

Ivan W. Nicholson. EDWARD JONES HALE AND THE FAYETTEVILLE OBSERVER, 1860-1865. (Under the direction of Dr. Charles L. Price) Department of History, East Carolina University, May 1971.

The purpose of this study is to examine a five year period in the career of newspaper editor Edward Jones Hale and the influence that he exerted through his newspaper, the Fayetteville Observer, and through his personality upon the events of that period. The selected period encompasses the time from January of 1860 to March of 1865. During those years, Hale and his Observer reached the apex of their influence within North Carolina. The defeat of the South abruptly ended Hale's influence and his career as editor of the Observer.

Hale began his career as a newspaper editor with the Observer at the age of twenty-three in 1825 when he bought the paper. By 1860 the Fayetteville Observer was forty-four years old, and Hale had served as its editor for thirty-five years. For the early part of those years, Hale supported Andrew Jackson and the Democratic party. However, with the establishment of the Whig party in North Carolina during the 1830's, Hale transferred his political allegiance. Thus, he campaigned for Whig policies throughout the years in which the party was a viable opposition to the Democratic party, and he continued to support the Whig party even when it entered its period of decline and finally its demise as a national party during the 1850's.

As a loyal member of the Whig party, Hale decried secession and believed deeply in the United States government and the Constitution, that is, until the firing on Fort Sumter. With the commencement of the Civil War, Hale did an about face in his attitude toward secession and became one of the strongest advocates of the Confederacy until the last

days of the war.

During the war years, Hale's success as an important editor received assistance from several factors. First, the people elected Zebulon B. Vance, a former Whig, as governor in 1862 and again in 1864. Vance acknowledged that he owed his victories in part to Hale and that he considered Hale as one of his closest advisers. Also, other former Whigs sat on the North Carolina Supreme Court and occupied other positions of power within the state. Therefore, in the highest offices of the state, men of the Whig political persuasion looked to the Observer as the paper which reflected their views and to Hale as their spokesman. Second, when William W. Holden brought his Raleigh North Carolina Standard to the peace movement in 1863-1864, the Democratic party chose not to run a candidate in 1864 against Vance. The Democratic papers nominally supported Vance against Holden, and in effect they fell into step politically with Hale.

When the war began to go badly for the South in the latter part of 1864, Hale refused to recant from the position that the South must fight until it achieved independence. In March of 1865 when Sherman marched north from South Carolina, Hale still refused to soften his stand against the Federal government. His attitude resulted in the destruction of the Observer and in disillusionment of Hale with the people of North Carolina.

Hale left North Carolina in 1866 and spent the remainder of his life in New York City as the owner of a publishing company. It seems odd that such an enthusiastic Confederate supporter would move to the North after the war, but Hale had friends there and he felt that New

York offered the best opportunity for him and his family. Hale never published a newspaper again, and only after his death did the Fayetteville Observer resume publication under the management of his son Edward.

While Hale edited the Observer from 1825 to 1865, he made it one of the leading newspapers in North Carolina and carved for himself a niche in North Carolina history as one of the state's most dedicated, successful, and indomitable newspaper editors. The Civil War was a national tragedy for the United States and a personal tragedy for Hale. After giving all that he had to a losing cause, he left both the South and his profession for the rest of his life. However, a study of the last five years that Hale spent in the South as an editor presents an opportunity to reassess the influential role of a leader of the Civil War era whose true significance has never been fully appreciated.

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AND THE
FAYETTEVILLE OBSERVER, 1860-1865

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CHAPTER I

A CAREER WHIG JOURNALIST

The first quarter of the nineteenth century saw the establishment of several newspapers in North Carolina that survived from the "Era of Good Feeling" to the holocaust of the Civil War. Among those newspapers were the Fayetteville Observer, established in 1816; the Hillsborough Recorder, established in 1820; and the Tarboro Southerner, established in 1824. By 1860 the Fayetteville Observer was second only to the Raleigh Register, established in 1799, in longevity of journalistic service to North Carolina, and by 1864 it was second to none.

From 1825 until 1865 Edward Jones Hale edited the Fayetteville Observer. For the first thirty-five years of that period, he gradually built the Observer into an influential political newspaper of the Whig party. Through the Observer, Hale's journalistic policy emphasized fervid and polemic editorials. Those editorials combined with a variety of news reports and a number of advertisements helped the Observer to have a substantial list of subscribers in Fayetteville and throughout the state, particularly in the East and in the Piedmont. Although Hale made himself an important editor in North Carolina before 1860, he did not reach his zenith of importance until after the decade of the 1860's began.

During 1860 and for the first three years of the Civil War, Hale wielded an increasing amount of journalistic power that only one other newspaper editor approached, William Woods Holden of the North Carolina Standard. After February of 1864, when Holden suspended publication of the Standard, until March of 1865, when General William T. Sherman destroyed the Observer, no one editor rivaled the influence with

the people, the governor, and other state politicians as Edward Jones Hale. The war years were his last years as a newspaper editor, but they represent a culmination in the career of Hale and the Observer.

Like Dennis Heartt of the Hillsborough Recorder and Joseph Gales of the Raleigh Register, as well as the more prominent Thomas Ritchie of the Richmond Enquirer and Horace Greely of the New York Tribune, Hale represents a period in United States history, "when newspapers had souls and demanded respect and were read for their opinion, quoted and treated with deference, and were treasured and stored to be read and re-read."¹ During that period of history the editor and his newspaper were synonymous terms. If the great age of the editor and the editorial dates from about 1830 to about 1890,² then Hale's career as editor of the Observer encompasses nearly two-thirds of that age, and perhaps had it not been for his extremism in defense of the Confederate cause and subsequent destruction of his press by Sherman's army, his career with the Observer might have encompassed all but a few years at the end of the entire "great age". However, any attempt to understand Hale's career must begin with an analysis of his early life.

Edward Jones Hale was born in Randolph County, North Carolina, on October 21, 1802.³ Joseph Hale and his wife Dorothy had a plantation

¹Robert N. Elliott, The Raleigh Register, 1799-1863, The James Sprunt Studies in History and Political Science, XXXVI (1955), 124, hereinafter cited as Elliott, The Raleigh Register.

²Lucy M. Salmon, The Newspaper and the Historian (1923), p. 251.

³This date was used in a memorial paper by Judge MacRae that was incorporated in an address of Colonel Broadfoot on April 15, 1917, and used in William Holden's address to the Press Association of North Carolina in 1881. However, the obituary in the New York Times of January 3, 1883, reported October 26, 1802, and Samuel Ashe's Biographical History of North Carolina states that Hale was born in Chatham County, North Carolina, on September 9, 1802.

and a mill in Chatham County until 1801 when they moved to Randolph County. The first five children of their marriage were born in Chatham County, but the next five, including Edward, were born in Randolph. In 1807 Joseph Hale died only to be followed late the next year by his wife. Thus, at the age of six, Edward Hale was an orphan.⁴ However, before her death, Dorothy Hale wrote in her will that each of her children would have a guardian, and for Edward she said, "It is my desire that my friend Edward Jones shall have the raising of my son Edward."⁵

In 1809 Edward Hale went to live with the man for whom he was named.⁶ There at Rock Rest in Chatham County, young Hale received some schooling before he was placed in 1812 with Joseph Gales of the Raleigh Register as an apprentice.⁷ For the next twelve years Hale learned the printer's trade under the careful supervision of Gales. In 1824 he went to the National Intelligencer in Washington, D. C. In 1825 John Eccles and John McRae invited Hale to Fayetteville to publish a newspaper.⁸ He became editor and part owner of the Carolina Observer in January, 1825,

⁴Edward J. Hale v. Thomas Loring, Cumberland County Miscellaneous Papers, 1754-1867, State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, hereinafter cited as Hale v. Loring.

⁵Randolph County Record of Wills, 1809, State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh.

⁶Colonel Edward Jones served as State Solicitor General of North Carolina in 1814, and on the Board of Trustees at the University of North Carolina from 1804 to 1841.

⁷William Woods Holden, "On the History of Journalism in North Carolina" (Rough draft of an address delivered before the Press Association of North Carolina, Winston, North Carolina, 1881), William Woods Holden Papers, Manuscript Department, Duke University Library, Durham, North Carolina, p. 34.

⁸Holden, "On the History of Journalism in North Carolina," p. 34.

and by the next year, he owned the paper.⁹

The Carolina Observer had its beginning in 1816. Francis Waldo founded the paper in that year, but the next year Alexander H. Dismukes owned and edited it. By 1823 Dismukes expanded the name of the paper to Carolina Observer and Fayetteville Gazette. Also in the spring of that year, John McRae obtained control of the paper. However, Lemuel Bingham bought the paper in October of 1823 and changed the name back to Carolina Observer. He edited the paper until September of 1824 when Edwin Brewer became owner. Brewer's association with the paper lasted until January of 1825.

Fayetteville offered advantages to a young man, such as Hale, who wanted to become involved in publishing a newspaper. The most important advantage was its location. Fayetteville served as the market town for the country west of Raleigh. By 1818 steamboats plied the Cape Fear River between Wilmington and Fayetteville bringing news from the port city with them. Charleston, South Carolina, provided a further source of foreign news. With those two suppliers of news, a Fayetteville newspaper received important information in advance of other state papers. In addition to the links with Wilmington and Charleston, Fayetteville formed a hub from which roads spread in all directions. Later some of these roads were plank roads.¹⁰ Thus, in 1825 Hale found an opportunity to put his newspaper experience to good service in a growing community that needed a reliable news source, and that provided the essential foreign and national

⁹Guion G. Johnson, Ante-Bellum North Carolina, A Social History (1937), p. 763, hereinafter cited as Johnson, Ante-Bellum North Carolina.

¹⁰George W. Paschall, A History of Printing in North Carolina (1946), p. 35. For general background material pertaining to North Carolina I have relied upon Hugh Talmage Lefler and Albert Ray Newsome, North Carolina, The History of a Southern State, Revised edition (1963).

news which constituted the heart of ante-bellum newspapers.

Hale began his endeavor to mold a forceful and exemplary editorial personality on January 13, 1825. On that day he published an editorial stating two aims. First, he stated that he would not engage in "violent party contests."¹¹ Considering the vituperative language used by Hale in later political campaigns, and the lawsuits and the challenges to duels stemming from politics, he did not adhere to his good intention of 1825. Second, Hale stated that he hoped to make the paper "useful and profitable."¹² In that regard, Hale succeeded for forty years. In particular, Hale made the Observer a financial success. During this early period he was "often referred to as the only printer in North Carolina who made money from his shop...."¹³ Many of his editorials reflected his desire to operate at a profit by imploring his subscribers to pay their dues or he would have to sell the paper. Later in his career Hale pioneered the idea of subscribers paying the subscription rate in advance. However, on occasions Hale retreated from his policy of financial tenacity to extend a generous hand. In February of 1842 he reduced the subscription rate of a subscriber from \$3.50 to \$3.00 a year because of the character and circumstances of the man. In giving his reasons for his action, Hale said, "I do not mean this as an example of what I will do with other people, but purely because I am not willing to be hard on a poor and industrious and honest man."¹⁴

¹¹Fayetteville Observer, January 13, 1825.

¹²Fayetteville Observer, January 13, 1825.

¹³Johnson, Ante-Bellum North Carolina, p. 806.

¹⁴Edward Hale to Duncan McLaurin, February 4, 1842, Duncan McLaurin Papers, Manuscript Department, Duke University Library, Durham, North Carolina.

In 1828 Andrew Jackson counted Hale among his avid supporters. Hale called for Jackson not just to be elected President but to be elected by an overwhelming majority.¹⁵ However, by the election of 1832, Hale disagreed with Jackson's policies. One disagreement stemmed from Hale's support of distribution of proceeds from sale of public land. Jackson did not support the idea, and in March of 1833 he vetoed a resolution to appoint a committee of inquiry.¹⁶ A second disagreement stemmed from Jackson's dislike of the national bank. Hale defended the bank on the basis that it offered more advantages than local banks, and that a recharter of the bank was in the best interest of the United States.¹⁷ Hale believed in federal aid to the states and championed a national bank. Thus, Hale reluctantly supported Andrew Jackson and Phillip Barbour on the Republican ticket in the fall of 1832 since he felt that he could not honestly favor Jackson and Van Buren on the Democratic ticket, and he was not yet a Henry Clay supporter.¹⁸

By 1833 Jackson alienated Hale even further by the bank veto and by the removal of deposits to pet banks, even though Hale enthusiastically supported Jackson's nullification stand. Meanwhile, Hale admired Clay for his tariff of 1833. With the formation of the Whig party in 1834, Hale emerged as a leading critic of Jacksonian Democracy. Under the leadership of George Badger, Edward Dudley, Willie Mangum, William A. Graham, and Hale,

¹⁵Fayetteville Observer, November 6, 1828.

¹⁶Herbert D. Pegg, "The Whig Party in North Carolina, 1834-1861" (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of North Carolina, 1932), pp. 21-22, hereinafter cited as Pegg, "The Whig Party".

¹⁷Fayetteville Observer, July 24, 1832.

¹⁸Fayetteville Observer, October 2, 1832.

the Whigs made a good showing in the state elections of 1834. On May 18, 1835, the Whig party in North Carolina was organized on a state wide basis.¹⁹

Hale proved himself to be a good Whig, although at times too eager to besmirch the Democrats. In 1836 he declared through the Observer (Fayetteville Observer as of January of 1833) that Colonel Richard M. Johnson, Van Buren's running mate, had reared a family of mulatto children.²⁰ He vigorously campaigned against Van Buren and Johnson until the election. Earlier in 1837 the Raleigh Register said that the Observer "is exceeded by none in the State in point of usefulness and respectability."²¹ Also, Hale was elected to the vestry of St. John's Episcopal Church in Fayetteville.²² It is impossible to gauge the effect that those two events and the election attack on Johnson had on Hale, but the purpose of a convention that Hale proposed in 1837 was to form a code of ethics for editors in order to curtail their use of personality assassination and of unbecoming language. Only thirteen of the twenty-five papers in the state sent representatives. A call from the Observer for a second meeting in 1838 had no response so the idea languished and died.²³ The lack of a written code gave Hale the opportunity to act in clear conscience during the next two and a half decades, during which time he aimed editorial barbs at Democrats and other foes, often in ungentlemanly terms.

¹⁹Pegg, "The Whig Party", p. 38.

²⁰Fayetteville Observer, July 28, 1836.

²¹Raleigh Register, January 17, 1837.

²²Raleigh News and Observer, January 6, 1833.

²³Johnson, Ante-Bellum North Carolina, p. 793.

With the Whigs in control of the state and of the leading newspapers, Hale had no particular journalistic enemy until William Holden switched allegiance to the Democratic party in 1843 in return for the opportunity to edit the North Carolina Standard, a Democratic newspaper in Raleigh. Before the year was over, Holden accused Hale of borrowing \$10,000 from the Literary Board of North Carolina. Hale countered that he had only signed a bond of the person who had made the loan. But his primary defense was that Holden had acted distastefully by printing Hale's private financial affairs for all to read in a newspaper. Accordingly, no one ever accused Holden of the tactic of invasion of privacy again.²⁴ However, the editorial exchange between Holden and Hale in 1843 signaled the first of many exchanges between them via their respective papers. In April of 1845, Hale lashed Holden with one of his most vicious editorials. He said that "no man of any party here Fayetteville regards or respects him. Those he acts with constantly fear him--they know not how soon in the very thickest of the fight he may turn his weapons; while uncharitable Whigs actually loathe him, as being diseased with a vile moral leprosy...."²⁵ Despite the severity of Hale's attack, he displayed remarkable insight to Holden's vacillation of loyalty that broke a war-forged alliance between them in 1863.

With the establishment of the Wilmington Journal in 1844 as a Democratic paper, Hale had two targets of attack. He took upon himself the task to keep the Journal and the Standard informed of their political

²⁴Edgar Estes Folk, "W. W. Holden and the North Carolina Standard, 1843-1848: A Study in Political Journalism," North Carolina Historical Review, XIX (January, 1942), 32.

²⁵Fayetteville Observer, April 23, 1845.

ineptitude. But Hale did not limit his forays into the polemical arena just to two newspapers or to two editors. Hale did not hesitate to cross pens with anyone. However, when it appeared that a quarrel would turn into a personal feud, Hale stopped the argument with the charge of conduct unbecoming a gentleman and moved to drop the offending newspaper from the exchange list.²⁶ If that move was not enough to end the controversy, Hale would bring a lawsuit, as he did in 1849 against Thomas Loring of the Wilmington Commercial. Loring remarked that Hale did not have a father, and in the ensuing testimony before a judge in Randolph County in November of 1850, witnesses testified to the contrary.²⁷ Thus, Hale won the lawsuit, and Loring printed a public apology.

Throughout the 1840's Hale exemplified the Whig political philosophy. As he had earlier advocated distribution, uniform currency, and a national bank, he continued to advocate economic and financial regulation by a central government. Hale's support of those policies were led in part by his desire to protect his growing investment in the Observer and his growing diversification of investment, notably as an incorporator of the Rock Fish Manufacturing Company.²⁸ With regard to national political issues, Hale opposed the annexation of Texas. Early in 1845 he considered the joint resolution for annexation a violation of the Constitution.²⁹ Even after the annexation was ratified, Hale criticized the action and contended that the only reason Southerners supported the

²⁶Johnson, Ante-Bellum North Carolina, p. 789.

²⁷Hale v. Loring.

²⁸Richard L. Zuber, Jonathan Worth, A Biography of a Southern Unionist (1965), p. 34.

²⁹Fayetteville Observer, March 5, 1845.

annexation was to prepare for a Southern Confederacy.³⁰ The next year he condemned the Mexican War as unnecessary and unconstitutional.³¹ On the home political front, the control of state politics by the Whigs had been steadily reduced by 1848. In that year the Democratic challenger for governor, David Reid, made a serious attempt to wrestle control of the state house away from the Whigs. Hale, as a member of the Central Whig Committee³² and as editor of a leading Whig paper, attempted to divert Reid's main thrust of making free suffrage an issue. Hale contended that Reid, as a member of the General Assembly, had not favored free suffrage.³³ Although they were able to win the election in 1848, the Whigs were divided. The divisive issue was secession. Six Whig papers supported Congressman Thomas Clingman, who believed secession was a tool of resistance to Northern dominance, while the other Whig papers including the Observer supported George Badger. Badger believed that a state could not secede from the Union because a state had no constitutional right to do so.³⁴ The split in the party over the secession issue helped to reduce the power of the Whig party both in the state and in the nation during the 1850's. It also helped drive Clingman into the Democratic party in 1850.

With the success of the Democratic party in the state and in the nation in 1850, the Raleigh Register began a decline along with the

³⁰Fayetteville Observer, September 17, 1845.

³¹Fayetteville Observer, May 26, 1846.

³²A Circular Letter of the Central Whig Committee of North Carolina, November, 1843, Henry Thomas Shanks (ed.), The Papers of Willie Person Mangum (1950-1956), V, 119-121.

³³Clarence Norton, The Democratic Party in Ante-Bellum North Carolina, 1835-1861 (1930), p. 223, hereinafter cited as Norton, The Democratic Party.

³⁴Raleigh North Carolina Standard, November 21, 1838, hereinafter cited as North Carolina Standard.

Whig party. Although the paper continued to endorse Whig policies, "leadership was gradually taken over by the Fayetteville Observer."³⁵ As the emerging leader of Whig newspapers, Hale resolutely attacked the Nashville Convention. He charged that the convention was a plot of John C. Calhoun "to demand impracticable and impossible concessions, and with a purpose and declaration, if not granted, the South would secede."³⁶ When the Compromise of 1850 was passed, Hale along with most of his fellow party members accepted it completely. The Whigs hoped the compromise measures would settle slavery and sectional issues.³⁷ Secession continued to be an issue, however, in the North Carolina congressional campaign of 1851. The Democratic newspapers contended a state had the right to secede although they were divided over the time of implementation. Both the Standard and the Wilmington Journal upheld the right of secession, but the Journal opposed secession as an immediate goal. Even the Whig papers were divided. The Wilmington Commercial and the Milton Chronicle favored secession, but the majority of the Whig papers, led by the Observer and the Register, opposed the doctrine.³⁸ Hale said the doctrine must be completely destroyed.³⁹ To Hale, the Federal government could only be destroyed by revolution.⁴⁰ He went so far as to declare that when a state seceded, the other states had the constitution-

³⁵Elliott, The Raleigh Register, p. 97.

³⁶Fayetteville Observer, March 20, 1850.

³⁷Morton, The Democratic Party, p. 114.

³⁸Joseph Carlyle Sitterson, The Secession Movement in North Carolina, The James Sprunt Studies in History and Political Science, XXIII, no. 2 (1939), 95, hereinafter cited as Sitterson, The Secession Movement.

³⁹Fayetteville Observer, May 20, 1851.

⁴⁰Fayetteville Observer, July 22, 1851.

al power to coerce it back into the Union.⁴¹

Amid such political turmoil, 1851 marked a milestone for the Observer. On July 3 Hale began a semiweekly edition of the paper. The Raleigh Register had been a semiweekly for years and even the Wilmington Commercial had been a triweekly since 1846. By the time the Observer appeared as a semiweekly, both the Register and Journal were attempting to circulate a daily paper.⁴² Hale never attempted to publish the Observer as a daily paper, but he continued to publish it as a weekly and as a semiweekly until 1865.

