

Notes about Scotch-Irish and German Settlers in Virginia and the Carolinas

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Introduction

During the 1700s many Scotch-Irish and German immigrants arrived in America. They and their children settled parts of Pennsylvania, Virginia, and the Carolinas. Today, most of their descendants seldom think about their heritage. Most live in the present, are working on real-life problems, or planning their future. That attitude was shared by their ancestor immigrants 250 years ago. Nonetheless, I suspect most descendants have at least wondered what the word Scotch-Irish means. All my life, I have heard various facts, but never understood how they fit together. Some facts appeared contradictory. So, I investigated, and discovered a colorful story that far exceeded my expectations.

My principal objectives were to:

- Understand certain comments made by grandparents and other relatives over 40 years ago.
- Understand the confusing adjective Scotch-Irish.
- Understand the confusing cultural icons of bagpipes, kilts, Celtic whistles, etc.
- Understand the history of Moravian, Lutheran, Mennonite, Amish, Dunkards, Presbyterian, Puritanism, Huguenot, Quaker, Methodist, Congregational, and Baptist denominations that have churches in the Carolinas.
- Understand why and when surnames became common.
- Understand ancestor Margaret Moore's recollections of the Siege of Londonderry in 1689.
- Understand motivations of Scotch-Irish and German immigrants during the 1700s and terms of their Carolina land grants.
- Understand relations between early Carolina immigrants and Native Americans.
- Understand why Scotland's heroine Flora Macdonald came to live in North Carolina in 1774.
- Understand Scotch-Irish legacy in Charlotte and Mecklenburg County, North Carolina.
- Understand the controversial *Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence*.
- Understand the decisive role Scotch-Irish and German settlers played during the American Revolution 1775–1781.
- Understand the sequence of events during 1780–1781 when the American Revolution reached the Carolina Piedmont. It was a civil war between rebel and loyalist neighbors that directly impacted many family members. At least 22 were veterans. For some reason, their story is virtually forgotten. But because war was better documented than ordinary home and farm life, much is recoverable. While a high-school student and cadet at the Citadel, I prepared reports and gave presentations on battles at Moore's Creek, Charlestown siege, and Cowpens. Only recently, I learned details about relatives who participated or were affected by these battles.
- Understand limitations of genealogy. Why do all family-tree branches end in obscurity?

It is said that the "Scotch-Irish kept all the Ten Commandments and everything else upon which they could lay their hands." The best humor has an element of truth.

I presume a contemporary American reader who, like myself, is only vaguely familiar with Scotland's history. I relate history to familiar movie films. Also, I show how one can estimate the number of his ancestors and descendants. Mentioned family relationships are those of the author. That allows a family-member reader to quickly calculate his or her own relationship.

Special family history and events appear in paragraphs using this font color. Anderson and Plonk-McGuire data are distinguishable by other font colors.

Anderson family members will be surprised to learn that a 6th great-grandfather from Germany was an indentured servant. A 5th great-granduncle was a North Carolina Continental Army regiment commander during the American Revolution. In the North, he served in General George Washington's army. Later, in the South, he defended Charleston during the 1780 British siege. Although he was well known among his contemporaries, no one has written a comprehensive history of his military career. This document compiles details from many historical sources. Another 5th great-granduncle was a delegate to the 1776 Fifth Provincial Congress that established North Carolina's first constitution. He was also delegate to the 1789 North Carolina convention that adopted the United States Constitution. He was one of 8 commissioners who organized the University of North Carolina and selected its site. In 1792, he was elected United States Congressman. A 3rd cousin 2 generations removed, was the first woman to graduate from the University of North Carolina.

Plonk family members will be surprised to learn that a 5th great-grandmother was abducted by Indians during the French and Indian War and held 3 years. A 5th great-grandfather was a signer of what became known as the 1775 *Tryon County Resolves*. A 4th great-grandfather was a patriot officer at the 1780 Battle of Kings Mountain. He was wounded. His location is known within about 100 feet. His name is on the 83-foot obelisk monument. A 1st cousin 5 generations removed was elected North Carolina Governor in 1840. He had extraordinary accomplishments, and is arguably the state's most significant governor. A 1st cousin 3 generations removed was killed by lightning while a Confederate soldier in 1865. The oldest Plonk generations spelled their name Plunk. This document spells each individual's name as he or she did during his or her lifetime.

McGuire family members will be surprised to learn that a 3rd great-granduncle participated in little-known but important battle at Musgrove Mill, South Carolina. Also many 2nd and 3rd cousins 5 generations removed were influential in early Mecklenburg County, and participated in many Revolutionary War battles.

I wrote this document as a tool to understand the above listed objectives, and to collect and organize important or interesting facts. Chronological order is followed closely. Newly added information has made the document rather long. Consequently, I have attempted to make each section self-explanatory by redefining terms and re-identifying individuals. The reader should be able to read only those sections he or she regards as interesting. Of course, this document could be separated into multiple documents, but its present form seems best for inserting and organizing new information.

Since only important and interesting facts are included, content is somewhat anecdotal. It is not comprehensive history. Nonetheless, I am serious that it accurately represents history. Legends are explicitly identified. Sources were carefully selected. Some sources are first-hand accounts of actual participants. Modern references reflect decades of research by professional historians.

Although I have been careful, there may be errors. Please advise me wherever an interpretation can be improved. Ultimately, I hope this document encourages younger people to extend the information in their own way.

Value of Subject

The value of these studies was expressed by Reverend William Henry Foote, the first historian who specialized in this subject matter. In the introduction to his book, he wrote:

The history of principles is the history of States. And the youth of Carolina might study both on one interesting page, were there a fair record of past events presented to their perusal. They might learn at home something better than the histories of Greece and Rome, or the Assyrian and Babylonian, or all the eastern and western empires of the world, have ever taught. They would find examples worthy of all praise, and actions deserving a generous emulation. They would be impressed most deeply with the

conviction that people and actions worthy of such examples must be the citizens and the acts of the happiest nation on earth. (Foote 1846, x).

Timeline Format and Citations

This document follows a strict timeline. That format describes the circumstance when a leader made an important decision or took decisive action. The reader can appreciate the drama of unfolding events and a leader's courage.

History is best appreciated when expressed by actual participants. This document frequently quotes these participants. To assist further research, citations are embedded in the text and appear in the form (author year written, series:volume:page) or some appropriate variation. For example, a quote within a reference is cited as (person quoted year quoted in author year published, series:volume:page). This technique helps evaluate authenticity and, with careful text analysis, often uncovers precise time and place information. For these reasons, a citation is more informative than an indirect footnote. Overall, embedded citations efficiently guide the researcher to the best information available with a minimum of effort. A bibliography of all sources, articles, and books appears at the end. Place names and an individual's military rank are specified contemporaneous with the event described. For example, Charlestown was the contemporaneous name of present-day Charleston.

This timeline format with embedded citations creates a working document from which conjectured scenarios can be tested and into which new evidence can be inserted.

The Word Scotch-Irish

The word *Scotch-Irish* is confusing. It is an American word that probably would not be understood in Scotland or Ireland. It is both correct and misleading. It is correct when understood in the historical context of settlers first leaving Lowland Scotland for Ulster, in northern Ireland during the 1600s, and then younger generations emigrating to North America during the 1700s. In the 1800s, the hyphenated name Scotch-Irish did not mean an ethnic mix. It meant Scots from northern Ireland. It was used to distinguish from Irishmen. Scotch-Irish were mostly Presbyterian Protestants while Irishmen were mostly Roman Catholic.

Many readers will be satisfied in understanding the above distinction. But the name Scotch-Irish is even more ironic if considered over the last 2000 years. That is because Scots first lived in Ireland, and migrated to what is now called Scotland. They were pagans with no written language, painted their bodies, and were regarded as barbarians by Romans and other civilized societies. Ironically, after 1000 years, the Scots' name was applied to a Pict-Scot-Angle-Saxon-Norman-Viking-Irish ethnically mixed society with a political system modeled after England, yet fiercely independent.

Today, cultural icons are often confused. The kilt is traditional Celtic clothing. It belongs to Highland Scots. The bagpipe is an ancient instrument. Romans spread its use. Americans are most familiar with the Scottish bagpipe. The modern Irish bagpipe has a bellows that is pressed using the arm and is played in a sitting position. Most Scotch-Irish American heritage started in Lowland Scotland where dress fashion was similar to England, and the fiddle (violin) was the principal folk instrument.

This confusion over Scotch-Irish has some benefits. A Scotch-Irish American can pick and choose whatever he or she likes from Scottish and Irish heritage without contradiction. Also, ignorance spares the United States from strife similar to present-day Northern Ireland. Understanding the name Scotch-Irish requires investigating a long history.

Some modern authors substitute the expression Scots-Irish for the traditional expression Scotch-Irish. This trend is especially popular in official documents and at museums. The whimsical justification is that Scotch is not an adjective; it is a type of whisky. Source documents from the 1800s and early 1900s use Scotch-Irish. Since these source documents will always be referenced, the expression Scotch-Irish can never be eliminated. The grammatical advantage of Scots-Irish does not outweigh the historical continuity of Scotch-Irish. Authors are trying to tell the story of these people. There are already multiple names. It does not help to invent a new name whose only advantage is grammatical correctness. For this reason, lots of

authors continue to use Scotch Irish. Also, two expressions with the same meaning will unnecessarily confuse students.

Both Anderson and Plonk families include Scotch-Irish, English, and German names. Anderson relations have German names Holt, and Ramseur. Plonk relations have Scotch-Irish or English names Espey, Oates, Means, Motley, and Simpson.

400 BC, Pharaoh's Daughter Scotta and a Limitation of Genealogy

A superficial sentiment in genealogy is finding some notable ancestor, either royalty or in the extreme case, a son of Noah. Scots living about 400 BC had such a sentiment. They claimed to be descendants of Egyptian Pharaoh's daughter Scotta and Greek prince Gael. They took Scotta's name, and migrated from the Mediterranean, via present-day Spain, to Ireland, carrying with them the *Stone of Destiny*. This legend probably made them feel important and part of a larger civilized world that they knew about but had never seen. It is mythology and not history. Nonetheless, it invites the curious question of its probability. The surprising fact is that every Scot of 400 BC was probably a descendant of every pharaoh's daughter who had children since 5000 BC. And so was everyone else alive in 400 BC.

Anyone who has tried to maintain an accurate family tree realizes the futility of making it complete beyond a few generations. The author maintains a family tree database that includes only a few ancestors alive during the 1600s although there were actually thousands. Some ancient societies, like the Scots, took their genealogies seriously. The Bible records many ancient Hebrew genealogies: for example, 1 Chronicles 1–4 and Matthew 1. Saint Paul, a well-educated person, seemed to understand the fallacy without analysis. He wrote, “Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies.” (KJV 1611, 1 Timothy 1:4) and “Avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain.” (KJV 1611, Titus 3:9).

Note: Mathematics of Generations

Mathematics helps explain this, and consequently, a limitation of genealogical inferences. Everyone has 2 parents, 4 grandparents, 8 great-grandparents, and so on. This relationship is called an exponential function given by the formula $n = 2^g$, where g is the number of generations and n is the number of great ... grandparents. For example, each of us had 1024 great ... grandparents 10 generations older. For a newborn today, that would be approximately the year 1750. A few ancestors might be counted more than once if distant cousins married and had children. In such a case, the number of distinct 10th-generation grandparents would be somewhat less than 1024.

The number of descendants is even more dramatic since parents can have more than 2 children. The formula is $n = c^g$, where c is the number of children in each generation. For example, Mary Louise McGuire, 1895–1988, had 4 children, 11 grand children, and 19 great-grandchildren with more expected. The formula for this is approximately $n = 3^g$. At this rate, she will have over 2 million living descendants in year 2250. That is the sum of the 11th, 12th, and 13th generations. It assumes an average generation length of 25 years. The $g = 0$ generation completed in 1925. The $g = 1$ generation completed in 1950, and so on. Again, since distant cousins may have offspring, some descendants may be counted more than once. Nonetheless, it is clear that her genetic legacy will be dispersed rather quickly throughout the population. Interestingly, such dispersion does not necessarily lead to uniformity of all human characteristics. Due to what geneticists call *genetic drift*, group characteristics can persist. Such analysis has helped anthropologist time human immigration from Asia to North America.

The above formulas can be put to work in other instructive ways. For example, the author knows about 7 great...great-grandfathers and 11 great...great-granduncles who participated in the Revolutionary War. The author was surprised to find so many. But should it be surprising? What is the expected number? The Revolutionary War occurred during years 1775–1783. Most soldiers were from one generation of 20–40 year olds. So, the 8-year Revolutionary War was fought by a generation and a half. Most of the known participants predate the author by 7 generations. So, the expected number of great...great-grandfathers and great...great-granduncles is $\frac{1}{2} c (2^7 + \frac{1}{2} 2^6) = 80 c$. Thus 80 great...great-grandfathers and, assuming an average of 5 children per family, 320 great...great-granduncles had a soldier's eligible age. Of course, even

assuming all these men lived in the 13 colonies, not all were soldiers. The 1775 population of the 13 colonies was 2,700,000. In any population, one would expect 1/6 to be males in age range 20–40. So, approximately 450,000 men were eligible. Historical records show that approximately 250,000 actually served. Thus about 1/2 of all eligible males served. This high ratio is consistent with the militia system that, in principle, included all able-bodied men. Thus, the expected number of Revolutionary War participants is 40 4th or 5th great-grandfathers and 160 4th or 5th great-granduncles. Although this result depends on several coarse approximations, it implies that the author and anyone else whose ancestry is limited to the United States for seven generations have many 4th and 5th great-grandfathers and great-granduncles who participated in the Revolutionary War.

Well, if mathematics assures that nearly everyone alive in 400 BC was a descendant of Pharaoh's daughter, why did no legitimate pedigree exist? Even though a significant minority of every generation die young or have no children, one would expect privileged kings and queens to have many descendants. Also, they were more likely to marry across nationalities to achieve political alliances. Surely most people have royalty in their background, but it is difficult to discover because genealogy records are not complete. Illiteracy may be a principal reason. After all, a person who could not write his own name was not likely to record much about his ancestors. Also, family fortune was rarely transferable beyond a few generations even for the richest, especially during times of political or economic instability. Young individuals selectively remember fortunate ancestors and dismiss others. Also, in modern times, record keeping was biased toward male ancestors for surname continuity. So, virtually every family-tree branch ends obscurity. It is almost hopeless for a Scotch-Irish American to find a royal ancestor since most Scotch-Irish immigrants were poor common folk. So poor that it probably never occurred to them that someday their descendants might want to know more about their lives. They preserved few records.

Whatever the limitations of genealogies, culture remains remarkably persistent over many human generations. The Old Testament describes the slow cultural transition from cult-based religions to more sophisticated laws and religious beliefs. The Hebrew cultural fight against pagan idol worship took 2000 years to prevail. Even good human behavior becomes persistent after integration into the culture. Today, there is much in American political and social culture that reflects the outlook of Scotch-Irish who emigrated from Ulster during the 1700s.

Before 843, Picts

From 80 AD until 1746, Scotland had the misfortune of being on the border of contending super-powers. Like present-day Balkans, its wars were frequent and bloody. Scotland has contented with Romans, Britons, Saxons, Vikings, Normans, always the English, and internal conflicts between Highlanders and Lowlanders. Throughout these conflicts, Scotland has always maintained a separate identity.

Beginning in year 43, Romans occupied southern *Britannia*, the island of Great Britain. The religion of the indigenous Celts was animism, a primitive form of paganism. Celts attributed spirits to trees, streams, hills, and everything natural. Their rituals included human sacrifice. They had a complex oral tradition that required a young person many years to master. The most successful students achieved priest-class called druid or bard. From this tradition, we have inherited leprechauns, wizards, mistletoe, hidden treasure, and wishing wells (Mebane 1999, 13).

Historian Tacitus recorded the Roman army under Suetonius Paulinus meeting the indigenous Britains and their druid priests at Anglesey in the year 60:

On the beach stood the adverse array, a serried mass of arms and men, with women flitting between the ranks. In the style of Furies, in robes of deathly black and with disheveled hair, they brandished their torches; while a circle of Druids, lifting their hands to heaven and showering imprecations, struck the [Roman] troops with such an awe at the extraordinary spectacle that, as though their limbs were paralyzed, they exposed their bodies to wounds without an attempt at movement. Then, reassured by their general, and inciting each other never to flinch before a band of females and fanatics, they charged

behind the standards, cut down all who met them, and enveloped the enemy in his own flames.

The next step was to install a garrison among the conquered population, and to demolish the groves consecrated to their savage cults: for they considered it a pious duty to slake the altars with captive blood and to consult their deities by means of human entrails. While he [Suetonius Paulinus] was thus occupied, the sudden revolt of the province was announced to Suetonius.

The conflict between the Druid priests and the Romans was captured in Vincenzo Bellini's 1831 opera *Norma* which included the beautiful aria *Casta Diva*.

The sudden revolt was the Celtic uprising led by Boudicca, queen of the Iceni tribe, which forced Suetonius to return to Londinium, present-day London.

The Roman word for present-day Scotland was Caledonia. It was controlled by the Picts, so called by Romans because of their painted bodies. Picts had a culture much like the Celtic tribe Scots who at that time lived in Hibernia, the island now called Ireland. The Romans almost conquered the Picts, and if they had, Scotland may have never evolved. Romans built two defensive walls and a system of forts to stop Pict raids and to tax commerce through gates. Hadrian's Wall was completed in year 122. It was 15 to 20 feet high and 80 miles long, coast to coast. The Pict problem was serious enough in 208 to require the personal attention of Roman Emperor Severus who after 3 years of directing inconclusive fighting died of exhaustion at Eboracum [pronounced E-bore-rock-um], present-day York.

Scotland and Ireland in Gaelic, Latin, and English

Gaelic	Latin	Modern English
Alban	Caledonia	Scotland
Eire	Hibernia	Ireland

The Romans withdrew their military from Britannia in 407 when the weakening Western Empire began to implode. The vacuum induced Picts to raid fellow Celtic Britons whose wealth accumulated during Roman rule. Britons enlisted mercenary Angles and Saxons from mainland Europe to help them fight off the Picts. But the Anglo-Saxon mercenaries soon attacked their hosts driving them westward into Strathclyde and Wales. The Anglo-Saxons, who were pagan, established the new super power called Northumbria. This conflict produced the legend of Christian King Arthur and his Knights of the Roundtable, although the famous romantic stories were written 1000 years later by Thomas Malory in *Le Morte d'Arthur* and during the 1900s by Alfred Tennyson in *Idylls of the King*. In fact, if Arthur actually existed, it is not certain that he would have been Christian. Anglo-Saxons were Christianized in 597 under King Ethelbert by Saint Augustine—not the same saint who wrote *Confessions*. Like the Romans, the Anglo-Saxons also tried to conquer the Picts. But a blunder in 685 got their army trapped in a marsh called Nectansmere where Picts destroyed them. This victory allowed Celtic culture to continue. In continental Europe, it had been obliterated, beginning with Julius Caesar's Gaul conquest in 52 BC.

Ireland, 400–700

During and after the Roman-era, the culture of Ireland was Celtic. Celtic clans formed a loose defensive alliance. An ancient settlement on a particular hill near present-day Dublin was a gathering place for political and religious ceremonies. It was called *Tara*. This name became part of Americana with Margaret Mitchell's *Gone With The Wind*.

In 430, Saint Patrick, a Roman missionary, christianized Ireland. By legend, he banished all serpents. About the same time, missionary Saint Ninian christianized the Picts. Although most of Europe devolved into political chaos, Christianity thrived in this remote region. Monks continued Christian traditions and scholarship. They established an abbey on Iona Island. They sent missionaries to Europe.

Scots, 843–1066

In 503, the Scottish Dalriada Kingdom extended its domain from the northeastern corner of Hibernia to western islands and coast of Caledonia which is geographically isolated from Pictland to the east. About 560, missionary Saint Columba arrived to serve Scots and Picts. Eventually, Scots would absorb all of Caledonia and assign its modern name Scotland.

In 843, Scottish king Kenneth MacAlpin claimed title to king of the Picts. This was successful even though Picts were far more populous, controlled more land, were more advanced in trade, and were English bilingual in the Lowlands. Modern historians believe Picts accepted peaceful assimilation since they viewed themselves as a Celtic extension, they shared Saint Columba's Christian tradition, and since they had the unusual rule of female-line succession of kings which Kenneth MacAlpin satisfied through his mother. (Cummins 1995) Because Picts were more numerous than Scots, it is reasonable to assume that most latter day Scots have Pict ancestors.

McAlpine Creek is a principal creek in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina. Its name origin is lost in obscurity. The most likely origin was a farm family that moved away during the mid-1700s. But direct or indirectly, King Kenneth MacAlpin may be the original source.

An intriguing legend from this era describes how Saint Andrew's bones came to Scotland. Saint Andrew was Christ's second disciple and brother of Saint Peter. He was a missionary to the Black Sea area. He was crucified on a cross lying on its side forming an X. In 330, Roman Emperor Constantine moved relic bones of many saints, including Saint Andrew, to his new city Constantinople. A legend is that some of Saint Andrew's bones were carried on a ship under the care of a man named Regulus. The ship wrecked off Scotland's coast. Regulus was able to carry the bones ashore. Saint Andrew became patron saint of Scotland, eclipsing Saint Columba's cultural traditions. In another legend, a Scottish commander saw a white X in a blue sky before a battle victory (A. B. Anderson 1999). That image is now the flag of Scotland, called the *Saltire*. Interestingly, Saint Andrew's X-shaped cross is on the flag of Charlotte, North Carolina.



The Saltire

In 319, Roman Emperor Constantine made Christianity the state religion of the Roman Empire. In 321, he decreed Sunday as the Christian day of rest, overriding the traditional Jewish Saturday Sabbath. It was, translated from Latin:

On the venerable Day of the Sun let the magistrates and people residing in cities rest, and let all workshops be closed. In the country, however, persons engaged in agriculture may freely and lawfully continue their pursuits; because it often happens that another day is not so suitable for grain-sowing or for vine-planting; lest by neglecting the proper moment for such operations the bounty of heaven should be lost. Given the 7th day of March, Crispus and Constantine being consuls each of them for the second time [A.D. 321]. (Schaff 1902, 3:380)

Early Christianity had many factions, each led by a bishop at a principal city: Alexandria, Antioch, Rome, Caesarea, and Nicaea. The Alexandria bishop Arius promulgated *Arianism* ideology that denied Christ's divinity. Approximately, half of all Christians held this belief. These factions caused a serious political problem for Constantine who wanted the new state religion to be a unifying force. In 325, to establish a written uniform Christian doctrine, he called all Christian bishops to a council at Nicaea. Beforehand, the only agreed doctrine was the *Apostle's Creed*, which was a compilation of baptismal sayings, none of which were actually attributed to any of Christ's apostles. At Nicaea, Constantine intervened to force a

compromise with Arianism bishops by agreeing that Christ and God were different but were “of the same substance.” Thus, this phrase appears in the *Nicene Creed* that is often recited during Christian church services. Another curious expression in both Apostle’s Creed and Nicene Creed is, “He descended into Hell, and on the third day arose again.” That refers to Christ going to Hell after his death and escorting meritorious sinners, including Adam and Eve, to heaven. Even more curious, is that it is not mentioned in the Bible, but in the *Gospel of Nicodemus*, a non-canonical gospel popular during years 300–400. Incidentally, Arianism was named after Bishop Arius and should not be confused with completely unrelated Aryanism.

795–1263, Vikings

Beginning in 793, pagan Vikings raided wealthy Christian monasteries and abbeys in Scotland and Ireland. Their longboat invention gave them access to inland areas along rivers. They settled in Orkney, Shetland, Outer Hebrides, and other islands, plus the northernmost parts of Scotland, present-day Caithness and Sutherland. They explored and settled along Russian rivers, Iceland, Greenland, and North America. Viking settlers in northwestern France established a separate identity as French-speaking Normans. How did Vikings achieve this without more sophisticated political or social structures or other advantages? It may have been terrorism on a grand scale. Their boastful and frenzied violence gave us the adjective *berserk*. Most remarkable was their victims’ ineffective response. That is evidence of the profound weakness of medieval monarchies. The feudal correction came two centuries later, but by then Vikings were assimilated throughout Europe’s population.

Powerful Viking lords had threatening names: Harold Fair Hair, Kentil Flatnose, Godfrey Crovan, Sigurd the Mighty, Maelbrigte Tooth, Brian Boru, Thorfinn the Mighty, Somerled, and Haakon.

1066–1500, Norman Feudalism

In 1066, Normans, under William the Conqueror, invaded England. He consolidated his power by building over 80 castles across England. On 1 August 1086, he summoned chief landholders to Salisbury where he demanded the oath:

Statuimus, ut omnes liberi homines faedere et sacramento affirmant, quod intra et extra universum regnum Angliae Wilhelmo regi domino suo fideles esse volunt; tenas et honores illius omni fidelitate ubique servare cum eo, et contra inimicos et alienigenas defendere.

This formalized feudalism, a political system that could muster a large army. Normans weakened England’s traditional ties to Saxony and Norway, and strengthened ties with France. Scotland had to adopt feudalism to survive against feudal England. King David I started feudalism by dispossessing landholders and replacing them with imported Anglo-Saxon-Norman lords in exchange for absolute loyalty.

Feudal governments throughout Europe made laws requiring individuals to take on surnames to better account for taxes and required military service. In 1053, Scotland’s King Malcolm Canmore decreed that each landowner use his property name as a surname. Gradually, this practice applied to everyone. Some people chose a surname describing where he lived, like Brook. Others chose a surname that described his profession, like Taylor, Cooper (barrel maker), Sawyer, Turner (lathe worker), and Smith (hammerer). A popular choice was a variation of Son of Often the meaning was not meant literally, but implied Servant of Saint For example, Anderson could mean Servant of Saint Andrew. This development occurred after the Viking era. So, similar surnames like Scottish Anderson and Scandinavian Andersen developed independently, but concurrently. Until about 1500, an individual could select any surname. That contributed to wide use of Son of ..., since it associated child’s legal liabilities with his father. Later, laws made a surname hereditary. These laws did not apply to monarchs. So even today, kings, queens, and the Pope do not have surnames.

The Celtic form of Son of ... was prefix Mac or Mc. The former was more common in Scotland and the latter in Ireland. But they meant the same thing. Less common prefixes were Ma as in Makemie and Me as in Mebane, equivalent of McBane (Mebane 1999, 1).

The genealogical implication is that a surname is almost impossible to trace before year 1500.

Note: Child Naming Traditions

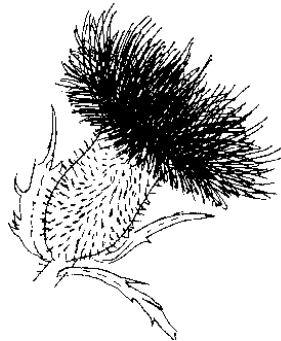
An old Scotch-Irish tradition is to name the first son after his paternal grandfather, the second son after the maternal grandfather, and the third son after the father. If an older cousin already had the grandfather's name, then the new son took the name of an uncle in order of age. Likewise, the first daughter was named after the maternal grandmother, the second daughter after the paternal grandmother, and the third daughter after the mother. If an older cousin already had the name of the grandmother, then the new daughter took the name of an aunt in order of age. The rule was not absolute, but a guideline that was often followed. What is neat about the rule is that sometimes an unknown grandparent's name can be back calculated.

During the feudal period 1066–1500, Scotland had a long succession of kings, regents, and heroes. Notables are: MacBeth, Malcolm Canmore, David I, William the Lion, Alexander III, William Wallace, Robert the Bruce, and Robert Stewart. King William the Lion drove out Viking lords.



King William's Red Lion Rampant

In 1263, Alexander III defeated Norse King Haakon's fleet of 200 ships and 15,000 soldiers by stalling negotiations until the stormy season decimated Norse ships. Haakon withdrew and soon died, ending 400 years of strong Norse influence (Mackie 1978, 44). A legend from this time made the thistle a national icon. When an attacking Norse soldier stepped on a thistle at night, his ouch cry alerted a Scottish sentry spoiling the surprise attack.



Thistle
from clip art

But in 1296, Alexander III stumbled over a cliff and died. During disputes over succession, English King Edward I, nicknamed *Longshanks*, saw an opportunity to attack Scotland. In 1296, he successfully defeated Scotland. Among his trophies was the Stone of Destiny. But resistance continued, led by William Wallace and Robert the Bruce. They invented creative military tactics against the English Army. To defend against English armored knights, Scottish infantry massed and presented a picket of 12-foot long pikes. All castles in the Borders region were destroyed to deny garrisons. These tactics led to Scottish success at the battle of Bannockburn on 24 June 1314. Events during this time were portrayed in the 1995 movie *Braveheart*. In the 6 April 1320 *Declaration of Arbroath* addressed to the Pope, the Scots warned:

As long as but a hundred of us remain alive, never will we on any conditions be brought under English rule. It is in truth not for glory, nor riches, nor honors that we are fighting, but for freedom—for that alone, which no honest man gives up but with life itself.

This document partly inspired the United States' *Declaration of Independence*. Gradually, Lowland nobility became English-speaking Anglo-Saxon-Norman-Scot while Highland leaders remained Gaelic-speaking Celtic clan chiefs. The Stone of Destiny was not returned to Scotland until 1996. Since 1603, every United Kingdom monarch has sat over the Stone of Destiny during coronation.

In Ireland, feudal developments paralleled that of Scotland. In 1169–1170, Richard de Clare, a Norman/Welsh earl raised an army to invade Ireland. He quickly captured Wexford, Waterford, and Dublin. In 1171, he married Aoife MacMurrough, daughter of the Celtic king of Leinster. He later became known as Strongbow. As in Scotland, the Normans built castles, but never established full authority throughout Ireland. Beginning about 1259, both Celtic and Norman lords strengthened their forces with Scottish mercenaries, mostly of Viking descent, known as gallowglass.



Marriage of Strongbow to Aoife
Romanticized representation. Painted by Daniel Maclise, 1854.

Throughout Europe, the general political trend was ever increasing absolute kings. After kings gained authority to appoint bishops, they could commingle state and church revenues. They could operate unchecked by a parliament. The Pope's corresponding loss of revenue led to corrupt policies like selling indulgences. Church corruption led to the Reformation.

Much more could be written about Scotland's feudal kings. However, to understand Scotch-Irish immigration in the 1700s, the important fact was that Scotland remained an independent country with a Lowland population much like the people in England.

1517–1648, Reformation

Roman Catholic Church reform was first advocated in the 1370s by Oxford professor John Wycliffe whose followers were called *Lollards*. Wycliffe believed:

- The Church should not own property
- An individual can relate to God without the Church
- The number and importance of sacraments should be reduced from seven to two.

In the 1450s, professor-priest Jan Hus [pronounced Hoose] linked these ideas with secular interests of Bohemian princes. On 31 October 1517, German priest Martin Luther posted his famous 95 theses, or debating points, on a church door in Wittenberg. Many theses questioned the church's absurd justification of selling indulgences. In addition to Wycliffe's reforms, Luther believed:

- Doctrine of *justification by faith* that did not necessarily require good works
- Eucharist *consubstantiation* instead of Catholic *transubstantiation*.

Like Hus, he believed that the state had authority over the church. He encouraged this by writing a public letter to the Christian German nobility. Opportunist princes immediately realized they could stop flow of funds to Rome and confiscate Church property. In 1520, alarmed Pope Leo X sent Luther a bull of excommunication that Luther promptly burned. In April 1521, Luther was summoned before the council of the Holy Roman Empire, called the Diet of Worms. At that decisive meeting, Luther was protected by political nobles. Within 10 years a major political realignment occurred. Northern and western Germany became independent of Rome and was called *Palatinate* [pronounced pa-latin-ate]. The word *Protestant* was applied first to a group of Palatinate princes making a legal complaint. Luther translated the Bible into German and authored hymn *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God*, based on Psalm 46. In 1524, Ulrich Zwingli started the Reformed Church in Zurich. His beliefs were similar to Luther's except he believed the Eucharist was a symbolic ritual, rejecting both consubstantiation and transubstantiation. In 1530, John Calvin in Geneva published a new austere theology.

Lord God, eternal and almighty Father: We acknowledge before your holy majesty that we are poor sinners, conceived and born in guilt and in corruption, prone to do evil, unable of our own power to do good. Because of our sin, we endlessly violate your holy commandments. But, O Lord, with heartfelt sorrow we repent and turn away from all our offenses. We condemn ourselves and our evil ways, with true sorrow asking that your grace will relieve our distress. Have compassion on us, most gracious God, Father of mercies, for the sake of your son Jesus Christ our Lord. And in removing our guilt, also grant us daily increase of the grace of your Holy Spirit, and produce in us the fruits of holiness and of righteousness pleasing in your sight: Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (Calvin 1543)

A leading principle was God's omnipotence implies God knows the future, and thus the predestined salvation of everyone. Predestination believers called others *Armenian*, a name that implied an alien Christian sect. Unlike Luther, Calvin believed in theocracy, the church had authority over the state.

Beginning in 1559, John Knox attempted to reform Scotland's state-supported Church called *Kirk*, a Norse word for church. That church owned half Scotland's wealth. Knox was influenced by John Calvin's philosophy. The backlash of the established church was unbelievably brutal. Some of Knox's associates were burned at the stake on church grounds in the presence of notorious Cardinal Beaton. In reaction, Protestants ransacked churches. In an act of desecration, the ancient bones of Saint Andrew were lost. Religious emotionalism was extreme on both sides.



John Knox
Engraving from Icons by T. Beza, 1580

In 1560, the English-language *Geneva Bible* was published. An unintended consequence was that, for the first time, literate people could understand authentic Christian teachings instead of relying on priests. John Knox, in the 1560 *Book of Discipline*, made literacy and compulsory education principal objectives.

The simple outline of religious beliefs above is inadequate for most purposes. For example, consubstantiation is not defined. This document attempts only to place development of denominations into a history timeline. Each denomination is inserted at its approximate founding date along with its distinctive beliefs and characteristics. Such reduction risks triviality. No doubt, the reader knows that religion is a complicated subject, best described in books with extensive commentary.

The church formed by Jan Hus in the 1400s called itself *Unity of the Brethren*. It began as a reform oriented church in Moravia, a region now within the Czech Republic. Hus was burned at the stake for heresy. Immediately after the Thirty Years' War 1618–1648, church members were forced from their homes. When some members settled in Germany, they became known as *Moravians*. Somewhat confusingly, then and now, a Moravian church member can be from anywhere.

In the 1500s, several *Anabaptists* movements began. They believed a person must be baptized only after he or she was old enough to understand its meaning. They rejected Luther's justification by faith. They believed in complete separation between church and state. These included *Mennonites* who were named for leader Menno Simons. Some Mennonites from the Switzerland mountains followed leader Jacob Amman to become *Amish*. They meet in homes rather than churches. Other Anabaptists were quite austere. They removed all religious art, sang hymns without accompanying music, and did not celebrate Christmas since the Bible does not explicitly justify it. Present-day Baptist roots are Anabaptist. However, there is wide diversity among Baptists. Their theology is still in ferment as they debate Calvinist principles like predestination.

Robert C. Carpenter has researched records in Steffisburg, Canton of Bern, Switzerland and records in Alsace, France. The Blancks (Plunks) and Zimmermans (Carpenters) were from the village of Steffisburg. Starting around 1693 some of these families migrated to Alsace. The Zimmermans held strong Anabaptist beliefs and some of them became followers of Jacob Amman, the founder of the Amish sect, in Alsace. Carpenter found references to Blancks in Alsace at the same time Zimmermans were there. They apparently were also Anabaptist because very few of them had children baptized in the Reformed, Lutheran, or Catholic churches in Alsace.

Carpenter thinks the Zimmermans and Blancks were related in Switzerland. He has traced a Hans Zimmerman and wife Madle Blanck in Steffisburg. Most of their children became Mennonite/Amish, migrated to Alsace, and then to America. A familial relationship in Europe would help explain why they remained close in Pennsylvania and in North Carolina. The Zimmermans, Blancks, Kauffmans, Yoders, Zooks all came from Steffisburg. Carpenter has found Blancks in Alsace. They do not appear in the parish records of Alsace which suggests that they were also Mennonite. The Zimmermans, Blancks, Yoders, Eakers, Mauneys, and Whisnants were in Alsace. So many of these families traveled in the same areas and probably knew each other.

Carpenter believes that Dr. Peter and Jacob Plunk, father of Jacob and Peter, were not born and baptized in Steffisburg. He has not found baptisms that match them. That would probably mean that they were baptized in Alsace. Carpenter has read for hours in the parish records of Alsace and found no Blancks. (Carpenter 2006–2018) It was the son Jacob who migrated to North Carolina, and for that reason is usually referred to as Jacob I. He died about 1790 and is believed to be buried in an unmarked grave in the Plunk Family Cemetery in Lincoln County, North Carolina.

Calvinism induced several denominations. In England, *Puritanism* adopted the doctrine of *Company of Saints*. In France, followers of Swiss Besancon Hugues, formed the *Huguenot Church*. In Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre, 24 August 1572, Catholics massacred over 10,000 Huguenots. Civil war continued until King Henry IV issued the 1598 *Edict of Nantes* that tolerated Protestantism in France.

Note: Julian and Gregorian Calendars

The present-day calendar is basically the same calendar standardized in 46 BC by Julius Caesar. Originally, years were dated from Rome's mythical founding. That changed in 532, when Dionysius, a monk in Rome, started dating years since Christ's believed Nativity, indicated by *anno Domini*, meaning "in the year of our Lord." Present-day scholars believe the Nativity actually occurred sometime between 7 and 4 BC. In 1582, Pope Gregory XIII instituted a more precise calendar. It removed leap-year day from each century year not divisible by 400. To correct the accumulated 10-day error, Thursday 4 October 1582 was followed immediately by Friday 15 October 1582. Protestant England refused to adopt the new calendar because it was labeled an invention of the Pope. On the other hand, Scotland adopted the new calendar in 1600 to be consistent with its trading partners, especially France. For the next 152 years, calendars of Scotland and England with its colonies differed by 10 days prior to 1 March 1700 and 11 days prior to 14 September 1752. In a family tree database, birthdays and death dates in English colonies prior to 14 September 1752 are obsolete Julian calendar dates. So, for example, on the day George Washington was born, the calendar read 11 February. Later, that day was converted to 22 February, the official commemoration date. In addition, in 1752, New Year's Day was moved from 25 March to 1 January. That is why days between 1 January and 25 March in prior years are written with hyphenated years. For example, today, when we want to write George Washington's Julian calendar birthday, it is best written 11 February 1731–1732. Despite the complicated adjustments to the Gregorian calendar, it is noteworthy that today's calendar differs by only one day per century from the Julian calendar made standard in 46 BC. Moreover, our alphabet, English language, Christian religion, legal and political system, civil service, military organization, public architecture, and marriage customs are modeled on Roman precedence.

Note: Origin of Weekday Names

Beginning in pre-history antiquity, the full-moon cycle was the obvious time period longer than a day. This cycle divided into four equal parts became the seven-day week. Naturally, each week was associated with a moon phase: new, first-quarter, full, or last-quarter. Interestingly, in Western cultures, the weekday phase has not shifted for at least 3000 years, approximately 150,000 cycles. Weekday names have an astronomical origin: sun, moon, and five known planets. Present-day English names derive from German names.

Roman Name	Meaning	Roman-German God	German Name	English Name
Dies Solis	Day of Sun	Apollo	Sunnandaeg	Sunday
Dies Lunae	Day of Moon	Luna - Mona	Monandaeg	Monday
Dies Martis	Day of Mars	Mars - Tiu	Tiwesdaeg	Tuesday
Dies Mercuri	Day of Mercury	Mercury - Woden	Wodnesdaeg	Wednesday
Dies Iovis	Day of Jupiter	Jupiter - Thur	Thursdaeg	Thursday
Dies Veneris	Day of Venus	Venus - Frigga	Frigedaeg	Friday
Dies Saturni	Day of Saturn	Saturn	Saeterdaeg	Saturday

Note: Christmas and Easter Holidays

Many present-day Christmas traditions have pagan origins. The 25 December date is from the Roman festivals of *Saturnalia* and *Sol Invictus*, meaning Invincible Sun. The Old Testament admonished against the pagan practice of decorating tree (KJV 1611, Jeremiah 10:1–4). But the custom continued especially among Germans. During the Reformation, all Christian celebrations were controversial. In June 1647, Puritans gained control of Parliament. They passed legislation:

For as much as the feast of the nativity of Christ, Easter, and other festivals, commonly called holy days, have been here-to-fore superstitiously used and observed; be it ordained that the said feasts, and all other festivals, commonly called holy days, be no longer observed as festivals.

This law was reversed after the 1660 restoration, but observance was minimal, especially among Presbyterians, until the 1800s. After Queen Victoria erected a Christmas tree for her German-born husband Albert, the English public adopted the same custom. In 1843, Charles Dickens' short book *A Christmas Carol* was extremely popular. It transformed Christmas into a children's day. Today, Christmas is a time to strengthen family bonds. Otherwise, cultural customs are sometimes confused. Some Christians defend pagan symbols in public places against secularists who want to call Christmas and Easter "holidays," which means "holy days."

Beginning 1610, Ulster Plantation

A long-term English goal was to assimilate unruly Scottish Highlanders and Irishmen. During the 1570s, Queen Elizabeth I injected English colonists into occupied Dublin and surroundings, known as the *Pale*. The expression "beyond the Pale" indicated uncivilized territory. Queen Elizabeth I was the first to use the word Scotch-Irish. It appeared in a formal document referring to Scottish settlers in and around Dublin. The present-day word Scotch-Irish, although similar in meaning, originated in America during the 1800s.



Queen Elizabeth I
Attributed to Isaac Oliver.

Queen Elizabeth died in 1603, leaving no heirs. Scotland's King James VI became King James I of England. His hereditary claim was that his 2nd great-grandfather had been former English King Henry VII. He got the crown by creating political alliances during Elizabeth's reign. Stakes of these alliances were so high that he acquiesced to his mother's, Mary Queen of Scots, execution in 1587. For the first time, the entire island of Great Britain had one monarch, the *United Kingdom of Great Britain*. A new flag was designed and called *Union Jack* after James's official Latin name *Jacobus Rex*. It contains the white X-shaped Cross of Saint Andrew superimposed on the red cross of Saint George that symbolized England.



Union Flag or Union Jack, 1606–1801

In 1604, King, James commissioned scholars to translate the Bible into English. It was published in 1611 as *King James Version*. James was also a proponent of colonization. Jamestown Colony in Virginia began in 1607.



King James I
Attributed to John de Critz the Elder.

In 1632 in London, the Baker's edition of the King James Bible mistakenly misprinted the Seventh Commandment, "Thou shalt commit adultery," leaving out the important "not." It became known as the "Wicked Bible." No doubt some people were amused, but official reaction was severe. Parliament ordered all copies destroyed, fined the printer 3000 pounds, and forbade all further unauthorized printings of the Bible.

In 1610, Irish Earls of Tyrconnell and Tyrone abandoned Ulster under pressure. King James set up Ulster Plantation and invited residents of Scotland and England to settle providing they cultivate land and provide as many jobs as possible exclusively to Scots or Englishmen. Organizational details appear in (Foote 1846, 84–90). Since King James was originally Scotland's king, Scots probably got better allotments than they would have otherwise. Most Scot colonists were from western Lowlands and did not have far to go since Ulster and Scotland are only 13 miles apart at their closest points, the so-called *Giant's Causeway*. Scots succeeded in making Ulster farmland productive. Their descendants are still there today. Obviously, native Irishmen resented this.

Hugh Espy, born 1647, and his wife Mary Stewart, born 1649, Plonk-related 8th great-grandparents, were born in Edinburgh, Scotland, but settled and died in County Antrim, Ulster. Joseph Means, a Plonk-related 7th great-grandfather was born in Perthshire, Scotland, about 1653 and died in Belfast, County Antrim, Ulster.

In the 1600s, rent for farmland was called *mail*, and was often paid in cattle and dairy products. *Blackmail* was rent, actually extortion, paid to keep cattle from being stolen.

Quit rent was a holdover from medieval times. Under the feudal system, a tenant held the land from his lord and usually had sub-tenants. In return, he was required to lend aid to the lord in times of emergency by coming to fight on his behalf and bringing an army of his subtenants. This custom was superseded by an annual money payment, the quit rent, which served in place of military service. In the Royal Colony of North Carolina the settlers owned the land "in fee simple" and could sell or dispose of the land any way they wanted. However, they paid annual quit rents to the original grantee who in turn passed these payments up to the King (Mitchell April 1993).

1638–1700, Presbyterian Church

The word Presbyterian implies church governance not by bishops but by church leaders in a hierarchical structure of Session, Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly. Leaders are both lay and clergy. To provide trained ministers, Presbyterians created many independent colleges.

In the minds of most Europeans during 1600s, religious toleration was not a virtue. Instead, they believed that each nation must share a common religion and celebrate religious events simultaneously. King Charles I wanted to enforce the Anglican Church liturgy throughout England and Scotland. On Sunday, 23 July 1637, he required that the *Book of Common Prayer* be read during the Sunday service at Saint Giles' Cathedral in Edinburgh, Scotland. Scottish Presbyterians considered such practice as "Popery" and disrupted the service. A local woman Jenny Geddes famously threw a stool at the reader while yelling: "De'il gie you colic, the wame o' ye, fause thief; daur ye say Mass in my lug." meaning "Devil cause you colic in your stomach, false thief: dare you say the Mass in my ear." On 28 February 1638, *Covenanters* tried to reverse state, or established, religion by making Presbyterianism the only religion in England, Scotland, and Ireland. Its beliefs and policies were codified by the *Westminster Assembly* in its *Confession of Faith* in 1643. The "trespasses" version of the Presbyterian Lord's Prayer is an incidental consequence of the Westminster Assembly. In the King James Bible, Matthew 6:9–13 uses "debts" and Luke 11:2–4 uses "sins."

During the remainder of the 1640s, other factions took advantage of royal weakness. A three-sided civil war resulted. First, the Scotland Army invaded northern England. To raise funds, Charles I was forced to reconvene what became known as *Long Parliament*. It attempted to destroy Charles I's government. The English Army split between royalist supporters known as *Cavaliers* and Parliament supporters known as *Roundheads*. In 1641, Irish Catholic majority revolted against all Protestants overlords. In 1648, the Army under Oliver Cromwell took virtual custody of King Charles and banished him to Isle of Man. Some Covenanters attempted to deal with the weakened king to realize their goal of universal Presbyterianism. But other armed Covenanters, 6000 strong, marched on Edinburgh in what became known as *Whiggamore's Raid*. That unusual word was a loose variation of "whig a mare" meaning prod a horse. The participants, and later all Presbyterian fighters, became known by the nickname *Whig*. In 1649, they made an alliance with Cromwell that decisively ended the monarchy and put Cromwell in power. On 30 January 1649, Charles I was beheaded. But soon afterwards, the Covenanters felt double crossed, because Cromwell failed to make Presbyterianism the established church. In 1649–1650, Cromwell's Army brutally repressed Irish Catholics. In 1653, Cromwell was named *Lord Protector*. Presbyterians were generally happy when Charles II restored the monarchy on 29 May 1660. But soon thereafter, they felt double crossed when instead of advancing Presbyterianism as he had promised in 1649, he contemptuously said "Presbytery was not a religion for gentlemen," and began to reestablish bishops and formal liturgy, such as kneeling. Such issues mattered deeply to Presbyterians who again decided to fight. Many Presbyterians lost their jobs, property, and lives for their beliefs. Fighting lasted for decades. The 1680s were the worst period. In the end, they failed to establish universal Presbyterianism, but did maintain a separate existence. Fighting radicalized leaders, resulting in dogmatic and austere policies. For example, in 1696 a student was hanged for using profanity. His sadly ironic name was Thomas Aikenhead (Mackie 1978, 253). The degree of religious passions and violence during the 1600s had searing impacts on individuals. It shaped the Presbyterian image as dour, independent, self-reliant, defensive, anti-government, and militant.

Reverend James Alexander, a McGuire-related 8th great-grandfather, was ordained on 12 December 1677 in Raphoe, Donegal, Ulster, Ireland. He was fined £20 and imprisoned 8 months for publicly holding "a day of prayer and fasting," violating the established church laws (Foote 1846, 117). James Alexander was mentioned in minutes of "The General Synod of Ulster."

A few generations later, when opportunity opened in America, Ulster Scots were already predisposed to settle elsewhere. During 1683–1708, Francis Makemie founded America's first Presbyterian churches on Virginia-Maryland Eastern Shore.



Francis Makemie
Makemie Presbyterian Church, Accomac, Virginia (W. M. Plonk 1994–2008)
Copy of statue by Alexander Stirling Calder, 1897
Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, PA

From 1974–1990s, William McGuire Plonk was minister at the Makemie founded church in Onancock, Virginia.

1688–1690, Siege of Ulster

In France, the 1598 Edict of Nantes had been divisive. After 1650, systematic persecutions of Huguenots increased. Many left France for Geneva, Amsterdam, London, Brandenburg-Prussia, and Ulster. In Ulster, Huguenots integrated well with Presbyterian Scots. Beginning 1669, Huguenots immigrated to Charlestown, Carolina, later South Carolina. More settled west of present-day Richmond, Virginia. In October 1685, French King Louis XIV revoked the Edict of Nantes, forcing all remaining Huguenots to convert or depart.

Surname Forney has a Huguenot origin. Faucett Family tradition is that their ancestors refused to convert to Roman Catholicism and with other French Huguenots migrated to Ulster, Ireland.

Surname Brevard has a Huguenot origin.

In 1685, new King James II was Roman Catholic. Soon he began replacing all Protestant office holders with Catholics. Also, his newborn son was expected to become another Catholic monarch. King James was so unpopular that Parliament invited his Protestant daughter Mary and her husband William of Orange to create an army in Holland and invaded England. King James tried to escape, was caught, and then freed to “escape” again. This so-called *Bloodless Revolution* marked the end of English absolute monarchs and the beginning of Parliament preeminence. The winning political party became known as Whigs, although its support was more diverse than the original Covenanters.

In 1688–1690, James, with French and Irish Catholic soldiers, attempted to regain the crown by attacking Ulster from southern Ireland where the population was mostly Catholic. Londonderry was surrounded. Although city officials advised surrender, residents refused. For fifteen weeks, between March and July 1689, supplies were cut off. Many people starved. Finally, a relief ship broke the harbor blockade. King William ultimately defeated James at River Boyne Battle on 1 July 1690.

Margaret Moore, an Anderson-related 7th great-grandmother, spoke of sickness and suffering the people endured during the siege when she lived in Londonderry. Her husband was a British soldier. (Turner 1971, 62)

During the *War of the League of Augsburg*, 1688–1697, called *King William's War* in America, the army of French King Louis XIV devastated the Rhineland and Palatinate region of Germany. Thousands of German farms were destroyed and farmers forced off their land. Afterwards, Louis attempted to unite the monarchies of Spain with France, and thus create a powerful state that would dominate Europe. Other nations allied against this threat and started the *War of Spanish Succession*, 1701–1714, called *Queen Anne's War* in America. As before, German farmers suffered during this unsettled time. No doubt, many Germans sought a better life in America.

1707, Scotland Parliament joined England Parliament

There were always some Lowland Scotland leaders who believed closer ties to England were in Scotland's long-term interest. Economic conditions in the early 1700s caused these views to prevail. Integration freed Scotland from England's trade-restrictive Navigation Acts. Also, England got a more stable northern neighbor less influenced by France. In 1707, Scotland's Parliament met to accept terms of union with England's Parliament, and then permanently disbanded. Thereafter, Scotland sent its members of parliament to London. Scotland retained an independent church and legal system. Scotland would have preferred a federal form of government. This was achieved in July 1999. Today, Scotland Parliament's powers are limited to regional issues. London continues control of foreign policy, defense, and central bank.

1690–1801, Protestant Ascendancy in Ireland

The 1690 defeat of James II led to Protestant Ascendancy in Ireland with its systematic subjugation of the majority Catholic population. Unlike today, Ireland was not partitioned. It had its own parliament until 1 January 1801, the date that corresponds to Scotland's 1707 event. In the 1700s, various penal laws forbid Catholics from holding public office, owning land or firearms, and educating their children even outside Ireland. Although Ulster Presbyterians were not persecuted as severely, they were forced to pay tithes to the established Anglican Church. Between 1704 and 1719, the Irish Parliament *Test Act Against Popery* excluded all *dissenters*, including Presbyterians, from public office and military careers. It also made non-Anglican marriages technically illegal which threatened children's future. Also, the previous 150 years taught Presbyterians that their liberty and property could disappear anytime government changed. Also English protectionist laws forbade importation of Irish wool and other products. This was the political, religious, and economic environment from which many Scotch-Irish emigrated to North America. But compared to other contemporary immigrants, Scotch-Irish were motivated to own large farms. Reference (Leyburn 1962) contains details.



Authentic 1700s Ulster Farmhouse
Frontier Culture Museum, Staunton, Virginia



Typical 1700s Ulster Clothing
Linen manufactured from homegrown flax.
Frontier Culture Museum, Staunton, Virginia

1681–1756, Pennsylvania

Certainly most departing emigrants never expected to see older family members again, although they could correspond by mail. Ocean passage required tropical easterly trade winds and took from 6 to 10 weeks. This route was known as the *Southern Crossing*. Near Florida, ships turned north, aided by the Gulf Stream. Obviously, such passage was very expensive. Emigrants who could not afford the cost, indentured themselves as farm laborers for 4 to 7 years.

Note: Indentured Servitude

The principles of indentured servitude were based on the *Old Testament* (KJV 1611, Deuteronomy 15:12–14).

In 1717, an Anderson-related 6th great-grandfather, Michael Holt I left Germany for America. During a stop in London, the ship's captain was forced to pay debts by contracting many passengers as indentured servants. Consequently, Michael Holt worked for seven years for Virginia's Lieutenant Governor Alexander Spotswood in a settlement called the Second Germanna Colony (Troxler and Vincent 1999, 48).

On 20 May 1734, William Oates I, a Plonk-related 4th great-grandfather was born on the Atlantic Ocean in a ship headed to Pennsylvania. It is not certain if his parents were emigrating from the United Kingdom or moving from coastal North Carolina (Porter, Herndon and Herndon 1973).

The *Society of Friends*, or *Quaker*, religion began in England in the 1640s. It appealed to Protestants who wanted a more emotional, informal, and engaging debate in the liturgy. Its leaders quickly wrote a complete doctrine that rejected formal sacraments, priesthood, and violence. Quaker William Penn's father had been a British Navy admiral who was owed a large debt by the crown. In 1681, this debt was paid with the landholding call Pennsylvania. The new government set the liberal policy of welcoming all Protestant immigrants. Public morals were proscribed at monthly Friend's Meetings. Men and women met separately.

Cornelius Empson, an Anderson-related 8th great-grandfather, was born in Booth Yorkshire, England, in 1660. He immigrated to America and acquired large landholdings. In 1684, he purchased 1230 acres of land in New Jersey. That same year he purchased land in New Castle County. He named the plantations after his land holdings in England. These were: Wild Hook, Goole Grange, Chestnut Hill on White Clay

Creek, and Horse Hook on Brandywine Creek in Pennsylvania, today in Delaware. These were named in his will (Empson 1710, B:1:224). His first wife was Mary Watkins. Their daughter Sarah Empson was born 20 May 1687 at Goole Grange. Mary died soon afterwards. In October 1689, Cornelius and Mary's sister Elizabeth Sanderson indicated to the Friend's Meeting their intentions to marry. Presumably she was a widow. Recorded proceedings from monthly Friend's Meetings describe ordinary marriage approvals and the controversial marriage of Cornelius and Elizabeth.

1689 __ day 10th mo The monthly Meeting being held at Valentine Hollingsworth appoints a meeting to be held at New Castle ye first day after every Quarter Sessions to be held at Edward Blakes. Cornelius Empson & Elizabeth Sanderson signifying their intentions of marriage to mens & womens meeting which being taken into serious consideration Could in no wise be joyned with by ye meeting by reason of their nearness of kin, she being his former wifes own sister.

1689 4th day 11th mo The Monthly Meeting being held at Cornelius Empsons. said Empson addressing himselfe to ye meeting on account of his intentions of marriage and desireing some assistance from ffreinds to go to ffriends of Upland Meeting to take their advice on ye said matter.

1689 8th day 12th mo The Monthly Meeting being held at Valentine Hollingsworth, Thomas Peirson & Rose Dixon laying their intentions of marriage before this meeting. It's appointed yt George Harlan & Thomas Hollingsworth doe ____ Enquiry concentering ye clearness of ye man & Ann Hollingsworth & Mary Connaway to make Enquiry Concentering ye clearness of ye woman, and give an account thereof to ye next meeting. Michael Harlan & Dinah Dixon laying their intentions of marriage before this meeting, It's appointed yt thos Hollingsworth & nathan Cartmell to make enquiry concerning ye clearness of ye man & Ann Hollingsworth & Mary Connaway to make enquiry of ye clearness of woman & to give an accth thereof to ye next monthly meeting.

1689/90 1st day 1st mo The Monthly Meeting being held at valentine Hollingsworths forasmuch as Cornelius Empson hath proceeded contrary to ye order of Truth & ye advice of ffriends in marrying his late wifes own Sister. It is therefore ye judgment of this meeting yt he ought not be Commeted amoug us any more in our mans meeting untill he give Satisfaction for his so doing & cleareth ye truth & untill then ffriends have with drew the meeting from his house. Morgan Druet & George Harlan are desired by ye meeting to give Cornelius Empsons to give him ye sence of ye meeting and of the proceedings as aforesaid. The Meeting desires Val Hollingsworth to speak to his son. ____ to be as ye next Monthly Meeting. Thomas Pierson & Rose Dixon making their appearance before this meeting in order to their marriage (this being ye second time) Geo. Harl & Thos Hollingsworth having been appointed ye last meeting to make Enquiry Concerning ye Clearness of the man & Ann Hollingsworth & mary Connaway to make Enquiry concentering ye clearness of ye woman, who accordingly have given in the report y t all was clear as far as they can understand. Wherefore ye meeting leaves them to their liberty to take one another according to the good order of Truth

1689/90 __ day 1 mo Michael Harlan & Dinah Dixon making their appearance before this meeting in order to their marriage (this being ye second time) Thomas Hollingsworth & nathaniel Cartmell being appointed ye last meeting to make Enquiry Concentering ye clearness of ye man and Ann Hollingsworth & Mary Connaway to make Enquiry Concentering ye clearness of ye woman, who accordingly have given in their report y to all was clear as far as they can understand wherefore ye meeting leaves y m to their Liberty to take one another according to the good order of Truth. We likewise of ye womens meeting do unanimously agree to and with ye proceedings of ye mans meeting concerning ye default of Cornelius Empson & we do likewise disown having any unity with his wife in our meeting untill she clear the Truth & acknowledge her error.

1690 7th day 4th mo. The Monthly Meeting being held at Valentine Hollingsworth, Cornelius Empson sent a paper of his condemnation to ye meeting desireing ____ same might be recorded 7 [members voted] as being read the meeting consented thereinto and ordered the same to be done.

1690 5th day 5th mo. The Monthly meeting being held at Valentine Hollingsworth ffreinds having ye last Monthly meeting received a paper from Cornelius Empson & accepted of it, they appointed Valentine Hollingsworth & Ann Sharply to give him an acctt thereof.

1690 2nd day 6th mo. The Mo Meeting being at Valentine Hollingsworth, those ffreind which were nominated by ye last mo meeting to spake to Cornelus Empson abt ye meetings accepting his paper, return answer ye having spoaken to him he received their words very gladly & with great contempt. (Quaker 1689)

On 29 July 1685, Cornelius Empson was appointed a justice of the peace in the southern counties of Pennsylvania, a part of present-day Delaware. He was appointed again on 2 January 1689 and a third term on 13 April 1690. He was elected to the Pennsylvania Assembly in 1686, 1693, 1695, 1696, and 1697. During 1698–1701, he was a Puisne (lower, not chief) Justice of the provincial court, the equivalent of today's Pennsylvania Supreme Court. (List of Officers of the Colonies on the Delaware and the Province of Pennsylvania, 1614–1776 in Pennsylvania State Archives n.d., 2:IX:630)

Beginning about 1720, most Scotch-Irish immigrants entered America through ports Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, or New Castle, Delaware, and first settled in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. In addition, many Amish, Lutherans, Moravians, and Mennonites entered. Many German emigrants were refugees displaced by French King Louis XIV's expansion into Rhineland. They journeyed down the Rhine River to Rotterdam, Holland where they boarded ships. They were often called "Dutch." Unlike today, that name was not specific to Holland. Originally, it was a generic word for German that was equivalent to what the Germans called themselves "Deutsch." Likewise, Scotch-Irish from Ulster were often called "Irish Presbyterians" or simply "Irish." Some Scotch-Irish maintained sentimental attachment to Ireland by established non-religious Saint Patrick societies. The imprecise word "Moravian" is described above. Confusion was compounded when these words became adjectives, as in "Dutchman's Creek" and "Moravian band." Of course, only those of us in later generations are confused. The name "Alamance" was a reference to German settlers.



Authentic 1700s German Palatinate Farmhouse
Frontier Culture Museum, Staunton, Virginia

There is a record of a John Anderson entering Pennsylvania in 1722, but it is not known for certain if he was our ancestor. In any event, our John Anderson was born in Ulster. In 1724, in Lancaster County Pennsylvania, he married Ann Moore, daughter of Margaret Moore. Margaret Moore got word that her

British soldier husband was thrown off a horse and died. Because of his military service, she was entitled to land in North Carolina. Ann Moore and her husband John Anderson inherited this claim.

In 1729, William Mebane I, an Anderson-related 7th great-grandfather, signed a petition to create Lancaster County, Pennsylvania (Mebane 1999, 64–67).

Robert C. Carpenter, a noted author of the Carpenter Family (R. C. Carpenter 1982), wrote the following in a 2007 correspondence:

There are lots of connections between the Carpenters and Blancks. Both families came from the same village in Switzerland —Steffisburg, in the Canton of Bern. Both travelled to Alsace in present France. At that time it was a mixed French and German speaking area which had been de-populated as a result of the Thirty Years War. Both had Anabaptist leanings during these years. Both immigrated to Pennsylvania. Some lived in Berks County and according to Jacob he was born in Lancaster County. The Zimmermans lived in Cocalico Township, Lancaster County. I have spent the last two years reading parish records from Alsace for my Zimmermans. I have found some Blancks and other family connections. I believe that the Blancks came to North Carolina as a result of encouragement, recruitment, of the Zimmermans. Dr. Peter Blanck was the first one here. The brothers Jacob and Peter were here at least by the Revolutionary War.

Jacob Plunk I, a 5th great-grandfather, and Johann Jacob Rudisill, a 6th great-grandfather, emigrated from Germany, probably through Holland. They first settled in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. There are two conflicting histories that might be resolved by careful investigation. One history is that immigrant Jacob Plunk landed in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on 28 August 1735. The source is a list of immigrant names by Professor I. Daniel Rupp of Pennsylvania, Page 4, Rev. Joshua Kocherthal leader of immigrants. See Broadhead's Documentary History of New York. Names have been preserved and are kept in the archives of the State of New York. An alternative history is that of Doctor Hans Jacob Plonk who emigrated from Germany by way of Amsterdam, Holland, and Krews, England. He landed on 31 August 1749. The name of the ship was "Crown." Doctor Plonk was a herbalist, a doctor who grows and collects herbs. Neither of these histories is entirely consistent with the Plunks who immigrated to North Carolina.

Patrick McGuire, a 4th great-grandfather, emigrated from Ireland in 1775, probably from Ulster County Fermanagh where the McGuire surname was common.

As new farmland was acquired and cleared, the Pennsylvania government paid Indians a fair price. Scotch-Irish newcomers were not generous and had poor relations with Indians. Indians retaliated during French and Indian War 1756–1763.

Note: English Currency, pound sterling

English currency was based on the *pound sterling*, each equal to 20 *shillings*, each equal to 12 *pence*, each equal to 4 *farthings*. Notation was £ pound.shilling.pence. A *guinea* was a pound and a shilling, and thus written £1.1.0. One pound in 1760 equals approximately US\$20 in 2000.

1663–1756, Virginia and Carolinas, Lord Proprietors

On 24 March 1663, King Charles II subdivided land south of Virginia into 8 large landholdings for political cronies who helped restore him to the monarchy in 1660. In the order listed on Charles's charter, these Lord Proprietors were: Earl of Clarendon, Duke of Albemarle, Lord Craven, Lord Berkeley, Lord Ashley, Sir George Carteret, Sir William Berkeley, and Sir John Colleton. Proprietor George Monck, or Lord Albemarle, was a few years earlier, the Army general that made Charles II restoration possible. Today, the Albemarle name applies to a coastal sound and a city. Other names continue in regional lexicon. These proprietorship grants appear as extravagant gifts, but they were actually charters for financial investors who hoped to profit from colonial development. Collectively, this region was called Carolina, a variation of older name Carolana that honored King Charles I who was beheaded fourteen years earlier

during Oliver Cromwell's rule. By claim, Carolina extended westward to the "South Seas," meaning Pacific Ocean, but England had no effective control beyond the Atlantic coast. In 1665, this area was extended northward 30 minutes of latitude to include Albemarle Sound, creating the approximate present-day North Carolina-Virginia boundary. The area was also extended southward to 29 degrees latitude into Spanish Florida near present-day St. Augustine. On 7 December 1710, two political units, North and South Carolina, were established, each with its own colonial governor.

Before bridges were common, coastlines, rivers, and creeks formed the reference system of all locations.



Dugout canoe made in 1700s.
Found in swamp near Camden, South Carolina.

Many Native American tribes inhabited Carolina which was on the frontier of Algonquian culture to the north and Siouan (or Mississippian) culture to the south and west. The latter is studied at Town Creek Indian Mound excavation site in Montgomery County, North Carolina.

Indians created a main trail through the Piedmont called Indian Trading Path. By running along the elevated ridgeline between watersheds it circumvented creeks that were impassable during flood. Of course, major rivers could only be crossed at fords when water level was low. A topological map reveals many old roads that avoid creek crossings. Today's bridges allow shorter routes between towns.

The Indian Trading Path was thought to cross Eno River where Lowe's Mill was built probably in the 1750s. In 1768, that mill was purchased by Anderson-related 6th great-grandfather Richard Faucett and became known by his name (W. S. Price 1988, 8:2). A segment of Indian Trading Path now coincides with Mebane-Rogers Road (Troxler and Vincent 1999, 29). Jacob Holt built his house off that road in 1865. Later, horse or mule teams pulled the house on rolling logs to its present-day site near the road. Nell Aldridge lives there today.

Note: Human pathways before bridges: waterways, fall line, ridgelines, and geodesics

Human pathways are so familiar that it is surprising how complicated they are to define physically. A particular pathway is a compromise between minimizing distance, time, and effort. In America before bridges, human pathways were waterways and ridgelines between watersheds. Since ridgelines are determined by watersheds, rivers and creeks formed the most useful coordinate system. In the Carolina Lowcountry, waterways were the principal paths. A few causeways and bridges crossed expansive marshes. During the Revolutionary War, it was tactically important to control these routes. Military leader called them *passes* since each was analogous to a mountain pass. Above the *fall line*, waterways were not navigable. In fact, most rivers were barriers except at fords or ferries. A good ford location was where water was shallow and the streambed was hard. A smooth rock bottom, or shoal, made an ideal ford. A good ferry location was where water was deep enough to float a heavily load barge. Some fords were known by their functionality, for example, Trading Ford and Shallow Ford on the Yadkin River. Most creeks were barriers during floods. Consequently, pathways tended to follow ridgelines to avoid possible

blockage. Such ridgelines are the “natural roads.” They often coincide with original Indian trails. For example, Flat Rock Road, from Hanging Rock to Grannies Quarter Creek, coincides with the ridgeline between the Pee Dee and Wateree Rivers. If all roads simply followed ridgelines, then their paths would be entirely deterministic, and given a topological map, could be plotted by a computer. However, it is common that a route cut across the upper reaches of a creek where the streams are small enough to be passable during rains, especially if that route is a shortcut to a resource, like a farm, mill, pasturage, spring, or town. It is also relevant that a ridgeline can pass over a local barrier like a steep hill, stony terrain, dense thicket, fence line, etc. Of course, an actual road bypasses such an obstacle. What is interesting is that there can be two paths on either side of an obstacle that are equivalently optimal. In mathematics, such a path is called a *geodesic*. So along most roads, the ridgeline rule is deliberately broken to reach a point resource or bypass an obstacle. For example, the main north-south road between Camden and Charlotte deliberately avoided the nearest ridgeline by crossing Clems Branch for the purpose of passing by a campground and market with a clean and “constant” source of water. All this is common sense. The complexity illustrates the impossibility of reducing actual human pathways to deterministic physical land topography.

Note: Can computers rediscover historical road paths?

Can computers rediscover historical road paths using only physical topological data? The impossibility is proven by one counter example. Suppose it is known that an old road connected two points on opposite sides of a mountain. The mountain is symmetrical, so paths on both sides are equal in distance, gradient, curvature, etc. Suppose also that all ground evidence was obliterated. No computer can rediscover the actual historical road path because there are two possible solutions. While this example uses a hypothetical mountain, analogous barriers occur in many problems of this type. This does not say that computers cannot be useful in such problems, it only proves that computers cannot solve every such problem, in particular those with multiple solutions. So what can be inferred from only physical topological data? If a present-day road closely follows a ridgeline, as shown on a topological map, then it is reasonable to assume it was a historical road that predated bridges. One such road is Rehobeth Road, near Waxhaw in Union County, North Carolina.

Catawba Indians moved into the region in approximately 1650 after being driven out of their original home in present-day Ohio by other Indians. Their entire population was approximately 11,000 (Lawson 1709, 43–44). They managed to gain control of the river now known by their name, but only in a constant state of war with Cherokees who resided along and west of Broad River. In a battle at Nation Ford, more than 1000 braves died on each side. That ford was at the present-day *Norfolk & Southern Railroad* bridge northeast of Rock Hill, South Carolina. Actually, the name Catawba originally applied to a sub-tribe. About 1700, the name applied generally to an alliance of Esaw, Sugaree, Shuteree, and Catawba sub-tribes. Their central community was at the confluence of Sugar Creek and Catawba River. Reference (Merrell 1989a, 92) contains details. Waxhaw Indians inhabited land south of Twelve-Mile Creek. Their culture, called *Cofitachique*, had links to Indians in present-day Mexico (Merrell 1989a, 103). They flattened the skull of each infant child with strapped-on sandbags. The rationale was to spread the eyes to improve hunting skills.

Tribes often fought each other. After large numbers of European colonists settled coastal Virginia, Siouan tribes, Cheraw, Santee, Pee Dee, Waccamaw, and Catawba, aligned with colonists against Algonquian tribes, Tuscarora and Cherokee. On 22 September 1711, Tuscaroras in eastern North Carolina raided colonial villages including New Bern at the Neuse River mouth. That triggered the Tuscarora War. Colonial military leaders organized the Tuscarora’s traditional Indian enemies. The war ended in 1713 with a thousand Tuscaroras killed or sold into slavery. The remainder migrated to Iroquois country in present-day New York State. Virginian adventurers and criminals expropriated freed land. The war experience taught all Indians the value of organization and a clearer assessment of their common interest. In May 1715, a local problem with Yamasees in southern South Carolina erupted in a general Indian uprising that included Waxhaws and Catawbas. All marched on Charlestown, seriously threatening the South Carolina government until George Chicken, a colonial military leader with an unlikely name, and a band of colonists attacked undefended Indian villages behind the advancing warriors. The Indian advance collapsed. Catawbas wanted peace and blamed Waxhaws for forcing their involvement. In August 1716, Catawbas

destroyed the Waxhaw tribe. Survivors and other vanquished Indians migrated and merged into what became known as *Catawba Indian Nation*. It was in present-day Lancaster and York Counties. Catawbans traded deerskins for manufactured goods, in particular, guns, gunpowder, tools, and textiles. Although Catawbans survived colonial settlers, they had strong Indian enemies. They were subjected to Iroquoian Shawnee raiders from as far away as the Ohio River. For these reasons, Catawbans allied themselves with settlers during the French and Indian War and American Revolution (Merrell 1989a, 161).

Lumbees have a distinctive history. Before modern transportation, their land, in present-day Robeson County, was isolated by swamps from other Indians and Europeans. Nonetheless, as early as 1730, they had an entirely European way of life that included English language, European-style houses, and farming methods. Their surnames included those of Lost Colonists who disappeared sometime between 1587 and 1590. Reference (Dial and Eliades 1996) discusses this evidence. Lumbees have always been self-sufficient, never subject to federal government Indian-Affairs programs, and vigorously defended themselves against racial prejudice. Today, Lumbees are prominent near Pembroke, North Carolina.

About 1717, Ralph Outlaw and his wife Ann, who were Anderson-related 6th great-grandparents, moved from Surry County, Virginia, to Chowan County, North Carolina. Ralph purchased land on the south side of Catherine Creek, or probably Cashie Creek. He later purchased land near Wildcat Swamp. These sites are now in Bertie County.

The proprietorships were not as profitable as hoped. On 25 July 1729, all except one of the 8 proprietors sold their holdings back to the English government that then began promoting inland settlement. The price was £17,500. Proprietor John Carteret, Lord Granville, kept his landholding that was north of latitude 35 degrees 34 minutes, which was approximately the northern half of North Carolina. Today, that boundary is evident as the northern edge of Moore, Montgomery, Stanly, Cabarrus, Mecklenburg, and Lincoln Counties with slight adjustments. Granville hired private officers to sell land to new immigrants.

Note: North Carolina — South Carolina boundary

On 24 March 1663, King Charles II organized the land south of Virginia. It was called Carolina. By claim, it extended westward to the “South Seas,” meaning Pacific Ocean, but England had no effective control beyond the Atlantic coast. In 1665, this area was extended northward 30 minutes of latitude to include Albemarle Sound, creating the approximate present-day North Carolina-Virginia boundary. The area was also extended southward to 29 degrees latitude into Spanish Florida near present-day St. Augustine. On 7 December 1710, two political units, North and South Carolina, were established, each with its own colonial governor. A 1734 agreement specified rules that would determine the North and South Carolina boundary. From the coast, the boundary started 30 miles south of the Cape Fear River mouth. It then ran along a straight line that could never be closer than 30 miles from the Cape Fear River. This boundary line was to stop at latitude 35 degrees, but the surveyors stopped short of that latitude because of working “with Extraordinary fatigue Running the said Line most of that time thro’ Desart and uninhabited woods...” (L. Pettus n.d., 3). In 1759, surveyors were to continue westward along latitude 35 degrees, but by confusion began from the last measurement at latitude 34 degrees 48 minutes, about 11 miles south of the intended latitude. They were instructed to terminate the survey at Salisbury Road, a principal backcountry road that may have connected the natural fords of Lands Ford on the Catawba River and Trading Ford on the Yadkin River. After the boundary was set, it was too late to correct. North Carolina acquired about 600 square miles originally intended for South Carolina. During the French and Indian War 1756–1763, Catawba Indians supported European settlers against other tribes. In the 1763 Treaty of Augusta, they secured a 15-mile square area known as the Catawba Nation (L. Pettus 2005b). Two corners of that square are evident in the boundary today. In 1772, to compensate South Carolina, an equal area was taken from North Carolina west of Catawba River beginning at the South Fork confluence (Plan of the Boundary Line Between the Provinces of South and North Carolina 1772) (A. S. Salley 1929, 29). The South Carolina Head Commissioner was William Moultrie (C. S. Davis 1942), who wrote:

They had tents and a wagon to carry their baggage; after the usual compliments and a glass or two of wine we proceeded immediately to business, by each party showing his commission and instructions to the other. We agreed that a surveyor from each Province

should attend the Compass every day and that the chain should be carried alternately, and two blazers from each side to follow the Surveyors. We waited at the old corner tree till 12 o'clock to take an observation. Sun's altitude 75—35 latitude 34.48. After dinner we proceeded and encamped at a Run about 4 ½ miles, we took the various courses along the Salisbury road, which made it very tedious." The next day the surveyors had a good day and made 11 ½ miles. The following day it was 8 miles. On Sunday they took a break and went into Charlotte Town in Mecklenburg County. "The town has a tolerable Court house of wood about 80 by 40 feet, and a jail, a store, a Tavern and several other houses say 5 or 6, but very ordinary built of logs. From here we went to Capt. Polks, about a mile, spent the day agreeable and returned to camp about 12 miles off. (L. Pettus 1992)

In South Carolina, the region was called *New Acquisition District* (B. P. Robinson 1957, 315). That adjustment accounts for the stair-step state border and the southern boundary of York County, South Carolina. It new state line not well received in Mecklenburg, Tryon, and the New Acquisition District since it arbitrarily separated settlers with common heritage (B. P. Robinson 1963, 66). In 1785, South Carolina established Lancaster and York Districts.

Since 1665, only Englishmen were allowed to own land in British American colonies. The *Colonial Naturalization Act of 1740* was enacted by King George II to enable those foreigners who were already in the colonies to take an oath of allegiance to the British government and thereby be granted land in areas which the British government desired to develop, for example North Carolina. This right was granted to foreign Protestants and others residing seven years in America who should take the oath of abjuration, made the declaration of fidelity, and receive the sacraments. A foreign born Protestant simply had to go before Chief Judge or another judge in the colony and take the prescribed oaths and proved through the testimony of two witnesses and a certificate from his minister that he had received the sacrament within the last three months.

Before 1763, France claimed the entire Mississippi River watershed. Its Fort Duquesne, present-day Pittsburgh, blocked English settlement west of Pennsylvania. Because of that, Indian conflicts, and rising Pennsylvania land prices, younger Scotch-Irish and Germans moved south. Beginning in 1730, Scotch-Irish and Germans settled Virginia's Shenandoah Valley and then the Carolina Piedmont. They traveled along what was later called the *Great Wagon Road*. At that time, a wagon road meant a good road wide enough for a wagon and better than a typical unimproved trading path. A desirable wagon type, named Conestoga for the Pennsylvania town where it was manufactured, had a sunken floor for high capacity and stability. Moving occurred after autumn harvest and before spring planting.



Great Wagon Road
From Rowan County Information Web Site.

Note: Great Wagon Road

Questions about the Great Wagon Road often arise on field trips. One historian challenged anyone to find a use of the expression “Great Wagon Road” before 1800. As yet, no single instance has been found. However, there are many instances of “great road” which meant more or less what we mean by “closest major highway”. It did not mean one specific road, just the closest major road from wherever you happened to be. Also, “wagon road” meant a road good enough for commercial traffic with wagons. Farmers were ordered by the government to maintain such commercial wagon road near their property. Unlike today, roads did not have official names. They were usually called by wherever they led. So for example, Camden Road and Charlotte Road could be same physical road. Thus today, people are predisposed to believe “Great Wagon Road” must have been an official name. But in the 1700s almost no roads in the countryside had official names. So, the Great Wagon Road was probably never a specific road. It is usually a metaphor for the mass migration of Scotch-Irish and German settlers from Pennsylvania to the Carolinas.

Note: Indian Old Fields

Beforehand, Indians used fire to maintain wide fields as habitat for buffalo, elk, and deer in Shenandoah Valley and Carolinas. Settlers assigned names like “Old Fields” and “Haw Fields.” Already free of trees, these fields were quickly converted to farmland. Each settler family selected a home site near a spring or creek.

Note: House Construction

A settler’s first house was typically a log cabin of hewn logs. Logs were cut from virgin oak timber and were often more than 12 inches wide and 6 inches thick. They were joined in corners using a dovetailing method called *notch and chamfer* (Boyte 1992, 17).



Notch and Chamfer Dovetailing

That created a strong box structure that could support internal crossbeams and floors. Gaps between logs were filled with wadded mud called *chinking*. The front door faced south for maximum sunlight. The house had few if any windows. Today, many such structures remain standing after 200 years. The kitchen was separate from the house to minimize the fire hazard. Preparing meals was a daylong task (Randolph 1838).

One of the early Scotch-Irish settlements occurred on the Eno River. William Few, 1748–1828, later wrote:

[About 1740, my father] halted in order to explore the country, and being pleased with the soil and climate, purchased lands on the banks of the river Eno, in the county of Orange. Those lands were in their natural state. Not a tree had been cut. ... In that country, at that time, there were no schools, no churches or parsons, or doctors or lawyers; no stores, groceries or taverns. (Few 1820 in Dula 1979)

John Anderson, a 6th great-grandfather, and his wife Ann Moore migrated to North Carolina during 1738–1739 winter (J. H. Anderson 1898, 3). Their plan was to settle near either Yadkin or Catawba River. In progress, they learned of a smallpox outbreak at those locations. Consequently, they moved east and settled where the two forks of Eno River combine. Eno River was named for local Oenock Indians. Being one of the first settlers in that area, John Anderson became a prominent resident. Eno Presbyterian Church was organized in his home (Ellis, Ellis and Hughes 1955).

About 1748, Alexander Mebane I, an Anderson-related 6th great-grandfather, moved his family from Pennsylvania to North Carolina. His brother William Mebane II migrated his family further west to Buffalo Creek in present-day Guilford County (Mebane 1999, 80). Additional information about Mebane and Anderson families is in (Holmes n.d.) and (Mebane 1999).

Note: County government, Sheriff

Local governments were modeled on English county government. Freemen voted for justices of the peace among candidates selected by the colonial Assembly, or legislature. These justices of the peace selected one of themselves as sheriff, subject to the Assembly's approval. The sheriff was the county's chief executive and had wide authority. His principal responsibility was to enforce justice of the peace rulings as warrant and summons officer with power to appoint armed deputies. He was also jailer, tax collector, elections supervisor, and militia leader. This collusion between Assemblymen and local officials led to oligarchy. Two-thirds of Assemblymen were also justices of the peace. The corrupting system was called "courthouse ring." (B. P. Robinson 1963, 55).

On 31 March 1752, Orange County was established. It was named for William of Orange, the liberator of Ulster in 1689. The new country extended to the Virginia border.

In 1751, Alexander Mebane I was an Anson County justice of the peace. In 1752, he was appointed Orange County's first sheriff.

Note: Roadside Inns called “Ordinaries”

County government licensed roadhouse inns, each called an “ordinary” since it was regulated by ordinance. Fixed prices for lodging, dinners, liquor, horse stabling, and pasturage protected new immigrants from price gouging. But prices were high enough to make ownership very profitable. Guests, although strangers, might share the same room and bed (Thorp 1996). Many ordinaries were licensed and operated by single women or widows (K. Moore 2016).

In 1757, Ann Moore, widow of John Anderson and a 6th great-grandmother, renewed her license to operate an ordinary in Corbintown, later Hillsborough. See page 34.

In 1752, Moravian Bishop August Gottlieb Spangenberg explored the Piedmont for a suitable community site. Because this trip was commissioned, he wrote a detailed log. In 1753, Moravians purchased and settled on 100,000 acres that they called Wachovia, the Latin word for the Wachau Valley, the homeland of their leader Count Nicholas Ludwig von Zinzendorf (1700–1760) in present-day Austria. The first village was Bethabara [pronounced Beth-thab-bar-ra]. Soon afterwards, Salem was settled along a major tributary of Yadkin River. Moravians stressed community and cooperation. Their good deeds were highly respected by other immigrants.

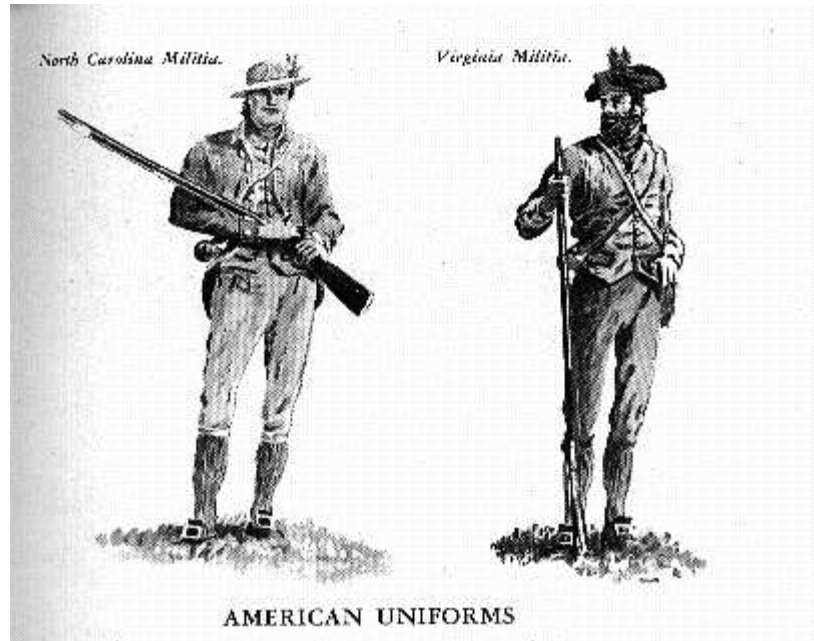
While in route in 1752, Bishop Gottlieb Spangenberg, stopped at Alexander Mebane I's Hawfields roadhouse inn, then called an “ordinary.” His expenses were 10 shillings and 6 pence (Troxler and Vincent 1999, 45).

In 1918, Mary Louise McGuire was a teacher at Salem School. She described how Salem church bells rung on Armistice Day, 11 November 1918, which ended World War I.

Note: Militia

The militia was a local defense system based on an English feudal tradition that began with the 1181 *Assize of Arms*. At the time of the American Revolution, state assemblies ordered the creation of militia regiments, each typically in county. A leading local citizen, typically with military experience, was given a colonel's commission. Thus, a militia regiment with its colonel was a legally-sanctioned institution. The colonel was accountable to the state. It typically persisted for many years while its officers and soldiers rotated in and out of tours of service. The militia required service of every able-bodied male age 16–60. Each man kept a musket, balls, and gunpowder. The local militia unit drilled a few times each year. During times of alarm, some militiamen drilled frequently and maintained a heightened state of readiness. They were called *Minutemen*. Typically, militiamen elected their officers, whose names were submitted to the Assembly and finally the Governor for commissions. Militia rank did not necessarily imply special military training or experience. A civic leader who could assemble militia soldiers or had special business skills was assigned rank. Militia leaders studied published British Army drill manuals. Reference (Wilbur 1993) illustrates life of a typical militiaman. He did not wear a uniform, but his own leather hunting coat over cotton or wool clothing that included a loose-fitting shirt, knee britches, leggings, and round hat with brim pinned on one side so as not to interfere with a shoulder-carried musket or rifle. In addition, he carried a cartridge box, leather or wood canteen, blanket, and haversack. The standard military weapon was the 9.5-pound *Brown Bess* musket. That nickname arose in the early 1700s when it replaced an older musket with stock painted black. Musket use created the expressions “lock, stock, and barrel,” “half-cocked,” and “flash in the pan.” However, many militia armories had fewer muskets than militiamen. So, a militiaman might use his hunting rifle. The American-made Deckard rifle was the best at that time. Its nickname was Kentucky long rifle. While in the field, militiamen cooked their own meals in small groups. They ate two meals a day,

breakfast and dinner, unless marching when they pre-cooked food for several days. They typically ate corn meal, beans, and chicken, beef, or pork cooked on a skewer.



From Guilford Courthouse National Military Park Web Page

Note: Musket ball archeology

Archeologists can estimate the original diameter of a fired musket ball using the Sivilich Formula.

$$\text{Diameter in inches} = 0.2228 \times (\text{weight in grams})^{1/3}$$

It is named after Dan Sivilich, an archaeologist who worked at Monmouth battlefield in 1996.

A lead shot's original diameter indicates what caliber barrel it was molded to fit, for example, 0.67 to 0.69 inches was a standard lead ball for a British Brown Bess 0.75 inch musket. (Allison 2009–2016)

Although Catawba and other Piedmont Indian tribes were allied with colonists, their condition deteriorated, especially by smallpox. Epidemics in 1738 and 1759 reduced Catawba Indian population to less than 1000 with only 200 fighting braves. In 1759, to avoid smallpox at the Sugar Creek village, Catawba King Hagler created a new village where Twelve-Mile Creek joins the Catawba River (Merrell 1989a, 195). In 1760, he skillfully negotiated with both North and South Carolina colonial governments to legally establish the Catawba Indian Nation boundary on a 15-mile square. Catawbas became landlords collecting rents from settlers. A fort was built at present-day Fort Mill, South Carolina, for protection against other Indians and to free braves for soldier duty. By agreement, Catawba Nation was to remain entirely in South Carolina. A corner of this square is evident today in a right-angle notch along the state boundary immediately west of Pineville, North Carolina. After King Hagler was killed by Shawnee raiders in 1763, no effective Catawba leadership emerged. In 1840, all but 600 acres of the Nation were sold to the South Carolina government (Merrell 1989a, 249).

During the early 1900s, the father of Doctor Robert Ashe Moore, uncle of Chris Evans Folk Sr., established Ashe Brick Company near this Twelve-Mile Creek site.

The *Dunkards* religious sect arose in Germany in 1708. They practiced triple total immersion baptism to imitate original Christians. They were pacifists to the extent that they rejected courts to settle disputes. Later, they merged with Moravians.

In the 1730s, Englishman John Wesley, influenced by Moravian beliefs and policies, appealed to middle-class workers alienated by Anglican Church formalities. During 1736–1737, he was rector of Christ Church, an Anglican church, in Savannah, Georgia. There he instituted Sunday school and published the first hymnal in the colonies.



Christ Church, Savannah, Georgia
John Wesley rector 1736–1737.

In 1761, Wesley published *Select Hymns with Tunes Annexed* in which he provided *Directions for Singing*.

Directions for Singing

That this part of Divine Worship may be the more acceptable to God, as well as the more profitable to yourself and others, be careful to observe the following directions.

- I. Learn these tunes before you learn any others; afterwards learn as many as you please.
- II. Sing them exactly as they are printed here, without altering or mending them at all; and if you have learned to sing them otherwise, unlearn it as soon as you can.
- III. Sing all. See that you join with the congregation as frequently as you can. Let not a slight degree of weakness or weariness hinder you. If it is a cross to you, take it up, and you will find it a blessing.
- IV. Sing lustily and with a good courage. Beware of singing as if you were half dead, or half asleep; but lift up your voice with strength. Be no more afraid of your voice now, nor more ashamed of its being heard, than when you sung the songs of Satan.
- V. Sing modestly. Do not bawl, so as to be heard above or distinct from the rest of the congregation, that you may not destroy the harmony; but strive to unite your voices together, so as to make one clear melodious sound.
- VI. Sing in time. Whatever time is sung be sure to keep with it. Do not run before nor stay behind it; but attend close to the leading voices, and move therewith as exactly as you can; and take care not to sing too slow. This drawling way naturally steals on all who are lazy; and it is high time to drive it out from us, and sing all our tunes just as quick as we did at first.
- VII. Above all sing spiritually. Have an eye to God in every word you sing. Aim at pleasing him more than yourself, or any other creature. In order to do this attend

strictly to the sense of what you sing, and see that your heart is not carried away with the sound, but offered to God continually; so shall your singing be such as the Lord will approve here, and reward you when he cometh in the clouds of heaven. (Wesley 1761, appendage)

In the 1790s, Wesley's followers formed the *Methodist Church*. Using similar methods, Jonathan Edwards formed the *Congregationalist Church* in America.

Similarly, during mid-1700s, the Presbyterian *New Side* movement appealed to rural less-educated churchgoers. The newly published *Watts Hymnal* contained hymns not based on psalms. This disturbed traditional Presbyterians. For example, about 1800, in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, traditionalists departed Providence Presbyterian Church and formed Sardis Presbyterian Church (Foote 1846, 249). Even today, Presbyterian hymnbooks reflect this history. A large section contains psalm-based hymns that predate 1800.

In 1754, Arthur Dobbs, an Ulster politician, was appointed North Carolina colonial governor. He encouraged settlement by more Ulstermen. His residence and seat of government was Brunswick Town near the Cape Fear River mouth.



Original Saint Philip's Anglican Church
Governor Arthur Dobbs's burial site.
Brunswick Town, North Carolina

In 1754, where the Indian Trading Path crosses the Eno River, William Churton surveyed 400 acres for a new town in the newly established Orange County. It became the capital of the backcountry. It was called Corbintown, and later Hillsborough. (Dula 1979, 15)

On 1 October 1754, in court held at Eno, "Grand Jury Impannelled and sworn to wit – John Anderson, ... John Tinnen, Cairns Tinnen ..." (Orange County Inferior Court 1756–1758, 21:41)

The 1755 Orange County Tax List shows John Anderson household with 4 White males and no slaves. Presumably, these 4 were father John and three sons age 21 or older: William, James, and David. (Orange County 1755)

On 10 June 1755, in court held at house of James Watson, "John Anderson was appointed Constable in the room of Thomas Wilkinson" (Orange County Inferior Court 1756–1758, 30:60)

During 1755–1756, Presbyterian minister Hugh McAden toured much of settled North Carolina and South Carolina. He wrote a detailed journal.

On Friday 8 August 1755, Hugh McAden stopped at John Anderson's home. On Sunday 10 August, he preached "to a set of pretty regular Presbyterians," who appeared to him to be in a cold state of religious feeling. "In the evening returned to Mr. Anderson's; here I tarried till Tuesday, the 12th of August; preached again to the same company." On Wednesday 20 August 1755, after a side trip, Hugh McAden returned to John Anderson's home. On Friday 22 August, he rode "to the Hawfield's, where I preached the fourth Sabbath in August, to a considerable large congregation, chiefly Presbyterians, who seemed highly pleased and very desirous to hear the word. Preached again on Tuesday; the people came out to hear quite

beyond expectation. Wednesday, set out upon my journey, and came to the Buffalo Settlement, about thirty-five miles; lodged at William Mebane II's till Sabbath day; then rode to Adam Michel's where I preached;" (McAden 1755 in Foote 1846, 166). McAden's diary allegedly indicates that he baptized the children of Alexander Mebane I on 19 August 1755 at Hawfields.

On Sunday 12 October 1755, Hugh McAden rode seven miles to Justice [William] Alexander's, "when I preached in the afternoon, a considerable solemnity appeared." On Friday 17 October, he preached at David Caldwell's, about five or six miles, to a small congregation, and went on to William Alexander's, and tarried till Sunday 19 October, and then rode about twelve miles to James Alexander's, on Sugar Creek, and preached—"where there are some pretty serious, judicious people—may the Lord grant his blessing!" (McAden 1755 in Foote 1846, 168). Then McAden traveled to Broad River in South Carolina. On Sunday 30 November, during his return, he stopped at James Alexander's and preached. He then proceeded twelve miles to Justice [William] Alexander's on Rocky River (McAden 1755 in Foote 1846, 170).

On Thursday 22 April 1756, Hugh McAden returned to Eno River and home of John Anderson, "who seemed very joyful to see me returned so far back again." McAden tarried till Sunday and preached. He preached Tuesday 27 April at Hawfields and Wednesday 28 April at Eno (McAden 1756 in Foote 1846, 174). John Anderson died later that year (Orange County Inferior Court 1756–1758, Fol47p94). In September 1757 and again on 12 December 1758, Orange County renewed his wife, Ann Moore's, license to operate a roadside inn, called an ordinary (Orange County Inferior Court 1756–1758, Fol61p122, Fol16p169).

Apparently, John Anderson died before December 1756 when in court held at Courthouse in Corbintown, "Ann Anderson and [son] John Anderson, Administrators of John Anderson, dec., filed an Inventory of the estate." (Orange County Inferior Court 1756–1758, 47:94)

In September 1757, in Orange County Court, "Mrs. Ann Anderson's license to run an Ordinary in Corbintown renewed. Her securities: Thomas Lapsley [Lapsley] and James Taylor." (Orange County Inferior Court 1756–1758, 61:122) Thomas Lapsley was her son-in-law. Did Ann Moore leave her farm to open an "ordinary" business in Corbintown after her husband died and when she was in her 50s? She must have been land-rich. Her land was probably not at risk during the French-Indian War. Was hard-currency "ordinary" business too good to pass up? It would be complicated to set up an "ordinary" inn business in town since it required excess rooms, beds, access to food produce, livestock, stables and forage for travelling horses, etc. She would have to pay for all that in town. On the other hand, if she already had an established farm and a good location along a principal highway, she could have easily set up an ordinary business at no extra cost. On 12 December 1758, at the Courthouse in Corbintown, "Ann Anderson's Ordinary license renewed. Securities: Alex. Mebane, Wm. Reed, Esq.'s." (Orange County Inferior Court 1756–1758, 16:169) This was the last court entry for Ann Moore. She may have died in 1759 or soon afterwards. Her unmarked grave was said to be the first grave in Old Eno Presbyterian Church Cemetery (Engstrom 1970, 3).

Since 1663, Carolina colonial governments tolerated any religion since the primary objected was to encourage immigration. The earliest Scotch-Irish settlements in the Piedmont were too isolated to be influenced by the coastal established Anglican Church. Presbyterians built churches and actively sought trained preachers. As the Piedmont became better organized, the established church attempted to assert its authority. Marriages had to occur in an established church. In reaction, many Presbyterians signed *anti-vestry petitions* arguing that rules were too burdensome and illegitimatized existing churches.

In 1756, Alexander Mebane I, William Anderson, and other Presbyterians signed Orange County Anti-Vestry Petition. This petition's text appears in (Mebane 1999, 88–90).

In September 1759, an Orange County Court fined John Tinnin, an Anderson-related 6th great-granduncle, 5 shillings for "contempt of Authority." (Shields 1990, 56)

1745–1770, Highlander Persecutions

In 1690, King James II lost any chance of regaining the English crown. The main issue was that he was Roman Catholic. His claim was recognized by the Vatican, powerful France, and many British conservatives, including Highland Scots. His Protestant daughters Mary and Anne ruled after him. Although Queen Anne had seventeen children, none survived her. In 1701, the Whig dominated Parliament, fearing that James II's son James Edward could become king, passed the *Act of Settlement* that made the next monarch German Protestant Electress Sophia of Hanover, a granddaughter of James I. Anne outlived Sophia by 6 weeks. So, on 1 August 1714, the next monarch was Sophia's son, George. He could not speak English, and relied on translators for his entire reign. Since that time to the present, English monarchs have been from the so-called House of Hanover. During World War I, 1914–1918, the name was changed to House of Windsor to avoid German connotations.

In 1745, Highland Scots opposed to the 1707 union rallied behind Bonnie Prince Charles, grandson of James II, who would otherwise be King of Scotland. Within weeks, Charles gathered up to 8000 soldiers, completely surprising the English. His force was enough to march towards London, but hopelessly inadequate to effect concessions. The English defeated this force on 16 April 1746 at Battle of Culloden [pronounced Cō-lă-den]. For a few months afterwards, Charles was the target of a large manhunt. A £30,000 reward was offered (Foote 1846, 128). Flora Macdonald, age 24, helped him escape between islands in a rowboat while he was disguised as Flora's maidservant. Ultimately, Charles got to safety in France. Flora was arrested, taken to London, and questioned about her involvement. She told the Prince of Wales that she would do the same for him had she found him in like distress. In the public's perception, she was innocent and the only redeeming personality in the national tragedy. She cultivated that celebrity status.



Flora Macdonald
Painted by Allan Ramsay, 1749.

King George II pardoned many rebels on condition that they take an oath of allegiance and emigrate to colonial plantations. Among these were the first Highlanders to settle near Cross Creek, present-day Fayetteville, North Carolina (Foote 1846, 129).

After Culloden, firearms were confiscated. Highland culture was curtailed by the *Act of Proscription*. From 1747 until 1781, it was unlawful to wear a kilt or play a bagpipe. On 15 November 1746, James Reid, an unfortunate piper soldier, was executed after a judge accepted the argument that a bagpipe was a weapon. New laws and higher rents cleared Highlanders off their land. They were replaced with sheep, bitterly called “four-legged clansmen.” Affected families were devastated. On the other hand, clearances resulted in better land management. It ended the centuries-old practice of denuding forests, an environmental disaster that remains evident today.

After Culloden, the British Army formed its famous Highland Regiments partly to relieve unemployment. The 42nd Highland Regiment, also known as the Black Watch Regiment, attacked Fort Ticonderoga in 1758. It participated at Harlem Heights during the American Revolution in 1776. The 71st Highland Regiment, also known as Fraser Highlanders, was under Cornwallis's command during 1780–1781 (Brander 1971, 164).

1750–1770, Carolina Piedmont

In February 1764, Orange County Court ordered construction a new road by jurors including 5th great-granduncles James Anderson, David Anderson, Thomas Lapslie, and George Allen. That road may have been 15 miles long. These assignees did the work personally or hired crews.

Ordered that a road from Isaac Lowe's mill to Alexander Mebane's mill and from thence to Woody's Ferry on Haw River be opened ... by the following jurors ... James Anderson, David Anderson, Francis Wilkinson, Thomas Lapsey [Lapslie], James McGown, Thomas Cate, Sr., Thomas Cate, Jr., Robert Cate, Robert Tinnen, George Allen, and Cairns Tinnen, ... (Orange County Court 1777–1788, III:149)

Many Scotch-Irish and Germans settled in the Catawba River valley. Thomas Spratt Senior and his family were the first settlers in what later became Charlotte, North Carolina. His home was along present-day Randolph Road near Presbyterian Hospital. A family cemetery was created nearby. The human remains were disturbed when Mercy Hospital was built in 1912. In 2007, these remains were reburied at Steele Creek Presbyterian Church Cemetery. Thomas Spratt's daughter Susanna Spratt married local leader Thomas Polk. About 1755, his son Thomas Spratt Junior settled about 18 miles south close Catawba Indian villages and along the road to Catawba Nation Ford. In the part of Bladen, later Anson, County that became Rowan, Mecklenburg, Iredell, and Cabarrus Counties, Scotch-Irish Presbyterians organized the following 12 churches: Cathey's 1747, Rocky River about 1750, Third Creek 1751, Coddle Creek 1753, Sugar Creek 1755, Steele Creek 1760, Hopewell 1762, Poplar Tent 1764, Fourth Creek 1764, Centre 1765, Providence 1767, and Clear Creek 1770. Of these, 7 originated in Mecklenburg County (Blythe and Brockmann 1961, 195). Centre Church was organized in Mecklenburg County but moved to Rowan County, now Iredell County. Poplar Tent and Rocky River Churches are now in Cabarrus County. About 1777, Cathey's Presbyterian Church was renamed Thyatira Presbyterian Church. In 1780, Clear Creek Presbyterian Church was renamed Philadelphia Presbyterian Church. In 1924, Sugar Creek Presbyterian Church was renamed Sugaw Creek Presbyterian Church (McGeachy 1954). In 1764 or 1765, Reverend Alexander McWhorter visited this region to help organize the earliest of these Presbyterian congregations (Dussek 2011–2014).

About 1766, Jacob Plunk I, a 5th great-grandfather, with his two sons Jacob Plunk II and Peter Plunk, settled in Catawba River South Fork watershed along with many other German-speaking immigrants (Plunk, Jacob, pension application 1832) (Arney, Christian, pension application 1832–1833). The original Plunk home site may have been on Long Creek in present-day Gaston County. Jacob Plunk II and Peter Plunk moved to the Indian Creek area in 1787 and before the 1790 United States Census (Carpenter, correspondence 2006–2018). That was on present-day Old Lincolnton Crouse Road. There is no remaining evidence on the ground. Today, that site is in the yard of 4th cousin Gary Chapman's house.



Jacob Plunk II home place site

Plunk Family Cemetery is 0.3 miles away on a picturesque knoll overlooking Indian Creek. It is just north of highway NC150 bridge over Indian Creek near present-day Crouse, North Carolina. A 1930 stone monument commemorates Jacob Plunk II. Its bronze plate was lost and replaced in 2006. In 2007, the cemetery and surrounding property was purchased and donated to the Lincoln County Historic Properties Commission (W. L. Anderson 2011a). The original Old Crouse Road is discernable between the graveyard and creek.



Jacob Plunk II Marker, 4 feet high, Crouse, North Carolina

About 1770, Thomas Espey, a 5th great-grandfather, with his family, settled in Long Creek area of Tryon County, present-day Gaston County (Espey, Samuel, pension application 1832).

William Oates I and his wife Jane Sloan, 4th great-grandparents, belonged to the Presbyterian Church in Mercersburg, present-day Franklin, Cumberland County, Pennsylvania. Before 1776, they migrated to Tryon County, North Carolina. They settled west of Muddy Fork Creek in present-day Cleveland County. About 1777, Jane Sloan's brother John and other sisters with their families migrated. (Porter, Herndon and Herndon 1973, 14–15)

After 1750, new immigrants settled South Carolina Piedmont, especially near Waxhaws and Longs Canes, present-day Abbeville. By 1775, approximately 200,000 Scotch-Irish lived in Virginia or the Carolinas. There were an equal number of Germans. Together, these were approximately half the total populations.

Virginia and Carolina Settlement Approximate Timeline

Starting Year	Cluster Location	State	Group
1663	Pennsylvania	PA	Quakers, Scotch-Irish, German, Amish
1670	Edenton, Halifax, Brunswick	Carolina	English
1670	Charlestown	Carolina	English
1680	New Bern	Carolina	German-speaking Swiss
1714	Germanna	VA	German
1730	Shenandoah Valley	VA	Scotch-Irish, German, Mennonite
1735	Upper Pee Dee	SC	Welsh Baptist
1740	Eno River	NC	Scotch-Irish
1750	Hawfields	NC	Scotch-Irish
1750	New Garden, Stinking Quarter Creek	NC	Quaker
1750	Upper Cape Fear River	NC	Highland Scotch
1750	Alamance Creek	NC	German
1750	Waxhaws	NC, SC	Scotch-Irish
1753	Bethabara	NC	Moravian
1760	Mecklenburg	NC	Scotch-Irish
1760	South Fork Catawba River	NC	German
1760	Williamsburg County	SC	Scotch-Irish
1760	Purrysburgh, Savannah River	SC	German-speaking Swiss
1760	Saxe Gotha	SC	German
1760	Dutch Fork	SC	German
1760	Newberry	SC	German
1765	Long Canes	SC	Scotch-Irish
1770	South of Congaree-Santee River	SC	German
1780	Healing Springs	SC	Mennonite

Family ancestors were active in the following churches:

Eno Presbyterian Church began about 1740 in Orange County. Tradition indicates it was founded in John Anderson's home. In 1754, Thomas Thompson deeded land to John Anderson to erect the first church structure.

It was said that Mr. Thompson wanted to give the land for the church, but [John] Anderson had a knowledge of the law that there must be a consideration of money in the transfer of real estate, so he paid the money and the Deed was made out in his name. (J. H. Anderson 1898, 3)



Hawfields Presbyterian Church
Original-site marker and present-day site. Mebane, North Carolina.

Cross Roads Presbyterian began in 1783. Anderson, Roney, Aldridge families attended. Its cemetery is the burial site of the families of William Anderson, William James Anderson, James Anderson, and William Lee Anderson. These were 3rd great-grandfather through grandfather.



Cross Roads Presbyterian Church
James and Nannie Anderson stain-glass window
Alamance County, North Carolina

Sugar Creek Presbyterian began in 1755 in Anson County, later Mecklenburg County. Alexander family attended. At that site, the minister directed Sugar Creek Academy. Since the earliest years, its spelling and pronunciation has been like the ordinary word “sugar” (Foote 1846, 189). In 1924, the church’s official name was changed to Sugaw Creek Presbyterian Church. That spelling was thought to match the original Catawba Indian pronunciation of the nearby creek. (McGeachy 1954).



