

228TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF KINGS MOUNTAIN

**OCT. 7, 2008
KINGS MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK**

**Remarks of
JUDGE EDWARD F. BUTLER, SR.
SECRETARY GENERAL, NATIONAL SOCIETY
SONS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION**

PRINCIPAL SPEAKER

President General Appleby was unable to participate in the 2008 Kings Mountain celebration. He asked me to represent him. The following are my remarks:

Good morning ladies and gentlemen.

First, I bring greetings to you from the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution. We are known as the "S.A.R." We are the largest male hereditary society in the United States. Sixteen U. S. Presidents have been or are members of the SAR. Since I joined 22 years ago, some 60,000 men have joined our number.

We are here today to honor the heroes of, and commemorate the Battle of Kings Mountain, conducted 228 years ago today. There was only one British soldier in the battle that day. All the rest of the combatants were colonists. Many of the Tories in the battle were from New York and New Jersey. A large number of the patriots were Scotch Irish, Welch, French Huguenots and German. All lived on the western frontier.

One of the Germans, Col. Frederick Hambright, was my direct ancestor, and he was my original patriot ancestor when I joined SAR. Except for the first 10 seconds of the battle, when Maj. William Chronicle was killed, the Lincoln County, NC Militia of about 90 men, was led by Col. Hambright. The "Over The Mountain Men", came from far western Virginia, North Carolina and what is now part of East Tennessee. They were joined by Virginians, and citizen soldiers from North Carolina and South Carolina.

The Tories had taken the high ground on Kings Mountain, and the patriots sought to capture the mountain. The colonists were divided into 8 groups. Col. Hambright's men were assigned the eastern end of the mountain, which had the steepest terrain to climb. Even with a bullet in his thigh, Col. Hambright remained on his horse and encouraged his men to the top of the mountain. With a boot full of blood he shouted "Huzza my brave

poys”, his accent from the old country rang out, “fight on a few minutes more, and the battle will be over!” His exemplary leadership contributed to this important victory.

I submit to you that the one hour battle was the most important hour of the American Revolutionary War¹. The victory marked the turning point in the war and was the catalyst that led to the ultimate victory over the English at Yorktown, VA. Col. Hambright and the other leaders at the Battle of Kings Mountain were presented swords by the North Carolina Legislature to recognize this significant victory.

Col. Hambright. He was born Freiderick Hamprecht in Neunstetten, Germany in 1727. He came to Philadelphia, PA from Germany in 1738 with his family on the ship St. Andrew, when he was 11 years old. He fought with Cap. Cobrin’s Company of the NC Militia during the Spanish Alarm (1747-1748) at Wilmington, DE. Col. Hambright was selected as a Delegate to the North Carolina Continental Congress which met in Hillsboro, NC on 21 Aug. 1775. He also served on a Committee of Safety of Lincoln County, NC., and after the battle was appointed a Justice of the Peace.

I am glad to see so many young people here today. You are our future. I hope you learn from your history.

Following the above remarks, Judge Butler presented a wreath on behalf of the National Society Sons of the American Revolution, at which time he saluted the bronze plaque on the high stone obelisk monument. Thereafter, scores of wreaths were presented by other national, district and state lineage societies; and by SAR, SR, CAR and DAR chapters, and by the Descendants of Frederick Hambright. After the ceremony, Judge Butler was invited to have a buffet lunch with the Overmountain Victory Trail Association – the group that walked from E. Tennessee over a two week period to participate in the

¹ Although I came to this conclusion on my own, I have since been told that these were the exact words of Thomas Jefferson, when he described this battle.

Subsequently, I have found three important references that pertain to King Mountain. The first one was by Thomas Jefferson, where he referred to the Battle of Kings Mountain as “That turn of the tide of success.” The second similar reference was by British Sir Henry Clinton, who said Kings Mountain was “the first link in a chain of evils . . . the loss of America.” The third significant reference that reinforces the notion that Kings Mountain should have greater public significance and visibility was by President Herbert Hoover when he dedicated the Centennial Monument at Kings Mountain in October 30th. He said “History has done scant justice to its significance, which rightly should place it beside Lexington and Bunker Hill, Trenton and Yorktown, . . . “

The first two of these references are published in the official brochure entitled “Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail” and the third reference is in the brochure entitled “Kings Mountain,” both distributed by the book store at the Kings Mountain National Military Park, SC.

ceremony That Afternoon, we attended a lecture on “The Aftermath of the Battle of Kings Mountain”.