

THE CITY OF KINGS MOUNTAIN: THE HISTORICAL CITY WITH A
MISPLACED IDENTITY

by

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ABSTRACT

MELISSA BARNETT. The battle of Kings Mountain and the men who fought on the ridgeline not only changed the history of the nation, but the area surrounding the battlefield. Since that time, the collective memory of the battle has been shaped by local committees and patriotic groups who have conflated their own local heritage with that of the battle and the battlefield itself. (Under the direction of DR. KAREN L. COX)

Fought on October 7th, 1780, on a ridgetop in the backcountry of South Carolina, the battle of Kings Mountain turned the tide of the Revolutionary War. A century later, the City of Kings Mountain was founded along the Charlotte-Atlanta Railroad, nine miles north of the battlefield, in North Carolina. From its creation, the city has laid claim to the battlefield's heritage as its own. Beginning in 1880, six years after its founding, the city used the history of the battle to create a shared history for its community by establishing a commemoration committee and organizing the centennial of the battle. Over the next fifty years, the city's involvement in the commemorations and memorials held at the battlefield and in the City of Kings Mountain reinforced the use of the history of the battle as a replacement for the city's unique past of mining and textiles.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DAR	Daughters of the American Revolution
KMBCA	Kings Mountain Battlefield Centennial Association
KMCA	Kings Mountain Centennial Association
NPS	National Park Service
SAR	Sons of the American Revolution
UDC	United Daughters of the Confederacy

INTRODUCTION

On October 7, 1930, the citizens of Kings Mountain, North Carolina, gathered with 70,000 visitors to celebrate the sesquicentennial of the Battle of Kings Mountain. The dust on the roads leading to the battlefield was thick and stifling. The hillside had been clear-cut for the crowd except for a few withered trees, none of which provided any shade on the warm October afternoon.¹ Men in shirtsleeves and women in brightly colored dresses listened closely as President Herbert Hoover spoke from a platform where 1,000 patriot militia soldiers stopped the British army in the South in 1780. Hoover's voice boomed through the sound system, cheering when he spoke of the religious purpose of the American people and the damaging effects of communism and Bolshevism. After the speech, as the president and his wife prepared to leave by train, small American flags began to rain down from a large red plane. The first lady recognized the aircraft as the famed Question Mark piloted by Dieudonné Costes and Maurice Bellonte, who chanced by on their goodwill tour after their transatlantic flight from Paris to New York City.²

There was a carnival atmosphere in the City of Kings Mountain that October. After Hoover's speech, visitors stayed to enjoy the celebratory events, and the city spared no expense to commemorate the battle's anniversary.³ There were military camps set up on the battlefield and three days of activities that included an airshow, college football games, a play written specifically about the battle, and a dance party that lasted until one

¹ "No Cheers for President Hoover," *Kings Mountain Herald*, Kings Mountain N.C., October 3, 1974.

² "Hoover Warns of Perils of Red Doctrine in Talk to Kings Mountain Throng," *New York Times*, October 8, 1930. <https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1930/10/08/issue.html>

³ History and Program Commemorating the Centennial of Kings Mountain 1874-1974, Archival Folder 1986.11.10, Kings Mountain Historical Museum 7.

in the morning.⁴ As the town continued to celebrate, Hoover returned to Washington D.C. where he began the process of turning the battlefield into Kings Mountain National Military Park, which happened the next year in 1931.⁵

⁴ Sesquicentennial Celebration of the Battle of Kings Mountain Program, Archival Folder 2000.24.3 Kings Mountain Historical Museum.

⁵ Robert W. Blythe, Maureen A. Carroll, Steven H. Moffson, *Kings Mountain National Military Park: Historic Resource Study*, (Washington DC: Cultural Resources Planning Division, National Park Service, 1995), 47-48.

HISTORIOGRAPHY

The celebrations at the battlefield and in the City of Kings Mountain demonstrated David Glassberg's argument in a *Sense of History: The Place of the Past in American Life*, that public histories help communities understand their place in the succession of the past, present, and the future. It gave the city a sense of not only where it was located, but also when. Glassberg explored how this effected group and personal identities and allowed people to find their place in history. Historical objects or places stir feelings of pride, loss, or veneration and that creates a sense of history. His definition of a sense of history reflected "the intersection of the intimate and the historical—the way that past events of a personal and public nature are intertwined."⁶ Glassberg further argued that scholars must change their approach to include not only traditional academic scholarship, focused on governmental agencies and the media, but also how individuals engage in the history and understand it, in what he calls public history. He believes that the meaning of a historical book or display in a local museum is interpreted differently by those who read or see it. Every person becomes his or her own historian by understanding the information they receive based on their social backgrounds.⁷

In the City of Kings Mountain, as a new community formed, it needed to find where it belonged in the cultural landscape. The city's institutions used the imagery and history of the battle to create a story for itself. Scholarship like Glassberg's focused on autobiographical memory and reminiscence, in which stories of the past help create

⁶ David Glassberg, *Sense of History: The Place of the Past in American Life*, (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001), 6.

⁷ Ibid., 6-11, 18-21.

personal identities. In Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities*, he argued that these elements of history, such as the battle and its commemorations, what is remembered and forgotten, along with a shared history, are the most critical elements in the development of imagined communities. Although they may never meet each other, individuals envision themselves with a shared present and future. According to social anthropologist Ernst Gellner "Nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness; it invents nations where they do not exist."⁸ Nationalism experienced at an event like the 1930 commemoration can help form a nation or a community.

The earliest citations of history and memory appear in historicists works, such as Jules Michelet in the early nineteenth century, and R.G. Collingwood in the early twentieth century. They viewed memory as a way to recover the historical presence of the times they studied. Collective memory was "construed as the living imagination of the historic actors of the past."⁹ In the 1920s, Maurice Halbwachs, a French sociologist, created a theory that argued social contexts remade collective memory, the more powerful the context, the greater the memory. His model anticipated the commemoration and memorial trends of the twentieth century to "locate memorable places on the landscape of memory." In doing so, these celebrations in the City of Kings Mountain and at the battlefield tied the past to the present.¹⁰

Halbwachs' model was the basis for the most influential study of collective memory and national identity in the 1980s, Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger's *The*

⁸ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Spread of Nationalism*, (London: Verso, 1983), 6.

⁹ Patrick Hutton, "Recent Scholarship on Memory and History," *The History Teacher* 33, no. 4, (2000), 535.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 536-537.

Invention of Tradition. Unlike previous work on memory, their work was wary of the misrepresentations of memory.¹¹ Hobsbawm and Ranger examined how new traditions form in communities. According to Hobsbawm tradition was a “set of practices...of a ritual or symbolic nature which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition... In fact, where possible they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past.”¹² Hobsbawm and Ranger analyzed how myth and ceremonies created public memory by examining nineteenth-century European officials use of false traditions to strengthen the appearance of the nation-state.¹³

Another influential work of the 1980s, Pierre Nora’s *Les Lieux de Mémoire* focused on reconciling history and memory, which he believed were at odds. “Memory takes root in the concrete, in spaces, gestures, images, and objects,” he wrote, “[while] history binds itself strictly to temporal continuities to progressions and to relations between things.”¹⁴ To do so, Nora and other scholars began to reexamine French national identity as the bicentennial of the French Revolution approached. Nora studied the historical narrative of the event by looking from the present to the past, to research how the national heritage had been created. Nora shaped narratives of French history and affixed them to places of memory. He reversed the common way of fixing memory to historical narratives. He used memories for fixed historical reference points and reconstructed French cultural history.¹⁵

¹¹ Ibid., 533-535.

¹² Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds. *The Invention of Tradition*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 1-14.

¹³ Ibid., 13-14.

¹⁴ Pierre Nora, “Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire,” *Representations*, no. 26, Special Issue: Memory and Counter Memory (1989), 9.

¹⁵ Patrick Hutton, “Recent Scholarship on Memory and History,” 537-538.

Modern scholarship on memory is devoted to understanding the processes of memory. Terminology such as postmemory and prosthetic memory, the study of memories from previous generations, and vernacular memory, the understanding of memory of individual actors, not of the state, are a few of the areas scholars are researching.¹⁶ Using these evolving methods, Kristin Hass examined memory and the creation of war memorials similar to the memorials at Kings Mountain in her book, *Sacrificing Soldiers on the National Mall*. She argued that the shared memories of dead soldiers are central to nationalism and create a “memory-nation nexus.”¹⁷ She argued nations and memories exist in mutual dependence, “not about recalling an event but producing a past and recalling for the sake of the future, with a fluctuating sense of obligation to historical detail.”¹⁸ Hass used the nexus to tell two stories of democratization of memory in American war memorials, both of which apply to Kings Mountain. The first is the increased interest, after the Civil War, of the sacrifices of individual citizen soldiers, and the second is how this narrative worked to imagine a white nation.¹⁹ The City of Kings Mountain did not honor a single soldier in the town square, but the Over Mountain Men with days of celebrations, including parades, oration, and pageants at the battlefield.

Another example of the memory-nation nexus is the study of patriotic groups in Francesca Morgan’s *Women and Patriotism in Jim Crow America*. In this study, she explored another aspect of memory by examining patriotic groups such as the United

¹⁶ Kristin Hass, *Sacrificing Soldiers on the National Mall*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013), 16.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 14.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 14.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 18.

Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC), the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), and The National Association of Colored Women. She studied the differences between the DAR, the UDC and other groups' definitions of patriotism and nationalism.²⁰ In the late nineteenth century, with the overseas expansion of the United States' empire, the DAR expanded their initiative of state-based nationalism to a national scale by funding monuments, plaques and preserving battlefields. The focus on national history directly related to the organization's support of the nation's expansion of the overseas empire. In peacetime, the DAR's state-based nationalism focused on producing loyalty to the federal government. Morgan argues that "national unity with allegiance to the federal government as that unity's glue has always been the core element of patriotism."²¹ Of the hundreds of properties first purchased, many went on to become national historic sites, such as Independence Hall in Philadelphia, the Lapwai Mission in Idaho, and the Cowpens and Kings Mountain battlefields in South Carolina.²²

Thomas Chambers focused on the collective memory of the Revolutionary War in his book *Memories of War*. Chambers traced the roots of tourism and how it affected national memory of the war. He argued battlefield tourism first developed as a scenic stop for tourists, then as a rallying cry for secession, and again as unifying effort after the Civil War was over. He examined early tourists' relationships with battlefields after the Revolutionary War. Their experience was highly personal and emotional and tied to place rather than experience. In the South, the inaccessibility of southern battlefields is one of the reasons commemorative activities developed later than at northern battlefields,

²⁰ Francesca Morgan, *Women and Patriotism in Jim Crow America* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2005). 10-15.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 76-77.

²² *Ibid.*, 63-64, 68-72.

such as Saratoga.²³ Chambers argued that the lack of tourist infrastructure “made preserving battlefields, erecting monuments and engaging in battlefield tourism difficult in Post-Revolutionary War South.”²⁴ Kings Mountain challenged Chamber’s argument since thousands have attended every major commemoration on the battlefield, beginning as early as 1815. The ridgetop in the backcountry of South Carolina has defied history since the Overmountain Men met Major Patrick Ferguson there almost two hundred and forty years ago.

²³ Thomas A. Chambers, *Memories of War: Visiting Battlegrounds and Bonefields in the Early American Republic*, (London: Cornell University, 2012), 4-16.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 100.

THE BATTLE OF KINGS MOUNTAIN

After two years of battles in the north, the Continental Army spent a vicious winter at Valley Forge, during which former Prussian Army Captain Friedrich Von Steuben, introduced a simple and standardized training method in drill and musketry. In the summer of 1778, the training led to a stalemate at the Battle of Monmouth Courthouse, in New Jersey, which was the last major battle in the Northern Colonies. Over the next three years, the British Army remained in New York City and Washington's Army took up positions along the Hudson Valley in New York State.²⁵ In 1779, after five years of indecisive fighting in the northern colonies, the Revolutionary War reached an impasse, and the two armies were back where they began.

The British troops could no longer wait out the Continental forces in the North and sought to redevelop a worldwide military strategy that included the American South. They planned to invade the region with a small core of British soldiers to recruit and train loyalist militias to secure the region and create division, thus making American forces easier to defeat. In November of 1778, Sir Henry Clinton, the commander of the British forces in America, began Britain's Southern campaign and captured the port city of Savannah, Georgia. After this victory, the British forces moved north and conquered South Carolina by defeating the patriots at Charleston in May and Camden in August of 1780, forcing the Continental army to North Carolina²⁶

²⁵ Allen R. Millet, Peter Maslowski, and William B Feis, *For The Common Defense: A Military History of the United States from 1607 to 2012*, (New York: Free Press, 2012), 65-66.

²⁶ Robert M. Dunkerly, *Kings Mountain Walking Tour Guide*, (Pittsburg, PA: Dorrance Publishing, 2003), 1-2.

The British Commander in the South, Lord Charles Cornwallis, appointed Major Patrick Ferguson, a British regular soldier, to recruit loyalist militia in North and South Carolina. Families throughout the two states divided, as they had to choose whether to fight for the patriot or loyalist cause. Ferguson set his sights westward toward Scotch-Irish families living west of the Proclamation Line of 1763. The line, set by the British government, allowed Cherokees and other Native American tribes to live freely west beyond the line, but not settlers. The families who lived beyond this line did so illegally and had been fighting with the Cherokees for decades. During the summer of 1780, Ferguson issued a proclamation stating that if these settlers, the Over Mountain Men, did not “desist from their opposition to the British arms, he would march over the mountains... and lay their country waste with fire and sword.”²⁷

Ferguson’s proclamations and the prospect of him and the loyalist militia invading their homestead became the rallying cry for the patriot militia who had fought skirmishes throughout the South. Militia groups formed from five states: Virginia, North and South Carolina, Georgia, and modern Tennessee and met on September 25, 1780, at Sycamore Shoals, in current Elizabeth, Tennessee. From there eight hundred militiamen began their march toward Ferguson. Two weeks later, on October 6th, 1780, they gathered at Cowpens at the border between North and South Carolina. Colonel William Campbell, from Virginia, who was elected commander of the militia, received word that Ferguson controlled the top of a hill known as Kings Mountain, thirty miles away. Campbell decided to strike before Ferguson got away and selected nine hundred men to march through the rainy night to Kings Mountain. They reached the base of the ridgeline

²⁷ John Buchanan, *The Road to Guilford Courthouse: The American Revolution in the Carolinas*, (New York: John Wiley & Sons: 1997), 208.

at 3:00 p.m. on October 7, 1780, and surrounded the hill. Each patriot was told to be his own officer, and not to wait for instructions, but to fire when ready. The combination of their hunting rifles and the cover of an old growth forest gave them the edge over Ferguson's loyalist militia muskets from the top of the ridgeline. The patriots advanced up the hill suppressing two loyalist bayonet charges. In one hour, the battle was over, Ferguson was dead, and the patriot forces captured the loyalist militia and stopped the British momentum in the South.²⁸

Forty-Two years later, in 1822, President Thomas Jefferson hailed the Battle of Kings Mountain as "the turn of the tide of success which terminated the Revolutionary War."²⁹ This battle and the men who fought on the ridgeline not only changed the history of the nation, but the area surrounding the battlefield. Since that time, the collective memory of the battle has been shaped by local committees and patriotic groups who have conflated their own local heritage with that of the battle and the battlefield itself.

²⁸ Lyman C. Draper, *Kings Mountain and its Heroes: History of the Battle of Kings Mountain, October 7th, 1780*, (Cincinnati: Peter G Thompson Publishers, 1881), 293-303.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 585.

CITY FOUNDING

The Battle of Kings Mountain and its commemoration has influenced the identity of the City of Kings Mountain since its beginning. In 1872, the Charlotte-Atlanta Railroad completed a stop in White Plains, at the base of the ridgeline containing the battlefield. In 1874 the new region needed a name to separate it from White Plains so Minerva Stone Tracy, the postmistress, and wife of Dr. James Wright Tracy, a prominent White Plains citizen, named the small city Kings Mountain, to honor the men who had fought and died during the battle.³⁰ Although they share the same name, the battle and city have little to tie them together. Located eight miles south of the City of Kings Mountain, the battlefield is in another state, South Carolina, and yet, from its creation, the city has laid claim to the battlefield's heritage as its own.

³⁰ History and Program Commemorating the Centennial of Kings Mountain 1874-1974, Archival Folder 1986.11.10, Kings Mountain Historical Museum 7.

1880 COMMEMORATION

As the City of Kings Mountain looked to its future, it eyed the ridgeline the Overmountain Men fought on. As Benedict Anderson argued in *Imagined Communities*, the city needed a shared history to create their community.³¹ The Centennial Celebration of the Battle of Kings Mountain fell fifteen years after the end of the Civil War and six years after the City of Kings Mountain's incorporation in 1874. The Revolutionary War battlefield provided a place to create a shared history. In May 1879, town leaders, including former Confederate soldier Andrew Mauney, met to form the Kings Mountain Centennial Association, (KMCA) to commemorate the battle of Kings Mountain's Centennial anniversary with a celebratory event. The KMCA resolved to mark the anniversary with a national commemoration, and to invite all surrounding regions and state and national politicians to participate and to "celebrate the ever-memorable period when under a common flag, and with a common hope, and a common destiny, our forefathers gained one of the glorious victories that gave us liberty."³²

The City of Kings Mountain did not exist during the Civil War, but residents, like brothers Andrew, Peter, and Jacob Mauney, of White Plains did join Company B of the 28th Regiment, North Carolina Troops, and participated in some of the most infamous battles of the war including Antietam, and Gettysburg. When Andrew and Jacob Mauney returned from the Civil War, they became dry goods merchants and prominent Kings Mountain citizens. They helped found the city and Andrew became its first mayor.³³

³¹ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 6-7.

³² *Battle of Kings Mountain Proposed Centennial Celebration: October 7, 1880*, (Yorkville, SC: Office of the Enquirer, 1880), 4.

³³ Lawrence Lohr, *The Mauney Brothers' Civil War: Andrew, Peter and Jacob*, (Kings Mountain Historical Museum, 2013), 7-8, 18-20.

The Civil War affected the area like the rest of the South. Cleveland County, which contains the City of Kings Mountain, saw the value of its farms fall by half and federal soldiers occupied the county seat of Shelby.³⁴ During Reconstruction, the political power and wealth of the southern elite withered. After the defeat of the Confederacy and the changes of Reconstruction, the South responded by creating myths to preserve their culture, known as the Lost Cause. Southern whites revered the antebellum era as a golden age of kind masters, honorable mistresses, and faithful slaves and looked to the heroes of the Confederacy as virtuous models.³⁵ As Gaines M. Foster argues in *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause and the Emergence of the New South, 1865 to 1913*, some of the leaders of the Lost Cause movement practiced sectional reconciliation. By doing so they did not admit defeat or to the true causes of the conflict, but the experience of the nation as a whole throughout the Civil War. Many of these leaders came from the urban and middle class, not the planter elite. They had accepted the new order after Reconstruction and struggled to survive in it.³⁶

The men of the KMCA from the City of Kings Mountain represented the urban class of reconciliationists. However, other KMCA members represented the planter elite. The planter elite reshaped public memory in the late nineteenth century by creating civic monuments that transformed, as Catherine W. Bishir states in her essay, *Landmarks of Power*, “the cult of defeat into the dominant culture of power.”³⁷ The two classes

³⁴ *Our Heritage: A History of Cleveland County*, (Shelby, NC: *Shelby Daily Star*, 1976), 128.

