

Dr. Ephraim Brevard

Dr. Ephraim Brevard, the reputed author of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence, proclaimed on the 20th of May, 1775, was born in Maryland in 1744. He came with his parents to North Carolina when about four years old. He was the son of John Brevard, one of the earliest settlers of Iredell, then Rowan, county, and of Huguenot descent. At the conclusion of the Indian war in 1761, he and his cousin, Adlai Osborne, were sent to a grammar school in Prince Edward county, Va. About a year later, he returned to North Carolina and attended a school of considerable notoriety in Iredell county, conducted successively by Joseph Alexander, (a nephew of John McKnitt Alexander) David Caldwell, then quite young, and Joel Benedict, from the New England States. Adlai Osborne, Ephraim Brevard and Thomas Reese (a brother of David Reese, one of the signers), graduated at Princeton College in 1768, and greatly contributed by talents and influence to the spread and maintenance of patriotic principles. Soon after graduation, Ephraim Brevard commenced the study of medicine under the celebrated Dr. Alexander Ramsey, of South Carolina, a distinguished patriot and historian of the Revolutionary war.

In 1776, Dr. Brevard joined the expedition of General Rutherford in his professional capacity, during the Cherokee campaign. Soon after this service he settled in Charlotte, where he married a daughter of Col. Thomas Polk, and rapidly rose to eminence in his profession. He had one child, Martha, who married Mr. Dickerson, the father of the late James P. Dickerson, a Lieutenant-Colonel in the South Carolina regiment in the Mexican war, and who died from a wound received in a battle near the City of Mexico. After the death of his beloved and youthful wife, Dr. Brevard again entered the Southern army, as "surgeon's mate," or assistant surgeon, under General Lincoln, in 1780, and was made a prisoner at the surrender of Charleston.

While engaged as one of the teachers in the Queen's Museum he raised a company, from the young men of that institution, to assist in putting down the Tories assembled on Cape Fear River. Of this company he was made captain. They marched immediately in the direction of Cross Creek (Fayetteville), but, on learning of the dispersion of the Tories, they returned home. Inheriting from his family a devotion to liberty and independence, he early became distinguished for his patriotic ardor and decision of character. He was a fine scholar, fluent writer, and drew up the resolutions of independence which the Convention of the 20th of May, 1775, adopted, with very slight alteration, acting as one of the secretaries. During his confinement in Charleston, as a prisoner of war, he suffered so much from impure air and unwholesome diet that his health gave way, and he returned home only to die. He reached the house of his friend and fellow patriot, John McKnitt Alexander, in Mecklenburg county, where he soon after breathed his last. He lies buried in Charlotte, in the lot now owned by A.B. Davidson, Esq., near the grave of his beloved wife, who, a short time before, preceded him to the tomb. Upon this lot was located the Queen's Museum College, receiving, in 1777, the more patriotic name of "Liberty Hall Academy." Within its walls were educated a Spartan band of young men, who afterward performed a noble part

in achieving the independence of their country.

Source: Sketches of Western North Carolina, Historical and Biographical
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