

## **JACOB FORNEY, SR.**

(Condensed from Wheeler's "Historical Sketches.")

Among the early settlers of Lincoln county (formerly Tryon) was Jacob Forney, Sr. He was the son of a Huguenot, and born about the year 1721. His life was checkered with a vicissitude of fortunes bordering on romance. At the revocation of the edict of Nantes, in 1685, his father fled from France, preferring self-expatriation to the renunciation of his religious belief, and settled in Alsace, on the Rhine where, under the enlightening influences of the reformation, freedom of opinion in matters of conscience was tolerated. The family name was originally spelt Farney, but afterwards, in Alsace, where the German language is generally spoken, was changed to Forney. Here his father died, leaving him an orphan when four years old. At the age of fourteen he left Alsace and went to Amsterdam in Holland. Becoming delighted whilst there with the glowing accounts which crossed the Atlantic respecting the New World, and allured with the prospect of improving his condition and enjoying still greater political and religious privileges, he came to America by the first vessel having that destination, and settled in Pennsylvania. Here he remained industriously employed until his maturity, when he returned to Germany to procure a small legacy. Having adjusted his affairs there he again embarked for America on board of a vessel bringing over many emigrants from the Canton of Berne in Switzerland. Among the number was a blithesome, rosy-cheeked damsel, buoyant with the chains of youth, who particularly attracted young Forney's attention. His acquaintance was soon made, and, as might be expected, a mutual attachment was silently but surely formed between two youthful hearts so congenial in feeling, and similarly filled with the spirit of adventure.

Prosperous gales quickly wafted the vessel in safety to the shores of America, and soon after their arrival in Pennsylvania Jacob Forney and Mariah Bergner (for that was the fair one's name) were united in marriage. At this time the fertile lands and healthful climate of the South were attracting a numerous emigration from the middle colonies. Influenced by such inviting considerations, Forney joined the great tide of emigration a few years after his marriage, and settled in Lincoln county (formerly Tryon) about the year 1754.

The first settlers of Lincoln county suffered greatly by the depredations and occasional murders by the Cherokee Indians. On several occasions many of the inhabitants temporarily abandoned their homes, and removed to the more populous settlements east of the Catawba river. Others, finding it inconvenient to remove, constructed rude forts for their mutual defence. A repetition of these incursions having occurred a few years after Forney's arrival, he removed his family to a place of safety east of the river until the Indians could be severely chastised by military force. On the next day he returned to his former residence, accompanied by two of his neighbors, to search for his cattle. After proceeding about a mile from home they spied a small Indian just ahead of them running rapidly, and not far from the spot now well known as the "Rocky

Spring Camp Ground." Forney truly suspected more Indians were in the immediate vicinity. After progressing but a short distance, he and his party discovered, in an open space beyond them, ten or twelve Indians, a part of whom, at least, were armed with guns, apparently waiting their approach. Forney being a good marksman, and having a courage equal to any emergency, was in favor of giving them battle immediately, but his two companions overruled him, contending it would be impossible to disperse such a large number. It was therefore deemed advisable to retreat, and make their way to the fort, about two miles in their rear, where several families had assembled. After proceeding a short distance the Indians approached somewhat nearer and fired upon the party but without effect. Forney directed his companies to reserve their fire until the Indians approached sufficiently near to take a sure and deadly aim, and maintain an orderly retreat in the direction of the fort. Soon after they commenced retreating the Indians again fired upon them and unfortunately one of the party, Richards, was dangerously wounded. At this critical moment, when one or two well directed fires might have repulsed their enemy, the courage of F---, the other companion, failed him, and he made his rapid departure. Forney, however, continued his retreat, assisting his wounded companion as much as he could, and, although fired upon several times, managed to keep the Indians at some distance off by presenting, his unerring rifle when their timidity was manifested by falling down in the grass, or taking shelter behind the trees, each one, no doubt, supposing the well-aimed shot might fell him to the earth. At length poor Richards, becoming faint from loss of blood, and seeing the imminent danger of his friend's life, directed Forney to leave him, and, if possible, save himself. This advice he reluctantly complied with and pursued his course to the fort. But the Indians did not pursue him much farther, being probably satisfied with the murder of the wounded Richards.

In this unequal contest Forney only received a small wound on the back of his left hand, but, on examination, discovered that several bullets had pierced his clothes. This adventure shows what cool, determined bravery may effect under the most discouraging circumstances, and that, an individual may sometimes providentially escape although made the object of a score of bullets or other missiles of destruction. When he reached the fort he found the occupants greatly frightened, having heard the repeated firing. After this adventure and narrow escape became generally known, a belief was widely entertained by the surrounding community that Forney was bullet-proof. It was even affirmed, and received additions by repeating, that after he reached the fort and unbuttoned his vest, a handful of bullets dropped out.

In subsequent years Forney was accustomed to smile at this innocent credulity of his neighbors but frequently remarked that the impression of his being bullet-proof was of great service to him on more than one occasion preceding and during the Revolutionary war.

