

Ney Myth ^[1]

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""Ney by Himself" From P.S. Ney's copy of History of Napoleon. Ney added a sketch and comments to the illustration." Image courtesy of Davidson College

by Michael Hill, 2006Archives.

^[2]

The Ney Myth, propagated by several North Carolina writers as fact but dismissed by historians as spurious, held that [Rowan County](#) ^[3] teacher [Peter Stuart Ney](#) ^[2], who died on 15 Nov. 1846, was the assumed identity of [Napoleon](#) ^[4]'s trusted lieutenant Marshal Michel Ney, who was rumored to have escaped execution in 1815 and fled to America. This romantic legend held evident appeal for several generations of North Carolinians but, like many legends, had little basis in documented fact. Extensive research by [William Henry Hoyt](#) ^[5] and others resulted in conclusive evidence that Marshal Ney did not escape the firing squad. The grave of Peter Stuart Ney at [Third Creek Presbyterian Church](#) ^[6] in the town of Cleveland is located near the session house at which he taught classes.

References:

James Edward Smoot, comp., *Marshal Ney before and after Execution*(1929).

George V. Taylor, "Scholarship and Legend: William Henry Hoyt's Research on the Ney Controversy,"*South Atlantic Quarterly* 61 (Summer 1960).

Image Credit:

""Ney by Himself" From P.S. Ney's copy of History of Napoleon. Ney added a sketch and comments to the illustration." Image courtesy of Davidson College Archives.

Additional Resources:

Peter Stuart Ney, Davidson College Archives: <http://sites.davidson.edu/archives/encyclopedia/peter-stuart-ney/> ^[2]

Subjects:

[Antebellum \(1820-1861\)](#) ^[7]

[Folklore and Legends](#) ^[8]

Authors:

[Hill, Michael](#) ^[9]

Origin - location:

[Rowan County](#) ^[10]

From:

[Encyclopedia of North Carolina, University of North Carolina Press.](#)^[11]

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http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/bonaparte_napoleon.shtml [5] http://www.lib.unc.edu/mss/inv/h/Hoyt,William_Henry.html [6]
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