

Dictionary of North Carolina Biography

Abbot(t), Henry (ca. 1740–May 1791), Baptist minister and revolutionary patriot, was born in London. His father was the Reverend John Abbot, a minor or petty canon of St. Paul's Cathedral and rector of the city church of St. Michael in London. The younger Abbot was baptized in the Anglican church, received a "tolerable" education, and in the 1750s migrated to America "without the consent or knowledge of his parents."

Henry Abbot settled in Camden (until 1777 Pasquotank) County, occupying himself first as a schoolmaster. In 1758 he embraced the General Baptist faith and was baptized by Elder Joseph Parker. Shortly thereafter, however, like many others in his region, Abbot switched from the General to the more Calvinistic Particular Baptists. He was ordained by Elders Charles Daniel and James Gamewell and began a lifelong effort to spread the gospel along the Pasquotank River. From 1758 until about 1764 Abbot was a traveling evangelist and undoubtedly became well known to congregations on both sides of the river. He served briefly as minister for a group at Tar River and in 1764 or 1765 accepted an invitation to become pastor of Shiloh Church in Pasquotank County, following the death of the previous minister, John Burgess.

Organized in 1729, Shiloh was the first permanent Baptist church in North Carolina. Forty years after its founding, Shiloh, with Abbot as pastor, participated in the formation of the historic Kehukee Baptist Association. Within five years, however, a dispute over the association's proper relationship with the Separate Baptists, who had spread south from New England, led to division and gave rise to a fundamental reevaluation of qualifications for church membership. Formerly, a mere desire for baptism was deemed sufficient evidence of salvation, but a new wave of religious fervor produced in many churches a purge of members who by their own admission had been baptized prior to conversion. One who made this confession was the Reverend Henry Abbot, and consequently, Abbot had to be baptized for a third time in about 1779, before his church could be admitted formally to the reformed Kehukee Association.

While distinguishing himself as a minister, Henry Abbot did not ignore political developments within the colonies. During his gubernatorial administration, William Tryon had made no effort to conceal a personal dislike for North Carolina Baptists; when a later governor, Josiah Martin, initiated a conciliatory policy regarding the Regulators, Abbot and another Baptist minister presented the governor with a letter of commendation from the Kehukee Association for his spirit of toleration.

In 1776 Abbot and four other men were chosen to represent Pasquotank County in the provincial congress that met at Halifax and endorsed American independence. At this gathering the minister from

Shiloh Church actively participated in the work of at least four committees, including one delegated to "take into consideration the defence and the state of the Sea coast," another (the Committee of Privileges and Elections) empowered to "send for Persons, Papers and Records" and report to the congress, and a third requested to "devise a more effectual way for apprehending deserters." Undoubtedly one of Abbot's most important contributions came with his service on the committee that drafted a constitution and bill of rights for North Carolina.

Henry Abbot had an interest not only in political guarantees but in religious liberties as well. Under colonial rule only the established church was authorized to perform the marriage ceremony, and this privilege was extended to dissenting sects only after ties with the mother country had been severed. Near the conclusion of the last session of 1776, Abbot, quick to take advantage of the move toward independence, introduced a resolution providing that ministers of all denominations might perform the marriage rite. Although passed in a slightly amended form, this resolution was the forerunner of a state law approved by the legislature some fifteen months later.

During the American Revolution, Abbot served as recruiting officer for Pasquotank County and held a seat on the three-member Salt Commission for Edenton (Port Roanoke). His interest in affairs of state continued after the war. In 1788 he was one of Camden's representatives at the Hillsborough Convention that rejected the proposed United States Constitution and suggested written assurance of certain individual liberties. A year later, when a second convention gathered in Fayetteville, he was again a delegate and voted with the majority to ratify the historic document.

Abbot was a peer of the most learned men in North Carolina. He is generally recognized as author of the nineteenth article of the state constitution, which made formal acknowledgement that "all men have natural and inalienable rights to worship almighty God according to the dictates of their own conscience." Variouslly described as an "elegant gentleman" and "popular idol," Abbot came to exercise an influence hardly equaled by ministers from his area before or since.

