

A Brief History of the Mecklenburg Militia and A List of its Battles

compiled by Ralph Yerby Ray

In the middle of May 1775 tensions were running hot among the many scots-irish in the western portion of the colony of North Carolina. High taxes, trade tariffs, and the lack of representation made the independent settlers of the backcountry realize that England should govern them from across the ocean.

On May 19, 1775, Colonel Thomas Polk, the leader of the Mecklenburg militia, the citizen army who defended the area from native attacks, ran the elections, made and repaired the roads, and collected the taxes and keep the peace, called for a meeting at the Charlotte courthouse. There, the collection of settlers were busy planning ways to protect their freedom from British rule when a messenger arrived with news of the battles of Lexington and Concord, Massachusetts. Furious, the citizens decide to cut all ties with Britain.

The bustling city of Charlotte that we know today was a mere village at the time consisted of about twenty houses and small businesses located near the intersection of today's Tryon and Trade Streets. It was located in the backcountry of the Carolinas along a centuries old trading path where it crossed the Catawba River.

The Mecklenburg County Regiment was authorized on May 31, 1775 by the Province of North Carolina Congress.

On September 9, 1775, the Provincial Congress authorized thirty-five (35) existing county Militias to be organized. All officers were appointed and commissioned by the Provincial Congress.

The North Carolina General Assembly of 1779 approved the creation of a 2nd Mecklenburg County Regiment on November 7, 1779, the name of the original regiment became the 1st Mecklenburg County Regiment. Colonel Caleb Phifer became the commander of the 2nd Mecklenburg County Regiment. The 2nd Mecklenburg County Regiment was short lived and it was disbanded in the third quarter of 1780, about the time of the Battle of Camden.

The Mecklenburg County regiment was active from its original authorization until the end of the war. It was subordinated to the Salisbury District Brigade under Brigadier General Griffith Rutherford.

The Mecklenburg County regiment was involved in 39 known battles, sieges, and skirmishes in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia. They are:

December 1775	Snow Campaign
December 1775	Battle of Great Cane Brake
February 1776	Battle of Moore's Creek Bridge
June 1776	First Battle of Fort Moultrie
Summer 1776	Cherokee Expedition 1776
March 1779	Battle of Briar Creek
June 1779	Battle of Stono Ferry
Spring 1780	Siege of Charleston
April 1780	Battle of Moncks Corner
June 1780	Ramseur's Mill
July 1780	Battle at Colson's Mill
July 1780	Battle of Rocky Mount
August 1780	Battle of Hanging Rock
August 1780	Battle of Lynch's Creek
August 1780	Battle of Camden
August 1780	Battle of Fishing Creek
September 1780	Battle of Cane Creek
September 1780	Battle of Charlotte
October 1780	Kings Mountain
December 1780	Rugeley's Mill
January 1781	Battle at Cowpens
February 1781	Battle at Cowan's Ford
February 1781	Skirmish at Torrence's Tavern
February 1781	Skirmish at Trading Ford
February 1781	Skirmish at the Shallow Ford
February 1781	Skirmish at Hart's Mill
March 1781	Battles of Clapp's Mill
March 1781	Battle at Wetzell's Mill
March 1781	Skirmish at Reed Fork
March 1781	Battle of Guilford Court House

April 1781	Battle at Hobkirk's Hill
August 1781	Battle of Rockfish Creek
August 1781	Battle of Beatty's Bridge
September	Battle of Eutaw Springs