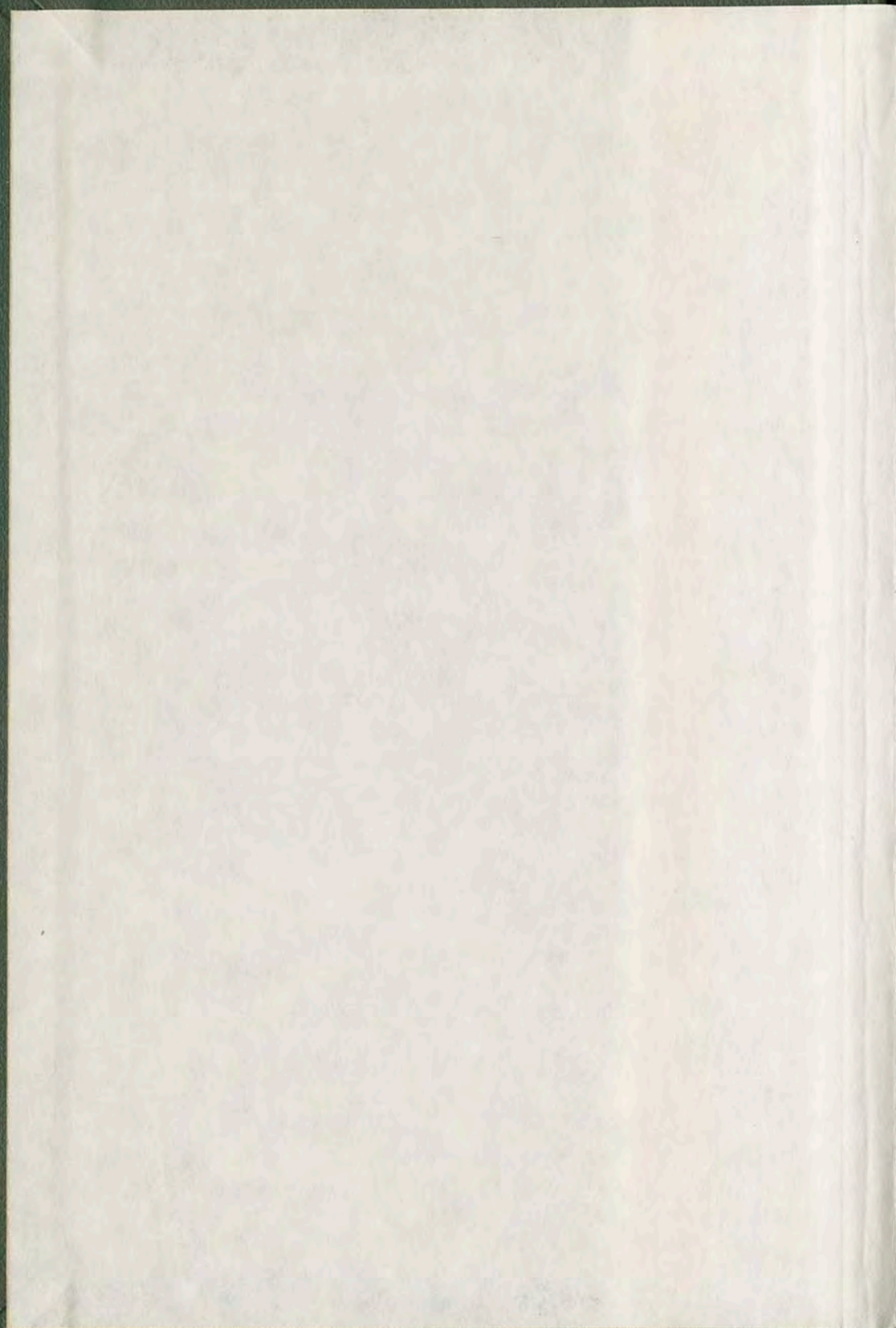


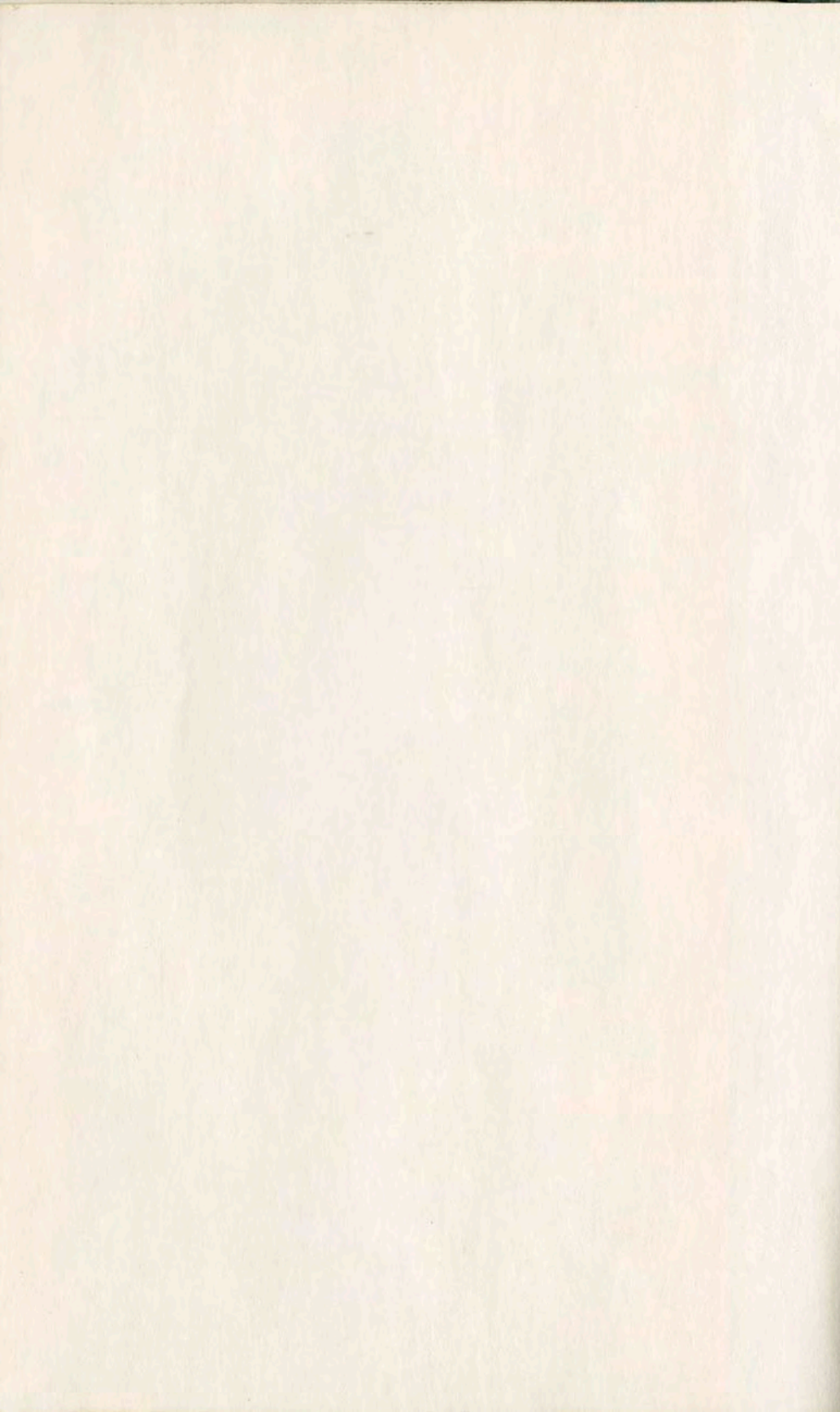
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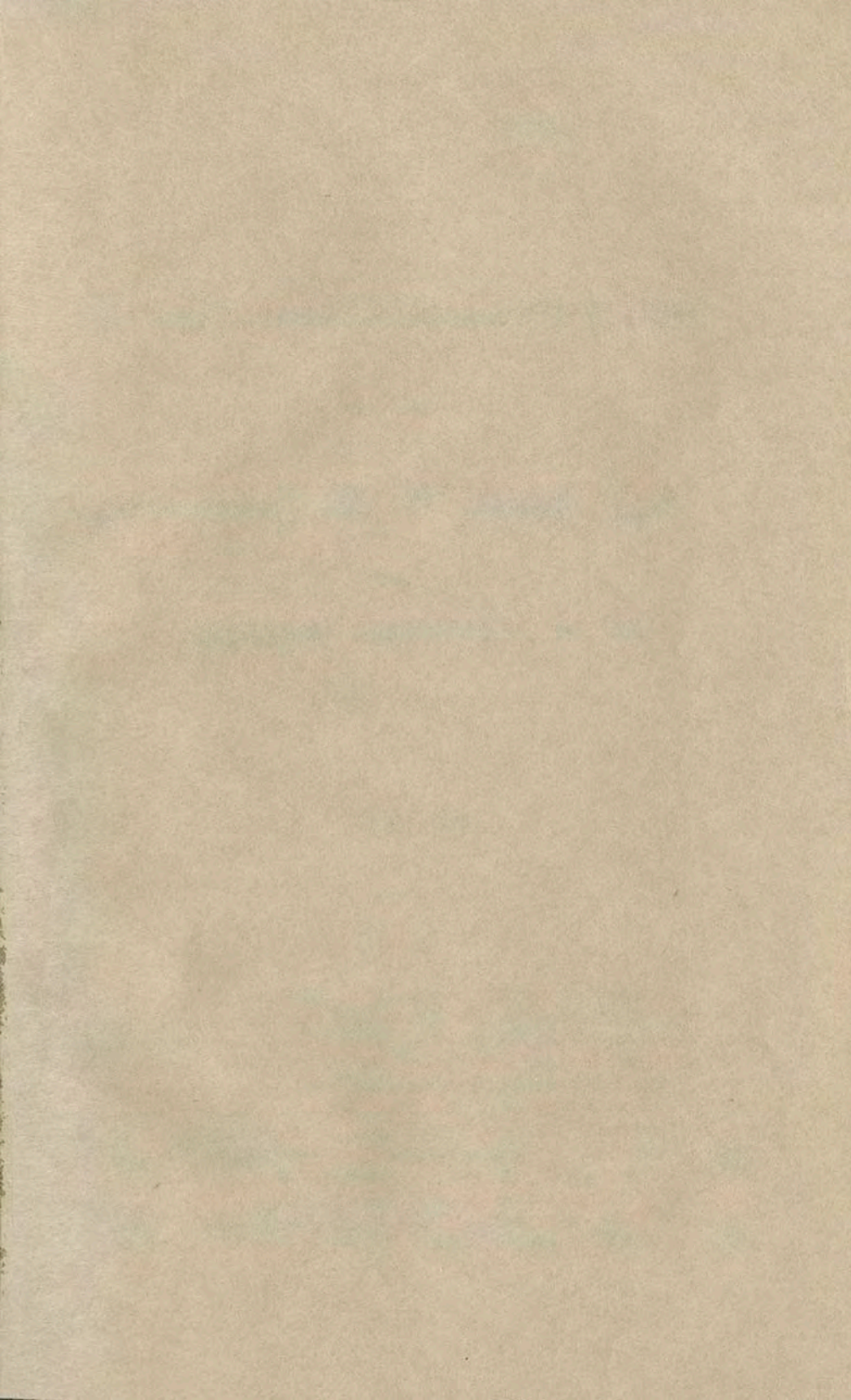