Few persons during the war suffered heavier losses than Jacob Forney. By persevering industry and strict economy he had surrounded himself and family with all the comforts, and, to some extent, luxuries of the

substantial farmer. When Cornwallis marched through Lincoln county in the winter of 1781, endeavoring to overtake Morgan with his large number of prisoners captured at the Cowpens, he was arrested in his progress by the swollen waters of the Catawba river. Being thus foiled in his expectations, supposing he had Morgan almost in his grasp, Cornwallis 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, in the meantime Forney's entire stock of cattle, hogs, sheep, geese, chickens, a large amount of forage, forty gallons of brandy, &c. His three horses were carried off, and many thousands of rails and other property destroyed. But the extent of his losses did not end here. Cornwallis had been informed that Forney had a large amount of money concealed somewhere in his premises, and that if diligent search were made it might be readily found.

This information set the British soldiers to work, and, aided by the Tory conductor's suggestions, they finally succeeded in finding his gold, silver and jewelry buried in his distillery, the greater portion of which he had brought with him from Germany. Whilst this work of search was going on without, his Lordship was quietly occupying the upper story of the family mansion, making it his headquarters. Forney and his wife being old, were graciously allowed the privilege of living in the basement. As soon as he was informed his gold, silver and jewelry were found, amounting to one hundred and seventy 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--the loss of his own life, and perhaps that of his family. But the prudent advice of his wife, "Heaven's last, best gift to man," had its proper, soothing effect, and caused him to desist from his impetuous purpose. It is hardly necessary to inform the reader he was punished in this severe manner because he was a zealous supporter of the cause of freedom, and his three sons were then in the "rebel army."

The log house in which his lordship made his headquarters for three days and four nights is still in existence, though removed, many years since, from its original site to a more level location in the immediate vicinity. In this humble building he, no doubt, cogitated upon the speedy subjugation of the "rebels," and that subsequent glorification which awaits the successful hero. Little did Cornwallis then allow himself to think that he and his whole army, in less than nine months from that time, would have to surrender to the "rebel army," under Washington, as prisoners of war!

It is said Cornwallis, after finishing his morning repast upon the savory beef and fowls of the old patriot's property, would come down from his headquarters, up stairs and pass along his lines of soldiers, extending for more than a mile in a northwest direction, and reaching to the adjoining plantation of his son Peter, who kept "bachelor's hall," but was then absent, with his brother Abram, battling for their country's freedom. About midway of the extended lines, and only a few steps from the road on which the British army was encamped, several granite rocks protrude from the

ground. One is about four feet high, with a rounded, weather-worn top--a convenient place to receive his lordship's cloak. Another rock, nearly adjoining, is about two feet and a half high, with a flat surface gently descending, and five feet across. At this spot Cornwallis was accustomed to dine daily with some of his officers upon the rich variety of food seized during his stay, and washing it all down, as might be aptly inferred, with a portion of the forty gallons of captured brandy previously mentioned. This smooth-faced rock, on which his lordship and officers feasted for three days, is known in the neighborhood to this day as "Cornwallis' Table." On visiting this durable remembrance of the past quite recently, the writer looked around for a piece of some broken plate or other vessel, but sought in vain. The only mementoes of this natural table he could bear away were a few chips from its outer edge, without seriously mutilating its weather-beaten surface, now handsomely overspread with moss and lichen. Where once the tramp and bustle of a large army resounded, all is now quiet and silent around, save the singing of birds and gentle murmurs of the passing breeze in the surrounding forest.

After Cornwallis left, Forney ascertained that the Tory informer was one of his near neighbors with whom he had always lived on terms of friendship. Considering the heavy losses he had sustained attributable to his agency, he could not overlook the enormity of the offence, and accordingly sent a message to the Tory that he must leave the neighborhood, if not, he would shoot him at first sight. The Tory eluded him for several days by lying out, well knowing that the stern message he had received meant action. At length Forney, still keeping up his search, came upon him unawares and fast asleep. He was immediately aroused from his slumbers, when beholding his perilous situation, he commenced pleading most earnestly for his life, and promised to leave the neighborhood. Forney could not resist such touching appeals to his mercy, and kindly let him off. In a few days afterward the Tory, true to his promise, left the neighborhood and never returned.

Jacob Forney, Sr., died in 1806, aged eighty-five. In his offspring flowed the blood of the Huguenot and the Swiss--people illustrating in their history all that is grand in heroic suffering and chivalric daring. His wife survived him several years; both were consistent and worthy members of the Lutheran Church, and are buried in the "old Dutch Meeting House" graveyard, about three miles from the family homestead, and near Macpelah Church.

#### **GEN. PETER FORNEY**

Gen. Peter Forney, second son of Jacob Forney, Sr., was born in Tyron county (now Lincoln) in April, 1756. His father was the son of a French Huguenot, and his mother Swiss. His origin is thus traced to a noble class of people whose heroic bravery, unparalleled suffering and ardent piety are closely connected in all lands where their lots have been cast with the promotion of civil and religious liberty.

