



CAPT. JOHN WALKER.

ladies, who lived with their brother-in-law, Dr. David R. Dunlap, and frequently with Brawley Oates, another brother-in-law, who lived in a large lot on the eastern corner of Seventh and Brevard streets. And, by the way, it is said Miss Lilly Lowrie, afterwards Mrs. Oates, was the prettiest woman in Mecklenburg. Mr. Oates was engaged in the office of the County Court Clerk, and took his nephew as a substitute in the office with him, and for several years he worked there and read law. He was not only thoroughly drilled in the science of the law, but was well acquainted with the practical workings of the law. After obtaining his license to practice law, he was taken in partnership by Hon. J. W. Osborne, who was a prince among lawyers. After a few years he took an office by himself, and did not devote himself as assiduously to his practice as his friends desired. He was the peoples' favorite, and his services always in demand. The war came on and he plead his avoirdupois was against his marching. He was too heavy for cavalry service, hence he chose the navy. He was stationed in Charleston harbor, where the duties were light and no marching to do. His legal talents accompanied him to the navy; here he was employed to defend a poor seaman who had stricken an officer. The penalty was death, but he gained an acquittal for his client. Once he wanted a furlough, and he wrote the clerk to know how many cases he was to appear for in the Superior Court. The clerk replied 150 cases; either for or against most every case on the docket. He got his furlough. His opportunities were very great. He outlived his aunts and all of his near kin, yet he was scarce forty when death claimed a most brilliant lawyer, in 1870.

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In any State of the Union, Capt! Walker would have taken a prominent position. Nature had chosen him for a leader of men. He was not a polished man, with a surface education, but he had a strong mind, well balanced, fearless

in contending for what he believed was right. He was one of the most influential citizens of Mecklenburg county. He entered public life in 1840, as a member of the General Assembly of North Carolina. He there drew the attention of the county, by his close attention to business, particularly to the welfare of Mecklenburg. He was sent to the Senate in 1842-'44-'46-'48. Again Senator in 1854, and the last time in 1860. Six times a Senator from this county betokens great popularity. He was given the pet name of "The Great Wheel Horse of Democracy." He was an active Justice of the Peace; was for a long time chairman of the County Court, and was able to dispense justice without so much red tape. He was a good man to have in a neighborhood. He appealed to reason, and prevented many a trivial law suit by a timely word of advice, that otherwise would have engendered a bitterness that would have lasted more than a generation. He understood the common law, and had no hesitation to enforce it, and believed that all—both rich and poor—should be treated alike. He believed in being fair in debate, and he would force his opponent to be fair, or else he would drive him to the wall. He was strictly in his element when he had a "foeman worthy of his steel."

After the war, in the days of reconstruction, he was shorn of his strength. Much of his property was gone; he was placed under the ban; he was not allowed to vote; if he was worth \$20,000, unless he could get a pardon (?) his property would be confiscated. His proud spirit could not brook such treatment. He lived but a short time. Reconstruction laws bore heavily upon him.

It took a man of iron nerves to undergo the so-called reconstruction days. He was elected an elder in Sardis church when but 20 years old. But for the sake of peace and harmony, he, with his son, Rev. James Walker, and several other prominent members, removed their membership to Sharon, where he continued to exercise the office of ruling elder until his death.

Capt. Walker was married three times. First he married