THE PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

We begin our winter season for the first time with a headquarters of our own; an achievement which carries out the national effort toward historic preservation which is of such vital moment.

In the near future it is hoped that a detailed master plan can be made for the development of the Historic Area. The Society will be called upon to contribute financially to the study. It is hoped that the churches, whose stake in the future of the Historic Area is great, will also materially support the effort.

The preservation of The Latimer House, our headquarters, and the leadership the Society has furnished the Wilmington Historic Area project are our contributions to the American Landmark Celebration, a part of the United States observance of UNESCO’s International Campaign for monuments which continues until November 30, 1964.

The American Landmarks Celebration, under the co-chairmanship of The Honorable Stewart L. Udall, Secretary of the Interior, and The Honorable Gordon Gray, is sponsored by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The nationwide celebration opened on July 30, with the dedication of Woodrow Wilson House in Washington, D. C. as a National Historic Landmark. Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson, Honorary Chairman of the American Landmarks Celebration, presided at the ceremony, which was attended by over 60 Ambassadors representing the countries taking part in UNESCO’s worldwide campaign.

The American Landmarks Celebration, and specifically American Landmarks Week, aims to draw attention to the vital necessity for preserving our open spaces, and historic sites and buildings as areas of inspiration and “re-creation” in a hurried, harried highly industrialized society.

In a message to the American Landmarks Celebration, the historian Lewis Mumford says: “Without our historic monuments, our land will exist only in the one-dimensional world of the present, dynamic but insensibly destructive: a present, that will soon be past, leaving as its chief reminder blasted landscapes and the memory of buildings wantonly destroyed.”

In a telegram to the co-chairmen of the program, conductor Leonard Bernstein says: “Every time I travel anywhere in the United States I am struck anew by the extravagant beauty of our country. In its intensity and variety and quality of surprise it is second to no country I have ever seen. But I am struck with equal ferocity by the rate at which this beauty is being violated. Natural glory is disappearing before our eyes, and man-made beauties with historical patina are being destroyed. I hope that this celebration will be a turning point in our senseless ravaging of a beautiful land.”

N. Winfield Sapp, Jr., President
MEETING

Time: Friday, October 30, 1964, 8:00 p.m.
Place: St. Andrews-Covenant Presbyterian Church
Speaker: Lee Adler II
Subject: Historic Savannah Project

Lee Adler II, President of Historic Savannah Foundation, Inc., will be the speaker at the meeting of the Lower Cape Fear Historical Society to be held at St. Andrews-Covenant Presbyterian Church at 8:00 p.m. Friday, October 30.

The subject of his address will be "The Historic Restoration Program in Savannah," and will be illustrated by pictures showing both "interior and exterior of many Savannah homes that have been preserved by the citizens of Savannah in recent years.

Mr. Adler has served as president of the Foundation for several previous terms and has been a director of Savannah Restoration, Inc., which has been instrumental in the purchase, restoration, and preservation of many of the old historic Savannah homes and monuments. He is an authority on this subject and has been much in demand as a consultant and advisor to cities interested in a program of restoration of historical sites.

Mr. Adler is coming to Wilmington in advance of his talk to tour the Wilmington Historical District and inspect some of our older homes so that he may be in a position to help and advise our community in its planning along the line of historical preservation.

Mr. Adler is one of Savannah's most distinguished leaders and public-spirited citizens. He received the 1963 outstanding citizens' Thomas H. Gignilliat Award. He was the organizer and head of the Tourist and Convention Bureau of the Savannah Chamber of Commerce, and has served on the Boards of the Savannah Public Library, Florence Crittenten Home, Boy Scouts and many other civic organizations of the city.

Because of the wide interest in this subject, the society is inviting the general public to attend the meeting at St. Andrews-Covenant Presbyterian Church on October 30, and hopes there will be a representative attendance, not only of society members, but others interested in community planning and historical preservation.

