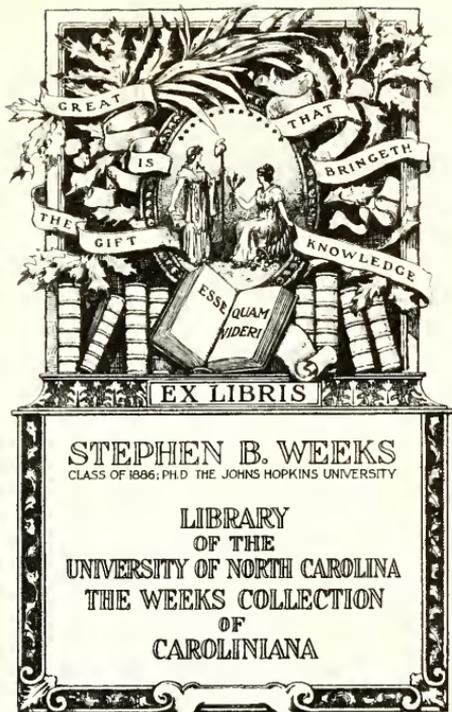


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Mrs Kerenthappuch Turner

Bradshaw



MRS. KERENHAPPUCH TURNER.

A Heroine of 1776.

AN ADDRESS

BY

G. S. BRADSHAW, ESQ.,

On occasion of the Unveiling of a Monument
to Her Memory, at the Guilford Battle
Ground, July 4th, 1902.

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MRS. KERENHAPPUCH TURNER.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen:

It has been truly said that a people is poor who have no days to celebrate and a people is rich whose history is full of heroic days. The history of North Carolina, glorious as it is, in its recital of heroic virtue and brave deeds, tells us of no day more lustrous than that we celebrate today—"the supreme moment in the life of Cornwallis and the crisis in the Revolution," when the fatal wound was given to royal authority from which it lingered and lingering died seven months thereafter at Yorktown. I rejoice and exult with you over the fact that today our annual pilgrimage to this historic spot hallowed scarcely more by the memories of the brave deeds of the dead heroes who made it famous than by the patriotic and unselfish efforts of the few who have been dutifully engaged in the pious work of preserving and perpetuating its name and fame is under auspices most delightful and inspiring.

Who on this bright, cloudless day, filled with God's own sunshine, can look without a sense of delight upon this magnificent Park, with its charming groves of stately oaks, its waving grain, its beautiful flowers, its lovely lake, its cool springs, its green meadows and its sacred acres of hill and vale? Who on this anniversary of the birthday of our Republic in the presence of this multitude of God's own people, moved by patriotic impulse to keep it holy, can behold without a thrill of inspiration these splendid monuments and these beautiful memorial stones erected to tell us and those after us of self-sacrifice, noble deeds and heroic virtues? Who that looks upon this sacred spot and recalls its deathless record, reclaimed as it is, beautified and decorated with these imposing

memorials, is not moved to uncover in presence of Judge Schenck and Maj. Morehead, who have led at untold sacrifice in the great work here accomplished? This audience needs not to be told of the great work of Judge Schenck, who first secured for the Battle Ground Association lodgement in the public attention of this State and successfully invoked the aid of our State Legislature. Nor does it need to be reminded of the strenuous efforts of Maj. Morehead throughout these years and that as the acting President of this Association for some years past has succeeded in securing for it a surer and more exalted place in the patriotic love of the people of this State.

We may rejoice today over another fact and for another reason. Not only does this Company or Association occupy a higher and safer place in the affections of our own people and under the fostering and continuing care of state legislation than ever before, but through the vigilance and diligence of President Morehead and our representatives of all parties in Congress, the favoring eye and the fostering hand of the National Government have been attracted as never before. More prominently and favorably than ever before does our Company stand in the esteem of Congress and the people of all sections of this great country as is illustrated by the action of the present House of Representatives in voting two monuments to Generals Nash and Davidson because of what has been done here and because of the avowed declaration that they should be located here. This is as it should be, for does not its history and every memory attaching to it belong to our whole country? I am persuaded that if Congress and the whole country could see with their own eyes what we behold today with ours, these nineteen monuments and the great work here accomplished by individual effort in preserving and caring for this great battle field on which was fought the *critical*, the *turning* and the *greatest* battle of the Revolution—that battle which meant so much and was the means of

securing so much not only for our forefathers but for all succeeding generations, no Congress would refuse or hesitate in extending the fostering hand of the national Government in aid of its permanent preservation.

