

HISTORICAL EVENTS FOR JANUARY

Jan. 1, 1780--Daring guerrilla warfare continues, especially around Augusta, Georgia, and across the Savannah River in South Carolina.

Jan. 2, 1788--Georgia ratifies the Constitution unanimously, becoming the fourth state to ratify.

Jan. 3, 1777-- Washington again crosses the Delaware River. Out-marching Lord Charles Cornwallis, who has been summoned by General Howe from New York, Washington meets the British at Princeton. The British are defeated and driven toward New Brunswick.

Jan. 4, 1836--A constitutional convention at Little Rock adopts a constitution for Arkansas. Under the terms of the Missouri Compromise, slavery is permitted within the proposed state.

Jan. 5, 1782--Wilmington, North Carolina, is evacuated by the British, as part of concerted plans to withdraw from all the ports and cities they have occupied during the war.

Jan. 6, 1777--Washington leads his tired army into the hills around Morristown, New Jersey, and establishes winter quarters.

Jan. 7, 1817-- Electors are chosen for the first Presidential election in United States history. In some states the citizens who are entitled to vote for state officials also vote for electors; in others the electors are chosen by the state legislature. In Massachusetts two are chosen by the people while eight others are appointed by the legislature from a list of 24 candidates. The electors, once chosen, are free to cast their ballots for whomever they please.

Jan. 8, 1815--The British launch a savage frontal attack on the nearly impregnable American entrenchments and breastworks at New Orleans. After this is repulsed with heavy losses, the whole action is repeated, with the same devastating results. In a third assault, the British commander, General Sir Edward Pakenham, is killed in action. British casualties total more than 2,000 men, while the Americans lose about 70, killed and wounded.

Jan. 9, 1776--Thomas Paine publishes Common Sense, attacking George III and presenting the Colonists with the first clear and popular statement of their cause.

Jan. 10, 1779--In France, John Paul Jones is presented with a battered old hulk, which he overhauls, refits and renames the Bonhomme Richard, in honor of Benjamin Franklin.

Jan. 11, 1785--Congress moves to the newly designated capital, New York City, meeting in the City Hall.

Jan. 12, 1792--The first U.S. Minister to Great Britain under the Constitution is Thomas Pinckney, a South Carolina Federalist.

Jan. 13, 1794--Congress approves a measure adding two stripes and two stars to the national flag, in recognition of the admission of Vermont and Kentucky.

Jan. 14, 1781-- Virginia agrees to cede its claims to lands north of the Ohio River, removing the barrier to ratification by Maryland (the sole holdout) of the Articles of Confederation.

Jan. 15, 1777-- Settlers of the New Hampshire Grants--a former part of New Hampshire colony west of the Connecticut River, now claimed by New York--declare their independence and establish a "republic" under the name of New Connecticut.

Jan. 16, 1833-- In Barron vs. Baltimore, the U.S. Supreme Court rules that the provisions of the first 10 Amendments to the Constitution (the Bill of Rights) are not binding on state governments.

Jan. 17, 1781-- General Daniel Morgan wins a smashing victory over Tarleton at Cowpens, South Carolina.

Jan. 18, 1854-- William Walker, by proclamation, adds the Mexican state of Sonora to his "republic" of Lower California.

Jan. 19, 1777-- A highly effective issue of Thomas Paine's latest pamphlet, American Crisis, is published. It helps to raise American morale.

Jan. 20, 1781-- A mutiny of New Jersey troops is quelled by General Robert Howe, who hangs two of the leaders.

Jan. 21, 1785-- Wyandot, Chippewa, Delaware, and Ottawa Indians cede land in the Ohio country.

Jan. 22, 1847-- Taylor in a letter to General Edmund P. Gaines that is published in the New York Morning Express, defends his grant of an armistice to the Mexicans and criticizes the Polk Administration.

Jan. 23, 1822-- The Mississippi state legislature holds its first meeting in the state house at Le Fleur's Bluff, which is re-named Jackson, after the popular general from Tennessee, and has been designated the new state capital, replacing the small town of Washington, east of Natchez.

Jan. 24, 1776-- Colonel Henry Knox, under Washington's direction, reaches Cambridge, Massachusetts, with 43 cannons and 16 mortars that were captured several months ago by Ethan Allen. The weapons have been hauled overland from Fort Ticonderoga, New York.