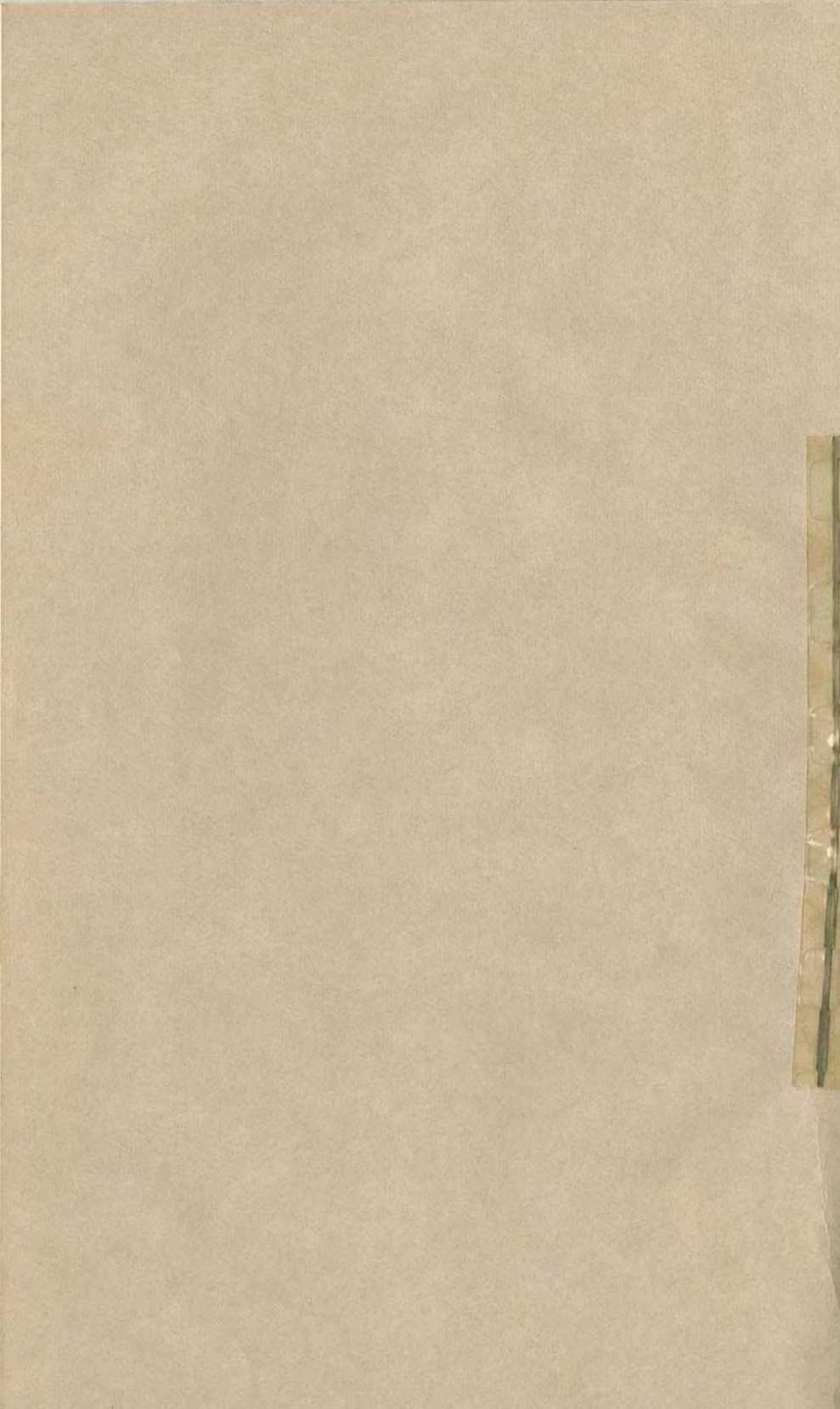














North Carolina State Library  
Raleigh

—A—

**BRIEF HISTORICAL SKETCH**

—OF THE—

**HAGER FAMILY**

—OF—

**LINCOLN COUNTY, N. C.**

—BY—

**A. NIXON.**

1902.

Among the pioneers who crossed the Great Catawba as civilization extended westward, and first set foot upon the soil embraced in the present county of Lincoln, was William Hager. He came about the year 1750, and settled on the west bank of the Catawba at the place long known as "Hager's Ferry." He was of German descent and wrote his name "Heeker." The name was sometimes written Hecker, Heaker, Heager, and finally Hager. I know nothing of this old pioneer and patriarch except what can be gathered from his land grants, deeds, and his last will and testament. The dates of his royal grants made while this was a part of Anson County, show that he was amongst the first settlers. His will, probated October sessions, 1775, court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, Tryon County, indicates about the time of his death. This is now on file among the records in the court house. In this he mentions five sons—

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Frederick, Simon, William, John and Christian, and three daughters, Sarah, Elizabeth and Barbara.

William Hager died at the beginning of the Revolutionary War. His two oldest sons enlisted in the struggle that followed and were arrayed on opposite sides: Frederick a Tory and Simon a Whig. As to whether any of his other sons were in the war, history and tradition are silent. They may have been too young, and that is the opinion of the writer. That some of his children were small is indicated by the last item in his will. It is in these words:

"I leave the still for the benefit of the family whilst my wife keeps house with the children."

The schedule of property set out in his will shows he was possessed of a considerable real and personal estate. This he divides among his children. According to the custom of that day he gave his lands to his sons and to his daughters certain items of personalty.

He made ample provision for his wife, Elizabeth. She was a frugal housewife, managed her estate well and survived him many years. Her name appears on a tax list of 1795, and she lived until near the close of the century. She occupied a large space in the affections of her children, and in the catalogue of most of her children's children is found one named Elizabeth.

Many of the people around Hager's postoffice are descended from this old pioneer; others have scattered to the surrounding counties, while numbers have followed the course of empire in its westward sweep and gone to seek their fortune in distant States and Territories. It would be beyond the limits ascribed to this sketch to trace out all of his descendants, but a brief notice may interest many, and rescue from the gulf of forgetfulness and oblivion a few facts

worthy of preservation for future generations.

I am encouraged in this effort by the recent words of a distinguished North Carolinian:

"To any one in possession of material, which, if published, would prove to be of historical value, the exhortation of Carlyle, 'were it but the infinitesimal fraction of a product, produce it,' may well be addressed; and to none with more propriety than to a North Carolinian."

William Hager in his will draws a dividing line across his river plantation of 266 acres; and also divides a plantation of 300 acres on Long Creek, Tryon county, into halves. To his oldest son, Frederick, he allows first choice. Simon was given second choice.

In presenting all the writer has been able to gather of the conduct and services of Frederick and Simon in the Revolution, the advice of Othello will be observed:

"Speak of me as I am  
Nothing extenuate or ought set down in  
malice."

**I. Frederick Hager.**

In the Revolution that burst forth soon after his father's death, Frederick was loyal to King George and a Tory partisan. When Lord Cornwallis passed through Lincoln County in his famous pursuit of Morgan, he marched from Ramsour's Mill, on Clark's Creek, to Jacob Forney's. Here he encamped two or three days. The Forney place is now known as the "Hall Place." His camp extended from the Hall Mansion up the ridge in the direction of Mrs. Pain's. This was the last of January, 1781.