At his death he possessed six slaves and resided on a three- or four-hundred-acre estate in Camden County. Between 1766 and 1772, he married Mariam Caroon Lurry Wilson, and although there were no children by this union, Abbot's wife had two sons, William and Thomas, by the first of her two previous marriages. The Reverend Henry Abbot died after a short but "violent" illness and was possibly buried at a now obliterated site on his plantation northeast of Shiloh.

SEE: C. T. Bailey, ed., *North Carolina Baptist Almanac* (1883); Lemuel Burkitt and Jesse Read, *A Concise History of the Kehukee Baptist Association* (1850); Walter Clark, ed.,

State Records of North Carolina, 16 vols. (1886–1907); Maloy Alton Huggins, *A History of North Carolina Baptists, 1727–1932* (1967); *London Daily Advertiser*, 30 Jan. 1744; George Washington Paschal, *History of North Carolina Baptists*, 2 vols. (1930); Jesse Forbes Pugh, *Three Hundred Years along the Pasquotank* (1957); William L. Saunders, ed., *Colonial Records of North Carolina*, 10 vols. (1886–90).

JERRY W. COTTEN

Abbott, Joseph Carter (15 July 1825–8 Oct. 1881), Union general, United States senator, political lobbyist, newspaper editor, and manufacturer, was born a son of Aaron Abbott in Concord, N.H. He had two brothers and six sisters. Upon graduation from Phillips Academy, Andover, Mass., in 1846, Abbott returned to Concord, undertook the study of law, and was admitted to the New Hampshire bar in 1852. While maintaining a law practice at Concord, he served as editor of the *Manchester (N.H.) Daily American* (1851–57) and as editor and owner of the *Boston Atlas and Bee* (1859–61).

Meanwhile, Abbott had become active in the Whig party. Though the party soon disappeared, the Whig ideal of nationalism and concern for economic growth remained with Abbott all his life. With the disintegration of the Whig organization, Abbott joined the short-lived Know Nothing party, which was transformed into the "Fremont clubs" in 1856 and absorbed into the Republican party shortly thereafter. His political activities won for him political appointments: he was adjutant general of the New Hampshire militia (1855–61) and served on the commission that surveyed the boundary between New Hampshire and Canada.

With the outbreak of the Civil War, Abbott dropped all other activities to organize the Seventh Regiment of New Hampshire Volunteers, an achievement that entitled him to serve as its commanding officer with the rank of colonel. He yielded the position, however, to H. S. Putnam, who had more military experience, and served instead as lieutenant colonel and second in command, in Florida and South Carolina. In 1863 Putnam was killed during an attack on Battery Wagner, near Charleston, and Abbott assumed command and the rank of colonel. On 15 Jan. 1865 he was promoted to brigadier general for "gallant and meritorious service" during the federal storming of Fort Fisher.

Abbott also took part in the capture of Wilmington and for more than three months was the commander of the Port of Wilmington. The assignment was a difficult one. Because of the influx of refugees and freed prisoners of war, the population of the city increased two and a half times within a few days of the federal occupation. Food and sanitary facilities were inadequate, and disease broke out. Abbott's wife came to Wilmington to join him and do relief work in the refugee camps but caught typhoid fever and died.

Yet it was in the chaos and misery of postwar Wilmington that Abbott came to the decision that the city would be his permanent home. Perhaps he was influenced by the public recognition given to him and his wife for their work in cleaning up the signs of war. He certainly made many friends at this time. He may also have become aware of exceptional business opportunities then existing in southeastern North Carolina.

