

Source: Sketches of Western North Carolina, Historical and Biographical by C. L. Hunter

CAPTAIN JAMES HOUSTON.

Captain James Houston was born in 1747, and was an early and devoted friend of liberty. In the battle of Ramsour's Mill, near the present town of Lincolnton, he took an active part, and by his undaunted courage greatly contributed to the defeat of the Tories on that occasion. During the engagement Captain Houston was severely wounded in the thigh, from the effects of which he never fully recovered. Seeing the man who inflicted the severe and painful wound he shot him in the back and killed him as he ran. When it was ascertained that Cornwallis had crossed the Catawba river at Cowan's Ford, and was approaching with his army, the family of Captain Houston conveyed him to the "big swamp" in the immediate vicinity, known as "Purgatory," and there concealed him until the British had marched quite through the country.

When the British army passed the residence of Captain Houston some of them entered the yard and house, and threatened Mrs. Houston with death if she did not quickly inform them where her husband was, and also where her gold and silver and China ware were kept, using, at the same time, very coarse and vulgar language. Mrs. Houston, knowing something of "woman's rights" in every civilized community, immediately asked the protection of an officer, who, obeying the better impulses of human nature, ordered the men into line and marched them off.

Mrs. Houston and "Aunt Dinah" had taken the timely precaution to hide the China ware in the tan vats and the pewter-ware in the mud immediately beneath the pole over which it was necessary to walk in conveying provisions to Captain Houston in his place of concealment. The pole was put under the water and mud every time by aunt Dinah when she returned, so that no track or trace could be discovered of her pathway into the swamp.

Captain James Houston was the father of the late Dr. Joel B. Houston, of Catawba, and the grandfather of R.B.B. Houston, Esq., who now wears the gold sleeve buttons of his patriotic ancestor with his initials, J.H. engraved upon them. Dr. J.H.G. Houston, of Alabama, who married Mary Jane Simonton, is another grandson.

The following is

CAPTAIN JAMES HOUSTON'S MUSTER ROLL.

Captain, James Houston; Lieutenant, William Davidson;

David Evins, David Byers, Robert Byers, Nat.

Ewing, Alexander Work, William Creswell, William

Erwin, John Hovis, John Thompson, John Beard, John

Poston, Robert Poston, Paul Cunningham, John M. Connell,

Moses White, Angus McCauley, Robert Brevard,

Adam Torrence, Sr., Adam Torrence, Jr., Charles Quigley,

James Gulick, Benjamin Brevard, Thomas Templeton,

John Caldwell, Joseph McCawn, James Young,

James Gray, Philip Logan (Irish), William Vint, Daniel

Bryson, John Singleton.

Many of these have descendants in Iredell at the present time, and they can refer with veneration to the names of their patriotic ancestors.

Captain James Houston died on the 2d of August, 1819, in the 73d year of his age, and is buried in Center Church, graveyard.