

Some Revolutionary Heroes of Rutherford

Incidents of The Revolutionary Period in Rutherford County and Sketches of Some of the Participants.

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PART NINE.

Robert Lewis.

Robert Lewis, son of John Lewis and wife, Sarah Taliaferro Lewis, was born 1752 in Hanover County, Va., and was a soldier of The Revolutionary War. He was one of a company that went from Virginia to South Carolina during the War against the Tories. Some gentleman came up from South Carolina and offered a negro to each of the Virginians who would go against the Tories. A company was formed of about one hundred mounted men who proceeded to South Carolina and divided into small parties, killing about eighty Tories, mostly at their own houses under the direction of a committee appointed by the South Carolinians. The company was paid off in negroes taken from the farms of the Tories that were killed. Robert Lewis got a girl by the name of Chloe who produced a large family of negroes. He was a member of a volunteer company raised by Captain afterwards General, James Miller, of Rutherford County, N. C., and was at the siege of Augusta, Ga. He died a bachelor, at the house of Major John Martin, in Clarke county, Ky., in 1799. His will is on record in that county. (Genealogy of The Lewis Family in America, Pp 214-215.)

Charles C. Lewis.

Hon. Charles Crawford Lewis, son of John and his wife Sarah Taliaferro, was born in Albemarle county, Va., in 1761. He was a hatter by trade.

He emigrated to Rutherford county N. C., with his father before the Revolution and settled on Mountain Creek, four miles west of Rutherfordton.

At the time of their settlement in N. C., the country was infested with Indians, bears, wolves, etc., which proved a great source of annoyance to the early settlers.

On one occasion he was out hunting with his dog and gun and unexpectedly came in contact with a large bear on his farm. The dog encountered the bear in a fight and had it over and under for a few minutes, but the bear proved to be an over match for the dog on account of the great difference in their sizes and would have soon have dispatched him for good but for the timely aid of Charles, his master, who to save his dog, fired hastily at the bear, but missed his aim; he loaded again in a great hurry and neglected to ram down a wad on his shot, and by the time he got his gun loaded the bear had the dog in his embrace and was giving him some of his most affectionate hugs. Charles rushed up on the bear with his gun, placed the muzzle against the side of the bear and fired; but having no wad on his shot, as he lowered the muzzle of his gun the shot all ran out; but he fired, notwithstanding, and the burning of the powder set Bruin's wool on fire, which together with the report of the gun, alarmed him so that the bear let loose the dog and made his escape in double-quick time to the nearest jungle.

He had often heard old bear-hunters spin their yarns about their wonderful adventures, their hair-breadth escapes, their hand-to-hand fights, their shooting and stabbing the bears, but he was always rather incredulous as to the stabbing part, until he had the above mentioned encounter with a bear himself, which removed all his doubts and feelings of incredulity.

When the Revolutionary war commenced he was only fourteen years of age, but after he arrived at the proper age he was in the service. It is not known how long he served in the army as he never applied for pension.

After his death the following certificate (now filed in the archives of the War Department at Washington City) was found among his papers, which, together with other living evidence, enabled his widow to prove his services and draw a pension:

"This is to certify that Charles

Lewis, Sergeant, has faithfully served out his tour of three months, in General Lillington's Brigade, to the southward.

Robert Gilley, Captain, Andrew Hampton, Colonel. Charleston, S. C., March 24, 1780."

He acted as a magistrate for some years in Rutherford county, N. C., after which he was elected in 1798 as a member in the House of Commons in the State Legislature, and only served one term. It was the only time he ever aspired to that office. His name can be found in Wheeler's History of N. C., on page 400. He was afterwards elected, during life or good behavior, to the office of register of the county, which office he held upwards of thirty years, until about the time of his death, which occurred in 1833.

He married Elizabeth Russell, daughter of George Russell, from Ireland, in 1786, by whom he had thirteen children.

George Russell, Sr., (father of Mrs. Chas. Lewis) was killed by the Indians while on a bear hunt soon after the close of the Revolution. He lived about ten miles west of Rutherfordton, on the Broad river, where the Hickory Nut gap road crosses said river, at a plantation which has since been owned by George Russell, Jr., John U. Whitesides, Elias Lynch and others. The first settlement was made on the west side of the river; at this place George Russell Sr., was living during the Revolutionary War, when Ferguson and his army marched as far west as his house, which they plundered and turned east.

What money the family had was in silver; when they saw the army approaching the house they threw the money in a little barrel of feathers that stood in the corner of the house. When the soldiers entered the house they commenced plundering and appropriating everything they saw proper to their own uses; one ran his arm down into the barrel of feathers; grabbed the money bag and left. All the bed clothes and wearing apparel that the family saved were such as they carried to the swamp and were stowed away in a hogshead before the arrival of the enemy (Genealogy of the Lewis Families, pp 257-58-59) Chas. Lewis is buried on Geo Biggerstaff's farm, north of Rutherfordton.

Chisolm Griffin.

Chisolm Griffin was born in Virginia about 1759 or 1760, and was a member of the Virginia militia during the Revolution. He came to Rutherford county during the war, or shortly afterwards, where he resided until his death. He was married in 1790 to Frances Terrell, born in Virginia, March 17, 1764, a daughter of Joel Terrell, Jr., and Anna Lewis Terrell. Chisolm Griffin was a farmer of moderate circumstances, and resided in what is now Cool Springs township and later in Union township, of this county. He was killed in a feud about 1804. He had three sons and one daughter. One son died young. His daughter never married. The oldest son, Greenberry Griffin, was a soldier in the War of 1812, and afterwards removed from the county. His youngest son, William Lewis Griffin, was register of deeds in Rutherford county from 1851, to 1868, and is the progenitor of the Rutherford-Buncombe branch of the family of today.

BLANTON REUNION

There will be a reunion of the descendants of the Late Frank Blanton at Mt. Olivet Baptist church, between Ellenboro and Hollis on Thursday, July 17th. All children, grandchildren, great grand children and other relatives and friends are invited to attend and bring well filled dinner baskets. Any church choir or string band will be welcome to make music for the occasion. This is the first reunion of this family ever held and it is hoped that all will attend and enjoy the day.

It is the plan now to have a brief history of the late Frank Blanton read on that day.

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