

## Some of the Prominent Citizens in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century.

About the year 1830, Chevalier de Riva Finola, an Italian nobleman, was sent here as the president of a mining company. He was an expert as a mining engineer, but we are at a loss to know how long his stay was protracted, or what success he had. Probably not a dozen men in the county have ever heard his name. While here he lived in the house that was afterwards occupied by Joseph Wilson, the great lawyer and solicitor, and for many years by W. J. Yates, the well-known editor of *The Charlotte Democrat*. Recently the house has been moved back on West Morehead street. Seventy years ago an Italian of royal blood lived in Charlotte, and employed a mulatto barber by the name of Paulidon Brickett, to shave and dress his hair every morning. So the plain people of Mecklenburg had a live prince among them, who moved about in European fashion.

Humphrey, Titus and Edward Bizzell moved to this county probably somewhat later; but Edward Bizzell was mayor of the town for a short time just after the war. They were natives of New York. They came as mining experts, and were very liberal in spending money for the company. They got possession of several large tracts of land, but did not have good titles. What is known as Bizzell's Mill, was one of their places. This mill was in operation before the Revolutionary war, and is where Lord Cornwallis got his grinding done during his short stay in Charlotte. They have gone the way of the world without leaving any posterity to perpetuate the name. In company with them came a man named Penman. He was a native born Englishman, stood well with the nobility, and was sent over here to take charge of some gold mines that were supposed to be very rich, and some of them sustained the character for half a century that was given them; but probably more money was

spent in developing them than they ever yielded their owners.

Penman was a large, red-faced, typical Englishman, and was used to being waited upon. He brought his body servant with him, a man by the name of Goodluck. Every morning the servant would groom his master with as much care as our former slaves would our race horses; then saddle his master's horse and mount his own, riding a respectful distance behind, but near enough to take his master's horse the moment he would light. This was the usual programme. At any rate, this kind of service was kept up for several months. Wherever Penman would turn, Goodluck would have to be on hand to obey every behest.

Mr. David Henderson, a near neighbor, suggested to Goodluck that he was as free as Penman, and he was not obliged to wait on him; in fact, he advised him not to make himself a "nigger" for any man. Goodluck at once quit his employer. James P. Henderson—a distant relative of David Henderson—thought he knew a good thing when he saw it, immediately applied for the vacant place and was accepted, and was duly inducted into the office of 'Squire for the Knight of the Golden Dream around Charlotte. This was an era of gold hunting that has only been rivaled once in fifty years. James P. Henderson was not ashamed to work for money in a legitimate way. This service lasted but a short time. He married a woman of brilliant mental attainments—a daughter of Dr. Matthew Wallace—raised four children far above the average in mental acumen.

Capt. Penman had an associate or fellow helper, by the name of Penworthy, in his mining operations. They were a lively pair, and spent their money most lavishly, not to see how much good they could do, but to see how good a time they could have. It has always been the same old story, that every dollar made by mining, it cost ten dollars to get it.

About 1845, Capt. Penman abandoned mining and set his face towards the ministry, after being converted to the

Methodist faith. He then became a preacher—a winner of souls for the Kingdom of Christ. In the latter part of his life he behaved very civilly and did not need so much waiting on. The two women who lived with him, and whom he passed off as his sisters, are now forgotten, “having neither name nor place” to let those who come after know that they ever occupied a place in the county. Mining for gold was carried on very extensively in the first twenty-five years of the century, but their methods were very crude, and unsatisfactory. Costly machinery was not put in the shafts, as the time for heavy expense had not arrived, for when a profit was not yielded directly, it was considered that much was lost.