³⁵ Vincent J. Lowery, “A Monument to Many Souths: Tourist Experience Southern Distinctiveness at Stone Mountain,” in *Destination Dixie: Tourism and Southern History*, Karen L. Cox ed., (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2012), 225-226.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 15.

³⁷ Catherine W. Bishir, “Landmarks of Power: Building a Southern Past in Raleigh and Wilmington, North Carolina, 1885-1915,” in *Where These Memories Grow: History, Memory, and Southern Identity*, ed. Brundage, W. Fitzhugh, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 142.

combined to create a reconciliationist commemoration that also reasserted the dominance of the southern elite at the Kings Mountain battlefield.

During their first meeting, the KMCA elected Colonel Asbury Coward, superintendent of Kings Mountain Military School in Yorkville South Carolina, as Chairman. Other committees formed and the ways and means committee received funds from the North and South Carolina legislatures and bought thirty-nine and a half acres of the battlefield for \$197.50.³⁸ The troops' committee, led by former Confederate General Wade Hampton and United States Senator and former North Carolina Confederate Governor Zebulon Vance, assured a strong military presence.³⁹ The monument committee erected a four-sided granite monument with engravings on each side honoring the American soldiers, from officers to privates, who fell during the battle. They placed it on the purchased land, which was the highest point on the battlefield, where the battle began, and the bloodiest fighting occurred.⁴⁰ The correspondence committee confirmed the legislative assistance of the States of Tennessee, and Virginia, and invited President Rutherford B. Hayes as well as historian George Bancroft to speak at the unveiling, but each man declined. Historian Lyman Draper did attend, and one year later released what some consider a definitive history of the battle, *Kings Mountain and its Heroes: History of the Battle of Kings Mountain*. He cited his attendance at the centennial celebration as the inspiration for his work.⁴¹

³⁸ Blythe, Carroll, Moffson, *Kings Mountain National Military Park: Historic Resource Study*, 57-58.

³⁹ *Battle at Kings Mountain Proposed Centennial Celebration: October 7, 1880*, 3-13.

⁴⁰ Dunkerly, *Kings Mountain Walking Tour Guide*, 22, 34.

⁴¹ W.G. Finley, "Former Celebrations of Battle of Kings Mountain," *Charlotte Observer*, February 9, 1930.

Although the KMCA was made up of men from throughout the South, most of the financial support and planning came from North and South Carolina and the commemoration could not have been possible if not for the citizens of Kings Mountain leading the charge for a reconciliation celebration. During the first week of October 1880, thousands arrived by covered wagon at the old gold mine outside of the City of Kings Mountain. The gold mine had been abandoned for years and created an open area for the thousands that traveled for the event to camp.⁴² There they set up camps, and fires were visible for miles. The commemoration lasted three days, and representatives from South Carolina, North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, Arkansas, and Mississippi made speeches.

The first day of the celebration was Reunion Day, a day for family and friends to reunite at Kings Mountain “their Mecca; while worshipping at the shrine of liberty.”⁴³ It also allowed Confederate soldiers to reunite and to camp alongside United States Army soldiers. During Reunion Day, Judge Daniel G. Fowle, a former Confederate North Carolina State Representative, and 1880 North Carolina gubernatorial candidate, praised the soldiers who fought at Kings Mountain “who here poured out their blood and welcomed death in order that a nation of freemen might live.”⁴⁴ His description of the Over Mountain Men turned to “those who fell wearing the Gray” as he turned his attention to the Civil War.⁴⁵ His speech points to sectional reconciliation, as he reminds

⁴² Loretta Cozart, “Remembering Our Heritage,” *Kings Mountain Herald*, Kings Mountain NC, October 10, 2018.

⁴³ “Celebration of the Centennial Anniversary of the Battle of Kings Mountain: October 5, 6, 7, 1880, *Yorkville Enquirer*, York, SC, October 14, 1880.

⁴⁴ Ibid., and “Daniel Gould Fowle (1831-1891),” North Carolina History Project, 2016, <https://northcarolinahistory.org/encyclopedia/daniel-gould-fowle-1831-1891/>

⁴⁵ “Celebration of the Centennial Anniversary of the Battle of Kings Mountain: October 5, 6, 7, 1880, *Yorkville Enquirer*.

attendees that North Carolina had always maintained its devotion to the principles of free government. However, he believes that because of the size of Centennial Celebration it “shows the earnest desire which the people of our section have for a full, entire, complete reconciliation.”⁴⁶ Later that day, Colonel Asbury, the head of the KMCA, presented each of the original thirteen colonies flags and raised them around the speaker stand. As he did so, the crowd cheered loudly for each of the states. As a reporter from the *Yorkville Enquirer* stated, “spontaneous applause given these flags and the States they represented, on Reunion Day, was one of the happiest features of the occasion.”⁴⁷

On Military Day, there were many Civil War veterans present and a military parade organized by Hampton and Vance, which was reviewed by General Henry Jackson Hunt of the United States Army, a Union veteran. The parade consisted of the Fifth United States Artillery Unit from Atlanta. Former Confederate companies such as the Richmond Howitzers from Richmond, Virginia, Salisbury Rifles from Salisbury, North Carolina, and the Charlotte Grays from Charlotte, North Carolina camped together all three days and presented a soldier’s encampment for visitors. The U.S. Artillery detachment camped beside the Confederate veterans with cadets from the Kings Mountain Military School in Yorkville, South Carolina and Kings Mountain High School in Kings Mountain, North Carolina.⁴⁸

October 7th, the final day of celebration, dawned clear and bright. People gathered to hear the original song written by Clara Dargan McLean of Yorkville, South Carolina, and then an oration by John W. Daniels of Lynchburg, Virginia. Daniels, a

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

State Senator from Virginia, was a former Confederate Major who served under General Jubal Early at the Battle of Gettysburg.⁴⁹ He first gained national political attention in June 1880 at the Democratic National Convention where he gave the nominating speech for the Democratic presidential candidate, Winfield Scott Hancock. In 1885 Daniels became a United States

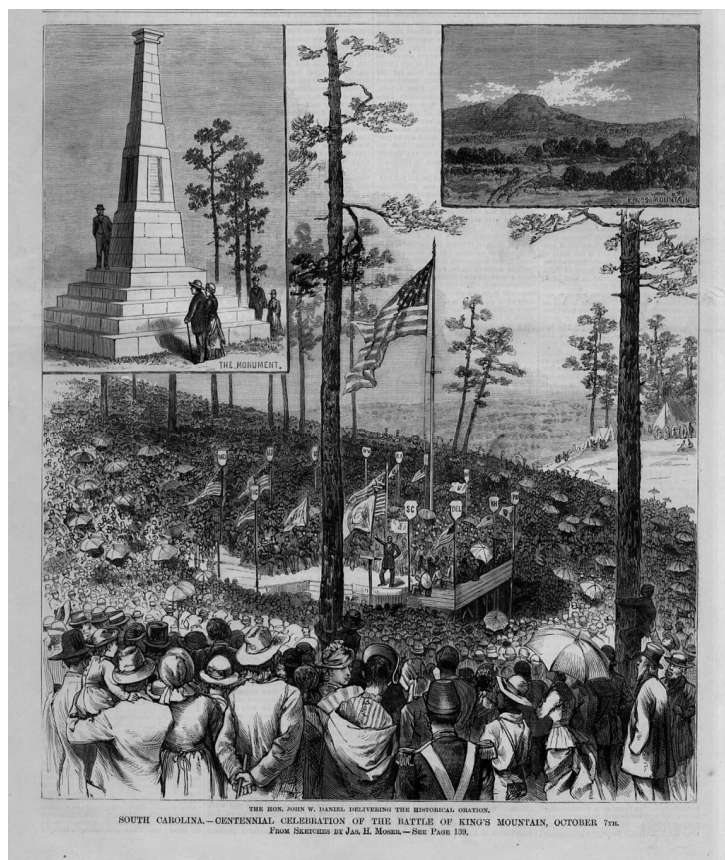


FIGURE 1: John W. Daniels delivering the address during Kings Mountain Battlefield Centennial Celebration

Senator and continued his involvement with the commemoration of Virginia Confederate troops at Gettysburg and gave the keynote speech at the unveiling of a Robert E. Lee statue at Washington and Lee University.⁵⁰

Daniels speech declared the Battle of Kings Mountain as a “battle of the people,” because both the loyalist and the patriot forces consisted of militiamen with only one

⁴⁹ Kaitlin Shifflet, The Lame Lion of Lynchburg, LynchburgMuseum.org, September 9, 2016, <http://www.lyncburgmuseum.org/blog/2016/9/9/the-lame-lion-of-lynchburg>, Accessed on October 10, 2018.

⁵⁰ W. B. Whitley, *The Dictionary of Virginia Biography: John Warwick Daniel 1842–1910*, November 4, 2015, Encyclopedia Virginia, http://www.EncyclopediaVirginia.org/Daniel_John_Warwick_1842-1910. Accessed on October 9, 2018, https://www.encyclopediaivirginia.org/Daniel_John_Warwick_1842-1910#start_entry

regular army officer, Major Patrick Ferguson of the British Army.⁵¹ After a thorough history of the American Revolution and the battle he closed with “Kings Mountain and Guilford, and Cowpens and Yorktown, let these be the names that blend their colors in the rainbow that now spans the sunlit arch of our peace-illuminated land. With these sacred words of union, with these sacred relics of memory and inspirations of hope, let us all rejoice that the great principles of American Liberty are still the lawful inheritance of this people.”⁵² After his speech, four young women, representing the future of the South, two from South Carolina, and one each from North Carolina, and Virginia revealed the Centennial Monument.⁵³ The stone plaque reads, “In Memory of the Patriotic Americans who participated in the Battle of Kings Mountain. This monument is erected by their grateful Descendants.”⁵⁴ As day faded into evening, thousands of campfires dotted the hillside as fireworks lit up the sky signaling the end of the celebration.⁵⁵

One year later, in 1881, a similar centennial celebration was held at the battlefield that marked the end of the Revolutionary War. Yorktown, Virginia, a Revolutionary and Civil War battlefield, also opted to use the centennial celebration of the Revolutionary War as a time of celebration of southern patriots and reconciliation between the North and the South. Unlike Kings Mountain, however, this celebration and monument were paid for by the federal government. Congress dedicated one hundred and twenty

⁵¹ W.G. Finley, “Former Celebrations of Battle of Kings Mountain,”

⁵² “Celebration of the Centennial Anniversary of the Battle of Kings Mountain: October 5, 6, 7, 1880, *Yorkville Enquirer*, York, SC, October 14, 1880.

