



GEN. RUFUS BARRINGER.

Rufus Barringer, of Cabarrus and Mecklenburg.

Rufus Barringer was often head to say, "I believe in but three institutions, the Family, the Church, and the State," and under these heads this sketch will be written.

As to Family, reference is made to a letter of his to Dr. Kemp Battle, written in the spirit of the true American. He says: "So far as I have been able to find, the Barringers, of Germany, laid no claim to noble rank or descent; but I do find that my grandfather, John Paul Barringer, of Wurtenburg, was a man of heroic mould and ever a good man through a long and eventful life."

Rufus Barringer was a firm believer in heredity. Since it is always interesting to note family characteristics, we return to the founder of the Barringer family in North Carolina, John Paul (or Paulus) Barringer. He was born in Wurtenburg June 4, 1721, arrived in Philadelphia September 20, 1743, on the good ship Phœnix, Capt. Wm. Wilson, last from Rotterdam. He married in Pennsylvania Ann Eliza Iseman, and after several years (about 1750) they with their children, Catherine and John, and several fellow countrymen, joined in the exodus to the Piedmont region of North Carolina, where they settled on the fertile lands of Dutch Buffalo, then Anson county, afterwards Mecklenburg, and now Cabarrus, thus living in three counties without moving.

The desolation of the country during the seven years war, added to the desire of being land-owners, is said to have caused this immigration from Wurtenburg.

John Paul's love of family was shown by his sending to the "Old Country" for father, mother, brothers and sisters. The aged parents were buried at sea, but two brothers and three sisters came. George settled at Gold Hill. Mathias married Miss Burhart, settled in Lincoln, and was killed by

the Indians in Catawba, where a monument was erected to him in 1891. The sisters were: Catherine married to Christian Overshine, Dolly married to Nicholas Cook, and Elizabeth or Anna Maria, married to Christian Barnhardt. Their descendants are scattered over the South and West, and show the same strong characteristics in Family, Church, and State.

In 1777, John Paul Barringer married his second wife, Catherine, daughter of Caleb Blackwelder and Polly Decker, and raised a large family.

John Paul was of note and influence in his community. He was captain of Queen's Militia, member of Committee of Safety, and was with James Hogg, of Orange, appointed by unanimous consent of the Halifax convention of 1776, Justice of the Peace. He and his brother-in-law, Caleb Phifer, were the first representatives of Cabarrus in the Legislature. It is said that the separation of Cabarrus from Mecklenburg was due to the indignation of John Paul and German friends, at his being ridiculed for giving orders to his company in German or Pennsylvania Dutch. The county was named for Stephen Cabarrus, who aided them to get the act through the Legislature.

John Paul and his father-in-law, Caleb Blackwelder, too old for service, led in defence of the settlement against the Tories, who destroyed crops and carried away slaves. Finally the Fanning gang raided across the Yadkin, destroyed everything and taking these two men prisoners, carried them to Camden. Old Mrs. Blackwelder, nothing daunted, followed them on horseback and ministered to their wants as well as to those of other prisoners, even to the Britishers. Smallpox was raging there and unfortunately, she communicated the disease to her young grandson Paul, who always bore the marks of it. The husband and father were eventually released through her influence and that of a man named Levinstein. The Tory most obnoxious to that neighborhood was named Hagar and was finally run off. Hagar's

mill was confiscated by Tom Polk and came into the possession of the Barringer family.

In religion, John Paul was Lutheran and deeply devotional, though neither sectarian nor fanatic. He used daily a large Luther Bible (date 1747) which is still owned by the family. These German Lutherans, like the Presbyterians, ever had church and school house side by side. He gave a large body of land to the church, was active in church building, president of the council and was made referee in all church disputes. The "Yellow Meeting House" was built at his expense and the congregation voted him a raised seat of honor, moving it to the new church of St. John's when rebuilt. He is said to have lived well after the manner of his day, and "they say" he exchanged a barrel of kraut with the Italian miner, Rivafinoli, for a barrel of imported wine.

Gov. Tryon visited him during his tour in 1768, and was highly gratified with his entertainment. He died January 1, 1807, and was buried at St. John's church. His wife, Catherine, lived till October 29, 1847, aged 92.

GEN. PAUL BARRINGER.

The oldest son of John Paul Barringer and Catherine Blackwelder was born in 1778, on Dutch Buffalo, then in Mecklenburg, now Cabarrus. He was both merchant and farmer.

His father had never mastered the English language, but he gave his children the best advantages of the times and directed his executor to have his minor children educated in the Protestant faith. Realizing the disadvantages he had labored under he sent his sons to Chapel Hill, and his daughters to the best schools. Besides his own children, he helped many other young men to get a start in life.

His wife was Elizabeth Brandon, daughter of Matthew Brandon and Jean Armstrong, of Rowan. Her family were the Lockes, Brandons and Armstrongs. The records