But this patriotic Company is not waiting for outside help, badly as it needs it. We are here today to witness again further evidence of its self-sacrifice and labor of love. Yonder stand—hidden as yet from your view—two more monuments which we are met to dedicate and unveil to-day and which shall stand through coming time to tell you and yours and those who shall come after you of the virtues of a brave, good woman, and the story of a great man. The story of this great man, Nathaniel Macon, you have just heard from the eloquent gentleman (Mr. Pittman) who preceded me. It is for me to tell you something of the brave woman in honor of whose memory we today unveil on this sacred spot the first monument ever erected on American soil to a Revolutionary heroine. In song and in story—"in thoughts that breathe and in words that burn"—have been told again and again the story of the virtues, the brave deeds, the sacrifice, the suffering and the heroism of the men who fought, bled and died in that terrible war for Independence, but the story of the privation, the suffering, the daring and the dying of *the grand reserve army* of that war is yet untold and unsung. The women by their lonely hearthstones surrounded by helpless children in the primeval forests, without mail or telegraph or Railroad to bring them tidings of the absent loved ones—their griefs, their sorrow, their suspense, their anxiety, their agony—their death borne without a murmur. They died not in the exciting and exulting rush of battle. Theirs was the long, slow, wasting, lingering death—a thousand deaths. Sometimes it was coldblooded murder; sometimes it was the cold, piercing cutting dagger of helpless grief and sometimes they fell under the crushing burden of domestic care and trouble. Their battles were fought in the

darkness and loneliness and silence of their homes. They heard not the martial music which thrilled heroes; they felt not the elbow touch which heroes feel in the mad rush of battle. There was never a shout or cheer to give them courage and strength. There were no medals awarded to them; no promotions were bestowed to stimulate them. Theirs was a lonely march to death. and yet how bravely and how patiently they fought to the end no tongue or pen can ever tell. These were heroines—and whilst in village, hamlet, town and city, from ocean to ocean, we have with stone and brass built memorials of every name, size and kind in honor of our heroes, the mothers, the wives and the daughters of that awful time who toiled and suffered and died for their country are unwept, unhonored and unsung. Not only did they suffer and fight and toil thus in their lonely and desolate homes, but these ministers of compassion, these angels of pity, whenever possible, went to the battle fields to moisten the parched tongues, to bind the ghastly wounds, and to soothe the parting agonies alike of friend and foe, and to catch the last whispered messages of love from dying lips. Not since Aaron stood between the living and the dead has there ever been a ministry so gracious, so patient, so self-sacrificing, so tender, so gentle and so faithful as was that of the heroines of the Revolution.

Among the brave women who hastened to the field of the battle of Guilford Court House to minister to the wounded and the dying was Mrs. Kerenhappuch Turner, whose sons and grandsons were with Gen. Greene in this battle. Mrs Kerenhappuch Turner was the wife of James Turner one of the early settlers of Maryland, possessed of his courageous spirit as well as noted for her skill in nursing the sick, and her wisdom, tact and energy. She loved her children with the devotion of a true mother, but she loved her country also. Sending forth her sons to the defense of their country, she exacted from them the promise that

she should be kept informed of their whereabouts and there needs that she might continue to minister to them. One of these sons received a fearful wound in the battle of Guilford Court House, but the brave mother came to him, riding on horseback all the way from her home in Mary, land and herself nursed him back into life and service. Placing him in a log cabin, near this spot whereon we now stand, upon the floor, beneath the bare rafters she bored holes in tubs which she suspended from these rafters above the ghastly wounds and keeping these tubs filled with cool water from the "Bloody Run" near by the constant dripping upon the wound allayed the fever, and she thus improvised a treatment as efficacious as the "ice pack" of modern science.

One of her daughters, Elizabeth, married Joseph Morehead, of North Carolina, of Scotch ancestry and her descendants have ever been noted for their love of country and public spirit. Another daughter, Mary, married Charles, the brother of Joseph Morehead, and left offspring in the West. Of these Governor Charles S. Morehead of Kentucky and his cousin, Governor James Turner Morehead of the same State, have been eminent statesmen, having served not only as Governor, but also in the Senate of the United States from that State.