The election of 1852 marked the end of the Whig party as a moving force on the American political scene. In North Carolina as well as in the entire South, most Whigs opposed the nomination of Winfield Scott for President. The Northern Whigs decided to nominate him in spite of the fact that the Southern faction of the party favored Millard Fillmore. Edward Stanly of North Carolina pictured Scott as a supporter of the Compromise of 1850 and, therefore, could not see why Southern Whigs would be suspicious of Scott merely because he was supported by the Northern, anti-slavery wing of the party.⁴³ Scott's nomination also found favor with Senator Willie Mangum. He made a speech in the Senate in favor of Scott. Scott was not popular with many North Carolina Whigs, and the state convention had endorsed Fillmore instead of Scott. When Hale learned of Mangum's speech in support of Scott, he wrote William A. Graham that he felt that Mangum was drunk when he began the speech and

⁴¹Fayetteville Observer, July 29, 1851.

⁴²Elliott, The Raleigh Register, p. 124.

⁴³Sitterson, The Secession Movement, p. 95.

was very drunk by the time that he finished it, even though Graham was Scott's Vice-Presidential candidate.⁴⁴ Hale's remarks about Mangum give some indication of Hale's irascible nature. However, fellow Whig Paul Cameron said more accurately of Hale, "You sometimes hit a little hard those who do not always think with you."⁴⁵

While the Whig party disintegrated after the defeat of Scott, the Know-Nothing party materialized. First organized in New York in March of 1852, it appeared in North Carolina after the gubernatorial election of 1854. Organized by September in North Carolina, it attracted many Whigs, and within six months the Whig party no longer functioned in the state.⁴⁶ Despite its anti-foreigner and anti-Catholic platforms, which did not have much application in the South, many Whig editors joined or supported the Know-Nothing party.

Although Hale never joined the party, he did support its cause.⁴⁷ When Weston Gales of the Register joined the party, Hale declined an offer from several leading Whigs in the state to move the Observer to Raleigh.⁴⁸ Even though he did not join the party, Hale could not disregard the only party that opposed his traditional enemies, the Democrats. With Whig support, the Know-Nothing party elected three Congressmen in 1855. In 1856 the eyes of the party were on the governor's mansion. At the state convention in Greensboro in April of 1856, John

⁴⁴Edward Hale to William A. Graham, April 21, 1852, Joseph Gregoire de Roulhac Hamilton (ed.), The Papers of William Alexander Graham, (1957-1961), IV, 292.

⁴⁵Paul Cameron to Edward Hale, May 21, 1857, Edward Jones Hale Papers, State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, hereinafter cited as Hale Papers.

⁴⁶Pegg, "The Whig Party," p. 288.

⁴⁷Pegg, "The Whig Party," p. 293.

⁴⁸Fayetteville Observer, March 5, 1855.

A. Gilmer of Guilford County, a former Whig, accepted the nomination for governor.⁴⁹ In the ensuing August election for governor, the Observer did not support Gilmer. Neither did the Observer support Fillmore for President on the Know-Nothing party's national ticket. Hale may have favored the party, but he would not let his views appear in the Observer.

As the election of 1852 marked the end of the Whig party in national politics, so the election of 1856 marked the end of the Know-Nothing party. The national council adjourned sine die on June 3, never to meet again.⁵⁰ That fall, John Gilmer went to Washington, D. C., as the only member of the Know-Nothing party in Congress from North Carolina as well as from Virginia, Alabama, and South Carolina. From all of the states, the House of Representatives only had fourteen men that were of the party.⁵¹ With the demise of the Know-Nothing party and all of its Whig newspaper supporters, the Observer emerged as the leading if not the only safe and representative paper of the old Whig party in North Carolina, and it received the endorsement of old Whigs to that effect.⁵² But with no Whig or Know-Nothing party to oppose the Democrats, old Whigs had to form or join some group to express their political ideology. For the gubernatorial election of 1858, they joined former Whigs, Know-Nothings, and any one else that they could gather away from the Democrats in a conglomeration called the Opposition party. However,

⁴⁹Norton, The Democratic Party, p. 223.

⁵⁰Thomas H. Leath, "The Know-Nothing Party in North Carolina," (unpublished master's thesis, University of North Carolina, 1929), p. 47, hereinafter cited as Leath, "The Know-Nothing Party."

⁵¹Leath, "The Know-Nothing Party," pp. 48-49.

⁵²F. B. Satterthwaite to Hale, September 21, 1857, Hale Papers.

Democrat John Ellis defeated their candidate Duncan McRae by 16,247 votes.⁵³ Beaten on the Know-Nothing party ticket and the Opposition ticket, the Whigs directed their wills to the formation of a new Whig party. The Whig party reorganized in the winter of 1859, and in the fall four Whigs were sent to Congress from North Carolina, including Zebulon Vance and John Gilmer.⁵⁴

When Gilmer ran for governor in 1856 on the Know-Nothing party ticket, the Raleigh Register supported him. As previously indicated, the activity of Weston Gales in the Know-Nothing party had caused some Whig leaders in 1856 to approach Hale and to ask him that he move the Observer to Raleigh. Although the Register had been a leading paper in the state for nearly sixty years and the most prominent Whig paper for the last thirty-two years, it had been slipping downward in importance since 1848 when Weston Gales had become editor.⁵⁵ Finally in December of 1856, Weston Gales sold the paper to John Syme for \$5,100.⁵⁶ Within six months Hale discontinued the exchange with the Register, threatened Syme with a libel suit, and declined a challenge from Syme to fight a duel. Hale and his son Peter, who as associate editor of the Observer had been challenged, declined the offer because they were opposed to dueling.⁵⁷ In three

⁵³Leath, "The Know-Nothing Party," p. 52.

⁵⁴Leath, "The Know-Nothing Party," p. 53.

⁵⁵Elliott, The Raleigh Register, p. 102.

⁵⁶Elliott, The Raleigh Register, p. 100.

⁵⁷Elliott, The Raleigh Register, p. 102. Peter operated the Observer with his father from July, 1850, until March, 1865. After the war, Hale praised Peter by saying, "And most of the praise which I have had for the later years of my Editorial life, is really his. I am sorry the world does not know it, for it is emphatically true." Peter did not associate himself with another newspaper until 1876 when he went to Raleigh and joined with William Saunders to publish the Raleigh Observer and Hale's Weekly. Hale's other son Edward joined with Hale in the operation of the Fayetteville Observer in November, 1860, but his

years Whig leaders offered Syme \$6,000 for his paper in order to place it in the hands of a more efficient editor.⁵⁸ Syme refused to sell, and the Whig leaders discussed establishing another paper in Raleigh. They rejected the plan, and on the "advice of [Jonathan] Worth they attempted to heal the breach with Syme, but extended their chief aid to the Fayetteville Observer."⁵⁹ One reason why the Whig leaders wished to rid the Register of Syme is illustrated by his statements in 1859 concerning John Brown's raid. After the raid, the Register said that the election of a Republican to the Presidency would be a signal for secession.⁶⁰ That statement did not reflect the feelings of many Whigs in North Carolina. By the end of 1859, Whig leaders like Worth turned to the Observer as the Whig paper of the state.

Worth even stopped his subscription to the Register. He felt that it had little influence, but he feared that putting another Whig paper in Raleigh might cause a breach between it and the Register. As for the newspapers that Worth read, he said, "The Fayetteville Observer is the most efficient."⁶¹ In that sentiment Worth only echoed the words of Whig leader Charles Manly, who had written Hale back in late winter of

⁵⁷(Cont'd.) military duty after April, 1861, did not allow him to be actively associated with the Observer during the war years. Edward re-established the Observer in Fayetteville in February, 1883, and edited it until 1885 when he became Consul to Manchester. He returned to the Observer in 1892 and edited the paper for four more years until he turned it over to his son Edward.

⁵⁸Jonathan Worth to Hale, February 13, 1859, Hale Papers.

⁵⁹Elliott, The Raleigh Register, p. 102.

⁶⁰Raleigh Register, November 23, 1859.

⁶¹Jonathan Worth to George Little, November 26, 1859, Joseph Gregoire de Roulhac Hamilton (ed.), The Correspondence of Jonathan Worth (1909), I, 83-84.

1859, "I consider yours the best newspaper in the State politically, editorially and gentlemanly."⁶² Even in comparison to Democratic editor William Holden, whom most historians consider the leading North Carolina editor of the period, Hale contends for the accolade of having an unsurpassed editorial influence.⁶³

If the Observer was not the best, it certainly has to be considered as one of the best newspapers in North Carolina and the motivating force behind the paper was Hale. In addition to editing the Observer, Hale also operated a print shop which published books. Among the books Hale printed were the Georgia Supreme Court Reports and Francis Hawks' History of North Carolina.⁶⁴ Although Hale lost money in the latter project,⁶⁵ the combined efforts of newspaper publishing and book printing earned him about \$12,000 to \$20,000 per year between 1840 and 1860.⁶⁶ Hale's financial success in part led A. S. Barnes and Company of New York to offer him a job as manager in 1857, and the New York World to offer him a position as editor in 1858.⁶⁷ Thus, Hale's forte as a newspaper editor was recognized beyond the borders of North Carolina.

Although Hale aligned himself politically with the Whigs, he

⁶²Charles Manly to Hale, February 12, 1859, Hale Papers.

⁶³Horace Wilson Raper, "William Woods Holden: A Political Biography" (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of North Carolina, 1951), p. iv, hereinafter cited as Raper, "Holden: A Political Biography."

⁶⁴New York Times, January 3, 1883.

⁶⁵Hale to David Lowery Swain, November 26, 1858, David Lowery Swain Papers, State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh.

⁶⁶Samuel A. Ashe and Others (eds.), Biographical History of North Carolina; From Colonial Times to the Present (1905-1917), VIII, 181.

⁶⁷Ashe, Biographical History, VIII, p. 181. Hale apparently was the Southern distributor for Barnes and Company of New York. Correspondence in the Hale Papers indicate a long and friendly association between Hale and the Barnes family.

realized that patriots existed in both the Whig and the Democratic parties of North Carolina.⁶⁸ For above everything else, Hale was a North Carolinian. As Professor Charles Phillips of the University of North Carolina said to Hale, "One thing I have always admired in your course---promptly as you may at times keep people from treading on your toes--and that is what you praise in 'the Standard'--a hearty and whole souled North Carolinaism."⁶⁹ Even Holden and the Standard, bitter political enemies of Hale, received Hale's respect for their public spirit.⁷⁰ Therefore, by 1860 Hale had established himself as a leading Whig, editor, and patriot of North Carolina, and the Fayetteville Observer was an important extension of his personality. Together, they entered the fretful year of 1860.

⁶⁸Hale to Henry Miller, May 10, 1859, Hale Papers.

⁶⁹Charles Phillips to Hale, June 30, 1859, Hale Papers.

⁷⁰Fayetteville Observer, July 2, 1859.

CHAPTER II

DEFENDER OF THE UNION

For Hale, 1860 began a period of five years of unparalleled political activity and commentary. Occupying a critical position in the editorial ranks of the newspapers of the state, Hale brought thirty-five years of journalistic sagacity and experience into a year that began with the reaction to John Brown's trial and ended with the reaction to the secession of South Carolina. The national events of the year overshadowed the state events, and thus Hale concentrated his efforts upon the most important area. Setting for himself the task of helping to preserve his beloved Union in the face of the most severe threat to its existence during Hale's life, his pursuance of that task continued until April of 1861, when the realities of war broke Hale's bonds to the Stars and Stripes. However, while pursuing the task of preserving the Union, Hale did not divorce himself from the political struggles within North Carolina nor the political struggles of his fellow Whigs, both nationally and locally.

Since the Whigs of North Carolina had just reorganized in 1859, they had the ambition to have their elected representatives to the thirty-sixth Congress, which convened in December of 1859, make their presence known within Congress and throughout the nation. Hale recognized that the Whig party had an excellent opportunity to do that when John Gilmer became involved in the struggle for the powerful position of Speaker of the House. Because Gilmer was a political friend of Hale and a member of a small minority of Whigs in Congress, Hale was anxious to see Gilmer gain the job of Speaker, so much so that he dedicated his editorial

efforts to obtaining that end from December of 1859 through January of 1860. Even when the fight for Speaker was lost by Gilmer, Hale did not withdraw from the field without releasing a barrage of verbal spears.

In brief, Gilmer moved to amend a Democratic resolution aimed at John Sherman of Ohio, the Republican choice for Speaker, the statement suggesting that anyone who had endorsed Hinton Helper's The Impending Crisis was not fit to be Speaker.¹ He thus lost the support of Democrats who otherwise could have elected him Speaker. Neither Democrats nor Republicans could elect a Speaker without a break in their ranks or the support of the twenty-six Whigs and Know-Nothings in Congress. Gilmer was not particularly loved by North Carolina Democrats because he had voted against the Lecompton Constitution and because his election as Speaker would increase the Whig party in North Carolina.²

Hale rushed to Gilmer's defense when the Democrats of North Carolina refused to support him. Hale charged primarily that the Democratic papers of North Carolina had made libelous statements about Gilmer and Helper's book. They claimed that Gilmer had a copy of the book, but Gilmer denied the charges. His denial was not published. The Wilmington Journal went so far as to charge that Gilmer voted for a Republican for Speaker.³ Hale replied, "Such is not the purpose of the newspaper press. It is a degradation from its noblest ends. Instead of informing, it misleads the public--knowingly, wilfully misleads."⁴ The Wilmington Journal

¹Henry M. Wagstaff, "State Rights and Political Parties in North Carolina, 1776-1861," Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science, XXIV (January-February, 1906), 551, hereinafter cited as Wagstaff, "States Rights".

²Wagstaff, "States Rights," p. 552.

³Fayetteville Observer, January 5, 1860.

⁴Fayetteville Observer, January 5, 1860.

was not the only Democratic paper which received Hale's wrath. He criticized the Standard for saying it published a denial by Gilmer when it did not, and for saying it did not even publish charges against Gilmer.⁵ However, Hale acted quickly to recognize a Democratic apology like the one published by the Charlotte Western Democrat. It disclaimed having sought to injure Gilmer by publishing charges of his having a copy of Helper's book. Hale felt the disclaimer was a credit to the Western Democrat and a rebuke to those who did publish the charges.⁶

As the month of January waned, Hale continued to fume over the fact that the Southern Democrats had not voted for Gilmer. As he had argued against the charge that Gilmer was innocent of any sympathy with Helper, he also argued that Gilmer had opposed the Lecompton Constitution along with many other Southerners and Democrats.⁷ Gilmer recognized the debts that he owed Hale for his defense, but acknowledged that he would never be able to pay them.⁸ Later Gilmer paid respect to Hale's political acuity in his assertion of what transpired in the fight for Speaker.⁹ Gilmer wrote Hale that the Democratic delegation from North Carolina led by Warren Winslow induced other Democrats not to support him for Speaker. Instead, the Democrats supported for Speaker, W. N. H. Smith, another of the Whig Congressmen from North Carolina, but Gilmer claimed that they had no idea of electing him.¹⁰ However, on the thirty-ninth

⁵Fayetteville Observer, January 12, 1860.

⁶Fayetteville Observer, January 19, 1860.

⁷Fayetteville Observer, January 26, 1860.

⁸John Gilmer to Hale, January 29, 1860, Hale Papers.

⁹Gilmer to Hale, February 4, 1860, Hale Papers.

¹⁰Gilmer to Hale, February 4, 1860, Hale Papers.

ballot Smith did get more votes for Speaker than Sherman, and Sherman withdrew from the contest. William Pennington of New Jersey, who had not endorsed The Impending Crisis, received the nomination from the Republicans and was elected with the support of enough Whigs to win over the Democratic candidate.¹¹

At best the Whigs had demonstrated their ability to create a compromise in national affairs. To Hale, the election for Speaker represented a threat by the Democrats to stifle the truth. In a specific reference to his favorite journalistic target, the Wilmington Journal, he railed that the Democratic papers were determined that the people would not see the truth.¹² Of course, Hale as the editor of the most prominent Whig political journal could not argue otherwise if he entertained thoughts of a serious challenge to Democratic rule in the fall elections. However, the Wilmington Journal dismissed Hale's charges as being unfounded. It concluded that Hale based his information on the Charleston Mercury which the Journal claimed "recognizes no allegiance to the Democratic Party, and is recognized as an organ by no regular Democrat."¹³

Although Hale spent most of his editorial effort in January of 1860 defending Gilmer, he occasionally wrote on other topics, but these, too, were of a political nature of national concern. For example, he argued against mob or lynch law because it was dangerous to the South. His inspiration for the editorial was Daniel Worth, accused of circulating abolitionist material in North Carolina. Hale was against mob law

¹¹Wagstaff, "States Rights," p. 552.

¹²Fayetteville Observer, February 6, 1860.

¹³Wilmington Journal, February 9, 1860.

but he was in favor of Worth's arrest and legal punishment.¹⁴ Another editorial called for Southern economic independence from the North. He wanted Southern dollars to be spent in the South.¹⁵ In February Hale turned his attention wholly to two subjects that engrossed him for the next ten months. They were the organization of the Whig party in state politics and the organization of the Constitutional Union party in national politics.

On February 13 Hale announced that the Opposition or Whig State Convention would meet on February 22 to select a candidate for governor.¹⁶ The hope of Hale and others opposed to the Democratic control of the state was to form a viable Whig party that would incorporate Whigs, Know-Nothings (generally former Whigs), and any other Democratic critics into one movement. Both Hale and his eldest son Peter attended the convention at Raleigh.¹⁷ As a leader behind the Whigs, Hale declared that they would not join the Democrats or the Republicans since they viewed both parties as opponents upon whom they would war.¹⁸ The issue chosen to challenge the Democrats was ad valorem taxation, and the man selected to contest the Democratic nominee for governor was John Fool. Hale launched the attack in a two-pronged assault. First, he charged the Democratic party with inconsistency on the tax issue. He stated that

¹⁴Fayetteville Observer, January 9, 1860.

¹⁵Fayetteville Observer, February 9, 1860.

¹⁶Fayetteville Observer, February 13, 1860.

¹⁷Fayetteville Observer, February 23, 1860.

¹⁸Fayetteville Observer, February 23, 1860.

it "must be in a terrible state of trepidation when it cannot venture, with a majority heretofore of 12,594 votes, to take ground for or against a measure of such importance...."¹⁹ He did not hesitate to cite the Standard as an example of inconsistency. He claimed that in 1859 the Standard was for ad valorem taxation, but now it was against it.²⁰

Second, Hale defended his stand on the issue. He claimed that he did not oppose equal taxation before the Whig convention met. Hale's initial argument contained a certain amount of irrationality. He contended that he considered the Negro as property but also considered him as a person.²¹

The results of the Whig convention were hailed by Whigs in different parts of the state as a step to regaining state power. E. K. Liles of Anson County wrote Hale that he had not seen for many years the Whigs in his county so enthusiastic about victory. At the same time, he spoke for many friends of the Observer in praise of it for its course of action.²² In the second week of March the Democrats completed the stage for a bitter struggle. The Democratic convention defeated a proposal to endorse ad valorem taxation by a three to one margin.²³ Without any surprise the Democrats nominated Governor John Ellis to run for a second term. Since both the Democrats and the Opposition now had their respective candidates and had their respective stands on equal taxation, the parties launched their campaign for governor in the latter part of March with zeal and confidence.

¹⁹Fayetteville Observer, March 1, 1860.

²⁰Fayetteville Observer, March 1, 1860.

²¹Fayetteville Observer, March 5, 1860.

²²E. R. Liles to Hale, March 27, 1860, Hale Papers.

²³Fayetteville Observer, March 12, 1860.

Hale led the Whig attack for ad valorem taxation. He published a table showing the tax paid on real estate compared with tax on slaves compiled from the Comptroller's Report. Hale commented that he was prepared to advocate equal taxation as being right and fair "whether the proposition should bring defeat or success to our party, or higher or lower taxes to ourselves."²⁴ He argued that Whigs wanted to equalize the tax burden for landowners and slaveholders. The table from the Comptroller's Report supported Hale's argument of an imbalance between slaveholders and landowners by concluding that \$180,000,000 of slave property yielded \$118,000 in taxes while \$98,072,993 of real estate yielded \$191,960.96 in taxes.²⁵

For the next several months, Hale hammered at the issue of ad valorem taxation, the issue upon which the election would be won or lost. Of course, he attacked Ellis and glorified Pool, but the thrust of his attack was ad valorem taxation. He refuted the charge of the New Bern Enquirer that Eastern North Carolina would have to pay nine-tenths of the state's taxes instead of the present four-fifths if ad valorem taxation were approved.²⁶ Rather, Hale believed that the state had a right to require that each man's share of taxes should be proportional to his means.²⁷ In response to Hale's constant insistence on ad valorem taxation and to his constant attack on Democratic papers, the Wilmington Journal dismissed Hale and the Observer from its columns for the rest of the campaign with the statement that the abuse of the Observer was like the noise of

²⁴Fayetteville Observer, March 22, 1860.

²⁵Fayetteville Observer, March 22, 1860.