Jan. 25, 1806-- Secretary of State James Madison issues a full report on the illegal actions of the belligerents in the European conflict. The report is effective in generating anti-British sentiment.

Jan. 26, 1819-- In view of the pending application for statehood on the part of Missouri, a resolution to reorganize Arkansas County of Missouri Territory as Arkansas Territory, extending south of the proposed Missouri boundary and west from the Mississippi River to 100° W. Long., is introduced into Congress. An amendment to this resolution by Congressman John W. Taylor of New York, forbidding the introduction of slavery into the proposed Arkansas Territory, is defeated.

- May 20, 1670--On this day Major Harris who was in charge of the expedition which set out with 20 colonists, five Indians and Lederer. Their primary purpose was to find a way through the mountains to the west, solving the mystery of what lay beyond.
- Oct. 8, 1753--On this day the record reads--Twelve unmarried men set out from Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, in a large covered wagon drawn by six horses to begin the settlement of Wachovia.
- Feb. 25, 1760--On this night a group of Cherokee warriors surrounded Fort Dobbs but were beaten off by the troops under Major Waddell.
- July 21, 1774--A mass meeting was held in Wilmington where it was decided to call for delegates to meet at New Bern on August 25. Thirty of the thirty-six counties sent a total of 71 delegates to this meeting called the First Provincial Congress in North Carolina.
- Sept., 1774--From the body at the First Provincial Congress the delegates were selected to meet with the First Continental Congress in Philadelphia.
- August 11, 1775--Surry County didn't send delegates to the first meeting at New Bern the distance being so great, but when the Congress met the following year at Hillsborough, five men selected from the Committee of Safety, were appointed Surry's Delegates to the Provincial Congress.
- May 26, 1738--Benjamin Cleaveland was born in Virginia, in Prince William County, a son of John Cleaveland.
- May 12, 1780--On this day Charleston surrendered to British forces under Sir Henry Clinton, assisted by Lord Charles Cornwallis, the newly appointed British commander for the south.
- Oct. 7, 1780--The battle at King's Mountain turned the tide in the South as the victory at Trenton did in the North.
- October 15, 1780--General Smallwood having been informed of the Tory movement in Surry at once moved westward, arriving at Bethabara and sent out scouting parties which returned with the following message which he reported to General Gates, "On October 14th the Tories were defeated at Shallow Ford by Major Cloyd with one hundred-sixty Virginia and Carolina militia,
- January 7, 1781--On receiving information, near the last of December that General Morgan with about 500 regulars and a few militia, had crossed the Catawba and was advancing toward the British Post at Ninety-Six, Lord Cornwallis dispatched Colonel Tarleton with a 1000 men with orders to capture General Morgan or drive him out of the Country. Instead they met with sad and humiliating defeat.
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January 18, 1781--General Leslie arrived with 1000 reinforcements for General Cornwallis who immediately moved his troops. His first object was to overtake Morgan and rescue his prisoners. His second was to get between General Greene, then encamped on the Pee Dee River, and Virginia from which Green was expecting troops. Cornwallis' hope was to engage Greene in Battle before the troops arrived.

February 3, 1781--General Morgan reached the Trading Post on the Yadkin as the British were entering Salsibury.

February 9, 1781--Cornwallis arrived in Bethania with his army and made camp. The houses were filled with officers and their servants while the camp extended for two and one half miles. All the food and livestock including horses were seized, nor did they fail to drink their entire stock of wines and whiskeys.

Feb. 10, 1781--Having rested his troops and replenished his food supplies, Cornwallis began to leave the Moravian Settlement.

Feb. 22, 1781--Cornwallis followed General Greene as far as the Dan River in Virginia but finding that Greene had already passed over, he gave up the chase and turned toward Hillsborough where he set up the King's standard and issued a proclamation calling on all loyal subjects to rally at once to the Standard.

February 25, 1781-- A patrol was sent out beyond the guard under Captain Franklin, since Governor of the state. In this patrol was Major Micajah Lewis of Surry County who was killed by the enemy troop whom they encountered. These men were part of the troops whommet and defeated a company of Tories led by a Dr. Pyle, thus cooling the enthusiasm of the Tories and making it more difficult for the British to enroll them under the King's Standard.

March 15, 1781--Though Cornwallis claimed the victory for the Battle of Guilford Court House on that day, the victory so depleted his army that he dared not risk another encounter with Green's army though the later had withdrawn and reformed for another attack.