For whatever reasons, in September 1865, after being mustered out of the army and settling his business affairs in New England, Abbott returned at the age of forty to Wilmington, which would remain his home for the rest of his life. The financial resources of the former

lawyer and newspaperman went a long way in a region where the money supply had largely vanished with the Confederacy. With business partners, several of whom were also newcomers, he formed the Cape Fear Building Company and bought three thousand acres of pine forest in Bladen County on the Wilmington, Charlotte and Rutherfordton Railroad, fifty miles west of Wilmington. From the throngs of unemployed refugees the partners recruited a work force that eventually numbered 150 and built a sawmill and woodworking plant that produced railroad cars, laths, fence pickets, broom handles, and the parts for prefabricated houses. Some of these products were marketed as far away as Cuba. Abbott and his associates also laid out the town of Abbottsburg.

Even Abbott's enemies would often cheerfully concede that Abbottsburg was perhaps the most promising economic development in southeastern North Carolina. The New Englander's politics were quite a different matter. Elected to the North Carolina Constitutional Convention of 1868, Abbott emerged as one of the most influential delegates present, partly because the convention had been elected in such a way as to exclude most of the established political leadership of antebellum North Carolina. Few of the delegates had any political experience at all. Rare indeed was the delegate who could match the political resources that Abbott brought, with his legal training, newspaper background, and experience of political, military, and business leadership.

But Abbott's influence was not entirely a matter of political know-how. He also had at least \$20,000, contributed by railroad owner George Swepson, which he used to win passage of measures providing for state aid to railroads. Subsequent investigations have shown that much of this money was used for bribes, for which Abbott was roundly condemned by both contemporary newspapers and later historians. Rarely have his critics overlooked his New England origin; and, generally speaking, the corrupting influence of Abbott and other carpetbaggers has attracted more attention than has that of the native-born members of the same lobby.

It is significant, however, that from his own constituency in southeastern North Carolina there has been virtually no condemnation of Abbott for his activities on behalf of the railroads, from either his fellow Republicans or his Democratic opponents. The future prosperity of the area depended so heavily upon completion of the WC&R that both parties took a permissive view of the tactics Abbott used to win appropriations for it. Most people in the section to some degree benefited from his impropriety, though few more than Abbott himself, with his three thousand acres of land along the favored line.

Following the convention Abbott was elected to the legislature which chose him for the United States Senate. He immediately became the chief spokesman for another special interest group, this time the Wilmington port lobby, which, like the WC&R Railroad, was so closely linked to the prosperity and economic development of the region that it enjoyed the local support of both parties. The arguments Abbott presented to the Senate for federally financed harbor improvements were based on carefully researched studies made by engineers and local leaders of the Wilmington area, who were often Democrats. As a result of local bipartisan cooperation to bring about the completion of the WC&R and the improvement of the harbor, both of which owed much to Abbott's efforts,

Although he was baptised at Fries of Fort River Church
 in 1741 he baptised himself Burkhitt.
 was a Unitarian. Paschal, Vol. 1, p. 433

Cause he was apposed to the tax for the support of the Established Church
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 later called Pasquataunk, North Meeting, and, in 1812, and since
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 of Rights of the N. Carolina Constitution. Then when the delegates met
 in Fayetteville in 1788 to consider the proposed Federal Constitution
 Abbott was among them. Another victory was won when the provisions
 of the North Carolina Bill of Rights were put forth as a condi-
 tion precedent to the adoption of the Federal Constitution by N. C.
 Carolina. This was ^{probably the greatest of} Abbott's contributions. But what a contribution it was!
 The Centenary Sermon of the State Convention, Paper of J. Melville Broughton p. 151.

The Centennial Session of the State Convention, Paper of J Melville Broughton p. 151.

From Huggins PC178

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See

Burkett - p. 107

Cathcart, p. 10

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Biog. Cent p 40 r 151 r 181 1788

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NAME: Abbot, Henry, -1791

DATA: sett. Tar River (Granville) N. C., 1761; member Kehukee Assn., 1765;
sett. Shiloh Chh. (Camden), 1765-1791; member, N. C. State convention, 7
times; member, Provincial Contress; Bapt.; d. Camden, N. C., May 1791.