Sugaw Creek Presbyterian Church and Academy

Long Creek Presbyterian began in 1780 in Lincoln County, later Gaston County. Espey, Oates, and Plonk families attended. The cemetery contains graves of Samuel Espey, William Oates II, Joseph Calvin Plonk and their families (Long Creek Presbyterian Church 1980). Espey's signature appears on [James Hill Revolutionary War pension application](#) (Hill, James, pension application 1832).



Long Creek Presbyterian Church and Captain Samuel Espey grave marker
Gaston County, North Carolina

Bethel Presbyterian Church began in 1764 in Camden District, later New Acquisition District, and later York County, South Carolina. Moor and Patton families attended.



Bethel Presbyterian Church
York County, South Carolina

Saint Mark's Lutheran began in 1805 in Lincoln County, later Gaston County. Plonk and Rudisill families attended.



St. Mark's Lutheran Church
Gaston County, North Carolina

Beginning September 1766, itinerant Anglican clergyman Charles Woodmason served an area within about 40 miles of Camden. He was the first clergyman to preach in that area. Nonetheless, because he was Anglican, some Presbyterians insulted him and annoyed his attempts to hold services. He wrote a private journal. In a January 1767 entry, he described the Waxhaws as fine land, "But it is occupied by a Sett of the most lowest vilest Crew breathing—Scotch Irish Presbyterians from the North of Ireland" (Woodmason 1767, 14). In other journal entries, Woodmason described backcountry settlers in extremely derogatory terms: "the worst Vermin on Earth," "They delight in their present low, lazy, sluttish, heathenish, hellish Life," and "these People despise Knowledge ..." (Woodmason 1767, 50,52). He accused Presbyterians of many tricks: hiring bums to harass him, intoxicating churchgoers before his sermons, bringing 57 fighting dogs to church, stealing the church-door key, terminating his job using a paper note stuck in the pulpit, refusing to sell him food, defaming him by giving his stolen night robe to a prostitute, and without notice, scheduling his appearance at remote sites (Woodmason 1767, 30,45,49). In this private journal, Woodmason had a habit of exaggeration, since most characters he describes were either fine persons or the worst possible. His entertaining writing style was probably modeled on Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*. Most likely, Woodmason saw redeeming qualities in backcountry people since for two years he traveled nearly 6000 miles on horseback to preach, perform communion, marry, and baptize. He even purchased land near Hanging Rock, South Carolina, and planned to retire among these people.

In the 1770s, iron ore was discovered in a deposit that extended from present-day Kings Mountain to eastern Lincoln County. Surface mining extracted iron ore that was used to make tools, household goods, and munitions.



Ormand Iron Furnace, predates 1788
Gaston County, North Carolina

The Plonk-related Oates, Sloan, and Ramseur-related Forney families developed iron foundries.

1754–1763, French and Indian War

During the spring of 1754, Virginians begin to build a trading post near French Fort Duquesne [pronounced Dū-cane], present-day Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. In May 1754, 22-year old Captain George Washington's unit of Virginia militiamen attacked a French diplomatic party, killing a French officer. Immediately afterwards, the French sent out a retaliatory force. At a place called the Meadows, Washington had his men build a rude fort, called Fort Necessity. The Americans were outnumbered. A heavy rain disabled all muskets. After Washington signed a surrender agreement, he and his men were allowed to return to Virginia. This event precipitated the *French and Indian War*, or the *Seven Years' War* as it was called in Europe. Britain fought France and Spain. In 1755, Britain sent Major General Edward Braddock into western Pennsylvania to capture Fort Duquesne. Pioneers cut a road through the wilderness to move artillery, equipment, and a four-mile baggage train. Over 200 women cooks, laundresses, and nurses accompanied the army. But on 9 July, French soldiers and their Indian allies ambushed the British. Many British were killed. Washington led a successful withdrawal. When Braddock died a few days later, his body was hidden under the road his men built earlier.



Major General Edward Braddock buried in road, 13 July 1755.
Colonel George Washington reads from Book of Common Prayer.
Engraving. Artist unknown.

Captain Joseph Motley III, a Plonk-related 5th great-grandfather, was one of the Virginia soldiers under Washington's command at Braddock's defeat (Morehead in Hurt 1976, 98,218).

Braddock's defeat greatly emboldened Indian tribes aligned with France and spread terror among settlers on the frontier from New York to South Carolina. Delaware Indians in Pennsylvania and Shawnees in Ohio retaliated against settler encroachment. In Indian culture, a killed tribesman might necessitate a spiritual replacement, achieved by capturing an individual from the enemy and absorbing him or her into Indian life.

A Plonk-related 5th great-grandmother Nancy Ann Means was born in 1717 in Ireland. Her mother may have died in childbirth. In the summer of 1718, her father and five children left Londonderry and arrived in Boston, Massachusetts, on 14 October 1718. By 1720, the family moved to Bucks County, Pennsylvania. About 1734, she married William Sloan in Bucks County. Their children were: John Sloan, born about 1734; William Sloan, born about 1736; Robert Sloan, born 1738 in Franklin, Pennsylvania; and Jane [Jean] Sloan, born 7 October 1744. After William died in 1744, Nancy remarried John Wasson on 26 May 1744 in Bucks County. Their children were: John Wasson, born about 1745; Thomas Wasson, born 1745; Robert Means Wasson, born about 1746, James Wasson, born 1746, and Elizabeth Wasson, born 1747.

On 26 May 1756 in central Pennsylvania, Nancy Means' second husband John Wasson was killed and she was taken hostage. Descendant Walter Reed Sloan, 1888–1974, wrote the following:

The story of Ann Wasson is not one of youth and romance as has been portrayed of other Indian captives, but that of suffering and privation. The story of a noble pioneer woman who was willing to risk all that this country should be developed for her children. In the spring of 1756 we find Ann Wasson living with her second husband, John Wasson, and seven children—John, William, Robert and Jane Sloan, issue with her first husband, William Sloan, and Thomas, James and Elizabeth Wasson, issue with her second husband, John Wasson on a plantation of 450 acres in Peters Township, Cumberland (now Franklin) County. The times were exceedingly dangerous. Since Braddock's defeat the previous fall the Indians had been terrorizing this whole section. Many settlers had lost their lives and many been captured. Rev. John Steele's meeting house had been turned into a fort, which was a place of refuge for the women and children of the neighborhood, as well as a stronghold when attacked by the Indians. On April 5, 1756, Fort McCord, just a few miles away, had fallen with the loss of many lives. Seedtime was

at hand. John Wasson was busy tilling his land On May 26, 1756, Ann Wasson leaving her seven children at Fort Steele, had gone to their plantation, risking her life that she may be at the side of her husband. Without warning they were attacked by the Indians. John Wasson was horribly mangled and scalped. Ann Wasson was taken captive. (Sloan 1930)

Soon after the event, the *Pennsylvania Gazette* reported:

On Wednesday 26th May 1756, They [the Indians] came to the Plantation of John Wasson in Peters Township, Cumberland County, whom they killed and mangled in so horrible and cruel manner, that a regard to decency forbids describing it, and afterwards burned his house and carried off his wife. A party of Steele's and Peters' men went out after the enemy, but to no purpose. (Pennsylvania Gazette 1756, 108).

After the Indian raid, authorities were notified. John Potter, Sheriff of Cumberland County, learning from the older children of an uncle, a brother of Nancy Means, living in Newton, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, notified him as follows:

Mr. Robert Means-

These are to certify to you, your brother [in-law], John Wasson, last Wednesday was barbarously killed by the Indians and his wife carried captive, and as the time is so exceedingly dangerous in these parts and no relatives of the orphans here to take care of them, the children desires to go to you; and all things considered, it appears to us most advisable; and with them we send you an account of his estate as it is now situate, his crops in the ground, the young lads can tell you best. His debts appears to be near fifty pounds, and if you incline to administer, send word to come up with the young lads yourself, you being the highest relative. This 29th of May 1756.

John Potter
Will Maxwell
Hez Alexander
William Dunwoddy
Moses Thomson (Corbett 1997)

One of these officials was Hezekiah Alexander who later in 1767 migrated to Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, and became a justice of the peace. He was a McGuire-related 2nd cousin 7 generations removed.

Nancy Ann Means was held for 3.5 years, possibly near Assinisink, in the southern part of New York, by Ekoan, a Munsee chief because in the fall of 1759, Delaware Indian Chief Teedyuscung [pronounced Tē-dē-us-kung] demanded from Ekoan the release of thirteen pioneer prisoners, but only received two elderly white women and two boys. (A. F. Wallace 1949, 211–212)

On 27 November 1759 at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, Teedyuscung and his party was given the following pass by Timothy Horsfield:

These are to request all his Majesty's liege people to suffer the bearer, King Teedyuscung & Daniel, with seven other Indians, men & women having with them four white captives. \iz. two women & 2 boys to pass unmolested to Philada. their business being to deliver the said captives to his honour the Governor. Given under my hand & seal at Bethlehem on the 27th Nov., 1759. Timo. Horsfield. (Pennsylvania State Archives n.d., 3:692)

On 1 December 1759, Pennsylvania Lieutenant Governor James Hamilton received Nancy Means and the three other hostages. The official record was:

Names of 4 prisoners delivered by Teedyuscung to Gov. 1st Dec.1759

Memorandum of Ann Wasson She was taken ill the year 1756 in the beginning of May, at Caghnehseheeky in Cumberland County her husband John Wasson was then killed and scalped. She left seven children about two miles off, and she hopes they are alive some where. She is unable to support herself. She has two brothers some where in Chester or Bucks County. Memorandum of Maria Wagoner She was taken in the year 1757 in September and her husband was then killed and scalped his name was Conrad Wagoner they lived on Scarboro in Lancaster County, she has no children. Peter Newfang, a lad of about 11 or 12 years of age was taken in the year 1756 in May on the other side of the mountains, his mother was then killed. He can't talk a word of German. His father, Balhaser Newfang, is a private soldier in Battalion of Penna. Regiment. (original at Pennsylvania State Library, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania)

On 4 December, Hamilton officially thanked Teedyuscung:

Brother: The sight of our flesh and blood, after a tedious captivity gives us great pleasure, and I thank you for the return of the four prisoners, and expect you will continue to do your utmost that all be returned to us as soon as possible. (Gave a string of Wampum.)
Brother: You have acted a just part in bringing the six horses that have been stolen from the poor people on the borders by some of your unthinking young men.
(Pennsylvania State Archives n.d., 4:6)

On 7 December, Hamilton addressed the Pennsylvania Assembly:

There are two Indian messengers in town from the Ohio, who, with Teedyuscung, to whom they were recommended to be conducted here, have been assisting in a council of Indians held at Atsintsing, an Indian town, situate on the Cayuga Branch of the Sasquehannah. Teedyuscung, having delivered to me four prisoners, two elderly women and two boys, who are quite naked and destitute, I recommend it to you to enable me to make some provision for them, and likewise to send these messengers away well pleased with their reception, being of opinion with Teedyuscung, that it will be of great service, at this time, to engage the friendship of the nation to whom they belong.
(Pennsylvania State Archives n.d., 3:12)

On 8 December, Isaac Norris, Speaker of the House, arranged for provisions for the four prisoners and addressed Hamilton:

We have recommended the other parts of your Honor's message to the commissioners who will make a suitable provision for the prisoners now delivered, and also to take care that the messengers from the Ohio shall depart well satisfied with their reception. Amongst us signed by the Order of the House December 8, 1759 Isaac Norris Speaker.
(Votes of Assembly, Vol. 5, December 8, 1759)

Nancy Means may have remained a ward of the Province of Pennsylvania for about a year (Sloan 1930). Further research by descendent Paul Corbett has provided:

Just when and where Ann Wasson was united with her children is not known. On April 22, 1762, letters of administration were issued at Carlisle on the estate of John Wasson, with Ann Wasson and William Sloan, her eldest son, as administrators in the settlement of this estate it was brought out that John Wasson "had received all and singular the personal estate of William Sloan", Ann Wasson's first husband. As this sum was now due the Sloan children. William Allison, John Holiday, William Maxwell and James Potter asked to act as arbitrators. On May 26, 1762, they made settlement with the consent of all parties. This settlement was confirmed at an Orphan's Court held at Shippensburg on the 8th day of March 1763. (Corbett 1997)

In 1769, Nancy was a member of the congregation of Doctor John King's Presbyterian Church in Mercersburg, Pennsylvania (Sloan 1930). The last known evidence of her eventful life was on 30 October 1772 when her son Thomas entered a caveat on a survey of the Wasson family farm on behalf of himself, his mother, his brother and sister (Sloan 1930). Presumably, she was buried in Mercersburg, Pennsylvania. Other sources include: (Wasson n.d.) (Finafrock 1942, 25) (Pennsylvania State Archives n.d., 5:6:276, 289, 297, 299, 305, 315) (Albert n.d., 609). Also:

In November 1951, while digging a ditch along the South Penn railroad on his farm, one and a half miles northwest of Williamson, Pennsylvania, Elmer C. Myers uncovered the skeleton of a man, believed to be that of John Wasson. Dr. William E. B. Hall, Chambersburg Hospital pathologist, who examined the remains immediately after they were found, reported that the man was brutally attacked with both a tomahawk and war clubs. Marks on the skull and other indications pointed to a violent death; ribs were fractured by blows to the body, and one of the skeleton's arms was broken by twisting. The discovery of the skeleton prompted research into the life of John Wasson and it was learned that he had taken up residence on the farm in Peters Township during the period of the French and Indian Wars. The farm was located only a few miles from the Rev. John Steele's church at Church Hill, near the present village of Lemasters. (Corbett 1997)

We descend from Nancy Means' daughter Jane Sloan, 1744–1819, from her first marriage to William Sloan who died before 1744. About 1765, Jane married William Oates, 1734–1818, and about 1778, moved to Lincoln County, North Carolina.

Iroquois Indians aligned with Britain and attempted to strengthen their nation at the expense of other tribes. But except for the Mohawks, their support was weak after British defeats. In 1756, the French, under General Louis-Joseph de Montcalm, captured Fort Oswego. In August 1757, he captured Fort William Henry and renamed it Fort Ticonderoga. On 8 July 1758, Britain lost 2000 soldiers in a failed attack on Fort Ticonderoga. Three years of dreadful British defeats forced a new government. William Pitt who achieved effective control of Parliament began massive military spending. He partly justified policies as benefiting the world by spreading the ideals of British *Liberty* and constitutional government.



William Pitt, Member of Parliament
Painted by William Hoare, 1756.

In 1759, Britain war success exceeded all expectations. On 18 September, at Quebec City, Major General James Wolfe drove French soldiers from Canada. Many other victories occurred around the world. The year 1759 became known as “annus mirabilis,” year of miracles. Incidentally, Queen Elizabeth II used the opposite expression “annus horribilis,” when she described 1992.

In this hopeful time, George III, at age 23, became king when his grandfather George II died on 25 October 1760. Both he and his recently married Queen Charlotte were coronated on 22 September 1761. A golden gilded carriage built for his coronation is used today by the monarch to open Parliament and other state ceremonies.



King George III
Painted by Allan Ramsay, about 1761.

War reached South Carolina in January 1760, when Cherokees, urged by the French, attacked backcountry settlements, killing and mutilating adults and scalping children. South Carolina House of Commons set bounties on Cherokee scalps. The 10 November 1763 *Treaty of Augusta* pushed the Cherokee boundary westward.

At war's end in 1763, Spanish Florida became a British possession. In an attempt to resolve the Indian land problem, George III announced the *Proclamation of 1763*. It prohibited further settlement west of the Alleghenies.

Ironically, Britain's success undermined its influence among North Americans. The departure of French and Spanish soldiers made North Americans less dependent on Britain's military protection. Indians that aligned with France were marginalized. The younger generation who wanted to acquire large farms resented the restrictive Proclamation of 1763. Military experiences of young Americans, like George Washington, provided a cadre of trained officers. The war's heavy debt forced Britain to search for ways to raise revenue by taxing colonists.

Major Robert Rogers, 1731–1795, of Scotch-Irish descent, from Massachusetts, distinguished himself during this war as the commander of *Rogers' Rangers*. In 1759, he wrote the following *Rules of Ranging*:

1. All Rangers are to be subject to the rules and articles of war; to appear at roll-call every evening, on their own parade, equipped, each with a Firelock, sixty rounds of powder and ball, and a hatchet, at which time an officer from each company is to inspect the same, to see they are in order, so as to be ready on any emergency to march at a minute's warning; and before they are dismissed, the necessary guards are to be draughted, and scouts for the next day appointed.
2. Whenever you are ordered out to the enemies forts or frontiers for discoveries, if your number be small, march in a single file, keeping at such a distance from each other as to prevent one shot from killing two men, sending one man, or more, forward, and the like on each side, at the distance of twenty yards from the main body, if the ground you march over will admit of it, to give the signal to the officer of the approach of an enemy, and of their number, &c.
3. If you march over marshes or soft ground, change your position, and march abreast of each other to prevent the enemy from tracking you (as they would do if you marched in a single file) till you get over such ground, and then resume your former order, and march till it is quite dark before you encamp, which do, if possible, on a piece of ground which that may afford your sentries the advantage of seeing or hearing the enemy some considerable distance, keeping one half of your whole party awake alternately through the night.
4. Sometime before you come to the place you would reconnoiter, make a stand, and send one or two men in whom you can confide, to look out the best ground for making your observations.
5. If you have the good fortune to take any prisoners, keep them separate, till they are examined, and in your return take a different route from that in which you went out, that you may the better discover any party in your rear, and have an opportunity, if their strength be superior to yours, to alter your course, or disperse, as circumstances may require.
6. If you march in a large body of three or four hundred, with a design to attack the enemy, divide your party into three columns, each headed by a proper officer, and let those columns march in single files, the columns to the right and left keeping at twenty yards distance or more from that of the center, if the ground will admit, and let proper guards be kept in the front and rear, and suitable flanking parties at a due distance as before directed, with orders to halt on all eminences, to take a view of the surrounding ground, to prevent your being ambuscaded, and to notify the approach or retreat of the enemy, that proper dispositions may be made for attacking, defending, &c. And if the enemy approach in your front on level ground, form a front of your three columns or main body with the advanced guard, keeping out your flanking parties, as if you were marching under the command of trusty officers, to prevent the enemy from pressing hard on either of your wings, or surrounding you, which is the usual method of the savages, if their number will admit of it, and be careful likewise to support and strengthen your rear-guard.
7. If you are obliged to receive the enemy's fire, fall, or squat down, till it is over; then rise and discharge at them. If their main body is equal to yours, extend yourselves occasionally; but if superior, be careful to support and strengthen your flanking parties, to make them equal to theirs, that if possible you may repulse them to their main body, in which case push upon them with the greatest resolution with equal force in each flank and in the center, observing to keep at a

due distance from each other, and advance from tree to tree, with one half of the party before the other ten or twelve yards. If the enemy push upon you, let your front fire and fall down, and then let your rear advance through them and do the like, by which time those who before were in front will be ready to discharge again, and repeat the same alternately, as occasion shall require; by this means you will keep up such a constant fire, that the enemy will not be able easily to break your order, or gain your ground.

8. If you oblige the enemy to retreat, be careful, in your pursuit of them, to keep out your flanking parties, and prevent them from gaining eminences, or rising grounds, in which case they would perhaps be able to rally and repulse you in their turn.
9. If you are obliged to retreat, let the front of your whole party fire and fall back, till the rear hath done the same, making for the best ground you can; by this means you will oblige the enemy to pursue you, if they do it at all, in the face of a constant fire.
10. If the enemy is so superior that you are in danger of being surrounded by them, let the whole body disperse, and every one take a different road to the place of rendezvous appointed for that evening, which must every morning be altered and fixed for the evening ensuing, in order to bring the whole party, or as many of them as possible, together, after any separation that may happen in the day; but if you should happen to be actually surrounded, form yourselves into a square, or if in the woods, a circle is best, and, if possible, make a stand till the darkness of the night favors your escape.
11. If your rear is attacked, the main body and flankers must face about to the right or left, as occasion shall require, and form themselves to oppose the enemy, as before directed; and the same method must be observed, if attacked in either of your flanks, by which means you will always make a rear of one of your flank-guards.
12. If you determine to rally after a retreat, in order to make a fresh stand against the enemy, by all means endeavor to do it on the most rising ground you come at, which will give you greatly the advantage in point of situation, and enable you to repulse superior numbers.
13. In general, when pushed upon by the enemy, reserve your fire till they approach very near, which will then put them into the greatest surprise and consternation, and give you an opportunity of rushing upon them with your hatchets and cutlasses to the better advantage.
14. When you encamp at night, fix your sentries in such a manner as not to be relieved from the main body till morning, profound secrecy and silence being often of the last importance in these cases. Each sentry therefore should consist of six men, two of whom must be constantly alert, and when relieved by their fellows, it should be done without noise; and in case those on duty see or hear anything, which alarms them, they are not to speak, but one of them is silently to retreat, and acquaint the commanding officer thereof, that proper dispositions may be made; and all occasional sentries should be fixed in like manner.
15. At the first dawn of day, awake your whole detachment; that being the time when the savages choose to fall upon their enemies, you should by all means be in readiness to receive them.

16. If the enemy should be discovered by your detachments in the morning, and their numbers are superior to yours, and a victory doubtful, you should not attack them till the evening, as then they will not know your numbers, and if you are repulsed, your retreat will be favored by the darkness of the night.
17. Before you leave your encampment, send out small parties to scout round it, to see if there be any appearance or track of an enemy that might have been near you during the night.
18. When you stop for refreshment, choose some spring or rivulet if you can, and dispose your party so as not to be surprised, posting proper guards and sentries at a due distance, and let a small party waylay the path you came in, lest the enemy should be pursuing.
19. If, in your return, you have to cross rivers, avoid the usual fords as much as possible, lest the enemy should have discovered, and be there expecting you.
20. If you have to pass by lakes, keep at some distance from the edge of the water, lest, in case of an ambuscade or an attack from the enemy, when in that situation, your retreat should be cut off.
21. If the enemy pursue your rear, take a circle till you come to your own tracks, and there form an ambush to receive them, and give them the first fire.
22. When you return from a scout, and come near our forts, avoid the usual roads, and avenues thereto, lest the enemy should have headed you, and lay in ambush to receive you, when almost exhausted with fatigues.
23. When you pursue any party that has been near our forts or encampments, follow not directly in their tracks, lest they should be discovered by their rear guards, who, at such a time, would be most alert; but endeavor, by a different route, to head and meet them in some narrow pass, or lay in ambush to receive them when and where they least expect it.
24. If you are to embark in canoes, battoes, or otherwise, by water, choose the evening for the time of your embarkation, as you will then have the whole night before you, to pass undiscovered by any parties of the enemy, on hills, or other places, which command a prospect of the lake or river you are upon.
25. In paddling or rowing, give orders that the boat or canoe next the sternmost, wait for her, and the third for the second, and the fourth for the third, and so on, to prevent separation, and that you may be ready to assist each other on any emergency.
26. Appoint one man in each boat to look out for fires, on the adjacent shores, from the numbers and size of which you may form some judgment of the number that kindled them, and whether you are able to attack them or not.
27. If you find the enemy encamped near the banks of a river or lake, which you imagine they will attempt to cross for their security upon being attacked, leave a detachment of your party on the opposite shore to receive them, while, with the remainder, you surprise them, having them between you and the lake or river.
28. If you cannot satisfy yourself as to the enemy's number and strength, from their fire, &c. conceal your boats at some distance, and ascertain their number by a reconnoitering party, when they embark, or march, in the morning, marking the course they steer, &c. when you may pursue, ambush, and attack them, or let

them pass, as prudence shall direct you. In general, however, that you may not be discovered by the enemy upon the lakes and rivers at a great distance, it is safest to lay by, with your boats and party concealed all day, without noise or shew; and to pursue your intended route by night; and whether you go by land or water, give out parole and countersigns, in order to know one another in the dark, and likewise appoint a station every man to repair to, in case of any accident that may separate you.

The French and Indian War affected most lives in North America. The following table lists family relations with known military service or impact.

French and Indian War Impact

Name	Relation	Service and Notes
Joseph Motley III	5GGFather	Captain, George Washington's Virginia militia, Braddock's Defeat
Nancy Means	5GGMother	Abducted by Indians for 3 years.
Hezekiah Alexander	2 nd cousin 7x removed	Forced to abandon home in western Pennsylvania.

1763–1770, Mecklenburg and Tryon Counties

Large concentrations of Scotch-Irish settled in part of Anson Country that became Mecklenburg County. One community positioned itself on a hilltop ridge between two parallel creeks, later named Irwin Creek and Little Sugar Creek. The latter was named for Sugaree Indians, a subtribe of the Catawba Indians. The road to Anson County courthouse was called Lawyers Road. The North Carolina General Assembly authorized the new Mecklenburg County on 11 December 1762. It became effective 1 February 1763 (J. H. Williams 2010–2017). Thomas Polk promoted this community as the new county seat. A courthouse and jail was quickly constructed. The name Charlotte referred to Princess Charlotte Sophia, from Mecklenburg-Strelitz [pronounced Strāy-lits], a German principality. Recently, in 1761, she married King George III and became Queen. Their youth and recent coronation made them popular. The name Charlotte was thought to be “pretty and euphonious.” No doubt the names Mecklenburg and Charlotte were well received by the colonial government which approved the county and town establishment.



Queen Charlotte, Age 17

The History of Vandalia, volume 3, plate after page 52, Thomas Nugent, London, 1766–1773.



Queen Charlotte Walks in Her Garden
Sculpted by Graham Weathers, 1988.

Land disputes occurred throughout the backcountry. On 6 March 1765 in Mecklenburg County, a severe riot resulted in injuries. It became known as the *Sugar Creek War*. (L. Blackwelder 2005). The altercation may have occurred on the headwaters of McMullen Creek near present-day Sharon Memorial Park.

On 22 May 1767, North Carolina colonial governor William Tryon passed through Charlotte on the way to negotiate a boundary treaty with Cherokee chief *Jud's Friend* on the Tyger River in South Carolina (NCCR 1886, VII:991–1008) (C. G. Davidson 1951, 22).

Lieutenant Colonel Moses Alexander, a McGuire-related 5th great-granduncle, commanded the Mecklenburg County militia. He and some of his men accompanied Governor Tryon (Preyer 1987, 54). Also, Lieutenant William Lee Davidson from Rowan County militia participated. Later that year, on 10 December 1767, he married Mary Brevard, a McGuire-related 5th cousin 4 generations removed (C. G. Davidson 1951, 22). Thomas Polk may have participated (J. H. Williams 2010–2017).

On 7 November 1768, Charlotte was chartered after Lord George August Selwyn sold 360 acres to trustees Abraham Alexander, Thomas Polk, and John Frohook. This property was divided into half-acre lots for homes. In August 1769, when colonial governor William Tryon visited Charlotte, the main north-south road was named *Tryon Street*. It runs along the ridgeline separating the watersheds of Little Sugar Creek and Big Sugar Creek. It has always been Charlotte's principal axis. The perpendicular Indian trading path was named *Trade Street*. The original log courthouse was in the intersection of Tryon and Trade Streets. Its ground floor was a community market place. In 1774, a more permanent courthouse replaced it.

In January 1771, Thomas Polk, Matthew Locke, Griffith Rutherford, and others were appointed by the North Carolina General Assembly to define the boundary line between Mecklenburg and Rowan Counties so that those living in the area were certain of where they owed taxes. Later, these men became important leaders. (North Carolina General Assembly 1770–1771, 23:787–849). Polk was elected and served in the General Assembly in 1766–1768, 1769, 1770, 1771, 1773 and 1774 (J. H. Williams 2010–2017). Sessions were typically two months of each year.

A college in the backcountry was the inspiration of two educated and capable individuals: Hezekiah Alexander and Waightstill Avery. Colonial North Carolina Governor Josiah Martin supported an application for a charter from the government in London. In 1771, the North Carolina General Assembly chartered *Queens College* in Charlotte.

Whereas the proper education of Youth has always been considered as the most certain source of tranquility, happiness and improvement both of private families and of States and Empires ... the rising generation may repair, after having acquired at a Grammar School a competent knowledge of the Greek, Hebrew and Latin Languages ... to obtain ... a regular and finished education ... and whereas several Grammar schools have been long taught in the western parts of this Government ... Be it enacted ... founding establishing and endowing Queen's College in Charlotte Town ... (J. H. Williams 2010–2017)

The application stated that the college president must be Anglican, but the 3 or less teachers need not be. On 28 June 1773, the British government denied the charter, fearing the college would encourage Presbyterian dissent (NCCR 1886, IX:665). The decision was unworkable since no Anglican teachers were available. Nonetheless, as the only school available, it continued operation under the name *Queens Museum*. It was constructed south of the courthouse at the present-day southeast corner of Tryon and Third Street, now occupied by *Two Wells Fargo Center* building. It was the first college south of the *College of William & Mary* in Virginia. Doctor Ephraim Brevard taught science and medicine. In 1776, it was renamed *Liberty Hall Academy*. It had approximately 80 students. (Preyer 1987, 70–72).



Opposite sides of Liberty Hall Monument
Trustees listed include Isaac Alexander, Thomas Polk, Abraham Alexander, Ephraim Brevard, and John McKnitt Alexander.
Liberty Hall Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution monument, 1913.

Abraham Alexander and John McKnitt Alexander were McGuire-related 2nd cousins 7 generations removed. Ephraim Brevard was a McGuire-related 5th cousin 4 generations removed. Thomas Polk was 7th great-granduncle of Arabelle Boyer.

A statue that represents Hezekiah Alexander, whose actual appearance is unknown, stands on the grounds of the Charlotte Museum of History.



Backcountry Patriot
Representation of Hezekiah Alexander
Sculpted by David Dowdy, 2001.

On 10 April 1769, Tryon County was formed from Mecklenburg County, separated by the Catawba River. Life on the frontier was rough. In 1910, historian Alfred Nixon wrote:

At July Term, 1770, “Thomas Camel came into court and proved that the lower part of his ear was bit off in a fight with Steven Jones, and was not taken off by sentence of law; certified by whom it may concern.” At a later term, “James Kelly comes into open Court of his own free will and in the presence of said court did acknowledge that in a quarrel between him and a certain Leonard Sailor on the evening of the 2nd day of June, 1773, he did bite off the upper part of the left ear of him, the said Leonard Sailor, who prays that the same be recorded in the minutes of the said court.” This confession gave James Kelly such standing in the esteem of his Majesty’s Justices that at the same term it was “ordered by the Court that James Kelly serve as constable in the room [instead] of George Trout and that he swear in before Thomas Espy, Esq.” (Nixon 1910).

Justice Thomas Espey was a Plonk-related 5th great-grandfather.

1768–1771, Regulator Rebellion

During the 1760s, abusive Granville officials charged exorbitant fees for land transactions.



John Carteret, Lord Granville
Painted by William Hoare, circa 1750.

Powerful colonial Assemblymen colluded with them. In reaction, some backcountry settlers planned to “regulate” their own affairs. In 1768, they organized a *Regulator Association*. Its written agreement states, “An officer is a servant of the publick, and we are determined to have the officers of this county under a better and honester regulation than any have been for some time.” (Hatch 1969, 3). They attempted to work within the government by electing new Assembly representatives, but Governor Tryon frustrated corrective reform. Soon all officials associated with the Assembly, including appointed justices of the peace, were suspect. In addition, backcountry men resented a special tax to construct a lavish governor’s palace in New Bern.



Tryon Palace, New Bern, North Carolina
reconstructed and reopened in 1959

On 22 September 1770, rioters interrupted a Hillsborough trial and whipped several justices of the peace.

Orange County justice of the peace Michael Holt II, an Anderson-related 5th great-granduncle, was whipped (Troxler and Vincent 1999, 74).

This rebellion led to Battle of Alamance on 16 May 1771. Governor Tryon was present and read the Riot Act, a 1715 British law that formally notified insurgents to disperse within one hour or be fired on.



North Carolina Governor William Tryon demanded authority over Regulators
engraving, artist unknown

Tryon also demanded that Regulators turn over their leaders for arrest. After a full day of negotiations, Tryon personally killed one Regulator negotiator, Robert Thompson. A general engagement followed. Regulators were dispersed. What started as a legitimate grievance against venal officials ended with several deaths. On 9 June, Tryon overreacted by hanging six Regulator leaders in Hillsborough (Dula 1979, 16). Some Regulators escaped over the mountains to western North Carolina, present-day Tennessee. Resentment made the Piedmont a region of rebellion. Three months later, Tryon became New York Governor. The new North Carolina Governor, Josiah Martin, tried to reconcile differences. Five years later, many Regulators were leaders on both sides of the Revolutionary War. Of 883 known Regulators, 289 became Whigs, 34 became Tories, and 560 are unknown (B. P. Robinson 1963, 64).

John Tinnin, an Anderson-related 6th great-granduncle, supplied the Governor's forces with a wagon and 4 horses (Conolly 2008).

After the Regulator Rebellion, many Orange County citizens petitioned Governor Josiah Martin to pardon Regulator John Fruit. Presumably, the signers were anti-Regulators. They included: William Anderson, Alexander Mebane I, Alexander Mebane II, James Mebane, Andrew Mebane, Robert Mebane, David Mitchell, George Allen, William Armstrong, and Richard Bird. All of these were Anderson-related. (NCSR 1895, IX:93–94)

Adam Alexander, a McGuire-related 3rd cousin 6 generations removed, of Mecklenburg was a prominent anti-Regulator. He commanded a company under General Hugh Waddell in supporting Governor Tryon (J. B. Alexander 1902, 104).

William “Black Billy” Alexander, a McGuire 3rd cousin 6 generations removed, was a fanatic Regulator. He led 9 fellow Rocky River Presbyterian Church members who painted their faces black and then intercepted wagons of gunpowder heading for General Waddell at Salisbury. They destroyed this gunpowder in a tremendous explosion. Because of this exploit, he got the nickname “Black Billy.” (Hunter 1877, 115). Later, during the Revolutionary War, he became a prominent patriot military leader. He was Arabelle Boyer’s 1st cousin 8 generations removed.

The following table lists family relations with known Regulator Rebellion participation. Mebane information is from (Mebane 1999, 90–94).

Regulator Rebellion Participants

Name	Side	Relation	Activities and Notes
William Mebane	Reg	6GGUncle	
Alexander Mebane I	Anti	6GGFather	Colonel
William Mebane	Anti	5GGUncle	Broken gun at Alamance
Alexander Mebane II	Anti	5GGUncle	Captain. Public debt for wagons.
Michael Holt II	Anti	5GGUncle	Justice of peace. Whipped.
John Tinnin	Anti	6GGUncle	Provided wagon and 4 horses
Abraham Alexander	Anti	2 nd cousin 7x removed	
Moses Alexander	Anti	5GGUncle	Colonel. Commanded Mecklenburg County militia.
Hezekiah Alexander	Anti	2 nd cousin 7x removed	
Adam Alexander	Anti	3 rd cousin 6x removed	
William “Black Billy” Alexander	Reg	3 rd cousin 6x removed	Blew up gunpowder wagons.

Interestingly, Hermon Husband, one the Regulator leaders fled to western Pennsylvania where his name reappeared in 1794 as a rebel during the Whiskey Rebellion. He was tried for treason and sentenced to death, but pardoned by President Washington.

Concurrently, South Carolina had a backcountry Regulator movement, but it was independent and did not share leadership with Regulators in North Carolina. It was a law-and-order reaction to widespread lawlessness during 1767–1768. The South Carolina colonial government was ineffective in providing security. So, using vigilante methods, backcountry settlers took control and drove criminals away. Afterwards, these Regulators overreacted against all perceived “lower sorts.”

Neither North Carolina nor South Carolina Regulator movement was about representation or independence, the issues that induced the Revolutionary War, 1775–1783. Nonetheless, allegiance oaths and personal animosities did persist into the American Revolution.

About 1768, Richard Faucett, a Whitted-related 6th great-grandfather, migrated from Ulster, Ireland, to settle in Orange County, North Carolina. On 22 October 1768, he purchase land along Eno River that included the gristmill that became known as Faucett's Mill (W. S. Price 1988, 8:2). The seller Isaac Lowe, a Quaker, wanted to move away because of the Regulator conflict.

1770–1775, Highlander Immigration

During persecutions and clearances, Highlanders had good reason to emigrate to the relative freedom of America. They entered at Wilmington, North Carolina, and settled along the upper Cape Fear River, but downstream of the Piedmont. So ironically, Scotland's Lowlander descendants and Scotland's Highlanders exchanged relative elevations in the Carolinas. Both groups were Presbyterian.

During 1770–1775, Highlander emigrants included *tacksmen*, farm overseers whose status was immediately below clan chief. They reluctantly left Scotland because of economic necessity and intended to maintain strong ties with their homeland. Most families had long military traditions. Thus, they were naturally loyal to Britain. They certainly underestimated the dangerous place they entered. This group included Flora Macdonald and her husband Allan Macdonald. In 1774, they settled along Cheek Creek on present-day Loving Hill Road in Montgomery County, North Carolina. She and her husband were active loyalists during the American Revolution. For their stand, their property was confiscated and she went into hiding. Two sons died while serving in the British military. Eventually, she returned to Scotland, where she and her husband lived with relatives until their deaths in the early 1790s. She was a quixotic character and personification of the doomed Highlander (Celtic vestige) way of life. Her gravestone inscribes Doctor Samuel Johnson's epitaph, "Her name will be mentioned in history, and if courage and fidelity be virtues, mentioned with honor."

Flora Macdonald College in Red Springs, North Carolina, was named for her in 1914. In 1961, it was incorporated into Saint Andrews Presbyterian College in Laurinburg, North Carolina. Reference (MacLeod 1995) contains details.



Flora Macdonald College
Red Springs, North Carolina

Relatives Caroline Edith Roney, Caroline Mae Roney, and Ruth Plonk attended Flora Macdonald College.

When Highland culture prohibitions were lifted in 1781, even Lowland Scots reacted by accepting kilt and bagpipe as cultural icons. A dance called *Seann Triubhas* (Kicking Off Old Trousers) was created to celebrate this event.

Today, *Seann Triubhas* is used in Scottish dance competition. Daughters of Ray and Nancy Kimsey are champion Scottish dancers who compete across the United States and Canada. Megan Kimsey competes now. Her older sister Erin Kimsey competed in prior years.

1765–1766, Stamp Act

The Seven Years' War left Britain in deep debt. Consequently, it raised taxes. It felt that Americans should share these taxes since they benefited greatly from the war's victory.

On 22 March 1765, Parliament passed the Stamp Act, a fee tax on many legal documents. It was extremely unpopular in the colonies. After Secretary of State William Pitt managed its repeal on 18 March 1766, South Carolina erected a statue in Charlestown. Its inscription reads:

In Grateful Memory of His services to His country in General And to America in particular, The Commons House of Assembly of South Carolina unanimously voted This Statue of The Right Hon. William Pitt, Esq. Who gloriously exerted himself In Defending the Freedom of America, The True Sons of England, By Promoting a Repeal of the Stamp Act in the year 1766. Time Will sooner Destroy This mark of their esteem Than Erase from their minds their just sense Of His Patriotic Virtue.

The statue, less both arms, stands today. Charles Pratt, Lord Camden, also worked to repeal the Stamp Act. For him, the town Pine Tree Hill, South Carolina, was renamed Camden.

In 1766, Corbintown, North Carolina, changed its name to Hillsborough, in recognition of Wills Hills, Lord Hillsborough, the head of British Board of Trade and soon afterwards, Secretary of State for the Colonies.

1775–1783, American Revolution

Conditions that induced the American Revolution developed over many years. Beginning 7 September 1774, the First Continental Congress convened in Philadelphia to deliberate relations with Great Britain. Based on the recommendation of this Congress, Mecklenburg County formed a Committee of Public Safety. Thomas Polk and Hezekiah Alexander were elected members (Preyer 1987, 94). Reconciliation was the first objective. In England, William Pitt attempted reconciliation. On 20 January 1775, Pitt, while sick, pleaded in the House of Lords,

I contend not for indulgence, but justice to America. ... Let the sacredness of their property remain inviolate; let it be taxable only by their own consent, given in their provincial assemblies, else it will cease to be property. ... [American] resistance to your acts was necessary as it was just; and your vain declarations of the omnipotence of Parliament, and your imperious doctrines of the necessity of submission, will be found equally impotent to convince, or to enslave your fellow-subjects in America. ... Look at the papers transmitted [to] us from American; when you consider their decency, firmness, and wisdom, you cannot but respect their cause, and wish to make it your own. ... For solidity of reasoning ... and wisdom of conclusion ... no nation, or body of men, can stand in preference to the general Congress at Philadelphia. I trust it is obvious to your Lordships that all attempts to impose servitude upon such men, to establish despotism over such a mighty continental nation, must be in vain, must be fatal. We shall be forced ultimately to retract; let us retract when we can, not when we must.

This exhausting speech caused Pitt to collapse (Beloff 1960, 189–190,194).

On 23 March 1775, Delegate Patrick Henry anticipated an irreconcilable conflict with Britain. He spoke before the Second Virginia Convention which was meeting at St. Johns Church in Richmond:

MR. PRESIDENT: No man thinks more highly than I do of the patriotism, as well as abilities, of the very worthy gentlemen who have just addressed the House. But different men often see the same subject in different lights; and, therefore, I hope it will not be thought disrespectful to those gentlemen if, entertaining as I do, opinions of a character very opposite to theirs, I shall speak forth my sentiments freely, and without reserve. This is no time for ceremony. The question before the House is one of awful moment to this country. For my own part, I consider it as nothing less than a question of freedom or

slavery; and in proportion to the magnitude of the subject ought to be the freedom of the debate. It is only in this way that we can hope to arrive at truth, and fulfil the great responsibility which we hold to God and our country. Should I keep back my opinions at such a time, through fear of giving offence, I should consider myself as guilty of treason towards my country, and of an act of disloyalty toward the majesty of heaven, which I revere above all earthly kings.

Mr. President, it is natural to man to indulge in the illusions of hope. We are apt to shut our eyes against a painful truth, and listen to the song of that siren till she transforms us into beasts. Is this the part of wise men, engaged in a great and arduous struggle for liberty? Are we disposed to be of the number of those who, having eyes, see not, and, having ears, hear not, the things which so nearly concern their temporal salvation? For my part, whatever anguish of spirit it may cost, I am willing to know the whole truth; to know the worst, and to provide for it.

I have but one lamp by which my feet are guided; and that is the lamp of experience. I know of no way of judging of the future but by the past. And judging by the past, I wish to know what there has been in the conduct of the British ministry for the last ten years, to justify those hopes with which gentlemen have been pleased to solace themselves, and the House? Is it that insidious smile with which our petition has been lately received? Trust it not, sir; it will prove a snare to your feet. Suffer not yourselves to be betrayed with a kiss. Ask yourselves how this gracious reception of our petition comports with these war-like preparations which cover our waters and darken our land. Are fleets and armies necessary to a work of love and reconciliation? Have we shown ourselves so unwilling to be reconciled, that force must be called in to win back our love? Let us not deceive ourselves, sir. These are the implements of war and subjugation; the last arguments to which kings resort. I ask, gentlemen, sir, what means this martial array, if its purpose be not to force us to submission? Can gentlemen assign any other possible motive for it? Has Great Britain any enemy, in this quarter of the world, to call for all this accumulation of navies and armies? No, sir, she has none. They are meant for us; they can be meant for no other. They are sent over to bind and rivet upon us those chains which the British ministry have been so long forging. And what have we to oppose to them? Shall we try argument? Sir, we have been trying that for the last ten years. Have we anything new to offer upon the subject? Nothing. We have held the subject up in every light of which it is capable; but it has been all in vain. Shall we resort to entreaty and humble supplication? What terms shall we find which have not been already exhausted? Let us not, I beseech you, sir, deceive ourselves. Sir, we have done everything that could be done, to avert the storm which is now coming on. We have petitioned; we have remonstrated; we have supplicated; we have prostrated ourselves before the throne, and have implored its interposition to arrest the tyrannical hands of the ministry and Parliament. Our petitions have been slighted; our remonstrances have produced additional violence and insult; our supplications have been disregarded; and we have been spurned, with contempt, from the foot of the throne. In vain, after these things, may we indulge the fond hope of peace and reconciliation. There is no longer any room for hope. If we wish to be free² if we mean to preserve inviolate those inestimable privileges for which we have been so long contending² if we mean not basely to abandon the noble struggle in which we have been so long engaged, and which we have pledged ourselves never to abandon until the glorious object of our contest shall be obtained, we must fight! I repeat it, sir, we must fight! An appeal to arms and to the God of Hosts is all that is left us!

They tell us, sir, that we are weak; unable to cope with so formidable an adversary. But when shall we be stronger? Will it be the next week, or the next year? Will it be when we are totally disarmed, and when a British guard shall be stationed in every house? Shall we gather strength by irresolution and inaction? Shall we acquire the means of effectual resistance, by lying supinely on our backs, and hugging the delusive phantom of hope,

until our enemies shall have bound us hand and foot? Sir, we are not weak if we make a proper use of those means which the God of nature hath placed in our power. Three millions of people, armed in the holy cause of liberty, and in such a country as that which we possess, are invincible by any force which our enemy can send against us. Besides, sir, we shall not fight our battles alone. There is a just God who presides over the destinies of nations; and who will raise up friends to fight our battles for us. The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone; it is to the vigilant, the active, the brave. Besides, sir, we have no election. If we were base enough to desire it, it is now too late to retire from the contest. There is no retreat but in submission and slavery! Our chains are forged! Their clanking may be heard on the plains of Boston! The war is inevitable² and let it come! I repeat it, sir, let it come.

It is in vain, sir, to extenuate the matter. Gentlemen may cry, Peace, Peace² but there is no peace. The war is actually begun! The next gale that sweeps from the north will bring to our ears the clash of resounding arms! Our brethren are already in the field! Why stand we here idle? What is it that gentlemen wish? What would they have? Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death! (Wirt 1817, 119–123)

The 19 April 1775 British raid on Lexington and Concord, Massachusetts outraged most Americans. The Second Continental Congress convened on 10 May 1775. It directed each state to contribute regiments of soldiers for the war effort. The army outside Boston was called *The Army of Observation*.

It is convenient to separate American Revolutionary War into North and South because of the 1778 shift in Britain's strategy. At first, Britain attempted to suppress rebellion in the North by controlling the Hudson River and thereby divide the colonies. But after that strategy resulted in a stalemate, Britain tried to reestablish loyalist governments in the South.

Veteran Pension Applications

On 7 June 1832, United States Congress passed a law awarding pensions to all living Revolutionary War veterans. Each applying veteran testified in court about his service, including details about time, place, battles, officers, units, commissions, and discharges. Collaborating witnesses testified. Excerpts from these applications appear throughout this document.

1775, Scotch-Irish Sentiment, Mecklenburg Resolves

Of all groups, Scotch-Irish were the strongest supporters of the American Revolution. In some respects, the war was a continuation of anti-government tension between Scotland and England. Even nicknames *Whig* and *Tory* transferred. Originally, Whig meant a Presbyterian guerrilla fighter, and Tory meant an Irish bandit, or worse, king supporter. However, American Whigs should not be confused with the British Whig Party, which ironically was the party in power at the time of the American Revolution.

Many Scotch-Irish were former soldiers or at most two generations removed from conflicts in Ireland or Scotland. All landholders wanted legal protection for their property and also lower taxes. On 19–20 May 1775, a group of Mecklenburg's most prominent residents allegedly met in Charlotte as a spontaneous reaction to news of the 19 April British attack on Lexington and Concord, Massachusetts. They are attributed with composing and signing the *Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence* and reading it in public. However, a declaration requires publication, yet there was no known contemporaneous newspaper article. Nonetheless, without question, 11 days later, some of the same signers met as the Mecklenburg Committee of Public Safety to write the *Mecklenburg Resolves* which was published in the 13 June 1775 edition of Charlestown's *South Carolina Gazette and Country Journal* and the 23 June 1775 edition of Wilmington's *Cape Fear Mercury*.



Mecklenburg Resolves, righthand column,
South Carolina Gazette and Country Journal, 13 June 1775

The Mecklenburg Resolves established a temporary county government (Preyer 1987, 97–98). It argued creatively that since the King of England had characterized colonies in a state of rebellion, then local officials were required to establish a new government that could protect lives and property. This legalism provided sufficient cover for those who had taken an oath of allegiance to the King. Minutes from the 19–20 May 1775 meeting were destroyed in a house fire on 6 April 1800, leaving no hard evidence. Controversy began in 1819 when Thomas Jefferson called the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence “spurious.” The still-living signers defended its existence and were consistent on sequence of events. These signers were respected citizens. The controversy distracts from the incontrovertible fact that the 1775 Mecklenburg citizens were extraordinary courageous and serious in effecting independence from Great Britain. References (Salley 1907), (Blythe and Brockmann 1961) and (Syfert 2013) contain details.

Prominent among signers were several Mecklenburg County Alexanders, including Abraham Alexander, Ezra Alexander, Adam Alexander, Charles Alexander, and Hezekiah Alexander. Samuel Alexander, a 3rd great-grandfather, was related to these Alexanders, but exactly how is a mystery. One family tradition is that his father was Elias Alexander, son of Arthur Alexander who was a contemporary of the signers. Recently, the author found a will of an Arthur Alexander that is consistent with this family tradition. Arthur Alexander was the brother of both Abraham and Ezra Alexander and cousin of Hezekiah Alexander. The will indicates that Arthur Alexander died when his children, Elias, Mary, and Ann, were young. He entrusts their care to his widow and two brothers. Some family trees of Alexanders omit Arthur Alexander, but that may be because he died young. Abraham Alexander had a son Elias who lived out his life as a farmer in Mecklenburg County. His birth and death years are identical with Arthur’s son Elias in our family tradition. It is not clear if these two Elias’s were the same person or if dates were assigned by someone who confused two individuals. In July 2001, Mary Manning Boyer discovered the likely source of this tradition. The writing of Miss Hattie Alexander and Mr. McWhorter says Samuel and Lawson Alexander were sons of Elias Alexander but offers no evidence. Mary Manning Boyer is cited in (Preyer 1987, xii) and recently co-authored a Charlotte history book (Kratt and Boyer 2000).

Another independent source shows Samuel's father as James Alexander II from Spartanburg, South Carolina. He too was related to Mecklenburg Alexanders, but as second cousin. This information is from Alice Grubb who lives on the Roane County, Tennessee, farmland once owned by Samuel Alexander. What is known for certain is that Samuel married Elizabeth Hinton on 22 April 1808 in Logan County, Kentucky, and later moved to Roane County, Tennessee, where he lived near other Alexanders, including James Alexander II and his son Lawson Alexander. Samuel's father might be confirmed by investigating Spartanburg County or Logan County records. What evidence exists makes this Alexander connecting more plausible than the above. It is assumed throughout the remainder of this document. However, even this evidence is not conclusive. It is possible that our Alexanders ancestors were not related to the colorful Alexanders from Mecklenburg County.

Mary Louise McGuire in her 1979 "Twigs of the McGuires and Plonks," (L. M. Plonk 1979), was careful not to specify Samuel Alexander's father. She wrote that Samuel, his wife Elizabeth, and daughter Sarah moved from Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, to Roane County, Tennessee, but does not mention her source. The author is sure her knowledge was no more precise, because during the 1950s when her DAR chapter restored the Hezekiah Alexander house, she took the author there and told him there was "some family connection" with Hezekiah Alexander.

Major General William Alexander, one of George Washington top generals, was also related to these Alexanders (Foote 1846, 198) (Hunter 1877, 60). This William Alexander was also known as Lord Sterling, a pre-Revolution title he claimed but could not establish legally.

Note: Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence and Ten Commandments

In 2012, a Mecklenburg citizen expressed dismay that historian Lyman Draper concluded after investigating that the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence did not occur. Without taking sides, I attempted to explain that Draper was a professional historian who had to rely on primary sources. In response, the citizen asked me, "Do you believe in the Ten Commandments?" I said yes. "Have you seen the original Ten Commandments?"

Charlotte resident Captain James Jack carried the Mecklenburg Declaration and Resolves to the North Carolina delegates at the Continental Congress in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, for consideration by all 13 colonies. His passage was recorded in Salisbury and Salem (Preyer 1987, 101). In Philadelphia, the North Carolina delegates considered the resolutions "premature" and thus not entered into the proceedings (Polk 1819 in Hoyt 1914, II:200).



Spirit of Mecklenburg
Representation of Captain James Jack
Sculpted by Chas Fagan, 2010.

On 7 December 1819, James Jack made an affidavit in which he indicated that he was an eyewitness to the proceedings and that he took only one document to Philadelphia:

Having seen in the newspapers some pieces respecting the Declaration of Independence by the people of Mecklenburg County in the State of North Carolina, in May, 1775, and being solicited to state what I know of that transaction, I would observe that for some time previous to, and at the time those resolutions were agreed upon. I resided in the town of Charlotte, Mecklenburg County; was privy to a number of meetings of some of the most influential and leading characters of that county on the subject before the final adoption of the resolutions and at the time they were adopted. Among those who appeared to take the lead may be mentioned Hezekiah Alexander, who generally acted as chairman, John McKnitt Alexander, as secretary, Abraham Alexander, Adam Alexander, Major John Davidson. Major (after General) William Davidson, Colonel Thomas Polk, Ezekiel Polk. Dr. Ephraim Brevard, Samuel Martin, Duncan Ochletree, William Wilson, Robert Irwin.

When the resolutions were finally agreed on, they were publicly proclaimed from the court house door in the town of Charlotte, and received with every demonstration of joy by the inhabitants.

I was then solicited to be the bearer of the proceedings to Congress. I set out the following month, say June, and in passing through Salisbury, the General Court was sitting; at the request of the Court I handed a copy of the resolutions to Colonel Kennon, an attorney, and they were read aloud in open court. Major William Davidson and Mr. Avery, an attorney, called on me at my lodgings the evening after, and observed they had heard of but one person, a Mr. Beard, but approved of them. I then proceeded on to Philadelphia, and delivered the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence of May, 1775, to Richard Caswell and William Hooper, the delegates to Congress from the State of North Carolina.

I am now in the 88th year of my age. residing in the county of Elbert in the State of Georgia. I was in the Revolutionary War from the commencement to the close. (Jack 1819 in Ashe 1905, IV:223)

Soon after 23 June publication of the Mecklenburg Resolves in the *Cape Fear Mercury*, Richard Cogdell, chairman of the New Bern Committee of Safety, sent a copy of the newspaper to Richard Caswell, a delegate at the Continental Congress in Philadelphia, adding:

You will observe the Mecklenburg Resolves exceed all other committees or the congress itself. (Cogdell 1775 in Ashe 1908, 1:459)

In April 1775, colonial Governor Josiah Martin escaped New Bern and resided at Fort Johnston in present-day Southport, North Carolina. There on 25 June in a Governor's Council Meeting, Martin referred to the 31 May 1775 Mecklenburg Resolves:

the late most treasonable publication of a Committee in the County of Mecklenburg, explicitly renouncing obedience to His Majesty's Government and all lawfull authority whatsoever are such audacious and dangerous proceedings, and so directly tending to the dissolution of the Constitution of this Province, That I have thought it indispensably my Duty to advise with you on the measures proper to be taken for the maintenance of His Majesty's Government, and the Constitution of this Country, thus flagrantly insulted and violated. (Martin 1775 in NCCR 1886, X:38–39)

A few days later on 30 June, Martin explicitly referenced the published Mecklenburg Resolves to William Legge, Earl of Dartmouth:

The Resolves of the Committee of Mecklenburgh, which your Lordship will find in the enclosed Newspaper, surpass all the horrid and treasonable publications that the inflammatory spirits of this Continent have yet produced, and your Lordship may depend its Authors and Abettors will not escape my due notice, whenever my hands are

sufficiently strengthened to attempt the recovery of the lost authority of Government. A copy of these Resolves I am informed were sent off by express to the Congress at Philadelphia as soon as they were passed in the Committee. (Martin 1775 in NCCR 1886, X:48)

Martin mentioned the Mecklenburg Resolves in two other known correspondences. In this context, why did he not mention the much stronger Declaration of Independence? If it existed, was it publicly declared?

On 18 July, because of the growing rebellion, Martin moved offshore onto British warship *Cruizer* anchored in the Cape Fear River. In this action, he followed the example of the Virginia colonial governor John Murray, Earl of Dunmore, who on 8 June, found protection on the warship *Fowey* off Yorktown. Rebels burned Fort Johnston to prevent its reuse. The Assembly declared the Governor abdicated and established, in his place, an emergency executive branch of government named *Provincial Council*. It was a committee. It oversaw and directed all county committees of safety. That included power to activate the militia and commission officers. On 15 August, Martin issued a proclamation denouncing the new government. Among his assertions was:

And whereas I have also seen a most infamous publication in the Cape Fear Mercury importing to be resolves of a set of people stiling themselves a Committee for the County of Mecklenburg most traiterously declaring the entire dissolution of the Laws Government and Constitution of this country and setting up a system of rule and regulation repugnant to the Laws and subversive of His Majesty's Government. (Martin 1775 in NCCR 1886, X:144) (Preyer 1987, 101–102)

Notably, each contemporaneous quote above explicitly mentioned the Mecklenburg Resolves. None mentioned the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence.

During 20 August–10 September 1775, Thomas Polk was a delegate to the North Carolina Provincial Congress (NCCR 1886, X:165). On 9 September 1775, he was promoted to colonel and commander of the Mecklenburg County Militia.

Similarly, on 14 June 1775, South Carolina First Provincial Congress created a Council of Safety. It also directed William Henry Dayton, Richard Richardson, Joseph Kershaw, William Tennent, and Oliver Hart to tour the backcountry to persuade key leaders to support the rebel government.

Also in 1775, Reverent Alexander MacWhorter and Elihu Spencer toured North Carolina loyalist settlements attempting to gain their support for the American cause (Dussek 2011–2014).

1775, Tryon County Resolves

On 26 July 1775, Whigs in Tryon County, North Carolina, established a *Committee of Public Safety*. It met Christian Mauney's [pronounced Moon-ney] house on 14 August to write an *Association Oath*, sometimes called *Tryon County Resolves*. Like the Mecklenburg County Resolves, enacted 31 May 1775, it empowered an independent local militia. It was a test oath that all Tryon County inhabitants were to sign, in effect endorsing the legitimacy of the Committee of Public Safety.

Resolved, That this Association be signed by the inhabitants of Tryon County, viz:

An Association

The unprecedented, barbarous and bloody actions committed by the British troops on our American brethren near Boston, on the 19th of April and 20th of May, last, together with the hostile operations and traitorous designs now carrying on by the tools of ministerial vengeance and despotism for the subjugating of all British America, suggest to us the painful necessity of having recourse to arms for the preservation of those rights and liberties which the principles of our constitution and the Laws of God, Nature and Nations have made it our duty to defend.

We therefore, the subscribers, freeholders and inhabitants of Tryon County, do hereby faithfully unite ourselves under the most sacred ties of religion, honor and love to our country, firmly to resist force by force in defense of our natural freedom and constitutional rights against all invasions; and at the same time do solemnly engage to take up arms and risk our lives, and fortunes, in maintaining the freedom of our country whenever the wisdom and counsel of the Continental Congress or our Provincial Convention shall declare it necessary; and this engagement we will continue in and hold sacred till a reconciliation shall take place between Great Britain and America on Constitutional principles which we most ardently desire. And we do firmly agree to hold all such persons inimical to the liberties of America who shall refuse to subscribe to this association.

[Signed] John Walker, Charles McLean, Andrew Neel, Thomas Beatty, James Coburn, Frederick Hambricht, Andrew Hampton, Benjamin Hardin, George Paris, William Graham, Robert Alexander, David Jenkins, Thomas Espey, Perrygreen Mackness (Magness), James McAfee, William Thompson, Jacob Forney, Davis Whitesides, John Beeman, John Morris, Joseph Hardin, John Robison, James McIntyre, Valentine Mauney, George Black, Jas. Logan, Jas. Baird, Christian Carpenter, Abel Beatty, Joab Turner, Jonathan Price, James Miller, John Dellinger, Peter Sides, William Whiteside, George Dellinger, Samuel Carpenter, Jacob Mooney, Jr., John Wells, Jacob Costner, Robert Hulclip, James Buchanan, Moses Moore, Joseph Kuykendall, Adam Simms, Richard Waffer, Samuel Smith, Joseph Neel, Samuel Loftin. (NCCR 1886, X:162–163) (Griffin 1937, 17)

It was not a declaration of independence. Instead, it was conditional:

Resolved *nem. con.* That we will Continue to profess all Loyalty and attachment to our Sovereign Lord King George the Third, His Crown & Dignity, so long as he secures to us those Rights and Liberties which the principles of Our Constitution require. (NCCR 1886, X:163)

In 1919, a monument commemorating the Tryon County Resolves was erected at the site of the original Tryon County Courthouse. That location is on highway NC274 about 4 miles south of Cherryville, North Carolina. Before 1779, Tryon County included present-day Lincoln, Gaston, Cleveland and Rutherford Counties.



Tryon County Resolves Historical Marker

Thomas Espey was a Tryon County justice of the peace during 1772–1775. He was a member of the Tryon County Committee of Public Safety that decreed the Association Oath. Reference (Griffin 1937, 21) indicates he was brother of Captain Samuel Espey who participated in Kings Mountain battle. But that Thomas Espey Junior was at most 19 years old in 1775. His 46-year-old father Thomas Espey Senior was the more likely justice of the peace and signer. He was a Plonk-related 5th great-grandfather.

Jacob Forney I, George Shuford Ramseur Sr.'s 3rd great-grandfather, was a member of the Tryon County Committee of Public Safety that decreed the Association Oath.

1775, Committees of Safety members

The following table lists family relations who were members on a Committee of Public Safety during 1774–1776.

Committee of Public Safety Participants

Name	Relation	County
Abraham Alexander	2 nd Cousin 7x removed	Mecklenburg, NC
Hezekiah Alexander	2 nd Cousin 7x removed	Mecklenburg, NC
Ephraim Brevard	5 th Cousin 4x removed	Mecklenburg, NC
William Lee Davidson	Husband of 5 th Cousin 4x removed	Rowan, NC
Thomas Espey	5GGFather	Tryon, NC

1775, Boston, George Washington

On 14 June 1775, the Continental Congress established the Continental Army. On 17 June, George Washington was appointed General and Commander in Chief. Outside Boston, on 2 July, Washington took

command of the assembled militia. Patriotism was extremely high. It waned in subsequent years as the war costs increased.



General George Washington
Painted by Charles Willson Peale, 1780.

For two months, Washington erected fortifications about Boston and disciplined his troops. A few problems were humorous. In his General Orders for 22 August 1775:

The General does not mean to discourage the practice of bathing, whilst the weather is warm enough to continue it; but he expressly forbids, any persons doing it, at or near the Bridge in Cambridge, where it has been observed and complained of, that many Men, lost to all sense of decency and common modesty, are running about naked upon the Bridge, whilst Passengers, and even Ladies of the first fashion in the neighbourhood, are passing over it, as if they meant to glory in their shame: The Guards and Centries at the Bridge, are to put a stop to this practice for the future. (PGWRWS 1985, 1:346)

On 18 November 1775, Washington ordered an observance of Thanksgiving:

The Honorable the Legislature of this Colony having thought fit to set apart Thursday the 23rd of November Instant, as a day of public thanksgiving “to offer up our praises, and prayers, to Almighty God, the Source and Benevolent Bestower of all good: That he would be pleased graciously to continue, to smile upon our Endeavors, to restore peace, preserve our Rights, and Privileges, to the latest posterity; prosper the American Army, preserve and strengthen the Harmony of the United Colonies, and avert the Calamities of a civil war.” The General therefore commands, that day to be observed with all the Solemnity directed by the Legislative Proclamation, and all Officers, Soldiers & others, are hereby directed, with the most unfeigned Devotion, to obey the same. (PGWRWS 1985, 2:393)

In January 1776, Thomas Paine published the 47-page pamphlet *Common Sense*. It ended:

O ye that love mankind! Ye that dare oppose, not only the tyranny, but the tyrant, stand forth! Every spot of the old world is overrun with oppression. Freedom hath been hunted round the globe. Asia, and Africa, have long expelled her. Europe regards her like a

stranger, and England hath given her warning to depart. O! receive the fugitive, and prepare in time an asylum for mankind. (Paine 1776, 100–101)

Note: How were soldiers paid?

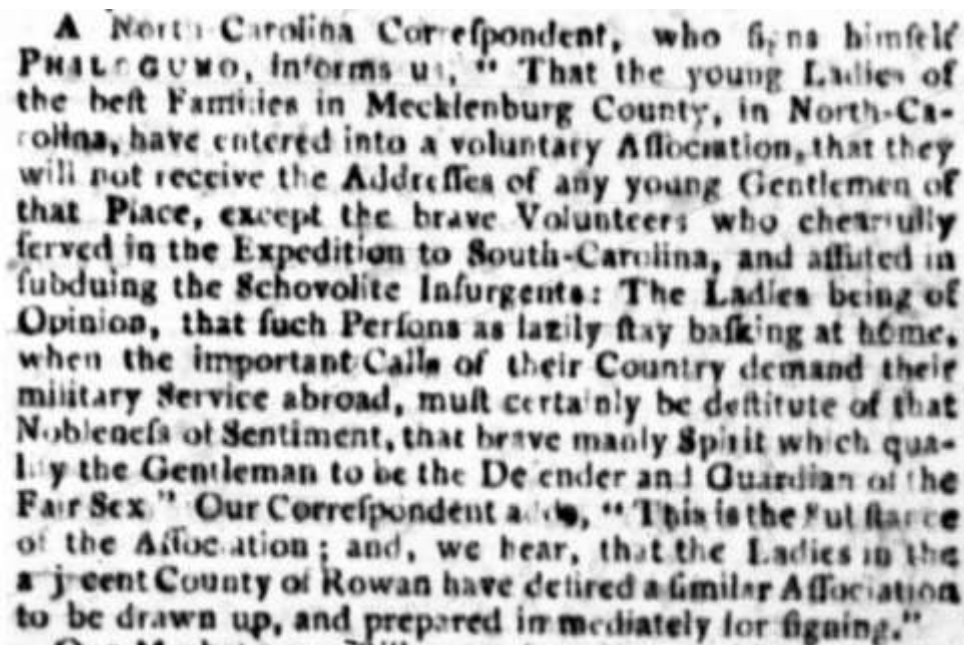
Militia units were organized at the province/state level by county and region/district. Militia service was the obligation of every able-bodied male, age 16–60. Sometimes militiamen on long tours of service were paid by the province/state in which they resided even if their unit was temporarily ordered into another province/state.

On 14 June 1775, the Continental Army was established. The pay of each private soldier was set at 6 2/3 dollars per month. This expense was an obligation of the Continental Congress. It required of each state a specific number of new regiments. Each state was free to offer bonuses to raise its quota. On occasion, when a crisis occurred, the Congress ordered specific militia units “on the establishment” for a few months. In these cases, the Congress paid the states. As the war progressed, payment became more difficult. So, Congress resolved to pay in land in Tennessee, Kentucky and elsewhere on the frontier.

1775, Snow Campaign, Norfolk

As in many southern towns, Charlestown, South Carolina, was governed by a rebel Committee of Public Safety. Colonel William Moultrie defended Charlestown harbor. Britain provided loyalists and Cherokees with weapons. In November 1775, South Carolina royal governor, William Campbell, incited backcountry loyalists to capture gunpowder supplies at Ninety Six. The attack occurred 19 November. These Tories were derisively called *Scovellites*, named after one of their leaders Joseph Coffel who was regarded as a criminal since the 1767 Regulator movement. In November–December 1775, Scotch-Irish militiamen campaigned against them. These included the Mecklenburg and Rowan County militias led by Colonel Thomas Polk and Colonel Griffith Rutherford respectively (Preyer 1987, 113). Captain William Lee Davidson led a company of Rowan minutemen as well as served as Rutherford’s adjutant.

The 2–9 February 1776 issue of the *South Carolina and American General Gazette*, printed in Charlestown, South Carolina, published the article:



A North-Carolina Correspondent, who signs himself PHALOGUHO, informs us, “That the young Ladies of the best Families in Mecklenburg County, in North-Carolina, have entered into a voluntary Association, that they will not receive the Addresses of any young Gentlemen of that Place, except the brave Volunteers who cheerfully served in the Expedition to South-Carolina, and assisted in subduing the Schovolite Insurgents: The Ladies being of Opinion, that such Persons as lazily stay basking at home, when the important Calls of their Country demand their military Service abroad, must certainly be destitute of that Nobleness of Sentiment, that brave manly Spirit which qualifies the Gentleman to be the Defender and Guardian of the Fair Sex.” Our Correspondent adds, “This is the full stance of the Association; and, we hear, that the Ladies in the adjacent County of Rowan have desired a similar Association to be drawn up, and prepared immediately for signing.”

Ladies of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina
Printed in *South Carolina and American General Gazette* issue of 2–9 February 1776

Which transcribes as:

A North Carolina Correspondent, who signs himself PHILOGUMO, informs us, “That the young Ladies of the best Families in Mecklenburg County, in North-Carolina, have entered into a voluntary Association, that they will not receive the Addresses of any young Gentlemen of that Place, except the brave Volunteers who cheerfully served in the Expedition to South-Carolina, and assisted in subduing the Schovolite Insurgents : The Ladies being of the Opinion, that such Persons as lazily stay basking at home, when the important Calls of their Country demand their military Service abroad, must certainly be destitute of that Nobleness of Sentiment, that brave manly Spirit which qualify the Gentleman to be the Defender and Guardian of the Fair Sex.” Our Correspondent adds, “This is the Substance of the Association; and, we hear, that the Ladies in the adjacent County of Rowan have desired a similar Association to be drawn up, and prepared immediately for signing.”

Unfortunately, the Association declaration and the names of the signers are not known. A 1946 newspaper article indicated that the Mecklenburg ladies met at Queens Museum (Fore 1946). However, the above original article included the full context and did not make that assertion. Nonetheless, that was possible since the Queen’s Museum had a hall used for public meetings (Foote 1846, 514).

Similar actions by the ladies of Rowan County were recorded in the minutes of the 8 May 1776 meeting of the Rowan County Committee of Safety:

A letter from a number of young ladies in the [Rowan] county, directed to the chairman, requesting the approbation of the committee to a number of resolutions enclosed, entered into, and signed by the same young ladies, being read ; Resolved, That this Committee present their cordial thanks to the said young ladies for so spirited a performance, look upon their resolutions to be sensible and polite ; that they merit the honor, and are worthy the imitation of every young lady in America. (Rumple 1881, 192) (J. Blythe 2015–2017)

Because of a rare 2-foot snow on 23 December, this expedition became known as the “Snow Campaign” (Hunter 1877, 113). William Polk, son of Colonel Thomas Polk, was an officer in a South Carolina regiment. He was wounded in a skirmish (Polk in Hoyt 1914, II:403) (H. F. Rankin 1971, 23).

Captain Adam Alexander, McGuire-related 3rd cousin 6 generations removed, served in the Snow Campaign against Scovellites. Private Thomas Alexander, another McGuire-related 3rd cousin 6 generations removed, participated (Hunter 1877, 113). William Polk was 1st cousin 8 generations removed of Arabelle Boyer.

Since neither patriot nor loyalist militiamen wore uniforms, it became customary for patriots to attach a scrap of white paper to their hats and loyalists to attach an evergreen twig.

In late 1775, Virginia royal Governor Earl of Dunmore encouraged loyalists and slaves to resist. Like the North Carolina royal governor, he took refuge on a British warship. North Carolina Colonel Robert Howe marched his militia unit to Norfolk, Virginia. On 1 January 1776, British soldiers landed and burned parts of Norfolk.

January–February 1776, Moore’s Creek Bridge

Since the summer of 1775, North Carolina colonial governor Josiah Martin planned the recapture of North Carolina. He persuaded British military planners to send a large invasion force to the Cape Fear River. On 10 January 1776, he ordered loyalist militia to march to Wilmington to meet the expected British Army arriving on ships. Scotland’s heroine Flora Macdonald used her social prestige and Gaelic public speaking skills to actively recruit Highland Scot immigrants for the British military. Flora’s husband Captain Alan Macdonald was a prominent loyalist militia officer. Only 500 of the 1600 Highlanders had firearms, a residual effect of Scotland’s 1746 Act of Proscription. In response, Whig militias assembled to suppress the loyalists. Colonel Thomas Polk led the Mecklenburg County militia to Cross Creek. On 27 February, Whigs from the coastal counties blocked the loyalist’s march at Moore’s Creek Bridge. During the

preceding night, Whigs removed approximately half the bridge flooring and greased the remaining with soap and tallow. Without many firearms, Highlanders planned to attack using double-edged broadswords. This ancient tactic failed miserably against muskets and small artillery. The battle was over in 3 minutes.



Reconstructed Moore's Creek Bridge
Near Wilmington, North Carolina

After the battle, escaping Highlanders proceeded towards their homes near Cross Creek, North Carolina, present-day Fayetteville. But in their absence, piedmont Whigs, led by Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Martin and Colonel James Thackston, occupied that town. As many as 500 Highlanders then marched northward along the Cape Fear River eastside. At Black Mingo Creek they were surrounded by mounted Whig militiamen and surrendered. These captives were marched to nearby Smith's Ferry on Cape Fear River. There even more Whigs arrived. All Highlanders were disarmed. Ordinary soldiers took an oath of neutrality and got paroles. Officers, including Captain Alan Macdonald, were arrested and confined at Halifax. For the next two weeks, Whig bands rounded up suspected Highlander loyalists (Hatch 1969, 44–45).

Although Moore's Creek Bridge battle was small and short, it and its aftermath intimidated loyalists throughout both Carolinas. It allowed Whigs to consolidate control of local and state governments. Unchallenged for the next four years, Whigs were strong enough to resist the British Army when it returned in 1780. On 1 April, when General George Washington learned of this battle, he wrote, "the old proverb, of the first blow being half the Battle cannot better apply than in these Instances the Spirits of the vanquish'd being depresso'd in proportion as the Victors get elated." (Washington 1776 in PGWRWS 1985, 4:10)

Captain Robert Mebane, an Anderson-related 5th great-granduncle, led a militia company of riflemen to Cross Creek and then to Wilmington. Mebane's company was under militia Lieutenant Colonel John Williams of Hillsborough. This unit may have been in Colonel James Thackston's command. Robert Mebane may have participated in capturing escaping Tories at Smith's Ferry where his brother John Mebane was at that time. A John Williams, but not necessarily the same person, was on Colonel Richard Caswell's list of participants at Moore's Creek (Hunter 1877, 125).

In 1832, [Richard Allen testified](#) in his pension application:

On the 13th day of February following, they set out upon their march to Cross Creek or Fayetteville, having understood that the Scotch Tories were committing great depredations in the country round about that place. On their way, they were joined by Col Martin Armstrong with the Surry militia at a place called old Richmond. After joining Col Armstrong, they continued their march until they reached Randolph County where they were joined by Col Alexander Martin of the Continental line, with a small body of troops under his command from thence they pursued their march direct to Cross Creek or Fayetteville. The day before their arrival at that place, a battle had been fought between the Tories under Genl McDonald and the Whig militia under Genl Moore, in which the

former were defeated with considerable loss and a great number taken prisoners. The prisoners taken in this engagement were delivered over to Captain Jesse Walton; and his company who were ordered as a guard to convey them to Hillsborough. They immediately set out with the prisoners for that place, but before they reached it, they were met by two companies of Light Horse under the command of Captains Mebane & Shepherd, who took charge of the prisoners, when Captain Walton and his company were discharged and returned home, where they arrived about the 29th of March, having been gone near two months. (Allen, Richard, pension application 1832)

Private John Mebane, Robert's younger brother, an Anderson-related 5th great-granduncle, was also in John Williams's unit. His 30 March 1833 [pension application](#) (Mebane, John, pension application 1833) indicates that this unit intercepted Tories at Smith's Ferry as they escaped from Moore's Creek. About 300 Tories were captured. Smith's Ferry was on the Cape Fear River just downstream of where Lower Little River joins. Today, Linden, Cumberland County, North Carolina, is the nearest town. Smith's Ferry was later named Dawson's Ferry.

Michael Holt II, an Anderson-related 5th great-granduncle, organized loyalist militiamen in Orange County to support Governor Martin. He was leading these men to Wilmington at the time of Moore's Creek Bridge Battle. Afterwards, he was arrested and held in Halifax. In May 1777, he and about 30 principal Tories were sent to a Philadelphia prison. Holt contrived to make interest with Congress. He was released along with most native-born Americans (Symth in Hatch 1969, 86). By 1780, Holt was home again and cooperated with local Whigs (Troxler and Vincent 1999, 86).

Captain William Bethell, a Motley-related 4th great-grandfather, was in the Guilford County militia and participated in the Moore's Creek Bridge campaign. He was probably in the general activation and not in the actual battle (Rodenbough 1983, 332).

Militia Colonel Adam Alexander, McGuire-related 3rd cousin 6 generations removed, is credited with quelling the February 1776 Highlander uprising. He was probably among the Salisbury District Whigs under Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Martin that occupied Cross Creek.

May 1776, Norfolk

In May 1776, Captain Robert Mebane was in Norfolk defending it from British naval attack (NCSR 1895, XXII:114) (Russell 2000, 62–77).

March–May 1776, North Carolina Fourth Provincial Congress

On 12 March, British Navy arrived in the Cape Fear River. For a while, hundreds of British soldiers disembarked on Battery Island, beyond the range of patriot weapons. There they practiced amphibious attacks on Fort Sullivan and Fort Johnson that protected Charlestown's harbor (H. F. Rankin 1971, 58).

Battery Island is still uninhabited. It is a large nesting site for seabirds. There, during the early 1960s, William Lee Anderson Jr. banded young herons and egrets on their nests.

On 26 March 1776, South Carolina Provincial Congress adopted a state constitution ending emergency Committees of Safety. This constitution was not permanent; it would be effective "until an accommodation of the unhappy differences between Great Britain and America can be obtained." John Rutledge was South Carolina's first President.

On 9 April 1776, the North Carolina General Assembly established six Continental Army regiments. Colonel Thomas Polk was appointed to command the Fourth Regiment (NCSR 1895, XI:292). Major William Lee Davidson was appointed his subordinate in the same regiment (H. F. Rankin 1971, 63).

On 12 April 1776, delegates to the *Fourth Provincial Congress*, meeting in Halifax, unanimously authorized North Carolina's three *Continental Congress* delegates to vote for independence. This was the *Halifax Resolves*:

The Select Committee taking into Consideration the usurpations and violences attempted and committed by the King and Parliament of Britain against America, and the further Measures to be taken for frustrating the same, and for the better defence of this province reported as follows, to wit,

It appears to your Committee that pursuant to the Plan concerted by the British Ministry for subjugating America, the King and Parliament of Great Britain have usurped a Power over the Persons and Properties of the People unlimited and uncontrouled and disregarding their humble Petitions for Peace, Liberty and safety, have made divers Legislative Acts, denouncing War Famine and every Species of Calamity daily employed in destroying the People and committing the most horrid devastations on the Country. That Governors in different Colonies have declared Protection to Slaves who should imbrue their Hands in the Blood of their Masters. That the Ships belonging to America are declared prizes of War and many of them have been violently seized and confiscated in consequence of which multitudes of the people have been destroyed or from easy Circumstances reduced to the most Lamentable distress.

And whereas the moderation hitherto manifested by the United Colonies and their sincere desire to be reconciled to the mother Country on Constitutional Principles, have procured no mitigation of the aforesaid Wrongs and usurpations and no hopes remain of obtaining redress by those Means alone which have been hitherto tried, Your Committee are of Opinion that the house should enter into the following Resolve, to wit

Resolved that the delegates for this Colony in the Continental Congress be empowered to concur with the other delegates of the other Colonies in declaring Independency, and forming foreign Alliances, resolving to this Colony the Sole, and Exclusive right of forming a Constitution and Laws for this Colony, and of appointing delegates from time to time (under the direction of a general Representation thereof to meet the delegates of the other Colonies for such purposes as shall be hereafter pointed out.

It was adopted unanimously by the 83 delegates. The state flag of North Carolina, adopted later, includes its date and the earlier 20 May 1775 date of the *Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence*.



North Carolina State Flag

Martha Jane Murray, an Anderson-related 4th great-grandmother, was born four days after the Halifax Resolves. That made her one of the first Americans who was never a British subject.

Similarly, on 15 May 1776, Virginia Provincial Congress authorized its delegates to vote for independence. The Second Continental Congress voted for independence on 2 July 1776. Two days later on 4 July, it voted to approve the document *The Declaration of Independence of the Thirteen United States*. Formal copies were prepared. Most delegates signed the copies on 2 August 1776. It contains a justification similar to the argument in Mecklenburg Resolves, “He has abdicated government here by declaring us out of his protection and waging war against us.” Almost half the signers were of Scottish descent. They understood the enemy’s language, culture, and military methods. They started this awesome task with resolve and confidence. Most men followed the decisions of their local militia leader.



Lord Frederick North
Prime Minister during American Revolution.
Painted by Nathaniel Dance, 1775.

German immigrants were divided about independence. Some felt compelled to choose a side. Their land titles were contracts with the British government. Recent German immigrants had taken an oath of allegiance. Many had blind trust in their newly adopted and relatively liberal government. They reasoned that King George III was a German, born into the House of Hanover, who made it possible for them to come to America, and he would protect them. Ultimately, many Germans did fight for independence. Quakers, Moravians, and Dunkards had a pacifist tradition that was respected.

In June 1776, Thomas Polk's Fourth Regiment marched to Charlestown to defend against a threatened British invasion fleet, but was ordered back towards NC to guard the coast from British raids (H. F. Rankin 1971, 76–77).

Americans defended Fort Sullivan on Sullivan Island that guarded the entrance to Charlestown harbor. In June 1776, about 3000 British Army and Marine troops under Major General Henry Clinton and Major General Charles Earl Cornwallis landed on Long Island, present-day Isle of Palms, outside Charlestown harbor. British surgeon Thompson Foster described the conditions:

The suffocating heat ... was the most insufferable I ever felt, not a breath of air stirring — thick cobwebs to push thro' everywhere, knee deep in rotten wood and dried Leaves, every hundred yards a swamp with putrid standing water in the middle, full of small Alligators, a thick cloud of Musquitoes every where and no place entirely free from Rattle Snakes. ... spiders, their bodies as large as my coat Button ... Crocodiles are very frequent and large in these places, we killed one nine feet long, which attacked a Soldier, it was with difficulty he got from him ... nothing to eat and drink but salt Pork, bad rum and brackish water, no other bed than the Sand and no other covering than the Sky.

The British planned was to cross Breach Inlet, then more than a mile wide, and attack Fort Sullivan from the rear. To prevent this, American Colonel William Thomson organized a defense on the end of Sullivan's Island facing Breach Inlet. On 28 June, the British commenced a simultaneous amphibious crossing of Breach Inlet and ship bombardment of Fort Sullivan. After many hours, many ships were heavily damaged and Breach Inlet proved impossible to traverse. On 1 July, Major General Charles Lee wrote to General George Washington that he:

Order'd my Aid de Camp Mr Byrd who is (a lad of magnanimous Courage) to pass over in a small Canoe and report the state of the spirit of the Garrison — if it had been low, I

shou'd have abandon'd all thoughts of defence — his report was flattering — I then determin'd to maintain the Post at all risks — and pass'd the Creek or Cove in a small boat in order to animate the Garrison in propria persona — but I found They had no occasion for such encouragement — They were pleas'd with my visit, and assur'd me They never wou'd abandon the Post but with their lives — the cool courage They display'd astonish'd and enraptur'd me — for I do assure You, Dr General, I never experience'd a hotter fire — twelve full hours it was continued without intermission The noble Fellows who were mortally wounded conjur'd their Brethren never to abandon the Standard of liberty — Those who lost their limbs deserted not their Posts — upon the whole They acted like Romans in the third Century. (PGWRWS 1985, 5:169)

This event, with the American victory at Moore's Creek Bridge, prevented serious British military action in the southern states for three years. During that time, Whigs consolidated their control of local and state governments.

July 1776, Declaration of Independence, Continental Army structure

Beginning in July 1776, the British Army disembarked from ships onto Staten Island, New York. On 2 July, General George Washington issued the order:

The time is now near at hand which must probably determine, whether Americans are to be, Freemen, or Slaves; whether their Houses, and Farms, are to be pillaged and destroyed, and they consigned to a State of Wretchedness from which no human efforts will probably deliver them. The fate of unborn Millions will now depend, under God, on the Courage and Conduct of this army — Our cruel and unrelenting Enemy leaves us no choice but a brave resistance, or the most abject submission; this is all we can expect — We have therefore to resolve to conquer or die; Our own Country's Honor, all call upon us for a vigorous and manly exertion, and if we now shamefully fail, we shall become infamous to the whole world — Let us therefore rely upon the goodness of the Cause, and the aid of the supreme Being, in whose hands Victory is, to animate and encourage us to great and noble Actions — The Eyes of all our Countrymen are now upon us, and we shall have their blessings, and praises, if happily we are the instruments of saving them from the Tyranny meditated against them. Let us therefore animate and encourage each other, and shew the whole world, that a Freeman contending for Liberty on his own ground is superior to any slavish mercenary on earth. (PGWRWS 1985, 5:180)

On 2 July 1776, the Continental Congress voted for independence from the United Kingdom. On 4 July, it approved the *Declaration of Independence*.



Declaration of Independence
Painted by John Trumbull, 1819.

On 9 July, General George Washington ordered his officers to read the Declaration of Independence to all soldiers.

The Honorable the Continental Congress, impelled by the dictates of duty, policy and necessity, having been pleased to dissolve the Connection which subsisted between this Country, and Great Britain, and to declare the United Colonies of North America, free and independent STATES; The several brigades are to be drawn up this evening on their respective Parades, at six O'Clock, when the declaration of Congress, shewing the grounds & reasons of this measure, is to be read with an audible voice. (PGWRWS 1985, 5:246)

Washington also wrote, "that the peace and safety of his Country depends (under God) solely on the success of our arms." (Fitzpatrick 1932, 3:308).

On 1 August 1776, Samuel Adams addressed an audience at the Pennsylvania State House in Philadelphia:

If ye love wealth better than liberty, the tranquility of servitude than the animated contest of freedom — go home from us in peace. We ask not your counsels or arms. Crouch down and lick the hands which feed you. May your chains sit lightly upon you, and may posterity forget that you were our countrymen!

On 16 September 1776, Continental Congress, in its 88 *Battalion Resolves*, directed each state to establish, equip, and train a number of regiments proportional to its population. South Carolina, North Carolina and Virginia were to raise 6, 9 and 15 regiments respectively (Peterson 1968, 258). These professional soldier units complemented the citizen-soldier militia system. In the Continental Army, the words regiment and battalion were equivalent. By design, each regiment was to have 8 companies, a total of 728 men, but during the war, most regiments were not at full strength, and could function with as few as 150. Each regiment had a chaplain, surgeon, and musicians, especially drummers. By law, each soldier's ration included 1 pound of beef per day. Each private was paid 6 2/3 dollars per month. Reference (Peterson 1968) displays relics of Continental soldier muskets, rifles, bayonets, swords, cannons, fortification tools, tents, medical tools, music instruments, saddles, and other horse equipment. Reference (Martin 1830) is a well-written diary of an ordinary Continental soldier.

July–October 1776, Campaign against Cherokees

In July 1776, Cherokees, who were encouraged by the British and led by Dragging Canoe, raided throughout western Carolinas, including present-day Tennessee, killing at least 44 settlers (Preyer 1987, 117). In retaliation, each of the four southern states organized an expeditionary army. Colonel Griffith Rutherford organized a 2000-man army of North Carolinians. At that time, William Graham was commissioned colonel in command of Tryon County militia. His commission was granted by the North Carolina Provincial Congress.

North Carolina, Hillsboro. In Congress September 9, 1776
this may certify that William Graham Esq. is appointed by
act of Congress Colonel of the militia in the County of
Tryon by order of Samuel Johnston, President
Andrew Knox, secretary. (Graham, William, pension application 1832)

Corporal Samuel Espey was typical of many Tryon County militiamen. He volunteered as a ranger against the Cherokees. Beginning 10 July 1776, for about one month, he remained at McFadden's Fort on Mountain Creek just west of present-day Rutherfordton. On 19 August, at Moses Moore's home 6 miles from present-day Lincolnton, he joined Captain Peter Carpenter's company in Colonel William Graham's regiment. Moore's home was near where present-day Shoal Road crosses Indian Creek (Dellinger 2006–2011). From there he marched to Pleasant Gardens, on the Catawba River headwaters, and joined Colonel Rutherford's expedition. It crossed the French Broad River and advanced as far as the Little Tennessee River and then returned. Espey was discharged on 6 October (Espey, Samuel, pension application 1832).

Samuel Espey was a Plunk-related 4th great-grandfather. Espey was discharged on 6 October (Espey, Samuel, pension application 1832). On 6 May 1833, William Graham testified in a Rutherford County court that Espey was a packhorse man in this expedition (Graham 1833 in Espey, Samuel, pension application 1832).

British support of this Indian uprising alienated many Tryon County German-speaking settlers who otherwise would have been loyalists. Jacob Plunk II was typical among this group. He served as a militia private starting about June 1776 in Captain Robert Alexander's company (Plunk, Jacob, pension application 1832). That company marched to Monfort's Cove (Hunter 1877, 297) in present-day Rutherford County, North Carolina. From there, his company joined Rutherford's campaign.

Jacob Plunk II as a Plunk-related 4th great-grandfather.

Rutherford's army used no wagons; all provisions were carried by packhorse (Hunter 1877, 177). During September 1776, it destroyed the Cherokee Middle Towns with their crops. That location was between the present-day towns of Cherokee and Murphy, North Carolina. Most Cherokees fled the attack. Some who were captured were sold into slavery (Hatley 1995, 194–197). In early 1777, Cherokees attacked again, but by May, their resistance collapsed. In a 20 July 1777 treaty, Cherokees relinquished most of their lands in the Carolinas.

On 20 August 1776, Major Hugh Tinnin, an Anderson-related 1st cousin 7 generations removed, marched off with Colonel Ambrose Ramsey's First Battalion of Orange County Militia to join Colonel Griffith Rutherford's campaign against the Cherokees (Conolly 2008).

Captain Robert Mebane participated in the Rutherford campaign. He led a company from Charlotte to Quaker Meadows, present-day Morganton, North Carolina (Hunter 1877, 91, 125, 280). Reference (USNC n.d., 74) (Mebane 1999, 124) records his pay.

In 1833, [James Jack testified](#) in his pension application:

on the 22nd of next June — that in the spring of the year 1776 he entered the service of the United States at the town of Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, under Captain Robert Mebane [spelled throughout as “Mabin”], commander of a troop of light horse attached to a regiment commanded by Colonel Thomas Polk [spelled throughout as “Poke”] (that Mebane he believes was the son of Colonel Mebane of Hillsboro North Carolina) and came to Charlotte for volunteers; that he with 63 others turned out in one day; that they each found their own horse, saddle and bridle — that from Charlotte, Captain Mebane marched his company and crossed the Catawba [River] and joined six or 700 men at Dutchman's Creek in South Carolina under the command of Major Sumter [spelled “Sumpter” throughout]; that from thence we crossed Board River at Tuckaseegee Ford and from thence we marched to the Golden Grove, where we had an engagement with the Tories and probably some Cherokee Indians. In this engagement we succeeded under the command of Sumter. Immediately after this engagement we marched to the Chalk Bluff on the Savannah River where we remained until the British landed at Savannah. (Jack, James, pension application 1833).

Hezekiah Alexander was a commissary officer during the Cherokee campaign (Preyer 1987, 118). Joel Baldwin, a Mecklenburg County resident, may have participated in this campaign. He died on 21 October 1776 at age 26 and was buried in the Charlotte Burying Ground, now known as Settlers' Cemetery. His grave is the oldest known grave there.

Hezekiah Alexander was a McGuire-related 2nd cousin 7 generations.

Colonel Adam Alexander, McGuire-related 3rd cousin 6 generations removed, was ordered by the Mecklenburg Committee of Public Safety to march the county militia to the Catawba River headwaters (Preyer 1987, 117). William “Black Billy” Alexander, McGuire-related 3rd cousin 6 generations removed,

was in Adam Alexander's unit (Hunter 1877, 115). William's brother, Private Thomas Alexander participated (Hunter 1877, 113).

November–December 1776, North Carolina Fifth Provincial Congress

On 24 November 1776, the North Carolina *Fifth Provincial Congress* in Halifax established three new Continental regiments.

On 27 November 1776, Robert Mebane, an Anderson-related 5th great-granduncle, was commissioned lieutenant colonel in the newly created North Carolina Seventh Regiment (NCSR 1895, X:941) (Heitman 1914, 46). He was second in command under Colonel James Hogun. Reference (Rankin 1971, 87) indicates his rank was major, but does not provide a source.

The North Carolina Provincial Congress also established the Brigade of Volunteers to aid South Carolina resist an expected British invasion. The brigade was commanded by Brigadier General Allen Jones. It included two battalions. The Second Battalion was commanded by Colonel Francis Locke. Its officers included local leaders Captain James Jack and Captain Joseph Dickson. This brigade of volunteers was stationed in Camden, South Carolina, until the threat of invasion passed in April 1777.

On 18 December 1776, the Fifth Provincial Congress adopted the first *North Carolina Constitution*. This ended the Provincial Congress and emergency Provincial Council along with all county committees of safety. The new constitution created a bicameral legislature, the office of Governor, Council of State, and judiciary. The lower house was called *House of Commons*, a name that mistakenly suggests pre-Revolution to modern readers. The constitution included a *Bill-of-Rights*. Every free man, who was a resident for at least one year and paid taxes, was entitled to vote. This constitution was not revised until 1835 (Rankin 1959, 23). Section 41 provided “that a School or Schools shall be established by the Legislature for the convenient Instruction of Youth, with such Salaries to the Masters paid by the Public, as may enable them to instruct at low Prices; and all useful Learning shall be duly encouraged and promoted in one or more Universities.” Actual establishment occurred later during 1789–1794.

It took considerable courage to participate in creating a new government in December 1776 when the war's outcome was uncertain. At that time, a federal government was not contemplated. So, creating an independent state government was a final irreversible affront against Britain authority. Creators of the government realized every part of their family's future was at risk.

Alexander Mebane II, a 5th great-granduncle, was an Orange County delegate in the Fifth Provincial Congress. Due to a voting irregularity in Orange County, he did not acquire the seat until 16 December (NCSR 1895, X:970–971). Presumably, on 17–18 December, he voted for the bill-of-rights and new constitution (NCSR 1895, X:973–974). Mebane was an Orange County justice of the peace. In 1777, he was Orange County sheriff, the same office his father held in 1752. During the Revolutionary War, he was Hillsborough District militia commissary officer. In 1767, he married Mary Armstrong, a Whitted-Bird-Armstrong-related 1st cousin 7 generations removed. Thus Mary was both a cousin and a 5th great-grandaunt by marriage.



Alexander Mebane II and wife Mary Armstrong
Photographs of original portraits, Holmes Papers #4587, Southern Historical Collection,
Wilson Library, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Used with permission.
Images provided by Robert M. Mebane (Mebane 1999).

Hezekiah Alexander, a McGuire-related 2nd cousin 7 generations removed, was a Mecklenburg County delegate in the Fifth Provincial Congress (Preyer 1987, 130–135).

August–September 1776, New York

During 1775–1776, Britain concentrated the war effort against New England colonies that it regarded as the most rebellious. First, it captured Boston, but then abandoned it in favor of New York City. During the summer and autumn 1776, Washington attempted to hold Long Island, New York City, and the lower Hudson River.

On 27 August 1776, Private Patrick McGuire, a Pennsylvania Continental soldier, participated in the Battle of Long Island. He was in Captain Francis Murray’s company, Colonel Samuel Atlee’s “Musketry Battalion.” After the battle about a third of his unit was listed missing. A few days later, he was in a hospital at King’s Bridge, the north end of Manhattan Island (Pennsylvania State Archives n.d., 5:II:477–480). He may be the same Patrick McGuire of Pennsylvania, a 4th great-grandfather, who had immigrated to America only one year earlier. McGuire-Family genealogist Burris McGuire made this assertion (McGuire 1961, 4). However, this Patrick McGuire was probably the Pennsylvania 5th Regiment soldier who died 25 December 1777 at Valley Forge (Valley Forge Muster Roll n.d.). Our ancestor was almost certainly the Patrick McGuire listed with Rangers on the Frontier 1778–1783, Joseph Beckett’s Company (Pennsylvania State Archives n.d., 3:XXIII:323). His name appears on the 1788 Huntingdon County tax rolls. Interestingly, the same roll includes Joseph Prigmore, father of Patrick’s wife Catherine Prigmore (Pennsylvania State Archives n.d., 3:XXII:330).

After Washington retreated from Manhattan Island, he devised a new strategy. On 8 September, he described it in a letter to the Continental Congress (PGWRWS 1985, 6:248–249). It was:

- Avoid a decisive battle, called at that time a “general action.” Instead the American Army would fight a defensive war. In his words, “we should on all occasions avoid a general action or put anything to the risk, unless compelled by necessity, into which we ought never to be drawn.”
- However, Washington ruled out a pure partisan war. He insisted on maintaining the *Continental Army* as a professional core. It bolstered the international status of Continental Congress. It was an entity that Britain would have to destroy to claim victory. It also helped rally less reliable militiamen.

In early 1776, James Rankin Alexander, a McGuire-related 3rd cousin 6 generations removed, was a student at Nassau College, present-day Princeton University. After the British captured New York City, he enlisted in Captain Walter Alexander's company of Maryland militia, called the "Maryland flying Camp," and was appointed sergeant. In November 1776, he participated in General Nathanael Greene's evacuation of Fort Lee to Trenton and across the Delaware River. He was discharged before the battle at Trenton on 26 December 1776. James was son of Hezekiah Alexander. During 1776–1780, he studied medicine, and then returned to his father's home in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina. (Alexander, James Rankin, pension application 1833).

After defeating the Americans at Long Island, Kips Bay, and White Plains, the British were optimistic. In early December, 70 British ships moved from New York to Newport, Rhode Island. As these ships sailed down Long Island Sound, Lieutenant Frederick Mackenzie described a spectacular scene:

This Evening, just as it grew dark, our ship being among the headmost in the fleet, we had an opportunity of viewing a most beautiful Seapiece from our Cabbin windows. The fleet was going down the Sound before the wind, those ships which sailed the worst having all their sails set, the others such as were necessary to keep them in their respective Stations. The Sun having set from under some very thick clouds, a Streak of a reddish colour between those clouds and the horizon, shewed the fleet aStearn of us, and just discernable. The perspective was very find: in the farthest distance we could perceive some of the Sternmost ships, with their Mast heads and Top Gallant Sails, reaching about half way up the red streak: — according as the ships were situated nearer to us, less of them appeared; in some only their Topsails, in others nothing more than their Courses. But the principal object in the piece was the Brune Frigate; this ship had nothing more than her three topsails set, and she was exactly at that point of distance in which no part of her could be seen but her lower masts and rigging, her Hull being below the horizon, and her sails above the red streak. What was seen of her had a singular appearance. The stillness of the Sea added much to the beauty of the piece, which would have afforded an uncommonly fine subject for a Painter. ... At day break being nearly off Seabrook [Connecticut], we saw Sir Peter Parker's Squadron at anchor under the Long Island shore, with their yards and top masts struck. At Sunrise Commodore [William] Hotham saluted him with 13 Guns, which was soon after returned with the like number. (Mackenzie 1930, 119)

Spring-Summer 1777, Quankey Creek

During spring 1777, North Carolina Continental soldiers gathered near Halifax along Quankey Creek. In May, Brigadier General Francis Nash marched most soldiers northward to join George Washington's army (Rankin 1971, 90). On 21 May, at Alexandria, Virginia, all soldiers who had not had smallpox were inoculated (Rankin 1971, 91). This treatment transferred pus from a nearly recovered smallpox victim onto a healthy person's skin. This procedure gave the recipient a mild case of smallpox that lasted 3–4 weeks, and afterwards, lifetime immunity. The regiments then marched to Philadelphia where they were assigned to Major General Nathanael Greene's division. From there, they were assigned to various camps in New York, New Jersey, Delaware, and Pennsylvania. Some officers continued recruiting new soldiers at Quankey Creek during the summer under command of Colonel John Williams (Davidson 1951, 43).

Lieutenant Colonel Robert Mebane, second-in-command of North Carolina Seventh Regiment, continued recruitment at Quankey Creek during the summer. On 17 July 1777, he wrote a letter to North Carolina Governor Richard Caswell. As might be expected in a letter to a superior, it describes problems and possible solutions.

HALIFAX, July 17th 1777

SIR:—

A return of the success of the 7th Battalion your Excellency will have in the General return from the Commanding Officer, the chief reason given by most of the officers upon the recruiting service for their bad success is want of money, in which I am persuaded there may be some justice. We have numbers of deserters, who I think it will be impossible ever to have brought in, unless officers are sent on purpose after them; as they generally live too obscure for proclamations or any other offered clemency to reach them, even if we could suppose they were determined to return to their duty. I have, (with the leave of the commanding officer) sent several officers from the 7th Battalion in quest of them. As some officers had not discharged their duty, and in some measure disobeyed orders upon hearing the instructions given by your Excellency (to the Commanding Officer) they beg leave to resign; this indulgence I think may be granted them without any injury to the service. I should be glad, in making future appointments in this Battalion, if agreeable to your Excellency, that Commissions may be granted conditionally, according to the number they recruit. I should also be glad that I may be ordered to march with the first that goes from this place.

I am, Sir, with all possible deference and respect
Your very h^{ble}. serv^t.,
ROBT. MEBANE.

His Excellency Governor Caswell. (Mebane 1777 in NCSR 1895, XI:521).

In April 1777, Gilbert du Motier Marquis de Lafayette, age 19, wrote his wife Adrienne, “The happiness of America is intimately connected with the happiness of all mankind; she is destined to become the safe and venerable asylum of virtue, of honesty, of tolerance, and quality and of peaceful liberty.” He and Baron Johann DeKalb sailed to America on the warship *Victoire*. The destination was Charlestown, but its harbor was blockaded by British warships. Consequently, on 13 June 1777, they disembarked on North Island off the coast of Georgetown, near present-day Pawley’s Island. After returning to Charlestown, on 19 June, Lafayette wrote to his wife:

I shall now speak to you, my love, about the country and its inhabitants, who are as agreeable as my enthusiasm had led me to imagine. Simplicity of manner, kindness of heart, love of country and of liberty, and a delightful state of equality, are met with universally. The richest and the poorest man are completely on a level; and although there are some immense fortunes in this country, I may challenge any one to point out the slightest difference in their respective manner towards each other. I first saw and judged of a country life at Major Hughes’s house: I am at present in the city, where everything somewhat resembles the English customs, except that you find more simplicity here than you would do in England. Charlestown is one of the best built, handsomest, and most agreeable cities that I have ever seen. The American women are very pretty, and have great simplicity of character; and the extreme neatness of their appearance is truly delightful: cleanliness is everywhere even more studiously attended to here than in England. What gives me most pleasure is to see how completely the citizens are all brethren of one family. In America there are none poor, and none even that can be called peasants. Each citizen has some property, and all citizens have the same rights as the richest individual, or landed proprietor, in the country. The inns are very different from those of Europe; the host and hostess sit at table with you, and do the honours of a comfortable meal; and when you depart, you pay your bill without being obliged to tax it. If you should dislike going to inns, you may always find country houses in which you will be received, as a good American, with the same attention that you might expect in a friend’s house in Europe. (Lafayette 1777 in Lafayette 1837).

After a month long trip, he arrived at Philadelphia on 27 July.

August–October 1777, Philadelphia, Brandywine, Georgetown

In June 1777, British commander General William Howe invaded New Jersey in an attempt to draw Washington's army out of Morristown. Washington refused to engage, holding his army as a block on the land route to Philadelphia. On 28 June, this military strategy was articulated by 21 year old Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Hamilton:

I know the comments some people will make on our Fabian conduct. It will be imputed either to cowardice, or to weakness. But the more discerning, I trust, will not find it difficult to conceive that it proceeds from the truest policy, and is an argument neither of one nor the other ... Our business then is to avoid a general engagement, and to waste the enemy away by constantly goading their sides in a desultory, teasing way. (Hamilton 1776 in Muir 1977, 27)

On 22 August when British intentions to attack Philadelphia became clear, Continentals were again united in that city. On 24 August, 16,000 paraded through the city. The next day, they moved to Wilmington, Delaware, to block the British disembarking from the Chesapeake Bay (Rankin 1971, 92–99). The American Army built a defensive position north of Brandywine Creek, Pennsylvania, and met the British Army there on 11 September. The North Carolina Brigade, commanded by Brigadier General Francis Nash, was just upstream of Chadd's Ford. It formed a reserve behind Nathanael Greene's division. During the morning hours, Washington expected the British to attack across Chadd's Ford. But in the afternoon, he discovered the surprising British flanking maneuver occurred on the opposite end. To meet this threat, Washington ordered Nathanael Greene's division to reposition 4 miles away. That maneuver was executed in 45 minutes (Battle of Brandywine 2002). The North Carolina Brigade participated in this maneuver, and met the enemy. However, (Rankin 1971, 105) indicates that it did not participate in direct fighting. The American Army retreated to north of Philadelphia.

Captain James Cox, husband of Mary Alexander, a McGuire-related 5th great-grandaunt, was killed at Brandywine.

On 1 September, from Quanky Creek near Halifax, all remaining Continental officers and soldiers, including Lieutenant Colonel Robert Mebane, began to march north. They joined George Washington's army after Brandywine (Davidson 1951, 44).

In late September, as British forces advanced on Philadelphia, a detachment of Mecklenburg Continental soldiers was assigned the task of transporting the heavy baggage out of town.

Col. Polk was assigned to remove the heavy baggage from Philadelphia. This amounted to 200 men and 700 wagons containing also all of the brass bells of Philadelphia (to keep the British from melting them down for cannon balls). Among these, of course was the State House Bell, later known as the Liberty Bell. He carried the baggage first to Trenton and then to Bethlehem Pa. The arrival is recorded in the Moravian church records of Sept 23, 1777. The wagon with the State House Bell broke down in the middle of the street and they had to unload the bell. Highland prisoners [those captured after Moore's Creek Bridge] were moved out – further west – and their quarters were turned into a hospital. The wagons were unloaded and sent back to Philadelphia. (Polk 1912) (Williams 2010)

George Washington withdrew to a camp northwest of Philadelphia. Continental Congress moved to York, Pennsylvania. On 26 September, British occupied the city, and built its main camp at Germantown. George Washington devised a plan to attack this camp with four independent troop columns that were to converge simultaneously at daybreak 4 October. At first, success appeared likely. But foggy conditions prevented the four American columns from seeing each other. About 120 British soldiers took shelter in a fortress-like stone house. Washington decided to subdue the house rather than bypass it. That wasted valuable time. The delay caused other American officers to believe they were surrounded, and they ordered a withdrawal. Soon all Americans withdrew. Nathanael Greene wrote, Americans "fled from Victory." Nonetheless, British suffered high losses and withdrew from Germantown. Charles Stedman, British commissary officer and later historian, wrote:

It was the general opinion of the officers of both armies, that, had the Americans advanced immediately, instead of attacking the fortieth regiment, the total defeat of the British must have ensued. But the delay occasioned by the several attempts to reduce Chew's House afforded time for the British line to get under arms; and that circumstance was justly considered as the salvation of the royal army. (Stedman 1794, 1:300).