²⁶Fayetteville Observer, March 29, 1860.

²⁷Fayetteville Observer, April 9, 1860.

their printing press, "both matters of course and equally harmless."²⁸

Amid reports from Whigs across the state that the prospects for defeating Ellis were good, Hale continued his crusade for Pool on the equal taxation issue. In May, besides claiming that Democratic papers were not printing correct statements and views of Pool, and that they were giving one account of Ellis' speeches in the East and another in the West, Hale began to reprint articles on taxation first printed in the Observer during March and April. As the campaign began to wind down in July, Hale printed a lucid explanation of the ad valorem issue. In simple terms he explained that the constitution of North Carolina forbade the taxing of slaves under twelve and over fifty. All other slaves were taxed as high as white men between the age of twenty-one and forty-five. The clinching argument was that all states in the South except North Carolina had the power to tax all slaves.²⁹ To Hale, it did not make sense for so much possible revenue to go uncollected in North Carolina while her sister states of the South used the tax money to benefit themselves.

Until election day in the first week of August, Hale called for Whigs to work. He believed until the votes were tabulated that Pool would be elected and that the General Assembly would vote for an ad valorem taxation bill in November.³⁰ That type of stubborn behavior characterized Hale during his years as an editor. He simply refused to recognize defeat, both privately and publicly, until all hope was gone. That attitude was part of his nature. His faith in the election results was

²⁸ Wilmington Journal, April 19, 1860.

²⁹ Fayetteville Observer, July 12, 1860.

³⁰ Fayetteville Observer, July 30, 1860.

not vindicated. As the Democratic political experts predicted, Ellis won the election, but his margin of 6,024 votes gave Hale confidence for future elections.³¹ In a post election editorial, he ebulliently printed that he would campaign for Pool in 1862.³²

Hale's efforts in opposition to the Democrats did not go unrecognized. As the eminent Professor Samuel Phillips of Chapel Hill informed Hale and his son Peter, "You have conducted your share in the campaign with extreme credit to yourselves."³³ Other leading Whigs of the state joined in their praise of Hale's effort to elect Pool and gain state control from the Democrats. Perhaps the most laudatory of those voices of praise came from Oliver Dockery. In speaking of Hale, he said that even Pool agreed that Hale had done more for the cause than any other editor in the state.³⁴ Thus, in the gubernatorial election of 1860, Hale demonstrated his single purpose of mind to a cause. When the cause became secession, he acted no differently.

For most of 1860 Hale was not so concerned about the problem of secession, as he would be in the latter days of 1860 and the early months of 1861, as he was about the election of John Bell of Tennessee to the Presidency on the Constitutional Union ticket. Because the Whig party no longer functioned on the national level, Hale had to seek another political affiliation for the Presidential election if he were to be a participant rather than an observer. He did not wish to be identified with either the Democrats or the Republicans. He said that the country

³¹Fayetteville Observer, August 30, 1860.

³²Fayetteville Observer, August 6, 1860.

³³Samuel Phillips to Hale, July 19, 1860, Hale Papers.

³⁴Oliver Dockery to Hale, August 11, 1860, Hale Papers.

had reason to be discontented with both parties.³⁵ Instead, Hale urged what the country needed was a Constitutional Union party.³⁶ In publishing the address of the National Executive Committee of the Constitutional Union party, Hale called the address "eloquent," and he praised the people of the committee as "some of the purest men and patriots and soundest intellects, which have adorned the annals of our country at any period of its existence."³⁷

Old-line Whigs and Know-Nothings of North Carolina rallied to the Constitutional Union party because they saw in it a positive approach to preserving the Union from proven Democratic antics and untried Republican tactics. After the Democratic party adjourned on May 3 amid the chaos of an aborted attempt to nominate a candidate, the Constitutional Union party convened in Baltimore on May 9 to choose its candidate. Hale attended the convention, and when he returned to Fayetteville, he informed his reading public that he was "ready to do our duty against all comers, in favor of BELL and EVERETT, of the CONSTITUTION, the UNION, and the ENFORCEMENT of the LAWS--in favor of Peace in the land, and against corruption in the government."³⁸

Hale dismissed the nomination of Lincoln in the latter part of May with little comment. His immediate concern and target was his old enemy, the Democratic party. He criticized the Democratic party for its "monstrous corruption," and reasoned that the leaders of the party were too committed to preserving the present order to agree to any changes.³⁹

³⁵Fayetteville Observer, February 16, 1860.

³⁶Fayetteville Observer, February 20, 1860.

³⁷Fayetteville Observer, February 27, 1860.

³⁸Fayetteville Observer, May 14, 1860.

³⁹Fayetteville Observer, June 4, 1860.

Thus, with some measure of glee Hale announced after the second Democratic Convention in late June, "The Democratic party is fallen to pieces!"⁴⁰ The boycott by the Southern delegates of the Baltimore Convention meant that the Democrats would have two candidates for President. In late June the seceders held a convention in Richmond and nominated John Breckinridge. Hale felt now that the strongest challenge for the Presidency would come from the Republican party. Therefore, he directed his appeal for Bell on the basis that conservative men of all parties of both sections of the country had the opportunity of defeating the Republicans if they united behind Bell. Unfortunately for Hale, his hope of saving the country from the Democrats and Republicans and of restoring peace did not attain reality.

In early August Hale went North for two months, as he had done for the previous twenty-five years, in order to evade a fever that beset him if he remained in Fayetteville in late summer and early autumn.⁴¹ His travels took him to Saratoga, New York, where he paid his respects to ex-President Fillmore, and to Hartford, Connecticut.⁴² From Hartford he wrote home that support for Bell was not strong and there seemed no hope of fusion between any two of the three parties opposing Lincoln.⁴³ The letters to the Observer by Hale demonstrated his genuine concern for the safety of the country. Hale had friends in Hartford and in other cities of the North. He perceived that between the fanaticism of the Republicans and the folly of the Democrats his friends might one day

⁴⁰Fayetteville Observer, June 25, 1860.

⁴¹Fayetteville Observer, September 6, 1860.

⁴²Fayetteville Observer, August 16, 1860.

⁴³Fayetteville Observer, September 6, 1860.

become his enemies. He appealed to Heaven to prevent such an occurrence.⁴⁴ But Hale wrote undauntedly in his campaign for Bell with the belief that the fate of the Union rested on his shoulders.

To Hale, the argument was basically simple--the Republicans were for exclusion of slaves in the territories and the Breckinridge Democrats were for protection of slaves.⁴⁵ From the nomination of Breckinridge to the election, he argued that Breckinridge was for disunion, and he pointed to William L. Yancey in his ranks as proof.⁴⁶ As for Stephen Douglas, the regular Democratic nominee, Hale felt that he and Bell represented the parties in favor of the Union.⁴⁷ Despite all that Hale could do or say, the people of the United States and even of North Carolina rejected Bell. Lincoln won the election in the nation and Breckinridge won the majority of votes in North Carolina. Hale and the South had to face the reality of the inauguration of a "Black Republican" President.

Although the reaction of many Southerners to the election of Lincoln was to dissolve the Union, Hale represented the traditional Whig thought of maintaining the Union despite Lincoln's election. Back in January of 1860 he had stated his views on the subject. In an editorial he theorized that the time to dissolve the Union was before the election, but if the other parties and the South agreed to enter the election and were fairly beaten, then they had no alternative but to abide by the results.⁴⁸ For Hale it was a matter of honor to the Union to abide by

⁴⁴Fayetteville Observer, September 6, 1860.

⁴⁵Fayetteville Observer, September 13, 1860.

⁴⁶Fayetteville Observer, June to November, 1860.

⁴⁷Fayetteville Observer, September 13, 1860.

⁴⁸Fayetteville Observer, January 19, 1860.

the election results. However, he opened the possibility of disunion if there developed a cause for resistance, but he did not believe a constitutional election of any man justified that cause.⁴⁹

Hale advocated even before the election a policy of waiting to see if Lincoln would violate the rights of the South before any action should be taken. With regard to the action that should occur, Hale dismissed peaceable secession as Daniel Webster had dismissed it on the grounds that it was impossible.⁵⁰ Secession would produce a war that in fact would be a revolution. Leading Whigs of North Carolina had long adopted the same view. Both William A. Graham and George Badger denied any right of secession, and neither one saw a necessity for revolution if Lincoln were elected President.⁵¹ Hale felt, however, that the Republicans did not realize the precarious state of the Union. He predicted that South Carolina and Alabama might adopt some extreme measure if Lincoln were elected, and that it was possible other states would be forced into the same action.⁵² He also feared that the election of Lincoln might touch off an abolition foray, as Brown's raid had at Harper's Ferry, against the arsenal at Fayetteville. Thus, before the election Hale affixed his name to a petition presented by the mayor of Fayetteville to the Secretary of War requesting additional troops to guard the arsenal. The request was granted.⁵³

⁴⁹Fayetteville Observer, September 13, 1860.

⁵⁰Fayetteville Observer, October 25, 1860.

⁵¹Sitterson, The Secession Movement, p. 178.

⁵²Fayetteville Observer, November 1, 1860.

⁵³Adjutant General George Cooper to General Winfield Scott, November 1, 1860, The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies (1880-1901), Series I, I, 484, hereinafter cited as Official Records (Army).

After the election of Lincoln Hale called for reason, not passion, to govern men's minds.⁵⁴ Since revolution was the only means of redress of grievances against the Union, that time had either passed or had not arrived. For Hale and other Whigs, a state had no legal right to secede but neither did the Federal government have the right to coerce a state back into the Union. If that attempt was made, then there would be trouble.⁵⁵ In November, all of the thoughts of coercion were mere speculation. But, the election had the effect of tearing the fabric of political cloth into Union and Disunion factions rather than Whig and Democratic factions. Immediately many of the Democratic papers, such as the Wilmington Journal, increased their radical stand for disunion. They were joined in late November by the radical State Journal, a newly established Democratic organ in Raleigh. Its purpose was to replace the North Carolina Standard since Holden had fallen from good standing with the Democratic Party largely controlled by the more radical elements, including Governor Ellis. When the North Carolina General Assembly convened in Raleigh on November 19, the Democratic majority of both Houses split into conservatives and radicals because Governor Ellis recommended a convention to consider secession.⁵⁶ With Union Whigs, led by editors such as Hale, and conservative Democrats, led by editors such as Holden, fighting to suppress the secessionist urge ignited by Lincoln's election, North Carolina did not go hand in hand with South Carolina down the road of secession even though the two states later met in the abyss of the Civil War.

⁵⁴Fayetteville Observer, November 8, 1860.

⁵⁵Kemp P. Battle, "The Secession Convention of 1861," North Carolina Booklet, XV (April, 1916), 178.

⁵⁶Wagstaff, "States Rights," p. 567.

As South Carolina prepared to withdraw from the Union in December, Hale reported that the Republican papers were changing tone, and with patience the result could be an avoidance of civil war.⁵⁷ He received encouragement from Francis Hawks in New York who informed Hale that a reaction had begun in the North. Hawks told Hale that if the election were to be held in December, Lincoln would lose.⁵⁸ Optimistically Hawks wrote Hale another letter stating that if Republican attitudes did not change toward the South, the non-seceding states could form a border confederacy including some Northern states.⁵⁹ Hale agreed with that plan. He felt that if the Union were dissolved, North Carolina had more attachment to New York or Pennsylvania than South Carolina.⁶⁰ Thus, Hale advocated, in case of disunion, that North Carolina cast her fate with a Central or Border Confederacy rather than to a Southern Confederacy.⁶¹ However, Hale was not one to concede anything, particularly the dissolution of the Union. He encouraged his readers to accept Lincoln as President of the country. He pleaded with them that Lincoln's election was "not sufficient cause for a dissolution of the Union, or for resistance to the laws or to the inauguration of the new administration."⁶² Echoing the Standard he implored the people of North Carolina to "Watch and Wait."⁶³

Although Hale felt that the work of the Committee of Thirty-three indicated the Union feeling of both the North and the South, he

⁵⁷Fayetteville Observer, December 3, 1860.

⁵⁸Francis Hawks to Hale, December 4, 1860, Hale Papers.

⁵⁹Hawks to Hale, December 6, 1860, Hale Papers.

⁶⁰Fayetteville Observer, December 10, 1860.

⁶¹Fayetteville Observer, December 10, 1860.

⁶²Fayetteville Observer, December 12, 1860.

⁶³Fayetteville Observer, December 12, 1860.

once again clarified his position on secession. Hale accepted the doctrine of revolution against a tyrannous government, but he denied the doctrine of secession as being unconstitutional. Not believing in the right of secession but the right of revolution, he did not feel that the time for revolution had come, even though he had to concede that he feared that it was coming.⁶⁴ Hale admitted to believing in the right of revolution, but he did not favor the exercising of that right until every avenue leading toward peace had been explored. After the secession of South Carolina, Hale declared that North Carolina had the duty to stand where she was and not to commit herself to South Carolina.⁶⁵ With all the talk of secession and revolution, on the last day of December Hale offered a public prayer to God that He would overrule the madness in the country and restore it to its former state.⁶⁶

As 1861 began, Hale brought all the pressure that his influence could garner against the forces of secession within the state. The newspapers of the state were about evenly divided over the issue with the Observer along with the powerful Standard, the Register, the Carolina Watchman of Salisbury, and the Hillsborough Recorder for the Union while the State Journal and the Wilmington Journal led the papers favorable to secession.⁶⁷ Although the people of the state were divided over secession, most people, Hale included, were opposed to any attempt to coerce South Carolina back into the Union.

As a means of preparing the state against an attempt by the United States to coerce South Carolina back into the Union, the General

⁶⁴Fayetteville Observer, December 19, 1860.

⁶⁵Fayetteville Observer, December 24, 1860.

⁶⁶Fayetteville Observer, December 31, 1860.

⁶⁷Sitterson, The Secession Movement, pp. 211-213.

Assembly passed an arms bill on January 3 which appropriated \$300,000 to buy arms and munitions and set up a military commission to advise the governor.⁶⁸ To prepare for war was one thing, but to encourage it was another matter. Hale called the seizures of Fort Johnston and Fort Caswell on January 10 by North Carolina insurgents treason, and he labeled the firing on the Star of the West at Charleston an "Outrageous Act of War."⁶⁹

Besides the arms bill, another important bill passed by the General Assembly was a bill authorizing the people to vote for or against a convention and to select 120 delegates in case a convention were to be held. The bill passed on January 29 with the election date set for February 28.⁷⁰ If the people favored a convention, it would convene at Governor Ellis' call not earlier than March 11.⁷¹ Hale favored the convention so that the people of the state through their delegates might have the opportunity to demonstrate their support for the Union by soundly defeating any attempt to have North Carolina secede. Hale campaigned hard to have Union men in the majority at the convention. He believed that every North Carolinian would unite to overthrow an oppressor if the Federal government became that, but he agreed that the people of North Carolina should do all in their power to save the Union, stressing that there was no reason why the Union could not be saved.⁷² When the convention votes were counted, the people rejected it 47,323 votes to 46,672,

⁶⁸Richard W. Iobst, "North Carolina Mobilizes: Nine Crucial Months, December, 1860-August, 1861" (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of North Carolina, 1968), p. 17.

⁶⁹Fayetteville Observer, January 1, 1861.

⁷⁰Sitterson, The Secession Movement, p. 208.

⁷¹Sitterson, The Secession Movement, p. 208.

⁷²Fayetteville Observer, February 14, 1860.

but more importantly of the 120 delegates chosen for the convention, seventy-eight were Unionists and only forty-two were Secessionists.⁷³

The inauguration of Lincoln on March 4 induced Hale to comment that he saw no coercion in the message. Rather, Hale felt that the message had some remarkable passages and for that reason he printed it in full.⁷⁴ Later in the week Hale commented that war was an evil but civil war was "an awful scourge!"⁷⁵ Even as late as April 8, he scorned the idea that coercion would be used against South Carolina.⁷⁶ Within a week South Carolina troops attacked Fort Sumter and Lincoln responded with a request on April 15 for 75,000 men. The call for men by the United States government to be used against South Carolina quieted the Union newspapers within North Carolina. Together they joined the secession papers in a united front. Thus, on April 16 Hale found himself on the side of secession in a civil war that he had feared would come, but in a war that he had worked and prayed to prevent. For the next four years he turned his pen and mind away from a defense of the perpetuation of the United States to a defense of the establishment of the Confederate States of America.

⁷³Sitterson, The Secession Movement, p. 223.

⁷⁴Fayetteville Observer, March 7, 1861.

⁷⁵Fayetteville Observer, March 11, 1861.

⁷⁶Fayetteville Observer, April 8, 1861.

CHAPTER III

DEFENDER OF THE CONFEDERACY

The firing on Fort Sumter and Lincoln's call for troops left the Union men in North Carolina little choice in determining whether they would continue to support the United States, or whether they would begin to support the Confederate States of America. With few exceptions they turned their full attention and gave their full energy to the support of the Confederacy even before North Carolina officially joined with the other Southern states. The secessionist and Union newspapers ceased their quarrel and united in their support for the convention in May which swept North Carolina into the Confederacy. During the exciting and emotional days of April and May, 1861, few men realized the ultimate consequences of the decision to become entangled in a civil war. Indeed, few men realized how severely strained their commitment to war would become as the days lengthened into months and the months dragged into years.

From Fayetteville, Hale gave little indication that the course of events caused any feeling of remorse. Soon after the call for troops, he limited his editorial space because he was anxious to give details of military news and he had little time to write editorials.¹ When the convention had completed its work on May 21, the dissolution of the ties with the Union pleased him for he felt the preamble of the United States Constitution had been "perverted to an agent of intolerable injustice..."² With this attitude, Hale completely severed the ties with the government

¹Fayetteville Observer, April 22, 1861.

²Fayetteville Observer, May 23, 1861.

that he had supported for over forty years. His attention now focused on making the Observer a primary advocator of Confederate propaganda and an undaunted friend of the Confederate government more than a disseminator of war news and a reliable critic. However, he did publish war news and reprints from other papers, and one or two columns in each edition concerning news from Europe.

Hale filled the Observer with editorials about the military despotism that Lincoln had instituted in the North. He offered as evidence Lincoln's war measures, such as withdrawing the privilege of habeas corpus and implementing a naval blockade.³ In addition, Hale appealed to the patriotic and brave men of the South with good character to volunteer to fight against the Federal government.⁴ But, he continued to keep his editorial space limited because he claimed that the public demand was for news and he desired to supply the demand.⁵ Perhaps the reduction in editorial space should not be emphasized as much as the reduction in editorial content. At this embryonic stage of the war, Hale's editorials noticeably lacked the usual vitriolic language and party spirit which had characterized his editorials for four decades. That state of affairs did not remain in effect throughout the war despite Hale's moderate efforts to curtail unnecessarily harsh language and his best efforts to neutralize party politics.

When the Greensboro Patriot, an avid Whig paper in the Whig and Quaker area of Guilford County, spoke kindly of President Jefferson

³Fayetteville Observer, June 3, 1861.

⁴Fayetteville Observer, June 17, 1861.

⁵Fayetteville Observer, June 24, 1861.

Davis in a July editorial, Hale responded that the Patriot also spoke his sentiments, since Hale felt that Davis had overcome Hale's prejudice against him as a Democrat and a Secessionist and that Davis even commanded his respect.⁶ That statement by Hale illustrates how far he was willing to bend in order for the South to present a united front to the North. The death of Governor Ellis in July provided Hale an opportunity to lend even more unanimity to the cause, but Hale just reported the event without any comments good or bad.⁷

If Hale could not find any complimentary words to publish about Ellis, he showed his intention to fight as hard for victory as any Secessionist or Democrat before Fort Sumter, and he was willing to pay the price. When the Confederate Congress passed a tax bill in August of 1861, many people became alarmed. Hale urged that the measure was a necessity. According to Hale, if the people did not give a part, even a large part, of their money for support of the government, the North would take it all.⁸ He constantly admonished the people that the war had to be sustained and that they should not grumble about taxes. Considering Hale's taxable property in Fayetteville and his parsimonious inclinations, his endorsement of higher taxes underscored his commitment to the Confederate cause.

Even though Hale strived to abolish outward manifestations of party spirit, the fall elections in North Carolina for electors to choose the President and Vice-President of the Confederacy, and for representatives to Congress, provided an opportunity for party politics to

⁶Fayetteville Observer, July 8, 1861.

⁷Fayetteville Observer, July 11, 1861.

⁸Fayetteville Observer, August 11, 1861.

surface. Hale implored the Charlotte Western Democrat to silence the Raleigh State Journal, and he in turn would answer for the Patriot, Salisbury Carolina Watchman, and the old Whigs in an attempt to keep party feelings muffled.⁹ He urged the people to support Davis and Alexander Stephens and to vote for good and true men for Congress who would support the Confederate Constitution.¹⁰ For Hale, maintaining the Constitution was all important even if the job fell to former Democrats. But the Wilmington Journal could not forget its past battles with Hale and the Whigs to let the elections occur without adverse comment. It complained that certain men on the electoral ticket which the Observer published would have a hard time supporting Davis, but Hale refuted the charge with the statement that he did not care who was on the ticket.¹¹ At the same time he showed that the feud between the Observer and the Wilmington Journal still simmered by claiming that the Journal helped the Yankees by printing that the old Union men on the electoral ticket were still for the Union.¹²

As 1861 drew to a close, Hale looked back upon a year that saw him and other Whigs stand by the Union until they could do so no more. They had been joined by some Democrats to form a strong Union force in North Carolina. One of these men, William W. Holden, an old political enemy, had become an ally. During the months after the call for troops, the old Whig editor and the powerful Democratic editor called for victory. From the pages of the Standard, Holden equaled Hale or any

⁹Fayetteville Observer, September 26, 1861.