FORM OF BEQUEST

The great need of the Association, in order to render broader and more effective service, is to have funds available for historical research, publications, and restoration of historic sites. For those purposes, it is hoped that interested persons will bequeath to the Association whatever sum or sums of money may be available. The following form is suggested:

To the Lower Cape Fear Historical Society, Inc., a nonprofit corporation organized under the laws of the State of North Carolina, I give and bequeath the sum of $.....................

This bequest is unrestricted, and the Board of Directors or other governing body may use and expend the same for the benefit of the Lower Cape Fear Historical Society, Inc., in any manner it deems appropriate.
A LETTER OF INTEREST

By VIRGINIA BELLAMY RUFFIN

When my father, Marsden Bellamy, cleaned out the accumulation of many years in his law office some time ago, he gave me many old deeds and letters. I recently showed these to Henry J. MacMillan and Mrs. Ida Brooks Kellum. They both thought that an old letter written by Judge Joshua Grainger Wright on June 8, 1806, to John Winslow, Esquire, would be of interest to members of the Lower Cape Fear Historical Society.

This letter reads as follows:

Ashwood, June 8, 1806.

Dear Sir:

Mrs. Mebane, a sister of Doctor Claypoole, is on her way to the Back Country through your town. When I understood she will have to remain a day for the stage it would oblige me if you would with Mrs. Winslow relieve the awkwardness and unpleasantness of her residence at a Tavern by calling to see her. I have mentioned to her that I would request you to change some paper money which she has, either for gold or bills of the United States. I will thank you to do so if you can with convenience. Mrs. Wright joins me in our best regards to the ladies and family.

Yours with esteem and ,

Joshua G. Wright

P. S. I have a miserable pen and hardly any ink.

To John Winslow, Esq.

This letter was written from "Ashwood". Joshua G. Wright was probably the guest of Thomas Brown and his wife, who lived in 1806 at their home "Oakland," a part of the old Ashwood tract. Joshua G. Wright's wife was the former Susan Bradley, while Thomas Brown's second wife was the former Lucy Bradley, a sister of Mrs. Wright. It is possible that Joshua G. Wright had escorted Mrs. Mebane to Ashwood to break the long trip to "the Back Country."

Joshua Grainger Wright was a native of New Hanover, and a member of the House of Commons from 1791 to 1808, and a Speaker of The House. He was elected a Judge of the Superior Courts of Law and Equity in 1808. He served in this capacity until his death in June, 1811. He and his family lived in The Burgwin-Wright (Cornwallis) House at Third and Market Streets, now owned by the National Society of Colonial Dames of America in the State of North Carolina.

John Winslow of Cross Creek, later Fayetteville, to whom this letter was written, was a scion of the historic Winslow family of Massachusetts. He was the son of the Reverend Edward Winslow, who was born in Boston, graduated from Harvard in 1741, died in New York during the Revolution, and was buried under Saint George's Chapel. John Winslow was one of the organizers of Saint John's Church in Fayetteville and its first Senior Warden. Jane Isabella Winslow, widow of the Reverend Edward Winslow, came to Fayetteville where she is buried. 3

In 1878 John Winslow was the surviving partner of Edward & John Winslow. His mother, Jane Isabella Winslow, had "right, title, and interest" in the property. 4

One of John Winslow's sons, Warren Winslow, a celebrated lawyer, married Mary Ivie Toomer, the daughter of Honorable John D. Toomer, a native of Wilmington, who later moved to Pittsboro, where he was living when he died. It is interesting to note that Mrs. Warren Winslow of Fayetteville died in Smithsville, and was buried at Orton Plantation Cemetery. Her tombstone shows that she was born May 12, 1811, and died May 22, 1843.

The Mrs. Mebane referred to in this letter before her marriage was Ann Claypoole of Philadelphia, the granddaughter of Hannah and George Claypoole, whose interesting oil portraits are owned by their descendant, Miss Susan Claypoole Lovering of Wilmington. These portraits were described in the May 1861 Lower Cape Fear Historical Society Bulletin. According to this article by Ben F. Williams, it is believed that they were painted by George Claypoole's half brother, James Claypoole, who is known as the earliest native artist of Pennsylvania. Mr. Williams writes that these portraits were most likely brought to Wilmington by Dr. William Claypoole (grandson of the sitters) who came there around 1770.