At Germantown, the North Carolina Brigade was in a central attacking column, following Generals Sullivan and Wayne's soldiers (Commager and Morris 1975, 626). It saw heavy fighting when Americans withdrew. Brigade commander Brigadier General Francis Nash was mortally wounded. Later, Georgia Brigadier General Lachlan McIntosh assumed temporary command until replaced by North Carolinian Colonel Thomas Clark.

No specifics about Robert Mebane's participation are known. His immediate superior, Colonel James Hogun, "behaved with distinguished intrepidity." (Rankin 1971, 168). That evidence helped promote Hogun to brigadier general and brigade commander on 9 January 1779.

Colonel Thomas Polk, 7th great-granduncle of Arabelle Boyer, participated at Germantown and was wounded. He exchanged final words with dying Francis Nash (Rankin 1971, 115). His son Major William Polk, a 1st cousin 8 generations removed of Arabelle Boyer, was shot through both jaws, but recovered (Polk in Hoyt 1914, II:404) (Rankin 1971, 118).

During the winter of 1777–1778, American soldiers camped at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania (Rankin 1971, 90–123). Soldier privations and suffering were astonishing. For example, in late December 1777, of the 1051 North Carolina Continentals, 327 were sick and 164 were unfit for duty for want of clothing (Rankin 1971, 138). As wintertime conditions worsened, the Scotch-Irish soldiers remained steadfast. Washington declared, "If defeated everywhere else, I will make my last stand for liberty among the Scotch-Irish of my native Virginia." While at Valley Forge, Washington requested the Continental Congress appoint Marquis de Lafayette, age 20, commander of a division with the rank of major general. Because of Lafayette's heroism at Brandywine and his exemplary character, his appointment was popular among American officers and men. Lafayette was likewise impressed with his Continentals at Valley Forge. He wrote, "The patient fortitude of the officers and soldiers was a continual miracle that each moment renewed." More Valley Forge details appear in (Bill 1952).



Major General Gilbert du Motier Marquis de Lafayette
Engraved by George E. Perine.

During December 1777–May 1778, the North Carolina Brigade was at Valley Forge under the American division commanded by Lafayette. Its camp was close to Washington's headquarters. Since Robert Mebane's responsibilities were two levels below division level, he did not take orders directly from

Lafayette or Washington. But during his long service, he likely interacted with most principal military leaders.

January–May 1778, Oath of Allegiance, French Alliance, Barren Hill

On 3 February 1778, the Continental Congress, having taken into consideration the report of the special committee appointed to devise effectual means to prevent persons disaffected to the interest of the United States from being employed in any of the important offices thereof, resolved, That every officer who held or should thereafter hold a commission or office from Congress, should subscribe the oath or affirmation of allegiance. These oaths or affirmations the commander-in-chief or any major or brigadier-general was authorized and directed to administer to all officers of the army or of any of the departments thereof. (Barrie 1890). Washington delayed administering this oath until Congress clarified long-term pay commitments to his officers.

On 6 February 1778, France signed a treaty of alliance with United States.

On 28 March 1778, the South Carolina General Assembly passes an oath of allegiance law for all residents. Many loyalists fled to British Florida.

On 6 May 1778, a *Grand Review* parade at Valley Forge celebrated the new alliance with France. The French ambassador attended.

After France entered the war, Philadelphia became vulnerable to the French Navy blockading the Delaware River. During May 1778, British intentions to evacuate Philadelphia became clear. Before or on 19 May, Washington ordered Lafayette to move about 3000 troops towards Philadelphia. Lafayette crossed Schuylkill River at Matson's Ford and set up a position on Barren Hill. During the night of 19–20 May, 5000 British soldiers marched by a circuitous route to the rear of the Americans, blocking the road. At the same time, another strong British detachment under General Charles Grey marched more directly towards Barren Hill and took control of a downstream Schuylkill ford. When the Americans realized their severe predicament, they hurriedly withdrew directly to Matson's Ford avoiding the road. General Washington, who was a few miles away, thought Lafayette's position was hopeless. It was reported that Washington was so alarmed that he destroyed an intervening bridge to save his remaining troops. The British had sufficient time to control Matson's Ford, and if they had, Barren Hill would be known as a significant British victory. Fortunately, Lafayette's troops did cross at Matson's Ford and stabilized the situation by quickly securing high ground on the opposite bank. (Stedman 1794, 1:376–379).

Since Lieutenant Colonel Robert Mebane's unit was in Major General Lafayette's division, he likely participated in these events near Barren Hill and Matson's Ford.

In late May, while at Valley Forge, all [officers pledged their allegiance](#) by signing individual certificates (PNG 1980, II:398).

Lieutenant Colonel Robert Mebane signed an oath of allegiance certificate. He indicated that he was still in Seventh Regiment. (PNG 1980, II:398).

In June 1778, Hardy Hurdle Junior, an Anderson-related 4th great-grandfather, took the oath of allegiance in Chowan County, North Carolina.

May–July 1778, Regiment consolidation, Monmouth Courthouse

On 27 May 1778, Congress, with General Washington's consultation, reorganized the Continental Army. The number of regiments was reduced from 88 to 80 with South Carolina, North Carolina and Virginia supplying 6, 6 and 11 respectively. Each new regiment was to add a new company of light infantry drawn from the other 8 companies. No officer was to be promoted to colonel, instead a lieutenant colonel must advance directly to brigadier general. Each regimental field officer was to command a company in addition to his regimental duties (Peterson 1968, 258). The 9 North Carolina regiments in the North were consolidated into 3 regiments. This created an excess of officers. These so-called supernumerary officers returned to North Carolina (Rankin 1971, 147).

On 1 June, Lieutenant Colonel Robert Mebane was reassigned as a company commander in First Regiment. Its 8 September muster roll was recorded (NCSR 1895, XV:724).

On 26 June, Colonel Thomas Polk wrote to General Washington from Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, resigning his commission:

May it please your Excellency:

From the earliest Commencement of the present War, I have been actively engaged in the services of my country. I embarked in it at so early a season as rendered me not a little obnoxious to a vast majority of the Province in which I lived. The timid, the Friends of the established Government, & the moderate, as they were called, at that Period composed the bulk of the Inhabitants—by them was my forward zeal universally condemned. Thro' innumerable difficulties, from opposition, & inconveniences to my private interest, in the militia and regular service, I continued my efforts for the public good, and doubted not, as I had done more of this kind for the defence of the State than any other member of it, that I had deserved well of my Country; but as soon as an opening for promotion was made by the unhappy fall of Gen'l Nash, the power of a party, overlooking the merit of these services, procured a recommendation in favour of a Junior Officer. Such a flagrant demonstration of partiality and injurious preference, without alledging a single article of disqualification against me, has determined me no longer to serve my ungratefull country in so painful and so hazardous a capacity.

I rejoice in the prosperity of my country, and am willing, on every occasion, to aid the advancement of its Interests, but choose not to obtrude my services.

For these reasons I am constrained to offer your Excellency my Commission in the Army, and humbly beg that you would kindly condescend to accept it.

I am, may it please your Excellency,
with the profoundest respect,
Your Excellency's most humble,
most obedient, and most devoted Servant,
THOMAS POLK.

Mecklenburg County, in the State of N. Carolina,
June 26, 1778.

His Excellency Gen'l Washington, Commander
in Chief of the Armies of the United States. (Polk 1778 in NCSR 1895, XIII:451)
(Williams 2010)

Until October 1778, North Carolina Continental soldiers wore personal hunting coats, although most officers probably purchased uniforms.



Private North Carolina Third Regiment in 1778.
Painted by Charles M. Lefferts. (Lefferts 1926).

On 18 June 1778, British Army evacuated Philadelphia and moved by land towards New York City. General Washington ordered his army to follow the British column. On 24 June, the entire region witnessed a predicted solar eclipse. On 28 June, at Monmouth Courthouse, New Jersey, Washington ordered an attack. The initial attack was led by Lafayette, Wayne, and Scott. Both Wayne and Scott believed they near “obtained a most glorious and decisive victory.” But Major General Charles Lee ordered a withdrawal. Shortly afterwards, Washington countermanded the withdrawal. Fighting lasted from sunup to sundown in extremely hot weather. After suffering heavy losses, British pulled away during the night (Rankin 1971, 154).

From about 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m., 24 June 1778, Carolina residents experienced a total solar eclipse. Its track ran along the Carolina Piedmont about 25 miles south of and parallel to present-day highway I85. Totality was experienced within 50 miles on both sides of that track.



Total Solar Eclipse, Zone of Totality, 24 June 1778 (NASA 2012)

A Moravian, probably at Bethabara or Bethania settlement, recorded:

Beginning shortly before 9 o'clock in the morning there was an almost total eclipse of the sun. At the peak of the eclipse the sun was under a cloud, and for some minutes it was necessary to light the candles, stars peeped out here and there, and no one can remember to have seen the like before. The reapers returned from the field about 9 o'clock, and did not go out again until afternoon. (RMNC 1922, III:1237) (Bumgarner 2014)

On 26 June 1778, the *North Carolina Gazette*, in New Bern, published:

On Wednesday last, the great eclipse of the sun, as calculated by astronomers in the almanacks, and said to happen in this latitude, and be visible here, was observed with great attention, and some surprise to the ignorant, the weather being tolerably clear, and the moon's passage over the sun's disk being distinctly seen during the whole immersion. This was the greatest eclipse of the sun ever seen here by the eldest people now living among us, and exhibited a scene truly awful. The gradual obscurity of the sun, the decrease of her light, the sickly face of nature, and at last the total darkness which ensued, the stars appearing as at midnight, and the fowls seeking for their nightly shelter, caused a solemnity truly great, and, tho' proceeding from a natural cause, the moon's passing between the sun and our earth, which she must necessarily do in certain periods in different latitudes, was beheld with astonishment and gratitude to the supreme Ruler of the universe, by whose almighty power the motions of such vast bodies are regular and uniform, and the delightful system of the world kept entire and complete. (NCSR 1895, XIII:450) (Poteet 2009–2017)

North Carolina First Regiment participated at Monmouth Courthouse. It may have participated in the initial attack under command of General Scott. During the late afternoon hours, the North Carolina Brigade again moved to the front (Rankin 1971, 158). During 12–19 July, George Washington's headquarters ordered Robert Mebane to preside over a court martial of prisoners (NCSR 1895, XII:501). That typically included trials of all American soldiers currently in prison accused of petty crimes, neglect of duty, and desertion.

October 1778–July 1779, Encirclement of New York City, King's Ferry

With the British back in New York City, Washington began to encircle it. In October 1778, new Continental uniforms arrived from France. North Carolina Continentals were given blue coats faced in blue (Rankin 1971, 163).

Robert Mebane may have commanded First Regiment in late 1778 when Colonel Thomas Clark assumed temporary command of the North Carolina Brigade. For certain, Mebane commanded 200 North Carolina Continental soldiers at King's Ferry along the major north-south road. King's Ferry crosses the Hudson River between Stony Point and Verplanck's Point. This defense protected American commerce as well as prevented British use of the upper Hudson River as a supply line into occupied New York City (Rankin 1971, 166).



King's Ferry across Hudson River
Revolutionary War era map
From Stony Point Park, New York, web site.

On 4 and 7 December 1778, George Washington issued the following orders to Colonel Thomas Clark, commander of the North Carolina Brigade. The second order refers to the first. Both orders were combined and dispatched to Clark on 7 December.

Elizabeth Town, December 4, 1778.

Sir: As the Convention Troops [British captives being marched to a Virginia prison] will have passed above you by the time this reaches you, the object of your Station at the [Smith's] Clove will have been effected. You will therefore be pleased to move down to Paramus with the [North] Carolina Brigade and quarter your Men in as compact a manner as the situation of the Buildings will permit. You shall, upon my arrival at Middle Brook receive more particular instructions. I would recommend it to you, as soon as you have taken post, to make yourself acquainted with the Roads leading to the North [Hudson] River and have pickets established upon them at proper distances from you. You are in no danger from any other quarter. Should the Enemy move up the River in any considerable force, you are immediately to fall back to your former position at Suffern's and send your Baggage to Pompton. Colo. Morgan furnished Mr. Erskine at Ringwood Iron Works with a guard of a serjeant and 12. be pleased to send the like number to releive them. They are to remain there during the Winter, as Mr. Erskine will be compleating some valuable surveys for the public.

Be pleased to make use of all means to cut off the intercourse between the Country and New York [City]. You are upon no account to permit any inhabitant of the States of New York or New Jersey to pass to New York [City] without permissions under the hands of their respective Governors. Upon your arrival at Paramus you are to send the inclosed to Colo. Febiger at Hackinsack. It directs him to join his Brigade, as soon as you have taken post. I am &ca.

Paramus Decemr. 7.

The Enemy having gone down the [Hudson] River, you will immediately proceed to put the foregoing into execution. Be pleased to let the 200 Men under Colo. Mabane, if they are not already withdrawn, remain near Kings ferry until they are relieved by a party, which will be sent over by Genl. McDougal. I must beg you to be particularly careful to prevent the Soldiers from burning the fences of the farmers and committing other disorderly acts. I am etc.

[P.S.] If Colo. Mabane should have been withdrawn from Kings ferry, be pleased to leave an officer and 50 Men at Kakiate until you receive further orders. (Fitzpatrick 1932, 13:377).

On 9 January 1779, Colonel James Hogun was promoted to brigadier general and commander of the North Carolina Brigade. Thomas Clark resumed his former position as commander of First Regiment. Mebane remained in First Regiment. Reference (NCSR 1895, XVI:1113) states that on 9 February 1779, Robert Mebane's status was "Coll.". It is not certain if this was a promotion. Beginning March 1779, North Carolina Third Regiment strength dropped due to enlistment expirations (Rankin 1971, 167). In the February 1779 Continental Army strength return (Lesser 1976, 104), these expirations may be indicated as sick absent.

February 1779 North Carolina Regiments Strength Return

		First	Second	Third
Fit for Duty	Commissioned Officers	18	12	16
	Noncommissioned Officers	38	39	15
	Staff Officers	4	5	4
	Rank & File	302	223	35
	Total	362	279	70
Sick & Furlough	Sick Present	28	44	62
	Sick Absent	35	16	263
	On Command, Extra Service	125	127	64
	On Furlough	1	7	
Grand Total		551	473	459
Alterations	Deaths		10	24
	Deserted	2	3	
	Joined, Enlisted, Recruited	3	3	

On 4 April 1779, in a report to Continental Board of War, George Washington recommended that Robert Mebane assume command of Third Regiment, exchanging responsibilities with Lieutenant Colonel William Lee Davidson.

... If Lieutenant Colo. Mebane was the Oldest Lieutenant Colonel in the North Carolina line when Colo. Hogan [Hogun] was promoted to the rank of a Brigadier, he unquestionably, according to the principles of rank recomd. should be appointed Lieutenant Colonel Commandant, and Lt. Colo. Davidson should remove to the Regiment in which the former served. ... (Fitzpatrick 1932, 14:331).

On 17 April 1779, Continental Board of War ordered Robert Mebane to return Third Regiment to North Carolina for recruitment and to counter the growing British threat from Savannah, Georgia. The Board of War Office informed North Carolina Governor Richard Caswell.

WAR OFFICE, April 17th, 1779

SIR:

The time of service of the non-commissioned officers and privates of the Third North Carolina Regiment being expired, all the officers belonging to it are to return home to the State, as they may do service in the Southern Army, if furnished with men. We have given orders to Lieut. Col. Mebane, who has the command of the Regiment, to apply to the Government of your State to form a Regiment, to be employed at the Southward during the continuance of the Enemy in that quarter, the Regiment to be raised in such manner as the Government shall think fit, only, if engaged on the continental establishment, the Regiment must, of course, be liable to serve where the exigency of the States shall call them. Of this matter we judged it expedient to inform your Excellency,

and to request that as those officers continue in pay they may be furnished with the means of serving the United States.

We have the honor to be,
Very respectfully, your Mo. Ob. Servt.,
TIM PICKERING.

By order of the Board.

Gov. Caswell. (Pickering 1779 in NCSR 1895, XIV:70)

Reference (Heitman 1914, 46) states Mebane transferred to Third Regiment on 7 June, but that maybe an administrative delay. As a regimental commander, Mebane was directly answerable to North Carolina Governor Caswell. In a 10 May letter, he wrote about recruitment problems and officer discontent.

HALIFAX, May 10th, 1779

SIR:

The enclosed is a return of the Regiment which marched from this place under the command of Genl. Hogun, which, I think, is sufficient to convince the Assembly of the impropriety of raising Troops for so short a time, and the necessity of having them supplied with clothing and other necessities when raised.

I have dismissed the officers with orders to meet agreeable to your orders, which Major Hogg (the bearer of this) waits on your Excellency for, but am almost convinced if the Assembly does not do something for the support of the officers they will not all meet. There has been several applications made to me already, and from I think, the best of my officers, to receive their commissions, but have prevailed on them to keep them until the Assembly rises. The officers to the Northward are much dissatisfied with the treatment they have received from the State. Capt. McRee, came from the Brigade a few days before I left Philadelphia, says that the officers were then met in order to inform the State if there was not something done immediately for them they would resign to a man; from what I heard before I left there am convinced they will.

My bad state of health will not permit my waiting (agreeable to orders) on the Governor and council, wish the Major to receive the orders respecting the Regiment.

I am, with esteem,
Your Ob. humb. Servt.,
ROBERT MEBANE (Mebane 1779 in NCSR 1895, XIV:80)

In response, North Carolina General Assembly resolved that Continental officers who did not resign should receive half pay for life after the war, and such pay was transferable to their wives if they died in service (Davidson 1951, 55).

The famous Stony Point Battle occurred the night of 15–16 July 1779. Selected North Carolina Continentals participated. They probably included men in Mebane's previous regiment. At that time, Mebane had already departed with Third Regiment for North Carolina.

Late 1778, Southern Strategy

At the end of 1778, the British Army was back in New York City, in essentially the same strategic position held in 1776. Thus, war in northern states reached a stalemate. In addition, Britain was at war with France and needed relocate troops to secure all its colonies, especially in the West Indies. This manpower shortage caused Britain to change its strategy by focusing on southern states where it believed loyalist militia, such as Highland immigrants, could be recruited. Former royal North Carolina Governor Josiah Martin made such optimistic projections. Britain's planners mistakenly assumed that most backcountry men were

loyalists. They did not consider likely Scotch-Irish reaction. The regular British Army objective was to suppress rebellion enough to reinstate loyalist control of local governments. If successful, the American Army would be proven ineffective in supporting rebel local governments. So, the British Army searched for ways to engage rebel forces while the American Army countered this goal by merely maintaining a respectable force.

December 1778–March 1779, Savannah, Brier Creek

Beginning 29 December 1778, British controlled Savannah, then Georgia's capital. Soon afterwards it captured Augusta, Georgia. The American Army encamped across the Savannah River at Purrysburgh, South Carolina. There on 3 January 1779, Major General Benjamin Lincoln took command from Brigadier General Robert Howe.



American Army Encampment Site on Savannah River
Purrysburgh, South Carolina

Nancy Morgan Hart was a McGuire-related 3rd cousin 6 generations removed. Her husband Benjamin Hart, and sons Morgan, John, and Thomas, are said to have participated in Kettle Creek battle, 14 February 1779 where Colonel Andrew Pickens defeated North Carolina loyalists marching to join the British. The incident described below occurred after that battle. This description is from L. Parker, a distant Alexander-family relative.

King's men had captured Savannah and Augusta, and the loyalists and rebel guerillas were engaged in savage raids. One day five or six Tories invaded Nancy Hart's cabin after murdering a militia colonel, John Dooly, in his bed. They had killed her last turkey gobbler, and ordered her to cook it. Nancy, called the "War Woman" by the local Indians for her ferocity against local Tories, now turned to apparent guile. While pretending to cooperate, she sent her daughter Sukey to summon her father. She then was caught slipping guns through a chink in the cabin wall, as the Tories were becoming jovial over flowing liquor. In the next moments, she had killed one of the Tories, and wounded another who was misled, perhaps, by her crossed eyes. She then held them all until her husband and others arrived and captured the startled Tories. The men proposed shooting the Tories, but Nancy argued that such a death was too good for Dooly's murderers, whereupon they were hanged in the Hart's backyard. She was also credited with pretending insanity to learn of war plans in British occupied Augusta. Another story tells of her crossing the Savannah River on a raft to gather secret information for Georgia patriots.

It is difficult to separate fact from legend. Credibility increased in 1912 when a railroad crew discovered graves of six men near what was the Hart property. Hart County, Georgia, was named for her when it was created in 1853. There is also a Nancy Hart Highway in Georgia.



Nancy Morgan Hart holding Tories at gunpoint.
Painted by Louis S. Glanzman, National Geographic, October 1975.



Nancy Morgan Hart Monument
Constructed by United States Government. Unveiled 11 November 1931.
Near highway US29, Hartwell, Georgia.

Coincidentally, on the same day, on the other side of the earth, Captain James Cook was killed by the indigenous people of Hawaii. Even during the costly American Revolution, Britain could afford worldwide explorations.

On 3 March 1779, highly exposed North Carolina soldiers under Colonel John Ashe were defeated at Brier Creek, Georgia.

In March 1779, threats forced Reverend Alexander MacWhorter to leave Newark, New Jersey, and move with his family to Charlotte, North Carolina, where he was appointed President of Liberty Hall Academy (Dussek 2011–2014). Earlier in 1774, he had created *Newark Academy*. MacWhorter was a personal acquaintance of General George Washington and had served as chaplain to Major General Henry Knox's brigade. (McLachan 1976, 194–199)



Reverend Alexander MacWhorter
Painted by James Sharples, 1795–1800.

April–June 1779, Prevost's attack on Charlestown, Stono Ferry

In April 1779, Major General Benjamin Lincoln and Colonel Griffith Rutherford were heroes among the Whigs. Both were containing British forces within Savannah, Georgia. In North Carolina, the local Tryon County Whig government split and renamed their new counties Lincoln and Rutherford. Beginning on 3 May, Lincoln County citizens signed a petition to the General Assembly for appointment of their militia field officers (Broad River Genealogy Society, *Eswau Huppeday*, 1998, XVIII:2:175–178).

Peter Plunk and Adam Kiser, both 4th great-granduncles, signed this petition (Broad River Genealogy Society, *Eswau Huppeday*, 1998, XVIII:2:175).

The recommended Lincoln County leader was Colonel William Graham who on 12 May, received a new commission. Its text was typical of all officer commissions.

State of North Carolina: to William Graham Esq.,

Greetings, we, reposing special trust and confidence in your Valor, Conduct and Fidelity do by these presents Constitute and appoint you to be Col of the Lincoln [County] Regiment of Militia of this State. You [illegible words] carefully and diligently to discharge the duties of a Colonel by exercising and well disciplining the Officers and Soldiers under your Command and by doing and performing all manner of things thereunto belonging and we do Strictly Charge and require all Officers and Soldiers under your Command to be Obedient to your Orders as Colonel and you are to Observe and follow such Orders and Directions from time to time as you shall receive from your Superior Officers according to the Rules and Directions of Military Discipline and the law of this State.

Witness: Richard Caswell, Esq., Governor Captain General and Commander in Chief of the said State under his hand and the Great Seal of this State at Smithfield the 12th day of May Anna Dom 1779 and in the 3rd year of our independence.

By his Excellency commanded: [signed] J. Glasgow, Sec.
[signed] Richard Caswell (Graham, William, pension application 1832)

Beginning 23 April 1779, American commander Major General Benjamin Lincoln invaded Georgia to dislodge the British. In a daring countermove, British Brigadier General Augustine Prevost with 2400 men invaded South Carolina and advanced to the gates of Charlestown. Prevost negotiated with South Carolina Governor John Rutledge, and foolishly rejected the Governor's offer of South Carolina neutrality for the remainder of the war. A few days later, the approach of Lincoln's 4000-man army forced Prevost to withdraw to John's Island. Lincoln was harshly criticized for leaving Charlestown exposed. On 20 June, Lincoln challenged and lost the battle at Stono Ferry.



Major General Benjamin Lincoln
Painted by Charles Willson Peale, 1781–1783.

Major William Richardson Davie was wounded in Stono Ferry battle.

Colonel James Armstrong commanded the North Carolina Fourth Regiment at Stono Ferry. He was wounded. Apparently, he was from Pitt County and not related to Mary Armstrong who married 5th great-granduncle Alexander Mebane II.

Colonel Hugh Tinnin, an Anderson-related 1st cousin 7 generations removed, participated at Stono Ferry (Conolly 2008).

Because of the growing British threat on Savannah, Lieutenant Colonel Robert Mebane, an Anderson-related 5th great-granduncle, marched North Carolina Third Regiment from New Jersey back to North Carolina during late April through early May 1779. He and his officers recruited to bring the regiment to full strength. In a 30 June letter to Governor Richard Caswell, he said poor health would prevent him from performing his duties.

HILLSBOROUGH, June 30th, 1779

SIR:

As opportunity offers I think it my duty to inform you that I am in a very low state of health; without an alteration must of consequence leave the service. I am sorry to inform you that there are but few Soldiers raised in this District. I have not as yet heard what

they are doing in the District of Salisbury. Genl. M. Ramsey informs me that he is to write to you this day; therefore I only inform you that there is not one Continental officer in this district or the district of Salisbury as I know of.

I am, with due esteem,
Your Excellency's ob. humb. Serv't.,
ROBT. MEBANE. (Mebane 1779 in NCSR 1895, XIV:136)

Either Mebane's resignation request was refused or his illness was temporary. No doubt, recruitment continued. In August 1779, Third Regiment had 171 soldiers (Rankin 1971, 167).

On 3 July 1779, 5th great-granduncle James Anderson acquired land through a North Carolina grant. The land was along Back Creek opposite the confluence of Mill Creek. That land is northwest of present-day Mebane, North Carolina. (W. L. Anderson 2012a)

David Motley, a Plonk-related 4th great-granduncle, was a Continental soldier who marched to Savannah in Captain Thomas Scott's Company. He also was in Virginia 3rd Regiment under Colonel McEntush (Hurt 1976, 191).

Captain James Morehead, brother of husband of 4th great-grandaunt, participated at Stono Ferry.

September–October 1779, Siege of Savannah

During September 1779, a joint American and French force assembled to dislodge the British from Savannah. The French were led by Vice Admiral Henri Le Comte d'Estaing. A 800-man British force at Port Royal Island rapidly moved to reinforce Savannah. Using small boats, they found a little-known waterway called Wall's Cut that evaded French warships anchored off the Savannah River mouth. A portion of their path can be viewed today from the Hilton Head Harbour Town lighthouse. On 9 October, the British successfully defended Savannah.

Folk Family tradition indicates that John Benedict Folk, half 3rd great-granduncle of Chris Evans Folk Sr., died at Savannah on 1 December 1779. He was listed on the roll of Captain John Murphy's South Carolina loyalists.

A strength report on 23 October indicates that Third Regiment was in Charlestown under acting command of Major Thomas Hogg. It also indicates that Colonel Mebane was on duty in North Carolina (Lincoln 1779–1780). On 27 October, Mebane was in Charlestown when he signed a weapons report. He signed his rank as colonel (Lincoln 1779–1780). On 8 November, Mebane was ordered to preside over a court martial of prisoners. However, apparently he was relieved of this duty since on 12 November, Colonel Peter Horry presided (Grimke 1779–1780).

October 1779–February 1780, Charlestown

On 19 November, George Washington ordered all other North Carolina regiments at West Point, New York, and Philadelphia to march south. Frustrated by weather and many delays, they did not arrive in Charlestown until 3 March 1780 (Davidson 1951, 57).

In November 1779, a limited smallpox epidemic erupted in Charlestown, South Carolina. Rumors of its continuance lasted for several months and dissuaded many South Carolina militiamen from entering the town.



View of Charles Town

Painted by Thomas Leitch, 1774.

Prominent Saint Michael's Anglican Church steeple and Exchange Building stand today.

Collection of Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts, Winston-Salem, North Carolina

On 27 November 1779, Colonel Mebane was ordered to sit on a court of inquiry into the "Cause of the Deficiency in the Supply of Wood & Forage at Fort Moultrie & in Town." On 1 December, this court was ordered to investigate a complaint that "Sick and wounded were neglected on their passage from Savannah to Charles Town." On 7 December, this court reported its findings. (Grimke 1779–1780).

John Moor was a 4th great-grandfather who lived near Bethel Presbyterian Church in the New Acquisition District, later York County, South Carolina. In 1779 or early 1780, his militia unit was marched to Four-Hole Swamp Bridge to guard that crossing on the road between Charlestown and Dorchester (Moor, John, pension application 1845) (Sutton 1987, 360). That bridge was at or near the present-day highway US78 bridge over Four-Hole Swamp River. Although the pension indicates this event occurred in 1779 or 1780, it is possible that John Moor's wife Jane Patton confused the time with November–December 1781 when Sumter's brigade was near Orangeburg, South Carolina (Bass 1961, 212–213).

On 7 December, a court martial found Thomas Wilson, a private in North Carolina Third Regiment, guilty of desertion and sentenced him to "receive 100 Lashes on the bareback with a Cat o'nine Tails, but from his former good Character & behavior & this being his first offence, they recommend him to the General to have it mitigated or omitted." However, Lincoln ordered, "The Gen^l. approved the Sentence & directs it to be executed tomorrow Morning at Guard mounting, as the reason assigned by the Court would not in his Opinion justify a Remission or mitigation of the Sentence." (Grimke 1779–1780).

On 17 December, Colonel Mebane ordered a board of officers to settle the ranks of all officers in Third Regiment (Lincoln 1779–1780).

On 1 January 1780, an abstract of Lieutenant Colonel Robert Mebane's Third Regiment muster roll was submitted to Major General Lincoln. It reports 5 companies with a total strength of 202 men (Lincoln 1779–1780). A report of horse forage consumption indicates that Mebane drew forage for 4 horses during 14–18 January (Lincoln 1779–1780).

Charlestown defense depended on Fort Moultrie control of the harbor entrance and a massive fortification against land assault. The latter extended across a peninsula neck between tidal creeks of the Ashley River and Cooper River. Today, this neck is unrecognizable due to land fill, but since the 1750s a fortification wall extended for about a mile from present-day Smith Street along Vanderhorst Street, across King Street and Marion Square, along Charlotte Street, turning northward towards Chapel Street (Borick 2003, 42). During 1779–1780, the fortification was strengthened under the direction of French engineers Colonel Laumoy and Lieutenant Colonel Cambray-Digny. The major earthen wall, or *parapet*, average height was 10 feet. In front of the wall were two lines of *abatis*, cut treetops planted with sharpened branches facing outward that functioned like present-day barbed wire. Deep holes, called "wolf-traps," were hidden in the abatis (Rankin 1971, 222) (Borick 2003, 116). In front of the abatis was a groundwater *canal*, 12 feet wide

and 6 feet deep. Centralized behind the parapet was a hardened fort, called *hornwork*, erected earlier during 1758–1759. It was made with *tabby*: a lime, oyster-shell, and sand cement. It had two bastions connected by a curtain-wall that included a double gate where it crossed King Street. Today, a curtain-wall segment remains at Marion Square (Butler 2014). During the defense, several temporary mini-forts, called *redoubts* and *redans*, were built.



Hornwork curtain wall remnant in front of 1842 Citadel.
Marion Square, Charleston

Note: Tabby

Tabby is a construction material and process well suited to the coast of southeastern North America where its raw materials were readily available. It was first used by Spanish colonists. The process began by burning a large quantity of oyster shells, reducing them to white powder lime and ash. The results were mixed with sand, ordinary seashells, and water. The resulting mortar was poured into a wooden mold and allowed to harden over a few days. A high wall was made in layers. The outer surface was often covered with stucco. Tabby use ended with the introduction of Portland cement.

Lieutenant Colonel Robert Mebane's regiment probably assisted in strengthening the fortification. On 6 February 1780, Mebane commanded a fatigue party to support the military engineers (Grimke 1779–1780).

February–May 1780, British Landing, Siege of Charlestown

On 11 February 1780, the British Army disembarked from North Edisto River inlet onto Simmons Island, present-day Seabrook Island. They advanced across Johns and James Islands. During February, Americans defended Ashley River Ferry, 13 miles upstream of Charlestown near Drayton Hall and also Bacon Bridge, the closest Ashley River bridge, near present-day Summerville, South Carolina. The South Carolina General Assembly adjourned after granting Governor John Rutledge the “power to do everything necessary for the publick good, except the taking away the life of a citizen without a legal trial.” (Borick 2003, 46). He was a virtual dictator.

American Major General Benjamin Lincoln's daily orders were recorded and posted by staff member Lieutenant Colonel John Faucher and Grimke (Grimke 1779–1780). These orders assigned alarm posts to all units. They also specified guard Officers-of-the-Day. Such guard duty superseded ordinary duties and lasted 24 hours beginning and ending in the morning. An Officer-of-the-Day was required to check all sentry positions, conduct special patrols, as well as visit the hospital and prison. Lincoln's daily orders also

assigned soldiers to special fatigue or guard duty. On 14 February, the one North Carolina regiment was ordered to join the Virginia Brigade under Colonel Richard Parker (Grimke 1779–1780).

On 15 February, Lieutenant Colonel Robert Mebane was a guard Officer-of-the-Day. On 24 February, Mebane was a guard Officer-of-the-Day. He was ordered to assemble 175 men with 4-days provisions. The next day, these men were transferred to Lieutenant Colonel John Laurens (Grimke 1779–1780) and probably marched to Ashley River Ferry.

On 3 March, Brigadier General James Hogun arrived in Charlestown with North Carolina First and Second Regiments. On 6 March, Mebane's Third Regiment was ordered to rejoin the North Carolina Brigade (Grimke 1779–1780). On 8 March, Mebane was a guard Officer-of-the-Day (Grimke 1779–1780). On 9 March, Private George McCarty, in Mebane's regiment, was judged guilty of desertion and sentenced to "100 lashes on his bare back with switches." Despite the serious offense, court martial officers and Major General Lincoln remitted his sentence (Grimke 1779–1780). On 22 March, Mebane was a guard Officer-of-the-Day (Grimke 1779–1780).

At 4:00 a.m. 10 March, the British Army crossed Wappoo Cut onto the mainland. Artillery batteries were quickly built to exclude American ships from the Ashley River, prevent a waterborne counterattack, and threaten the town with canon fire. Lincoln considered challenging the British west of the Ashley, but was unwilling to risk losing soldiers needed inside the fortifications (Borick 2003, 66–68).

On 20 March, during a spring tide and with an east wind, 7 British Navy warships, under Vice Admiral Marriot Arbuthnot, crossed the most significant sandbar barrier into Five Fathom Hole, a deep-water holding area off Morris Island. This action greatly weakened American strategic defense since the British Navy could support land operations and inevitably force Americans to defend the entire Charlestown perimeter. American warships became useless and many were scuttled in the Cooper River to support a chain and log boom. (Borick 2003, 71–85)

On 21 March, North Carolina Brigade was posted on the right, or Cooper River, side of the fortification line (McIntosh 1780, 99) (Moultrie 1802, II:72). Its camp was probably near present-day Charleston County Public Library on Calhoun Street. As an officer, Mebane probably roomed in a nearby house. On 22 March, Mebane was guard Officer-of-the-Day (Grimke 1779–1780).

Lincoln ordered measures to protect against a sudden attack. On 28 March, he ordered Saint Michael's Church bell rung every quarter hour throughout each night. Immediately after the ring, each sentry was to call aloud "All's well," beginning at the hornwork and proceeding to the right (Grimke 1779–1780).

During the night of 28–29 March, British sailors rowed flatboats 13 miles upstream to Drayton Hall. There, they rendezvoused with the British Army. Beginning at dawn, using the flatboats, the army crossed the river and quickly advanced along Dorchester Road towards Charlestown. By late 30 March, they secured Gibbes' Landing only 2 miles from the American fortifications and immediately north of present-day Citadel campus. At that crossing, heavy cannons and equipment were transported to the peninsula.

On 31 March, Lincoln ordered that at each daybreak, an Officer-of-the-Day conduct a patrol 300 to 400 yards towards the enemy (Grimke 1779–1780).

During 1 April–12 May 1780, the British Army applied a classic siege on the Charlestown fortification. That included digging approach trenches, called *saps*, and three successively closer parallel trenches. Combat engineers called *sappers* and 1500 workmen dug these trenches continuously, day and night (Borick 2003, 121). Sapper duty was so hazardous they were traditionally paid in advance. Hessian riflemen called *jaegers* protected them (Uhlendorf 1938). Military engineers recalculated the best positions for cannons, transported them, built platforms, and redoubts. The British first parallel lay along present-day Spring Street (Borick 2003, 280). American artillery bombarded these works in progress. British had 14,000 professional soldiers and sailors. American defenders continued to grow, but were at most 2000 Continentals plus 4000 militia.

On 7 April, Virginia Continental reinforcements arrived after a long march from the North (Borick 2003, 129).

On 8 April, 11 British Navy warships passed by Fort Moultrie's firing guns and entered Charlestown harbor (Borick 2003, 133). 27 British sailors were killed.

After completion of the first parallel on 10 April, British commander Major General Henry Clinton opened negotiations with American Major General Benjamin Lincoln. These negotiations followed formal 1700s diplomatic rules understood by all commanders. First, Clinton sent a *summons* pointing out the futility of defense and honorable terms of surrender, and warned that continued defense could result in a *storm* attack with unrestrained "effusion of blood" among both soldiers and civilians. The summons read:

Sir Henry Clinton K. B. General and Commander in Chief of His Majesty's forces in the Colonies lying on the Atlantic from Nova Scotia to [Florida] and Vice Admiral Arbuthnot[,] Commander in Chief of his Majesty's Ships in North America[,] regretting the effusion of Blood and distress which must now commence[,] deem it conformant to humanity to warn the Town and Garrison of Charlestown of the havock and devastation with which they are threatened from the formidable force surrounding them by Sea and Land.

An alternative is offered at this hour of saving their Lives and Property contained in the Town or of abiding by the fatal consequences of a cannonade and Storm.

Should the place in a fallacious Security or its Commander in a wanton indifference to the fate of its Inhabitants delay a Surrender or should the public Stores or Shipping be destroyed[,] the resentment of an exasperated Soldier may intervene[,] but the same mild and compassionate Offer can never be renewed. The respective Commanders who hereby summon the Town do not apprehend so rash a [path] as farther resistance will be taken, but rather that the Gates will be opened and themselves received with a degree of Confidence which will forebode further reconciliations. (Borick 2003, 136).



Sir Henry Clinton
British Commander in Chief. Directed Charlestown Siege.
Engraved by A. H. Ritchie, 1777.

Lincoln replied:

Gentlemen, I received your Summons of this date. Sixty days have passed since it has been known that your Intentions against this Town were hostile in which time has been afforded to abandon it, but Duty and Inclination point to the propriety of supporting it to the last extremity. (Borick 2003, 138).

On the morning of 13 April, Lincoln convened a council of general officers to discuss the prospects of their defense (Borick 2003, 138). During that meeting, at about 10:00 a.m., British artillery began bombarding the American fortification.

On 13 April, Lieutenant Colonel Robert Mebane was a guard Officer-of-the-Day (Grimke 1779–1780).

Before daybreak 14 April, British cavalry and infantry surprised and dispersed the American cavalry at Biggin's Bridge over the West Cooper River. That location was just south of present-day highway US52 bridge over Tail Race Canal below Lake Moultrie dam. That loss exposed the land area east of the Cooper River that was vital to American re-supply and possible escape.

Beginning 14 April, the North Carolina and Virginia brigades rotated 3 days on and 3 days off duty along the main defensive wall (Grimke 1779–1780).

On 15 April, British hauled gunboats from Ashley River to Town Creek, a Cooper River branch. Two boats with brass cannons fired on American ships *Ranger* and *Adventure* (McIntosh 1780, 101).

On 16 April, the British completed their second parallel approximately along present-day Morris and Mary Streets (Borick 2003, 288). That same day, the right arm of William Pitt's statue was clipped by a British cannon ball fired from James Island. Years later, further damage occurred during relocation.



Britain's Secretary of State William Pitt
Erected after 1766 Stamp Act repeal.
Partially damaged during 1780 Charlestown siege.
Charleston Museum

On 22 April, because of shortages, Lincoln ordered meat rations reduced to 3/4 pound per soldier (Grimke 1779–1780).

By 23 April, British completed their third parallel in two unconnected segments approximately along present-day Radcliffe, Ann, and Judith Streets (Borick 2003, 291). From there a sap was dug towards the canal. At daybreak 24 April, about 300 Continentals silently sallied forth surprising the British and killing about 20 (Borick 2003, 177). Because of the worsening strategic position, Lincoln and almost all subordinate officers advised evacuation of Continental soldiers, but civilian authorities pleaded for continued defense (Moultrie 1802, II:77).



Siege of Charlestown, view from British line

Painting by Alonzo Chappel, 1862.

Anne S. K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University Library, Providence, Rhode Island.

Shows American fortification across peninsula and sunken boom blocking Cooper River.

On 27 April, American troops evacuated their redoubt at Lampriers Point, east of Cooper River (Borick 2003, 189). That severed all outside communication. The Americans were surrounded. Lincoln planned to protect his army in the event of a British storm by enclosing the hornwork into a *citadel*. To build this, he ordered every soldier to collect as many as 15 fence pickets or wood panels from private property in Charlestown (Grimke 1779–1780).

Beginning the night of 28 April, Lincoln ordered the Officer-of-the-Day responsible to ignite turpentine barrels to illuminate the ground between the lines to discourage a British attack (Grimke 1779–1780).

On 29 April, Lincoln ordered all soldiers to remain at their posts and not enter town. He further ordered officers “without the most pointed necessity” to remain in camp with their men (Grimke 1779–1780). The bombardment ordeal affected soldiers and civilians. General William Moultrie wrote, “The fatigue in that advance redoubt, was so great, from want of sleep, that many faces were so swelled they could scarcely see out of their eyes.” (Moultrie 1802, II:83).

On 29 April, Robert Mebane was a guard Officer-of-the-Day (Grimke 1779–1780).

On 1 May, British sappers breached the American canal and began to drain it. On 4 May, Lincoln ordered meat rations reduced to 6 ounces of pork per soldier (Grimke 1779–1780).

RETURN of <i>The North Carolina</i>		Brigade of Foot, Commanded by <i>Brigadier General Robert Mebane</i>																								
REGIMENTS		Officers & Privates in the Day										Rank & File		Waiting to Complete		Alterations Since the last Return										
STATE	COMP. NAME	Colonel	Lieut. Colonel	Major	Captain	Adjutant	Quartermaster	Surgeon	Commissary	Provost Marshal	Drum Major	Trumpeter	Musician	Blacksmith	Farrier	Shoemaker	Barber	Butcher	Wagoner	Teamster	Driver	Coachman	Stable Boy	Footman	Scullery	Boatman
<i>Robert Mebane</i>		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<i>Patton</i>		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<i>Shelton</i>		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
TOTAL		3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
<i>Command</i>		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<i>Adjutant</i>		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<i>Quartermaster</i>		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<i>Surgeon</i>		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<i>Commissary</i>		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<i>Provost Marshal</i>		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<i>Drum Major</i>		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<i>Trumpeter</i>		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<i>Musician</i>		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<i>Blacksmith</i>		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<i>Farrier</i>		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<i>Shoemaker</i>		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<i>Barber</i>		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<i>Butcher</i>		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<i>Wagoner</i>		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<i>Teamster</i>		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<i>Driver</i>		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<i>Coachman</i>		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<i>Stable Boy</i>		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<i>Footman</i>		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<i>Scullery</i>		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<i>Boatman</i>		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
ESTABLISHMENT		25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25
FIT FOR ACTION		2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
		2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2

Robert Mebane

Patton

Shelton

Command

Adjutant

Quartermaster

Surgeon

Commissary

Provost Marshal

Drum Major

Trumpeter

Musician

Blacksmith

Farrier

Shoemaker

Barber

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Barber

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Musician

Blacksmith

Farrier

Shoemaker

Barber

Butcher

Wagoner

Teamster

Driver

Coachman

Stable Boy

Footman

Scullery

Boatman

Robert Mebane

Patton

Shelton

Command

Adjutant

Quartermaster

Surgeon

Commissary

Provost Marshal

Drum Major

Trumpeter

Musician

Blacksmith

Farrier

Shoemaker

Barber

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North Carolina Brigade Strength Return of 6 May 1780
Document found in Sir Henry Clinton Papers. Clements Library (Lesser 1976, 159).

Lieutenant Colonel Robert Mebane's regiment details on third row of numbers and under "Monthly Alterations." In his regiment during previous month, 10 soldiers died and on 6 May, 57 out of 147 were sick absent. In condensed form (Lesser 1976, 161):

April 1780 North Carolina Regiments Strength Return

		First	Second	Third
Fit for Duty	Commissioned Officers	8	12	7
	Noncommissioned Officers	30	31	15
	Staff Officers	3	4	4
	Rank & File	153	196	60
	Total	194	243	86
Sick & Furlough	Sick Present	29	31	19
	Sick Absent	7	12	57
	On Command, Extra Service	72	22	11
	On Furlough	1	5	
Grand Total Alterations		303	313	173
	Deaths	7	2	10
	Deserted	2	6	
	Taken Prisoner	7		
	Discharged	19	4	
	Joined, Enlisted, Recruited	2	3	9

On 7 May, Americans surrendered Fort Moultrie. On 8 May, Clinton once again summoned Charlestown.

Circumstanced as I now am with respect to the place invested[,] Humanity only can induce me to lay within your reach the Terms I determined should never again be proffered.

The fall of Fort Sullivan [Moultrie,] The destruction on the 6th Instant of what remained of your Cavalry, the critical period to which our Approaches against the Town have brought us mark this as the term of your hopes of Succour (could you have framed any) and an hour beyond which resistance is temerity.

By this last Summons therefore I throw to your Charges whatever vindictive Severity exasperated Soldiers may inflict on the unhappy people whom you devote by persevering in a fruitless defence.

I shall expect your Answer untill 8 o'clock when hostilities will again commence unless the Town shall be surrendered. (Borick 2003, 207).

Under a cease-fire, Lincoln and Clinton negotiated surrender terms. Lincoln called a council of general and field officers. They met in the hornwork and voted 49 to 12 to accept terms of capitulation (Borick 2003, 209).

On 8 May, Robert Mebane was a guard Officer-of-the-Day (Grimke 1779–1780). He participated in this council and voted to accept terms (Lincoln 1779–1780).

May 1780, Surrender of Charlestown, Prisoners of War

By 11 May, the inevitable defeat was clear to everyone. Lincoln accepted British terms. At 11:00 a.m. 12 May, Continental and militia soldiers filed out of the city gate and stacked their arms (Moultrie 1802, II:108). This location was probably west of King Street between present-day Vanderhorst and Warren Streets (Borick 2003, 300). Americans conducted a 42-day honorable defense against an overwhelming 14,000-man professional army and navy. Although only 1500–1600 Continentals participated in the surrender ceremony, a total of 3465 Continental officers and men were captured. That was virtually the entire Continental Army Southern Department.

Continental soldier prisoners were first held in barracks inside Charlestown. However, because their internment required hundreds of British guards, in October 1780, these prisoners were moved to prison ships in the harbor. Continental Army officers were held at Haddrell's Point in present-day Old Village in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina (Borick 2003, 287). They were permitted "to go to the extent of six miles from the barracks, but to pass no river, creek, or arm of the sea." (Moultrie 1802, II:105). They could receive visitors, and were allowed to grow small gardens and to fish for personal sustenance. Militiamen were released on parole, a promise that they would remain neutral for the remainder of the war. In the 1700s, such a promise was self-enforcing by a sense of personal honor as well as the threat of retaliation against fellow parolees. Nonetheless, some important militia leaders, like Colonel Andrew Pickens, believed Britain violated these terms on 3 June when General Clinton ordered militiamen to take up arms against rebels (Tarleton 1787, 73–74).

When Charlestown fell, Robert Mebane became a prisoner of war. From his Third Regiment, 162 Continental soldiers, excluding officers, became prisoners. He along with other Continental Army officers were held at Haddrell's Point (Rankin 1971, 232). During the siege, one of Mebane's associates was Colonel Francis Marion, commander of South Carolina Second Regiment. Marion avoided capture by being outside Charlestown recuperating from a debilitating ankle injury. During the following year, Marion became known as the *Swamp Fox*. Francis Marion details appear in (Rankin 1973). Similarly, Lieutenant Colonel William Lee Davidson avoided capture while on leave (Davidson 1951, 58).

Doctor Ephraim Brevard, a McGuire-related 5th cousin 4 generations removed, joined the American Army in Charlestown as a surgeon. On 12 May, he was captured and held prisoner (Preyer 1987, 165). He probably attended to the many soldiers held on prison ships.

Note: Why was Charlestown lost?

Why did this tragic loss of Continental soldiers occur? Earlier in New York and Philadelphia, George Washington saved his Continentals by evacuation. Many officers at Charlestown had experience near these northern cities, and must have understood Washington's strategic defense policy. Nonetheless, on 21 April 1780, these officers voted that it was too late to evacuate (Moultrie 1802, II:77). Americans might have inflicted higher British costs by contesting each natural barrier along the British route from its North Edisto River landing site. Those barriers are: Stono River, Wappoo Cut, and Ashley River. However, these barriers can be crossed at many locations, and thus, defenders would run the risk of being flanked and captured. But even such half-measures would have been a difficult political decision. Non-military authorities had the impression that Charlestown was defensible due to Fort Moultrie victory in June 1776 and withdrawal of Brigadier General Augustine Prevost in May 1779. To defend and withdraw from natural barriers outside the city appeared inconsistent with these earlier victories. Moreover, each of these defenses would have been perceived as a defeat with final loss of Charlestown. That result looks good only in hindsight when compared to something worse—what actually happened. The principal decision-maker was Major General Benjamin Lincoln, and he had had a bad year. On 3 March 1779, he allowed highly exposed North Carolina soldiers under Colonel John Ashe to be defeated at Brier Creek, Georgia. In 23 April 1779, when he invaded Georgia, Prevost embarrassed him with a flanking maneuver that nearly captured Charlestown. On 20 June 1779, he lost Stono Ferry battle. In October 1779, he failed to recapture Savannah even with assistance of 4000 French soldiers. He knew General Robert Howe was dismissed for losing Savannah in December 1778. Thus, Lincoln's reputation could not afford another defeat. It was difficult to abandon months of planning and labor invested in the fortification. Also, delay appeared justified since reinforcements were expected from Washington's Army, and possibly the French or Spanish Navy. Once the decision to defend Charlestown was made, Lincoln's problems increased. Technically, he did not command the South Carolina militia, many of whom did not report to duty because of a smallpox rumor. Lincoln had to consult with city and state civilian authorities in every decision. In short, Lincoln should have evacuated Continental soldiers from Charlestown to a safe place such as Round-O where Major General Nathanael Greene encamped a year later.

Over a year later, in a 10 August 1781 letter (Clark 1981, I:480), Robert Mebane asserted, as an aside, that Charlestown fell because of exhausted provisions. Unfortunately, his complete insights are unknown.

After Americans surrendered Charlestown on 12 May 1780, the British could begin to consolidate their control. On 23 May 1780, Lieutenant Anthony Allaire wrote in his diary, "About three o'clock in the afternoon returned [to Fort Moultrie] in a six-oared boat, and had the pleasing view of sixty or seventy large ships coming into the harbor." (Allaire 1780)

May-June 1780, Carolina Upcountry, Cornwallis, Tarleton

Note: Tactics of military movements.

Rivers, horses, and grist mills had an important impact on military movements. Transportation constraints during this era are not obvious to modern readers accustomed to automobile travel.

- Major rivers were significant natural barriers and good defensive locations. They were crossed at fords or for a fee at ferries. After a heavy rain, a swollen river was impassable, usually for several days. Even during low water conditions, an army with wagons might be limited to a few possible ford crossings. The weapons of that time made a river-crossing army very vulnerable. When divided, it could be attacked piecemeal and pinned against the river edge. Thus, a crossing army attempted to conceal the location until the last moment and then cross as quickly as possible. The best tactic was for cavalry to first cross at an undefended location and then race to secure the bank opposite the main crossing.
- Horses were a scarce commodity. Wartime demand and the inability to quickly produce more meant there never enough. A horse was certainly the quickest way to travel a few miles. But for the individual traveler, a horse had inconveniences. It needed frequent rests and many hours each

- day to feed itself. It and its equipment were expensive, requiring protection. On the road it could presented control problems. Consequently, a typical traveler either took a stage or walked. Of the available horses, only the biggest were suitable for cavalry.
- When an infantry regiment was ordered to a new location, the few available horses pulled wagons or artillery. The typical infantryman walked, even if the destination was 500 miles away. He carried 50 pounds of supplies plus a heavy musket or rifle. At night, he camped on the ground with one blanket. Shoe technology was primitive and expensive. Accounts of barefoot soldiers during the winter are not exaggerations. Separate right-footed and left-footed shoes were not commonly made until the mid-1800s. The average physical exertion of healthy young people was much higher than today. Everyone respected the personal attribute of being “indefatigable.”
 - Military officers separated by distance communicated by express horse riders. During important times, such express riders arrived and departed every few hours. Every officer learned the importance of writing concisely and quickly. In hazardous regions, several horsemen escorted the express rider. Obviously, only strong horses were used for this purpose. Such a horse could travel about 40 miles a day. To increase the range, horses were probably changed where possible. Some messages were encrypted using a simple number-letter pairing.
 - All armies in the 1700s collected food supplies and animal forage from the countryside. Meat was delivered live and butchered on site. Supplies were often confiscated from the plantations of known enemies. A commissary officer directed this procurement.
 - Grist mills and iron works were strategically important facilities. Each was located along a dammed stream for water power. The mill dam and pond were often not on the main watercourse but on a tributary. There the dam and mill were outside the main torrent during damaging floods. During normal flow river water was diverted into the mill pond through a gated canal. That way the mill took advantage of river power while reducing its risk to floods. At iron works, water power drove bellows necessary to raise fire temperature high enough to work iron. Iron manufacturing required charcoal. That produced a secondary cottage industry of charcoal makers who cut and burned prodigious numbers of trees using grossly inefficient methods.
-

After loss of Charlestown, Governor John Rutledge moved towards Salisbury, North Carolina. The only free North Carolina Continentals were newly-hired former militia and previous deserters collected by Brigadier General Jethro Sumner. They were not an official regiment since they were enroute to join regiments in Charlestown.

The British Army operated from its base in Charlestown, South Carolina, under command of 42-year-old Lieutenant General Charles Cornwallis. Within a month, it consolidated its control of South Carolina by establishing or strengthening principal forts at Georgetown, Camden, Ninety Six, and Augusta. These controlled the major rivers: Wateree (Catawba), Congaree (Saluda, Broad), and Savannah Rivers. It also built secondary outposts at Cheraw, Hanging Rock, Waxhaws, and Rocky Mount.



Lieutenant General Charles Cornwallis
Painting by Thomas Gainsborough, 1783,
National Portrait Gallery, London.

The organizational capabilities of the British Army were impressive. It could move over 1000 soldiers more than 20 miles a day. It included field artillery and as many as 50 wagons of gunpowder, a portable forge, medical equipment, musical instruments, gold coins, and baggage of personal belongings. Its commissary system supplied food and horse forage as it moved. Its entourage included independent traders, supporting the commissary, and women cooks and seamstresses. Terrain, vast distances, and American elusive tactics were suited to the British Legion, a mix of several hundred cavalymen, mounted infantry, and light cannon. Lieutenant Colonel Banastre Tarleton, age 25, led the Legion. He had remarkable success during spring and summer of 1780. While in pursuit of Americans forces, Tarleton's Legion began moving at 2:00 a.m. to arrive at a battlefield at daybreak. Such capabilities and tactics were designed to intimidate rebels. But ultimately, it was counterproductive because it provoked widespread resentment throughout the Piedmont and mountains.



Lieutenant Colonel Banastre Tarleton

Bear-pelt helmet designed to absorb saber blows.

Painted by John Raphael Smith and Joshua Reynolds, 1782.

29 May 1780, Tarleton, Buford's Defeat

The American defenders of Charleston, after a six-week siege, surrendered the city on 12 May 1780. To extend British control over South Carolina, Lieutenant General Charles Earl Cornwallis and his army crossed Santee River and proceeded towards Camden. He dispatched the mobile British Legion to pursue the withdrawing 350 Virginia Continental soldiers who missed the Charleston siege and who were escorting South Carolina Governor John Rutledge to Salisbury, North Carolina. The British Legion was led by 26-year-old Lieutenant Colonel Banastre Tarleton. Colonel Thomas Sumter, the former commander of South Carolina Sixth Continental Regiment, knew he was a likely target. He moved his family from his primary home just north of Nelson's Ferry on Santee River to his second home in the High Hills of the Santee. On 28 May, as the British Legion approached, Sumter left his family and escaped north. A few hours later, British soldiers burned his home (Bass 1961, 52).



Brigadier General Thomas Sumter

Painted by Rembrandt Peale, 1796.

Up the road, 14 miles north of Camden, Rutledge was a guest at the home of Colonel Henry Rugeley [pronounced Rūg-lē] on the hilltop just north of Grannies Quarter Creek (Landers 1929, 20). Sumter was on the same road at the same time, but it is not known if Sumter conferred with Rutledge. That night, the British Legion bivouacked for a few hours in Camden, allowing just enough time for Rutledge to learn of the threat and evade capture. In the morning, the Legion continued to move quickly (Tarleton 1787, 28).

Tarleton sent a summons to the American commander Colonel Abraham Buford using Captain Kinlock under a flag of truce (Tarleton 1787, 28).

Wacsaws, May 29, 1780

Sir,

Resistance being vain, to prevent the effusion of human blood, I make offers which can never be repeated: — You are now almost encompassed by a corps of seven hundred light troops on horseback; half of that number are infantry with cannon, the rest cavalry: Earl Cornwallis is likewise within a short march with nine British battalions.

I warn you of the temerity of farther inimical proceedings, and I hold out the following conditions, which are nearly the same as were accepted by Charles town: But if any persons attempt to fly after this flag is received, rest assured, that their rank shall not protect them, if taken, from rigorous treatment.

1st Art. All officers to be prisoners of war, but admitted to parole, and allowed to return to their habitations till exchanged.

2^d Art. All continental soldiers to go to Lamprie's point, or any neighbouring post, to remain there till exchanged, and to receive the same provisions as British soldiers.

3^d Art. All militia soldiers to be prisoners upon parole at their respective habitations.

4th Art. All arms, artillery, ammunition, stores, provisions, wagons, horses, &c. to be faithfully delivered.

5th Art. All officers to be allowed their private baggage and horses, and to have their side arms returned.

I expect answer to these propositions as soon as possible; if they are accepted, you will order every person under your command to pile his arms in one hour after you receive the flag: If you are rash enough to reject them, the blood be upon your head.

I have the honour to be,

[signed] Ban. Tarleton

Lieutenant colonel, Commandant of the British legion. (Tarleton 1780 in Tarleton 1787, 77–78)

The expression “blood be upon your head” was from the Bible (KJV 1611, 2 Samuel 1:16, Ezekiel 33:4, Acts 18:6). Buford replied:

Wacsaws, May 29, 1780

Sir,

I reject your proposal, and shall defend myself to the last extremity.

I have the honour to be, &c.

[signed] Abr. Buford, Colonel (Buford 1780 in Tarleton 1787, 79)

At 3:00 p.m., after a 54-hour chase, the British Legion caught the Virginians along Salisbury Road in Waxhaw region, 30 miles southeast of Charlotte at the present-day intersection of highways SC9 and SC522. Buford, on a disadvantageous open field, seriously miscalculated. He made tactical errors in arranging his soldiers and ordering them to hold their fire (Tarleton 1787, 31). Tarleton's Legion, using a cavalry column, charged the Continental line formation, breaking it immediately. When Tarleton's horse was disabled, he lost effective command for 15 minutes during which surrendering Continentals were killed without quarter (mercy). Tarleton attributes his soldier's actions, "to a report amongst the cavalry, that they had lost their commander officer, which stimulated the soldiers to a vindictive asperity not easily restrained." (Tarleton 1787, 30–31). In total, 113 Continentals were killed and over 150 were wounded, mostly with saber-slashed skull and shoulder injuries. The horrible character of these wounds is described in the [ordeal of Captain John Stokes](#) (Brownfield 1821 in W. D. James 1821, 97) (Buchanan 1997, 84), who later became a federal judge and for whom Stokes County, North Carolina, was named. Tarleton credits his victory to Buford's mistakes (Tarleton 1787, 31). Written on the battlefield monument is a quote of Charles Stedman, British commissary officer and later historian, "The king's troops were entitled to great commendation for their activity and ardour on this occasion, but the virtue of humanity was totally forgot." (Stedman 1794, 2:193). This shocking event induced widespread resentment among residents of the Carolina upcountry. Soon the slogan "Tarleton's quarter" meant wanton cruelty. It was effective anti-British propaganda for the remainder of the war. Even today, a few Charlotteans still hold a grudge. They object to any new Charlotte street being named Tarleton. Buford was court-martialed, but exonerated.



Buford's Defeat, 29 May 1780
Reprint from Harper's Weekly, 29 May 1858, colorized.

David Motley, a Plonk-related 4th great-granduncle, was a Continental soldier. Sometime, probably after his tour in Savannah, he was in Virginia 3rd Regiment under Colonel McEntush (Hurt 1976, 191). He may have been at Buford's Defeat.

On 14 June 2006, at a *Sotheby's* auction, an anonymous buyer purchased Buford's three regimental flags from one of Tarleton's direct descendants. The price was \$5.056 million (Associated Press 2006).



Regimental flag entitled "Perseverando" (Associated Press 2006)

Interestingly, this symbol of a beaver also appeared on the earlier Benjamin Franklin designed Continental Congress six-dollar currency.



Six-Dollar Continental Currency
Designed by Benjamin Franklin, 1776.

Local Scotch-Irish took American wounded to Waxhaw Presbyterian Church for treatment (Howe 1870, 538). Among the caregivers were 13-year-old Andrew Jackson, his mother Elizabeth Hutchinson Jackson, and his brother Robert. Years later, Jackson wrote that the church floor was made into beds by removing pews and covering the floor with straw (M. James 1938, 19). The Virginia Continentals who died at the church were buried in the cemetery, but it is not known exactly where (D. L. Pettus 2008–2015). [Doctor James Rankin Alexander](#), son of Hezekiah Alexander, treated the wounded. When the wounded able to move, they were transported to Liberty Hall Academy in Charlotte where a hospital was organized (Alexander, James Rankin, pension application 1833).



Old Waxhaw Presbyterian Church
 Treatment site of Buford's Defeat wounded.
 Grave site of Andrew Jackson's father.
 Memorial to Andrew Jackson's mother.
 Grave site of William Richardson Davie.

On 5 June 1780, from British warship *Romulus*, off Charlestown bar, Clinton accessed the military situation in the Carolinas. That dispatch arrived at Whitehall, London, on 5 July (Tarleton 1787, 79–84). Aside from commending Tarleton, Clinton expressed what he knew about North Carolina loyalists.

I have also the satisfaction to receive corresponding accounts, that the loyalists in the back parts of North Carolina are arming. I dare entertain hopes that Earl Cornwallis's presence on that frontier, and perhaps within the province, will call back its inhabitants from their state of error and disobedience. If a proper naval force can be collected, I purpose sending a small expedition into Cape-fear river, to favour the revolution I look for higher in the country. (Clinton 1780 in Tarleton 1787, 81)

At this time, John Sloan, a Plonk-related 5th great-grandfather, made munitions for American forces at his iron foundry business (Porter, Herndon and Herndon 1973, 18). He worked near Long Creek in what is now western Gaston County. A tradition is that William Oates I, a Plonk-related 4th great-grandfather, worked with him. William Oates I also served as a militia private.

Probably at this time, Tories of Lincoln County captured brothers Thomas Espey Junior, John Espey, and Samuel Espey and delivered them prisoner to forces at Ramsour's Mill. Later, on 19 September 1782, these Tories were listed on a "Confiscation of Property from Tory Sympathizers" document.

Peter Eaker, Jun^r, Jacob Carpenter, Jun^r, Mical Eaker, Jn^o Hufstatler, Jn^o Eaker, Mical Hufstatlar - The Above named persons in the Righthand Column are those that took Tho^s Espey, Jn^o Espey, and Sam^l Espy prisoners and Delivered them to the Enemy of this and the United States at Ramsours. (Confiscation of Property from Tory Sympathizers 1782)

Neither Samuel Espey nor John Espey mentions their capture in their pension applications (Espey, Samuel, pension application 1832) (Espey, John, pension application 1832).

Sumter at Salisbury, North Carolina

In reaction to Buford's defeat, Brigadier General Griffith Rutherford called up the North Carolina Western (Salisbury) District militia. Lieutenant Colonel William Lee Davidson volunteered to serve under Rutherford as second in command. On 3 June, 900 men assembled near Charlotte (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 212) (B. P. Robinson 1957, 42). Included were South Carolina refugees driven from their farms by loyalists emboldened by the advancing British Army. On 4 June, Reverend Alexander MacWhorter, minister of Sugar Creek Presbyterian Church and President of Liberty Hall College, exhorted students to suspend their studies and serve in the militia (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 212). When it was learned that Tarleton had returned to Camden, Rutherford dismissed the militia with

orders to have their arms “in good repair and be in readiness for another call.” (Hunter 1877, 101) (B. P. Robinson 1957, 42).

In a 1 November 1832 pension application (Plunk, Jacob, pension application 1832), Jacob Plunk II, a 4th great-grandfather, [testified](#) that he served three months in Captain George Taylor’s company under the command of Major William Lee Davidson. During this tour, he was ordered to make soldier shoes at his home. This tour began “Shortly before the Battle of Ramsour” as revealed in Christian Arney’s 1832 and 1833 [pension application](#) (Arney, Christian, pension application 1832–1833) for which Jacob Plunk II testified. In 2006, Pat Caswell Cloninger discovered the tradition:

Jacob Plunk II was a shoe-maker and carried a drawing of each man’s feet so he could make shoes for them. All they had to do was to tell Jacob they needed a new pair of shoes. He would pull the pattern out of his saddle bag along with some leather and make the shoes.

Sumter visited Governor Rutledge in Salisbury. Four months earlier, the South Carolina General Assembly delegated to Rutledge sweeping emergency powers. Sumter got 19 certificates worth \$1,000 each (Bass 1961, 54).

Meanwhile, Cornwallis captured Camden and began erecting a strong fort. He built outposts at Cheraw, Hanging Rock, Waxhaws, and Rocky Mount. The Waxhaw camp was led by Lieutenant Colonel Francis Lord Rawdon and is believed to be where present-day highway US521 crosses Waxhaw Creek.



Lieutenant Colonel Francis Lord Rawdon
Painted by Hugh Douglas Hamilton, 1801.

The day after Lord Rawdon reached Waxhaw, he with a life guard of twenty cavalry, visited the Catawba Indian towns, six or eight miles distance from his encampment. These towns are situate above the mouth of Twelve Mile Creek, on the east bank of the Catawba River. The warriors, headed by their General New River had left their towns on the preceding evening to join the troops under General Rutherford. Curiosity alone seemed to have induced Lord Rawdon to visit the towns; but his approach frightened the Indians, who fled from their houses. His Lordship discovered two white men and four or five Indians, armed, moving briskly down the bank of the river, and thinking it to be a movement to intercept his return, he hastened at full gallop to his encampments. (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 213).

Rawdon sent a commissioner to meet local citizens at Colonel William Hill’s Iron Works on Big Allison Creek. The commissioner demanded their signed submissions for British protection. He proclaimed that the

Continental Congress had decided to forfeit both Georgia and South Carolina and that General Washington's army had fled to the mountains (W. Hill 1815, 6). These falsehoods were refuted by William Hill (W. Hill 1815, 7). Hill and Andrew Neel assembled the local militia and soon moved to Tuckasegee Ford on Catawba River in Mecklenburg County. Tarleton later wrote:

In the beginning of June Colonel Lord Rawdon, with the volunteers of Ireland and a detachment of legion cavalry, made a short expedition into a settlement of [Scotch] Irish, situated in the Wacsaws : The sentiments of the inhabitants did not correspond with his lordship's expectations : He there learned what experience confirmed, that the [Scotch] Irish were the most averse of all other settlers to the British government in America. (Tarleton 1787, 86)

Because of Rawdon's proximity to Mecklenburg County, on 8 June, Rutherford recalled the Western District militia, which assembled on 10 June at David Reese's plantation, 18 miles northeast of Charlotte (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 213) (McLeary, Michael, pension application 1832) (King 1956). On 12 June, these 800 men moved to Mallard Creek. A battalion of 300 light infantry was formed and assigned to Lieutenant Colonel William Lee Davidson, an experienced Continental Army officer. The remaining 500 militiamen were directly commanded by Rutherford (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 213). North Carolina Governor Abner Nash commissioned William Richardson Davie a major and appointed him commander of North Carolina cavalry (Hamilton and Battle 1907, 7). Davie was a 1776 graduate of the College of New Jersey, now Princeton University (Hamilton and Battle 1907, 5). He was active partisan, located at New Providence where his uncle, William Richardson, had been minister of the Presbyterian Church ten years earlier (Matthews 1967, 46). Davie raised 65 cavalymen that he equipped using much of his inheritance (Hamilton and Battle 1907, 7).



William Richardson Davie
Patriot Officer. North Carolina Governor 1798–1799. Special envoy to France 1799–1800.
Buried in Old Waxhaw Presbyterian Church cemetery.
Painted by John VanderLyn in Paris, France, 1800.

Meanwhile, on 10 June 1780, Colonel John Moore held a secret meeting of 40 loyalists “in the woods on Indian Creek seven miles from Ramsour's [Mill]” (Schenck 1890, 53). Seven miles from Ramsour's Mill would be near where present-day Shoal Road crosses Indian Creek. The home of John Moore's father Moses Moore was near that location (Dellinger 2006–2014). These loyalists conspired to call out more loyalists and embody at Ramsour's Mill a few days later.

The location of this meeting was not far from the Plonk Family home place and cemetery.

On 14 June, Brigadier General Rutherford learned that Tories were embodying at Ramsour's Mill, in present-day Lincolnton, North Carolina (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 213–214). Rutherford

ordered Colonel Francis Locke, commander of Rowan County militia, to disperse these Tories. On 15 June, Rutherford moved his force to a location 2 miles south of Charlotte to better counter any further advance by Rawdon. As it turned out, on 10 June, Cornwallis had recalled Rawdon back towards Camden (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 214) (B. P. Robinson 1957, 43). Cornwallis strengthened Rocky Mount by sending a detachment of 150 British Legion dragoons under Captain Christian Huck.

11 June 1780, Rocky Mount and Fishing Creek Presbyterian Churches

The newly built British outpost at Rocky Mount greatly disturbed members of Rocky Mount Presbyterian Church. Their minister, William Martin, preached, “My hearers, talk and angry words will do no good. We must fight!” Alluding to Declaration of Arbroath, he said Americans had been “forced to the declaration of their independence. Our forefathers in Scotland made a similar one and maintained that declaration with their lives; it is now our turn, brethren, to maintain this at all hazards.” (Ellet, Domestic History of the American Revolution 1850b, 179).

On 11 June, from Rocky Mount, a detachment of Tarleton’s Legion led by Captain Christian Huck attempted to arrest Fishing Creek Presbyterian Church minister John Simpson. Not finding Simpson, Huck’s men looted and burned the parsonage.

Sumter at Tuckasegee Ford

Colonel William Hill wrote to Sumter in Salisbury describing his men’s intention of joining Rutherford (W. Hill 1815, 8). Sumter joined the South Carolina refugees at Tuckasegee Ford on Catawba River. On 15 June, Sumter was selected to lead these South Carolina militiamen. They recognized him as a brigadier general (Gregorie 1931, 80), although Governor Rutledge did not grant this commission until the following October. One of these refugees was John Adair, later Kentucky Governor, 1820–1824. He [certified](#) on 12 July 1832:

... about three hundred men who had fled from the enemy of whom I was one did assemble in North Carolina where they had fled and entered into a solemn obligation to place themselves under the command of Genl. Thomas Sumpter and to continue in a body and serve under his command until the war was at an end, or until their services were no longer necessary, they were to find their own horses, arms, clothing and all accessories, It being absolutely necessary that they should act on horseback. (Adair 1832 in L. C. Draper 1873, VV:10:15–17) (Adair, John, pension application 1832)

Probably all men who joined Sumter had prior military experience and some had been Continental soldiers. When they acted under Sumter’s orders they were official state troops of South Carolina. However, Sumter did not force strict discipline. Small detachments came and went.

In mid-June 1780, about 1000 Tories assembled at Derick Ramsour’s Mill, in present-day Lincolnton, North Carolina. On 17 June, after Rawdon withdrew from Waxhaw Creek to Hanging Rock, Rutherford planned to join Locke in attacking the Tories at Ramsour’s Mill (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 214) (B. P. Robinson 1957, 43).

18 June 1780, Hill’s Iron Works

From Rocky Mount, Lieutenant Colonel George Turnbull dispatched Captain Huck to destroy the property Colonel William Hill, one of Sumter’s principal subordinates. On 18 June, Huck burned Hill’s Iron Works on Big Allison Creek. This strategically important site included a furnace, forge, gristmill, and sawmill as well as Hill’s residence (W. Hill 1815, 8). Reference (W. A. Graham 1904b, 232) erroneously placed this event on 9 July 1780. But since the description was written in the first-person, it is probably correct. A few Colonel Thomas Sumter’s men fought a minor skirmish with these British troops (Hunter 1877, 101). Soon afterwards, William Hill joined Sumter’s partisans (W. Hill 1815, 8).



12 and 24-Pound Cannonballs Manufactured at Hill's Iron Works
Gift of Bigger Family to Charlotte Mecklenburg Public Library, 2017

Hill's Iron Works was on Big Allison Creek, now submerged by Lake Wylie, immediately south of the McGuire riverfront cabin used during the 1950s.

20 June, Ramsour's Mill

Rutherford recalled the militia to assemble in Charlotte. They moved to Tuckasegee Ford. Meanwhile, about 400 Rowan County militiamen assembled under Colonel Francis Locke. At daybreak, on 20 June, these Whigs attacked in what became known as Battle of Ramsour's Mill. Both sides were poorly led, resulting in mayhem in which neighbor farmers killed and maimed each other. Approximately 100 men died on each side. About 2 hours later, Davidson's troops arrived in advance of Rutherford's army on the march from Charlotte. The battle's significance was that Tories dispersed and were demoralized. Fortunately for the patriot cause, this Tory assembly did not occur 3 months later when the British Army was in nearby Charlotte.

Some Tory soldiers were superstitious Germans:

At one time during the conflict when the battle was at its bitterest an incident occurred which came near breaking the enemy's lines. A soldier who was a "Conjurer" — the Germans were generally believers in Witchcraft — had practiced his art on the Tory soldiers and "conjured off bullets" from a good many who were of his faith, by mysterious motions, incantations, and all sorts of rig-a-marole and manipulations, always accepting a fee for his services. According to him none of his "patients" could be shot with leaden bullets, nothing but a silver bullet could possibly hit a "Conjured soldier." But this Conjurer was singled out and shot in his right hand, whereupon he dropped his gun and ran down the hill to the mill pond and plunged in; gathering an old rotten stump which he managed to keep near his head as he swam the mill pond and made his escape. One of Reep's sharpshooters ran down and fired at his head but the old stump saved his life. About 20 of his manipulated believers saw him run after being shot in the hand and they, too, left the ranks and started down the hill for the mill pond at full speed, crying out, "Silver bullets, silver bullets." Captain Warlick witnessed this break and had them all brought back and gave orders to shoot the first man who attempted to run. (Fair 1937)

Derick Ramsour was a 3rd great-grandfather of George Shuford Ramseur Sr.

John Moor, a Moore-related 4th great-grandfather, was with Colonel Thomas Sumter's South Carolina troops encamped at Tuckasegee Ford (Moor, John, pension application 1845) (Sutton 1987, 360). These troops followed Brigadier General Rutherford, arriving after the fighting (Bass 1961, 57). Ironically, he had the same name as the principal loyalist organizer, Colonel John Moore. The latter's home was in Lincoln County (Schenck 1890, 53).

Ezra Alexander, a McGuire-related 2nd cousin 7 generations removed, and William “Black Billy” Alexander, a McGuire-related 3rd cousin 6 generations removed, were captains under Lieutenant Colonel William Lee Davidson.

Peter Costner, great-granduncle of 1st cousin 4 generations removed, was one of the Tories killed.

Tarleton later wrote:

The precautions employed to prevent the rising of the King’s friends in North Carolina had not had universal effect. Several of the inhabitants of Tryon county, excited by a Colonel Moore, manifested their attachment to the British cause, by taking up arms on the 18th of June, without the necessary caution requisite for such an undertaking, and they were in a few days afterwards defeated by General Rutherford. (Tarleton 1787, 91)

On 20 June, Sumter was with Rutherford as they approached the Tory encampment at Ramsour’s Mill. They arrived after the Rowan County militia under Colonel Locke won the battle. As Tories fled, Sumter got authorization from the state of North Carolina to confiscate their military property in order to equip his force (W. Hill 1815, 8).

On 22 June (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 229), Rutherford ordered Major Davie to post his 65 cavalymen at Waxhaw Creek. Davie later wrote:

Major Davie was ordered to take a position near the South Carolina line opposite to the Hanging rock that might enable him to prevent the enemy from foraging on the borders of the State adjacent to the Waxhaws and check the depredations of the Loyalists who infested that part of the Country; for this purpose he chose a position on the North side of the Waxhaw creek, his corps was reinforced by some South Carolinians under Major [Robert] Crawford the Catawba Indians under their chief General Newriver, and a part of the Mecklenburg militia commanded by L^t Col^o Heaggins. This ground being only eighteen miles from the Hanging-rock where the enemy were in force, ... (Davie 1810 in B. P. Robinson 1976, 8).

Davie’s camp was at the present-day intersection of highways US521 and SC5 and probably on the hilltop immediately to the west (Allison 2009–2016). This encampment was witnessed by future President Andrew Jackson, then age 13, and his younger brother Robert Jackson whose home was within a mile away. (M. James 1938, 20). Lieutenant Colonel William Hagins was one of Sumter’s subordinates (L. Pettus 1995). One of Hagins’ privates, Edward Curry, applied for a pension in 1833. He testified in court:

... he [Curry] got his horse and gun went with them and next day joined Col William Hoagans (of the North Carolina militia) who had collected three or four hundred men on the road leading from Charlotte to Camden at a creek called Waxhaws. (Curry 1833 in L. C. Draper 1873, VV:10:251) (Curry, Edward, pension application 1833)

Curry was in Hagins’ unit for two years. He portrays a partisan organization engaged in small-unit operations (Curry 1833 in L. C. Draper 1873, VV:10:249–252) (Curry, Edward, pension application 1833)

Immediately after Ramsour’s Mill, Brigadier General Rutherford and Lieutenant Colonel Davidson pursued loyalists assembling under Colonel Samuel Bryan at Abbotts Creek on the east side of the Yadkin River. As soon as these loyalists learned the results of Ramsour’s Mill, they attempted to escape along the east side of the Yadkin towards the British encampment at Cheraw, South Carolina (Graham 1820 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 193). Rutherford tried to prevent this escape, but failed. After Ramsour’s Mill, the Mecklenburg County militiamen under Colonel Robert Irwin returned to Charlotte and were temporarily dismissed. Soon afterwards, they reassembled and marched to South Carolina to assist Sumter. Lincoln County patriots were ordered to remain in a high state of readiness. In 1832, Colonel William Graham later [testified](#):

About that time our forces began to embody and I think in the same summer the Battle was fought at Ramsour's [Mill]. I was not there at the battle but arrived there in company the next day with General Rutherford and Col Martin. I was then ordered to keep in readiness as strong a force as I could raise ready at a moment's warning. We could not keep in large bodies. We had nothing to subsist on. I kept up what was called the Flying Camp. (Graham, William, pension application 1832)

In 1832, Abraham Forney [testified](#):

That sometime in June 1780, there was a call upon the Militia, he [Abraham Forney] volunteered and served as a private in Captain John Baldridge's Company and a part embodied at the time first mentioned at Ramsour's Mills, from thence we marched to Espey's, where we joined more troops and lay there about three weeks collecting men. At this place Colonel [William] Graham & Lt. Col. Hambright took the command of us. From thence we marched to Lincoln old Court House, to old Moses Moore's, the father of Colonel John Moore the Tory and marched and counter marched through all that section of Country (Forney, Abraham, pension application 1832)

Thomas Espey's plantation was probably near Long Creek Presbyterian Church, which was organized that same year, 1780. It is in present-day Gaston County. This Whig show of force prevented loyalists from reassembling in Lincoln County.

The Espey's place mentioned was likely the home of Thomas Espey, a Plonk-related 5th great-grandfather. His son Captain Samuel Espey served under Colonel William Graham.

Sumter at Clems Branch campground

After Ramsour's Mill, Sumter and his men returned to South Carolina. They camped at Clems Branch campground where forage was available and presumably could be purchased from local farmers. That location was where Clems Branch crosses the North Carolina and South Carolina state line (W. L. Anderson 2006). Clems Branch was named for Clem Davis, an early settler who owned land at its headwaters in Mecklenburg County (L. Pettus 1990a). The strongest evidence for Sumter's encampment is a memoir written by Colonel William Hill, one of Sumter's principal subordinates. He later wrote:

— and then it was that Col. Sumter met with us from So. Ca. He [Sumter] then got authority from the civil & military authority of that State [North Carolina] to impress or take waggons horses, provisions of all kinds, from the enemy that was in that action [Ramsour's Mill battle] — & to give a receipt to that state for the same — This being done we returned to So. Ca. & formed a camp on the East side of Catawba River at the place called Clems branch — from this out all our proceedings of importance, was done by a convention of the whole — a commission of captains appointed to take notice of all the property taken either from the enemy or friends. & a commissioner to supply us With provisions &c — (W. Hill 1815, 8)

John Moor, a Moore-related 4th great-grandfather, was likely among Sumter's followers at this time (Sutton 1987, 360) (W. L. Anderson 2010a).

Sumter's return to South Carolina generated alarm among the British stationed in Camden. Tarleton later wrote:

The news brought by these loyalists created some astonishment in the [British] military, and diffused universal consternation amongst the inhabitants of South Carolina : They reported, that ... Colonel Sumpter had already entered the Catawba, a settlement contiguous to the Wacsaws. These accounts being propagated, and artfully exaggerated, by the enemies within the province, caused a wonderful fermentation in the minds of the Americans, which neither the lenity of the British government, the solemnity of their paroles, by which their persons and properties enjoyed protection, nor the memory of the

undeserved pardon so lately extended to many of them, had sufficient strength to retain in a state of submission or neutrality. (Tarleton 1787, 91–92)

In 1827, William Wylie, then living in Alabama but originally from Chester County, wrote a petition in which he fixes the time of Sumter's Clems Branch encampment before Huck's Defeat on 12 July (Wylie 1827 in L. C. Draper 1873, VV:9:102–106) (Wylie, William, pension application 1827).

[William] Wylie Entered the army at 16 years of age — with Sumter at Clems Branch — Obtained leave a few days before Houck defeat to visit his friends — when near his home he lay down to sleep — while a comrade who was journeying with him was washing his shirt — was waked by & found a British soldier standing over him with a bayonet presented to his bosom — was taken prisoner & carried to Rocky Mount — Kept there a few days & then paroled — On his return he met a few Stragglers of the remnant of Houck's & [Tory militia Colonel James] Furguson's party which had been cut up that morning at W^{mson}'s plantation endeavoring to make their way to Rocky Mount — A little farther on he met a party under M^cLure in pursuit — M^cLure had some prisoners & made an exchange for Wylie ... (Wylie 1827 in L. C. Draper 1873, VV:9:104) (Wylie, William, pension application 1827).

The recorded activities of William Anderson of Chester County suggest a Clems Branch encampment time before Huck's Defeat.

William Anderson, meanwhile, joined the forces of General Thomas Sumter under Captain John Steel at Clem's Branch, east of the Catawba River, and he fought at the battles of Williamsons [Huck's Defeat], Rocky Mount, Hanging Rock and Carey's Fort. (Ellet, Domestic History of the American Revolution 1850b, 181–182) (Kennedy 2005).

In 1832, George Gill applied for a pension (Gill 1832 in L. C. Draper 1873, VV:10:68–73) (Gill, George, pension application 1832). He [testified](#):

... the next service was under the same Capt. [McClure] he believes in General Sumpter's command at Steel Creek. Marched from there to the camp at Clems branch; hence to the neighborhood of Rocky Mount and was in that battle. (Gill 1832 in L. C. Draper 1873, VV:10:68) (Gill, George, pension application 1832)

Gill probably substituted Steel Creek for its tributary Hagler's Branch.

A secondary reference written by Daniel Green Stinson in 1873 states that Sumter appointed a subordinate commander Andrew Neel. Such appointments are believed to have occurred in June 1780. Stinson wrote:

His [Thomas Neel's] son Andrew [Neel] rose to the rank of Col. in place of his father, and was detached by Sumpter at Clems branch as commander of the troops of York & Chester. He afterwards fell in the battle of Rocky Mount. (Stinson 1873 in L. C. Draper 1873, VV:9:208)

In late June, Sumter's force at Clems Branch was the only organized South Carolina patriot military force resisting British Army occupation. At this time, Davie with 65 North Carolina cavalymen was posted on the north side of Waxhaw Creek (Davie 1810 in B. P. Robinson 1976, 8). That was at the present-day highway US521 bridge (A. S. Salley 1929, map).

Note: Clems Branch campground description

Sumter's encampment had about 300 men. Although there is no known written description of its appearance, it can be inferred from historical knowledge of how such camps were equipped, organized, and operated (Peterson 1968). Most of Sumter's men arrived in small units. Each militiaman brought his own horse, weapons, and bedroll. But an individual could not easily bring wagons or heavy equipment, like tents and tools, from his local militia armory. That was the probable reason Sumter got permission to

confiscate Tory equipment abandoned after the battle at Ramsour's Mill. So, at Clems Branch there were few, if any, tents. Hundreds of horses grazed along the creek. The camp probably extended on both sides of the creek, exceeding the bounds of the 2 to 3-acre campground. A portion could have been in North Carolina. Sumter trained his men in raiding, or ranger, skills rather than traditional close-order infantry drills (Bass 1961, 57). Some modern history books represent Sumter's Clems Branch camp as "hidden" or "secret" (Bass 1961, 57). Actually, the camp was on the main north-south Camden-Charlotte road. That location was easy to find by newly arriving militiamen from distant regions of South Carolina. The camp's location, just south of the state line, meant South Carolina militiamen need not leave their state, a sensitive political issue for some. Newly arriving militiamen brought intelligence of British force dispositions. Nonetheless, the camp had some disadvantages. The ground was not ideal for defense. It was vulnerable to sudden attack by British cavalry, in particular by Captain Christian Huck's detachment of 150 British Legionnaires based at Rocky Mount. There is no evidence that Sumter erected defensive fortifications. However, Catawba Indians used a special technique. Veteran Robert Wilson reported that Catawbans "had put a strange feature upon the ground by stretching cowhides between the trees, for fear of being attacked by cavalry" (Wilson 1849 in L. C. Draper 1873, VV:16:318) (D. S. Brown 1966, 267). Perhaps Sumter felt secure in his large force, all of which were mounted. Davie's 65 North Carolina cavalymen stationed 15 miles south at Waxhaw Creek provided a guard (Davie 1810 in B. P. Robinson 1976, 8). If threatened, Sumter could have withdrawn to the camp of Mecklenburg and Rowan County militias in North Carolina.

In March 2007, a South Carolina historical marker was erected to commemorate Sumter's camp.



South Carolina historical marker on Harrisburg Road
in upper Lancaster County (W. L. Anderson 2006) (W. L. Anderson 2010a).

Note: Milestones and Mileposts

Distances along principal roads were marked by milestones and mileposts (J. Davis 1774). Such a milestone was erected along the Charlotte-Camden Road in Lancaster County, South Carolina, near Clems Branch campground. This milestone probably predated 1825 when Mills Atlas showed that a newer main road bypassed this older road segment (Mills 1825).



Milestone originally on Charlotte-Camden Road near Clems Branch campground
Inscription highlighted with software. Means 15 miles to Charlotte.

Late June, Cornwallis and Tarleton return to Charlestown

At this time, the British Army occupied all of South Carolina with no organized opposition within the state. Cornwallis next turned his attention to establishing civil government and commercial regulations. About the middle of June, he returned from Camden to Charleston leaving Rawdon in command (Tarleton 1787, 89). Cornwallis described his plans for North Carolina in a 30 June letter to his superior General Henry Clinton.

I have established the most satisfactory correspondence, and have seen several people of credit and undoubted fidelity from North Carolina. They all agree in the assurances of the good disposition of a considerable body of the inhabitants, and of the impossibility of subsisting a body of troops in that country till the harvest is over. This reason, the heat of the summer, and the unsettled state of South Carolina, all concurred to convince me of the necessity of postponing offensive operations on that side until the latter end of August, or beginning of September; and, in consequence, I sent emissaries to the leading persons amongst our friends, recommending, in the strongest terms, that they should attend to their harvest, prepare provisions, and remain quiet till the King's troops were ready to enter the province. (Cornwallis 1780 in Tarleton 1787, 118).

Most of Tarleton's British Legion Cavalry returned with Cornwallis to Charleston to prepare an offensive into North Carolina.

4 July, Sumter at Hagler's Branch guarding Nation Ford, Raid towards mountains

On 4 July, Sumter moved his men to take control of the strategic Nation Ford on Catawba River, at the present-day *Norfolk & Southern Railroad* bridge. There they controlled wagon transport across the river. They could project force on both sides of Catawba River, to both protect their farms and threaten loyalists. Politically, this move asserted recapture of a portion of South Carolina.

The actual camp was on Hagler's Hill next to Hagler's Branch inside the Catawba Indian Lands.. That location was where the branch crosses Nation Ford Road, also known at that time as Old Saluda Road. Today, it is within Anne Springs Close Greenway Park in York County. Evidence of this encampment is in [James Jameson's pension application](#):

... immediately after fought & defeated the Tories at Ramsour's in North Carolina, — after this battle returned & again joined Genl. Sumpter at Haggler's Branch, crossed the Catawba and defeated the British under Capt. Hook at Williamson's. (Jameson, James, pension application 1832) (Jameson 1832 in L. C. Draper 1873, VV:10:46)

One account sent to historian Lyman Draper stated that John Barnett and other Mecklenburg men said that at Hagler's Hill, Sumter's men wrestled, jumped, and ran foot races (White in Stinson 1871 in L. C. Draper 1873, VV:11:294). At Hagler's Hill, Sumter's men complained of poor forage, and called it "Poor Hill" (Gregorie 1931, 81) (Bass 1961, 57).

By 12 July, Sumter's force grew to 500 men (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 233) (Bass 1961, 58). Later, Joseph Graham wrote that Sumter was concerned about a possible enemy attack. He ordered that a crude fort be erected 5 miles up the road at Hagler's Branch. Oak timbers were felled in different directions to quickly construct an improvised fort (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 233) (Gregorie 1931, 84).

... the general ordered the timber to be felled in different directions around the camp, somewhat in the form of an "abattis," and the body of the trees split and leaned over the pole, supported by forks on some high stump, the other end on the ground at an angle of thirty degrees elevation, and facing the avenues left through the brush or abattis for passage, so that it would answer the double purpose for the men to be under and for defence. If the enemy's cavalry had come, unless supported by a large body of infantry or artillery, they could not have forced the camp. (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 233).

In early July, Sumter visited North Carolina authorities to raise money and arms. He visited the Gillespie brothers who were armorers living in the mountains (Bass 1961, 60). Allegedly, there Sumter got his nickname "Gamecock" (Bass 1961, 61). James Hemphill may refer to this event in his 1832 pension application (Hemphill, James, pension application 1832). He [testified](#):

Some time in the summer of 1780 having moved to Mecklenburg County in North Carolina after the taking of Charleston by the British, our regiment then under the command of Lt. Col. Watson and Major Bratton (Col. Neel having died) joined the forces commanded by Col. Sumpter and a few days afterwards moved down to Hagler's Branch in S.C. and after staying there between one and two weeks went about eighteen or twenty miles to the mountains having understood that there were several British Dragoons and Tories in that neighborhood and when we had a battle with about four hundred British and tories commanded by a Capt. Huck of whom we defeated very badly. (Hemphill, James, pension application 1832).

These mountains may be Spencer Mountain or Kings Mountain area where a number of iron works existed. Colonel Andrew Neel actually died later at Rocky Mount battle. On 27 September 1832, [Samuel Watson Jr. described this same event](#).

... as the troops collected together Col. Brattan [Bratton] directed Capt. Moffitt to raise as many volunteers as he could with a view specially to rout a gang of tories assembled in the neighborhood of Kings Mountain. He went with Capt. Moffitt in that forlorn hope. When they had reached the neighborhood of the tories not being on their guard were surprised by them and a considerable engagement ensued in which he had his horse shot down from under him they succeeded however in putting the Tories to flight and pursued them to an almost impenetrable cane brake and left them and immediately returned to the balance of the troops with Col. Brattan who were then encamped on a creek he thinks called Clams Creek [Clemons Branch] ... (Watson 1832 in Scoggins 2005, 181–182).

4 July 1780, Independence Day celebration at Haddrell's Point

Continental Army officers at Haddrell's Point were housed in barracks. General William Moultrie later wrote:

The officers, prisoners at Haddrell's-point, were very ungovernable indeed and it was not much to be wondered at, when two hundred and fifty of them from different states, were huddled up together in the barracks, many of them of different dispositions, and some of them very uncouth gentlemen; it is not surprising that their should be continual disputes among them, and frequent duels. General M'Intosh who was the senior officer that resided constantly with them, complained to me of their disorderly conduct and uncivil behaviour to each other, ... (Moultrie 1802, II:119).

The prisoner's Fourth-of-July celebration induced the following complaint from a nearby British officer to his commander in Charlestown.

Sir,

I think it incumbent on me to acquaint you, for the information of the general, that the conduct of the rebels at the barracks at Haddrell's-point, during the course of this night, has been very irregular and improper. Not contented to celebrate this day, of their supposed Independence, with music, illuminations, &c. they have presumed to discharge a number of small arms; which, I imagine, it is thought they were not (nor indeed ought not to be, by the articles of capitulation) to be in possession of.

I am, &c.

[signed] J. B. Roberts

Captain of the sixty-fifth regiment;

Commanding at Fort Arbuthnot. [Fort Moultrie]

Major Benson.

As a result, on 10 July, officer prisoners were forced to give up their light muskets, called *fuzees*, but kept their pistols.

12 July 1780, Huck's Defeat

British Lieutenant Colonel George Turnbull, commander of Rocky Mount, became extremely frustrated by the British setbacks during June. On 6 July, he wrote Cornwallis:

Those Mecklenburgh, Roan, and my friends the [Scotch] Irish above are perhaps the greatest skum of the Creation. English lenity is thrown away when there is not virtue to meet it half way. If some of them could be caught who have submitted and run off and join'd the rebels, an example on the spot of immediate death and confiscation of property might perhaps make them submit. (Turnbull 1780 in CPS 2010, I:364)

Turnbull sent an order to Captain Christian Huck who was posted at White's Mill along Fishing Creek.

You are hereby ordered, with the cavalry under your command, to proceed to the frontier of the province, collecting all the royal militia with you on your march, and with said force to push the rebels as far as you may deem convenient. (Gregorie 1931, 84).

Huck's earlier success in the New Acquisition District made him arrogant and profane. He was a New York lawyer who had no understanding of the people he tried to intimidate. In early July, he led approximately 100 Legionaries. At daybreak 12 July, about 500 Whig partisans surprised and defeated Huck's unit at Williamson's plantation. Most loyalists were killed or captured.

Colonel William Hill later wrote:

After we had been some time at this camp [Clemons Branch] as before mentioned. in order to prepare for actual service a number of men together with y^e author. being desirous to go into their own settlements on the west side of the River, in order to get a reinforce as well as other necessaries to enable us to keep the field — shortly after we crossed the

River we were informed by our friends. that Capt. Hook [Huck] the same that had a few weeks before destroyed the Iron works had sent to most of the houses in the settlement. to notify the aged men, the young being in Camp, to meet him at a certain place, that he desired to make terms with them, & that he would put them in the King's peace accordingly they met him, he undertook to harangue them, on the certainty of his majesty^s reducing all the Colonies. to obedience, and he far exceeded the Assyrian Gen^{ls} who we read of in ancient writ in blasphemy by saying that God almighty had become a Rebel, but if there were 20 Gods on that side, they would all be conquered, was his expression — Whilst he was employed in this impious blasphemy he had his officers & men taking all the horses fit for his purpose, so that many of the aged men had to walk many miles home afoot — This ill behaviour of the enemy made an impression on the minds of the most serious men in this little band and raised their courage under the belief that they would be made instruments in the hand of Heaven to punish this enemy for his wickedness and blasphemy (W. Hill 1815, 8–9).

On 11 July, Huck captured James McClure and Edward Martin molding lead musket balls and ordered their execution the next morning. During that evening, McClure's sister Mary raced to Sumter's camp at Nation Ford to inform her father Captain John McClure. A large detachment under Colonel William Bratton immediately left to attack Huck. At dawn, these patriots defeated Huck severely at Williamson's Plantation (W. Hill 1815, 9). Colonel William Hill later wrote:

The number of the Americans was 133, and many of them without arms Capⁿ. Hook [Huck] had about 100 horse & Col. [James] Ferguson, at this time commander of the Tory Militia, had about 300 men: they were encamp^d. in a Lane — a strong fence on each side — the Horse picketed in the inside of a field next to the lane, with their furniture and the officers in a mansion house in the field, in which was a number of women, which the said Hook had brought there. and at the moment the action commenced, he was then flourishing his sword over the head of these unfortunate women. & threatening them with death if they would not get their husbands & sons to come in — and marching all night, we made the attack about the break of day — The plan was to attack both ends of the Lane at the same time, but unfortunately the party sent to make the attack on the east end of the lane met with some embarrassments, by fences, brush, briars &c. that they could not get to the end of the lane until the firing commenced at the west end — The probability is that if that party had made good their march in time very few of them w^d. have escaped — However Cap. Hook was killed, and also Col. [James] Ferguson of the Tory Militia — Hook's Luit^t was wounded & died afterwards; considerable number of privates the number not known, as there were many of their carcasses found in the woods some days after — This happened about the. 10th .. of July 1780 at Williamsons Plantation in Y^k. D^t [York District], and it was the first check the enemy had received after the fall of Charleston; and was of greater consequence to the American cause than can be well supposed from an affair of small a magnitude — as it had the tendency to inspire the Americans with courage & fortitude & to teach them that the enemy was not invincible (W. Hill 1815, 9–10).

In 1839, John Craig wrote an article for *Pendleton Messenger* newspaper. It reappeared in the *Chester Standard* newspaper on 16 March 1854.

On the 26th [20th] June, 1780, we had an engagement with a company of Tories at Ramsower's mill. — We defeated them with considerable loss; among the slain was Capt. Falls. We then joined Gen. Sumter at Charlotte and moved on near the Old Nation ford in South Carolina, where we took up camp, and thence we moved to Steel creek, where we had an increase in numbers. Our next engagement was at Williamson's lane, commanded by Colonels Andrew Neal, and Lacy, Bratton, Major Dickson, Capt. McClure, and Capt. Jameson. Gen. Sumter remained in camp. This engagement was on the 12th of July, 1780. Our number was one hundred and ten and we defeated four hundred, commanded by Col. Floyd; killed Major [James] Ferguson and Capt. Hook, and

took Capt. Adams prisoner with 30 or 40 privates, with the loss of one man. We then went back and joined camp with Gen. Sumter at Steel creek. (Craig 1839 in Chester Standard 1854 in L. C. Draper 1873, VV:5:150).

On 18 March 1822, [Archibald Brown testified](#):

Immediately after the fall of Charleston when the enemy came into the back country he joined Gen^l Sumter at Clems Branch in the Indian Land, Capt. Nixons company, was at Hooks defeat near Colonel Brattons, was at the battle of the Hanging Rock, was with Gen^l Sumter when attacked by the British at Fishing Creek, was at the Battle of Blackstocks. (Brown 1822 in Scoggins 2005, 162). (Brown, Archibald, pension application 1822)

On 13 November 1834, [Hugh Gaston testified](#):

... He was afterwards at the battle at James Williamson's plantation. The night previous to the battle they encamped at Clems Branch when they crossed the Catawba river and attacked the united forces of the British & Tories about day break. ... (Gaston 1834 in Scoggins 2005, 167) (Gaston, Hugh, pension application 1834).

On 6 May 1834, [Samuel Houston testified](#):

... From the Battle ground at Ramsour's Mills he was again marched across the Catawba River into the Catawba Indian's Land and encamped for some time at a place called Clem's branch in Lancaster district South Carolina. From thence in Captain McLure's Company under the Command of Col. Lacey he was detached to cross the Catawba River into York district to meet some British & Tories, whom we met and defeated at Col. William Bratton's. Capt. Hook [Huck], a British officer, and Col. [James] Ferguson a Tory, was killed & a Capt. Edmonson [Adamson] of the British Infantry was taken prisoner. From Col. Bratton's we were again marched across the Catawba & joined Genl. Sumpter at Clem's Branch. Thence he was marched with Genl. Sumpter to Rocky Mount where we had a battle with some British & Tories under the Command of Col. Turnbull of the British army. (Houston 1834 in Scoggins 2005, 169) (Houston, Samuel, pension application 1833)

On 1 July 1833, [James Kincaid testified](#):

... That he was first marched into Lancaster District South Carolina in the indian Land at Clem's branch. That he was shortly after his first enrolment marched to Fishing Creek in York District South Carolina and was there in the engagement under Capt. Moffet and Col. Bratton, at Hooks [Huck's] defeat, and that shortly thereafter he was then marched to Rocky mountain [Mount] and was there in that engagement under the command of Genl. Sumpter, Col. Moffet [Bratton] and Capt. Moffet where Genl. Sumpter's army was repulsed. (Kincaid 1833 in Scoggins 2005, 170) (Kincaid, James, pension application 1833)

On 27 September 1832, Samuel Watson Jr., stated:

... [Colonel Bratton's men, including Watson,] immediately returned to the balance of the troops with Col. Brattan who were then encamped on a creek he thinks called Clams Creek [Clems Branch]. At this place there had assembled a good many volunteers some from Georgia who were commonly called refugees. This place was selected as a place of greater safety from the Tories than any other known at the time and the place from which several important sorties were made during those times. In a short time he does not remember how long, the troops under command of Col. Brattan the company of Capt. Moffitt among them crossed over the Catawba River leaving a number of troops at Clam's Creek and marched a distance of twenty eight or thirty miles in the dead of night

and early next morning had an engagement with a party of British and Tories under command of a British officer whose name was Hook [Huck], and defeated them. ... (Watson 1832 in Scoggins 2005, 181–182) (Watson, Samuel, pension application 1832).

At Colonel Sumter's camp at Catawba Nation Ford, militia Colonel William Bratton assembled approximately 150 volunteers to attack Huck. John Moor, a Moore-related 4th great-grandfather, could have volunteered since Huck was close to his home (Sutton 1987, 360).

The combined effect of Ramsour's Mill and Huck's Defeat plus Sumter's control of Nation Ford did much to encourage local Whigs and discourage local Tories.

Private James Potter Collins described conditions shortly after Huck's Defeat. As a young 17-year-old from the New Acquisition District, he was sent by Captain John Moffet as a spy into Lincoln County to learn the plans of Tories. He described visiting the house of a Patriot named Oats who had raised an orphan named Crago. The latter was familiar with surrounding Tories and help Collins gather information about their plans (Collins 1859, 28 30). This Patriot could have been William Oates or his brother John Oates. William was a Plonk-related 4th great-grandfather.

17–19 July, Sumter joins Davie at Waxhaw Creek

At this time, the Continental Army Southern Department was advancing to challenge the British Army. Major General Baron Johann DeKalb was temporary commander awaiting the arrival of Major General Horatio Gates. Beginning 30 June, the Continentals marched from Hillsborough to the south and west along Deep River. On 17 July, from "Camp Catawba River," Sumter sent a long letter to DeKalb that summarized the South Carolina situation, estimated British strength, and suggested a strategy (Gregorie 1931, 86). On 19 July, the Continentals camped at Buffalo Ford on Deep River (Kirkwood 1780).

With Huck's cavalry threat eliminated, on 17 July, Sumter moved his men to join Davie's 65 North Carolina cavalrymen at the Waxhaw Creek camp. From this location, they could control access to strategically important Land's Ford. At that time, there were 700 horses in one camp (Gregorie 1931, 85). The men moved towards Land's Ford and turned their horses loose in the cornfield of Doctor Harper, a known loyalist (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 234) (Gregorie 1931, 87). Sumter and Davie often cooperated in South Carolina even though they were not under the same chain of command.

On 19 July, these Americans learned of a large body of British soldiers marching forward from Hanging Rock. They moved back to Waxhaw Creek, and during the night of 19–20 July, they attempted to trap the British in an ambush. For whatever reason, the British did not appear (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 234) (Gregorie 1931, 87) (B. P. Robinson 1957, 45).

20–21 July, Flat Rock

On the night of 20 July, Major William Richardson Davie took his men from Waxhaw Creek to Flat Rock, 5 miles below the British outpost at Hanging Rock, at the present-day granite quarry. There they set up an ambush and waited until the following afternoon. They successfully captured and destroyed a British supply convoy. Prisoners were placed on captured horses. For safety, Davie returned by a detour route. But about 2:00 a.m. at a principal branch of Beaver Creek, he was ambushed by loyalists who accidentally killed many of the prisoners. Davie arrived back at Waxhaw Creek on 22 July. (Davie 1810 in B. P. Robinson 1976, 9).



Flat Rock is a monument granite quarry today.
World War II Monument in Washington, DC, 2004, used stone from Flat Rock.

Captain William Polk, 1st cousin 8 generations removed of Arabelle Boyer, acting as a volunteer, participated in this engagement (Polk in Hoyt 1914, II:405).

20 July, Colson's Ordinary

About 19 July, from Salisbury, Rutherford ordered Davidson to attack Colonel Samuel Bryan's loyalist forces assembled at Colson's Ordinary where the Rocky River joins Pee Dee River (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 230–232). (The Yadkin becomes the Pee Dee below the mouth of Uwharrie River). On 21 July, Davidson routed Bryan's loyalists, but he was severely wounded in the abdomen and returned to his home to recover. Rutherford joined his troops and pursued the loyalists who crossed the Pee Dee to the east side. The loyalists evaded and reached the safety of McArthur's 71st Regiment at Cheraw.

John Espey, a Plonk-related 4th great-granduncle, may have been in Rutherford's army at this time. Later, he [testified](#) that he was in a regiment commanded by Colonel George Alexander of Mecklenburg County (Espey, John, pension application 1832).

