

Walker, Felix ^[1]

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by Stanley J. Folmsbee, 1996

19 July 1753–1828

Felix Walker, soldier, politician, and pioneer, was born in Hampshire County, Va. His grandfather, John Walker, emigrated from Derry, Ireland, in 1720 and settled in Delaware. His father, John Walker, Jr. ^[2], was a soldier in the French and Indian War ^[3] and moved to Rutherford County ^[4], N.C., in 1768. His mother was Elizabeth Watson. At age sixteen Felix was bound to a Charleston, S.C., merchant but went home early in 1775 and took part in the expedition of Judge Richard Henderson ^[5] that established the Transylvania colony in Kentucky. After briefly returning to the North Carolina coast, he joined the settlers in the Watauga Valley in the Tennessee country and helped them reorganize their government as Washington County ^[6] (now in Tennessee). He served for four years as the county clerk. After learning of the invasion of southern colonies by the British army, he went back to Mecklenburg County ^[7], N.C., and became a lieutenant in a regiment commanded by Colonel Isaac Huger, which marched eastward to aid in the defense of Charleston, S.C. He soon resigned his commission and crossed the mountains to help the frontiersmen repel Indian attacks and then accompany them to the Kings Mountain battleground.

He became clerk of Rutherford County, N.C., in October 1789; served in the North Carolina legislature in 1792, 1793, 1800–1802, and 1806; and represented Buncombe County ^[8] in the U.S. Congress from 1817 to 1823. In the latter capacity he commented that he would make a speech for Buncombe and thus added the phrase "talking buncombe" to the English language. He wrote an autobiography that was published by his grandson. Felix Walker married Susan, a daughter of Major Charles Robertson. He died in Clinton, Miss.

References:

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Clarence W. Griffin, *History of Old Tryon and Rutherford Counties* (1937) and *Revolutionary Services of Col. John Walker and Family and Memoir of Felix Walker* (1930).

F. A. Sondley, *History of Buncombe County*, vol. 2 (1930).

Additional Resources:

"Felix Walker." N.C. Highway Historical Marker P-26, N.C. Office of Archives & History. <https://www.ncdcr.gov/about/history/division-historical-resources/nc-highway-historical-marker-program/Markers.aspx?sp=Markers&k=Markers&sv=P-26> ^[9] (accessed May 15, 2013).

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Dictionary of North Carolina Biography, University of North Carolina Press. ^[19]

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