


# DR. S. MILLINGTON MILLER AND THE MECKLENBURG DECLARATION 

By<br>A. S. SALLEY,$~ J r .$,<br>ANI)<br>HOORTHINGTON C. FORD

REPRINTED FROM THE

## Gmeriam fistorical deniew

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# DR．S．MILLIAGTON MII．LER ANH THE MECKLENPURG DECTAR．1やすか 

［Jx the exposure of Dr．Ailler＇s interesting falmication there have been two marked stages．In the perion from the time of its pub－ lication on Decomber 30,1005 ，the leading fart in the attack was taken by Mr．A．S．Salley．Jr．．Secretary of the Ifistorical Commin－ sion of South Carolina，who assailed it in the Columbia State of Iuly $3^{\circ}$ ，and in the pamphet mentioned below．From December 30 on，in conserpence of Ir．Miller＇s exlibition of his document on that day the leading part maturalls fell to Mr．Worthington C． Fort，Chief of the Division of Manuscripts in the Lihrary of Con－ grese At the request of the managing editor，these two gentlemen have kindly fumished the Revew with accomts of the first and scond acts of the comedy respectively．The ancient question of the Mecklenburg Declaration，it is perhaps needless to say．remains where it stool before，exeept that Ior．Miller＇s efforts have resulted in awakening renewed interest in it and in eliciting some new bits of evidence．Our thanks are due to the chitor of Collier＇s for per－ mission to reproduce the original photogaph first printed in their pages（plate 1．，post）${ }^{1}$ ；to Mr．Salley for plate It．；the the anthorities of the Public Record Uffice，Messrs．I：F．Stevens an！lirown of London，and Mr．Alexander Graham of Charlotte．North Carolina． for plates int．and in．－En．］

## I．

Os April 30，18w，the Raloish Register and North Carolina Gasctfe．${ }^{2}$ of Raleigh，North Carolina，published a set of resolutions that were alleged to have been passed in Mecklenlorgs Combtr： North Carolina，by a comention，on May 20，1755，and that had been rewritten from memory by John Nckinit ．Nexanter，terming them a＂Declaration of Independence＂．A controwersy wer their gennineness was immediately started and has never ended．The latest attempt to prove them gemme was made by $" S$ ．Aillineston Miller，MI．D．＂in an article on the Mecklenburg＂I lectaration＂ which he contributed to the isane of Colliers for July i，Inos．It Wa－an datmate lat vain attempt to deceise the public ley a fac－

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manmfacturer combed the mumber of wecks, not the momber of Fridays (melnsive) and momerel his paper wrong. Ite numbered it 24. It shomblate been 25 to hase the romed mumber of Fridars. Dut the history of the Cape-Far I/erotry shows that it
 to June 2. $1 / 75$. The folloning extract form the jumat of the Wimingen Committe of satety for Jamary . 30 . 575.5 shows that the paper hat sugnembel publication at sume time prior the the latter late:

 ... Would suphert him wh the following termos: That he. Mr. hind should wedky continue at newapler, demminated the (:il" bear
 the small fica on hag permer letter. and in return reveive his payment at the following periouls, wat: whilling at the delivery of the forst
 after.'
 as to mont whers. that there ate five ofpics , if the cape-forer der-


 1755 accorl with this in dating amd manluring. All five ate of two columens to the pare, not three

Fint the wong , late and the wrons number are not the only evidences of spurasmero on the face of the facsimile of this paper. There are baree distinct shales to the paper, markel by clearly defined lines, showing that the cut was mate from a photograph of at least three distinct and separate piemes of paper put lugether. The bealing muloubtedy came from a gemine Cape-Fen Wercury. lout not ane of "June 3 Ma, $17-5^{\circ}$. A comparison of the cht of the senuine paper in the Imerian Xitiquarim Society's library (plate
 that the latter bears exactly the same stains, specks, bypsraphical defects, cte., as the former, and that the heading of this spurious paper is in fact an alteral cons of the gomine one. For instances: the right upper hom of the liftle ornament over the parembesis. before "Fritaty" is buken ,ff in hath; just to the risht of the same pratentleses is a sucek that appears on both cuts: just under the " $F$ " is amother: inside of the " $L^{+}$" in " Mereury" is another;