⁵³ Helen Deane Chandler, *A Brief Description of the Battle of Kings Mountain: The Turning Point of the American Revolution, The Sesqui-Centennial Celebration*. (Publicity Committee of the Sesqui-Centennial Celebration: 1930). 7.

⁵⁴ Dunkerly, *Kings Mountain Walking Tour Guide*, 34.

⁵⁵ “Kings Mountain Centennial Celebration,” Archival Folder 2003.85.1, Kings Mountain Historical Museum.

thousand dollars for the celebration and the monument as a way to promote national unity. The monument read “one country, one construction, one destiny.”⁵⁶ The words on the monument and the speeches that day spoke of reconciliation. President Chester Arthur spoke of a single nation gathered to “refresh our souls with the contemplation of the unfaltering patriotism, the sturdy zeal and the sublime faith which achieved the results we now commemorate.”⁵⁷

He spoke to a crowd of 200,000 which included Civil War militias from the North and the South, including the Boston Cadets, Pennsylvania regiments and the Chatham Light Artillery from Georgia.⁵⁸ The militias camped together and as the reporter from the *New York Times* stated of the area “the general good humor brings men from different States together in a way that cannot be considered too important, viewed merely from political grounds,”⁵⁹ Like at Kings Mountain, the encampment reflected the desire for reconciliation throughout the North and the South. Sarah Goldberger argues in her article “Seizing the Past: Revolutionary Memory and the Civil war in Yorktown” that the commemoration rewrote Yorktown’s public memory from Civil War to Revolutionary Battlefield and it revived interest in the Revolutionary War. In Kings Mountain, the centennial celebration served as an outlet for the Lost Cause as there were no other Civil War memorials in the city. Yorktown and Kings Mountain employed the Lost Cause to

⁵⁶ Sarah Goldberger, “Seizing the Past: Revolutionary Memory and the Civil War in Yorktown,” *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 22 No. 2, (2014), 121.

⁵⁷ “Memories of Yorktown: Hosts and Guests Speaking of Days Gone By,” *New York Times*, October 20, 1881.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

celebrate their communities' identity through another outlet--Revolutionary War anniversaries.⁶⁰

⁶⁰ Sarah Goldberger, "Seizing the Past: Revolutionary Memory and the Civil War in Yorktown," 121-122.

DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION AND THE 1909 COMMEMORATION

After the 1880 Commemorative events at Kings Mountain, the grounds became neglected and vandalized as KMCA members moved and died. Battlefield visitation declined due to access.⁶¹ After the Revolutionary War, Southern battlefields were inaccessible for tourists as most were in the backcountry with little infrastructure. Tourists did not have everyday access to important battlefields such as Guilford Courthouse and Cowpens and Kings Mountain returned to its natural state of overgrown mountain forest. Thomas Chambers argued in *Memories of War* that most southern battlefields “lacked the physical landmarks that acted as the narrative link and punctuation mark in people’s interpretation of the scene.”⁶² The landscape took away from understanding the battle, and when people did visit, they could not connect. However, in 1899, a new patriotic group became stewards of the battlefield and began upkeep, the Kings Mountain Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), founded in York, South Carolina.⁶³ These women became a part of a growing faction of women across the United States who were reclaiming American nationalism for themselves and their families. After the Civil War, the DAR wanted to foster unity through state-based nationalism. The Civil War was important to the women of the DAR, but they chose a reconciliationist viewpoint that looked to the Revolutionary War, when men from the North and the South fought side by side for the cause of liberty, as a solution to the tension caused by Reconstruction. Unlike the United Daughters of the Confederacy

⁶¹ W.G. Finley, “Former Celebrations of Battle of Kings Mountain,” *Charlotte Observer*, February 9, 1930.

⁶² Chambers, *Memories of War: Visiting Battlegrounds and Bonefields in the Early American Republic*, 99-100, 105-108, 117.

⁶³ Blythe, Carroll, Moffson, *Kings Mountain National Military Park: Historic Resource Study*, 57-58.

(UDC) who focused on unity among propertied southerners as part of their broader mission of neo-confederate nationalism.⁶⁴ Membership in the DAR was restricted to descendants of the American Revolutionary War who could prove their ancestry and each member had to be “personally acceptable” by the local DAR chapter, which allowed for only white upper and middle-class women to join.⁶⁵

The DAR’s structure reflected their allegiance to the federal government. While most women’s national civil organizations formed at the local or state level, the DAR’s Washington D.C. national headquarters held most of the power where they approved applications and appointed state and local leaders. Francesca Morgan in her work, *Women and Patriotism in Jim Crow America*, argued that this represents women-centered nationalism. The women of the DAR expressed this nationalism through self-education of the Revolutionary War, random local historic preservation, and celebrations with members of other patriotic groups.⁶⁶ The DAR’s ultimate educational, patriotic and historical objectives are, “to perpetuate the memory and spirit of the men and women who achieved American independence.”⁶⁷

The Kings Mountain DAR was founded in 1898 by Lesslie Donnom Witherspoon, wife of prominent South Carolina judge, L.D. Witherspoon. Her family traced their ancestry back to Dr. John Witherspoon, a signer of the Declaration of Independence from New Jersey. In the beginning, the chapter only averaged four or five members per meeting, but they were hard workers and interested in the history of the

⁶⁴ Morgan, *Women and Patriotism in Jim Crow America*, 28-29.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 42.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 3-10, 42-47, 62-63.

⁶⁷ “DAR History,” Daughters of the American Revolution, <https://www.dar.org/national-society/about-dar/dar-history>

American Revolution. One year later, the DAR met in Witherspoon's home for a lecture about the battle of Kings Mountain by former Civil War Major and prominent Rock Hill, South Carolina citizen Major A.H. White, a friend of her husband.⁶⁸ After the speech, the women asked White's advice regarding the neglected battleground. He suggested the battlefield be transferred to the DAR, as he believed they would be the best stewards. The DAR wrote to the surviving members of the KMCA, including Asbury, and the association agreed to transfer ownership.⁶⁹

The Kings Mountain chapter not only focused its efforts on the Battle of Kings Mountain, but it was also active throughout the rest of their community. It placed a monument at another local battle site, Huck's Defeat in McConnells, South Carolina, and began a successful state-wide movement to have the statue of John C. Calhoun placed in the National Statuary Hall in the Capitol building in Washington D.C. Therefore, the chapter incorporated a new organization, the Kings Mountain Centennial Battlefield Association (KMCBA) to specifically care for the site. It consisted of members of the Kings Mountain DAR with Witherspoon as the perpetual president. The association took ownership of the thirty-nine and a half acres of battlefield becoming its caretakers. For the next several years, the KMCBA kept the undergrowth on the battlefield cleared, helped pay to maintain roads, posted directional and no trespassing signs, put up a fence surrounding the battlefield and locked and unlocked it daily. The women also cared for the Centennial Marker, placed on the battlefield during the Centennial celebration, and the Chronicle Marker, which is the second oldest Revolutionary War monument in the

⁶⁸ Michael C. Scoggins, *Historic York County: An Illustrated History*, (San Antonio, TX: Historical Publishing Network, 2009) 60.

⁶⁹ Margaret Gist, "Keepers of the Dead Who Sleep on the Hilltop," *Charlotte Observer*, October 5, 1930

nation. It was placed on the battlefield in 1815 and had been subject to defacement and age. In 1914, the chapter placed a replica marker next to the fading Chronicle Marker to preserve its message, honoring the fallen Major William Chronicle. Both monuments were placed behind an iron fence, to combat vandalism.⁷⁰

The KMBCA knew the best way to protect the battleground moving forward was to garner national recognition, so they pursued congressional support. Federal interest in America's battlefields began in 1876, around the Centennial of the American Revolution, when Congress began a ten-year plan to appropriate funds to erect monuments at eight Revolutionary War battlefields and to evaluate the rest. However, of the eight bills introduced into Congress, none of them were enacted, but it did begin a conversation about historic preservation policy for the first time. In 1884, the House Committee on the Library requested an analysis of all Revolutionary Battlefields by Benson J. Lossing, the author of the *Pictorial Field Book of the Revolution*. Beginning in 1848, Lossing traveled to Revolutionary War battlefields and created wood engraving prints of the battlefield scene and paired it with the history of the battle in his widely popular book.⁷¹ He suggested that there were fifty-eight engagements that should be classified as battles in a three-tier system. Congress created a bill to set aside \$350,000 spread over twenty-five years to mark all first and second tier battlefields by placing a monument at the site. It also created the first Congressional national board consisting of the Secretary of State, the

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ David Van Tassel, "Benson J. Lossing: Pen and Pencil Historian," *American Quarterly* 6, No 1 (1954), 33-35.

