireland were Roman Catholic to the core. Henry was not in sympathy with the Reformation and threw the weight of his influence against it, but when the Pope of Rome refused to grant his divorce from Catherine of Aragon just as he wanted it, he broke with Rome in 1536, declared himself the head of the church in England and Ireland, and began a reformation all of his own, which was more political than religious. England fell into line in a way that was fairly satisfactory to Henry, but Ireland refused to make the break with the Roman Catholic Church. Henry proceeded to compel her to do so and as a result Henry had trouble in Ireland all the days of his life. His daughter, Queen Elizabeth, inherited this trouble. Her policy towards Ireland was more conciliatory than that of her father and she met with better success in establishing peace in Ireland. Yet Ireland remained almost solidly Catholic. When James I succeeded Elizabeth in 1603 there were violent outbreaks and conspiracies in Ire-

land, especially in the northern part, against his rule. James dealt with these conspiracies with an iron hand. As a result, six whole counties in the north of Ireland in the province of Ulster were practically depopulated and confiscated by James. These counties covered an area of a half million acres.

During the century in which all this was going on, John Knox and his co-workers had made Scotland a great Presbyterian stronghold. In the meantime England had also become strongly Protestant. James hit upon a bright idea. It was suggested by no less a personage than Lord Bacon, the great philosopher, and that was to send over large Protestant colonies from England and Scotland to take possession of these counties in the north of Ireland, with the hope that this leaven would leaven the whole lump. As Scotland lay closer to Ireland, and for other reasons which we need not mention here, the great majority of these colonists settling in Ireland went from Scotland. These Scotchmen took their Presbyterian faith with them. However, it must not be supposed that they were all devout Christians. Many were far from it. But Presbyterian ministers and evangelists went over from Scotland and great revivals followed in which thousands were converted. Churches were built and Presbyteries were organized. By 1660 there were five Presbyteries in Ulster with 100,000 Presbyterian communicants.

These Scotchmen in the north of Ireland and their descendants came to be known, especially in America, as the Scotch-Irish and must be sharply distinguished from the Scotch who have never lived in Ireland.

This in the very briefest way gives us the origin of the Scotch-Irish. For the first hundred years after their migration to Ireland these Scotch-Irishmen got on in a fairly satisfactory way with the English government, but in 1704 troublous days began with the enactment of the Test Act, which compelled every person holding a position under the crown to take communion in the Established Church, which was the Episcopal Church, within three months after entering an office. You can imagine the effect of such a law on Scotch-Irish Presbyterians. Later there followed other forms of tyranny. In addition to this, the grain crops failed in Ireland for several successive seasons. These Scotch-Irishmen began to turn their faces to America, whither friends had gone from time to time. Then began one of the greatest emigration movements of modern times. For sixty years the Scotch-Irish poured across the Atlantic in one continuous stream. It has been estimated that from 1713 to 1775 fully 600,000 of them came from north Ireland to our American shores.

Some of these landed on the coast of New England, some at Charleston, South Carolina, but the great body of them found their way up the Delaware River to Philadelphia and its vicinity. Many of them remained in and around Philadelphia, others went down to the eastern shores of Maryland and Virginia, where there were already small colonies of their fellow countrymen. The great majority of them moved towards the western frontier of Pennsylvania. From there they passed over into Maryland and across the Potomac into the valley of Virginia. From Virginia they passed on into North Carolina, South Carolina,

Georgia and Alabama, until they came to the colonies formed by the Scotch-Irish who had landed at Charleston and made their way inland.

This tide of emigration left three great settlements of Scotch-Irish in North Carolina. The oldest of these was the settlement in Duplin and New Hanover Counties, made under the leadership of Henry McCulloch about 1736. There was another large settlement along the Hico, Eno and Haw Rivers in the territory now occupied by Caswell, Guilford, Alamance, Orange and Granville Counties. The third settlement was between the Yadkin and Catawba Rivers, sometimes called the Mesopotamia of North Carolina, in the territory now covered by Rowan, Iredell, Cabarrus and Mecklenburg Counties.

We cannot give the dates of these early settlements as definitely as we could wish, but we can get some conception of dates and of the rapid growth of the population in these settlements from the dates in which the counties were set off and from the rapidity with which this was done. In 1743 Granville was set off from Edgecombe. In 1749 Anson was set off from Bladen. At that time Granville and Anson included all the western part of the State. In 1751 Orange was set off from Granville and Bladen. In 1753 Rowan was set off from Anson. In 1762 Mecklenburg was set off from Anson.

I have now given you in the shortest possible compass a bird's-eye view of our Scotch-Irish ancestors and of the way in which they began their settlements in North Carolina. It would be an interesting story if there were only time to tell it in full.