and wan all over the headins. Some apparent effort has been made to remuse the larger stains from the altered cops, with the result that the alteral cops is blurred or scrathed at every single point where these stains show up clearly in the menanged cops. It is well known to several people in Worcester that S. AIillington Miller was in Worcester a short time before this article appeared in Collier's and that he visited the library of the American Antiquarian Society. and it is atso known that the Societys cops of the Cape-Fear Merarry was phographed for him prior to the appeatance of his atticle in Colliors. The following letter will throw some light on the matter:
 Office of the First Vice-President
Mr. A. S. Salley, Worcenter, Mass. Xies. is. 1905 Columbia, S. C.
My Dear Sir:-
Four inmury of the ith inat, to haml. I fill make a Chy of the Cape Fear Murcury for S. Millingtom Mitler, but for some reaton the wanted a reverse negative makle-and in doing this there might have leen a slight deviation from the exact size ${ }^{2}$, bat in your cope I fed quite sure that the dimensions are exactly the size of the original, as I was very particular ahout the size. I thank you for giving me or. for the colle in your reproluction.

Very truly yours.
I. Chester Bushmig;

No. 6 Elin St.
The meta! in the clectrondate loaneal the writer ior his pamplet by Collier's shows up brighter where the erasures were made on Mr. lanhong's photugraplar onegative. The next photograph and the equally faithful half-tome made therefrom and the electroplate malle from that all preserve the truth quite plainls.

That the date of the semine paper was altered for the reproduction is quite evident. "June $z^{2} n$ " is not in the usual type used for printing the montls in the . Merory's late-line: it is not in the same type as "November 24 " in the gentine paper. The "J" and "une" are not in the same relative proportion as the " N " and "ovember". The "ki," is in small capitals, which were seldom or never used in date albreviations in the body of a newspaper then and are net used now-always lower-case letters-and it was not the style of the Cape-Far Meremy to use figures followed by "rd" or "th" in the date-line; a comma was all that was used, but the

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## S. M. Millir amt the Micklenturs Mecharathon 55-

" R1," in small capitals appear h lo lave lecen uned in this case to fill
 actly the same positimo wh this porer that they do on the Antiguarian
 wombleate an ankwan yate which the " kl" " in small caphats,
 besiles, the apmaname of the chectroplate imbicates that a change wa- mate on the wiginal photuraph on the newative the eof beme being temmateal. This docs mot show in the print ats it dens on the electroplate male from preving repolactims. The " 25 " in
 ant the " 2 " in " 204" is in a lifferent type irnm the " " " and the " $\mathrm{t}^{\prime}$.

Incther significant fact in that the coples af the cape-Fear Mor-
 the roval arms of Great liritain and the Latin moto that appear on the healing of the paper issued in $I-(n)$ that is in the library of the American Antipuarian Society. The same types were used for the title, howerer.

Again, the types in the first tho colmme apmendel th this heading are different. The woe of the Jecktemburg " Declaration" in the first chamen are apparenty mondent tye and are smaller and trimmer than the 19 pe of the second whme, which are the chansylomking type of the kewhtionar! perinl. The secon! column was apparent taken from a paper publishel just after the lexingtom and Conema fiehts, in April. 1875 giving the casmalties of those fights. The small pioce of this collumb perement in the out in Colliers is exactly-punctuation athl all-bike the acon mint of the fishts published in Nmon's Rememboner. lint the names are in italics in the Remembrancor, and its acombut was dmbless ompact from an earlier paper and it was polshly from that carlice paper that \liller cut the acomont and used the first if it to fill up his first column behw his Xecktubnts " Dechation" and continuel it on his secomd colum. Ite are uninformel as to what constituted his
 graph all lout the hearling, the " Declaration "and four lines of its alleged list of signers. amo the small piece of the second column shown in the cut. Another striking coincidence is that when Miller was in Charlote in the spring of 1005 he was shown a cofer of Almon's Remembromor containing this account of the Coneord and Lexingtom fights, and trical to haty it.

