



By the KING,  
A PROCLAMATION,  
For suppressing Rebellion and Sedition.

GEORGE R.



WHEREAS many of Our Subjects in divers Parts of Our Colonies and Plantations in *North America*, misled by dangerous and ill-designing Men, and forgetting the Allegiance which they owe to the Power that has protected and sustained them, after various disorderly Acts committed in Disturbance of the Publick Peace, to the Obstruction of lawful Commerce, and to the Oppression of Our loyal Subjects carrying on the same, have at length proceeded to an open and avowed Rebellion, by arraying themselves in hostile Manner to withstand the Execution of the Law, and traitorously preparing, ordering, and levying War against Us: And whereas there is Reason to apprehend that such Rebellion hath been much promoted and encouraged by the traitorous Correspondence, Counsels, and Comfort of divers wicked and desperate Persons within this Realm: To the End therefore that none of Our Subjects may neglect or violate their Duty through Ignorance thereof, or through any Doubt of the Protection which the Law will afford to their Loyalty and Zeal; We have thought fit, by and with the Advice of Our Privy Council, to issue this Our Royal Proclamation, hereby declaring that not only all Our Officers Civil and Military are obliged to exert their utmost Endeavours to suppress such Rebellion, and to bring the Traitors to Justice; but that all Our Subjects of this Realm and the Dominions thereunto belonging are bound by Law to be aiding and assisting in the Suppression of such Rebellion, and to disclose and make known all traitorous Conspiracies and Attempts against Us, Our Crown and Dignity; And We do accordingly strictly charge and command all Our Officers as well Civil as Military, and all other Our obedient and loyal Subjects, to use their utmost Endeavours to withstand and suppress such Rebellion, and to disclose and make known all Treasons and traitorous Conspiracies which they shall know to be against Us, Our Crown and Dignity; and for that Purpose, that they transmit to One of Our Principal Secretaries of State, or other proper Officer, due and full Information of all Persons who shall be found carrying on Correspondence with, or in any Manner or Degree aiding or abetting the Persons now in open Arms and Rebellion against Our Government within any of Our Colonies and Plantations in *North America*, in order to bring to condign Punishment the Authors, Perpetrators, and Abettors of such traitorous Designs.

Given at Our Court at *St. James's*, the Twenty-third Day of *August*, One thousand seven hundred and seventy-five, in the Fifteenth Year of Our Reign.

God save the King.

L O N D O N :

Printed by *Charles Eyre* and *William Strahan*, Printers to the King's most Excellent Majesty. 1775.

His Majesty George III was not amused by news from Lexington, Concord, Philadelphia, and North Carolina. — (From Emmet Collection, New York Public Library.)

On the 19<sup>th</sup> May 1775 Pursuant to the Order of Col. ~~James Pollock~~ to  
each Captain of Militia in his regiment of Mecklenburg County, to elect  
nominate and appoint 2 persons of their militia company, clothed with  
powers to ~~take care of~~ means to entertain themselves and ward off the  
dreadfull impending Storm bursting on them by the British Nation &c  
Therefore on P. 19<sup>th</sup> May the P. Committee met in Charles the Towne & men  
from each company, Deated with all powers their <sup>own</sup> Constituents had &c.

After a short conference <sup>about</sup> their suffering brethren besieged and  
suffering every hardship in Propton and the American blood running  
in Lexington &c the Electical <sup>fell</sup> into every breast <sup>and</sup>  
to pursue <sup>order</sup> and Choppe Abraham <sup>the</sup> <sup>Secretary</sup> <sup>of</sup> <sup>the</sup> <sup>Committee</sup>  
After <sup>the</sup> <sup>free</sup> <sup>discursion</sup> in order to give relief  
to suffering America and protect our just & natural right <sup>abandoned</sup>  
1<sup>st</sup> We the County, by a solemn and awfull vote, <sup>abandoned</sup> our  
allegiance to King George & the British Nation

2<sup>d</sup> Declared our selves a free & independent people, having a right  
and capable to govern our selves as a part of North Carolina,

3<sup>d</sup> In order to have laws as a rule of life for our future government  
We formed a Code of laws, by adopting our former wholesome laws

4<sup>th</sup> And in these wars, no officers Civil or Military in our County were

We Decreed that every Militia officer in P. County should hold on  
Obey his former Commission and Grade