Gen. Forney was one of the earliest and most unwavering Whigs of the revolutionary struggle. He first entered the service about the first of June, 1776, in Capt. James Johnston's company and Col. William Graham's regiment. The command marched to Fort McFadden, near the present town of Rutherfordton, and found that the greater portion of the inhabitants had fled for protection against the Cherokee Indians.

After remaining a short time at the fort, he joined a detachment of about one hundred men in pursuit of the Indians, under Captains Johnston, Cook and Hardin. They marched about one hundred miles, and not being able to overtake them, the detachment returned to the fort.

In 1777, Gen. Forney volunteered as a Lieut. in Capt James Reid's company, for the purpose of quelling a considerable body of Tories assemble not far from the South Carolina line. The detachment was commanded by Col. Charles M'Lean, who marched into South Carolina and pursued after the Tories until it was ascertained Gen. Pickens, considerably in advance with his forces, had commenced the pursuit of the same, and was too far ahead to be overtaken. The detachment then returned to North Carolina, and, having taken several prisoners on the way, suspected of being inimical to the American cause, Capt. Reid was ordered to convey them to Salisbury. Gen. Forney still remained in service, and attached himself to Capt. Kuykendal's company until some time in June. After this time he was frequently out in short expeditions for the purpose of intimidating and keeping down the rising spirit of the Tories, and arresting them, whenever the good of the country seemed to require it. In the fall of 1779 Gen. Forney volunteered with a party to go to Kentucky (Harrod Station) and after staying there a short time returned home. At this time, there being a call made upon the militia to march to the relief of Charleston, he volunteered as a Lieut. in Capt. Neals' company, which was ordered to rendezvous at Charlotte, whilst there, waiting for the assemblage of more troops, he was appointed Captain by Col. Hampton and Lieut. Col. Hambright, Capt. Neal being superseded in his command on account of intemperance. From Charlotte the assembled forces march by way of Camden to Charleston, under the command of Cols. Hall, Dickson and

Major John Nelson, continental officers. The militia of North Carolina, at the time, was commanded by Gen. Lillington. The term of service of Gen. Forney's company having expired shortly after his arrival at Charleston, and the British being in considerable force off that city, he induced the greater portion of his company to again volunteer for about six weeks longer, until fresh troops, then expected, would come to their relief. In the spring of 1780 Gen. Forney, immediately after his return from Charleston, volunteered under Lieut. Col. Hambright, and went in pursuit of Col. Floyd a Tory leader on Fishing Creek, S. C. Hearing of their approach Floyd hastily fled to Rocky Mount, and the expedition, not being able to accomplish anything more at that time, returned to North Carolina. On the night of his arrival at home Gen. Forney was informed that the Tories, under Col. John Moore, were embodied in strong force at Ramsour's Mill near the present town of Lincolnton. On the next day he left home and went up the Catawba river, when, encountering a considerable body of Tories near Mountain Creek, he returned and immediately hastened to inform Gen. Rutherford. He found him encamped at Col. Dickson's, three miles northwest

of Tuckaseege Ford, with a strong force. He then attached himself to his army, and marched early next morning to Ramsour's, but did not reach there until two hours after the battle, the Tories having been completely defeated by Col. Locke and his brave associates. The dead and wounded were still lying where they had fallen, and Gen. Rutherford's forces assisted in the closing duties of that brilliant victory. Never afterwards in that county did Tory-loyalism present a formidable opposition to the final success of the American arms. Of the Whig officers the brave Captains Falls, Dobson, Smith, Knox, Bowman, Sloan and Armstrong were killed, and Captains Houston and McKissick wounded. Of the Tories, Captains Murray, Cumberland and Warlick were killed, and Capt. Carpenter wounded.

During the latter part of the year 1780 Gen. Forney was almost constantly in service in different portions of county. When Cornwallis entered the county in the last week of January, 1781, endeavoring to overtake Gen. Morgan with his prisoners captured at the Cowpens, he was providentially arrested in his march by the swollen waters of the Catawba river. He then fell back and encamped three days on the plantation of Jacob Forney, Sr., a well to-do farmer and noted Whig, consuming in the meantime, destroying or carrying off, every thing of value belonging to father or son, (Gen. Forney,) consisting of three horses, a large stock of cattle, hogs, sheep, fowls, forage, &c.

After the British army moved from this encampment, Gen. Forney commanded a company and placed themselves on the eastern bank of the river, endeavoring to oppose their crossing, and remained there until the light troops, under Col. Hall, effected a passage at Cowan's Ford.

The militia being repulsed, and Gen. Davidson killed, he fled to Adam Torrence's, hotly pursued by Tarleton's troop of cavalry. At this place he found a considerable body of militia, but in great confusion in consequence of the death of Gen. Davidson, and greatly disheartened. After giving the British one discharge of their arms, and killing several, the militia were repulsed, with small loss, and fled in all directions. Gen. Forney then retreated across the Yadkin, and remained on Abbot's creek about six weeks, during which time he had no regular command, and co-operated with other soldiers, whenever it appeared any advantage could be rendered to the American cause.