SOURCE: The Colonial Clergy of Virginia, North Carolina and South Carolina
by: Rev. Frederick Lewis Weis

Page: 58

ABBOT, HENRY. "M" . He was the son of John Abbot, the Canon of St. Pauls, London London, England. It appears that he left London because he was opposed to the tax for the support of the Established Church in England. We meet him first about 1765 at Burgess Meeting House, later called Pasquotank., North Meeting, and, in 1812, and since that time, Shiloh. In this year he became the Pastor of Sholoh, succeeding John Burges and in 1771, under his leadership, the Church joined the Kehukee Association which was organized in 1769. Then in 1776, he went as a delegate to the Constitutional Convention. In this meeting he made a plea for, not mere toleration but for absolute religious liberty and for a Free Church in a Free State. His arguments prevailed and these provisions were written into the Bill of Rights of the North Carolina Constitution. Then when the delegates met in Fayetteville in 1788 to consider the proposed Federal Constitution Abbot was among them. Another victory was won when the provisions of the North Carolina Bill of Rights were put forth as a condition precedent to the adoption of the Federal Constitution by North Carolina., This was probably the greatest of Abbots contributions, although in 1771 he baptized Lemuel Burkitt. This, too was a contribution.

Paschal, Vol I, p. 433

The Centennial Session of the State Convention, Paper of J. Melville Broughton p. 151.

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A BIOGRAPHICAL HISTORY OF CAMDEN COUNTY

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Humphries probably passed his last days on the former Griffith Jones plantation, since this tract became known for a period as Humphries' Quarter. However, he also owned a two hundred-acre plantation, which he had purchased from Lodovick Williams "in a place called Gumberry," which is present day Belcross.



• *Preacher and Patriot*

REV. HENRY ABBOTT

ca 1740-1791

DESTINY WAS KIND to the Baptist congregation on the northeast side of the river. The death of their able and beloved young pastor John Burgess, in 1763, seemed an irreparable loss at the moment. In their dejection the members truly felt themselves to be a flock without a shepherd, and they were no doubt discouraged over the prospects of continuing the splendid works which had been wrought under their departed leader. Their thoughts turned to a young man who had dwelt among them not many years since as a schoolteacher and who, having entered the ministry, had recently begun his first pastorate with a congregation at Tar River. He accepted an invitation to succeed Burgess as leader of the vigorous organization on Portohonk Creek, and it is a matter of historical fact that he continued with magnificent consummation the program initiated by his predecessor and brought to this church a prestige and influence it had not known heretofore. Indeed he may be the ablest minister who has served this church during its two hundred and twenty-odd years of existence.

This young man was Henry Abbott, son of the Reverend John Abbott, Canon of St. Paul's Cathedral in London. He was baptized and reared in the faith of the Established Church of England. While still a young man he left home and came to America," without the advice or consent of his parents," and espoused the Baptist beliefs. His was the unusual experience of receiving the rite of baptism three times. As a child he was baptized in the Episcopal Church of his father; again in 1758 when he joined the Baptists of the General Order, whose tenets were Arminian; and finally, about 1779, after he had been preaching for upwards of fifteen years to the Portohonk Creek congre-

gation, who had come to support strongly the principles advocated by the Particular Baptists, their theology being Calvinistic. He seemed to feel this third ceremony necessary in order to allay any suspicion among his members that he might still be affiliated with the General Baptists.

A brief consideration of his participation in the political events of his time will lead to a clearer understanding of his effective contribution as pastor of his church. Meeting in September, 1772, the Kehukee Association expressed formal approval of the conciliatory policy Governor Josiah Martin was showing towards the Regulators, following their defeat in Alamance County. Among those chosen to present a letter expounding approval to the Governor were Henry Abbott and William Burgess. This expression is a matter of significance when it is recalled that more than two-thirds of the militia used by Governor Tryon to crush the Regulators were from the eastern counties where the sentiment of the majority was against the Alamance "rebels." The Kehukee Association was not protesting treatment of fellow Baptists; they were manifesting sympathy for those who were oppressed.

