

Name _____

Date _____ Class _____



BACKGROUND: Charlotte Patriots



Hezekiah & Mary Alexander built the Rock House in 1774 with enslaved labor. 1925 postcard, Robinson-Spangler Carolina Room, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Library. The site is now part of the Charlotte Museum of History.

Charlotte began as a trading path crossroads between the Yadkin and Catawba Rivers. Benefitting from trade with the nearby Catawba tribe, European settlers established Mecklenburg County in 1762. Many were Scotch-Irish and German, migrating south along the Great Wagon Road into the Carolina backcountry. Unlike the Highland Scots, who were more likely to be loyalists, the Scots-Irish fiercely supported the Patriot cause.

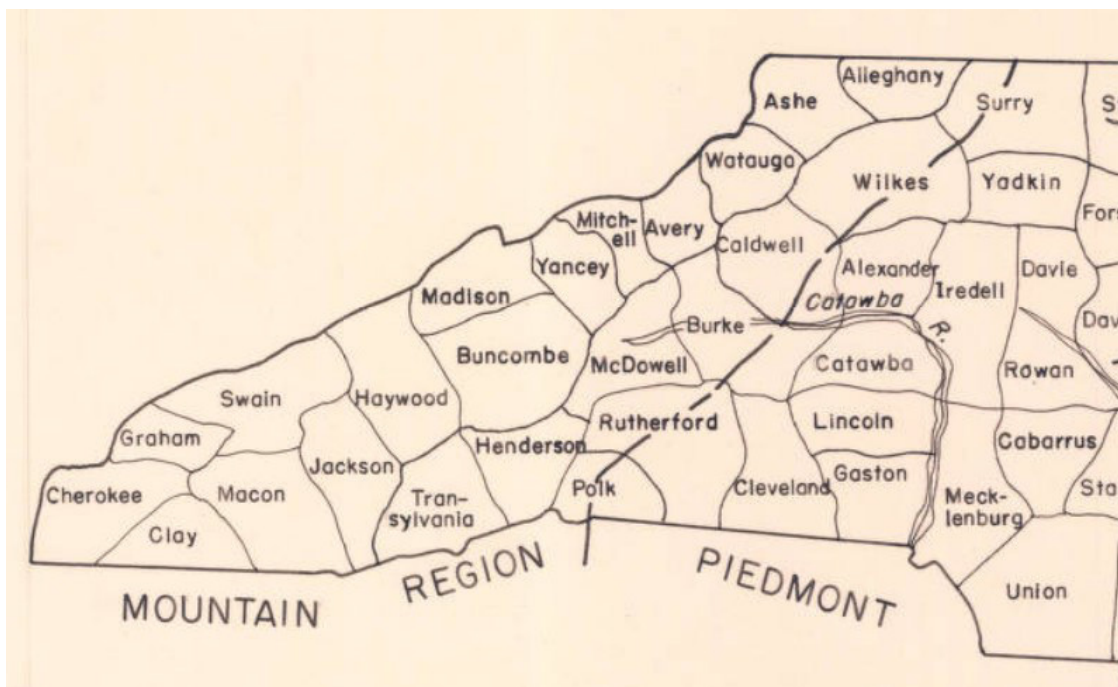
Hezekiah and Mary Alexander descended from Scotch-Irish immigrants and migrated south from Pennsylvania in 1768 with their growing family. Several relatives had already settled the area, including cousin Col. Adam Alexander, who led the county militia. Hezekiah quickly became a leader in the new town of Charlotte, worked to found Queens College, and became a member of Mecklenburg's Committee of Safety. That group functioned as a local government and signed the Mecklenburg Resolves on May 31, 1775. Several of his close associates also played important roles. Attorney and statesman Waightstill Avery boarded at the Alexander house, and both men helped write the first state constitution in 1776. Avery later represented the young state during the 1777 treaty with the Cherokee. John McNitt Alexander was Hezekiah's younger brother, whose son, John McKnitt Alexander, Jr., published the article on the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence in a newspaper in 1819.

Study the “Compleat Map of North Carolina from an actual Survey” to find:

- The Catawba River
- Catawba Indian Tribe
- Col. Alexander’s mill
- C’House [courthouse]
- Mecklenburg County
- Trading paths
- “Charlottesburgh”

Quick Fact Check

1. Along which route did many European settlers migrate to the Charlotte area?
2. Name two of three main ethnic groups in the Charlotte area in the 1760s.
3. Hezekiah Alexander quickly became a prominent Charlotte leader. List one of his important roles.
4. When did Charlotte statesmen sign the Mecklenburg Resolves?



Named after Waightsill Avery, Avery county formed in 1911 as the the state’s one-hundredth and final county.
Federal Writers’ Project, “North Carolina Physiographic Regions,” detail, MC.150.1940f, State Archives of N.C.