In the Sketch of St. James' Parish, Wilmington, N. C., from "The Historical Notices" of The Reverend R. B. Drane, D.D., written by "A Member of The Vestry" (Colonel James G. Burr) in 1874, the following is printed about prominent doctors in the latter part of the 18th Century:

Claypole, Cobham, and Hill were all well educated and skilful practitioners; Dr. Claypole was brother of the Philadelphia editor and printer, and came

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1 In an article by Barbara Beeland Relph on "Oakland" published in the May 1900, Lower Cape Fear Historical Society, Inc. Bulletin she writes: "Oakland is a part of the original Ashwood grant. John Baptista Ashe came from England to the Colony of North Carolina in 1720... John Baptista Ashe patented a tract of six hundred and forty acres on the northwest branch of the Cape Fear River, and on November 27, 1730, he designated this as Ashwood. This land he left to his three children... Later Ashwood was conveyed to William Bartram... Bartram's two daughters divided his... lands by deed in 1776, Ashwood becoming the property of Sarah Bartram and her husband, Thomas Brown. Within a year, Sarah was dead. In 1781, Brown, then married to Lucy Bradley, had designated a part of Ashwood as Oakland, and had begun to build the house which, with some changes, remains today. General Brown lived at Oakland until his death at sixty-seven in 1814."
2 "Historical Sketches of North Carolina from 1184 to 1851. ... by Colonel John H. Wheeler. Published by Frederick H. Hitchcock Publisher, New York, 1921, Page 293.
3 From The Bishops of North Carolina by Haywood, published 1910, Page 36.
4 Deed Book 8, Page 274, Cumberland County, N. C.
over to this country with William Penn. He was a
great-grandson of Oliver Cromwell, and grand-
father of F. C. Hill of this city.

It is interesting to note the variation in the spelling of the
name "Claypoole," written as just spelled in Mr. Joshua G.
Wright's letter and elsewhere, but it is spelled "Claypole" by
some of his descendants and in the aforesaid reference to "Dr.
Claypoole."

In Deed Book L, Page 617, New Hanover County dated
January 16, 1799, there is the following entry:
Joshua G. Wright, guardian of Ann Claypoole,
daughter of William Claypoole, deceased, leases for
a term of ten years, to Benjamin Smith of Brunswick
County, a lot on Dock Street between Front and
Second, said Smith agrees to build a brick house
two stories high with a garret and cellar — and
said Smith agrees to build the house as nearly like
the house lately consumed by fire, as possible. The
house which burned having been built by Dr. Wil-
liam Claypoole, deceased.

Dr. Claypoole's wife is buried in St. James' Churchyard
Cemetery and the following is written on her tombstone:

In Memory of Mrs. Mary Claypoole, wife of Mr.
William Claypoole, who departed this life November
6th at sea and was interred here November 9,
1792, aged 27 years, from this last tribute of af-
faction from an afflicted husband to a beloved wife.

Ann Claypoole Mebane, about whom Judge Wright wrote
his letter, was married to Brigadier General Alexander Mebane
of Irish descent, who was born in Pennsylvania November 26,
1744, and died July 5, 1795. Their home was near Hillsboro
in Orange County, which is "the Back Country" to which
Mrs. Mebane was returning.

Alexander Mebane was first married in February 1767 to
Mary Armstrong of Orange County, by whom he had four
sons and eight daughters. After her death, he married Miss
Claypoole, by whom he had no children.6

According to Historical Sketches of North Carolina From
1584 to 1851 by Colonel John H. Wheeler:

In 1776 Alexander Mebane was a member of the
Convention that met at Halifax to form the Con-
stitution. In 1783 he was a member of the House of
Commons, and repeatedly afterwards. In 1793 he was
elected a Member of Congress, and attended at
Philadelphia, where he married a "Miss Claypole."
He died soon afterwards, 5th July, 1795. Alexander
Mebane was distinguished for his sound practical
sense, his unblemished integrity, and unflinching
firmness.