Secretary of War, and the Librarian of Congress, to advise historic preservation and commemoration.⁷²

Beginning in 1890, Congress moved beyond just monuments and authorized four major Civil War battlefields as National Parks: Chickamauga in 1890, Shiloh in 1894, Gettysburg in 1895 and Vicksburg in 1899. These parks laid the groundwork for Congress to preserve other battlefields. For the first time, the government took private property for historic preservation using federal funds and the power of eminent domain. It also established a policy of preserving battlefields as near to the condition at the time of the battle. By doing so, it preserved historic homes and farms, and it reduced the cost of maintenance. It also created a three-man managing commission for each park. The creation of these four national parks, later to be called battlefields, set the stage for the next large preservation movement by Congress.⁷³

In the early 1900s, thirty-four bills were introduced to Congress to authorize thirty-three new historic sites. The projects ranged from colonial-era towns, French and Indian and Revolutionary War sites to Civil War battlefields. The House Committee on Military Affairs, which shepherded these bills, considered the cost of creating new parks, and the range of types of locations, as not all were battlefields. The chairman of the Official Records Commission, Brigadier General George Breckenridge Davis, who oversaw historical records of American military history, realized during a survey of the Antietam Battlefield that he needed only to preserve the narrow lanes of battle to tell its

⁷² Ronald F. Lee, *The Origin and Evolution of the National Military Park Idea*, (Washington D.C., Office of Park Historic Preservation, 1973).

https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/history_military/nmpidea6a.htm

⁷³ Ibid.

history as opposed to the vast tracks of land purchased at Gettysburg and Chickamauga, which were expensive to maintain. It was reported to the House, “It is not desirable that all those battlefields should be turned into great military parks, adorned with monuments... by maintaining the general condition of the country, setting up proper monuments and markers, and thus enabling the student and patriot to see how the battle was fought.”⁷⁴ The House of Representatives determined that most of the sites could be preserved by acquiring small tracts of land and adding a marker, this became known as the Antietam Plan.⁷⁵

In 1902, after the Antietam Plan had been created the House proposed a National Military Park Commission to procure battlefields and to mark lines of battle. However, the opposition of the existing battlefield commissions caused the House to reject the proposal. The proposal did have several consequences, which together with the interruption of World War I, stopped the preservation of more battlefields, with a few exceptions. From 1905 to 1925 four battlefields were preserved or commemorated by Congress, a monument for the War of 1812 in New Orleans, the Civil War battlefield at Kennesaw Mountain in Georgia, the Revolutionary War battlefield of Guilford Courthouse, and a monument at Kings Mountain.⁷⁶

After years of petitions and letters, the KMBCA had finally gained the support of South Carolina representative David E. Finley, and North Carolina representative E.Y.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

Webb.⁷⁷ On May 5th, 1906, Webb who represented Cleveland County, the county seat of the City of Kings Mountain, made a rousing speech on the floor of the House of Representatives calling for funds to build a monument at Kings Mountain.⁷⁸ He lauded the patriotic men who won the victory over the British at the Battle of Kings Mountain and called it the most significant battle of the Revolutionary War. He said “The



FIGURE 2: The U.S. Monument during construction

great heroes who fought there and shed luster upon American arms, need no monument to their memory...but we ourselves American citizens who have reaped the benefit of their sacrifice and their glory cannot afford to let this spot go unmarked by national recognition. But in justice to ourselves... let us build to their memory a magnificent monument.”⁷⁹ His speech convinced Congress to approve \$30,000 to build one of two federally funded monuments between 1900 and 1925. The KMBCA relinquished the property to the U.S. government in 1908 expecting not just a monument, but a national

⁷⁷ Blythe, Carroll, Moffson, *Kings Mountain National Military Park: Historic Resource Study*, 58.

⁷⁸ “Edwin Webb Yates (1872-1955),” Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, <http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=W000231>

⁷⁹ U.S. Congress, House of Representatives, Special Session of the Senate, *The Proceedings and Debates*, 59th Cong., 1st sess., 1906, 6415-6419.

military park, to provide federal protection and preservation. Plans for the commemorative ceremony began in 1908, and the U.S. government began construction on the monument. The eighty-three-foot obelisk monument, hailed by a local paper as the “handsomest south of Gettysburg,” was designed by the celebrated architectural firm, McKim, Mead, and White, who also designed New York’s Madison Square Garden, Boston Public Library and the White City at the Chicago World’s Fair in 1893.⁸⁰

Once the monument was complete, the dedication service took place on October 7th, 1909. It is the only large-scale commemorative exercise planned and executed solely by women at the battlefield. The Kings Mountain Commercial Club, an organization consisting of Kings Mountain business owners, paid five hundred dollars to construct a road to the celebration, and the Charlotte-Atlanta railroad brought visitors to within three miles of the battlefield. From the train station, visitors would take wagons or carts to the event.⁸¹ Eight thousand people attended the ceremony including the Governors of North and South Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, and Virginia, and the President of Wofford College gave the address. The commemoration became a local celebration, although the United States War Department had provided the funds to erect the monument and owned the land.⁸²

One year later the Army Corps of Engineers and the War Department returned the land to the KMBCA. The department stated that the battlefield lacked distinctiveness and would not create a national military park. In Ronald F. Lee’s, *The Origin and Evolution*

⁸⁰ Gist, “Keepers of the Dead Who Sleep on the Hilltop,” and Catherine W. Bishir and Leland M. Roth, “McKim, Mead, and White,” *North Carolina Architects and Builders: A Biographical Index*, last modified 2014, North Carolina State University Libraries, <http://ncarchitects.lib.ncsu.edu/people/P000029>

⁸¹ “Commercial Club Will Fix It,” *Charlotte Observer*, September 5, 1909.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 59.

of the *National Military Park Idea*, he suggested that the remoteness of the battlefield contributed to the reason the House committee designated only a monument and not a military park. The War Department believed the U.S. Monument established permanent identification and commemorated the participants of the battle.⁸³ The obelisk monument became not only the symbol of battle but the City of Kings Mountain. The city began to use it in advertising, and tourism. They published an advertising pamphlet in the mid-1930s to advertise its textile industry, churches, and school system, yet the Battle of Kings Mountain dominates the front of the brochure. On the cover is a picture of the U.S. Monument.⁸⁴ Glassberg argued that monuments and rituals that point citizens to remember a war in similar ways are vital in the creation of the imagined community, and public commemorations of war seek to “recapture feelings of wellbeing when society was most integrated and feelings of unity most intense.”⁸⁵ The monument symbolizes the sacrifices made for the unity of the country. From then on, the city’s identity became closely tied to the U.S. Monument and the battlefield as it began the commemorations of the battle in town.

⁸³ Ronald F. Lee, *The Origin and Evolution of the National Military Park Idea*

⁸⁴ Kings Mountain North Carolina, Archival Folder 2003.55.10, Kings Mountain Historical Museum.

⁸⁵ Glassberg, *Sense of History: The Place of Past in American Life*, 26-27.

THE CITY TAKES OVER COMMEMORATIONS

After the 1909 commemorative events, just like in 1880, battlefield visitation diminished immediately due to access. In 1917, a newspaper reported on the remoteness of the battlefield after an attempted visit to the location and stated the area was easy to access except “a spell of bad road on ascent of the rise” to the battlefield.⁸⁶ Six years later a Kings Mountain newspaper reported on the inaccessibility of the battlefield. Bonnie Eloise Mauney, wrote of the battlefields isolation, “ There is now a wagon road which traverses the western portion of the field and there are several paths that have been worn by the feet of those patriotic citizens who have visited the spot. But such visits are rather infrequent.” She continued, “The roads near this desolate ridge are poorly kept...so bad that many tourists are prevented from visiting this historic landmark. No human soul resides near the spot”⁸⁷ However, in 1926, a Charlotte Observer reported visited the battlefield stating, “Easily accessible...the battleground is the objective of a constant stream of sightseers...especially on a Sunday when they often run into the hundreds.”⁸⁸ The natural beauty of the ridgeline and the monuments greeted visitors upon arrival, and “its very atmosphere surcharged with patriotism, and its serenity and quietude.”⁸⁹

The unreliability of access meant that all commemorations of the battle between 1912 and 1929 were planned and executed in the City of Kings Mountain. In the 1920s,

⁸⁶ “Visit to Scene of the Battle that Decided America’s Fortunes.” *Charlotte Observer*, September 6, 1917.

⁸⁷ Bonnie Eloise Mauney, “Battlefield is Unchanged Since Time of Revolution,” *Sunday Observer*, Kings Mountain, NC, September 30, 1923.

⁸⁸ Ernest Jackson, “Government to Convert Field of Carnage into Shrine for the People” *Charlotte Observer*, July, 25, 1926.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

Bonnie Mauney Summers, the daughter of Andrew Mauney who founded the town and member of the KMCA, wrote in a history of the city that “it has proven more convenient and satisfactory to host the festivities in town since many anniversaries have been observed with parades, pageantry, and public speaking.”⁹⁰ Moreover, the city took the responsibility seriously. In 1912, all nine cotton mills and schools in the City of Kings Mountain closed on October 7th so the entire community could attend the celebration. Prominent citizens of Kings Mountain and the local Woman’s Club planned the event. Eight thousand people gathered outside of the city at the old gold mine to listen to prominent Kings Mountain citizens speak and the Ft. McPherson Army band from Georgia played “Dixie,” the “Star-Spangled Banner,” and “My Old Kentucky Home.”⁹¹

Historians Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger considered the 1912 celebration as an invented tradition. The yearly commemorations of the battle in the city created rituals that instilled norms that established permanence with the historic past. The City of Kings Mountain chose the battle as their historic past. A previous connection had been made by the city founders to the battlefield when they choose to commemorate the centennial with a reconciliationist celebration. Hobsbawm separated tradition from custom by repetition and one year later in April 1913, Kings Mountain citizens gathered once again to discuss commemorations of the battle.⁹² In this meeting, they decided “it is the purpose of the people of this town and vicinity to perpetuate the commemoration of the Battle of Kings Mountain.”⁹³ There was a permanent organization established “for

⁹⁰ Bonnie Mauney Summers, *Kings Mountain: Her Background and Beginning (About 1780-1920)*, (Kings Mountain, NC, 1922).

⁹¹ W.B. Bell, “Kings Mountain Honors Her Heroes,” *Charlotte Observer*, October 8, 1912.

⁹² Hobsbawm and Ranger, eds, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1-4.