Brigadier General William Davidson, a brave and vigilant officer, was on the Mecklenburg side of the Catawba, to resist the passage of the British army.

He placed guards at Tuckaseege, Tools, and Beattie's Ford; with a force variously estimated from 300 to 400 he commanded in person at Cowan's Ford.

Cornwallis's camp at Forneys was five miles from the river. He determined to cross at Cowan's Ford, and employed Frederick Hager on account of his knowledge of the country and familiarity with the ford, to act as a guide, and pilot his army across the river.

Cornwallis broke camp at 2 a. m., on the morning of February 1st, 1781, and crossed the river at break of day. When the British reached the Mecklenburg bank the gallant General Davidson was shot through the heart and fell from his horse dead. Most of the histories say he was shot by the Tory guide, Frederick Hager, and that is the local tradition on both sides of the river to this day.

The attempt to ascertain who killed a man in a battle of the Revolution is an odd and difficult undertaking; yet the writer has gathered extracts from those who have written on the Battle of Cowan's Ford, touching the part taken by Frederick Hager and General Davidson's death, and a careful examination of these can leave little doubt as to who killed General Davidson. Fortunate for such investigation, two of the British and two of the Whig participants wrote accounts of the passage.

The British entered the wagon ford just below the G. D. Abernethy Mill and went directly across the river; the horse ford entering at same place, turned down the river and came out on the Mecklenburg side, a half a mile below the other. General Davidson's camp was three-fourths of a mile from the river. He had guards placed at each of the fords, but expected the British to follow the horse ford. The Catawba, at this point is about 500 yards wide and the

Cowan's Ford of to-day is a new one, some half a mile below where the British crossed.

General Joseph Crahan, a brave soldier, captain of a cavalry company under General Davidson, and who fired upon the British during the passage in his history of the battle, says:

"The command of the front was committed to Col. Hall of the guards, who had for a guide Frederick Hager a renegade Tory, who lived within two miles of the place. They entered the river by sections of four and took the wagon ford."

"The enemy was advancing slowly in line, and only firing scatteringly, when General Davidson was pierced by a ball and fell dead from his horse.

"The General was shot with a small rifle ball near the nipple of the left breast, and never moved after he fell. It was well known that their pilot, Frederick Hager, had a rifle of this description and it was always believed that he shot him." \* \* \* \* \*

Col. Wheeler, who lived at Beattie's Ford when he wrote his history, and was familiar with local history and tradition, says:

"General Davidson in riding from the point where he expected the enemy to cross to the place where they did was fired upon, a rifle ball pierced through his heart and he fell dead from his horse. As the British only had muskets and the Tories rifles and he was slain by a rifle shot it is believed he fell by the hands of a Tory." And in a foot note adds, "It is said and the tradition is that a Tory by the name of Hager shot General Davidson."

Dr. Caruthers in "Old North State, 2nd Series, p. 26, says "General Davidson was killed, not by the British but by Frederick Hager, a German Tory, who

had piloted the British across the river, as was generally believed."

Dr. Hunter says in his history, p. 223:

"With judicious forethought, Cornwallis had hired the services of Frederick Hager, a Tory on the western bank and under his guidance the bold Britons plunged in the water with the firm determination of encountering the small band of Americans on the eastern bank."

The only person I ever heard speak with any doubt about who killed General Davidson was Dr. Hunter. Dr. Hunter was the son of a Revolutionary soldier, an accomplished scholar, and familiar with Revolutionary history. He told me when a small boy that he was not of the opinion that Fred. Hager killed General Davidson; that Hager turned back when the firing commenced and quoted as authority Steadman, the English commissary and historian, who accompanied Cornwallis in his southern campaigns. Steadman says:

"When the light infantry had nearly reached the middle of the river, they were challenged by one of the enemy's sentinels. The sentinel having challenged twice and receiving no answer immediately gave the alarm by discharging his musket and the enemy's pickets were turned out. No sooner did the guide (a Tory) who attended the light infantry to show them the ford, hear the report of the sentinel's musket than he turned around and left them—this which at first seemed to portend much mischief in the end proved a fortunate incident. Colonel Hall being forsaken by his guide and not knowing the true direction of the ford, led the column directly across the river to the nearest part of the opposite bank."

Some years after this Dr. Hunter wrote his history. On page 224 he says:

"The British infantry waded the river preceded by their Tory guide, staff in hand, to show them the proper ford; and the statement made by some historians that General Davidson was killed by this guide is not corroborated by Steadman, the English Historian; but on the contrary he leaves us to infer that the American General met his death at the hands of one of their troops."

I will next introduce the testimony of a very intelligent and competent witness, who was one of the guards stationed at the water's edge on the Mecklenburg bank, and was an eye witness to the facts he relates. This is an extract from the Battle of Cowan's Ford, by Robert Henry, recently published by Judge Schenk. Mr. Henry removed to Western North Carolina and was afterwards a school teacher, surveyor and lawyer. He details the account of General Davidson's death by another hand. Mr. Henry says:

"Shortly after dark a man across the river hooted like an owl, and was answered; a man went to a canoe some distance off, and brought word from him that all was silent in the British camp. The guard all lay down with their guns in their arms, and all were sound asleep at daybreak, except Joel Jetton, who discovered the noise of horses in deep water. The British pilot, Dick Beal, being deceived by our fires, had led them into swimming water. Jetton ran to the ford, the sentry being sound asleep, Jetton kicked him into the water, endeavored to fire his gun, but it was wet; having discovered the army, ran to our fires, having a fine voice, cried, 'the British, the British,' and fired a gun—then each man ran to his stand: I saw them red, but thought from loss of sleep I might be mistaken, threw water into them; by the time I was ready to

fire, the rest of the guard had fired. I then heard the British splashing and making a noise as if drowning. I fired and continued firing until I saw that one on horseback had passed my rock in the river, and saw that it was Dick Beal moving his gun from his shoulder I expected to shoot me. I ran with all speed up the bank, and when at the top of it, William Polk's horse breasted me, and General Davidson's horse about twenty or thirty feet before Polk's horse and near to the water's edge. All being silent on both sides, I heard the report of a gun at the water's edge, being the first gun fired on the British side, and which I thought Dick Beal had fired at me. That moment Polk wheeled in his horse, and cried, 'fire away, boys; there is help at hand,' turning my eye around, designing to run away I saw my lame school-master, Beatty, loading his gun by a tree. I thought I could stand it as long as he could, and commenced loading. Beatty fired then I fired, the heads and shoulders of the British being just above the bank; they made no return fire; silence still prevailed. I observed Beatty loading again; I ran down another load—when he fired, he cried, "Its time to run, Bob." I looked past my tree, and saw their guns lowered, and then straightened myself behind my tree. They fired and knocked off some bark from my tree."

In another place he says: "Davidson was killed by the first gun that was fired on the British side on that occasion, for they did not fire a gun whilst in the river; and the gun that killed him was fired at the water's edge on the Mecklenburg side; and if Davidson's clothes had been examined, it is probable that they would have shown the marks of powder. The whole of the Americans had left their stands or posts at the water's edge and judiciously fled lest the British

might hem them in by the river; and utter silence prevailed—not a gun firing on either side; silence was first broken by the gun that killed General Davidson."

And again: "Now I will give the common report of it. I will begin with the report of Nicholas Gosnell, one of our neighbors a Tory, who was in Cornwallis' army when they crossed the Catawba at Cowan's Ford. It was frequently repeated from the extraordinary language he used, and from his manner of expression—I will endeavor to give it in his own language: 'His Lordship chose Dick Beal for his pilot, as he know'd the Ford, and a durned pretty pilot he was, for he suffer'd himself to be led away by the rebel fires, and then had to go down to the ford afterwards; but if he did bad one way he did good another, for he killed their damned Rebel General; The Rebels were posted at the water's edge there want many of 'em; but I'll be durned if they didn't slap the wad to his majesty's men suicidally for a while; for I saw 'em hollelrln' and a snortin' and drownin'—the river was full on 'em a snortin' and a drownin' until his Lordship reached the off bank; then the rebels made straight tils, and all was silent then I tell you his Lordship was bo super gille cristilum and when he arose the bank he was the best dog in the hunt, and not a rebel to be seen.'"

From these authorities I conclude that the British employed Fredrick Hager as a guide to conduct them from Forney's to Cowan's Ford and pilot them across the river; that General Davidson was killed by a rifle ball fired by the Tory pilot; that Fredrick Hager turned back in the river at the "fire of the sentinel's musket; that when the British reached the Mecklenburg bank Dick Beal was

acting as pilot and shot General Davidson.

Gen. Graham gives the last account of Frederick Hager as follows:

"Most of the Tories returned at or before the close of the war, but Hager went to Tennessee and staid there until some of the Davidson family moved to that country, when he moved with eight or ten others, all fugitives from justice, and made the first American settlement on the Arkansas river near Six Post; married and raised a family there, and died in the year 1814."

## II. Simon Hager.

At the time William Hager and the other pioneers came here it is believed the Great Catawba marked the tribal division between the peaceful Catawbas on the east and their more hostile Cherokee neighbors on the west.

The pioneer with axe and rifle encountered the primeval forest and native wilderness, the habitat of the red man and wild animal.

His descendents have been engaged in making mother earth produce the necessities and luxuries of life.

They have been a plain home-loving people, industrious and upright. Interested in affairs of government, but not aspirants for position. A name that has never filled much space in the public eye and no place on the civil and criminal records of the county.