The will of this Alexander Mebane is on file in the Archives
in Raleigh among the Orange County wills. He named his
wife Ann, and referred to the fact that she had property in
Philadelphia.

Mr. Tench C. Coxe, Jr., of Asheville, North Carolina, owns
a miniature of Ann Claypoole Mebane. Mr. Coxe and Miss
Susan Lovering both stated that Ann Claypoole Mebane's
brother, Dr. William Claypoole, had a daughter named Ann,
who married William Hill. Their daughter, Eliza Ann Hill,
at the age of 17 married William Augustus Wright (a
brother of Joshua G. Wright) at Orton Plantation. Their
daughter, Ann Claypoole Wright was the great-grandmother
of Miss Sue Lovering and Mr. Tench C. Coxe, Jr. Ann Clay-
poole Mebane raised her great-niece, Eliza Ann Hill. The
latter married William Augustus Wright and named her
daughter Ann Claypoole Wright for her great-aunt. Mr.
Coxe says that this is the reason that his family inherited
the miniature of Ann Claypoole Mebane.

Therefore, this old letter, as brief as it is, revives interest in
many prominent North Carolinians who lived over 150 years
ago. It also evokes many interesting aspects of life in the
early 19th century — the difficulty and inconvenience of
travel by stage coach, the problem of converting money in
those days, and the fact that Orange County was then re-
tered to as "the Back Country!"

5 It is true that the Claypoole family came to Pennsylvania with William
Penn, but that was several generations before the time of Dr. William
Claypoole.

6 From "St. James Churchyard Cemetery Records" by Elizabeth McKoy.

ARCHIVES CONTRIBUTIONS

The archives department has received the following con-
tributions: photographs of Mr. and Mrs. William Henry Hill
from Stanley A. South; Know New Hanover County: a Sur-
vey Report by the League of Women Voters, 1964, from
Miss Ann Hewlett; Bond coupons of the Confederacy from
Miss Fannie deRosset; A Huguenot Family of XVI Century,
from Mrs. Ludlow P. Strong; A Peanut Story, by Johnson
from Campion McD. Davis; Smith's Island and the Cape Fear
Peninsula, from the author, Sheafe Satterthwaite; Clandon
Hall, home of the Onslow Family for whom Onslow County
was named, from Alexander M. Walker; Certificate 773 given
by the Wilmington Fire Steam Engine Co. to W. C. Smith,
from Miss Therma Smith; A Ledger used by Dr. Chauncy
Graham, 1774-1784, from Mrs. Peter Browne Ruffin; A col-
lection of old books and papers from Mrs. Catherine J. Jones;
from A Friend: Annual Reports of the Municipal Officers of
the City of Wilmington, N. C., 1871-1872; By-laws and
Rules of Trade of the Wilmington Produce Exchange, adopt-
ed May 15, 1873; Reports of the Municipal Officers of the
City of Wilmington, N. C., 1877; and Smaw's Wilmington
Directory, 1887.

NOTICE

Members should keep the Treasurer informed promptly of
any change of address. The Bulletin is not first class mail and
cannot be forwarded by the Post Office.

MAYOR'S PROCLAMATION

The 5th day of August, 1964 Mayor O. O. Allsbrook issued
a proclamation to the effect that the City of Wilmington
declared September 28th through October 4th 1964 as
American Landmarks Week. He urged all citizens to observe
this celebration.
A Letter of Charles O'Hara to the Duke of Grafton

Camp near Wilmington Cape Fear River
April 20th 1781

Tho' I dispair of giving your Grace so particular an account as I could wish, of the late expedition into North Carolina, under the Command of Lord Cornwallis, I will endeavour to give you some sketch of our transactions, since Major General Lesslie's Corps (the Brigade of Guards composing a part) join'd Lord Cornwallis the 18th of January upon Bullock Creek, near Broad River, in Camden Precinct.

