

Some of the Bar One Hundred Years Ago.

HON. SAMUEL LOWRIE.

He was a native of New Castle county, State of Delaware, born May 12, 1756; son of Robert and Elizabeth Lowrie. When a child his parents moved to Rowan county and he was educated at Clio Academy, Iredell county, by Rev. James Hall. He studied law in Camden, S. C., and was elected to the House of Commons from this county in 1804, 1805 and 1806, when he was elected a judge of the Superior Court, which he held until his death, on the 22nd of December, 1818. He married in 1788 Margaret, daughter of Robert Alexander, who left him with several children; and second time, 1811, he married Mary, daughter of Marmaduke Norfleet, of Bertie county. He was a man of most engaging manners, a fine conversationalist, very learned in the law. His judicial district covered a great deal of territory, extended down into the eastern counties. Some of his descendants still live in Mecklenburg. The family were noted for intellect, both men and women, and were looked up to as leaders of thought, and were critics of more than ordinary ability, especially the female members of the family.

JOSEPH WILSON, ESQ.

A most distinguished lawyer and statesman, resided and died in Charlotte, which for many years was the scene of his services and honors. Joseph Wilson's early education was as good as the country afforded. He was under the care of Rev. David Caldwell, and by the advice of Reuben Wood, he studied law. He was licensed in 1804, and came to the bar at the same time with Israel Pickens, of Burke county, afterwards Governor of Alabama. By the perseverance of his character, the force of his intellect and steady applica-

tion he arose to eminence in his profession. He settled for a while in Stokes county; he represented that county in the State Legislature in 1810-'11-'12. He distinguished himself by his warm advocacy of the war with England. About this time he made his home in Charlotte; was elected Solicitor of the Mountain Circuit, then embracing nearly all the western part of the State. His unsurpassed zeal and indomitable energy with which he discharged his duties of this responsible position, when the country was swarming with law-breakers, in bringing them to punishment, was indeed a hazardous undertaking. More than once was his life threatened for upholding the majesty of the law. He continued in this office until his death, which occurred in August, 1829. He left quite a large family, who inherited largely their father's talents. His daughter, Catharine, married William J. Alexander, Esq., who was as profound a lawyer as his accomplished father-in-law. Another of his daughters, Miss Roxana, married Dr. P. C. Caldwell, the most distinguished physician in the county. Miss Cousa Wilson, another daughter, who was never married, but partook largely of the intellectual qualities of her father. Of Mr. Wm. J. Alexander's family much could be said of the mental attainments, and of the brilliancy and beauty of the women. Miss Mary Wood Alexander was admired by the most talented young men of the town, but she thought best to remain heart-whole and fancy free, and applied herself to the education of young girls, fitting them to fill useful stations in life. Miss Laura also remained single, and applied her talents on the stage, where she shone brilliantly for a while, but her sun went down when her friends thought she had scarcely reached half way to her meridian. Both sons, William and Joseph, attained honorable positions in the Confederate army, and proved themselves worthy of their parentage. Their father, W. J. Alexander, attained a reputation as a lawyer, but few men ever reach. Early in the latter half of the last century he and his family moved

to Lincoln county, where he remained until he died. His brother, Washington Alexander, also a lawyer, lived here, was well known as an advocate, did much practice in the forties, but did not have the great reputation of his brother Julius.

In 1846, at a gala day in Charlotte, when the town was crowded with negroes, one man was overheard to say: "I believe there are negroes enough here to pay all of Julius Alexander's debts," and some one replied, "I think it doubtful."

JAMES W. OSBORNE.

James W. Osborne began the practice of law about 1830. He was much sought after to take capital cases. It was conceded that if Mr. Osborne could not clear a case of murder, or any other capital case, he must be guilty. Besides his logical powers of reasoning, he was the most eloquent lawyer that ever appeared at the bar in the western part of North Carolina. He was an elder in the Presbyterian Church and often attended church courts, and was by no means a silent member, but took an active part in whatever pertained to the spiritual welfare of the church. He left a record as a jurist that any man might well be proud of. His memory should be cherished by the people of the town and county, and his character emulated by the youth of the State. His widow still lives in the city at a good age, surrounded by her son's family and hosts of friends to cheer her in her declining years.

J. HARVEY WILSON.

Mr. J. Harvey Wilson, another lawyer of eminence, came to the bar about the same time and took a high stand with his brethren, and also with the people.

He came of a lineage that would have pushed to the front