

Creating a State

After the Revolution, North Carolina had achieved its independence — but old conflicts still smoldered. Western settlers still complained of a lack of money, their distance from the state's government, and the influence of eastern elites. Wealthy planters, lawyers, and merchants disagreed with common people about how much freedom and democracy were too much. Anti-federalists had accepted North Carolina's place in the new nation but still resented the power of the new federal government.

By the middle of the 1790s, these differences of opinion had hardened into something new in American politics — a pair of political parties, the Federalists and the Democratic-Republicans, whose violent debates threatened to tear the new nation apart. How much power the central government should have, whether the United States should be a commercial nation or an agricultural one, whether the young republic should lean towards democracy or rule by elites — all these issues would take decades to settle, and in fact we are still debating them today.

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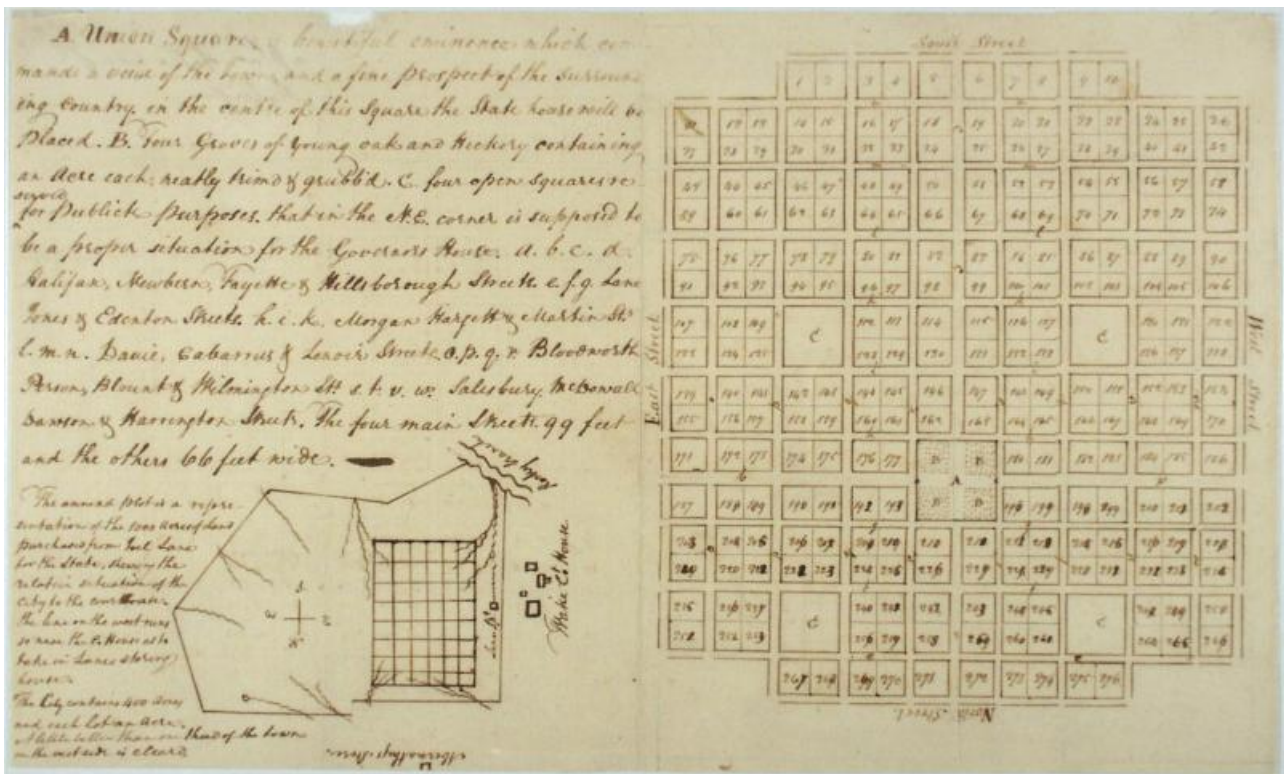
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North Carolina established Raleigh as its permanent capital in 1792.

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