In the spring of 1781, Gen. Forney commenced repairing his plantation which the British had entirely destroyed, together with that of his father's in the immediate vicinity, whilst encamped there. He remained at home until a call was made upon the militia to march to the relief of Wilmington, when he again volunteered and commanded a company of dragoons, associated with Captains White and Lemmonds. In this expedition Charles Polk was appointed Major of dragoons, Gen. Rutherford in chief command, and marched through the disaffected country around Cross creek, (now Fayetteville,) and on to the immediate vicinity of Wilmington. Here Gen. Rutherford created a belief before his arrival that his forces were much larger than they really were. In consequence of this belief Major Craig, in command of the post, deeming his situation then insecure, immediately evacuated Wilmington and fled to Charleston. This was the only post in North Carolina held by the British,

and with the flight of Craig all military operations ceased within her borders. This campaign closed the Revolutionary services of a gallant soldier and faithful patriot in the cause of American freedom.

In 1783 Gen. Forney married Nancy, daughter of David Abernathy, a lady of great moral worth and Christian benevolence. The natural goodness of her heart made her the "cheerful giver." Her numerous acts of charity were free of all ostentation, and flowed silently forth like gentle streams from a pure fountain, imparting new vigor and refreshing everything in their course. After the close of the war, full of youthful enterprise, and anxious to engage in some useful business, he fortunately became the owner of the "Big Iron Ore Bank," seven miles east of Lincolnton. This is one of the best and most extensive deposits of iron ore, of the variety known as "magnetic," in the State. Aware of the inexhaustible supply of ore, Gen. Forney disposed of interests to other parties (Brevard and Graham) and they immediately proceeded to erect a furnace (called Vesuvius) on Anderson's creek, now owned by the heirs of the late J.M. Smith, Esq.

After a few years the copartnership was dissolved, separate sites were purchased by Forney and Brevard, on Leeper's creek, additional furnaces were erected and thus the manufacture of cast metal, under its various forms, was vigorously and successfully carried into operation. Gen. Forney commenced building his ironworks in 1787, associated for several years with his brother Abram, laid in a supply of the necessary stock, (ore and coal,) as recorded in a small account book, produced hammered iron in his forge on the 28th of August, 1788.

This is believed to be the first manufacture of iron in the western part of the State. Here Gen. Forney permanently settled for life, and prospered in his useful calling. His residence received the name of "Mount Welcome," an appellation appropriately bestowed, as his future history manifestly proved. The poor and needy of his own neighborhood were frequently the beneficiaries of his bounty; and the weary traveler was at all times made "welcome," and entertained beneath his hospitable roof "without money, and without price."

Gen. Forney was elected as a member to the House of Commons from 1794 to 1796 inclusively, and to the State Senate in 1801 and 1802. He was again called out from the shades of private life and elected as a Representative to Congress from 1813 to 1815. He also served as Elector in the Presidential campaigns of Jefferson, Madison, Monroe and Jackson. With these repeated evidences of popular favor his public services ended. Frequent solicitations were tendered to him afterwards, all of which he declined. The infirmities of old age were now rapidly stealing upon him, and rendering him unfit for the proper discharge of public duties. For several years previous to his decease his mental vigor and corporeal strength greatly failed. After a short illness, without visible pain or suffering, he quietly breathed his last on February 1st, 1834, in the seventy-eighth year of his age.

Generosity, candor, integrity and freedom from pride or vain show were prominent traits in his character. Let his name and his deeds and his sterling virtues be duly appreciated and faithfully imitated by the rising

generation.

#### **MAJOR ABRAM FORNEY.**

Major Abram Forney, youngest son of Jacob Forney, Sr., was born in Tryon county, (now Lincoln) in October, 1758. His father was a Huguenot, and his mother Swiss. His origin is thus connected with a noble race of people who were driven into exile rather than renounce their religious belief under the persecutions which disgraced the reign of Louis XIV, of France. Major Forney first entered the service about the 25th of June, 1776, as one of the drafted militia in Capt. James Johnston's company, and Col. William Graham's regiment. His company was then ordered to reinforce the troops at Fort McFadden, near the present town of Rutherfordton, and remained there until about the 1st of August, when he returned home to prepare for the expedition against the Cherokee Indians. The militia of Mecklenburg, Rowan, Lincoln and other counties were called out by orders from Gen.

Rutherford, who marched to Pleasant Gardens, where he was joined by other forces. From that place Major Forney marched into the Nation with a detachment under Col. William Sharpe as far as the Hiwassee river, where they met with a portion of Gen. Williamson's army from South Carolina. The expedition was completely successful; the Indians were routed, their towns destroyed, a few prisoners taken, and they were compelled to sue for peace. The prisoners and property taken by Gen. Rutherford's forces were turned over to Gen. Williamson, as falling within his military jurisdiction. The expedition then left the Nation, and he reached home on the 13th of October, 1776.

