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Hambright, Frederick [1]

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by Michael Edgar Goins, 1988; Revised by Jared Dease, Government and Heritage Library, December 2022

17 May 1727–9 May 1817

Frederick Hambright, colonial officer and local patriot, was born in Germany, probably the son of Conrad Hambright. Along with several members of the Hambright family, he emigrated to Philadelphia in 1738 on the ship *St. Andrew*. The family settled in Lancaster County, Pa. As a young man, Hambright moved to Virginia where he married Sarah Hardin, daughter of Benjamin Hardin. In the early 1750s they moved to the area that became Tryon County [2], N.C., with Joseph, John, and Benjamin Hardin, Nathaniel Henderson, James Kuykendall, Robert Leeper, and others. For protection from different American Indian [3] tribes of North Carolina, he settled near the fort at the mouth of the South Fork of the Catawba River [4].

Hambright was a member of Captain Samuel Cobrin's company during the Spanish Alarm in 1747–48 at Wilmington [5]. As commanding officer of the Tryon County militia, he campaigned against the people of Cherokee tribe [6] in 1771.

In 1774, the Provincial Congress [7] elected him to serve as a commissioner to help decide where to place the courthouse. He also served on a jury to lay out a road from Tryon Court House to Tuckasege Ford in present Gaston County [8] on the Catawba River. Continuing civil offices in 1775, he was a venireman at the term of the Court of Oyer and Terminer for the Salisbury district and an active member of the Committee of Safety of Tryon County. Although he arrived a day late, he served as a member of the Provincial Congress at Hillsborough. Along with others, he signed the petition opposing Parliamentary taxation and supporting the Provincial and Continental congresses. After receiving permission to leave in September, he was elected by the Provincial Congress to be second major of Tryon County. In the following year, the Congress also elected him justice of the peace. Throughout 1776 he attended safety committee meetings in Wilmington and at Tryon Court House.

As a Revolutionary War [9] officer, Hambright served under General Griffith Rutherford [10] in his campaign into Georgia in 1776. Promoted to lieutenant colonel, he went to the relief of Charles Town in 1779 as a member of Colonel Alexander Lillington's brigade, but retired before the surrender. In the summer of 1780, he served under Colonel Charles McDowell [11] in the Broad River region.

In the fall of 1780, Cornwallis sent Major Patrick Ferguson to stop the colonial militia. When Ferguson claimed on Kings Mountain that "all the Rebels from hell" could not drive him away, Hambright was second in command of a segment of troops under Major William Chronicle [12]. In one of the four columns that converged on the British, Chronicle was shot in the first charge. His undisciplined militia then followed Hambright to participate in the victory. In a thick German accent, he is reported to have said, "Huzza, my brave boys, fight on a few minutes more and the battle will be over." Although wounded in the thigh by a rifle bullet, he remained in the saddle for the entire battle; when Samuel York of York County, S.C., suggested that he leave the field because of his profuse bleeding, he refused. After the battle, he was conveyed to a cabin on Long Creek. The deep wound required a long time to heal and caused him to limp for the rest of his life.

Hambright's first wife died, and he married Mary Dover in 1781. The following year he sold his Long Creek property near Dallas, N.C., and bought land near King's Creek, S.C., where he built a large two-story log cabin which burned in 1927. When he left North Carolina, he resigned the offices of lieutenant colonel and justice of the peace in what was by then Lincoln County [13]. His bravery at Kings Mountain was rewarded by the North Carolina General Assembly [14] in 1786, when he and the other commanders at the battle received an elegant mounted sword. Hambright's is now in the museum at Kings Mountain National Military Park [15].

For the remainder of his life, Hambright engaged in farming. He also served as a Presbyterian [16] elder. At the time of his death he owned 700 acres of land, three mares, and he also enslaved four people. He had twelve children by his first wife and ten by his second. After fighting at Kings Mountain, his son John was named a captain in the Revolutionary Army [9] and his son Frederick, Jr., became a major. Hambright was buried at Shiloh Presbyterian Church, one mile east of Grover, N.C. In 1931, the Daughters of the Revolution [17] erected a monument to him on Kings Mountain.

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