But we must turn now and look at another very important colony of our Presbyterian ancestors who came into North Carolina from another direction and from a slightly different source. The Scotch began to come into North Carolina, by the way of Wilmington and the Cape Fear River, directly from Scotland, at a very early period. In fact, nobody knows just how early. They were certainly here as early as 1729, when North Carolina and South Carolina became separate provinces. Others came from year to year. But the great tide did not set in until after the battle of Culloden in 1746. You will remember that the battle of Culloden was fought between those Scotch who espoused the cause of Prince Charles Edward in his efforts to gain the British Crown, on the one side, and the troops of King George II on the other side. Charles Edward lost the battle and his followers were persecuted without mercy. They turned their faces toward America, where they might have civil and religious liberty. Great numbers of them came. Some of them settled in South Carolina, some in Maryland and New Jersey, but many landed at Wilmington, North Carolina, made their way up the Cape Fear River, and occupied a large section of country of which Cross Creek (now Fayetteville) was the center.

These were genuine Scotch Highlanders and used the Gaelic language in their homes and in their church services for many years after their settlement in North Carolina. Their descendants constitute one of the strongest elements in the Presbyterian Church of North Carolina today.

I have now shown you the two lines of our Presbyterian ancestors which converged and made the one great, strong church. It is not necessary that I should stop and try to characterize these ancestors

or try to show you the differences in temperament between the Scotch and the Scotch-Irish. These are all well set forth and illustrated in their descendants even unto this day. If I were asked to characterize these ancestors of ours in a sentence I would do it by quoting a sentence from a recorded prayer of an old Scotch-Irish elder in which he made this earnest petition: "Lord, grant that I may always be right, for Thou knowest I am hard to turn."

II. SOME PIONEER PREACHERS

North Carolina may have been first at Bethel, the farthest at Gettysburg, and the last at Appomattox, but we will have to humbly confess that she did not have the first Presbyterian church or first Presbyterian preacher in the United States. So if we wish to trace intelligibly the beginnings of the Presbyterian Church in North Carolina we will have to turn aside for a moment and look at the beginning and development of the Presbyterian Church in America.

In 1683 Rev. Francis Makemie, a Scotch-Irishman, came over from Ireland and organized some churches on the eastern coast of Maryland. These are the first Presbyterian Churches organized in America. Other churches were soon afterwards formed among the Scotch-Irish in and near Philadelphia. In 1705 the first Presbytery in America was organized at Philadelphia, with Francis Makemie as moderator. Other Presbyteries were soon formed. In 1717 the first Synod in America was organized at Philadelphia. This continued to be the only Synod until 1741, when there was a split in the church and the Synod of New York was organized. The split came about in what may seem to us a very peculiar way. A great revival began in America in 1735 under the leadership of such men as Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield. A number of Presbyterian ministers threw themselves heart and soul into this revival. There was great excitement and the revival was attended by shoutings and bodily contortions and other excesses. Many conservative Presbyterian ministers condemned these excesses in the strongest terms. Other defended them. One of the bitterest controversies in the history of the church arose. The controversies that rage around the methods of Billy Sunday are mild compared with it. The church was split. Those who condemned the excesses remained in the Synod of Philadelphia and were known as the "Old Side". Those who defended the revival, excesses and all, went out and formed the Synod of New York and were known as the "New Side". Happily, these two Synods were brought together again in 1758 after a separation of only seventeen years, and the united Synod was known thereafter as the Synod of New York and Philadelphia. Although the Synods were united, the old and new side differences continued to be a ground of controversy for many years, and we find them cropping out over and over again in the early history of the Presbyterian Church in North Carolina.

The Synod of New York and Philadelphia, both in the days of its union and in the days of its division, took the place of the General Assembly in those early times, when there was no Assembly, and all

the Presbyteries were connected with it except an independent Presbytery in New England and another in South Carolina. All the home missionary work in Virginia and North Carolina was done through the Synod of New York and Philadelphia.

From 1744 onward frequent and most earnest petitions were sent by the Presbyterians of North Carolina to the Synod of New York and Philadelphia, urging and pleading that ministers and missionaries be sent to supply them with the preaching of the gospel. In response to these petitions there is no doubt that ministers were sent, of whom we have no record. But we have a record of many, and a most interesting and glorious record it is. We must now glance for a moment at some of these pioneer preachers who came in response to these Macedonian cries which went up to Synod year by year. As subsequent speakers are to tell you of the personnel of these early ministers, we must not pause long, but no history of the Presbyterian Church in North Carolina would be complete without the mention of a few of these names and an item about each.

Rev. William Robinson is the first Presbyterian minister who ever preached in North Carolina, so far as the record goes. He was a native of England, but came to America at an early age, was ordained in New Jersey, and came to Virginia to preach. In the winter of 1742 and 1743 he made an evangelistic tour into North Carolina, but, unfortunately, we have no record of the points he visited.

In 1753 Mr. McMordie and Mr. Donaldson were sent by the Synod of Philadelphia with instructions to show special attention to the vacancies between the "Atkin" (Yadkin) and Catawba Rivers. In 1754 the Synod of New York appointed four ministers, Messrs. Beatty, Bostwick, Lewis and Thane, each to spend three months preaching in North Carolina. Later on others were sent. Some were of the "old side", but the majority of them belonged to the more aggressive "new side".