⁹³ “Kings Mountain People to Perpetuate Celebration of the Battle,” *Charlotte Observer*, April 9, 1913.

the purpose of making arrangements for the proper celebration of the Battle of Kings Mountain.”⁹⁴ The members of this committee reflected the same families from the KMCA, the Mauneys, Dixons,



FIGURE 3: William Jennings Bryan speaks in the City of Kings Mountain for the battle anniversary celebration.

Dillings, McGinnis’s, all prominent Kings Mountain citizens who helped found the city.⁹⁵ Along with the permanent organization, another patriotic group helped organize the celebrations. Established in 1916, the Colonel Frederick Hambright Chapter of the DAR, named after a militiaman who fought at the Battle of Kings Mountain and lived in the White Plains area.⁹⁶ Two charter members of the chapter, Ida Pauline Maoney Neisler and Bonnie Eloise Maoney Summers’ were sisters and daughters of Andrew Maoney, a city founder, and KMCA member. Six other charter members were directly related to Colonel Hambright, which is why they chose the name.⁹⁷

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid., and Bonnie Maoney Summers, *Kings Mountain: Her Background and Beginning*.

⁹⁶ “Welcome,” Colonel Frederick Hambright Chapter, Kings Mountain, North Carolina: Daughters of the American Revolution, <http://ncdar.org/ColFrederickHambright/index.html>

⁹⁷ Loretta Husky Cozart, “Pieces of Kings Mountain History,” *Kings Mountain Herald*, Kings Mountain, NC, February 16, 2016.

Over the next decade, the City of Kings Mountain planning organization, and the DAR continued to honor the battle with speakers like former Democratic candidate for President, William Jennings Bryan. In 1924 the City of Kings Mountain chose to celebrate its fiftieth anniversary by honoring the men who fought at her namesake. The event was planned jointly by the Colonel Frederick Hambright Chapter of the DAR and the Kings Mountain Chamber of Commerce. There was a parade featuring the band and soldiers from Ft. Bragg, North Carolina, and floats from patriotic, and fraternal orders. The Central School, a central location two blocks outside of downtown, staged the address by the commander of Ft. Bragg and an Ft. Bragg Weapons Exhibition. There was a high school football game, airshow and a boxing match to entertain everyone “from bum to bank president.”⁹⁸

⁹⁸ “Kings Mountain to pay tribute to Country’s Heroes,” *Charlotte Observer*, September 20, 1923.

1930 COMMEMORATION

Attendance at the yearly commemorations in the City of Kings Mountain were high, however as the sesquicentennial of the battle approached the Kings Mountain DAR began preparations for the celebration. Although the city had hosted previous celebrations, the Kings Mountain DAR owned and maintained the battlefield and therefore were responsible for any celebration held at the actual site. In November 1929, the Kings Mountain DAR hosted the first public planning meeting in York, South Carolina.⁹⁹ Although the DAR laid the groundwork, the sesquicentennial committee consisted of men and women from all over North and South Carolina. The Chairman was Clarence O. Kuester, from Charlotte, North Carolina. Kuester was an active businessman in Charlotte and President and Manager of the Charlotte Chamber of Commerce. He spent his life promoting and developing businesses in the Charlotte area.¹⁰⁰ Men from the City of Kings Mountain were in charge of various committees such as C.E. Neisler on the Executive, Wiley McGinnis on Grounds, and O.B. Carpenter on the President's Luncheon. The DAR's primary responsibility became the Historical Committee, which was led by Mrs. R.M. Bratton from York, South Carolina, the Regent of the Kings Mountain DAR. The committee was responsible for a two-and-half-hour historical program from the central platform before President Hoover spoke. Along with the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR), they presented the descendants in attendance and had a speaker.¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ Gist, "Keepers of the Dead Who Sleep on the Hilltop."

¹⁰⁰ Granbery Dickson, "Clarence O. Kuester Dies of Heart Attack at Home," *Charlotte Observer*, March 13, 1948.

¹⁰¹ Souvenir Program: Sesquicentennial Celebration Battle of Kings Mountain: October 7th, 1930, Archival Folder 2000.24.3, Kings Mountain Historical Museum, 13, 21-22.

Many former residents of Kings Mountain were among the thousands to attend the commemoration. The event was not just an observance of the battle anniversary, but a chance for the city to reflect on what it perceived as its past and the people who had contributed to it. The previous commemorations held in the city helped to establish what Glassberg describes, as a “sense of place.”¹⁰² The longer a person lives in one place, the more places become associated with life experiences with family and friends. Childhood settings create an anchor point for personal identities and become storied places when remembered in history, legend, and monuments.¹⁰³ For Kings Mountain residents, those places were the battlefield and monuments. The City of Kings Mountain sent a leaflet to former residents with a poem inside describing the nostalgia of the event. On the cover of the leaflet was the U.S. Monument with the ridgeline of the battlefield behind it. The poem read in part, “Scenes of the past rise to our sight/Where here and there a cherished spot appears/On which fond memories lingers with delight.”¹⁰⁴ The cherished spot for many former and current residents of Kings Mountain was the U.S. Monument or a place on the battlefield and the anniversary was a chance to revel in that once again.

On October 7th, 1930, there were two points of celebration, the battlefield, and the City of Kings Mountain. Attendees of the celebration chose where to spend their day. If a visitor chose the battlefield, most arrived early to secure a spot on the hillside overlooking the covered stand where the day’s entertainment would take place. Two-hundred acres adjoining the improved battlefield road were cleared to park 25,000 cars.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² Glassberg, *Sense of History: The Place of the Past in American Life*, 18-19.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 18-21.

¹⁰⁴ Leaflet: Sesqui-Centennial of the Battle of Kings Mountain: October 7th, 1930, Archival Folder 2003.85.3 Kings Mountain Historical Museum.

¹⁰⁵ “All Roads Lead to Kings Mountain,” *Charlotte Observer*, October 5, 1930.

Before the president spoke at 2:30 p.m. there were many programs including the SAR and DAR Historical Program, a concert by the Charlotte High School Band, a Flag Drill by the American Legion and a Revolutionary-era rifle was fired from the speakers stand.¹⁰⁶ If they remained in the city, there were activities planned from 8:00 a.m. until 1:00 a.m. the next morning.¹⁰⁷ The people in town welcomed President Herbert Hoover and his wife as they arrived by train from Washington D.C. Thousands of people greeted him at the station, and rousing cheers went up as he exited the train car. He greeted those closest to him, including a young resident of Kings Mountain, Hazel Herndon, who later recounted his graciousness, but mainly “his lipstick and rouge!”¹⁰⁸ He proceeded to the observation stand in downtown Kings Mountain where he reviewed the largest military gathering in North Carolina since World War I, consisting of eighteen hundred South and North Carolina National Guardsmen, and seven hundred troops from Ft. Bragg.¹⁰⁹

However, newspaper reports indicate that the President received a colder reception as he rode through the city than the warm welcome he received at the train station. The October 1930 *Shelby Daily Star* gave southerners’ reserved patriotism as a reason for the icy reception.¹¹⁰ An editorial in the 1974 *Kings Mountain Herald* stated that many in the area blamed President Hoover for the “plight they were in.”¹¹¹

¹⁰⁶ Souvenir Program: Sesquicentennial Celebration Battle of Kings Mountain: October 7th, 1930, Archival Folder 2000.24.3, 11-17, and “Ancient Relic Talks Again,” *Charlotte Observer*, October 8, 1930.

¹⁰⁷ Souvenir Program: Sesquicentennial Celebration Battle of Kings Mountain: October 7th, 1930, Archival Folder 2000.24.1, Kings Mountain Historical Museum.

¹⁰⁸ Hazel Herndon Fryer, *A Pipe Dream that Lasted for Twenty-Six Years: The Kings Mountain Historical Museum Story*, December 2002, Archival Folder 2003. 136.1, Kings Mountain Historical Museum Archives.

¹⁰⁹ “Crack Military Units File By,” *Charlotte Observer*, October 8, 1930, and “Plans to Handle Huge Crowd at Kings Mountain Outlined,” *Charlotte Observer*, September 4, 1930.

¹¹⁰ “Sixty Thousand Greet Hoover on Mountain Battleground in S.C.” *Shelby Star*, Shelby, N.C.

¹¹¹ No Cheers for President Hoover,” *Kings Mountain Herald*, 1974.

The plight referred to the effects of the Great Depression on North Carolina textile mills. In 1931 there were seven hundred textile mills in the state and ten in the City of Kings Mountain.¹¹² In the early 1930s cotton and textile production became unprofitable as demand for it decreased, and the mills began overproducing. The mill's owners absorbed the cost by lengthening the workday and workweek and reducing the workers' salaries, this practice came to be known as the "stretch-out."¹¹³ Textile mill workers felt hopeless because of the change in working conditions, and the resulting economic hardships. In John Bauman and Thomas H. Coode's *In the Eye of the Great Depression: New Deal Reporters and the Agony of the American People*, reporters described the mindset of the mill workers in Gastonia, North Carolina, located nine miles from the City of Kings Mountain, as "fearful of hunger, cold, and loss of employment."¹¹⁴ Many mill workers blamed Hoover for their dilemma. In an oral history with Eula Durham, a mill worker from North Carolina, she described the general feeling about President Hoover, "I don't think they thought too much of him, cause you see, everybody had, you know, just a pretty good living. So, he come in and starved everybody to death. I don't think too many people nowhere liked him."¹¹⁵

¹¹² David C. Wheelock, "The Great Depression an Overview," North Carolina Museum of History, <https://www.ncmuseumofhistory.org/session-1-great-depression-and-north-carolina> and Sharon Stack and Stephanie Walsh, *Images of America: Kings Mountain*, (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2012), 8.

¹¹³ David C. Wheelock, "The Great Depression an Overview,"

¹¹⁴ John Bauman and Thomas H. Coode's *In the Eye of the Great Depression: New Deal Reporters and the Agony of the American People*, (Dekalb, Illinois, Northern Illinois University Press, 1988), 100.