And that every member present, of this Committee shall henceforth  
as a Justice of the peace, in the Character of a Committee 1775

keep and determine all Controversies agreeable to P. Laws -  
peace Union & harmony in P. County - and to all ways

spread the Electrical fire of freedom among our selves & u

5<sup>th</sup> We &c many other laws & ordinances were then made  
after sitting up in the Court house all night - neither

After reading and maturing every paragraph ~~was~~ they seen  
all papers N. M. - Con about 12 o'clock May 20. 1775

But in a few days after cooling, a considerable part of P. Committee men  
convened and employed Capt. James Jack of Charlotte, to go as proxy to Con-

gress, then in Philadelphia, with a copy of all P. Laws <sup>resolutions</sup> & a letter to  
our members there. With. Cause <sup>of</sup> <sup>the</sup> <sup>Committee</sup> <sup>of</sup> <sup>the</sup> <sup>County</sup> <sup>of</sup> <sup>Mecklenburg</sup>

in order to get Congress to sanction or approve them &c &c

Capt. Jack returned with a long, full, complasent letter from P. B mem-

bers, recommending our <sup>zeal</sup>, <sup>perseverance</sup> <sup>order</sup> &  
forbearance &c &c all were <sup>prematine</sup>, Congress never had our P. Laws

on their Table for discussion, though P. copy was left with them by Capt. Jack

MS: about 1775 ~~Doctor~~ Doctor Hugh Williamson (then of New York: but formerly  
was member of Congress from this State) applied

above by Col. <sup>Wm</sup> <sup>Pat</sup> <sup>son</sup> who was then compiling a

in order to prove that the American people  
in the Revolution - and that Congress were Comi

MS: allowing the 19<sup>th</sup> May to be a epoch bet  
effects in binding all the middle west

firm Whigs - no tongs but  
not fully <sup>invented</sup> in the mind

On these facing pages appear the  
early rough notes on the Mecklenburg  
Independence story made

Be it remembered. That the within mentioned Committee Men continued to  
 act as Justices and were <sup>or fallowed to act</sup> confirmed in their offices by the ~~General~~ <sup>Assembly</sup> of  
 South Carolina in Newber & Wilmington alternately ~~and~~ <sup>and</sup> con-  
 tinued to hold their quarterly Sessions in Charlotte as usual and no  
 appeals from P. Justices — for they had the confidence of the people and  
 such was the enthusiasm of the people at large and that whatever was  
 the Voice of the People was the voice of God, all <sup>was</sup> submission  
 thus matters were carried on when Lord Cornwallis was in Charlotte in the  
 fall of 1780 — (he was in a Hornets-nest) no communication to, or from  
 — but the great Cambden road — all from Whigs — ~~but~~ <sup>and</sup>  
 they dare not move nor cheap  
 And the first Court held in Charlotte after Lord Cornwallis retreated,  
 retrograded or run away from Charlotte, the Court adjourned or rather  
 appointed a Special Court of Enquiry — which sat by regular  
 adjournments at Charlotte at Col. James Hains — at Col. Phipps.  
 one week at each place — to which places all suspicious persons  
 were brought under guard — formally tried — some from Lincoln &  
 Rowson Counties — & even Booths <sup>and</sup> Gunn Lawyers, from Salisbury were  
 convicted and ordered off under guard — with several others —  
 These were first — the arbitrary measures were the cause of peace  
 the County until ~~the~~ the fall of 1777 when our first  
<sup>in</sup> met in Newber in the State of North Carolina & confirmed  
<sup>more</sup> <sup>all</sup> <sup>that</sup> <sup>was</sup> <sup>done</sup> — New State commissions then issued &  
 were as they yet do — see the laws of P. Session of 1777 —  
 & foregoing extracted from the old minutes &c

By J. McKnitt Alexander

wh. were the feeling and sympathetic sensations of the Mecklenburgers, when they  
 knew their brethren of Boston were besieged by <sup>the</sup> ~~the~~ in a State of starvation, that on each  
 Capt. Mellick company a subscription was signed for their relief — many subscribed  
 one buck — other 2 joined for one buck — and none was suffered to sign  
 but what the officers and leading men admitted, for whom they were responsible &c  
 And had there then been a plan of government for their driving to Boston, 100 would  
 been given in the County in one week — the news were all heard — Boston  
 had got relief — We were thanked for our good-will —  
 And soon afterwards we smelt and felt the blood & courage of Lexington  
 which raised all the passions into fury — ~~and~~ <sup>and</sup> escape  
 which was the immediate cause of adjourning general Britain on May 14. 1775  
 as before related