20–28 July, Sumter at Clems Branch campground, second encampment

On 20 July, Sumter returned to Clems Branch campground for a second time (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 235) (Gregorie 1931, 87). The strongest evidence for this encampment is from Captain Joseph Graham, who was adjutant of the Mecklenburg County militia (Graham 1832 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 48). He later wrote:

It was not thought advisable to attack the enemy at his camp [Hanging Rock], and as Lord Rawdon, when there [at Waxhaw Creek] before had consumed the forage at the neighboring farms, General Sumter moved back on the road to Charlotte sixteen miles to Clem's Branch, and encamped where he could draw his supplies from the fertile settlement of Providence on his left. (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 234–235)



Brigadier General Joseph Graham
Artist unknown, about 1805.
(W. A. Graham 1904b, frontispiece).

Without a plan of immediate action to keep his men busy, Sumter furloughed most of his men who returned to their farms. His strength fell to 100 (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 235).

But soon afterwards, Sumter believed the British outposts at Rocky Mount and Hanging Rock were vulnerable and decided to attack. On 25 July, he recalled his own men and requested the Mecklenburg County militia to join (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 235).

At this time, a loyalist officer named Lisle outfitted his entire regiment at British Army expense, and delivered it to the Sumter. Tarleton later wrote:

An instance of treachery which took place about this time, ruined all confidence between the regulars and the [loyalist] militia : The inhabitants in the districts of the rivers Ennoree and Tyger had been enrolled since the siege of Charles town, under the orders of Colonel Floyd; Colonel Neale, the former commanding officer, having fled out of the province for his violent persecution of the loyalists. One Lisle, who had belonged to the same corps, and who had been banished to the [West Indies] islands, availing himself of the proclamation to exchange his parole for a certificate of his being a good citizen, was made second in command : And as soon as the battalion was completed with arms and ammunition, he carried it off to Colonel Neale, who had joined Colonel Sumpter's command in the Catawba [Nation]. (Tarleton 1787, 93)

24–25 July, Caswell and Gates at Deep River

On 24 July, Major General Richard Caswell's troops marched from Buffalo Ford on Deep River to Moore's Ferry on Yadkin River, 22 miles south of Salisbury. That is near the present-day US49 bridge over Yadkin River. The next day, they marched to Colson's Ordinary where Caswell expected to find Rutherford (Caswell 1780). There Caswell's troops were delayed by high water in Rocky River (Mitchell, William, pension application 1832).

On 25 July, Major General Horatio Gates arrived in the Continental's camp at Buffalo Ford and Deep River. Gates immediately decided to proceed south to South Carolina. An order sent back to Brigadier General Edward Stevens at Hillsborough started the Virginians on the march at least two days behind the Continentals.

30 July, Shelby takes Fort Thicketty

At day break 30 July, Colonel Isaac Shelby forced surrender of Tory Major Patrick Moore at Thicketty Fort.



Site of Fort Anderson, later Fort Thicketty, 1760–1785. Log building postdates fort.

31 July, Sumter attacks Rocky Mount

On 28 July, at Clem's Branch, Sumter had sufficient men to attack the British outpost at Rocky Mount (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 236). Some Mecklenburg County militiamen who lived close to Clem's Branch joined Sumter (Ellet 1850a), but the main militia under Colonel Robert Irwin did not arrive in time to accompany Sumter (Adair 1832 in L. C. Draper 1873, VV:10:16) (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 237). These eyewitness recollections are more credible than Davie's 1810 recollection that Irwin did accompany Sumter (Davie 1810 in B. P. Robinson 1976, 11).

Rocky Mount is about two miles downstream of Great Falls, a natural wonder before it was dammed in 1905. An early 1800s observer wrote (Durden 2001, 19):

Hills confine the descending stream as it approaches them [the Great Falls]; when advancing nearer, it is further narrowed, on both sides, by high rocks, piled up like walls. The Catawba River from a width of 180 yards, is now straightened into a channel about one-third of that extent, and from this confinement is forced down into the narrowest part of the river, called the gulf. Thus, pent up on all sides, on it rushes over large masses of stone, and is precipitated down the falls. Its troubled waters are dashed from rock to rock, and present a sheet of foam, from shore to shore, nor do they abate their impetuosity until after they have been precipitated over 20 falls, to a depth of very short of 150 feet. Below Rocky Mount the agitated waters, after being expanded into a channel of 318 yards wide, begin to subside, but are not composed. A considerable time elapses before they regain their former tranquility.

On 31 July, Sumter attacked the fort at Rocky Mount. This assault was unsuccessful (Sumter 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:540) (W. Hill 1815, 11), but at least temporarily put the British on the defensive. Colonel Andrew Neel was killed.

Alexander Haynes, who was a Mecklenburg County resident, while peeking behind a rock during the battle at Rocky Mount had an eye shot out and his cheek badly disfigured. This event was described in the life story of Jane Gaston in the March 1850 issue of *Godey's Lady's Book* written by Elizabeth Fries Ellet.

... the Whigs, who had been driven back by the British, returned, and formed a camp not far below, on Clem's Branch, in the upper edge of Lancaster District. At this time, Alexander, a son of old Mr. Haynes, was about starting to join the fighting men in this camp. When his mother bade him adieu, she gave her parting counsel in the words, "Now, Alick, fight like a man! Don't be a coward!" Such was the spirit of those matrons of Carolina! After two weeks had elapsed, Alexander was brought home from the battle

of Rocky Mount badly wounded in the face. Mrs. Haynes received him without testifying any weakness or undue alarm, and seemed proud that he had fought bravely, and that his wound was in front. He was taken thence to [the hospital in] Charlotte. (Ellet 1850a).

Nonetheless, Alexander Haynes lived to be an old man. (White in Stinson 1871 in L. C. Draper 1873, VV:11:292).



Rocky Mount Monument
Rocky Mount, South Carolina

William “Black Billy” Alexander, a McGuire-related 3rd cousin 6 generations removed, served under Colonel Sumter and participated at Rocky Mount (Hunter 1877, 116).

Unable to force the fort to surrender, Sumter returned to Land’s Ford where he was joined by Irwin’s Mecklenburg County militia (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 237), reportedly only 30 men (Adair 1832 in L. C. Draper 1873, VV:10:16). A meeting was held to plan the next action (Davie 1810 in B. P. Robinson 1976, 11). On 6 August, all units participated in the battle at Hanging Rock (W. Hill 1815, 12).

31 July – 6 August, Gates’ Advance

About 31 July, Major General Richard Caswell wrote he was 5 miles into South Carolina on the west side of the Pee Dee River, Rutherford was directly across the river on the east side, Gates was about 25 miles behind, and Stevens behind Gates (Caswell 1780). That day, Captain Robert Kirkwood wrote in his journal that Gates Continentals were at Smith’s Mill on Little River (Kirkwood 1780). Caswell indicated that McArthur with the 71st Regiment and Bryan’s loyalists had evacuated Cheraw and withdrawn towards Camden. Rutherford probably used the ferry at Cheraw to join Caswell.

On 1 August, Gates’ Continentals crossed Pee Dee River at Mask’s (or Massey’s) Ferry. That location may have been near Grassey Islands. That is about 7 miles north of present-day US74 bridge. Today, there is a nearby road called Ingram Mill Road. Kirkwood wrote that the Continentals camped at Ingram’s Farm (Kirkwood 1780). The Virginia militia under Brigadier General Edward Stevens was a few days behind. When the Virginians reached Mask’s Ferry, they left their baggage to speed up their march.

6 August 1780, Hanging Rock

On 6 August, Americans under Colonel Thomas Sumter attacked the British outpost near Hanging Rock along Camden Road near present-day Heath Springs, South Carolina. Mecklenburg County militiamen under Colonel Robert Irwin joined Sumter. Major William Richardson Davie was an important leader since his cavalry had been active in the area for several days. Davie’s messengers were teenage Andrew Jackson

and his brother Robert (M. James 1938, 20–21). Among the British were Rowan County loyalists under Colonel Samuel Bryan. Many references place the battle at Hanging Rock boulder. But original-sources, Sumter's report (Sumter 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:541-542) (Bass 1961, 72) and (Davie 1810 in B. P. Robinson 1976, 13), indicate the battle was along Camden Road, beginning at the present-day fish hatchery, across the creek, up the ravine, and down the road for about a third of a mile. Tarleton later wrote:

Colonel Sumpter crossed Broad [should be Catawba] river, and retired to his former camp in the Catawba settlement; where, reinforcing the numbers he had lost at Rocky mount, he was soon in a condition to project other operations. This active partisan was thoroughly sensible, that the minds of men are influenced by enterprise, and that to keep undisciplined people together, it is necessary to employ them. For this purpose, he again surveyed the state of the British posts upon the frontier, and on minute examination he deemed Hanging rock the most vulnerable : He hastened his preparations for the attack, because a detachment of cavalry and mounted infantry had been ordered from that place to reinforce Rocky mount. (Tarleton 1787, 94)



Round Rock, 30-foot diameter boulder
One among many large boulders near Hanging Rock.

In this battle, Colonel William Hill was injured (W. Hill 1815, 13) as well as Thomas Spratt Junior.

Ezra Alexander, a McGuire-related 2nd cousin 7 generations removed, participated in the attack at Hanging Rock. William “Black Billy” Alexander, a McGuire-related 3rd cousin 6 generations removed, served under Colonel Sumter and participated at Hanging Rock (Hunter 1877, 116). His brother, Thomas Alexander, also participated (Hunter 1877, 114).

Jane Brown, 1767–1858, a 13-year-old resident of Chester County, South Carolina, visited the hospital at Liberty Hall in Charlotte. After her 1790 marriage to Joseph Gaston, she was referred to as Jane Gaston. About 1850, she recalled this visit to author Elizabeth Fries Lummis Ellet who wrote:

The hospital being not far from the house of Mr. Haynes, Jane Brown went frequently, with others, to see the wounded soldiers. Many of the wounded of Beaufort [Buford] where there, and disabled men from the battles of Rocky Mount and Hanging Rock were lying in rude log-houses, upon boards covered with straw, and laid across the sleepers for their resting-place. The subject of this notice remembers seeing the soldiers there, maimed and suffering, some having but one arm, some having lost a leg, and some deprived of both arms, or both legs. She heard them laughing and joking with one another and her attention was particularly attracted to one who had lost both arms, and was

threatening to knock down a fellow-sufferer. It was common thus to see cheerfulness manifested in the midst of misfortune, by these martyrs to liberty. Mrs. Gaston also remembers well having seen there her neighbors, Henry Bishop and the gallant John McClure, both severely wounded. (Ellet, Jane Gaston 1850a)

Late July–Early August 1780, Wofford's Iron Works

For about three weeks in July 1780, Lincoln County Whigs assembled at Espey's plantation (Hunter 1877, 265) under the leadership of Colonel William Graham and Lieutenant Colonel Frederick Hambricht (Forney, Abraham, pension application 1832).

Some Lincoln County Men joined Colonel Joseph McDowell at Cherokee Ford on Broad River (Espey, Samuel, pension application 1832). About 2 August, Colonel Isaac Shelby, Colonel Elijah Clarke, and Colonel Graham moved their 400 troops south to Brown's Creek (Graham, William, pension application 1832). On 6–7 August, these men withdrew to Fair Forest Creek (Draper 1881, 90) near present-day Spartanburg, South Carolina.

During the summer 1780, Scotsman Major Patrick Ferguson recruited loyalist militiamen in upstate South Carolina. In reaction, patriot militiamen harassed these loyalists. On the night of 7–8 August, about 400 patriots camped at Fair Forest Creek near present-day Spartanburg, South Carolina. At dawn, they were alerted that Ferguson was advancing on them with a 1000-man army at nearby Cedar Springs. They quickly abandoned camp and fell back to a better defensible position across Lawson's Fork Creek near Wofford's Iron Works in present-day Glendale, South Carolina. Loyalist light-cavalry, call dragoons, under Captain James Duncan arrived first. The patriots repulsed two dragoon charges and for a short while remounted and pursued them. However, when Ferguson's full army arrived, the outnumbered patriots withdrew. (Draper 1881, 90–94).

Patriot Captain Samuel Espey, a Plonk-related 4th great-grandfather, participated in this battle. He was in Colonel William Graham's militia regiment of mounted infantrymen. (Espey, Samuel, pension application 1832).

August 1780, Gates' Defeat

In late July and early August 1780, American Major General Horatio Gates moved an army towards the British outpost at Camden. For several days, American and British forces, under Rawdon, faced each other across Lynches Creek, 14 miles from Camden (Tarleton 1787, 99). On 13 August, Gates moved his army to Rugeley's Mill. The main encampment was north of Grannies Quarter Creek. The light infantry was posted on the south side (Tarleton 1787, 102). In reaction, Rawdon pulled back from Lynches Creek to Camden. On 10–13 August, Cornwallis raced from Charlestown to Camden to take personal command. As Gates approached Camden, Colonel Thomas Sumter corresponded and persuaded Gates of the strategy of controlling all crossings of the Catawba, Wateree, and Santee Rivers. On 15 August, while at Rugeley's Mills, Gates sent 100 Continentals and 300 North Carolina militia to reinforce Sumter (Bass 1961, 78).



Major General Horatio Gates
Painted by Charles Willson Peale, 1782.

John Espey, a Plonk-related 4th great-granduncle, was in Gate's army as it advanced on Camden. [John Espey](#) was among the North Carolina militia detached to reinforce Sumter (Espey, John, pension application 1832).

At 10:00 p.m. 15 August, Gates began moving his army closer to Camden, planning to stop at defensible Saunder's Creek. By coincidence, Cornwallis began a simultaneous surprise attack. At 2:00 a.m. 16 August, vans of both armies collided along the road 10 miles north of Camden. Both armies suddenly stopped. From a few captured prisoners, Gates learned for the first time that he faced 3000 Redcoats led by personally Cornwallis. The shock paralyzed Gates decision making. He assigned North Carolina and Virginia militia the same responsibilities as trained Continental soldiers. Unfortunately, those militiamen were lined up against Cornwallis's best professional soldiers. At daybreak, the initial British bayonet charge collapsed the militia's position, exposing the Continental's left flank (Tarleton 1787, 105–109). Garret Watts, a North Carolina militiaman, [testified](#) 54 years later:

I well remember everything that occurred the next morning. I remember that I was among the nearest to the enemy; that a man named John Summers was my file leader; that we had orders to wait for the word to commence firing; that the militia were in front and in a feeble condition at that time. They were fatigued. The weather was warm excessively. They had been fed a short time previously on molasses entirely. I can state on oath that I believe my gun was the first gun fired, notwithstanding the orders, for we were close to the enemy, who appeared to maneuver in contempt of us, and I fired without thinking except that I might prevent the man opposite me from killing me. The discharge and loud roar soon became general from one end of the lines to the other. Amongst other things, I confess I was amongst the first that fled. The cause of that I cannot tell, except that everyone I saw was about to do the same. It was instantaneous. There was no effort to rally, no encouragement to fight. Officers and men joined in the flight. I threw away my gun, and, reflecting I might be punished for being found without arms, I picked up a drum, which gave forth such sounds when touched by the twigs I cast it away. When we had gone, we heard the roar of guns still, but we knew not why. Had we known, we might have returned. It was that portion of the army commanded by [Major General] de Kalb fighting still. (Watts, Garret, pension application 1834).

Major General Baron Johann DeKalb was killed.



Major General Johann Baron DeKalb
Re-painted from half size by Charles Willson Peale, 1781–1782.



Major General Johann Baron DeKalb Monument
Flat Rock Road, north of Camden, South Carolina.

William Mitchell, brother of David Mitchell Jr., who was husband of Ann Anderson an Anderson-related 4th great-grandaunt, was a North Carolina militiaman at Gates' Defeat (Mitchell, William, pension application 1832). David Mitchell Jr. was a militia lieutenant at this time, but his brother did not mention he was in the battle (Mitchell, Ann Anderson, pension application 1843).

Colonel Hugh Tinnin, an Anderson-related 1st cousin 7 generations removed, participated at Gates' Defeat. He was captured and held prisoner of war for a year (Conolly 2008). [James Tinnin](#), an Anderson-related 1st cousin 7 generations removed, was in Major General Richard Caswell's army of North Carolina militiamen (Tinnin, James, pension application 1833).

David White, husband of Elizabeth Allen an Anderson-related 1st cousin 6 generations removed, was a seventeen-year-old North Carolina militiaman at Gates' Defeat.

At first fire his regiment retreated. It then took up a position at the right of the Irish [Volunteer] regulars and on his second fire he took aim at a mounted officer riding up from the left and killed him. Being closely pressed he turned and fired a third time while retreating. (S. W. Stockard 1900, 150) (Turner, The Scott Family of Hawfields 1971, 46)

Tarleton's Legion pursued fleeing Americans. In his own words (Tarleton 1787, 107), "rout and slaughter ensued in every quarter." About 250 Americans died and 800 were wounded. Most of these casualties were Continentals. Over 1000 captives were taken to Charlestown and Haddrell's Point. Captured Brigadier General Griffith Rutherford was taken to St. Augustine, Florida. In his absence, on 31 August, the North Carolina Assembly appointed Davidson as brigadier general in command of Salisbury District militia. Also, it promoted Davie to colonel.

On 26 May 1791, almost eleven years after the battle, President George Washington, while on his tour of southern states, examined the battleground. He noted in his journal:

Had Genl. Gates been ½ a mile further advanced, an impenetrable Swamp would have prevented the attack which was made on him by the British Army, and afforded him time to have formed his own plans; but having no information of Lord Cornwallis's designs, and perhaps not being apprised of this advantage it was not siezed by him. (Washington 1791, 148)

Gates abandoned the battleground and with a small guard arrived in Charlotte at 11:00 p.m. that evening (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 243). Those American soldiers who escaped walked home or to Hillsborough as best they could. Virginians returned to their baggage at Mask's Ferry on Pee Dee River. Caswell first went to Charlotte and then to Hillsborough. At noon 17 August, 300–400 militiamen retreating soldiers appeared in Charlotte. Later in the day, many more soldiers arrived. (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 243)

18 August 1780, Sumter's Surprise

Colonel Thomas Sumter with attached Mecklenburg County militia moved down the west bank of the Catawba and Wateree River. On 15 August, at Fort Cary, opposite Camden, they captured a large convoy of supplies. With prisoners, they reverse marched. (Bass 1961, 78)

On 17 August, Sumter's army camped at Rocky Mount not realizing that Tarleton's Legion was stalking them across the river. The next day, Sumter crossed Fishing Creek at Cow Ford and rested on the north side (Collins 1859, 41–45) (Bass 1961, 82). Tarleton surprised and virtually destroyed Sumter's army. About 150 Americans were killed. Present-day historical markers along highway US21 locate the battle's approximate location. Cornwallis summarized the action.

But as I saw the importance of Destroying or Dispersing, if possible, the Corps under General Sumpter, as it might prove a foundation for assembling the routed Army, On the Morning of the 17th I detached Lt. Col. Tarleton with the Legion Cavalry & Infantry & the Corps of Light Infantry, making in all about 350 men, with orders to attack him wherever He could find him, And at the same time I sent orders to Lt. Col. Turnbull & Major Ferguson, at that time on Little river, to put their Corps in motion immediately, and on their side to pursue & endeavour to attack Genl. Sumpter. Lt. Col. Tarleton executed this service with his usual activity & military address. He procured good information of Sumpter's movements, and by forced and concealed marches came up with & surprized him in the middle of the day on the 18th near the Catawba Fords. He totally destroyed or dispersed his detachment, consisting then of 700 men, killing 150 on the Spot & taking two pieces of Brass Cannon & 300 Prisoners, & 44 waggons. He likewise retook 100 of our men, who had fallen into their hands, partly at the action at Hanging Rock, & partly in escorting some wagons from Congarees to Camden, & He released 150 of our Militia Men or friendly Country people who had been seized by the Rebels. (Cornwallis 1780 in NCSR 1895, XV:272)

Private James Potter Collins, a South Carolina militiaman, was a participant. He later wrote:

all at once the picket guns gave the alarm — they retreated on the main body with the enemy at their heels. Before Sumpter could wake up his men and form, the enemy were among them cutting down everything in their way. Sumpter, with all the men he had collected, retreated across the creek at the main road, leaving the remainder to the mercy of the enemy. It was a perfect rout, and an indiscriminate slaughter. No quarter was given; we were preparing in all haste to secure our own safety. The greater part of our number dashed through the creek, at the fording place, and pushing on with all possible speed, reached the highland. (Collins 1859, 41–45)

John Espey, a Plonk-related 4th great-granduncle, [participated at Fishing Creek](#) and somehow escaped (Espey, John, pension application 1832).

Davie wrote, “Colo Sumpter who was asleep under a waggon when the action commenced, fortunately made his escape amidst the general confusion and reached Major Davie’s camp at Charlotte two days afterwards without a single follower.” (Davie 1810 in B. P. Robinson 1976, 20). But Sumter soon raised another large force (Cornwallis 1780 in NCSR 1895, XV:272) and relocated to Bigger’s Ferry, now under Lake Wylie.

North Carolina militia retreating from Gates’ Defeat might have re-grouped at Clems Branch campground. On 23 August, North Carolina Governor Abner Nash wrote, “General [Richard] Caswell made a stand at Charlotte, near the boundary line, and called in upwards of one thousand fresh men. These he [Caswell] added to Colonel Sumpter’s party of about seven hundred, and gave him [Sumter] the command of the whole, whilst he [Caswell] came here [Hillsborough].” (Nash 1780 in Tarleton 1787, 150). That implies the militiamen assembled along the Camden-Charlotte Road at the boundary line. That was at Clems Branch campground. It is plausible that these militiamen re-grouped at their first opportunity inside North Carolina. It also explains how Sumter so quickly refurbished his command after Fishing Creek with North Carolina recruits. Nash was reciting what he was told by North Carolina Major General Caswell. Davie called Caswell’s claim of credit for assembling this force a “damnable lie” because Caswell soon departed Charlotte (Davie 1810 in B. P. Robinson 1976, 20). But maybe Caswell intent was merely to inform the current governor that he ordered up more North Carolina militiamen and placed them under the command of Sumter. After all, Major Davie would not necessarily know what agreement Major General Caswell made with Colonel Sumter. In 1780, Caswell was a former North Carolina governor. It seems unlikely he would deliberately mislead the current governor Nash. On 19 August, Major General William Smallwood arrived in Charlotte. He organized the soldiers who had retreated from Gates’ Defeat and Fishing Creek. The next day, most continued on to Salisbury and Hillsborough. Major Anderson of the Maryland Third Regiment remained in Charlotte about 12 days. He collected about 60 more men before marching north (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 244).

In Camden, Cornwallis prepared to invade North Carolina.



British Camden Headquarters, June 1780–May 1781
1976 replica, Camden, South Carolina

Shortly afterwards, the British began transferring American prisoners to Charlestown. On 21 August, a convoy was intercepted by Colonel Francis Marion and Colonel Hugh Horry [pronounced Ōr-rē]. Tarleton later wrote:

A subsequent event manifested in strong colours the duplicity of the inhabitants of the province, and the necessity of occasionally exercising exemplary punishment on the most guilty. In the districts through which the prisoners were to pass, on their journey to Charles town, the inhabitants had almost universally given their paroles, or taken out certificates as good citizens. This reflection, and the heat of the weather, caused the King's officers to send small guards only of infantry from Camden to escort detachments of continentals and militia, taken in the late actions: The first and second convoy passed in security; but the third was waylaid by the inhabitants of the country, under the direction of one Horry; the British were made prisoners, and the Americans released from captivity. (Tarleton 1787, 157).

In Hillsborough, Gates collected about 800 Continental soldiers plus at least 72 American prisoners recaptured by Marion and Horry (Seymour 1780 in Seymour 1883, 289). Gates attempted to reestablish a formidable army by recruitment and supply. Three light infantry companies were formed by selecting the most swift and agile young men from the regular units. Captain Brooks commanded the Maryland company, Captain Robert Kirkwood, the Delaware company, and Captain Bruin, the Virginia company (Seymour 1780 in Seymour 1883, 290).

19 August 1780, Musgrove Mill

During the night of 18–19 August, 200 American militiamen rode 40 miles from Smith's Ford (DeLorme, South Carolina Atlas & Gazetteer 1998, 20) on Broad River to raid a British outpost at Musgrove Mill on Enoree River. They were commanded by Colonel Isaac Shelby and Colonel Elijah Clarke. They were joined by Colonel Thomas Brandon's men from Spartanburg District and other volunteers. This was a daring raid behind the advanced post of Major Patrick Ferguson at Fair Forest Shoal. On arrival at a clearing about a mile from Musgrove Mill, the Americans sent out a reconnaissance patrol, but they were detected and the entire British camp was alerted. At the same time, Americans learned that an additional 300 provincial regulars had just arrived. The Americans changed tactics. They quickly built a fortification from brush. Captain Shadrack Inman with 25 fellow mounted Georgians proceeded down the road to the river and made a display, luring the British across the river and up to the American position. There several volleys were exchanged. When the commanding British officer, Colonel Alexander Innes, was wounded, the remaining British panicked and fled back to the river. The Americans killed 63, wounded about 90, and captured 70. American losses were only 4 killed and 9 wounded. However, soon afterwards, an express rider sent from Colonel Charles McDowell at Smith's Ford brought news of Gates' Defeat three days earlier and McDowell's intention to withdraw to Gilbert Town. Shelby and Clarke realizing how dangerously exposed they were and decide to withdraw toward Gilbert Town (Draper 1881, 103–122). In late 2002, a new South Carolina state park opened at Musgrove Mill. It includes Horseshoe Waterfall along Cedar Shoals Creek.



Musgrove Mill battleground
as viewed by British approaching American position.

Matthew Alexander, a McGuire-related 4th great-granduncle, participated at Musgrove's Mill. He served under Captain Parson and Colonel Benjamin Roebuck (Alexander, Matthew, pension application 1832) (Moss 1983) probably under Colonel Thomas Brandon. Later, Matthew Alexander was arrested along with 60 others and marched to Ninety Six where he was imprisoned for 3 months.

On 20 August, two days after his defeat at Fishing Creek, Sumter arrived at Davie's camp in Charlotte "without a single follower." (Davie 1810 in B. P. Robinson 1976, 20).

Early September 1780, Graham's Fort

Encouraged by the British advance, marauding Tories threatened the Whig families of southern Lincoln County, present-day Cleveland County. For protection, the Whigs gathered at the fortified home of Colonel William Graham on the west bank of Buffalo Creek. Sometime in September, about 23 Tories attacked this fort (Draper 1881, 145). Only three fighting men were present to defend the many young and old in the fort. They were William Graham, David Dickey, and nineteen-year-old William Twitty. (Graham, William, pension application 1832) (Draper 1881, 145)

One fellow [Tory], John Burke, more venturesome than the rest, ran up to the house, and through a crack aimed at young Twitty, when Susan Twitty, the sister of the young soldier, seeing his peril, jerked her brother down just as the gun fired, the ball penetrating the opposite wall. She then looked out of the aperture, and saw Burke, not far off, on his knees, re-loading for another fire; and quickly comprehending the situation, exclaimed: "brother William, now's your chance—shoot the rascal!" The next instant young Twitty's gun cracked, and bold Tory was shot through the head. So eager was Miss Twitty to render the good cause any service in her power, that she at once unbarred the door, darted out, and brought in, amid a shower of Tory bullets, Burke's gun and ammunition, as trophies of victory. She fortunately escaped unhurt. It was a heroic act for a young girl of seventeen. (Draper 1881, 145–146)

Late August–Early September 1780, Mecklenburg County militia at McAlpine Creek

After Major General Horatio Gates' defeat on 16 August 1780 and Colonel Thomas Sumter's defeat on 18 August at Fishing Creek, the British Army under Lieutenant General Charles Earl Cornwallis occupied Georgia and South Carolina, and was poised to capture North Carolina. Cornwallis was overconfident. Like many British officers, he was contemptuous of American soldiers. He would have been wise to adopt conciliatory policies, including reinstating some civilian government, that had a chance of winning

American hearts and minds. Instead, he encouraged his military subordinates to use extreme measures. In an August 1780 message to Lieutenant Colonel John Cruger, commander of Ninety Six, Cornwallis wrote:

I have given orders, that all the inhabitants of this Province [South Carolina] who had submitted, and who have taken part in its revolt, shall be punished with the greatest rigour — that they should be imprisoned, and their whole property taken from them or destroyed. I have ordered in the most positive manner, that every militiaman, who had borne arms with us, and afterwards joined the enemy, should be immediately hanged; and have now, Sir, only to desire, that you will take the most vigorous measures to extinguish the rebellion, and that you will obey, in the strictest manner, the directions given in this letter. (Cornwallis 1780 in CP 1970, 80:27–28) (Cornwallis 1780 in Garden 1822, 35) (Wickwire and Wickwire 1970, 179)

After Gates' Defeat, on 16 August 1780, the American Army in the South was in utter disarray. It tried to regroup at Hillsborough, North Carolina. During these panic circumstances, on 6 September 1780, the North Carolina legislature “established a *Board of War* for the more effectually and expeditiously calling forth the powers and resources of the State against a common enemy.” (W. A. Graham 1904b, 380). It was modeled on the Board of War established by the Continental Congress. It usurped the executive authority of Governor Abner Nash who complained (Rankin 1971, 246–247). This action contrasts with that of the South Carolina legislature which the previous April granted its governor dictatorial powers (Borick 2003, 46).

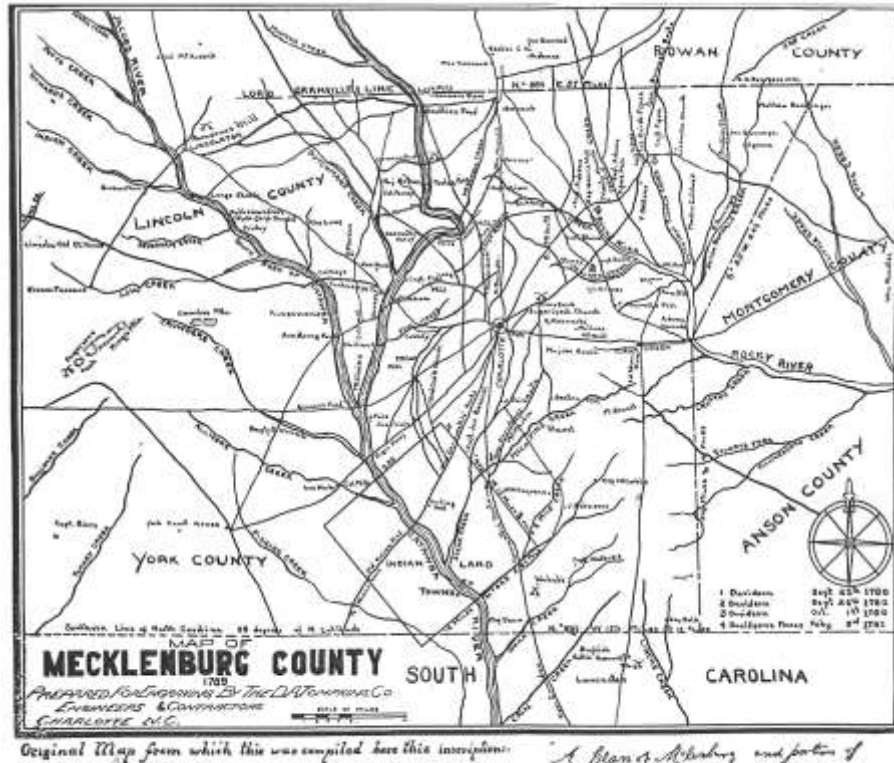
Thomas Polk was appointed to the Board of War, but declined. Instead, Polk served as Continental Army Commissary Officer.

On 20 August 1780, in Charlotte, during the commencement ceremony of *Liberty Hall Academy*, President Reverend Alexander McWhorter, exhorted the older students to join the militia (Preyer 1987, 153).

North Carolina Governor Abner Nash urged Mecklenburg County militia officers to meet in Charlotte (Davidson 1951, 71). They directed Colonel Robert Irwin to assemble half the county militia and camp to the south of Charlotte. They also directed Major William Richardson Davie to patrol his cavalry in the country next to Camden. (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 245–246) (Robinson 1957, 65).

Colonel Irwin selected a position seven or eight miles southeast of Charlotte, between the two roads that lead to Camden from that place, and encamped behind McAlpin's Creek. (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 246).

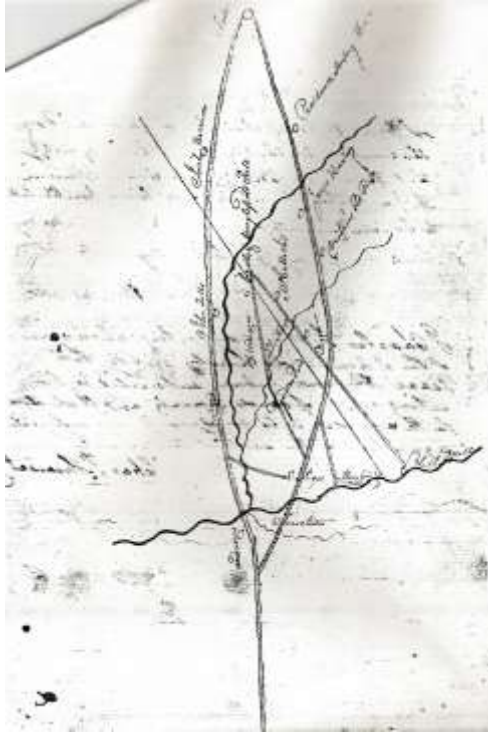
These two roads were approximately present-day Providence Road and highway US521, however with important deviations. Between Twelve Mile Creek and Waxhaw Creek, a crossroad connected the two. It could have been present-day Rehobeth Road, a ridge road, and vestige of the old colonial “Salisbury Road” (Plan of the Boundary Line Between the Provinces of South and North Carolina 1772). Or it might have been the path of the present-day railroad tracks that parallel highway NC75. Two old maps show these joining roads. Major Joseph Graham, an active Revolutionary officer, prepared one of these maps in 1789. This map was redrawn sometime in the early 1900s by the Charlotte engineering firm D. A. Tompkins Company.



Caption reads: Original Map from which this was compiled bore this inscription: -
 "A plan of Mecklenburg and portion of joining Counties is laid down by a scale of five miles to an inch.
 January 16th 1789 By Maj Joseph Graham." (J. Graham 1789)
 (Graham 1789 in Tompkins in W. A. Graham 1904b, 188)
 (Graham 1789 in Tompkins in Robinson 1976, 6)

The second map is rough sketch of public roads drawn by Joshua Gordon, a resident of upper Lancaster County, in 1810 (Gordon 1810 in SCDH 2007, 176.1 0010 004 ND00 66714 00). Historian Louise Pettus wrote:

Around 1810 Joshua Gordon petitioned the South Carolina legislature "complaining of the improper conduct of the Board of Commissioners of Roads of the district of Lancaster." Gordon said there were already two public roads to connect Charlotte and Lancaster Court House and that it was a hardship to add another [those who lived on the road had to maintain it]. What is remarkable is that Gordon included a hand-drawn road map showing the roads, creeks, some households, the Six Mile and Providence Meeting House locations, etc. it is probably the earliest road map of the area that is extant, preceding the Mills Atlas map by around 15 years. (L. Pettus 1988).



Two roads between Charlotte and just below Twelve Mile Creek
 Joshua Gordon, (Gordon 1810 in SCDAH 2007, 176.1 0010 004 ND00 66714 00).

One source suggests the two roads intersected four miles north of Waxhaw Creek (Sumner 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:775–776). That intersection was probably slightly west of where present-day Old Church Road, SR378, forks into Niven Road in South Carolina and Rehobeth Road, SR1107, in North Carolina (Salley 1929, map). Alternatively, it could have followed the present-day railroad tracks that parallel highway NC75. At the time of the Revolution and well into the 1800s, the western road was called Steele Creek Road. Along this road the distance between Waxhaw Creek and Charlotte was 30 miles. Along Rehobeth Road and Providence Road the distance was slightly longer, 33 miles. Between these two principal roads there were several crossroads that were ridge roads. One notable crossroad ran along the ridgeline between the Sugar Creek and Twelve Mile Creek watersheds. It was called Providence Road West. Today, it is the connected segments of Ballantyne Commons Parkway, Elm Lane, Bryan Farms Road, Providence Road West, and Barbersville Road.

Note: Steele Creek Road

At the time of the American Revolution, the main north-south wagon road was often referred to as Steele Creek Road. This name appears in (Davie 1810 in Robinson 1976, 24), (Davidson 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:786) (Davidson 1780 in Davidson 1951, 89), (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 249), (Bass 1961, 86), (Stinson 1871 in Draper 1873, VV:5:45), and (L. Pettus 1990b). This name applied as far south as at least Twelve Mile Creek (D. L. Pettus 2008–2015).

Unfortunately, this obsolete name is ambiguous since Steele Creek flows into the opposite side of Sugar Creek and two other roads in Mecklenburg County have the same name. This ambiguous name confounded this author and at least one historian (Robinson 1957, 69). A plausible explanation is that the name originated from an earlier time when the main Indian trail may have paralleled the Catawba River by veering west, across Sugar Creek, and connecting to the road that retains that name today. The name may predate 1763 before Charlotte had a name and few roads led directly to it.

Although the name Steele Creek Road is problematic, it remains more distinguishable than the alternatives: Camden Road, Charlotte Road, Great Road, wagon road, etc. Since it was in the vernacular used by local

residents during the American Revolution, it is also used in this document.

8 September, Davidson commands Western District militia at McAlpine Creek

Colonel Robert Irwin's camp was probably near present-day Old Providence Road bridge over McAlpine Creek. In a few days, Colonel Francis Locke with the Rowan County militia joined. All together, they constituted about 400 Salisbury District militiamen. However, who was commander was unclear in the absence of Brigadier General Rutherford who had been captured at Gates' Defeat. In about a week, on 31 August, Governor Nash resolved this issue by appointing William Davidson, an experienced Continental Army lieutenant colonel, who was promoted on this occasion to militia brigadier general (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 246). Davidson had just recovered from injuries received at Colson's Ordinary on 21 July.

The spirited response of the Mecklenburg County and Rowan County militiamen encouraged Governor Abner Nash to write Brigadier General Jethro Sumner at Ramsey's Mill on Deep River on 4 September:

The Western Counties are now high spirited, and things there wear a good countenance; 500 Virginia regulars will be here [Hillsborough] in a day or two, and nothing is wanting but the countenance of your brigade to give life and spirit to our affairs; so let me beg of you, sir, to march on, surmounting and despising all difficulties. Appoint a commissary yourself. (Nash 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:771)

At Ramsey's Mill, surgeon Robert Williams joined Sumner.

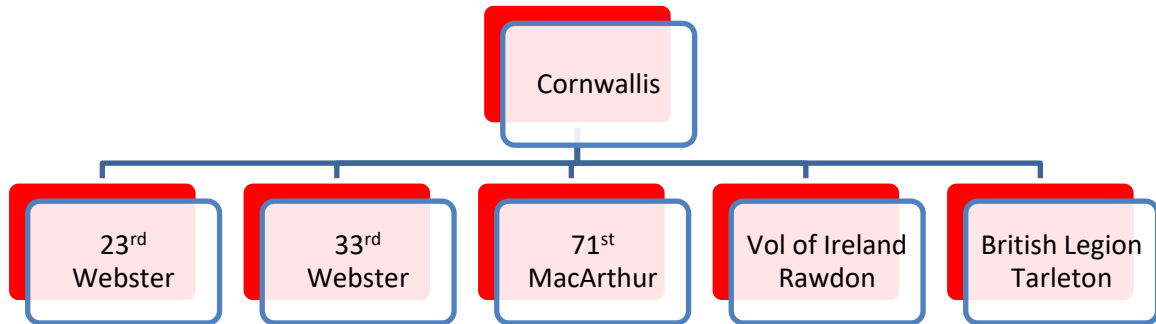
We continued on until we joined the remains of the defeated army at Ramsey Mills on Deep River in this State then under the command of General Jethro Sumner who was a Brigadier in the Continental line. James Cole Montflorenc was his aid. He gave me an appointment of Surgeon General which I went and returned because I was young and there was several surgeons on the Continental establishment who had been several years in service. He then gave me an appointment as surgeon to the army as he said the Doctors he believed that were there were inattentive to their duty and some of them drank hard. (Williams 1832 in Draper 1873, VV:10:192) (Williams, Robert, pension application 1832)

Meanwhile, Cornwallis's severe policy was implemented. In mid-September 1780, British Major James Wemyss [pronounced Wē-mes] burned homes of noted Whigs along the Pee Dee River. He burned Indiantown Presbyterian Church as a "sedition shop." These vindictive policies drove hundreds Whigs into Colonel Francis Marion's camps.

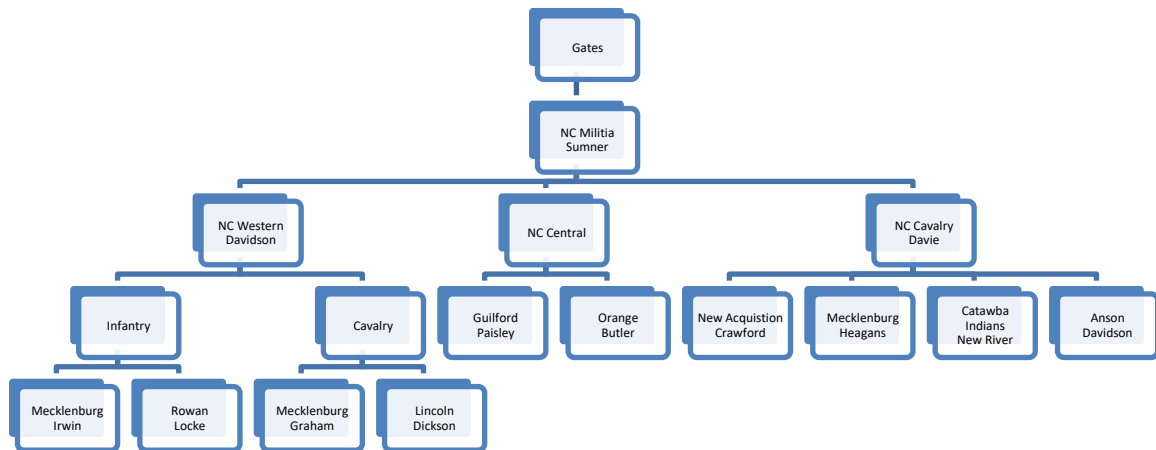
September 1780, British Army and American Army Chain of Commands

Only parts of both armies were operational in or near Charlotte, North Carolina, in September 1780. Of those that did participate, their chains of command appear below.

British Army chain of command:



American Army chain of command:



7-8 September, Cornwallis advance, Davie withdrew to Providence

Beginning 7 September 1780 (Money 1780, 7 Sep) (Stedman 1794, 2:215) (Davie 1810 in Robinson 1976, 21), Cornwallis marched the British Army, in total about 1200 soldiers, from Camden northwards towards North Carolina by the Catawba Nation. Tarleton's Legion advanced up the Catawba River west side to upper Fishing Creek. Tarleton later wrote:

Earl Cornwallis, with the principal column of the army, composed of the 7th, 23d, 33d, and 71st regiments of infantry, the volunteers of Ireland, Hamilton's corps, Bryan's refugees, four pieces of cannon, about fifty wagons, and a detachment of cavalry,

marched by Hanging rock, towards the Catawba settlement; whilst the body of the British dragoons, and the light and legion infantry, with a three pounder, crossed the Wateree, and moved up the east [west] side of the river, under Lieutenant-colonel Tarleton. (Tarleton 1787, 158).

Note: British Army Regiments

A British regiment's full name indicates how or where its soldiers were first recruited. If it was established by the monarch, it was called Royal. Or the name may reflect a region of Great Britain. Or the name could be the colonel commissioned to recruit a regiment. (Brander 1971, 37–48) Once established, a regiment was typically active for a campaign or war. Depending on need, it could be consolidated with another regiment or be disbanded until reestablished years later. Each regiment's uniform was distinctive in some way, particularly in hat design. A fusil was a light musket. Cornwallis's regular British regiments and their commanders in the Carolinas were:

Regiment	Name	Commander
23 rd	Royal Welch Fusiliers	Lieutenant Colonel James Webster
33 rd	West Riding Regiment	Cornwallis (delegated to Webster)
63 rd	West Suffolk Regiment	Major James Wemyss
71 st	Fraser's Highlanders	Major Archibald McArthur
7 th	Royal Fusiliers	[garrison duty]
	British Legion	Lieutenant Colonel Banastre Tarleton
2 nd American	Volunteers of Ireland	Lieutenant Colonel Francis Lord Rawdon
	Volunteers of New York	Lieutenant Colonel George Turnbull
militia	Royal North Carolinians	Lieutenant Colonel John Hamilton
militia	Yadkin Valley loyalists	Colonel Samuel Bryan

The 23rd and 33rd Regiments had distinguished records since the beginning of the war. The 23rd Regiment accompanied Brigadier General Hugh Percy's rescue of British soldiers and Marines who fought at Lexington and Concord, Massachusetts, on 19 April 1775 (Mackenzie 1930, 19–23). Both regiments participated in the flanking maneuver on Long Island, New York, that won an important British victory on 27 August 1776. The British Legion and Volunteers of Ireland were on the British establishment, but despite their name, most of their soldiers were American loyalists.

In 1780, the 23rd Regiment was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel James Webster. He was also delegated command of the 33rd Regiment by its titular colonel, Cornwallis.

On 7 September, Cornwallis's army encamped at Rugeley's Mill; on 8 September, at Hanging Rock (Cornwallis 1780 in CP 1970, vol. 80); on 9 September, at Berkley's on Camp Creek (Stinson 1874 in Draper 1873, VV:5:407–409), near present-day Shady Lane, Lancaster, South Carolina; and on 10–11 September, at Forster's or Foster's (Cornwallis 1780 in CP 1970, vol. 80) near present-day Foster's Crossroads. (Allison 2009)

As Cornwallis advanced from Camden, Davie took up a new post at New Providence in front of Davidson. At this time, Governor Nash promoted Major William Richardson Davie to colonel.

Col^o Davie who was now appointed Col^o Com^t of all the Cavalry of N^o Carolina with orders also to raise a regiment had there collected only about seventy men however with these and two companies of riflemen commanded by Major Geo. Davidson [of Anson County] he took post at Providence twenty five miles above the British camp. (Davie 1810 in Robinson 1976, 21).

With this promotion, Davie no longer reported to the Mecklenburg County militia command, but to Sumner. Major George Davidson was from Anson County and not related to William Davidson. He

contributed 80 mounted infantry, bringing Davie's strength to 150 cavalymen (Davie 1810 in Robinson 1976, 21). Both William Davidson and Davie were subordinates to Brigadier General Jethro Sumner, but operated independently. Davie's cavalymen continued to patrol throughout the Waxhaw region.

The distances that Davie cites in his two quotes reveal an interesting insight. He wrote that the British camp on Waxhaw Creek was 40 miles from Charlotte and his camp at Providence was 25 miles above the British camp (Davie 1810 in Robinson 1976, 21). So implicitly, Davie indicated his camp was 15 miles from Charlotte. That is where Six Mile Creek crosses Providence Road. How did he know the distance between the two camps was 25 miles? It is not likely that he directly measured it. It is more likely that he computed it from known distances from Charlotte. A milepost probably marked that location. Such mileposts were in existence in the early 1800s (Rosser 1873 in Draper 1873, VV:13:6), and probably existed much earlier. So Davie almost certainly used the well-known 15 miles to derive the 25-mile distance between the two camps. This analysis is confused by Davie's mistaken 40-mile distance from Charlotte to Waxhaw Creek on the North Carolina line. The actual distance is 30 miles. This discrepancy is surprising since Davie's boyhood home was nearby. Perhaps Davie was referring to the long way, along Providence Road and present-day Old Tirzah Church Road. Or perhaps his original manuscript was misread. Whatever the reason, the invariant in Davie's writing is that his camp was 15 miles from Charlotte, and that is where Six Mile Creek crosses Providence Road.

Graham later wrote, "Davie retired before them [the British] until near General Davidson's quarters at McAlpin's Creek." (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 249). The inference is that Davie's camp was distinct from Davidson's camp and that Davie was closer to the enemy. Graham, who was with the Mecklenburg County militia at McAlpine Creek, remembered the camps relative positions. Because of his many horses, Davie was probably at either Four Mile Creek or Six Mile Creek.

Four, Six, and Twelve Mile Creeks were probably named for the mileage from McAlpine Creek along Providence Road.

12 September, Cornwallis at Waxhaw Creek

On 12 September, Cornwallis's army marched past Old Waxhaw Presbyterian Church and cemetery. It continued on to the North Corner of the South Carolina-North Carolina state line. For an addition mile, it marched north along the road that defined the state line since 1772. It encamped at Major Robert Crawford's plantation on Waxhaw Creek. Cornwallis's correspondence of 12 September indicates his location was "Camp at Crawford's, Waxhaw Creek." (Cornwallis 1780 in CP 1970, 80:17) Davie later wrote:

... Earle Cornwallis moved with the whole of the British Army from Camden to the Waxhaws and took possession of the Camp occupied by Major Davie in the months of June and July, forty [should be 30] miles below Charlotte and directly on the N^o Car^a line. (Davie 1810 in Robinson 1976, 21).

Davie described his previous camp as "on the North side of the Waxhaw creek" (Davie 1810 in Robinson 1976, 8). Most of the British army camped north of Waxhaw Creek except for the 71st Highland Regiment that encamped in the rear, about half a mile south of the creek (Davie 1810 in Robinson 1976, 21). Cornwallis's campsite was slightly north of the present-day highway US521 bridge over Waxhaw Creek. At that time, Salisbury Road defined the state line. An 1813 map shows this road closely flanked by two small streams flowing into Waxhaw Creek (Salley 1929, map). Today, highway US521 has the same configuration. That puts the present-day US521 bridge within 400 yards of where the Salisbury Road crossed Waxhaw Creek in 1780. Major Robert Crawford's house was Cornwallis's headquarters. It was most probably on the hilltop above the creek and west of the road (Allison 2009). This house site appeared later as "J. Crawford's" on an 1813 map (Salley 1929, map) and as "John Crawford's" on the 1825 *Mills Atlas* (Mills 1825). Since Robert Crawford died in 1801, these labels probably refer to his son John. In fact, this was confirmed by General Andrew Jackson who after receiving a copy of the Mills Atlas, replied on 8 July 1827:

The crossing of Waxhaw creek within one mile of which I was born, is still, however, I see, possessed by Mr. John Crawford, son of the owner (Robert) who lived there when I

was growing up and at school ... From the accuracy with which this spot is marked on the map I conclude the whole [map] must be correct. (Jackson 1827 in James 1938, 794)

Lieutenant John Money, Aide de Camp, recorded that British soldiers built huts (Money 1780, 12 Sep). Since Major Robert Crawford was a noted Patriot, Cornwallis probably confiscated Crawford's property.

He [Robert Crawford] served as a captain during 1776. He served under Cols. Richard Richardson and Joseph Kershaw. He went to Charleston at the time of Provost's invasion [May 1779] and was in the battle at Stono's Ferry. In 1780 he became a major and was taken prisoner in the fall of Charleston. After being paroled, he joined Sumter and commanded a unit at the Battle of Hanging Rock. In addition, he was at Sumter's Defeat. He lost two horses in service. (Moss 1983)



Probable British Army encampment site at Major Robert Crawford's Plantation

Cornwallis's pause at Waxhaw Creek was to await additional reinforcements and to consolidate loyalist support before a new offensive (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 248). Many soldiers were sick, including Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton who was recuperating from serious illness (Cornwallis 1780 in Tarleton 1787, 191). Tarleton was with the British Legion at White's Mill west of Catawba River on Taylor Creek off present-day Craig Road (Scoggins 2010–2017). These two British positions controlled use of Land's Ford.

No doubt, Cornwallis was sensitive about his entry into North Carolina since it had significant political implications. It meant the expansion of the war into another political entity, threatening the legitimacy of every North Carolina government agency, and forcing its officials to react.

Cornwallis considered his Waxhaw Creek camp within South Carolina. While there, Cornwallis issued a *Proclamation of Sequester* against the property of certain notable South Carolina rebels. The Proclamation explicitly states that it was signed in "the district of Wacsaw" in the province of "South Carolina" (Cornwallis 1780 in Tarleton 1787, 191). Also, on 12 September, in correspondence with Lieutenant Colonel Cruger, Cornwallis wrote explicitly that he was not yet in North Carolina:

I have given the fullest Directions to Lt. Col. Balfour relative to the affairs of this Province and he will have the Management of all the Posts when I move into North Carolina. (Cornwallis 1780 in CP 1970, 80:11)

Also, Davie regarded Cornwallis's location in South Carolina. In 1810, Davie wrote that Cornwallis "moved with the whole of the British Army from Camden to the Waxhaws and took possession of the Camp occupied by Major Davie in the months of June and July." A few sentences later, Davie wrote, "but his Lordship was not ready to enter North Carolina" (Davie 1810 in Robinson 1976, 21).

Some loyalists camped nearby in North Carolina, notably at Wahab's Plantation (Davie 1810 in Robinson 1976, 21–23).

On 12 September, Davidson wrote to Gates in Hillsborough requesting reinforcements to counter Cornwallis's army at Waxhaw Creek. Gates ordered Sumner, who was marching to Salisbury, to support Davidson (Nelson 1976, 245). In a 14 September report to Gates, Davidson indicated his location was on McAlpine Creek, 8 miles south of Charlotte.

Camp Maccappin's Creek, Sept. 14, 1780

Sir:

I am now encamped 8 miles South of Charlotte, my number consisting of 400, minute men from Rowan and Mecklenburg counties, none from the other counties being yet arrived. The enemy are at Wax Haw creek, 20 miles distance. Lords Cornwallace and Roddin [Rawdon] are both with them. Their number, by the best intelligence, about 1,000. They are busied threshing and flouring wheat, collecting cattle, sheep, butter, &c. I do not learn they have any artillery. Col. Ferguson and his party, which by common report consists of 1,200, are troublesom to the westward. I cannot find they have yet entered this State, except some who have committed some depredations on the west end of Rutherford county.

Lest they should advance I have sent Col. Lock to Rowan to embody the rest of his regiment to join Col. Macdowell, who lies in Burke with about 400, by the best accounts. Col. Paisley joins me to morrow with near 200. Gen. Sumner with his brigade is expected to be at Salisbury this evening. Gen. Sumpter lies 13 miles to my right [probably at Bigger's Ferry] with 200, his number daily increasing. Our troops are in high spirits, and seem determined to stand out to the last extremity rather than submit to the fate of So. Carolina.

Sir, I have the honour to be,
Your most obedt. Servt.,
Wm. Davidson.

(Davidson 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:615–616).

The closest straight-line distance that McAlpine Creek gets to downtown Charlotte is 7.3 miles and that is between present-day Old Monroe Road and Providence Road. Because of mileposts, Davidson knew the distance along Providence Road with precision. So, his 8 mile distance locates the campsite near where present-day Old Providence Road crosses the creek. The camp would have been on the high, dry ground on the Charlotte side of the creek (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 246). Because of the large number of horses, it probably extended a quarter of a mile or more. Davidson's indication that the British at Waxhaw Creek were 20 miles distant is consistent with the total distance of 30 miles from Charlotte. Colonel Thomas Sumter was located on the Catawba River east bank at Bigger's Ferry (Hill 1815, 17) (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 249). That was actually 16 miles away. So, Davidson's cited 13 miles was probably an estimate he got from an express rider carrying a message from Sumter. In fact, in a 24 September report, Davidson revised this estimate to 15 miles (Davidson 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:614–615). Graham's later account was less specific, but consistent.

The foot, under Gen W. L. Davidson, encamped southeast of Charlotte, and the horse, under Colonel Davie, were patrolling the country as far as Waxhaw, and the adjoining counties in the west, which were disaffected. (Graham 1832 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 48).



Probable American campground on McAlpine Creek, September 1780

On 14 September, Sumner arrived at Salisbury (Gates 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:773) (Sumner 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:785–786). Sometime before 18 September, Davidson wrote Sumner:

I am extremely glad to hear of your, being so near at hand. It raises the spirits of the people here, who were greatly disgusted by the misfortune of Gen. Gates and the near approach of the enemy. Lord Cornwallis commands, and Lord Rawdon is there. Their force is perhaps almost 1,000, nearly all British. They are thrashing and flowering wheat and driving in cattle, sheep, hogs, etc. they have no artillery. Col. Brannon and his South Carolina refugees has routed a party of tories in Rutherford County, killed and wounded 2 and taken 24. The people here long for some support. (Davidson 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:772).

On hearing a rumor that Gates ordered Sumner to withdraw, Davidson wrote:

September 18, 1780

The news of your coming forward in such force gave a surprising spirit to the people of this county, but a report has taken place that Gen. Gates has directed you to retire over the Yadkin. Should that be the case, I dread the consequences. I need not tell you the dreadful effects of Gen. Gates's retreat to Hillsborough. The effects of it are, in my opinion, worse than those of his defeat. It has frightened the ignorant into despair, being left without cover or support to defend themselves against the whole force of the enemy. No people have a better claim to protection than the people of this county. They have fought bravely and bled freely. I mention these things, as I have reason to fear that my minute troops will disperse, should they not be treated agreeable to their expectations. The enemy continue at Waxhaw Creek, and are almost 900, and one third tories. The cavalry are inconsiderable. (Davidson 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:773).

Actually, Gates ordered Sumner to Charlotte:

September 19th, 1780

This morning I received your letter of the 14th from Salisbury. I would have wished to have been certain you were upon your march from thence, to succor and sustain our friends in Charlotte, who seem to be threatened with an attack. The instant the [Hillsborough] troops are in a proper condition to march be assured they will be put in motion to join you. (Gates 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:773).

20–21 September, Davie launches attack, Wahab Plantation

On 20 September, Davie's 150 cavalymen departed Six Mile Creek camp to attack loyalist militiamen encamped on Cornwallis's right flank. At dawn on 21 September, they attacked a camp at Wahab

Plantation, just west of present-day JAARS Institute. The attack was swift and bloody. Davie later wrote, “the vicinity of British quarters, and the danger of pursuit satisfactorily account for no prisoners being taken.” (Davie 1810 in Robinson 1976, 23). Davie’s men captured 96 horses and returned to their Six Mile Creek camp that afternoon, “having performed a march of sixty miles in less than twenty four Hours, notwithstanding the time employed in seeking & beating the enemy.” (Davie 1810 in Robinson 1976, 23). Davie almost certainly traveled Providence Road since 60 miles is more than his calculated, but mistaken, 50-mile roundtrip distance to Waxhaw Creek by the most direct route. Later that day, Cornwallis wrote:

Two or three Volunteer Companies of our Militia who had made some successful Scouts, contrived this morning to be totally surprised and routed by a Major Davy who is a celebrated partisan in the Waxhaws. (Cornwallis 1780 in CP 1970, 80:21)



Site of Wahab’s Plantation

William “Black Billy” Alexander, a McGuire-related 3rd cousin 6 generations removed, participated in this raid on Wahab’s Plantation (Hunter 1877, 116).

20 September, Sumner arrives at McAlpine Creek

On the evening of 20 September, Sumner arrived at Davidson’s camp with about 400 militiamen from Guilford, Granville, and Orange Counties (Sumner 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:775–776) (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 247) (Money 1780, 23 Sep). Among these men was [Lieutenant Richard Vernon](#) (Vernon 1832 in Draper 1873, VV:10:169). Their total strength was about 800 men. Davie later wrote:

Generals Sumner & Davidson had arrived that day [actually previous evening] at his [Davie’s] camp with their brigades of militia both of which However did not amount to one thousand men all on short enlistments, illy armed, and diminishing every day. These with Davie’s corps were the whole assembled force at that time opposed to the enemy. (Davie 1810 in Robinson 1976, 23).

When Davie wrote in 1810, he must have forgotten about other active militia units. Sumter with 400 men were encamped at Bigger’s Ferry on Catawba River (Hill 1815, 17) (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 249) and Colonel Charles McDowell and his men were at Quaker Meadows, near present-day Morganton, NC (Draper 1881, 180).

Sumner described these events in a 12 October letter:

I arrived at Salisbury on the September 14th & joined Gen. Davidson on the 21st. His Brigade was greatly reduced, not amounting to upwards of 20 [obvious misprint, should read 200] privates fit for duty. (Sumner 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:785–786).

[Joseph McLane](#), an Anderson-related 1st cousin 7 generations removed in-law, arrived with Sumner at Davidson's camp at New Providence (McLane, Joseph, pension application 1832).

22 September, Cornwallis prepares approach on Charlotte

At Waxhaw Creek, Cornwallis made his final plans to capture Charlotte. On 22 September, he wrote his superior General Henry Clinton:

If nothing material happens to obstruct my plan of operations, I mean, as soon as Lieutenant-colonel Tarleton can be removed, to proceed with the 23rd, 33rd, volunteers of Ireland, and legion, to Charlotte town, and leave the 71st here until the sick can be brought on to us. I then mean to make some redoubts, and establish a fixed post at that place, and give the command of it to Major Wemyss, whose regiment is so totally demolished by sickness, that it will not be fit for actual service for some months. (Cornwallis 1780 in Tarleton 1787, 191).

That day, Cornwallis ordered the British Legion to cross Catawba River and join him at Waxhaw Creek (Tarleton 1787, 158) (Stedman 1794, 2:216) (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 249). Tarleton, using the third person, later wrote:

On the 22d, Earl Cornwallis directed the British legion and light infantry to cross the Catawba at Blair's ford [Land's Ford], in order to form the advance guard, for the immediate possession of Charlotte town. The junction of the light troops had been prevented for a few days, by a violent fever which had attacked Lieutenant-colonel Tarleton, and which yet disabled him from holding his situation when his regiment moved forwards. Several convalescent men of the army having relapsed, the 71st [Regiment], under M^cArthur, was left near Blair's mill, to afford protection to the sick, to cover the mills in the neighbourhood, and to hold communication with Camden, till the arrival of the additional supplies. (Tarleton 1787, 158).

Blair's Ford was named for Blair's Mill, located about a half a mile above Land's Ford (Draper 1873, VV:9:188) (Joy, Stine and Clauser 2000). On 23 September, Cornwallis wrote, "Tarleton is better, and was moved to-day in a litter" (Cornwallis 1780 in Tarleton 1787, 192). So, Tarleton probably remained near Land's Ford. In his absence, command of the British Legion fell to Major George Hanger (Tarleton 1787, 159). Tarleton's next known activity was on 10 October in Charlotte (Tarleton 1787, 165).



Major George Hanger
Painted by Thomas Beach, about 1782.

Before 23 September, Davidson ordered Colonel Francis Locke to march the Rowan County militia to Sherrill's Ford. From there, Locke wrote to Sumner, probably presuming Sumner was still at Salisbury:

September 23rd, 1780.

I have ordered all the militia in Rowan to join me at Sherril's ford, where I was ordered by Brig. Gen. Davidson to take post and send him all the intelligence I could of the strength and movements of the enemy. I have not in camp more than sixty men, and from the first accounts of the enemy they are 800, and some say 1,500, strong, lying at Burke Court House and Greenlefe's. Lead we are in want of; Col. Armstrong was to have sent on a quantity. If you have any part of your army you could spare to our assistance, I think we could drive the enemy out of our State. I have not any expectation of being much stronger, as the torries are committing robberies in all parts of our county. (Locke 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:774–775)

In a 24 September report to Gates, Davidson estimated Cornwallis's strength.

September 24, 1780

Sir:

I have the pleasure to enform you that Colo. Davie, with a Detachement of Horse and Light Infantry from my Brigade, compleatly surprised a party of Tories on the morning of the 20th Sept. [actually 21 September], two miles in the rear of the British encampment. Killed 12; on the ground, wounded, by our best intelligence, about 60, and brought off one prisoner, and the Colo. made good his retreat with 50 Horses, as many saddles, 13 guns, &c. Lord Cornwallis continues at the Waxsaw Creek, collection reinforcements from the Militia, fattening his Horse, and Carrying off every article valuable to our Army. His present strength is about 1,200, with one piece of Artillery — perhaps near one-half of his number Tories. Colo. Trumbull, on the west of the River, has about 700, chiefly new recruits in uniform, and is now in fishing Creek Neighbourhood. Colo. Ferguson, with about 800 Tories, has advanced to Gilberts Town, and a Detachment from him has penetrated as far as Burk Court House, with which Colo. Mc'dowul Skirmished with about two Hundred men, but gave ground and retreated, I am enformed, over the Mountains. Genl. Sumner has joined me. Genl. Sumpter has Collected about 400 of his Dispersed Troops, and lies 15 miles on our right on the Bank of the [Catawba] River. I have ordered Collonels Amstrong, Cleveland and Lock to unite their forces against Furguson, and if possible stop his progress. The establishment of a post at Maskes ferry [on the Pee Dee River] appears well Calculated to make a Diverte and give relief to the Western parts of the State. Inclosed you have a Coppy of a proclamation, with Colo. Furguson has taken grate pains to Circulate.

I have the Honnour to be
Your most Obd. & very Hbl. Serv't,
Wm. Davidson

[incorrectly dated 14 September in (Davidson 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:614–615)].

In a separate report to Gates, Sumner wrote:

The Cappings [McAlpine] Creek,
September 24th, 1780

I immediately marched from Salisbury, and arrived in this camp the 20th, in the evening. Gen. Davidson informed me his minute men were upon leaving the camp to go to Sherell's Ford. Col. Armstrong has gone to join the forces collecting to oppose Major Ferguson, who is in the neighborhood of Burke County Court House, with a large number of the disaffected and some British. The British force is near White's Mill, and is commanded by Col. Turnbull, others say by Lord Rodney [Rawdon]. Gen. Sumter judges he could drive them from thence with as many more men as he has with him, which I have reason to believe is almost 300. Lord Cornwallis is yet at the Waxhaw Creek with

600 or 700 British troops and 300 or 400 Tories, mostly on horse, with 70 or 80 dragoons. They lie close and expect reinforcements. On the road westward, almost 7 miles across, we have a party of horse; this road passes in four miles of the British Camp, and passes through the Catawba nation to Charlotte. I judge the enemy will make use of it should they move in force toward Charlotte. Col. Davie, on returning from reconnoitering on the 22^d [should be 21st], fell in with a party of 130 Tories, surprised them, killed 14 and took two prisoners. The others dispersed with the greatest precipitation. Forty horses and saddles fell into our hands. His party received no damage except in wounded. I am just sending a party of 140 infantry and 20 horse under Col. Seawell as far as the 12 mile creek, to view the road which passes near that creek. (Sumner 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:775–776).

Since Sumner lived in a different part of North Carolina, he did not know the local roads and creeks. In this report, he clearly repeated his briefing by Davidson and Davie. With this understanding of context, much information can be inferred from his choice of words. His reference to the “road westward, almost 7 miles across” applies to Steele Creek Road. The party of horse was probably that commanded by Graham since Davie implied he was not on Steele Creek Road (Davie 1810 in Robinson 1976, 24). The expression “this road passes in four miles of the British Camp,” likely refers to where the two roads from Charlotte joined. That intersection was probably slightly west of where present-day Old Church Road, SR378, forks into Niven Road in South Carolina and Rehobeth Road, SR1107, in North Carolina (Salley 1929, map). The latter is a ridge road. Another possible ridge road traversed the path of the present-day railroad tracks connecting to Providence Road at present-day Waxhaw, North Carolina (Graham 1789 in Tompkins in W. A. Graham 1904b, 188).

Apparently, on the afternoon of 24 September, Davidson moved his remaining 200 militiamen from Providence Road to Steele Creek Road, camping on the Charlotte side of McAlpine Creek, but this time 12 miles from Charlotte, at the present-day highway Old-US521 bridge. That camp location was drawn on a 1789 map by Major Joseph Graham (Graham 1789 in Tompkins in W. A. Graham 1904b, 188) (Graham 1789 in Tompkins in Robinson 1976, 6). It was 3 miles north of Clems Branch campground. These men likely traversed the ridge road that is the present-day connected segments of Ballantyne Commons Parkway, Elm Lane, Bryant Farms Road, Community House Road, and Providence Road West. Davidson probably intended to continue north to Sherrill’s Ford to counter the threat posed by Major Patrick Ferguson’s army (Sumner 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:775–776). But Cornwallis’s approach forced Davidson to withdraw towards Salisbury.

After ordering Colonel Benjamin Seawell out, Sumner received the following 23 September message from Sumter:

My spies bring me accounts this morning that the enemy [British Legion] have evacuated their camp at White’s Mill, and it is supposed they have crossed the River at Landsford. They have a number of horse, but not one half of them equipped as cavalry. Perhaps they mean to be troublesome to you. They have been collecting guides for different purposes, and have offered twenty guineas to any one who will conduct them privately to my camp. (Sumner 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:775).

Sumner quickly wrote to Seawell:

Evening. [24 September]

After your leaving the camp I have received a letter from Gen. Sumter. He says the enemy have crossed the river at Landsford, and perhaps they may fall in with you. I thought it necessary to send you this information. If you should fall in with the [illegible] I doubt not but you’ll give a good account of them. (Sumner 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:776).

Meanwhile, from Waxhaw Creek, the British began their march. Lieutenant John Money recorded:

The following Corps marched this afternoon at 4 pm towards Charlotte — 23rd, 33rd, Vol'n of Ireland and Legion with 2, 3 and 6-pounders. Halted at Twelve Mile Creek till the moon rose and then proceeded toward Sugar Creek on the Charlotte Road. (Money 1780, 24 Sep) (Allison 2009)

Apparently, Sumner did not realize that he put Seawell's infantrymen at great risk. The next morning, Seawell reported back to Sumner:

September 25th, 1780

We arrived at this place [probably Twelve Mile Creek] last evening and camped, intending to start at moon-rise, but a very heavy rain coming on, I was obliged to stay until the morning to examine the guns. I hear that Lord Cornwallis had a reinforcement of a thousand British from Camden come in on Wednesday last, as also a number of cannon. Col. Tarleton has joined him with 700 horse; also a number of South Carolina militia has been sent to him, which makes them number almost 5,000 [should be 2000] strong. I can't tell how far I shall proceed, as it depends on such intelligence as I shall hereafter get. If I had my men mounted on horses I doubt not we should do something clever, but shall do the best I can. (Seawell 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:776–777).

Interestingly, on 25 September 1780, the moon was four days past its last-quarter phase. Thus, it rose about 4:00 a.m. (time and date.com 2009).

25 September, Cornwallis's army crosses state line at Clems Branch

Late on 24 September, Cornwallis started to move his forces from Waxhaw Creek towards Charlotte (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 249). A 1787 British map shows the route, but without great precision (Faden 1787). It is consistent with the route of present-day highway US521. Although the British march formation was not recorded, it can be inferred from historical information (Peterson 1968).

Note: British Army on the march

Undoubtedly, the marching British Army column was a spectacular demonstration of strength. Probably the day before, Cornwallis specified the exact order of march. He intended that the British Legion lead the marching column (Tarleton 1787, 158). Each of these cavalrymen wore tan buckskin trousers, a green jacket with a black collar, and a black leather helmet. Typically, he carried a saber and a holstered pistol. Next in line were a few light-infantry companies comprised of the swiftest and most agile young soldiers drawn from all the regular companies. Next were the 23rd, 33rd, and Volunteers of Ireland Regiments. Each regular soldier wore white trousers, a redcoat, and a distinctive black hat that signified his regiment. He carried a musket, bayonet, cartridge box, and haversack supported by white cross webbing. Each regiment had 6 to 8 companies. Each company had a captain, typically on horseback, and about 70 men who walked. The company drummer was conspicuous as he brought attention to the captain's commands or relayed signals along the column. Probably near the rear, some local loyalist militiamen marched together, but not in uniform. In the middle, Cornwallis probably rode in a carriage. At least two artillery cannons were pulled on horse-drawn carriages. Inserted between regiments were about 100 wagons (Davidson 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:678) carrying ammunition, medical supplies, a blacksmith forge, rum, and soldier's personal baggage. One wagon carried a portable printing press with its ink and paper supplies (Tarleton 1787, 167) (Preyer 1987, 156). Walking beside these wagons were about 150 officer servants, women, and perhaps some children. Most women were wives of professional soldiers. Like the soldiers, they received food rations. They earned army wages as clothes washers, cooks, or seamstresses. They were paid by the army and were not personal servants. As such, they were subject to army discipline for maintenance of good order. On 28 September, one of these women, while gathering milk, tried to arrange medical treatment for wounded Captain Joseph Graham (W. A. Graham 1904b, 65). If an individual injured a leg or foot and could not walk, he or she rode in a wagon. The entire column was about three miles long and took about an hour to pass any one point. Patrols of British Legionnaires cleared crossroads. They inspected provisions at each nearby plantation and demanded the owner sign a "protection" form, or else have his property confiscated or burned. The British needed to establish and maintain a secure supply and

communication line back to Camden. Cornwallis did not expect serious opposition. If he had, most wagons and women would have remained behind. A civilian passerby on the road could be stopped and questioned in a rough manner. For that reason, sensible American civilians avoided contact, and thus no one recorded the spectacle.



British Army Marching Column

Davie later wrote, “on the 24th of september our patrols gave information, that the enemy were in motion on the Steele-creek road leading to Charlotte.” (Davie 1810 in Robinson 1976, 24). Consequently, early in the morning on 25 September, Sumner and Davidson abandoned their camp.

On the 25th of September, [we] heard that the whole British army were on the march from Camden [Waxhaw Creek on Camden Road]. General Davidson immediately decamped, marched towards Salisbury... (Graham 1832 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 48–49).

Sumner marched from McAlpine Creek to Charlotte. From there after 6:00am, he wrote Gates:

I am to inform you about three Ock. this morn’g we received information of the Enemys being on their march from the Waxhaws Creek, by the Steel Creek Road in force. We immediately retreated thus far, judg’g it prudent, to prevent, if possible, coming to a Genl. Action. (Sumner 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:651)

In Charlotte, Sumner loaded all public stores and marched towards Salisbury (Sumner 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:778) (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 69, 249). Sumner ordered Davie to rear guard the slower foot soldiers. Sumner described these events in a 12 October letter:

On September 25th I was informed that the enemy had moved towards Charlotte. We marched into Charlotte at 6 o’clock in the morning, and found the main British army advancing and only 12 miles away. Having positive orders not to risk a general engagement, & our force not being able to cope with the enemy’s, I thought proper to order a retreat, having secured what provisions we could and all the public stores, leaving Colo. Davie with his horse to cover our retreat. (Sumner 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:785–786).

In 1832, Robert Williams, a surgeon in Sumner’s brigade, [testified on his pension application](#):

We moved towards South Carolina and a few miles below Charlotte in Mecklenburg County near the South Carolina line, a reconnoitering party of ours took some British

prisoners when we found we were near Cornwallis. We retreated next day. (Williams 1832 in Draper 1873, VV:10:192) (Williams, Robert, pension application 1832)

From Steele Creek Road, Davidson took the ridgeline road between Little Sugar Creek and McMullen Creek, passing 4 miles east of Charlotte (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 249). Graham described that road:

Persons going from Waxhaw to Salisbury would not pass through Charlotte, but, after passing Sugar [meant McAlpine] Creek, take a right-hand fork, and leaving Charlotte four miles to the left, enter the Charlotte-Salisbury road at "Cross-Roads" near the Alexander Residence. (W. A. Graham 1904b, 69).

Today, that route is the connected segments of highway Old-US521, Park Road, Sharon Road, Sharon Amity Road, Pierson Drive, Kilborne Drive, Eastway Drive, and highway US29 (Barden 2010). At the "Cross Roads," about a mile east of Sugar Creek Presbyterian Church, Davidson ordered Graham "to Charlotte, to take command of the militia assembling there in consequence of the alarm of the enemy advancing." (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 250). About 50 men collected (Graham 1832 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 49). Davidson continued on and halted behind Mallard Creek. Sumner continued on towards Salisbury.

During the late afternoon of 25 September, Cornwallis's army of about 2000 troops marched (Davidson 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:678) (Sumner 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:778) past Clems Branch campground as it entered North Carolina. In 1789, Major Joseph Graham drew a map that marked Cornwallis's route (Graham 1789 in Tompkins in W. A. Graham 1904b, 188) (Graham 1789 in Tompkins in Robinson 1976, 6). The British Army definitely entered North Carolina at this location.

Cornwallis dispatched Rawdon's Volunteers of Ireland regiment with part of the British Legion to chase down Colonel Thomas Sumter and about 400 of his men who were encamped on the east side of Bigger's Ferry. Lieutenant John Money recorded:

No certain Intelligence being received of Sumpter's having passed the Catawba River, Lord Rawdon was detached with the Legion and Flank Companies of the Vol'n of Ireland to attack him. I marched with his Lordship to Bigger's Ferry where we learned he had passed the evening before and that Sumner and Davidson had retired from McAlpine's Creek. (Money 1780, 24 Sep)

Rawdon's march most likely traversed the route of present-day highway SC160, Zoar Road, and Youngblood Road. Sumter and his men barely escaped by crossing at the ferry (Hill 1815, 17) (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 249) (Bass 1961, 87). Colonel William Hill was with Sumter and later wrote:

Cornwallis detached Rawdon & Tarlton [actually British Legion without Tarleton] with a number of horse & foot to five times the number that Gen^l Sumter had then in camp in order to surprise him but fortunately he got news of their intentions & crossed the River to the west side at Bigers' (now called Masons ferry) & there encamped. Your author then as chairman of the Convention [of the Whole] called it together in order to deliberate on some plan respecting Gen^l Sumter's commission as it was protested by [Colonel James] Williams, but before any progress was made in the business the firing commenced across the River between our guard & Rawdon's men this soon broke up the convention & the army marched up the River & encamped that night in an uncommon thick wood, where we supposed we were safe from the horse of the enemy. (Hill 1815, 17)

During the 1800's, Bigger's Ferry was renamed Mason's Ferry. About 1904, that ferry location was submerged under Lake Wylie. The western access is Mason's Ferry Road off of South Carolina road SR46-1099. The camp was in the fork of the Catawba River (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 249) but downstream of Tuckasegee Ford (Hill 1815, 18).

A tradition of Providence Presbyterian Church is that Cornwallis cut an oak sapling to use as a walking stick. He inadvertently left it stuck in the ground. The following spring, it took root and eventually grew very large. It became known as the “Cornwallis tree” until it burned much later. (Matthews 1967, 71)

The British Army halted that afternoon one mile north of McAlpine Creek (Robinson 1957, 70). That evening, “The [main] Army took Post at [Little] Sugar Creek.” (Money 1780, 25 Sep). That location was “ten miles from Charlotte, between McAlpin and Sugar Creeks on the Camden Road.” (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 62, 249). That was near the present-day President James K. Polk Birthplace State Historic Site (Hunter 1877, 84). A 1789 regional map marked this as Cornwallis’s route (Graham 1789 in Tompkins in Robinson 1976, 6).

Fortunately for the American side, Sumter, Davidson, and Sumner evaded engagements with Cornwallis’s superior army by mere hours.

In Charlotte, Davie ordered Graham:

to go down to the enemy’s lines and relieve a party who had been out two days. He [Graham] relieved Colonel Davies’s party in the afternoon [25 September], and in the evening took four men, stragglers, at a farm adjacent to the [British] encampment, who had gone out in search of milk, and sent them on to Colonel Davie. (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 250).

Davie wrote Sumner that he would “keep parties down every Route and wait here [Charlotte] for further orders.” (Davie 1780 in Robinson 1957, 70). Davie, “during the night and morning had the hospital and military stores removed.” (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 251). Doctor James Rankin Alexander later [testified](#):

At the time the enemy reached Charlotte, most of the invalids had sufficiently recovered to go home and the hospital was broken up. (Alexander, James Rankin, pension application 1833).

Likewise, Reverend Alexander McWhorter, with his family, escaped Charlotte (Marting 1948) (Dussek 2011–2014). Before the British entered Charlotte, James Reed transported the moveable property of Sugar Creek Presbyterian Church to McCorkle’s Meeting House (Allen, James, 1781 in Mecklenburg County Estate Papers n.d.) (Boyer 2008–2017), probably Thyatira Presbyterian Church where Reverend Samuel Eusebius McCorkle was minister.

To Waggonage of Sundry Goods from Sugar Creek to McCorkle’s Meeting House when the British came to Charlotte – horses feeding &c. &c. bringing home &c. &c. 1-0-0 (Allen, James, 1781 in Mecklenburg County Estate Papers n.d.) (Boyer 2008–2017)

On the morning of 26 September, events occurred quickly. Graham later wrote:

Before sunrise on the 26th, Graham’s party discovered the front of the enemy advancing, and two of his men who had been sent down their left flank [maybe Nations Ford Road], reported that the whole army was in motion — that they had seen their artillery, baggage, etc., coming on. (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 250).

Receiving this report, Davie wrote to Sumner, “The Enemy were in motion at day break and if they march on will reach this place by ten [o’clock].” (Davie 1780 in Robinson 1957, 70).

Two weeks later, on 8 October, Davidson reported to Sumner, “Golson Step, a Tory, on examination gave the following particulars: That the Enemy brought to Charlotte 100 Waggons, 1,100 infantry in uniform, 550 Light Dragoons, 800 Militia & 2 field pieces” (Davidson 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:678).

In 1812, Lieutenant Colonel Henry Lee published a history of the Revolution in the South. It states:

Four days after the affair at Wahab's, the British general put his army in motion, taking the Steel creek road to Charlotte. This being announced to general Sumner by his light parties, he decamped from Providence, and retired on the nearest road to Salisbury; leaving colonel Davie with his corps, strengthened by a few volunteers under major Graham, to observe the movements of the enemy. (Lee 1812, I:201) (Lee 1869, 196).

Graham later wrote that Lee relied on Davie for this information (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 249), since he did not join the Southern American Army until 11 January 1781. Lee's 1812 publication was within the lifespan of many veterans, it was widely read and became a standard reference. Many veterans commented on its factual details. Notably, neither Davie nor Graham, both of whom followed the British advance, contradicted Lee's explicit assertion that Cornwallis's army approached Charlotte along Steele Creek Road, in their subsequent publications.

Some modern historians, in particular (Robinson 1957, 69), presume Davie made an error because present-day Steele Creek Road passes to the west of Charlotte. Instead, they presume the British Army traveled Providence Road and East Trade Street. That mistake is reinforced by an ill-placed historical marker near where Providence Road extension crosses the South Carolina boundary. But it was Davie's mounted militiamen that tracked British movements on 25 September. Davie was near his boyhood home, and thus intimately familiar with all local roads. For a person whose home was in the Waxhaws, such as Davie, that road was the road to Steele Creek. A map of Clems Branch campground drawn in 1871 explicitly marks this road as Steele Creek Road (Stinson 1871 in Draper 1873, VV:5:45). Name ambiguity arises from sources that use Charlotte as the reference origin. From Charlotte, Steele Creek Road meant the road to Steele Creek Presbyterian Church. Even today, a segment named Old Steele Creek Road connects Wilkinson Boulevard and Tyvola Road. From Charlotte, the road Cornwallis used was known as Camden Road. Today, its fork with South Tryon Street remains discernible.

North Carolina "Cornwallis" historical marker

In 1939, the North Carolina Office of Archives and History erected historical marker L16 on highway NC200 in Union County. It asserts that Cornwallis's army entered North Carolina nearby.



North Carolina historical marker L16
Ill-placed on highway NC200 in 1939.

In April 2006, the North Carolina Office of Archives and History was asked what historical sources supported this marker. Research historian Ansley Wegner found that the marker was staff-proposed along with other markers indicating Cornwallis's route through North Carolina. It has no supporting documentation. The closest Cornwallis's army got to that location was its Waxhaw Creek encampment, 5 miles west near the present-day highway US521 bridge. Apparently, in 1939, erecting roadside markers was a new public program that authorities wanted to implement quickly.

26 September, Charlotte

Before sunrise on 26 September, Cornwallis's army departed its Little Sugar Creek camp and marched along present-day South Boulevard towards Charlotte. It passed by the plantation of Ezekiel Polk near the present-day Lynx Light-Rail Train terminus. Polk signed a "protection" form to avoid confiscation or destruction of his property. Although he was a Patriot leader, this act tarnished his reputation. Even 64 years later, during the 1844 Presidential-election campaign, political opponents of James K. Polk falsely asserted his grandfather was a Tory.

Ezekiel Polk was 7th great-grandfather of Arabelle Boyer.

Captain Joseph Graham's 50 mounted infantry (Graham 1832 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 49) maintained contact with the British advance (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 250).

At daybreak on 26 September, Lord Rawdon's troops marched from Bigger's Ferry to rejoin Cornwallis. Lieutenant John Money wrote that juncture occurred at the "Cross Roads within four miles of Charlottetown." (Money 1780, 26 Sep) (Allison 2009). Graham, who was also an eyewitness, located the juncture within 2 miles of Charlotte.

Within two miles of Charlotte, where the road from the ferry [Bigger's Ferry] comes in, Tarleton [actually Rawdon and Hanger] joined them [the main British army]. In five minutes after he arrived, being indisposed by his night's march, Major Hanger took command of the cavalry, and, coming in front, compelled Graham to keep a more respectful distance. He [Graham] was pursued by the front troop in a brisk canter for a mile; after that they went at a common travel, until they came in sight of the village, when they halted that the rear might close up, and some of their officers endeavored to reconnoiter. (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 250–251)

That location was probably where present-day Camden Road joins South Tryon Street.



Rawdon rejoined Cornwallis at Camden Road and Bigger's Ferry Road

About noon on 26 September, Cornwallis's army entered Charlotte (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 249). Graham later wrote, the British approached on South Tryon Street (W. A. Graham 1904b, 62). He described the event:

His [Graham's] orders were when the village was reached not to fire but to draw the enemy up to the [American] infantry at the court-house. The commanding officer of the British advance, Major Hanger, rode conspicuously at the head of his troops. When Graham's company arrived about where the railroad now crosses South Tryon street [just south of present-day Stonewall Street (Kratt and Boyer 2000, 8)], one of his men (his brother-in-law, Thomas Barnett) remarked to a comrade, "I believe that is Cornwallis; I

am going to get him.” He dismounted and was aiming his rifle, when Captain Graham rode up and told him he had given him orders not to fire, and if he did not remount his horse he would cut him down in his tracks. Barnett obeyed the command. (W. A. Graham 1904b, 62)

Davie’s defense of Charlotte was later described by Graham:

The disposition of troops in the village for battle was about as follows: Major Dickson’s command was placed behind the McCombs’ House, near where the Buford Hotel now stands [northeast corner South Tryon and Fourth Streets (Kratt and Boyer 2000, 73)]. The infantry was formed in three lines across North Tryon street, the first line twenty steps from the court-house, the other lines each fifty yards in rear, with orders to advance to the court-house, fire and retire by flank. Eighty yards distance on East and West Trade streets were two troops of cavalry, each concealed by a building. (W. A. Graham 1904b, 62–63)

Captain Joseph Graham and Captain John Brandon’s company from Rowan County, were placed as reserve where Tryon Street Methodist Church stood in 1902 (W. A. Graham 1904b, 63). That was the southwest corner of North Tryon and Sixth Streets (Kratt and Boyer 2000, 85). Tarleton later wrote, “The conduct of the Americans created suspicion in the British: An ambushade was apprehended by the light troops, who moved forwards for some time with great circumspection.” (Tarleton 1787, 159).

The Americans briefly defended Charlotte from the courthouse. They stopped three British Legion cavalry charges and temporarily stopped the entire 2000-man British Army. British commissary officer Charles Stedman later wrote:

In the centre of Charlotte, intersecting the two principal streets, stood a large brick [pillared] building, the upper part being the court-house, and the under part the market-house. Behind the shambles a few Americans on horseback had placed themselves. The legion was ordered to drive them off; but upon receiving a fire from behind the stalls, this corps fell back. Lord Cornwallis rode up in person, and made use of these words: — “Legion, remember you have everything to lose, but nothing to gain;” alluding, as was supposed, to the former reputation of this corps. Webster’s brigade moved on and drove the Americans from behind the court-house; the legion then pursued them; but the whole of the British army was actually kept at bay, for some minutes, by a few mounted Americans, not exceeding twenty in number. (Stedman 1794, 2:216).

Stedman must have been in the column rear and not seen the action. He thought at most 20 Americans participated. Actually, there were about 150 Americans (Davie 1810 in Robinson 1976, 24). It is not certain if Davie counted Graham’s and Dickson’s troops in this number. If not, as many as 225 Americans participated.

Later, Davie wrote that Charlotte’s defense:

... furnishes a very striking instance of the bravery and importance of the American Militia; few examples can be shewn of any troops who in one action changed their position twice in good order although pressed by a much superior body of Infantry and charged three times by thrice their number of Cavalry, unsupported & in the presence of the enemy’s whole army and finally retreating in good order. (Davie 1810 in Robinson 1976, 25).

On 15 August 1833, Captain Henry Connelly [testified](#):

At the time of approach of Cornwallis to Charlotte, under Col Davie the troops posted themselves to meet the enemy. On the enemy’s approach the companies commanded by this applicant received the first onset from Tarleton’s Cavalry, and the firing became general on the left wing. The troops were commanded by Col Davie in person, and for three times we succeeded in repulsing the enemy. At length we had to yield to superior

numbers. In this battle we had many men killed, several from under this applicant.
(Connelly, Henry, pension application 1833)

North Carolina commemorates the battle with a historical marker. In 2010, a petition caused this marker to be relocated. It is now on South Tryon Street near where the charging British Legion was first repulsed by an American musket volley fired from the courthouse.



North Carolina historical marker *Battle of Charlotte*, 1938 and replacement 1992
Photographed by Clarence Griffin, about 1948.
Courtesy of the North Carolina State Archives.

Charlotte commemorates the battle with a bronze plaque where the original courthouse stood.



Battle of Charlotte marker
Tryon Street and Trade Street intersection, Charlotte

The British Legion (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 253) continued to pursue and fight as the Americans withdrew up Salisbury Road, present-day North Tryon Street. Brief skirmishes occurred at Muddy Branch, near present-day highway I277 overpass, and Kennedy Creek, near present-day 36th Street (W. A. Graham 1904b, 63). Captain Joseph Graham's unit of Mecklenburg County cavalrymen "sustained the retreat by molesting the advance of the enemy for four miles against their whole cavalry and a battalion of infantry which followed; at last they charged, when Colonel Davie was not in supporting distance, and this deponent received nine wounds" (Graham 1832 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 49).

As Captain [Joseph] Graham was engaged in a hand-to-hand fight, his horse backed under a limb of a tree which knocked him off. He received three bullets in the thigh, one saber thrust in the side, one cut on the back of the neck and four upon the forehead. And from one of these some of his brains exuded. (W. A. Graham 1904b, 64).

Some years afterwards an old lady acquaintance asked him if he thought he had as much sense as before losing a portion of his brains. He replied that he had not perceived any difference. (W. A. Graham 1904b, 64:footnote).

Graham's papers and pension application indicate that this incident occurred at the "Cross Roads" about 4.5 miles from Mallard Creek (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 254) and 4 miles from Charlotte (Graham 1832 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 49). An independent source indicates that the site known as the Cross Roads was where present-day Eastway Drive intersects North Tryon Street (Barden 2010). Apparently, this location was later confused with the intersection of Sugar Creek Road and North Tryon Street where a Graham monument was erected in 1916. However, Graham made clear that Sugar Creek Presbyterian Church and the Cross Roads were not the same place (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 254). In 1904, Graham's grandson William Alexander Graham Jr. compiled his papers and published a book. The grandson also understood that the incident occurred at the Cross Roads (W. A. Graham 1904b, 63). It is not known why the 1916 monument was placed at its present location since W. A. Graham Jr., born 1839, died 1924, was living at that time.



Captain Joseph Graham monument marks where he was wounded.

Monument erroneously indicates his rank as major, his rank after September 1781.

Erected in 1916 across from Sugaw Creek Presbyterian Church, but the event occurred at Cross Roads.

A few days later, wounded Graham was moved to a safe location in present-day Davie County (W. A. Graham 1904b, 65) where he recuperated for two months (Graham 1832 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 49). He was not active again until the following January (W. A. Graham 1904b, 66).

Sassafras Fields, about 3 miles from Cross Roads and 1.5 miles from Mallard Creek (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 254) (Murphey 1830 in Hoyt 1914, II:243), or about 7 miles from Charlotte, was the furthest extent of the British Legion advance (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 255). This location was approximately at the present-day Lieutenant George Locke monument. Although this marker conveniently marks Sassafras Fields, Locke's was probably killed near Cross Roads (Davie 1810 in Robinson 1976, 25) (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 255–256) (W. A. Graham 1904b, 64). In 1832, Fowler Jones [testified](#) that, "Between Salisbury and Charlotte I saw Young Locke who had been killed by the British. His brother was carrying his dead body on a horse before him when we met & saw him." (Jones, Fowler, pension application 1832). George Locke was son of Brigadier General Matthew Locke

(Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 255) and nephew of Colonel Francis Locke of Rowan County. Before sunset, the British pursuers disengaged and returned to Charlotte (W. A. Graham 1904b, 64).



Lieutenant George Locke monument marks Sassafras Fields, the furthest extent of the British Legion dragoons. It was unveiled on 26 September 1911 (In Social Circles 1911) near where present-day highways US29 and NC49 diverge. It erroneously indicates Locke's rank as lieutenant colonel. Also, he probably was killed near Cross Roads.

During the battle, 5 patriots were killed and 6 wounded. The British had 12 killed and about 33 wounded (Davie 1810 in Robinson 1976, 25). Graham criticized Davie for deciding to fight in Charlotte (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 256) (W. A. Graham 1904b, 66). Davie admitted, "This action, altho' it carries a charge of temerity on the part of Col. Davie and can only be excused by the event and that zeal which we are allways ready to applaud ..." (Davie 1810 in Robinson 1976, 25). By nightfall, Davie withdrew to Rocky River and Davidson to Phyfer's Plantation (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 257). From Phyfer's, Davidson wrote Gates:

This day at 11 o'clock the enemy marched into Charlotte in force. According to the best information, Col. Davie skirmished with them at that place, and for several hours since, retreating as pr. express. About two he was reinforced by above 300 cavalry and infantry, but no intelligence since they joined him. He is directed to continue skirmishing with them to cover our retreat. The inhabitants are flying before us in consternation, and except we are soon reinforced the West side of Yadkin must inevitably fall a prey to the enemy. Rowan is able to give us very little assistance, on account of Col. Ferguson's movements to the Westward. (Davidson 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:655)

A few days later, Sumner wrote:

The enemy having pursued my horse under the command of Col. Davie within three miles of our camp on Mallard's Creek, I immediately reinforced him with 200 infantry and about 60 horse. The enemy's retreating was convincing to me that they were not in force from Charlotte, and being informed by Col. Davie of their having 600 or 800 horse, we suppose that their intention was to take the McKnitt's road from Charlotte to Torrents' road, & to cut off our retreat to Salisbury. When we arrived at Salisbury, understanding the river was arising, determined us to retire, and we have encamped within a mile of the Ford, advantageously on the north side. The people of Mecklenburg County are very spirited, and a majority will be in the field in a day or two. The enemy lay close in their camp; they are not fond of fighting in small parties. The party under Col. Davie repulsed the enemy's advanced party of horse several times upon their entering Charlotte, killed 22 of them and wounded a larger number. The day following,

the enemy engaged a small party of horse at the crossroads, four miles from Charlotte, by surprise, and made prisoner of a son of Gen. Lock [Francis Locke], whom they cut to pieces on the ground; one or two are yet missing. (Sumner 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:777–778)

This reinforcement was described by [Joseph McLane](#) in his pension application:

that on their retreat from the aforesaid New Providence the [Davie's] cavalry staid behind and attacked the advanced guards not far from Charlotte—that as soon as this was known Col. Paisley & Col. Armstrong volunteered and requested others to join them and returned to assist the Cavalry there engaged—that he [McLane] and others among whom was his neighbor Wm Albright joined them but they met them [illegible word] on the retreat (McLane, Joseph, pension application 1832).

Joseph McLane was an Anderson-related 1st cousin 7 generations removed. In 1818, Charity Anderson, an Anderson-related 1st cousin 6 generations removed, married Preston Paisley, nephew of Colonel John Paisley.

Cornwallis's headquarters in Charlotte was Colonel Thomas Polk's white house on the northeast corner of Independence Square (Foote 1846, 509).



Cornwallis's Charlotte Headquarters Building on right
photographed by Rufus Morgan, 1873 (Kratt and Boyer 2000, 6).

Liberty Hall Academy continued to be used as a hospital. It was at the southeast corner of present-day Second Street and South Tryon Street.

In Charlotte, the British encampment configuration is not known from original sources. Nonetheless, before 1827, Joseph Graham learned that the British camp surrounded the courthouse in an approximant square. Graham wrote that the 23rd and 33rd Regiments camped 220 yards east from and parallel to present-day Tryon Street. The Volunteers of Ireland Regiment camped 165 yards north from and parallel to present-day Trade Street. O'Hara's regiment camped west, opposite the 23rd. The British Legion and Tories camped south, opposite the Volunteers of Ireland. (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 257). However, Joseph

Graham did not witness the British camp because he was recovering from serious wounds. Also, neither Brigadier General Charles O'Hara nor his unit, the Brigade of Guards, was in Charlotte. The British encampment enclosed the square that runs approximately along present-day College Street, Fifth Street, Church Street, and Fourth Street. Later, on 8 October, the 71st Regiment 1st Battalion was ordered to march from Waxhaw Creek to Charlotte (Money 1780 in CPS 2010, II:284). It could have camped along the western side.

On 27 September in Charlotte, Cornwallis, using a mobile printing press, issued a proclamation that offered peace and protection to inhabitants (Preyer 1987, 157).

NORTH-CAROLINA

By the Right Honourable
CHARLES EARL CORNWALLIS
Lieutenant-General of His Majesty's Forces
&c. &c. &c.

A PROCLAMATION.

Whereas the Enemies of His Majesty's Government continuing to practise every Artifice and Deceit to impose upon the Minds of the People, have, as industriously as falsely, propagated a Belief among the People of this Country, that the King's Army indiscriminately makes War, and commits Ravages upon the peaceable Inhabitants, and those who are in Arms and open Rebellion against His Majesty's Authority: I think it proper, in order to remove such false and injurious Impressions, and to restore as much Peace and Quiet to the Country as may be possible, during the Operations of War, hereby to assure the People at large, that all those who come into the Posts of His Majesty's Army under my command, and faithfully deliver up their Arms, and give a Military Parole to remain thenceforth peaceable at Home, doing no Offence against His Majesty's Government, will be protected in their Persons and Properties, and be paid a just and fair Price in Gold or Silver, for whatever they may furnish for the Use of the King's Army; it being His Majesty's most gracious Wish and Intention rather to reclaim His deluded Subjects to a Sense of their Duty, and Obedience to the Laws, by Justice and Mercy, than by the Force and Terror of His Arms.

GIVEN under my Hand and Seal at Headquarters in Charlotte-Town, this Twenty-Seventh Day of September, One Thousand Seven Hundred and Eighty, and in the Twentieth Year of His Majesty's Reign.
CORNWALLIS.

By His Lordship's Command,
J. Money, Aid-de-Camp.

GOD SAVE THE KING.

Cornwallis tried to encourage loyalist civilians, but had little success. Most Whig families evacuated. Their men were already on active duty.

On 27 September, the Salisbury District militia under Brigadier General William Davidson was posted near Phyfer's plantation with about 600 militiamen with another 300 at their farm (Davidson 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:677) s. On 27 September, Brigadier General Jethro Sumner with about 800 Hillsborough District militiamen was in Salisbury. From these men, [Colonel Philip Taylor's](#) regiment from Granville County (Taylor, Philip, pension application 1837) (Taylor, John, pension application 1832) was attached to Davie, raising his total strength to 300 cavalrymen (Davie 1810 in Robinson 1976, 26). On 28 September, Sumner forded Yadkin River at Trading Ford and encamped on the east side (Sumner 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:777) (Sumner 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:786) (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 249) (Vernon 1832 in Draper 1873, VV:10:169). Today, Trading Ford can be seen while crossing present-day

highway I85 bridge. The ford traversed the large island about a half mile south. On 30 September, Major General Horatio Gates in Hillsborough ordered Sumner to prevent a British advance beyond the Yadkin River.

If you should have been advised to cross the Yadkin, you must on no account abandon the defense of that ford [Trading Ford], nor withdraw your guard from the west side of that river until you are, by the near approach of a superior number of the enemy, forced to do it. (Gates 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:778–779)

Soon afterwards, on 2 October, Gates ordered Major General William Smallwood to rush reinforcements to Sumner at Trading Ford (Nelson 1976, 246). This objective was accomplished on 13 October (Higginbotham 1961, 111).

On 1 October, at Phyfer's Mill, Davie assessed the British deployment for Sumner:

Flying Camp Phyfer
Sunday, October 1st, 1780

Dear General [Sumner]:

Yesterday morning I detached Colo. Taylor with a party to reconnoitre the Enemy; he returned late last night, informing me that a detachment of 800 of the British marched that morning from Charlotte, partly foot, partly Horse, with two pieces of Artillery, & that they took a rout between McKnits road & the River. In consequence of this I sent a Captain's command into that quarter, from whence I have had my intelligence. The Enemy are cajoling & flattering the People to take Paroles, & pursuing the same steps they did in South Carolina. This with the Panic of the People, is an alarming circumstance. They forage largely & carelessly below, & a few rifle light infantry companies might perhaps be of singular service, if you think it requisite & safe. If you detach them, I will endeavor to support them, the best of Guides may be had, & if the parties are small, may lie secure among the thickets & Morasses, & annoy the Enemy very considerably.

Their paroling the People, bringing large quantities of liquor with them & provision, convinces me of their serious intentions to subjugate this State, but their halting & marching so slowly is unaccountable, but of a piece with their conduct in other places.

I am happy to hear Capt. Dickinson was so fortunate; enterprises of this kind keep the Enemy in continual alarm.

I am &c. &c.
Wm. R. Davie (Davie 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:659–660)

Davie soon returned towards Charlotte to attack British foraging parties (Davie 1810 in Robinson 1976, 26). His patrols covered all roads to Charlotte.

Troop Deployment, Movement, and Strength Timeline

In piecing together the above scenario, a useful tool has been what crime-solving detectives called a *constraint timeline*. It is effective when given lots of clues each containing partial information. When these clues are forced into a timeline worksheet, many suspect scenarios can be excluded as impossible. Even if the actual scenario is indeterminate, a detective can test a plausible scenario against all clues. For this application, the analogous worksheet is a *troop deployment, movement, and strength timeline*.

This timeline contains operational details: who was where and when with how many troops. Commanders appear only when they operated independently or their presence was important. Their abbreviations are:

Notation	Commander	Operational Command and Strength
I	Col Robert Irwin	Mecklenburg County militia, 200
L	Col Francis Locke	Rowan County militia, 200
r	Col Armstrong	Rowan County militia, 200
S	MG Jethro Sumner	NC Brigade, 400
D	BG William Davidson	Salisbury District NC militia, 400
d	Col William R. Davie	North Carolina militia cavalry, 300
g	Capt Joseph Graham	Mecklenburg County cavalry
u	Col Thomas Sumter	South Carolina state troops
P	Col John Paisley	Guilford County militia, 200
a	Col Benjamin Seawell	Franklin County, NC, militia
C	LG Charles Earl Cornwallis	23 rd , 33 rd , 71 st , 2000 + Rcy
T	LCol Banastre Tarleton	British Legion, 500
H	Maj George Hanger	British Legion, 500
R	LCol Francis Lord Rawdon	Volunteers of Ireland, 600
c	Maj Archibald McArthur	71 st , 1 st Battalion, 250
y	Maj James Wemyss	63 rd

	1 Sep	7 Sep	12 Sep	15 Sep	18 Sep	20 Sep	24 Sep	25 Sep	26 Sep
Ramsey's Mill	S400	S400	S400						
Deep River									
Salisbury		P200		S400					
Phyfer's Mill			P200		S400				S400
Rocky River									
Mallard Creek								SDP600	DP200
Sherrill's Ford							r200	r200	r200
Charlotte								dg150	dg150
									CH2000
McAlpine	I200	I200	IL400	DP600	DP600	DPS1000	DPS640		
Creek (8 miles)									
Providence		d70	d150	d150	d150		d150		
Bigger's Ferry				u200	u200	u400	u400	u400	
								R500	
Little Sugar							g50	CH2000	
Creek									
(10 miles)									
Twelve Mile							a160		
Creek									
Wahab					d150				
Plantation									
Waxhaw Creek	d70		C1200	C1200	C1200	C1200	CH2000		
Blair's Mill							cT250	cT250	cT250
White's Mill			T700	T700	T700	T700			
Camden	CT2000	CT2000							

This timeline provides an overall perspective on how opposing American and British forces were deployed. It is also a worksheet against which a newly conjectured scenario can be tested. However, its troop strengths are approximate. Actual troop strength depended on sickness, detachment duty, guard duty, etc. Some values are interpolated between known before and after values. Nonetheless, the strengths appear to be at least as precise as known by the commanders at that time. For that reason, commanders frequently ordered updated strength returns from their subordinates.

Early October 1780, Charlotte

Sometime before 3 October 1780, former colonial North Carolina Governor Josiah Martin joined Cornwallis in Charlotte. Although he was exiled 5 years earlier, he presumed himself reinstated. On 3 October, he issued a proclamation (Martin 1780 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 263–266).

NORTH CAROLINA

By His Excellency Josiah Martin, His Majesty's Captain General, and Governor in Chief of the said Province, &c. &c. &c. &c.

A PROCLAMATION.

Whereas the King, ever anxious for the welfare and happiness of all his people, and sensible to the representations which have been constantly made to him of the steady and unshaken loyalty and of the inviolable fidelity and attachment of his faithful subjects in this Province to his person and government; and confiding entirely in their repeated assurances to His Majesty of their own utmost exertions in cooperation with his armies whenever they should be directed to their support. And, Whereas His Majesty moved by these considerations, and by every the most tender and paternal feeling of concern, and regard for the sufferings and misery of his faithful people, under the intolerable yoke of arbitrary power, which his majesty, with indignation, sees imposed by the tyranny of the rebel Congress upon his freeborn subjects, hath been pleased to send an army to their aid and relief. I have therefore thought it proper, by this Proclamation, to inform his majesty's loyal and faithful subjects of this Province, of his great proof and instance of his majesty's gracious attention to them, and at the same time to advertise them that the royal army under the command of Lieut. Gen Earl Cornwallis, is thus far advanced to their support, leaving it to themselves to compute its power and superiority from the great, signal, and complete victory which it obtained, when in force very inferior to its present strength, over the rebel army on the 16th of August. And whereas, while his majesty on the one hand, holds forth grace and mercy to his deluded subjects, who shall immediately, and with good faith, return to their duty, to which they have been invited in vain by every reason and argument, and by every consideration of interest, of freedom and happiness; he is determined on the other, to employ in the most vigorous and effectual manner the force of his arms, and the united strength of his faithful people, to restore and maintain to them that genuine liberty, peace and prosperity, which they formerly enjoyed in such full security under the mild government and protection of Great Britain, and to compel the disobedient to submission to the laws, and the participation of those blessings of a free constitution, which through ignorance, infatuation, delusion, blindness and fraud, they have been hitherto led to resist notwithstanding his majesty's most gracious and merciful endeavors to reclaim them. Having thus signified to the King's loyal and faithful subjects, the arrival and progress of his Majesty's army to their aid and support, which they are to evince the sincerity of their profession of loyalty and attachment; they are to consider themselves in this hour most seriously and solemnly called upon by every duty of the subject to the sovereign, and by every tie and consideration of family, liberty and property, of present and future welfare and interest, with heart and hand to join and unite their strength with that of his majesty's force, in order to deliver themselves from that intolerable yoke of slavery and arbitrary power, which the tyranny of the Rebel Congress, lost to every sense of truth and virtue is evidently aiming to rivet upon them, by calling in the aid of the two Roman Catholic powers of France and Spain whose policy and incessant labor it has been for ages to subvert the civil and religious liberties of mankind, and to restore themselves to that state of perfect freedom, which is acknowledge throughout the world to be found only in the envied rights and conditions of British subjects: And whereas I have entire confidence, that it is the wish, inclination an ardent desire of his majesty's faithful and loyal subjects in this province to employ their strength on this great occasion, for the redemption of every thing that can be dear to men, in the way that is likely, most effectually and

certainly to accomplish the great objects of peace and happiness which they have in view: I do hereby exhort and invite all the young and able bodied men to testify the reality of their loyalty and spirit, by enlisting in the Provincial Corps, which are forthwith to be raised and put under my command, as his majesty's Governor of the Province, hereby informing and assuring them, that they are, and will be required to serve only during the Rebellion, and within the Provinces of North and South Carolina and Virginia, under officers of their own recommendation; that each man will receive the bounty of three Guineas at the time of enlisting, and all the pay, clothing, appointments, allowances and encouragements of soldiers of this majesty's army, and will be entitled at the end of the rebellion, when they are to be discharged, to free grants of land. And I have such full assurance that his majesty's loyal and faithful subjects of this Province, will so clearly see the propriety and necessity of forming their strength upon this plan, which experience hath proved can alone render it effectual to the suppression of the tyranny which has for years past deprived them of every blessing, right and enjoyment of life, that I am confident their honest zest will lead them to contend and vie with each other in filling the respective battalions in which they shall close to enlist, from a just sense on merit & applause that will be due to such as are soonest completed.