¹⁰Fayetteville Observer, September 23, 1861.

¹¹Fayetteville Observer, October 31, 1861.

¹²Fayetteville Observer, October 31, 1861.

secessionist paper in his pleas for the people to resist. He said, "He that is not for the South in this contest is against it... There can be no half-way ground now."¹³ Later in the year, he said, "The South cannot, will not, must not yield an iota, now that she has taken up the sword, until her rights are fully vindicated."¹⁴ Together with Holden and Hale, other North Carolina newspapers supported a total war effort, but the war was still new. Their mettle was yet to be fully tested. The first full year of war, 1862, evidenced to all that the test would be a torturous one.

During 1862 Hale established himself as a standard by which one could compare whether or not he had the mettle to survive the war. Even more impassionate than Holden's pleas of 1861 for total commitment to war, Hale drew upon the argument of possible annihilation of the South by the North to spur the Southern people constantly, particularly the people of North Carolina, to pledge themselves body and soul, materially and spiritually, to winning the war at all costs. He argued, "Nothing can be more plain than that if we permit ourselves to be conquered, we lose all."¹⁵

For fear of losing all, Hale generally prevented the Observer from printing complaints about the state or Confederate government. He would print criticism reluctantly, but he did not like to complain about the government himself or to print critical material from the exchange papers.¹⁶ Military defeats seemed to inspire his loyalty rather than

¹³North Carolina Standard, July 24, 1861.

¹⁴North Carolina Standard, October 30, 1861.

¹⁵Fayetteville Observer, February 6, 1862.

¹⁶Fayetteville Observer, January 2, 1862.

depress it. After the defeat of the Confederate forces at Fort Donelson, Hale cried to the people, "Never despair! Never give up the contest!"¹⁷ When several papers of the Confederacy criticized the Confederate government for its manner of operations, Hale refused to consent. Particularly annoying to some papers was the defensive strategy of early 1862. Hale said that he did not concur with the papers in blaming the government for following that policy.¹⁸ Thus, early in the war the newspapers of the Confederacy established a division of opinion about governmental and military operations that would deepen and widen as the war progressed.

The Observer was not the only Whig or Union paper to support the war after the initial period of journalistic unity in the spring and summer of 1861. The Greenboro Patriot agreed with the philosophy of Hale and other Whigs that North Carolina was in a justifiable revolution. The Patriot announced that it supported the South against the North and "North Carolina against the world."¹⁹ Other North Carolina newspapers of both political factions published similar declarations. Even those papers which criticized the strategy of the government were united in their support for the war, but few if any exceeded the Observer in its reiteration and fervency for victory. From the Observer flowed the constant message, "We have to fight our way to independence, at all hazards."²⁰ To Hale, the victory was assured because God in his wisdom knew of "the awful infidelity and ungodliness in the North," and that infidelity and ungodliness "was doomed in this war to meet the judgment of an offended

¹⁷Fayetteville Observer, February 20, 1862.

¹⁸Fayetteville Observer, March 6, 1862.

¹⁹Greensboro Patriot, April 25, 1862.

²⁰Fayetteville Observer, December 4, 1862.

God."²¹ Therefore, Hale felt no need to publish words of despondency in the Observer, and he gladly gave the government and the war his total physical and financial support.²²

Even though Hale supported the government and the war, he did not acquiesce in everything that occurred in order to prevent Southern disunity. In particular Hale showed occasional irritation toward the neighboring states of Virginia and South Carolina. To Virginia, Hale directed numerous defensive statements concerning the journalistic treatment of North Carolina troops at the hands of the Virginia newspapers. He felt that the North Carolina troops were unnecessarily criticized for their performance in the field and that they received little of their deserved recognition from the Virginia papers.²³ When South Carolina critics accused President Davis of having an incapacity to be President, Hale defended Davis on the grounds that no one could satisfy everyone, and that the effects of such charges were to weaken the government and strengthen the enemy.²⁴ However, Hale did not support Davis in all matters. For example, Davis wanted to let paroled Southern prisoners of war be allowed to break their oath not to fight against the North. Since Hale considered himself an honorable man and lauded the concept of honor, he did not agree with Davis. He wanted to have the soldiers properly exchanged for prisoners held by the South.²⁵ Hale's point of view prevailed.

One issue raised in 1862 which sparked controversy in the Con-

²¹Fayetteville Observer, September 15, 1862.

²²Fayetteville Observer, June 5, 1862.

²³Fayetteville Observer, March 17, 1862; and June 12, 1862.

²⁴Fayetteville Observer, October 30, 1862.

²⁵Fayetteville Observer, March 24, 1862.

federacy for the remainder of the war was conscription. For the first year after Fort Sumter, the Confederacy relied on volunteers. After April of 1862, the Confederate government enacted three conscription laws to bolster the strength of the army. The first law, passed by Congress on April 16, 1862, provided that all whites between eighteen and twenty-five be drafted for three years.²⁶ The second law, passed September 27, 1862, raised the age limit to forty-five, and the third law, passed February 17, 1864, raised the age limit to fifty.²⁷ These acts were first modified by exemption acts of April and October of 1862, which exempted members of Congress, legislators of states, one editor of each newspaper, and other classes of men.²⁸ The exemption act of October was not intended to let an editor under forty-five remain with the paper when another editor connected with the paper was over the age limit of conscription. However, Daniel Fowle of the Adjutant General's Office informed Hale that his son Peter was exempt because his services at the Observer were more valuable than if he were in the army.²⁹ Additional exemption acts were passed in 1863. Not only were certain classes of people exempted, but until December of 1863, if a person could afford the price of a substitute, he could avoid military service.

The idea of a forced military service on behalf of a central government was not well accepted by most Southerners since the primary

²⁶Clarence Douglas, "Conscription and the Writ of Habeas Corpus in North Carolina During the Civil War," Historical Papers of the Trinity Papers of the Trinity College Historical Society, XIV, (1922), 5, hereinafter cited as Douglas, "Conscription and the Writ of Habeas Corpus". For general background material pertaining to the Civil War, I have relied upon J. G. Randall and David Donald, The Civil War and Reconstruction, Second edition (1966).

²⁷Douglas, "Conscription and the Writ of Habeas Corpus," p. 6.

²⁸Douglas, "Conscription and the Writ of Habeas Corpus," pp. 6-7.

²⁹Daniel Fowle to Hale, June 25, 1863, Hale Papers.

emphasis of the secession movement was on the individual rights of the states. Hale voiced his objection to conscription before Congress passed the first act. He doubted the necessity of the law since more men were volunteering for service than the army could use. He felt that the men who volunteered for twelve months at the outbreak of hostilities were having their rights to a discharge infringed upon.³⁰

Regardless, he expressed his confidence in President Davis and his advisers.³¹ After Congress passed the conscription law, Hale saw no need to debate the issue further at that time. Instead, he addressed himself to the people to defeat the enemy and then argue about what should or should not have been done during the war.³²

From the beginning of the war until April of 1862, the newspaper business in North Carolina flourished on a near equal prewar basis. Some papers were forced to close for one reason or another, but the remaining papers did business as usual. But along with the need to raise troops in April came the need of some newspapers to raise the price of subscription or reduce the size of the paper in order to combat inflation. All newspapers operated under the handicap of a growing shortage of quality materials. Hale commented in April that the paper on which he printed the Observer was not as good as it had been for the past year, and that the ink was of an inferior nature.³³ Despite the inferior paper and ink, Hale had no intention of raising prices because the number of subscribers had increased by twenty per cent during the past year, and all of the new subscribers as well as most of the old ones were having to

³⁰Fayetteville Observer, April 7, 1862.

³¹Fayetteville Observer, April 7, 1862.

³²Fayetteville Observer, April 17, 1862.

³³Fayetteville Observer, April 17, 1862.

pay cash for the Observer rather than receive it on credit.³⁴ Other papers could not or would not refrain from raising their prices. For example, in late May the Wilmington Journal raised the price of its daily from \$6.00 to \$8.00 per year while the weekly remained at \$2.50 per year.³⁵ Without raising his prices, Hale stated in July that the past year was the most profitable in the history of the Observer.³⁶ Even without the increase in profit, he considered a reduction in the size of the paper or an increase in the price to be steps backward.³⁷ But the success of the Observer based on prewar prices allowed Hale to speculate, "Everybody seems crazy with money greed."³⁸

The financial success of the Observer was only one triumph for Hale during 1862. Of far greater importance to Hale was the political triumph of a Whig in the gubernatorial election. All during 1861, after the war had begun, Hale admonished the people of the state to forget party considerations and to work for the common interest of North Carolina and the Confederacy. Even in early 1862 Hale acknowledged a comment in the Western Democrat, which recommended Democrat William Johnston for governor, with the remark that he would be satisfied with Johnston "or any other proper man."³⁹ Regardless of the public thoughts of Hale on party politics in North Carolina, he and other men throughout the state were aware that party feelings existed and were intensifying as the election spirit began to overshadow the avowed political unity of

³⁴Fayetteville Observer, April 17, 1862.

³⁵Wilmington Journal, May 29, 1862.

³⁶Fayetteville Observer, July 28, 1862.

³⁷Fayetteville Observer, July 28, 1862.

³⁸Hale to Thomas Pittman, November 25, 1862, Thomas Pittman Papers, State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh.

³⁹Fayetteville Observer, February 6, 1862.

wartime.

The Democratic party had been in power when the war began and had remained in power thereafter. They relinquished the name "Democratic party" in the spring of 1862 in favor of the "Confederate party" because they hoped that the new name would encourage people to keep them in office without having to stand for re-election.⁴⁰ Because of its political policies and because of Confederate defeats at Hatteras Inlet in August of 1861, Roanoke Island in February of 1862, and Elizabeth City and New Bern the following month, opposition to the Confederate party formed. The opposition emerged under the label of "Conservative party" in the spring of 1862.⁴¹ The Conservative party drew its support from Whigs and Union Democrats, like Hale and Holden, who advocated winning the war but not at the cost of destroying the Confederate Constitution or losing the protection of personal freedom and state supremacy guaranteed in the Constitution. On the other hand, the Confederate party drew its support from Democrats, like Governor Henry Clark, who favored giving the central government more authority to conduct the war, both in military and governmental operations.⁴² Both parties prepared themselves for the gubernatorial campaign.

With party lines drawn and the Confederate party nominating Johnston for governor, the Conservative party surveyed the field for the best opponent for Johnston. They failed to persuade William A. Graham

⁴⁰Richard E. Yates, "Zebulon B. Vance as War Governor of North Carolina, 1862-1865," Journal of Southern History, III (February, 1937), 46, hereinafter cited as Yates, "Vance as War Governor".

⁴¹Horace W. Raper, "William W. Holden and the Peace Movement in North Carolina," North Carolina Historical Review, XXXI (October, 1954), 495, hereinafter cited as Raper, "Holden and the Peace Movement."

⁴²Frontis W. Johnston (ed.), The Papers of Zebulon Baird Vance (1963), I, xliii.

to run, but he endorsed John Pool.⁴³ Hale remained uncommitted with regard to his choice for governor, mentioning Zebulon Vance as one of several possible candidates for the office.⁴⁴ He was not to remain uncommitted for long. Augustus Merriman, a Whig leader from the western part of the state, traveled to Fayetteville to elicit the support of Hale for Vance. Merriman had been selected by a conference of Conservative leaders for that purpose because they felt that Hale was "the wisest head of the greatest influence in the party...."⁴⁵ Merriman succeeded in his mission.

On June 19, Hale published Vance's letter of acceptance of the nomination along with Hale's endorsement of Vance.⁴⁶ Earlier in the month Vance had received the endorsement of Holden.⁴⁷ Now Vance had the support of the two most powerful editors in the state, despite the fact that Hale had declared that he had nothing against Johnston. As expected, the Wilmington Journal endorsed Johnston. The Journal and the Observer had not feuded as intently after Fort Sumter as before, but they continued to take turns verbally sparring with each other. Before Hale announced his endorsement of Vance, the Journal had declared that the Observer tended to everyone's business as well as its own, and it reminded the editors of the Journal of a strutting turkey cock.⁴⁸ After Hale endorsed Vance, the feud took on new political dimensions. The State Journal and Raleigh Register, along with the Wilmington Journal, began a

⁴³George Little to Hale, April 9, 1862, Hale Papers.

⁴⁴Fayetteville Observer, June 19, 1862.

⁴⁵Ashe, Biographical History, VIII, 183, quoting Walter Clark.

⁴⁶Fayetteville Observer, June 19, 1862.

⁴⁷North Carolina Standard, June 4, 1862.

⁴⁸Wilmington Journal, June 7, 1862.

campaign against Vance and his supporters. They accused them of promoting a party feud and of making the election one of union versus secession.⁴⁹ Of course, the Observer rejected that implication. But the main election issue was just that. Those who supported Johnston contended that the election of Vance would be viewed in the North as an indication of weakness in the Confederacy on behalf of the war effort.

Despite the misgivings of the Johnston supporters, Hale and Holden used the power of their combined circulation to put Vance's name before the voters of North Carolina. Hale and Holden had much to say about what tactics would enhance the odds in Vance's favor. Although neither Vance nor Johnston actively campaigned, Hale and Holden persuaded Vance to enter the election while stationed with his troops at Kinston.⁵⁰ In fact, it has been said that Vance's campaign was managed entirely by the two editors.⁵¹ For Hale's part, he called Vance "honest, capable and faithful" while he extolled the virtue that Vance was unconnected with a party and thus fit for the current times when there should be no party.⁵² Holden, meanwhile, called to the people to vote for Vance if they were opposed to party politics during the war.⁵³ Why Vance was not connected with a party when he was associated with the Conservative party, neither Hale nor Holden effectively explained.

According to the directions of the convention, the gubernatorial election was set for the first Thursday in August, but the soldiers

⁴⁹Yates, "Vance as War Governor," p. 48.

⁵⁰Raper, "Holden: A Political Biography," p. 59.

⁵¹Raper, "Holden: A Political Biography," p. 59.

⁵²Fayetteville Observer, July 24, 1862.

⁵³North Carolina Standard, August 2, 1862.

could vote a week earlier.⁵⁴ The new legislature would be elected at the same time, and then the inauguration of the governor would take place the second Monday in September.⁵⁵ When the votes of the soldiers were counted, Vance had won 11,683 to 3,691.⁵⁶ When the official total vote was tabulated, Vance had won by 33,975 votes out of a total vote of 74,861, and he had received a majority in sixty-eight of the eighty counties.⁵⁷ After the election, Hale described the Journal's attacks on the Observer in terms of a striking snake full of venom.⁵⁸ Only after the election did Hale admit that the election of Vance might give some comfort to Lincoln. However, at the same time, Hale charged A. L. Price and Joseph Fulton of the Journal with failing to print the patriotic speeches of Vance.⁵⁹ Thus, in the fall of 1862, the Journal and the Observer were at diametrically opposed political points as they had been before the war, regardless of the party label, and they engaged in name calling contests that did justice to any prewar election or non-election period.

As the gubernatorial election indicated, Hale had been on the winning side for the first time in fourteen years. Not only was he on the winning side, although he would have been reluctant to declare a winning or losing side, he assured himself of an influential position as political confidant to Governor-elect Vance. Vance owed Hale and Holden

⁵⁴Glenn Tucker, Zeb Vance: Champion of Personal Freedom (1965), p. 145, hereinafter cited as Tucker, Zeb Vance.

⁵⁵Tucker, Zeb Vance, p. 145.

⁵⁶Tucker, Zeb Vance, p. 154.

⁵⁷Fayetteville Observer, September 1, 1862.

⁵⁸Fayetteville Observer, August 11, 1862.

⁵⁹Fayetteville Observer, August 28, 1862.

for much of his success. The newspapers of the state had divided about equally during the election, but Vance had Holden on his side, and he had "the staunch support of Edward J. Hale and his Fayetteville Observer."⁶⁰ As for Holden, Vance in his inaugural address indicated that he would support the conscription law of which Holden disapproved.⁶¹ If that was a hint that the two men would disagree more severely over policy at a later date, few people were able to ascertain it. In November the General Assembly elected Holden state printer at the insistence of Vance.⁶² When Holden wrote Hale about his election to state printer, he offered his services to Hale if they were ever needed.⁶³ In November of 1862, Holden and Hale were together, strong allies against a common foe. Nearly all the people and the press were together behind Vance with each indicating that they would support him and the cause. However, behind the appearances of solidarity, there brewed a turbulent undercurrent of doubt, fear, and bewilderment.

Beginning in 1863 the course of the Confederacy and of North Carolina as a member of the Confederacy entered a decisive period. The period culminated in July with the military defeats at Gettysburg and at Vicksburg, and with a widespread peace movement which divided the people and hardened their attitudes toward peace or war. But during the early months of 1863, not many men could foresee that the South was reaching the apex of the rebellion, and would begin to lose the war before the summer ended. For Hale, the beginning of defeat was never recog-

⁶⁰Tucker, Zeb Vance, p. 150.

⁶¹Yates, "Vance as War Governor," p. 50.

⁶²Raper, "Holden and the Peace Movement," p. 498.

⁶³William W. Holden to Hale, November 21, 1862, Hale Papers.

nized, or at least never publicly admitted. He was singled out by state leaders, like D. M. Barringer, for his "support of the Confederate cause under all circumstances."⁶⁴ He took pride in the fact that the Observer was declared by North Carolinians as "the ablest and most dignified journal of our state...."⁶⁵ When other papers became despondent at Confederate setbacks, Hale stated that he saw no reason for the people to be despondent.⁶⁶ He often reiterated his belief that even if he disagreed with the government and President Davis, he would wait until the war was over to publicly voice his disagreement.⁶⁷

Not content to support the Confederate government and to criticize the United States government, Hale heaped contempt upon "the off-scourings of the foreign population of the Northern cities---those moral pest-houses."⁶⁸ When he felt that the morale of Southerners was ebbing to a dangerous low after a battle, he sought to inspire them by inferring that the Southern people were showing a trait of character inferior to Northern people.⁶⁹ Hale praised and sometimes goaded the people and the government, but he was always on their side. In return, the people praised him, and state and community leaders sought his advice. No one sought his advice more than Governor Vance who claimed that Hale was "more nearly of my precise stripe politically---past and present---than any other editor in the state...."⁷⁰ But, first and foremost Hale was a newspaper editor. As an editor, he had to deal with two problems that directly

⁶⁴D. M. Barringer to Hale, January 8, 1863, Hale Papers.

⁶⁵Paul Cameron to Hale, June 6, 1863, Hale Papers.

⁶⁶Fayetteville Observer, July 2, 1863.

⁶⁷Fayetteville Observer, March 30, 1863.

⁶⁸Fayetteville Observer, May 28, 1863.

⁶⁹Fayetteville Observer, July 30, 1863.

⁷⁰Zebulon Vance to Hale, June 10, 1863, Hale Papers.

affected the stability of the Observer--censorship and inflation.

In general the government did not interfere with the concept of freedom of the press during the war.⁷¹ Rather, editors voluntarily restrained from printing improper material like troop movements. However, penalties were enforced against editors who violated the restriction of printing material concerning army movements or information that tended to undermine the confidence in government officials.⁷² But, the government relied more on the co-operation of editors than on force to censor news. In that respect Hale co-operated to his fullest measure. He stated that many things should not be published because his purpose as an editor was to encourage the public mind and strengthen the public heart.⁷³ When deserters were raiding at will in Randolph County, Hale informed Vance that he probably already knew of the events, but he wanted to assure him that he was not going to publish anything about the subject, and he hoped that the matter would be kept out of all the papers.⁷⁴

With regard to deserters, other editors in North Carolina acted similarly to Hale. For example, William Yates of the Western Democrat wrote Hale that he refused to print news of the disaffection in the central part of the state, indicating that he did not publish one-half of

⁷¹James G. Randall, "The Newspaper Problem in Its Bearing Upon Military Secrecy during the Civil War," American Historical Review, XXIII (January, 1918), 323, hereinafter cited as Randall, "The Newspaper Problem."

⁷²Randall, "The Newspaper Problem," p. 313.

⁷³Fayetteville Observer, March 26, 1863.