¹¹⁵ Eula and Vernon Durham, interview by Jim Leloudis, November 29, 1978, Southern Oral History Series, transcript, *Southern Historical Collection*, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. <https://docsouth.unc.edu/nc/durhame/durhame.html>

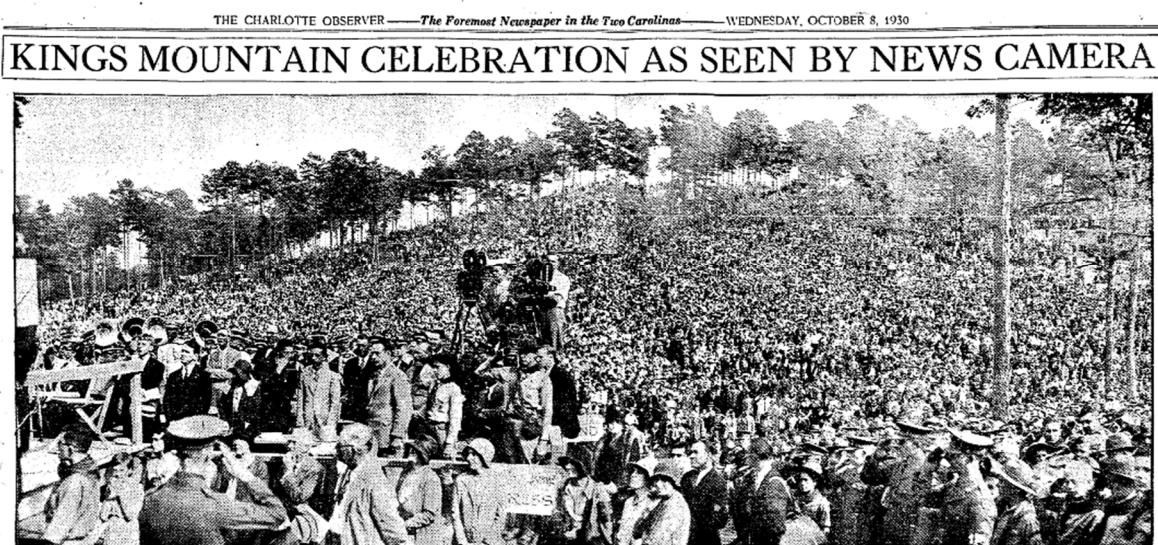


FIGURE 4: The crowd of 75,000 at Kings Mountain Battleground for the Sesquicentennial Celebration

President Hoover was not the first sitting president to be invited to speak at a commemorative ceremony at Kings Mountain. In 1880, President Rutherford B. Hayes was invited to the Centennial Celebration, and in 1913 Woodrow Wilson was invited to the commemoration in the City of Kings Mountain.¹¹⁶ Hoover, however, was the first to accept and he became the first sitting president ever to visit a southern Revolutionary War battlefield.¹¹⁷ He began his speech, which had international reach as it was broadcast simultaneously across the United States and to Great Britain, by stating that, “This is a place of inspiring memories.”¹¹⁸ He addressed the historical value of the battle by placing it alongside, Lexington, Bunker Hill, and Yorktown. He believed, “No American can review the vast pageant of human progress so mightily contributed to by

¹¹⁶ W.G. Finley, “Former Celebrations of Battle of Kings Mountain,” *Charlotte Observer*.

¹¹⁷ “Hoover Speaks to a Crowd of Over 70,000,” Kings Mountain National Military Park, Wayside Sign.

¹¹⁸ Herbert Hoover: “Address 6on the 150th Anniversary of the Battle of Kings Mountain,” October 7, 1930, *The American Presidency Project*, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=22379>.

these men without renewed faith in humanity, new courage, and strengthened resolution.”¹¹⁹

For the remainder of his speech, he contrasts American institutions, ideals, and spirit to those of other nations. He addressed the United States’ growth in population, consumerism, and the size of the military. He praises the United States’ economic growth which “has secured to the common man greater returns for his effort and greater opportunity for his future than exist in any other place on the Earth.” He expressed America as a land of opportunity where hard work and a good education can propel anyone forward. He cited that ninety percent of current elected federal government officials were self-made and not from wealthy families.¹²⁰ In an area marked by labor violence for better working conditions, he stated that the American democratic system is better than “socialism or its violent brother, Bolshevism.”¹²¹ He compared the two systems to training runners, in America hard work will allow the runner to finish first. However, socialism “would compel all the runners to end the race equally.”¹²² He argued that if Americans choose other systems, they are abandoning their spiritual heritage. America’s greatness comes from its roots in religion and God. It is one of the things that makes America better, including security, freedom, liberty, and progress. And lastly, standing in front of textile mill workers who were frightened they were going to lose their livelihoods and who were paid in Googaloos, a currency created by mill owners to pay their employees, he declared America’s economic problems were a result of growth not

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Ibid.

decay.¹²³ He listed statistics that stated that America was more financially stable than Europe. In an era of economic downturn Hoover, argued that the people in front of him, like their ancestors, the Overmountain men, were “dedicated, not to the pursuit of material riches, but to pursuit of a richer life for the individual.”¹²⁴ In his twenty-five-minute speech, he spoke of the Battle of Kings Mountain twice, at the beginning and the end. He mentioned the Overmountain men and how they “turned back a dangerous invasion well designed to separate and dismember the United Colonies.”¹²⁵ Hoover used his speech to unite southerners and quell the fear many felt of an uncertain future.

After his speech, Hoover was scheduled to attend the unveiling of a monument to Major Patrick Ferguson. The citizens of Charlotte, North Carolina, donated a new stone monument for the grave of the fallen British officer.¹²⁶ The monument honored the fallen foe, and the inscription on the new monument noted the “appreciation of the bonds of friendship and peace” between American and British citizens.¹²⁷ Ronald Campbell of the British Embassy was on hand for the unveiling. However, because of the number of people on the battlefield, Hoover could not attend, and he headed back to the train station in Kings Mountain.¹²⁸ Thousands followed him in “Hoover Carts,” wagons driven by local farmers that brought many visitors to and from the city where the celebration was ongoing.¹²⁹

¹²³ Stack and Walsh, *Images of Kings Mountain*, 18.

¹²⁴ Herbert Hoover: "Address on the 150th Anniversary of the Battle of Kings Mountain.," October 7, 1930, *The American Presidency Project*

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Blythe, Carroll, Moffson, *Kings Mountain National Military Park: Historic Resource Study*, 60.

¹²⁷ Souvenir Program: Sesquicentennial Celebration Battle of Kings Mountain: October 7th, 1930, Archival Folder 2000.24.3.

¹²⁸ “Hoover Warns Carolinas Against Radical Enemies of American Political System,” *Charlotte Observer*.

¹²⁹ “No Cheers for President Hoover,” *Kings Mountain Herald*, Kings Mountain, NC, October 3, 1974.

If an attendee could not make it to the battleground to hear the president's speech or to see the monument dedication, the city offered a wide array of activities throughout the day. The events began at 8:00 a.m., where there was an airshow, two college football games, two military band concerts, and the historical play, *Historical Pageant of the Battle of Kings Mountain*.¹³⁰ The production was over three hours long and the cast contained over three hundred people. There were twenty-one short scenes from the Revolutionary Era such as the Boston Tea Party, the Signing of the Declaration of Independence, Washington Crossing the Delaware, and the march of the Overmountain Men to Kings Mountain. The City of Kings Mountain paid for the elaborate costumes. The characters of the Overmountain leaders of Colonel Isaac Shelby, Colonel John Sevier, Colonel William Hambright, and Colonel William McDowell were all played by direct descendants. There were four performances over two days in the city, which 2,000 people attended.¹³¹

The 1930 commemoration accomplished the DAR's long sought-after goal for federal recognition. In 1928, a bill was presented to the House of Representatives to appropriate money for a survey of battlefields. The War Department once again left Kings Mountain off the list, deeming it not significant enough for national recognition. North Carolina Representative, A.L. Bulwinkle of the Tenth Congressional District, which encompasses the City of Kings Mountain, created an amendment for the bill requesting fifteen hundred dollars for a survey of Kings Mountain.¹³² It passed, and a

¹³⁰ Souvenir Program: Sesquicentennial Celebration Battle of Kings Mountain: October 7th, 1930, Archival Folder 2000.24.1.

¹³¹ "More than 300 Take Part in Kings Mountain Performance," *Charlotte Observer*, October 7, 1930.