Given under my hand and the Great Seal of the said Province, at Head-Quarters, in Charlotte Town, this third day of October, one thousand seven hundred and eighty, and in the twentieth year of his Majesty's reign.

JO. MARTIN.

By his Excellency's command,
Rigdon Brice, P. Secy.

GOD save the KING.

British Army occupation of Charlotte raised its population by a factor of 20. Ordinary supply of food was insufficient. Charles Stedman, the British commissary officer, described food procurement:

There were several large, well-cultivated farms in the neighbourhood of Charlotte. An abundance of cattle; few sheep; the cattle being mostly milch-cows, or cows with calf, which at that season of the year was the best beef; for the cattle in North and South Carolina run wild in the woods, and at this season are in general very poor. As an instance, when the army was at Charlotte, we killed upon an average 100 head [of cattle] per day. The amount of rations issued, including the army departments, militia, negroes, &c. was 4,100 per day. The leanness of the cattle will account for the number killed each day. This was not confined to Charlotte, for they were poor at this season throughout the Carolinas; very few of the oxen were fit to kill. In one day no less than 37 cows in calf were slaughtered. Necessity only justified this measure. At this period the royal army was supported by lord Rawdon's moving with one half of the army one day, and colonel Webster, with the other half, the next day, as a covering party, to protect the foraging parties and cattle-drivers. This measure was rendered necessary from the hostile disposition of the inhabitants. Wheat and rye were collected in the straw, Indian corn in the hulk, and brought in waggons to Charlotte, where (in the court-house) it was threshed out by the militia and negroes, and then sent to the mill. This was attended with much trouble and fatigue to the army; nevertheless meal was not wanting; cattle there were in abundance. When a cow calves in the Carolinas, the owner marks the calf, and turns it into the woods, where it remains for three or four, and even seven, years, without ever being brought out. Individual farmers have marked from twelve to fifteen hundred calves in one year. It would never answer to fodder such a number of cattle. The climate being very much to the southward, admits of their running in the woods all the winter, where a species of coarse wild grass grows most luxuriantly all the year. Pennsylvania and Maryland do not raise black cattle sufficient for their own consumption. The drovers from Pennsylvania go to the Carolinas, purchase these lean cattle at a very low price, and bring them to Pennsylvania, where they are fatted in the rich meadows on the banks of the

Schuylkill and Delaware rivers for market. This will explain, in some degree, why the Carolinas suffered so much during the war; for the planters property consisted chiefly in cattle and negroes, there not being white inhabitants sufficient to cultivate the land; the planters asserting, that, without negroes, indigo and rice could not be cultivated, the whites not being able to bear the heat of the climate. The negroes in general followed the British army. (Stedman 1794, 2:216–217).

British troops destroyed considerable property in Mecklenburg County. Loss or destruction was reported later by Sara McDough (McDough, Robert, 1783 in Mecklenburg County Estate Papers n.d.), John Taylor (Sharply, Moses, 1785 in Mecklenburg County Estate Papers n.d.) and John and James Armstrong (Armstrong, Matthew, 1787 in Mecklenburg County Estate Papers n.d.). (Boyer 2008–2012)

Captain James Thompson and Lieutenant George Graham obtained permission from Davidson to return home. There, on 3 October, they collected a party of men and disrupted a British foraging party at McIntyre's farm on Beattie's Ford Road (W. A. Graham 1904b, 28).



McIntyre House, built about 1769, demolished 1941, shown 1 May 1931.
E. L. Baxter Davidson stands in doorway riddled with musket ball holes highlighted with chalk (Boyer 2008–2012).

Meanwhile, Brigadier General Davidson and Colonel Davie applied constant pressure on Cornwallis in Charlotte (Davidson 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:676). Later, Davie described his orders:

Colonel Davie returned towards Charlotte, as his force was insufficient to make any impression on the enemy in their camp, all that could be done was to confine them if possible to the Town by attacking their foraging parties, and to distress them by cutting off their supplies; in consequence of which positions were chosen within fifteen & twenty miles, and parties detached on all sides to watch and harass the enemy; he was confined by express orders to remain always with the principal body in the direction between Salisbury & Charlotte, and by no means to risque being generally engaged. These orders limited the operations of this partisan but much was done by his perfect knowledge of the Country and the daring bravery of the militia under his command: no part of the enemy ventured out without being attacked, and often retired with considerable loss; the people of the neighbouring Country were strongly attached to the American cause, and gave his Lordship no assistance, and all information was cut off by the vigilance and activity of the militia cavalry. (Davie 1810 in B. P. Robinson 1976, 26)

On 5 October, despite the many difficulties, Cornwallis admonished his soldiers to be lenient toward the American residents:

Head Quarters Charlotte Town 5th. Octr. 1780

The Officers & Soldiers, of this Army, have given such repeated proofs of their Zeal and Attachment to the Interests of their King and Country, that Lord Cornwallis can have no doubt of their paying the most exact attention to them in every Instance by which they can be Materially affected.

He desires the Officers & Soldiers to reflect that the great object of his Majesty's forces in this Country is to protect & Secure his Majesty's faithfull & Loyal Subjects, & to Encourage & Assist them in Arming; & opposing the Tyranny & Oppression of the Rebels. His Lordship therefore recommends it to them in the Strongest manner, to treat with kindness all those who have Sought protection in the British Army, & to believe that Although their Ignorance & want of Skill in Military Affairs, may at present render their appearance Awkward in a Veteran & Experienc'd Army; When they are properly Arm'd, Appointed, & Instructed, they Will shew the same Arduor, & Courage, in the Cause of Great Britain, As their Countrymen who repair'd to the Royal Standard in the Northern Colonies. (Cornwallis 1780 in Newsome 1932, 4:381)

Probably about 7 October (Stedman 1794, 2:223–224), from Rocky River camp, Davidson ordered Major Joseph Dickson, commander of the Lincoln County cavalry, to circumvent Charlotte using outlying roads. He attacked a British guard at Polk's Mill, 2 miles from Charlotte, probably near where present-day Remount Road crosses Irwin Creek (Price and Strother 1808). On 8 October, Davidson reported to Sumner:

I have the pleasure to enclose to you a large packet taken yesterday at McAlpines Creek, on the way to Camden, by a small party of my brigade. A detachment of 120 horse under Rutledge and Dixon [Dickson] almost surrounded Charlotte yesterday, attacked a picket at Col. Polk's mill, and at a certain Mr. Elliott's brought off a sentry and 8 Tories, who are now on their way to join you. A small party of riflemen brought off 50 horses from the Tories at Col. Polk's plantation last night. Dixon [Dickson] lost one man and killed one. (Davidson 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:784)

On 13 October 1832, Rowan County militiaman Joseph Patton [testified](#) a bit more detail:

He [Patton] was in a skirmish at Col. Polk's Mill the British were guarding said mill we thought it was the Tories until we fired a few times on them they wounded 7 [could be 17] of our horses and killed one man of ours named Hugh Gray, we took one of their guards and retreated and then returned to head quarters at Rocky river. (Patton, Joseph, pension application 1832)

Tarleton wrote:

An attack was directed against the picket at Polk's mill, two miles from the town: The Americans were gallantly received by Lieutenant Guyon, of the 23d regiment; and the fire of his party from a loop-holed building adjoining the mill, repulsed the assailants. (Tarleton 1787, 160).

Charles Stedman wrote:

At Polk's Mill, near Charlotte, a small detachment of the twenty-third regiment was posted, commanded by lieutenant Guyon, a very young man. The Americans made an attack upon the mill, with a very superior force, but were repulsed. Lieutenant Guyon's conduct was highly applauded. (Stedman 1794, 2:223–224).

Later, Joseph Graham wrote:

A guard of fifty men were stationed at Polk's Mill (now Wilson's), in two miles of Charlotte, which was kept grinding night and day for the army. On the 28th of September [more likely 7 October], Major Dickson set out from Colonel Davie with sixty men, made a circuit around Charlotte, and in the evening charged on this post. The garrison was

vigilant, threw itself into a log house on the hill above the mill, and had loop-holes in the daubing and chinks to fire through. Major Dickson was repulsed, with the loss of one man killed and several horses wounded. Before the enemy got into the house, two were wounded, but after that they were secure, and the assailants, much exposed, withdrew. (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 258).

The Americans cut off almost all outside communication to Charlotte. Later, Tarleton wrote:

Charlotte town afforded some conveniences, blended with great disadvantages. The mills in its neighbourhood were supposed of sufficient consequence to render it for the present an eligible position, and, in future, a necessary post, when the army advanced: But the aptness of its intermediate situation between Camden and Salisbury, and the quantity of its mills, did not counterbalance its defects. The town and environs abounded with inveterate enemies; the plantations in the neighbourhood were small and uncultivated; the roads narrow, and crossed in every direction; and the whole face of the country covered with close and thick woods. In addition to these disadvantages, no estimation could be made of the sentiments of half the inhabitants of North Carolina, whilst the royal army remained at Charlotte town. It was evident, and it had been frequently mentioned to the King's officers, that the counties of Mecklenburg and Rohan were more hostile to England than any others in America. The vigilance and animosity of these surrounding districts checked the exertions of the well affected, and totally destroyed all communication between the King's troops and the loyalists in the other parts of the province. (Tarleton 1787, 159).

Likewise, British commissary officer Stedman later wrote:

So inveterate was their rancour, that the messengers, with expresses for the commander-in-chief were frequently murdered; and the inhabitants, instead of remaining quietly at home to receive payment for the produce of their plantations, made it a practice to waylay the British foraging parties, fire their rifles from concealed places, and then fly into the woods. (Stedman 1794, 2:216).

During 9–10 October, Davie fell sick which briefly curtailed his personal action (Davidson 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:677, 683).

Colonel Thomas Polk, commissary officer for the Continental Army Southern Department, had severe problems of funding. On 10 October, he wrote Gates:

Part of the Provision I had laid up in Charlotte was taken by the Enemy. My own Money is entirely expended; am therefore reduced to the Necessity of calling on you for a supply. ... My Property is chiefly lost; cannot therefore Venture to extend my Credit. (Polk 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:684–685)

September–October 1780, Ferguson, Overmountain Men, South Carolina Militiamen and Lincoln County Men to Kings Mountain

In September 1780, the patriot situation was desperate. During the previous May, Charlestown fell with many Continental soldiers taken prisoner, including all active North Carolina and South Carolina Continental Army regiments. In late May, 260 Virginia Continentals were brutally killed or wounded at Buford's Defeat. Tories proved they could assemble in large numbers as at Ramsour's Mill on 20 June. On 16 August, 1050 soldiers, including many Continentals, were killed or captured at Gates' Defeat. American Major General Horatio Gates was discredited. Two days later, 150 of Colonel Thomas Sumter's soldiers were killed at Fishing Creek. Finally, Charlotte was occupied. It appeared that Cornwallis would soon subdue North Carolina. It is remarkable that rebel resistance continued.

By early September, Major Patrick Ferguson had recruited over 1100 loyalists, about half from upstate South Carolina and half from North Carolina (Draper 1881, 293). In addition, he had a cadre of uniformed provincial troops, mostly New Yorkers, from four regiments: *King's American Regiment* commanded by Captain Abraham DePeyster, *Loyal American Regiment* commanded by Major Main, *New Jersey Volunteers* commanded by Captain Samuel Ryerson, and *Prince of Wales American Regiment* led by Sergeant Townsend.

Meanwhile, Colonel James Williams with his unit of Little River District militia delivered prisoners taken at Musgrove Mill to Hillsborough. There South Carolina Governor John Rutledge authorized Williams to raise a regiment and return to South Carolina. He received permission from the North Carolina Board of War to recruit soldiers within that state. Some came from Caswell County (Graves 2012, 58).

[Lieutenant David Mitchell](#), later husband of Ann Anderson a 4th great-grandaunt, served under Colonel James Williams. His service is described in his brother [William Mitchell's pension application](#) (Mitchell, William, pension application 1832) (Draper 1881, 191–192).

About 11 September, Ferguson sent a threatening verbal message to rebels in western North Carolina, which at that time included present-day Tennessee, saying he would “march his army over the mountains, hang their leaders, and lay their country waste with fire and sword.” (Draper 1881, 169). This threat was certainly counterproductive since among the addressees it provoked a determination to destroy Ferguson before he destroyed them. More than 400 Scotch-Irish rebels, some called *Overmountain Men*, assembled and pursued Ferguson. These men were led by Colonel William Campbell, Washington County, Virginia, militia; Colonel Isaac Shelby, Sullivan County, North Carolina, militia; and Colonel John Sevier, Washington County, North Carolina, militia. On 25 September 1780, they assembled their forces at Sycamore Shoals on the Watauga River, at present-day Elizabethton, Tennessee. The next day, they began ascending the west side of the mountains. On 27 September, they crossed Yellow Mountain Gap, 4640 feet above sea level. That location was covered with “shoe-mouth deep” snow (Campbell 1780 in NCSR 1895, XV:372–373). Although it was not known at that time, this traverse was the highest elevation of all military operations during the American Revolution (Dugger 1932, 15) (Lindsey 2015). It greatly exceeded the 1450-foot highest elevation of Colonel Benedict Arnold's epic expedition to Quebec City during the winter of 1775.

During the summer 1780, about 60 Lincoln County militiamen assembled at Espey's plantation (Hunter 1877, 265), under the leadership of Colonel William Graham and Lieutenant Colonel Frederick Hambricht. They moved to Lincoln County Courthouse and Moses Moore's plantation. Moore's home was near where present-day Shoal Road crosses Indian Creek (Dellinger 2006–2017). Their show of force prevented loyalists from assembling (Forney, Abraham, pension application 1832).



Major William Chronicle's South Fork Boys
Part of the Lincoln County Men. Mural at Belmont City Hall, Belmont, North Carolina.
Painted by Peter DeAnna, 1940. (Davis 2008) (Robertson 2015)

About 15 September, because of the threat posed by Ferguson moving into the upper Catawba River valley, the Lincoln County Men moved to the east side of Tuckasegee Ford on the Catawba River.

hearing that [Patrick] Ferguson was coming on in considerable force, it was concluded to retreat across the Catawba River at the Tuckasegee Ford (Forney, Abraham, pension application 1832)

On 23 September, one of Williams' principal subordinates Major Samuel Hammond issued a call for recruits from the refugees from South Carolina and Georgia:

A Call to Arms: Beef, Bread & Potatoes
Huggins' Plantation 23rd Sept. 1780

The undersigned has just returned from Hillsborough to this neighborhood. While there he obtained an order on the Companies and Quartermasters upon this frontier for supplies of provisions and forage for such of the patriotic Citizens of South Carolina & Georgia as might be embodied for actual services and being informed that there is a number of you, resting with patriotic friends in the Two adjoining Counties no doubt anxiously looking for an opportunity to embody for the performance of duty, but without the power or means of supporting yourselves or your horses from your own resources I have thought your wishes would be forwarded by the Establishing of a Camp at a rallying rendezvous at a convenient place for your assemblage, and to be ready when occasion might offer to give our aid for the recovery of Our County.

I have with this view formed a Camp at Huggins' Plantation a few miles from Capt. Brannon's Tavern, near the road leading westwardly to Torrence's Crossroads, where we will be supplied with the needful. I am justified in the expectation of the arrival of a powerful support shortly and that we may return toward home with a strong army. Let us be prepared to do our part, our little force will be important if Combined possessing as we do a better knowledge of the County and its resources. Now is the time to show ourselves and I invite you, both Officers & soldiers to obey the call: I here assure you that I shall cheerfully surrender the Command, and Cooperate fully to and with any Officer of Senior Rank of either State that may think proper to Join; Should an opportunity offer immediately for my advancing toward the enemy with a prospect of doing good an officer will be left at this Camp authorized to obtain Rations for such as may Join there after my departing. I have some other good news. Come and hear it.

S. Hammond Major
Comdg Refugees Lower Regt.
So Carolina 96 Brigd.

Huggins' Plantation near Brannon's, Roan [Rowan] County, NC (Hammond, Samuel, pension application 1832)

The purpose of the recruitment was to "return towards home [South Carolina] with a strong army." However, Ferguson's northward movements obstructed Williams' plans and forced him to confront the enemy earlier. These two objectives may be the source of the misunderstanding with Colonel William Hill that arose later. Huggins plantation (Miller 1988) was west of Salisbury and near Colonel Francis Locke's plantation. Williams may have personally stayed at Locke's plantation (Whelchel, John, pension application 1832).

Among those who joined Williams were Georgia refugees under Colonel William Candler.

On 25 September, Colonel Thomas Sumter's 260 South Carolina militiamen camped on the east side of the Catawba River at Bigger's Ferry (Hill 1815, 17). His subordinates included Colonel William Hill of the New Acquisition District militia and Colonel Edward Lacey of the Chester District militia. When pursued by Lieutenant Colonel Francis Rawdon (Money 1780, 24 Sep), Sumter crossed to the west side and

continued up river. On 26 September, he joined Graham at Tuckasegee Ford (Hill 1815, 18) (Draper 1881, 214).

arriving at that point we then met with some South Carolina troops retreating before Cornwallis, whom they informed us was then in Charlotte (Forney, Abraham, pension application 1832)

This group intended to join Brigadier General William Lee Davidson who was retreating towards Salisbury before Cornwallis's advance on Charlotte. However, Davidson informed them that a large force including Overmountain Men was assembling to confront Ferguson (Hill 1815, 18). Consequently, on 27 September, this group marched up the river's east side to Beattie's Ford and re-crossed (Hill 1815, 18) (Merrell, Benjamin, pension application 1833).

On 27 September, Ferguson withdrew from Gilbert Town and the next day crossed Twitty's Ford (Allaire 1780 in Draper 1881, 509). In later accounts, it was conjectured that Ferguson intended to march to Ninety Six (Vance 1799 in Henry 1850 in Schenck 1891, 21). However, Ferguson's mission was to support Cornwallis's advance into North Carolina. Consequently, he never contemplated returning to Ninety Six, as made clear from the contemporaneous diaries of Lieutenant Anthony Allaire (Allaire 1780 in Draper 1881, 509) and Uzal Johnson (Johnson 1780 in Moss 2000, 69–71).

On 28 September, Sumter and Graham's men proceeded to Sherrill's Ford (Cornwallis 1780 in CPS 2010, II:158) (Espey, Samuel, pension application 1832). There, probably early on 29 September, Colonel James Williams' joined with his unit of Little River District militia and new recruits from North Carolina, many from Caswell County. Sumter and Williams did not agree who had superior rank. Nonetheless, Williams prevailed since Sumter with a few principal subordinates departed from his troops to resolve the dispute with Rutledge in Hillsborough. Sumter's absence indicated that Williams had overall command. This is confirmed by several original sources (Williams 1780 in NCSR 1895, XV:94) (Campbell 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:663–664) (Forney, Abraham, pension application 1832). Although Hill and Lacey objected in principle to Williams' as commander (Hill 1815, 18), the combined forces moved as one unit. On 30 September, these troops marched towards the advancing Overmountain Men (Cornwallis 1780 in CPS 2010, II:158). Some of Williams' men joined after passing Island Ford on the Catawba River (Whelchel, John, pension application 1832).

In Charlotte, Cornwallis learned of this gathering threat against Ferguson. On 1 October, he wrote Ferguson:

I am informed that Colonel [James] Williams with part of Sumpter's corps marched yesterday from Kerrel's [Sherrill's] Ford, giving out that they were going against you. My informant saw only 150, but the enemy told him they had 400 more — that is not good authority. Sumpter has had a quarrel with Williams about command and is gone to Hillsborough to refer it to Gates. (Cornwallis 1780 in CPS 2010, II:158)

On 30 September, about 1060 Overmountain Men camped at Quaker Meadows, the wide bottomland just north of present-day Morganton, North Carolina. There about 240 militiamen from Wilkes and Surry County joined. That evening, the six militia leaders planned tactics under a large tree, later known as *Council Oak*.



Colonel Charles McDowell House, built in 1812
Quaker Meadows, Morganton, North Carolina

Bost Road intersects highway NC181 in Quaker Meadows. George Shuford Ramseur Sr. his brothers and sister's home place is on Bost Road. That is where the Ramseur-Forney family reunion is held. Also, Jacob Forney II family graveyard is on Boss Road.

On 30 September at Step's Plantation, Ferguson wrote Cornwallis that he necessarily had to retreat towards Charlotte and that a protective escort would help (Draper 1881, 201–202). Because the carriers took a circuitous route, they were delayed, and Cornwallis did not receive this message until 7 October (Draper 1881, 202). On 1 October, at Denard's Ford on Broad River, Ferguson desperately attempted to recruit more local loyalists. He wrote:

Denard's Ford, Broad River, Tryon County, October 1, 1780

Gentlemen: — Unless you wish to be eat up by an inundation of barbarians, who have begun by murdering an unarmed son before the aged father, and afterwards lopped off his arms, and who by their shocking cruelties and irregularities, give the best proof of their cowardice and want of discipline; I say, if you wish to be pinioned, robbed, and murdered, and see your wives and daughters, in four days, abused by the dregs of mankind — in short, if you wish or deserve to live, and bear the name of men, grasp your arms in a moment and run to camp.

The Back Water men have crossed the mountains; McDowell, Hampton, Shelby, and Cleveland are at their head, so that you know what you have to depend upon. If you choose to be degraded forever and ever by a set of mongrels, say so at once, and let your women turn their backs upon you, and look out for real men to protect them.

Pat. Ferguson, Major 71st Regiment. (Draper 1881, 204)

On 1 October, the Overmountain Men group moved to Bedford Hill. Because of rain they remained there for two days.

On 1 or 2 October, Williams' troops camped near present-day Valdese, North Carolina. On 2 October, Williams reported to Gates:

Burke County, Oct, 2d. 1780.

Sir:

I am at present about seventy miles from Salisbury, in the fork of the Catawba, with about four hundred and fifty horsemen, in pursuit of Col. Ferguson. On my crossing the Catawba River, I dispatched to different quarters for intelligence, and this evening I was favoured with this news, which you may depend on: That Col. Clarke, of the State of Georgia, with one hundred riflemen, forced his way from South Carolina to Georgia. On his route thither, being joined by seven hundred men, he proceeded to the town of

Augusta, and has taken it with a large quantity of goods; but not finding it prudent to continue there, he has retreated to the upper parts of South Carolina, in Ninety Six district, and made a stand with eight hundred brave men. This moment another of my expresses is arrived from Cols. McDowell and Shelby; they were on their march, near Burke Court House, with fifteen hundred brave mounted men, and Col. Cleveland was within ten miles of them with eight hundred men, and was to form a junction with them this day.

I expect to join them to-morrow, in pursuit of Col. Ferguson, and under the direction of heaven I hope to be able to render your honor a good account of him in a few days.

I am, &c.,

James Williams. (Williams 1780 in Tarleton 1787, 194) (Williams 1780 in NCSR 1895, XV:94)

There are important inferences in Williams' correspondence:

- Williams considered himself in command of all South Carolina and Lincoln County troops by reporting directly to Gates.
- Williams' estimate of 450 horsemen would require all of Hill's, Lacey's and Graham's troops be with him. The actual number was probably closer to 390.
- Williams said he would join the Overmountain Men the next day. Thus he was within a day's march of the Overmountain Men who were at Bedford Hill. That meant Williams could not have been in central Lincoln County.
- Williams indicated that pursuing and defeating Ferguson was his near-term objective.
- By indicating that he would report any victory to Gates, Williams implied that he might command the Overmountain Men although his force was much smaller. He might have expected that since he was the oldest colonel at age 40.

Williams wrote that he was in Burke County, 70 miles from Salisbury, and "in the fork of the Catawba". Historian Lyman Draper could make no sense of this and concluded a different route:

This party of South Carolinians and their associates marched through Lincoln County, crossing the upper forks of Dutchman's [now Killian] creek, proceeding on to Ramsour's Mill, on the South Fork of the Catawba; thence bearing somewhat south-westerly, crossing Buffalo and First Broad rivers, to Flint Hill. (Draper 1881, 194)

Draper was well aware of the above discrepancy between his route and Williams' location. He wrote:

By some unaccountable mistake, or misprint, this letter of Colonel Williams is dated "Burke County:" when all the other authorities, Hill, Floyd, Hammond and Whelchel — the two latter of Williams' party — combine to show, beyond a doubt, that they were at this time in Lincoln County, west or south-west of Tuckasegie Ford. (Draper 1881, 192)

Here Draper cited William Hill's *Memoirs* (Hill 1815, 18–19), and the pension applications of Andrew Floyd (Floyd, Andrew, pension application 1832), Samuel Hammond (Hammond, Samuel, pension application 1832) and Dr. John Whelchel (Whelchel, John, pension application 1832). However Draper must not have read these sources carefully, because none of them explicitly mentions the direction south-westerly or Buffalo Creek or First Broad River or even Ramsour's Mill in this context. So why was Draper so confident in the route through the center of Lincoln County? Was he influenced by another historian? This might be discovered by a thorough search into the Draper Manuscripts, in particular the correspondence of Colonel John Randolph Logan and W. L. Twitty (Draper 1881, 194). Also, in Draper's above quote, he made the minor mistake assuming Flint Hill was a particular place. Original sources refer only "the Flint Hills" which apparently meant present-day Cherry Mountain and its surrounding hills in all directions.

On first reading, Williams' description of his location is suspect because the usual meaning of "in the fork of the Catawba" is the region around present-day Belmont, North Carolina, about 25 miles south of Sherrill's Ford where Williams' men had been. It would not make sense for Williams to have moved so far south and be so close to British occupied Charlotte. There appears to be no way to reconcile "in the fork of the Catawba" and "Burke County". However, Williams could have meant a broader interpretation of "fork" which leads to a timeline consistent with other facts.

By "in the fork of the Catawba", Williams could have included the land between the Catawba River and Henry Fork, a tributary of the South Fork River. That is consistent with being in Burke County and "seventy miles from Salisbury". That location was near present-day Valdese, North Carolina, between Hickory and Morganton. This casts a new light on how these troops marched from Sherrill's Ford on the Catawba River to Cowpens. It suggests that their first objective was to join the gathering Overmountain Men. It implies that they took the ridgeline road between Sherrill's Ford to where Williams wrote on 2 October. There, Williams learned that McDowell and the Overmountain Men were moving towards Ferguson who had recently been at Gilbert Town.

There is other evidence to support this northern route along the west side of the Catawba River. Abraham Forney testified in his 1832 pension application:

we united with these forces under the command of a Colonel [James] Williams and marched up the West side of the Catawba River (Forney, Abraham, pension application 1832)

Veteran Benjamin Merrell, a South Carolina militiaman, testified in his 1833 pension application:

crossing the Catawba River at the Tucasejah [Tuckasegee] Ford thence up the East side of said River to Baiteys [Beatties] Ford thence up the South fork of the Catawba (Merrell, Benjamin, pension application 1833)

In Williams' 2 October correspondence to Gates, he indicated that he planned to join the Overmountain Men and pursue Ferguson (Williams 1780 in NCSR 1895, XV:94). Is made good military sense to combine forces before confronting Ferguson's 1100 troops. So, if Williams had followed his stated intension what would have been his expected action? He would have followed the Overmountain Men. That way:

- He would have minimized the risk of losing the Overmountain Men's trail by following in their footsteps.
- For safety reasons, he would have had the Overmountain Men between him and Ferguson.

Late on 2 October, Brigadier General William Davidson learned of Williams' movements. Davidson wrote Brigadier General Jethro Sumner:

October 3d., Near Capt. Phifer's.

Last evening I was informed by Col. Watson that Col. Williams, Seavey [Sevier?] and Graham had formed a junction west of the Cattawba, their force about 600. They had held a council and sent an express to Col. Cleaveland, whom they expected to join & co-operate with in pursuit of Ferguson, who had retreated to Gilberts town. It is expected they are now on their march. Ferguson, by the best accounts, is 800 strong ; Cleaveland about 600, and is probably now thoroughly reinforced. Should our troops be successful in that quarter it will probably be a diversion to the enemy in Charlotte. (Davidson 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:782)

Although Williams had the opportunity to join the Overmountain Men, he chose to remain separated. Perhaps an express message from the Overmountain Men described the latest decisions made at Bedford Hill including their planned departure for Gilbert Town. By early 3 October, Williams decided not to immediately join the Overmountain Men. His reasons are not known with certainty, but could have been one or a combination of:

- Ferguson had withdrawn from Gilbert Town and his last known position was Dennard's Ford on 1 October. It would make sense for him to move eastward towards Cornwallis's army at Charlotte. So, Williams may have wanted to take the shortest route to Ferguson assuming that the Overmountain Men would join him rather than vice versa.
- Williams was jealous not to lose command the South Carolinians.
- Williams surmised that he would not command the Overmountain Men since their colonels already agreed on Campbell.
- Williams wanted to maintain the independence of the South Carolinians since his ultimate mission, as directed by Rutledge, was to suppress the Tories around Ninety Six.

Hill intimated some of these reasons (Hill 1815, 19–20).

On 3 October, Williams probably marched down the east side of South Mountain and camped. This route matches Hill's description of the topography (Hill 1815, 19–20).

Colonel William Graham, the commander of the Lincoln County Men, who had been with Williams since 30 September, was not required to follow Williams because Graham was a North Carolina militia colonel. Graham's first responsibility, as directed by Davidson, was to join the other North Carolina colonels. So, on 3 October, Graham's Lincoln County Men separated from Williams, as implied by (Henry, Malcolm, pension application 1834), and marched towards the Overmountain Men. Major William Chronicle, one of Graham's subordinates, led an advance group of about 20 militiamen and caught up at a location later called Probit's Place (Vance 1799 in Henry 1850 in Schenck 1891, 21). Archeologist Ken Robinson, who has investigated this area, discovered the property of William Probit, who was enumerated in the 1790 United States Census in Burke County and listed on the 1805 tax list as being in the militia company of Captain James Dysart (Robinson 2015).

On 4 October, Campbell marched to Camp Creek near Gilbert Town, north of present-day Rutherfordton, North Carolina. The objectives of the Overmountain colonels had changed. Apparently, they abandoned the pursuit of Ferguson. They wrote Gates:

Rutherford County, Camp near Gilbert Town
October, 4, 1780.

Sir:

We have now collected at this place about 1,500 good men, drawn from the Counties of Surry, Wilkes, Burke, Washington and Sullivan Counties in this State, and Washington County of Virginia, and expect to be joined in a few days by Colo. Clark of Georgia and Colo. Williams of South Carolina, with about 1,000 more. As we have at this time called out our militia without any orders from the Executive of our different States, and with the view of Expelling the Enemy out of this part of the Country, we think such a body of men worthy of your attention, and would request you to send a General Officer, immediately to take the command of such Troops as may embody in this quarter. All our Troops being Militia, and but little acquainted with discipline, we could wish him to be a Gentleman of address, and able to keep up a proper discipline, without disgusting the Soldiery. Every assistance in our power shall be given the Officer you may think proper to take command of us.

It is the wish of such of us as are acquainted with General Davidson and Colo. Morgan (if in Service) that one of these Gentlemen may be appointed to this command.

We are in great want of Ammunition, and hope you will endeavor to have us properly furnished with Article.

Colo. [Charles] McDowell will wait upon you with this, who can inform you of the present situation of the Enemy, and such other particulars respecting our Troops as you may think necessary.

We are, Sir,
Your most obdt. and very hble. Servts.,

BENJA. CLEVELAND.
ISAAC SHELBY.
JOHN SEVIER.
ANDW. HAMPTON.
WM. CAMPBELL.
JO. WINSTON. (Campbell 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:663–664)

It is noteworthy what this correspondence did not mention:

- Ferguson or his position.
- A pursuit plan of Ferguson.
- A sense of urgency.

It is also noteworthy that the Overmountain colonels recognized Williams as commanding the South Carolinians with no mention of Hill or Lacey. Since Graham did not sign this correspondence, presumably he had not yet joined. It was possible that Graham did not actually join but veered to the east towards Cowpens, possibly passing Biggerstaff's Plantation (Henry, Malcolm, pension application 1834).

Since the Overmountain Men included both Virginians and North Carolinians, the correspondence was sent to Gates. There is no mention of informing Brigadier General William Davidson who officially commanded all the western North Carolinian militia.

The Overmountain colonels' mindset suggests that they had concluded that Ferguson had already evaded them. And since the simple tactic of chasing Ferguson no longer applied, they needed a general officer to strategically plan their next actions. Also they did not want to exceed their authority without explicit executive orders. Of course, the colonels had no expectation that a general officer would arrive soon. They may have believed Colonel Charles McDowell was not their most dynamic leader, and thus asked him to carry the correspondence to Gates. On this mission, McDowell passed through the South Carolina camp (Draper 1881, 189).

On 4 October, Williams probably camped between South Mountain and present-day Cherry Mountain.

Late on 4 October, the remainder of Graham's troops joined the Overmountain Men at Camp Creek (Vance 1799 in Henry 1850 Schenck 1891, 21). This is based on Colonel David Vance's narrative of 1799 which was written in the company of Joseph McDowell and Robert Henry, all three who were present at this juncture. Had the juncture not happened, either McDowell or Henry could have challenged the assertion or Henry could have corrected it any time before his death in 1863. Nonetheless, the cited troop strength of 160 horsemen was too large. According to Vance's narrative, Graham told the Overmountain colonels to expect Williams at Gilbert Town. This is evidence that Graham had earlier separated from Williams, but recently enough to know Williams' plans. The narrative also indicated that Graham told the Overmountain colonels that Ferguson had "left Gilbert Town and had crossed Broad River at Twitty's Ford on his way to [Lieutenant Colonel John Harris] Cruger at Ninety-Six." In actuality, Ferguson left Gilbert Town on 27 September (Allaire 1780 in Draper 1881, 509) which had to be old news to the Overmountain colonels by 4 October. Those present at the Vance's 1799 narrative, knew that Ferguson did not actually move towards Ninety Six. So the narrative must mean that on 4 October, Graham had a rumor of Ferguson's movement towards Ninety Six. If so, it would have been quickly dismissed with knowledge of Ferguson's proclamation on 1 October at Dennard's Ford. In actuality, Ferguson never intended to return to Ninety Six (Allaire 1780 in Draper 1881, 509) (Johnson 1780 in Moss 2000). That would have been contrary to his responsibility to support Cornwallis's advance in North Carolina. By not mentioning that the Ferguson's movement towards Ninety Six was bad information at the time, the Vance 1799 narrative created a myth that was repeated, and even suggested that Williams deliberately misled the Overmountain Men (Hill 1815, 20) (Moore 1859).



Robert Henry, 1765–1863
Daguerreotype 1859 (Arthur 1914, 96) (Holland 2014)

It is also possible that Graham, although trailing Overmountain Men along Cane Creek, never actually joined them. Instead, after learning of the plan to rendezvous at Cowpens, Graham may have veered to the east to take the shortest path. That route led past Biggerstaff's Plantation. This scenario is suggested by the pension application of Malcolm Henry:

In a short time Colonel Shelby returned to Rutherford County to Gilbert Town. He [Malcolm Henry], this applicant, was sent to Shelby by Colonel Graham to know of Shelby where the troops under his command should join those under Shelby. It was agreed that all the troops should rendezvous at the Cowpens 16 miles from the Cherokee Ford on Broad River. It was then expected that Ferguson and his Tories were there [at Cherokee Ford]. On the same evening Colonel Graham marched to that place [Cowpens] with his command and met the troops commanded by Colonel Shelby, Col. Campbell, Colonel Sevier, Colonel Cleveland, Col. Williams and other officers not recollected. (Henry, Malcolm, pension application 1834)

Also the pension application of Abraham Forney indicated that the Graham's Lincoln County Men joined at Cowpens:

[We marched] towards South Carolina in the rear of Ferguson and fell in with the overmountain troops under the command of Campbell, Cleveland, Shelby & Sevier at the Cowpens (Forney, Abraham, pension application 1832)

On 5 October, Cornwallis ordered Major Archibald McArthur to march the 71st Regiment 1st Battalion from Waxhaw Creek to Armour's Ford on Catawba River on either 7 or 8 October to support Ferguson (Cornwallis 1780 in CPS 2010, II:282). At the same time, he ordered Ferguson:

I would have you come to Armer's Ford just below the forks [of the Catawba River]. If we can then fix the enemy, or if they presume to pass on towards Ninety Six, I will detach in force against them. Take all possible pains to get intelligence and let me hear when you arrive at Armer's Ford. Major McArthur will meet you there. (Cornwallis 1780 in CPS 2010, II:161)

Cornwallis was concerned for the safety of Ninety Six. Since Ferguson did not move towards Armour's Ford during 6–7 October, he probably never received this order.

On the morning of 5 October, the two American camps were 20 miles apart. That was close enough for Williams to have personally taken a “pathway that led to the mountain,” presumably conspicuous Cherry Mountain, and conferred with the Overmountain colonels (Hill 1815, 19). Williams considered himself in command of all South Carolinians and was probably concerned about the terms of joining the North Carolina and Virginia Overmountain Men: who would command, length of commitment, etc.

Since Hill described Williams as having taken a “pathway that led to the mountain,” then implicitly Hill did not take such a path (Hill 1815, 19). For that reason, Hill and Lacey’s South Carolinians marched to the Flint Hills, southeast of present-day Cherry Mountain.

When Williams met with the Overmountain colonels early on 5 October, what was the situation? Ferguson’s current position was not known. Yet it was known that he had been at Dennard’s Ford 4 days earlier and that he was likely moving toward the safety of Cornwallis’s army at Charlotte. That gave Ferguson a 4 day lead to reach safety 70 miles away. Given this premise, what were the options? Ferguson had been the target of the Overmountain Men. He was the reason so much effort had been expended over the previous 10 days. But if Ferguson had evaded capture, the next best strategy was to threaten the British posts, like Ninety Six, behind Cornwallis’s advance. This secondary aim was doable. Even though the Overmountain Men might not be expected to stay a long time, Williams’ South Carolinians had every motive to regain control of the South Carolina upcountry. Besides, that was Williams’ mission as directed by South Carolina Governor John Rutledge and the purpose of his recruitment during September. Such a move could stop Cornwallis’s advance and force him to return to South Carolina which is what actually happened on 12 October (Rawdon 1780 in CPS 2010, II:126). Not only was this move viable, it was arguably the best option before these officers, and certainly less risky than battle. Unfortunately, the deliberation of these officers is not known. However, their decision can be surmised from what they did. The meeting ended with a decision to join forces at Lawson’s Iron Works on the way to Ninety Six.

Consequently, later in the day, the Overmountain Men marched over Twitty’s Ford to Alexander’s Ford to get to the west side of Broad River. Did they know that Ferguson had been on the east side since 2 October? The route they took avoided the many tributaries on the east side. Hill indicated that their destination was the iron works on Lawson’s Creek (Hill 1815, 20), a tributary of the Pacolet River. Interestingly, a good, perhaps the best, road to that location passed through Cowpens.

While Williams was away on 5 October, Hill indicated that the South Carolina troops moved on to the Flint Hills (Hill 1815, 19). This camp was likely at the southeast base of present-day Cherry Mountain since that is about 18-20 miles from Alexander’s Ford (Draper 1881, 219) and 20 miles from Cowpens (Draper 1881, 221). On this day, during Williams’ absence, Hill and Lacey learned of Ferguson’s position with more precision (Hill 1815, 19). He was at Cherokee Ford, within capture distance.

When Williams returned that evening, the situation had changed and notification had to be sent to the Overmountain Men. Some historians dismiss everything Hill reported in his memoirs. But could there be some insights from Hill’s description? Williams described to Hill his deliberations with the Overmountain colonels including a plan to march to Ninety Six by way of Lawson’s Iron Works. Hill was probably angry that he and Lacey were excluded from the deliberations. He interpreted Williams’ subtle distinctions as devious. Later, Hill impugned Williams’ reputation by assigned self-serving intent (Hill 1815, 20). In any event, Lacey made an overnight ride over a “spur of the mountain” to the Overmountain Men to acquaint them of Ferguson’s approximate position (Moore 1859). Apparently, there was no alternative plan if Lacey failed to reach them. That meant the South Carolinians waited for the initiative of the much larger Overmountain force. During the night of 5–6 October, Lacey caught up with the Overmountain Men at Alexander’s Ford on Green River and arranged a rendezvous at Cowpens. The Overmountain Men probably planned to pass through Cowpens anyway, but knowing that Ferguson was within reach made their march urgent (Campbell 1780 in NCSR 1895, XV:163–165). In the morning 6 October, Lacey returned to the Flint Hills camp. The South Carolinians immediately began their march to Cowpens. They crossed Broad River at Island Ford (Merrell, Benjamin, pension application 1833) (Robertson, *Global Gazetteer of the American Revolution* 2006–2014).

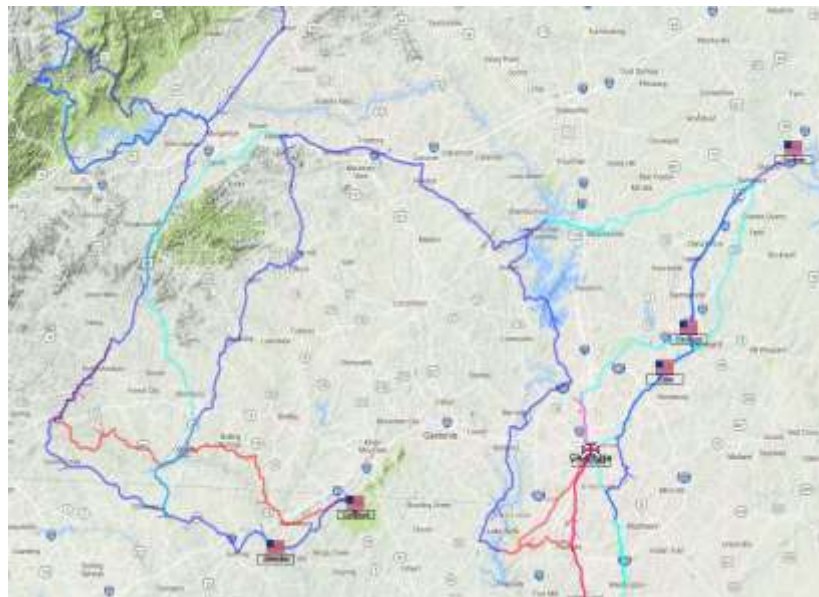
It is noteworthy that Hill's memoirs do not accuse Williams of telling the Overmountain colonels that Ferguson went to Ninety Six, but of arranging a rendezvous of Americans at Lawson's Iron Works to march to Ninety Six (Hill 1815, 20).

On 6 October, the three groups marched and united about sundown at Cowpens, a well-known crossroad in South Carolina (Draper 1881, 223–227). Officers selected their ablest men with good horses for the final pursuit. Campbell later wrote:

We marched to the Cowpens, on Broad River in South Carolina, where we were joined by Col. James Williams, with four hundred men, on the evening of the 6th of October, who informed us that the enemy lay encamped somewhere near the Cherokee Ford of Broad River, about thirty miles distant from us.

By a council of the principal officers, it was then thought advisable to pursue the enemy that night with nine hundred of the best horsemen, and leave the weak horsemen and foot-men to follow as fast as possible. We began our march with nine hundred of the best men, about eight O'clock the same evening, and marching all night, came up with the enemy about three O'clock P. M. of the 7th, (Campbell 1780 in NCSR 1895, XV:163–165)

At Cowpens, Colonel William Hill delegated command of the New Acquisition District militia to his subordinate Lieutenant Colonel James Hawthorne (Hill 1815, 22).



Trail of South Carolina Militiamen and Lincoln County Men to Kings Mountain
24 September – 7 October 1780

The approximate mileage of the three major routes to Kings Mountain was: 248 miles from Abingdon, Virginia, 178 miles from Surry County muster ground, and 173 miles from Tuckasegee Ford. An appropriate name for the latter route is *Catawba River Valley Victory Trail*.

In Hillsborough, Colonel Thomas Sumter conferred with South Carolina Governor John Rutledge. On 6 October, Rutledge promoted Sumter to militia brigadier general (Scoggins 2010–2017). Sumter's promotion settled the rank issue with Williams. However ironically, it had no practical consequence because of Williams' death on 8 October.

7 October 1780, Kings Mountain

At 9:00 p.m. on 6 October, during a rain, 910 men departed Cowpens for Cherokee Ford on Broad River (Campbell 1780 in NCSR 1895, XV:163–165) (Draper 1881, 227). Lincoln County Men led since they knew the terrain and could properly interpret intelligence gathered from residents. Enoch Gilmer proceeded well in advance of everyone else. He risked his life by posing as a loyalist trying to find Ferguson's camp (Draper 1881, 226). At Cherokee Ford on Broad River, he signaled that the opposite bank was clear (Draper 1881, 228). At dawn 7 October, the entire force forded the river (Espey, Samuel, pension application 1832). Cherokee Ford is immediately upstream of present-day Cherokee Falls, South Carolina. Lincoln County Men continued to lead. Colonel Isaac Shelby insisted that the troops press on without rest (Draper 1881, 229).



Cherokee Ford over Broad River

Actual ford with rock bottom is 200 yards downstream of access road (Moss 1990).

Word was passed that the acknowledgement countersign was “Buford,” an ominous reminder of Buford's Defeat and symbolic of their resentful motivation. Rain continued until noon (Draper 1881, 230). They learned of Ferguson's exact position on a ridge top near Kings Mountain. It had been a deer-hunting camp of Major William Chronicle and Captain Charles Mattox (Draper 1881, 231). While approaching the battleground, Lincoln County commander Colonel William Graham was called away. Command fell to Lieutenant Colonel Frederick Hambright, but he deferred command to Major William Chronicle (Vance 1799 in Henry 1850 in Schenck 1891, 25) (Henry 1850 in Schenck 1891, 34) (Draper 1881, 232).

Private James Potter Collins later wrote:

The sky was overcast with clouds, and at times a light mist of rain falling; our provisions were scanty, and hungry men are apt to be fractious; each one felt his situation; the last stake was up and the severity of the game must be played; everything was at stake — life, liberty, property, and even the fate of wife, children and friends, seemed to depend on the issue; death or victory was the only way to escape suffering. (Collins 1859, 51)

At about 3:00 p.m., after a nonstop 18-hour, 33-mile, horseback pursuit, Patriots surrounded the loyalists (Campbell 1780 in Draper 1881, 523). Lincoln County Men marched to the furthest side where they blocked the only road escape. Historian Lyman Draper wrote about the Lincoln County Men, referred to as the “South Fork Boys.”

Major [William] Chronicle and Lieutenant Colonel [Frederick] Hambright led their little band of South Fork boys up the north-east end of the mountain, where the ascent was more abrupt than elsewhere, save where Campbell's men made their attack. As they reached the base of the ridge, with Chronicle some ten paces in advance of his men, he raised his military hat, crying out — “Face to the hill!” He had scarcely uttered his

command, when a ball struck him, and he fell; and William Rabb, within some six feet of Chronicle, was killed almost instantly thereafter. The men steadily pressed on, under the leadership of Lieutenant Colonel Hambright, Major Joseph Dickson, and Captains Mattocks, Johnson, White, Espey and Martin—a formidable list of officers for so small a body of men; but they all took their places in the line, and fought with determined heroism. Before they reached the crest of the mountain, the enemy charged bayonet—said to have been led by DePeyster—first firing off their guns, by which, Robert Henry supposed that Captain Mattocks and John Boyd were killed, and William Gilmer, a brother of the noted scout, and John Chittim wounded—the latter of Captain Martin’s company, was shot in his side, making an orifice, through which, according to tradition, a silk handkerchief could be drawn, and yet he recovered, living to a good old age. (Draper 1881, 257).



Location of “Face to the hill!” command.

Photo taken during winter. In 1780, trees were bigger and widely spaced.

The nickname “South Fork Boys” was a reference to the South Fork of the Catawba River where some of these Lincoln County Men lived. However, not all lived there including the leaders William Graham and Frederick Hambright. Also, this expression does not appear once in approximately 20,000 transcribed pension applications dated from 1832–1850 (Graves and Harris 2005–2015). Apparently, it appeared first about 1850 in Robert Henry’s narrative (Henry 1850 in Schenck 1891, 34–36) and repeated in Draper’s book of 1881 (Draper 1881, 257). Some historians apply this nickname strictly to Major William Chronicle’s company of 18 men, not all of whom were in the battle (Hall 1965). But even with this interpretation, the nickname is imprecise because some of these men’s homes, including Chronicle’s, were in the Catawba River watershed. So, in summary, the nickname “South Fork Boys” first arose about 70 years after Kings Mountain and has been used ambiguously ever since. Arguably, the name Lincoln County Men is more descriptive since it explicitly associates with the organization’s actual identity, the Lincoln County Militia. It is also a name the actual participants would have recognized.

At the time of the battle, Samuel Espey was a captain in the Lincoln County Militia led by Major William Chronicle and Lieutenant Colonel Frederick Hambright. He was at this location.

Many years after the battle, Robert Henry, a Lincoln County man, wrote about the action during a bayonet charge.

I was preparing to fire when one of the British advancing, I stepped back and was in the act of cocking my gun when his bayonet was running along by the barrel of my gun, and gave me a thrust through my hand and into my thigh. My antagonist and I both fell. The Fork boys retreated and loaded their guns. I was then lying under the smoke and it appeared that some of them were not more than a gun’s length in front of the bayonets,

and the farthest could not have been more than 20 feet in front when they discharged their rifles. It was said that every one dropped his man. The British then retreated in great haste, and were pursued by the Fork boys.

William Caldwell saw my condition, and pulled the bayonet out of my thigh, but it hung to my hand; he gave my hand a kick and it went out. The thrust gave me much pain, but the pulling of it was much more severe. With my well hand I picked up my gun and found her discharged. I suppose that when the soldier made the thrust, I gripped the trigger and discharged her; the load must have passed through his bladder and cut a main artery at his back, as he bled profusely. (Henry 1850 in Schenck 1891, 34–35).

Private James Potter Collins, although a South Carolina militiaman, was temporarily assigned to the Lincoln County Men. He later wrote:

I looked around; every man's countenance seemed to change; well, thought I, fate is fate, every man's fate is before him and he has to run it out, which I am inclined to think yet. I was commanded this day by Major Chronicle and Capt. Watson. We were soon in motion, every man throwing four or five balls in his mouth to prevent thirst, also to be in readiness to reload quick. The shot of the enemy soon began to pass over us like hail; the first shock was quickly over, and for my own part, I was soon in a profuse sweat. My lot happened to be in the centre, where the severest part of the battle was fought. We soon attempted to climb the hill, but were fiercely charged upon and forced to fall back to our first position; we tried to second time, but met the same fate; the fight then seemed to become more furious. Their leader, Ferguson, came in full view, within rifle shot as if to encourage his men, who by this time were falling very fast; he soon disappeared. We took to the hill a third time; the enemy gave way; when we had gotten near the top, some of our leaders roared out, "Hurra, my brave fellows! Advance! They are crying for quarter." (Collins 1859, 52)

Many rebels observed that loyalists consistently overshot their targets. Present-day marksmen call this effect *terrestrial refraction* (Draper 1881, 279). It is an optical allusion. Collins later wrote:

Their great elevation above us had proved their ruin; they overshot us altogether, scarce touching a man, except those on horseback, while every rifle from below, seemed to have the desired effect. In this conflict I had fired my rifle six times, while others had perhaps fired nine or ten. (Collins 1859, 53)

Fighting lasted about an hour (Draper 1881, 296–297). When it ended, rebels suffered 28 killed and 62 wounded. Loyalists suffered 157 killed, 163 wounded, and 698 captured (Draper 1881, 300–301). Ferguson was shot 6 or 8 times (Draper 1881, 290–292) and died. Although it is not known who fired these shots, the Lincoln County Men were in a good position. Ferguson's body was moved to the base of the steep hill where it remains today. Ferguson was an officer in the 71st Highland Regiment. In prior years, he was a leading developer of breech loading firearms and held a patent on a threading design that reduced fouling.



Major Patrick Ferguson, 1778 wax bust, artist unknown.
Burial rock carn. Monument erected 7 October 1930.

Patriot participants knew they achieved an important victory, but could not have appreciated its full importance. The bronze plaque on the obelisk south side states the importance concisely:

TO COMMEMORATE THE VICTORY
OF
KING'S MOUNTAIN
OCTOBER 7, 1780
ERECTED BY THE GOVERNMENT
OF THE
UNITED STATES
TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF WHICH
THE HEROISM AND PATRIOTISM OF
THOSE WHO PARTICIPATED IN THIS
BATTLE SO LARGELY CONTRIBUTED.



Kings Mountain Battleground Obelisk
Constructed by United States Government in 1909.

Captain Samuel Espey participated and was wounded by a musket ball passing through his right elbow joint. That permanently disabled his right elbow (Espey, Samuel, pension application 1832). He was among the 65 Patriots killed or wounded whose names appear on the 83-foot obelisk.



Killed and wounded Patriots
Of the 66 names, 25 were Virginians and 11 were Lincoln County Men.

Captain Samuel Espey is listed on the left under wounded.

About casualties, Draper wrote:

The Lincoln County men, considering their small number, suffered considerably in the engagement—Major Chronicle, Captain Mattocks, William Rabb, John Boyd, and Arthur Patterson [incorrect], killed, and Moses Henry mortally wounded; Lieutenant-Colonel Hambright, Captain Espey, Robert Henry, William Gilmer, John Chittim, and William Bradley, wounded. There must have been other losses; for of Captain Samuel Martin's company of about twenty men, he relates in his pension statement, that four were killed, and two mortally wounded. (Draper 1881, 302–303).

Private James Espey, Samuel's younger brother, also participated. He was in Captain Isaac White's company. See his 15 August 1832 [pension application](#) (Espey, James, pension application 1832). James's descendants maintain the tradition that he carried water in his hat some distance to his wounded brother.

After the battle, the Lincoln County Men dispersed and returned to their nearby homes (Forney, Abraham, pension application 1832) (Henry, Malcolm, pension application 1834). Most were called up again in a few weeks.

In 1799, Joseph McDowell, a participant, compared Kings Mountain favorably to Thermopylae. While this is an interesting analogy, it is arguably an overstatement since the first battle in 480 BC was part of a clash of civilizations.

Taking the whole campaign, including the battle, I know of no parallel to it in the annals of ancient or Modern warfare; the nearest was that of the Grecian Leonidas and his army at the battle of Thermopylae with the Great Xerxes. Leonidas and his army were found, victualled and clothed at public expense; each individual of our army had to find at his own expense; Leonidas' army were under Governmental orders; we were under no government at all, but were volunteers; Leonidas' army were furnished with arms and camp equipage: We had to find our own arms, ammunition and horses at our own

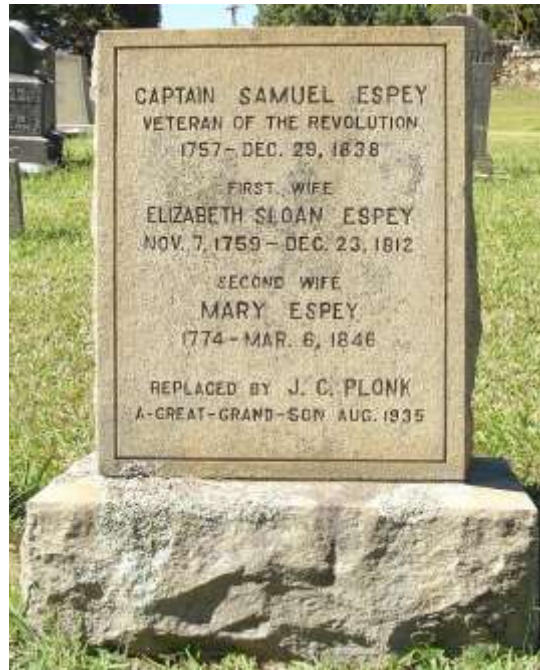
expense", Leonidas' army were under Government pay; we were under no pay or reward, or the expectation of any; Leonidas' army had choice of ground at the pass at Thermopyle; our enemies had the boasted choice of ground; Leonidas' army had to fight superior numbers— so had we; Leonidas had never a coward—neither had we any; but Leonidas had a traitor who was his overthrow and destruction of all but one man: We had neither coward or traitor to face our enemy—hence we were successful: Leonidas would have been successful, and have defeated or put to flight the great Xerxes if he had not had a traitor aboard; Leonidas' defeat was the destruction of the fine country of Greece, and the burning and destruction of their fine city of Athens, the labor of ages: Our success was the salvation of our country and our liberty. There is no parallel here: We will see if there is any in modern times. (McDowell 1799 in Vance 1799 in Henry 1850 in Schenck 1891, 28–29)

In 1814, Doctor William McLean purchased and erected the battlefield's first commemorative marker (Jones 2015). It honors Lincoln County Men killed and is located where that military unit approached the steep hill. Today, it is on the hiking trail beside a modern copy. The marker reads, "Sacred to the memory of Major William Chronicle, Captain John Mattocks, William Rabb, and John Boyd who were killed at this place on the 7th of October, 1780, fighting in defense of America." Of historical interest, McLean did not include Arthur Patterson Sr. among the killed as appears on the obelisk plaque. Martha Rudisill, an Arthur Patterson Sr. descendant, indicates that he was not killed (Rudisill 2006–2010). Also, McLean's oration during the 4 July 1814 monument dedication did not mention the expression "South Fork Boys" although all 4 men belonged to Chronicle's company (Hall 1965) (Jones 2015).



1814 Lincoln County Men Marker and modern copy

Plonk family records indicate that Captain Samuel Espey's powder horn and wooden canteen were in the possession of Margaret Espey, granddaughter of Samuel, in 1905. At that time, Margaret was 80 years old and lived in Coosa, Georgia, between Rome and Summerville. Samuel Espey was buried in Long Creek Presbyterian Church cemetery, Gaston County, North Carolina. In August 1935, Joseph Calvin Plonk placed a marker by Samuel Espey's grave. (Long Creek Presbyterian Church 1980).



Samuel Espey Marker
Long Creek Presbyterian Church Cemetery

John Moor, a Moore-related 4th great-grandfather, was among the Patriots that followed the assault group from Cowpens. He was 18 years old. According to his wife Jane Patton's 16 September 1845 pension application, he was "in the service of the army at the time of the Battle at Kings Mountain and was at that time sent with others to guard some Crossing place near by, was in hearing of the Battle and was marched up to the Battle Ground Immediately after the close of the fight and was appointed with others to take Charge of the Prisoners." (Moor, John, pension application 1845) (Sutton 1987, 360).

On 7 October 1930, United States President Herbert Hoover spoke at the 150-year commemoration ceremony that included other dignitaries and 75,000 attendees.

Laura Plonk, a 1st cousin 2 generations removed, organized and directed the associated Historical Pageant at City of Kings Mountain Auditorium.

Each year on 7 October, a commemoration service is held. An invited speaker discusses a historical aspect. A group of *Overmountain Victory Trail Association* members retrace the trail from Abingdon, Virginia, to the battleground.



Commemoration Day, 7 October 2001. 38 floral wreaths.

On 8 October 1780, Brigadier General William Davidson moved his 600 troops from Phyfer's plantation to Rocky River on Salisbury Road, present-day highway US29 near Lowes Motor Speedway (Davidson 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:677). That was 16 miles from Charlotte. When news of Kings Mountain got to Davidson, he hurriedly wrote Brigadier General Jethro Sumner:

Camp Rocky River, October 10, 1780

Sir — I have the Pleasure of handing you very agreeable Intelligence from the West. Ferguson, the Great Partizan, has miscarried. This we are assured of by Mr. [Samuel] Tate, Brigade Major in General Sumpter's Brigade. The particulars from that Gentleman's Mouth stand thus: that Colonels Campbell, Cleveland, Shelby, Sevier, Williams, Brandon, Lacey, Etc., formed a Conjoint Body near Gilbert Town consisting of 3000 — From this Body were selected 1600 good Horse, who immediately went in search of Colonel Ferguson, who was making his way to Charlotte — Our people overtook him well posted on King's Mountain, and on the evening of the 7th Instant at 4 o'clock, began the attack which lasted forty seven minutes, Colonel Ferguson fell in the action, besides 150 of his men — 810 were made prisoner, including the British — 150 of the prisoners are wounded — 1500 Stands of arms fell into our Hands. the enemy surrendered. We lost about 20 men among whom is Major Chronicle of Lincoln County, Colonel Williams is mortally wounded, the number of our wounded cannot be ascertained. This blow will certainly affect the British very considerably. The designs of our conquering Friends near King's Mountain not certainly known, it is most probable that they will secure their prisoners in or over the Mountains and proceed toward Charlotte — The Brigade Major who gives us this was in action. The above is true. The Blow is great and I give you Joy upon the Occasion.

I am, Etc.,

Wm. Davidson (Davidson 1780 in Tarleton 1787, 195) (Davidson 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:685) (Davidson 1780 in Davidson 1951, 86)

When Davidson's letter arrived at Sumner's camp on the Yadkin River, Colonel Thomas Polk wrote the North Carolina Board of War:

Camp Yadkin River, 11th Oct. 1780

Gentlemen:

I have the pleasure to inform you that on Saturday last the noted Col. Ferguson with 150 fell on Kings Mountain, 800 taken Prisoners with 1500 Stand of Arms. Cleaveland and Campbell Commanded. A glorious affair. In a few Days doubt not but we will be in Charlotte & I Will take Possession of my house & his Lordship take the Woods.

I am, Gent., with Respect, Your humb. Servt., Thomas Polk (Polk 1780 in NCSR 1895, XV:414)

Davidson's letter was forwarded from Sumner (Sumner 1780 in Tarleton 1787, 196) to Gates, to Virginia Governor Thomas Jefferson, to Continental Congress in Philadelphia (Draper 1881, 358). It was published in newspapers across the country.

The degree of American resistance surprised the British. On 24 October, Cornwallis's second in command, Lieutenant Colonel Francis Lord Rawdon, reported, that Gates' army "unveiled to us a fund of Disaffection in this Province of which we could have formed no Idea And even the dispersion of that Force [at Gates' Defeat] did not extinguish the Ferment which the hope of its support had raised." (Borick 2003, 240). Later, British commander-in-chief Major General Henry Clinton wrote about Kings Mountain:

And, surely, never was the trite apothegm that the greatest events often proceed from little causes more fatally confirmed than by the present check [at Kings Mountain]—

which, though in itself confessedly trifling, overset in a moment all the happy effects of our successes at Charlestown and His Lordship's glorious victory at Camden [Gates' Defeat], and so encouraged that spirit of rebellion in both Carolinas that it never could be after humbled. For no sooner had the news of it spread through the country than multitudes of disaffected flew to arms all parts, and menaced every British post on both frontiers, carrying terror even to the gates of Charlestown. (Morrill 1993, 112)

During the 1700s and 1800s, battles were often represented in verse. A Kings Mountain ballad by an unknown author appears in reference (Draper 1881, 591).

In United States history documents, Lieutenant Colonel Banastre Tarleton is often maligned. But his book is balanced and perceptive. Only 7 years after these events, he described of the significance of the British invading Charlotte and Mecklenburg County:

It was now evident, beyond contradiction, that the British general [Cornwallis] had not adopted the most eligible plan for the invasion of North Carolina. The route by Charlotte town, through the most hostile quarter of the province, on many accounts, was not advisable. Its distance likewise from Ferguson allowed the enemy to direct their attention and force against that officer, which ultimately proved his destruction. A movement on the west of the Catawba, towards Tryon county, would have been better calculated either to cover the frontier of South Carolina or to protect detachments from the army. Another operation might also have been attempted, which, in all probability, would have had a beneficial effect. Considering the force of the King's troops at this period, a march to Cross Creek [present-day Fayetteville] would have been the most rational manoeuvre that could have been adopted; where the inhabitants were acknowledged to be almost universally loyal: Upon this move Ferguson would have been undoubtedly ordered to retire, and to remain upon the defensive to the westward; and Earl Cornwallis would have had a favourable and convenient opportunity to try the fidelity of the King's friends, and to discover whether the water communication between that place and Wilmington could be opened; a point which should necessarily have been ascertained before the Royal army proceeded to the interior parts of North Carolina. (Tarleton 1787, 168)

Kings Mountain Order of Battle

British/Loyalists

- Commanding Officer: Major Patrick Ferguson
 - Provincials: Captain Abraham DePeyster: 115
 - Loyal American Volunteers detachment: Major Main: 18
 - Kings American Regiment detachment: Captain Abraham DePeyster: 22
 - New Jersey Volunteers detachment: Captain Samuel Ryerson: 58
 - Prince of Wales Regiment detachment: Sergeant Townsend: 17
 - Loyalists: 800
 - North Carolina Militia: 450
 - Tryon County: Colonel Ambrose Mills
 - Rutherford County: Major William Green
 - Burke County: Colonel Vezey Husbands
 - South Carolina Militia: 450
 - Fair Forest District: Major Daniel Plummer
 - Long Canes District: Colonel Richard King
 - Stevens Creek District: Colonel John Cotton
 - Spartan District: Colonel Zacharias Gibbs
 - Little River District: Major Patrick Cunningham
 - Dutch Fork District: Colonel Daniel Clary
 - Wagoner's: 10
- Total: 1025

- Casualties: Killed: 157, Wounded: 163, Captured: 705 (Moss 1998) (OKelley 2004–2005, 2:322–327)

Americans/Patriots

There were 3 trails and 4 groups that led to Kings Mountain. Approximate strengths of all participants including the follow-up group are shown in black. Actual battle commanders and their strengths are shown in red.

- Overmountain Victory Trail: 1060
 - Overmountain Men: 880, **440**
 - Washington County, VA: **Colonel William Campbell**: 400, **200**
 - Sullivan County, NC: **Colonel Isaac Shelby**: 240, **120**
 - Washington County, NC: **Colonel John Sevier**: 240, **120**
 - Burke and Rutherford County Men: 180, **90**
 - Burke County: **Major Joseph McDowell**: 120, **60**
 - Rutherford County: **Colonel Andrew Hampton**: 60, **30**
- Yadkin Valley Victory Trail: 240
 - Wilkes and Surry County Men: 240, **120**
 - Wilkes County: **Colonel Benjamin Cleveland**: 120, **60**
 - Surry County: **Major Joseph Winston**: 120, **60**
- Catawba Valley Victory Trail: 390
 - South Carolinian led men and Lincoln County Men: 390, **260**
 - New Acquisition District: Colonel William Hill, **Lt. Colonel James Hawthorne**: 140, **70**
 - Chester District: **Colonel Edward Lacey**: 120, **60**
 - Little River District: **Colonel James Williams**: 70, **70**
 - Caswell County, NC
 - Lincoln County: Colonel William Graham, **Major William Chronicle**, **Lt. Colonel Frederick Hambright**: 60, **60**
- Total 1690, **910**
- Casualties: Killed: 28, Wounded: 64 (Draper 1881, 214)

Early October 1780

On 6 October 1780, off the coast of Newfoundland, Henry Laurens, South Carolina planter and former President of the Continental Congress, was captured by a British warship during his return from a secret diplomatic mission to Holland. His papers were seized and used as evidence by Britain to declare war on Holland. Laurens was imprisoned in the Tower of London until exchanged for Earl Cornwallis on 31 December 1781.

On 8 October, McArthur was redirected to Charlotte. Lieutenant John Money wrote to McArthur:

I am directed by Lord Cornwallis to desire you will march with the 1st Battalion of the 71st Regiment to this place [Charlottetown] instead of Armer's Ford as mentioned in his Lordship's letter the 5th instant. (Money 1780 in CPS 2010, II:284).

So the 71st Regiment 1st Battalion was in Charlotte for a few days.

On 8 October, Sumner reported to Gates:

I am just now informed by Colo. Taylor, who is just arrived from Colo. Phyfer's, that the Enemy is reinforced from their outposts with 14 pieces of Cannon in all & two Grass-hoppers; that their intention was to march this day, & to fix their Encampment contiguous to Mr. Frohock's Mill, near Salisbury. (Sumner 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:678)

In the same message, Sumner described what he thought to be deliberate biological warfare:

A Woman who passed about 15 days ago I am apprehensive has proceeded towards Hillsborough, from the enemy, with the small-pox. I doubt not but she has been sent on purpose to spread that Contagion among the Troops. The Ferry man at this ford, I am informed by Doctor Pasteur & Alexander, whom I sent to examine him, has got it. I have had him removed, & shall take such precaution in my power to prevent the infection spreading. (Sumner 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:678–679)

On 8 October, Gates ordered Colonel Daniel Morgan with his 404 Virginia riflemen, three companies of selected light infantry, and Lieutenant Colonel William Washington's cavalrymen marched from Hillsborough to reinforce Sumner at Trading Ford. (Kirkwood 1780, 216) (T. L. Anderson 1780, 2) (Seymour 1883, 290).

By 9 October, after weeks of stressful fighting, Davie became sick, but remained active. Davidson reported his concern to Sumner: "Colo. Davie is very sick. I don't know what I should do should he be rendered unfit of Duty." (Davidson 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:677) (C. G. Davidson 1951, 83). Davidson's subordinates Captain Joseph Dickson and Captain Rutledge patrolled Charlotte's perimeter.

On 10 October, Lieutenant James Tagert captured a supply convoy from Camden (Tagert, James, pension application 1843) (McLeary, Michael, pension application 1832). Two days later, Davidson reported to Sumner:

Tuesday evening a small part of my Infantry fell in with two Waggons on their way from Camdon within two miles of Charlotte on the Steel Creek Road [Camden Road] killed two took 2 brought off the Waggon Horses 2 port Mantues with officers Baggage, &c. (Davidson 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:786) (Davidson 1780 in C. G. Davidson 1951, 89).

In early October, Cornwallis planned to advance beyond Charlotte. Tarleton later wrote:

In the beginning of October it was intended to send a corps from Charlotte town, under the orders of Lieutenant-colonel Webster, to attack a party of Americans, commanded by General Sumner, at [William] Alexander's mill, on a branch of Rocky river. (Tarleton 1787, 165).

Davidson learned that Cornwallis ordered his army in Charlotte to draw two days' provisions for a march (Davidson 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:677). Davidson presumed that Cornwallis planned to attack his position at Rocky River. On 10 October, Davidson wrote: "I find he is determined to surprise men & I am as determined to disappoint him." (Davidson 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:683) (Davidson 1780 in C. G. Davidson 1951, 83).

Meanwhile in Surry County, about 300 Tories began to assemble under Colonel Gideon Wright with the intention of joining Cornwallis in Charlotte. To prevent such a juncture, on 12 October, Sumner dispatched 300 men under Colonel John Paisley. This event was described in Richard Vernon's 1832 pension application:

Capt. Pray taking sick soon after the commencement of our retreat, the command of the company devolved on me. Col. Pasely [Paisley] was dispatched with about 750 [probably 300] men from head-quarters on the Yadkin among which was Capt. Pray's company commanded by one [me], to disperse a body of about 380 tories collected on the shallow ford of the Yadkin, in Surry County, N. Carolina about the time we attacked them they soon attacked in the rear by some troops from the other side. We killed several and took 30 or 40 prisoners among the killed was Capt. Jo^s Bryant. Col. Pasely took charge of the prisoners and we conducted them to Moravian town and left them under guard; from thence we returned to head-quarters. (Vernon 1832 in L. C. Draper, Draper Manuscripts 1873, VV:10:169).

In 1818, Charity Anderson, an Anderson-related 1st cousin 6 generations removed, married Preston Paisley, nephew of Colonel John Paisley.

October 1780, British evacuate Charlotte, Great Hurricane of 1780

When Cornwallis's army was in Charlotte, Major General Horatio Gates expected it to advance further into North Carolina. He planned to defend Trading Ford on the Yadkin River. On 13 October, he wrote the Continental Congress that he intended to move his army from Hillsborough and set up a strong defense on the east side of the Yadkin River fords. Gates wanted to be within striking distance from Charlestown as he was advised that the French fleet might arrive momentarily (Nelson 1976, 248). Unfortunately, this French fleet was lost in the Great Hurricane of 1780. During 10–14 October, it killed at least 22,000 individuals in the West Indies. It sank 40 French transport ships off Martinique with 4000 French soldiers headed for North America. It destroyed 8 British ships in St Lucia. It remains the deadliest hurricane in recorded history (US National Weather Service, National Hurricane Center 1996).

In Charlotte, British Lieutenant John Money recorded the first intimation of the results of Kings Mountain. On 10 October 1780, he wrote to Major James Wemyss, “We have a report of Ferguson being routed and killed.” (Money 1780 in CPS 2010, II:224) (Allison 2009–2011) Nonetheless, Cornwallis was not certain of Ferguson's predicament. Having a few days earlier sent an order to Ferguson to march to Armour's Ford on the Catawba River (Cornwallis 1780 in CPS 2010, II:161), on 10 October, Cornwallis sent Tarleton's British Legion and light infantry to that ford. On arrival, Tarleton confirmed the defeat. He later wrote:

On the 10th [October], Earl Cornwallis gave orders to Lieutenant-colonel Tarleton, to march with the light infantry, the British legion, and a three pounder, to assist Major Ferguson, no certain intelligence having arrived of his defeat : It was rumoured with great confidence by the Americans in the neighbourhood of Charlotte town, and the probability of the circumstance gave weight to the report. Tarleton's instructions directed him to reinforce Ferguson wherever he could find him, and to draw his corps to the Catawba, if after the junction, advantage could not be obtained over the mountaineers; or, upon the certainty of his defeat, at all events to oppose the entrance of the victorious Americans into South Carolina : Accordingly, Tarleton marched to Smith's ford [should be Armour's ford, since Smith's ford was on Broad River], below the forks of the Catawba, where he received certain information of the melancholy fate of Major Ferguson. This mortifying intelligence was forwarded to Charlotte town [corrected errata], and the light troops crossed the river, to give protection to the fugitives, and to attend the operations of the enemy. (Tarleton 1787, 165–166).

The roads taken were probably present-day York Road, highway US49, and Shopton Road. Armour's Ford was near the South Fork River confluence (Price 1796). Joseph Graham provided more detail that he must have learned from resident Matthew Knox.

On the day he received the express [from Ferguson], Cornwallis ordered Tarleton's cavalry to go with the bearers, who were to serve as guides, to Ferguson's aid. The ford at which they had crossed was Armour's, near the mouth of the South Fork of the Catawba; it was deep and somewhat difficult to find, which being represented to Colonel Tarleton, he sent for Matthew Knox, an old man nearly seventy residing hard by, to show them the way over. They arrived at the ford a little before sunset; the water had risen considerably since the express had passed. The old man knew this, but said nothing about it, only giving them directions how the ford ran. The advance, about twenty in number, went in, but before they had gone twenty steps, they were swimming; after much difficulty they got out, on the same shore; some nearly drowned. They were much enraged with Mr. Knox, threatening to “cut the old rebel to pieces,” but the commander protected him. They repaired to a neighboring farm and encamped until morning, by which time the river had fallen so as to be passable, and they were about to go over when they met two men who had been in the battle of King's Mountain, and gave Tarleton information of the destruction of Ferguson's army, ... (Graham 1827 in Graham 1904b, 268–269)

Although William Faden's 1787 map (Faden 1787) suggests that Tarleton crossed the Catawba River at Bigger's Ferry, the above evidence for Armour's Ford is stronger. That is where Cornwallis ordered Ferguson to go and thus where Tarleton would expect to meet him.

When Cornwallis learned of Ferguson's defeat at Kings Mountain, he became concerned of an immediate rebel attack against Charlotte or the British fort at Ninety Six. Lieutenant Colonel Francis Lord Rawdon was second-in-command and privy to Cornwallis's decision making. Soon afterwards, on 21 October, Rawdon wrote to Lieutenant Colonel Nesbit Balfour:

The inveteracy of the inhabitants in Mecklenburg County was so great that during the latter part of our stay there we were totally ignorant of the situation of many of our posts, all our expresses being way laid and many of them murder'd on the road. We had obtained accounts of Major Ferguson's misfortune but we cou'd procure no intelligence of its consequences. We had, however, reason to fear that they might be fatal to the Ninety Six District and from thence might eventually extend yet farther. This consideration, added to our incertitude of co-operation from the northward, made Lord Cornwallis determine to pass the Catawba and put this country in a proper state of security before he proceeded so far as to be out of reach of being called to its assistance should circumstances require it. (Rawdon 1780 in CPS 2010, II:126)

The reference to cooperation from the northward was about Major General Alexander Leslie's 2500 soldiers which were to disembark in Portsmouth, Virginia, as a diversion in the American rear. This force did not reach Portsmouth until 22 October. Historical evidence reveals that Cornwallis's risk was not as severe as he presumed. Had Kings Mountain not occurred on 7 October, Cornwallis's army would have likely advanced further into North Carolina.

During the afternoon of 12 October, the British Army pulled out of Charlotte, ending its 16-day occupation (Davidson 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:694–695). Graham indicated this evacuation occurred on 9 October (Graham 1827 in Graham 1904b, 270) (McLeary, Michael, pension application 1832). Tarleton indicated this event occurred on 14 October (Tarleton 1787, 167). Stedman (Stedman 1794, 224) repeated that date, as did Davie (Davie 1810 in Robinson 1976, 27). However, Davidson and Sumner's contemporaneously dated correspondence (Davidson 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:694–695) (Davidson 1780 in Davidson 1951, 90) (Sumner 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:693), shown below, indicate that this event occurred during the early evening of 12 October. Consistent with 12 October is the 10:00 a.m. correspondence of Lieutenant John Money in Charlottetown to Lieutenant Colonel George Turnbull in Camden (Money 1780 in CPS 2010, II:252) (Allison 2009–2011). Turnbull acknowledged the 12 October date in his 20 October reply to Rawdon:

Lord Cornwallis's groom and a corporal of the Legion who left Charlotte express the 12th instant for this place [Camden] — the groom arrived here next morning before day. He met an officer with twelve dragoons carrying Lord Cornwallis's dispatches from New York and turn'd him back, saying that it was his orders to turn every thing back and that we shou'd send nothing forward untill we shou'd hear from his Lordship. The corporal was killed at Sugar Creek. (Turnbull 1780 in CPS 2010, II:257)

The corporal was likely killed where Camden-Charlotte Road crossed Little Sugar Creek. That is near present-day President James K. Polk Birthplace State Historic Site. Private Michael McLeary was probably among the Americans who intercepted this express. In 1832, he testified:

your Declarant was also want [one] of a small Detachment who captured an express from Lord Cornwallis to Col. Turnbull Commander of his Majesty's forces in Camden South Carolina (McLeary, Michael, pension application 1832)

As the British Army evacuated Charlotte, it burnt the Liberty Hall Academy buildings (Polk 1825 in Hoyt 1914, II:401) (Foote 1846, 516). The army included many regiments: 23rd, 33rd, Volunteers of Ireland, and 1st Battalion of the 71st, in total over 2000 soldiers. The entire entourage was about 4100 individuals (Stedman 1794, 2:216–217). There were approximately 100 wagons (Davidson 1780 in NCSR 1895,

XIV:678). The British marched to “Barnets Creek 5 Miles below Town, on the Road to Armours Ford.” (Davidson 1780 in Robinson 1957, 80) Its name in 1780 may have been Park’s Mill, later renamed Barnett’s Mill (Graham 1827 in Graham 1904b, 270). This was where present-day South Tryon Street crosses Big Sugar Creek.



Possible Park’s Mill, later Barnett’s Mill, site on Big Sugar Creek
near present-day South Tryon Street

Immediately south of this crossing was the John McDowell home where present-day South Tryon Street intersects Beam Road. After the British passed her house, Jane Parks McDowell quickly mounted a horse and rode 10 miles to alert the Americans (Williams 1927) (Crosland 1934) (Hastings 1955, 48–49) (Blythe and Brockmann 1961, 89) (Blackwelder 1973).



Jane Parks McDowell monument
Erected in 1927 by Daughters of the American Revolution

During the night, the British learned they were not on the road to Catawba-Nation Ford. Charlotte resident William McCafferty guided the British Army. He stated that he would find the correct road, but abandoned the British. Unwilling to backtrack, the British traveled cross-country during that night attempting to locate the road to Nation Ford. British soldiers became confused, separated, and lost. Their route was along or near present-day Westinghouse Road (Faden 1787). Tarleton later wrote:

The British rear guard destroyed, or left behind, near twenty wagons, loaded with supplies for the army, a printing press, and other stores belonging to public departments, and the knapsacks of the light infantry and [British] legion. (Tarleton 1787, 167)

In 1787, Lieutenant Roderick MacKenzie wrote in a criticism of Tarleton's book:

The cause, however, was known by every individual in that army. The guide at this time employed was a Doctor M [McCafferty], a Presbyterian fanatic from Glasgow, the ambiguity of whose faith did not escape the discernment of the General. Under this distrust he was given in charge to a corporal and two dragoons of Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton's corps. The Doctor was too shrewd for his guards, and finding that they had no suspicion of his real design, he led the army, in a dark and rainy night, through thick woods, briars, deep ravines, marshes, and creeks scarcely fordable. After such a progress of six hours, the General grew impatient, the alarmed guide eluded the vigilance of the dragoons, and escaped unobserved. Left in such a situation, any army, where not one of the individuals which composed it knew where they were, might be well contented to come off with a loss so trifling as that of a few wagons. (MacKenzie 1787, 49)

At that time, Tarleton was west of the Catawba River and was approaching Brigadier General Thomas Sumter's men on Bullock's Creek. He wrote:

The situation of Colonel Sumpter's detachment on Bullock's creek attracted Tarleton's attention, and he was adopting measures to dislodge the Americans when the expresses from the royal army prevented his design, by requiring his instant return to the Catawba. (Tarleton 1787, 166–167)

Meanwhile, at Rocky River, 16 miles north of Charlotte, Davidson received reports of British Army movement. In the early morning, he reported to Sumner.

Camp Rocky River, October 13th, 1780 [before the next report at 7:00 a.m.]

Sir:

Yesterday I received intelligence of a party of the Enemy marching out of Charlotte towards Bigger's ferry on Catawba, consisting of 800, with one field-piece. I have waited till this morning to have this account officially confirmed, but am not fully convinced of the truth of it yet. We have a Report from a Man of Veracity just arrived from within 6 Miles of Charlotte that the Enemy have evacuated Charlotte & that last Night at 10 O'Clock the Rear of the Army passed Barnet's Creek 5 Miles below Charlotte on the Road to Bigger's Ferry. This account agrees with a piece of intelligence received about midnight, by 5 Tories who deserted in the evening, that the Enemy were just ready to march at that time. Colo. Davie was yesterday evening in the neighbourhood of Charlotte with a sufficient force to gall the Enemy in the Rear. I cannot account for Colo. Davie's not sending me accounts, unless he is so busily engaged on their Rear as to neglect this.

I am, Sir, &c., &c.,

Wm Davidson (Davidson 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:694–695) (Davidson 1780 in Davidson 1951, 90)

McCafferty raced to Davidson's camp at Rocky River, arriving the next morning. He disclosed the British predicament. (Graham 1827 in Graham 1904b, 270). Davidson sent an express report to Sumner:

Camp Rocky River, October 13th, 1780, 7 o'Clock A. M.

Sir:

This morning Mr. McCafferty is come to me & informs me that the Rear of the Enemy left Charlotte at 4 o'Clock last Evening; that he went with them to Barnet's Creek, five

Miles below Town, on the road to Armour's ford. His conjecture is that their design is to go in quest of our Western Army, as they were particular in inquiring the nearest ford on Catawba river. You will be pleased to accept as an Apology for my not sending a reinforcement of Horse to the forks of the Yadkin the accounts of 90 horsemen imbodyed there last Wednesday as per Express, my orders of yesterday to Co'o [John] Brandon to imbody all the Minute men he could to join them, & Colo. Davie being now out with 140 Horse. I am now preparing to march to Charlotte. Mr. McCafferty is sent with this under guard; his late conduct is to me a demonstration that he is not a friend to his Country.

I have the honour to be, &c., &c.,
Wm Davidson (Davidson 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:695)

Sumner relayed this report to Gates who was in Hillsborough.

Camp Yadkin Ford, October the 13th, 1780
IX, Ock. Even'g

Sir:

About an hour ago I receiv'd the inclosed Express from Genl. Davidson of the Enemy's Retreat from Charlotte towards Beggar's Fery on Catawba River. I shall, Sir, recross the [Yadkin] river to Morrow, or Early next morning, with all the troops at this place. (the sick and convalescents, with great part of the baggage, I shall leave proper Officers to take charge of, &c., &c., &c.) and March after the enemy, so as to annoy as much as possible, preventing a general Action. Colo. Morgan Arrived in Camp about two Ock. this after Noon with his Troops.

I am, Sir, Yr.
Very Hble. Servt.,
Jethro Sumner

P.S. The fourth part of the Troops here are without Cartridge Boxes, and flints are likely to be very scarce. (Sumner 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:693)

On 13 October, Davidson marched his militiamen towards Charlotte (Davidson 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:788). In route, he ordered his infantry to camp at John McKnitt Alexander's plantation. With the remaining 317 cavalrymen, Davidson entered Charlotte (Davidson 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:788) (Davidson 1951, 90). Davie continued trailing the British column (Graham 1827 in Graham 1904b, 271).

On 14 October, Davidson reported to Sumner about events on 13 October:

Last evening I marched to Charlotte with the remainder of the cavalry, and by the latest intelligence the enemy were on the way to Nation ford. Col. Davie is now in pursuit with all his cavalry. The enemy seem to have gone off with an alarm, but from what cause is uncertain. Deserters say they received accounts last Monday of Gen. Clinton's Defeat at West Point; others, that we were reinforced with 5,000. The inhabitants say they left their kettles on the fire, and 20 waggons, which they left 5 miles from town, with a quantity of valuable loading, have fallen into our hands. Express this moment arrived from Col. Davie informs that the main body of the enemy lay last night 11 miles from town. I propose to march downwards today. (Davidson 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:788)

The 11-mile distance from Charlotte placed the British camp approximately where Nations Ford Road crossed the state line and near its intersection with present-day highway NC51. Later, using evidence provided by others, Graham wrote:

Finding that no advantage could be taken of them [the British] in that manner, Davie turned to the left, where the road enters the Indian Lands (which at that time were woods and unsettled), passed up their left flank at a distance of three-fourths of a mile from the road (his spies viewing them at every favorable position), and marched for four miles, but the enemy's march was so condensed and in such perfect order that it was impossible to attack them without encountering at the same time their whole army. In the afternoon he returned to the settlements of Sugar Creek. (Graham 1827 in Graham 1904b, 272)

This description suggests that the British Army took the route of present-day highways SC51 and US21 and that Davie took present-day Flint Hill Road and its extension which no longer exists (C. Garrison 2014). The former route was more level and thus a better wagon road.

By tradition, while Cornwallis retreated from Charlotte, he and Tarleton allegedly stopped at the home of Robert Wilson, who was held prisoner elsewhere, and encountered his wife Eleanor Wilson. The Wilsons had seven sons, the older sons fighting with Brigadier General Thomas Sumter. Cornwallis offered to free Robert if Eleanor could persuade him to join the British. She replied:

I have seven sons who are now or have been bearing arms; indeed, my seventh son, Zaccheus, who is only fifteen years old, I yesterday assisted to get ready and go to join his brothers in Sumter's army. Now, sooner than see one of my family turn back from the glorious enterprise, I would take these boys (pointing to three or four small sons) and would myself enlist under Sumter's standard and show my husband and sons how to fight; and, if necessary, how to die for their country. (Graham 1904b, 84)

To this, Tarleton allegedly complained that the Charlotte region was a "hornets' nest" of rebellion (Graham 1904b, 84). However, at that time, Tarleton was on the opposite side of the Catawba River. The origin of the expression "Hornets' Nest" as applied to this region is not known. Its first known appearance in writing was in 1819 in correspondence of William Polk to historian Archibald DeBow Murphey (W. Polk 1819). Polk attributed the expression to an unnamed British officer who could have been Charles Stedman (Stedman 1794, 2:224). The expression appeared soon afterwards in reference (Johnson 1822, 308).

Probably on 15 October, Davie reported to Sumner describing events through 14 October:

After I wrote to you I hung on their flank till they arrived at the river. I found no opportunity of skirmishing, as they marched in close order, with large flanking parties, and the old Indian fields gave them great advantage. They discovered our trail early, and detached a large party in our rear, whom we discovered on our return. The men having no provisions for two days, and the evening rainy, obliged us to retreat. (Davie 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:789)

Probably late on 14 October, from Charlotte, Davidson also reported to Sumner, "The enemy were at Nation ford this afternoon, whether crossing or not I have not learned." (Davidson 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:788) Soon afterwards in another report, Davidson wrote:

There appears to me a high probability that the enemy's force will now be divided by the rising of the [Catawba] river, as by the best accounts the [British] legion crossed last Thursday, and no account of their return. Accounts are uniform that their wagons move with great difficulty on account of the poverty of their teams. (Davidson 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:788)



Nation Ford during high water

On 14 October, all Davidson's men joined him in Charlotte and encamped 2 miles west (Davidson 1951, 92), probably at or near Polk's Mill on Irwin Creek.

On 15 October, Davidson argued that Americans should attack (Davidson 1780 in Davidson 1951, 92). In a separate letter, Davidson notified Sumter who was camped west of Catawba River on Bullock's Creek of Broad River (Davidson 1951, 92).

On 15 October, with the intent of supporting Davidson, Morgan crossed Yadkin River at Trading Ford with his Virginia riflemen, Continental light infantry, and Washington's cavalymen (Sumner 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:789) (Davidson 1951, 92). Sumner wrote to Major General William Smallwood:

Gen. Morgan crossed the [Yadkin] river this morning. The rain set in very heavy before he effected his crossing; however, he has just got his corps over. The rain continuing, I deferred my recrossing under it. The troops are generally very bare of clothing, tents, etc., and cartridges are exposed to the weather, as almost three-fourths are without cartridge boxes. (Sumner 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:789)

The date of this report is consistent with William Seymour's journal that indicated Morgan's troops arrived in Salisbury on 15 October (Seymour 1883, 290).

On 15 October, a Rawdon order located the British Army on "Old Nation Ford Road" (Rawdon 1780 in CPS 2010, II:231) (Allison 2009–2011). Probably in the morning of 15 October, Tarleton's Legion re-crossed the Catawba River, west to east, at Nation Ford (Tarleton 1787, 167) (Faden 1787). He wrote:

As soon as the British Legion, and the light infantry, arrived at the Catawba ford, they were ordered to cross the river, which they accomplished with some difficulty, on account of a great fall of rain. (Tarleton 1787, 167)

This exceptionally heavy rain may be due to the *Great Hurricane of 1780* whose center was moving northward off the Carolina coast (US National Weather Service, National Hurricane Center 1996). It was noted in many contemporaneous sources in the Carolinas:

- On 14 October, at Biggerstaff's Plantation, Doctor Uzal Johnson recorded a "Shed to keep out of the Rain." (Moss 2000, 77).
- On 15 October, near present-day Morganton, Lieutenant Anthony Allaire noted in his diary, "Marched all day through the rain — a very disagreeable road." (Allaire 1780, 511).

- British commissary officer Charles Stedman wrote: “it rained for several days without intermission” (Stedman 1794, 2:224).
- Tarleton wrote: “a great fall of rain” (Tarleton 1787, 167).
- On 15 October, “heavy rain” was noted in the *Records of the Moravians* at Salem, North Carolina.
- Davie wrote: “heaviest rain ever poor fellow lived through” (Davie 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:789–790).
- Colonel Philip Taylor wrote: “Such a rain, good God! ... the most powerful rain I ever saw” (Taylor 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:790).
- Sumner wrote: “rain set in very heavy” (Sumner 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:789).
- Graham wrote: “It was rainy weather, and the roads bad” (Graham 1827 in Graham 1904b, 272).

No known source, then or later, associated this rain with the Great Hurricane of 1780 probably because the characteristic northward movement of hurricanes was not understood. Only recent recognition of the coincidence of dates implies this association. In fact, there were three major storms during October 1780: *Savanna-la-Mar Hurricane*, 3–7 October; *Great Hurricane of 1780*, 10–20 October; and *Solano’s Storm*, 16–21 October. The latter reached Pensacola, Florida, on 21 October and was thus too late to induce rain in the Carolinas on 15 October. The track of the Great Hurricane of 1780 is usually shown passing near Bermuda on 18 October (Garrison, et al. 1989, F-15), yet there is some evidence that its track could have been closer to the coast of North America. Josiah Smith made the following diary entry in Saint Augustine, Florida:

Thursday 19th October [1780]. The weather as mentioned on Saturday [14 October], growing worse, by Sunday evening it came on to Rain and blow excessive hard, and till the evening of yesterday was a mere Gale at about N. N. E. by which means the Sea came in very heavily upon the front of the Town and raised the Tide several feet higher than common, and which ran through some of the Lanes up to the Second Street, above 150 feet from the bay... (Smith 1780 in Smith 1932, 24)

On 16 October, Davie reported to Sumner describing events on 14–15 October and the great vulnerability of the British:

The enemy’s baggage arrived at Nation ford almost 3 o’clock in the afternoon. The evening turned in rainy and my dependence alone upon the dryness of my powder, I was under the necessity of retreating and marching all night thro’ the heaviest rain ever poor fellow lived through. Not a gun will fire in the corps, and the ammunition, for want of cartridge boxes, is principally lost. It will be three or four days before I can move again. Col. Tarleton crossed the river [east to west on 10 October], two days before his lordship marched, with 200 dragoons and 400 of the infantry mounted. The Catawba was too high Saturday [14 October] evening for Cornwallis to cross over or Tarleton to return. [Actually, unknown to Davie, Tarleton did return probably on 15 October.] Gen. Sumter is somewhere near on the other side in quest of Tarleton, with 2,500 men. His lordship never was in such a pound—the river impassible in the West, and Sugar Creek in the same condition to the Southward of him, his lordship’s reason for retreating turned him on every quarter, without one mouthful of provisions or forage to be gotten within several miles. I am sure the convention of Saratoga has flew through his lordship’s head five hundred times these two days. A few troops would make him very uneasy. (Davie 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:789–790)

Davie’s Saratoga reference is to the 1777 surrender of British Major General John Burgoyne. The content of this message is remarkably insightful for a 24-year-old who had spent days in the field. Probably on 16 October, Colonel Philip Taylor, who’s Granville County mounted militia was assigned to Davie’s cavalry, reported to Sumner:

There’s not a man in my regiment saved his ammunition. Such a rain, good God! I never saw a better opportunity to confine British progress—had we our whole force so as to make a descent on them in six days. We suffered much for four days past during a

pursuit, and afterwards in the most powerful rain I ever saw. We this moment received intelligence that the Legion (Tarleton's) have recrossed the Catawba. They are d—d shy, depend on it. (Taylor 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:790)

Probably on 17 October, Sumner responded to Davie:

I wish I could join you, that we might by detachments annoy the enemy more effectually. By the retreat of Cornwallis great advantage might be made in our favor by a general action [battle], were we near him. I am now recrossing the [Yadkin] river with all possible diligence, and shall march forward to you without loss of time. In the mean while, by order, I dare not risk a general action [battle] before the army makes a junction. (Sumner 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:791)

After Tarleton crossed the Catawba River, reducing the risk on the west side, Sumter furloughed his men (Bass 1961, 92). British commissary officer Charles Stedman wrote:

In this retreat the King's troops suffered much, encountering the greatest difficulties; the soldiers had no tents; it rained for several days without intermission; the roads were over their shoes in water and mud. At night, when the army took up its ground, it encamped in the woods, in the most unhealthy climate; for many days without rum. Sometimes the army had beef, and no bread; at other times bread, and no beef. For five days it was supported upon Indian corn, which was collected as it stood in the field, five ears of which were the allowance for two soldiers for twenty-four hours. (Stedman 1794, 2:224)

Torrential rains made Nation Ford on Catawba River impassable for wagons. Because of the British Army's vulnerability near the river, it backtracked to a more defensible position near a farm with provisions. The William Faden 1787 map shows this backtracking (Faden 1787).



Cornwallis's advance on and retreat from Charlotte
William Faden 1787 map segment (Faden 1787)

Private Michael McLeary, who was with Davie, testified in his 1832 pension application:

Followed them to the old Nation Ford on the Catawba River, where the [they] encamped all night hanged one of their men and left him hanging. The River being high could not

cross — marched back up the Road about 10 miles, ... (McLeary, Michael, pension application 1832)

The British Army may have camped on Thomas Spratt Junior's Plantation at the old 1760 Catawba Indian fort (Godey 1856) (Allison 2009–2011). Today, that fort's location is identified by a historical marker immediately south of present-day Fort Mill, South Carolina, on Brickyard Road. Or it may have camped where a crude fort was built earlier on Hagler's Hill near where Nation Ford Road crossed Steele Creek (Graham 1827 in Graham 1904b, 233) (Gregorie 1931, 84). That location is within present-day *Anne Springs Close Greenway Park*.

Major George Hanger later wrote:

I caught the yellow fever at Charlottebourg. Tarleton was just recovering from it as I sickened. When the army marched from that town, myself and five officers, who had the same disorder, were put into waggons and carried with the army. They all died in the first week of our march, and were buried in the woods as the army moved on. (Hanger 1814, 408)

Three of these officers were Captain Peacocke, Captain Harrison, (Rawdon 1780 in CPS 2010, II:126) and Major Fraser (Godey 1856) (Allison 2009–2011). The latter could have been Lieutenant Alexander Fraser of the 71st Regiment 1st Battalion who was known to have died on 15 October 1780 (Baule and Gilbert 2004, 67) (Howard 2011).

Probably on 15 October, Cornwallis became ill. He delegated command to Lieutenant Colonel Francis Lord Rawdon.



Lieutenant Colonel Francis Lord Rawdon
Painted by Hugh Douglas Hamilton, 1801.

The British were exceedingly vulnerable at this location. But because of rain and distance, Americans could not concentrate enough force to take advantage. The British marched away at the first opportunity, probably 16 October. In 1851, Susannah Barnett Smart recalled in an interview by Daniel Green Stinson that the British Army occupied her maternal grandfather Thomas Spratt Junior's house. In 1856, her edited recollections were published.

The unbidden guests [British Army] took from Spratt over a hundred head of cattle, hogs, etc. When the time came for marching, the army formed a line before the [illegible] and then formed a hollow square, with their drums muffled. These played a mournful air; till at length the army deployed, and took up the line of march with a lively tune and a quick

step. The cause of this ceremony was the punishment of one of their own soldiers, whose body hung from the limb of a tree, he having been executed for an alleged attempt to desert and join Davie's troops. (Godey 1856)

Tarleton later wrote:

The royal forces remained two days [probably afternoon 14 – afternoon 16 October] in an anxious and miserable situation in the Catawba settlement, owing to a dangerous fever, which suddenly attacked Earl Cornwallis, and to the want of forage and provisions. When the physicians declared his lordship's health would endure the motion of a wagon, Colonel Lord Rawdon, the second in command, directed the King's troops to cross Sugar creek, where some supplies might be obtained from the country. On this move, the Mecklenburg militia, supposing the cavalry still absent, attempted to harass the head of the column; when their want of intelligence proved fatal to the most enterprising of the party. (Tarleton 1787, 167)

After the rain subsided, on 16 October, the British Army marched to Steele Creek where Rawdon dispatched an order to Turnbull. It was marked "Dispatched from Steel Creek on the 16th [October] at eight at night." (Rawdon 1780 in CPS 2010, II:253–254) (Allison 2009–2011). Davie's 300 horsemen harassed the British rear and prevented foraging to the north. The next morning, Tuesday 17 October, Davie wrote Sumner:

[illegible] Miles from Charlotte
Tuesday, 7–8 O'clock

Dear Genl.:

I have just received Intelligence from one of my patrol parties that the Enemy moved yesterday at One O'clock in the Afternoon, and were taking the route by one Roush's, on Sugar Creek, leading to the Waxhaws.

Their Waggon Horses are so poor that they make very slow Marches. For want of provisions and ammunition, it will be out of my power to march before the Afternoon.

O! for a few Light Troops.

I am, Sir, with
Hum. Esteem, your &c., &c.,
William R. Davie
Col. Comd. Ma. Cavalry. (Davie 1780 in NCSR 1895, XV:111)

These two sources suggest that the British crossed Sugar Creek near Steele Creek. Since no known reference mentions crossing any creek other than Sugar Creek (Tarleton 1787, 167) (Stedman 1794, 2:225) (Davie 1780 in NCSR 1895, XV:111) (McLeary, Michael, pension application 1832), the crossing was probably downstream of the Steele Creek confluence, perhaps near the present-day highway SC160 bridge over Sugar Creek. Davie described the connecting road as "by one Roush's on Sugar Creek." This might have been Thomas Roach's plantation (Pettus 2005b), or possibly Ross's plantation which was located north of Doby Bridge (Mills 1825). William Faden's 1787 map suggests the crossing was further north (Faden 1787), but this map was not drawn with great precision. British commissary officer Charles Stedman wrote about the crossing:

The continual rains had swelled the rivers and creeks prodigiously, and rendered the roads almost impassable. The waggon and artillery horses were quite exhausted with fatigue by the time the army had reached Sugar Creek. This creek was very rapid, its banks nearly perpendicular, and the soil, being clay, as slippery as ice. The horses were taken out of some of the waggons, and the militia, harnessed in their stead, drew the waggons through the creek. We are sorry to say, that, in return for their exertions, the

militia were maltreated, by abusive language, and even beaten by some of the quarter-master-general's department: In consequence of this ill usage, several of them left the army the next morning, for ever. (Stedman 1794, 2:225)

Later, Davie summarized these events:

Lord Cornwallis had intended to cross the Catawba river, at the old Nation ford, but a sudden swell of the river, obliged him to halt the army. After remaining here two days in a miserable situation without supplies, surrounded by Militia Cavalry who prevented all foraging, they marched precipitately down the river attended by the Detachment of Cavalry under Col. Davie who continued skirmishing with their rear. (Davie 1810 in Robinson 1976, 27)



Possible site where British Army crossed Sugar Creek
near present-day highway SC160 bridge

On 17 October, the British Army may have foraged for provisions east of Sugar Creek. From this location, the army likely marched the short distance to the main commercial wagon road called the Camden-Charlotte Road which existed before the Revolutionary War (W. L. Anderson 2006). That was the same road the British Army previously used to advance on Charlotte during 24–25 September (Faden 1787). On 18 October, the army could have camped at Twelve Mile Creek, the first major water source. On 19 October, the army marched along the Camden-Charlotte Road that included the connected segments of present-day highway US521, Niven Road, Old Church Road, to the intersection of US521 and SC5. On that date, Rawdon wrote that he was at “Waxhaw” (Rawdon 1780 in CPS 2010, II:255). This site was likely Crawford’s Plantation on Waxhaw Creek where the British previously camped during 11–24 September 1780. Rawdon also wrote that he “plan to camp on Catawba” (Rawdon 1780 in CPS 2010, II:255). This implied he was not then on Catawba River (Allison 2009–2011). On 20 October, the army continued south on present-day US521, North Corner Road, across US521, Old Hickory Road, past Old Waxhaw Presbyterian Church, Industrial Park Road, and Landsford Road to the Catawba River (W. L. Anderson 2008a). On that date, Rawdon wrote that he was at Blair’s Mill which was on the river (Rawdon 1780 in CPS 2010, II:256) (Allison 2009–2011) (Joy, Stine and Clauser 2000).

On 21 October, the British Army crossed Catawba River at Land’s Ford (Rawdon 1780 in CPS 2010, II:126) (Davie 1810 in Robinson 1976, 27) (McLeary, Michael, pension application 1832) (Walkup, Samuel, pension application 1832). Later, Stedman wrote:

At length the [British] army reached the Catawba, which was forded by the troops. This river is six hundred yards wide, and three and a half feet deep. Two hundred rifle-men

placed on the opposite bank must have destroyed many of our men before we could have gained the shore. (Stedman 1794, 2:226)



Land's Ford
Relatively wide and shallow Catawba River ford.

Later, Davie wrote:

on the 19th [of October] they [the British] completely evacuated the State [North Carolina] and crossed the Catawba river at Lands-Ford. (Davie 1810 in Robinson 1976, 27).

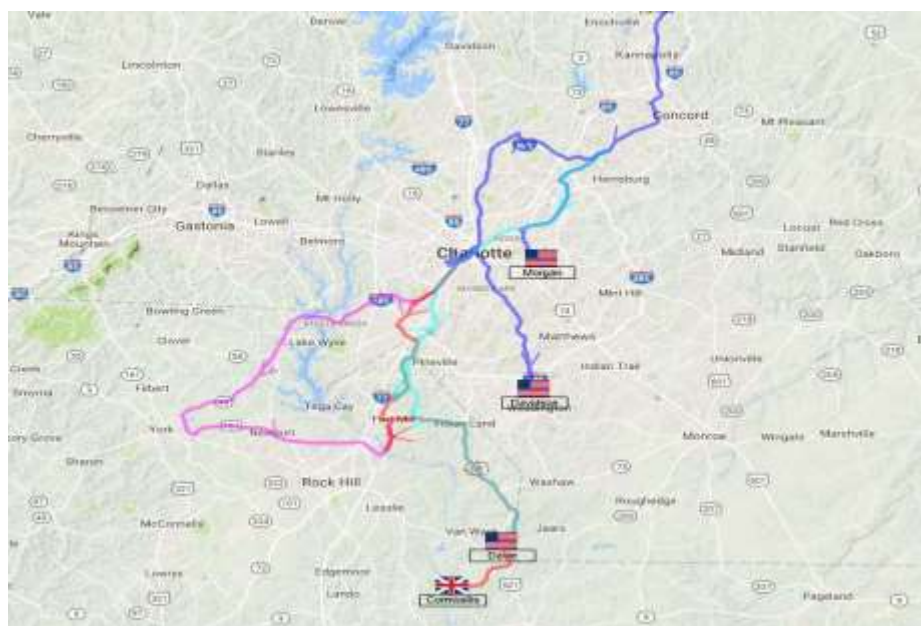
This quote reflects Davie's understanding of the unusual state line in 1780 (Davie 1810 in Robinson 1976, 21) (Salley 1929) (Pettus 1992) (W. L. Anderson 2008a). In 1832, Samuel Walkup testified:

when Rawdon was retreating from Charlotte Davis' [Davie] Company & others harassed him near the Waxhaw Creek we had a little skirmish & took one prisoner & five horses – and as Rawdon crossed the Catawba at Lands Ford – we came up just as he had crossed. Our numbers were too Small to think of attacking. (Walkup, Samuel, pension application 1832)

Tarleton wrote that the army crossed “near Twelve-mile creek” (Tarleton 1787, 167) which is 5 miles further north. This vague location is probably incorrect or possibly where the British Legion crossed first to secure the opposite embankment.

