

Benjamin Patton

Benjamin Patton was one of the earliest settlers in the eastern part of Mecklenburg county (now Cabarrus). He was a man of iron firmness and of indomitable courage. Descended from the blood of the Covenanters, he inherited their tenacity of purpose, sagacity of action and purity of character. He was an early and devoted friend of liberty.

He was a delegate to the Provincial Congress which met at Newbern on the 25th of August, 1774. This was the first meeting of representatives direct from the people. The royal Governor, Josiah Martin, issued his proclamation against its assembling, as being without legal authority. It constitutes an illustrious epoch in our colonial history, transpiring nearly two years before Congress would dare to pass a national declaration.

Although it was not a battle, or conflict of arms, yet it was the first and leading act in a great drama, in which battles and blood were the direct and inevitable consequences. Had Governor Martin the power at that time, he would have seized every member of this "rebellious" body and tried them for treason. In this dilemma, he summoned his ever obsequious Council for consultation, who, becoming alarmed at the "signs of the times," declared "nothing could be done."

Tradition informs us that Mr. Patton, not being able to procure a horse, or any conveyance, walked all the way from Charlotte to Newbern, about three hundred miles rather than not be present to vote with those determined on liberty or death. Although then advanced in years, he showed all the enthusiasm of youth. At the Provincial Congress which met at Hillsboro on the 21st of August, 1775, he was appointed Major of the second Continental regiment, with Robert Howe as Colonel, and Alexander Martin as Lieutenant Colonel. Of his military record, in such high position, little is known, but we find him acting as a member of the Committee of Safety for Mecklenburg county, with very full powers, associated with John Paul Barringer and Martin Phifer. They were a "terror unto evil doers." He was a man of considerable learning, of ardent temperament, and of Christian integrity. He died near Concord, in Cabarras county, at a good old age, and is buried on the banks of Irish Buffalo Creek. No monument marks his grave:

"They carved not a line, they raised not a stone.
But left him alone in his glory."

Source: Sketches of Western North Carolina, Historical and Biographical
by Author: C. L. Hunter