The Rev. Hugh McAden is the first Presbyterian preacher who accomplished a really great work in North Carolina. He was born in Pennsylvania of humble Scotch-Irish parents, graduated at the College of New Jersey, afterwards called Princeton, and was licensed to preach in 1755. He belonged to the new side. Soon after his licensure he started on a home missionary tour to North Carolina, preaching as he went. Before he concluded the journey he had preached in practically every Presbyterian settlement in North Carolina. His diary of that journey is still extant and is full of interest. A number of churches gave him most urgent calls to settle as their pastor. One of these was old Thyatira in Rowan County, the only church of which I was ever a member. When he had completed his journey, which covered the period of about one year, he accepted a call from the Presbyterian congregations of Duplin and New Hanover and settled as their pastor in 1756 or 1757. It may be that he was the first ordained Presbyterian minister to settle as a pastor in the State. He spent ten years in Duplin and then removed to Caswell County and became pastor of old Red Horse Church (then known as Middle Hico) and supplied several other points. Here he labored until his death in 1781. His body lies buried in the Red Horse churchyard. Two weeks after his death the British army passed through Caswell, ransacked his home and burned

his library and practically all his valuable papers. The British had no love for a Presbyterian minister, living or dead.

The Rev. James Campbell came to North Carolina in 1757 and settled as a pastor among his Scotch brethren on the Cape Fear near the present town of Fayetteville. He, instead of Rev. Hugh McAden, may have been the first Presbyterian preacher to settle as a pastor in the State. Mr. Campbell was a native of Scotland, but came to America in early life and preached for awhile in Pennsylvania before coming to North Carolina. He did a great work among the Scotch on the Cape Fear. He organized and built three churches, Bluff (1758), Barbecue and Longstreet (1765). All three still appear on the role of Fayetteville Presbytery. It is interesting to note that Flora McDonald, around whose life there is gathered such a beautiful romance, worshiped at the old Barbecue Church for a number of years. Mr. Campbell thoroughly instructed his people in the Scriptures, the Shorter Catechism, and the doctrines of the church. They were also good sermon tasters. Rev. John McLeod, who came from Scotland and assisted Mr. Campbell for several years, said that "he would rather preach to the most polished audience in Edinburgh than to the little critical carls of Barbecue". Mr. Campbell preached two sermons every Sunday, one in Gaelic and the other in English. He continued his labors among these people until his death in 1781.

In 1758 the Rev. Alexander Craighead came to North Carolina to become pastor of Rocky River Church in the present county of Cabarrus. He was the first Presbyterian preacher to settle between the Yadkin and Catawba Rivers, and, indeed, was the only Presbyterian preacher in all that territory up to the time of his death in 1766. Alexander Craighead was a native of north Ireland and a genuine Scotch-Irishman. His ancestors for many generations had been Presbyterian ministers. He came to America in early youth, was ordained in 1735, took part in the great Whitefield revivals, and was one of the leaders of the "new side" when the church split in 1741. In 1749 he removed to Augusta County, Virginia, from whence he was driven by the Indians in 1755. His daughter, Mrs. David Caldwell, was accustomed to say that as they went out of one door the Indians came in at the other, so narrow was their escape. A little later Mr. Craighead came to North Carolina. For eight years he threw all the energies of body and soul into the work at Rocky River, Sugar Creek, and other points in Mecklenburg County. He had a great parish and did a great work. He preached the unsearchable riches of the gospel of Christ and he preached the doctrines of civil and religious liberty. There are not a few of us who still believe in the historicity of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence. Alexander Craighead had more to do with the setting in motion of the influences that resulted in that Declaration than any other man. Eternity alone will reveal the work of Alexander Craighead.

The Rev. Henry Patillo is another name that is inseparably connected with the early history of the Presbyterian Church in North Carolina. He was a native of Scotland, came to Virginia when a youth, studied under Rev. Samuel Davis, was ordained in 1758, and after laboring in Virginia awhile came to North Carolina in 1765. He became

pastor of Hawfield, Eno and Little River in Orange County. In 1755 he was elected a member of the Provincial Congress of North Carolina and was an honored member of that body. In 1780 he became pastor of Grassy Creek and Nutbush Churches in Granville County and remained there until his death in 1801.

Mr. Patillo was deeply interested in work among colored people. He was also noted for the great work he did in speaking to men personally about their salvation.

He must have been very human. We read that he fell deeply in love with a young lady and married her while he was a student, two years before he had finished his course, in spite of the fact that he had nothing to live on and in spite of the protestations of Rev. Samuel Davies, his instructor. That all sounds very human and very modern.