Each of his four sons remaining here and one daughter left a will; the student of genealogy could trace his descendents from this authentic source.

His second son, Simon, was a Whig, and a friend to the cause of liberty. At the call to arms he shouldered his gun, marched with his Whig neighbors and did battle for the patriot cause.

To distinguish him from another Simon Hager and soldier patriot in the

Revolution, he was familiarly known as "Big Simon."

He first enlisted in Capt. Peter Sides company and served four months. He later enlisted in Capt. John Baker's company and served three months. He afterwards assisted in guarding prisoners to Salisbury. His company was not attached to any particular regiment, but sometimes acted in unison with other companies. His services were chiefly against the Tories in Rutherford, Lincoln, Mecklenburg and Rowan Counties. He later marched into South Carolina and joined the Southern Army soon after the defeat of Gen. Gates.

Dr. Draper, in the preface to "King's Mountain and its Heroes," speaks of the early part of 1780 as a "gloomy period, when the cause of liberty seemed prostrate and hopeless in the south," and says:

"Gloom and dismay overspread the whole southern country. Detachments from the victorious British army were scattered throughout the settlements; and the rebellious colonies of Carolina and Georgia were reported to the home government as completely humiliated and subdued. Ferguson, one of the ablest of the Royal commanders, was operating on the western borders of the Carolinas, enticing the younger men to his standard, and drilling them for the Royal service."

In this condition of affairs Simon was over-persuaded by some of his Tory acquaintances and joined Col. Ferguson. When that dashing commander took his position on King's Mountain, from which he boastingly proclaimed he could not be driven, Simon was in his ranks.

At the close of that famous battle, Ferguson and many of his men lay dead on the mountain, the rest prisoners—Simon among the latter. I will now insert a paragraph from "Draper's King's

Mountain and its Heroes," page 335, which was copied from "Hunter's Sketches." This refers to Simon Hager, the subject of this sketch:

"As Abram Forney, one of the Lincoln troops, was surveying the prisoners, through the guard surrounding them, he discovered one of his neighbors, who only a short time before King's Mountain battle, had been acting with the Whigs; but had been over persuaded, by some of his Tory acquaintances to join the King's troops. Upon seeing him Forney exclaimed: 'Is that you, Simon?' 'Yes,' he replied, quickly, 'it is, Abram, and I beg you to get me out of this bullpen; if you do, I will promise never to be caught in such a scrape again.' When it was accordingly, made to appear on the day of trial, that he had been unfortunately wrought upon by some Tory neighbors, such a mitigation of his disloyalty was presented as to induce the court to overlook his offence and set him at liberty. Soon afterwards, true to his promise, he joined his former Whig comrades, marched to the battle of Guilford, and made a good soldier to the end of the war."

The old veteran was pensioned by his country, and lived to a ripe old age. He died in the year 1844, at the age of ninety years, and was buried in the graveyard at (Henkles) old White Haven Church.

Simon Hager was married twice. By his first wife, nee Lawing, he had the following children:

1. Robert (born Oct. 8, 1786) married Ann Robinson, 1807. Children: (a) William Capps—Barbara Hager; (b) Martha—Lewis Holdscaw; (c) John (Sparrow)—Sallie Nixon; (d) Robert; (e) Mary—Simon S. Hager; (f) Phillip—Harriet Howard; (g) Jacob—Eliza Ann Covington; (h) Thomas—Sarah Sherrill.

2. Annie married Shadrack Abernethy,

1805. Children: (a) Robert—Elizabeth Strong; (b) George; (c) Joseph—Ollie Nantz; (d) Simon—Mary Strong; (e) Ezekiel—Margaret Henkel; (f) Martha—James Moore; (g) Manerva—Elias Kelly; (h) Henry—thrice married.

3. William (born October 18, 1792; died May 1, 1870) married Elizabeth Hager. Children: (a) Simon S., who married first Mary Hager and second Nancy Lawing. Julius P. Hager, the postmaster at Hager post office, S. A. Hager one of the County Commissioners, and Landie C. Hager, who has rendered valuable service in getting up this history, are sons of Simons. (b) Miller married Margaret Hager. Their only child, Jennie, married John H. Nixon.

Simon Hager was married a second time to Nellie Eaton. Children of this marriage: 1, Henry H., who first married Ann Hager; they had nine children: Jane married William Cashion; all the others died without issue. Henry's second wife was Matilda Tucker; they have four living children: Francis, Cephas, Alonzo and William.

2, John Hager married Rachel Hager. They had nine children. Of these are yet living (a) Rachel Ann who married first Albert Nixon, second C. M. Loftin; (b) Jane married J. P. Proctor; and (c) Ellen married Fuller Jones.

3, James who married first Elizabeth Norwood. Children: Elizabeth, William, Sherod, and Augustus L.; his second wife, Jane Hager. Children: Isabelle, Mary, Nancy and Alfred.

4, Francis married Wm. Lawing.

5, Simon married Susan Alexander.

His sons William, Henry, Simon and James have died since the Civil War, and are remembered by the writer. These all bore names very common in the Hager family, so that resorts were had to various nicknames to distinguish them.

Each of the pioneer's sons named a son William. An old tax list of 1832 contains the names of four tax payers by the name of William Hager in the same Captain's district.

According to tradition the old soldier often related his war experiences; and in political campaigns and at musters was fond of proclaiming himself a Whig. This in broken English he would pronounce "Wig." To distinguish Simon's son Willam from the others, his neighbors called him William "Wig." He held the sobriquet in due appreciation and I have seen his name signed in his own hand "William Wig Hager."

John was the owner of a fleet mare that he entered in the races at Beals old Field. When time came to start he would say: "Lef 'er go," and so became known as "John Lef 'er."

Henry used a by word "Hope," occasionally accompanied by a condemnatory word, and became known as "Henry Hope."

To distinguish James from others bearing the same name, he was called "Long Jim."

Henry was the last of the old soldier's children to pass away; he died May 26, 1894. From a notice of his death in the Lincoln Courier, of June 1st, 1894, the following paragraph is copied:

"Last Saturday the spirit of another octogenarian passed into the presence of its Maker. Henry H. Hager died at his home near Lowesville, this county, in the eighty-ninth year of his age. He was born and spent his long life in that vicinity. He was a quiet, peaceable citizen and gave little attention to matters outside the cultivation of his little farm, and the cares of his humble home. He attended strictly to his own business and so avoided many of the vexations incident to this life which doubtless contributed to his great longevity. He was

content with his lot and however dark the cloud and great his misfortunes, 'mid sunshine and shadows he was never heard to murmur or complain, but always looked on the bright side, maintained a cheerful disposition, full of courage and hope. Such characters are not rare, but it is a delight to come in contact with them. He enjoyed good health until a few days before his death when his strength was sapped by a severe attack of the flux and had not sufficient vitality to rally. He lived long after all the companions of his youth, and was affectionately called by the present generation "Uncle Henry." He was a member of Salem Methodist church. Let charity incline us to bury in the silence of the tomb his imperfections whatever they may have been and accord to his memory the praise his virtues deserve. A good friend, kind neighbor, an honest man is gone. Peace to his ashes."

The tax list of 1902 contains the names of thirty-five tax payers in that vicinity bearing the cognomen Hager. Many of these are descendants of the old soldier. Most of these worship at Salem Methodist church, situate in their midst.

### III. William Hager.

William was the third son of the pioneer. A bond for the marriage license of William Hager and Ann Blacklock is on file in the court house; this bears date 30th April, 1785, and is believed to be for the marriage of this William.

In the will of his father, William Hager, Senior, he was given third choice of his lands, and it is believed the portion above the ferry fell to his lot, as this is where he lived.

His will bears date January 23rd, 1839. In this he mentions a son Joseph, a daughter Barbara Garner and several grand children.



His son Joseph was the father of (a) Elizabeth, married Elam Smith; (b) Ann—Joseph Barnett; (c) William—Susan Burch; (d) Franklin —————; (e) David—Elizabeth Black, (father of Luther S. and James L.); (f) Turner (never married); (g) Barbara—William Capps Hager, (mother of David E., and George and Monroe.)

#### IV. John Hager.

William Hager, Sr., bequeathed his home place to John, "in case his mother chooseth him to live with her."

The Hager family has been observant of the scriptural injunction "to be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it." This is essentially true of the branch now under consideration. At the time of John's marriage the applicant had to file a bond with the Clerk of Court payable to the Governor in the sum of five hundred pounds before license would issue. John's marriage bond is yet on file in the court house, and is in the words and figures that follow:

"Know all men by these presents that we John Hager and John Beel are held and firmly bound unto Sam'l Johnston, Esqr., Gov'r in the sum of five hundred pounds good and lawful money. We bind ourselves our heirs, exrs. admrs. jointly and severably firmly by these presents.

"Sealed with our seals and dated this 28th day of August, 1788.

"The condition of the above obligation is such that whereas the above bounden John Hager has obtained a license of marriage to be celebrated between him and Sally Statia, Now if it shall appear at any future time hereafter that there is no just cause to obstruct said marriage then this obligation to be void otherwise

to remain in full force and virtue.

JOHN HEAKER.

JOHN BEAL.

Lest:

Eliza Dickson.

Sallie Statia (or Stacey) came with her widowed sister, Mrs. Proctor, from Pytsylvania County, Virginia. Mrs. Proctor settled with her two sons near Hager's Ferry. From these sons, Richard and Benjamin have descended the Proctors of Lincoln County.

