

Clapp's Mill, Battle of ^[1]

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Battle of Clapp's Mill

by Michael Hill, 1992.

Research Branch, NC Office of Archives and History, 2006.

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Near Clapp's Mill on Beaver Creek not far from the Alamance battlefield, Col. Henry Lee's Legion, supported by local militia and some Catawba Indians, surprised the mounted cavalry of Lt. Col. Banastre Tarleton in a well-planned ambush on March 2, 1781. As soon as the confusion resulting from the first American volley was brought under control, Tarleton retired to cover and deployed his troops. With the heavy fire, the American second line became panic-stricken and retreated. Tarleton chose not to pursue. The British suffered twenty-one casualties while the Americans had eight. The fighting preceded by four days the skirmish at Weitzel's Mill, northeast of Greensboro.

Most of what is known about the encounter derives from the account of [Joseph Graham](#) ^[3], a member of Lee's Legion. Lee and fellow officer Otho Williams apparently planned a major engagement at Clapp's Mill that did not develop. The major battle would take place less than two weeks later at [Guilford Courthouse](#) ^[4].

In 1898 J. M. Bandy, a local historian, retraced the route taken by the British troops enroute to Guilford Courthouse. Accompanied by Joseph Whitsett and other older men of the community, Bandy identified the site of Clapp's Mill about one mile southwest of the Holt factory at Alamance and three miles northwest of the site of the [Battle of Alamance](#) ^[5]. Signs of the old dam and race were visible in 1898 but evidence of the mill itself had by that time disappeared. In recent years a reservoir has been built atop portions of the battlefield.

References:

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Subjects:

[American Revolution \(1763-1789\)](#) ^[6]

[Battles](#) ^[7]

Authors:

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Origin - location:

[Alamance County](#) ^[9]

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