In April, 1776, the first Provincial Congress met in Halifax and authorized the delegates in the Continental Congress "to concur in independence," the first action of this kind taken by any state. The delegates from Pasquotank were Thomas Boyd, Joseph Jones, William Cumming, Dempsey Burgess and Henry Abbott. Abbott was assigned to a Committee "to take into consideration the defense and state of the Sea Coast and render report thereon." When the Provincial Congress assembled again at Halifax in November of that year, the Pasquotank representatives were Henry Abbott, Devotion Davis, Isaac Gregory, Lemuel Sawyer and Dempsey Burgess, four of those being from the northeast or Camden side of the river. Abbott was placed on a Committee of Privileges and Elections and also on another "to devise a more effective way of apprehending deserters." His major assignment, however, was with a "Committee to form, and lay before this House a Bill of Rights, and form of a Constitution for the Government of this state." Though a new man he received this appointment along with a group of the most distinguished citizens in North Carolina. He also laid before the House an ordinance "to regulate the marriages in this State until the next session of Assembly, which was read." This bill as enacted authorized all ministers to perform marriage ceremonies.

The capability of this young Baptist pastor would seem to have been generally recognized, for the Council of State, meeting in New Bern in the late summer and fall of 1777, selected him for two ap-

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pointments. He was named one of the three-member Salt Commission set up for Port Roanoke (Edenton) "to receive such salt as may be sent by the agents into the respective ports." The other assignment seems a singular one for a minister; he was made recruiting officer for Pasquotank. Now Abbott was a resident of Camden County, which had been created during the May just passed, and he was pastor of the largest congregation in that county, though he doubtless had been a frequent visitor to the Knobbs Creek and Flatty Creek Baptist groups over in Pasquotank. Was he requested by Pasquotank officials in order to offset the influence in their own borders of the numerous adherents of the Society of Friends whose tenets opposed military participation? Another citizen who would probably have filled the position was Colonel Isaac Gregory, who had been High Sheriff of Pasquotank for a number of years, but he too lived in the newly made Camden area for which he had also been appointed recruiting officer.

Camden sent five delegates—Henry Abbott, Isaac Gregory, Peter Dauge, Charles Grandy and Enoch Sawyer—to the Convention at Hillsboro in 1788, which body refused to ratify the United States Constitution, but proposed several amendments to be incorporated in a bill of rights. The same representatives from Camden attended the Fayetteville Convention in 1789 when the Constitution was finally ratified.

Tradition credits Abbott with being the author of Article Nineteen of the State Constitution, "That all men have natural and inalienable rights to worship almighty God according to the dictates of their own conscience." The known facts tend to give weight to the assumption. He was a member of both Provincial Congresses held at Halifax and was on the committee which formulated the Bill of Rights. Likewise he was a delegate to the Hillsborough Convention which refused to ratify the constitution but offered some amendements, chief of which was a bill of rights; and he was a member of the Fayetteville Convention which ratified the U. S. Constitution. Walter Clark, editor of the *State Records of North Carolina*, in prefatory remarks signally points out Abbott as a member of the committee which drafted the Bill of Rights. But the most significant evidence would seem to be a casual statement made by Burkitt and Read in "*A Concise History of Kehukee Association*" (1803) and which reads: "to him we owe our thanks, in a measure, for the security of some of our religious rights." This remark becomes more significant when we recall the close relationship between Abbott and Burkitt. Burkitt had been baptized as a young man by the pastor at Portohonk Creek. Weeks, in *Church and State*

in *North Carolina*, refers to the passage from "*A Concise History*," and explains: "Burkitt was a contemporary and an acquaintance of Abbott, and we may assume the statement is substantially correct."