John Hager was married twice. His will bears date 9th July, 1840. In this he mentions eighteen children, and I have heard it said there were four others who had died prior to that time.

(a) His first child was born Dec. 20, 1790. She was named Sallie after her mother. When about fifteen she married Archibald Womack of Virginia and was the mother of fourteen children.

Four of them are living at this date: Starling and Elisha Womack, Vina Nixon, the widow of John Nixon, Esq., and Milie Nixon, the widow of Robert Nixon. The latter is the mother of the writer. Among other children of Sallie Womack may be mentioned: Susan Regan, wife of P. G. Regan; Jane, wife of Franklin Hager; Elizabeth, wife of Alfred Childers; William died in Civil war; Thomas of Batesville, Arkansas.

Mrs. Sallie Womack died 17th June, 1874, aged 83 years, 4 months and 17 days. She is buried at Unity, with her son Jesse who was killed by the kick of a horse at Rock Spring Camp Ground August 11th, 1862.

(b) William married Sarah Little; (c) Frederick married Peggy (Betsey Miller); (d) Priscilla married William McIntosh (mother of William McIntosh, who lives near Castanea, the late John H. McIntosh and others); (e) Elizabeth married John Bynum; (f) Starling married Eliz-

abeth Winters; (g) Aaron married Luranie Steely.

(h) Benjamin married Sarah King—the father of (1) Margaret, who married first, Miller Hager, second, Alfred Nixon, Sr.; (2) Sallie married James Norwood; (3) Mary married R. A. Duckworth and (4) James died in war.

(i) John married Elizabeth Bynum.

John Hager's second wife was Jennie Hawn—date of marriage bond 27th March, 1805. By this marriage he has the following children: (a) Barbara, married Turner Edwards; (b) Christie—Amelia Rogers; (c) Annie—Henry Hager; (d) Margaret—Daniel Carpenter; (e) Jane (never married); (f) Lucy Rev. John Covington; (g) Rachel—John Hager; (h) Simon C., (never married); (i) Charity—first Clem Nantz; second, William Burch.

John Hager was born Sept. 15th, 1767, and died July 16th, 1842, at the age of 74 years. His second wife Jane, surviving him many years. She died Nov. 9th, 1876, having attained the great age of 106 years.

John Hager willed most of his property to his son Simon C. Hager. This Simon operated the ferry. Never married and was known as "Big Simon."

He died in 1887 and gave to his niece, Mrs. Jane Edwards, the ancestral homestead his ferry with one acre on the Mecklenburg side. He also gave one hundred dollars, the interest of which is to be used in keeping up the old Salem grave yard.

This grave yard is situate a couple miles below the present Salem Church, and near Dr. McLeans. Simon Hager is buried there, likewise his father, mother and other members of the family.

Three generations of the family have passed from earth  
"Beyond the rock-waste and the river,  
Beyond the ever and the never."

with a single exception; Mrs. Rachel Hager, a grandchild of the pioneer, is yet living. She has celebrated her eightieth birthday.

#### V. Christian Hager.

Christian Hager's will was written March 19th, 1827, and probated October Sessions same year. His marriage bond bears date 28th December, 1790. His wife's name Elizabeth Beal. William Hager, Senior, did not will this son any land; but, bequeathed to his "beloved son, Christian Heager, the sum of eighty pounds proc. to be levied out of my personal estate and to be laid out upon land for the use of him at the discretion of my executors."

Christian Hager had two sons, William and John, to whom he gave his lands "as they are now settled, John the upper and William the lower part." His son John lived on the East side of Killian's Creek. The place is now owned by C. R. Kelly.

John Hager married Nancy Cox. He made his will July 16th, 1867, and is remembered by the writer. He mentions five children: Robert N., Harriet, Serenah, Delia Ann Luckey, the wife of William Luckey, and Isabella Barnett, wife of Arthur Barnett. Harvey Luckey, of Harvey's, and Macon Luckey, who has removed to Missouri and Chas. S. to Texas, are sons of Mrs. Delia Ann Luckey.

William, son of Christian, in 1824, married Franky Robinson, a daughter of John Robinson, who lived near Beal's old field, and they moved West.

These were called "John Christ" and William Christ" to distinguish them from others having the same given names.

Christian mentions five daughters: Polly, Ibbey, Elizabeth, Annie and Sallie.

Polly married Henry Eddlemen (1813) and moved West.

Ibby married James Bryant. Their daughter Dinnie married John Little. Children: Clay, Ann and others. Philip Bryant, the son of Ibby, was killed in the war. James A. and Margaret, of Triangle, are children of Philip, and live on a part of the tract entered by their pioneer ancestor, William Hager, Senior 23rd February, 1754.

Elizabeth the daughter of Christian Hager married William "Wig" Hager.

#### VI. Sarah Hager.

Sarah married Christian Eaker and died the latter part of the year 1834, without children. In her will probated January Sessions 1835, she makes certain bequests to her "sister Barbara Killian, wife of Samuel Killian, now a widow," also to her "two brothers Simon Hager and John Hager." The witnesses to Christian Eaker's will were Major Hull, Samuel Wilson and John Cook; the witnesses to Sally Eaker's will were Noah Bess and Abram Kistler, and her executors, William Baxter and Major Hull. These names indicate that they lived in the Bess Chapel section of North Brook township.

Mr. W. J. Baxter informs me that in the "Eaker Graveyard," a private burying ground one mile North of Bess Chapel, are two graves the head stones inscribed: "In memory of Christian Eaker, died August 30, 1829, aged 76 years." And the other "In memory of Sallie Eaker, died Dec. 26, aged 82 years.

These wills and inscriptions indicate that this is the last resting place of Sallie, one of the daughters of William Hager, Senior.

#### VII. Elizabeth Hager.

There is on file a bond for marriage license of George Hager and Betsey Hager. This bears date 12th December, 1812, and may be for the marriage of this Elizabeth Hager.

#### VIII. Barbara Hager.

Barbara, the youngest daughter, married Samuel Killian in the year 1784. Samuel was the son of another pioneer, Andrew Killian. Andrew Killian entered in one body 1000 acres of land below the Catawba Springs. In old deeds the creek on which he settled is referred to as "Andrew Killian's Creek." It is called to this day "Killian's Creek" after the old pioneer. Samuel Killian's marriage license bond is on file, signed by William Hager, and dated 1784.

Samuel Killian moved to that part of Lincoln that is now Catawba county. Settled on Clark's Creek, four miles West of Newton, and is buried at St. Paul's.

His land in 1813 was divided between his widow, Barbara, and ten children, as follows: William Herman and wife, Elizabeth; John Gross and wife, Sallie; David, William, Frederick, Barbara, Polly, Samuel, Joseph and Andrew Killian.

They have many descendants.

1. Elizabeth Herman was likewise the mother of 10 children: George, Paul, Caleb, Adolphus, William, Clarisa, Elizabeth, Barbara, Leah and Michal. Files Herman Ex Register of Deeds and Clerk Superior Court of Catawba county is a son of Caleb Herman.

David Killian (son of Samuel and Barbara) married Catherine Cline. Their marriage bond bears date 10th January, 1809. Children: Ephriam, Logan, Abel, Susan and others.

Ephriam Killian (son of David) is the father of William L., John (killed in war) Amzi, Dr. Robert, Elizabeth and Susan, of these, Amzi, Dr. Robert and Susan (married Alonzo Lutz) live near Lincolnton.

Frederick, (son of Samuel) had several children. Samuel Killian, a merchant in Hickory, is one of them.

Polly Killian married Daniel Herman; her oldest son (a) Franklin, was the father of (1) Candace A., wife of Rev. M. L. Little and mother of Clarence Little, of The Indian Creek Mills; (2) Saphronia, wife of Sunmey Coulter; (3) Camelia—Ex-Sheriff M. J. Rowe; (4) Claudia—W. T. Henderson; (5) Alice—Phillip Bost; (6) George F. Herman.

(b) Peter, (son of Polly.) was a noted Methodist minister. (c) George, another son, was killed in the war; one of his sons, George, is a Methodist minister, and another, Frank, a physician.

#### George Hager.

The writer knows nothing of the Hagers prior to their coming to Lincoln county. Yet all the Hagers are not descendants of William. Another Hager came with him named George, and they entered adjoining farms. One of George's grants in the same neighborhood bears date 1753 and shows he was one of the pioneers. He was the companion and trusted friend of William and may have been his brother. William names George Hager as one of the executors of his last will and testament.

August 30th, 1753, George Hager was granted 895 acres "on the East side of Killian' Creek." A portion of this his sons conveyed to John McCall and it has in late years been known as the "Delia Wilson place"

This old pioneer's will was made June 6, 1784, witnessed by Peter Forney, Lemuel Saunders and Jacob Sides; Abraham Earhart and James Reel, executors. He likewise has a long list of descendants. He mentions the following children, George, Simon, William, Jonathan, David, Elizabeth, Sallie and Mary.

This Simon was likewise a patriot soldier in the Revolution. At the age of 17

he enlisted in Capt. William Hutchison's company, Col. Polk's regiment and served ten months. He served principally in South Carolina and was engaged in the battle of Monks Corner and Eutaw Springs. He died January 28, 1835, age about 72 years. His will contains the names of the following children: Frederick, Catherine, John, William, Barbara Elders, Sarah Frost, and Mary Rudisill, wife of John Rudisill. The witnesses and executors indicate that he lived in the Long Creek Section of Gaston county.