There is a spicy letter from his pen in the minutes of the Synod of the Carolinas in 1793, protesting against the importation of ministers from Europe. The fact that he was a native of Scotland gives all the more interest to this letter. Here are a few specimen sentences: "We have never found the exotic plants of Europe's cold regions to thrive among us. * * * Their divinity, if they have one, is not Jesus Christ and the power of His grace in experimental religion—their politics are monarchical and suit not the liberal spirit of American republicanism. They will neither pray, preach nor live like pious youth bred among ourselves. I bear my testimony against the admission of such dry sticks among lively trees in our American vineyard. * * The churches will be much better as vacancies than committed to stewards who would feed them with poison or dry husks at best." That, too, has a human flavor about it and makes us feel that these ancient worthies were men of like passion as ourselves.

There is no grander nor more interesting figure in the early history of North Carolina than the Rev. David Caldwell, who for fifty-six years was pastor of Alamance and Buffalo Churches. He was born in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, worked as a house carpenter until he was twenty-five, graduated at Princeton at the age of thirty-six, and was ordained to preach at the age of forty. On March 3, 1768, he became pastor of Alamance and Buffalo Churches, and continued to serve them until his death on August 25, 1824.

Dr. Caldwell was an indefatigable worker. Soon after he settled as a pastor he bought a farm and, in addition to his labors as pastor and preacher, became a splendid farmer. A little later he established the best classical school south of the Potomac. As if this were not enough, he studied medicine and became an accomplished physician. All these things he did for the sake of the Kingdom, and he did them well, and lived to be over ninety-nine years of age. If any one is laboring under the delusion that work will kill a man he ought to read the life of Dr. David Caldwell.

Dr. Caldwell married Miss Rachel Craighead, the third daughter of Rev. Alexander Craighead. In later years, when Dr. Caldwell's school had trained at least fifty ministers, there was a saying through the country: "Dr. Caldwell makes the scholars, but Mrs. Caldwell makes the ministers."

The Rev. Samuel Eusebius McCorkle, pastor of Thyatira in Rowan County from 1777 to 1811, was one of the ablest and most scholarly men of his day. He was born in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, August 23, 1746, but his parents moved to North Carolina when he was a boy of ten and settled in the bounds of Thyatira. He graduated at Dr. David Caldwell's school and at Princeton and was licensed to preach in 1774. In 1777 he settled as pastor at Thyatira, among his own people, and remained there until his death in 1811. In connection with his work as pastor, he, too, conducted a classical school, known as Zion's Parnassus, from which forty-five young men went out to be ministers. Dr. McCorkle belonged to the "old side" and when he condemned the excesses of the great revival of 1802, a large element of the membership of Thyatira, including all the elders, withdrew and formed Back Creek. But even those who withdrew continued to admire and love Dr. McCorkle as long as he lived.

To me the Rev. James Hall is the most winsome of all the pioneer preachers. He was pastor of Fourth Creek, Bethany and Concord in Iredell for many years.

Mr. Hall was born in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, in 1744, but moved with his parents to North Carolina when he was only eight years old and settled within the bounds of the churches which he afterwards served. He graduated at Princeton in 1774 and was licensed to preach in 1776. In 1778 he became pastor of Bethany, Concord and Fourth Creek. In 1790 he resigned from the two latter churches, but remained pastor of Bethany until his death in 1826.

Mr. Hall fell deeply in love with a young lady when he was a young man, but he did not follow the example of Henry Patillo. On the other hand, as he brooded over the matter, he feared that he loved the young lady more than he did his Savior and resolved in his heart to remain single all his days. He kept this resolution.

Mr. Hall was a most ardent missionary. He often made long home missionary journeys, going as far as Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi. When he was appointed by the General Assembly to preach the opening sermon at the organization of the Synod of North Carolina in Alamance Church, one hundred years ago today, he took for his text: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." But time fails me even to call the roll of all these venerable fathers "of whom the world was not worthy", and by whose labors and prayers and tears the Presbyterian Church in North Carolina was established.

III. OUR OLDEST CHURCHES

Somebody ought to write the history of every old church in the Synod, and then somebody ought to gather these histories together and place a copy of each one of them in the library of every educational institution which is connected with the Presbyterian Church of North Carolina, so that our young people may receive the inspiration that comes from such sacred history and so that the future historians may have adequate material for writing the real history of the Presbyterian Church in our State.

I have found it very interesting to dig into the history of these old churches, so far as the material at hand would allow. Let me now

give a list of some of the more important of these churches in the order of their probable age.

Old Goshen Church in Duplin was probably the first Presbyterian Church in the State. It was organized about 1750 and issued a call to Rev. Hugh McAden in 1756.

Grassy Creek in Granville County, was organized in 1753. Thyatira in Rowan County, holds a deed for her grounds, dated January 1, 1753, and Rev. Hugh McAden tells us in his diary that he received a call from Thyatira (then known as Cathey's Meeting House) on Dec. 28, 1755. Griers (formerly known as Upper Hico) and Red House (formerly known as Middle Hico) in Caswell County, were organized in 1753. Barbecue, Bluff and Longstreet Churches, in Cumberland County, are very old and must be dated about 1755. Rocky River in Cabarrus County, sent a request to the Synod of New York for a pastor in 1755 and in December, 1755, joined with Thyatira in a call to Rev. Hugh McAden. Sugar Creek was then included in the bounds of Rocky River. Hawfield and Eno Churches in Orange County, were organized in 1755, Buffalo in Guilford was organized in 1756 and Alamance in 1764.