In February, 1777, Major Forney again volunteered as a private in Capt. James Reid's company for the purpose of quelling some Tories who had, or were about to embody themselves near the South Carolina line.

The detachment was commanded by Col. Charles McLean. The Tories were commanded by a certain John Moore, whom Col. McLean pursued into South Carolina until he ascertained Gen. Pickens was engaged in the same pursuit, and too far ahead to be overtaken. The detachment then returned to North Carolina, and having taken several prisoners on the way, suspected of being inimical to the American cause, Major Forney was ordered to take them to Salisbury. After this service he was dismissed and returned home in April, 1777.

At different times subsequently Major Forney volunteered in several short expeditions as far as the South Carolina line, for the purpose of intimidating and keeping down the rising spirit of the Tories, who were numerous in this section of country, and required a strict vigilance to hold them in a state of subjection. Early in June, 1780, when a call was made upon the militia, he volunteered in Capt. John Baldridge's company, marched to a temporary rendezvous at Ramsour's, and thence to Espey's, where they joined other troops under the command of Col. William Graham and Lieut. Col. Hambright. The united forces then proceeded to Lincoln "old Court House," near Moses Moore's, the father of Col. John Moore, the Tory leader, and marched and countermarched through that section of country. At this



time, hearing that Ferguson was coming on with a strong force, it was deemed advisable to retreat and cross the Catawba at Tuckaseege Ford.

Col. Graham then marched with his forces to that place, and there met some other troops from South Carolina, under Col. Williams, retreating before Cornwallis, whose army had just reached Charlotte. The two forces then united under Col. Williams and marched up the west side of the Catawba river, and thence across the country in a circuitous direction towards South Carolina in the rear of Ferguson, and thus were enabled to fall in with the "over mountain" troops under Campbell, Shelby, Cleaveland, Sevier, and others, at the Cowpens, afterwards rendered famous by the battle fought there. The officers having agreed upon the plan of operations, a select portion of the combined forces marched rapidly in pursuit of Ferguson, and found him encamped on King's Mountain on the 7th of October, 1780. The action immediately commenced, and resulted in one of the most decisive victories gained during the Revolutionary struggle, and constitutes the turning point of final triumph in the cause of American freedom.

Soon after the battle, Major Forney and Capt. James Johnston were appointed to number the dead on the British side. They soon found Ferguson at the foot of the hill, dead, and covered with blood. His horse having been shot from under him, he continued to advance, sword in hand, cheering on his men by word and example, until five or six balls pierced his body and sealed his fate. Major Forney often stated he picked up Ferguson's sword, intending to keep it as a trophy, but some subordinate officer getting hold of it, made off with it, and thus deprived him of his prize. An incident connected with the closing scenes of this memorable battle is here worthy of being recorded:

As Major Forney was surveying the prisoners, through the guard surrounding them, he spied one of his neighbors, who only a short time before the battle had been acting with the Whigs, but had been persuaded by some of his Tory acquaintances to join the king's troops.

Upon seeing him Major Forney exclaimed, "is that you, Simon?" The reply quickly came back, "Yes, it is, Abram, and I beg you to get me out of this bull pen; if you do, I will promise never to be caught in such a scrape again." Accordingly, when it was made to appear on the day of trial that he had been unfortunately wrought upon by some Tory neighbors, such a mitigation of his disloyalty was presented as to induce the officers holding the court-martial to overlook his offence and set him at liberty. Soon afterward, true to his promise, he joined his former Whig comrades, marched to the battle of Guilford and made a good soldier to the end of the war.

Near the close of the year 1780, hearing that Col. Morgan was preparing to go upon an expedition into South Carolina, Major Forney attached himself to the command of Capt. James Little, with the intention of joining his forces, but did not come up with them until after the battle of the Cowpens. He then returned home, and remained there until the 27th of January, 1781, when all the Whigs in his section of the country had to fly before Cornwallis in pursuit of Morgan with his large number of

prisoners on their way to Virginia.

Major Forney then crossed the Catawba, and joined a detachment of troops on its eastern bank under Capt. Henderson, placed as a guard by Gen. Davidson at Cowan's Ford, where it was expected the British might attempt to cross. Having stood guard for some time at this point, and being relieved, he went a short distance to a house to procure refreshments of which he was much in need, and was not present when the guard was repulsed, and Gen. Davidson killed. He then fled with the other troops to Adam Torrence's, about ten miles distant, where a considerable body of militia had assembled, but were greatly disheartened on account of the death of Gen. Davidson. The day was damp and unfavorable to the use of firearms. The militia, without much order, fired once at the British, killing seven, and then dispersed in all directions. He then retreated until he reached Gen. Greene's army, in Guilford county. From this place he was advised to return home, and in doing so was furnished with a ticket to procure provisions on the way.

