

The Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence

Charlotte, North Carolina
May 20th 1775

Resolved — That whosoever directly or indirectly abets or in any way, form or manner, countenances the invasion of our rights, as attempted by the Parliament of Great Britain, is an enemy to his country, to America, and the rights of man.

Resolved — That we, the citizens of Mecklenburg county do hereby dissolve the political bands which have connected us with the mother country, and absolve ourselves from all allegiance to the British crown, abjuring all political connection with a nation that has wantonly trampled on our rights and liberties and inhumanly shed the innocent blood of Americans at Lexington.

Resolved — That we do hereby declare ourselves a free and independent people, that we are and of right ought to be, a sovereign and self-governing people under the power of God and the general Congress, to the maintenance of which independence we solemnly pledge to each other our mutual co-operation, our lives, our fortunes, and our most sacred honor.

Resolved — That we do hereby ordain and adopt as rules of conduct all and each of our former laws, and the crown of Great Britain cannot be considered hereafter as holding any rights, privileges, or immunities amongst us.

Resolved — That all officers both civil and military in this county, be entitled to exercise the same powers and authorities as heretofore; that every member of this delegation shall henceforth be a civil officer, and exercise the powers of a justice of the peace, issue process, hear and determine controversies according to law, preserve peace, union and harmony in the county, and use every exertion to spread the love of liberty and of country, until a more general and better organized system of government be established.

Resolved — That a copy of these resolutions be transmitted by express to the President of the Continental Congress assembled in Philadelphia, to be laid before that body.

Abraham Alexander	Chairman.
John McNeill Alexander	Secretary.
Ephraim Breward	Adam Alexander
Hezekiah B. Walsh	Charles Alexander
John Phifer	Nathaniel Wilson
James Harris	Waightstill Avery
William Kenyon	Benjamin Patton
John Ford	Matthew McSwain
Richard Barry	Neil Morrison
Henry Downs	Robert French
Hyra Alexander	John Wisnawski
William Graham	David Lucas
John Murray	John Davidson
Hezekiah Alexander	Richard Morris
Thomas With.	

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Alarmed by rumors of action by the British Parliament which would suppress the colonies, Colonel Thomas Polk, on May 1, 1775, called for a meeting of Mecklenburg County Militia Delegates for May 19 to determine a course of action.

Twenty-seven delegates were meeting in the Mecklenburg County Courthouse on that date when a courier rode into Charlotetown with news of the Battle of Lexington. His electrifying news so united the assembly that at 2:00 a.m. on the morning of May 20, 1775, a unanimous vote approved the Declaration which was then signed by all delegates as representatives of the people.

At noon the Mecklenburg Declaration was read before several thousand people from the steps of the Courthouse.

The Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence is one of the nation's most controversial documents. It has never been authenticated — the original was lost — and, if authentic, would have preceded the July 4, 1776 Philadelphia Declaration of Independence by more than a year.

It remains as the cornerstone of the fierce pride of Mecklenburg County in independence and patriotism. If not accepted by the nation, its authenticity is believed in by all those who love Charlotte and Mecklenburg County.



NEWS OF THE BATTLE OF LEXINGTON.

prepared by
The Charlotte Chamber of Commerce