In 1764 the Synod of New York and Philadelphia directed Rev. Elihu Spencer and Rev. Alexander McWhorter to go to North Carolina and "to form societies (churches), help them in adjusting their bounds; to ordain elders, administer the sacraments, etc. These two brethren came to North Carolina in 1765 and, acting under their instructions from the Synod, made it a banner year in the history of the organization of churches in our State. It was in 1765 that Sugar Creek, Steele Creek, New Providence and Hopewell in Mecklenburg; Center, Fourth Creek, Bethany and Concord in Iredell; Poplar Tent in Cabarrus, and many other churches in the State, were set off from older congregations and organized into separate churches. But again time fails even to mention all these old churches, each one of whom is worthy of a volume all to itself.

IV. PRESBYTERIES, SYNODS, AND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

There was no Presbytery in Virginia or North Carolina prior to 1755. On Dec. 3, 1755, Hanover Presbytery was formed and embraced practically all the territory south of the Potomac. It covered the whole of North Carolina and Virginia. The pioneer preachers of whom we have been speaking belonged to this Presbytery. On October 2, 1765, Hanover Presbytery met in Lower Hico Church in Person County. This was the first time a Presbytery ever met in the State of North Carolina. We find from the records that it held three other meetings in this State—one at Red House Church on June 4, 1766, another at Buffalo Church on March 2, 1768, and the last at Buffalo Church on March 7, 1770. That was the last meeting of Hanover Presbytery in North Carolina. It is still meeting in Virginia.

September 4th, 1770, was a red letter day in the history of the Presbyterian Church in the State. On that day Orange Presbytery was organized at Hawfield Church in Orange County. It embraced the whole of the State and more, and was the only Presbytery in North Carolina

for the next twenty-five years. It included seven ministers and forty or fifty churches with a membership of about 2,000, and many more adherents. The seven ministers were Rev. Messrs. Hugh McAden, Henry Patillo, James Creswell, David Caldwell, Joseph Alexander, Hezekiah Balch and Hezekiah James Balch. The Presbytery grew rapidly in spite of the terrible war through which the country was so soon to pass. In 1774 it had twelve ordained ministers. In 1780 there were eighteen ministers and five licentiates.

One of the deplorable losses of the Presbyterian Church of the State was the burning of all the records of the Presbytery of Orange when the residence of the stated clerk, Rev. John Witherspoon, near Hillsboro, was burned on New Year's Day, 1827. These records contained the most precious history of our church in this State.

Steps were taken in 1788 by the Synod of New York and Philadelphia to organize a General Assembly. With this in view, the Synod of Virginia was set off, embracing the whole of Virginia and a part of Kentucky. The Synod of Virginia held its first meeting on October 22, 1788. At the same time the Synod of the Carolinas was set off, including the whole of North Carolina and South Carolina and a part of Georgia. That was another red letter day in the history of our church in this State. The Synod of the Carolinas was composed of three Presbyteries, Orange, South Carolina and Abingdon. Orange still embraced practically all of the Presbyterian Churches in North Carolina.

The Synod of the Carolinas held its first meeting in Center Church in Iredell County on November 5, 1788. There were present ten ministers and eight elders. Six of these ministers and six of the elders were from Orange Presbytery. There were at that time twenty-eight ministers living within the bounds of the Synod.

Dr. David Caldwell preached the opening sermon and was elected moderator. The organization gave a fresh impetus to the work of our church in the State, and it went forward more rapidly. The Synod in 1795 ordered the division of Orange into two Presbyteries. The new Presbytery was to embrace all of the State lying west of the Yadkin River and was to be known as the Presbytery of Concord. At the time of this division there were eleven ministers in Orange Presbytery and twelve in Concord. In 1799 Orange had 14 ministers and Concord had 15.

A synopsis of the minutes of the Synod of the Carolinas is preserved in Foote's Sketches and makes very interesting reading. It held twenty-five annual sessions in all. A list of its moderators makes a suggestive study. The Rev. James Hall, of Iredell, was moderator twice, in 1794, and again in 1812 at the last meeting of the Synod of the Carolinas. At the Synod of 1812 two significant resolutions were passed, one directing that Fayetteville Presbytery be set off from Orange, and the other requesting the General Assembly to divide the Synod of the Carolinas and to organize the Synod of North Carolina to be composed of the Presbyteries of Orange, Concord and Fayetteville. After this the Synod of the Carolinas adjourned sine die.