The first column. Whirh contains only the first three of the five resolves of the alleged Mecklenharg" Declaration" of llay 20 , with
the names appomded of the chamman. sectetary, and others of the alleged mombers of the convention. Was evidently set up for the especial purpose of making this very collum, and was then printed off on a well " doctored" picce of paper. It was set in modern type. and as the font evidently containal no old-fashioned long " s " ( which resembles an " $f$ ") a mulern " $f$ " was used in lien thereof. The difference is apparent. The bar at right ansles to the perpendicular extents from the left acros to the right of the perpendicular in the " f " ; it stops at the perpendicular of the old-style "s." This alleged contemperary pint of the Xecklenburg" Declaration" faithfully follws: in capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and the arrangement of the names of the athered signers of the " Declaration" (save that the lines of the Chairman and the Secretary are reversed, while they retain their proper positions on those lines) a broadside printed in Ioscph Johmon's Traditions and Reminisconces of the Recolution in 1851, which did not pretend to be a copy from the uriginal "Declaration", but is now known to be a copy of another broadsite of the "Declaration", manufacturet alont 1825 , and presenting a list of the alleged signers. Ar. Alexander's memory could not possibly have licen so accurate as to have enabled him to remember the very spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and arrangement of a paper he hat not seen in many years: and it is alon a significant fact that when Miller was in Charlote in the spring of mos he was presented with one of these bradsides.

These several pices of paper were placel in juxtaposition and photegraphet, and the first and secomel columms were not so placed as to make their perpendioular lines of type exactly parallel.

If the enntroversy wer the Xecklenburg " Declaration of Independence" is ever settleal, it will have to be done benuine contemperary hocments and not be spurins ones like this.
A. S. Silley, Jr.

## II.

Liswis asked hy a member of the North Carolina I listorical Commissinn to wive my onimion of the Cape-Far Marary of June 3 . 155. Which Dr. S. Millington Jiller was holding for sale, I went to Faltimote on the moning of December 30 moter an arrangement with the ihree sentlemen representing Xorth Carolina, namely. Dr. Gemge IV. Graham, Mr. Aexander (iraham, and M1r. R. O. Alexander. Under a phea of an important engagement Miller left the city before I arrived, but agreed io " endeaver to secure " my opinion " hy a direct witten regnest upon hinn |me] within five days of this date." The commitue reported that Niller showed to them a two-
colmmed paper that reproducel in Colliers beins ond of three columms, se plate I. a, and specified that the word "Malfore" Wan printen! in the thisd line from the top of the secome colmmen in Miller's shoct, wherea the callior facsimile sate the secom syllalale of the watl. "ford", as the first werl of the secomil colmom. Further, to Mr. Wahm G. Lectand, whe accmanaich me to Fallimore, and who bas shown ateon and intelligent interest in the subject, the commiter gave definite pints ann the water-mark of the paper, the repaits men it, and the sencral apearance of the shect, which fumel the basson ofuestinns to Dr. Miller in my talks with him.
(G) Decenber 30, Wr. Xibler wrote that he womblace ane ane of there dars be namel, and I at moe mamed Friday, Jamary 5. I Was with him for an hour am a half on Vibilay and mearly two hours and a half on Saturday. with his C'opr-Four heromy before me. Ay questions were all framel with an ifla to show how and when he obtamed this paper. I was obliged to conclude that bis statements are entirely mediable, ant that he was offering a paper which he knew to be a forgery, and of which he was presmathy the forger. The mont puzzling feature in the matter. howerer, lay in the defmite statement of the three gentlemen from North Carolina that he shawel them in Paltimore a two-chmmed paper. It was a threecoltmmet paper that I saw, and the water-mark, the repairs, and the location of the wond "Menfore" all correspomed to what the committer saw. Ever if they hat trikd Xiller what points they thus especially moted, aml they assure me that they dil mot, it was a phrsical imposibility for him to have manfacturel a mow shet in the interval of five days, with like peints. Inasmuch as Miller in all probalitity hal taken the cons of the Cape-Few Merowry at Worcester (plate (1.) as his mokel (a threc-cohmmed paper), there was moreason for his sumbiting a two-colmmed shcet. The committee

 may have comfused their impressims of what they did see. In justice th then it may le sail that all thee reiterated the statement of a two-chumed paper in Jifler's bants when lex telegraph I called attention to the discrepance.