⁷⁴Hale to Vance, January 18, 1863, Zebulon B. Vance Governors' Papers, State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, hereinafter cited as Vance Governors' Papers. Hale wrote Vance several letters in August, September, and October of 1863 on the same topic of deserters and conscripts raiding North Carolina counties.

what he had heard.⁷⁵ Thus, North Carolina editors, and Southern editors as a whole, exercised discretion in the publishing of news that apparently exceeded the discretion of their Northern counterparts.⁷⁶ Certainly no one could have been more watchful about selecting what news to print than Hale. When other editors found the need to criticize the government, Hale declared that to silence the unfounded criticism, he would print no point against the Confederacy.⁷⁷ At the same time, he did not pretend not to realize that the Observer was useful to the cause.⁷⁸ Therefore, like most Confederate editors, he was one of a group of men who felt that they had done more to support the war than any other group in the Confederacy with the exception of the army.⁷⁹

In doing his share for the cause, Hale also fought inflation by keeping the price of the Observer at prewar prices until he could bear the financial strain no longer. Late winter and early spring of 1863 saw North Carolina newspapers reluctantly raise their subscription rates and/or reduce the size of the paper. The general rate of increase was a dollar per year for the semiweekly and a dollar per year for the weekly. The Standard raised its prices from \$4.00 to \$5.00 for the semiweekly and from \$2.00 to \$3.00 for the weekly in early February.⁸⁰ The Observer went from \$2.00 to \$3.00 for the weekly and from \$3.00 to \$4.00 for the semiweekly in early March, if the subscription rates were paid

⁷⁵William Yates to Hale, August 13, 1862, Hale Papers.

⁷⁶Randall, "The Newspaper Problem," p. 316.

⁷⁷Hale to Vance, June 27, 1863, Zebulon B. Vance Papers, State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, hereinafter cited as Vance Papers.

⁷⁸Hale to Vance, June 27, 1863, Vance Papers.

⁷⁹James W. Silver, "Propaganda in the Confederacy," Journal of Southern History, XI (November, 1945), 497.

⁸⁰North Carolina Standard, February 3, 1863.

in advance.⁸¹ Similar increases in the subscription rates followed in the Greensboro Patriot.⁸² In the space of a month, the Wilmington Journal raised the price of the weekly twice, from \$2.50 to \$3.00 and from \$3.00 to \$4.00, and the price of the daily once, from \$8.00 to \$10.00 per year.⁸³ Even Hale was forced to raise the subscription rate of the Observer, both the weekly and the semiweekly, a dollar per year on the first of June.⁸⁴ No wonder Hale could honestly refuse the offer of Vance to be the Director of the Board of Internal Improvements on the grounds that he had a busy schedule.⁸⁵ The operation of the paper consumed a great deal of his time and energy. The problems of inflation and censorship were not the only issues that occupied Hale's mind during this period. He became involved with other issues of greater importance to the survival of the Confederacy than inflation or censorship.

The effect of the proclamations of the Confederate government which instituted conscription in 1862 still reverberated in North Carolina in the spring of 1863. Once again, the controversy raged between the authority of the state and the authority of the central government with respect to furnishing troops. For the most part the issue was

⁸¹Fayetteville Observer, March 5, 1863.

⁸²Greensboro Patriot, March 12, 1863.

⁸³Wilmington Journal, March 26, April 23, April 30, 1863.

⁸⁴Fayetteville Observer, June 1, 1863. Despite all that he could do, Hale could not stop inflation, and he had to raise the price of the Observer according to the value of Confederate money. In January of 1864 Hale raised the price of the weekly to \$6.00 and the semiweekly to \$10.00. In July of the same year, the price rose to \$10.00 for the weekly and to \$15.00 for the semiweekly. The following December the price of the weekly climbed to \$15.00 per year and the semiweekly to \$20.00 per year. By January 26, 1865, Hale charged \$15.00 per six months for the weekly and \$20.00 per six months for the semiweekly.

⁸⁵Hale to Vance, January 10, 1863, Zebulon B. Vance Governors' Letter Books, 1862-1865, State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, hereinafter cited as Vance Governors' Books.

settled in 1863, but conscription left a bitter taste in the mouths of many Southerners, soldiers and civilians alike. Although seemingly simple, the issue was complex with several sources of agitation.

In early January, Colonel T. P. August of Virginia was appointed commander of conscripts in North Carolina.⁸⁶ The fact that a Virginian was in charge of gathering conscripts from North Carolina for the Confederate Army irritated many people. This factor was eliminated when Colonel Peter Mallett, who was in charge of conscripts in North Carolina before Colonel August, relieved Colonel August after he had recovered from his wounds suffered at Kinston in December, 1862.⁸⁷ Because desertion rates were running high among North Carolina troops, Vance published a proclamation on January 26 which gave deserters until February 10 to get back to their commands.⁸⁸ Vance extended the date and later issued two more proclamations giving deserters time to return to their units.⁸⁹

Many people felt that the problem of deserters stemmed from the very existence of conscription with an assist by the judicial interpretations of Justice Richmond Pearson, Chief Justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court. The particular case that caused a great commotion in North Carolina was the John W. Irwin case. In brief, Irwin furnished a substitute who was subsequently drafted under the provisions of the second conscription act. The Confederate War Department declared that he was no longer protected from the draft and he was arrested by North Carolina militia officers. When Irwin was brought before Chief

⁸⁶Tucker, Zeb Vance, p. 249.

⁸⁷Tucker, Zeb Vance, p. 249.

⁸⁸Tucker, Zeb Vance, p. 315.

⁸⁹Tucker, Zeb Vance, p. 313.

Justice Pearson, he ruled that the original contract should be upheld and issued a writ of habeas corpus releasing Irwin. In effect, Chief Justice Pearson declared the law unconstitutional. Irwin was rearrested which led Vance to exchange letters with Secretary of War Seddon stating that he was bound by the decision of the North Carolina courts and judges. As a result of all this, Vance issued a proclamation on May 11 directing that the militia officers were not to arrest any man as a deserter or conscript who had been released by a writ of habeas corpus from a North Carolina judge.⁹⁰

The conflict between the Confederate and North Carolina governments placed Hale in a difficult position. As a friend of Vance, he knew that Vance felt that Justice Pearson was "corrupt and unfit to hold his position on the bench!"⁹¹ As a supporter of the Confederate cause, he had refrained from making critical statements about the government. Thus, he had the opportunity to launch a stinging attack upon Justice Pearson. However, another matter of importance was at stake. Even though Vance may not have appreciated Justice Pearson, he felt that the civil law of North Carolina had to be upheld, and that the law was decided by the North Carolina courts. Hale held the same belief. As a Whig he had strong feelings about constitutional government. As a Conservative he disagreed with the Confederates on the limits of central authority. Therefore, Hale defended the actions of Chief Justice Pearson. He declared that if the decision could be shown to be wrong, let it be done, but to belittle Chief Justice Pearson in vile language

⁹⁰Tucker, Zeb Vance, pp. 291-293.

⁹¹Vance to Hale, January 1, 1863, Hale Papers.

was not worthy of the space in any decent newspaper.⁹² Hale declared, "There is higher law in this State than the decisions of the highest Judicial officers."⁹³ As Hale saw the situation, Vance had the duty to uphold the civil law in North Carolina in order to prevent military force.⁹⁴

Despite the claims by many that Pearson's ruling had encouraged the desertion rate among North Carolina troops, the North Carolina Supreme Court in the June term of 1863 affirmed the ruling in the Irwin case with a majority decision in the Ex Parte Bryan case, and thus Irwin was released.⁹⁵ The basis for the decision was that the War Department had too much discretionary authority in interpreting the conscription laws. Since the Confederacy had no Supreme Court, the North Carolina Supreme Court felt that it was in their jurisdiction to interpret the law according to the Confederate Constitution. Thus, the Court decided that it had the power to discharge any man on a writ of habeas corpus when it appeared that he had been unlawfully arrested.

In the end the Confederate government acquiesced in letting North Carolina judicial authority remain intact. It agreed that the courts of North Carolina shared concurrent jurisdiction with the Confederate courts in issuing writs of habeas corpus.⁹⁶ The crux of the issue, the use of the North Carolina militia to enforce Confederate law, was not settled until the legislature authorized Vance to use the

⁹²Fayetteville Observer, May 21, 1863.

⁹³Fayetteville Observer, May 25, 1863.

⁹⁴Fayetteville Observer, May 28, 1863.

⁹⁵Douglas, "Conscription and the Writ of Habeas Corpus," p. 34.

⁹⁶Albert Burton Moore, Conscription and Conflict in the Confederacy, (1924), pp. 172-174.

militia to arrest deserters and conscripts. However, because the name of the militia was then changed to "Guard for Home Defense," Justice Fearson continued to issue writs. He said that Vance could not use the Home Guards because the legislature had given him the authority to use the militia only. The legislature acted to correct the error and the Home Guards were allowed to enforce the conscript law.⁹⁷

The arguments between North Carolina and the Confederate government over conscripts was compounded by the exemption acts of 1863 in addition to the ones of 1862. The act of April affected mail carriers, and the one in May allowed Governor Vance to exempt state officers whom he claimed that he needed to administer the state government.⁹⁸ As a result, Vance certified for exemption petty officers of all kinds in the state and local governments.⁹⁹

The many problems created in North Carolina during the war years only served to emphasize the pleas of Hale for unity during the war and for debate after the peace. Hale commented on the problems when he felt comments were necessary, but he consistently strove to impress the Southern people that the most vital issue at stake was complete victory for the South. Thus, Hale did not embroil himself or the Observer in the wartime problems to the extent that some of his fellow editors embroiled themselves.

There was, however, one issue to which Hale totally directed his efforts from the summer of 1863 to the fall of 1864. That issue was the peace movement. That movement, in any form, represented a threat

⁹⁷Yates, "Vance as War Governor," pp. 57-58.

⁹⁸Douglas, "Conscription and the Writ of Habeas Corpus," pp. 7-8.

⁹⁹Douglas, "Conscription and the Writ of Habeas Corpus," p. 27.

to his crusade for complete victory. Therefore, Hale could not rest until he had used every resource and influence at his command to eliminate every vestige of that movement.

CHAPTER IV

POLITICAL ADVISER TO GOVERNOR VANCE

Of all the issues of the war years in which Hale acted either as a commentator or participator, none threatened the very foundations of the Confederate cause in North Carolina to the extent that the peace movement did. To Hale, the Confederate cause could overcome taxation, inflation, conscription, desertion, and the other problems that the war spawned, but the cause could not survive a weakness of the spirit to survive and to win, especially if that weakness were encouraged and nourished by the advocates of a peace on grounds other than complete independence of North Carolina and the other Confederate states.

Because of the strong Union sentiment in North Carolina before the war, one would have to assume that the Union sentiment would manifest itself in some form or another if the South did not achieve its goal within a relatively short time after the war began. That sentiment did manifest itself in the form of a peace movement within a year after Lincoln's call for troops. In mid-March of 1862 a meeting was held near Asheboro at which a white flag was raised and the people offered prayers for peace.¹ If that meeting initiated the peace movement, it did not cause an immediate turmoil in the state. However, by the end of 1862 two factors were evident. First, William Holden through the Standard began to create the impression in the minds of some people of giving comfort to the North.² Second, Hale began to be concerned about the tone of the Standard and its effect on the character of the people of North Car-

¹A. Sellow Roberts, "The Peace Movement in North Carolina," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XI (September, 1924), 195.

²Tucker, Zeb Vance, p. 356.

olina. Although he wanted to write Holden, he wrote a letter to William A. Graham instead, explaining that he feared that the Standard was doing harm "by making too much of party in these times, and unintentionally encouraging disaffection."³ Hale sensed that his ally in the promotion of the Vance campaign was using his power to encourage "a great and growing evil."⁴ Despite his uneasiness about Holden's politics, Hale found little fault with Holden's declaration that the only way to peace was through war, and its accompanying blood and suffering.⁵ Graham assured Hale in his reply that the Standard was only opposing the intolerance of the Confederate party to anyone who disagreed with it about the conduct of the war. In questioning the policies of the government, Graham told Hale that Holden only reflected the sentiment of the people.⁶ Hale turned his attention to other issues, but not for long.

In early April of 1863 J. L. Pennington of the Raleigh Progress stated in an article that he desired peace even if it were obtained on terms which conceded the rights and honor of the Confederacy.⁷ That did not elicit a response in Hale, but in June when the Standard published a communication in favor of reconstruction, Hale grieved.⁸

³Hale to William A. Graham, December 5, 1862, William Alexander Graham Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, hereinafter cited as Graham Papers. The typescript copies of the Graham Papers were used for this study.

⁴Hale to Graham, December 5, 1862, Graham Papers.

⁵North Carolina Standard, February 27, 1863.

⁶Graham to Hale, April 6, 1863, Graham Papers.

⁷Richard E. Yates, "Governor Vance and the Peace Movement," North Carolina Historical Review, XVII (January, 1940), 4, hereinafter cited as Yates, "Vance and the Peace Movement," Part I.

⁸John Young to Hale, July 3, 1863, Hale Papers.

He did not have long to grieve for the floodgates of the peace and reconstruction feelings opened during the warm days of June, and on top of the crest of the movement rode Holden. Some people damned him and the Standard for doing the state more damage than an invading army.⁹

That fact did not discourage Holden. He plunged ahead, advocating peace on honorable terms and the need for immediate negotiations.¹⁰ By advocating negotiations with the North and peace meetings by the people, Holden fell out of step with the Conservatives, including Vance and Hale, which led Holden to weaken his ties with the Conservative party in late June.¹¹

During July the break in the Conservative ranks became a major problem for the morale of North Carolina and other Southern states. Justice Battle of the North Carolina Supreme Court, a prewar Whig and a wartime Conservative, took time to write Hale a letter praising the "moral, patriotic, common sense, humane and Christian course" of the Observer, but more importantly he confided in Hale that he feared a split in the Conservative party between Vance and Hale, and those who wanted to end the war, implying Holden.¹² He hoped that Lee would be victorious in his coming engagements and, thus, stop the growing tendency toward dissension.¹³ Unfortunately, not all old-line Whigs and wartime Conservatives sided with Hale against Holden. Jonathan Worth, later State Treasurer under Vance, encouraged his friends to help the peace movement.

⁹Fayetteville Observer, June 4, 1863.

¹⁰North Carolina Standard, June 19, 1863.

¹¹Edgar Estes Folk, "W. W. Holden, Political Journalist, Editor of North Carolina Standard, 1843-1865," (unpublished doctoral dissertation, George Peabody College for Teachers, 1934), p. 56C.

¹²Kemp Battle to Hale, July 3, 1863, Hale Papers.

¹³Battle to Hale, July 3, 1863, Hale Papers.

But he dared not incur the wrath of Hale. In a response to Hale's disapproval of some of his actions, Worth diplomatically informed Hale that he had confidence in Hale's "impartial independence."¹⁴

The Confederate defeats at Vicksburg and Gettysburg only added fuel to the fire that Justice Battle had hoped would have been quenched by Confederate victories. Holden stated in mid-July that the people wanted the fighting stopped and negotiations begun. In addition, he claimed that the South could not beat the North. Thus, he appealed to reason in face of the fact that peace could not be attained by fighting.¹⁵ That argument only induced factions of the Conservative and Confederate parties to unite in the common goal of chastizing Holden. The State Journal, the Confederate party organ at Raleigh, already had attacked Holden's personal character.¹⁶ After Holden's statements concerning negotiations, the Wilmington Journal reprinted an editorial from the Observer about peace, with the comments that it took pleasure in copying the editorial and endorsed every word of it. Further, the Journal stated that the editorial in the Observer contrasted pleasantly with the "traitorous expression" of the Standard, with the reminder that the editorial was from the Observer and not a "Democrat" or "Destructive" paper.¹⁷ To the editors of the Journal, the peace movement reduced party considerations or political disagreements. They said, "In the presence of this issue we waive all former disagreements, or more recent squabbles."¹⁸

¹⁴Jonathan Worth to Hale, July 6, 1863, Joseph Gregoire de Roulhac Hamilton (ed.), The Correspondence of Jonathan Worth (1909), I, 244.

¹⁵North Carolina Standard, July 17, 1863.

¹⁶Raleigh State Journal, July 8, 1863.

¹⁷Wilmington Journal, July 8, 1863.

¹⁸Wilmington Journal, July 8, 1863.

Although the opposition to Holden and the peace movement mounted from all quarters, for political reasons Vance seemed reluctant to sever the ties with Holden and to condemn him. Hale advised Vance that by openly opposing the Standard, he merely confirmed its hostility. According to Hale, both the State Journal and the Raleigh Register should have been silenced because their attacks on Holden had caused much of the trouble. Hale wanted Vance to initiate a truce period "so all parties could have time to come to their senses."¹⁹ In his reply to Hale, Vance contended that he did not see how a split could be avoided despite the assertions by Holden that he would not make it.²⁰ In the meantime, Hale was being urged to thwart the evil that Holden represented with regard not only to the peace movement, but to a possible counter revolution.²¹ He received letters of encouragement from North Carolina civilians and from North Carolina soldiers at the front.²²

By August the situation had deteriorated rapidly. Hale vigorously maintained that there should be no party movement and that there should be no quarreling between the people until independence was achieved.²³ But the split within the Conservative party was growing, and Holden's faction within the Conservative party was increasing. Jonathan Worth concluded that the masses and many intelligent people of the state sympathized with Holden, and he felt that Holden understood "the popular

¹⁹Hale to Vance, July 24, 1863, Vance Papers.

²⁰Vance to Hale, July 26, 1863, Hale Papers.

²¹Frederick Fitzgerald to Hale, July 24, 1863, Hale Papers.

²²_____ to Hale, August 6, 1863, Hale Papers.

²³Fayetteville Observer, August 3, 1863.

mind better than anybody else...."²⁴ Although Worth was careful to keep his views to himself, or at least in the family, other prominent Conservatives of a differing view openly let Hale know their opinions. Thomas Ruffin expressed the view of most Conservatives of North Carolina when he wrote Hale a letter in which he stated that he deplored the war from the beginning. However, unlike Worth, Ruffin felt that peace was not to be gained by internal division. He felt that Holden's efforts at peace were unpatriotic, and by the same token he praised Hale for being patriotic. Expressing the views of a majority of the Conservative party, he said, "My great hope for the peace and well being of North Carolina rests in my confidence in the patriotic principles and feelings of our worthy Governor Vance and yourself."²⁵

Those "patriotic principles" led Vance to decide that a split with Holden, and thus of the Conservative party, was a necessity. He informed Hale that he had made up his mind to split with Holden, and urged Hale to attack Holden, and to spare nothing because he was prepared to throw his life and reputation into the fight.²⁶ However, Hale continued to attempt to salvage the situation in order to keep the controversy from affecting the war effort as little as possible. He admitted to a division in public sentiment and to a division between Vance and Holden, but he earnestly appealed to Holden to denounce the peace meetings and not to give way to the attacks of its enemies, that is,

²⁴Jonathan Worth to John M. Worth, August 9, 1863, Hamilton, The Correspondence of Jonathan Worth, I, 253.

²⁵Thomas Ruffin to Edward Hale, August 11, 1863, Joseph Gregoire de Roulhac Hamilton (ed.), The Papers of Thomas Ruffin (1918-1920), III, 327-329.

²⁶Vance to Hale, August 11, 1863, Hale Papers.

the Raleigh Register and the State Journal.²⁷ Hale sincerely believed that Holden wanted to calm the situation but that the ungentlemanly and unpatriotic conduct of those two papers prevented him from doing it.²⁸

Hale received little support in his persistent efforts to mend the break. Because his opinions carried so much weight in the public mind, Hale wanted William A. Graham to express his views publicly about the situation, but Graham acted cautiously. Meantime, Vance prepared an open letter to the public explaining his position and declaring a split between Holden and himself.²⁹ Before he published the letter, he showed it to Holden and asked his opinion. Holden advised Vance not to publish it.³⁰ Then Vance sent the letter to Graham who advised Vance also not to publish it.³¹ With the letter unpublished, Hale still hoped that the issue would subside at this juncture, but his hopes were dashed by an editorial reply by Holden to Hale's appeal to resolve the differences and to support the cause.

Holden announced that the United States would not recognize the Confederacy. He stated that if the choice came between defeat by the North and reconstruction, then he was for reconstruction. As for the peace meetings, he avowed that neither he nor the Standard was responsible for the people who attended them. Lastly, he accused the Observer of poor leadership by grouping one portion of people under Vance and

²⁷Fayetteville Observer, August 17, 1863.

²⁸Hale to Ruffin, August 17, 1863, Hamilton, The Papers of Thomas Ruffin, III, 332.

²⁹Vance to John Haughton, August 17, 1863, Vance Papers.

³⁰William Woods Holden, The Memoirs of W. W. Holden, The John Lewson Monographs of the Trinity College, XI (1911), 23-24.

³¹William A. Graham to Vance, August 21, 1863, Vance Papers.

another under Holden.³² Thus, Holden showed no inclination to recant. Rather, he argued that as long as the issues were discussed on their merits, there was no danger of ill feeling.³³ He was mistaken.

In the latter part of August, Seaton Gales, former editor and owner of the Raleigh Register, expressed the desire "to tender to you [Hale] the right hand of friendship and good will...." as a sign of support in the struggle against the peace movement.³⁴ Not even the more pacific Greensboro Patriot concurred in the efforts of Holden toward peace. It stated that it desired peace but only after freedom and independency. It was against continuing the war but even more against the idea of submission.³⁵ The Wilmington Journal emphasized its position that it had ceased to fight with other papers or even to reply to attacks upon it, which meant that the peace issue had transcended party allegiance and that it was ceasing its quarrel with the Observer.³⁶ But most important of all, Hale condemned Holden for saying that the people should speak openly about issues, because Hale felt that tolerance would give them the right to utter treason.³⁷

For all his many years as a nationalist and constitutionalist, Hale would not allow personal freedoms to endanger a fight for survival. To admit the personal right to discuss peace and to allow peace meetings would be to undermine the cause, and if the cause were defeated, there

³²North Carolina Standard, August 25, 1863.