The defeat of Major Ferguson's Corps of Militia at King Mountain, by a large Body of Rebel Militia, of which I gave your Grace an account in my last Letter, produced all the fatal consequences, that ever attend the smallest check to our Arms. A great Majority of the People of South Carolina, who had taken any active part for Government, were so exceedingly alarm'd at all the dangers, that their fears made them believe they were threatened with, that in order to make their peace with the Rebels, many immediately joined them, and every appearance of a general revolt, was strongly mark'd in every part of the Province — In this critical situation, Lt. Col. Tarltons misfortune at the Cow-Pens on ye 17th January at once determined our numerous friends what part they should take, and all that could, deserted from Us, and our hopeless cause, and join'd the Rebels — Greene who com-mands the Rebel Army to the Southward, immediately upon Lt Col. Tarltons defeat, to give countenance and facilitate the rising of the Rebel Militia; and our Scoundrel Friends in the Neighborhood of our Posts, advanced from the Cherais, where he had been Posted for some time, upon Thompsons Creek — With all these Storms gathering round Us some Vigerous measures however desperate was to be adopted, any delay or inactivity that betrayed our imbarass'd situation, would increase the numbers and confidence of the Enemy — but where and how to direct our operations were the great points to be consider'd, as it was evident every material, possibly fatal consequences might attend any steps that could be taken — circumstance'd as we were all was to be risked, and as the only event that could possibly tho' in a small degree for the moment, retrieve our affairs in this Quarter, was the beating or driving Greene's Army out of the Carolina's, that resolution was taken, and carried into execution in a Stile that must ever do the greatest Honor to Lord Cornwallis's Military Reputation, and to the Gallant persevering Spirit of his little Army — As the Operations of the Army, would in all probability be chiefly confined to North Carolina, a very mountainous Country, almost a continued thick Forrest, cut with numberless Broad, Deep, and rapid Waters it was evident the movements of the Army, would be attended with many difficulties; the necessity therefore of diminishing the Carriages and Bagage of the Army was indispens'able, and the proper Orders were given for that purpose, tho' these two impediments were less'd in a great degree, after a few days March, the Country proved so very impracticable from a thousand causes, not only those already mention'd, but the exceeding scarcity of Subsistance for Men and Horses, made the necessity of making long and rapid marches so unavoidable that it was again determin'd, to lessen still more the Bagage, and number of Servants; Lord Cornwallis sett the example, by burning all his Wagons, and destroying the greatest part of his Bagage, which was followed by every Officer of the Army without a single murmur, such very little Bagage only as could be carried upon a few Batt Horses was kept, the only carriages that remained, exclusive of the Canon and Ammunition, were a few Wagons for Salt — even the Hospital Wagons were destroyed — In this situation without Bagage, necessaries, or Provisions of any sort for officer or Soldier, in the most barren inhospitable unhealthy part of North America, opposed to the most savage, inveterate perfidious cruel Enemy, with zeal and with Bayonets only, it was resolves'd to follow Greene's Army, to the end of the World — Our first movements were calculated to make Greene suppose that he was not our immediate object, to keep from him as long as possible, our intentions of passing the Catawba River, which was consider'd from its magnitude, many other causes, and the Banks Inhabitad by a very disaffected well trained Militia, as a most dangerous arduous undertaking, our fears in those particulars, as we afterwards experienced, were but too well founded — Greene very soon discovering, yt. we meant to pass the Catawba, ordered their famous Partizan General Morgan with a picked Corps, (the same that had beat Lt. Col. Tarlton on ye. 17th January) and all the Militia of the Country to defend the Fords upon the Catawba near our Army — In order to keep from the Enemy our real intentions, at what place we meant to endeavour to force a pas-

Editors Note: This letter was written to the Duke of Grafton, former head of the English Ministry, from Wilmington by Charles O'Hara a British officer best remembered for having surrendered Cornwallis' sword to General Benjamin Lincoln who received it in behalf of General George Washington at Yorktown. He was described on that occasion by Douglas Southall Freeman in his George Washington, A Biography New York 1952, V, 391-392 as being "entirely at ease." "Had he been in his own quarters, entertaining welcome friends, he could not have been more pleasant. Later some of the French, who themselves knew all of the arts of making a good appearance, expressed amazement at the sangfroid of British officers."