On the 25th of March, 1781, the militia being again called out, Major Forney attached himself to the command of Capt. Samuel Espey, acting as a Sergeant. The company then joined a detachment of militia under Gen. Thomas Polk, marched into South Carolina, and came up with Gen. Greene's army at Rugeley's Mill. The army was then placed under the command of Col. Dudley, and remained under him until Gen. Greene commenced his march to the post of Ninety Six. At this time, Capt. Espey being compelled to leave the service in consequence of a wound received at the battle of King's Mountain, went home with a part of his company, and then Major Forney joined the command of Capt. Jack, still acting as Sergeant. Soon afterward the expedition returned to Charlotte, when he was dismissed by Capt. Jack, about the 1st of July, 1781.

In a short time afterward, Major Forney attached himself to the company of Capt. John Weir, under orders to proceed to Wilmington.

His company crossed the Catawba at Tuckaseege Ford on the 1st day of November, 1781, and encamped three or four miles beyond the river on the road leading to Charlotte. On the next day the company marched through Charlotte and encamped at Col. Alexander's, who had been ordered to take command of the detachment. Whilst there intelligence was received of the return of Gen Rutherford's forces. Major Forney was then sent to that officer for orders; receiving these, the company recrossed the Catawba. Capt. Loftin then took command in place of Capt. Weir, who had resigned and returned home. The company proceeded to form several stations in the county, and arrested some suspected persons. Capt. Thomason the 31st of December, 1781.

Again, when a call was made upon the militia in 1782, to march against the Cherokee Indians, Major Forney was placed in command of a company, and ordered to rendezvous at Ramsour's Mill. He remained there from about the 1st of June until the 1st of August McGee having assumed command in place of Loftin, resigning, marched with the prisoners to Salisbury, and delivered them up to the proper authorities, when he marched to the head of the Catawba and joined the troops of Burke and Wilkes. He then attached his company

to Col. Joseph McDowell's regiment, marched across the Blue Ridge and met with the Rutherford troops on the Swannanoa river, under the command of Col. Miller. After the junction of the Rutherford troops, the expedition, under Gen. Charles McDowell, marched into the Nation, nearly on the trail of Gen. Rutherford in 1776, but proceeded some farther than where his army halted. The expedition was entirely successful; took a few prisoners, returned home and were dismissed in October, 1782.

This was the last service of a brave soldier, who fought long, and fought well, for the freedom of his country. Major Abram Forney died on the 22nd day of July, 1849, in the ninety-first year of his age.

His only surviving son, Capt. Abram Earhardt Forney, at the present time, (1876,) is still living at the old homestead, has already passed his "three score years and ten;" is an industrious farmer, and worthy citizen of Lincoln county.

#### REMARKS.

Among the curious revolutionary mementoes that Capt. A.E. Forney, son of Major Abram Forney, has in his possession is a small leather memorandum pocket-book, filled originally with twenty-four blank leaves; also a powder horn, made by his father preparatory to an expedition to the mountains. The front, or opening sides, is handsomely ornamented with numerous small stars, arranged diagonally across the surface and around the borders. The back side has the patriot's initials, A.F. distinctly impressed, and immediately beneath, the year 1775, the whole displaying considerable artistic skill; numerous entries appear on its pages, made at different times, and without reference to strict chronological order; brief notices of military and agricultural matters and occasionally a birth, death or marriage are harmoniously blended. On page 5 is this entry: "The first snow in the year 1775, was on December the 23rd day, and it was very deep."

On the same page it is recorded: "April the 28th day, Old John Seagle departed this world, 1780." On page 11 this entry appears: "May the 3rd day I sowed flax seed in the year 1779," and other entries relating to the same agricultural avocation are interspersed through the little book. The culture of flax was then an indispensable employment. Our soldiers then wore hunting shirts, made of flax, to the battle fields. Cotton was not generally cultivated until twenty years later. On page 24 it is recorded: "May the 1st day there was a frost in the year 1779." On page 22 is this entry: "Be it remembered the battle between the Whigs and Tories (at Ramsour's) was fought on the 20th day of June 1780." (Signed) Abram Forney. Had any doubt arisen as to the precise date of this important battle it could have been ascertained from this memorandum pocket-book of this distinguished patriotic soldier. On page 13 is an entry which, on its realization, sent a thrill of joy throughout the land: "April the 17th day, great talk of peace in the year 1783." The definite treaty was not signed until the 30th of September following, and a new Republic sprung into existence.

## GENEALOGY OF THE FORNEY FAMILY.

Jacob Forney, Sr., (sketch of his life previously given) married Mariah Bergner, a native of Switzerland. Their descendants were three sons, Jacob, Peter and Abram, and four daughters. Catherine married Abram Earhardt, Elizabeth married John Young, Christina married David Abernathy and Susan married John D. Abernathy. Of the descendants of the daughters, who left the State soon after marriage, little is known.