³³North Carolina Standard, August 21, 1863.

³⁴Seaton Gales to Hale, August 16, 1863, Hale Papers.

³⁵Greensboro Patriot, August 20, 1863.

³⁶Wilmington Journal, August 29, 1863.

³⁷Fayetteville Observer, August 27, 1863.

would be no need to worry about personal rights because there would be no rights at all. Thus, Hale reasoned that complete freedom to discuss peace without victory or a separate peace would lead to treason, and treason would destroy the heart of the Confederate effort. Peace had to come to all the Confederate States with the realization of independence. The fact was apparent to Hale that North Carolina was not a free agent to deal with the North independently of the other Confederate States. He stated strongly that North Carolina would not listen to the idea of separating from the Confederacy.³⁸ To Hale, Holden was wrong even to hint at that possibility.

By the end of August, Hale had grown intemperate in the debate between his position and that of Holden. His growing irritation received support from many Conservatives, but it also led many Conservatives to search their conscience for the right belief. Torn between the Holden-Worth position and the Vance-Hale position, one man expressed the conviction of many men when he wished Hale were as wise as he was true, and when he said that he believed Holden was nearer right than Hale but that he disagreed with the former as to timing.³⁹ Therefore, as the formal break with Holden neared, the Conservative ranks wavered behind Vance and Hale, but the majority continued to push onward under the Conservative banner.

In light of the extent to which the controversy within the Conservative party had grown, Vance vainly endeavored to reach a solu-

³⁸Fayetteville Observer, August 31, 1863.

³⁹Samuel F. Phillips to William A. Graham, August 28, 1863, Graham Papers.

tion to the problem. As a gesture of reasonable debate and hopeful compromise, he summoned to Raleigh in early September his closest advisers. He called a conference for September 2 in Raleigh at which he requested the presence of Edwin Reade, John Gilmer, Holden, Graham, and Hale.⁴⁰ Gilmer could not attend, but he informed Graham that he wanted him to go because Vance was in trouble and something was needed to quiet the public mind.⁴¹ Graham informed Hale of the meeting and told Hale that he was disturbed that he was being criticized in the Western Democrat for not making an address to the people on the state of affairs.⁴² He urged Hale to attend the meeting because Vance needed the counsel of friends like Hale.⁴³ Hale did not attend the meeting along with Gilmer and Reade. However, Hale wrote Vance a letter advising him that Holden was growing stronger because Holden felt that he and Vance agreed on everything except a minor point.⁴⁴ Reade also wrote Vance a letter advising him to keep relations with Holden.⁴⁵ But in the absence of Gilmer, Reade, and Hale, the burden fell to Vance and Graham to convince Holden that his course was a destructive one.

After failing to convince Holden to discourage the peace meetings, Graham advised Vance to issue a mild denunciatory proclamation against Holden.⁴⁶ Thus, one result of this meeting was that Holden refused to abandon the movement or to alter his position. A second re-

⁴⁰Yates, "Vance and the Peace Movement," Part I, p. 14.

⁴¹John Gilmer to William A. Graham, August 29, 1863, Graham Papers.

⁴²William A. Graham to Hale, August 27, 1863, Graham Papers.

⁴³Graham to Hale, August 27, 1863, Graham Papers.

⁴⁴Hale to Vance, September 2, 1863, Vance Papers.

⁴⁵Vance to Hale, September 7, 1863, Hale Papers.

⁴⁶Raper, "Holden: A Political Biography," pp. 68-69.

sult was that Vance issued a cautious proclamation that failed to distinguish the difference between Holden and himself much less stating that they had separated.⁴⁷ For whatever reason Hale missed the conference in Raleigh, he missed an opportunity to exert a dominating influence over Vance at a time when he seemed confused as to precisely what course of action to take. Perhaps his presence was not necessary for instead of criticizing Vance's proclamation, he later informed Vance that it pleased him.⁴⁸ Instead of clearly breaking with Holden as he wished, Vance listened to Hale's advice to try to rectify the differences between Holden and himself.

While still trying to get Holden back into the administration's fold, Hale made it plain that Holden encouraged others to commit treason. He pointed out the fine distinction between the revolutionary rights of people and the constitutional rights of people in a public meeting. People had the right to rebel against a government, but individuals did not have that right of rebellion, and to advocate that they did was treason. Therefore, he argued, "When people assemble in public meetings and resolve in favor of the destruction of the Government of North Carolina as established by The People, they are instigating treason."⁴⁹ Not that Hale would have refused to report the public meetings in the Observer. He would have done so if they had not advocated treason or defied the law.⁵⁰ In Hale's opinion a great many of the meetings fell into that category.

⁴⁷Yates, "Vance and the Peace Movement," Part I, p. 16.

⁴⁸Hale to Vance, September 9, 1863, Vance Papers.

⁴⁹Fayetteville Observer, September 7, 1863.

⁵⁰Fayetteville Observer, September 7, 1863.

In addition to advocating treason or defying the law, many of the meetings favored reconstruction. Yet, the Standard said that it was against that concept. The ambiguity in Holden's attitude confused Hale. Considering Holden's earlier stand, from the call for troops in May of 1861 until the summer of 1863, it would seem that he had dramatically changed his mind. Certainly the people of the state had reason to be discontented, frustrated, and resentful over conditions in North Carolina and throughout the Confederacy. In that regard, Holden could be considered no different. But, in his role as editor of a widely circulated newspaper, his opinion had force, and Hale contended that a force for a disruptive cause only compounded the problems of the war.

Despite his misgivings about Holden's peace activities, Hale denounced the mob destruction of the Standard on September 9.⁵¹ Unfortunately for Hale, he did not get the facts correct, and thus received a sharp letter from Vance advising him to hold his temper against the Raleigh papers and to correct his report that a fight had taken place between Raleigh citizens and the Georgia soldiers who had formed the mob.⁵² In retaliation for the destruction of the Standard, some of Holden's friends destroyed the press of the State Journal, whose editor had long called for a suppression of Holden.⁵³ Hale had always blamed the State Journal as a source of agitation in the peace movement in that he felt that its denunciation of the Standard had led Holden to become more and more defensive. In fact, Hale told Vance that he got the im-

⁵¹Fayetteville Observer, September 14, 1863.

⁵²Vance to Hale, September 20, 1863, Hale Papers.

⁵³Richard E. Yates, The Confederacy and Zeb Vance, Confederate Centennial Studies, VIII (1958), 92.

pression from people that they would be glad if all four papers in Raleigh were defunct.⁵⁴

The destruction of the Standard initiated an exchange of letters between Hale and Holden in which Holden declared how much he appreciated Hale's views and his friendship, while Hale declared that he did not doubt that the Standard would appear again despite the outrage of the mob.⁵⁵ Even though Hale wished publicly that the Standard and the State Journal would turn over a new leaf and change their ways, no doubt he would not have been too saddened had he never seen either one of them again. As for Vance, the destruction of the Standard did not seem to be as popular in Raleigh as he would have preferred even though he informed Hale that the destruction of the press weakened Holden.⁵⁶ Therefore, the destruction of the Standard only aggravated feelings in the state and between the old allies within the Conservative party and did nothing toward reconciliation.

One man in the Conservative party to whom Hale wanted to state his position was William A. Graham. More than ever, Hale felt that Graham could do much to weaken Holden and the peace movement and to strengthen the Conservative party and its principles by declaring his beliefs. Hale told Graham that Thomas Ruffin had done Hale the honor of classifying him with Graham and Vance as the three persons in North Carolina to whom Ruffin looked to save the state. Hale argued that since the public had heard from Vance and himself, now it should hear from the

⁵⁴Hale to Vance, September 22, 1863, Vance Papers.

⁵⁵Holden to Hale, September 14, 1863; Hale to Holden, September 22, 1863, Hale Papers.

⁵⁶Vance to Hale, September 20, 1863, Hale Papers.

greatest of the three--William A. Graham.⁵⁷ Of course, the Observer was available to Graham as a medium of presentation.

Graham responded to Hale's request by stating that he had an aversion to writing for the public. But, he promised to prepare something, and because he had been the target of much criticism by the state press, he decided that he should give more than just a simple statement of his views.⁵⁸ On the last day of September, Graham forwarded to Hale a paper presenting his arguments against reuniting with the North and presenting his view of dealing mildly with the peace men in order to encourage them to reconsider their actions.⁵⁹ After considering Graham's paper, apparently Hale did not think the content would have the desired effect and informed Graham of his opinion. Graham replied that he respected Hale's opinion about the effect of the paper, and he asked Hale to return it because he would "rather suffer individual injustice than add to the bitterness of the strife prevailing among parties in the State."⁶⁰ In addition, Graham told Hale that he had mentioned to some of his friends at Raleigh the existence of his position paper to Hale, but he assured Hale that he would explain to them why it had not appeared in the Observer.⁶¹

When Graham's statement did not appear in the Observer, Vance informed Hale that people were saying that it was against Hale and so he had refused to publish it. Vance advised Hale that the best course

⁵⁷Hale to William A. Graham, September 16, 1863, Graham Papers.

⁵⁸Graham to Hale, September 21, 1863, Graham Papers.

⁵⁹Graham to Hale, September 30, 1863, Graham Papers.

⁶⁰Graham to Hale, October 11, 1863, Graham Papers.

⁶¹Graham to Hale, October 11, 1863, Graham Papers.

was to publish Graham's paper. He also advised him to say a good word for Thomas Fuller for Congress.⁶² Hale immediately replied to Vance that Graham withdrew the letter because of possible harm to himself, but he emphasized that he had been willing to publish it.⁶³ Furthermore, Hale resented the implication that he placed party politics above the good of the Confederacy because he did not support Thomas Fuller for Congress. He admitted that he hoped to be associated with the Whigs when the war was over, but not before. Even though Fuller was a Conservative, that did not mean that he was obligated to support him. He told Vance in no uncertain language that he would support "no man, Conservative or not, who is otherwise than true."⁶⁴

Vance was not long in sending Hale a letter apologizing to Hale for displeasing him about the Graham letter, and accepting Hale's reason for not coming out for Fuller.⁶⁵ Despite the fact that Graham supported the war effort and sought peace only through the appropriate channels of President Davis and the Richmond government, Hale always regretted that Graham did not lift his voice or his pen against Holden. To Hale, it seemed that Graham had the talent and the public confidence to lift his voice or his pen and do effortlessly what other men considered a Herculean task.⁶⁶

⁶²Vance to Hale, October 26, 1863, Hale Papers.

⁶³Hale to Vance, October 27, 1863, Vance Papers.

⁶⁴Hale to Vance, October 27, 1863, Vance Papers.

⁶⁵Vance to Hale, November 9, 1863, Hale Papers.

⁶⁶Hale to Cornelia Spencer, April 9, 1866, Cornelia Phillips Spencer Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, hereinafter cited as Spencer Papers. Typescript copies of the Spencer Papers were used for this study.

Hale regretted that Graham did not speak against Holden, but in the fall of 1863 he regretted that he had to speak against Holden. They were allies and both were Conservatives. More importantly, both wanted peace. Hale wanted peace, but he believed the only way that peace could be negotiated was between the two governments. However, since the North was unwilling to make peace except on terms of unconditional surrender, he maintained his philosophy that the war could terminate only with a victory by the Confederate States resulting in independence.⁶⁷ But Holden also avowed that he was for independence. What he opposed was indefinite fighting and the policies of President Davis. In his opinion, those two factors did not impair his friendship with Hale.⁶⁸ Hale disagreed. He curtly informed Holden that he supported Davis as much as possible, and he had confidence in him as President.⁶⁹ Hale also felt that Holden had strained their friendship by pursuing a course in the Standard, which had resumed publication in October, that resulted in injustice to the Observer, while he simultaneously maintained that the Observer had issued only friendly appeals to the Standard.⁷⁰ Thus, by the end of November, Hale and Holden irrevocably ended their three year sojourn as allies. While Holden charged that Hale had gone over to the "Destructives," Hale held the Standard accountable for voting North Carolina into the war, and he labelled it the life of the secession party before the war and in the fall of 1863, the

⁶⁷Fayetteville Observer, September 24, 1863.

⁶⁸Holden to Hale, October 7, 1863, Hale Papers.

⁶⁹Hale to Holden, October 8, 1863, Hale Papers.

⁷⁰Fayetteville Observer, November 16, 1863.

life of the peace party, or according to Hale, "the real secession party."⁷¹

To many people North Carolina entered her darkest hour of the war during December of 1863. No one doubted that the Conservative party had split into two factions--one behind Holden and the Standard and the other behind Hale and the Observer. Despite its earlier claim of endorsing no party, the Wilmington Journal represented the Confederate party in the absence of the defunct State Journal and the re-located Raleigh Register at Petersburg, Virginia. When North Carolina and the Confederacy needed solidarity of action in the face of military setbacks, North Carolina had three competing political parties. However, the Confederate party press approached the political division with peace gestures toward the Conservatives. The Wilmington Journal attacked Holden and not the Conservative party, or even Hale. Old Democratic enemies of Hale extended their apologies and voiced their admiration and respect for Hale.⁷² The major political gulf lay between the Conservative party and the Peace party, with the latter claiming itself to be the true Conservative party. People expressed their opinion to Hale that Holden's actions were giving a false impression to the North about solidarity of North Carolinians, and they even appeared surprised that Davis did not arrest Holden.⁷³ Other people were of the same opinion about Holden's injury to North Carolina, but they looked to Hale and his

⁷¹Fayetteville Observer, November 30, 1863.

⁷²Alfred Waddell wrote Hale, "I owe you an apology for insulting language used by me when editing the Wilmington Herald." See Waddell to Hale, December 2, 1863, Hale Papers.

⁷³W. A. Smith to Hale, December 17, 1863, Hale Papers.

"Holden Killer" to curtail Holden's activities.⁷⁴

The growing strength of the peace movement in December caused Vance to despair over the conditions in the state. He told Hale that matters were "gloomy in the extreme," and that he feared that North Carolina was "on the eve of another revolution and civil war...."⁷⁵ From a determined position in August, Vance seemed confused as to what course of action to take in December. He even speculated to Hale that if the Congress offered the State Legislature to treat for peace, would it do any good?⁷⁶ Vance sought Hale's advice and the advice of other loyal Conservatives, but the decision had to be his decision. His advisers offered him no clear course to follow. During the last several months of confusion and hesitation in the Conservative ranks, Hale had attempted to heal the wound between Holden and the other Conservatives, but on Hale's terms and in his language. Since the conditions had not been met, he did what he had advised Vance not to do earlier--split with Holden. As governor, Vance had to act to gain any order out of chaos in the Conservative party and the state. As the old year ended and the new year began, Vance did act.

In light of a proposal by the peace movement to call for a convention in May of 1864, to consider a peace treaty with the North, Vance informed Hale that the only issue to be emphasized was Lincoln or no Lincoln.⁷⁷ He then informed Davis that if the Richmond government nego-

⁷⁴James Johnson to Hale, December 5, 1863, Hale Papers.

⁷⁵Vance to Hale, December 10, 1863, Hale Papers.

⁷⁶Vance to Hale, December 21, 1863, Hale Papers.

⁷⁷Vance to Hale, December 20, 1863, Hale Papers.

tiated with the Washington government, and if the terms were rejected, then the war feeling would be strengthened.⁷⁸ By the time Davis replied to Vance that he should abandon the policy of conciliation,⁷⁹ Vance had written Graham that he had decided to see the Conservative party destroyed and Holden in hell before he would allow an action such as a peace convention to dishonor North Carolina and the Confederacy.⁸⁰ Thus, after six months of vacillation on the part of Hale and Vance as to the proper course to take against the peace movement, and disagreement between themselves on where and when to attack, they were ready to launch a drive that would bury Holden and the peace movement for the course of the war.

Although Hale's campaign against Holden and the peace movement proceeded in January with the complete support of Vance, the campaign encountered two problems that Hale felt reduced its effectiveness. First, Hale received letters urging him to get Graham to speak against the contemplated convention movement.⁸¹ In response to those urgings and to his own belief that Graham's public support was needed once again, Hale sent Graham a letter that he had received from "a gentleman of position and influence" that criticized Graham for not speaking against the convention movement, because his silence gave the movement strength and conveyed sympathy with the movement.⁸² Graham replied to

⁷⁸Zebulon Vance to Jefferson Davis, December 30, 1863, Official Records, (Army), Series I, LI, Part II, 807.

⁷⁹Jefferson Davis to Zebulon Vance, January 8, 1864, Official Records, (Army), Series I, LI, Part II, 808-810.

⁸⁰Vance to William A. Graham, January 1, 1864, Graham Papers.

⁸¹R. S. French to Hale, January 22, 1864, Hale Papers.

⁸²Hale to Graham, January 25, 1864, Graham Papers.

Hale that the letter he had enclosed was from an excitable person, probably an original secessionist.⁸³ He felt that the person tended to denounce anyone who did not use methods of an evil nature to control events.⁸⁴ As for himself, Graham said that he would communicate anything to Hale if their opinion varied.⁸⁵

In his reply to Graham, Hale did not question the right to hold a convention but only the purpose for which the convention was to meet, "to enable North Carolina to take her own affairs into her own hands, and to withdraw the key-stone from the arch."⁸⁶ He implored Graham to give his opinion to the people against the convention with the argument, "Be assured that it needs every effort to defeat it."⁸⁷ But once again, as in September of 1863, Hale had to be content without Graham's influential words to the public, although Graham told him in a letter not for publication that he was against any movement leading to the abandonment of rights and that he was against a convention.⁸⁸

A second problem that the campaign against the peace movement encountered also involved Graham. Early in January, George Davis of North Carolina resigned from the Confederate Senate to join President Davis' cabinet in Richmond. Vance wanted Graham or David Swain to replace Davis for the remainder of his term, and he asked Hale for his suggestion.⁸⁹ Hale also wanted Graham, but Graham refused the offer,

⁸³Graham to Hale, January 29, 1864, Graham Papers.

⁸⁴Graham to Hale, January 29, 1864, Graham Papers.

⁸⁵Graham to Hale, January 29, 1864, Graham Papers.

⁸⁶Hale to Graham, February 5, 1864, Graham Papers.

⁸⁷Hale to Graham, February 5, 1864, Graham Papers.

⁸⁸Graham to Hale, January 29, 1864, Graham Papers.

⁸⁹Vance to Hale, January 7, 1864, Hale Papers.

much to Hale's regret.⁹⁰ In declining the position because of business, Graham opened the door for Vance to extend an offer to Swain, but he, too, refused. However, Swain recommended one of Vance's closest friends, Edwin Reade, for the position.⁹¹ Vance accepted Swain's advice and selected Reade. When Reade made a statement in a Conservative caucus meeting to the effect that the North Carolina General Assembly should issue some expression of readiness or desire for peace, Graham did not agree with his sentiments, and he informed Hale that "his views prevailed among friends!"⁹² Regardless of Reade's statement, Graham still had confidence in Reade, and he informed Hale that he assumed that Vance still had confidence in him.⁹³

The confidence in Reade by Vance and Graham did not placate Hale. He wrote Graham that he regretted even more that Graham did not accept the Senate seat since Reade had made those comments in the caucus meeting and had made a speech in the Senate that tended "to excuse or justify action of the Standard and its party."⁹⁴ Hale stated his respect for Reade personally and politically, but he stated his doubts that Reade was fit to represent the state.⁹⁵ Reade's action so incensed Hale that he refused to publish Reade's speech, but commented privately on it in severe language.⁹⁶ Vance smoothed Hale's ire by telling him that he believed Reade was sound on the main issues, even though he felt

⁹⁰Hale to Graham, January 23, 1864, Hale Papers.

⁹¹Graham to Hale, January 29, 1864, Graham Papers.

⁹²Graham to Hale, January 29, 1864, Graham Papers.

⁹³Graham to Hale, January 29, 1864, Graham Papers.

⁹⁴Hale to Graham, February 5, 1864, Graham Papers.

⁹⁵Hale to Graham, February 5, 1864, Graham Papers.

⁹⁶Hale to George Little, February 8, 1864, Hale Papers.

that Reade was timid about the convention.⁹⁷ Hale apparently did not say too much more about the matter either to Graham or Vance. He did tell Swain, the man who had initially recommended Reade, that Reade's appointment may have been good policy, but his speech was a mistake.⁹⁸ Hale did not have to regret for long that Graham had not accepted the Senate offer from Vance because in the election for the Senate seat in February, Graham won and took Reade's place in the Confederate Congress in May.

If Reade's comments and Graham's lack of comments hurt the campaign against Holden and the peace movement, the establishment of the Confederate in Raleigh helped it. Early in February Hale announced in the Observer that the Confederate had recently begun its operation in Raleigh in place of the discontinued State Journal.⁹⁹ Alexander M. Gorman established the Confederate, and he employed Duncan McRae of Fayetteville as editor. Before his association with the paper, McRae demonstrated his extremism by writing Hale a letter in which he suggested that he advise Vance to suspend the writ of habeas corpus and declare martial law.¹⁰⁰ In contrast to John Spelman, the editor of the State Journal, Hale called McRae a political friend, and he agreed with his views even though the Confederate occupied the same political position as that of the State Journal. Hale recognized the advantage of a favorable press in Raleigh, and he informed Vance that the Democrats were

⁹⁷Vance to Hale, February 11, 1864, Hale Papers.