¹³² Thomas S. Morgan, "Bulwinkle, Alfred Lee," *NCPedia*, January 1, 1979, <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/bulwinkle-alfred-lee>

commission of local people familiar with the battlefield formed to determine the site's suitability for preservation, one of which was G.G. Page. Page was the editor of the *Kings Mountain Herald* and had written a published account of the battle. The commission recommended a two-hundred-acre park. The report also stated that local citizens supported the national park idea and as proof of their cooperation they cited the development of roads to the battlefield for the sesquicentennial celebration. The War Department once again dismissed the report. However, after reviewing the survey, the House approved a bill, put forth by Bulwinkle, to make Kings Mountain a National Military Park, but it stalled in the Senate. Bulwinkle's successor, Representative Charles A. Jonas, submitted another bill, H.R. 6128, and in 1931, after the sesquicentennial celebration, it passed Congress, and President Hoover signed the bill creating Kings Mountain National Military Park.¹³³ The City of Kings Mountain's Congressional representatives initiated both federal actions on the battlefield, the U.S. Monument and the creation of a national park. Webb and Bulwinkle were both from the Kings Mountain area, and Bulwinkle had been a member of the planning committee for the sesquicentennial celebration.¹³⁴

The DAR continued to place memorials on the battlefield after the National Park Service took over stewardship. The Kings Mountain DAR erected three monuments in 1931: the Hoover monument, honoring where Hoover gave his address, the Asbury Coward monument, he was the Chairman of the Kings Mountain Centennial Association

¹³³ Gregory De Van Massey, *An Administrative History of the Kings Mountain National Military Park* (Washington D.C.: National Park Service, 1985), 13-17.
<https://archive.org/stream/administrativehi00mass#page/16/mode/2up>

¹³⁴ Souvenir Program: Sesquicentennial Celebration Battle of Kings Mountain: October 7th, 1930, Archival Folder 2000.24.3, and "Edwin Webb Yates (1872-1955)," *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*, and Thomas S. Morgan, "Bulwinkle, Alfred Lee."

and the Kings Mountain Battleground monument.¹³⁵ They also erected the Major Hawthorn monument in 1949. In 1939, the Colonel Frederick Hambright Chapter of the DAR created a monument to their namesake. Between 1949 and 2016, there were no new memorials put up on the battlefield, but the park continued to be used for community gatherings to commemorate the battle. The first superintendent of the Kings Mountain National Military Park, Oswald Camp, met with the William Gaston and Kings Mountain Chapters of the DAR and encouraged the use of the park's amphitheater and grounds.¹³⁶ A historical play, produced by the City of Kings Mountain Little Theater, *The Sword of Gideon, The Historical Drama in Honor of the 175th Anniversary of The Battle of Kings Mountain*, ran throughout the 1950s and 1960s at the amphitheater and continues today under a new title *Liberty Mountain*. Another example is the anniversary celebration, organized by the National Park Service, held annually on October 7th to commemorate the battle. The celebration consists of a wreath-laying ceremony at the base of the U.S. Monument. DAR and SAR chapters from around the country provide hundreds of wreaths, and reenactors provide a twenty-one-gun salute with muskets and rifles. The celebration continues over three days with reenactor encampments, ranger-led walks and children activities.¹³⁷

¹³⁵ The Kings Mountain Battleground monument is no longer on the battlefield. It is now at the eastern entrance to the park, bordering the state park.

¹³⁶ Blythe, Carroll, Moffson, *Kings Mountain National Military Park: Historic Resource Study*, 63.

¹³⁷ "Schedule of Events," Kings Mountain National Military Park, Accessed April 20, 2018, <https://www.nps.gov/kimo/planyourvisit/calendar.htm>

THE AFRICAN AMERICAN MONUMENT

In 2016, almost two hundred years after the first marker was dedicated, a new monument was placed on the battlefield during the anniversary celebration. Since the placement of the last marker in 1949, the DAR continued their involvement with anniversary celebrations. In 2010, Loretta Cozart became regent of the Colonel Frederick Hambright Chapter of the DAR. Cozart, who is a journalist for the *Kings Mountain Herald*, used her time as a regent to create a memorial to an oft-forgotten participant in the Battle of Kings Mountain. In a 2016 article in the *Kings Mountain Herald* she discussed how, for the first time, she became aware of the African American patriots who fought during the battle.¹³⁸ Cozart's unfamiliarity with African American soldiers who fought during the Battle of Kings Mountain is not because of a lack of research. There have been several scholarly works written about African American's contribution to both the patriot and loyalist causes during the Revolutionary War. In 1855, William C. Nell published the first historical work by an African American, *The Colored Patriots of the American Revolution*, which was meant to inspire abolitionists and to lift the spirits of African Americans.¹³⁹ Lyman Draper, in his 1881 work, *Kings Mountain and its Heroes*, suggests that up to twelve African Americans fought for the patriots' militia.¹⁴⁰ More recently, in 1960, Benjamin Quarles' work *The Negro in the American Revolution*, uncovered 100,000 African Americans who fought as loyalist soldiers.¹⁴¹ He believed

¹³⁸ Loretta Cozart, "Pieces of Kings Mountain History," *Kings Mountain Herald*, Kings Mountain, NC, May 18, 2016.

¹³⁹ William C. Nell, *The Colored Patriots of the American Revolution, with sketches of several Distinguished Colored Person: To which is added a brief survey of the Condition and Prospects of Colored Americans*, (Boston: Publisher, Robert F Wallcut, 1855).

¹⁴⁰ Draper, *Kings Mountain and Its Heroes*, 267.

¹⁴¹ Benjamin Quarles, *The Negro in the American Revolution*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1961).

that African American soldiers were fighting for liberty not because they were patriotic, but because they believed they would have a chance at a better life.¹⁴²

During her term as regent, Loretta Cozart decided to rectify the omission by placing a monument. She began the long process in 2010 to create a new monument. For a project like this, funds must first be raised, and this monument required \$1,100 for a matching DAR grant. The City of Kings Mountain once again stepped up to lead the memorial process. Prominent citizens and businesses from families whose ancestors had participated in commemorations dating back to the 1880 celebrations at Kings Mountain such as Dr. Jeff and Mrs. Priscilla Mauney, Neisler Brothers Inc., and Dilling Heating and Air, and civic organizations, including the Kings Mountain Historical Museum donated the needed funds. Her next step was to meticulously research the African American soldiers who fought at Kings Mountain. For this portion of the application, she turned to the DAR's *Forgotten Patriots: African Americans and American Indian Patriots in the Revolutionary War*, which is an online database with research on African Americans who served as patriot soldiers.¹⁴³ Although Draper had listed twelve and recent scholars have found evidence that at least five African American soldiers fought at Kings Mountain, the DAR only recognizes soldiers who received a pension for their Revolutionary War duty.¹⁴⁴ Cozart found two, Esaias Bowman and Andrew Ferguson,

¹⁴² Other Scholarship: Jeffrey Crow, *The Black Experience in Revolutionary North Carolina*, (Raleigh, NC: North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, 1977), Sylvia R. Frey, *Water from the Rock: Black Resistance in a Revolutionary Age*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), Sidney Kaplan, and Emma Nogrady Kaplan, *The Black Presence in the Era of the American Revolution*, (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1989).

¹⁴³ Cozart, "Pieces of Kings Mountain History," Kings Mountain Herald.

¹⁴⁴ In Bobby G. Moss and Michael Scoggins work, *African-American Patriots in the Southern Campaign of the American Revolution*, (Blacksburg, SC: Scotia-Hibernia Press, 2004), they identify two more African American soldiers, Ishmael Titus and Primes Record. However, their pension records were denied, and thus the DAR did not include them on the memorial. The City of Charlotte, North Carolina does have a plaque for Ismael Titus to honor African American Revolutionary War patriot soldiers from North and

freedmen who served throughout the Southern Campaign of the American Revolution. However, after further research another name surfaced, John Broddy, a slave for the patriot commander, William Campbell. Upon Campbell's death before the end of the Revolutionary War, Broddy received emancipation. His emancipation papers verified his service at Kings Mountain.¹⁴⁵

After the research and approval obtained from the National DAR office and the National Park Service, the planning of the physical monument began. Like all monuments the DAR had installed since 1931, it would include a bronze plate attached to a sizeable stone. Scott Neisler, the mayor of Kings Mountain, assisted with obtaining a good stone from the Martin Marietta Kings Mountain Quarry, and he directed the city's Public Works Department to move it to the battlefield at no charge. On the rainy morning of October 7, 2016, during the anniversary celebration, the monument was dedicated with descendants of John Broddy in attendance. The keynote speaker was the first African American General for the North Carolina National Guard, Brigadier General James R. Gorham.¹⁴⁶ As Loretta Cozart reflected on the process to honor African American soldiers, she stated, "it truly takes a city and its citizens to see a project like this through to completion. And our Kings Mountain community supported this project 100%."¹⁴⁷

South Carolina. "Commemorative Landscapes," Documenting the American South, <https://docsouth.unc.edu/commland/monument/943/>

¹⁴⁵ Loretta Cozart, "Pieces of Kings Mountain: Battle Celebration events Friday," *Kings Mountain Herald*, Kings Mountain, NC, October 5, 2016.

¹⁴⁶ Loretta Cozart, "DAR Dedicates Marker," *Kings Mountain Herald*, Kings Mountain NC, October 12, 2016.

¹⁴⁷ Loretta Cozart, "Pieces of Kings Mountain History: Marker to African Americans," *Kings Mountain Herald*, Kings Mountain NC, July 6, 2016.

CONCLUSION

In G.G. Page's 1926 published account of the battle, the President of the Kings Mountain Chamber of Commerce remarked on the battle's importance to the City. He described the citizens as "descendants of this manhood of the Revolution period" and living in a town that is "so conspicuously portrayed in History."¹⁴⁸ Although founded one hundred years later, the city still considers its citizens the descendants of the battle. The use of the battlefield as the city's connection to history continued throughout the century. In 1960, the Chamber of Commerce released their first brochure titled, "Kings Mountain, North Carolina: 'The Historical City.'"¹⁴⁹ The first image of the Historical City is the Centennial Monument, and written under the "History" section of the pamphlet, is the story of the Overmountain Men's victory over Major Ferguson.¹⁵⁰ There is no mention of the 1799 gold rush, the first in the United States, the railroad, or the textile mills.¹⁵¹ In 1980, Carol Carre Perrin, a preservation consultant visited the town to conduct a historical inventory. She recommended a historic district be created around the downtown area to preserve the houses and buildings from the late nineteenth century. However, she concluded that the city was not interested in preserving its history. She states in her summary "the average resident does not think of Kings Mountain as having any history."¹⁵² For so long, the City of Kings Mountain had tied its heritage to the battle, and in doing so, lost sight of its own unique history.

¹⁴⁸ G.G. Page, "The Battle of Kings Mountain," (Kings Mountain, N.C.: Herald Publishing House, 1926), 4.

¹⁴⁹ The Kings Mountain Chamber of Commerce Brochure, Kings Mountain Historical Museum Archive, Kings Mountain, NC,

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 8.

¹⁵¹ Stack and Walsh, *Images of Kings Mountain*, 7-9.

¹⁵² Carol Carre Perrin, Kings Mountain Inventory: Project Completion Report, (Greenville SC: 1980), 11.

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