I repeat the description of the paper iteelf which I made to the North Carnlina Commiosion:

length whal\} not vary irnm week th week so much as would the sheet iif proper. The sheet was an entire sheet without wire-marks, hut did have a wator-mark toward the top and lying alnot half-way lectween the two site enges of the sheet. This water-mark is of a lozenge shape with crown, fleur-de-lis, and spear or armw shat, without letters or figures. The paper was thimer than was manally employed in newspaper wark of that day, and had lien folded twice, ance lengthwise and once across. These folls had weakened the pater so as to call for mending. This repair work comsists of two striph of tissuc-paper Fasted alme the follo, and a third one on the right-hand in outer edge of the paper where signs of wear were ahtions. The left or imner edge had the appearance of having lueen taken from a bound whme. and was ragged, with a temfency to be uniformly wron on the upper and lower halves. The type-line was not hroken or injured, shawing little hevond the effect of a fold. The repair work had been dome by Dr. Miller himself. The ink was fair in appearance, the impresion not rough enough for an example of methom press (hand) work of that time. not black enough for a goon example. The columns were not crovidel hut were spaced and made-up fair. Altogether it is a paper which is a really fine specimen of the forger's art, and well calculated to pass for a genume issue of the printing press of that das. I lay no stress ${ }^{2}$ on the spots or discolntation which appear on the sincet, as they belong to the most vulgar firncesses of the imitator's art; but would add that Dr. Niller is well-informed of the effects produced in ink aml paper ly certain chemical tratment.

Some of the infumation whent by mas as follows:
I. In Collier's Alillicr states that the Morcury was "disenvered amons some papers of Sndrew Stevenson, UT. S. Minister to the Convt uf St. Janes's". He told me that, more than a year before, he hat luotyht abont two or three thousand of the papers of Andrew Stevensm, anons which were only two or three letters of Stevenson himedf. Tn me of these he found the Merowy folded. This particular letter was written bey Stermsom in Febrnary, 1837, to "P. P. Thatcher, now at Prighton". It had been opench by another Thather and returnel to Stevenom at Lombon. No mention of a newspaper was given in the letter, and the word which Miller read as "newspaper" was "permission". Inasmuch as it was not until August. 1837, that Stevenson saw the papers in the Public Record Office, this letter could have no commection, direct or indirect, with the alleged Morary of June 3. Miller afterward denied that he had purchased the papers of Andrew Stevenson, but said that he had obtained a collection of two or three thousand antostaphs. some four or fire Sterenson letters loing among them. In one of these the Merenty was fomm. Ss he had indicated the stains on the lecrenry Which hat come from the seal of this particular Stevenson letter, he still maintained that the paper had been found with it. But other

[^2]evilence prowed bequal any question that the ere could have been no p"salde combection letween the tw..
 the Ancricaln Sntiquarian Sockety at Worcenter. He did try, he said, to dhain a meative, lout it came to him homen, and be returned it at mace, withont taking an impersoin. biy the contesy of Ilr. J. Chester linshong. of Torcester, who made thas nesative. I kam that "it was returned to me beden in many pieces. lout I harl mo information from Xe Miller ar wits leing rereived by him in that condition. (on the contrary his letter station and complaninse that the phate wan not exact size ant that he wat compelled to have it rephweraphal. for whel expence he tow the liberty th deduct from my lill. woml I think very mach watralict his statement to yon."
liefore parsing from the e two prints 1 may ald that to Colliors

 wouk. Thes are many homerel mike away at present, atho of hepe


 size) but were forcel to make several smatler nesative athe pice them tosether." Why dild Niller, who hat fomm the Jerary in Stevensmis parers mene than "a year aso" and therefore six months before his Jetter to Colliers. state that he dind mot wow it? and Whe if he hat it in his poscosion, did he find it necesary to have it
 Miller materel the nesative abona Xay 15 . it was sent to him about
 lettern wif Niller the the has rapher hate been destroned, but these dater, eiven indeperdently wing suseention from me. correspend with sufficient chomens to that of the letter te. Colliors to carry onviction.