⁹⁸Hale to David L. Swain, February 16, 1864, David Lowery Swain Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, hereinafter cited as Swain Papers, Southern Historical Collection.

⁹⁹Fayetteville Observer, February 4, 1864.

¹⁰⁰Duncan McRae to Hale, January 16, 1864, Hale Papers.

anxious to be of his party.¹⁰¹ Thus, by February Vance had former political enemies as allies against Holden and the peace movement, with the Confederate attacking Holden more than defending Vance. Its influence in Raleigh and its friendly relationship with Hale made it an important asset in Vance's favor.

Other events of February contributed to make that month a vital one in the war era. In addition to the attacks on Holden by the Confederate and the Democratic newspapers, Hale continued to pour criticism upon the Standard, claiming that if Northern armies should sweep across North Carolina, the blame lay at the door of the Standard.¹⁰² Similarly, he emphasized the inconsistency of the Standard by charging that its "present favorites are men whom it was formerly in the constant habit of denouncing, and those whom it now denounces are men who were once its prime favorites."¹⁰³ Hale did not have the Standard for a target for long because on February 25 the Observer reported that Holden had suspended publication of the Standard, but the report gave no reason for the action.¹⁰⁴

One reason connected with the suspension of the Standard involves the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus by an act of the Confederate Congress on February 15. The act provided for the writ to be suspended for a period of five months. In general, the cases which the suspension of the writ affected were "treason, resisting the authority of the Confederacy or inciting others to abandon the cause, attempts to

¹⁰¹Hale to Vance, February 8, 1864, Hale Papers.

¹⁰²Fayetteville Observer, February 1, 1864.

¹⁰³Fayetteville Observer, February 15, 1864.

¹⁰⁴Fayetteville Observer, February 25, 1864.

avoid military service, and other offenses which might weaken the Confederate government in its fight for independency."¹⁰⁵ Specifically, the act applied to thirteen cases in which the writ would be suspended. Certainly Holden had reason to be alarmed that the act was aimed at him, and he had reason to see the terms of the act as a threat to the existence of the Standard by reducing its freedom if not, in fact, shutting it down. Regardless of the effect that the act had upon Holden's decision to suspend the Standard, a factor that did help Vance in his campaign for re-election, the act suspending the writ of habeas corpus caused other repercussions in North Carolina.

Before the act of suspension had been enacted, Hale wrote Duncan McRae that he felt that the suspension would be hazardous since he could not say whether or not the circumstances in North Carolina justified the act. Although he expressed regret that the writ might be suspended, he said, "I cannot determine what to suggest instead of force."¹⁰⁶ After the act had become law, Hale commented in the Observer on February 22 that he questioned the policy of suspension, but he did not question the right of the Congress and the President to judge matters affecting the policy and the necessity to implement it. Although he said that he hoped that the power would not be abused, he could not help adding for Holden's benefit, "True men had nothing to fear from the suspension."¹⁰⁷ That bit of advice from Hale's pen conveniently coincided with the launching of Vance's official campaign for governor

¹⁰⁵ Yates, "Vance as War Governor," p. 57.

¹⁰⁶ Hale to Duncan McRae, January 20, 1864, Hale Papers.

¹⁰⁷ Fayetteville Observer, February 22, 1864.

by a speech in Wilkesboro condemning the peace movement.¹⁰⁸

While both Vance and Hale disliked the act suspending the writ of habeas corpus, they were not prepared for the action taken by Chief Justice Richmond Pearson of the North Carolina Supreme Court on the day after the Wilkesboro speech. In the case of Edward Walton, Pearson construed the act to apply only to criminals and not to conscription petitioners. His interpretation of the act was important since the Confederate government had recently abolished substitution and had made those men who had furnished substitutes liable for conscription. Pearson ruled that Congress had no authority to violate a contract made between a substitute and a principal. He issued a writ of habeas corpus to Walton, and the immediate effect was Walton's release.¹⁰⁹ However, the long range effect was a division of the Supreme Court since Pearson stood alone in his interpretation of the act and in his willingness to release petitioners on a writ of habeas corpus in defiance of congressional law. Hale reported on February 25 that both Justice Battle and Justice Menly decided that they had no authority to issue writs in light of the fact that Congress had suspended the writ of habeas corpus and that the constitutionality of the act abolishing substitution had not been tested in court.¹¹⁰ Until the June term of 1864, when the North Carolina Supreme Court ruled two to one to overrule Pearson and to uphold the constitutionality of the act conscripting principals of sub-

¹⁰⁸Richard E. Yates, "Governor Vance and the Peace Movement," North Carolina Historical Review, XVII (April, 1940), 96, hereinafter cited as Yates, "Vance and the Peace Movement," Part II.

¹⁰⁹Yates, "Vance as War Governor," p. 60.

¹¹⁰Fayetteville Observer, February 25, 1864.

stitutes, Pearson continued to issue writs of habeas corpus to principals of substitutes, while Battle and Manly refused to issue writs on the grounds that the suspension did apply to principals and that the act of suspension of habeas corpus was constitutional.¹¹¹

While the controversy over the writ of habeas corpus absorbed some of the attention of Vance and Hale, and they followed the issue with interest until the summer, their main concern during the last part of February and the early part of March was the gubernatorial election. An important step was taken by Vance on the last day of February when he notified Hale that he felt that the convention movement was dead.¹¹² This statement evidenced a growing confidence that Vance had in his position. Three days later on March 3, Vance gave a speech calling the convention movement unauthorized and stating the impossibility of reconstruction.¹¹³ Up to that time Vance had been running for re-election without formal opposition. On that date, Holden officially announced his candidacy for governor.¹¹⁴ Speaking for the Democrats, McRae informed Hale that the Democrats would not put up a candidate because it would remove support from Vance and they favored Vance over Holden, even if they were not completely pleased with Vance.¹¹⁵ With the public

¹¹¹Before the Supreme Court overruled Pearson's decision, the General Assembly of North Carolina passed an act in June affirming the legitimacy of the writ of habeas corpus. When the act suspending the writ expired on August 1, 1864, the Confederate Congress refused to renew it. Thus, from February to August of 1864, the writ of habeas corpus was never fully suspended in North Carolina.

¹¹²Vance to Hale, February 28, 1864, Hale Papers.

¹¹³Fayetteville Observer, March 3, 1864.

¹¹⁴Fayetteville Observer, March 7, 1864.

¹¹⁵Duncan McRae to Hale, March 3, 1864, Hale Papers.

announcement by Holden that he would seek the office of governor, the issue of the peace movement reduced itself to a power struggle between Holden and Vance for control of state policies for the duration of the war.

The suggestion by Vance to Hale to attack Holden and make him "the daddy of secession in N. C."¹¹⁶ indicated the tack that the campaign would take for the next five months. Vance decided to place the onus of secession upon Holden for his secessionist activities of 1850 and for his vote for North Carolina to secede in the May convention of 1861. Vance did not want to alienate those voters who were growing tired of the war so he offered no concessions to the Confederate party, while he attempted to indicate to the supporters of peace the possible dangers of Holden's plan.¹¹⁷ He could afford to more or less ignore the Confederate party since he had the support of its principal organ, the Confederate, and he had the assurance of Duncan McRae that the Democrats would not enter a candidate for governor. Vance wanted peace, but he did not want peace on any terms that did not have the support of the Confederate government at Richmond and its avowed policy of independence. No doubt his campaign strategy reflected the advice that Hale had accumulated in forty years of observing political campaigns.

Vance built his platform primarily for the moderates, who formed a majority of the voters, while he largely ignored the extremists of war and of peace. Since the extremists of war had no candidate in the field, Vance ignored them more than the extremists of peace. In so

¹¹⁶Vance to Hale, March 6, 1864, Hale Papers.

¹¹⁷Yates, The Confederacy and Zeb Vance, p. 103.

doing, he sought to take support away from Holden, who wanted to use Vance's attitude of condemnation of the peace movement as a lever to pull moderate and peace voters to himself. Basically, Holden desired North Carolina to assert itself as a sovereign body and by special convention obtain an early peace.¹¹⁸ Holden was a Union supporter in 1864 "because he saw the futility of the war and felt it would be far better to make an honorable peace while possible, instead of being forced later to accept unconditional surrender."¹¹⁹

Of course, that peace policy which Holden enunciated during the spring of 1864 could not have been more removed from the view that Hale had of the war situation if it had been intentionally designed. Not only did Holden's policies differ from those of Hale, but his political involvement differed also from that of Hale. During his years as editor of the Observer, Hale limited his political involvement to campaigning for other men, not for himself. Unlike Holden, if Hale had any desire to seek and to hold any elected public office, he never let those desires become manifest into overt action. However, on at least two instances, Hale received encouragement to run for public office. Ironically, one instance involved receiving encouragement from none other than Holden himself.

In the summer of 1862, Holden attempted to persuade Hale to run for the State Senate by saying of Hale, "We would suggest that we know of no man who ...is so justly entitled to the honor of a seat in the

¹¹⁸Raper, "Holden: A Political Biography," p. 79.

¹¹⁹Raper, "Holden and the Peace Movement," p. 494.

next Senate of North Carolina...." ¹²⁰ Hale declined to run for the office. The next summer Hale's name was suggested for the Confederate Congress. One man at Fort Fisher, North Carolina, informed Hale, "With the thousands of others in the 4th Congressional District who are really anxious, and believe that you will consent to serve us in the ensuing Congress of the Confederate States of America, are the members of Co. "B", 36th N. C. Artillery."¹²¹ Despite that endorsement and the praise of the Greensboro Patriot for being a "true and honest man," ¹²² Hale once again declined to run for public office.

To Hale, the Observer required enough of his energies without trying to be a politician and a newspaper editor at the same time. The absence of Hale from politics induced David L. Swain to lament to Hale that he could render a great service to the state if he were in politics at Raleigh. ¹²³ Hale did not let Swain's advice change his attitude toward holding office even when the advice was coupled with the praise, "Our opinions have coincided so nearly during your editorial career of forty years."¹²⁴ Perhaps the best reason for Hale's refusal to enter politics came from Holden. The man who successfully combined the two careers of politician and newspaper editor said of Hale in 1881, "Mr. Hale has shown his good sense, in that he has never sought or held public office."¹²⁵ In the spring of 1864, Holden may have wished at one time or another that he had had better sense than to run for public

¹²⁰North Carolina Standard, July 12, 1862.

¹²¹John M. Kelly to Hale, September 7, 1863, Hale Papers.

¹²²Greensboro Patriot, August 27, 1863.

¹²³David L. Swain to Hale, December 30, 1863, Hale Papers.

¹²⁴Swain to Hale, December 30, 1863, Hale Papers.

¹²⁵Holden, "On the History of Journalism in North Carolina," p. 38.

office against the formidable team of Vance and Hale.

Holden's efforts to win the election against that team were dealt still another blow in April. Despite the establishment of the Confederate in Raleigh during February with its avowed pro-Vance editorial policy, Vance informed Hale in March that he had to have a paper in Raleigh. Since the Confederate came from Democratic origins, Vance wanted a paper of his own party. He speculated that members of the Conservative party would buy the Spirit of the Age and convert it into a party organ.¹²⁶ The result of Vance's desire was the establishment of the Conservative on April 16. Although Vance wanted Hale to edit the paper, Hale could not be persuaded to leave Fayetteville.¹²⁷ Vance then prevailed upon John D. Hyman, a lawyer from Yadkinville, to come to Raleigh to edit the paper.¹²⁸ The first issue of the Conservative appeared on April 20. Within a week of its initial issue, the Conservative enumerated the "true conservative platform" which included repeal of habeas corpus, continued fighting but negotiations for peace, and no separate action by a convention.¹²⁹ Thus, the Conservative indicated its

¹²⁶Vance to Hale, March 20, 1864, Hale Papers.

¹²⁷Perhaps one reason Hale was reluctant to leave Fayetteville at this time was that the construction of a telegraph line to Fayetteville from Raleigh had finally begun in early February. Hale had wanted the line for at least two years, but the construction of the line had become more important in the last six months. On September 14, 1863, Hale had written Vance that the Observer had gained several hundred subscribers. Those subscribers took the Observer because it opposed the Standard. Hale had argued, "Now if we had a telegraph here, many more would take it /the Observer/ for its news, and so the influence and circulation of the Standard might be still further curtailed." Even though the Standard had ceased to be published in March, 1864, its suspension coupled with the telegraph line to Fayetteville made Hale and the Observer more influential than ever.

¹²⁸Yates, "Vance and the Peace Movement," Part II, p. 107.

¹²⁹Raleigh Conservative, April 25, 1864.

purpose of assisting Vance and the Conservative party with an effort to attract supporters to Vance's ranks rather than to attack the position of Holden.

With all the journalistic assistance from the Conservative and the Confederate, Hale ceased to be as intense in his attacks upon Holden. However, several days before the appearance of the Conservative, Hale had lashed into Holden with a scathing editorial that called Holden a "designing demagogue" who was pretending to sell peace by unlawful and impractical methods for his own "personal preferment."¹³⁰ That editorial condemning Holden was one of the few of that kind, and apparently the most severe, which Hale published in April. But the reduction of his editorial attacks upon Holden did not reduce his role as adviser to Vance.

Victor Barringer of Concord, an active member of the Conservative party, believed that Hale occupied the position of chief adviser to Vance. Barringer wrote, "I honestly believe it is the duty of those who have influence with the Governor--among whom I am sure you are chief--to advise him...."¹³¹ Certainly Hale was not a person to shirk his duty. Whether or not Hale was Vance's chief adviser at this time is debatable. What is evident is that he was a leading adviser. Men of the Confederate party also recognized Hale's prominent position of adviser to the governor. Duncan McRae anxiously wrote Hale that Vance needed to be advised that he should elicit support from those who opposed Holden rather than winning over Holden's friends. McRae also pointed out that

¹³⁰Fayetteville Observer, April 11, 1864.

¹³¹Victor Barringer to Hale, April 18, 1864, Hale Papers.

Vance seemed too confident in his strength.¹³² Hale was aware of Vance's confidence, at least since the latter part of March when Vance had told him, "Things appear wonderfully well in all directions-- better than I could have thought. Holden's friends say he is much disappointed..."¹³³ Perhaps McRae's fears were conveyed to Vance by Hale, but apparently Vance decided not to change his campaign strategy.

At the same time that McRae expressed his fears about Vance's confidence to Hale, he complimented Hale on behalf of the Confederate by telling him, "We heartily and sincerely reciprocate for the Observer the appreciations you express for the Confederate; and were it to fail to reach us in due time (which it never does) we would miss it very much."¹³⁴ Although the Conservative was the organ of the Conservative party and the Confederate was the organ of the Confederate or Democratic party, it seems that Hale remained more closely tied with the Confederate.

A better indication of the ties between the Confederate and Hale than the correspondence between McRae and Hale occurred in May. Peter Mallett, the chief conscription officer in North Carolina, learned that Hale was considering suspending publication of the Observer. He told Hale that he could think of "no greater calamity except invasion could befall our state and Confederacy than the stoppage of your Paper."¹³⁵ He could not offer any suggestions about the lack of supplies which had caused Hale to consider suspension, but he did inform Hale that he would

¹³²Duncan McRae to Hale, April 26, 1864, Hale Papers.

¹³³Vance to Hale, March 20, 1864, Hale Papers.

¹³⁴Duncan McRae to Hale, April 26, 1864, Hale Papers.

¹³⁵Peter Mallett to Hale, May 14, 1864, Hale Papers.

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do all in his power to furnish the Observer with workers.

Curiously the offer of assistance from Mallett to Hale in publishing the Observer nearly coincided with the return to circulation of the Standard. Hale wrote in the Observer on May 16 that he had received a copy of the Standard for May 13 in which Holden said it would be issued on a regular basis.¹³⁷ Two days after the reappearance of the Standard was noted in the Observer, Hale received a letter from George Little of the Confederate, who had just learned that Hale needed printers and materials. He expressed his determination to prevent the Observer from suspending publication due to a lack of printers or materials. He informed Hale that he had written a letter to a printer at Hillsborough urging him to go to Fayetteville, and that the Confederate had enough paper that it could spare twenty or thirty reams. Little concluded his letter by saying, "And if we have anything else you need, you have only to let us know, to secure division with you."¹³⁸ Whatever problem Hale had in publishing the Observer, either by himself or with assistance from other papers as the Confederate, he was able to publish the Observer throughout the war without any period of suspension.

The crisis of mid-May concerning the suspension of the Observer seemed to climax a period of several months in which Hale had been involved in numerous issues and events relating to the political and domestic stability of North Carolina. After the crisis had passed, Hale became involved in only one issue for the next three months--the defeat of Holden in the August election. The return of the Standard to circula-

¹³⁶Mallett to Hale, May 14, 1864, Hale Papers.

¹³⁷Fayetteville Observer, May 16, 1864.

¹³⁸George Little to Hale, May 18, 1864, Hale Papers.

tion brought adverse comments from Hale about the paper and its editor. Hale reminded his readers that the North used the remarks of Holden and the statements of the Standard as evidence that North Carolina wanted to return to the Union.¹³⁹ Hale continued to assault Holden and the Standard for the remaining days of May and throughout the month of June. Near the end of June, Hale noted in an editorial that the Conservative was urging Holden to withdraw from the race for governor. Hale answered the suggestion of the Conservative with a thundering "No!" Hale declared, "We wish to have done now and forever, with the political aspirations of Mr. W. W. Holden."¹⁴⁰ If the Confederacy had won the war, perhaps Hale's wish would have been fulfilled.

July provided Hale with the opportunity to bring to bear as much pressure as possible upon Holden since it was the last month before the election in early August. Hale's primary weapon against Holden was the columns of the Observer. The basic element upon which he relied was the emotional rather than the logical appeal to his readers. He attacked Holden for wanting to make peace by means other than provided by the constitution. According to Hale, those means were synonymous with "base and cowardly submission," and submission meant "submission to Lincoln and his abolition hordes--submission to the loss of Liberty and of all the property of the people of the State, except possibly his own [Holden's]"¹⁴¹

Hale was not without allies in his journalistic condemnation of Holden. In addition to other Conservative newspapers, the Democratic

¹³⁹Fayetteville Observer, May 23, 1864.

¹⁴⁰Fayetteville Observer, June 27, 1864.

¹⁴¹Fayetteville Observer, July 27, 1864.

press led by the Confederate conducted an assault on Holden. Other prominent Democratic papers such as the Wilmington Journal brought their support to Vance and against Holden, although they were somewhat reluctant to support their former political enemy. Since they had no candidate of their own to support, Vance represented the lesser of two evils. The Wilmington Journal expressed the feeling of the Democrats in an editorial by the editors, Joseph Fulton and A. L. Price. Their feelings were as follows:

We may deprecate Mr. Holden's present candidacy and we do deprecate it, but we do this from motives and for reasons far above party. Had party considerations alone governed us, or those with whom we concur in opinion, we would have hailed with pleasure this split in the party by which we have been most bitterly denounced and ruthlessly proscribed....

We declined running a candidate of our own before the split rising out of Mr. Holden's candidacy....

We declared ourselves at the first willing for the sake of peace and harmony to waive opposition to Governor Vance. Our position was so proclaimed and since been loyally adhered to....

We have often before stated our grounds for withholding opposition to Governor Vance, and have defined the character and extent of the support we are prepared to give him, which does not commit us to his political position and still less compromise him to ours.¹⁴²

With all the assistance that Vance was receiving throughout the state from temporary political friends and from staunch political friends, Hale had reason to tell David L. Swain, "I am glad to feel hopeful as to the condition and prospects both in our State and the Confederacy."¹⁴³ In the same letter, Hale expressed his gratitude to Swain for his nomination of his son Edward to be Vance's private secretary, and to Vance for his offer to Edward of the position. But Hale had pride

¹⁴²Wilmington Journal, July 14, 1864.

¹⁴³Hale to David L. Swain, July 16, 1864, Swain Papers, Southern Historical Collection.

in his son's accomplishments upon the battlefield as an officer of the Confederacy. He told Swain that he was not at liberty to advise Edward.¹⁴⁴ In a letter three days later to Vance, Hale expressed his sentiments that he would be glad for Edward not to be put in further danger of the war. However, he refused to speak for his youngest son. He told Vance on July 19, "I think it a matter to be decided alone by his own feelings and judgment."¹⁴⁵ The matter was not settled until the second week of August when Hale wrote Vance that Edward had notified him that he did not want to leave the field, and that Edward requested Vance to make another appointment as his private secretary.¹⁴⁶

In his correspondence with Vance during this period, the fate of Edward was not Hale's only concern. In the July 19 letter to Vance, Hale told Vance that in regard to the August gubernatorial election, "I cannot see but that the results will be a Waterloo defeat of the miserable traitors."¹⁴⁷ The fate of North Carolina and the Confederacy depended on a favorable outcome for Vance in the election. As for Holden and his supporters being traitors, Hale wrote in the Observer that he defied anyone to find any hostility to any government except that of the Confederacy in the Standard.¹⁴⁸ Hale's spirits were bolstered by reports that even some of Holden's supporters were turning on him for his extremism. He reported that Holden was so unpopular that his friends abused him as an "unscrupulous partizan and liar."¹⁴⁹ Hale gloated,

¹⁴⁴Hale to Swain, July 16, 1864, Swain Papers, Southern Historical Collection.

