



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Nancy Hawley  
Tryon Palace Communications & Marketing  
Phone (252) 514-4937  
E-mail: [nhawley@tryonpalace.org](mailto:nhawley@tryonpalace.org)

**RICHARD DOBBS SPAIGHT/JOHN STANLY  
FACE OFF IN A REENACTMENT OF THEIR FAMOUS DUEL  
FREE – PUBLIC INVITED  
NEW BERN ACADEMY - 4:00 P.M.**

(NEW BERN, NC)---On the afternoon of Labor Day September 1, at 4:00 p.m. the New Bern Academy Museum will be the site of an authentic reenactment of a famous duel between two of New Bern’s sons, Richard Dobbs Spaight and John Stanly. The original duel took place in New Bern on September 5, 1802, after Spaight described Stanly, his successor in Congress, as “both a liar and a scoundrel.”

As the first native-born governor of North Carolina, Richard Dobbs Spaight, born in New Bern in 1758, served several years in the state House of Commons, in the national Continental Congress, and at the federal Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia. He was only 29 when he signed the Constitution. In 1792, he was elected governor of North Carolina and served three terms. In 1798, Spaight was elected to Congress.

In 1802, after Stanly succeeded Spaight in Congress, Spaight described Stanly as “both a liar and a scoundrel.” Stanly took umbrage at Spaight’s remarks and challenged him to a duel. On

# Tryon Palace

HISTORIC SITES & GARDENS

September 5, 1802, after firing at each other four times, John Stanly mortally wounded Richard Dobbs Spaight, who passed away the following day.

The Tryon Palace Fife and Drum Corps will lead downtown residents to the duel, where a moderator will be on site to explain the events that led up to the duel. Participants in the duel reenactment will wear period attire, and fire authentic flintlock pistols.

The New Bern Academy Green, the site of the reenactment, has been in place for over 230 years. At different times, both Spaight and Stanly were trustees of the Academy, which was the first chartered school in North Carolina. At its decommissioning in 1971, the Academy was one of the oldest continuously operated public school buildings in America.

The New Bern Academy will be open for tours from 1PM to 4PM.

###

Tryon Palace Historic Sites & Gardens, located in New Bern, N.C., is an agency of the division of State Historic Sites, N.C. Department of Cultural Resources, a state agency dedicated to the promotion and protection of North Carolina's arts, history, and culture through such programs as "Telling our Stories," a yearlong celebration that showcases North Carolina's arts, heritage, and cultural life. For more information, visit [www.ncculture.com](http://www.ncculture.com)

Buildings currently open to the public include the reconstructed Tryon Palace, the John Wright Stanly House, the Robert Hay House and the New Bern Academy Museum. The visitor center and the first floor of Tryon Palace are accessible to visitors with disabilities. For directions and further information about special events, programs or group tours, phone 800-767-1560 or 252-514-4900 or check our web site: <http://www.tryonpalace.org/>

# *Tryon Palace*

HISTORIC SITES & GARDENS



NORTH CAROLINA  
DEPARTMENT OF  
**CULTURAL  
RESOURCES**  
[WWW.NCCULTURE.COM](http://WWW.NCCULTURE.COM)