Charles O'Hara (1740-1802) the illegitimate son of James O'Hara, second Lord Tyrawley, was educated at Winchester and later commissioned an officer in the Coldstream Guards. After the American Revolution he was governor of Gibraltar where he was called the "Old Cock of the Rock." At his death he left 70,000 pounds in trust for two Gibraltar ladies by whom he had bad families and his plate valued at 5,000 pounds to his Negro servant.

A full account of the six letters of Charles O'Hara to the Duke of Grafton which are on deposit with the Grafton papers in Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk, England appeared in the South Carolina Historical Magazine Vol. 65, No. 3, 175-179 in July 1964. The letters were edited by George C. Rogers, Jr. Publication was permitted by the present Duke of Grafton.
Gilbert Stuart's Portrait of an Ashe

A SPECULATION BY HENRY JAY MacMILLAN

In a list of the works of Gilbert Stuart it was noted he had painted a portrait of John Baptista Ashe now in the Mellon collection. In a reply to a request for information and a photograph of the painting Mr. William P. Campbell, Assistant Chief Curator of the National Gallery of Art wrote:

We have recently spent much time studying the portrait by Gilbert Stuart that has been known as John Baptista Ashe. While the portrait is certainly a member of the Ashe family, it is of a Richard or John Ashe of the South Carolina branch, and not of John Baptista.

Not knowing how the students of the Ashe portrait arrived at the decision that the painting is not of Colonel John Baptista Ashe, one wonders what information they had in order to change an identification of long-standing. The confusion bringing doubt as to the subject of the painting may have arisen from the fact that the noted John Baptista Ashe, first of the name, died in 1734 before the birth of Gilbert Stuart. Do the curators of the Mellon Collection know that John Baptista Ashe had a grandson, Lieutenant Colonel John Baptiste Ashe who was in New York and Philadelphia during the years Stuart was painting there and was of an age to correspond with the age of the sitter?

John Baptiste Ashe, son of Governor Samuel Ashe and Mary Porter, was born at Rocky Point in New Hanover County (now Pender) in 1748. He moved to Halifax and married Elizabeth Montfort, sister of Mrs. Willi Jones and daughter of Colonel Joseph Montfort. Colonel Montfort was appointed by the Duke of Beaufort in 1771 "The Grand Master of Masons of and for America." Blackwell Robinson the historian says that "as such he was the first, last, and only Grand Master of America." Colonel Ashe was the owner of sixty-three slaves and twelve hundred acres in Halifax County in 1790.

From 1787 to 1788 and from 1790 until 1793 Colonel John Baptiste Ashe represented his district in Congress. Thus he was in New York at the time Stuart was painting so many Federal leaders. Colonel Ashe was elected Governor of North Carolina but died in 1802 before taking office.

Colonel John Baptiste Ashe belonged to the elite group of wealth and political prominence from whom Gilbert Stuart gained his patronage. He was also in the right place at the right time to sit.

A GENTLEMAN OF THE ASHE FAMILY
BY GILBERT STUART
1755 - 1828

Men down the stream, under a very heavy Fire. They were never thrown into the smallest confusion or fired a single Shot, 'till they landed on the opposite shore (which with difficulty they were so exhausted they could ascend) where they attacked and immediately dispersed the Enemy, formed upon the Heights; So soon as Morgan was informed that one of our Corps had passed the Catawba, He fell back, with all the Militia Corps likewise, upon Green who was moving forward to support his Posts upon the Catawba, The Whole Rebel Army then retreated to the Yadkin, another very considerable River, which Green reached by forced Marches, and crossed before we could overtake him, notwithstanding every possible exertion that we made He crossed upon Flatts and Ferrys about Twenty Miles before Salisbury; but we trod so close upon Morgans heels who commanded Greens rearguard, composed of about a Thousand of their best Troops, that he
A LETTER OF CHARLES O'HARA . . .