The North Carolina branch of the family has given to this State the late Governor John M. Morehead, one of the greatest, if not the greatest Governor our State has yet produced, who was a great leader of the old Whig party, and the greatest internal improvement man the State has yet known, and his brother, Hon. James Turner Morehead, one of the greatest and most distinguished lawyers of his day in this State, and who at one time represented this District in Congress where he could have remained indefinitely but for his positive refusal to remain in Congress. He preferred his profession to which he was devoted.

The late Gov. Morehead is survived by one son, Maj.

J. Turner Morehead, now of New York City. The only surviving sons of the late Hon. James Turner Morehead are Col. James T. Morehead, one of the leading and most distinguished members of the Greensboro bar, who, like his father, is devoted to his profession, preferring it to political honors, and Maj. Joseph M. Morehead, who is now and has been for some years the acting President of the Guilford Battle Ground Company. It was the latter who conceived the idea of erecting the beautiful monument which we dedicate and unveil to-day in honor of the memory of Kerenhappuch Turner. The conception of this idea was submitted by him to his patriotic kinsman, Maj. J. Turner Morehead of New York City, who like all members of this distinguished family, is noted for his public spirit, and who with enthusiasm as well as with purse and brain, joined President Morehead in the execution of the idea under the auspices of said Company. These two men are, therefore, entitled to the honor of erecting here the first monument ever built in America to a Revolutionary heroine—an honor of which they may well be proud and which entitles them to the gratitude of every man who loves his country. They have set an example worthy of imitation, which it is to be hoped will stimulate others to like manifestation of patriotic and filial piety.

We honor ourselves in honoring the brave and good woman of whom I speak today. Her long ride, her gentle touch, her tact, her skill and her heroic service saved the life of her son. It was an Ancient Roman touched perhaps by a transient gleam of Christian truth, who said when he turned aside from a career of Asiatic Conquest that he would rather save a human life than become master of all the dominions of Mithridates. This is but one life of which history and tradition tell us. How many were saved by the tender ministry of the brave women of that awful time will never be known. The history of the part enacted by them in that great

struggle has never been written. I salute the Daughters of the American Revolution who honor us today with their presence, and bid them God-speed in their pious and patriotic work of rescuing from oblivion the history of those heroic days. They can render their sex and their country no greater service than that of rescuing from oblivion those records and traditions which tell us of the glori-ous deeds and God-like sacrifices of the brave women of those days. It is fit, Mr. President, that the Daughters of the Revolution should join with us in the tribute we pay today to one who glorified her sex in her homely toils and in her angelic ministry upon this battle-field where valor wrote in crimson letters "the purple testament of bleeding war."

It is meet, too, that on this Sabbath of our Government this uncounted multitude should come and share with us the honor of dedicating to a brave woman this beautiful monument around which in the coming years youth and age shall gather and linger to read its story, and to study the annals emblazoned by the Christ-like services of the heroines of the Revolution.

Then upon this holy ground whereon fell the tears of our mothers and the blood of our fathers in the starless night of their supremest effort, let us reverently uncover in the presence of this most fitting and beautiful memorial to the memory of a Revolutionary mother.

"The bravest battle that was ever fought,
Shall I tell you where or when?
On the maps of the world you will find it not,
'Twas fought by the mothers of men.

Nay, not with cannon or battle shot,
With a sword or nobler pen;
Nay, not with eloquent word or thought
From mouths of wonderful men.

But deep in a walled up woman's heart,
A woman that would not yield,

But bravely, silent'y bore her part—
Lo, there is that battlefield.

No marshalling troops, no bivouac song,
No banner to gleam and wave ;
But oh these battles they last so long,
From babyhood to the grave.

Yet, faithful still as a bridge of stars,
She fights in her walled up town ;
Fights on and on in the endless wars,
Then silent, unseen, goes down.

Oh ye with banners and battle shot,
And soldiers to shout and praise.
I tell you the kingliest victories fought
Are fought in these silent ways.

Oh, spotless woman in a world of shame
With splendid and silent scorn,
Go back to God as white as you came—
The kingliest warrior born.



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