As a pastor, Abbott carried forward, and extended even, the laudable program initiated by William Burgess and his son John. Five churches were organized in Carolina—Sawyers Creek, Coinjock, Yoppim, Knobbs Creek and Flatty Creek—and one—Pungo—in Virginia. In addition to Abbott and the three Burgesses (William, Sr., William, Jr., and John), six ministers were raised in the Camden congregation before 1800. They were Thomas Etheridge, William Lurry, Davis Biggs, Joshua White, David Duncan and Lemuel Burkitt. Burkitt was moderator of the Kehukee Association from 1773 until 1805, and Paschal writes of him: "For the next third of a century he was the most influential man among the Baptists in North Carolina and gave direction and character to Baptist development in the eastern half of the State."

Prior to the Revolution many of the leading planters in the Camden area were members of the Established Church, which lost prestige and membership as a result of the war because of antagonism toward England. The personal qualities of gentle breeding, cosmopolitan background, and strong mind possessed by Abbott, combined with the public regard for him because of his activities in behalf of freedom, served to attract most of the local Episcopal persuasion into membership with his congregation. Under him the "Church in Camden," as Shiloh was then called, emerged to be a dominant factor in the religious, political and social life of the county. One church historian states that the first association held in Camden was in 1783, while Abbott was pastor. He was succeeded upon his death by Davis Biggs.

Shiloh Baptist Church has had many able ministers during its long history, but no others have quite equalled the stature of the great trio: William Burgess, his son John, and Henry Abbott. Which of them was the greatest may be largely an academic question.



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The Baptist Annual Register 1794

(52)

The Rev. HENRY ABBOT,
Camden County, North Carolina.

On Thursday the 26th of April 1792, died the respectable, and Rev. Mr. HENRY ABBOT, of Camden county, North Carolina, son of the Rev. JOHN ABBOT* of St Paul's Church, London. He came over to America very young, without the consent or knowledge of his parents. He first embraced the principles of the *general* Baptists, and was baptized by one of their ministers; afterwards being convinced of his mistake he joined the *particular* Baptists. He was called to the ministry about the year 1762, removed into Camden about 1765, and became pastor of a church in that county, and continued preaching and baptizing until his death. He was orthodox in principles, exemplary in his life and conversation, particularly useful in church discipline, and was very much esteemed by the most respectable persons in the county. He had the honour to be one of the Representatives of the county in State Congress for the formation of the State Constitution; and again in a second Convention for the deliberation on the Federal Constitution; and at last, after a short but violent sickness of five days, he departed this life in peace. His request long before his death was, that if the Rev. Lemuel Burkitt survived him, he should attend his funeral solemnity, which he did; and to a lamenting auditory preached his funeral sermon from 2 Tim. vi. 7, 8. His wife died before him, and he left no child.

Mr. JOHN HALL,

Many years a Deacon of the church at Hamsterly, *Durham*.

THIS good man, son of Henry and Jane Hall, of Hamsterly, was born in the Spring of 1712. His parents being religious characters, and members of the church, brought him up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and habituated him from his infancy to attend upon the public worship of God. Their house was a little sanctuary to which the pious in the village often resorted for friendly conference and social prayer; where ministers were received, and strangers who came up to hear the gospel were often hospitably entertained. Many were the prayers offered to God, both by themselves and others, for the salvation of their children, most of whom died in their youth; and the two that arrived at maturity were called early by the grace of God. John was preserved from ungodliness and worldly

* At his father's death, he was proved to be the son of the Rev. John Abbot in order to receive his legacy.