April 19. 1775. was the battle of Lexington

92

our  
 and  
 his

Copy of Dr. W. H. Alexander's letter to  
Mr. Davidson on Declaration of Independence &c.<sup>s</sup>

St. Charles }  
Mucklenburg } May 20 1775

In the Spring of 1775, the leading characters of  
what we call the Revolution, stimulated by that enthusiastic patriotism, which  
elevates the mind above considerations of individual advantage  
and inclines to shun themselves from the impending state  
of submission to lawful power. At St. Charles several meetings  
were held - in which of which the individual sentiments were  
"That the cause of Boston was the cause of all, that their distresses  
were inseparably connected with those of their Eastern fellow  
Citizens & that they must either submit to all the impositions,  
which an unprincipled & to them an unrepresented Par-  
liament might impose; or support their Brethren who  
were doomed to sustain the first shock of that power  
which if successful there, would ultimately overtake  
all in the common calamity. Accordingly to these  
principles Col. Adam Alexander through solicitation  
issued an order to each Capt. company in the County  
of Mucklenburg, then comprising the present County of Adams  
directing each militia Capt. company to elect two  
persons and delegate to them ample power to discuss

William Polk's handwriting as shown in the first page of his new copy of Document B, made in 1819 for William Davidson. Note similarities on this page and the page opposite, written ca. 1794, which is the first of four pages of Document B. On both pages see manner of writing date 1775, and resemblances in capitals C, P, M, and other characters. In writing this page William Polk used name of Adam Alexander in fifth line from bottom, when he usually made a point of writing in the name of his father: Thomas Polk. — (From Emmet Collection.)

Declaration of Independence May 20. 1775  
 In the Spring of 1775 the leading characters  
 in Mecklenburg County stimulated by these  
 -sister and patriotisms which elevate the mind  
 above considerations of individual aggrandize-  
 -ment & warning to shelter themselves from the  
 impending storm by subscription to lawful  
 power - to be held several detached mee-  
 -tings in each of which the individual con-  
 -sensus was that the cause of Boston was the  
 cause of all; that their destinies were indissol-  
 -ubly joined & connected with those of their  
 Eastern fellow Citizens - & that they must either  
 submit to all the impositions which an usurped  
 -power & to their unrepresented parliament might  
 impose or support their brethren who were  
 doomed to sustain the first shock of that  
 power which if successful there - would  
 ultimately overwhelm all within the common  
 calamity - conformably to their principles  
 Col. James Blount the delegation  
 the said order to each captains company  
 in the County of Mecklenburg <sup>then comprising</sup>  
 present County of Cabarrus directing each mili-  
 -tia company to elect 2 persons & delegate to  
 them ample powers to devise ways & means  
 to aid & assist their suffering brethren in Boston  
 & also generally to adopt measures to extri-  
 -cate themselves from the impending storm &  
 to secure unimpaired their inalienable rights  
 of privilege & liberties from the domineering grasp  
 of British imposition & tyranny  
 In conformity to said order on the 19th of  
 May 1775 the said delegation met in  
 Charlotte <sup>from 20</sup> vested with unqualified powers  
 at which time official news by express arrived  
 of the battle of Lexington on that day of the previous  
 -ceding month - every delegate felt the

This is the hand writing of John McKnitt Alexander

This page and the three following show Document B, the working copy  
 made from John McKnitt Alexander's original record of adoption of May  
 20 Mecklenburg Declaration. - (From Southern Historical Collection.)

the value & importance of the prize & the  
awful & solemn crisis which had arrived  
— every bosom swelled with indignation at  
the snail's inactivity & insatiable revenge  
developed in the late attack at Seawrighton  
~~the unwelcome sentiment~~  
Let us not flatter ourselves that popular  
harangues or resolves — that popular vapour  
will avert the storm — or vanquish our com-  
-mon enemy — Let us deliberate — let us  
calculate the issue, the probable result —  
— then let us act with energy as brethren  
legued to preserve our property, our lives  
& what is still more endearing the liberties  
of America —

Abraham Alexander was then elected  
Chairman & M<sup>o</sup> McKnight Alexander Clerk  
after a free & full discussion of the various  
objects for which the delegation had been  
convened it was unanimously ordered

