

Brief Sketch of Cleveland County, North Carolina

by

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Cleveland is a comparatively new county. It was formed in the year 1841 from the old counties of Rutherford and Lincoln. It is bounded on the south by the state of South Carolina and joins Gaston, Lincoln, and Rutherford counties. The northern extremity touches Burke, and it contains 275,000 acres of land.

The county was named in honor of Colonel Benjamin Cleveland, who was one of the revolutionary heroes engaged in the decisive battle of Kings Mountain, which was fought just across the line in South Carolina. The soldiers in this battle, coming chiefly from western North Carolina, marched directly through the county now known as Cleveland and engaged the forces of Colonel Ferguson only 13 miles from the spot where the county seat is now situated in Shelby.

Shelby, the county seat, takes its name from Colonel Shelby another one of the famous King's Mountain commanders. It is asserted upon uncertain authority that Grover Cleveland is a descendant of the same family, though we doubt whether we have a right to claim kinship as the "greatest American citizen." Mr. Cleveland, in a letter to a prominent NC paper, said that he did not belong to the family of Benjamin.

The county belongs to the great Piedmont belt of the state and the soil, of course, is principally a clay. It is watered, however, by the two broad rivers and several large creeks along which is situated thousands of acres of the richest alluvial bottoms to be found in any old coast states. One of these creeks, Buffalo, is particularly noted for the large quantity and wonderful fertility of its bottoms. This remarkable stream has its source at the foot of South Mountain in the extreme north and forms the entire length of the county 25 miles. For 20 miles it will average 100 acres of lowlands to the mile. The surface is hilly in the northern part of the county and rolling in the middle and southern

sections.

Everything that grows in North Carolina can be grown in Cleveland, except rice, with more or less profit. The soil and climate is admirably adapted to a large variety of crops, as the statistics for the staples will readily show. The most valued product—I mean the one whose total (*foots*) up (*more*) money— is at present cotton.

The forest lands comprise at least 65% of the area and every vegetable found on the plate, except the coast growth, is to be found here.

The manufacturing industries of the county are as yet in their infancy. Still, the people show that they are not unmindful of the importance of this branch of the world's market. Eight cotton meals are now here.

Among the valuable minerals found in the county are iron, silver, gold, copper, tin, plumbago, carborundum, tourmaline, garnet, amethyst, kaolin, and easily and most important is mica and monazite.

Cleveland County justly prides herself on her excellent school facilities.

The press is represented by the by two branches in Shelby, *The Cleveland Star*, and *The Shelby Aurora*.

Wealth is distributed with remarkable equality in Cleveland. Everybody has something; there are no very rich people and no very poor ones.

The people of Cleveland County date their ancestry from England, Scotland and the German and Dutch countries of Europe. The Dutch element is exceedingly strong and evinces itself in the fact that everybody in the country knows how to make and to eat Teuton's great dish— sauerkraut. They are a conservative, peaceful and law abiding people. And in the times that try men's souls, whether in chivalric war or in the gentler, but trying times of peace where dread pestilence sweeps any part of our land, calling for sympathy. The sacrifice of money or life they are never found wanting.

Four religious denominations comprise all the believers of the land, the Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, and Episcopalians. The people are remarkable for their church going qualities. They all go to church, saints and sinners go rain or shine with a faithfulness and regularity that is simply wonderful to the unorthodox.

Politically the county is decided by democratic. The people do not take as much interest in politics as in some other sections, which doubtless arises from the fact that it is so one sided. Every man is allowed to profess any political creed that may seem best to himself without molestation by anyone.

No charge of fraud has ever been made against the people, even by the most enthusiastic political liars.

Cleveland is a great summer resort situated under the shadow of the blue ridge and constantly refreshed by the cool breezes from its lofty summits. Its hotels are always filled during the summer by the health and pleasure seekers from the eastern part of the state.

There are four sulfur springs in the county. The largest and most important of these is situated a mile and a quarter from Shelby and is called Cleveland Springs. Five kinds of water are to be found on the premises—freestone, chalybeate, iron, red sulfur, and white sulfur.

Cleveland County is connected with the outer world by splendid railroad facilities. The farms are in a most flourishing condition. The area in Cleveland is 420 miles. The population 25,078. The RFDs are all over the county, also railroads, telegraphs, and telephone systems and express companies. A hearty welcome given to strangers who (*visits*) our own Cleveland County.