

## **LOCKE FAMILY**

Matthew Locke, one of the first settlers of Rowan county, and the patriarchal head of a large family, was born in 1730. He was an early and devoted friend of liberty and the rights of the people. His stability of character and maturity of judgment caused him to be held in high esteem in all controversial matters among his fellow citizens.

In 1771, during the "Regulation" troubles, he was selected by the people, with Herman Husbands, to receive the lawful fees of the sheriffs, and other crown officers, whose exorbitant exactions and oppressive conduct were then everywhere disturbing the peace and welfare of society. In 1775, he was a member of the Colonial Assembly, and in 1776 member of the Provincial Congress, which met on the 12th of November of that year, and formed the first Constitution. From 1793 to 1799 he was a member of Congress, and was succeeded by the Hon. Archibald Henderson. He married a daughter of Richard Brandon, an early patriot of the same county. He died in 1801, aged seventy-one years.

Matthew Locke had at one time four sons in the Revolutionary war. Francis Locke, his eldest son, was appointed by the Provincial Congress which met at Halifax on the 4th of April, 1776, Colonel of the 1st Rowan Regiment, with Alexander Dobbins as Lieutenant Colonel; James Brandon, 1st Major, and James Smith, 2d Major. He was attached to General Lincoln's army when General Ashe was defeated at Brier Creek, and composed one of the members of the court-martial to inquire into that unfortunate affair. Colonel Locke commanded the forces which attacked and signally defeated a large body of Tories assembled at Ramsour's Mill, under Col. John Moore. (For particulars, see "Lincoln county"). Another son, Lieutenant George Locke, a brave young officer, was killed by the British in the skirmish near Charlotte, in September, 1780.

Hon. Francis Locke, son of Francis Locke, the "hero of Ramsour's Mill," was born on the 31st of October, 1766. He was elected Judge of the Superior Court in 1803, and resigned in 1814, at which time he was elected a Senator in Congress in 1814-'15. He never married, and died in January, 1823, in the forty-fourth year of his age. His mortal remains, with those of his father, Colonel Francis Locke, repose in the graveyard of Thyatira Church, Rowan county, N.C.

Source: Sketches of Western North Carolina, Historical and Biographical  
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