

## **Clinch, Joseph John, Jr.** <sup>[1]</sup>

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by Ralph Hardee Rives, 1979; Revised November 2022.

#### **1754–95**

Joseph John Clinch, Jr., Revolutionary War <sup>[2]</sup> officer and political leader in Edgecombe <sup>[3]</sup> and Nash <sup>[4]</sup> counties, was the son of Elizabeth Goodrich and Joseph John Clinch of Surry County, Va. He went to Edgecombe County <sup>[3]</sup> as a young child with his parents, settling near Tarboro and present-day Rocky Mount. He eventually owned some eleven hundred acres of land and enslaved sixteen people.

On 1 Sept. 1775, Clinch was appointed an ensign in the Second North Carolina Regiment; on 16 Apr. of the following year he was appointed by the North Carolina congress first lieutenant from the Halifax District. In April 1777 he became first lieutenant in the Third Regiment of North Carolina Continentals, and he was later promoted to lieutenant colonel. According to family records, he served for a brief period as an aide to General George Washington <sup>[5]</sup>. Known as "The Terror of the Tories," Clinch raised and equipped a regiment for local service against the Tory faction of his area. His home, Ard-Lamont, was plundered by the Tories, and his favorite horse, Red Buck, was stolen, although later returned by a patriot.

Following the Revolution <sup>[2]</sup>, Clinch continued to serve in the militia, was a justice of the peace, and was a representative from Nash County <sup>[4]</sup> at the meeting of the North Carolina House of Commons in November 1786. In 1777 he was one of five commissioners appointed to run the dividing line between Edgecombe and Nash counties.

Though Anglican before the Revolution, Clinch and his wife, Mary Lamont Clinch, became active members of the Methodist Episcopal church in the years following the war. Clinch was the father of five children, including Duncan Lamont <sup>[6]</sup>, who became a prominent soldier and Whig <sup>[7]</sup> leader in the nineteenth century.

#### **References:**

Rembert W. Patrick, *Aristocrat in Uniform—General Duncan L. Clinch* <sup>[8]</sup> (1963).

William L. Saunders and Walter Clark, eds., *Colonial and State Records of North Carolina* <sup>[9]</sup>, vols. 10–13, 20, 24 (1890–1905).

#### **Subjects:**

American Revolution (1763-1789) <sup>[10]</sup>

Biographies <sup>[11]</sup>

#### **Authors:**

Rives, Ralph Hardee <sup>[12]</sup>

#### **Origin - location:**

Edgecombe County <sup>[13]</sup>

Nash County <sup>[14]</sup>

#### **From:**

Dictionary of North Carolina Biography, University of North Carolina Press,<sup>[15]</sup>

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