

Calvin Eli Grier.

Calvin Eli Grier was born in Steele Creek Township on the 30th of December, 1845. He was the son of Col. William M. Grier, a man closely identified with the history of this county. His mother was, before her marriage, Miss Feriba Edwards, a daughter of Stouton Edwards, of York county, S. C.

Steele Creek has been noted for its good schools and its interest in education, and in the academy near his father's home Calvin Grier studied until his fourteenth year. As a boy he early displayed a wonderful versatility, and those who were his companions at school tell of his progress in his studies and of the early age at which he read the Latin classics.

In common with all the children raised in Steele Creek, a center of Presbyterianism, he was early trained to study the shorter Catechism. His father, a ruling elder in the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, taught him to perfectly ask and answer every question in the Catechism before he was four years old.

In 1859, General, then Major D. H. Hill, founded his Military Institute in Charlotte, and to this Calvin Grier was sent as soon as the school was opened. At that time he was only fourteen, but he was a thorough student and the reports he received were most excellent ones.

On the breaking out of hostilities between the North and the South, Gen. Hill closed his school. Many of the cadets were made officers and others hastened to offer their services to the Confederacy.

Calvin Grier, though not fifteen years of age, enlisted in the Ranalesburg Rifles, a company then formed largely of Steele Creek men, and of which A. A. Erwin was captain. It seemed most appropriate that he should enlist in this company, for Col. Grier, with true Southern generosity, had con-

tributed largely of his means in equipping this company, and so liberal was he to it during the war that some of the men referred to him as the "Father of the Ranalesburg Rifles."

Young Grier remained with the company for one year, but at the end of that time was sent home on account of his extreme youth. But brave and ambitious, he could not bear to remain at home inactive while his companions were dying in defence of the South, so in 1862 he enlisted again, this time in Graham's Battery, which had been organized in Charlotte. He served with this battery but a short while, being transferred to his first command, where he remained till the close of the war.

When the conflict was over, though only 19 years of age, Capt. Grier was acting Adjutant-General of Scales' Brigade, and had made a wonderful record for courage and daring. During the war he was seven times wounded, being shot through and through the body on two occasions, once at Barnett's Ford and again at Reams' Station.

At the close of the war, Calvin Grier returned home to find his circumstances terribly altered. In place of wealth, he had poverty, and instead of vigorous, young manhood, he had a wrecked constitution, the result of the wounds from which he suffered all his life.

With a heroism as great as that he displayed in battle, he took up his round of duties on his father's farm. In 1866 he began the study of law. All day he would plow on the farm and at night he would remain up late reading his law books. Once a week he came to Charlotte and recited to Osborne and Barringer.

In spite of the obstacles with which he had to contend he made such rapid strides in his studies that at the end of a year he stood his examination and received his license to practice law.

In 1868 he moved to Charlotte and began the practice of his profession. He formed a partnership with Capt. Armistead Burwell, but in about a year decided to locate in Dallas.

In 1872 he returned to Steele Creek, broken down in

health, but in 1876 he moved back to Charlotte, where he made his home until the time of his death. For a number of years he was the law partner of Judge W. P. Bynum, and for some time he was solicitor of the Inferior Court of Mecklenburg county.

In 1878 he was married to Miss Addie Ramseur, of Lincolnton, a sister of the gallant Major-General, Stephen D. Ramseur.

In 1889, on the 1st of May, Capt. Grier died and was buried in Steele Creek cemetery, where rest his father, grand-father and great-grand-father.

Nothing can be more appropriate than to quote what his friend, Mr. F. B. McDowell, says of him in his article on Steele Creek: "As I write of another the pen falters. He was so young, so generous, so gifted. His life, too, was so pathetic, and his existence seemed to end almost before it fairly began. If the war called some from the portals of the grave, it took others almost from the cradle. A mere strippling boy went forth as a volunteer. Intrepid as a Hampden, as daring as a Ney, he was twice shot through the body upon the enemy's breastworks, within touch of his guns. He brought back from the field painful wounds and a wrecked constitution; but with all his suffering he was an admirable companion and a natural leader and adviser of men; and no young man in this section and of this generation left a deeper impress of admiration and sympathy upon those who knew him best, than Calvin E. Grier."—*Contributed by Miss Feriba Grier.*