

John M. Clayton.

At Dover, -not far from the Court House, stands a roomy old dwelling, formerly the residence of John M. Clayton, Secretary of State under President Tyler. Here he lived during the more active portion of his life; here he entertained his friends in the broad, generous style of Delaware hospitality, playing for their delectation his fine old fiddle, or expounding for their edification the State constitution.

John M. Clayton was a man of undoubted ability, and great power and strength of character. During his life he possessed an influence in his native State such as is rarely attained in this country of uninherited political power, but an influence which died with him and the Old-Line Whig party to which he belonged, leaving as its fruit a State constitution the most deleterious to progress and the most unfair to its subjects.

It was he that really built the constitution of 1831, and so hedged it in by clauses that, as he said himself, he "locked the door and threw the key away." As the constitution now stands, an equal number of State Representatives and Senators are elected from each county, notwithstanding that Newcastle, the upper county, has a population equal to both the others together, and ten times their wealth.

John M. Clayton was born in Sussex county, Delaware, July, 1796, and died at his residence in Dover, November, 1856. He is buried in the Presbyterian burying-ground, his remains being covered by a not large, but tasteful, mausoleum. -Howard Pyle, in Harper's Magazine. FEB 5 1880

CLAYTON JOHN M.
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