Jonathan Hager's will bears date 26 January, 1827, John D. King, executor.

Children, David, Catherine, Mary, George, Fredereck, Sarah, William, Jonathan, Elizabeth, Daniel, Michal.

The last named, Michal, married Catherine Nixon and is the father of Henry, Franklin, Sallie.

The Henry mentioned here is the father of Lawrence and Withers Hager, of Triangle.

Franklin Hager married Jane Womack and Sallie married Frank Cashion.

#### Number of the British.

We do not know the exact number of the British at this time. In a letter of Cornwallis dated 18th December, at Winnsboro, he says: "I have a good account of our recruits in general, and hope to march from hence with 3500 fighting men." He lost perhaps 800 men at Cowpens, and received the 1500 under General Leslie, and in round numbers must have had 4000 fighting men. Sir Henry Clinton estimates it at "considerably above 3000 exclusive of cavalry and militia."

#### Route from Forneys.

General Earl Cornwallis says: "Lieut. Colonel Webster was detailed with part of the army and all the baggage to Beat-

tie's Ford, six miles above McCowan's, where General Davidson was supposed to be posted with 500 militia, and was directed to make every possible demonstration by cannonading and otherwise of an intention to force a passage there, and to march at one in the morning with the Brigade of Guards, Regiment of Bose, 23rd Regiment, 200 cavalry and two three pounders; the morning being very dark and rainy and part of our way through a wood where there was no road, one of the three pounders in front of the 23rd Regiment and the cavalry overset in a swamp and occasioned these corps to lose the line of march and some of the artillery men belonging to the other gun (one of whom had the match) having stopped to assist, were likewise left behind."

General Graham says: "On the same day, as Cornwallis was marching to Beattie's Ford, about two miles from it at Col. Black's farm he left behind him under the command of Brigadier General O'hara, twelve hundred infantry and Tarlton's cavalry, which in the night moved secretly down to Cowan's Ford, only three miles below.

I am of opinion the British crossing at Beattie's Ford march from Forney's via the Sulphur Spring and Triangle as the public road is now located. Colonel Black lived where James S. Black now lives at Triangle. Here Cornwallis must have turned to the right, for Cowan's Ford, and says himself a "part of our way through a wood where there was no road."

#### Losses at Cowan's Ford.

Robert Henry in his narrative says they went in a canoe next morning to James Cunningham's fish trap and "there were fourteen dead men lodged in it, we pushed them into the water, they floated off, and went each to his own home."

And again: "That a great number of British dead were found on Thompson's fish dam, and in his trap, and numbers lodged on brush, and drifted to the banks; that the river stunk with dead carcasses; that the British could not have lost less than one hundred men on that occasion."

Cornwallis estimates the loss as follows: "Their General and two or three other officers were among the killed, the number of the wounded was uncertain, and a few were taken prisoners. On our side Lieut. Colonel Hull and three men were killed, and thirty-six wounded, all of the Light Infantry and Grenadiers of the Guards."

General Graham's estimate: "At Cowan's Ford, besides General Davidson, there were killed, James Scott, of Lieutenant Davidson's picket; Robert Beatty, of Graham's cavalry, and one private in General Davidson's infantry—in all, four. We had none wounded or taken. The enemy's loss, as stated in the official account, published in the Charleston Gazette two months after was Colonel Hall of the guards, and another officer, and twenty-nine privates, thirty-one in all, and thirty-five wounded."

Gen. Gramam says an elegant beaver hat marked inside "The property of Josiah Martin, Governor," was found ten miles below. And Colonel Wheeler says Cornwallis narrowly escaped with his life as his horse was killed under him.

#### The Civil War.

In the second Revolution—the struggle for Southern Independence—the old pioneer's descendents answered their country's call to arms, and their blood stained many battle fields. The gallantry, devotion and self-sacrifice of the confederate soldier is beautifully exem-

plified in the will of James Hager. It contains scarce two dozen words, yet they express much. He voluntarily lays his young life on the altar of his country and gives his earthly possessions to his brother. Here is the entire will:

"I am a volunteer and if I should die or be killed I bequeath to my brother, Clem N. Hager, all my property.

JAMES HAGER.

March 25, 1862.

#### Beal's Old Field.

In the midst of the "Hager Settlement" on the great highway in ante bellum days was the noted muster ground of Beal's Old Field. The story of the "settlement" would be incomplete without some notice of this.

A talented writer in speaking of the early settlers of East Lincoln says:

"Occasions of much interest were the old field and general musters which were kept up until the late war. Beal's Old Field situate about four miles from Beattie's Ford was the most noted muster ground.

"Here all the able bodied freemen from the age of eighteen to forty-five, constituting the militia of the county, would assemble for inspection at least once a year. Here also came the old men and the children, the matron and the maid, the rich and the poor, to view the pride of the country, its sturdy yeoman soldiery.

"Here the devoted maid, the fond and affectionate mother and the proud wife saw alike her gallant lover, her dutiful son, and her manly husband 'pass muster.'

"Here also came the 'ginger cake woman' with her wagon load of fragrant sweet-bread and a plentiful supply of hard cider to appease the hunger and quench the thirst of the multitude.

"Here, too, came the old toppers, only

two of whom were known to the history of Beal's Old Field, not to 'pass muster,' but to pass away into happy unconsciousness of all passing events.

"Here also came the bullies of the neighborhood to decide the bullyship with gloves off in a 'free fist and skull fight' as it was called. A circle was made, a ring was formed and no one was allowed to enter until one of the contestants cried enough. The fight never lasted but one round."

This old muster ground also had its race-path in which the farmers tested the speed of their horses, usually wagering a small sum on the result. I have seen the paths.

Many of the men who played soldier here experienced its realities in the great Civil war. At the close of the war Beal's Old Field was still a place for tax listing, collecting and public speaking. The writer's earliest recollection of public discussions were at Beal's Old Field by Judge Bynum, Alfred Morrison, W. S. Pearson and others. With the adoption of the Constitution of 1868 "Captains, Districts and Beats," were dispensed with, the county divided into townships, villages sprang up. Beal's Old Field was turned by the plow of the farmer and now exists only in the memory.

#### Notes.

Mrs. Rachel Hager, mentioned as the last living grand child of the pioneer, has died since the manuscript of this sketch has been in the hands of the printer. She was born at the old homestead at Hager's Ferry, March 7, 1819; married her cousin, John Hager; died July 2, 1902, aged 83 years, 3 months and 25 days, and was buried at old White Haven.

Starling Womack is the next oldest descendant in Lincoln county. He is

now past 81 years old and is a great grand son of the pioneer. He likewise has a great grand child, so that in this line there are six generations from the pioneer.

Page 7—(c) John Sparrow Hager (son of Simon) was the father of Robert, Monroe S. P., Henry and Rebecca Ann. (f) Philip's children: John, James, Robert and Mary Ann. (g) Jacob's: Henry D. and Hattie. Other children of Simon S.: Nat married Nancy, daughter of Dinnie and John Little; children: Lee, Laudie and Ira; Mary Ann married Monroe A. Nixon; Frankie, J. Will McIntosh. (2) Sallie, daughter of Benjamin and wife of James Norwood, the mother of Rufus, Thomas J. Norwood and others.

Page 9—(f) Starling Hager moved to Missouri about 1834 and his defendants yet reside there. He had four sons and one daughter: William, John, Joseph and Henry and Sarah. Of these Joseph and Henry are yet living.

Page 10—(g) Aaron Hager married Lurania Steely. She was a daughter of Lovick Steely. Lovick Steely married Mary Hager about the 10 Feb. 1806. Aaron is the father of Samuel, William, John, Thomas, Green, Sidney, Mary and Rachel.

(a) Barbara Edwards' children: John, William and Turner. (f) Children of

Lucy Covington: (1) Harriet married first, Turner Edwards. then Adolphus Edwards. (2) Jane married Turner Edwards. R. H. W. Barker married their daughter, Alice, and they reside on the ancestral homestead at Hager's Ferry.