¹⁴⁵Hale to Vance, July 19, 1864, Vance Papers.

¹⁴⁶Hale to Vance, August 11, 1864, Vance Papers.

¹⁴⁷Hale to Vance, July 19, 1864, Hale Papers.

¹⁴⁸Fayetteville Observer, July 25, 1864.

¹⁴⁹Fayetteville Observer, July 28, 1864.

"The demagogue is getting his deserts."¹⁵⁰ With regard to Holden, the Wilmington Journal went so far as to state on July 30, "Politically speaking, he is defunct, and may hereafter be referred to as the late Mr. Holden."¹⁵¹ On that date the prediction was accurate, but premature, and the prediction applied only to the election of 1864.

Hale printed the first election results on August 4, and those results indicated that Holden was indeed the "late Mr. Holden" as far as the gubernatorial election was concerned. Hale reported that the army balloting held on July 28 showed Vance with 16,604 votes and Holden with 2,190 votes.¹⁵² Hale reported on August 8 that the civilian balloting held on August 4 combined with the army balloting showed Vance with 29,269 votes and Holden with 8,275 votes. With regard to those election statistics, Hale said, "The election that has just occurred in this State is in all its aspects the most remarkable political incident of the age."¹⁵³ When Hale wrote Vance a letter on August 11 regarding Edward's appointment to be Vance's private secretary, Hale commented that he did not think Holden could have been "beaten out of sight."¹⁵⁴ Yet, as the election returns continued to be tabulated, the evidence pointed to a disastrous defeat for Holden.

Hale reported on August 15 that the election figures showed Vance with 43,525 votes and Holden with 11,334 votes. He commented that to his knowledge the margin of victory in a gubernatorial election had

¹⁵⁰ Fayetteville Observer, July 28, 1864.

¹⁵¹ Wilmington Journal, July 30, 1864.

¹⁵² Fayetteville Observer, August 4, 1864.

¹⁵³ Fayetteville Observer, August 8, 1864.

¹⁵⁴ Hale to Vance, August 11, 1864, Vance Papers.

never previously exceeded 40,000 votes.¹⁵⁵ The final figure for Vance has been estimated at 57,873 votes and the final figure for Holden at 14,432 votes.¹⁵⁶ The exact voting figures for each candidate are difficult to determine, and are not essential to the issue. The significant fact is that Vance won the election by a substantial majority. Much of the credit for Vance's success can be assigned to Hale. Thomas Ruffin wrote Hale that he hoped that Hale had put Holden in a position in which he would never bother the state again "with the protrusions of his personal ambition...."¹⁵⁷ No doubt many people across the state had the same feeling that North Carolina owed to Hale and his Fayetteville Observer as much as anyone connected with the campaign the precarious political position of Holden.

Of course, other factors contributed to Holden's defeat and Vance's victory besides Hale. For example, Holden depended on the popularity of the peace movement to win votes, but his support did not have the strength that the newspapers indicated that it had.¹⁵⁸ In fact, Holden's own Standard manufactured much of the support ascribed to Holden's appeal.¹⁵⁹ Only two papers besides the Standard were for Holden. Those two papers, the Raleigh Progress and the Salem People's Press, portrayed Holden as the true Conservative candidate while denouncing Vance for being "Destructive."¹⁶⁰ In addition, Vance's tactics of ad-

¹⁵⁵Fayetteville Observer, August 15, 1864.

¹⁵⁶Yates, "Vance and the Peace Movement," Part II, p. 111.

¹⁵⁷Thomas Ruffin to Hale, August 16, 1864, Hamilton, The Papers of Thomas Ruffin, III, 414.

¹⁵⁸Raper, "Holden and the Peace Movement," p. 515.

¹⁵⁹Raper, "Holden: A Political Biography," p. 63.

¹⁶⁰Yates, The Confederacy and Zeb Vance, p. 105.

vocating a continuation of the war while expressing a desire for peace helped to divide the supporters of Holden. Both men regarded peace as the primary objective of the times. However, Vance wanted peace by victory or by negotiations between the Confederate government and the United States government. Holden wanted peace by negotiations between North Carolina and/or the Confederate government and the United States government on any terms except reunion. On the issue of reunion, Hale offered a lucid explanation a year after the war had ended. Hale said, "Mr. H[olden] was too true an index of popular feeling to have mistaken it on so momentous a point. He knew that the people wanted peace, therefore he was a peace man. He knew that they did not want reunion; therefore he professed uncompromising hostility to reunion."¹⁶¹ Hale's evaluation of Holden after the war did not prevent him from accusing Holden during the war of promoting reconstruction.

To the list of factors leading to Holden's defeat can be added Vance's popularity with the masses of people in the state, and Holden's connection with the Heroes of America, who professed the aim of reuniting North Carolina with the Union.¹⁶² Thus, Holden had too much to overcome in order to prevent Vance from securing a second term as governor and to put himself in the position to alter the course of the war from the governor's mansion. The results of the gubernatorial election of 1864 effectively crushed Holden and the peace movement, which had increasingly menaced the war effort in North Carolina since the preceding summer. The defeat of Holden and the peace movement was a gratifying victory that Vance and Hale, and the other Conservatives of the state,

¹⁶¹Hale to Cornelia Spencer, April 21, 1866, Spencer Papers.

¹⁶²Raper, "Holden and the Peace Movement," p. 515.

savored at a time when victories of any kind, political or military, became less and less frequent.

CHAPTER V

ARDENT REVOLUTIONIST

With the results of the gubernatorial election sufficiently tabulated by mid-August of 1864, Hale confidently saw that the masses of the voting public were behind Vance and his policies, and were not willing to jeopardize the fate of North Carolina by putting her into the control of Holden and his policies. Hale accepted the compliments of other Conservatives for his role in the defeat of Holden, and he felt that he would not be honest to disclaim his role and that of the Observer.¹ Therefore, the defeat of Holden and the peace movement in the August election marked a personal as well as political triumph for Hale. Equally important, the defeat of Holden allowed Hale to turn away from the fight against Holden, which had consumed so much of his time for the past year, and to return to the fight against the real enemy--the Yankees of the North.

Perhaps more adamant than any other Conservative about the issue of peace, Hale focused his efforts of persuasion on the point that he could not support any peace plan that included the prerequisite of reunion in any form. He called reunion "a thing utterly impossible."² He recognized three possibilities for peace. They were independence by military victory, independence by negotiation, and defeat by military

¹Hale wrote to Ruffin, "We feel that we have been of some service to the State in its late sore trial, and it gives us more pleasure so to feel, and to know that so many others of the good and great of the State concur with you in that estimate of our service." See Edward Hale to Thomas Ruffin, August 22, 1864, Hamilton, The Papers of Thomas Ruffin, III, 415.

²Fayetteville Observer, August 18, 1864.

subjugation. He presumed to speak for all Southerners by saying, "We must be independent of the despised and hated yankees, or their slaves. There is no middle ground to stand upon."³ Of course, that attitude did not facilitate any possibility of a negotiated peace that existed in the minds of many Northerners and Southerners who wanted to see the bloody war ended as soon as possible.

Even more abrasive to the prospects for peace was Hale's attitude toward retaliation. He stated, "We hope to see enemy violation of the laws of war and the rights of our soldiers promptly met by retaliation."⁴ Fired by the private euphoria of political victory and by the public despondency of military defeat, Hale defiantly branded himself as a Confederate chauvinist, an act that helped build the road that eventually led to his own destruction.

Hale's uncompromising stand in part caused Chief Justice Richmond Pearson to cancel his subscription to the Observer. Pearson indicated that he had been receiving the Observer against his wishes.⁵ Few things irritated Hale as much as the thought that someone received the Observer when he did not want it. He explained his subscription policy to another subscriber, who had canceled in January of 1864, in these words, "Years ago, when we were needy, we made it a rule, never departed from, to ask no man to subscribe for the Observer, and to send it to no subscriber a day longer than he desired it."⁶ The same policy

³Fayetteville Observer, August 18, 1864.

⁴Fayetteville Observer, August 22, 1864.

⁵Hale to Richmond Pearson, August 25, 1864, Hale Papers.

⁶Hale to Daniel Russell, January 16, 1864, Hale Papers.

applied to Pearson in August of 1864, as well as to any other person who felt that Hale had become too intense in his dedication to Confederate independence.

At the same time that Hale wrote Pearson to explain his subscription policy, he wrote Vance to inquire about the exemption of editors and printers. He did not want to claim any exemption for his son Peter or for his printers, but if they had to go into the Home Guards, Hale wanted to know so he could warn his readers that the Observer might be suspended. But Hale added quickly that the cause came first, even before the Observer. He told Vance, "We must all go and the papers stop. There is no help for it."⁷ Thus, Hale reaffirmed privately what he declared publicly, that he was willing to sacrifice everything--his sons, his newspaper, and his well being--to continue the war against the North.

If Hale seemed to move further away from the moderate elements of the Conservative party and more toward the radical elements of the party, or even to the Confederate party itself, in the prosecution of the war, he did not lose his position of confidant to Vance, nor did Vance and Hale seem to be in disagreement over war policies. In October

Vance called the Council of State together in order to consider his proposal to convene the General Assembly for the purpose of allowing North Carolina officers and the Home Guard to be sent to General Lee. Vance wrote Hale that the Council refused to recommend a special session of the legislature in order to authorize assistance to Lee.⁸

⁷Hale to Vance, August 26, 1864, Vance Governors' Papers.

⁸Vance to Hale, October 11, 1864, Hale Papers.

He told Hale that their decision against convening the General Assembly made him feel that he should "cut loose from some of the old fogies" and rely on "men nearer my own age and notions of things."⁹

Certainly Vance knew that Hale was one man that he could rely upon to be nearer his "notions of things." Hale wrote Vance that he advised him to send North Carolina troops to Virginia because he felt that Petersburg and Richmond were now essential to the defense of North Carolina.¹⁰ In addition Hale advised Vance that he was in favor of a meeting of the governors of all the Confederate states. He asked Vance to keep him informed if the meeting resulted in a concerted policy. To that end, Hale said, "The Observer will second any movement calculated to promote the success of the great cause."¹¹ Even into November, Hale told Vance that he supported the idea of troops to reinforce Lee despite the unpopularity of the idea among state legislators. He declared to Vance, "I have never allowed myself to be influenced by a consideration of what others do."¹² The General Assembly showed little interest in the problems of Lee and the troops in Virginia, and it declined to send North Carolina troops to the Virginia front.

While the General Assembly was refusing to concur with Vance and Hale in the matter of troops for Virginia, the peace movement was claiming that seven of its members were elected in the ten districts of North Carolina during the Congressional elections.¹³ However, the activity of the peace movement and the inertness of the Council of State

⁹Vance to Hale, October 11, 1864, Hale Papers.

¹⁰Hale to Vance, October 13, 1864, Vance Papers.

¹¹Hale to Vance, October 13, 1864, Vance Papers.

¹²Hale to Vance, November 15, 1864, Hale Papers.

¹³Yates, The Confederacy and Zeb Vance, p. 94.

and the General Assembly did not deter Hale in his effort to spur the morale of the people for the remainder of the year by urging retaliation against the North while emphasizing faith in God. Primarily aimed at the destruction that Sherman and Sheridan were wreaking to the South, Hale felt that some Confederate troops were taking the right action by doing some burning and devastation of their own to the North. Hale cried with frenzy from the pages of the Observer, "Let them burn every yankee city, town, village and dwelling upon all their borders, and let every man, woman and child among them go to sleep at night under an apprehension that the flames will burst out over his head before dawn."¹⁴

In juxtaposition to Hale's belief in retaliation was his belief that God looked favorably upon the Confederacy. Two days before the last year of the war began, Hale zealously declared, "We know not how the efficient help is to come--how we are to gain Independence and Peace together—but we have never lost confidence, now or heretofore, that it will come, and so come that we shall all see His hand and acknowledge His goodness in it."¹⁵ The events of the next four months did not justify Hale's faith in God's hand nor in His goodness to provide either independence or peace for the South, regardless of how sincerely Hale had espoused his belief in God's special relationship to the Confederacy.

Hale did not alter his convictions during January of 1865, even when besieged Fort Fisher fell to Union troops on January 15. He continued to confess his faith in God and in the Confederate army to win the war and to obtain independence for the South. Despite all of his

¹⁴Fayetteville Observer, November 7, 1864.

¹⁵Fayetteville Observer, December 29, 1864.

efforts, despondency increased throughout North Carolina as the citizens pondered their fate at the hands of the advancing enemy. Although pessimism in the state and in the entire Confederacy grew as the defeats of January were followed by the defeats of February, Hale was not alone in his belief that the South had to continue to fight and that the cause was not yet hopeless. The same day that the people evacuated Wilmington, February 22, the Hillsborough Recorder printed a speech by Vance in which he said, "We must fight, my countrymen, to the last extremity, or submit voluntarily to our own degradation."¹⁶

Vance still believed that the South could win its independence if the people would wholeheartedly support the army. From the Virginia front, Lee wrote Vance on February 24, that "the cause is not hopeless; that the situation of affairs, though critical, is critical to the enemy as well as ourselves;...And that his successes are far less valuable in fact than in appearance...."¹⁷ Thus, Hale's confidence in victory had the support of two leaders of the Confederacy, even though Hale disagreed with Lee and large slave owners that victory had to be bought with the price of putting Negro slaves into the Confederate army.¹⁸

By the first of March, Sherman's army had advanced through Columbia, South Carolina, and was heading toward Fayetteville. In view of all of the signs of impending defeat, Hale did not abate the stream of epithets hurled from the pages of the Observer at the oncoming army. He pleaded with the people not to submit to the North on their terms,

¹⁶Hillsborough Recorder, February 22, 1865.

¹⁷Robert E. Lee to Zebulon Vance, February 24, 1865, Official Records (Army), Series I, XLVII, Part II, 1270.

¹⁸Fayetteville Observer, February 27, 1865.

and he argued with them,"There is but one way to secure peace; and that is, to conquer it. Let the Confederacy but establish its Independence, and there will be indeed what we all pray for, 'a lasting peace': not otherwise."¹⁹ On March 6 Hale urged the people to have faith and hope in Lee's belief that Sherman could be defeated, even though Hale admitted that he had no reliable news about Sherman.²⁰ Hale's bubble of optimism burst three days later. Hale printed the last issue of the Observer on March 9 while the Confederate army retreated through Fayetteville before Sherman's army.

The Union troops entered Fayetteville on March 11, and Mayor Archibald McLean formally surrendered the city to Lt. Colonel William E. Strong. Next McLean watched as the United States flag was raised over the city.²¹ By March 15 Sherman continued his drive into North Carolina, moving his army toward Goldsboro for the purpose of re-establishing his supply lines. Before leaving Fayetteville, Sherman had the Confederate arsenal located there destroyed. Later Sherman commented, "Little other damage was done at Fayetteville."²² The damage done at Fayetteville by Sherman did not exclude much of the property of Edward Jones Hale, since a main objective of Sherman was to destroy newspaper offices which he encountered on his route of march.²³

Hale did not witness the arrival of Sherman in Fayetteville, but if he had witnessed the event, he would have seen the building con-

¹⁹Fayetteville Observer, March 2, 1865.

²⁰Fayetteville Observer, March 6, 1865.

²¹John Barrett, Sherman's March Through the Carolinas (1956) p. 133, hereinafter cited as Barrett, Sherman's March.

²²William T. Sherman, Memoirs of General William T. Sherman (1957), p. 299.

²³J. Cutler Andrews, The South Reports the Civil War (1970), p. 498.

taining the Observer burned to the ground. Hale left Fayetteville before it fell to the Union forces, but he did not take the printing press and other printing material and equipment with him. He buried the files and records of the Observer at Colonel Thomas Hill's plantation in Chatham County,²⁴ and then he and his son Peter became refugees in Pittsboro.²⁵ While Hale was not in Fayetteville when Sherman arrived, his reputation lingered there. Because he was such a strong supporter of the war, the Northern soldiers had strong feelings about Hale and his paper.²⁶ The Wilmington Herald of the Union remarked on March 26 that the feeling against Hale among the Union soldiers had such an intensity that if a chicken coop had his name on it, it was not safe.²⁷ Because the soldiers did not find Hale in Fayetteville when they arrived, allegedly they offered \$10,000 for his body.²⁸ Thus, Hale and the Observer received an inordinate amount of attention from Sherman's men who considered them enemies of the United States who should be eliminated.

While the Union troops were in Fayetteville, they vented their rage against Hale by doing extensive damage to his property. When Thomas Fuller wrote William A. Graham from Fayetteville two weeks after the surrender of the city, he told Graham that Hale's printing office with all its fixtures, material, and furniture had been burned.²⁹ Hale's

²⁴Ashe, Biographical History, VIII, 183.

²⁵S. S. Jackson to Jonathan Worth, March 16, 1865, Hamilton, The Correspondence of Jonathan Worth, I, 370.

²⁶Barrett, Sherman's March, p. 139.

²⁷Barrett, Sherman's March, p. 139.

²⁸Andrews, The South Reports the Civil War, p. 498.

²⁹Thomas Fuller to William A. Graham, March 24, 1865, Graham Papers. Fuller also told Graham that the office of the North Carolina Presbyterian, a church newspaper in Fayetteville, had not been burned,

youngest son Edward wrote General James H. Lane that his father's property before the war could have been converted into specie, bringing from \$85,000 to \$100,000, but after Sherman had finished with him, he had no property that would bring income. Edward claimed that the Observer office and everything in it was burned by General Slocum's order, while the general sat on a verandah of a hotel across the street drinking wine stolen from Hale's cellar and watching the flames leap from the building. With all of his investments made worthless by the economic chaos of the Confederacy, Hale had nothing left but the ruins of the Observer building, a few lots in Fayetteville, and his house.³⁰

Considering what Sherman's army did to Hale one can understand why Hale angrily commented later that he had "jotted down a few of the thousand incidents that might be written, and ought yet to be written, of the doings of Sherman's army, that the world's scorn might finally and forever settle upon it and condemn it to everlasting infamy."³¹ Yet, Hale had himself to blame for much of his fate at the hands of Sherman's men. He did not acknowledge that fact, but rather he elected to blame his enemies in Fayetteville for instigating the burning of his office. With that conclusion in his mind, he decided soon after Sherman destroyed the Observer to leave Fayetteville. He put his house up for sale

²⁹(Cont'd.) but its type and press had been destroyed. Ironically, the Observer and the Presbyterian were the only newspapers in North Carolina that were not reduced to a half sheet during the war years due to a lack of printing supplies.

³⁰Edward Joseph Hale, Jr. to General James H. Lane, July 31, 1865, Edward Joseph Hale Jr., "'Sherman's Bummers' and Some of Their Work," Southern Historical Society Papers, XII (January-December, 1884), 427.

³¹Hale to Cornelia Spencer, January 11, 1866, Spencer Papers.

but with the understanding that the house would be paid for after the war in whatever money was then in use.³² He was determined to liquidate his remaining assets for every penny that he could obtain from them.

Hale's desire to leave Fayetteville had other aspects besides his feeling of betrayal by some people there. After the war ended, Hale said that he felt that the people of North Carolina and the South had supported the war for the first two years but had lacked persistence, and that lack of persistence was a great defect in their character.³³ Hale blamed the defeat of the Confederacy upon "croakers" who had quit the cause when the going had gotten rough. He believed that if the people had buckled down in the early part of 1865, the South would have won the war.³⁴ In addition to the factors concerning popular support of the war, the postwar restriction of mail facilities hampered the newspaper business.³⁵ However, Hale's primary reason for leaving Fayetteville was his disenchantment with the Southern support of the war effort. No one in North Carolina believed, to the very day that the Confederacy collapsed, with more conviction than Hale that the South had to win and could win the war.

Within a month after the destruction of the Observer, the Confederacy passed into history along with one of its staunchest defenders, Edward Jones Hale. The destruction of the Observer ended Hale's career as a newspaper editor. Although Vance, Graham, and other Conservatives survived the war and lived to contribute their energies

³²Thomas Fuller to William A. Graham, March 24, 1865.

³³Hale to Cornelia Spencer, April 9, 1866, Spencer Papers.

³⁴Spencer to Hale, May 4, 1866, Spencer Papers.

³⁵Hale to Spencer, April 9, 1866, Spencer Papers.

and their talents to North Carolina during Reconstruction, Hale elected not to stay. He moved with his family in the fall of 1866 to New York City, where he opened a publishing company with some assistance from business friends whom he had known there for many years. He lived in New York and operated his business until his death on January 2, 1883. Even in death, Hale remained severed from his native soil, being buried in New York. Thus, after 1865 Hale never contributed to North Carolina again the energy and the talent that between 1860 and 1865 had made him one of the most influential editors and had made the Fayetteville Observer one of the most important newspapers in the state, if not the entire South.

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