1 That whosoever directly or indirectly abetted  
or in any way form or manner countenanced  
the unchartered & dangerous invasion of our  
rights as claimed by G. Britain is an enemy  
to this Society — to America & to the in-  
-alienable & inalienable rights of Man —

2 We the citizens of Middlebury County do hereby  
~~absolutely~~ <sup>the</sup> political bonds which have connected  
us to the mother country & hereby ~~absolutely~~ sever  
from all allegiance to the British crown &  
abjure all political connection, contract or  
~~dependence~~ <sup>association</sup> with that nation who have wastefully  
trampled on our <sup>rights</sup> liberties & shed the innocent  
blood of American patriots at Seawrighton —

3 We do hereby declare ourselves a free & independ-  
-ent people — one & of right ought to be a  
sovereign & self governing association — under  
the control of no power other than that of our  
God & the general government of the ~~world~~ <sup>universe</sup>

to the maintenance of which <sup>civil & religious</sup> independence  
we solemnly pledge to each other our mutual  
cooperation - our lives - our fortunes & our most  
sacred honor

4 As we now acknowledge the existence &  
continuance of no law or legal officer - civil or  
military within this country - we do hereby  
ordain & adopt as a rule of life - all such  
& every of our former laws - <sup>to be</sup> ~~whereas~~ <sup>nevertheless</sup> the crown  
of Great Britain ~~nevertheless~~ <sup>nevertheless</sup> ~~can~~ <sup>nevertheless</sup> be  
considered as holding rights, privileges immunities  
or authority therein

5 It is also further decreed that all such  
every military officer in this country is hereby  
reinstated in his former command & authority  
to be acting conformably to their regulations  
AND that every Member present of this delegation  
shall henceforth <sup>be</sup> ~~act~~ <sup>as</sup> a Justice of the peace  
in the character of a "Committee man" to be  
issued principles & determine all matters of  
controversy according to <sup>the</sup> adopted laws - &  
to preserve peace union & harmony in <sup>the</sup> country  
& to use every exertion to spread the love of  
country & fire of freedom throughout America  
until a more general & organized government  
be established in this <sup>land</sup> province  
~~to exhibit from the members present~~ <sup>that constituted</sup>  
~~a committee of public safety~~ <sup>for the province</sup>  
A number of by-laws were also added <sup>to</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>to</sup>  
to protect the association from confusion &  
to regulate their general conduct as citizens  
After sitting up in the court house all night  
neither sleepy hungry or fatigued - & after  
discussing every paragraph they were all papers  
sanctioned & decreed <sup>unanimously</sup> ~~by~~ <sup>about</sup> ~~the~~  
O'clock May 20<sup>th</sup> - in a few days a <sup>deputation</sup> ~~meeting~~  
~~meeting~~ of 3<sup>d</sup> delegation <sup>convened</sup> ~~at~~ <sup>where</sup> Cap  
Jas Fard of Charlotte was deputed as emissary to  
Congress in Philadelphia with a copy of <sup>the</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>resolutions</sup>  
& proceedings together with a letter addressed <sup>to</sup> ~~to~~ <sup>the</sup>  
our 3 representatives then by R Caswell <sup>&</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>Hoskins</sup>

do hereby ordain & decree

under express injunctions personally & thro' the  
 State representation to use all possible means  
 to have 3 proceedings sanctioned & approved  
 by the general Congress - to the return of '69.  
 Each the delegation learned that their proce-  
 dings were individually approved by the mem-  
 bers of Congress - but that it was deemed pro-  
 vided to lay them before the house - then  
 a joint letter from 3 Members of Congress  
 was also received complimentary of the deed  
 in the common cause & recommending further  
 order & energy -