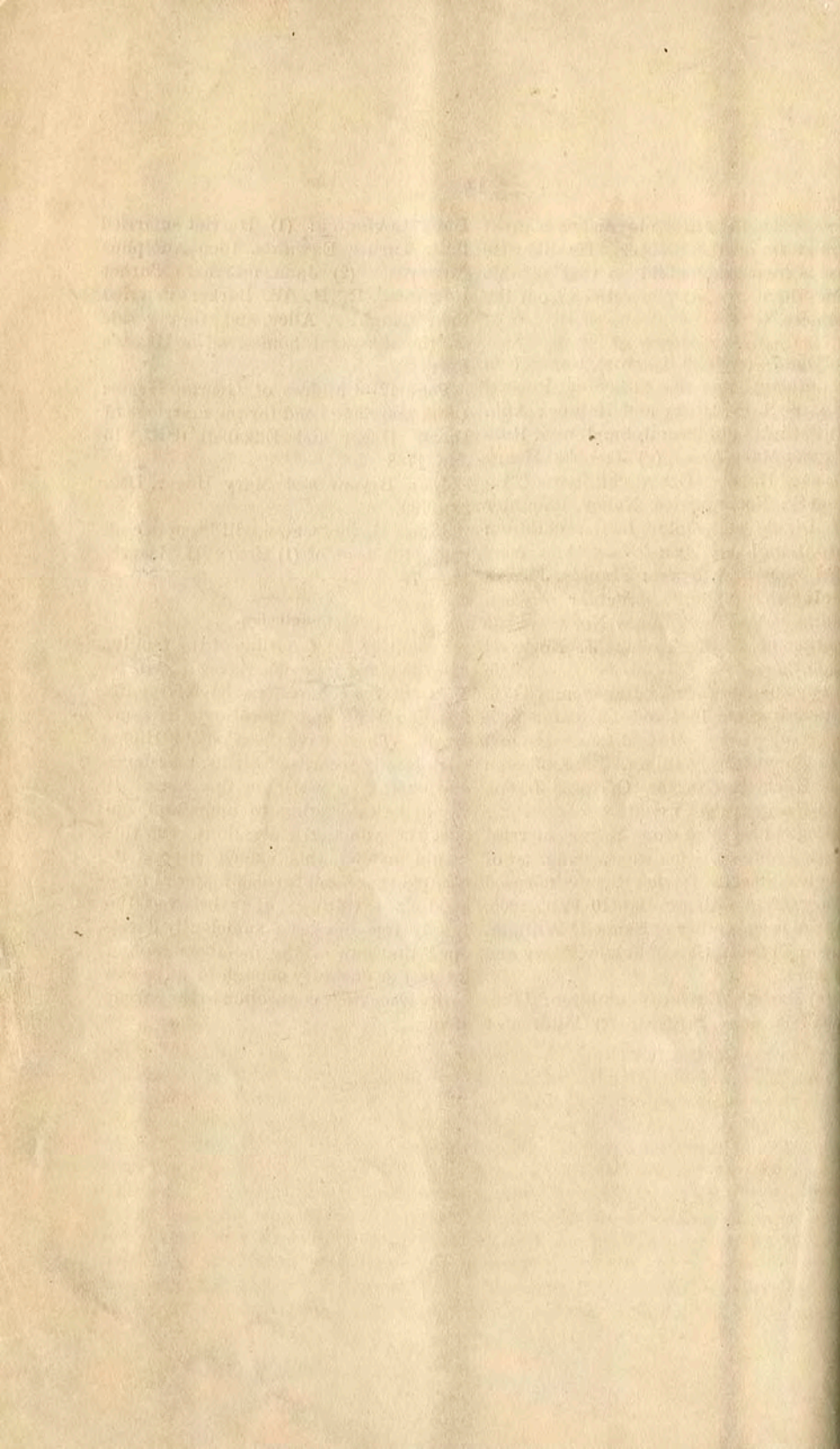
Page 12—Children of George Hager: I find marriage bond for the marriage of David Hager and Elizabeth Self, 15 Jan. 1788.

John Bryant and Mary Hager, Dec. 22, 1789.

James Hager, whose will is copied on page 14 is a son of (1) Henry H. Hager. Page 7.

#### Conclusion.

From this brief outline of the family, and the many inter-marriages it will be apparent the connections have been difficult to trace, and there may be some errors. There have been no old Bibles with family records of births, marriages and deaths to assist in the work. It would be interesting to name and connect the younger generations, but this would extend this sketch beyond its allotted space and furnish material for a good sized volume. It is believed the family tree has been sufficiently developed that any of the members having interest or curiosity enough to do so can easily trace their connection to the parent stem.