In this same letter to Collier's he began ley saying: "I hatme wh herewith the (Proclamation of bov. Montfort Stokes (origimal) and a reduced print of the first pase of the Cape Fear Meromry fors Jume 3rd. 1725." So that on that date he dis] have a "reduced "photograph of a llerous (presumally made lye the of the Woreester photosraph) amd he speaks of a " first fage" as though the we were other pages to this issue. Is stated, the paper shown to me was a single sheet printed only on one suble.
A. Xiller showed a good knowlenter of the chemistry of producing hots, oh ink-stans, and paper diconorations-tno good a knowl-
edge to be entirely safe, as it must be almitted that his Mercury as such is an excellent bit of mannfacture.
4. He had obtained from Dr. Graham a colr of the broadside which was printel in facsimike in Johnsm's Truditions and Reminisconces, the wording of which and its list of siguers are those of his Morcury. It lialtimore he stated voluntarily that he lad "lost" this paper. To Collior's in June he described it as in his possession, and to me he showerl it framed.
5. He described a package of papers bearing upon the Mecklenburg Declaration which, thongh boxet, had been stalen from a storage warelonse. Among these papers was the letter from John Adans to Jefferson reporluced in Collier's, and there stated to have ance been in the prossession of Hon. Jefferson Al. Levy, who sold it. The letter is, of course, not an Alams antograph (for the original is in the Library of Congress). Int a contemperary cony or a later manufacture: and Mr. Levy writes: " 1 have not seen the Jefferson letter [i.c.. Telams to Iefferson] therein referred to and regret very much to saty an not the owner of it. Ilat I been, no ne in the word could have bousht it."
6. The internal evidence is also against its anthenticity. The paper contains the sh-called Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence; the list of the killet and wommed at Lexington, Mass., the news being dated Salem, May $25 .|1755|$ (the word "Medford" appears in the third line from the top of the second column) ; some news items from Jhiladelphia, dated May 5 ; an item on the New Jersey Assembly: and a resolntion of the Continental Congress at Ihilarlelphia, May 15 , on the attitude to be taken loy the good people of New York toward the British tronps. This resolution is headed New York. It is langerous to mulertake to explain the vagaries of a colonial newspaper, Dut the contents become important, as Dr. Miller secks to explain any difference that may exist between this Cope-Four Merotry and any other issue of the same paper by claming this issue of Jume 3 , 175.5 to be a "supplement" to the regular issue of the paper. The explanation thus put forward must be rejectal. There is mothing except the Mecklenburg Declaration and the list of killed and wombed at Lexington to demand a supplement, and the colums would have been spaced ont he advertisements, and not with regular news items. A paragraph from Philadyhiai announces the arrival of the "worthy Dr. Renjamin Dranklin" and his election to represent Pemsylvania in the Contimental Comgress. Another states that mofficial list of the British lussat lexingtom had been pullished. These two items are assigned th) Phimktphia. May 5. Franklin did land on the fifth, and he was

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\text { S. M. Milker and the Meiklinhors Meikeration } 553
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chesen the the Contincutal fongres on the moming of the sixth. The I'hiladedna paper (I'mustionnia Jommal) of Nay 10 annonnced the arrival of franklin. hat make momention then on thereafter, so far as I have lisconerel, wh thectim to Congress. The
 phat atrs. of Alay 5. Lut mate nomention of his dection. The same issue save the list of pronincial los at Lexington. Lut the rembe of the Continental Congres of Jay is was mot printerl is the
 in the Lape-Fear Mocoury. It in hificult to explan why thin resolve should lave travelled so much more raphly than the mone impornut liet of los at Lexinstom. The two item may be comparal in their travels through the pres.
"Lors at Lexington ": startal at Wincenter Xlay $3:$ appeated in

"Congresa Remolve" : tartal from Xew Yom Jlay in' : appearel



The official list of liriti-h killew, wombed, and miosing wat frinted in the Pomsyliank, foumul of May Io, yet the Cupe-Fora Wowny says monch list had been publishet. It requied aparcatly two full weks to set the Franklin and I exingtom items from
 appeated at XVilliamshers and in the Morory on the same day. The Aforory camot be a sumbement, and on its face it is mot a resular issue.




[^0]:    ${ }^{1}$ We resret to find that the reduction in ize has entandel some luse of clearness．
    ${ }^{2}$ On file in the Litirary of Congress

[^1]:    
    *Mr. F. M. Barton, the litrarian of the American Antipuatian Society, confirms Mr. Dushong. The writer has a letter from him stating that the photograph made ly Mr. linalom, for the writer was mate the exact size of the phor. namely, 㮩 by $1 z^{i}$.

[^2]:    ${ }^{1}$ I. A. in characterizing the forgery as well exectote
    