was obliged to push for the Ford near Salisbury, where we arrived a few hours after him before he had completed his passing, and beat up his Rear Guard, who after giving a few Shots in the language of this Country, Split and Squer'd — that is run away — The Yadkin which had increased for some days past from heavy rains, swelled so much in the Night as to be impassible; and the next morning with the Day, we saw Morgans Corps posted upon the opposite Shore, grown bold by this invincible Barrier, they remained on the other side 'till the waters began to Ebb, and the passing of the River would have become practicable in a few Hours, they then moved off after Green, who was retiring towards the Roanoke, the greatest part of their Heavy Baggage had already crossed, and it was concluded that Greene meant to pass with his Army over that River; our being stopt by the Yadkin's not being fordsable, gave Green sufficient time to assemble a great Body of Militia at Guildford Court House in Orange County, where it was said He meant to wait for us; Our Army passed the Yadkin without opposition at the Shallow Ford, about Thirty five Miles above Salisbury as it was very improbable that Green with the Force he had at Guildford, would risk a general Action, as he expected to be considerably reinforced from the Northward in a very little time; Lord Cornwallis was persuaded. He never meant to wait for Him, And in order to get between Greens Army, and the Fords upon the Dan, (the Roanoke takes the name of the Dan above the Hyco River and is not fordsable in any part in the Winter) immediately after passing the Yadkin, we march'd to Bithania, and Salem the Moravian settlements; Green still remaining at Guildford, perceiving that we were pushing between him and the Dan, and likewise his supply from Virginia, march'd to Boyd's Ferry, where they had collected all the Ferrys and with wonderful dispatch crossed the Dan, just above where the River called the North-Hyco runs into the Dan — every effort that we made proved ineffectual, for their rear guard had passed about twelve hours before we arrived upon the Bank of the River. I dont recollect wether I mentioned to your Grace in any of my former Letters, that Government were persuaded from repeated assurances they had received, that a great Majority of the People of the Carolina's, particularly North Carolina, were waiting with the utmost impatience, for the arrival of our Troops among them, to countenance and protect their rising in favor of England, and that Thousands from every part of North Carolina, would Flock to the King's Standard, upon the first appearance of our Troops; The giving the People of North Carolina, an opportunity of manifesting their zeal to our cause, was another very powerful inducement, which determined Lord Cornwallis to penetrate into North Carolina; Green's march or rather flight from the Catawba over the Dan, closely pursued by our Army, had given some eclat and credit to our Arms, that hour of triumph and exultation was consider'd favorable for calling upon the many Friends Government had persuaded themselves we had in every part of North Carolina, And Lord Cornwallis with the usual formalities, erected the Kings Standard at Hillsborough, and invited all His Majesty's loving Subjects, to take up Arms and join his Forces, in defence of their Civil Libertys, the reestablishing Peace and good order, upon Constitutional principles and for many other good purposes that I have forgot: The novelty of a Camp in the back Woods of America, more than any other cause, brought several People to stare at us, their curiosity once satisfied, they returned to their Homes; I am certain that in our March of near a Thousand Miles, almost in as many directions, thro' every part of North Carolina, tho every means possible was taken to persuade our Friends as they are called, and indeed as they call themselves, to join us, we never had with us at any one time One Hundred Men in Arms, without the experiment had been made, it would have been impossible to conceive, that Government could in so important a matter, have been so grossly deceived. Total infatuation — when will Government see these People thro' the proper medium? I am persuaded never.