The subsequent harmony unanimity & exertion  
 in the cause of liberty & independence was  
 resulting from their regulations & the continued  
 exertion of 3rd delegation - apparently, thus  
 qualified this section of the state & met with  
 the concurrence & high approbation of the  
 Council of safety who held their sessions  
 at Newbern & Wilmington alternately &  
 who confirmed the nomination & acts of  
 the delegation in their official capacity -  
 From this delegation originated the Court of  
<sup>of this County</sup> ~~of this County~~ ~~of this County~~ who constituted & held their first  
 session ~~at Newbern~~ ~~at Wilmington~~ ~~at Newbern~~ ~~at Wilmington~~ ~~at Newbern~~ ~~at Wilmington~~ ~~at Newbern~~ ~~at Wilmington~~ ~~at Newbern~~ ~~at Wilmington~~  
~~at Charlotte~~ ~~at Charlotte~~ ~~at Charlotte~~ ~~at Charlotte~~ ~~at Charlotte~~ ~~at Charlotte~~ ~~at Charlotte~~ ~~at Charlotte~~ ~~at Charlotte~~ ~~at Charlotte~~  
~~at Charlotte~~ ~~at Charlotte~~ ~~at Charlotte~~ ~~at Charlotte~~ ~~at Charlotte~~ ~~at Charlotte~~ ~~at Charlotte~~ ~~at Charlotte~~ ~~at Charlotte~~ ~~at Charlotte~~  
 their meetings regularly at Charlotte - at Col.  
 La'Harris & at Col. Prifer alternately one  
 week at each place - it was a ~~civil~~ <sup>civil</sup> court  
 founded on military proups. before this judi-  
 cature all suspicious persons were made to  
 appear formally tried - & banished or conti-  
 nued under guard - its jurisdiction was ex-  
 unlimited as to jurisdiction - & its decrees as final  
 as the confidence & patriotism of the County.  
 Several were arrested & brot before them from  
 Lincoln Town & the adjacent Counties - Booth  
 & Durr Lawyers, were brot from Salisbury - tried  
 convicted - proscribed - & banished - &c &c.



<sup>16</sup> The effects of which reached it was felt in the  
Counties of Rowan, Inland & Leno & Co.

The following are some of the names  
alluded to —

- Thomas Polk
- Abraham Alexander
- Mr. W. Knitt Alexander
- Ephraim Howard
- Hezekiah Alexander
- Rev. E. Elizabeth Jones Bates
- Adam Alexander
- John Phifer
- James Harris
- John Dewey
- Lachius Wilson
- Wrightell Audey
- Wm Kennon
- John Ford
- Benjamin Patton

When on my way thro' Mecklenburg

This partial list of signers of May 20 Mecklenburg Declaration was written by William Polk in 1819, as part of a letter to Judge A. D. Murphey to accompany another copy of Document B, made by Polk. Page is shown here to enable readers to compare Polk's handwriting with that in older Document B. — (From Emmet Collection.)

possible means to have the P. proceedings, sanctioned & approved by the General Congress. &c. &c. &c. — based on the return of Capt. Jack, the delegation learned that their proceedings were individually approved by the members of Congress — but that it was deemed premature to lay them before the house. A joint letter from our P. 3 members were also recd. complimentary of the zeal in the common cause & recommending perseverance, order & energy in the prosecution thereof from the Journals & records of P. Committee

This is from a copy of the records of the P. Committee as to Amos & Charles, in regard to the 3rd of Sept 1800

where the copy of the record ends, the subsequent harmony, unanimity & exertion in the cause of Liberty & Independence evidently resulting from these regulations and the continued exertion of said delegation apparently tranquillized this section of the State & met with the approbation of the Council of Safety who held their sessions alternately at Newbern & Wilmington and who confirmed or approved the official Acts of Delegation

From this P. delegation, originated the Court of Inquiry, who constituted & held their first Court soon after Lord Cornwallis's removal from Charlotte that month — east, as he called it, in 1780. This Court was held in Charlotte, at Col. James Harris's at Col. Martin Fisher, alternately, one week at each place. It was a civil Court, founded on Military process — before this jurisdiction all suspicious persons were made to appear — formally tried and banished — or continued under guard — Its jurisdiction was as unlimited as Torquemada and its Decrees as final as the confidence and patriotism of the County. Several <sup>charges</sup> were <sup>presented</sup> and brought before them from Lincoln Gosport <sup>and other</sup> counties. <sup>11</sup> Booth and Quinn were brought from Salisbury — tried — and sent off under guard — and never returned.

