HISTORY OF MECKLENBURG COUNTY AND THE CITY OF CHARLOTTE: FROM 1740 TO 1903. VOLUME TWO-APPENDIX

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History of Mecklenburg County and the City of Charlotte: From 1740 to 1903. Volume Two-Appendix by D. A. Tompkins

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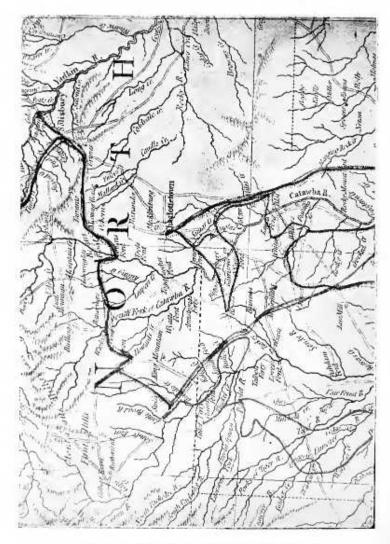
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D. A. TOMPKINS

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BRITISH MAP OF MECKLENBURG IN 1780.

History of Mecklenburg County

AND

The City of Charlotte

From 1740 to 1903.

BY D. A. TOMPKINS,

Author of Cotton and Cotton Oil; Cotton Mill, Commercial Features; Cotton Values in Textile Fabrics; Cotton Mill, Processes and Calculations; and American Commerce, Its Expansion.

CHARLOTTE, N. C., 1903.

VOLUME TWO-APPENDIX.

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EXPLANATION.

This history is published in two volumes. The first volume contains the simple narrative, and the second is in the nature of an appendix, containing ample discussions of important events, a collection of biographies and many official documents justifying and verifying the statements in this volume. At the end of each chapter is given the sources of the information therein contained, and at the end of each volume is an index.

PREFACE.

One of the rarest exceptions in literature is a production devoid of personal feeling. Few indeed are the men, who, realizing that the responsibility for their writings will be for them alone to bear, will not utilize the advantage for the promulgation of things as they would like them to be. Many of the works of the Ancients fail to stand the test of modern historical criticism because the advancing conception of historical labors is getting farther and farther from discursive analysis and closer and closer to the presentation of plain, unvarnished facts.

"History is philosophy teaching by example," says Dionysius, and it is obvious that if we are to "judge the future by the past." that the main requisite is a complete record. "To study history," says Wilmot, "is to study literature. The biography of a nation contains all its works. No trifle is to be neglected. A mouldering medal is a letter of twenty centuries. Antiquities which have been beautifully called history defaced, composed its fullest commentary."

Parton, in the preface to his Life of Jackson, gives an apt illustration of the true historian's duty. A young clergyman, fresh from the university, became rector of one of the oldest of English parishes. Examining his church, he found that a crust was falling from the walls. The wardens suggested whitewash, but the new rector discovered that whitewash had been applied too many times already, and that it

was these surplus coats which were falling.

Thereupon, he resolved that instead of applying more, he would remove that already on the walls. When this was done, the beautiful frescoes which had been obscured for many years were exposed to the view. These paintings, some of them by the world's greatest artists, had been hidden in order that the cracks might be filled. The true beauty of the structure had been sacrificed to hide the natural results

of man's imperfect work. After the restoration, the defects marred the glory of the decorations, yet it left a subject for study even if not for unqualified admiration. And above all, those viewing it could be possessed of the consciousness that they were beholding the truth—displeasing though it might be—yet unquestionably and plainly the truth.

It is not for the writer of history to decide what shall and what shall not be recorded, any more than it is justifiable for a church-member to accept certain articles of his religion and repudiate the others; each must be all-inclusive or of no importance. As a consequence, it is not within the proper bounds of historical endeavor to be argumentative. The person who investigates and accumulates facts for the purpose of strengthening his pre-conceived opinions is not a historian. History's worst enemy is the writer who distorts facts to bolster prejudice. Histories should not be intended to convince, but to enlighten. 'The true historian's duty is to uncover the naked truth, and though this be a disagreeable task, it is duty nevertheless. In the words of Lord Bacon, the reader should "Reade not to Contradict, and Confute; Nor to Beleeve and Take for granter; Nor to Finde Talke and Discourse: But to Weigh and Consider."

In this History of Mecklenburg County, the author has endeavored to present an historical record, not an historical discussion. "Facts are stubborn." and when they are all in hand, it is well to let them speak for themselves.

D. A. Tompkins.

December 1, 1903.

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