On 21 October, after passing Land's Ford, Rawdon described events in correspondence with Lieutenant Colonel Nesbit Balfour.

We attempted to pass at the [Nation] ford in the Indian lands but, the river being swollen, were disappointed, and rain coming on, our baggage embarrassed us so much in passing the creeks that we were detain'd for some days in that quarter, still ignorant of all that was passing in any other part of the province. We passed at Lands Ford this morning [21 October]. (Rawdon 1780 in CPS 2010, II:126)



Cornwallis's Retreat from Charlotte and American Response
including Tarleton's raid west of Catawba River, 10–20 October 1780

**Cornwallis's Retreat from Charlotte Timeline.
Where was the British Army?**

10 Oct	Charlotte. Cornwallis ordered Tarleton's British Legion to Catawba River to find Ferguson (Tarleton 1787, 165–166).
12 Oct 10:00am	"Charlottetown", "Ten in the morning" (Money 1780 in CPS 2010, II:252)
12 Oct 4:00pm	British evacuated Charlotte. (Davidson 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:694–695)
12 Oct evening	British Army abandoned road to Bigger's Ferry. During night, moved cross-country to Nation Ford Road, lost 20 wagons. (Tarleton 1787, 167)
13 Oct	British camped 11 miles south of Charlotte (Davidson 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:788). That's near state line, west of present-day Pineville.
13 Oct	Tarleton at Ross's Plantation (Tarleton 1787, 166–167) (Faden 1787), present-day York, South Carolina
14 Oct 3:00pm	British at Nation Ford (Davie 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:789–790). Backtracked (Faden 1787) (McLeary, Michael, pension application 1832) to Spratt's (Godey 1856).
15 Oct morning	Tarleton crossed Nation Ford and rejoins Cornwallis (Tarleton 1787, 167) (Faden 1787).
15 Oct	heavy rain all day (Tarleton 1787, 167) (Davie 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:789) (Taylor 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:790) (Stedman 1794, 2:224)
15 Oct	Cornwallis became ill, delegated command to Rawdon (Rawdon 1780 in CPS 2010, II:126).
15 Oct	"Old Nations Ford Road" (Rawdon to Hamilton)
16 Oct 1:00pm	British moved towards Sugar Creek near Rouch's (Davie 1780 in NCSR 1895, XV:111).
16 Oct 8:00pm	"Steel Creek" [could be Sugar Creek], "eight at night" (Rawdon 1780 in CPS 2010, II:253–254)
16-17 Oct	Crossed Sugar Creek, gathered provisions (Stedman 1794, 2:225).
18 Oct	On Camden-Charlotte Road, maybe camped at first major water source, Twelve Mile Creek.
19 Oct	"Waxhaw" (Rawdon 1780 in CPS 2010, II:255), probably Crawford's on Waxhaw Creek.

20 Oct	"Blair's Mill" (Rawdon 1780 in CPS 2010, II:256)
21 Oct	British crossed Catawba River at Land's Ford. "Camp between Fishing Creek and the Catawba" (Rawdon 1780 in CPS 2010, II:126) (Davie 1810 in Robinson 1976, 27)
22 Oct	"Lands Ford on Catawba" (Rawdon 1780 to Balfour in CPS 2010, II:126)
23 Oct	"Smiths Plantation" (Rawdon to Tarleton)
24 Oct	"Camp near Indian Lands, West of Catawba River" (Rawdon 1780 to Leslie in CPS 2010, II:55–57)
26 Oct	"Rocky Creek" Requested rum be sent to Lee's Mill on Rocky Creek (Rawdon 1780 to Cruger in CPS 2010, II:201)
26 Oct	"Brown's House near Crossroads" (Rawdon 1780 to Tarleton in CPS 2010, II:285).
27 Oct	"McClarkin's near Lee's Mill" (Rawdon 1780 to Turnbull in CPS 2010, II:262)
28 Oct	"Camp Between Broad River and Catawba" (Rawdon 1780 to Clinton in CPS 2010, II:57-59)
29 Oct	Army arrived in "Wynnesborough" (Rawdon 1780 to Turnbull in CPS 2010, II:262) (Stedman 1794, 2:226)

Compiled by John Allison from *Cornwallis Papers* on microfiche at *South Carolina Archives* and from sources cited (Allison 2009–2011).

Beginning 15 October, Cornwallis was incapacitated by sickness but able to travel. On 21 October, Rawdon wrote to Turnbull, "I have the satisfaction to tell you that Lord Cornwallis is recovering fast." (Rawdon 1780 in CPS 2010, II:258). Davie followed the British to Land's Ford. In 1832, militiaman [John Taylor](#) from Granville County recalled passing Old Waxhaw Presbyterian meeting house:

At the Waxhaws I remember of being in company with General [then Colonel] Davie when the latter pointed out to me a meeting house and remarked that he was educated by his uncle to succeed him as the Pastor of that house. I particularly recollect of being much affected by the solemn spectacle of the tombstones in the surrounding churchyard.
(Taylor, John, pension application 1832)

Many years later, after a successful political career as North Carolina Governor and envoy to France, Davie built a home on the western side of Land's Ford. In 1820, he was buried at Old Waxhaw Presbyterian Church (W. L. Anderson 2011d).

Mid October, American advance, Camp New Providence

On 18 October, Morgan with his Virginia riflemen, Continental light infantry, and Washington's cavalymen marched from Salisbury to Colonel Locke's Farm and the following day to Phyfer's Mill (Kirkwood 1780, 216) (T. L. Anderson 1780, 2). Following behind Morgan, Smallwood reached Salisbury on 20 October (Smallwood 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:703). Sumner had a long career in the North Carolina Continental Line. He was disappointed that Smallwood, a Marylander, was given command of North Carolina brigade. On 20 October, he submitted his resignation to Smallwood. "I feel myself distressed to signify my declining any further Command of the Line of Militia." (Rankin 1971, 257). His command included militiamen under Colonel John Paisley, Guilford County, and Brigadier General John Butler, Hillsborough District militia.



Major General William Smallwood
Maryland Continental Officer
Assigned command of North Carolina militia.
Painted by Charles Willson Peale, 1782.

While on the march towards Charlotte, Smallwood devised a tentative plan to attack the British. On 20 October, he wrote Gates that Davidson was to command both the North Carolina and Virginia militiamen. Sumter was to command the South Carolina and Georgia militia. Morgan was to command the Continental light infantry. (Smallwood 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:704–705) (Davidson 1951, 93).

On 20 October, Davidson advanced to where Providence Road crossed Six Mile Creek. There horses could water and graze (Davie 1810 in Robinson 1976, 21) (Graham 1827 in Graham 1904b, 284) (McLeary, Michael, pension application 1832) (Vernon 1832 in Draper 1873, VV:10:169, 178). The camp was 14 miles from Charlotte and, at that time, entirely within Mecklenburg County. Today, Six Mile Creek forms the boundary between Mecklenburg and Union Counties.

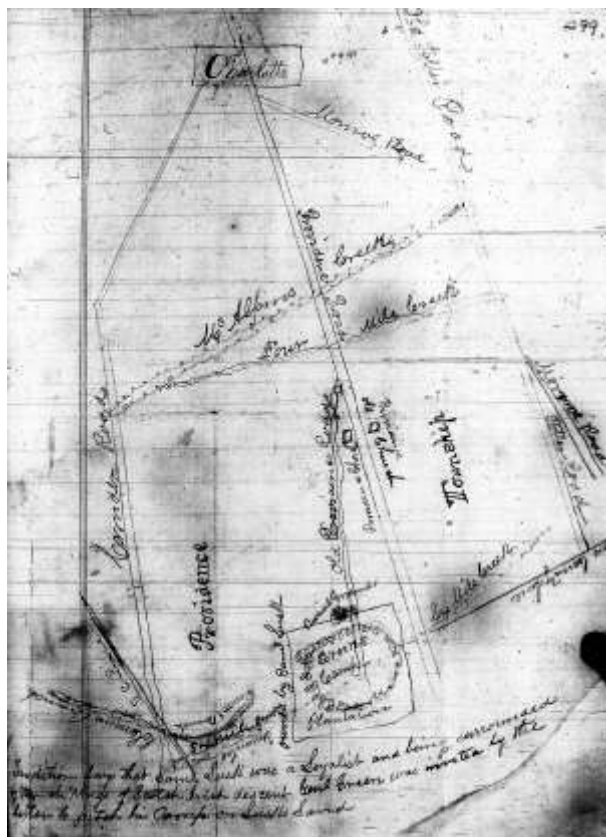
Davidson passed his previous McAlpine Creek campsite used before 25 September. This time he was not on the defensive. By camping seven miles further south, he expected better access to provisions. He was closer to South Carolina. Six Mile Creek banks had gentle slopes, suitable for a large camp. Its headwaters were immediately upstream which provided a constant flow of clean water.



Six Mile Creek, site of Camp New Providence

Davidson created *Camp New Providence* only 8 days after Cornwallis evacuated Charlotte and 1 day before Cornwallis crossed Catawba River east to west. This new camp asserted American control of the east side of Catawba River as far south as the Waxhaws.

On 17 April 1872, Samuel Ellison Belk, a Charlotte resident, wrote a letter responding to questions from professional historian Lyman Draper. Belk wrote that acquaintance James Houston Morrison's mother, as a young girl, remembered passing through the camp and seeing soldiers washing their shirts in Six Mile Creek. Morrison's, born 1792, died 1875, mother was Mary Susannah Houston, born 1771, died 1823. Belk labeled the camp "Green's Camp." He sketched a map of the camp in relation to Providence Road and other landmarks. He reported that the camp was on the plantation of loyalist Samuel Lusk (Belk 1872 in Draper 1873, VV:6:297–299) (Poteet 2009–2017). Today, that location is within the *Providence Crossing* and *HighGate* housing developments.



Samuel Ellison Belk map of Camp New Providence. Shown as “Green’s Camp.”
Burial ground shown on north side. (Belk 1872 in Draper 1873, VV:6:299)

On 30 August 1832, [George Findley testified](#) in a Lawrence County, Tennessee, court:

... he turned out volunteer for three months in all Mecklinburg County, North Carolina in the latter part of the summer 1780 shortly after Gates Defeat under Captain James Rees in Col. Francis Locks Regiment commanded by General Dawson [Davidson] of Mecklinburg at six mile Creek ... (Findley, George, pension application 1832)

On 13 January 1834, Shared Gray, a former resident of Mecklenburg County, [testified](#):

The militia of North Carolina assembled in a large body in Mecklenburg County near a Meeting-house called New Providence. At this place a large body of the Regular Continental Army was also encamped. Thinks that Generals Gates and the Greene were both at this place sometime during the stay of the troops there, but does not recollect distinctly which was in command of the Army. General Morgan & Colonel Washington with their respective commands, were also at this place. (Gray, Shared, pension application 1834)

On 14 May 1833, Doctor James Rankin Alexander, son of Hezekiah Alexander, [testified](#), that he was:

appointed surgeon to a Regiment of Militia raised in Mecklenburg County (N. C.) commanded by Colonel William L. Davidson. His Regiment was first for a while stationed at Rocky River in company with a Col. William R. Davy of Militia Cavalry — thence they both moved to Six Mile Creek between Charlotte & Camden where they joined Generals Smallwood & Morgan with their forces. (Alexander, James Rankin, pension application 1833)

22 October, Continental light infantry arrives at Camp New Providence

On 21 October, Smallwood, Morgan, and Washington's units, with Sumner and Paisley's troops, marched to "two miles below Esq^r [Hezekiah] Alexanders" house (T. L. Anderson 1780, 2) (Kirkwood 1780, 216). That site was probably along Edwards Branch. Today, that location is in the back of Evergreen Cemetery on an abandoned road segment that connected present-day Kilborne Drive and Sharon Amity Road (Barden 2010). On 22 October, they joined Davidson at Six Mile Creek, raising the total strength to 1300 men (Kirkwood 1780, 216) (T. L. Anderson 1780, 2) (Smallwood 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:712). Camp New Providence had several advantages:

- It raised the spirits of Mecklenburg Whigs.
- It projected American forces 14 miles south of Charlotte. It asserted American control east of Catawba River.
- It provided a base for foraging the farms in the Waxhaw region of both Carolinas.
- It recaptured assets centered near Charlotte including many gristmills, a hospital, civic leaders, and skilled craftsmen like blacksmiths.
- It provided control of roads leading south from Charlotte. Those were: Providence Road, Camden Road, and Nation Ford Road and their east-west connecting roads.
- It had relatively clean water since it was near the source of Six Mile Creek.

On 22 October, British Major General Alexander Leslie disembarked 2500 soldiers at Portsmouth, Virginia. This force was designed to support Cornwallis as a diversion in the American rear. It was ineffective because Cornwallis was already on the defensive. Soon, Leslie soldiers re-boarded ship and sailed to Charlestown.

When Smallwood learned that Cornwallis had crossed the Catawba River at Land's Ford, he decided not to attack (Smallwood 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:712) (Davidson 1951, 94). Colonel Davie created an advanced post with 300 cavalymen near Land's Ford (Davie 1810 in Robinson 1976, 28).

On 21 May 1833, [Daniel Apple testified](#) in a Guilford County, North Carolina, court:

That in August 1780 in the County of Guilford N Carolina he volunteered as a private militiaman was under Capt Jacob Clapp of the regiment commanded by Col John Paisley. That immediately thereafter he was marched under the said Captain to the South passing through Salisbury to Charlotte in Mecklenburg County: a few miles beyond which these troops were met by the British under Cornwallis when we retreated repassing Salisbury and the Yadkin River being pursued by the enemy, where our troops were encamped for something like a week, where upon the British returning South our forces were again marched after them and the main army went as far as what was called the Six Mile Creek where it encamped and this applicant was detached page 3: as one of a scout of reconnoitering party that they pursued the enemy as far as the Catawba River upon the border of So Carolina upon reaching the main army we remained there encamped until he was discharged by direction of his Col the said John Paisley. (Apple, Daniel, pension application 1833).

In 1818, Charity Anderson, an Anderson-related 1st cousin 6 generations removed, married Preston Paisley, nephew of Colonel John Paisley.

On 23 October, in Philadelphia, the Continental Congress appointed Major General Nathanael Greene to succeed Gates. Greene immediately conferred with General George Washington and began his trip south. When news of this transfer reached the Southern Army in early November, commanders began to postpone major decisions.

On 24 October, a correspondent for the *Pennsylvania Packet* reported from Camp New Providence:

General Davidson and colonel Davie possess the entire confidence of their troops, and discipline is better than formerly, when it was more lax. It would give you pleasure to see

the order our camp is in at present, and [we] are much pleased with general Smallwood's arrival [day before] yesterday to take command. (Davidson 1951, 94).

During the British occupation of Charlotte, several of Davidson's men were captured. Davidson persuaded Smallwood to send an overture to Cornwallis on 24 October to arrange an exchange of these men.

The Prisoners taken in the Neighborhood of Charlotte, whose names you will observe below, I understand are very solicitous to obtain an Exchange. Perhaps your Lordship would have no Objection to admit of a partial Exchange of those Persons for a like number now in our Possession, whose Situation and Circumstances may not be altogether dissimilar. If this Proposition should meet with your Approbation, you will be so obliging to signify it, that the Exchange may take place.

Richard Thomas, William Rankin, Andrew Baxter, John McKey, John Adair, William Wyley, William Wallace, Alexander Brown (Smallwood 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:710) (Davidson 1951, 94)

On 25 October, the Continental light infantry repositioned ahead of the militia to better defend the camp (Kirkwood 1780, 216). Seymour wrote that the newly arrived units, "moved our encampment further to the right, and in a more regular form." (Seymour 1780 in Seymour 1883, 290). He wrote that "At this place Col. Washington with a detachment of First and Third Light Dragoons, joined us, which, together with the Light Infantry and three companies of Riflemen, formed the Flying Army." (Seymour 1780 in Seymour 1883, 290). At this time, Morgan learned of his 13 October commission of brigadier general from the Continental Congress (T. L. Anderson 1780, 2). He was already a living legend for his participation in the storming of Quebec City and the battle at Saratoga, New York.



Lieutenant Colonel William Washington
Painted by Charles Willson Peale, 1781–1782.
Washington re-enactor Daniel Murphy, 3rd Continental Light Dragoons

On 26 October 1832, [Richard Vernon testified](#) in a Davidson County, Tennessee, court:

... The British having retreated to Waynesborough [Winnsboro] South Carolina. Gen. Davidson marched us down about the Waxhaw Settlement and took up Winter Quarters at a place called New Providence when Col. Morgan joined us also Col. Howard commanding the Maryland Continental troops while we remained here. Col. Morgan was promoted to Gen, and Col. Howard's Battalion was attached to his Brigade. We remained

here until my men's term of service expired. ... (Vernon, Richard, pension application 1832)

On 25 October, in South Carolina, Colonel Francis Marion with 150 men emerged from their hidden camp at Snow Island and crossed the Pee Dee River. The next morning, they attacked a detachment of British soldiers at Tearcoat Swamp (Buchanan 1997, 245).



Colonel Francis Marion crossing Pee Dee River by Ferry
Painted by William Ranney, 1850.

On 27 October, Smallwood wrote Gates that he believed Cornwallis would retreat to Charlestown. Smallwood encouraged Gates to march the remaining Continentals to Camp New Providence to "change the aspect" (Smallwood 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:713) (Davidson 1951, 94).

Late October, Cornwallis requests reinforcements, Americans need supplies

On 29 October, the British Army encamped at Winnsboro, South Carolina, a town equally distant from Camden and Ninety Six forts (Stedman 1794, 2:226). They used Mount Zion Academy grounds.



British Army Winnsboro Encampment

Cornwallis immediately requested reinforcements from General Henry Clinton.

The success of the Americans at King's mountain, and the distance of Earl Cornwallis' army, prompted many of the disaffected inhabitants of South Carolina again to violate their paroles, and to unite under a leader in the eastern part of the province. Mr. [Francis] Marion, by his zeal and abilities, shewed himself capable of this trust committed to his charge. He collected his adherents at the shortest notice, in the neighbourhood of Black river, and, after making incursions into the friendly districts, or threatening the communications, to avoid pursuit, he disbanded his followers. The alarms occasioned by these insurrections frequently retarded supplies on their way to the army; and a late report of Marion's strength delayed the junction of the recruits, who had arrived from New York for the corps in the country. The 64th regiment of infantry was ordered to Nelson's ferry from Charles town, and directions were given to Lieutenant-colonel Tarleton to pass the Wateree to awe the insurgents. (Tarleton 1787, 171).

When Sumter learned that Cornwallis created new headquarters at Winnsboro, he recalled his men and encamped west of Catawba River at William Hill's Iron Works in upper New Acquisition District, present-day York County, South Carolina (Bass 1961, 94).

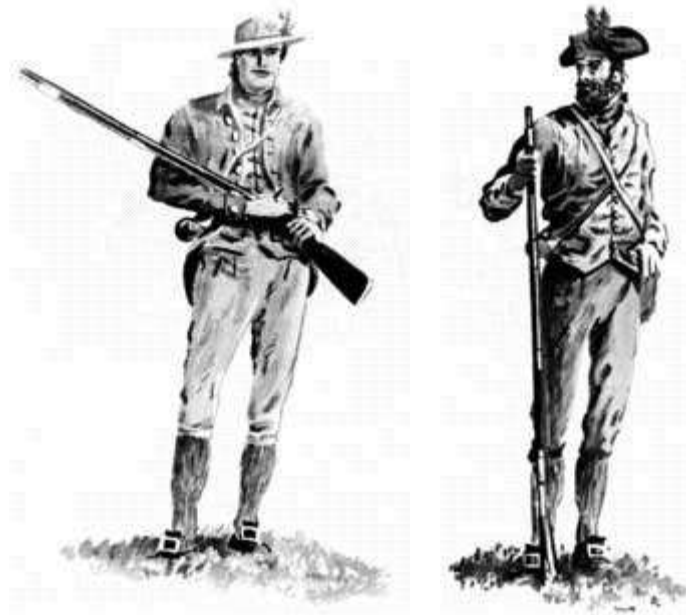
At Camp New Providence, despite expectations, scarcities soon arose. On 31 October, Smallwood wrote Maryland Governor Thomas Lee:

Sir Since my Last Nothing material has occurred except a Great Scarcity of Provisions. Col^oPolk has not even supplied the Regular Troops. Our principal Subsistence has been brought in by Detachments, which they took from the Disaffected who have gone over to the Enemy, and I have now not less than Two Hundred Men employ'd on that Duty which is the only prospect of supplying the Troops till the Late Provision Act for collecting the specific Tax in Provision is more effectually carried into Execution, which I fear at last will not afford an ample Supply; in addition to what Purchases can be made. Forage is also much exhausted, and cannot long be procured for any considerable Force, Plundering prevails to an amazing Degree by Persons who go under the denomination of Volunteers. ... (Smallwood 1780, 45:167) (Smallwood 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:720) (Smallwood 1780 in Davidson 1951, 95).

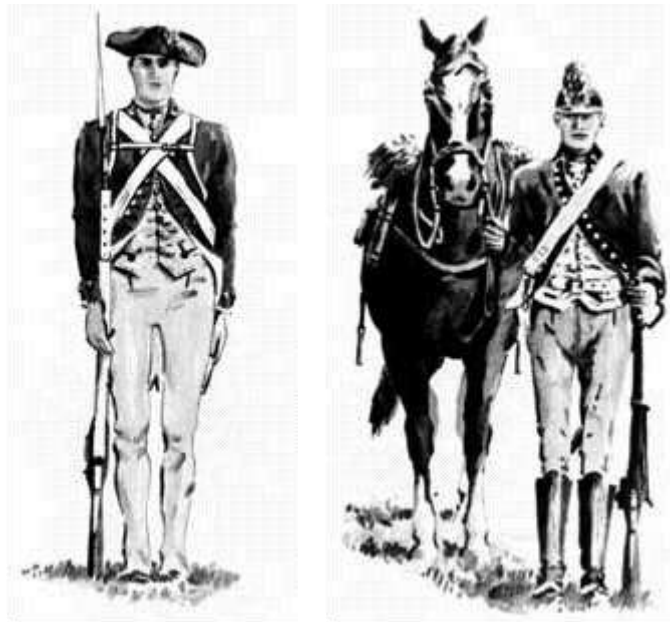
Smallwood ended his letter, "Axes and intrenching Tools are much Wanting." This meant that Smallwood intended to remain at that location and had ordered his soldiers to construct defensive fortifications against British cavalry attack. Smallwood's apparent criticism of Thomas Polk caused a negative reaction which Smallwood clarified a 16 November correspondence which exonerated Polk (Smallwood 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:741-742).

Camp New Providence physical description

Camp New Providence was large. Although there is no known written description of its appearance, it can be inferred from historical knowledge of how such camps were equipped, organized, and operated (Peterson 1968). It probably had about 400 tents pitched on the high ground on both sides of Six Mile Creek. Tents were mostly white in color, about 6 feet tall with steeply inclined sides. They were called common or wedge tents. Each tent as assigned to as many as 8 privates (Risch 1981, 148). But because of guard and extra duties, the average use was about 5 privates. Horses grazed along the creek banks. There were hundreds of smoky campfires where soldiers typically ate two meals a day, breakfast and supper. Meals were prepared in small groups of 4 or 5 individuals. While in camp, soldiers drilled under the guidance of a sergeant. They also repaired their uniforms, shoes, saddles, and harnesses. Militiamen wore hunting shirts and linen trousers. Continental soldiers wore buff-colored trousers and blue jackets laced with colors indicating their home state. Washington's cavalymen wore white jackets, white leather trousers, and leather helmets.



North Carolina and Virginia militiamen
From National Park Service, Guilford Courthouse, web site.



Delaware and Maryland Infantry, Continental Line. William Washington's Cavalry.
From National Park Service, Guilford Courthouse, web site.

Normally, each Continental Army regiment included a chaplain, a surgeon, drummers, and fifers. The typical rank-and-file soldier was illiterate. High-ranking officers probably had marquee tents with vertical walls, oval in shape, and the size of a small room. In these tents were a few chests of professional and personal baggage and portable folding wooden chairs and table. Compared to today's United States Army, officers were aloof. They typically conferred among themselves about strategic concerns. Officers at Camp New Providence were capable men. Some were highly educated and articulate in their letters and written orders. Wealthy officers often traveled with a personal servant. During leisure time, officers socialized with local prominent families. Dancing was a favorite pastime. However, such socializing may not have been an option at Camp New Providence since historic documents mention no nearby farmhouses or other

structures closer than the Presbyterian church, 2.5 miles away. In a 24 November letter, Lieutenant Colonel Otho Holland Williams mentioned that he hunted deer on three or four consecutive mornings. There were probably 50 wagons carrying gunpowder, tents, officer baggage, or barrels of rum. The camp was a busy place. Every few hours, express riders arrived and departed carrying written status reports, strength returns, and the latest news. During the day, local farmers arrived with cattle, chickens, and wagons of produce hoping to sell for currency. Camp New Providence was occupied during the autumn foliage change and the beginning of cold weather. Sickness was common. Unmarked soldier graves may be located at Camp New Providence.

Occasionally, soldiers were ordered to pre-cook their meals for a four to six day march. In the 1700s, walking 20 miles a day was common. No one recorded it as extraordinary. Each soldier carried his musket with cartridges, and food provisions. Shoes wore out quickly, sometimes requiring a soldier to march barefoot. In the late 1700s, shoe technology was surprisingly primitive. The concept of separate left and right shoes had not evolved. Also, shoe repair consumed considerable time and concern. Boots were very expensive and thus seldom used.

Early November, Main army leaves Hillsborough, Incursions into South Carolina

On 2 November, Gates ordered his adjutant general, Lieutenant Colonel Otho Holland Williams, to march the remaining main army towards Salisbury. They included about 700 Maryland, Delaware, and Virginia Continentals along with 2 artillery cannons. Gates followed a few days later with 130 mounted Continentals. (Rankin 1971, 258). These two troops of cavalymen were commanded by Colonel Charles Armand and Lieutenant Colonel Anthony White.



Lieutenant Colonel Otho Holland Williams
Delaware Continental Officer
Adjutant General of Southern Army
Promoted brigadier general in 1782.
Painted by Charles Willson Peale, 1784.

From Camp New Providence, the American Army projected deep incursions into South Carolina. On 3 November, Smallwood issued the following order to Morgan:

Camp New Providence, 3d November, 1780

Dear Sir:

Having understood that the disaffected Inhabitants in the settlements of Lynch Creek, and Waxhaw, since the retreat of the British from Charlotte, have meditated the removal of their property to Camden, I was induced to order Colo. Davie with a detachment down

into that quarter, to intercept all such property, which he might apprehend was about to be removed, and to draw what supplies of forage, and Provisions, could otherwise be procured, exclusive of the stock necessary for consumption of the remaining Inhabitants.

I have this day received intelligence that a party of four hundred British & Tories, have advanced up to the Hanging Rock, to cover the disaffected who are actually removing not only their own effects, but the property of such Whigs as they fall in with, and apprehending the detachment under Colo. Davie will be annoyed in the Execution of their Duty, — You will therefore proceed down with the Cavalry, Light Infantry, and Rifle men below the Range of his duty, to cover them in the discharge thereof. — March with all imaginable secrecy and dispatch, and if possible give the enemy a stroke at the Hanging Rock, should they still be there, and no powerful reasons against it.

In accomplishing your views should it be necessary you will call to your aid any part of Davie's detachment, but otherwise, I would not wish their duty to be obstructed —

It will be unnecessary to caution you to guard against a surprise, and to restrain the soldiery from distressing such of the Inhabitants as may merit your attention. Your own Judgment and vigilance in the first instance, and your Humanity and discretion in the latter, will govern —

It is not improbable but you may fall in with part of our Tents, Waggon, and Baggage plundered by the Tories after General Gates's defeat. Whatever you fall in with under that description secure and forward to camp —

You will give me the earliest, and frequent Intelligence of your transactions, and as speedy as possible accomplishing the views comprised in your Instructions, return to camp — distribute the orders prohibition plundering, copies of which are Enclosed and it may not be amiss to give assurances of Lenity to such Tories, who may return and submit to the mercy of their country, intimating that proclamations to that purpose will be issued. — Wishing you success and a pleasant tour, I am, with sincere —

Your obdt. Humble servt.

W. Smallwood (Smallwood 1780 in Hunt 1892, 6–8)

Beginning 4 November, Morgan's Continental light infantry and Washington's cavalry advanced towards Camden. They stopped at Hanging Rock, near present-day Heath Springs, South Carolina (Seymour 1780 in Seymour 1883, 290). This incursion caused a British reaction.

Earl Cornwallis was impressed with an idea that the Americans had a design upon Camden : The report of the advance of General Morgan towards the head of Lynche's creek, with Colonel Washington's cavalry, and a body of continental infantry, together with the exaggerated accounts of Marion's force, gave plausibility to the supposition. The situation and importance of the magazine [Camden] caused early jealousy and immediate attention. The light troops, however, on their arrival at Camden, found no reason to expect an attack from General Morgan, and Lieutenant-colonel Tarleton thought the opportunity favorable to commence an expedition against Marion. (Tarleton 1787, 171).

On 6 November, Smallwood sent the following vague order to Morgan:

Camp 6th November, 1780

Dear Sir:

I have just recd. Advice from Genl. Sumter, that a favourable opportunity of effecting something to our advantage offers on the other side the Catawba; you will therefore view the expediency of dispatching your tour below as soon as possible that we may avail

ourselves. — We have had no news since you left us, neither of the British in Virginia nor of Genl. Gates's coming on or forwarding the Continental Troops. I expect the Augusta [Virginia] Rifle men here to-morrow, one Hundred and Six in number, these I shall detain here unless you should require them below, as I imagine their service with you at this time will not be wanting —

I am with Sincere regard
Your Obed. Hble Servt.
W. Smallwood

P. S. The Enemy are still in Winsborough, Sumter informs me are likely to remain there for some time — and continue to make detachments some distance from their camp — after Provisions & Plunder. (Smallwood 1780 in Hunt 1892, 10–11)

On 7 November, Smallwood sent an order to Morgan:

Camp N. Providence, 7th Nov. 1780

Dear Sir:

I have just recd an intimation to be depended on that Tarleton's Legion to the amount of five hundred Cavalry and Infantry mounted, was three days ago at the ferry opposite Camden; this hint I think necessary to give, to guard you against a surprise, or any excursion they may have in view to attack you in a divided state, or intercept any of your parties — you will therefore avail yourself of the Hint, and keep a watchful eye on their motions, should they approach upward

I am
with great regard
your ob Hble servt
W. Smallwood.

N. B. (This information comes from Genl Sumpter) — Since writing the above I have it from good authority that Tarleton had crossed to Camden and had moved from there before Day. On Sunday morning, [5 November] he gave out he was going up the Hanging Rock road, but I rather think he took the road to the High Hills of Santee against Marion, otherwise you must have fallen in with him; he is Four Hundred Strong. I would therefore recommend that you move up & draw your and the principal part of Davies force to a point, covering such detachments as it may be necessary to make; by this means you will be more than sufficient to cope with him should he approach upwards. I shall send a detachment down to join you in the morning, and could wish our force would admit of a strong one. Give me the earliest intimation of occurrences, and your opinion of moving a large force to you. I am persuaded you will be vigilant and cautious and then you will have nothing to dread. Adieu. (Smallwood 1780 in Hunt 1892, 11–13)

Morgan and Washington returned to Camp New Providence, arriving 9 November (Seymour 1780 in Seymour 1883, 290). There Morgan learned that Gates was to be recalled. He wrote Gates:

I am informed you are to be recall'd, for which I am sorry and glad both, for I don't think it will be in the power of any genl. officer who commands in this country to add to his reputation, whatever he may loose from it. I was informed that you was apprehensive I had joined a party against you. I intended to convince you to the contrary by my conduct, and not mention the matter to you; but as you are going away, that will not be in my power; must therefore tell, on my word and Honor, that I never had the most distant thought of such a thing, nor was a thing of that Kind ever mentioned to me, or I would have let you a known it immediately, for I despise party matters as I do the devil. I would

be very glad to see you before you leave the army, if possible. (Morgan 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:730)

On 6 November, Major General Gates arrived at Guilford Courthouse with his entourage of cavalry. There he met Virginia Brigadier General Edward Stevens with his 300 militiamen. They were ill equipped to continue. So Gates send them back to Hillsborough, "to be Arm'd and Accoutred, and in some Degree equip'd before they can March from thence." (Nelson 1976, 249).

On 7 November, the North Carolina Board of War informed Davidson that it had intended to send him a "Horseman's Tent," but because it was mis-packed, he would be sent a "Marquee." (Davidson 1951, 95).

On 10 November, Cornwallis wrote a favorable reply to Smallwood's prisoner-exchange offer:

Your Letter of the 24th of last Month by some Mistake was not forwarded to me for several Days. I understand that some Prisoners who were on their March from Camden to Charlestown made their Escape, but have not yet had an Opportunity of informing myself whether those mentioned in your Letter were of the number. If they are still in our Possession, I will agree to Exchange them for Persons in similar Situation and Circumstances. I must now observe that the cruelty exercised on the Prisoners taken under Major Ferguson is shocking to humanity; and the hanging poor old Colonel Mills, who was always a fair and open Enemy to your Cause, was an act of the most Savage barbarity. It has also been reported to me that Capt. Oates, of Colo. Gray's Militia, who was taken near the Pedee, was lately put to Death without any Crime being laid to his charge. From the Character which I have heard of you, Sir, I cannot suppose that you can approve of these most cruel Murders; but I hope you will see the necessity of interposing your Authority to stop this bloody Scene; Which must oblige me, in justice to the suffering Loyalists, to retaliate on the unfortunate Persons now in my power.

I am not conscious that any persons have hitherto been executed by us, unless for bearing Arms, after having given a Military Parole to remain quietly at home; or for enrolling themselves voluntarily in our Militia, receiving Arms and Ammunition from the King's Store & taking the first Opportunity of joining our Enemies. The only Persons who were hanged at Camden, After the actions of the 16th. & 18th., except some Deserters from our Army, were two or three of the latter description, who were picked out from about Thirty, convicted for the like offence, on account of some particularly aggravating Circumstances which attended their case.

I would willingly Exchange any of the North or South Carolina Militia, who may be prisoners with us, for those who were taken on King's Mountain. (Cornwallis 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:733–734) (Davidson 1951, 95)

On 11 November, Gates arrived at Salisbury. There he ordered Stevens to march his newly equipped militiamen to Salisbury.

On 13 November, Gates replied to Morgan:

I hear by report that I am to be recalled, and that Greene is to succeed to the command of the Southern department. But of this I have not the smallest intimation from Congress, which, I conceive, would have been the case, had the business been finally settled. I think exactly as you do in regard to the command, and am impatient for the arrival of General Greene. (Gates 1780 in Hunt 1892, 9)

On 14 November, a British messenger, carrying a white flag, approached Camp New Providence along Providence Road. Smallwood believed its purpose was to spy on the American encampment, and so sent it back without a reply (Seymour 1780 in Seymour 1883, 291). Smallwood's suspicion may have been justified, since on 3 December, Cornwallis reported to his superior General Henry Clinton:

Smallwood has been encamped from the beginning of last month with about thirteen hundred Militia, a Corps of 250 Continentals under Morgan and 70 Dragoons Commanded by Washington, about 12 miles on this side of Charlotte Town, his front guarded by Davie and other irregular Corps, who have committed the most shocking cruelties and the most horrid Murders on those suspected of being our friends that I ever heard of ... (Robinson 1957, 88)

On 15 November, the American general officers at Salisbury met and decided to encamp the American army at Charlotte while Cornwallis remained encamped at Winnsboro (Nelson 1976, 249). The existing Charlotte hospital may have been a consideration.

About this time, enlistments of Davidson and Davie's men began to expire. Davidson was relatively lenient in issuing discharges. On 15 November, Davie complained to Smallwood that he needed the men that Davidson was discharging. He wrote:

The torments of the damned are scarcely equal to the torture of my feelings there five of six days past, from the rage of the militia for returning home. Most of them deserted before the last evening. (Davidson 1951, 96).

Davie abandoned his advanced post at Land's Ford, South Carolina (Davie 1820 in Robinson 1976, 38) (Robinson 1957, 88). Davie planned to raise a legion of mounted infantrymen attached to Brigadier General Morgan force (Davie 1820 in Robinson 1976, 39). In Salisbury, on 23 November, he appealed for authority from the North Carolina Board of War, but his application was not considered (Hamilton and Battle 1907, 8).

On 20 November, Gates arrived in Charlotte with the 700 Continentals and 400 North Carolina and Virginia militiamen. About this time, Gates learned that his 22-year-old son Robert had died of illness (Nelson 1976, 250). Williams wrote his wife that he was, "sorry for the good Old man." (Williams 1780, 70).

On 20 November, Sumter defeated Tarleton at Blackstock's, but was seriously injured. Immediately after the battle, Sumter was carried on a stretcher to a nearby house.



House where, by tradition, Sumter recovered from wounds immediately after battle.

On 22 November, Davidson wrote Sumter:

My anxiety for you (least your Wound be fatal) is such that I have scarcely spirit to congratulate you on your glorious victory. I sincerely wish you a speedy recovery, and in the meantime regret the Want of your services in the field, at this critical and important Juncture. Gen'l Gates with the Continental Troops will be at Charlotte tomorrow, We lie at the old post a dead weight on the Publick. I think I am possessed of all the patience

necessary to my profession but I assure you it is nearly exhausted. (Davidson 1780 in Davidson 1951, 97).

Before 23 November, Colonel Isaac Shelby visited Camp New Providence hoping to participate. Morgan wrote Gates:

Colo. Shelby have been in camp for some time, wating to lend his Aid, should any thing go on offensive, but apprehending not much will be done this winter. And his domestick business call for him, and he having no command, is now on his way home. I have been speaking to him to raise about three hundred good Rifle men this winter for the campaign, & join me early in the spring. (Morgan 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:749–750)

Mid November, Main army marches to Camp New Providence, Officer meeting

On 22 November, Major General Horatio Gates along with the newly arrived 700 Continental regular infantry and 400 militiamen marched from Charlotte to Camp New Providence. The new Continentals camped a mile further down Providence Road (Seymour 1780 in Seymour 1883, 291), probably near present-day Weddington. That raised the total camp strength to approximately 2600 soldiers.

On 29 October 1832, [William Neel testified](#) in a Giles County, Virginia, court:

In the year 1780 (as he thinks) he went as a volunteer from Augusta County, Virginia with a company under the command of Capt. Buchanan in company with two other companies commanded by Captain Tate and Gilmore from the state of North Carolina and joined General Morgan at Six Mile Creek. (Neel, William, pension application 1832).

On 25 November, William Pendergast reported the scarce state of supplies to Gates:

I have this morning examined the State of provisions in Camp, & find them very scarce and a great likelihood of a greater scarcity. There is but one Waggon load of Meal now in Camp (two or three more are expected this day). The Mills which grind are a great distance from Camp (& but two in employ); the one belongs to Colo. Polk, which is fourteen miles distant, & the other four are five & twenty. There are Mills nigher, I am inform'd, but no grain collected in the neighborhood of them; therefore thought it highly necessary to make this report. (Pendergast 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:757)

At the camp, on 25 November, Gates conducted an important meeting, designated a “Council of War,” to discuss provision shortages, the prospect of attacking the British, soldier sickness, and camp suitability. In attendance were Major General William Smallwood, Brigadier General Daniel Morgan, Brigadier General William Lee Davidson, Brigadier General Isaac Huger [pronounced Hū-gāy], Colonel Tadeusz Kosciuszko [pronounced Tha-dāy-ūse Kosh-chūs-kō], Colonel Abraham Buford, Lieutenant Colonel William Washington, and Lieutenant Colonel John Eager Howard. These were all the principal officers of the Southern Continental Army except for Lieutenant Colonel Otho Holland Williams who was in Charlotte. Davie was in Salisbury planning to establish a “legion” force to replace militiamen discharged a few days before. Gates contemplated making Camp New Providence the winter camp of the Army Southern Department. However, during this meeting, the officers decided to relocate to Charlotte (NCSR 1895, XV:160–161) (Davidson 1951, 97).

At a Council of War held at the Camp at New Providence, in the State of North Carolina, the 25th November, 1780, Consisting of
The Commander in Chief.
Major General Smallwood.
Brigadier General Huger.
Brigadier General Morgan.
Brigadier General Davidson.
Colonel Kosciuszko, Chief Engineer.
Colonel Buford.

Lt. Colonel Howard.
Lt. Colonel Washington.

The Council being assembled, the Commander in Chief acquainted them

That—The want of Provisions and Forage in this Camp—The advanced Season of the Year—The almost total Failure of the Herbage—The entire want of a Magazine of Salted Meat and the Uncertainty of providing it—The increasing Sickness and the unwholesome Situation of the Camp—The want of any proper accommodation for the sick—The want of Hospital Stores and proper Comforts necessary for sick and deceased Soldiers—The probability of a Reinforcement being sent from the Enemy at New York—The Invasion of Virginia, and the apparent Prospect of Sir Harry Clinton's supporting that Invasion and Commanding a Co-operation with Lord Cornwallis—The State and Strength of this Army compared with that of the Enemy, and the Expectancy of Reinforcements coming to our Army, are the motives which induced him to assemble the Council of War and to request their Opinion of the Movements and the Position the Army ought to take in the present circumstances.

The Council having fully deliberated upon the matter before them—And the question being put, What Position the Troops ought to take? Whether at or near Charlotte, or at the Waxhaws, or in that Neighborhood, The Junior Member, Lieut. Colonel Washington, gave it as his Opinion—That at or near Charlotte should be the present Position of the Army, to which every other member of the Council assented but General Smallwood, who was for the Army's moving to the Waxhaws, taking post there for three weeks, and then returning to Charlotte.

Sign'd

Horatio Gates. W. Smallwood. Isaac Huger. Daniel Morgan. Wm. Davidson. Thad. Kosciuszko. N. Buford. J. E. Howard. Wm. Washington.

True Copy. Chrisr. Richmond, Secy. to Genl. Gates. (NCSR 1895, XV:160–161)

No officer was prepared to take decisive action knowing that Major General Nathanael Greene would soon take command. Young Brigadier General William Lee Davidson was sorely disappointed that no action was planned at the 25 November meeting. He proposed an innovative plan to divide the American Army, but it was rejected. On 27 November, he submitted the plan to Colonel Alexander Martin on the North Carolina Board of War, hoping to gain its support.

Sir—

By this time you may be acquainted with the position the Army is to take for the present. In the meantime it appears to me that a proper Exertion of the Militia of my District might greatly Injure, if not totally Ruin, the British Army. I have been deliberating on this Matter some time; and submit my plan to your Consideration and hope that you will endeavor to promote it or something that may be more Eligible. My Scheme is to send Genl. Morgan to the Westward with his light Troops & Rifle men, 1000 voluntier Militia which I can raise in 20 days & the Refugees from South Carolina and Georgia, to join which will make a formidable Body of Desperadoes the whole to be under Morgan's Direction and proceed immediately to 96 and possess ourselves of the western parts of South Carolina, at the Same time the main Army to move down to the Waxhaws which will oblige the Enemy to divide (which will put them quite in our power) or vacate the present Posts & collect to one point in which Case we can command the Country cut off their supplies and force them to retreat & fight the Militia in their own way. The Messenger waits I have neither time nor Room to make farther observations. I think the Scheme practicable and certain of success unless the Enemy be reinforced. Favor me with your Opinion on this Matter and believe me, Dr. Sir.

Your very Obdt.
& Hbl. Servt.
Wm. L. Davidson

N. B. this comes to you in a private Capacity.
(Davidson 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:759–760) (Davidson 1780 in Davidson 1951, 98).

This letter shows that Davidson originated the imaginative idea to divide the American Army, an insight that historians have attributed to Major General Nathanael Greene when he ordered it into effect on 16 December.

On 25 November, Gates submitted to the Continental Congress his army's strength return. It consisted of 1053 Continentals, mostly Marylanders, 1147 militiamen, plus Morgan's 404 riflemen (Nelson 1976, 251). Another source indicates that the army had 1187 Continentals, 1283 militiamen, plus Morgan's 476 riflemen, a total of 2946. Of these, 743, 873, and 430, respectively, a total of 2046, were fit for duty (Lesser 1976, 189). Not mentioned in these strength returns were an additional 300 Virginia militiamen led by Brigadier General Edward Stevens.

**A Field Return of the Southern Army Under Command of Major General Gates, Camp New Providence, North Carolina,
25th November, 1780.**

BRIGADES.	FIELD		COMMISSION'D.				STAFF OFFICERS.				NON COM'D R. AND F. FIT FOR DUTY.														
	Colonels.	Lt. Colonels.	Major.	Capt.	Lieutenants.	Ensigns.	Adjutants.	Pay Masters.	Qr. Masters.	Sergeants.	Mates.	Sergt. Majors.	Q. M. Sergeants.	Drum Majors.	Fife Majors.	Sergeants.	Drum's & Fifers.	Rt & File for Duty.	Sick Present.	Sick Absent.	On Command.	On Extra Service.	On Furlough.	Total Rank & File.	
Continental Brigade	1	0	10	"	9	6	0	1	0	2	1	1	0	0	0	46	41	609	18	198	08	101	0	1053	
General Morgan's Brigade	1	1	4	"	9	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	07	4	558	01	4	0	0	0	404	
Genl Davidson's Brigade, Militia	0	0	20	"	10	19	4	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	00	0	397	70	00	100	00	00	1147	
Grand Total	1	1	34	"	34	33	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	100	45	1704	144	202	108	101	00	2904	

N. B. Colo. Penseley's Regiment of Militia, Consisting of four Captains, 3 Subalterns, 8 Sergeants and two hundred Privates, will be Discharged by the 27th Instant, and the Term of Service of the Militia in General will Expire by the 5th of December next.

JOHN DAVIDSON, B. M.

Strength Return of 25 November 1780 at Camp New Providence, not original

Tarleton later described the British assessment during late November:

About this time, the American force in North Carolina assumed a tolerable appearance. General Gates had advanced from Hillsborough in the middle of November, to reinforce the detachments on the Yadkin; and on the 25th, he again moved forwards with the continentals and militia, to Six-mile run, where he was soon joined by Colonels White, Washington, and Armand, with two hundred cavalry, and two pieces of cannon. This position was not far distant from the frontier of South Carolina, and was adopted in order to give spirit and vigour to the militia. The American commander published reports, that he would advance to the Tuckaseege ford, to protect the detachments which invaded Ninety Six; and that General Smallwood would remain with a powerful corps at Six-mile run, which, in case of any movement of Lord Cornwallis across Broad river, would incline towards the head of Black creek, to give strength and influence to Marion, who, in consequence of such assistance, might be able to destroy the communications between Camden and Charles town. (Tarleton 1787, 181).



Colonel Charles Armand Tuffin, cavalryman
Marquis de la Rouerie from Brittany, France

For 5 days, Camp New Providence was headquarters of the Continental Army Southern Department. On 27 November, Gates with his 700 regular Continentals returned to Charlotte and started constructing winter huts (Rankin 1971, 261). Each hut was probably constructed like the 12-man log huts used at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, and Morristown, New Jersey (Wilbur 1993, 64–67).

Late November–Early December, Rugeley's Fort

Smallwood was to follow Gates to Charlotte on 28 November, but intelligence of a supply of corn and forage in the Waxhaws changed his plans. Morgan argued strenuously that horses needed the forage. Such an incursion would require that Smallwood remain at Camp New Providence for support. (Morgan 1780 in NCSR 1895, XIV:762) (Higginbotham 1961, 113). Although Smallwood argued against the plan, on 28 November, Gates ordered Morgan with his light troops on a foraging expedition towards Camden (Rankin 1976, 9). Only the sick and barefoot men remained in camp (Seymour 1780 in Seymour 1883, 291). Washington's cavalrymen with some Continentals advanced to Rugeley's [pronounced Rūg-lē] Fort on Grannies Quarter Creek, about 14 miles north of Camden (Seymour 1780 in Seymour 1883, 291). There, on 1 December, he tricked the loyalist defenders into a bloodless surrender using a "Quaker cannon," a pine log disguised as an artillery piece. Sergeant Major William Seymour of the Delaware Continentals wrote:

On the 28th our Horse and Infantry marched for Rugeley's mill, leaving our tents standing, and the sick and barefoot men left as a guard. We came before Rugeley's on the first December where Col. Rugely lay, with his Regiment of Tories, in number about two hundred, strongly fortified. Col. Washington with the light Horse being sent to draw them out, who ordered a party of them to dismount and represent Infantry, they getting a large pine knot, hauling along which served for a piece of cannon, and had the same effect as if it was the best piece in Christendom. The great piece of ordnance was drawn up in full view of the Tories. Col. Washington at the same time sent in a sergeant with a flag demanding the Tories to surrender, upon which Col. Rugely demanded some time to consider, but the sergeant who bore the flag made answer and told him that we had cannon and would put them all to immediate death if they did not give up, upon which the Tories marched out and gave up their fortifications, without so much as firing a single shot, and surrendered themselves up as prisoners of war. On the 2^d December we returned towards camp, which we reached on the 4th — one hundred miles. Next day the prisoners were sent to Hillsborough, being escorted by a detachment of Col. [Dempsey] Moore's militia of North Carolina. (Seymour 1780 in Seymour 1883, 291)

Tarleton later described this event.

In the beginning of December, General Morgan and Colonel Washington, with some continental light infantry and cavalry, advanced through the Wacsaws to Hanging rock; from which place they detached a threatening summons to Colonel Rugeley, who commanded the militia of the Camden district, and was posted with one hundred men at his own house, where some defences had been erected. Rugeley being intimidated by the summons, and the appearance of the Americans, who placed the resemblance of a cannon opposite his house, surrendered to the light dragoons, without firing a shot. The continental infantry had not advanced within three miles of the post, when this irresolute commander laid down his arms. General Morgan retreated with his prisoners to the main army, ... (Tarleton 1787, 182).

Even Cornwallis was dismayed. On 4 December, he wrote Tarleton from Winnsboro:

Rugeley will not be made a brigadier. He surrendered without firing a shot, himself and one hundred and three rank and file, to the cavalry only : A deserter of Morgan's assures us that the infantry never came within three miles of the house. (Cornwallis 1780 in Tarleton 1787, 205).

On 11 January 1836, [Private Holloway Pass testified](#) in a Caswell County, North Carolina, court that, as a guard, he escorted the Rugeley prisoners to Salisbury.

... that on the 15th day of September 1780, this declarant volunteered under Captain James Wilson in the County of Caswell and State of North Carolina and was march[ed] on the same day to Caswell old Court House (now Seaburg) and there joined themselves to the Regiment under the command of Col. William Moore, and was thence marched to Hillsborough, North Carolina and there continued some two or three days (perhaps a week); from there we march[ed] to Bells Mill on Deep River and was there stationed some few week[s], during which time of the stay of the troops at Bells Mill, James Rainey, Esq. (Who is now the Chairman of our County Court &) and who was one of the volunteers of the same company was taken sick & this affiant was appointed to wait and attend upon him. From Bells Mill on Deep River this declarant with the Regiment commanded by Col. William Moore as aforesaid was march[ed] to the Yadkin River near Salisbury N. C. and there stationed some two or three weeks. At this place, Dempsey Moore was appointed Major of the Regiment. From this place this Declarant with the Regiment was marched through Salisbury and Charlotte N.C. to the neighbourhood of the War Saw [Waxhaw] Settlement to a place called the Six Mile Creeks or the Three Mile Creeks and was there again stationed, watching the enemy and cutting off their supplies. At this place we met with Col. Washington who commanded a company of Horse [illegible]. Whilst we were here also Genl Morgan joined us with his infantry. Whilst at this place and in the neighbourhood, this Declarant, with the company to which he belonged, went with Col. Washington to a place called Rugleys Fort and there lay a stratagem. Captured all the Tories and enemy of the place and took the fort. This Declarant was thence ordered as one of the guards which brought the prisoners to Salisbury and confined them; ... (Pass, Holloway, pension application 1836).

Early December, Greene arrives in Charlotte

Congress appointed Major General Greene commander of the American Southern Army. He had been traveling south since 23 October. During his trip south, he left his second-in-command Major General Friedrich Wilhelm Baron von Steuben in Richmond, Virginia, to command the Virginia Continentals opposing British forces in Chesapeake Bay (Rankin 1971, 260). While in Hillsborough, Greene asked Brigadier General Jethro Sumner, who had resigned on 20 October, to reestablish the North Carolina Continental Line by pardoning deserters if necessary (Rankin 1971, 260). Greene sent artilleryman Lieutenant Colonel Edward Carrington and engineer Colonel Tadeusz Kosciuszko to thoroughly scout the Dan, Yadkin, and Catawba Rivers to note the military significance of each ford and to inventory boats at each ferry.



Major General Nathanael Greene
Painted by Charles Willson Peale, 1783.

On 2 December 1780, Major General Nathanael Greene arrived in Charlotte. He spent the first night with Thomas Polk assessing all conditions. Later, Polk's commented, "By the following morning Greene better understood the resources of the country than Gates had during the whole period of his command." (Polk 1915, 27).



Major General Nathanael Greene arrives at Charlotte, 2 December 1780.
Painted by Howard Pyle, 1903, Delaware Art Museum, Wilmington, Delaware.



North Carolina historical marker, 1987.

In 2010, moved to site of historical event on North Tryon Street.

Formal change of command occurred the next day. About 40 years later, Judge William Johnson wrote:

A manly resignation marked the conduct of General Gates on the arrival of his successor, whom he received at head quarters with that liberal and gentlemanly air which was habitual with him. General Greene observed a plain, candid, respectful manner, neither betraying compassion nor the want of it—nothing like the pride of official consequence even *seemed*. In short, the officers who were present, had an elegant lesson of propriety exhibited on a most delicate and interesting occasion. General Greene was announced to the army as commanding officer, by General Gates; and the same day General Greene addressed the army, in which address, he paid General Gates the compliment of confirming all his standing orders. (Johnson 1822, 1:510)

Earlier Greene was ordered to conduct a court of inquiry into Gate's conduct during the 16 August battle. Gates wanted to clear his name. Nonetheless, after conferring with all field officers, Greene decided other army concerns made a court impossible (Nelson 1976, 252). Gates left Charlotte on 8 December.

Army strength was 2307 infantrymen, 60 artillerists, and 90 cavalrymen. Of these, only about 800 were completely uniformed and equipped (Rankin 1971, 262) (Buchanan 1997, 288) (Robinson 1957, 94). In a letter to Joseph Reed of Pennsylvania, Greene wrote:

I overtook the army at Charlotte, to which place General Gates had advanced. The appearance of the troops was wretched beyond description, and their distress, on account of provisions, was little less than their sufferings for want of clothing and other necessities. (Greene 1780 in Commager and Morris 1975, 1152)

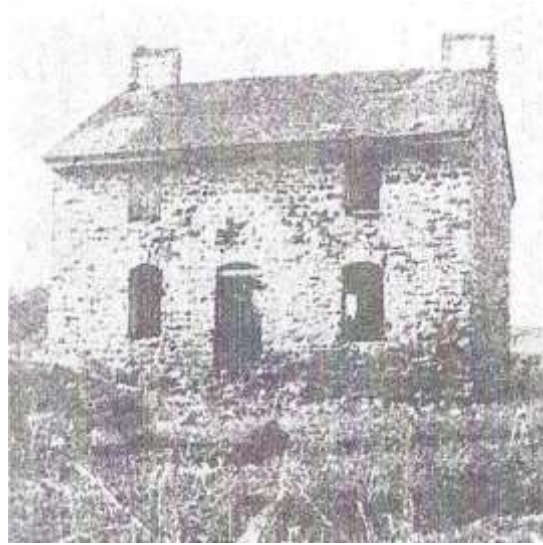
Greene sent all sheeting and osnaburg, a burlap-like cloth, in Charlotte to Salisbury to be sewn into shirts and trousers by the women of Rowan County. He offered to pay the seamstresses in salt (Rankin 1976, 12). For administrative continuity, Greene re-appointed Lieutenant Colonel Otho Williams as adjutant general (Rankin 1976, 14).

On 5 December, the terms of enlistment for all remaining Davidson militiamen expired. All were discharged and returned home, leaving Davidson without troops to command. On 16 April 1833, [James Bradford testified](#) in a Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, court:

... He further sayeth that in the same year [1780], the month not recollected, he entered the service as a substitute for Joseph J Ross under Capt'n James Reese & Colo. [John] Phiifer. Served the Whole of the three months in the County of Mecklenburg, N.C. frequently on scouting parties but the main camp on Six Mile Creek in s'd county, and at the end of this three months was discharged by General [William Lee] Davidson and released with others. (Bradford, James, pension application 1833).

On 8 December, Governor John Rutledge accounted for the deployment and strength of American troops in the Carolinas. He wrote that “Ab^t 1000 Cont^{ls} of Maryland, Delaware, & Virgⁿ Cont^{ls} at Charlotte & wth Gen^l Smallwood 16 miles below it.” (Barnwell April 1917).

On 9 December, Greene and South Carolina Governor John Rutledge ventured out of Charlotte to Isaac Price’s stone house near Armour’s Ford (Price 1796) (Blackwelder 2015) to confer with Brigadier General Thomas Sumter who was recovering from a serious shoulder wound received at Blackstock’s (Rutledge 1780 in South Carolina Historical Society 1917, 48–49). Sumter attempted to persuade Greene to attack Cornwallis at Winnsboro before he was reinforced. But Greene followed the defensive strategy he learned from years with General George Washington. Greene was not about to risk his army against Cornwallis’s 2500 professional troops (Bass 1961, 116) (Morrill 1993, 122).



Isaac Price’s stone house, about 1920 (Gregorie 1931, 126)

Since the previous May, both British and American armies had exhausted supplies in Mecklenburg and Waxhaw regions (Davie 1820 in Robinson 1976, 38). On 8 December, Greene ordered Colonel Tadeusz Kosciuszko to locate an alternative camp location.

You will go with Major Polke [William Polk] and examine the Country from the Mouth of Little River twenty or thirty Miles down the Peedee and search for a good position for the army. You will report the make of the Country, the nature of the soil, the quality of the water, the quantity of Produce, number of Mills and the water transportation that may be had up and down the River. You will also Enquire respecting the creeks in the Rear of the fords and the difficulty of passing them, all of which you will report as soon as possible. (Greene 1780 in Buchanan 1997, 291).



Colonel Tadeusz Kosciuszko
Painted by Julian Rys, 1897.

Discipline was a serious problem. On 8 December, Greene wrote Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Hamilton, George Washington's chief of staff:

The Officers have got such a habit of negligence, and the soldiers so loose and disorderly, that it is next to impossible to give it a military complexion. (Buchanan 1997, 290)

Greene ordered a deserter hung in the town square. An observant soldier remarked, "It is new Lords, new laws." (Rankin 1971, 263).

Colonel Thomas Polk, the Continental Army Commissary Officer, was frustrated with many supply problems. He asked to be relieved which Greene reluctantly accepted (Polk 1915, 26). Polk made a final delivery of 500 head of cattle and 1000 bushels of corn (Polk 1915, 26). Greene assigned this office to Colonel Davie despite Davie's wish to remain in the field. On 11 December, Greene wrote Davie:

Your character and standing in the Country lead me to believe you are the most suitable person to succeed him. It is a place of great consequence to the Army; and all our future operations depend upon it. As you are a single man, and have health, education, and activity to manage the business, it is my wish you should accept the appointment; especially as you have an extensive influence among the Inhabitants, and are upon a good footing and much respected in the Army. (Greene 1780 in Davie 1810 in Robinson 1976, 64) (Greene 1780 in Robinson 1957, 97) (Greene 1780 in Buchanan 1997, 293)

Major Joseph Dickson probably assumed Davie's former cavalry command. But it had to wait for new reenlistments to reach full strength.

Beginning 13 December, William Washington with light horse made an incursion towards Hanging Rock (Seymour 1780 in Seymour 1883, 292).

On 13 December, British Major General Alexander Leslie arrived in Charlestown harbor with reinforcements for Cornwallis (Tarleton 1787, 242).

17 December, Camp New Providence abandoned

There is no evidence that Greene personally inspected his troops at Camp New Providence. On 16 December, Greene decided to divide his army into two groups. He ordered Morgan with his

400 Virginia riflemen, 300 Continentals, and Washington's 70 cavalymen to cross the Catawba (Higginbotham 1961, 122). Greene's order to William Washington was:

Washington and his regiment are to join Gen. Daniel Morgan's detachment. He should follow Morgan's orders concerning the "the time and place for joining." Those of his men who are still at New Providence will accompany Morgan; those from Colonel [Anthony] White's regiment who are with Washington should proceed to Anson Courthouse on the Pee Dee River and wait there for Nathanael Greene's orders. (Greene 1780 in PNG 1997, VI:590)

Greene ordered Davidson to unite whatever new militiamen he could recruit with Morgan. At that time, about 100 militia volunteers had embodied at Ramsour's Mill.

On 17 December, Camp New Providence was vacated. All remaining Continentals marched to Charlotte. Sergeant Major William Seymour, of the Delaware Continentals, wrote:

We lay on this ground from the 22^d November [Seymour arrived with the Continental light infantry on 22 October] till the 17th December, and marched to Charlotte, fifteen miles. Same day [relieved] General Smallwood set out on his march for Maryland. At this time the troops were in a most shocking condition for the want of clothing, especially shoes, and we having kept open campaign all winter the troops were taking sick fast. Here the manly fortitude of the troop of the Maryland Line was very great, being obliged to march and do duty barefoot, being all the winter the chief part of them wanting coats and shoes, which they bore with the greatest patience imaginable, for which their praise should never be forgotten; and indeed in all the hardships which they had undergone they never seemed to frown. (Seymour 1780 in Seymour 1883, 292)

They left behind dead soldiers whose graves today have been obliterated. As late as 1872, the burial ground's existence was known and sketched on a rough map (Belk 1872 in Draper 1873, VV:6:299). Camp New Providence was a principal Southern Continental Army and militia camp from 20 October to 17 December 1780.

In many ways Camp New Providence was similar to Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, during the winter of 1777–1778, albeit much smaller.

- It occurred while the Continental Army was being reorganized.
- It asserted control of countryside against garrisoned British troops.
- It occurred during cool weather.
- Foraging was a primary concern.
- Soldier hardships were severe.
- Plans were laid for future actions.

In December 2009, a North Carolina historical marker for Camp New Providence was approved by the *North Carolina Office of Archives and History* (W. L. Anderson 2010a).



North Carolina historical marker, erected 2 November 2010.

Late December, Charlotte

Major General William Smallwood asked Greene to make him second-in-command of the southern army. Greene refused. Disappointed, Smallwood asked to be reassigned. He departed Charlotte on 19 December. In his place, Greene appointed Davidson head of all North Carolina militia, subject to approval of the North Carolina General Assembly (Rankin 1971, 265).

On 19 December, Leslie marched about 1530 British troops out of Charlestown towards Winnsboro (Tarleton 1787, 243).

On 20 December, Greene implemented Davidson's imaginative idea to divide the American Southern Army as part of his strategic plan to counter the British goal of sweeping through North Carolina and Virginia. His strategy was defensive and reflected policies of General George Washington under whom Greene had served for several years. The principal objective was to avoid a decisive defeat, like Gates' Defeat, and simultaneously to maximize British costs. So, Greene tried to entice the British Army as far from its Charlestown base as possible, threaten its supply lines to Charlestown, and always maintain an escape route for his main army. He created a more mobile army by adding cavalry units. He characterized his objective as a "flying army." The eastern army went to Cheraw Hills near Cheraw, South Carolina.

On 16 July 1833, [John Helms testified](#) in a Lincoln County, North Carolina, court:

That he moved from Botetourt County State of Virginia into Rowan County North Carolina in the year 1780 and that he volunteered in August or September of said year and joined the American army at the Six Mile Creek in Rowan [Mecklenburg] County North Carolina under Captain Smith. Marched from there to Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, N. Carolina from thence to Rocky River, from there he was marched to near the place now called Cheraw Hills, South Carolina, ... (Helms, John, pension application 1833)

The western army under Brigadier General Daniel Morgan left Charlotte and on 22 December crossed the Catawba River at Bigger's Ferry. That ferry was located downstream of Crowder's Creek and upstream of Big Allison Creek. Bigger's Ferry was later named Mason's Ferry. Today, it is submerged under Lake Wylie. The western access road to Bigger's Ferry is present-day South Carolina road SR46-1099.

That is the road from "Five Points" intersection to the McGuire riverfront cabin used during the 1950s.

Lieutenant Colonel John Eager Howard commanded the 300 Continental light infantrymen in Morgan's army.



Lieutenant Colonel John Eager Howard
 Maryland Continental Officer
 Name in lyrics of state song *Maryland, My Maryland*.
 Painted by Charles Willson Peale, 1784.

Morgan positioned his army so as to threaten Ninety Six. Greene's decision was an unexpected and apparent risky action that invited attack on either part. But it was well reasoned, as he explained later.

It makes the most of my inferior force, for it compels my adversary to divide his, and holds him in doubt as to his line of conduct. He cannot leave Morgan behind him to come at me, or his posts at Ninety Six and Augusta would be exposed. And he cannot chase Morgan far, or prosecute his views upon Virginia while I can have the whole country open before me. I am as near to Charlestown as he is, and as near Hillsborough as I was at Charlotte; so I am in no danger of being cut off from my reinforcements. (Morrill 1993, 123).

When Davidson reached his volunteers at Ramsour's Mill, he found less than 90. Most had been drawn away by a Cherokee attack encouraged by the British. On 24 December, Davidson wrote Morgan:

The Expedition against the Overhill Cherokee Towns, & the Murder committed in Rutherford & Burke Counties have intirely drawn the attention of the people who were to compose my Command. I suspect it to be a Stratagem as Tories were undoubtedly concerned in the Murder. (Davidson 1780 in Davidson 1951, 103).

Davidson said he would wait until 26 December, and then, "I shall move to Join you be my force what it may." (Davidson 1780 in Davidson 1951, 103). At the direction of North Carolina Governor Abner Nash, Davidson sent orders to all Salisbury District colonels to complete their drafts and assemble their men in Charlotte on 10 January 1781. Because Davie was no longer available, Davidson ordered Captain Joseph Graham to raise a cavalry troop. By this time, Graham had recovered from his severe wounds of 26 September. Within 3 weeks, Graham had about 50 men equipped with serviceable weapons (Graham 1832 in Graham 1904b, 49–50).

On 25 December, Morgan encamped at Grindal Shoals on the Pacolet River. During the following week, Davidson delivered only 120 militiamen to Morgan, and returned to Charlotte to raise more (Davidson 1951, 104).

Apparently, Greene's actions surprised Cornwallis. On Tuesday, 26 December, Cornwallis wrote Tarleton:

A man came this morning from Charlotte town; his fidelity is, however, very doubtful; he says, that Greene marched on Wednesday last [20 December] towards the Cheraws, to

join General Caswall, and that Morgan, with his infantry and one hundred and twenty-four of Washington's light horse, crossed Biggar's ferry, on Thursday and Friday last, to join Lacey. I expect more certain intelligence before night, when you shall hear again from me. (Cornwallis 1780 in Tarleton 1787, 243).

Varying success and failure of each army exacerbated conflict between Whig and Tory neighbors. From Cheraw, Greene wrote Alexander Hamilton:

The division between people is much greater than I imagined; and the Whigs and Tories persecute each other with a savage fury. There is nothing but murder and devastation in every quarter. (Rankin 1976, 23)

Camp New Providence obscurity

Why did knowledge of Camp New Providence fall into obscurity? Perhaps it was a combination of:

- Since the camp was located in the countryside and not in a town, there was no obvious name. Most officers called the site "Camp New Providence," but other participants used "Six Mile Creek" or "Six Mile Run." Others used "Providence" or "near Waxhaw settlement." Others did not name it, but referred only to its distance from Charlotte as 12, 14, or 15 miles.
- The American Army was being reorganized. The division and merging of units and their separate movements is difficult to follow. The troop deployment, movement, and strength timeline below reduces this complexity and measures the number of soldiers at Camp New Providence.
- No battle occurred there.
- Local farmers probably wanted to forget the event because of the destructive impact on their grain stores and livestock.
- Maryland and Delaware Continental officers were not motivated to precisely locate a place far from their home.
- After the Continental main army arrived on 22 November 1780, for 5 days, the camp was actually two camps separated by one mile.
- Davidson died on 1 February 1781. Had he lived longer, he could have better told the story. Davie could have clarified this, but he simply called it "Providence."
- In later years, the town of Charlotte attributed to itself events that happened at Camp New Providence.
- The story of Camp New Providence emerges only after reading many original source documents and making the only inference that is consistent with many partial pieces of information.

Troop Deployment, Movement, and Strength Timeline

How many soldiers were at Camp New Providence during its existence from 20 October to 17 December 1780? Of course, exact precision is impossible. An army is like any other complicated dynamic social system. The number of persons engaged changes daily. Nonetheless, coarse strength figures are sufficient for comparing the relative strengths of adversaries. They are also sufficient for commissary procurement and can show trends or developing shortages. During the American Revolution, commanders were justifiably obsessed with this knowledge and demanded frequent strength returns from their subordinates.

The first step is to list important actors. Those were the high-ranking commanders. Each commanded a unit whose approximate strength is known from original sources. Units are operational command, not necessarily official command. For example, Lieutenant Colonel Howard officially commanded the Maryland Continentals, but operationally commanded the light infantry detached from Maryland, Delaware, and Virginia Continentals. Likewise, Lieutenant Colonel Williams officially commanded the Delaware Continentals, but for a short time, as directed by Gates, operationally commanded all regular Continentals.

Notation	Commander	Operational Command and Strength
g	MG Horatio Gates	sw
w	LCol Otho Williams	Army adjutant general
h	LCol John Howard	Maryland Continentals, 300
b	Col Abraham Buford	Virginia Continentals, 100
s	MG William Smallwood	MhWBPD
M	BG Daniel Morgan	Virginia riflemen, 400, + h
W	LCol William Washington	Continental cavalry, 70
i	LCol Anthony White	Continental cavalry, 70
a	Col Charles Armand	Continental cavalry, 70
N	Cpt Anthony Singleton	Continental artillery, 2 field pieces, 60
S	MG Jethro Sumner	BP
B	BG John Butler	Hillsborough District NC militia, 300
P	Col John Paisley	Guilford County militia, 300
D	BG William Davidson	Salisbury District NC militia, 500
d	Col William R. Davie	North Carolina militia cavalry, 300
V	BG Edward Stevens	Virginia militia, 300
G	MG Nathanael Greene	wMhW
C	LG Charles Earl Cornwallis	23 rd , 33 rd , 71 st , 2000, + R
T	LCol Banastre Tarleton	British Legion, 500
R	LCol Francis Lord Rawdon	Volunteers of Ireland, 600
r	Col Henry Rugeley	Camden District loyalist militia, 100
e	MG Alexander Leslie	2500

However, these strengths were not fixed. From September–December 1780, the American Army was in transition. Officers joined and resigned. New units, both Continental and militia, joined. Entire militia units were discharged at the end of their tours of duty. Special units were created. For example, it was common practice to detach the youngest and most agile Continental soldiers from their regular regiments into companies of light infantry. Good horsemen might enter as infantry but be assigned to cavalry. By comparison, artillery units were static because of the high level of training and skill needed. The complexity is daunting, but probably no more than any other large social institution.

For purposes of determining the number of soldiers at Camp New Providence, a troop deployment, movement, and strength timeline is helpful. Estimated strengths are calculated by inclusion and exclusion using partial data from many original sources. Details affecting strength, like detachments, foraging, and hospitalization, are not known, and thus ignored. Despite the imprecision, these strengths provide a macro view. Locations are listed north to south to show troop flow. Troops on the march appear in italic typeface.

	24 Sep	25 Sep	26 Sep	27 Sep	30 Sep	2 Oct	3 Oct	7 Oct	10 Oct
Hillsborough	gwMia W1300	gwMia W1300	gwMia W1300	gwMia W1300	gwMia W1300	gwMia W1300	gwMia W1300	gwMia W1300	gwia830
Trading Ford					S500	S500	S500	S500	S500 MW470
Salisbury				SDd 1000	D200	D200			
Phyfer's Mill			SD1000				D300	D500	
Rocky River		S800			d300	d300	d300	d300	D500 d300
Mallard Creek		D 200							
Charlotte		d150	d150 C1600	CTR 2500	CTR 2500	CTR 2500	CTR 2500	CTR 2500	CR2100
Armour's Ford									T400
Bigger's Ferry		R400	R400						
McAlpine Creek	SD800	C1600							
Clems Branch	d150								
Waxhaw Creek	C1600								
Land's Ford	T500	T500	T500						
Blair's Mill									

About 30 September, Davie took command of Colonel Philip Taylor's 150-man regiment from Granville County (Davie 1810 in Robinson 1976, 26). In early October, Gates assigned Morgan the additional command of Howard's light infantry. Movements of Kings Mountain participants are omitted for clarity.

	12 Oct	13 Oct	14 Oct	15 Oct	17 Oct	19 Oct	20 Oct	22 Oct	29 Oct
Hillsborough	gwia830	gwia830	gwia830	gwia830	gwia830	gwia830	gwia830	gwia830	gwia830
Surry County	P300	P300	P300	P300					
Trading Ford	S500 MW470	SMW 970	SMW 970	S500	SsP800	sB300	sB300	B300	B300
Salisbury				MW470					
Rocky River	D500				MW470	SP500 MW470	P500 MW470		
J. M. Alexander farm		D200							
Charlotte	d300	D300	D500	D500	D500	D500			
New Providence							D500	DMWsP 1300	DMWsP 1300
Nation Ford Spratt's farm	CT2500	d300 CT2500	d300 CT2500	d300 CT2500					
Land's Ford					d300 CT2500	d300 CT2500	d300	d300	d300
Winnsboro							CT2500	CT2500	CT2500

Smallwood assigned command of North Carolina militia. Sumner resigned 20 October.

	2 Nov	4 Nov	6 Nov	9 Nov	11 Nov	20 Nov	22 Nov	27 Nov
Hillsborough	gwia830	gia130		V300	V300			
Guilford CH		w700	giaV430 w700	gia130				
Trading Ford Salisbury	B300	B300	B300	wB1000	gwBia 1100	gwBia 1100		
Charlotte							gw700	
New Providence	DMWsP 1300	DMWsP 1300	DsP830	DMWsP 1300	DMWsP 1300	DMWsP 1300	DMWsP gwBVia 2600	DMWsP BVia 1900
Land's Ford	d300	d300	d300	d300	d300	d300		
Hanging Rock			MW470					
Camden	R600	RT1000	R600	R600	R600	R600	R600	R600
Sand Hills			T400	T400	T400			
Blackstock's						T400		
Winnsboro	CT2500	C2100	C2100	C2100	C2100	C2100	CT2500	CT2500

Davie's cavalrymen were discharged about 20 November. On 22–25 November, Williams was sick in Salisbury while his command advanced. On 25 November, Gates submitted his army's strength return as 1053 Continentals, 1147 militiamen, plus Morgan's 404 riflemen. A total of 2604 soldiers (Nelson 1976, 251). Of these, 2046 were present fit for duty and 144 sick present (Lesser 1976, 189). In addition, 300 Virginia militiamen under Brigadier General Edward Stevens were present.

	1 Dec	4 Dec	13 Dec	17 Dec	20 Dec	22 Dec	26 Dec
Salisbury			BP600				
Charlotte	gws700	Gws700	GwsV 1000	GwV 1000	GwV 1000	GwV 1000	
New Providence	Via440	MWBP Via 1500	Mhia500	MhWia 870			
Hanging Rock	MBP 1000		W70				
Rugeley's Fort	r103 W70						
Bigger's Ferry					MhW 800		
Pacolet River						MhW 800	MhWD 920
Cheraw Hills					ia70	ia70	GwiaV 1100
Camden	R600	R600	R600	R600	R600	R600	R600
Winnsboro	CT2500	CT2500	CT2500	CT2500	CT2500 e1500	CTe 4000	CTe 4000
Charlestown			e2500	e2500	e1000	e1000	e1000

Davidson's militiamen were completely discharged by 5 December. On 2 December, Greene replaced Gates. Butler's militia escorted Rugeley Fort prisoners to Salisbury.

January 1781, Haddrell's Point

On 4 January 1781, at Haddrell's Point, the North Carolina Brigade commander Brigadier General James Hogun died of illness. He had been Lieutenant Colonel Robert Mebane's immediate superior officer on many occasions since establishment of North Carolina Seventh Regiment in November 1776.

January 1781, Cowpens

On 11 January 1781, Lieutenant Colonel Henry *Light-Horse Harry* Lee arrived in Greene's camp with 280 mounted infantrymen. His unit was called a legion. Greene sent Lee to support Colonel Francis Marion. Together, they attacked the British outpost in Georgetown, South Carolina.



Lieutenant Colonel Henry Lee
Painted by Charles Willson Peale, 1782.

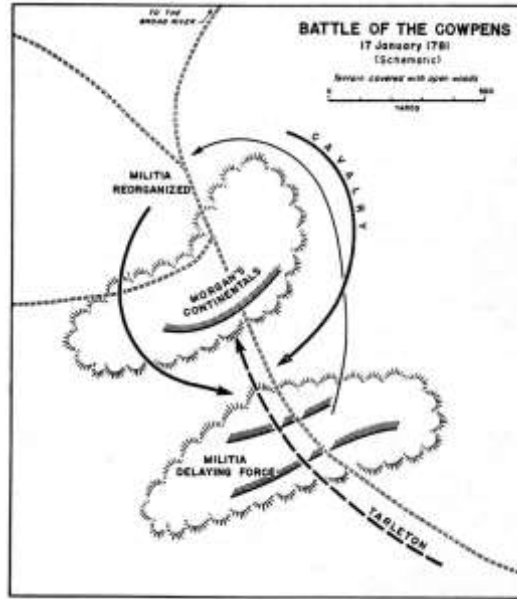
At this time, Colonel Andrew Pickens' troops joined Morgan. These Scotch-Irish were violating parole, and thus expected execution if captured. Pickens was a Scotch-Irish Presbyterian elder from western South Carolina. His character was described as so austere that he seldom smiled, never laughed, and spoke so guardedly that "he would first take the words out of his mouth, between his fingers, and examine them before he uttered them." (Hilborn and Hilborn 1970, 174).



Brigadier General Andrew Pickens
Painted by Thomas Sully, 1835.

In reaction, on 2 January 1781, Cornwallis divided his army (Cornwallis 1781 in Tarleton 1787, 244). Tarleton commanded the 1100-man part that began pursuit of Morgan's army. Tarleton camped at Thomas Dugan's plantation on Gilders Creek (Tarleton 1787, 245) (Parker 2009, 293) (Allison 2009–2016). Tarleton pushed Morgan to Broad River that could not be forded quickly. Americans were trapped at Hanna's Cowpens in South Carolina. Tarleton had good reason to believe in success when fighting started at daybreak 17 January 1781. Nonetheless, he was seriously defeated with 110 dead, over 200 wounded, and 500 captured of the 1100 British soldiers. Americans had only 12 men killed and 60 wounded. Cowpens was a decisive turning point. Cornwallis lost most of his light infantry. Cowpens is also famous for its tactics because of pre-positioning of militiamen in front of professionals and dynamic use of staged retreat, pinning fire, and cavalry attack. The second line was entirely South Carolina Scotch-Irish riflemen

under Andrew Pickens. In this battle, Americans were lucky. A misunderstood repositioning, and apparent retreat, command by an American officer actually worked to their advantage by causing British to break ranks and lose the configuration for firing volleys. Pickens's Scotch-Irish remained organized and reformed to fight in a second location. Reference (L. E. Babits 1998) contains a minute-by-minute account of this battle and is an example of micro-history scholarship. Military historians note Cowpens' coincidental similarity of topography, tactics, sequence, and results with Cannae, a Hannibal victory over Romans on 2 August 216 BC (Palmer and Stryker 1986). However, a major difference is that 40 times more soldiers participated in Cannae.



From *American Military History*
United States Army Center of Military History, 1989.

Daniel Morgan was a cousin of famous Kentucky pioneer Daniel Boone.



Brigadier General Daniel Morgan
Painted by Charles Willson Peale, 1794.

Colonel Thomas Brandon led a regiment of South Carolina militia at Cowpens. Private John Moor, a 4th great-grandfather, was assigned to Brandon's unit, but his widow's pension does not mention his participation in this battle. John Moor did pass through Cowpens earlier, on 6 October 1780, the night before Kings Mountain. (Sutton 1987, 360).

Colonel Elias Alexander, a McGuire-related 2nd cousin 7 generations removed, allegedly participated at Cowpens. See note below.

When Cowpens victory news reached Charlotte, Brigadier General Davidson ordered a parade and *Feu de Joie* [fire of joy] salute, a wave-like firing of muskets (C. G. Davidson 1951, 107).

In late January, Colonel Adam Alexander, a McGuire-related 3rd cousin 6 generations removed, was released from a Camden jail. He provided Brigadier General William Lee Davidson intelligence of Camden's vulnerability (C. G. Davidson 1951, 109).

January 1781, Cowpens' Consequences

The 17 January 1781 British defeat at Cowpens had a profound effect. General William Moultrie later wrote:

This defeat of Colonel Tarleton's at the battle of the Cowpens, chagrined and disappointed the British officers and Tories in Charlestown exceedingly. I happened to be in Charlestown at the time when the news arrived. I saw them standing in the streets in small circles, talking over the affair with very grave faces. I knew the particulars as soon as they did. Governor Rutledge sent in a person on some pretence with a flag; but in fact, it was to inform the American prisoners of our success: the person informed me of the whole affair, which I communicated to the officers at Haddrell's-point, on my return in the evening. The news gave great joy, and put us all in high spirits. (Moultrie 1802, II:256)

In 1794, British historian Charles Stedman wrote:

Had Lord Cornwallis had with him at Guilford Court House the troops lost by Col. Tarleton at the Cowpens, it is not extravagant to suppose that the American colonies might have been re-united to the empire of Great Britain. (Stedman 1794, 2:325, 346)

Reverend John Miller of Bethany Presbyterian Church, 5 miles east of Kings Mountain battleground, is credited with the following prayer:

Good Lord, Our God that art in Heaven, we have great reason to thank Thee for the many battles we have won. There is the great and glorious battle of Kings Mountain, where we kilt the great General Ferguson and took his whole army; and the great battle at Ramsour's and Williamson's; and the ever memorable and glorious battle of the Cowpens, where we made the proud General Tarleton run down the road halter-skelter, and Good Lord, if ye had not suffered the cruel Tories to burn Hill's ironworks, we would not have asked any more favors at Thy hands. Amen.

On 25 January, South Carolina Governor John Rutledge promoted Colonel Andrew Pickens to brigadier general.

22-24 January 1781, Cornwallis entered Lincoln County

On 17 January 1781 at Cowpens, Brigadier General Daniel Morgan captured about 500-600 of Cornwallis's best troops including a large portion of the 71st Regiment (CPS 2010, 4:12) (Morgan 1781 in PNG 1997, VII:152). After the battle and on the same day, Morgan marched to Island Ford on the Broad River. The next day, his army proceeded in the direction of Gilbertown, just north of present-day Rutherfordton, North Carolina (Morgan 1781 in PNG 1997, VII:154).

Gen. Morgan as soon as his pursuers and prisoners were collected, marched over the Island Ford on Broad River, and up past Gilbertstown. Here he detached the greater part of his Militia [under Pickens] and a part of Washington's Cavalry with the prisoners. The detachment took the Cane Creek road through the ledge of mountains, which divide the heads of the South Fork from the main Catawba, and down that river past where Morganton now stands and crossed the Catawba at the Island Ford. (W. A. Graham 1904b, 287–288)

The source of this information is not known. It appears as a footnote within the papers of Joseph Graham (W. A. Graham 1904b, 287–288). The same information appeared earlier in David Schenck's 1890 book (Schenck 1890, 229). Nonetheless, the assertions are plausible and probably much older. The route Pickens took on 19 January was a narrow valley easily defended by a rear guard. At the same time, Morgan with the remainder of his troops, the Continental Light Infantry and Virginia riflemen, marched towards Ramsour's Mill. This maneuver effectively screened Pickens with the prisoners and confused Cornwallis who did not accelerate his pursuit until 22 January. Interestingly, once at the Catawba River near present-day Morganton, Pickens did not immediately cross as prudence would seem to demand. Instead he proceeded down the ridgeline "Salisbury Road" on the south side of the Catawba River which was approximately the route of present-day Highway US70. This traded speed in favor of safety since the north side of the river had many tributaries to cross. Although, it is not known for certain, these movements were probably designed by Morgan who had a reputation for tactical genius.

For a few days, 17–21 January, Cornwallis was confounded by the shocking loss at Cowpens and uncertainty of Morgan's location with the captured British soldiers. Major General Alexander Leslie's army, which had been stationed at Camden, joined and together marched northward through present-day York County, South Carolina. Later, Cornwallis wrote:

That General Greene might be uncertain of my intended route as long as possible, I had left General Leslie at Camden, until I was ready to move from Wynnesborough, and he was now within a march of me. I employed the 18th [of January] in forming a junction with him, and in collecting the remains of Lieut. Colonel Tarleton's Corps; after which great exertions were made by part of the Army without baggage, to retake our Prisoners, and to intercept General Morgan's Corps on its retreat to the Catawba; but the celerity of their movements and the swelling of the numberless Creeks in our way, rendered all our efforts fruitless. (Cornwallis 1781 in NCSR 1895, XVII:996)

Later, Tarleton criticized Cornwallis's slow actions as "ineffectual" (Tarleton 1787, 222). Not until 22 January did Cornwallis proceed with his plan with the added urgency to recapture the British soldiers. His army crossed the state line into Lincoln County and camped at Charles Stice's Plantation, believed to have been on the First Broad River about 5 miles south of present-day Shelby, North Carolina (Cornwallis 1781 in Newsome 1932, 3:286) (Tryon County Deed Book n.d., 2:415–416) (Rutherford County Deed Book n.d., 1:345–346) (Carpenter 2006–2018).

On 23 January, Cornwallis's army encamped at the Tryon/Lincoln County Courthouse, which was the house of Christian Mauney, just south of present-day Cherryville, North Carolina (Cornwallis 1781 in Newsome 1932, 3:286).



Site of Cornwallis's Camp 23 January 1783

The British marching column would have been about 3 miles long and no doubt was an impressive spectacle. Almost all 2500 troops were professional soldiers wearing their distinctive uniforms. The former royal Governor of North Carolina Josiah Martin was present. There were hundreds of horses pulling wagons and artillery pieces.

On 23 January, Pickens with the British prisoners from Cowpens crossed the Catawba River at Island Ford. About 14 miles further south at Sherrill's Ford, Morgan crossed. On the next day, the prisoners were sent towards Salisbury under guard of the Virginia riflemen commanded by Major Francis Triplett. Washington's cavalry rejoined Morgan at Sherrill's Ford. Morgan believed Cornwallis was still in South Carolina and unaware that he was in hot pursuit and only 20 miles away (Morgan 1781 in PNG 1997, VII:192). But at least Morgan was then on the east side of the Catawba River.

On 24 January, Cornwallis's army marched towards Ramsour's Mill, in present-day Lincolnton, North Carolina. Davidson, who was in Charlotte, wrote Major General Nathanael Greene:

By a Major [Joseph] Dickson whom I have appointed to command a party of observation I am informed that Lord Cornwallis & Tarlton were yesterday & at 11 o'clock this Day at Dillingers Mill on Indian Creek near the South fork of the Cattaba a Northwest direction from Charlotte and 40 miles distant[.] Genl Lesley was 11 miles in the rear with the remaining part of the Troops and the whole Baggage of the Army. They have burned several Houses and make a point of distroying every article of provision & forage which they have not immediate use for. ... Genl Morgan is at Shiruls Ford 30 Miles from this place and about the same distance from the Enemy with this place which is about 30 Miles. Coll [Thomas] Farmers Troops which are to join me tomorrow as well as one third of those that have already joined have no flints. I have Sent both to Salisbury and Genl Morgan for a Supply but cant get them. I'll be obl [obliged] to you for four or five Hundred by the Bearer. (Davidson 1781 in PNG 1997, VII:188–189)

A map drawn by Joseph Graham in 1789 showed a road between Lincoln County Courthouse and Ramsour's Mill that crosses Indian Creek at, or near, Given's Mill (J. Graham 1789). That map was redrawn by the engineering firm of D. A. Tompkins Company about the year 1900. Historian Ann Moore Dellinger discovered land deeds that show Given's Mill of 1789 was previously John Philip Dellinger's

Mill of 1781. (Lincoln County Deed Book n.d., 1:672) (Lincoln County Deed Book n.d., 3:140) (Dellinger 2006–2017) It was located near where Indian Creek joined the South Fork River (Carpenter 2006–2018). That was near the present-day Laboratory Road bridge over Indian Creek. This location does not establish with certainty where the remainder of British Army marched later that day, but it is reasonable that it followed the same road made secure by Tarleton's British Legion.

In 1910, historian Alfred Nixon provided more details in *The History of Lincoln County*, but did not reference sources or traditions.

Cornwallis crossed the South Fork River at the Reep ford, one mile from Ramsour's Mill, and pitched his marquee [tent] on the Ramsour battle-ground; O'Hara remained on the west bank of the river at the Reep place; Webster occupied the hill west of Ramsour's Mill; while Tarleton who had crossed the river three miles lower down, between the Laboratory and the present railway bridge, in rejoining his chief, camped on the hill south of Cornwallis. Foraging parties were sent out in different directions to collect grain, and Ramsour's Mill was kept running day and night converting the grain into flour to replenish his Lordship's commissary. (Nixon 1910)

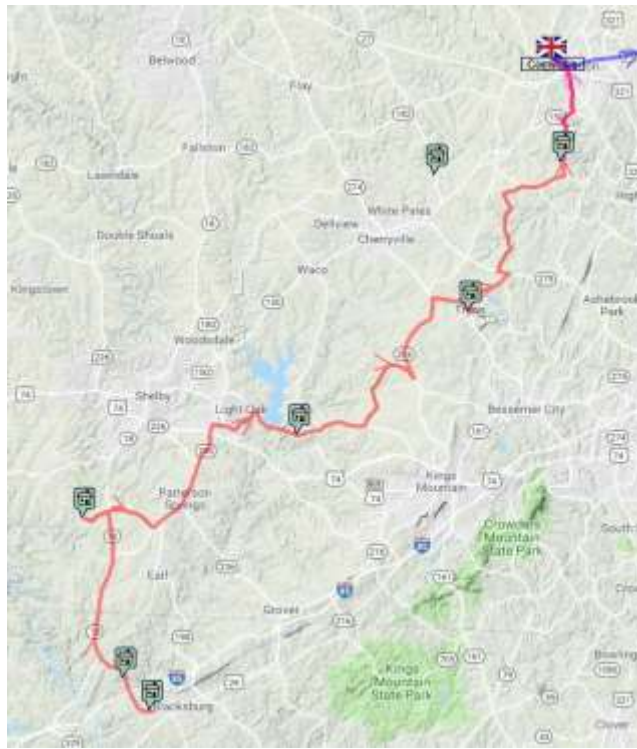
If Nixon's assertions are true, then Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton with his 400 cavalymen were dispatched from the main British Army to secure the opposite bank of the South Fork River. They crossed the South Fork River below the present-day railroad bridge. Meanwhile, the main army marched further north before crossing the South Fork River at Reep's Ford. A topographical map suggests that the two parts of the British Army separated after crossing Indian Creek and took separate routes that could coincide with present-day NC150 and Old Lincolnton Crouse Road. This is not a proof.

Cornwallis's army may have traveled the ridge road that is present-day highway NC150. It crosses Indian Creek at the Plunk Family Cemetery. The old roadbed is still evident. Probably at that point, Tarleton's cavalymen were dispatched to secure the far bank of the South Fork River while the main army continued along present-day Old Lincolnton-Crouse Road, past what later became the Jacob Plunk II home place (Nixon 1910).



Old roadbed at Plunk Family Cemetery
Property of Lincoln County Historical Association

The route of Cornwallis's army through Lincoln County to Ramsour's Mill was:



Route of Cornwallis's Army through Lincoln County 22–24 January 1781

At sunrise 25 January while at Sherrill's Ford, Morgan reported to Greene:

I am this minute inform by express that Lord Cornwallis is at Ramsowers Mill on their march this way Destroying all before them. I shall know the Truth of this in a few hours and Let you know immediatly. (Morgan 1781 in PNG 1997, VII:195)

24–27 January 1781, Cornwallis at Ramsour's Mill

While at Ramsour's Mill, Cornwallis resolved to lighten his army. To improve mobility, he ordered destruction of all inessential supplies, baggage, and wagons (Cornwallis 1781 in Newsome 1932, 3:289) (CPS 2010, 4:13). He wrote:

I therefore assembled the Army on the 25th at Ramsoure's Mill on the South Fork of the Catawba, and as the loss of my light Troops could only be remedied by the activity of the whole Corps, I employed a halt of two days in collecting some flour, and in destroying superfluous Baggage. And all my Waggons, except those loaded with Hospital Stores, Salt and Ammunition, and four reserved empty in readiness for sick or wounded. In this measure, tho' at the expence of a great deal of Officer's Baggage, and of all prospect in future of Rum, and even a regular supply of provisions to the Soldiers, I must in justice to this Army say that there was the most general and cheerful acquiescence. (Cornwallis 1781 in NCSR 1895, XVII:996–997)

British commissary officer Charles Stedman wrote:

[Earl Cornwallis] by first reducing the size and quantity of his own, set an example which was cheerfully followed by all the officers in his command, although by so doing they sustained a considerable loss. No wagons were reserved except those loaded with hospital stores, salt and ammunition, and four empty ones for the accommodation of the sick and

wounded. And such was the ardour, both of officers and soldiers, and their willingness to submit to any hardship for the promotion of the service, that this arrangement, which deprived them of all future supply of provisions, was acquiesced in without a murmur. (Stedman 1794, 326)

British Brigadier General Charles O'Hara was an eyewitness to these actions. Later, in a 20 April letter, he recalled:

Lord Cornwallis sett the example by burning all of his Wagons, and destroying the greatest part of his Baggage, which was followed by every Officer of the Army without murmur. ... Cornwallis ordered "The Supply of Rum for a time will be Absolutely Impossible." ... Without Baggage, necessities, or Provisions of any sort for Officer or Soldier, in the most barren, inhospitable, unhealthy part of North America, opposed to the most savage, inveterate, perfidious, cruel Enemy, with zeal and with Bayonets only, it was resolved to follow Greene's army to the end of the World. (Babits and Howard 2009, 15–16)

Supplies were burned to preclude any use by the Americans. (Morgan 1781 in PNG 1997, VII:216)

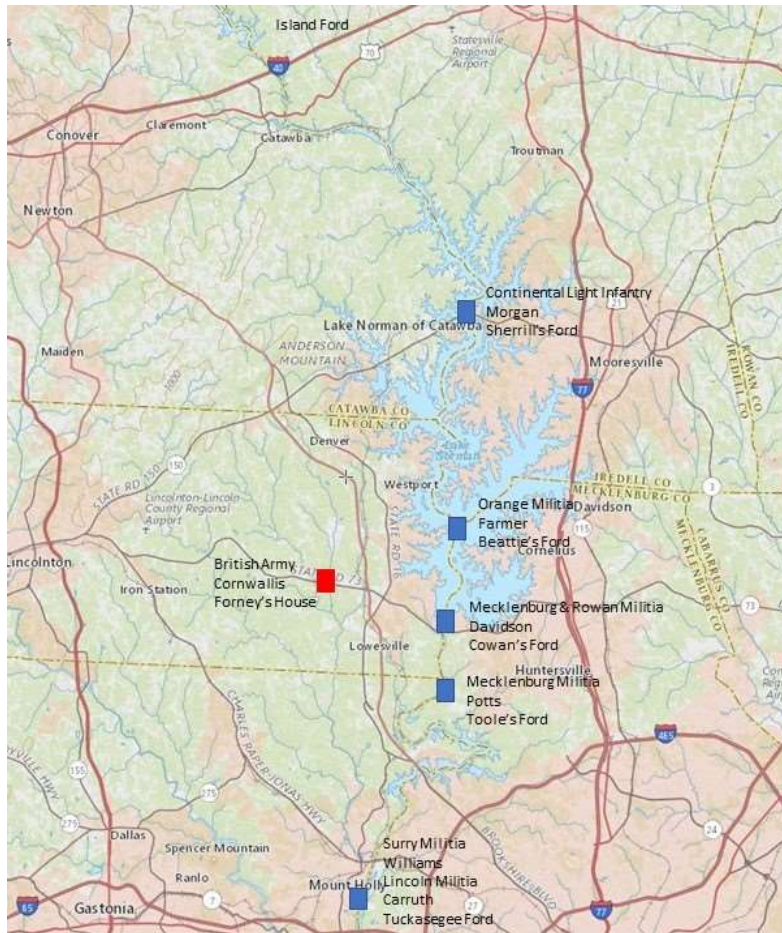
Derick Ramsour was a 3rd great-grandfather of George Shuford Ramseur Sr.

As the British Army approached Mecklenburg County, Ezekiel Polk, fearing for his personal safety, abandoned his home south of Charlotte and travelled to Pennsylvania. By March, his house was occupied by Brigadier General Thomas Sumter's family who were refugees from South Carolina. (Godey 1856) (Bass 1961, 141)

Morgan and Brigadier General William Lee Davidson informed Greene of Cornwallis's movements and threat to cross the Catawba River. Greene, who was on the Pee Dee River near Cheraw, South Carolina, realized that Cornwallis could separate his army there from its base of supply in Virginia. Greene quickly ordered his army to march north towards Salisbury, North Carolina. He notified North Carolina Governor Abner Nash to prepare the militia further east to confront Cornwallis (Morgan 1781 in PNG 1997, VII:206). Greene personally, with a small escort, raced to confer with Morgan (Morris 1781 in PNG 1997, VII:208–209).

28–31 January 1781, March to Catawba River, Jacob Forney's Plantation

As Cornwallis's army entered Lincoln County, Brigadier General William Davidson deployed about 500 North Carolina Western District militiamen at the many fords on the Catawba River (Morgan 1781 in PNG 1997, VII:221). Colonel John Williams, of Surry County, was posted with 200 men at Tuckasegee Ford. Captain Potts, of Mecklenburg County, was posted with 70 men at Toole's Ford. Lieutenant Thomas Davidson, of Mecklenburg County, was posted with 25 men at Cowan's Ford. Colonel William Graham, of Lincoln County, was posted with approximately 60 men near Cowan's Ford. Colonel Thomas Farmer, of Orange County, was posted with 200 men at Beattie's Ford. At Tool's and Tuckasegee Fords, Davidson ordered trees felled to impede movement along the access road (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 288).



Catawba River fords defended by American forces

On 28 January, Cornwallis's army marched from Ramsour's Mill towards the Catawba River (Cornwallis 1781 in Newsome 1932, 3:289). Colonel Samuel Hammond, of the South Carolina militia, had followed Cornwallis's army since Cowpens. His report to Greene, believed dated this day, describes the difficult duties of his reconnaissance detachment.

Under cover herewith, your Excellency will see a copy of Gen. Morgan's order, directed to me, on the evening of the 17th January. In obedience to which, I placed myself with the few men under my command, in front of Lord Cornwallis' army, and paid every attention to their movements that was in my power; looking at them as often as possible, until their arrival at Ramsour's Mills, and have communicated to General Morgan and Col. Pickens [Andrew Pickens of South Carolina] their movements to that point. Their heavy baggage was burnt at that place, as I was informed and am authorized to believe. The army moved from there this morning, and from the best information I have been able to obtain, and from my own observation, I am induced to believe they intend to pass Catawba at McGowan's [Cowan's] Ford. My command are mostly with Col Pickens, having taken with me on my detachment of observation only twelve men, four of whom have been despatched with communications to General Morgan and Col. Pickens, which I presume have been handed to you. I am pretty certain you may calculate on the approach of the enemy to south margin of the river this evening or early to morrow. My men and their horses are much fatigued and exhausted. We would be glad to have a day of partial rest, if possible, but wait your orders. Be pleased to inform me by the bearer where I may direct to Col. Pickens. (Hammond 1781 in PNG 1997, VII:229)

Actually, the British Army marched to Beattie's Ford, 5 miles upstream from Cowan's Ford, but found the river too swollen to cross. It retreated a few miles to John Bower's plantation (Cornwallis 1781 in Newsome 1932,

3:290). The next day, 29 January, it retreated farther to the rich plantation of wealthy Whig farmer Jacob Forney (Cornwallis 1781 in Newsome 1932, 3:290–291). During the next two days, while waiting for the river to subside, British soldiers confiscated and consumed Forney's livestock. Historian Clarence W. Griffin wrote:

Few persons during the war suffered heavier losses than Jacob Forney. When Cornwallis marched through Lincoln County in the winter of 1781, he was arrested in his progress by the swollen waters of the Catawba River. He fell back about five miles from the river to Forney's plantation, having been conducted there by a Tory well acquainted with the neighborhood. Here Cornwallis remained encamped for three days, consuming Forney's entire stock of cattle, sheep, hogs, geese, chickens, a large amount of forage, forty gallons of brandy, etc. His three horses were carried off, and many thousands of rails and other property destroyed. His gold, silver and jewelry, buried in his distillery, a greater portion of which he had brought with him from Germany, was found and confiscated. While the search was going on, his Lordship was quietly occupying the upper story of the family mansion, making it his headquarters. Forney and his wife, being old, were allowed the privilege of residing in the basement. As soon as he was informed that his gold, silver and jewelry were found, amounting to 170 pounds sterling, he was so exasperated for the moment that he seized his gun and rushed to the stair steps with the determination to kill Cornwallis, but his wife quickly followed and intercepted him, thus preventing the most deplorable consequences. (Griffin 1937, 19).



Site of Cornwallis's Headquarters at Jacob Forney House
Present-day house, known as Ingleside, built in 1817 by grandson Daniel Forney

Jacob Forney I was 3rd great-grandfather of George Shuford Ramseur Sr.

Cornwallis later wrote:

In the mean time the rains had rendered the North Catawba impassable and General Morgan's Corps the Militia of the rebellious Counties of Rowan & Mecklenburg, under General Davidson, or the Gang of Plunderers, usually under the command of General Sumpter, not then recovered from his wounds [received at Blackstocks on 20 November 1780], had occupied all the Fords in a space of more than forty miles upward from the Fork, during its height. I approached the River by short marches so as to give the enemy equal apprehensions for several Fords (Cornwallis 1781 in NCSR 1895, XVII:997)

A few days later these events, Greene summarized this situation in a letter to Major General Friedrich von Steuben:

Since I wrote you by Major [Edward] Giles[,] Lord Cornwallis has been constantly in pursuit of Genl Morgan and has burnt his waggons and equip'd his Army in such a manner, as to move with the greatest facility. His force is about 2500 men. General Morgan by forced marches, kept out of

the reach of his Lordship and has got off his prisoners in safety; but it was partly owing to a happy intervention of a great storm, which raised the Catabow so high that the Enemy cou'd not Cross. During which time the prisoners were pushed on over the Yadkin and are on their march for Virginia. (Greene 1781 in PNG 1997, VII:242)

On 29 January, Morgan personally visited Beattie's Ford and conferred with Davidson. Morgan wrote:

I just arrived at this place [Beattie's Ford] to view the situation. Genl Davidson is here with Eight hundred [actually about 500] men. The enemy is within ten miles of [this] place in force, their advance is in [sight. It] is uncertain whether they intend to [c]ross here or not. I have deteched two hundred men [probably Colonel John Williams' Surry County militiamen] to the Tuckaseega Ford to fill it up & [De]fend it. An express Just arrived who informs they have burnd their waggons and loaded their [men very heavy. We] have taken four prisoners, who says they are for Salisbury. I am Just returning to Shireld Ford where our regulars lie. I expect they will attempt to cross in the morning. I will let you hear of every particular. (Morgan 1781 in PNG 1997, VII:215)

On 30 January, Captain Joseph Graham's cavalry conducted reconnaissance on the west side of the Catawba River:

With his [Davidson's] greatest force, and Graham's cavalry, he took post at Beattie's Ford, on the road from Ramsour's to Salisbury, being twenty miles above Colonel [John] Williams [at Tuckasegee Ford]. On the 30th [January], the cavalry were dispatched over the [Catawba] River, and ascertained that the enemy were encamped within four miles. (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 288)

During that day, 30 January, Greene arrived at Sherrill's Ford (Greene 1781 in PNG 1997, VII:219–220). Initially, both Greene and Morgan believed Cornwallis might be prevented from passing the Catawba River. Greene issued the following orders:

- Requested 1000 Virginia militiamen from Colonel William Campbell (Greene 1781 in PNG 1997, VII:218–219).
- Requested the aid of Brigadier General Thomas Sumter who was in Mecklenburg County recovering from serious wounds (Greene 1781 in PNG 1997, VII:221).
- Ordered Major General Isaac Huger to march the Continental Army to Salisbury. Also, he ordered that Brigadier General Francis Marion march towards Camden to threaten the British stationed there. He ordered Lieutenant Colonel Henry Lee to force march to Sherrill's Ford. He ordered that Colonel Thaddeus Kosciuszko join him at Sherrill's Ford. (Greene 1781 in PNG 1997, VII:219–220)
- Requested 1000 militiamen from Colonel Isaac Shelby (Greene 1781 in PNG 1997, VII:221).
- Ordered Colonel Anthony White to immediately send all dragoons from the Moravian Towns, near present-day Winston-Salem, North Carolina, to William Washington's cavalry at Sherrill's Ford (Greene 1781 in PNG 1997, VII:221–222).