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lusts, and brought to an end the renovating power of the venerable William, baptized and received into the church about 1732, in the twenty-first year of his age. He lived a life of holiness and piety, and was a faithful witness of the Redeemer's glory and love, and the sweet peace of heaven. He was called to the Deacon's office, which he discharged to the satisfaction of the church, and his edification of his brethren. He was a powerful and pure minister, and his labors did, or obtained more good than all men. The church was a great blessing to him, and he even the wicked and profane, and have been heard to say, "a good man, John Hall." He died on the 26th of April, 1793, after a short illness, and a very acute and painful one, which shook his confidence, and he died on the 26th of April, 1793. His funeral sermon was preached by the Rev. Mr. Burkitt, who introduced, explaining, showing that righteousness was the minister, Rev. Mr. Burkitt, the comparative excellence of the following description of a man's character:—"Perfected to have attained, those, who, in modern times, enumerate his many excellencies the following, and them in an unusual degree, in an unusual degree, in an unusual degree."

"He had a just sense of God, and everlasting importance to himself, and his posterity, and his country, and his world."

"He was peculiarly devoted to the service of Christ, and dwelt richly in the law of his God both day and night, and whatever would hinder

heaven by being baptized. One of the ministers confessed that, if he could find any willing to be baptized, and it was in the night, he would immerse them *by fire-light*, lest they should determine otherwise before morning.

Against this system of baptismal regeneration a few bold spirits maintained a firm and persevering opposition. And among those who contended earnestly for the faith as it was once delivered to the saints, David Barrow was, perhaps, the most intelligent and unyielding. Men were to be baptized, he insisted, not to make them Christians, but because they were already such. The ordinance of baptism, he taught, was designed and commanded as the significant mode by which forgiven believers were publicly to profess allegiance to the King of Zion. The Baptists of North Carolina have reason to be grateful that his teaching and influence was greatly blessed in arresting the tide of error among the churches.

Elder Barrow was a sufferer in the persecutions which came upon the Baptists of his day. Once he was nearly drowned by a party of well-dressed ruffians who interrupted him while he was baptizing.

In 1797 he removed to Kentucky, where he continued his labors until his death, about the year 1814.

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HENRY ABBOTT.

Elder Abbott was the son of the Rev. John Abbott, Canon of St. Paul's, London. He left England while young, without the consent or knowledge of his parents, and came over to America. He had a tolerably good education and was chiefly employed in teaching schools until converted and called to the ministry. He was baptized before he was converted, as he himself after-

wards acknowledged. But it pleased God to reveal His dear Son to his soul and to convince him of the doctrines of Free and Sovereign Grace. He then joined the Regular Baptists and became a minister of the gospel. For a few years he was an itinerant preacher, it being customary among the colonial Baptist churches to ordain ministers distinctively for itinerant or for pastoral work. About the year 1764 he took charge of Camden (now Shiloh) church. It was while he was pastor of this church that he became dissatisfied with his former baptism in unbelief and was rebaptized upon a profession of his faith.

He was a man of strong mind, an earnest lover of the truth, skillful in the exercise of discipline and of good report with them that were without.

He was so highly esteemed and his abilities so generally recognized in his county that he was several times elected a member of State Conventions. He was a member of the Provincial Congress which adopted the State Constitution, and to him is due, in some degree, the security of some of our religious rights. He was also a member of the convention which deliberated upon the adoption of the Federal Constitution.

After many years of usefulness as minister of the gospel and as statesman, he died in May, 1791. Long before his death he had requested Elder Lemuel Burkitt, if he should survive him, to preach his funeral sermon. This he did to a crowded audience from those words which we associate with the death of so many of the Lord's faithful servants,—“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day.”

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Master. In the same wholesome way may it be your passion to please Him. Then when the need comes go to Him at once, direct. Ask for what you need. It is His first will to heal the body as to forgive the sins.

But what about the use of means? Ask Him? He'll tell you. You may be ignorantly abusing your body, or depriving it of something vitally necessary. You may need an expert to help you. Modern cookery and commercialism have robbed our foodstuffs of much nourishment put into them by a thoughtful Creator.

The thing to mark is this: Christ heals today, sometimes through means and skill, sometimes directly without either. Sometimes when the physician frankly confesses that it's beyond him.

And it should be keenly noted that there may be a waiting time. The Book of Job fits in here. The healing Christ is concerned for our spirit health as well as the bodily. Some of us need discipline. There is a distinctly disciplinary use in much bodily suffering.