Jacob Forney, the eldest son, married Mary Corpening, of Burke county, N.C. Soon after the Revolutionary war he purchased a valuable track of land on Upper creek, five miles northwest of Morganton, on which he settled and raised a large family. He lived a long, quiet and useful life. His tombstone, in a private cemetery on the old homestead property, bears this inscription: "Sacred to the memory of Jacob Forney, born Nov. 6th, 1754, died Nov. 7th, 1840, aged eighty-six years and one day." He had eleven children:

1. Elizabeth E. Forney, (died young.)
2. Thomas J. Forney married S.C. Harris, of Montgomery county.
3. Isaac Newton Forney, married M.L. Corpening, of Burke county.
4. Marcus L. Forney married S. Connelly, of Burke county.
5. Albert G. Forney married Eglantine Logan, of Rutherford county.
- 6 Fatima E. Forney married H. Alexander Tate, of Burke county.
7. Peter Bergner Forney married M.S. Connelly, of Caldwell county.
8. James Harvey Forney married Emily Logan, of Rutherford county.
9. Daniel J. Forney married S.C. Ramsour, of Lincoln county.
10. Mary L. Forney married W.P. Reinhardt, of Catawba county.
11. Catharine S. Forney married A.T. Bost, of Catawba county.
12. General Peter Forney, (sketch of his life previously given) married Nancy, daughter of David Abernathy, of Lincoln county. He had twelve children:
  1. Daniel M. Forney married Harriet Brevard, of Lincoln county.
  2. Mary Forney married Christian Reinhardt, of Lincoln county.
  3. Moses Forney, (died in Alabama unmarried.)
  4. Jacob Forney married Sarah Hoke, of Lincoln county,

5. Joseph Forney (died comparatively young.)
6. Eliza Forney married 1st, Henry T. Webb, Esq., of North Carolina, and 2nd, Dr. John Meek, of Alabama.
7. Susan Forney married Bartlett Shipp, Esq., of Lincoln county.
8. Lavinia Forney married John Fulenwider, of Lincoln county.
9. Nancy Forney married Dr. William Johnston, of Lincoln county.
10. Caroline Forney married Ransom G. Hunley, of South Carolina.
11. Sophia G. Forney married Dr. C.L. Hunter, of Lincoln county.
12. J. Monroe Forney married Sarah Fulenwider, of Cleaveland county.
13. Major Abram Forney, (sketch of his life previously given,) married Rachel Gabriel, of Lincoln county. He only had two children:
  1. Abram Earhardt Forney, a worthy citizen of the same county, and now (1876) considerably past his "three score years and ten," and 2., John W. Forney, who died comparatively young.

Daniel M. Forney, eldest son of Gen. Peter Forney, received the appointment of Major in the war of 1812, and proceeded to the scene of conflict in Canada. He served as a Representative to Congress from 1815 to 1818, and as a Senator from Lincoln county to the State Legislature from 1823 to 1826. In 1834, he moved to Lowndes county, Ala., where he died in October, 1847, in the sixty-fourth year of his age. He had seven children:

1. Eloise Forney married Gen. Jones Withers, of Mobile, Ala.
  2. Mariah Forney married Judge Moore, of Alabama,
  3. Alexander B. Forney, (died comparatively young.)
  4. Harriet Forney, (died young.)
  5. Macon Forney, (died young.)
  6. Susan Forney, married Dr. B.C. Jones, of Alabama.
  7. Emma Forney married Col. M. Smith, of Alabama.
2. Mary Forney, who married Christian Reinhardt, had five sons and four daughters. One of the sons, Franklin M. Reinhardt, who remained in the State, was a worthy member of society, highly esteemed by all who knew him, and remarkable for his benevolent disposition and liberality to the poor. He married Sarah, daughter of the late David Smith, of Lincoln county. He died on the 12th of June, 1869, in the sixty-second year of his age.

3. Jacob Forney, who married Sarah Hoke, daughter of the late Daniel Hoke, formerly of Lincoln county, N.C., was an enterprising, useful and highly respected member of society, possessed many noble traits of character, and raised a large and interesting family. He moved in 1835, from Lincoln county to Alabama, and settled in Jacksonville, where he died on the 24th of April, 1856, in the sixty-ninth, year of his age. He had nine children:

1. Daniel P. Forney, of Jacksonville, Alabama.
2. Joseph B. Forney married Mary Whitaker, of Alabama.
3. William H. Forney married Eliza Woodward, of Alabama.
4. Barbara Ann Forney married P. Rowan, Esq., of Alabama.
5. Gen. John H. Forney married Septima Rutledge, grand-daughter of Edward Rutledge, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence.
6. Emma E. Forney married 1st, Col. Rice, 2nd, Rev. Thomas A. Morris.
7. Col. George H. Forney, (killed at Spotsylvania Court House, Va.)
8. Catharine Amelia Forney, married J.M. Wylie, Esq., of Alabama.
9. Mariah Louisa Forney, ("Ida") married R.D. Williams, Esq., of Alabama.

The sons of Jacob Forney won military distinction and renown in the late Confederate war. Our prescribed limits forbid a more extended notice of their gallant services. Their chivalric courage and "deeds of noble daring" will justly claim the careful study of some future historian.