Early on 31 January, Colonel Thomas Farmer at Beattie's Ford sent a message to Greene:

Recd yours by Express about four oClock [yesterday]. Sent the Dispaches in fifteen Minuts after they came to hand. Have this Morning Brought over a Deserter who informs That the Number of the Enemy fit for Action is about 4500 [actual 2500] and Three Hundred Toreys. That they are Commanded by Ld Cornwallase, Genl Howard [O'Hara] & Genl Lesly. That there was orders to parade & March at 3 oClock yesterday, but Continued in Camp till night. Two Toreys was killed yesterday on a foraging Party for the British, That the attillarys of the Enemy are four 6 pound, four 4 pound & Two three Pounders. That the Enemy Waits the fall of the Water & intend to Cross at one of the fords which they say is Betys, Or another within five miles, or one fifteen Miles from Camp; He informs that some Spy bring Intelligence to the British Every Day from us, The Object in their View is Salisbury & that they Burned 100 Wagons &c. Quantity of Salt & flour at Ramsours Mill. (Farmer 1781 in PNG 1997, VII:228)

During the afternoon 31 January, Generals Greene, Morgan, and Davidson and Lieutenant Colonel William Washington conferred at Beattie's Ford's east bank (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 289) (Graham 1827 in

Hoyt 1914, 257) (Davidson 1951, 112) (Higginbotham 1961, 150) (Babits and Howard 2009, 17) (Piecuch and Beakes 2009, 73). Greene decided that the Catawba River was no longer defensible and that Morgan's Continental Army troops had to withdraw from Sherrill's Ford to join up with the remainder of the Continental Army ordered up the Yadkin River. Nonetheless, some resistance at the fords was needed to screen Morgan's withdrawal and delay Cornwallis. He assigned this task to Davidson. Greene advised Davidson that the British cavalry would likely first cross the river at a secondary ford and attack the defender's rear at the main crossing (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 290). Later that day, Davidson told Graham:

That though General Greene had never seen the Catawba before, he appeared to know more about it than those raised on it. (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 289)

To assist Davidson, Greene wrote a letter to Colonel Francis Locke, commander of Rowan County militia, imploring immediate assistance:

To the Officers Commanding the Militia in the Salisbury District of North Carolina

The enemy are laying on the opposite side of the river and from every appearance seem determined to penetrate the Country. Genl Davidson informs he has called again and again for the people to turn out and defend their Country. The inattention to his call and the backwardness of the people is unaccountable. Providence has blessed the American Arms with signal success in the defeat of Tarleton and the surprise of George Town by Col Lee with his Legion. If after these advantages you neglect to take the field and suffer the enemy to over run the Country you will deserve the miseries ever inseparable from slavery.

Let me conjure you, my countrymen, to fly to arms and to repair to Head Quarters without loss of time and bring with you ten days provision. You have every thing that is dear and valuable at stake; if you will not face the approaching danger your Country is inevitably lost. On the contrary if you repair to arms and confine yourselves to the duties of the field Lord Cornwallis must be certainly ruined. The Continental Army is marching with all possible dispatch from the Pedee to this place. But without your aid their arrival will be of no consequence. I am Sir, Nath Greene. (Greene 1781 in PNG 1997, VII:227–228) (Tarleton 1787, 252–253)

However, in a letter to Samuel Huntington, President of the Continental Congress, Greene indicated that he did not expect the local militia could stop Cornwallis from crossing.

The fords are so numerous upon this river and our force so small that it will be impossible to prevent their passing; and we can give them but very little annoyance after they have crossed unless a great force comes to our relief. Genl Davidson informed me this evening that notwithstanding he had made use of every argument in his power to draw out the Militia, he had not more than 300 Men; nor had he but very little hopes of getting out a much greater number; and his district is said to contain more good militia than almost all the rest of the State. The people have been so harrassed for eight months past and their domestick matters are in such distress that they will not leave home; and if they do it is for so short a time that they are of no use. Twenty thousand men might be in motion in the manner the Militia come and go and we not have an operating force in the field of five hundred men....

The enemy are in force and appear determined to penetrate the Country, nor can I see the least prospect of opposing them with the little force we have, naked and distressed as we are for want of provision & forage. Our numbers are greatly inferior to the enemy's when collected and joined by all the Militia in the field, or that we have even a prospect of getting. The difference in the equipment and discipline of the troops give the enemy such a decided superiority that we cannot hope for any thing but a defeat. And the enemy being with out baggage we cannot avoid an action if we would, especially as we have no place where we can take post for want of provision and forage. (Greene 1781 in PNG 1997, VII:225–226)

The dire situation forced Greene to risk many human lives to achieve a tactical advantage. Davidson and other local militiamen risked their lives performing this duty.

Late in the afternoon, 31 January, Greene and Morgan returned to Oliphant's Mill near Sherrill's Ford. Morgan wrote a letter of concern to Virginia Governor Thomas Jefferson (Morgan 1781 in Higginbotham 1961, 150–151).

Greene sent an order to Lieutenant Colonel John Luttrell who was near Salisbury approaching with his Orange County militiamen reinforcements. Greene ordered that Luttrell's mounted men join Washington's cavalry and all others to go to Beattie's Ford, presumably to join other Orange County militiamen under Colonel Thomas Farmer (Greene 1781 in PNG 1997, VII:227).

Davidson transferred 200 troops from Beattie's to Cowan's Ford raising the strength there to 350. Captain Thomas Farmer of the Orange County militia remained at Beattie's Ford (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 290). Davidson set up camp at the exit of the horse ford, the longer but shallower of two ford passageways. Lieutenant Thomas Davidson remained posted as a guard at the shorter, deeper wagon ford (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 291). Davidson ordered Captain Joseph Graham, who commanded the Mecklenburg militia cavalymen, to patrol all fords during the night (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 290). Graham had just recovered from serious wounds received at the battle of Charlotte 4 months earlier (W. A. Graham 1904b, 66).



Brigadier General Joseph Graham
Artist unknown, about 1805.
(W. A. Graham 1904b, frontispiece).

In 1833, Graham [testified](#) of a changed in command of the active Lincoln County militia:

that on the 15th or 16th of Jan^y 1781 he [Joseph Graham] came to an encampment in said County near Tuckaseegee Ford on the Catawba River where Colonel William Graham (then of this County now of Rutherford,) had the command of a Regiment of men then assembling to serve a tour of duty of three months and at different times from that to the 31st day of January saw him in command of said Regiment on the East side of Catawba in Mecklenburg and on the said 31st day of January near Cowans Ford he the said Colo. was arrested by Brigadier General William L. Davidson on a charge of being intoxicated it being the day before the British crossed the Catawba River at said Ford where General Davidson fell and the Command of the Regiment devolved on Major John Carruth until after the Battle of Guilford Court House. (Graham 1833 in Espey, Samuel, pension application 1832) (Graham 1833 in Hill, James, pension application 1832) (Lofton, Thomas, pension application 1832)

1 February 1781, Cowan's Ford, Torrence's Tavern

Cornwallis lost three days of pursuit while waiting for the Catawba River to subside. Finally, he decided:

after having procured the best information in my power I resolved to attempt the passage at a private Ford (then slightly guarded) near McCowan's ford, on the morning of the 1st of February. (Cornwallis 1781 in NCSR 1895, XVII:997)

On 31 January, Cornwallis issued the following three general orders. The last was supplemented by Leslie's brigade orders:

Head Q^{rs}. Fawneys Plantation,
31st. Jan^{ry}. 1781

Orders

The Bat Horses are to be Loaded & the Army in readiness to March precisely at 9 oClock in the following Order.

L^t Col Tarleton's Corps
Yagers [German rifemen]
Corps of Pioneers,
Two Three Pounders,
L^t Col Webster's Brigade
Two Six pounders,

Reg^t, of Bose,
North Carolina Volunteers
Two Six pounders,
Brigade of Guards
Ammunition & Provⁿ Waggons
Bat Horses of the Gen^l Off^{rs}.

Bat Horses of the Reg^{ts}. in the same Order as their respective Corps.

Head Quarters,
31st. Jan^{ry}. 1781

The Guards will relieve the Provⁿ. Guard & Gen^l. Hosp^l ditto. No Railing to be burnt on any Ground Whatever but by Express permission.

Head Q^{rs}
31st. Jan^{ry}. 1781

The Army will be under Arms & ready to March to morrow morning at half past Two O'Clock in Two Columns ; Maj^r. Gen^l Leslie will lead the First Column, Consisting of the foll^g. Corps.

Brigade of Guards
Reg^t. De Bose.
Half the Pioneers,

Two Three Pounders
23rd. Reg^t.
L^t Col Tarlton's Corps

L^t Col. Webster will give Orders respecting the other Column. The Waggon Horses are to be Harness'd & the Bat Horses Loaded ready to move at ½ past five O'Clock under the Escort of an Off^r, of the N Carolina Reg^t.

Brigade Orders

Q^r M^r. Furnival will be left in Charge of the Baggage, Sick, Convalescents & Women of the Brigade, & will apply at five O'Clock tomorrow morning to L^t Col Hamilton Com^{dg}. Off^r. of the North Carolina Reg^t, for other Instructions & will in every respect Consider himself as Responsible for this Charge, & for the Conduct of the Men under his Command. As the Surgeon & all the Mates will March with the Brigade, it is expectd proper Medicines & Dressings are left for the Sick with directions for the Same.

NB : Horses will be apply'd for by Q^r M^r Furnival to the Q^r M^r Gen^l, in proper time, for the Conveniency of the Sick (Cornwallis 1781 in Newsome 1932, 3:292).

Note: Bat Horse

A bat horse was an antiquated name for a packhorse or workhorse.

In Cornwallis's last order, he specified the *order of march* for the regiments that proceeded to Cowan's Ford. Left unspecified were the light-infantry companies who presumably were under his direct command. He also ordered Lieutenant Colonel James Webster to march separately to Beattie's Ford as a diversionary feint. Webster's units were the remainder of those listed earlier: the Yagers, half the Pioneers, Webster's brigade or the 33rd Regiment, four six pounders, Regiment of Bose, and North Carolina Volunteers. The baggage wagons were to follow three hours later and follow Webster. Cornwallis later wrote:

Lieut. Colonel Webster was detached with part of the Army and all the Baggage to Beattie's Ford, six miles above McCowan's, where General Davidson was supposed to be posted with 500 Militia and was directed to make every possible demonstration by cannonading and otherwise, of an intention to force a passage there (Cornwallis 1781 in NCSR 1895, XVII:997)

Graham later describe the actions at Beatty's Ford:

Cornwallis placed his remaining force in array on the face of the hill fronting Beattie's Ford; and as soon as the firing commenced at Cowan's Ford, made demonstrations of attacking the post at Beattie's. A company went into the water forty of fifty steps and fired. Four pieces of artillery fired smartly for thirty minutes, and his front lines kept firing by platoons, as in field exercises. It was only a feint, however. (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 295)

The first column of British troops reached Cowan's Ford at daybreak on 1 February. Cornwallis wrote:

I marched at one in the morning with the Brigade of Guards, Regiment of Bose, 23rd Regiment, 200 Cavalry, and two three pounders, to the ford fixed upon for the real attempt; the morning being very dark and rainy & part of our way through a wood where there was no road, one of the three pounders in front of the 23rd Regiment and the Cavalry, overset in a swamp, and occasioned those Corps to lose the line of march, and some of the Artillery Men belonging to the other Gun, (one of whom had the match) having stopped to assist were likewise left behind. The Head of the Column in the meanwhile, arrived at the bank of the River and day began to break. I could make no use of the Gun that was up and it was evident from the number of fires on the other side, that the opposition would be greater than I had expected. However, as I knew that the Rain that was then falling would soon render the River again impassable, and I had received information the evening before that General Greene had arrived in General Morgan's Camp, and that his Army was marching after him with the greatest expedition, I determined not to desist from the attempt; and therefore, full of confidence in the Zeal & Gallantry of Brigadier O'hara and of the Brigade of Guards under his command, I ordered them to march on, but to prevent confusion, not to fire until they gained the opposite bank. Their behavior justified my high opinion of them; for a constant fire from the enemy, in a ford upwards of five hundred yards wide, in many places up to their middle, with a rocky bottom and strong current made no impression on their cool and determined valor, nor checked their passage. The light Infantry landing first immediately formed, and in a few minutes killed or dispersed everything that appeared before them, the rest of the Troops forming and advancing in succession. We now learned that we had been opposed by about three hundred Militia that had taken post there only the evening before under the command of General Davidson. Their General and two or three other officers were among the killed, the number of wounded was uncertain, and a few were taken prisoners. (Cornwallis 1781 in NCSR 1895, XVII:997–998)

Brigadier General Charles O'Hara's unit, the *Brigade of Guards*, led the British across the river and suffered many casualties including many killed whose bodies were swept downstream (Henry 1855 in Schenck 1891, 13).

Note: Brigade of Guards

The Brigade of Guards dates from 1659 and continues to the present. In Britain, it had three regiments: First Guards (later Grenadier Guards), Coldstream Guards, and Third Guards (or Scots Guards). In 1776, for service in North America, selected soldiers from each combined into one regiment of two battalions. It participated in battles at Long Island, White Plains, Fort Mifflin, Red Bank, Germantown, and Fort Mifflin. In January 1781, it joined Earl Cornwallis in the South. On 1 February, it forced the Catawba River crossing. On 15 March, it participated at Guilford Courthouse.

Note: Light Infantry Companies

Light infantry companies were detachments comprised of the swiftest, most active, soldiers drawn from all the regiments. These companies were not fixed long-lasting units like the numbered regiments. However, their officers might serve for as long as they were physically able. These companies were assigned the most dangerous tasks and typically were the first to engage the enemy. It was considered an honor to be chosen by a light-infantry company.



Battle of Cowan's Ford
Painted by Dan Nance, 2011.
www.dannance.com. Used with permission.

Graham later recalled:

[The British] infantry in front with bayonets fixed, muskets empty, carried on the left shoulder at a slope, cartridge box on the same shoulder, and each man had a stick about the size of a hoop pole eight feet long, which he kept setting on the bottom before him, to support him against the rapidity of the current, which was generally waist deep, and in some places more. (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 291)

Private Robert Henry was with the American guard on the opposite bank. He described the night and battle:

When about to start, I gave [John] Nighten a hundred dollar Continental bill for a half a pint of whisky. My brother gave another bill of the same size for half a bushel of

potatoes. We dispatched the whiskey, Being thus equipped, we went to the [Cowan's] Ford, which was about a mile and a half. When we arrived, the guard that was there, thirty in number, made us welcome; the officer of the guard told us that Cornwallis would certainly attempt to cross that night or early in the morning; that each one of the guard had picked their stands to annoy the British as they crossed, so that when the alarm was given they would not be crowded, or be in each other's way—and said we must choose our stands. He accompanied us—Charles Rutledge chose the uppermost stand, and I chose the lowest, next the getting out place of the Ford; the officer observed, that he considered that Davidson had done wrong, for that the army should have been stationed at the Ford—instead of which it was encamped three-fourths of a mile off, and that some person acquainted in the neighborhood of Forney should watch the movements of Cornwallis' army, and immediately when they would attempt to march, to hasten to the river and give the alarm; then that Davidson's army might be in readiness to receive them; the river being in the situation that it was then in, and the army thus prepared to receive them, said that Cornwallis and a million of men could not cross without cannon as long as our ammunition would last. This I thought was a large expression; but since I think he was correct. He mentioned to each man of the guard to go to his stand again and examine it, so that when the alarm was given, that there should be no mistakes then made. I went to mine, and was well pleased with it — for in shooting, if I would miss my first aim, my lead would range along the British army obliquely and still do damage, and that I could stand it until the British would come to a place the water was riffing over a rock, then it would be time to run away. I remember that I looked over the guard to see if there was any person with whom I was acquainted, and found none but Joel Jetton, and my lame school-master, Robert Beatty, with my comrade, Charles Rutledge.

Gen. Joseph Graham's name is mentioned by Wheeler. I was acquainted with him; but he was not there. Shortly after dark a man across the river hooted like an owl, and was answered; a man went to a canoe some distance off, and brought word from him that all was silent in the British camp. The guard all lay down with their guns in their arms, and all were sound asleep at day-break, except Joel Jetton, who discovered the noise of horses in deep water. The British pilot, Dick Beal being deceived by our fires, had led them into swimming water. Jetton ran to the Ford, the sentry being sound asleep, Jetton kicked him into the river, endeavored to fire his gun, but it was wet: Having discovered the army, ran to our fires, having a fine voice, cried "the British! the British!" and fired a gun—then each man ran to his stand; when I got to my stand, I saw them red, but thought from loss of sleep my eyes might be mistaken, threw water into them; by the time I was ready to fire, the rest of the guard had fired. I then heard the British splashing and making a noise as if drowning. I fired, and continued firing until I saw that one on horse-back had passed my rock in the river, and saw that it was Dick Beal moving his gun from his shoulder, I expected, to shoot me. I ran with all speed up the bank, and when at the top of it, William Polk's horse breasted me, and Gen. Davidson's horse, about twenty or thirty feet before Polk's horse, and near to the water's edge. All being silent on both sides, I heard the report of a gun, at the water's edge, being the first gun fired on the British side, and which I thought Dick Beal had fired at me. That moment Polk wheeled his horse, and cried "fire away, boys; there is help at hand." (Henry 1855 in Schenck 1891, 9–11)

Rather than Dick Beal, the guide was probably Frederick Hager, a Tory who later self-deported himself from North Carolina (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 292) (W. A. Graham 1904b, 304). Lieutenant Colonel Francis Hall, while leading the light infantry of the Brigade of Guards across the river, was shot and instantly killed. O'Hara's horse was shot and rolled over in the river. Cornwallis's horse was shot in the river and fell on reaching the opposite embankment (Stedman 1794, 329). Three days later, Cornwallis described the crossing in correspondence to Lieutenant Colonel Francis Rawdon:

We passed the Catawba on the 1st: at a private Ford four miles below Beatty's: The Guards behaved Gallantly, & although they were fired upon during the whole time of their passing, by some Militia under General Davidson, never returned a Shot until they

got out of the River & formed. General Davidson was killed, & his Militia routed; Genl. Leslie's Horse fell with him in the River, & bruised him very much. On the same day Tarleton attack'd a considerable body of Militia under Pickens, killed several, took some Prisoners, & dispersed the rest. ... Your Friends are all well. Colo. Hall was killed at the passage of the Catawba, no other Officer hurt. (Carleton 1747–1783, 28:3317)

Davidson's militiamen, who were stationed at the exit of the horse ford, quickly assembled and moved towards the wagon ford exit. Graham's cavalymen dismounted and joined. All fired on the British in the river (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 292). Graham later described the disciplined British emergence from the river:

The enemy kept steadily on, notwithstanding our fire was well maintained. As each section reached the shore, they dropped their poles and brought their muskets and cartridge boxes to their proper places, faced to the left, and moved up the narrow strip of low ground, to make room for the succeeding section, which moved on in the same manner. By the time the front rank got twenty or thirty steps up the river, they had loaded their pieces and began to fire up the bank. (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 293)



Battle of Cowan's Ford
Painted by David Teague.

The Americans retreated. Davidson ordered Graham to remount his cavalymen and guard against an attack from the rear (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 293). Davidson ordered a retreat and was reordering his men when he was killed instantly by a musket ball. Disorder seized the Americans who dispersed in small groups (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 294). Graham later wrote:

two of his [Graham's] company killed opposing their [British] passage, and his was the only company that went off the battle-ground in order and covered the retreat. (Graham 1832 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 50).

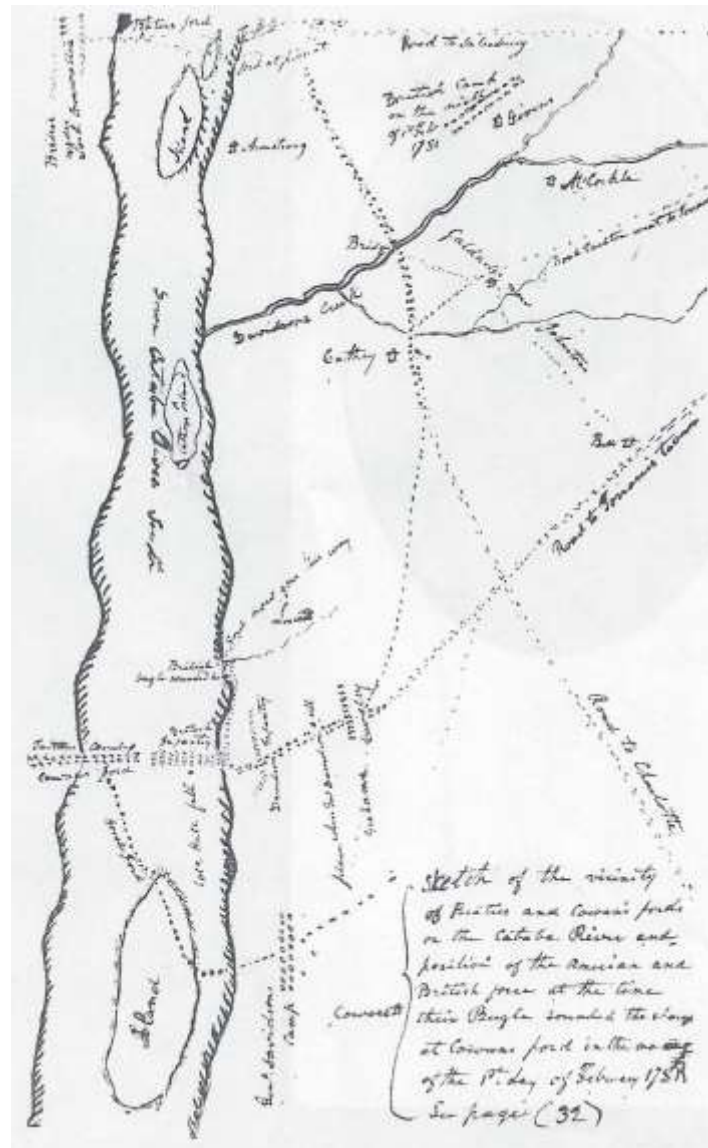
Cornwallis reported his casualties:

On our side Lieut. Colonel Hall and three men were killed and thirty-six wounded, all of the Light Infantry, and Grenadiers of the Guards. (Cornwallis 1781 in NCSR 1895, XVII:998)

However, the next day, Robert Henry found additional British bodies:

It was proposed that we would go to James Cunningham's fish-trap, and see if there were any fish in it. When we arrived at the trap, there were fourteen dead men lodged in it, several of whom appeared to have no wound, but had drowned. We pushed them into the water, they floated off, and went each to his own home. (Henry 1855 in Schenck 1891, 13)

About 1821, Joseph Graham drew a sketch of the ford and battleground. This evidence is significant because Graham participated in the battle and understood the importance of representing it correctly. It is the best evidence for the locating the historical ford and battleground.



Sketch of Cowan's Ford battle by Captain Joseph Graham, drawn about 1821
 North Carolina State Archives, Map Collection, Division of Archives and History
 (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 288) (Graham 1827 in Rankin 1976)

The large island on this sketch is believed to be the same island present today. No doubt, Graham drew this sketch with serious intent since he lived nearby, probably passed this location frequently, and was an accomplished citizen and brigadier general concerned about recording history accurately. His sketch can be compared with a modern satellite map that shows a dam crosses Cowan's Ford immediately south of the McGuire Nuclear Power Station.



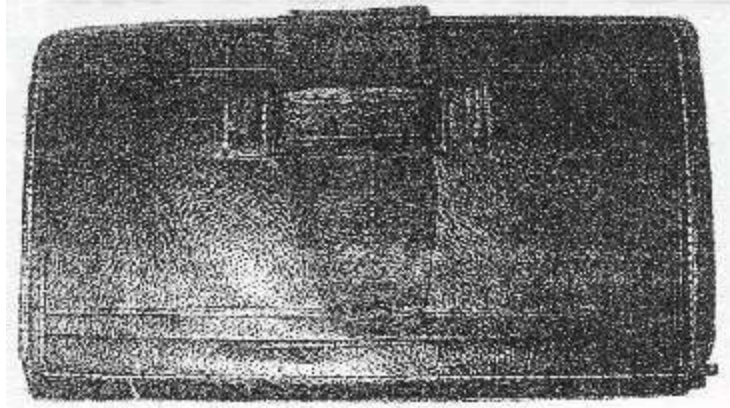
Cowan's Ford Battleground Area (Google Maps 2017)

The proportion of Graham's island's width to river width matches well the present-day island width. If the walking ford was approximately half an island's length upstream, then the historical Cowan's Ford, where the British crossed, was approximately at or just below where the dam is today. Not surprisingly, the dam's name is Cowan's Ford Dam. Exposed bedrock that made a natural shoal and a good ford also makes a good foundation for a heavy dam.

Paul Walters, surveyor in 1959 for *Duke Power Company*, indicates that he was told the historical Cowan's Ford crossed the island and then up the embankment near the present-day powerline cut. This ford was probably the "horse ford" marked on Graham's sketch. However, all descriptions of the British crossing do not mention traversing an island.

Since 1781, the name Cowan's Ford was applied to several physical fords. This has led to ambiguity on finding the location of the British crossing and battleground. Graham's 1821 sketch map indicated that the ford used at that time was farther upstream than the British crossing. Later maps from 1888, 1911, and 1949 showed Cowan's Ford farther downstream, on the 1949 map, near the present-day Highway NC73 bridge.

Davidson was killed at Cowan's Ford possibly by Tory guide Frederick Hager's rifle shot (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 294). British soldiers stripped Davidson's body and confiscated his wallet, containing a transcribed message from George Washington and orders from Nathanael Greene. The wallet was carried to England and ultimately stored in a British archive where it remained in obscurity until 1964 when rediscovered by Davidson's biographer Chalmers G. Davidson.



William Lee Davidson's Wallet

The battle noise was heard throughout the region, causing widespread panic. Graham reported:

The report of the artillery and platoons at Beattie's came down the river like repeated peals of thunder, as though it was within a mile, and was heard over the country to a distance of twenty-five miles. Although it had no effect on our troops engaged at Cowan's (for they acted well under the circumstances), yet it had a wonderful effect on the people on the adjacent country. Hitching up their teams in great haste, and packing up their most valuable goods and some means of substance, the men who were not in service and the women and children abandoned their homes and drove off in different directions. In one hour after the firing, the whole country appeared in motion, but unfortunately too many of them fled into the Salisbury road. (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 295–296)

Lieutenant Colonel William Polk, 1st cousin 8 generations removed of Arabelle Boyer, participated at Cowan's Ford.

On the morning of 1 February while at Oliphant's Mill, Greene wrote to Major General Isaac Huger, Colonel Charles McDowell, and Colonel Elijah Clarke (Greene 1781 in PNG 1997, VII:231–232). When word of the defeat reached Greene at Oliphant's Mill, he ordered a retreat. Morgan swiftly departed with his Continental Army light infantry, plus Washington's cavalry and the Virginia riflemen, for Salisbury. Sergeant Major William Seymour, of the Delaware Continentals, wrote:

We remained on this ground [Sherrill's Ford] till the first February, waiting the motion of the enemy, who this day crossed the river lower down than where we lay, and coming unawares on the militia commanded by Genl. Davidson, on which ensued a smart skirmish in which General Davidson was killed, and a great many more killed and wounded, upon which the militia retreated off in great disorder. We marched off this place for Salisbury on the evening of the first February, and continued our march all night in a very unpleasant condition, it having rained incessantly all night, which rendered the roads almost inaccessible. (Seymour 1781 in Seymour 1883, 295)

Later, Lieutenant Colonel John Eager Howard recalled:

Morgan did not leave the river until 10 or 11 o'clock on the 1st of February after it was known that the enemy had crossed and that Davidson had been defeated; then it was that Genl. Greene ordered the retreat. We marched all night in the rain & mud, and a most fatiguing march it was. We arrived at Colonel Locks 4 miles short of Salisbury at sun rise on the 2nd & halted to get dry and for the men who had fallen out of the ranks from fatigue, to come up. (Howard 1822)

While in route, Greene paused at David Carr's plantation to await any militiamen from the fords. He knew that Morgan's Continental Army Light Infantry was only a few hours ahead of Cornwallis's army. That evening, he wrote Major General Isaac Huger to, if possible, force march to Salisbury, otherwise to march up the east side of the Yadkin River.

The enemy crossed the Catawba this morning at M'Cowen's Ford, about seventeen miles below this, a little after break of day; they burnt a great number of their waggons yesterday, and seem to be preparing for forced marches. The militia is to assemble at Mr. David Carr's, where I shall remain to-night. I think the enemy will push for Salisbury; and from the rapidity with which they march will reach it in little better than a day, especially as we have little force to retard their march. If you have crossed the Yadkin and are in a condition to force a march, push for Salisbury. If not [in a condition to force a march for Salisbury], recross and come up the other side. And if you have not already crossed the river, move up the east side of the Yadkin. To have the baggage and stores secured is the next great object to the salvation of the troops. Let them be sent to Guilford, notwithstanding the order to transport it to the ford near Salisbury. Give orders to the waggon-master-general, or commanding officer of the guard with the baggage and stores, to impress all the horses they may require to hasten the march. Let the officers keep as little baggage with them as possible, as they may stand a great chance of losing it upon forced marches. Send orders to Lee to move up with his horse and leave his infantry in the rear to follow. Had we a superiority in horse the militia would be useful, but for want of it, they dare not go within miles of the enemy. Give orders to Colonel Wade, to have all his hogs collected at Rocky River driven off towards Guilford. (Johnson 1822, 1:422)

After crossing Cowan's Ford and dispersing the American defenders, Cornwallis ordered Tarleton's cavalry and the 23rd Regiment to pursue the escapist militiamen. Probably during early afternoon, Tarleton continued to Torrence's Tavern. Later, Cornwallis wrote:

I detached Lieut. Colonel Tarleton with the Cavalry and 23rd Regiment to pursue the routed Militia. A few were soon killed or taken and Lieut. Colonel Tarleton having learned that 3 or 400 of the neighboring Militia were to assemble that day at Tarrant's house, about ten miles from the ford. Leaving his Infantry he went on with the Cavalry and finding the Militia as expected, he with excellent conduct and great spirit, attacked them instantly and totally routed them, with little loss on his side; and on theirs between forty and fifty killed, wounded or prisoners. This stroke with our passage at the Ford so effectually dispirited the Militia that we met with no further opposition on our march to the Yadkin, through one of the most rebellious tracts in America. (Cornwallis 1781 in NCSR 1895, XVII:998)

Peter Forney, a Lincoln County resident, was with the guard posted at Beattie's Ford. On 31 October 1832, he [testified](#):

I volunteered as one to reconnoiter the encampment of the British while they lay three days at my father's plantation extending their lines on to a plantation which I occupied at that time. While they laid there they destroyed everything we possessed. After they moved from this position with the Main Army to Beatties Ford, I was one of those who took part on the opposite side, endeavoring to oppose what obstructions we were able to prevent their crossing and remained there until a part of the light troops had effected a passage at a bye ford four or five miles below at the ford called Cowan's Ford – and in effecting our retreat, two of the men with me were lost, one killed and the other taken prisoner – upon this I fled to the widow Torrence's being pursued by Tarlton's [sic, Tarleton's] troop of cavalry – at this place I found a considerable body of Militia, but in great confusion in consequence of the death of General [William Lee] Davidson who had been killed that morning by the British upon their crossing the River. Here our troops were utterly defeated and dispersed and I retreated across the Yadkin River and remained about Abbott's Creek about six weeks. (Forney, Peter, pension application 1832)

Peter Forney was a 2nd great-granduncle of George Shuford Ramsuer Sr.

Unknown to Tarleton, he was about 7 miles away from capturing Greene at David Carr's house (Johnson 1822, 1:416).

During the battle, Lieutenant Colonel James Webster with the 33rd Regiment and all the baggage wagons remained on the west side of Beattie's Ford. After the British secured the opposite bank, these units crossed, a process that took the remainder of the day.

Rebels having quitted Beattie's Ford, Lieut. Colonel Webster was passing his detachment and the Baggage of the Army, this had become tedious and difficult by the continuance of the rain and the swelling of the River, but all joined us soon after dark, about six miles from Beattie's Ford. (Cornwallis 1781 in NCSR 1895, XVII:998–999)

On the evening of 1 February, Davidson's body was recovered by Richard Barry and David Wilson (Sommerville 1939, 196, 253). Since the presence of British troops made it impossible to move his body to his home church Centre Presbyterian Church, his body was buried in Hopewell Presbyterian Church Cemetery.



William Lee Davidson Grave
Hopewell Presbyterian Church Cemetery, 1920

After Davidson death, on about 11 February, the field officers of the Salisbury District militia temporarily placed themselves under the command of Brigadier General Andrew Pickens (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 203) who had been recently promoted on 25 January for his conduct at Cowpens. Major Joseph Dickson, who commanded Lincoln County cavalrymen, joined Pickens.

In 1959, Paul Walters rediscovered the neglected Davidson monument erected in 1923 by E. L. Baxter Davidson. It was located near the top of embankment about 1500 feet from the river.



Brigadier General William Lee Davidson Monument
Erected by E. L. Baxter Davidson, 1923, and moved 1959 and 1971.

On 17 May 1931, the *Charlotte Observer* published an article about this monument and the condition of the old road.

Where Davidson Fell

As the British reached the shore they filed off to the left and loaded their pieces, beginning a brisk fire upon the Americans. When a sufficient number had crossed [the Catawba River] they loaded their muskets and crept the bluff, dragging their muskets behind them. Perceiving this the Americans fell back, but when the British reached the top of the bluff they delivered such a heavy fire upon the Americans that they were forced to fall back even further. General William Davidson was shot through the heart with a bullet from a small caliber rifle, believed to have been fired by the British guide who lived near the river, Frederick Hager, a Tory

The spot where General Davidson fell is now designated by a large stone marker with a bronze tablet on it, erected by E. L. Baxter Davidson, great-grandson of Major John Davidson [owner of Rural Hill], kinsman of the general's. The marker is partly surrounded by briars and is very difficult to find, because it is just off the old, abandoned road that led to the ford.

This old road is rather picturesque. It enters the woods about three hundred yards above the river and goes down toward the river with the high bluffs rising gradually on the right and the deep ravine dropping off on the left. The road is sunken deep with the wear of many years of use, and although abandoned for more than 15 years no vegetation yet has had the hardihood to grow where the feet of thousands of travelers, horses and the soldiers of the king tramped. On each side of the road big hickory trees rise and during the fall the ground is littered by the shells dropped by the squirrels.

On the main Beatty's Ford road is another stone marker erected by E. L. Baxter Davidson pointing the way toward the ford. (Adams 1931)

Beginning about 1959 when the Cowan's Ford Dam was planned, Duke Power collected information about historical sites that would be inundated by the new lake. Many graveyards were relocated. Some

archeology may have been conducted near the dam site. If any battle artifacts were discovered, they are not commonly known about among Mecklenburg County historians and were not mentioned in the dedication of a new monument in 1971 (Pierce 1971).

On 1 February 1971, Duke Power President William Bulgin McGuire officiated at the dedication of a new monument to Brigadier General William Lee Davidson. The text on the monument was written by historian Chalmers G. Davidson who indicated that “The exact spot [of Davidson’s death] is now under water near the east end of the dam.” (Pierce 1971)

Order of Battle

At the time of the battle, sunrise on 1 February 1781, the order of battle was:

British Forces, Lieutenant General Charles Earl Cornwallis

At Beattie’s Ford:

- Webster’s Brigade, Lieutenant Colonel James Webster, 234
- 33rd Regiment, Captain Frederick Cornwallis, 234
- British Legion, 160
 - Infantry Battalion, Captain Lochlan McDonald, 160
- Jaegers, Captain Wilhelm Friedrich von Roeder, 84
- Royal North Carolina Regiment, Lieutenant Colonel John Hamilton, 120
- Royal Artillery, 36
 - 1st Section, Lieutenant John McLeod, 18, 6-pounders, 2
 - 2nd Section, Lieutenant Augustus O’Hara, 18, 6-pounders, 2
- Half the Corps of Pioneers
- Baggage wagons

At Cowan’s Ford:

- Brigade of Guards, Brigadier General Charles O’Hara, 690
 - 1st Battalion, Lieutenant Colonel Chapple Norton, 170
 - 2nd Battalion, Lieutenant Colonel James Stuart, 170
 - Guards Light Infantry Company, Captain John Goodricke, 80
 - Guards Grenadier Company, Captain William Home, 80
- Webster’s Brigade, 238
 - 23rd Regiment, Captain Thomas Peter, 238
- Leslie’s Brigade, Major General Alexander Leslie, 565
 - 71st Regiment, 2nd Battalion, Captain Robert Hutcheson, 244
 - Regiment von Bose, Major Johann Du Buy, 321
- British Legion, Lieutenant Colonel Banastre Tarleton, 160
 - Cavalry Battalion, Captain David Kinlock, 160
- Royal Artillery, 12
 - Royal Artillery, 3rd Section, Lieutenant John Smith, 12, 3-pounders, 2
- Half the Corps of Pioneers

American Forces, Brigadier General William Lee Davidson

At Island Ford:

- South Carolina Militia, Brigadier General Andrew Pickens, 200

At Sherrill’s Ford:

- Continental Army Light Infantry, Brigadier General Daniel Morgan, 300

At Beattie’s Ford:

- Orange County Militia, Colonel Thomas Farmer, 200

At Cowan's Ford:

- Western (Salisbury) NC District Militia, Brigadier General William Lee Davidson
 - Mecklenburg County Militia, Lieutenant Thomas Davidson, 20
 - Mecklenburg County Militia, Major William Polk, 100
 - Mecklenburg County Militia Cavalrymen, Captain Joseph Graham, 50
 - Rowan County Militia, Colonel Francis Locke, 100

At Toole's Ford:

- Mecklenburg County Militia, Captain Jonathan Potts, 70

At Tuckasegee Ford:

- Surry County Militia, Colonel John Williams, 200
- Lincoln County Militia, Major John Carruth, 60

2-5 February 1781, Withdrawal to Trading Ford, Salisbury

From the Catawba River both armies probably traveled the ridge road towards Salisbury and Trading Ford. Today, that road follows the shoreline of Lake Norman to Cornelius, joins Statesville Road, NC115, to north of Mooresville, continues on Mazeppa Road and Rowan Mills Road, NC801, to US29 and Salisbury.

Until early morning on 2 February 1781, Major General Nathanael Greene remained at David Carr's house:

I waited that night at the place appointed for the Militia to collect at untill morning, but not a man appeared. (Greene 1781 in PNG 1997, 7:266)

Later that day in Salisbury, Greene joined the army of Brigadier General Daniel Morgan. He ordered Major General Isaac Huger to march the main Continental Army directly to Guilford Courthouse (Johnson 1822, 1:422). That evening, Greene is alleged to have visited the tavern of Elizabeth Maxwell Steele who offered her gold and silver coins for the American cause.



Major General Nathanael Greene at Elizabeth Steele's Tavern, Salisbury, North Carolina
Artist unknown.

The next day, it marched to Trading Ford on the Yadkin River. The river water was high and un-fordable. But Greene had anticipated such problems two months before. On 3 February, boats ferried his 1800 men and supplies to the east side. During this operation, a rear guard of 100 Virginia riflemen and North Carolina militiamen, positioned a half mile back, turned back a vanguard of 800 British. On 4 February, Cornwallis's 2100-man army arrived at Trading Ford as the American army began its march towards Guilford Courthouse. Without boats, The British could not attack. They set up artillery pieces on the bluff called *Heights of Gowerie* and shelled the opposite shore with no effect. Today, Trading Ford can be seen as the island to the east while driving across highway I85 bridge over Yadkin River.



Trading Ford historical marker.
Greene's army crossed on 3 February 1781

On 15 August 1832, John Moore of Rowan County [testified](#) how the Americans disabled the boats at Trading Ford:

General Morgan came to his father's in person being an old acquaintance of his father; when he states he joined General Morgan and was attached to Captain Washington's Company of General Morgan's Riflemen, he states he was marched on with General Morgan and belonged to the Regiment at the battle of the Cowpens – he states he was attached to the guard who guarded the prisoners from the Cowpens to the Yadkin River at the old trading ford, he states that at that place the Americans sunk the flatboat by boring holes through her bottom after the prisoners were set out and waiting [sic, weighing] her down with rocks; he states that the British who were in pursuit of them made their appearance on the opposite bank of the river in a short time, he states it was in the night, and bright moonlight, and at the place Morgan formed his men for action and gave his men to understand that from the superior numbers of the Enemy, he after giving them one or two discharges from their rifles he General Morgan would necessarily have to retreat. (Moore 1832)

Although having lost at Cowan's Ford and withdrawing, Greene planned future actions. On 3 February, he wrote to Baron von Steuben:

If the Enemy distress us in this State, I am not without hopes of giving them trouble in their rear; and Shall take measures to this purpose, with Generals Sumter, Marion and Pickens. O that we had in the field as Henry the Fifth said, some few of the many thousands that are Idle at Home. I am dear Baron

Your Most Obedt humble Sr
Nath Greene (Greene 1781 in PNG 1997, VII:243)

This revealed something of Greene's mindset. Although under extreme stress, he formed an analogy from literature by paraphrasing from William Shakespeare's [King Henry V, Act IV, Scene iii](#): Earl of Westmorland: "O that we now had here but one ten thousand of those men in England that do no work to-day!"

On 4 February, Greene, in a letter to Huger, summarized Cornwallis's options:

How is it possible, that an army, circumstanced as our's is, can make head against one organized and equipped as Lord Cornwallis'? Is it possible to guard against every misfortune with a force so inferior? If Lord Cornwallis knows his true interest, he will pursue our army. If he can disperse that, he completes the reduction of this state, and without that, he will do nothing to effect. (Johnson 1822, 1:413–421)

From Trading Ford, Cornwallis's army backtracked 7 miles to Salisbury and waited for the river level to subside. While there, British soldiers, perhaps some wounded at Cowan's Ford, were buried in what was later called *Old English Cemetery*. Graves almost certainly included British prisoners who died while being held in Salisbury since 1780.



Old English Cemetery
Salisbury, North Carolina

6–14 February 1781, Race to Dan River

On 6 February, Cornwallis ordered his army upstream to Shallow Ford, a 40-mile detour. There on 8 February, it crossed the Yadkin River. That same day, both parts of the American Army rejoined at Guilford Courthouse. Greene positioned light troops in the rear to screen movements of the main American Army. Lieutenant Colonel Edward Carrington arranged that Dan River flatboats were concentrated at Boyd's and Irwin's Ferries.

On 13 February, the American army camped at Hugh Dobbin's plantation. The following evening, the British army camped there. That location is very close to the land owned by the Powell Family. In 1857, Emily Caroline Powell married Levi Whitted IV.

During the day, 14 February, the American Army crossed at Irwin's Ferry. That is near where Country-Line Creek joins the Dan River (Tarleton 1787, 229). That night, the light troop successfully crossed just as the British Army van arrived (Moultrie 1802, II:264). Thus, Cornwallis lost this "race to the Dan." He was more than 250 miles from Charlestown and low on supplies. Greene stationed his army in Virginia at Halifax County Courthouse. Virginia Governor Thomas Jefferson granted Greene extralegal power to seize horses from Virginia farmers (H. F. Rankin 1976, 57). Tarleton later acknowledged American success when he wrote:

Every measure of the Americans, during their march from the Catawba to Virginia, was judiciously designed and vigorously executed. The British proceeded without intermission to Boyd's ferry, where they found some works evacuated, which had been constructed to cover the retreat of the enemy, who six hours before had finished their passage, and were then encamped on the opposite bank. (Tarleton 1787, 229).

On 18 February, Lee's Legion, two Continental companies, re-crossed the Dan River and united with Brigadier General Andrew Pickens now commanding the North Carolina Western District militia.

On 19 February, Cornwallis's army camped at Armstrong Plantation (Cornwallis 1781, 414) 8 miles from Hillsborough (Dunaway and Bright 2009, 103).

The Armstrong who owned this plantation could be from the family that intermarried with the Anderson, Mebane, Tinnin, and Faucett families who all lived north or west of Hillsborough.

February 1781, Cornwallis in Hillsborough, Hart's Mill

Cornwallis went to Hillsborough where on 20 February 1781, he issued a proclamation for loyalist support (Tarleton 1787, 256).

By the Right Honourable Charles Earl Cornwallis, Lieutenant-general of His Majesty's forces, &c.

A PROCLAMATION.

WHEREAS it has pleased the Divine Providence to prosper the operations of His Majesty's arms, in driving the rebel army out of this province; and whereas it is His Majesty's most gracious wish to rescue his faithful and loyal subjects from the cruel tyranny under which they have groaned for many years, I have thought proper to issue this proclamation, to invite all such faithful and loyal subjects to repair, without loss of time, with their arms and ten days provisions, to the royal standard now erected at Hillsborough, where they will meet with the most friendly reception : And I do hereby assure them, that I am ready to concur with them in effectual measures for suppressing the remains of rebellion in this province, and for the reestablishment of good order and constitutional government.

GIVEN under my hand, at head quarters, at Hillsborough, this twentieth day of February, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty one, and in the twenty-first year of His Majesty's reign.

CORNWALLIS

By his lordship's command,
H. Brodrick, Aid-de-camp.

GOD save the KING!

On 21 February, Cornwallis ordered that the Kings Standard be raised in Hillsborough. The ceremony occurred the next day. The Kings Standard was a symbol of the King's presence, actual or figurative. Its quadrants represented the King's claim to the crowns of England and Scotland united, France, Ireland, and Hanover. Although the monarchy lost France in the 1430s, it did not renounce that claim until 1801.

One Off^r & 20 Men with all the Bat Horses of the Brigade to be at the Artillery park at 10 oClock. All Officers & Men of the Guards & of L^t Inf^{ty} Comp^{ys} on duty to be immediately reliev'd & the Men get themselves Clean & ready to March by 12 oClock this day, in order to Attend the Ceremony of Hoisting the Kings Standard in Hillsborough at one oClock. two Additional Off^{rs} will be posted to those Companies for this day.
(Cornwallis 1781 in Newsome 1932, 4:372)



Kings Standard as of 1781

While in Hillsborough, the British may have seized control of Faucette's Mill, which was 1 mile upstream of Hart's Mill. This mill was owned by a Richard Faucett, a Whitted-related 6th great-grandfather. It was purchased in 1768 and transferred to son David Faucett in 1792.

After the death of Brigadier General William Davidson on 1 February, the Mecklenburg County and Rowan County militia were temporarily placed under the command of Brigadier General Andrew Pickens who having delivered the British prisoners from Cowpens, was left behind in the race to the Dan River (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 203). He was in and around the Yadkin River. When Pickens learned of Cornwallis's advance to Hillsborough, he moved to a mill on Back Creek or Stony Creek 12 or 15 miles from Hillsborough (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 203). Since Stony Creek is at least 18 miles from Hillsborough, the mill must have been on Back Creek. This confusion is repeated where Graham wrote, "a mill on Stoney Creek, ten miles from Hillsboro" (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 313). On 21 February, Pickens ordered Captain Joseph Graham, Mecklenburg County cavalry, and Captain Richard Simmons, Rowan County militia, as follows:

YOU will proceed down the road towards Hillsboro with the greatest caution and circumspection. If you find any detachment of the enemy out, inferior to your own, attack them. If you discover a larger party beyond supporting distance from their main army, and you can keep yourself concealed, give me notice, and I will come or send an additional force to assist you. But if you ascertain you are discovered by a larger party of the enemy return immediately. In any event, return early in the morning; for they will then hear of you from the inhabitants of the country. If I move from this place you will find my trail up the west side of this creek and may join me by ten o'clock to-morrow. (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 203–204)

On 22 February, Graham and Simmons attacked the British guard at Hart's Mill on the Eno River, 2 miles west of Hillsborough. In 1827, Graham wrote:

The party set out between sunset and dark. After proceeding several miles on the Hillsboro road, and when it was fully dark, met Robert Fawsett (usually called, as I understood, mad Bob), and another person, whose name is not remembered. They were direct from Hillsboro, and gave us the first information of a picket at Hart's mill, supposed to be about thirty in number. We determined to attack them at light in the morning. ... Fawcett at first thought we were a party of the enemy. We compelled him to be our pilot. If he is yet living, I would beg leave to refer you to him for subsequent events. In the morning, when we approached the picket, their sentry fired; and a sergeant and file of men came immediately to his support. Simmons and his riflemen dismounting and tying their horses, the sergeant and party fired in the direction of the noise, for they could not see us. Maj. Lewis, myself and six others crossed into the road leaning towards Mebane's and charged down this road after the sergeant and party, who ran, until we came within sight of the picket. Maj. Lewis then suggested to me the advantage the riflemen might have, by passing to the right, under cover of the hill, until they should be masked by some out buildings (I think a stable and smithshop). We instantly returned and

gave Capt. Simmons his instructions, and the cavalry moved off to the left, through an old field, above where buildings have since been erected, in order to attract the attention and fire of the enemy, until the riflemen should gain their destined positions. The plan succeeded as we expected. Owing to the great distance, the cavalry sustained no damage from the enemy's fire; and as soon as the riflemen, at the distance of only fifty or sixty yards, in their concealed position, had discharged their pieces at the picket, the cavalry charged, and the whole, consisting of twenty-seven men, were instantly killed or taken. (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 204–205)

In 1827, Graham also wrote:

The two command set out at dark, and before going three miles met two men coming from Hillsboro, who gave them information of the British army at that place, its position and headquarters, and that a guard of twenty men was at Hart's Mill, on the Eno, a mile and a half on this side, which was kept grinding for the army. After answering the questions put to them, they were for proceeding, but one of the men [Robert Faucett] was told that his examiners were Americans, and that he must act as their guide. He suffered some abuse before he would consent. (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 313–314)

Robert Fawcett who guided Graham to Hart's Mill was possibly Robert Faucett, 1720–1786, an Anderson-related 6th great-grandfather, or his son Robert who both lived on Back Creek. There is no known relation between these Robert Faucetts and Richard Faucett, owner of Faucette's Mill on Eno River.

February 1781, Pyle's Defeat

In response to Cornwallis's proclamation of 20 February, at least 200 loyalists assembled between Deep River and Haw River under the leadership of Colonel John Pyle, a well-respected medical doctor from Chatham County. Tarleton later wrote:

Notwithstanding the indifference or the terror of the loyalist was visible at Hillsborough, Earl Cornwallis entertained hopes of receiving reinforcements from the inhabitants between the Haw and the Deep River. On the 23rd [February] Lieutenant-colonel Tarleton was detached with two hundred cavalry, one hundred and fifty men of Col. Webster's brigade, and one hundred yagers, to give countenance to the friends of government in that district : A family of the name of Pyle had made preparation for an insurrection in that quarter, and had communicated their intentions to Earl Cornwallis, who assured them that a British force should be sent to give them protection whilst they assembled, and at the same time requested them to march to Hillsborough, or to Lieutenant-colonel Tarleton's corps, as soon as they had collected a body. (Tarleton 1787, 231–232)

Lieutenant Colonel Henry Lee joined forces with Brigadier General Anthony Pickens and proceeded towards Hillsborough.

Sometime in late February or early March 1781, about 10 of General Pickens' men appeared at the home of Alexander Mebane II. Only his wife Mary and children were home. One soldier, not realizing the Mebane's were patriots, drew a pistol and threatened to shoot Mary if she did disclose her husband's whereabouts. She replied that Alexander was where he ought to be, in General Greene's camp. She then gave the men food. They ate it sitting on their horses and departed (Caruthers 1854, 360).

On 24 February, near Mebane's plantation, they learned that a large British detachment was sent towards the Haw River. Lee wrote later that day:

About 12 O'clock Col Pickens & myself in our march towards Hillsborough were joined by Col William Moore, from whom we learnt that a body of the enemy were advanced to the Haw Fields. Every intelligence of their numbers & conduct indicated them to be a foraging party. We immediately drove across to the Salisbury road in the rear of the enemy. (Lee 1781 in PNG 1997)

The British detachment had plundered all the houses on the road, known, as they were, to be the property of patriots, and symbols of devastation marked their steps. (H. Lee 1812, 307)

It was presumable that we should come up with them at Gen John Butler's farm which was said to be their object. We gained this point at 4 in the afternoon, where we discovered that their numbers were respectable, their objects extensive, & their commander Lt. Col Tarleton. We also found that they had crossed the Haw River & were told they were to encamp for the night at a Mr. Holts 4 miles on the western side of the river where they were to be joined during the night by large body of enlisted Carolinians (Lee 1781 in PNG 1997).

By what could be gathered from report, and judging by the time of passing house, it appeared that most of the [enemy] cavalry, two light brass pieces, and four hundred infantry, composed the detachment (H. Lee 1812, 307)

Soon after we crossed the [Haw] river, which was fordable, a countryman was discovered by the cavalry [who stated that Tarleton was] encamped within three miles of us about noon; that his horses were unsaddled. (H. Lee 1812, 307)

When arriving within a few hundred yards of the expected theatre of glory, the farm and house were seen, but no enemy. The van of the horse galloping to the house brought off two of the enemy's staff, which had been delayed in the settling for the subsistence of the detachment; and hearing from the family that Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton would not advance above six miles further, Pickens and Lee instantly proceeded toward him, hoping that fortune would be more propitious upon the next occasion. (H. Lee 1812, 307)

By Pyle's lucky occupation of the right side of the road it became necessary for Lee to pass along the whole line of loyalist before he could reach their colonel; and thus to place his column of horse in the most eligible situation for any vicissitude. Their rifles and fowling pieces were on their shoulders, their muzzles consequently in an opposite direction to the cavalry. In the event of discovery, they must have changed the direction before they could fire — a motion not to be performed, with a body of dragoons close in their horses' heads and their swords drawn. (H. Lee 1812, 307)

Lee passed along the line at the head of the column with a smiling countenance, dropping, occasionally, expressions complimentary to the good looks and commendable conduct of his loyal friends. At length he reached Colonel Pyle, when the customary civilities were promptly interchanged. Grasping Pyle by the hand, Lee was in the act of consummating his plan, when the enemy's left, discovering Pickens's militia, not sufficiently concealed. (H. Lee 1812, 307)

Captain Joseph Graham unit followed Lee's Legion and witnessed how the fighting began.

At the time the action commenced, Lee's dragoons, in the open order of march, extended about the same distance as Pyle's men, who were in close order, and on horse-back. Most of them having come from home on that day, were clean, like men who now turn out for review. Lee's movement was as if he was going to pass them, five or six steps on the left of their line. (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 319)

On coming within twenty steps of them, Captain Graham discovered the mistake; for he saw that these men had on cleaner clothes than [Joseph] Dickson's party, and that each man had a strip of red cloth on his hat. Graham, riding alongside of Captain Eggleston, who commanded the rear of Lee's horse, remarked to him, "That is a company of Tories; what is the reason they have their arms?" Captain Eggleston, addressing a good looking man at the end of the line, supposed to be an officer, inquired, "To whom do you belong?" The man promptly answered, "A friend of his Majesty." Thereupon Captain

Eggleston struck him over the head. The [American] militia looking on, and waiting for orders, on this example being set, rushed on the Tories like lightning and cut away. The noise in the rear attracted the notice of Lee's men, and they turned their horses short to the right about, and in less than a minute the attack was made along the whole line. (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 318–319)

Lee wrote:

The conflict was quickly decided, and bloody on one side only. Ninety of the royalist were killed, and most of the survivors wounded, Dispersing in every direction, not being pursued, they escaped. (H. Lee 1812, 307)

Graham continued:

Some Catawba Indians under Captain Oldham, who did not overtake us until the close of the action with Pyle. To our discredit, it may be stated, when the Indians came up, they were suffered to kill seven or eight wounded men with spears before they were made to desist. (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 320)

At the close of the action, the troops were scattered, mixed and completely disorganized. General Pickens and Colonel Lee gave repeated order to form, but the confusion was such that their orders were without effect. These officers appeared sensible of the delicate situation that they were in. If Tarleton, who was only two or three miles off, with nearly an equal force, had come upon them at this juncture, the result must have been disastrous. (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 321)

Graham wrote that Lee:

[Lee] ordered one of his sergeants to go directly back and get a guide from among the Tories and bring him forward without delay. The sergeant in a short time returned with a middle-aged man, who had received a slight wound on his head, and who was bleeding freely. His name was [John or Michael (Dunaway and Bright 2009, 39)] Holt, and he lived near that place. The sergeant apologized to his Colonel because he could find none who were not wounded. Lee asked the prisoner several questions relative to the roads, farms, water courses, etc.; how O'Neal's plantation (where Tarleton then was) was situated; whether open woods, hilly or level, etc. (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 321)

After answering the several questions, and after an interval of about a minute, while Lee appeared to be meditation the man addressed him, "Well, God bless your soul Mr. Tarleton you have this day killed a parcel of us good subjects as ever his Majesty had." Lee, who at this time was not in the humor for quizzing, interrupted him saying, "You d—d rascal, if you call me Tarleton, I will take off your head. I will undeceive you : we are the Americans and not the British. I am Lee of the American Legion, and not Tarleton" The poor fellow appeared thunderstruck. (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 321–322)

The next day out militia counted ninety-three dead, and there was the appearance of many more having been carried off by their friends. There were certainly many more wounded. When Lee and Pickens retired, it appeared as though three hundred might be lying dead. Many, perhaps, were only wounded, and lay quiet for security. (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 321–322)

Tarleton's British Legion was camped 3 miles from the battleground. Tarleton later wrote:

In the course of the day [24 February] particular and authentic information was obtained of Colonel Lee's cavalry having passed Haw River to meet a corps of mountaineers under Colonel [William] Preston, for the purpose of intimidating or dispersing the King's

friends. This report made Tarleton repeat his order to the Pyles for an instant junction of the number already assembled, that he might proceed against either Lee or Preston before they united. Spies were sent to gain intelligence of both, and some satisfactory accounts had arrived, when several wounded loyalist entered the British camp, and complained to Tarleton of the cruelty of his dragoons. Though the accusation was erroneous, their sufferings were evident, and the cause from whence they proceeded was soon afterwards discovered. Colonel Pyle, and two hundred of his followers, being all equally ignorant of the customs of war, had not complied with the orders they received, and though forewarned of their danger, thought fit to pay visits to their kindred and acquaintance before they repaired to the British camp : Inspired by whiskey and the novelty of their situation, they unfortunately prolonged their excursions, till, meeting a detachment of dragoons, whom they supposed to be British, they received a fierce and unexpected attack, in answer to their amicable salutations of “God save the King,” and many of them experienced inhuman barbarity; when discovering their mistake, they supplicated for mercy. Patrols were sent out to learn the course the American dragoons had taken after this event, and assistance was dispatched to the wounded loyalists. After dark information was procured of the distance and position of the mountaineers; and when the British troops were under arms at midnight, to proceed towards their encampment, an express arrived from Earl Cornwallis with an order for Lieutenant-colonel Tarleton’s return to Hillsborough. (Tarleton 1787, 232–233)

In this account, Tarleton ignored his option to continue along the Salisbury Road until joining Pyle, an action that would have avoided the resulting catastrophe.

British historian, Charles Stedman, wrote, “Humanity shudders at the recital of so foul a massacre: But cold and unfeeling policy avows it as the most effectual means of intimidating the friends of royal government.” (Stedman 1794, 2:334). On 26 February, American commander Brigadier General Andrew Pickens wrote from Dickey Mill, near Stony Creek, “This affair [Pyle’s Defeat] however, has been infinite service. It has knocked up Toryism altogether in this part.” (Pickens 1781 in PNG 1997)

British archives show 32 injured loyalists at a Wilmington hospital during April 1781 (Troxler and Vincent 1999, 129:footnote 14). A James Anderson could have been 4th great-granduncle James Anderson, 1731–1802, or he could have been unrelated. He was almost certainly not 4th great-grandfather James Anderson, 1768–1850, who was 12 years old at that time. Joseph Holt could have been Joseph S. Holt, born 1755, son of 5th great-granduncle Michael Holt II. John Tinnen could have been 6th great-granduncle John Tinnin Junior, 1719–1800. But this seems unlikely since his son was Colonel Hugh Tinnin. After the war, John was an Eno Presbyterian Church elder. Robert Tinnen could have been 6th great-granduncle Robert Tinnin, 1726–1797, or his son Robert Junior, 1763–1835. Hospital patients John and Thomas Bryant could be John Bryan, born 1730, and Thomas Bryan, born 1735. These were brothers of loyalist Colonel Samuel Bryan, famous for escaping down the Yadkin/Pee Dee River from Rutherford and Davidson and fighting at the Battle of Hanging Rock in 1780.

March 1781, Clapp’s Mill, Weitzel’s Mill

After Weitzel’s Mill, Pickens was angry that Lieutenant Colonel Otho Williams put his men a high risk. Pickens withdrew his men, including the North Carolina Western District Militia, and marched home. Thus these men did not participate at Guilford Courthouse on 15 March. In 1827, Graham wrote:

It was acknowledged by all in service that from Tarleton’s defeat [Cowpens] until the battle of Guilford there was not a more active campaign in the whole war, and it is evident from the foregoing facts, that six or seven hundred of the North Carolina militia under the command of Gen. Andrew Pickens, of South Carolina, had their full share and more of the dangers to be encountered, and privations to be endured (which they did without a murmur of complaint, except as to the position in which some of them had been placed at Whitsell’s Mills), and, it may be further stated, without expectation of pay; for at that time the state of our currency was such that a month’s pay would not purchase a half pint of whiskey. There is one circumstance which ought not to be forgotten, that

notwithstanding the wet and inclement season, and that, as has been observed, the men were without shelter, were frequently wet, sometimes sleeping in wet clothes, marched whole nights without sleep, were irregularly supplied with provisions, sometimes bordering on starvation, and when provisions were obtained these often badly prepared, yet, under all these difficulties and hardships, it has since been often remarked that there was not a single case of indisposition or sickness among the militia during the whole campaign. As it is generally believed there is no effect without an adequate cause, it is submitted to the consideration of medical gentlemen whether the state of mind and excitement produced thereby did no operate as a stimulant and have a large share in producing such a degree of health as is above stated. It is well known that in common the same number of men when furnished with the best camp equipage and provisions, especially when lately from their homes, are subject to many diseases, even when only required to perform ordinary camp duty. (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 349–350)

[Thomas Byrd](#), an Anderson-related 5th great-grandfather, was a private in a company of Orange County militia dragoons under Captain Elliott during this time period. (Byrd, Thomas, pension application 1837).

March 1781, Guilford Courthouse

Greene knew he could not evade Cornwallis indefinitely, but believed delay served him. On 10 March, he wrote:

Hitherto I have been obliged to practice that by finesse which I dare not attempt by force. I know the People have been in anxious suspense, waiting the event of an Action [battle], but be the consequence of Censure what it may, nothing shall hurry me into a Measure that is not Suggested by prudence or connects not with it the interest of the southern [Army] department.

On 14 March, Greene, with new militia reinforcements, selected an advantageous battlefield near Guilford Courthouse. Cornwallis could not ignore a 4000-man American Army that could depose all British interests. He later wrote:

I was determined to fight the Rebel Army if it approached me, being convinced that it would be impossible to succeed in that great object of our arduous Campaign—the calling forth the numerous loyalists of North Carolina—whilst a doubt remained on their minds of the superiority of our Arms.

So, Cornwallis attacked on 15 March. Greene used the three-line formation that succeeded at Cowpens. The first and second of three lines were comprised of North Carolina and Virginia militia riflemen respectively. Most were Scotch-Irish farmers.

[Lieutenant David Mitchell](#), later husband of Ann Anderson a 4th great-grandaunt, participated at Guilford Courthouse as described in his brother [William Mitchell's pension application](#) (Mitchell, William, pension application 1832) (Mitchell, Ann Anderson, pension application 1843).

[Samuel Allen](#) and his brother [William Allen](#), both Anderson-related 1st cousins 6 generations removed, participated at Guilford Courthouse.

[Robert Tinnin](#), an Anderson-related 1st cousin 7 generations removed, participated at Guilford Courthouse among the North Carolina militiamen (Tinnin, Robert, pension application 1832).

During this time, [Joseph McLane](#), an Anderson-related 1st cousin 7 generations removed, guarded prisoners at Troublesome Creek. Afterwards he marched with Greene's army after the retreating Cornwallis's army (McLane, Joseph, pension application 1832).

Colonel Elias Alexander, a McGuire-related 2nd cousin 7 generations removed, allegedly participated at Guilford Courthouse. By tradition, he also participated in Kings Mountain and Cowpens. Unfortunately, his

unit is not known, and to the author's knowledge, no single unit participated in all three battles. Even those units that participated in two battles were not from Elias Alexander's home county.

In February 1781, Colonel Thomas Polk was ordered by Major General Nathanael Greene to call up 500 riflemen (H. F. Rankin 1971, 286).

Captain William Bethell, a Motley-related 4th great-grandfather, was in the Guilford County militia. By tradition, he participated at Guilford Courthouse (Rodenbough 1983, 332).

In the late 1800s, a public effort attempted to preserve the Guilford Courthouse battleground. Joseph Motley Morehead headed this effort as President of Guilford Battleground Company. His statue is near the Nathanael Greene monument. He was son of Congressman James Turner Morehead, who was brother of North Carolina Governor John Motley Morehead. More information about Governor Morehead appears below.

In 1893, North Carolina Governor Thomas Michael Holt dedicated the monument to Major Joseph Winston. Holt's name is inscribed on the monument. More information about Governor Holt appears below.

British losses were severe, nearly 600 casualties out of 2000 professional soldiers. Nonetheless, technically, it was British victory since Americans made an orderly retreat and withdrew to Speedwell Iron Works on Troublesome Creek near Reidsville. British losses persuaded Cornwallis that rebellion in upstate North Carolina and Virginia was insuppressible. Nathanael Greene's sophisticated strategy prevailed against the best-trained and equipped soldiers in the world. (Babits and Howard 2009).

Cornwallis moved his army to Snow Camp, North Carolina, on Cane Creek where for two days and nights he commandeered Quaker Simon Dixon's home. According to Dixon-family tradition, Simon Dixon escaped and stayed at Lieutenant Colonel Robert Mebane's home in Hawfields. British soldiers consumed Dixon's sheep, cattle, and burned his fences. When Simon Dixon returned to his devastated farm, he soon contracted disease and died.

Afterwards, Cornwallis's army withdrew to Ramsey's Mill on Deep River. Greene's army followed.

[Robert Tinnin](#), an Anderson-related 1st cousin 7 generations removed, was in Greene's army at Ramsey's Mill. From there his unit returned to Hillsborough was discharged (Tinnin, Robert, pension application 1832).

March–April 1781, Cornwallis to Wilmington, Hobkirt Hill

Between 16 February 1781 and about 9 March, Brigadier General Sumter, who had recovered from his wounds at Blackstock's, marched with his men to rescue his wife Mary and son Tom from their home in the High Hills of the Santee. When they returned to Mecklenburg County, the family resided in the house of John Barnett, south of Charlotte, (Godey 1856) (Bass 1961, 135) and then moved into the vacated house of Ezekiel Polk (Godey 1856).

On 22 March 1781, Greene appointed Colonel Thomas Polk to succeed Pickens as Salisbury District militia commander. Greene promoted Polk to acting brigadier general subject to final approval of the North Carolina government (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 351) (Polk in Hoyt 1914, II:407) (W. M. Polk 1915, 30–31) (H. F. Rankin 1971, 286). Polk feared that Cornwallis might march towards Camden through Salisbury and Charlotte. Consequently, he called up the district militia (Graham 1827 in W. A. Graham 1904b, 351). On 25 March 1781, Lincoln County militia was embodied. Captain Samuel Espey led a company that included Sergeant Abraham Forney (Forney, Abraham, pension application 1832). They marched from Lincoln County to Tuckasegee Ford (Kincaid, Robert, pension application 1833) to Charlotte and along Lawyer's Road to Matthew Stewart's farm on Goose Creek (Alexander, Elijah, pension application 1832) (Hunter 1877, 117). That company joined Colonel, acting as Brigadier General, Thomas Polk's Salisbury District militia brigade at nearby Crooked Creek (Espey, Samuel, pension application 1832). That location allowed rapid maneuvers north and south along the ridgeline road unimpeded by creeks.

Samuel Espey was a Plonk-related 4th great-grandfather.

Instead of returning to South Carolina, Cornwallis moved his army to Wilmington, North Carolina, arriving 7 April 1781. Instead of following Cornwallis, Greene marched the American Army into South Carolina. After learning this plan, on 2 April, Henry Lee wrote Greene, “I am decidedly of opinion with you that nothing is left for you but to imitate the example of Scipio Africanus,” (Greene 1893, 231) the Roman general who, in 204–202 BC, disengaged from Hannibal in Italy to counterattack Hannibal’s homeland, Carthage. Ultimately that strategy saved the Roman Republic. In an analogous manner, Greene disengaged from Cornwallis and proved Cornwallis could no longer defend upstate South Carolina.

Wherever Cornwallis’s army departed, local loyalists were abandoned and Whigs reasserted control. Many local skirmishes occurred. On 9 April 1781, local Whig militiamen assembled at Old Waxhaw Presbyterian Church under Major Robert Crawford. These included 14-year-old Andrew Jackson and his brother Robert. A patrol of British dragoons and loyalist militiamen led by Major John Coffin appeared and dispersed the Whigs into the woods and burned the church. The Jackson brothers escaped, only to be captured the next day at their cousin’s Lieutenant Thomas Crawford’s house. There a British officer demanded Andrew clean his boots. The refusal resulted in a saber slash that cut Andrew’s hand and forehead. Robert also received a saber slash by the same officer. Both brothers were marched 50 miles to the Camden jail.

Greene marched to Rugeley’s Mill and then to Hobkirk Hill. There Rawdon counterattacked and forced Greene to retreat to Rugeley’s Mill. William Richardson Davie later wrote about the time after Hobkirk Hill:

General Greene possessed in an eminent degree those high energies requisite to conquer appalling difficulties, united with that cool moral courage which resists the anguish of disappointment and the pressure of misfortune, I never observed his mind yield to despondency but at this gloomy moment, when he conceived himself not only abandoned by all the constituted authorities of the confederacy but even by that portion of the population of the Southern States who had everything to hope from his success, and everything to fear from his failure. (Davie 1820 in B. P. Robinson 1976, 45)

Both Andrew and Robert Jackson were in the Camden jail at the time of the Hobkirk Hill battle. A few days later, their mother Elizabeth Hutchinson Jackson secured their release as part of a prisoner exchange. But both boys had contracted smallpox, and Robert died a few days after returning home. After Andrew recovered, Elizabeth travelled to Charlestown to help nurse her Crawford nephews on British prison ships. There Elizabeth died of the plague and was buried in an unmarked grave in the Charlestown Neck. The future President lost two brothers and his mother because of the Revolutionary War. Her last words to Andrew were, “Make friends by being honest, keep them by being steadfast, never tell a lie, nor take what is not your own, nor sue for slander, settle them cases yourself.” (M. James 1938, 25–29)



Shrine to Elizabeth Hutchinson Jackson
Mother of President Andrew Jackson
Old Waxhaw Presbyterian Church

On 25 April, Cornwallis began marching to Virginia, leaving Major James Craig's forces in Wilmington. Cornwallis believed more effective pressure could be applied in coastal Virginia. Movements and skirmishes along the coast are covered by (Rankin 1959).

From Crooked Creek, Colonel Polk's brigade marched towards Camden along the ridge road, present-day Rocky River Road. It "halted at Flat Rock and ate beef butchered on that wide-spread natural table." (Hunter 1877, 117) (Alexander, Elijah, pension application 1832). They then joined Greene's Army at Rugeley's Mill, South Carolina, 14 miles north of Camden (Espey, Samuel, pension application 1832) (Hofner, Nicholas, pension application 1832) immediately after the 25 April battle of Hobkirk Hill (Alexander, Elijah, pension application 1832) (W. M. Polk 1915, 34). On 31 October 1832, [Abraham Forney testified](#):

That on the 25th day of March 1781 when he [Abraham Forney] again embodied and he was attached to the Company of Captain Samuel Espey and acted as Sergeant. We joined a detachment of Militia under the command of General Thomas Polk and marched into South Carolina and came up with General Greene's Army at Rugeley's Mills, after the Battle of Camden [Hobkirk Hill]. (Forney, Abraham, pension application 1832)

On 23 April 1833, Robert Kincaid testified that this Lincoln County unit joined Greene three days after Hobkirk Hill (Kincaid, Robert, pension application 1833).

On 11 September 1832, [Elijah Alexander testified](#):

After the Battle of Guilford March 15th 1781, General Green [Nathanael Greene] returned to South Carolina to hold the British in check and recover the State if possible. There was another call for men to assist General Greene. I volunteered again and rendezvoused in Charlotte, North Carolina under Col. Thomas Polk and Captain James Jack March 1781 – marched from Charlotte along Lawyers Road so called – to Matthew Stevens' on Goose Creek on the Rocky River Road from thence towards Camden to the flat Rock – halted to hear of General Greene – Eat beef butchered on the Rock. From thence we marched towards the South expecting to meet Greene's Army coming on a road on our left, but we found that General Greene was gone on towards Camden – we followed but too late for

the engagement that took place one mile North of Camden between Greene's and Rawdon's [armies] – which took place on the 25th or 26th of April 1781. In this engagement Greene's Militia gave way & the regulars forced to retreat lest the enemy should get in their rear– but the regulars brought off a number of prisoners – we met them retreating – turned with them to Ridgley's [Rugeley's] Mill 15 miles North of Camden at which place we stayed a week or more. Five of the Prisoners were proved to be deserters and all hung on one gallows. I saw it done. We, that is the company to which I belonged, the Militia were left near the conjunction of two roads for the double purpose of preventing Wagons or men from going too near or into Camden it not being known [illegible word] Greene proposed in the upper Country that Greene had left that vicinity and supplies were expected so Greene left a party of men to direct & protect if any should come. We had also to guard Tories brought in by Marion's men, some of these Tories were whipped (so soon as Court Martial was holden), others were sent to Jail or head quarters – when General Greene left vicinity of Rugeley's Mill he crossed the Wateree above Camden – Rawdon left Camden on the 9th or 10th of May 1781– we were discharged verbally I suppose – as I recollect not to have gotten a written one.

Green withdrew to the west bank of the Wateree River, first camping at Twenty Five Mile Creek and then at Sawney's Creek. On 8 May, Lord Rawdon attacked Greene's forces at Sawney's Creek. Green withdrew to Colonel Creek. Because British supply lines to Camden were being cut by Brigadier General Francis Marion and Lieutenant Colonel Henry Lee, on 10 May, Rawdon evacuated Camden. On 12 May, Greene departed for Ninety Six. The North Carolina Western District militia remained at Rugeley's Mill. On 15 May, Colonel Thomas Polk learned that he was relieved of command and replaced by Colonel Francis Locke (W. M. Polk 1915, 31). However, temporary command devolved to Captain James Jack (Kincaid, Robert, pension application 1833). It is not certain if Locke personally joined his men in South Carolina. In fact, it is possible that the Lincoln County men were detached to the local Camden District militia under Colonel John Marshall until at least 1 June 1781. This was Thomas Polk's last military command (W. M. Polk 1915, 34), yet through August, Greene urged North Carolina authorities to reinstate him (W. M. Polk 1915, 32). He was not promoted to brigadier general.

In late May, after Greene moved towards Ninety Six, Samuel Espey was compelled to leave in consequence of his Kings Mountain wound and returned to Lincoln County (Hunter 1877, 267–268). On 27 April 1827, [Abraham Forney testified](#) in a Lincoln County court:

... during this time of service, Capt Espy's arm became very sore, not having been healed, of the wound he received at Kings mountain, in 1780, and during this tour of service the soreness Increased, and smelt very offensive, at which time Captain Espy was unable to perform the duties, that devolved on him as Captain. – and got leave to return home, his arm was so offensive that the soldiers under his command complained of the offensiveness of the smell, before he consented to leave his company. ... (Forney 1827 in Espey, Samuel, pension application 1832)

While Greene was threatening Camden, he ordered Brigadier General Francis Marion and Lieutenant Colonel Henry Lee to lay siege to Fort Watson near Nelson's Ferry over the Santee River. The fort was built on the top of an old Indian mound. Marion and Lee arrived on 15 April. Major Hezekiah Maham built a siege tower to expose the forts interior. On 23 April, the British surrendered (Lossing 1850, II:490).



Maham Siege Tower at Fort Watson
Engraving by Lossing Barritt, about 1879.

From Fort Watson, Marion and Lee advanced to Mount Joseph where the British had fortified the house of Rebecca Motte. On 6 May, Marion and Lee began a five-day siege.



Mount Joseph, Site of Rebecca Motte's House

Finally, on 12 May, in frustration and knowing of Rawdon's imminent arrival, they decided to burn the house. Rebecca Motte famously offered fire arrows to ignite the roof of her house. That forced the British to surrender. The tradition is that both side helped stop the fire and Rebecca Motte served dinner to British and American officers. (H. Lee 1812, 236–239) (Lossing 1850, II:470)



Rebecca Motte offered fire arrows to Marion and Lee to burn her house.
Painted by John Blake White, 1859.

While Greene was laying siege on the Star Fort at Ninety Six, Scotch-Irish militiamen under Brigadier General Andrew Pickens joined.

Sometime in 1781, Martha Ellington, a Plonk-related 5th great-grandmother, was murdered by a Tory in her home.

Mrs. Joseph Motley [Martha Ellington] lay ill in bed with an infant when a Tory neighbor, who was leading a guerrilla raid, burst into the house and deliberately cut an artery in her arm. Captain [Joseph] Motley was temporarily away, and before help could reach her, she bled to death. [Her daughter] Obedience Motley, mother of John Motley Morehead, as a little girl, witnessed this incredible happening. It is said that some years later Obedience Motley Morehead “heaped coals of fire” on the head of her mother’s murderer when he was accidently brought to her home in a serious illness. (Hurt 1976, 98).

This description used a Biblical reference to merciful revenge.

Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. (KJV 1611, Romans 12:20).

May–August 1781, Cartel

Since the fall of Savannah in 1778, British held American Continental soldier prisoners in deplorable conditions. Most were held on prison ships in Charlestown harbor. Reference (Ramsay 1785) states that 800 died from neglect and 375 enlisted in the British military to escape these ships. British authorities had little incentive to improve conditions since prisoners could be recruited for British military service in the West Indies fighting Spain. General William Moultrie complained to the Lieutenant Colonel Nisbet Balfour, British military commandant in Charlestown.

March 21st, 1781

Sir,

You cannot possibly be more tired with reading my letters than I am of writing them; yet I must intrude upon your multiplicity of business, and remonstrate against every violation of the capitulation, and represent every grievance which occurs to us, whether they are attended to or not. What I am now to remonstrate against, is a most violent and inhuman breach of the capitulation; which is the impressing the American soldiers from on board the prison-ships, taking them away by violence, and sending them on board the transports, to be carried from the continent of America; many of them leaving wives and young children, who may possibly perish for want of the common necessities of life; if I cannot prevail upon you to countermand this violation altogether, let me plead for those unhappy ones who have families to be exempted from this cruelty. I beg you will consider their situation and suffer your humanity to be partial in their favor.

I am, &c.

WILLIAM MOULTRIE (Moultrie 1802, II:193)

American Continental officers were treated better at Haddrell's Point. Nonetheless, in March 1781, Balfour threatened to send these officers to a West Indies island (Ramsay 1785, 462) (Moultrie 1802, II:171–172). However, on 3 May 1781 a general prisoner exchange agreement, called a *cartel*, was signed at Claudius Pegues' house, just north of present-day Cheraw, South Carolina. It exchanged Continental Army officers and soldiers, most of whom were captured a year earlier in Charlestown or at Gates' Defeat. Cartel text appears in (Moultrie 1802, II:198–200). Actual release may have occurred on 22 June, the official British proclamation date. Most officers were transported to Virginia by ship (Moultrie 1802, II:200). Brigadier General Griffith Rutherford was exchanged and resumed command of Salisbury District militia.

While Robert Mebane was prisoner-of-war, he was second on the potential exchange list of lieutenant colonels (McIntosh 1780, 43). Nonetheless, he was not exchanged until after the cartel, sometime near 22 June 1781. On 7 August 1781, Robert Mebane and two other field officers took depositions in an investigation of British mistreatment of American prisoners. In a 10 August letter to Major General Lafayette, who headed the investigation, they urged retaliation to deter further abuses (Clark 1981, 1:480).

Richmond, Virginia
10 Aug 1781

To Major General, The Marquis de la Fayette

Sir:

The moment we were permitted to act, it became our duty to represent some facts, which have given us infinite mortification and although this is signed only by the three field officers now with your Army, yet we are confident there is not one of those exchanged, but joins us in sentiment.

The uncandid conduct of the enemy commenced with their relation of the reduction of Charlestown. The breast of every American officer and soldier has felt indignation on hearing that six thousand American troops, in works, had surrendered to eight thousand British, when, by their own confession, the enemy's army amounted to upwards of 13,000 men, whilst the Continental Troops, after a siege of 42 days, were short of two thousand. We would add that in our opinion, nothing even then could have induced a surrender but the exhausted state of our provisions. The enemy, on their first discovery of the disproportion between our numbers and theirs, could not forbear expressing their astonishment.

We beg pardon, Sir, for taking up your time with what you must know. But your heart will experience the feelings of a soldier, whose captivity has been embittered by such a misrepresentation.

We will not enumerate the many breaches of a sacred capitulation. What we would principally beg leave to lay before you is the conduct of the enemy, in confining our soldiers, on board prison ships, and afterwards compelling them into their service; the latter of which facts is sufficiently confirmed by the annexed attestation.

And now that we have given this account to one of our Generals and the Commander of the First American Army which after a long captivity we had the pleasure to see, nothing remains for us, but to ask, in the name of every officer and soldier, for the adoption of some speedy and effectual mode of retaliation.

We have the honor to be most respectfully, Sir,
Your obedient, humble servants,

[signed] Robert Mebane, Lieut Colonel
Commanding Third NC Regiment

[signed] John Habersham, Major
Georgia Regiment

[signed] David Stephenson, Major
Sixth Virginia Regiment

State of Virginia
7 Aug 1781

Humphry Macumber, Sergeant in the Third Continental Regiment of North Carolina, being sworn on the Holy Evangelists of the Almighty God, deposeth and saith, that early in March last, he being then a prisoner of war on board the British prison ship, ESK, lying in Charlestown Harbour, a certain Sergeant Brown came on board said ship with a number of captains of transports, and immediately ordered the guard of the ship down between decks to drive up the prisoners, then centinels were placed over them and the captains proceeded to point out such men as suited their purpose; that the men were then ordered into the boats and such as disclosed any backwardness to go were beaten by the guard with their swords and the butts of their muskets, and also by the said Serjeant Brown and were finally driven by force into the boats.

[signed] Humphry Macumber

Sworn before me,
David Stephenson, Major
Sixth Virginia Regiment

State of Virginia
7 Aug 1781

Ransom Savage, a Serjeant in the Second Continental Regiment of North Carolina, being sworn on the Holy Evangelists of Almighty God, deposeth, and saith, that early in March last, he being then a prisoner of war on board the prison ship, SUCCESS-INCREASE, lying in Charlestown harbour, a certain Serjeant Brown came on board said ship with a number of captains of transports and immediately ordered all the prisoners on deck; then

said Brown desired the captains to make choice of such men as they liked, which they did; that on one of the men's refusing to go, the said Serjeant caned and kicked him very severely and forced him, with a number of others, into the boats; the prisoners were told by said Brown they must either enlist in Lord Charles Montagu's Corps going to Jamaica, or be impressed on board men-of-war.

[signed] Ransom Savage

Sworn before me,
David Stephenson, Major
Sixth Virginia Regiment

State of Virginia
7 Aug 1781

Thomas Duffey, a private soldier of the Second Continental Regiment of North Carolina, being sworn on the Holy Evangelists of Almighty God, deposeth and saith, that some time in March last, he being then a prisoner of war on board the British prison ship, SUCCESS-INCREASE, lying in Charlestown Harbour, Captain Cook, British Commissary of Prisoners, attended by a Serjeant Brown and four or five captains of transports, came on board the ship and asked the prisoners if any of them would go to London in the fleet, where they should all be set free; the prisoners declined his offer, upon which Captain Cook assured them if they did not go voluntarily, they would be forced on board; that the captains of transports then proceeded to make choice of the men, and upon their appearing very much averse to go into the boats, the above-mentioned Serjeant Brown beat and abused them in the most barbarous manner; particularly one of the men, whom he threw from the gunwhale on the ship into one of the boats; that the deponent was among those who were thus forced on board the boats and was sent on board a transport brigatine where he was kept five days with a few other prisoners (the impressed prisoners being distributed among different vessels) and then went to Charlestown on promising to enlist in the British Cavalry; that the deponent heard Captain Cook declare, previous to the above transaction, that if the prisoner did not enlist in thirteen days in the British service, they would all be sent to the West Indies, where they would be put on board ships-of-war.

X (his mark) Thomas Duffey

Sworn before me
Nathaniel Welsh,
Major

State of Virginia
7 Aug 1781

Thomas Woods, a private soldier of the Third Continental Regiment of South Carolina, being sworn on the Holy Evangelists of Almighty God, deposeth and saith, that some time in March last, he being then a prisoner of war on board the prison ship, PRINCE GEORGE, lying in Charlestown harbour, the Serjeant of the guard on board said ship informed the deponent that himself and twenty three more of the prisoners were to go on board some ships that wanted men; that upon the men refusing to go, a certain Serjeant Brown, then on board the ESK, another prison ship, commanded the serjeant of the guard to call to his assistance, the mate and crew, and tumble him, the deponent, neck and heel, into the boat alongside the ship; that upon hearing this, the deponent ran down into the

hold, and thereby made his escape; that the deponent was informed one William Williams, another soldier, offered himself in his, the deponents, stead, and was accepted by the British Serjeant.

[signed] Thomas Woods

Sworn before me,
Nathaniel Welsh,
Major

State of Virginia
7 Aug 1781

Jesse Farrar, a private soldier of the Third Continental Regiment of South Carolina being sworn on the Holy Evangelists of Almighty God, deposeth and saith, that some time in March last, he being then a prisoner of war on board the British prison ship, PRINCE GEORGE, lying in Charlestown harbour, a certain Serjeant Brown came on board the ship and informed the prisoners that twenty four of them must immediately go on board some ships lying in the harbour; that upon three of the prisoners observing they thought it hard Congress should find sailors for the King, they were put under guard; that said Brown informed the prisoners that unless they would go on board the vessells voluntarily, they would be compelled to do it; in which case they would not be sent on board merchant men, but ships-of-war, whereupon the number demanded, with great seeming reluctance, went on board the boats with the British Serjeant.

X (his mark) Jesse Farrar

Sworn before me,
Nathaniel Welch,
Major

Lafayette reported findings to the Continental Congress where it was entered into the record on 3 September (Ford 1912, 21:929–930) (PCC n.d., M247-176-156:238–245). To retaliate, Continental Congress ordered 500 British prisoners to Connecticut's Simsbury mine prison, but later prisoner exchanges probably nullified this order. This investigation became a basis for new international standards for prisoner-of-war treatment expressed in the 1786 treaty between the United States and Frederick the Great, King of Prussia (Miller 1931) (Ranlet 2000).

On 21 August 1781, while in Granville County, Lieutenant Colonel Robert Mebane wrote North Carolina Governor Thomas Burke:

I have the Honour of Se'ding you this by Colo. John Williams whose house I am just arrived at Where I expected to have had the pleasure of Seeing You. Should have waited on you at Halifax but the want of horses prevents it. There is about fifty Continental Soldiers properly officered on their march from James Town to Hillsborough. They are greatly distress'd for Cloathing, as I cannot as yet be informed where they can be Supplied I must beg you to inform me. I intend Remaining at Hillsborough for Your particular Instruction. If Troops can be got I wish to take the Field as Soon as possible. (Mebane 1781 in NCSR 1895, XV:612)

On 31 August 1781, Mebane discharged Charles Griggs after his three-year enlistment.

By Rob^t. Mebane, Esq^r. Lt. Col Comd^t. of third N.C. Reg^t.

This is to certify that the Bearer hereof Charles Griggs, a soldier in Cap^t. McKees Company, of the 1st N. Carolina Reg^t. has served honestly & faithfully in said Regt. and

is discharged for the reason below mentioned, he having recv^d. all his pay, arrears of pay, Clothing etc. except such as is Certified on the Back of this discharge, he is discharged having served the term for which he Inlisted, on the thirty first of May one thousand Seven hundred and seventy seven, being three Years and to prevent any Ill use being made of this discharge by its falling into the hands of any other person, here follows a discription of said Cha^s. Griggs, aged twenty three Years, Black hair, black eyes and a dark Complexion about five feet ten Inches high, born in Maryland, by trade a farmer. Given under my hand this thirty first of Aug^t. one thousand seven hundred & eighty one.
[signed] Tho^s. Pasteur L^t. 1st No. Carolina Regiment
[signed] Rob^t. Mebane L^t. Col. Com^{dr}. 3^d N.C. R^{gt}.

I hereby Certify that there is due to Charles Griggs, late Soldier in the first N. Carolina Reg^t. pay from the first day of Aug^t. one thousand seven hundred & seventy nine, as a soldier, also one Years Clothing agreeable to the allowance for Soldiers by the Ru_ of Congress.
[signed] Thos. Pasteur L^t. 1st No. Carolina Regiment
[signed] Robt. Mebane L^t. Col. Cm^d. 3^d N.C. Rg^t.

I acknowledge to have recv^d. all my pay arrears of Pay Clothing & (Except such as are mentioned in the above Certificate) [smudge] my Inlistment into the Continental Service, as Witness my hand this thirty first of Aug^t. one thousand seven hundred and Eighty one.
[signed] Cha^s. [his x mark] Griggs

Attest
Tho^s. Pasteur Lt. (Griggs, Charles, pension application 1832)

Surgeon Doctor Ephraim Brevard, a McGuire-related 5th cousin 4 generations removed, contracted disease while in prison near Charlestown. In 1781, he was exchanged and returned to Charlotte. On 20 July 1781, he wrote his will, witnessed by Hezekiah Alexander and Abraham Alexander (Boyer 2008–2012). He died at John McKnitt Alexander's house (Alexander 1908, 284).

In August 1781, South Carolina John Rutledge ordered Brigadier General Thomas Sumter to organize factories and distribution of supplies from the interior of North Carolina to the Continental Army then in the High Hills of the Santee. Sumter moved to Charlotte and stayed with his wife Mary and son Tom who were living in the vacated home of Ezekiel Polk (Godey 1856) (Bass 1961, 205–206, 210).

Ezekiel Polk was 7th great-grandfather of Arabelle Boyer.

8 September 1781, Eutaw Springs

At the time of the last major battle, Eutaw Springs, accumulated experience made militiamen the equal of British professionals.



Eutaw Springs, 8 September 1781
 Painting by Alonzo Chappel, 1859.

Anne S. K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University Library, Providence, Rhode Island.

[James Tinnin](#), an Anderson-related 1st cousin 7 generations removed, was employed in the wagon service that followed Major General Nathanael Greene's army from the Santee High Hills to Eutaw Springs and back (Tinnin, James, pension application 1833).

[Thomas Byrd](#), an Anderson-related 5th great-grandfather, was a private in a company of Orange County militia dragoons under Major McClary. He participated at Eutaw Springs. His second wife Nancy Hamilton was awarded a pension after his 1835 death (Byrd, Thomas, pension application 1837).

Major Thomas Polk Junior, son of Colonel Thomas Polk and 1st cousin 8 generations removed of Arabelle Boyer, was killed at Eutaw Springs (Preyer 1987, 165). His brother Lieutenant Colonel William Polk led a unit of North Carolinians serving as South Carolina "State troops." During the battle William Polk thought, "every man killed but himself." (Polk in Hoyt 1914, II:407) (H. F. Rankin 1971, 359).

Greene's victories were unusual. He withdrew from each major battle he directed: Guilford Courthouse, Hobkirk Hill, Ninety Six, and Eutaw Springs. Yet in each case, within days, the British, after assessing their diminished strength, made a calamitous retreat.

September–October 1781, Lindley's Mill, Brown Marsh

In areas the British Army vacated, a Whig versus Tory reign of terror ensued. Tory Colonel David Fanning led several hundred loyalist militiamen. But in addition to protecting loyalists, his men confiscated property from Whig militia and farms (Fanning 1786, 32).

On 15 August 1781, Colonel Hugh Tinnin was prisoner of war. At Halifax, North Carolina, he was exchanged and soon returned to Hillsborough where he immediately resumed his militia responsibilities (Conolly 2008). On 24 August 1781, North Carolina Governor Thomas Burke ordered up the entire Hillsborough District militia. On 28 August, Tinnin wrote the Governor: "Letter of the 24th to General Butler was handed to me and agreeable to your directions, I have ordered out all the Militia of this county

... likewise communicated your orders to the commanding Officers of Caswell, Randolph, Chatham and Wake Counties.” (NCSR 1895, XXII:580–581)

Colonel Hugh Tinnin was an Anderson-related 1st cousin 7 generations removed. Not all militiamen obeyed Tinnin’s order. On 28 August, the Orange County Court decreed that William Anderson, 5th great-grandfather, and twelve others be “fined 100 pounds each for contempt of authority, refusing to obey commands of Hugh Tinnen, Esq. after being notified thereof by Robert McIntyre, Officer of the State.” (Orange County Court 1777–1788, I:52–104) William Anderson’s motivation and reaction is not known.

At daybreak 12 September 1781, 600 Tories under Colonel David Fanning raided Hillsborough and captured North Carolina Governor Thomas Burke and other Whig leaders (Fanning 1786, 33). These captives were first thrown into the Hillsborough jail while Tories plundered the town. Later that afternoon, Tories began transporting captives to British-occupied Wilmington.

According to Governor Burke’s daughter, Polly Burke, he was arrested at his house, called *Heartsease*, on Queens Street, now 115 East Queen Street (Barefoot 1998, 414). That is next door to the William Whitted Junior house built about 1810. This William Whitted is believed to be an Anderson-related 5th great-granduncle.

Private John Mebane, an Anderson-related 5th great-granduncle, was among these captive Whig leaders. When thrown in jail, he maintained high spirits. Fellow captive James Turner testified in 1832 that when John Mebane was “brought into the jail, he danced across the floor.” (Mebane, John, pension application 1833). John’s brother Alexander Mebane II barely escaped capture. Historian Eli Caruthers wrote:

Col. Alexander Mebane made his escape by leaving a very valuable horse to the care of the enemy, and taking it on foot through the high weeds which had grown up very densely in the cross streets. (Caruthers 1854, 207).

Alexander Mebane raced to Hawfields to alert other Whigs, including his brother Lieutenant Colonel Robert Mebane and Brigadier General John Butler.

The next day, about 10:00 a.m., approximately 350 Whigs ambushed the Tory column near Lindley’s Mill. They took advantage of a natural steep escarpment where the road takes a sharp turn. After the ambush, Fanning ordered the column front to retreat. Historian Algie Newlin deduced that a separate Whig group attempted to free captives by attacking the rear of the Tory column (Newlin 1975). Whigs were outnumbered two to one. After 4 hours of battle, Tories threatened to assassinate Governor Burke and other captives. Fighting stopped and Tories departed. Whigs lost 24 dead and 90 seriously wounded, an extraordinary high proportion. Tories lost 27 dead and 60 seriously wounded. Colonel Hector Macneil led the Tory column and was killed during the initial ambush. Colonel Fanning was badly wounded and hid in the forest for several days (Fanning 1786, 34).



Lindley's Mill Battleground Monuments
1915 and 1998

Lieutenant Colonel Robert Mebane was under militia Brigadier General John Butler, but was certainly a more experienced profession officer. It is likely that Mebane organized the men and planned this ingenious two-pronged ambush (Stockard 1900, 74) (Fanning 1786, 33) (Newlin 1975). No doubt, he also hoped to rescue his brother John. Fanning first secured the captives and then led a counterattack. Historian Eli Caruthers wrote:

Probably, it was on seeing this havoc made of the Whigs by this maneuver of Fanning's, and viewing their situation as now desperate, considering the disparity of numbers, that General Butler ordered a retreat, and commenced it himself. The men, in obedience to orders, were following his example, when Col. Robert Mebane got before them, and by arguments and remonstrances, so far inspired them with his own heroic spirit that enough of them returned to renew the battle and keep the ground. (Caruthers 1854, 212).

Robert's persistence and leadership lengthened the battle's duration to 4 hours. Caruthers wrote:

A more bold and deliberate act of courage is hardly on record that was done by Col. Robert Mebane in the hottest of the battle. In the midst of the conflict with Fanning, when the Whigs must have been nearly between two files, as the Scotch were advancing up the hill, they got out of ammunition and Mebane walked slowly along the line, carrying his hat full of powder, telling every man to take a handful, or just what he needed. (Caruthers 1854, 214).

David Anderson, a 5th great-granduncle, was severely wounded at Lindley's Mill. Family tradition is that he "was shot through the body, a silk handkerchief was drawn through the wound to clean out the blood. He was carried a good many miles [about 30 miles] on a litter to his home." (J. H. Anderson 1898, 6). He was incapacitated. Five months later, on 25 February 1782, the Orange County Court Minutes record: "David Anderson who is disabled by wounds received in the defense of his Country, a poor man and having a helpless family... to be tax exempt." (Orange County Court 1777–1788, I:folio54:109) His sister-

in-law Jane Mebane's brother William Mebane submitted the proposal to the North Carolina General Assembly, which was granted 11 May 1782.

Mr. Mebane, from the joint Committee to whom the recommendation of the Court of Orange County of David Anderson as an indigent person, wounded and disabled in the service of the State, and who therefore is a proper object to be exempted from the payment of pecuniary and specific taxes, was referred, having considered the same, do report as their opinion that the said David Anderson ought to be exempted from the payment of the aforesaid taxes so long as he continues disabled. (NCSR 1895, XIX:97–98)

See also references (NCSR 1895, XVI:117, 143, 144). Family tradition is that:

He continued to carry on his farm work, with great difficulty, as he never recovered from the wound. On being asked why he didn't apply for a pension he replied, "My country is more in need of the money than I." (J. H. Anderson 1898, 6)

In March 1785, David Anderson served as a court juror (Orange County Court 1777–1788, II:folio58:232). In May 1785, he served on a grand jury (Orange County Court 1777–1788, III:folio4:241). Not until over 30 years later, at age 82, did he request a pension from the State of North Carolina.

Legislative Session Dec. 1815

Petition of DAVID ANDERSON was referred to the Committee of Propositions and Grievances, who report that he was a citizen of Orange County, was a private in CAPTAIN DOUGLAS's company in the Revolutionary War and in the battle fought at LINDLEY's MILL where he was severely wounded. Anderson was crippled in both hands, two of his fingers of his left hand being shot off, and two of them, together with those of his right hand so wounded as to be drawn up and rendered nearly entirely useless. He received a musket ball into his body, which entered under his left arm and passed out at his back bone. "Being now eighty two years of age and also borne down by infirmities, with a wife who has been bed ridden for six years—therefore prays for relief."

Committee believes his service is adequately established by the depositions which accompanied his petition, and recommend that his name be placed on the pension list for an annual sum of \$25 for life. JOHN LONG, Chairman

By order P. HENDERSON. C. H. C. [Clerk House of Commons]

David Anderson appeared in court to receive his pension:

DAVID ANDERSON [signed shakily] appeared before WILLIE SHAW, Justice of Orange County, to certify that Anderson was the soldier entitled to the pension. 23 Dec. 1817.

Power of attorney from DAVID ANDERSON [his mark] of Orange County to WILLIE SHAW, of that county to receive his pension money. Sworn 19 Nov. 1820 before J. A. MEBANE. Reverse endorsed by Comptroller 27 Dec, 1820 to authorize Public Treasurer to pay \$50 for the pension.

David Anderson died in 1821.

[Lieutenant David Mitchell](#), later husband of Ann Anderson a 4th great-grandaunt, participated at Lindley's Mill as described in his brother [William Mitchell's pension application](#) (Mitchell, William, pension application 1832) (Mitchell, Ann Anderson, pension application 1843).

After the battle, Whigs followed the Tories hoping for an opportunity to free the captives. A skirmish was fought at Brown Marsh, near present-day Clarkton, North Carolina. Nonetheless, all captives were taken to Wilmington. Later, some, including Governor Burke, were taken to Charlestown. Holloway Pass, a soldier who participated in this chase, provides details in his 1836 [pension application](#). Portions of his application are:

...This Declarant remained at home until the fall of 1781 when the Tories came to Hillsboro and took our Whig Governor (Burke) prisoner and carried him off to Wilmington. Upon the hapening of this event there was great excitement in our Country and particularly in our County (Caswell) and all the men of the County was called upon to take up arms; accordingly this Declarant volunteered under Captain Adam Sanders of Caswell County and was marched & reorganized(?) in the woods in Caswell County on County Line Creek where they were met by two other Volunteer Companies of the said County, all under the command of Col. William Moore (Our Col.) And Major Dudley Reynolds (Our Major). From there we were marched through a night heag, all on horseback, in great speed with a view to overtake the Tories before they got to Wilmington (& it should be borne in mind that our Officers promised us that if we would find our horses and start immediately (which we did) that we should be discharged at the end of two months and that the tour should be accounted to us as a tour of three months, which promise was not kept, and instead of two months we were kept out for three months and half starved at that). We were marched a strait course leavings Hillsboro to the left and went directly to Cross Creeks (now Fayetteville) and we got on the trail of the Tories at Lindleg s Mill(?) and we followed on down to in sight of Wilmington expecting every Hour to overtake them. But they escaped into Wilmington before we came up with them; before we reached Wilmington we joined Gen l Butler with his company. From near Wilmington we retreated back up the Cape Fear River. Some 18 or 20 miles out of Danger and there stayed for a little time until we heard of a collection of Tories at a place called the Brown Marsh to which place we immediately was marched. At this place we met the Tories and some Brittish and had a severe engagement and was defeated by the bad management of Gen l Butler - and if it had not been for old Col. Mebane of the Orange Regiment we would have been all taken prisoner. From this place (Brown Marsh) we retreated to Fayetteville (which was then Cross Creeks). At this place our horses were taken away from us and sent home, and the Volunteer Company to which this Declarant belonged was put under the command of Capt. Spillsby Coleman.

...This Declarant states that he Volunteered both times when he was called into service - That he cannot recollect all the Regular officers who were with the troops where he served; but he remembers Col. [William] Washington, General Morgan, Col Henry Dixon, General Butler, & General Rutherford - But he is inclined to think that Butler & Rutherford were Militia officers - That he remembers the Orange Regiment Commanded by Col. Mebane & a brave officer he was - & the general circumstances of his service he has attempted to give above - That he received two discharges one from Col. Moore, & the other from Capt. Spillsby Coleman, as well as he can now recollect, both of which were burnt up some eight or nine years ago. ... (Pass, Holloway, pension application 1836)

In 1832, [Massey Medaris testified](#) in his pension application:

On account of the British army having passed through this country and during this time of their continuance in the country the Tories became very much insubordinate, and committed a great many outrages. This declarant at this time volunteered for the purpose [of] resisting the Tories and putting an end to their outrages. From Chatham Court house he was marched to Crow's ford on Haw River. The Tories but a short time before had taken the town of Hillsboro, from which place they retired to Lindley's mill on Cain [sic, Cane] Creek. About two hours before day, this declarant marched with two hundred &

fifty volunteers with him from Crow's ford to attack the Tories on Cain Creek. In this engagement the Tories to the number of seven hundred were defeated with loss of one hundred men & completely dispersed. The loss of the Whigs being only Seventeen. The success of this attack was chiefly owing to the skill and good management of Col Mebane an officer of the Continental army, who had been previously taken prisoner by the British, and was about this time passing through that section of country to join Genl Greene's Southern army. Hearing of the intended expedition against the Tories, and being fond of the sport, he took command of this expedition which ended as above stated. (Medaris, Massey, pension application 1832)

In 1822, British Major General David Stewart wrote a history of Highland regiments (Stewart 1822). He recorded a British perspective of these events, reprinted in (Brander 1971, 168). Unfortunately, it contains several obvious errors, and some details are inconsistent with (Fanning 1786, 33) and (Pass, Holloway, pension application 1836). Interestingly, the use of British artillery may be what alarmed American Brigadier General John Butler as described in (Caruthers 1854, 230).

Among these settlers was a gentleman of the name of Macneil, who had been an officer in the Seven Year's War. He joined the army with several followers, but soon took his leave, having been rather sharply reprimanded for his treatment of a republican family. He was a man of tall stature and commanding aspect, and moved, when he walked among his followers, with all the dignity of a chieftain of old. Retaining his loyalty, although offended with the reprimand, he offered to surprise the republican garrison, governor and council assembled at Willisborough. He had three hundred followers, one-half of them old country Highlanders, the other half born in America, and the offspring of Highlanders. The enterprise was conducted with address and the governor, council, and garrison, were secured without bloodshed, and immediately marched off for Wilmington, Macneil and his party travelling by night and concealing themselves in swamps and woods by day. However, the country was alarmed, and a hostile force collected. He proceeded in zig-zag directions, for he had a perfect knowledge of the country, but without any provisions except what chance threw in his way. When he had advanced two-thirds of the route, he found the enemy occupying a pass which he must open by the sword, or perish in the swamps for want of food. At this time he had more prisoners to guard than followers. 'He did not secure his prisoners by putting them to death'; but, leaving them under a guard of half his force on whom he could least depend, he charged with the others sword in hand through the pass and cleared it of the enemy, but was unfortunately killed from too great ardour in the pursuit. The enemy being dispersed, the party continued their march disconsolate for the loss of their leader; but their opponents again assembling in force, the party were obliged to take refuge in the swamps, still retaining their prisoners. The British Commander at Wilmington, hearing of Macneil's enterprise, marched out to his support, and kept firing cannon, in expectation the report would reach them in the swamps. The party heard the reports; and knowing that the Americans had no artillery, they ventured out of the swamps towards the quarter whence they heard the guns, and meeting with Major (afterwards Sir James) Craig, sent out the support them, delivered over their prisoners, half famished with hunger, and lodged them safely in Wilmington. Such partisans as these are invaluable in active warfare. (Stewart 1822 in Brander 1971, 168).

[Lieutenant David Mitchell](#), later husband of Ann Anderson a 4th great-grandaunt, participated at Livingston's Swamp as described in his brother [William Mitchell's pension application](#) (Mitchell, William, pension application 1832) (Mitchell, Ann Anderson, pension application 1843). That location was probably Brown Marsh.

A few weeks later, in October 1781, Robert Mebane was killed by Tory Henry Hightower. Historian Eli Caruthers wrote:

He was afterwards with his regiment on the waters of the Cape Fear, contending with the Tories; but being notified that his services were needed in the northern part of the State,

he set out accompanied only by his servant. On the way, he came upon a noted Tory and horse thief, by the name of Henry Hightower and perhaps too fearless and regardless of the consequences, he pursued him and when within striking distance with his arm uplifted, Hightower wheeled and shot him. (Caruthers 1854, 361).

Private William C. Smith witnessed Mebane death and helped bury him. In 1833, Smith testified in court:

After they were discharged and on their way home Col. Mabane his [Smith's] captain and several others were going on to Wake County where they all lived, they came across a tory in an old field who Col. Mabane knew and the Col. Swore he would take him or his life. He charge upon him and the tory broke and run and Col. Mabane after him on his horse through the old field, in the field there was a gully and some grape vines had grown over it. Col. Mabane went to charge the gully and his horse got entangled and in it & fell and threw him. The tory turned and shot Col. Mabane as he was getting up and killed him. We buried Col. Mabane and this applicant returned home to Wake County, North Carolina. (Smith 1833 in Draper 1873, VV:10:160–161) (Smith, William C., pension application 1833)

In 1832, [Joseph McAdams testified](#):

He declares that he volunteered again and was commanded by Captains Daniel Christmas, Hodge, and Guin and in the Regiment commanded by Colonel William O'Neale and Robert Mayben who was killed by Henry Hightower a Tory at a place ten miles from Hillsboro. (McAdams, Joseph, pension application 1832)

In 1832, [Jonathan Thomas testified](#):

About this time a Tory by the name of Hightower killed Col. Mabane of the Continental army and the company in which this declarant was then serving pursued the said Hightower & one of his brothers, but could not overtake either of them. (Thomas, Jonathan, pension application 1832)

One source mentions that Mebane died at Williams Township on 13 October. A section of northeastern Chatham County is known by that name. The author has attempted to find contemporaneous newspaper announcements of Mebane's death. But apparently, all North Carolina newspapers had suspended publication at that time.