Some bodily healing is delayed until we intelligently bring our stubborn wills into strong touch with his wise loving will. God has a hard time with some really saintly folks to get them to go his way.

But the outstanding thing to mark is that Christ hasn't changed. He heals today. It is His first will that we should be strong and healthy in spirit and life and body.

ELDER HENRY ABBOT 1702, 14,

By J. T. Alderman

In 1776 a great convention met in Halifax for the purpose of framing a constitution for the State of North Carolina. It was a notable body composed of able and patriotic men. There were Cornelius Harnet, Richard Caswell, Samuel Ashe, Willie Jones (the great commoner of the times), William Hooper, Elisha Battle, David Caldwell, and a hundred others of like intellect and reputation. Henry Abbot was there from Pasquotank County. Who was he? Of what interest can he be to us now?

An old document written at the time gives us what information we have of him.

Henry Abbot was the son of the Rev. John Abbot, Canon of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, London. He left England while young and without the consent or knowledge of his parents and came to America. He was fairly well educated in the schools and social life of London; he was endowed with many of those social amenities which easily gave him the advantage over most of his associates in his new surroundings. We have no means of knowing just what family episode may have caused his departure. It would be easy to fancy and read into the story some thrilling romance; but we must confine ourselves to the facts as we have them.

After coming to the Albemarle section he employed himself for a time in teaching. He soon became very popular in the circle of his acquaintance.

During those years Elder John Burges, a man of superior ability and culture, was pastor of Shiloh Church. Under the preaching of Burges, Henry Abbot was converted and turned to his Bible for guidance in his duty; the result was he joined the Baptist church. This was about the year 1760.

He soon began to exercise his gifts in a public way and the people heard him gladly. As was the custom with ministers in those days, he visited all the churches in that region and preached for them. In 1764 or 1765 he took charge of Shiloh Church in Camden County after Elder Burges resigned the work there. Abbot continued to preach and baptize there until the Revolution.

He was a man of strong mind, very orthodox, well acquainted with church discipline, and of a distinguished character. He was much esteemed by men of influence in the county where he resided, and was very useful as a statesman. He was chosen several times a member of the State Convention to regulate public affairs. He was a member of the Provisional Congress which framed the constitution for the State and to him we owe our thanks, in a measure, for the security of some of our religious rights. He was also a member of the convention elected to consider the adoption of the Federal Constitution in 1788; he was elected to that position by a greater number of votes than any other man in the county received.

In the convention for framing a constitution for the State Abbot, Battle, Burges, and the other Baptist members cast their votes and used their personal influence along with Willie Jones to secure popular rights for all the people and that this assurance must be written into the organic law. There were two schools of political thought among the members, one party was mak-

ing an effort to give an aristocratic turn to the constitution shaping it after English class gradation; the other led by Willie Jones was for establishing popular rights for all the people alike. Some compromises were made but in the main the constitution was favorable to popular rights.

When the Federal constitution was pending in the convention of 1788, the Baptists were present in good force; Abbot and Lancaster were among the speakers, Battle was presiding when the body declined to ratify the proposed Federal constitution until certain amendments which were specified and formulated should be added. It is reported that Henry Abbot voted with the minority in this case.

After his services in these conventions Elder Abbot devoted his time and energy to the ministry among the churches. He continued preaching and baptizing during the years until his death.

The influence of Abbot as a scholarly and otherwise highly cultured man was felt after he had passed away. The old Chowan Association which was formed a few years later has always been the home of culture and a high type of Christian living.

Elder Lemuel Burkitt who preached his funeral sermon relates that Abbot was much interested in reading books of a serious character, especially the Bible and a book entitled "Pious Memorials," which contained the story of the life and death of many eminent saints. He left great impress for good in the times in which he lived. A ripe scholar, an earnest Christian minister, an honored public servant.

He died in May, 1791.