



DR. ISAAC WILSON.

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*(A practitioner of Medicine from 1825 to 1875.)*

The subject of this chapter was a son of Sheriff Wilson, and a nephew of that eminent minister, Rev. John McKamie Wilson, D. D., who was regarded as one of the greatest preachers of his day. Rocky River was his church and home for a number of years. He was so intimately connected with the people of Mecklenburg that no apology is needed for mentioning his name or his greatness. Dr. Isaac Wilson studied medicine under Dr. D. T. Caldwell. He did not have the advantages of attending a medical college, or one of the recent kinds of hospitals, but he gained his knowledge from medical works and bedside experience. His practice covered a large expanse of territory. One day he would start out on the west side, on the next he would go on the east side—so that he was able to see all of his patients once in two days. He carried a very capacious pair of saddlebags, which were replenished every morning with such things as were expected to be needed. One thing in particular was never left out, viz.: his cupping *horn*. Seventy-five years ago it was very fashionable to bleed in all diseases. Dr. Wilson was not noted for bleeding, but if he did not bleed, he always cupped, hence his horn was never forgotten. It was taken from the head of a two-year-old heifer, scraped so thin you could easily see how much blood was drawn. A nice piece of ivory or horn closed the large end, with a few tacks or wire, and the small end with beeswax, punctured with a pin—through this hole the air is sucked out, and with the teeth the wax is made to fill the hole, and the blood is now poured out in sufficient quantity to relieve the patient.

Dr. Wilson was well known in the northwestern half of the county. In those days when physicians were few and far between, their practice was necessarily extensive; and it was common for a doctor not to see his patients oftener than once in two or three days. In 1830, before quinine was

discovered, or had been put on the market, barks (Peruvian) was the great remedy to stop chills with. In virulent cases a "bark jacket" was worn. In many cases grow round (*eupatorium perfoliatum*) a plant growing in marshy places, was extensively used; but we must not suppose the doctor carried all these plants with him, but they could be obtained at almost every house. He was immensely popular, was invited to all the parties, dinings, weddings and entertainments. One hundred years ago a doctor was about on a par with the preacher. Dr. Wilson was a Justice of the Peace, and was often called on to officiate in marriages when the preacher was absent.

Dr. Wilson was married three times. His first wife was a daughter of Wm. B. Alexander—Elizabeth. They had six children. The two youngest—Gilbreth and Thomas—died in the hospital in Richmond, Va., time of the war, 1862. Joseph Mc. and J. A. Wilson have families, and are farming. Their sister, Isabella, of more than ordinary talents, married Mr. Andrew Parks—died a few years ago in Statesville, leaving but three children. Dr. J. M. Wilson, another brother, a polished gentleman, who was well educated, graduated from Davidson in 1853, took a fine stand in class; taught school a short time, studied medicine and graduated in Charleston, S. C., in 1857; did a large and successful practice; was not strong physically, and in 1898 wound up his course, a successful life.

Dr. Isaac Wilson's second wife was Miss Rebecca McLean, a daughter of the revolutionary surgeon, Dr. McLean, who married a daughter of Maj. John Davidson—Mary (or Polly). She had no children. She was a most estimable woman, not of a robust constitution, and lived but a short time. His third wife was a widow by the name of McIntosh, from Alexander county. She was also a lovely woman and adorned the society with which she mingled. The evening of their lives was spent happily together. Having served his generation well, having waited upon the people for half a century, having to call him blessed, at

peace with all men, he laid down the burden of life with a bright hope of happiness in that world beyond the grave. He received a very productive farm from his first wife's father, twelve miles northwest of Charlotte, west of the Atlantic, Tennessee & Ohio Railroad. Here he built and improved the place, and had a most desirable residence. Dr. Wilson lived in the best part of the Nineteenth century. The great wilderness which existed at the beginning of the century, gradually began to give way, houses sprang up, fields were cleared, churches and school houses dotted the face of the county, industry accomplished wonders in the lifetime of one man. Dr. Wilson's life of seventy-five years saw wonderful changes in this county, all tending for the good of the county; best of all the changes, was putting up the stock in pastures, and turning out the fields. Timber was getting scarce as he neared the end of life, and it was meet that we should cut off the expense.

The expense of keeping up miles of fencing and annual repairs, amounted to vast sums of money; and our labor being freed, there was no other way left for the people to do but to keep better stock and less in numbers, and throw our cultivated lands outside. After a few years it gave perfect satisfaction. This grand movement in the march of civilization took place about the time the old doctor finished his course. From 1840 to 1850, the shooting match was common for beef or turkey. In this sport Dr. Wilson often indulged. He was not only an expert with the rifle, but was particularly fond of the sport. At this time the people had not learned how to preserve ice, consequently but a small piece of beef could be taken care of by one family; hence the necessity of having a large number to participate in the match.

Fox hunting was another grand amusement that Dr. Wilson often joined in with great pleasure. He kept a good pack of hounds, and any time in the fall or winter months, when not engaged professionally, he would indulge in the chase. Often he has been seen to lead in the chase, with

half a dozen sportsmen and twenty dogs. When a red fox was raised, the chase was kept up for several hours, as that species are much longer-winded than the grey. With the passing away of Dr. Isaac Wilson, so also the sports he loved so well have been forgotten, remembered only by the older people. The shooting match is now obsolete, and the fox hunting with the winding horn and pack of dogs is an exercise of the past.

WILLIAM MAXWELL, ESQ.

As a general rule, we do not see or appreciate the true worth of our public functionaries until they are removed from the sphere of their usefulness. While the memory of Esquire Maxwell is still fresh in the minds of the people, it is well to rehearse what endeared him to the people of Mecklenburg.

He passed away on the 26th of October, 1890, after having spent a useful life for his family, for the county and for the church. His was a well rounded life, devoted both to church and State.

Esquire Maxwell was in his 82nd year. He was born at what is known as the old Maxwell place, seven miles east of Charlotte, on September 9, 1809. He was the third son of Guy Maxwell, who emigrated to this country from County Tyron, Ireland, in 1795. Esquire Maxwell was twice married. His first wife was Mary E. Johnston, a sister of Nathaniel Johnston. She died a year after her marriage. His second wife was Nancy A. Morris, daughter of Col. Zebulon Morris, who with three children—Col. D. G. Maxwell, W. C. Maxwell, Esq., and Miss Carrie Maxwell, survive him. Esquire Maxwell was long in public life in this county, and his official career was untarnished. He was for a long time a member of the old County Court, and was also its chairman. In 1862, Mr. William K. Reed resigned as clerk of the court and Esquire Maxwell was appointed to fill out his unexpired term. That began Esquire