March 15, 1781--As history records the events of that day, the British were the victors, but the victory was so costly Cornwallis did not wage another battle while in the state.

October 19, 1781--Lord Cornwallis surrendered his army to the American and French troops under General Washington at Yorktown. The War for Independence had been won but the deep scars inflicted by it were a long time healing.

- August 22, 1776--The inhabitants living along the Watauga, Holston and Nolachucky Rivers, petitioned the Council of Safety, saying that since they are within the bounds of this state they wanted to be allowed to set up courts and elect representatives to the General Assembly.
- November 19, 1776-- The above petition was acted upon and the representatives, took seats in the Provincial Congress at Halifax.
- July 1778-- The delegates from North Carolina to the convention at Philadelphia finally signed the Constitution but when it was presented to the state convention meeting in Hillsborough in July, 1778, the members refused to sign it on the grounds that it was too centralized.
- December, 1796--The General Assembly changed the line between Stokes and Surry, giving the narrow strip lying west of the Yadkin to Surry.
- September, 1824-- Jesse Franklin died in his 64th year and was buried on his plantation in the family graveyard. d
- August 11, 1775--Colonel Joseph Williams of Surry County was one of the delegates to the Provincial Congress at Hillsborough and was appointed a member of the Committee of Safety for Surry County, held the rank of Colonel in the Surry militia and was active in all political as well as military affairs.
- Feb. 23, 1842--Lewis Williams, son of Joseph Williams, was so much esteemed by his colleagues that he received the title "Father of the House of Commons". He died at his post in Washington in Feb. 1842. i
- December, 1821--A postoffice was established somewhere in this region named Haystack with its Postmaster Thomas C. Hauser. It preceded the one in Mt. Airy by a few months.
- March, 1825--A postoffice was established at Jonesville with Richard Gwynn, Postmaster.
- March 9, 1889--The town of Pilot Mountain was incorporated.
- June, 1856--A postoffice was established at Elkin, Postmaster Richard Gwynn.
- December 9, 1776--A man by the name of Wolfesperger, who formerly lived near Lilitz, Pennsylvania, but is now in Virginia made an agreement with Br. Graff to buy 300 acres on Sparks' Creek. His son will live there." (His son John moved from the Moravian settlement to Surry County with his wife Christine Frey in 1792.)

- October 10, 1830--On this date in Rockingham County the founder of Surry County's family , James Henry Llewellyn, was born. He became a minister coming to Surry with his wife Sarah E. Pratt, about 1850 and settled on Fisher River, five miles from Dobson. He was the first missionary Baptist Minister in the county with records showing he married 2600 couples and baptised about 5000 people. He was also a prominent educator, serving many years as Superintendent of Public Education. The father of a large family his children became leading citizens in the county. James Robert, a lawyer in Dobson, was the father of Robert Cleveland banker in Dobson, Mt. Airy, and Elkin.
- April 16, 1862--Captain J.C. Norman marched his company up to stand in front of the new Methodist Church on South Main Street where they were presented with a new Confederate Flag of a beautiful silken emblem made from the treasured shawls of the mothers and wives of the departing soldiers.
- March 21, 1865--After a successful campaign through Georgia and South Carolina, General Sherman entered North Carolina in the South East where he was met by General Joseph E. Johnston whose forces he defeated at Bentonville on March 21, 1865.
- April 9, 1865--Lee surrendered to Grant but Sherman continued to fight the war in Carolina until April 26, 1865. On that date General Joseph E. Johnston surrendered his forces and the war ended. "The war for Southern Independence brought political division, bitterness, and disaffection to North Carolina; destroyed much of the State's wealth; took the lives of some 40,000 of its young men; and left a depressing heritage of defeat."
- July 4, 1885--After the long haul of eight years the road building camps moved into Surry and on the fourth of July 1885, they set up their camp on the farm of C.H. Haynes, Sr., Just south of town. The end seemed almost in sight yet it was three more years before the road was finally completed.
- May 28, 1888--At last, in the summer of 1888, eleven years after the first shovel of dirt was turned, a train rolled into the station at Mt. Airy. On that day a train left Fayetteville at 8 p.m. on a trial run to Mt. Airy, arriving twelve hours later. On the following day the train made the return trip to Fayetteville, cutting fifteen minutes from its time.
- May 11, 1885--Mt. Airy was incorporated. First Mayor-B.Y. Graves.