4. Eliza Forney married 1st, Henry Y. Webb, Esq., of Granville county, N.C. He was educated at the University of North Carolina, was a member of the Legislature in 1817; appointed by President Monroe, Territorial Judge of Alabama; elected to the same position by the State Convention of 1819, and died in September, 1823.

Eliza Forney, by first marriage with Henry Y. Webb, Esq., had five children.

1. Frances Ann Webb married Col. John R. Hampton formerly of Charlotte, N.C., now a worthy and highly respected citizen of Bradley county, Ark. His wife Frances, died in 1842, leaving three children, of whom only one, (Susan) widow of Dr. Greene Newton, at present survives.

2. William P. Webb, Esq., married Martha Bell, of Alabama. His children are:

1. James E. Webb, of Hale county, Alabama, married Zemma Creswell.

2. Frances E. Webb married Robert Crawford, of St. Louis, Mo.
3. Judge William H. Webb married "Donna Louise Abrigo," of Monterey, Mexico.
4. Rev. Frank Bell Webb, pastor of the Presbyterian church, at Union Springs, Ala.
5. Wert Webb, commission merchant of St. Louis, Mo., and two daughters, now in their minority.
3. Col. James D. Webb, of the 51st Alabama Regiment, married Jessie Walton. He was frequently a member of the Legislature of Alabama, and was highly esteemed for his purity of character. He died of wounds received in battle, July 3rd, 1863, near Winchester, Tenn., where he is buried. He left a widow and six children.
4. Susan E. Webb died in 1832, at the age of twelve years.
5. Dr. Henry Y. Webb, married Elizabeth S. Alexander, a great-grand daughter of Abraham Alexander, Chairman of the Mecklenburg Convention of the 20th of May, 1775. Most of the Alexanders in the United States have descended from seven brothers who fled from Scotland to the North of Ireland on account of civil and religious persecutions. From 1725 to 1740, many of their descendants emigrated to America, one of whom was William Alexander, who inherited an estate and earldom in Scotland, and became Lord Stirling, a distinguished General in the Revolutionary war. After a short sojourn in Pennsylvania, many of the Alexander families and their descendants emigrated south, and formed numerous settlements in Mecklenburg and adjoining counties.

Descendants of Eliza Forney (2nd marriage) and Dr. John Meek were:

1. Samuel T. Meek, married Miss Cabeen, of South Carolina.
2. John A. Meek, of Franklin, Ky., married Miss Newton, of Arkansas.
3. Lavinia Meek married, 1st, Col. Harry Williams, of Louisiana and 2nd, E.B. Cryer, of Trenton, Louisiana.
4. Nancy, and 5, Sarah Meek.

Bartlett Shipp, who married Susan Forney, served in the State Legislature from 1824 to 1830, and was one of the delegates from Lincoln county in 1835, to amend the constitution. He was an able lawyer, had a large practice for many years, and died in Lincolnton, on the 26th of May, 1869, in the eighty fourth year of his age. His descendants were:

1. Eliza Shipp married William Preston Bynum, Esq., at present one of the Judges of the Supreme Court of North Carolina.
2. William M. Shipp, Esq., married 1st, Catharine Cameron, of

Hillsboro, and 2d, Margaret Iredell, of Raleigh.

3. Susan Shipp married V.Q. Johnson, Esq., of Virginia.

Descendants of John Fulenwider and Lavinia Forney were:

1. John M. Fulenwider married Frances Hudson, of Alabama.
2. Eliza Fulenwider married L.M. Rudisill, Esq., of Catawba county, N.C.
3. Robert Fulenwider married Mary Sellers of Alabama.
4. Daniel Fulenwider married Mary Ann Leslie of Alabama.
5. Jane Fulenwider married Joshua Kirby, of Alabama.
6. Fannie Fulenwider, married James Gore, of Alabama.
7. Louisa Fulenwider married Robert Loyd, of Alabama.
8. Mary Fulenwider, (unmarried.)

For descendants of Dr. William Johnston and Nancy Forney see  
"Genealogy of Colonel James Johnston."

Descendants of Ransom G. Hunley and Carolina Forney, were:

1. Richard R. Hunley married Martha S. Johnston, of Lincoln county.
2. Col. Peter F. Hunley married Margaret Johnston, of Lincoln county.
3. Mary Hunley married Gen. E.W. Martin, of Alabama.
4. Annie Hunley married Alfred Agee, Esq., of Alabama.
5. Ransom Hunley, (died young.)

Descendants of Dr. C.L. Hunter and Sophia G. Forney, were:

1. Nancy Jane Hunter, (died young.)
2. Caroline Elmina Hunter, (died young.)
3. Henry Stanhope Hunter (severely wounded in the late war.)
4. Capt. George William Hunter, mortally wounded in the battle at Chancellorsville, Va.
5. Sophia F. Hunter married John H. Sharp, Esq., of Norfolk, Va.

Source: Sketches of Western North Carolina, Historical and Biographical



by Author: C. L. Hunter