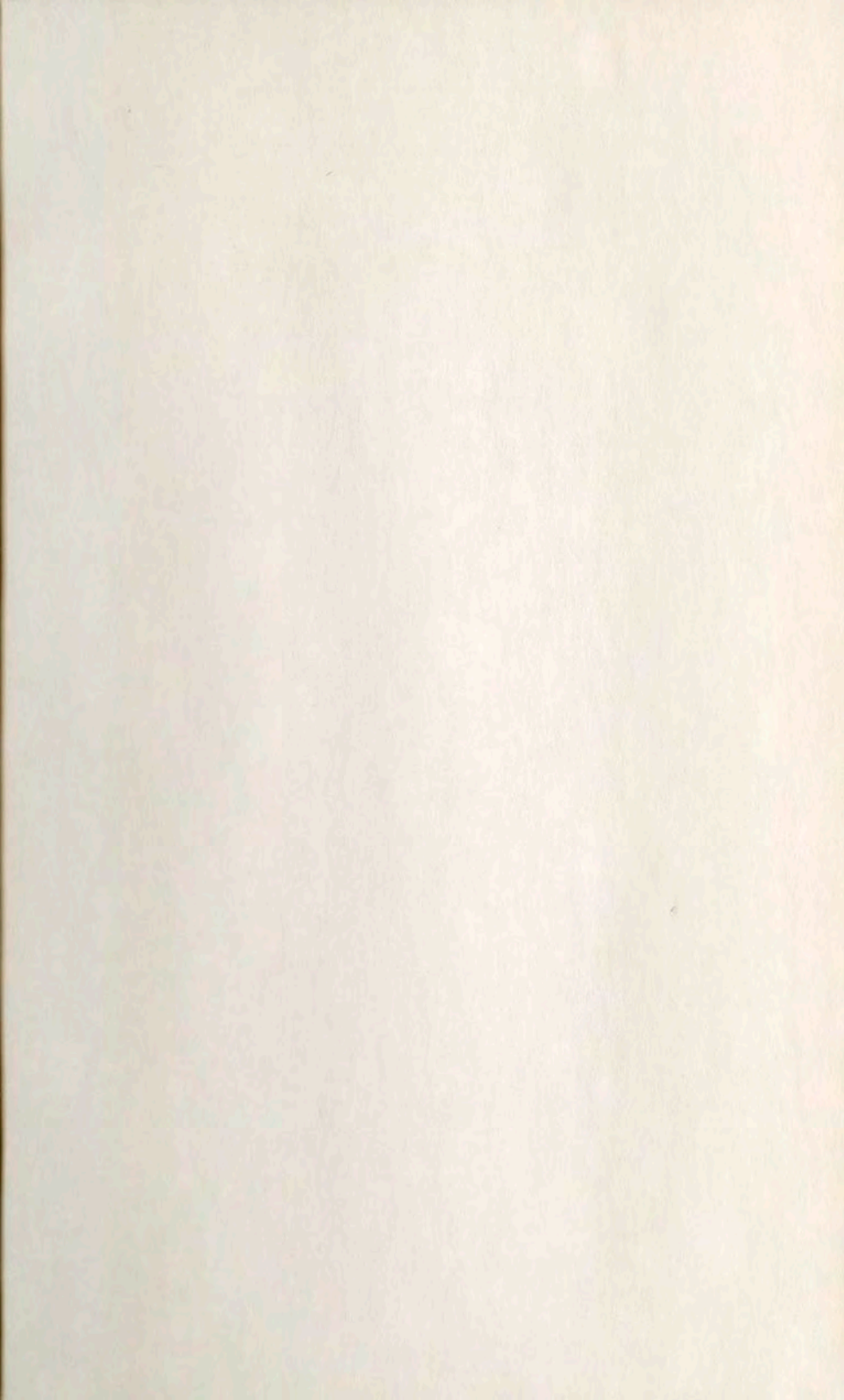


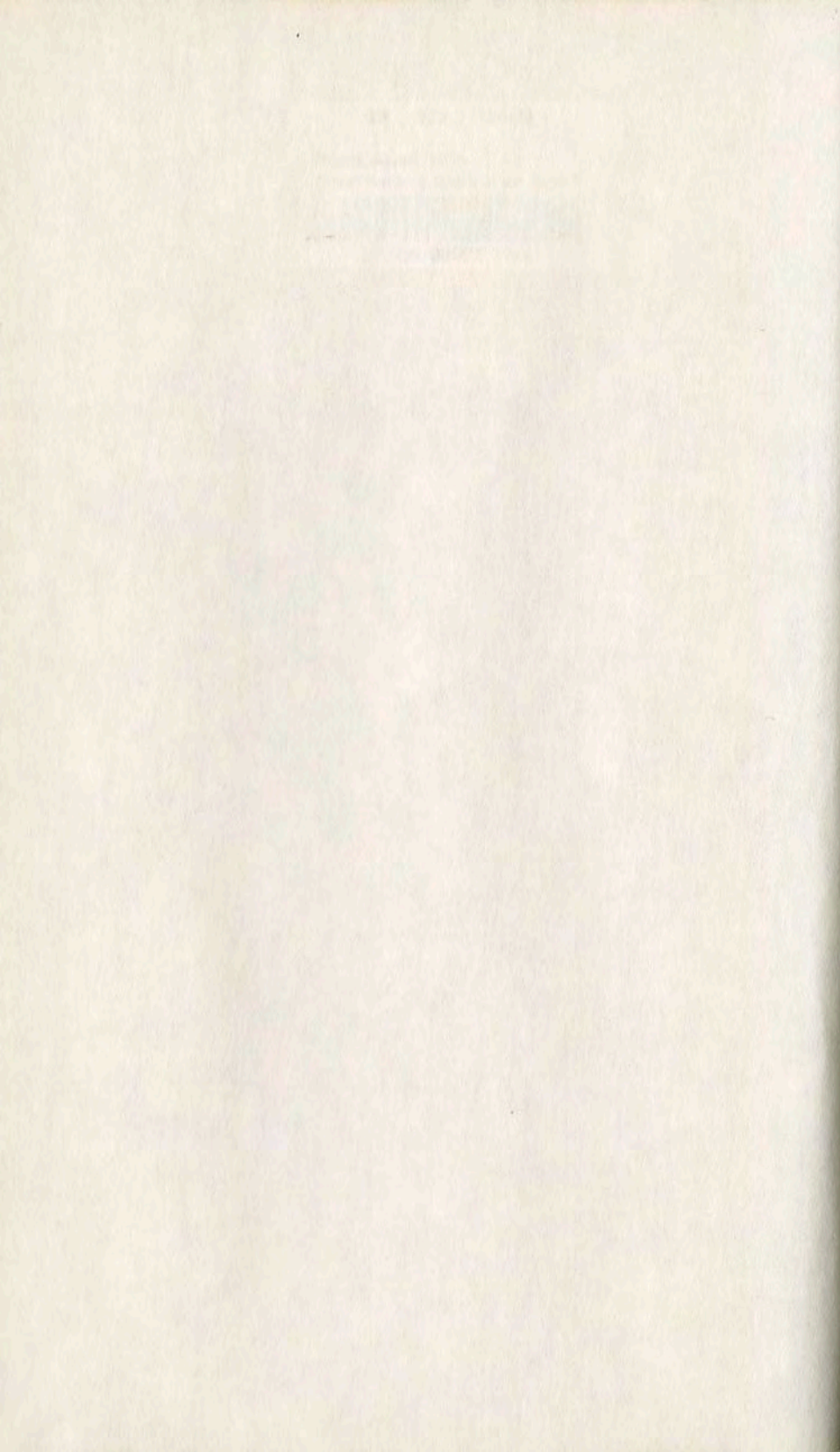
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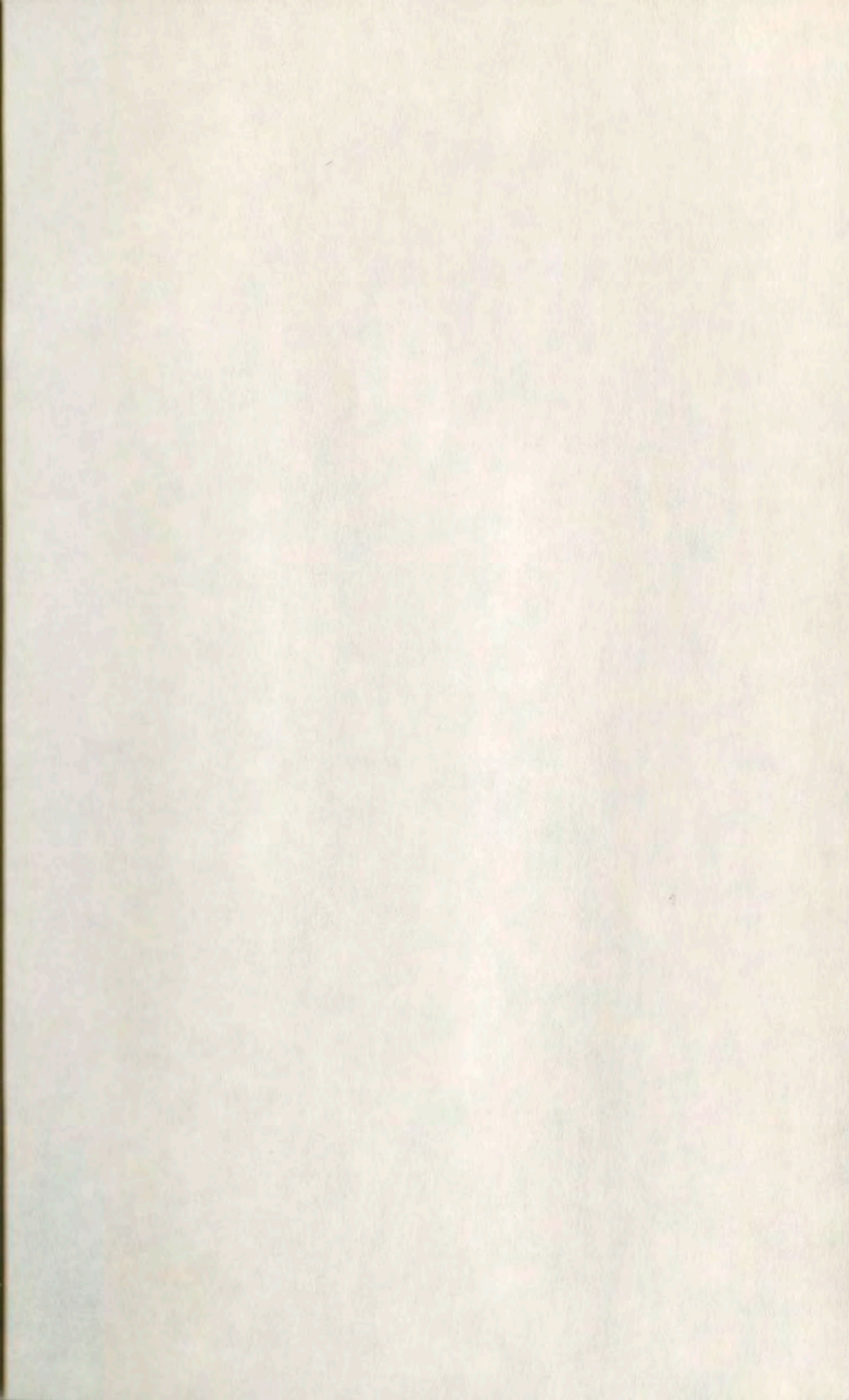
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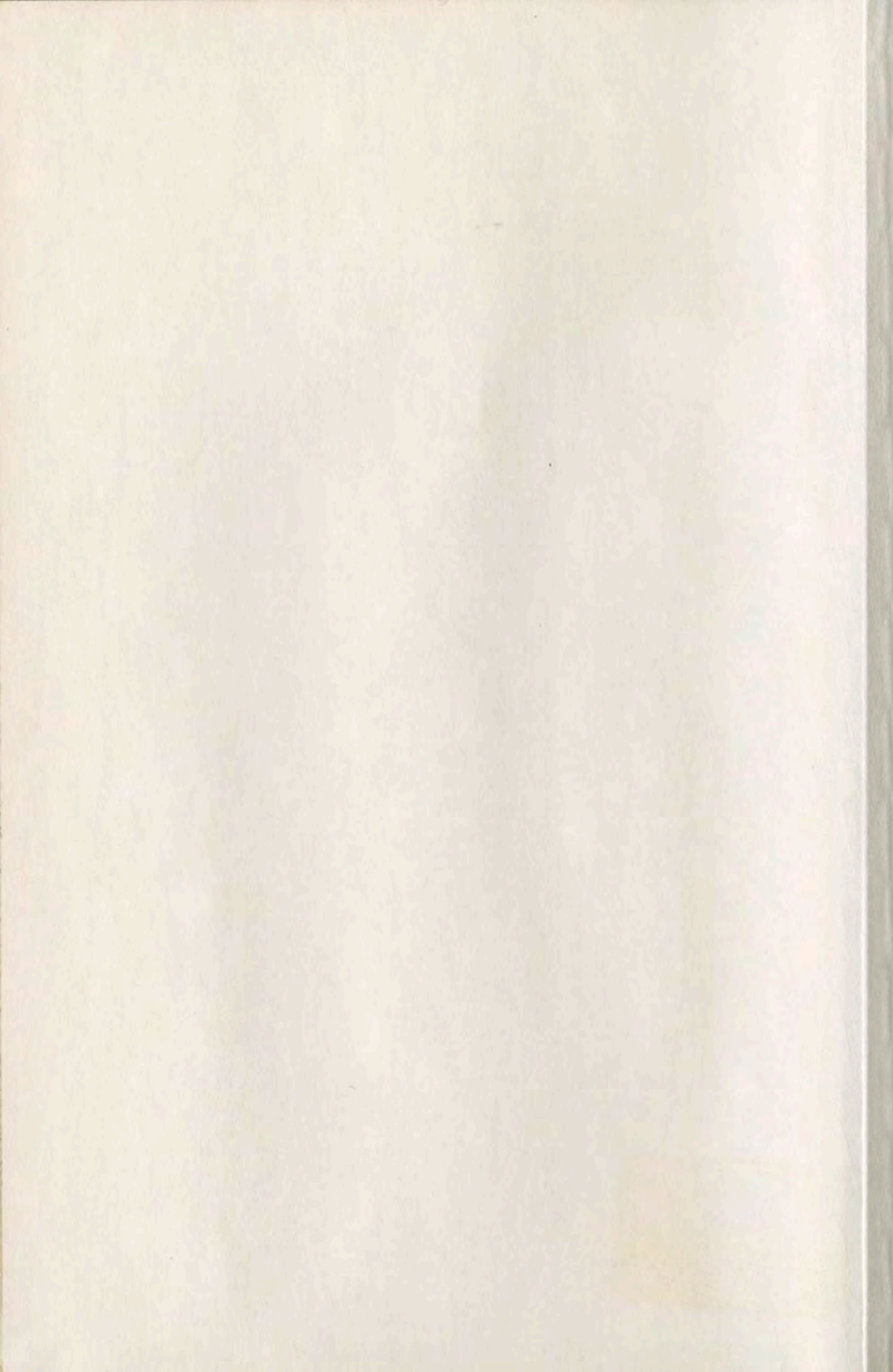


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