

office. The sons of the family did not think it safe to remain at home during the occupation of Charlotte by the British, as foraging parties might be expected at any time, but of course had to return occasionally for their supplies; and their mother used to hang a signal from one of the upper windows when she thought it safe for them to come home. On the walls of the house may be seen the date of its erection, 1774.

JOHN M'KNITT ALEXANDER.

No man in Mecklenburg county in Colonial times seems to have had more of the confidence and love of his fellow-citizens (or rather fellow sufferers) than John McKnitt Alexander. His devoted piety, his open-handed and never-ceasing hospitality, and excellent good sense made him a leader among the best class of the community. His grandson, Dr. J. G. M. Ramsay, the well-known historian of Tennessee, tells that when Ochiltree, the traitor, found that Cornwallis was preparing to leave Charlotte, he knew that the citizens would punish him as he deserved, for accepting from the enemies of his country the office of Quartermaster after having signed the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence. He had grown rich in his mercantile dealing with the Mecklenburg people and was loath to leave the property he had accumulated here. He determined to appeal to John McKnitt Alexander for protection, as being the kindest-hearted and most influential man in the county. So, on the night previous to the evacuation he mounted his horse and rode nine miles up what is called the Statesville road to the house of Alexander, but found no one at home except Mrs. Alexander and her children and servants. She knew him well, having bought goods from him for years as a merchant, and refused to admit him and refused to tell him where her husband was. He pledged the honor of a British officer that his intentions were good, and reached his sword to her through the window as a guarantee of his

truth. Mrs. Alexander's pity was aroused and she agreed to send for her husband, who was at one of the many military camps then dotting the country. This one was Maj. Sharp's, the one nearest his own house. Her little daughter Peggy, a girl of thirteen, attended by a faithful slave, Venus, was sent to bring her father. On returning home with the child, Ochiltree threw himself upon his protection, asking security for person and property, after the British army had left. But all the milk of human kindness had been turned to gall in the patriot's heart. The former friend and colleague had sinned too deeply to be forgiven. He said: "Ochiltree, if I had met you anywhere else, I would have killed you; in my own house your life is safe. But I advise you to cross the Yadkin before daylight, otherwise you will never witness another daylight. Your life is forfeited." The panic-stricken traitor knew that if John McKnitt Alexander had no pity on him, nobody else would, and he took his advice and fled. That was the last seen of Ochiltree. It was reported that he reached Wilmington safely and afterwards escaped to the coast of Florida. Previous to this time, Ochiltree had been sending out foraging parties to every plantation which he knew so well, to obtain supplies for the British troops. No man was base enough to sell to him, and many poor soldiers paid their lives for being his messengers. McKnitt Alexander was wealthy, and the produce of his plantation was very great. He said to his foreman, "Cato, the moment you see the red-coats enter our lane, run quick and set fire to the stock yard and barn. Duncan Ochiltree shall not have one bundle of my fodder." And in loyalty to his master, Cato and Ruth did actually burn to ashes the whole result of a year's labor.

The delegates from Mecklenburg who were elected to the Provincial Congress which met at Halifax 1776, were John Phifer, Robert Irwin, and John McKnitt Alexander. He was secretary to the convention in Charlotte which declared independence. He was treasurer for the two Synods (then united in one) of North and South Carolina. His

"SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF JOHN M'KNITT ALEXANDER,  
WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE JULY 10, 1817, AGED 84."

By his side is buried his wife, Jane Bain, who died March 16, 1798, aged 30 years. Two sons, Joseph McKnitt, M. D., and William Bain Alexander. The first married Dovey Winslow, who died September 6, 1801, aged 25, leaving one son, Moses Winslow Alexander, M. D.

Dr. Joseph McKnitt Alexander was born in 1774 and died October 18, 1841. His son, Moses Winslow Alexander, was born May 3, 1798, and died February 27, 1845. The children of William Bain Alexander, who married Violet Davidson, a daughter of Maj. John Davidson, were fourteen in number, seven sons and seven daughters:

1. Joseph, married Nancy Cathy; moved to Alabama in 1835.
2. William B., married Clarissa Alexander.
3. Robert D., married Abigail Bain Caldwell.
4. Benjamin Wilson, married Elvira McCoy.
5. James McKnitt, married Mary Wilson.
6. George Washington, married first Sarah Harris; second, Gillespie; third, Jetton.
7. John Ramsay, married Harriet Henderson.
8. Jane Bain, married Capt. John Sharp.
9. Margaret Davidson, married David R. Henderson.
10. Rebecca, married Marshall McCoy.
11. Sally Davidson, never married.
12. Abigail, married Henderson Robertson.
13. Betsy, married Dr. Isaac Wilson.
14. Isabella, married Dr. Calvin Wier.

This is copied from Wheeler's Reminiscences, published in 1884. Persons desiring it carried out still further, have plenty of data to draw from.

ABRAHAM ALEXANDER.

The home of Abraham Alexander was about three miles northeast of Charlotte, and was known in the neighborhood