

The Chowan Settlement had 4000 People in 1667



Post Card of Chowan Court House

During 1663 Sir William Berkeley, the Governor of Virginia, visited a small settlement on the Chowan River and appointed William Drummond as the first Governor of the Colony of Carolina. Drummond was a Scotch Presbyterian and was prudent, cautious and deeply impressed with the love of liberty. Such were the pioneer settlements, and such was the first Governor of North Carolina. However, in 1665, it being discovered the settlement on the Chowan was not situated within the limits of the Carolina charter, and was in Virginia instead.

King Charles solved the issue by granting an enlargement of the charter so as to make it extend from twenty-nine degrees to thirty-six degrees and thirty minutes, north latitude.

These charters were liberal in the concession of civil rights and the proprietors were permitted to exercise toleration towards non-conformists, if it should be deemed expedient. Immigrants from abroad were encouraged to settle at Chowan where it had a representative government where certain freedoms were given.

As the people were chiefly refugees from religious oppression, they had no

claims on government, nor did they wish to draw its attention. They regarded the Indians as the true lords of the soil; treated with them in that capacity; purchased their lands, and obtained their grants.

At the death of Governor Drummond in 1667, the colony of Carolina contained about four thousand inhabitants. In 1712 a town was established and was later incorporated in 1722 as "Edenton" which remains the seat of Chowan County today.