V. SOME OUTSTANDING CHARACTERISTICS OF THIS EARLY CHURCH

Before proceeding further, let me mention some of the points about this early Presbyterian church in North Carolina which have made a deep impression on my mind as I have studied its history.

1. It was a missionary church. In reality all of these early preachers were home missionaries. Rev. Hugh McAden and Rev. James Hall were princes among missionaries. You will find this intense missionary spirit cropping out in the minutes of every meeting of the Synod of the Carolinas. Let me give a few sample quotations from the minutes. From the minutes of the Synod which met at Thyatira in 1791 we have this praagraph: "At this meeting the Synod took up the subject of domestic missions and resolved to send out four missionaries to act in the destitute regions each side of the Alleghanies; the direction of the missionaries to be in the commission of the Synod during recess of Synod; their support fixed at two hundred dollars annually. It was made the duty of the missionaries to ascertain who of the families they visited wished to receive the gospel from the Presbyterians, and make report; they were also to make collections where they preached." One rule laid down by the Synod's commission for the direction of these missionaries is very interesting: "You are not to tarry longer than three weeks at the same time, in the bounds of twenty miles, except peculiar circumstances may appear to make it necessary." The reports of the missionaries to the Synod in 1794 were spread on the minutes of the Synod and cover sixteen folio pages. They show great diligence on the part of the missionaries and an alarming want of ministers. In 1800 a pastoral letter on the subject of missions was prepared by the Synod and sent to the Presbyteries to be laid before the congregations. In 1803 the Synod's commission reported that they had eight missionaries laboring within the bounds of the Synod, one of whom was working among the Catawba Indians. We might make many other similar quotations, but these are enough to show the missionary spirit of these early fathers. I rejoice that this spirit still lives in this great Synod. Perhaps it is not too much to say that the Synod of North Carolina is today the most intensely missionary of all the Synods.

2. This early Presbyterian Church in North Carolina was an educational church. Hard by nearly every Presbyterian Church there was a school house and the principal teacher in that school was the Presbyterian preacher. We recall some of the more notable of these schools. Dr. David Caldwell perhaps had the greatest of all of them right here in Guilford. Dr. Samuel E. McCorkle had a great school in Rowan. Dr. Wilson, of Rocky River, had a noted school and so did Dr. Robinson, of Poplar Tent. Dr. James Hall, with all his missionary labors, maintained a good school at Bethany in Iredell. Dr. Caldwell, of Sugar Creek, also had a flourishing school. Rev. William Bingham, of Chatham, founded a school which has continued to grow in power unto this day. There were also schools in Fayetteville, at Providence, in Burke, and in Duplin County.

In 1802 the Synod passed this resolution: "This Synod enjoins it on each Presbytery of which it is composed to establish within its respec-

tive bounds, one or more grammar schools, except where such schools are already established; and that each member of the several Presbyteries make it their business to select and encourage youths of promising piety and talents, and such as may be expected to turn their attention to the ministry of the gospel.’’

The Bible, the catechisms, and the great principles of our religion were taught in all these schools. Back in those days inability to repeat the Westminster Shorter Catechism was considered a mark of vulgarity.

Thus did our fathers lay foundations. We Presbyterians still believe in education and we have some splendid institutions and we have not a few pastors who have a school house by the church, but I seriously doubt whether we are laying half the stress upon Christian education that we should do.

3. These early fathers were jealous guardians of the faith. In reading these old records one is amazed at the number of cases of ministerial discipline. The charges brought against these ministers were seldom of a moral nature, but in nearly every case they were of a doctrinal character. Some of these charges seem interesting enough in these latter days. One minister was charged with holding ‘‘That the justification of a sinner through the atonement of Christ is an act of justice and that there is no difference between saving faith and historical faith, only in degree of evidence.’’ Another minister had the following charges lodged against him: ‘‘(1) He affirms * * that the passive obedience of Christ is all that the law of God can, or does, require in order to justification of the believer, and that his active obedience is not imputed. (2) He also affirms and teaches that saving faith precedes regeneration, and has nothing holy in its nature, as to its first act. (3) That the Divine Being is bound by His own law, or in other words, by the moral law.’’

Still another minister was accused, among other things, of ‘‘charging the Church of Scotland and some of our Calvinistic divines of holding the doctrine that there were infants in hell not a span long.’’ So you see the controversy over the infant clause is not new. I am glad that they brought that particular brother before the Presbytery and Synod.

The Synod of 1801 enjoined the Presbytery of Abingdon to have ‘‘a more strict regard to our standards of doctrine and discipline, especially in introducing young men to the ministry of the gospel.’’

Not only did these fathers guard the faith in this more or less negative way, but they did it in a very positive way by teaching it with great emphasis and earnestness to their people. They laid great stress upon the study of the Bible, the Confession of Faith and the Catechisms. Two illustrations will show this. In 1809 Rev. James Hall prefaced his report to Synod concerning a great missionary journey of 1545 miles in the following way, using the third person:

‘‘Previously to his departure from home, he had extracted four hundred and twenty questions from our Confession of Faith, which embraced the most important doctrines contained in that system, and disseminated them through eight of our vacancies for the perusal of the people, until he should return to finish his mission, at which time they were to be called up for examination.’’

