

# Patterson's Essay On Battle Of KM

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Irish, English, French and German ancestry; most were hard-working farmers and hunters. Almost five years passed before they were directly affected by British forces in the South. Stories of British atrocities fired their determination to defeat Ferguson and give the British a taste of their own medicine.

Summer, 1780, found Ferguson marching through the Carolinas, met by mountaineer militia regiments who engaged him in fierce actions.

August, 1780, Cornwallis defeated Gates' American forces at Camden, a great British victory. The only real American Army in the South had been shattered. The mountaineers returned home to rest and strengthen their forces, resolving to meet Ferguson again.

Meanwhile, Cornwallis marched toward Charlotte, intending to invade North Carolina. To protect his left flank, he ordered Ferguson northward into western North Carolina. In September, 1780, Ferguson camped at Gilbert Twon (Rutherford today). He commanded eleven hundred four trained soldiers and Loyalists. A British prisoner, Samuel Phillips, went to Col. Isaac Shelby, the Patriot militia commander in Sullivan County, North Carolina, and recognized leader of the mountaineers. Ferguson warned Shelby that he would "march his army over the mountains, hang their leaders and lay their country waste with fire and sword, if they did not desist" from opposing the British. The challenge couldn't be ignored.

On Sept. 25, 1780, over one thousand mountaineers gathered at Sycamore Shoals near Elizabethton, Tennessee. Shelby led 240 North Carolinians, Charles McDowell, 160, John Sevier, 240; William Campbell brought 400 Virginians, and James Williams led a South Carolina force.

Shelby and Sevier would later become the first governors of Kentucky and Tennessee, respectively, while Campbell's relative by marriage was Patrick Henry.

Each mountaineer carried a knapsack, corn bag, and Kentucky rifle. These rifles were extremely accurate at more than two hundred yards. Only at Lexington and Kings Mountain did the outcome hinge on the accuracy and range of these rifles.

A five-day march began Sept. 26, 1780. Benjamin Cleveland and three hundred fifty Virginians joined it. Campbell was

chosen as commander of the Patriot forces.

Ferguson's spies informed him of the mountaineers' approach. On October 2, Ferguson sent word to Cornwallis that he would stand and fight if he weren't outnumbered. Oct. 6, 1780, Ferguson reached Kings Mountain, one and one-half miles south of the North Carolina border, and camped to await the Patriots.

Kings Mountain is a rock, wooded, Blue Ridge spur, rising sixty feet above the surrounding plain. A barren plateau, six hundred yards long and seventy feet

wide on one end and one hundred twenty feet at the other, lies at its crest.

Learning of Ferguson's position, some nine hundred of the best frontiersmen moved through the rainy night October 6th, stopping at noon, Oct. 7, 1780, about one mile from the mountain. They formed a horseshoe around its base, surrounding the British.

Loyalist Alexander Chesney was about to tell Ferguson all was quiet when the surprising attack came. Sevier and McDowell formed the right flank, with Campbell and Shelby at Center,

and the Cleveland-Williams forces to the left. Campbell's men opened fire and the battle was on.

The British rained down a volley fire but the woods protected the Patriots. The Patriots' center force charged uphill, but British bayonets caused retreat. The barren crest made the British easy targets for the mountaineers to kill; the British overship the enemy. When British soldiers chased the Patriots downhill, they were killed attempting to get back to the crest. Twice the Patriots were forced to retreat.

Ferguson, bedecked in hunting shirt and silver whistle, charged on horseback downhill, urging the British forward. The Patriots shot him down with seven balls penetrating his body.

His second in command, Capt. De Peyster, surrendered, but many Patriots continued firing, remembering British atrocities. Col. Campbell managed to stop his men after the second truce flag was sent down. The Battle of Kings Mountain was ended.

The Patriots killed two hundred twenty-five Loyalist, wounded one hundred sixty-three, and took seven hundred

sixteen prisoners. Only twenty-eight Patriots were killed and sixty-two

### Conclusion

The Battle of Kings Mountain is significant because it caused disenchantment with the Loyalist cause and resulted in many Southerners' joining the American forces. All of the fighters had been American except Ferguson. Cornwallis lost his foothold in North Carolina. In Clinton's own words, the Battle of Kings Mountain was the "first link in a chain of events...ending in the total loss of America."

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## Red Cross UW Agency

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Red cross is the largest volunteer organization in the world, in the United States and in Cleveland County. Volunteers serve here locally as members of the Disaster team, as instructors to teach Safety classes, as nurses and workers at bloodmobiles, as Youth Club members, as Red Cross Board members, as volunteer office workers, as telephone contacts for the SAF & V emergency messages, as committee members making comfort items for veterans in veteran hospitals, and helping to provide other services whenever Red Cross help is needed. Red Cross is an international organization known through the world and in Cleveland County as "the Good Neighbor."

### Scott Bidy Visiting Here

Fireman John Scott Bidy of the U.S Naval Base in Norfolk, Va. is spending a ten-day leave visiting his parents, Mrs. Iris B. Bidy of Kings Mountain and Roy Bidy of Shelby.

Scott returned recently from a six month deployment covering the Mediterranean, Indian Ocean, and the Carribean. His ship, the U.S.S. Monongahela, an oiler, was responsible for refueling other ships and aircraft in that area. The last month of the deployment was spent in Libya, Algeria, and Lebanon. He was presented awards for Sea Service, Expeditionary Action, Battle E, and Rifle Range.

Scott is the grandson of Mrs. Bessie Bidy and Mrs. Otis Barber of Kings Mountain.