The Court of Inquiry thus continued to exercise unlimited power by the suggestion their sentence to the probable attachment to, and aid afforded to the British without all every suspected character who could be wrought was brought before them & tried, when the P. Court dissolved

It may be worthy of notice here, to observe that the foregoing statement tho' fundamentally correct; yet may not literally correspond with the original records of the transactions of said delegation & Court of inquiry as all those records and papers were burnt with the house, on April 6. 1800: but previous to that time of 1800; a full copy of said records, at the request of Doctor Hugh Williamson, then of New York: but formerly a representative in Congress from this State — was forwarded to him by Col. <sup>James</sup> <sup>Graham</sup> in order, those early transactions might fill their proper place in a history of this State then writing by P. Doctor Williamson in New York

Wachobury County }  
South Carolina } Certified to the best of my recollection and belief  
this 3<sup>d</sup> day of September 1800  
by J. M. Alexander

Third page of the copy made by John McKnitt Alexander for William R. Davie in September, 1800 (Document C). Observe that in third line of last paragraph Alexander scratched out two words, "delegation &," (enclosed in box) which Dr. Phillips restored in the copy he made for article in North Carolina University Magazine. — (From Southern Historical Collection.)

have been. We have not the letters which asked for the recollections of these gentlemen. Perhaps they contained leading questions, and suggested dates, events, names, &c., &c. Some of these witnesses were suddenly called on to testify to what they saw and heard forty-five and fifty-five years before, and when they had become old, and as some of them say, their memories not infallible. Of the fifteen witnesses, six omit to mention the day of the month, contenting themselves with saying that the meetings were held during the month of May. Not one of them mentions having heard two such Declarations read, and not one seems to have been asked which of the two we now have, he heard. There is a variance between the recollections of these gentlemen. Some say that John McNitt Alexander was secretary of the convention; others give this honor to Ephraim Brevard, while others share it between them. Mr. John Simeson asserts that what he heard contained a long string of grievances, a Declaration, and an order that Col. Polk, John Phifer, and Joseph Kennedy should secure all the military stores for the county's use. He seems to have recollected "The Resolves" only.

3. Of the age of the "Martin copy" we have no knowledge. The oldest edition of the "Davie copy" was furnished by John McN. Alexander to Gen. Davie, then a resident of South Carolina. The age and the degree of reverence to be given to its contents are unanswerably fixed by this conclusion to the manuscript: "It may be worthy of notice here to observe that the foregoing statement though fundamentally

correct, yet may not literally correspond with the original record of the transactions of said delegation and court of enquiry, as all those records and papers were burnt, with the house, on April 6th, 1800; but previous to that time of 1800, a full copy of said records, at the request of Doctor Hugh Williamson, then of New York, but formerly a representative in Congress from this State, was forwarded to him by C. I. Wm. Polk in order that those early transactions might fill their proper place in a history of this State then writing by said Doctor Williams in New York.

Certified to the best of my recollection and belief this 3d day of September, 1800, by

J. McN. ALEXANDER."

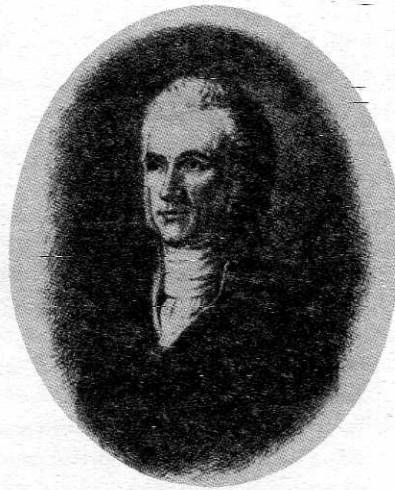
*Mecklenburg County, N. C.*

From this certificate it is clear that Mr. Alexander never intended to set forth the "Davie copy" as containing any more than the substance of what was resolved in Charlotte, in May, 1775. It originated in a patriotic effort to preserve from oblivion the worthy sentiments and actions of himself and his neighbors. He candidly declares that it must be received with due deference to what he furnished to Doctor Williamson; but he makes no mention of having then given a copy to Judge Martin. Judge Martin's History of North Carolina was published in 1820, and his copy is evidently a polished edition of the "Davie copy"—polished, because its guardians knew that this was not an extract from original records, and therefore felt no particular reverence for it.

4. Abundant confirmation of this position may be derived from a compar-



DR. DAVID L. SWAIN



WILLIAM RICHARDSON DAVIE



DR. KEMP P. BATTLE



COL. JOHN H. WHEELER



ARCHIBALD HENDERSON, F.R.S.L.  
From the oil painting in the hall of The Dialectic Society,  
University of North Carolina, by William Steen



LYMAN C. DRAPER