The other illustration I take from a note appended to a printed sermon preached in 1792 by Rev. Samuel E. McCorkle, pastor of Thyatira. He tells of his plan for instructing his people in the Scriptures and in the doctrines of the Church. "The Congregation I have divided into a number of divisions of fifteen or sixteen families each, assigned to each division a set of written questions, from one part of one or two books, as they may be long or short, in each Testament; catechising in the morning from the Old, and in the afternoon from the New Testament, and closing by calling on the youth to repeat the Shorter Catechism. * * * I have proceeded from Genesis to Job, and through part of the four evangelists and I design, if God permit, to proceed on to the end asking questions that lead to reading and reflection."

Many similar illustrations might be cited. Do you wonder that there were doctrinal giants in those days?

4. The attitude of this early church towards slaves and slavery is full of interest and instruction.

In 1796 the Synod of the Carolinas passed an order "enjoining upon heads of families the religious instruction of their slaves, and the teaching the children of slaves to read the Bible."

From the minutes of that same meeting of Synod we have this most illuminating paragraph: "A memorial was brought forward and laid before the Synod by the Rev. James Gilleland, stating his conscientious difficulties in receiving the advice of the Presbytery of South Carolina, which has enjoined upon him to be silent in the pulpit on the subject of the emancipation of the Africans, which injunction Mr. Gilleland declares to be in his apprehension contrary to the counsel of God. Whereupon Synod, after deliberation upon the matter, do concur with the Presbytery in advising Mr. Gilleland to content himself with using his utmost endeavors in private to open the way for emancipation, so as to secure our happiness as a people, preserve the peace of the church, and render them capable of enjoying the blessings of liberty."

In 1800 an overture was presented to the Synod urging the Synod to join in a movement to petition the legislature to undertake the emancipation of slavery by degrees, on the principle that all children of slaves born after a fixed time should be free. The Synod made this very interesting answer: "Though it is our ardent wish that the object contemplated in the overture should be obtained; yet, as it appears to us that matters are not yet matured for carrying it forward, especially in the southern part of our states, your committee are of the opinion that the overture should now be laid aside; and that it be enjoined upon every member of the Synod to use his influence to carry into effect the directions and recommendations of the Synod of New York and Philadelphia, and those additionally made by the General Assembly for the instruction of those who are in a state of slavery, to prepare them the better for a state of freedom, when such shall be contemplated by the legislatures of our Southern States."

5. These pioneer preachers preached the gospel, but they did not preach it in a timeless, ageless sort of way. They applied it to the times in which they lived and to the people who sat before them. A few quotations will make plain what I mean. They are taken from the Life of Dr. David Caldwell, by Dr. Caruthers: "There was a combination

of the doctrinal and practical in their preaching, which is not generally found to prevail at present. Much of their preaching was directed against the predominant vices of the times, such as intemperance, licentiousness, theft, robbery, and so forth, which were then rife everywhere, and required the combined efforts of all the wise and good for their suppression. There is in my possession a manuscript sermon preached about the close of the (Revolutionary) War by one of the ablest men in the country, entitled, "The Crime and Curse of Plundering."

Another quotation will give us a glimpse at the kind of preaching Dr. David Caldwell did: "Dr. Caldwell often preached on the subject of the existing difficulties between England and the American colonies. * * Hardly a Sabbath passed in which he did not allude to the subject in some way or other; and while he denounced in strongest terms the corruptions and oppressions of the existing government, he exhorted his hearers, with equal energy and zeal, to value their liberties above everything else, and stand up manfully in their defense. * * Most of the Presbyterian ministers in North Carolina and throughout the union pursued a similar course, and with very gratifying success; for wherever a minister of that denomination was settled, so far as I have been able to ascertain, the people around him were Whigs, almost to a man."

There is still extant a sermon by Dr. Caldwell on the text, "But the slothful shall be under tribute," which is a fine illustration of his style of preaching in those stormy days. It sounds like a section from Amos or one of the other great prophets of the Old Testament.

There are many other interesting and striking points about the early Presbyterian Church in North Carolina, but these must suffice.

I have now spent my time in giving you glimpses of the history of the Presbyterian Church in North Carolina up to the formation of the Synod in 1813. I have dwelt at length upon this early period, because it is the most interesting period, because it is not possible to cover the whole subject assigned me in one address, but most especially because it is the formative period in which the character of the church was being formed and in which her future policies were being shaped. Our history from 1813 onward was practically normal and was but the outworking of the great foundation principles which were laid back in the early period of which I have been speaking.

