

To show battle participants by commander is misleading. It gives an impression of organization such as Eisenhower had in WWII. In fact, the Kings Mountain 08Oct1780 confrontation was a just by chance meeting of a diverse and fluid collection of Patriot Whigs and King George Tory loyalists. Each individual had a personal reason for being there and for doing what he did among the people with whom he happened to find himself. The Whigs were later publicized as victorious Overmountain Men. Yes, a sizable portion of the winners came from west of the Blue Ridge. However the majority of the Whigs lived southeast of the Blue Ridge. There was turmoil throughout the southeast. What the people knew came from circulated word of mouth and hastily written notes. The Whigs had no uniforms, just civilian attire. The one item in common which pulled the patriots into four horseback columns to surround Kings Mountain was the threat from Patrick Ferguson. "If you do not desist in your opposition to the king, I will march an army over the mountain, hang the leaders, and lay waste with fire and sword." It had been sent from McDowell's home over the mountain to McDowell and the others who lived over the mountains or had fled from Ferguson's forces.

**From the 1909 obelisk at the Kings Mountain Battlefield:**

**AMERICAN FORCES**

WHERE ORGANIZED	COMMANDER
WASHINGTON COUNTY, VA.	COLONEL WILLIAM CAMPBELL
WASHINGTON COUNTY, N.C. (NOW TENN.)	COLONEL JOHN SEVIER
SULLIVAN COUNTY, N.C. (NOW TENN)	COLONEL ISAAC SHELBY
NINETY SIX DISTRICT, S.C. AND ROWAN COUNTY, N.C.	COLONEL JAMES WILLIAMS
WILKES AND SURREY COUNTIES, N.C. MAJOR JOSEPH WINSTON	COLONEL BENJAMIN CLEVELAND
LINCOLN COUNTY, N.C. MAJOR WILLIAM CHRONICLE	LT. COL. FREDERICK HAMBRIGHT
BURKE AND RUTHERFORD COUNTIES NC.	MAJOR JOSEPH MCDOWELL
YORK AND CHESTER COUNTIES, S.C. (THEN PART OF CAMDEN DISTRICT)	COLONEL EDWARD LACEY
GEORGIA	COLONEL WILLIAM HILL
	MAJOR WILLIAM CANDLER

**RESERVES**

**COLONEL JAMES JOHNSTON**

Before naming and coloring groups into which the heroes are herein placed, let's dispense with those groups named on the 1909 monument but unnamed herein.

James Johnston reserves- How did Col Campbell organize reserves for the Friday night final march in pursuit of Ferguson? He did not yet know where he would be on Saturday. He left some men at Cowpens who were not fit for the Friday night maneuver. History does not name a single reservist under Col Johnston nor state where he was located.

Though some of their patriots were in BKM, neither Maj Candler nor Col Hill were present. Col Lacey's troops were part of Col Williams' column. Both Williams and SC Gov Rutledge were in Hillsborough unaware of Ferguson's operations far in southwest NC. A few refugees from Ninety Six District were joined by Caswell County NC fresh volunteers who headed west from Hillsborough. En route, a company

of Rowan County minute men joined them. Eastern Burke County added a few when Williams' men passed through.

Geography of what was young Lincoln County in 1780 and today crosses lines. Col Graham was its militia commander, but Maj Chronicle of current Gaston County was the leader into battle. Col Hambright lived adjacent to the battlefield, but knew that Chronicle had a deer stand on the ridge. Let's just call them **South Fork Boys** (of the Catawba River).

Col **Shelby**'s home at Paperville (Bristol) was near the VA/NC line. Isaac would become the historically significant of the patriot leaders. Five decades later, some of the men did not honestly know whether their residence was NC or VA and testified that they enlisted from **Squabble State**.

Col **Sevier**'s home county was the Fort Watauga refuge for some Rutherford County, Burke County, and Georgia men and the Sycamore Shoals muster to challenge Ferguson's threat.

Col **Cleveland** was the commissioned Wilkes County militia commander. Just a few days before the Kings Mountain battle, Cleveland had military help from Virginia to suppress Tory activities in his county.

Col **Campbell** had just returned home from helping Col Cleveland when word of Ferguson's threat arrived. Reluctant to venture out of state again at first, he called the Washington County VA militia to muster at Sycamore Shoals. Elected "general" of the diverse men for the battle, Campbell's second, Maj Edmondson would be the nominal field commander of the Virginians. But nobody cared which patriot they rode with. They used the password "Buford" and a piece of paper on their hats so that they could recognize unfamiliar faces.

Col Charles **McDowell** was the commissioned Burke County militia commander.. The eastern part of his county still had ties stronger to Salisbury than to the new Burke County Courthouse. The militiamen from western parts of Burke and Rutherford had been sent fleeing from Ferguson's forces after the skirmish on Cane Creek. Being the senior officer of the scattered diverse groups, McDowell went to Hillsborough to request that Gen Horatio Gates dispatch a general to organize and lead the "overmountain men."