On 19 November 1781, Major General Nathanael Greene, with the Southern Army in South Carolina, issued in his general orders, "The promotion of Thomas Donoho, who is entitled to a Majority by the death of Col^o Meban, is announced." (Greene 1781 in PNG 1997, IX:591).

Mebane died at age 36 with no descendants. Ironically, he died within days of the Yorktown victory that ended significant Revolutionary War fighting. His death was not publicly announced because apparently no North Carolina newspapers were being published during late 1781. Robert Mebane's name occurs 25 times in the index of the Colonial and State Records of North Carolina (NCCR 1886) (NCSR 1895). Historian S. W. Stockard wrote:

Haw Fields [Presbyterian Church] was the intellectual centre of northern Alamance. It was not only the intellectual and religious, but also the political centre. Its members were Whigs of the Revolution. After a victory they were accustomed to meet to give thanks for it. On one occasion an influential member arose and left the house during services. Being questioned, he replied he did not expect to stay anywhere and hear them give the Lord all the thanks and Robert Mebane none. (Stockard 1900, 81).

John Mebane was imprisoned at Wilmington. In his 30 March 1833 [pension application](#) (Mebane, John, pension application 1833) he testifies that he was held prisoner a few weeks on a British ship and then

paroled to town. He understood that his brother Robert Mebane arranged his exchange for a Lieutenant McChain. Later, John married the widow of a fellow prisoner who died after release while returning home.

October–November 1781, South Carolina

From Charlotte, Sumter arranged the re-embodiment of the regiments of Colonel Isaac Shelby and Colonel John Sevier. To inspect these affairs, Greene briefly revisited Charlotte. On this trip, Greene stopped at Ezekiel Polk's house to discuss military plans with Sumter (Bass 1961, 211). Soon afterwards, Shelby and Sevier probably marched through Charlotte on their way to join Brigadier General Marion in the South Carolina Lowcountry. (Bass 1961, 211)

Ezekiel Polk was 7th great-grandfather of Arabelle Boyer.

About 28 October, Sumter assumed command again and was ordered to Orangeburg to pacify the remaining loyalists in the area (Bass 1961, 211). Major John Moore, one of Sumter's officers, engaged in a skirmish with loyalist Major William "Bloody Bill" Cunningham at nearby Rowe's Plantation. That event initiated Cunningham's murderous "Bloody Scout" campaign. Sumter created a post at Four-Hole Swamp Bridge (Bass 1961, 214).

John Moor was a 4th great-grandfather who lived near Bethel Presbyterian Church in the New Acquisition District, later York County, South Carolina. In 1779 or early 1780, his militia unit was marched to Four-Hole Swamp Bridge to guard that crossing on the road between Charlestown and Dorchester (Moor, John, pension application 1845) (Sutton 1987, 360). That bridge was at or near the present-day highway US78 bridge over Four-Hole Swamp River. Although the pension indicates this event occurred in 1779 or 1780, it is possible that John Moor's wife Jane Patton confused the time with November–December 1781 when Sumter's brigade was near Orangeburg, South Carolina (Bass 1961, 212–213). He was probably not related to Major John Moore who fought loyalist Major William Cunningham.

October–November 1781, Wilmington, Yorktown

At Yorktown, Virginia, Cornwallis's army of 9000 soldiers was surrounded by General Washington's army and a French Army under General Jean-Baptiste Count de Rochambeau. It was also blockaded by the French Navy. Cornwallis surrendered 19 October 1781. Claiming illness, Cornwallis did not participate in the surrender ceremony. So, British Brigadier General Charles O'Hara offered his sword to American second-in-command Major General Benjamin Lincoln (Johnston 1881) (Landers 1931).



British Surrender at Yorktown, Virginia, 19 October 1781
Painted by John Trumbull, 1797.

In 1829, Daniel Mebane [testified](#) that his brother Robert Mebane was killed at Yorktown Siege on 16 October 1781. If this is true, it may be verifiable from original-source battle records. But this statement is more likely incorrect. In fact, there is no known relation whose name was Daniel Mebane.

Afterwards, Washington and his officers offered respectable dinners for their British counterparts, but deliberately excluded Tarleton. After Tarleton returned to England, he became a member of Parliament and remained a lifelong celebrity. He wrote a valuable history of the war (Tarleton 1787).

Yorktown did not terminate hostilities. For another year, during diplomatic negotiations, Nathanael Greene's Army and partisans pushed British forces in South Carolina back to Charlestown and Savannah. After a prisoner exchange, Brigadier General Griffith Rutherford returned and took command of the Western District militia. In September 1781, in Mecklenburg County, he called for Salisbury District militia volunteers for an expedition to Wilmington. They assembled and trained for two weeks. On 1 October, this army moved towards Wilmington. On the southwest side of the Cape Fear River, near the ferry to Wilmington, the British fortified a brick house (Graham 1827 in Graham 1904b, 354). Rutherford's forces skirmished there (Graham 1827 in Graham 1904b, 368). Wilmington was encircled and slowly constricted. During this campaign, Lieutenant Colonel Henry Lee's troops brought word of the Yorktown victory. On 18 November, Rutherford's troops entered Wilmington while British troops embarked on ships.

[Robert Tinnin](#), an Anderson-related 1st cousin 7 generations removed, participated in this campaign to Wilmington. They encamped at McLean's Bluff about 10 miles from Wilmington. (Tinnin, Robert, pension application 1832).

Jacob Plunk II, a 4th great-grandfather, [participated](#) in this 1781 campaign to Wilmington. He was in Captain William Moore's company and Colonel Phyfer's regiment. His tour lasted three months. (Plunk, Jacob, pension application 1832). In 1832, Jacob Plunk II testified in support of William Moore's pension application (Moore, William, pension application 1832). Although William Moore was resident of Lincoln County, he was unrelated to the Moses Moore family that included several notable loyalists (Dellinger 2006–2011).

Captain William Bethell, a Motley-related 4th great-grandfather, was in the Guilford County militia and participated in this 1781 campaign to force the British from Wilmington (Rodenbough 1983, 332).

James Espey and John Espey, both Plunk-related 4th great-granduncles, participated in the 1781 campaign to Wilmington. Both served in Captain Isaac White's company and Major William [or Joseph] Grimes' Mecklenburg County militia regiment. James Espey mentions in his [pension application](#) (Espey, James, pension application 1832) a skirmish at "the brick house near Wilmington."

1782–1783, War Conclusion

In January 1782, when the outcome of the war was clear, Mecklenburg County Whigs enacted strong measures against local Tories.

The COURT, consisting of 11 members, unanimously agreed to meet at the dwelling house of Majr. James Harris on Thursday the 7th day of Febry. next, then and there to Set as a Court of enquiry etc. And that they in their Respective Districts (Especially) in Said Enterim do exert themselves to Summon all person therein whom they Suspect to have forfeited their Rites as Citizens by Joining, Aiding, or Assisting Our Common Enemy. Or Any person whom they know or Suspect to have Secreted any confiscated property and that the[y] Likewise Summon all Evidences whom the[y] Judge may be able to prove Said Crimes and that each Justice apply to the Militia Officers for information etc. Dc. - - ORDERED that the Clear do immediately Send expresses (at the expense of this Court) to the Absent Justices in that Quarter Notifying them of the Last Mentioned Resolution etc. Viz. To Robt. Harris, Junr., Dd. Reese, Martin Phiher, Danl. Jarret & Adam Alexander, Esqrs., And to Mr. James Reese, Commissioner. (Mecklenburg County Court Minute Book n.d., 1:9) (M. M. Boyer 2008–2017)

Beginning on 15 March 1782, loyalists Colonel Samuel Bryan, Lieutenant Colonel John Hampton, and Captain Nicholas White were tried for high treason in Salisbury, North Carolina. Despite the serious charge, all were recognized as men of integrity. In a remarkable irony, Bryan was defended by attorney William Richardson Davie who had defeated Bryan's corps at Hanging Rock two years earlier. Davie argued:

He'd refused to take the oath of allegiance to the State, from principle, having heretofore sworn allegiance to George the Third, King of England. ... [He had] uniform and active attachment to the interest of his Brittanic Majesty, whom he considered his liege sovereign and averred that he knew of no protection from, nor ever acknowledged any allegiance to the State of North Carolina. ... [Thus] where the state owed no protection to the prisoner nor the prisoner allegiance to the state, the prisoner could not be a traitor. (Raynor 1990, 19)

In 1794, Samuel Lawrence Scott, an Anderson-related 1st cousin 6 generations removed, married Nancy Bryan, grandniece of Colonel Samuel Bryan.

On 10–11 July 1782, British evacuated Savannah. After an armistice agreement 13 November 1782, on 14 December, all British soldiers boarded ships in Charlestown harbor and departed. For them the fighting was not over. They were still at war with France and Spain. William Moultrie wrote: "This fourteenth day of December, 1782, ought never to be forgotten by the Carolinians; it ought to be a day of festivity with them, as it was the real day of their deliverance and independence." (Hilborn and Hilborn 1970).



British evacuate Charlestown, 14 December 1782
Painted by Howard Pyle, 1898.

During the winter of 1781–1782, [James Tinnin](#), an Anderson-related 1st cousin 7 generations removed, was with Major General Nathanael Greene's army at Round O, Pon Pon, and Bacon Bridge, South Carolina (Tinnin, James, pension application 1833).

For at least 5 months in 1782, Captain John Mebane served in a regiment under Colonel Joseph Lewis. This unit went to the aid of Brigadier General Francis Marion in South Carolina and then returned to North Carolina searching for Tories. It crossed Raft Swamp and built a stockade fort at a house in Moore County. It was stationed at Brown's Mill in Chatham County and sometimes at Cane's Mill in Randolph County. Both he and his brother Lieutenant James Mebane, Anderson-related 5th great-granduncles, were in an

Orange County company of horse formed to counter and pursue Colonel David Fanning. They operated in Randolph County (Mebane, John, pension application 1833).

In 1782, Lieutenant Enos Reeves, an officer of Continental troops from Pennsylvania, passed through the Carolina Piedmont. On one night, he stayed in the home of Colonel Alexander Mebane II.

At Colonel Mebane's, he passed an evening with "Several of the Country Girls" who were there spinning. To get them to sing, he himself sang a few songs. One girl took the bait and sang until he stopped her after thirty verses. Her song, he complained, had sixty-two and "a Horrid, Disagreeable tune." He probably brought a taste for fashionable English songs with tunes in a major key. The Scotch Irish girl responded with a long traditional ballad and probably an old modal melody. (Patterson 2012, 392)

In 1782, James Espey was engaged against Cherokees (Espey, James, pension application 1832).

On 19 September 1782, Lincoln County ordered the confiscation of Tory properties (Confiscation of Property from Tory Sympathizers 1782). If the following event actually happened, it could date from this time:

J. G. [James Graham] Beatty married Miss Ann Graham, daughter of Archibald Graham, of Virginia, and sister of Col. Wm. Graham. He settled on Buffalo creek, now owned by Rev. Thos. Dixon. He became such a terror to the American Cause that Col. Wm. Graham sent a squad of soldiers, under command of Captain Isaac White and Lieut. Espy, to arrest him. They found him at home. Some of the soldiers were so enraged at his political principles that they killed him in his own house." (Beam 1898, 43).

No source is cited for this quote and no other known source mentions this event. Nonetheless, assuming it is true, then "Lieut. Espy" could have been Captain Samuel Espey whose rank was captain since May 1780 (Espey, Samuel, pension application 1832). Or it might have been either of his brothers John Espey or James Espey. If this event happened, why did William Graham continue to have confidence in both White and Espey who, as alleged, killed Graham's brother-in-law? If true, it must have been widely known or rumored. Moreover, in 1825, William Graham testified an affidavit supporting Espey's disability pension application (Espey, Samuel, pension application 1832). None of 15 pension applications that mention Espey also mention this event. Also, John Randolph Logan, a Cleveland County resident, who personally knew Samuel Espey, did not assert this event in his 1881 correspondence with historian Lyman Draper (Logan 1881 in L. C. Draper 1873, DD:6:30.1). Historian Ann Dellinger wrote that this account, written in 1898, could be entirely false (Dellinger 2006–2014). James Graham Beatty is known to have lived until at least 1807 when he sold property (Lincolnton page 18 in NC Deed book 23 of Lincoln County Paragraph 134). However, the story might have confused James Graham Beatty with his father James Abel Beatty who died between 19 September 1782 and 8 April 1784 when a court ruled on the guardianship of his children (Genealogical Society of Old Tryon County 2001). Earlier, in 1775, Able Beatty was a signer of the Tryon County Resolves (Griffin 1937, 17). Yet on 19 September 1782, his name was on a confiscation list of Tory sympathizers (Confiscation of Property from Tory Sympathizers 1782). For all these reasons, this assertion, which appeared first in 1898, is not credible.

The peace treaty was signed in Paris on 3 September 1783. That news arrived in New York City in November. On 25 November, General George Washington entered New York City. In the tradition of Roman general Cincinnatus, George Washington resigned his commission to Continental Congress in session at the Maryland State House in Annapolis on 23 December 1783. He spoke:

Having now finished the work assigned me, I retire from the great theatre of action, and bidding an affectionate farewell to this august body under whose orders I have so long acted, I here offer my commission and take my leave of all the employments of public life.

Both sides made mistakes. After Guilford Courthouse, Nathanael Greene wasted lives, time, and money during the siege of Ninety Six which the British had already decided to abandon. British officers

overestimated loyalist strength. Historian Charles Stedman wrote that loyalists were, “on the whole, too sanguine in their expectations. But it is the nature of men to cherish the hope of relief with an ardour proportioned to the greatness of their misfortunes.” (Stedman 1794, 2:447). British strategy for regaining the southern provinces failed. Tarleton later wrote:

Lord Cornwallis attempted to conciliate the minds of the wavering and unsteady, by promises and employments : He endeavoured so to conduct himself, as to give offence to no party ; and the consequence was, that he was able entirely to please none. He carried his lenity so far, that violent enemies, who had given paroles for their peaceable behavior, availed themselves of the proclamation of the 3d of June [1780], and, without examination, took out certificates as good citizens ; which conduct opened a door to some designing and insidious Americans, who secretly undermined, and totally destroyed, the British interest in South Carolina. The army was governed with particular discipline, and notwithstanding the exultation of victory, care was taken to give as little offence as possible in Charles town and country to the jealousy of the vanquished. This moderation produced not the intended effect : It did not reconcile the enemies, but it discouraged the friends. Upon their return home, they compared their past with their enemies present situation, they reflected on their own losses and sufferings, and they enumerated the recent and general acts of rigour, exercised upon them and their associates by all the civil officers employed under Congress, for their attachment to Great Britain. The policy therefore adopted on this occasion, without gaining new, discontented the old adherents ; and the future scene will discover, that lenity and generosity did not experience in America the merited returns of gratitude and affection. (Tarleton 1787, 90)

Certainly, the British underestimated Scotch-Irish resistance. Had they controlled the Lowcountry and isolated the Piedmont, they might have succeeded. A compelling argument is that unexpected Scotch-Irish resistance was decisive.

Revolutionary War family participants

The Revolutionary War affected lives of most residents of Virginia and the Carolinas. The following table lists family relations with reported military service. If a veteran, or his widow, lived until 7 June 1832, he or she could choose to apply for a pension by testifying in court. Each hyperlink below displays that transcribed court testimony. Anderson relations are shown in green and Plonk relations are in red. Unrelated veterans who refer to family members in their pension applications are shown in blue. No doubt, many more family veterans have yet to be discovered.

Revolutionary War Veterans

Name	Side	Relation	Rank, Unit, Service and Battles
William Anderson	Whig	5GGFather	Private, Orange County militia. Civil Service. Livestock confiscated.
James Anderson	Whig	5GGUncle	Private, Orange County militia. Possible Continental.
David Anderson	Whig	5GGUncle	Private, Orange County militia. Badly wounded at Lindley's Mill.
William Lawrence Murray	Whig	5GGFather	Captain, Orange County militia.
John Murray	Whig	5GGUncle	Sergeant, Orange County militia.
David Mitchell	Whig	Husband of 4GGAunt	Kings Mountain, Guilford Courthouse. Lindley's Mill. Livingston's Swamp.
William Mitchell	Whig	Brother-in-law of 4GGAunt	Gates' Defeat. Kings Mountain. Guilford Courthouse. Lindley's Mill. Livingston's Swamp.
Richard Bull	Whig	Husband of 1 st Cousin 6x removed	Private

Name	Side	Relation	Rank, Unit, Service and Battles
Robert Faucett	?	6GGFather or 5GGUncle	Not a soldier. Compelled to guide Graham to Hart's Mill.
Levi Whitted II	Whig	5GGFather	Officer
John Whitted	Whig	5GGUncle	NC Continental soldier. Killed.
Thomas Byrd	Whig	5GGFather	Private, dragoon. Eutaw Springs. (Fitzpatrick 1932, 8:329, 330, 355)
William Armstrong	Whig	1 st Cousin 7x removed	Captain. First NC Regiment. Later, Third NC Regiment.
William Mebane, 1741–1803	Whig	5GGUncle	Captain.
Alexander Mebane II	Whig	5GGUncle	1776 Fifth Provincial Congress. Hillsborough District militia commissary officer.
Robert Mebane	Whig	5GGUncle	Captain, Smith's Ferry after Moore's Creek Bridge. Norfolk. Cherokees. Lt. Colonel NC Continental. Germantown. Valley Forge. Monmouth Courthouse. Encirclement of New York City. Charlestown siege. Prisoner of war. Exchanged. Lindley's Mill. Brown Marsh. Killed by Tory.
James Mebane	Whig	5GGUncle	Lieutenant, Tory suppression. Pursuit of Col. David Fanning. Captain.
John Mebane	Whig	5GGUncle	Private, Smith's Ferry after Moore's Creek Bridge. Pursuit of Col. David Fanning. Captive at Lindley's Mill. Prisoner on ship. Captain, 1782 Tory suppression.
James Tinnin	Whig	1 st Cousin 7x removed	Gates' Defeat. Eutaw Springs, Round O, Pon Pon, Bacon's Bridge.
Robert Tinnin	Whig	1 st Cousin 7x removed	Guilford Courthouse. Ramsey's Mill.
Joseph McLane	Whig	Husband of 1 st Cousin 7x removed	New Providence. Charlotte. Guilford Courthouse.
Hugh Tinnin	Whig	1 st Cousin 7x removed	Major, Cherokees. Colonel, Stono Ferry, Gates' Defeat. Prisoner of war. Hillsborough, Lindley's Mill.
Michael Holt II	Tory	5GGUncle	Militia officer. Arrested after Moore's Creek. Philadelphia prison.
Jacob Holt	Tory	5GGFather	Not a soldier. Suffered retribution.
James Scott	Whig	5GGUncle	Continental soldier
David White	Whig	Husband of 1 st Cousin 6x removed	Gates' Defeat
Samuel Allen	Whig	1 st Cousin 6x removed	Private, Guilford Courthouse. commissary.
William Allen	Whig	1 st Cousin 6x removed	Private, Guilford Courthouse. commissary.
Hardy Hurdle Jr.	Whig	4GGFather	1778, oath of allegiance

Name	Side	Relation	Rank, Unit, Service and Battles
Samuel Bryan	Tory	Granduncle of Wife of 1 st Cousin 6x removed	Colonel. Moore's Creek Bridge, Hanging Rock. Tried for high treason, acquitted. Exchanged. Banished to East Florida. Resettled in NC.
John Paisley	Whig	Uncle of Husband of 1 st Cousin 6x removed	Colonel. McAlpine Creek. Surry County. New Providence.
Nathaniel Kerr	Whig	Father in law of 2 nd Cousin 5x removed	Ensign. Briar Creek. Black Swamp. Wilmington. Beech Hill.
Jacob Forney I	Whig		House was Cornwallis's HQ. Livestock confiscated.
Peter Forney	Whig		1776, Cherokees. 1780, Ramsour's Mill. 1781, Cowans Ford, Wilmington.
Abraham Forney	Whig		Private, Kings Mountain. Sergeant.
Jacob Forney II	Whig		
Dr. Peter Plunk	Whig	possible 5GGUncle	medical services for the Patriots (Vouchers at the State Archives in Raleigh) (Carpenter, correspondence 2006–2018)
Jacob Plunk II	Whig	4GGFather	Private. 1 term against Cherokees. 2 terms militia. Wilmington.
Samuel Espey	Whig	4GGFather	Corporal, 1776 Cherokees. Captain, Wofford's Iron Works. Wounded at Kings Mountain.
James Espey	Whig	4GGUncle	Private. Kings Mountain. Wilmington. Lieutenant, 1782 Cherokees.
John Espey	Whig	4GGUncle	Private. Fishing Creek. Wilmington.
John Sloan	Whig	5GGFather	Iron munitions manufacturing.
Robert Huggins	Whig	Probable Cousin	Ramsour's Mill
James Huggins	Whig	Probable Cousin	Captain under Colonel Francis Locke
William Oates I	Whig	4GGFather	Private. Probable iron munitions manufacturing. Tories burned house.
Edward Oates	Tory	4GGUncle	Disinherited for Toryism
Peter Costner	Tory	GGUncle of 1 st Cousin 4x removed	Killed at Ramsour's Mill.
Martha Ellington	Whig	5GGMother	Murdered by Tory.
David Motley	Whig	4GGUncle	Private, Virginia 3 rd Regiment. Savannah.
Daniel Motley	Whig	4GGUncle	Private, wagoner for Continentals.
James Morehead	Whig	Brother of husband of 4GGAunt	Captain. Stono Ferry. Elizabethtown.
William Bethell	Whig	4GGFather	Moore's Creek Bridge. Guilford Courthouse. Wilmington.

Name	Side	Relation	Rank, Unit, Service and Battles
Patrick McGuire	Whig	4GGFather	Private. Possible Pennsylvania Continental. Frontier Ranger.
Abraham Alexander	Whig	2 nd Cousin 7x removed	Colonel, Mecklenburg Committee of Public Safety.
Ezra Alexander	Whig	2 nd Cousin 7x removed	Ramsour's Mill. Hanging Rock.
Hezekiah Alexander	Whig	2 nd Cousin 7x removed	Mecklenburg Committee of Public Safety. Mecklenburg County militia paymaster.
James Rankin Alexander	Whig	3 rd Cousin 6x removed	Sergeant. Withdrawal from Fort Lee to Trenton, Delaware River. Surgeon. Treated wounded of Buford's Defeat. Charlotte hospital.
Adam Alexander	Whig	3 rd Cousin 6x removed	Colonel. Scovellites. Moore's Creek Bridge. Cherokees. Camden prison.
Charles Alexander	Whig	3 rd Cousin 6x removed	Captain. Ramsour's Mill.
Elias Alexander	Whig	2 nd Cousin 7x removed	Colonel. Kings Mountain. Cowpens. Guilford Courthouse.
William "Black Billy" Alexander	Whig	3 rd Cousin 6x removed	Cherokees. Ramsour's Mill. Rocky Mount. Hanging Rock. Wahab Plantation.
Thomas Alexander	Whig	3 rd Cousin 6x removed	Cherokees. Scovellites. Hanging Rock.
Matthew Alexander	Whig	4GGUncle	Musgrove Mill. Prisoner at Ninety Six.
James Cox	Whig	Husband of 5GGAunt	Captain. Killed at Brandywine.
Nancy Morgan Hart	Whig	3 rd Cousin 6x removed	Captured and killed six Tories.
Morgan Hart	Whig	4 th Cousin 5x removed	Kettle Creek.
John Hart	Whig	4 th Cousin 5x removed	Kettle Creek.
Thomas Hart	Whig	4 th Cousin 5x removed	Kettle Creek.
William Lee Davidson	Whig	Husband of 5 th Cousin 4x removed	Captain, Scovellites. Major, NC Continental. Germantown. Lt. Colonel. Valley Forge. Encirclement of New York City. Ramsour's Mill. Colson's Ordinary. Brigadier General, Charlotte defense. Pursuit of Cornwallis. New Providence. Killed at Cowan's Ford.
John Moor	Whig	4GGFather	Private, Four-Hole Swamp bridge. Ramsour's Mill. Kings Mountain.
Arthur Patterson	Whig	GGFather of wife of 1 st Cousin 3x removed	Kings Mountain, nearby resident, not soldier

Name	Side	Relation	Rank, Unit, Service and Battles
Arthur Patterson Jr.	Whig	GFather of wife of 1 st Cousin 3x removed	Kings Mountain, 13-year-old boy, not soldier
Thomas Patterson	Whig	GUncle of wife of 1 st Cousin 3x removed	Kings Mountain, boy, not soldier
William Patterson	Whig	GUncle of wife of 1 st Cousin 3x removed	Kings Mountain, boy, not soldier

John Anderson died in 1756. His six sons were likely in the Orange County, Hillsborough District militia. Since their farms were near Hillsborough, they were affected by the war. About 1898, James Henry Anderson, 1864–1941, wrote in his *Anderson Family History*: “I think the most if not all of the sons of the old pioneer, John Anderson, took part in the great conflict with England for independence.” However, he mentions only how one son, presumably David Anderson, was wounded (J. H. Anderson 1898, 6). A tradition was that James Anderson was in the Continental Army during 1777–1778, but he was rather old to be such an active soldier. He may have been awarded a warrant for land in Tennessee since he moved there soon after the war. The Daughters of the American Revolution indicate that William Anderson performed Civil Service. His only son James, 1768–1850, was too young, 12 years old, to participate when the war came to North Carolina in 1780. Other sons John, Robert and Michael probably belonged to the militia, but with no known record.

Levi Whitted II and John Whitted were Revolutionary War soldiers, probably militia. John Whitted was killed. Nothing is known about their service. No Whitted applied for a pension when Congress made that possible in 1832. Of course, Levi might have died before 1832.

Colonel John Walker and his wife Nancy Ashford, ancestors of Edith Walker, second wife of Dallas Malone Anderson, were buried in Cross Roads Presbyterian Church cemetery. Their graves, from the early 1800s, are about 15 feet from the grave of Margaret Louise Plonk, 1923–2006.

Robert Mebane Military Career Timeline

Robert Mebane’s military career timeline appears below. It reflects best known evidence. It will be refined as new evidence is discovered.

Robert Mebane Military Career Timeline

Time	Personal Location	Activity	Source Documents
Jan–Feb 1776	Cross Creek region, NC	Militia captain of riflemen. Suppressed Highlander uprising.	(Hunter 1877, 125)
27 Feb 1776	Moore’s Creek Bridge or Smith’s Ferry, NC	Possible participation. Certain concurrent support.	(Rankin 1971, 50) (Mebane, John, pension application 1833)
Apr 1776	Wilmington, NC	Supported NC regiments recruitment.	(Hunter 1877, 125) (NCSR 1895, XI:830)
May 1776	Norfolk, VA	Town defense.	(NCSR 1895, XXII:114)

Time	Personal Location	Activity	Source Documents
Sep 1776	Catawba River from Charlotte to Quaker Meadows, NC. "Seven-Mile Mountain."	Participant in Cherokee suppression.	(Hunter 1877, 91,125)
24 Nov 1776		Fifth Provincial Congress created Seventh Regiment.	
27 Nov 1776		Fifth Provincial Congress commissioned lieutenant colonel in Seventh Regiment.	(NCSR 1895, X:940)
Nov 1776–May 1777	Halifax, NC	Recruiting and training Seventh Regiment.	
May 1777	Halifax, NC	Continued recruiting in Halifax while most NC Continentals go north.	
17 Jul 1777	Quankey Creek, Halifax, NC	Mebane to Governor Caswell about recruiting. Requested to go Northward.	(NCSR 1895, XI:521)
11 Sep 1777	Brandywine, PA	Possible participation, including Greene's maneuver.	(Battle of Brandywine 2002)
4 Oct 1777	Germantown, PA	Probable participation. His superior Colonel Hogun participated.	(Rankin 1971, 168)
Dec 1777–Jun 1778	Valley Forge, PA	In Major General Lafayette's division.	(Bill 1952)
3 Feb 1778	Valley Forge, PA	Signed Congress oath of allegiance after this date.	(Barrie 1890)
20 May 1778	Barren Hill, PA	Probable participation.	(Stedman 1794, 1:376–379)
1 Jun 1778		Assigned to First Regiment.	(NCSR 1895, XIII:476) (Heitman 1914, 45)
28 Jun 1778	Monmouth, NJ	Almost certain participation.	
12–19 Jul 1778	Paramus, NJ	Presided over court martial of prisoners.	(NCSR 1895, XII:501)
Aug 1778	Hudson River highlands, NY	Encirclement of New York City begins.	
8 Sep 1778		Company commander. Members listed.	(NCSR 1895, XV:724)
4 Dec 1778	Hudson River at King's Ferry, NY	Commanded 200 NC Continentals from First Regiment.	(Rankin 1971, 166) (Fitzpatrick 1932, 13:377)
9 Feb 1779		Status "Coll." Possible promotion.	(NCSR 1895, XVI:1113)
4 April 1779	Middlebrook, NJ, near Washington's headquarters	Commanded Third Regiment.	(Fitzpatrick 1932, 14:331)

Time	Personal Location	Activity	Source Documents
17 Apr 1779		Ordered to return Third Regiment to NC and join Southern Army.	(NCSR 1895, XIV:70, 292)
10 May 1779	Halifax, NC	Mebane to Governor Caswell about officer dissatisfaction.	(NCSR 1895, XIV:80)
30 Jun 1779	Hillsborough, NC	Mebane to Governor Caswell about poor health. Offers resignation.	(NCSR 1895, XIV:136)
23 Oct 1779	NC	Third Regiment strength report.	(Lincoln 1779–1780)
Oct 1779–May 1780	Charlestown, SC	Defended Charlestown. Commander Third Regiment.	
27 Oct 1779	Charlestown, SC	Third Regiment weapons report.	(Lincoln 1779–1780)
8 Nov 1779	Charlestown, SC	Presided over court martial of prisoners.	(Lincoln 1779–1780)
27 Nov 1779	Charlestown, SC	Joined investigation into shortage of wood and forage.	(Grimke 1779–1780)
17 Dec 1779	Charlestown, SC	Ordered settlement of officer rank in Third Regiment.	(Lincoln 1779–1780)
1 Jan 1780	Charlestown, SC	Abstract of muster roll of Third Regiment	(Lincoln 1779–1780)
8 Jan 1780	Charlestown, SC	Major General Lincoln to Governor Caswell about NC Continental deserters.	(NCSR 1895, XV:316)
14–18 Jan 1780	Charlestown, SC	Drew forage for 4 horses.	(Lincoln 1779–1780)
6 Feb 1780	Charlestown, SC	Commanded fatigue party for military engineer.	(Grimke 1779–1780)
11 Feb 1780	North Edisto River, SC	British Army disembarked on Simmon's Island.	
15 Feb 1780	Charlestown, SC	Guard Officer-of-the-Day.	(Grimke 1779–1780)
24 Feb 1780	Charlestown, SC	Guard Officer-of-the-Day.	(Grimke 1779–1780)
25 Feb 1780	Charlestown, SC	Assemble 175 men and march to Ashley River Ferry.	(Grimke 1779–1780)
6 Mar 1780	Charlestown, SC	Rejoined newly arrived NC Brigade.	(Grimke 1779–1780)
8 Mar 1780	Charlestown, SC	Guard Officer-of-the-Day.	(Grimke 1779–1780)
22 Mar 1780	Charlestown, SC	Guard Officer-of-the-Day.	(Grimke 1779–1780)
1 Apr 1780	Charlestown, SC	Siege began.	
14 Apr 1780	Charlestown, SC	NC and VA brigades began duty rotation.	(Grimke 1779–1780)
29 Apr 1780	Charlestown, SC	Guard Officer-of-the-Day.	(Grimke 1779–1780)
8 May 1780	Charlestown, SC	Guard Officer-of-the-Day during Lincoln-Clinton negotiations. At council of officers, voted to accept terms.	(Grimke 1779–1780) (Lincoln 1779–1780)

Time	Personal Location	Activity	Source Documents
11 a.m. 12 May 1780	Charlestown hornwork	American surrender ceremony.	(NCSR 1895, XIV:816)
15 May 1780	Haddrell's Point, SC	Prisoner-of-war.	
Jun 1781	Haddrell's Point, SC	Sea transport to Virginia for exchange and release.	
10 Aug 1781	Richmond, VA	Mebane to Lafayette about prisoner-of-war treatment.	(Clark 1981, 480) (Ranlet 2000)
21 Aug 1781	Granville County, NC	Mebane to Governor Burke. Requests to return to field.	(NCSR 1895, XV:612)
28 Aug 1781	Hillsborough, NC	Andrew Armstrong to Governor Burke about Tory uprising.	(NCSR 1895, XXII:1048)
13 Sep 1781	Lindley's Mill, NC	Participant and leader.	(Caruthers 1854, 212, 214) (Newlin 1975)
Oct 1781	Brown Marsh, NC	Participant and leader.	(Caruthers 1854, 369) (Pass, Holloway, pension application 1836)
Oct 1781	Williams Township, Chatham County, NC	Killed by Tory Henry Hightower.	(Caruthers 1854, 361) (Smith, William C., pension application 1833)

War Conclusion Summary

A popular notion is that Americans invented irregular or Indian-style warfare and that British soldiers were too stupid to adopt it. But actually irregular warfare has always been an obvious choice for a small unit. However, it is not sufficient to protect an established government with publicly exposed legislators, judges, civil administrators, tax collectors, and law enforcers. These officials require a conspicuous professional guard. That was the only role available to the British Army since it had to reconstruct a safe environment for loyalist officials. In fact, only after Americans contested the British in conventional European-style battles at Saratoga, Cowpens, Guilford Courthouse, and Yorktown did they force significant concessions. Nathanael Greene made this distinction in a December 1780 letter (H. F. Rankin 1976, 18) seeking cooperation from Brigadier General Thomas Sumter.

The salvation of this army does not depend upon little strokes, nor should the great business of establishing a permanent army be neglected to pursue them. Partisan strokes in war are like garnishing on a table, they give splendor to the army and reputation to the officers, but they afford not substantial national security. They are matters which should not be neglected, and yet, they should not be pursued to the prejudice of more important concerns. You may strike a hundred strokes, and reap little benefit from them, unless you have a good army to take advantage of your success.

After the war, some Whigs mistreated their Tory neighbors. General William Moultrie wrote in his memoirs (Moultrie 1802, II:303), "The conduct of those two parties was a disgrace to human nature, and it may with safety be said that they destroyed more property, and shed more American blood than the whole British army." The most infamous Whig was Virginia judge Charles Lynch whose last name became a verb. As many as 80,000 loyalists moved to England, Spanish Florida, Bahamas, Nova Scotia, or New Brunswick. Since the Seven Years' War treaty of 1763, Florida belonged to Britain. But in 1783, it reverted back to Spain. In 1819, Florida became a United States' territory.

Jacob Holt, an Anderson-related 5th great-grandfather and brother of Michael Holt II, was a Tory. In 1782, Salem deacon Christian Benzien wrote of Jacob Holt, "I could perceive clearly that he is our friend as his brothers are also. He and Reich told so many stories of deeds of violence which are still taking place in the

neighborhood, that one could not listen without sorrow. Last week a man was made a cripple for a minor matter, and another was murdered.” (Troxler and Vincent 1999, 131).

After the war, many Scotch-Irish moved west. What had been Cherokee land in upstate South Carolina was settled by Scotch-Irish from Rowan and Mecklenburg Counties, North Carolina. That area became Spartanburg County. Many veterans acquired bounty land warrants in Tennessee or Kentucky and moved there with their families during the 1780s and 1790s.

The following veterans acquired a bounty land warrant. Most land warrant applications that predate 1800 were lost in a fire that year. References may be found on microfilm rolls (NARA 1997). The number following the first hyphen indicates land acreage.

Bounty Land Warrants

Name	Relation	BLW	Location	Roll
John Whitted	5GGUncle	43514-160-55		
Robert Mebane, died 1781	5GGUncle	#2578 or 1435-500 21 Feb 1791	Military District, Ohio	1705
David Motley	4GGUncle		100 acres (Hurt 1976, 159)	
Matthew Alexander	4GGUncle	36632-160-55	Logan County, Kentucky	
Abraham Forney		28507 28 May 1856		1003

On 14 March 1786, North Carolina issued the estate of Robert Mebane 7200 acres on both sides of West Fork of the Harpeth River near present-day Nashville, Tennessee. His oldest brother William Mebane inherited this property (Mebane 1786 in NCSAMARS n.d.) (Bockstruck 1996) (Burgner 1990). On 14 November 1790, William Mebane sold a portion of this land to Alexander Anderson, who on 13 September 1797, sold 923 acres to William Whitted (J. M. Murray 1999). Probably neither Alexander Anderson nor William Whitted inspected the land in Tennessee. On 21 February 1791, United States awarded the estate of Robert Mebane Bounty Land Warrant No. 2578 or 1435-500 for 500 acres in Ohio. His oldest brother William Mebane inherited this property. Reference (White 1990, 2318) indicates that brother Daniel Mebane made affidavit on 21 July 1829 in Spartanburg District, South Carolina. Nicholas Corry stated soldier’s heir was Daniel Mebane.

Researcher Beverly Conolly wrote:

On 18 November 1785 after the *Treaty of Hopewell*, all of the land of the Harpeth River drainage area was ceded by the Cherokee Indians. With the enthusiastic reports from the “long hunters” and the early explorers who had visited this part of the new country, and tales of land, bountiful, fertile, beautiful, along with the stories of the trade with Indians, it seemed to have an irresistible attraction to Hugh Tinnin and his Thompson relatives. We know that they moved to the new frontier shortly after the treaty was signed with the Indians, because on 14 April 1786, Hugh Tinnin was acting as an attorney for Joseph Titus in the Nashville area, and won his case. Whether he went west to trade with the Indians, fur trade, or to obtain more land, is not known. They first settled on land along Mansker’s creek, northwest of Nashville, a few miles north of present day Goodlettsville, Tennessee, in what is now Davidson County. In 1793, Hugh and his family moved west to a new homestead a few miles north of Clarksville, on the Red River, in Sumner County. While he was building a fence on 16 January 1793, he was wounded from ambush by the Indians and his horses were stolen. Then in October, while he was hunting with Evan Shelby, Jr., he was wounded again. On a later hunting expedition, along with Col. Montgomery, Col. Hugh Bell, Julius Sanders, and Charles Beaty, near Eddyville,

Kentucky, the group was ambushed by Indians. Col. Tinnin, having been wounded in the knee previously, was still a bit lame. As he couldn't escape the attack, Col. Montgomery stayed and kept himself between Col. Tinnin and the Indians, drawing their fire until Hugh could get away. Col. Montgomery was killed, saving Col. Hugh Tinnin's life. On 20 December 1794, Hugh was hunting with two cousins, John Brown and William Grimes, and Wm Graham, another Mebane cousin, on the Harpeth River about fifteen miles south of Nashville. The party had just killed and dressed out a bear and were resting around a campfire when they were attacked by Creek Indians. One companion was killed instantly but, according to a Creek participant who was interrogated at a later date, "the big man and the little man put up a terrific fight" before they, too, were killed. All three were scalped and left where they fell. (Conolly 2008)

On 7 June 1832, United States Congress passed a law awarding pensions to all living Revolutionary War veterans. Each applying veteran testified in court about his service, including details about time, place, battles, officers, units, commissions, and discharges. Collaborating witnesses testified. They testified solemnly. For example, James Rankin Alexander concluded his pension application with:

Truth to me Sir, is very precious I would not corrupt my character as a man of truth for all the pensions in the World what would it profit me to gain the whole world by a falsehood, and lose my own soul? Being now in my 78th year, I must soon put off my [illegible word] & appear before a just Tribunal where my thoughts, words & Actions will all be weighed in an even balance, then what good would be largest pension that can be conceived obtained by fraud do me? I rest my claim to the gratuity of my country on the veracity of the statements that have been made & subscribed myself. (Alexander, James Rankin, pension application 1833)

Most pensioners represented events as accurately as possible. In 1834, James Martin testified:

Thus have I told you every thing or circumstance that I can recollect for as I said before I kept no written Journal for myself but depended altogether on Memory & though I am now in my 91st year of Age I don't think it much impaired or obliterated as yet, particularly of things that passed Long ago for which I return my unfeigned thanks to God the benign Ruler of the Universe. (Martin 1834 in Graham, William, pension application 1832)

Both North Carolina and United States governments provided pensions to Revolutionary War invalids. Samuel Espey qualified for a pension due to his disabled right elbow. Beginning 4 September 1808, he received \$30 per year (Armstrong 1813, 42). Beginning 24 April 1816, he got \$48 per year. After 14 July 1832, he got \$120 per year. On 7 June 1832, United States Congress passed a law awarding pensions to all living Revolutionary War veterans. Each applying veteran had to testify in court about his service, including details about time, place, battles, officers, units, commissions, and discharges. Collaborating witnesses could testify. Today, these pension applications are published on microfilm rolls by the National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC (NARA 1997). Following veterans acquired this pension. Pension applications of unrelated veterans include general details about Samuel Espey and Jacob Plunk II service. No Whitted or Motley pensions were found. A copy of William Graham's pension statement is in (NCSR 1895, XXII:126) and (Griffin 1937, 47). A copy of Joseph Graham's pension statement is in (NCSR 1895, XXII:120). Samuel Espey's pension amounted to \$98.72 per year in addition to his invalid pension.

Revolutionary War Pensions

Name	Relation	Pension	Date	Roll
John Whitted	5GGUncle	W6495	7 October 1833	
John Mebane	5GGUncle	S9403	30 March 1833	1705
Jacob Plunk II	4GGFather	S7321	1 November 1832	1944
Samuel Espey	4GGFather	S6824	31 October 1832	934

Name	Relation	Pension	Date	Roll
James Espey	4GGUncle	S31668	15 August 1832	934
John Espey	4GGUncle	S31669	15 August 1832	934
William Graham		S8624		
Joseph Graham		S6937		1106
Samuel Martin				1642
Abraham Forney		S3976	31 October 1832	1003
John Moor	4GGFather	W4035	16 September 1845	

In the United Kingdom, the defeat caused collapse of Prime Minister Lord North's government in March 1782. King George III wrote a letter of abdication, but was persuaded not to abdicate. These events encouraged Irish Catholic resistance to Protestant Ascendancy. Unlike the present-day separatist policy, Irish leaders used the large political unit of the United Kingdom to achieve reform. On 1 January 1801, the Irish Parliament disbanded, and its members joined Parliament in London. It was not until 1918 that newly elected Irish members of Parliament asserted independence by meeting in Dublin. In 1922, all but Northern Ireland gained autonomy as the Irish Free State. In 1949, the Republic of Ireland was established.

In 1785, South Carolina established Lancaster and York Counties from the New Acquisition District. These were named after two Pennsylvania counties from which many residents had moved.

Nathanael Greene died 19 June 1786 at age 43. His remains are now under his dedicated monument at Johnson Square in downtown Savannah, Georgia.



Major General Nathanael Greene Monument
Johnson Square, Savannah, Georgia

After the Revolutionary War, William Richardson Davie entered law practice and North Carolina politics. He defended loyalists from retribution including Colonel Samuel Bryan, his adversary at the battle of Hanging Rock. In 1787, Davie helped defend Elizabeth Cornell Bayard's constitutional right to a trial by jury in her efforts to recover her father's property. This famous case *Bayard vs. Singleton* is the first example in United States history of a court asserting and using its power to declare a law unconstitutional (B. P. Robinson, William R. Davie 1957). Davie was a member of the original Board of Trustees of the

University of North Carolina. He investigated and promoted the Chapel Hill site. The university was established in 1786. As a Federalist, he supported ratification of the United States Constitution. In 1798, he was elected North Carolina Governor. However, he did not complete his term because in 1799, President John Adams appointed Davie one of three special envoys to France to negotiate an end to the *XYZ Affair* with Napoleon Bonaparte. Negotiations achieved Adams's aim of avoiding war with France, but the successful news did not reach America in time to help reelect Adams who lost to Thomas Jefferson in 1800. Davie retired to his *Tivoli* estate near Land's Ford, South Carolina. He died in 1820 and was buried in Old Waxhaw Presbyterian Church cemetery (D. L. Pettus 2008–2015). In 1927, his remains were moved to an enclosed gravesite. A newspaper article entitled "Remains of Davie Family Taken Up" reported "There was found a lone silver button, the badge of an officer in the Revolutionary War, and three pieces of board, containing the initials "W.R.D." made with copper head tacks. These were found in the grave of General Davie." (Remains of Davie Family Taken Up about 1927) (M. M. Boyer 2008–2017). Over Davie's grave is the elegant epitaph written by Judge William Gaston (B. P. Robinson 1957, 396–397):

In this grave are deposited the remains of
 WILLIAM R. DAVIE,
 The Soldier, Jurist, Statesman, and Patriot
 In the Glorious War for
 AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE.
 He fought among the foremost of the Brave,
 As an advocate of the Bar,
 He was diligent, sagacious, zealous,
 Incorruptibly Honest, of Commanding Eloquence.
 In the Legislative Hall,
 He had no superior in enlarged vision
 And Profound plans of Policy.
 Single in his ends, varied in his means, indefatigable
 In his exertions,
 Representing his Nation in an important Embassy,
 He evinced his characteristic devotion to her interests
 And manifested a peculiar fitness for Diplomacy.
 Polished in manners, firm in action,
 Candid without imprudence, Wise above Deceit,
 A true lover of his Country,
 Always preferring the People's good to the People's favour,
 Though he disdained to fawn for office,
 He filled most of the stations to which ambition
 might aspire,
 And declining no Public Trust,
 Ennobled whatever he accepted
 By true Dignity and Talent
 Which he brought into the discharge of its functions.
 — A Great Man in an age of Great Men. —
 In life he was admired and beloved by the virtuous
 and the Wise.
 In death, he has silenced calumny and caused envy to
 mourn.
 He was born in Edinburg 1756,
 And died in South Carolina in 1820.

Beginning in 1927, noted Charlotte architect Martin Evans Boyer Jr. designed the enclosed gravesite and described his work in an architectural journal (M. E. Boyer 1929).



Enclosed gravesite of William Richardson Davie

Two years later, Boyer was commissioned to disassemble, transport, and reassemble the old United States Mint from downtown Charlotte to its present-day location (M. E. Boyer 1931).



United States Mint, now Mint Museum of Art

Also, in 1931, Boyer painted a watercolor of Hezekiah Alexander's stone house.



Hezekiah Alexander's stone house
Painted by Martin Evans Boyer Jr., 1931.

Martin Evans Boyer Jr. was the father of Arabelle Boyer.

On 10 September 1936, President Franklin Delanor Roosevelt gave his "Green Pastures" speech at Memorial Stadium in Charlotte. He also visited the newly opened Mint Museum.

Post-war accomplishments of Mebane brothers include:

Name	Accomplishments
William Mebane	1788 US Constitution convention. North Carolina Senate.
Alexander Mebane II	Hillsborough Auditor. UNC board of trustees. 1788 and 1789 US Constitution conventions. Militia brigadier general. US House.
James Mebane	North Carolina Speaker of House.
John Mebane	Militia colonel. North Carolina House.

Many cities, counties, and other places were assigned a patriot's name. A partial list is:

Patriot	Place Name
Maj General Nathanael Greene	Greensboro, NC; Greenville, SC
Major Joseph Winston	Winston-Salem, NC
Brig General Daniel Morgan	Quaker Meadows renamed Morganton, NC
Marquis de Lafayette	Cross Creek, NC, renamed Fayetteville
Brig General William Lee	Davidson County becomes TN; Davidson County, NC; Davidson
Davidson	College; Davidson Street, Charlotte
Brig General Griffith Rutherford	Gilbert Town renamed Rutherfordton, NC; Rutherford County, NC
Brig General Francis Nash	Nashville, TN
Maj General Benjamin Lincoln	Ramsour's Mill renamed Lincolnton, NC; Lincoln County, NC
Ephraim Brevard	Brevard, NC, Brevard Street, Charlotte
Major Joseph Graham	Graham Street, Charlotte
Colonel William R. Davie	Davie County, NC
Alexander Mebane I family	Mebane, NC
Tinnen family	Tinnen Road, Orange County, NC
Captain John Stokes	Stokes County, NC
Colonel Thomas Wade	Wadesboro, NC
Colonel Isaac Shelby	Shelby, NC
Colonel Charles McDowell	McDowell County, NC; McDowell Street, Charlotte
Colonel Benjamin Cleveland	Cleveland County, NC
Brig General Thomas Sumter	Sumter, SC; Fort Sumter
Brigadier General Andrew	Pickens, SC
Pickens	
Colonel Francis Marion	Marion, SC; Marion, VA

After the war, North Carolina legislature passed the *Iron Bounty Lands Act* that tax exempted iron-producing land. This further encouraged iron manufacturing.

In April 1784, the Lincoln County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, heard the case:

Jacob Plunk the Younger accused of trespassing and taking property worth 10 shillings specie from Thomas Espie on December 1, 1780.

This was a reference to Jacob Plunk II, 1748–1845, because his father was alive and other Jacob Plunks can be eliminated by age or location (Dellinger 2006–2014). A conversion chart indicates that 10 shillings in 1760 was the equivalent of \$10 today. Thomas Espie was either the father or brother of Samuel Espey. The intent of this suit may have been symbolic or related to Jacob Plunk II's moving from the Long Creek area to land on Indian Creek (Pruitt 1987). There is comic irony in this event. Later, in 1847, Jacob Plunk II's grandson John Jonas Plonk, 1823–1908, married Thomas Espey's great-granddaughter Anne Ellen Oates, 1831–1905.

Ancestor Sloans and Oates engaged in iron production. Sloan Furnace was on Long Creek in present-day western Gaston County. Also related Ormands owned a furnace.

In 1786, merchant William Whitted Junior, an Anderson-relative, built a house in Hillsborough, North Carolina, at the northeast corner of Queen Street and Churton Street. It is still in use. (Dula 1979, 72–73)

Peter Forney, son of Jacob Forney I, owned a furnace and became wealthy. He built a house called *Mount Welcome*. In 1812, he was elected a United States Congressman.

Major Joseph Graham helped develop the regional iron industry. He was a major general during the War of 1812. He was buried at Machpelah Presbyterian Church in Lincoln County. His son William Alexander Graham was United States Senator 1840–1843, North Carolina Governor 1845–1849, United States Secretary of the Navy 1850–1852, and Whig Party Vice Presidential candidate in 1852.

On 9 March 1825, Lafayette toured the United States. He stopped at Camden to honor Baron Johann DeKalb who sailed with him to America in 1777 and died at Gates' Defeat. Lafayette laid the cornerstone of DeKalb Monument in front of Bethesda Presbyterian Church and spoke these words:

The honor now bestowed upon me, I receive with the mingled emotions of patriotism, gratitude and friendship; and, like other honorable duties which await me in the more northern parts of the Union, I consider it as being conferred on the Revolutionary army in the person of a surviving general officer. In that army, Sir, which offered a perfect assemblage of every civic and military virtue, Major General Baron DeKalb has acted a conspicuous part. His able conduct, undaunted valor, and glorious fall, in the first battle of Camden, form one of the remarkable traits of our struggle for independence and freedom. He was cordially devoted to our American cause, and while his public and private qualities have endeared him to his contemporaries, here I remain to pay to his merits on this tomb, the tribute of an admiring witness, of an intimate companion, of a mourning friend. (Whitfield 1980, 52)

1787–1789, United States Constitution

In 1783, George Washington wrote a letter to all 13 state governors advising that failure to form a strong federal government would make America “the sport of European politics, which may play one state against another.” Continental Congress could not pay debts to war veterans. In 1786–1787, Captain Daniel Shays and his followers rebelled against Massachusetts government and attempted to seize weapons from the Continental Army arsenal at Springfield. General Benjamin Lincoln, commanding militiamen, defended the arsenal and defused the crisis, but continued rebellion remained a threat.

During the summer of 1787, the Constitutional Convention met in Philadelphia. George Washington presided. The delegates created the *United States Constitution* and submitted it to all thirteen states for approval. Each state held a ratifying convention. When the ninth state, New Hampshire, voted for adoption on 21 June 1788, the Constitution became binding on all thirteen states. In North Carolina, the first convention occurred on 21 July–4 August 1788 at Hillsborough. Delegates were concerned about the degree of power given the proposed federal government and lack of a bill of rights for individuals. Anti-federalists prevailed, voting down the constitution 184 to 83, but provided for a subsequent convention that could reconsider. Thus, North Carolina did not participate in the first national election in November 1788. The First Congress convened in New York on 4 March 1789. On 30 April 1789, George Washington was inaugurated President at Federal Hall in New York City. North Carolina held a second convention in Fayetteville on 16 November–23 December 1789. It adopted the United States Constitution in a vote of 194 to 77. North Carolina was the 12th state to adopt federal government. Only, Rhode Island was later. North Carolina was consistent in its liberty principles by being first to adopt independence and next to last to adopt federalism. In 1791, *Bill of Rights* amendments were adopted.

During 1783–1784, Alexander Mebane II was Hillsborough district auditor. During 1787–1792, he represented Orange County in the North Carolina House of Commons. At the 1788 North Carolina convention for the United States Constitution, he and his brother William Mebane, 1741–1803, represented Orange County. Alexander Mebane II was also a delegate at the 1789 convention. A John Anderson represented Guilford County and a James Anderson represented Chatham County. Since these counties are adjacent to Orange County, these men could be Anderson relatives, but no hard evidence is known. All of these delegates were anti-federalists who voted against Constitution ratification. Reference (Massengill 1988) contains details.

When Rockingham County was formed in 1785, William Bethell, a Motley-related 4th great-grandfather, was one of the first justices of the peace. From 1786 through 1789, he was in the General Assembly. In 1790, he was a state senator for one term. He was a diligent anti-federalist who attempted to block the calling of both constitutional conventions. Once called, he was a delegate to both and voted against ratification (Rodenbough 1983, 332).

An Espey-related 5th great-grandfather John Sloan, a delegate from Lincoln County, was probably related to an Oates-related 5th great-grandfather William Sloan, 1715–1744, whose wife Nancy Means was abducted during the French and Indian War as described above. William Sloan was father of 4th great-grandmother Jean Sloan, wife of William Oates I (Porter, Herndon and Herndon 1973, 18). John Sloan owned property in Lincoln County, now Gaston County, including Sloan’s Iron Furnace. On 5 April 1785, his daughter Elizabeth Sloan, married Samuel Espey (Holcomb, Marriages of Rowan County North Carolina 1753–1868 1986, 125) in Rowan County which was where John Sloan resided (M. J. Miller 1988). These relationships need further investigation (Kuhbänder and Espy 1987, 24). John Sloan was a Federalist (NCSR 1895, XXII:2,25). Likewise, Samuel Espey held similar political views. On 17 January 1871, John Randolph Logan wrote that he personally knew Samuel Espey and characterized him as an “intelligent high toned Federalist in politics which rendered him unpopular with the dominant or democratic party.” (Logan 1881 in L. C. Draper 1873, DD:6:30.1)



Ormand Iron Furnace
Gaston County, North Carolina

On 7 December 1789, the North Carolina House of Commons nominated Alexander Mebane II for Hillsborough District militia brigadier general. The next day, an entry in the House record states: “at the particular request of Alexander Mebane, Esq., his name is withdrawn from the nomination.” On 9 December, the House voted “That Alexander Mebane, Esq., is made choice of as Brigadier-General for the district of Hillsborough.” (NCSR 1895, XXI:666) (Mebane 1999, 127).

Ideas from the 1789 French Revolution influenced some Americans. They believed reason alone might supersede Biblical principles. Conservatives called such radical thinkers “infidels.” (Foote 1846, 248).

Ezra Alexander, a McGuire-related 2nd cousin 7 generations removed, organized a debating society for this discussion (Preyer 1987, 174).

French Revolution leaders instituted the decimal-based Metric System of standard weights and measures. They also briefly instituted a 10-day week. Neither Britain nor United States adopted the Metric System.

On 3 October 1789, newly installed President George Washington issued a *Thanksgiving Proclamation*, a tradition that later became a national holiday.

By the President of the United States of America,

Whereas it is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits, and humbly to implore His protection and favor; and Whereas both Houses of Congress have, by their joint committee, requested

me “to recommend to the people of the United States a day of public thanksgiving and prayer, to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many and signal favors of Almighty God, especially by affording them an opportunity peaceably to establish a form of government for their safety and happiness.”

Now therefore, I do recommend and assign Thursday, the 26th of November next, to be devoted by the people of these States to the service of that great and glorious Being who is the beneficent author of all the good that was, that is, or that will be; that we may unite in rendering unto Him our sincere and humble thanks for His kind care and protection of the people of this country previous to their becoming a nation; for the signal and manifold mercies and the favor, able interpositions of His providence in the course and conclusion of the late war; for the general degree of tranquility, union, and plenty which we have since enjoyed; for the peaceable and rational manner in which we have been enabled to establish constitutions of government for our safety and happiness, and particularly the national one now lately instituted; for the civil and religious liberty with which we are blessed; and the means we have of acquiring and diffusing useful knowledge; and, in general, for all the great and various favors which He has been pleased to confer upon us.

And also that we may then unite in most humbly offering our prayers and supplications to the great Lord and Ruler of Nations, and beseech Him to pardon our national and other transgressions; to enable us all, whether in public or private stations, to perform our several and relative duties properly and punctually; to render our National Government a blessing to all the people by constantly being a government of wise, just, and constitutional laws, discreetly and faithfully executed and obeyed; to protect and guide all sovereigns and nations, especially such as have shown kindness to us, and to bless them with good governments, peace and concord; to promote the knowledge and practice of true religion and virtue, and the increase of science among them and us; and generally, to grant unto all mankind such a degree of temporal prosperity as He alone knows to be best.

Given under my hand in the City of New York the third day of October in the year of our Lord 1789.

Go. Washington

1789–1793, University of North Carolina Establishment

In 1785, Liberty Hall Academy moved to Salisbury where Andrew Jackson studied. Later, the school failed financially.

In 1785, *University of North Carolina* was chartered. William Richardson Davie led the University of North Carolina establishment during 1789–1794 (B. P. Robinson 1957, 222–276). As a member of the House of Commons, he introduced the establishing act on 12 November 1789. It passed on 11 December. The act created a board of trustees. Their first meeting was 14 December. During 1790–1792, the Board arranged the financial foundation.

Along with William Richardson Davie, Alexander Mebane II was a member of the original board of trustees (B. P. Robinson 1957, 229).

In 1792, Raleigh was selected as the capital city of North Carolina.

On 3 August 1792, the Board of Trustees of the University of North Carolina decided that the university site must be centrally located, within 15 miles of Cipritz Bridge over New Hope Creek. The next day, the Board created an 8-member commission to select and purchase land. On 1 November, 6 of these commissioners met to inspect eligible sites. On 5 November, they visited New Hope Chapel Hill in Orange County. There during a picnic lunch, traditionally under a poplar tree, Davie persuaded the commissioners.

Alexander Mebane II was elected commissioner representing Orange District. He was one of 6 commissioners who attended the inspection of Chapel Hill (B. P. Robinson 1957, 232) (Snider 1992, 11).

On 5 December 1792, the Board met to announce site selection and create another 7-member commission to contract building construction. This commission planned the nearby village with lots that would be sold to raise funds. On 12 October 1793, the cornerstone of the first building, later called Old East Building, was laid and village lots sold.

In December 1792, Alexander Mebane II, newly elected United States Congressman, was chosen to this commission (B. P. Robinson 1957, 234). On 12 October 1793, he attended the cornerstone laying ceremony (B. P. Robinson 1957, 241) (Snider 1992, 20). On 15 January 1795, he attended the university's formal opening. On 3 June 1793, his student son James Mebane was elected the first President of the *Debating Society* (Snider 1992, 31). The society divided and in 1796, the names were changed to *Dialectic* and *Philanthropic* societies (Snider 1992, 31).

President George Washington crosses state line at Clems Branch during 1791 Tour of Southern States

Clems Branch campground continued to be used after the Revolutionary War well into the 1800s (Rosser 1873 in L. C. Draper 1873, VV:13:7.2). During March–June 1791, President George Washington toured the southern states (Henderson 1923) (Bingham 2016). As he traveled he wrote a journal noting the suitability of the land for farming, soils, trees, drainage, and river navigability. He recorded interesting landmarks like North Corner and the boundary road between the two Carolinas (A. S. Salley 1929) (Pettus and Bishop 1984, 33) (L. Pettus 1991).



President George Washington, approximately as he appeared in 1791.
Painted by Gilbert Stuart, begun 1795.

On 27 May, Washington wrote:

Friday 27th. At Majr. Crawford's I was met by some of the chiefs of the Catawba nation who seemed to be under apprehension that some attempts were making, or would be made to deprive them of part of the 40,000 [sic. 144,000] acres wch. was secured to them by Treaty and wch. is bounded by this Road.

Someone told him that the road was the state line. On 28 May, Washington wrote:

Saturday 28th. Sett off from Crawfords by 4 Oclock and breakfasting at one Harrisons 18 miles from it & got into Charlotte, 13 miles further, before 3 oclock. Dined with Genl. Polk and a small party invited by him, at a Table prepared for the purpose.

It was not, until I had got near Barrs [Lancaster] that I had quit the Piney & Sandy lands — nor until I had got to Crawfords before the Lands took quite a different complexion. Here they began to assume a very rich look.

Charlotte is a very trifling place, though the Court of Mecklenburg is held in it. There is a School (called a College) in it at which, at times there has been 50 or 60 boys. (Washington 1791, 150).

Two days later, he added a note that an honorary escort of Mecklenburg County militia cavalymen welcomed him at the state line. That would be where Camden-Charlotte Road crosses Clems Branch. He stopped for breakfast at Harrison's house less than two miles away. This may have been Isaiah Harrison's house (R. Ford 2004, 39). When he learned that the escort was leaving rather than returning to their home area, he released them.

It ought to have been mentioned also that upon my entering the State of No. Carolina, I was met by a Party of the Mecklenburg horse — but these being near their homes I dismissed them. (Washington 1791, 151).

In a 2 August 1935 *Lancaster News* newspaper article entitled "T. W. Secrest Writes Concerning History of Osceola and Vicinity," Mr. Secrest, a long time local resident, described the old road. He pinpoints the stream crossing coincident with the state line and links it to President George Washington's tour route.

Now as to the road that George Washington rode over in a coach pulled by four white horses ... The old road passed in front of Dr. Potts place, crossed Clem's branch and the North and South Carolina line, at the same point. It passed the east side of the Harrison M. E. Church and intersected with the old road between Harrison church cemetery and Mr. Bill Kerr's, then on to Pineville and Charlotte.

This article was supplied by Professor Louise Pettus in 2005.

1793–1800, North Carolina

Despite Alexander Mebane II's anti-federalist record, he later was a United States Congressman during 1793–1795. At that time, Congress met in Philadelphia. He was re-elected in 1794. He died on 5 July 1795, age 50. His brother John Mebane represented Chatham County in the state House of Commons for many terms between 1790 and 1811, but not continuously. Another brother, James Mebane, represented Orange County intermittently between 1789 and 1824. He was Speaker of the House in 1821. He was also a state senator.



Alexander Mebane II historical marker
Center Street, Mebane, North Carolina

1800–1849, Irish Catholic Reform and Emigration

During the 1700s most emigrants from Ireland were from Ulster. They sometimes referred to themselves as Irish because, at that time, Ireland had a central government in Dublin controlled by Protestants. That condition changed in 1801 when its parliament united with the United Kingdom Parliament. This larger political unit made reform possible. Irish Catholics gained the right to vote and hold public office. It was not until the late 1800s that Ireland independence attracted much support.



Union Flag with superimposed Flag of Saint Patrick, 1801

During the potato famine 1845–1849, many Irish Catholics emigrated. In North America, these immigrants suffered severe prejudice and were unfairly regarded as criminals. The modern word Scotch-Irish dates from this time to distinguish the two immigrant groups. So although the word was laced with prejudice, today that distinction is virtually forgotten.

1812–1815, War of 1812

The following table is an incomplete list of family relations with known War of 1812 participation.

War of 1812 Participants (incomplete list)

Name	Side	Relation	Activities and Notes
Henry Hurdle		3GGFather	Second Orange Regiment
John Oates		3GGUncle	(Porter, Herndon and Herndon 1973, 29–30)

Jacob Plonk III, a 4th great-granduncle, was on the muster rolls of North Carolina Second Regiment during the War of 1812.

1800–1860, North Carolina

During the early 1800s, Germans attempted to maintain their separate language and cultural traditions. But through intermarriage and commercial discourse, German language usage gradually ceased.

In 31 August 1824, Ezekiel Polk died. He composed his own epitaph and left instructions that it be painted on durable wood “as there is no rock in this country fit for grave stones.”

Here lies the dust of old E.P.
One instance of mortality;
Pennsylvania born, Car'lina bred,
In Tennessee died on his bed.
His youthful days he spent in pleasure,
His latter days in gath'ring treasure;
From superstition liv'd quite free
And practiced strict morality.
To holy cheats was never willing
To give one solitary shilling,
He can foresee, and in foreseeing
He equals most of men in being

That church and state will join their pow'r
And mis'ry on this country show'r.
And Methodists with their camp bawling
Will be the cause of this down falling.
An era not destined to see,
It waits for poor posterity.
First fruits and tithes are odious things
And so are Bishops, Priests and Kings. (Jackson Gazette 1824) (Sellers 1953, 97)

Ezekiel Polk was 7th great-grandfather of Arabelle Boyer.

In the late 1700s and early 1800s, writers Robert Burns, 1759–1796, and Sir Walter Scott, 1771–1832, idealized and made fashionable everything Scottish. Robert Burns revised the old poem *Auld Lang Syne*, meaning Old Long Ago. His 1793 revision is now sung on New Year's Eve. In 1822, King George IV wore a kilt during a state visit to Scotland. Today, we recognized that as a designer-jean fashion statement since the kilt was not respectable in earlier generations.

The following Robert Burns poem describes a wife's love for her husband. Who, if anyone, the title represents is not known.

John Anderson My Jo
Robert Burns

John Anderson my jo, John,
When we were first acquent,
Your locks were like the raven,
Your bonnie brow was brent;
But now your brow is beld, John,
Your locks are like the snow;
But blessings on your frosty pow,
John Anderson my jo.
John Anderson my jo, John,
We clamb the hill thegither,
And monie a cantie day, John,
We've had wi'ane anither;
Now we maun totter down, John,
And hand in hand we'll go
And sleep together at the foot,
John Anderson my jo.

In 1801, the trustees of *Hillsborough Academy* included merchant William Whitted Junior. (North Carolina Highway Historical Marker Program 2010), believed to be an Anderson-related 5th great-granduncle. About 1810, he constructed a home in Hillsborough on the northeast corner of Churton Street and Queen Street (Dula 1979, 72–73). Today, it continues as a private residence.



William Whitted House
Hillsborough, North Carolina, built about 1810.

In 1830, Hannah Scott, an Anderson-related 2nd cousin 5 generations removed, married Archibald DeBow Murphey, nephew of a famous jurist with the same name. The nephew was raised by his uncle at the *Hermitage* home in Alamance County. The uncle was a North Carolina Senator and Supreme Court Justice and known as the “Father of North Carolina public schools” (Turner 1971). He intended to write a comprehensive history of North Carolina which was not completed. Nonetheless, his papers include many valuable notes (Hoyt 1914).

Great-grandaunt Mildred Clyde McGuire’s middle name may be a sentimental reference to River Clyde in Scotland.

In 1837, the Presbyterian Church founded *Davidson College*. In 1857, *Charlotte Female Institute* was established at the intersection of College Street and 9th Street. In 1891, it was renamed *Seminary for Girls*. In 1896, it affiliated with the Presbyterian Synod and became *Presbyterian College for Women*. In 1912, it was renamed *Queens College*, and in 1914, it moved to its present-day Myers Park campus. In 2002, it became *Queens University of Charlotte*.

Family graduates of Davidson College include Henry B. Roney Jr., Thomas Motley Plonk Jr., William McGuire Plonk Sr., Randolph McGuire Bulgin (Fulbright Scholarship, Phi Beta Kappa, 1953), William Bulgin McGuire Sr., William Bulgin McGuire Jr., John O’Brien McGuire, and John Brodie Brown Jr. Family graduates of Queens College are Margaret Louise Plonk, Mildred Ann Plonk, Mary Louise Plonk, Linda Louise Hite, and Elizabeth Ann Hite.

On 31 July 1789, John Moor, a 4th great-grandfather and his wife Jane Patton, transferred from Bethel Presbyterian Church in the York District, South Carolina, to Brittain Presbyterian Church near present-day Rutherfordton, North Carolina.

Bethel So Carolina

It is herby certified that the Bearers John Moor & Jane his Wife were raised from Children in this Congregation—that both before & since they were married they have been constant, regular and grave attendants in public Worship—that they were lawfully married on Aug^t 24 1786—that they are in full Communion with the Church— & are hereby recommended, being under no public scandal, to equal Privileges where ever God may cast their Lots—

July 31 1789

Per. Ord^r of Session (Moor, John, pension application 1845)

John Moor was an elder in that church. He was a justice of the peace. In 1816, he was elected state senator from Rutherford County. (Griffin 1937, 169) (Sutton 1987, 360).



John Moor gravestone,
“He was a soldier of the Revolutionary War and for many years a faithful Soldier of Jesus Christ.”
DAR marker, “BRIG MAJ” is incorrect.

John Motley Morehead, 1796–1866, North Carolina Governor 1841–1845, was a Plonk-related 1st cousin 5 generations removed. He was founder and president of *North Carolina Railroad Company*. In 1827, he purchased *Blandwood* estate which remained the Morehead Family residence for many decades. Today, that location is near downtown Greensboro, North Carolina. While governor, his policy of developing a great commercial deep-water seaport resulted in Morehead City. He supported the new public school system. He established institutions for training the blind and deaf and care of the mentally ill. After his governorship term, he founded *Edgeworth*, a women’s college in Greensboro. He was a member of American Whig Party, an anti-Andrew Jackson alliance created in 1835. Beginning about 1856, the new Republican Party absorbed its pro-business and weak-President policies. In early 1861, he represented North Carolina at the conference designed to avert civil war. After that failed, he was a Confederate congressman (Kerr 1868).



John Motley Morehead
North Carolina Governor 1841–1845
Engraving from portrait by William Garl Browne. (Kirkman 2002)

An artistic bust of his likeness is in one of the four niches in the Capitol Rotunda in Raleigh, North Carolina (Konkle 1922). When it was dedicated on 4 December 1912, R. D. W. Connor spoke:

Once in an age appears that rare individual both architect and contractor, both poet and man of action, to whom is given both the power to dream and the power to execute. Such men write themselves deep in their country's annals and make the epoch of history. In the history of North Carolina such a man was John M. Morehead. (Connor 1912)

Morehead Street in Charlotte was named for his son John Lindsay Morehead, 1833–1901, who owned a fine home on South Tryon Street where Morehead Street intersects today. Also, a stained-glass window in the First Presbyterian Church sanctuary, Charlotte, North Carolina, was dedicated to him. John Lindsay Morehead was a Plonk-related 2nd cousin 4 generations removed.

The governor's grandson, John Motley Morehead III, 1870–1965, developed an economical process for manufacture of calcium carbide in 1892. That became the foundation of *Union Carbide Corporation*. In 1900, he published the book *Analysis of Industrial Gases*. He was three-term mayor of Rye, New York, and envoy to Sweden during 1930–1933. In 1945, he created *Morehead Foundation* at UNC Chapel Hill. After a few years, that included Morehead Planetarium and Morehead Scholarship. His 1st cousin once removed, John Lindsay Morehead II, directed the foundation.

In 1849, Jacob Plonk III, a 4th great-granduncle, and other investors financed the first bridge across the Catawba River. Its location was Horse Ford in present-day Hickory, North Carolina. It was designed to facilitate railroad access for farmers west of the river. It opened as a toll bridge in 1852 and operated until destroyed in the 1916 Catawba River flood (Freeze 1995, 149). As a covered bridge, its use was assured even during icy weather conditions. Perhaps also, livestock was less spooked inside an enclosed path. Horse Ford was east and downstream of the present-day highway US321 bridge.



Horse Ford Bridge over Catawba River
1852–1916

Lydia McGuire, a McGuire-related 2nd great-grandaunt, married John L. Jacobs, 1806–1888. He met Davy Crockett when growing up in Tennessee. In 1884, he recorded his recollections.

Cullasaja, Macon County, N. C.
November 22^d, 1884

To the Editor of the Morristown [Tenn.] Gazette:

Some weeks ago I saw in the Knoxville Cronicle an enquiry for the purpose of gaining a knowledge of the history of the Celebrated Davy Crockett. I first knew him when I was a child, then when a boy, then when a youth perhaps 15 years old, then saw him when a man of 20 years.

Crockett was a poor man when first I saw him. He was then a married man, lived three-fourths of a mile of my father, in Findley's Gap, in Jefferson County, Bay's Mountain, Tenn. This gap is on the road leading from Mossy Creek to Chucky, and is in the line of ridges that spans the Honeycutt Valley that runs near to Morristown. My first recollection of Crockett was when a boy of some 6 or 8 years. He was then making rails for my

father. I went to him where he had cut a very large yellow pine tree. He frequently called on me to hand him the wedge or glut, which ever he wanted. This ends my boy recollection of Crockett. This period was near the time of the war of 1812 with Great Britain. Crockett, about this time, moved to what was then called the Western District, or Fork-a-Deer County, in Tenn. His wife's name was Mary Findley. When he left the country he was poor, and left a debt of one dollar to my father. He was absent several years before I saw him again. One morning I was standing in the door next to main road; I looked down the road toward Mossy Creek and saw a fine looking man riding in front of a large drove of horses. He rode opposite me and stopped and asked me if my mother was in the house. I answered she was. "Tell her to come to the door." I did so, and when she appeared he said, "How do you do, Mrs. Jacobs?" My mother said, "Sir, you have the advantage of me." "I am Davy Crockett," responded he. "Is that you, Davy?" said my mother. "Yes," said he, "this is Davy Crockett." Then a general shaking of hands took place, and enquiry of the health of families, etc. Just at this moment his horses came rushing up and nearly got ahead of him. He thrust his hand into his pocket and pulled his pocket book and pulled out a silver dollar and said, "Here, Madam, is a dollar I owed your husband, John Jacobs, when I left the country." My father had died in the meantime. My mother said, "Davy, I don't want it." "I owed it," he said, "and you have got to take it." My mother then took the dollar, and Davy Crockett then rode on the South Carolina to sell his horses. This ends my second short acquaintance with this noted man.

Some years elapsed, and Crockett had made his way to the Congress of the United States. James Blackburn had a corn-shucking in my neighborhood. There were many hands around the heap. We saw a fine gentleman riding toward the house. He alighted and went into the house, made himself known, passed the usual compliments, and came down to the men around the heap of corn, gave a general shaking of hands with all the citizens, then turned up the cuffs of his fine broadcloth and went to shucking corn with the other hands. He worked on till dinner was announced, then ate his dinner and left for his home. This was the last sight I ever had of this wonderful man. I shall here give you description of Davy Crockett: He was about 6 feet high, weighed two hundred pounds, had no surplus flesh, broad shouldered, stood erect, was a man of great physical strength, of fine appearance, his cheeks mantled with a rosy hue, eyes vivacious, and in form, had no superior.

N. B. The writer studied whether to write or not, after serious and close thinking, I could find no one in all that part of your country that had any recollection of Davy Crockett but myself. This prompted me to write. I am now entering into my 80th year. I never knew where Crockett was born.

Very respectfully,
John L. Jacobs

On 30 August 1849, Anna Davis Faucett, a 3rd great-grandmother, died and was buried in a cemetery off of present-day Dumont Drive, northeast of Hillsborough, North Carolina. Her husband Henry Whitted lived until 24 November 1883 and was also buried there. Regrettably, neglect as obliterated this cemetery (W. L. Anderson 2011a, 1).

During the summer of 1853, tragedy struck the William Anderson home. On 18 July, mother Martha Faucett, age 47, died of typhoid fever. On 1 September, that disease took both William, age 50, and his son John Stanford Anderson, age 13. The household was left with daughter Margaret Caroline, age 23, son William James, age 20, and son Robert Sidney, age 15. The eldest daughter Martha Adaline, age 25, was already married. On 10 October, William's sister Margaret Anderson's husband John Scott wrote his nephew John Mebane Allen in Arkansas, "Dear Nephew, ... We have just lost some of our kin by death this summer. William Anderson, his wife and son. All died of fever, and others of the family were sick but got well..." (Scott 1853 in Furman 1974, 39). Apparently, neither parent had written a will. So the default legal procedure was applied. The eldest daughter Martha Adaline's husband James G. Tate became will executor. Within a month, the property was inventoried and publicly sold, probably to settle debts. Children

Margaret Caroline and William James had to bid for their parent's property. No doubt, the shock of these sudden deaths was heartbreaking to William's mother Martha Murray (Anderson), 1776–1853. Although it may be a coincidence, she died on 15 October and was buried at Hawfields Cemetery. Eldest daughter Margaret Adaline Anderson (1827–1854) died the following summer on 24 June 1854 at age 26 with no offspring. Nine years later, son Robert Sidney Anderson (1837–1862) died at age 24. It is not known if his death was Civil War related. Daughter Margaret Caroline Anderson (1829–1866) married a Tate after 1853. He might be her sister's widower. They had no known offspring. She died at age 36. Only William James, 1832–1902, lived a full life. He died at age 69. He inherited his father's land and house and was a prosperous farmer. Sometime around 1870–1880, he built a new house that is still standing. All these individuals, except Robert Sidney Anderson, were buried in Cross Roads Cemetery.

About 1830, Braley Oates, a Plonk-related 1st cousin 4 generations removed, married Lillie Lowrie and moved from Cleveland County to Charlotte, North Carolina (Tompkins 1903, 2:77). Both were buried in Settlers' Cemetery behind First Presbyterian Church. In 1829, their infant daughter Agnes Louisa Oates was buried there. Another daughter Margaret Lowrie Oates, 1827–1867, married Charles E. Spratt and lived in Charlotte. In 1865, their 14-year-old daughter Lillie R. Spratt died. Two years later, Margaret died and was buried with her daughter. A prominent gravestone marks both graves. (Porter, Herndon and Herndon 1973).



Oates Family gravestones in Settlers' Cemetery, Charlotte, North Carolina

Herschel Vespasian Johnson, 2nd great-grandfather of Arabelle Boyer, was appointed United States Senator to complete the term of a vacate seat during 1847–1848. He was elected Georgia Governor and served 1853–1857. In the 1860 presidential election, he was the Democratic Party Vice Presidential candidate with Stephen A. Douglas.

1861–1865, Civil War

On 12 April 1861, the American Civil War begun when Confederate artillery bombarded Fort Sumter. On 20 May 1861, North Carolina seceded from the United States. It was noted at that time, that the day of the year coincided with the 1775 Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence.

In 1862, the *Confederate States Navy Yard* moved from Norfolk, Virginia, to more secure Charlotte, North Carolina. Its location was between East Trade Street and Fourth Street just west of the railroad tracks, now the *Lynx Light-Rail* tracks. (V. G. Alexander 1910) (Hanchett and Sumner 2003, 15) A long wooden platform was built to load and unload railroad cars. Because of the association with the navy, the site became known as the “wharf”. After the Civil War, the site became a huge cotton transportation center.

During 11–26 April 1865, Confederate States President Jefferson Davis met with his full cabinet in Charlotte.

This document does not attempt to cover the American Civil War 1861–1865. No doubt, there are many war records of family relations. The following table is an incomplete list of family relations with known Civil War participation.

Civil War Participants (incomplete list)

Name	Side	Relation	Activities and Notes
Robert Sidney Anderson	South	2GGUncle	Possible service. Died 1862
James Y. Whitted	South	2GGUncle	Lieutenant, Company G, 27 th Infantry Regiment NC. Wounded Sharpsburg, POW. Captain.
Thomas Whitted	South	2GGUncle	Sergeant, Company G, 27 th Infantry Regiment NC. Sharpsburg. Wilderness.
Wilkins Holt	South	1 st cousin 4x removed	Died 29 June 1864, Petersburg, VA. Marker at Bethel United Methodist Cemetery, Alamance County, NC.
Granville Simpson Holt	South	1 st cousin 4x removed	POW, Died 9 November 1863, Washington, DC.
John Philemon Boone	South	2 nd cousin 3x removed	
Joseph Hamilton	South	1 st cousin 5x removed	
John William Faucett	South	1 st cousin 5x removed	Died 19 April 1864 at Plymouth, Washington County, NC.
John Charles Faucett	South	2 nd cousin 4x removed	Died 3 August 1864.
Thomas Ray Faucett	South	2 nd cousin 4x removed	Died 1864 at Petersburg, VA.
Thomas U. Faucett	South	2 nd cousin 4x removed	Wounded at Chancellorsville on 3 May 1863
William Franklin Faucett	South	2 nd cousin 4x removed	Wounded at Gettysburg, left arm amputated.
Miles Edward Faucett	South	2 nd cousin 4x removed	Company G, Thirty-Second Texas Cavalry
George Washington Faucett	South	2 nd cousin 4x removed	Company E, 13 th North Carolina Regiment
John Williamson Stockard	South	1 st cousin 3x removed husband	Wounded 24 June 1864. Appomattox, VA. POW.
Bedford Hurdle	South	2GGUncle	Enlisted 21 June 1864.
Philip Plonk	South	2GGUncle	Colonel. Home Guard. Died 1863.
Sylvanus Froneberger	South	1 st cousin 3x removed	Killed by lightning
Philip Augustus Coulter	South	1 st cousin 4x removed husband	1862–1865, Army of Northern Virginia, Petersburg
William Michael Robinson	South	2 nd cousin 3x removed	North Carolina 71 st Regiment Company C (L. M. Hoffman 1915, 249)
William Bell	South	2 nd cousin 3x removed husband	North Carolina 71 st Regiment Company C (L. M. Hoffman 1915, 249)

Name	Side	Relation	Activities and Notes
John Ervin Moore	South	2GGUncle	Died at Murfreesboro, TN, 1 Jan 1863 (Wikle-Moore Family Bible 1871)
Thomas Henly Moore	South	2GGUncle	Died at LaGrange, GA, 13 June 1864 (Wikle-Moore Family Bible 1871)
Jesse Siler Moore	South	2GGFather	Private. Army of Northern Virginia, North Carolina 16 th Regiment, Company H (Jordon 1977, 79) (P. L. Anderson 1995). Wounded multiple times (L. M. Plonk 1979).
Patrick Henry Jacobs	South	1 st cousin 3x removed	casualty
Jacob J. Brown	South	2 nd cousin 4x removed	Died
Absalom Farmer	South	2 nd cousin 4x removed husband	Private. North Carolina 57 th Regiment, Company G. Died of wounds at Gettysburg.
David Dunlap Oates	South	2 nd cousin 3x removed	
Robert Marcus Oates	South	1 st cousin 4x removed	North Carolina 37 th Regiment, colonel, quartermaster for MG William Pender.
David William Oates	South	2 nd cousin 3x removed	North Carolina 37 th Regiment, captured, POW at Fort Delaware,.
Melchizedeck D. Chandler	South	husband of 2GGAunt	Captain, North Carolina 29 th Regiment, Company G
William Espy	South	1 st cousin 4x removed	

William Franklin Faucett, an Anderson-related 2nd cousin 4 times removed, at age 28, was enlisted by Captain Thomas Ruffin as a private in Company E, Thirteenth Regiment, North Carolina Troops, C.S.A., on 3 May 1861, for a period of twelve months. He was enrolled for active service on 8 May 1861, by Captain Ruffin and mustered into service on 15 May 1861, at Garysburg, Northampton County, North Carolina, by Colonel William Dorsey Pender. Private Faucett was a saddler. He was present from July 1861, to May 1863. He was promoted to corporal on 3 May 1863. He was present during May and June 1863, and was promoted to Color Sergeant on 27 June 1863. Sergeant Faucett was wounded at the Battle of Gettysburg on 1 July 1863, and left in the hands of the enemy. Apparently, he lay on the field for several days, since the Federal records indicate he was captured on 5 July 1863. He was admitted to the U.S.A. General Hospital in Chester, Pennsylvania, on 18 July 1863, having a compound fracture of the right [sic] arm. His shattered left arm was amputated at the middle third on 22 September 1863. He was transferred to Point Lookout, Maryland, on 2 October 1863. On 4 October 1863, he was admitted to Hammond, U.S.A. General Hospital, Point Lookout, Maryland, and he was transferred to Major J. E. Mulford for exchange on 17 March 1864. He was admitted to Chimborazo Hospital No. 5, Richmond, Virginia, on 20 March 1864, and furloughed on 25 March 1864. The disease listed is amputation of left arm. He was retired by General Robert E. Lee, C.S.A., on the September/October 1864 company muster roll. W. F. Faucett's name appears as a signature to a parole of prisoners of war belonging to the Army of Northern Virginia, and surrendered by General Robert E. Lee, C.S.A., commanding said army, to Lieutenant General U. S. Grant, commanding armies U.S. The parole is dated Greensboro, Guilford County, North Carolina, 16 May 1865 (Dreese 2004, 48–50) (W. J. Anderson 2017). Years after the end of the Civil War, General John Brown Gordon, C.S.A., would write:

At Big Falls, North Carolina, there lived in 1897 a one-armed soldier whose heroism will be cited by orators and poets as long as heroism is cherished by men. He was the color-

bearer of his regiment, the Thirteenth North Carolina. In a charge during the first day's battle at Gettysburg, his right arm,⁷ with which he bore the colors, was shattered and almost torn from its socket. Without halting or hesitating, he seized the falling flag in his left hand, and, with his blood spouting from the severed arteries and his right arm dangling in shreds at his side, he still rushed to the front, shouting to his comrades: "Forward, forward!" The name of that modest and gallant soldier is W. F. Faucette. (Gordon 1904, 114)



William Franklin Faucett, wounded at Gettysburg 1 July 1863,
gunshot broken and amputated forearm bones
Anatomical Collections, National Museum of Health and Medicine, Silver Spring, Maryland

Alex Haley's 1976 Pulitzer Prize-winning novel *Roots, The Saga of an American Family*, chapters 105–113, portrays the Murray and Edwin Michael Holt households in Alamance County during 1856–1865 (Haley 1976). Edwin M. Holt was grandson of Michael Holt II and was owner of Alamance Cotton Mill. The book does not mention Murray first names. The actual Murray household included two brothers Andrew Murray and Eli Murray and their families. They were members of Cross Roads Presbyterian Church although the book does not mention the church's name. The Murray brothers' sister or half-sister was Martha Jane Murray, who married James Anderson. She was an Anderson-related 4th great-grandmother. Tom, one of the book's principal characters, learned blacksmith and wrought-iron skills during this time. He took the Murray surname before moving his family to Tennessee. The 1976 made-for-TV movie differs from the book in many ways. It does not mention the Murray name. While composing his novel, Alex Haley interviewed granduncle Henry Baxter Roney who remembered from hunting trips the physical layout of the Murray farm and buildings (Roney 2000–2010). On 13 November 1977, Cross Roads Presbyterian Church held a reception for Alex Haley and Murray-Family reunion.

Jesse Siler Moore, a 2nd great-grandfather, was a private in the Army of Northern Virginia, North Carolina 16th Regiment, Company H (Jordon 1977, 79). He probably participated in many battles and events. Those known are: First Bull Run in 1861, Petersburg in 1864–1865, and Appomattox on 9 April 1865. He was wounded multiple times (L. M. Plonk 1979, 3). His military rifle is owned by Jim Morgan. In June 2009, an appraiser indicated it was manufactured in America during the 1830s, except for the firing mechanism which was imported from England (J. Morgan 2009).

Sylvanus Froneberger, a Plonk-related 1st cousin 3 generations removed, was a soldier in the Confederate Army. In late March 1865, he was killed by lightning. He was 18 years old. In 1915, Laben Miles Hoffman wrote this eyewitness description:

Sylvanus Froneberger was a member of Co. D, 71st N.C. Regt., C. S. A. I was in Co. C, same Regiment. On our retreat from Bentonville, I think it was a short distance east of Chapel Hill, a storm came up and we hurriedly turned into the woods and put up our tents. Froneberger's tent was near ours and in common with many others blew down. He took refuge under a large leaning oak tree about twenty feet in front of our tent in plain view. He had just taken his position when the lightning struck the tree and he fell dead. His heavy woolen sock was split wide open but the shoe left apparently uninjured. I was crouched down in the tent with my weight resting on my right leg which for a short time was paralyzed. (L. M. Hoffman 1915, 305)

1865–1900, North Carolina

Anderson Greene Hughes was a prominent minister and citizen. In 1810, he was born near the Eno Community. He was received into the membership of Eno Presbyterian Church on October 26, 1828. "He was a man of prayer, and as he grew older his earnestness became more marked. He was in the habit of secret prayer from early childhood, and would often go out into the wheat fields to pray." Mr. Hughes became pastor of Hawfields and Cross Roads and served them faithfully for thirty years from 1843 to 1873. He died in the pulpit at Cross Roads church on 15 June 1873 while preaching from the text: "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, He will give it to you." (Ellis, Ellis and Hughes 1955, 7).

Edwin M. Holt was father of North Carolina Governor Thomas Michael Holt. That makes the Governor an Anderson-related 3rd cousin 4 generations removed. He was elected Lieutenant Governor, but became Governor on the death of Governor Daniel Fowle. He help established the North Carolina School for the Deaf at Morganton.



Thomas Michael Holt
North Carolina Governor 1891–1893
Official photograph.

During the spring of 1861, Jacob Holt began constructing his house using the popular *Federal style* architecture: symmetric windows, two rooms on each of two floors, central hall, and external chimneys on opposite sides (Boyte 1992, 5). Jacob Holt was about 70-years old at that time. It is not clear exactly how ownership passed to his grandson James Anderson and his wife Nannie Edwin Whitted. Here are some known events. Jacob Holt died on 14 May 1883. In his 1876 will, he left his house to his wife Mary Stepney Wilkins, and upon her death to his daughter Jane Holt (Roney 2000–2010). But Jane died

unmarried on 13 October 1886 before her mother who died on 6 June 1889. At that time, the house must have been inherited by daughter Elizabeth Wilkins Holt and her husband William James Anderson, both in their late 50s. Probably after 6 June 1889, their son James Anderson and his wife Nannie Whitted moved into the house. Since their marriage on 1 December 1887, they had been living in a Faucett house on Dodson Road. Perhaps the Faucett connection was through Nannie's grandmother Anna Davis Faucett, 1810–1849, wife of Henry Whitted, 1804–1883. A more probable Faucett connection was through James' grandmother Martha Faucett, 1805–1853 since her family had lived along Back Creek for many generations. James and Nannie's first child Caroline Elizabeth Anderson was born in the Faucett house on 10 October 1888. Their second child William Levi Anderson was born in the Holt house on 27 December 1889. On 24 December 1891, Elizabeth Wilkins Holt died. It is not clear if the house became the property of James and Nannie at this time or only after William James died on 24 May 1902. In any event, Nannie wanted the house closer to the road. So, about 1892, a workman named Allen, a former slave, moved the house about one-third a mile. It was rolled on logs using a team of mules or horses. (Roney 2000–2010).



Jacob Holt about 1865 and his house today.

In October 1877, Levi Whitted IV, a 2nd great-grandfather, appended a frame house to his log cabin. It is on present-day Harmony Church Road, east of Cross Roads Presbyterian Church.



Levi Whitted IV House with date-marked chimney

William Levi Anderson, 1889–1951, original middle name was Levi, probably named after his grandfather Levi Whitted IV, 1832–1906. After he was born at the Faucett house on 27 December 1889, that name was entered in a family Bible. At that time, birth certificates were not a legal requirement. Since the concern of county governments was deed records, it was pointless to record infants do not own property. In fact, it was not until about 1920 that births were recorded for health purposes. For whatever reason, William Levi

Anderson decided to change his middle name to Lee before age 18 when he went to *Elon College*. He had no legal requirement to make an official name change. In fact, as a young person living in his parent's house, his name probably did not appear in any official record. So at least by 1908, he used Lee in all records for the rest of his life.

In 1883, William A. Murray, an Anderson-related 3rd cousin 4 generations removed (E. M. Murray 1978), purchased a mill on Balls Creek in Catawba County, North Carolina (Catawba County Register of Deeds 1883, 18:310). That site is now known as Murray's Mill.

In 1880, Robert Marcus Oates, a Plonk-related 1st cousin 4 generations removed, organized the Charlotte Cotton Mill, the first cotton mill in Charlotte. Its two buildings are still standing. He hired 3 nephews: David William Oates, John Edward Oates, and James M. Oates. All men are buried with their families in Elmwood Cemetery, Charlotte.



Charlotte Cotton Mill, 1880

Joseph Calvin Plonk, a Plonk-related great-granduncle, was a very accomplished individual.

In 1884, Joseph Calvin Plonk, who became a natural executive with a strong and commanding personality, was brought to Cherokee Falls from the old McAden Mill in North Carolina by the new superintendent, George Gray. Gray, who had succeeded the first “super,” John LeMaster, made Plonk the overseer of the carding room. Gray served as superintendent for a period of sixteen months, after which Plonk held the position until 1900. Plonk became the guiding genius of the Cherokee Falls Manufacturing Company. He was a sturdy spirit of the old school, whose rugged virtues did much to give the community a distinctive atmosphere. A native of Cleveland County, North Carolina, he managed to secure a good education despite the limited educational opportunities of his day. Although Plonk spent his later teens teaching school in upper Cleveland County, he decided that textiles promised a more secure future. He entered mill work at the old mill in McAdenville, North Carolina. When he came to his new employment he did not have a dollar of capital. However, with hard work, tireless energy, a keen brain, and a natural knack in the handling of men, he was able to reach the top of his profession. He married Miss Laura E. Roberts, a sister to the secretary-treasurer of the mill, Rufus P. Roberts. Even though he did not have a child, he adopted Nora Allgood and raised her as his own. Although Plonk did not believe in promiscuous and indiscriminate charity, he did believe in the dignity provided by an opportunity to work and earn an honest livelihood. Since he practiced what he preached by treating his men fairly, his employees became so loyal that fourth and fifth generations of the original employees are still working at Cherokee Falls. (Moss 1972, 338–339)

On 16 December 1891, 2nd great-grandaunt Jane Elizabeth Plonk died as result of a snake bite. She was bitten in the spring house where butter and milk were stored.

Note: Religion Development, Longest word in English language

A religious development in Great Britain during the 1800s was *antidisestablishmentarianism*. It means against separation of church and state. In this context, *Arianism* is narrowly defined as the Anglican Church. For many decades, this word was the longest word in the English language. About 1965, the contrived word *supercalifragilisticexpialidocious* took that distinction.

In 1898, Sallie Walker Stockard, a 3rd cousin 2 generations removed, was the first woman to graduate from the University of North Carolina.

In 1898, Sallie Walker Stockard was the first female graduate of the University of North Carolina and in 1900, the first female to receive a master's degree from that institution. She was the author of several historical books including *The History of Alamance* (S. W. Stockard 1900). She was a teacher in North Carolina, Arkansas, New Mexico, Texas, and Oklahoma. She was quoted as saying, "I have fought ignorance and filth of all sorts on the western frontier." In 1923, she moved to New York City and received a second master's degree from Columbia University. She built a home on Long Island and continued to write and publish. She died at the age of 93 and was buried in Greenfield Cemetery, Hempsted, New York. (J. Stockard n.d.)

1900s, North Carolina

Ella Bernard Anderson, a 3rd cousin 4 generations removed, married widower Robert Walker Scott on 29 December 1915. Her stepson William Kerr Scott, 1896–1958, was North Carolina Governor during 1949–1953. His son Robert Walter Scott, b:1929, was Governor during 1969–1973. Reference (Turner 1971) contains Scott Family details and images.

Between 5 December 1898 and 7 January 1907, great-grandfather Rufus Sylvanus Plonk, 1866–1918, was a Cleveland County Commissioner.

On 15 November 1911, Caroline Elizabeth Anderson, 1888–1973, and Henry Baxter Roney, 1888–1981, were married by Reverend William Oscar Sample, 1863–1932, minister of Cross Roads Presbyterian Church. By coincidence, he was grandfather of Mary Ann Manning Boyer, b:1934, noted historian of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County.

John H. Brooks, a great-granduncle, was a dentist in Burlington, North Carolina. In the early 1900s, he helped develop articulating dentures (Brooks 1914).

In 1908, the following entry was published in *Men of Mark in South Carolina*:

Plonk, Joseph Calvin, cotton manufacturer, president of the Cherokee Falls Manufacturing company, of Cherokee Falls, Cherokee county, South Carolina, was born December 9, 1852, in Cleveland county, North Carolina. His parents were John Jonas Plonk (now, 1907, living at the age of eighty-four) and Ann Ellen (Oates) Plonk, who died in 1905 in her seventy-fourth year. His mother had always been fond of reading, and was a woman of deep piety and exemplary life. The Bible was her constant companion, and its precepts and its spirit went into the training she gave her children. "If there is any good in me of any kind, I owe it to my mother," writes her son.

His father's family were of German extraction; his mother's were English and Scotch. His paternal great-grandfather, Jacob Plonk, came from Pennsylvania and settled in what is now Lincoln county, North Carolina, before the Revolutionary war. His son, Joseph Plonk, was born in Lincoln county in 1788, and died in 1888, aged one hundred years and two months. He was a skilled workman, and made spinning-wheels, hand-looms, violins, and many other articles, without the use of machinery. Both of Mr. Plonk's maternal great-grandfathers, William Oates and Samuel Espey, came from Pennsylvania before the

Revolution and settled in what is now Cleveland county, North Carolina. They were soldiers in the Revolution war, and were at the battle of King's Mountain, Espey serving as captain. William Oates, son of William Oates and grandfather of Joseph Calvin Plonk, built wagons and other vehicles. He was also a farmer, and land surveyor. He died in 1857. John Jonas Plonk, the father of Joseph Calvin, was born in Lincoln county, North Carolina, in 1823, and is still living at the age of eighty-four, having been an incessant worker himself and believing it a sin to be idle.

Descended from sturdy forebears, Joseph Calvin Plonk was blessed with a strong physique, which his life on the farm helped to develop. At the age of six he began to engage in helpful tasks, following the example of his father, who taught him that he ought not to "eat the bread of idleness." (Hemphill 1908, 311).

The following article appeared in the 18 September 1913 edition of *The Journal and Carolina Spartan*:

Gaffney People Will Attempt to get Interurban

Gaffney and Blacksburg people have become thoroughly aroused over this section's need for the interurban railroad, and a determined effort is to be made to secure this long hoped for and much coveted system.

Therefore, we the undersigned hereby call upon the public spirited citizens of Gaffney to meet in the courthouse at Gaffney at 8 o'clock Friday evening, for the purpose of discussing plans whereby the said railroad may be induced to come through Gaffney, connection Greenwood, Anderson, Greenville, Spartanburg and Gaffney with Gastonia and Charlotte, NC.

The foregoing is the call which has been issued for the meeting tomorrow night and this call has been signed by some of the most prominent men of Gaffney. Among the signatures to be found being that of Mayor T. B. Butler; J. C. Plonk, president of the Cherokee Falls Manufacturing Company; L. G. Potter, president of the Globe Mills; J. N. Lipsome, treasurer and general manager of the Victor Cotton Oil Mill; R. C. Sarratt, treasurer and general manager of the Victor Cotton Oil Mill; Alfred Moore, president of the Gaffney Manufacturing Company; W. C. Hamrick, president of the Limestone and Hamrick Mill; D. C. Ross, president of the First National Bank of Gaffney; C. M. Smith, president of the Merchants and Planters Bank; P. C. Pool, president of the Cherokee Savings Bank.

These gentlemen, who have signed this call, represent an unlimited amount of money, and with their influence and efforts behind the movement, it is reasonable to presume that Gaffney can raise as big amount of money as can any town in the surrounding country.

Shelby, NC, is putting forth every possible effort to get the line, and while no announcement has been made, it is understood that if the interurban goes to Shelby it will not come to Gaffney, and on the other hand, if Gaffney secures the system Shelby will be eliminated.

The meeting Friday night will be attended by practically every business man of the city, and a number from Blacksburg and some proposition will most certainly be made the railroad. (Journal and Carolina Spartan 1913)

On 22 May 1922, after the death of his wife, Joseph Calvin Plonk purchased 900 milligrams of radioactive radium for cancer treatment at Rutherford County Hospital. The following day, a notice appeared in the *New York Times*. That much radium was the size of a small pebble, yet it was 1/180 of the world's industrial supply. It was valued at \$100,000. In 1924, he remarried Maude Rheinhardt, 1886–1978. In 1930, he purchased a stone marker for the Plonk Family Cemetery. In 1935, he added stone markers for

graves of Revolutionary War veteran ancestors and arranged for a stone wall around Long Creek Presbyterian Church Cemetery. (Long Creek Presbyterian Church 1980).

In June 1923, Laura Emma Plonk, 1890–1966, and her sister Lillian Lenora Plonk, 1894–1979, created the *Plonk School of Creative Arts* on Charlotte Street, Asheville, North Carolina. That is near Albemarle Park. It remained in business for at least 40 years. On 7 October 1930, Laura Plonk organized a dramatization of the Battle of Kings Mountain at the auditorium in Kings Mountain, North Carolina. It was part of the 150th anniversary of the battle.

Beginning in October 1929, the Great Depression affected many family members.

The Depression came and when Uncle Sam closed the banks, everyone suffered. The banker in Spindale was a good friend, and one night Mr. Aerial and Motley walked the floor, talking earnestly until after midnight. I was upstairs wondering what was going on. The next morning the bank was closed, and they had been trying to decide how best to tell the depositors. Motley could have withdrawn his money, but I am glad he didn't take out one penny. We, along with everyone, lost all we had in that bank, and we also lost some in a Kings Mountain bank. Doing without things we thought we had to have, and working together, seemed to draw the family closer together. (L. M. Plonk 1979, 8)

On 4 May 1932, great-grandmother Annie Elizabeth Brooks lost both her brother John H. Brooks at 11:00 AM and her husband Jay Webster Tate at 2:00 PM. Great-granduncle Doctor Charles Alexander Anderson wrote and signed Jay's death certificate. Both were buried in Pine Hill Cemetery, Burlington, North Carolina.

In the 1950s, Herbert Johnson Plonk, 1896–1955, donated to Kings Mountain Hospital that was built on or near his parent's property. A portrait of Herbert hangs in the hospital lobby.

Today

Today, as many as 40 million North Americans have Scotch-Irish ancestry. Many attend annual Highland games. The *Loch Norman Highland Games* are held every April at John Davidson's home, named *Rural Hill Farm*, in the northwestern corner of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina. The *Scottish Heritage Center* is being developed there by the *Catawba Valley Scottish Society*.

In 1992, Miles Johnson Boyer, brother of Arabelle Boyer and husband of author Mary Manning Boyer (Kratt and Boyer 2000), was a member on the original Board of Directors of the *Loch Norman Highland Games*.

Interesting Questions

Several interesting family questions are:

1. Do any pre-emigration European records exist? Where exactly did Jacob Plunk I come from? Was it Germany or Holland?
2. Was the James Anderson at Pyle's Defeat our ancestor?
3. Where is the original Plunk land deed record?
4. Can we find Captain Samuel Espey's powder horn and wooden canteen used at Kings Mountain? In 1905, they were in the possession of Margaret Espy, granddaughter of Samuel Espey.
5. Can the Alexander family inter-relationships be resolved? Can we know for certain who was Samuel Alexander's father?
6. There must be an interesting story about Mary Elizabeth Oates, a Plonk-related 2nd great-granddaughter, who was born in 1819 in Kings Mountain, North Carolina, and died in 1875 in Nubieber, Lassen County, California.
7. Can we get the United States Congress records of Alexander Mebane II? What legislation did he promote?
8. Can we find Revolutionary War records of David Motley, Levi Whitted, and John Whitted?

9. Is John Sloan, son of Nancy Means, the same John Sloan who was a delegate to North Carolina's United States Constitution conventions in 1788 and 1789 and who also founded Sloan's Furnace along Long Creek near Bessemer City, North Carolina?

Confusion and Conclusion

Are you confused? If so, you are not alone. The modern word Scotch-Irish is an American-only word meaning Lowland Scots who left Scotland for Ulster, Northern Ireland, and then to America. For the most part, they were not Irishmen or kilt-clad Highlanders. In most respects, they were like contemporary Englishmen. Almost all were Presbyterian. But the original word Scots means a Celtic tribe who first lived in Ireland and later migrated to Scotland and assigned its name. Perhaps a word other than Scotch-Irish would be more descriptive. On the other hand, its ambiguity makes us investigate and learn more about Scotland and Ireland's colorful history. For complete understanding, German history during 1500–1800 must be included.

In 1915, Labane Miles Hoffman concluded his book *Our Kin* as follows:

I dedicate these memorials of our first American sires and of their descendants, our worthy departed fathers and mothers, to the great and ever increasing hosts of their posterity with the wish and hope that we who live and those who shall come may ever emulate their virtues and honor and reverence their lives and memories; ... and to this end, cousins, "I commend you to God and to the word of his grace which is able to build you up and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." (KJV 1611, Acts 20:32) (L. M. Hoffman 1915, 578)

Source pages of special interest

(J. B. Alexander, The History of Mecklenburg County from 1740 to 1900 1902, 1, 2, 84, 98, 177, 284, 403, 409, 415, 421)

(Draper 1881, 100, 102, 257, 302, 322, 478)

(Durden 2001, 19, 34, 36, 69, 109, 119, 120)

(Hunter 1877, 48, 55, 91, 267)

(Ramey 1964, 52, 109, 152, 157, 189, 190)

Revolutionary War pension applications to evaluate

About Camp New Providence

[Robin Harris](#), bypassed Charlotte

[James Scarborough](#), Davie towards Kings Mountain

[Nicholas McCubbin](#), crossing Yadkin in one boat, met Greene heading to Charlotte

About Robert Mebane

[Daniel Mebane](#), death 16 October 1781

[Joseph Witherington](#), 1777 Halifax, White Marsh

[William Eckels](#), in North Carolina Third Regiment

[Solomon Stanbury](#), Charles Town, January–May 1780

[Morgan Brown](#)

[Hardeman Duke](#), New York State

[Matthew Kaykendall](#), 1776 Cherokee campaign

[Arthur McFalls](#), 1776 Cherokee campaign

[Massey Medaris](#), Lindsey's Mill

[Joseph Neely](#), details of Lindsey's Mill

[John Bain](#), details of march to North, White Marsh, sickness

[Edmund Simpson](#), note to Will Graves, not Mebane

[Samuel Spears](#), discharged May 1779 by Robert Mebane
[Moab Stevens](#), Brown Marsh, nighttime battle
[William Duke](#), 1777 in Halifax under Mebane
[Vincent Vaughan](#), excellent detail 1778–1779
Charity Garriage, testimonial of Mebane by husband
[Sikes Garris](#), prisoner, sent to England and elsewhere
[William Cummings](#), carried dispatch to Mebane at White Marsh
[William Mitchell](#), Brown Marsh

About Alexander Mebane II

[William Lorance](#), May 1779

About John Mebane

[Henry Barnhill](#)

About Sloan Family

[John Sloan](#)

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