VI. A SYNOPSIS OF THE HISTORY OF THE SYNOD OF NORTH CAROLINA FROM 1813 TO 1863

I can now give but the very barest synopsis of our history from 1813 to 1863. The Synod of the Carolinas held its twenty-fifth and last session at New Providence Church on October 5th, 1812. The Synod of North Carolina was organized here in old Alamance Church on October 7th, 1813. It is interesting to note that this was to the very day the thirty-third anniversary of the battle of King's Mountain. It is possible that some of the veterans of that battle were present at this first meeting of the Synod.

There were in North Carolina in 1813 thirty-four Presbyterian ministers and eighty-nine churches. This would have made a Synod of 123 members if all could have been present. But there were no railroads

and few wagon roads in those days. As a result the first Synod was composed of only 12 ministers and 3 elders. But they did not despise the day of small things and there laid the foundation for this great Synod which you see today.

The Rev. James Hall, then in his seventieth year, preached the opening sermon. It was a great missionary sermon. His text was: "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." That sermon was the expression of the deep missionary spirit which pervaded the early Presbyterian Church in North Carolina and the foretoken of that larger missionary spirit which has laid hold upon the church in these latter days.

During the first two decades after its organization the growth of the Synod was rather slow and discouraging. We can see this from the statistics which are given for the Synod in the minutes of the General Assembly. We do well, however, to remember that these statistics are only approximate. It is difficult to get accurate reports from churches in these days when we have every facility for doing so; it was much more difficult in those early days with their primitive methods. For example, in 1812 there were 789 Presbyterian Churches in the United States, and only 215 reported the total number of their communicants to the General Assembly.

According to the minutes of the General Assembly, there were in 1813 in the Synod of North Carolina 34 ministers, 89 churches and 4000 communicants. In 1820 there were 38 ministers, 112 churches and 5841 communicants. In 1830 there were 57 ministers, 126 churches and 5907 communicants. Then came brighter days. Precious seasons of revival came to many of the churches in 1832 and 1833. We find that 1029 members were added to the churches on profession in 1832 and 1818 members in 1833. If we will remember how small the church was, how small the population was and what slow modes of travel were in vogue in those days, we can begin to see what these large numbers mean. If, in addition to this, we will remember that in 1913 our large Synod, with all her organization and resources, reported only 2608 additions on profession, we can understand their meaning more fully still.

The minutes of the General Assembly for 1833 report 65 ministers, 129 churches, and 9875 members in the Synod of North Carolina. Two more lean decades followed. In 1840 there were 78 ministers, 136 churches and 8481 members. In 1850 there were 88 ministers, 146 churches and 9910 members. It is interesting to note that 784 of these members were negro slaves. Now follows a decade of rapid growth. In 1860 there were 97 ministers, 180 churches and 15590 members. Of these members 1269 were colored. For many years prior to 1860 Rocky River Church in Cabarrus County was the largest church in the Synod. In 1860 it had a membership of 616. Of these 175 were colored.

These figures show us that there were lean years and fat years during the period from 1813 to 1863. There were lights and shadows, encouragements and discouragements, just as there are in the work today.

During this period there were some outstanding leaders, but as they will no doubt be mentioned by the speaker who is to follow me, I will resist the temptation to tell of them and their work.

Two far-reaching steps were taken along educational lines by the North Carolina Presbyterians during this period. In 1827 the Synod of North Carolina united with the Synod of Virginia in the ownership, control and support of Union Theological Seminary, which was then located at Hampden-Sidney, Virginia, and only fourteen years old. This is one of the most important actions the Synod of North Carolina ever took. Eternity alone will reveal its full significance.

In 1837 the Presbytery of Concord, in North Carolina, and the Presbytery of Bethel, in South Carolina, founded Davidson College. Later all the Presbyteries in North Carolina accepted an invitation to take part in the ownership and control of this splendid institution. Davidson has now passed her seventy-fifth anniversary. During all these years she has been a powerful factor in establishing and developing the Presbyterian Church, not only in North Carolina, but in all the world.

But time fails. We must close this meager study of a great subject. I am perfectly aware of the fact that I have only touched the outer edges of my subject. It would take several volumes to tell the whole story. Yet enough has been said to show us that we have a noble birth-right. Shall we despise it as Esau did?

As we stand here today on this holy ground, with this story of a glorious past burning in our hearts, there is a distinct call to you and me to reconsecrate ourselves to this great work to which our father's gave their lives. Dr. W. M. Paxton expresses this thought for me better than I can express it for myself. Let me close with a ringing exhortation from him: "We cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men who have struggled here have consecrated it far above our power to add or detract. It is for us the living rather to be dedicated here to their unfinished work". "In the memory of their mighty acts we should train our children. The historian Sallust tells us that the Roman mothers trained their children in the presence of the busts and statues of their ancestors. In like manner we should train our children and our rising ministry, as it were, in the presence of their forefathers, in all the memories of our past history, and urge them, as the Roman mothers did, never to be satisfied whilst the virtues and victories of the past were more numerous or more glorious than those of the present."*

* Quoted from *The Creed of Presbyterians*, by Rev. Egbert W. Smith, D. D.