After we had been about Six Days at Hillsborough where I am (I am certain that not more than that number of our many Friends joined us) Green having received some reinforcements from Virginia recrossed the Dan, and moved towards Hillsborough. His object in approaching, and keeping near our Army, was to prevent the People of the Country from joining us (no such precaution on their side was necessary) from that time to the 15th March, the two Armies were never above twenty Miles assunder, they constantly avoiding a General Action, and we as industriously seeking it; These operations obliged the two Armies to make numberless moves, which it is impossible to detail; The Gazette will acquaint your Grace with our success on the 15th March near Guildford Court House, I wish it had produced one substantial benefit to Great Britain, on the contrary, we feel at this moment, the sad and fatal effects of our loss on that Day, nearly one half of our best Officers and Soldiers, were either Killed or Wounded, and what remains are so completely worn out, by the excessive Fatigues of the Campaign in a march of above a Thousand Miles, most of them barefoot, naked and for days together living upon Carrion, which they had often not time to dress, and three or four ounces of unground Indian Corn has totally distroy'd this Army — entre nous, the Spirit of our little Army has evaporated a good deal. No zeal or courage is equal to the constant exertions we are making; Tho you will not find it in the Gazette, every part of our Army was beat repeatedly, on the 15th March, and were obliged to fall back twice. The Rebels were so exceedingly numerous, as to be able constantly to oppose fresh Troops to us, and be in force in our Front, Flanks and Rear.

It is impossible to say too much in praise of our Officers and Men in a conflict that lasted near two hours, tho' so powerfully outnumber'd, their Spirit and constancy never forsook them, and at length Crown'd their manly exertions with Victory. I never did, and hope I never shall, experience two such days and Nights, as these immediately after the Battle, we remained on the very ground on which it had been fought cover'd with Dead, with Dying and with Hundreds of Wounded, Rebels, as well as our own — A Violent and constant Rain that lasted above Forty Hours made it equally impracticable to remove or administer the smallest comfort to many of the Wounded.

In this situation we expected every moment to be attacked,
A LETTER OF CHARLES O'HARA

there could be no doubt, that the Enemy must be very well informed of our loss, and whatever their loss might be, their numbers were still so great, as to make them very formidable; and they had only retired eighteen Miles from us, fortunately for us they did not, or even follow'd us, when we march'd but at a very respectable distance, or have ever fired a Single Shot since the affair of the 13th.

Two Days after the 15th of March we fell back by easy marches upon Cross Creek, a very large settlement at the Head of Cape Fear River, chiefly inhabited by Scotch, who were said to a Man would join us, but that has proved like the other Government Dreams.

It was Lord Cornwallis's intention to have remained for sometime at Cross Creek, and by the means of Cape Fear River, to have received the supplies for the Army from Wilmington, which we were told before our arrival at Cross Creek would be very practicable, and would not be attended with the least obstructions from the People of the Country, on the contrary that we should from them receive every assistance, these favorable reports we found were false in every particular, for our advanced Guard were fired upon when we enter'd Cross Creek, and both Shores of the Cape Fear River proved so very hostile, as to render the Navigation for us totally impracticable, and Lord Cornwallis was obliged to fall back upon Wilmington where we arrived the 12th of this Month, and have remained every since, endeavouring to recruit and repair, our very Shatter'd, exhausted, ragged Troops.

You will have heard of the Engagement between the English and French Fleets off the Chesapeake. If Admiral Arbuthnot tells the Truth, in the account he means to give the Public, He must confess to the Eternal disgrace of our Navy, that with a much Superior Fleet both in number and size of Ships, He behaved as shamefully Ill as the French behaved Gallantly well — The Romulus Frigate of 44 Guns that the French took from us a few days before that scandelous event; was engaged with, disabled and beat our London of 90 Guns out of the Line — This Account I have from a Captain of One of our Frigates, who told me that he was a witness of that very dishonourable humiliating days disgrace. Admiral Greaves commanded the London, I dont find that any notice has been taken, of his shamefull conduct relative to detaining his Fleet so long by Tugging the French East India Ship from the Western Islands to New York, of which I gave your Grace an account in some of my Letters[.]

[P. S.] A Report prevails this morning that Green with his Army has march'd into South Carolina, if that should prove true a general Revolt will take place and we shall certainly loose the Carolina's for ever — it will be impossible for Lord Cornwallis to return by Land to South Carolina and equally impracticable for us to remain here. I believe we shall endeavour to join Major General Phillips who is said to be at Petersbourg at the Head of the Jame's River in Virginia[.]

LOWER CAPE FEAR HISTORICAL SOCIETY
WILMINGTON, NORTH CAROLINA