

## **Branson, Eli** <sup>[1]</sup>

### **Branson, Eli**

by Carole Watterson Troxler, 1979; Revised March 2022

**d. ca. 1818**

Eli Branson, a Regulator <sup>[2]</sup> and Loyalist <sup>[3]</sup>, was born in Virginia. The family moved to Chatham County <sup>[4]</sup>, where Branson inherited land from his father and was active in the Regulator movement. In 1776 he led a Loyalist company at the Battle of Moore's Creek Bridge <sup>[5]</sup>. After the defeat he hid for a while in North Carolina, and in 1777 he joined Sir William Howe's forces in Pennsylvania. After the British evacuated Philadelphia, Branson returned to North Carolina. There he corresponded with John Hamilton <sup>[6]</sup>, a leader of North Carolina Loyalist forces in Georgia and South Carolina, and in 1781 he joined Cornwallis at Hillsborough as captain of a company of North Carolina Volunteers. Branson and several members of his company were captured at Yorktown. When released, they were attached to the New York Volunteers and went to New York. On the British evacuation in 1783, Branson went to New Brunswick and was given a lot at Paratown (part of present-day St. John). He was in England for a while in the mid-1780s and considered settling in the Bahama Islands, but by 1788 he was living in Canada, probably Montreal.

He was married to Keziah Branson. Eli had four daughters and five sons. His daughters were Jemima Branson, Rebeccah Jones, Mary Jones, and Naomi Ward. His sons were John Branson, Daniel Branson, Thomas Branson, Levi Branson, and Eli Branson, Jr. He also owned an enslaved woman, Kate. During the postwar years Branson corresponded with his brother in Chatham County <sup>[4]</sup>. He moved to Abbeville, S.C. where he willed his estate apart in 1796. Eli Branson likely returned to Chatham County in 1815 and died in Ninety-Six, S.C., in 1818.

#### **References:**

North Carolina State Archives (Raleigh), for an Eli Branson deed in Chatham County Deed Book T and for the Eli Branson Estate Papers in Chatham County Estates.

P.R.O., A.O. 12, 13, 139.

ibid., F.O. 4.

ibid., T 64.

ibid., W.O. 65.

Public Archives of Canada (Ottawa) for Lawrence Collection, Chipman Papers, Muster Rolls of North Carolina Volunteers.

William L. Saunders, ed., *Colonial Records of North Carolina*, vols. 7–8 (1890).

Esther Clark Wright, *The Loyalists of New Brunswick* (1955).

*Wills, 1787-1868*; Author: *Abbeville County (South Carolina)*. Judge of Probate, Probate Place: *Abbeville, South Carolina*.

#### **Additional Resources:**

Historical Review of the Colonial and State Records of North Carolina, Weeks, Stephen Beauregard, 1865-1918 1914. Volume 30, Pages i-169. UNC Libraries: <https://docsouth.unc.edu/csr/index.html/document/csr30-0001> <sup>[7]</sup>

#### **Subjects:**

Biographies <sup>[8]</sup>

Colonial period (1600-1763) <sup>[9]</sup>

Military personnel <sup>[10]</sup>

#### **Authors:**

Troxler, Carole W. <sup>[11]</sup>

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

Chatham County <sup>[12]</sup>

#### **From:**

Dictionary of North Carolina Biography, University of North Carolina Press. <sup>[13]</sup>

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## Links

[1] <https://ncpedia.org/biography/branson-eli> [2] <https://ncpedia.org/history/colonial/regulator-movement> [3] <https://ncpedia.org/loyalists> [4] <https://ncpedia.org/geography/chatham> [5] <https://ncpedia.org/moores-creek-bridge-battle> [6] <https://ncpedia.org/biography/hamilton-john> [7] <https://docsouth.unc.edu/csr/index.html/document/csr30-0001> [8] <https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/biography-term> [9] <https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/colonial-period> [10] <https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/soldiers> [11] <https://ncpedia.org/category/authors/troxler-carole-wat> [12] <https://ncpedia.org/category/origin-location/piedmont-9> [13] <https://ncpedia.org/category/entry-source/dictionary-no>