

MAJOR THOMAS ALEXANDER

Major Thomas Alexander, born in 1753, was one of the earliest and most unwavering patriots of Mecklenburg county. He first entered the service in 1775, as a private, in Captain John Springs' company, and marched to the head of the Catawba river, to assist in protecting the frontier settlements, then greatly suffering from the murderous and depredating incursions of the Cherokee Indians. In 1775 he also volunteered in Captain Ezekiel Polk's company, and marched against the Tories assembled at the post of Ninety, in South Carolina.

In 1776 he volunteered in Captain William Alexander's company, under Colonels Adam Alexander and Robert Irwin, General Rutherford commanding, and marched to the Quaker Meadows, at the head of the Catawba, and thence across the Blue Ridge to the Cherokee country. Having severely chastised the Indians and compelled them to sue for peace, the expedition returned.

In 1779, he volunteered under Captain William Polk and marched to South Carolina, to subdue the Tories on Wateree River. Soon after this service he was appointed captain of a company to guard the magazine in Charlotte, which, on the approach of Cornwallis, in September, 1780, was removed to a place of safety on the evening before his Lordship's arrival.

After Cornwallis left Charlotte, Captain Alexander raised a company of mounted men to guard the Tuckasege Ford. He occupied this position until it was known Cornwallis had crossed the Catawba River, at Cowan's Ford.

After the death of General Davidson he placed himself under Colonel Lee, of the Continental line, Gen. Pickens commanding, and marched to Hillsboro, near which place they defeated Colonel Pyles, a Tory leader, on Haw River. After this service he volunteered under Colonel Davie and was with him at the battle of Hanging Rock. After Gates' defeat he was appointed Quarter-master, with orders to attend the hospital in Charlotte.

Major Alexander married Jane, daughter of Neil Morrison, one of the signers of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence, and died in 1844, at the age of ninety-two years.

In the "Charlotte Journal," of January 17th, 1845, an obituary notice of this veteran patriot was published, in which it is stated, "he was allied by blood to the two most distinguished families of the period--the Polks and Alexanders, and in his own person blended many of the qualities peculiar to each. He was remarkable for the highest courage and the greatest modesty; for marked dignity of personal deportment, and a disposition the most cheerful, and a heart overflowing with kindness. He crowned all his virtues by a simple, unostentatious and humble piety, and concluded a life, protracted to a period far beyond that allotted to mankind, without a blot, and without reproach, and with the respect, the affection and veneration of all who knew him."

Source: Sketches of Western North Carolina, Historical and Biographical

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