



# James Williams: An American Patriot in the Carolina Backcountry

*William Graves*

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## **James Williams: An American Patriot in the Carolina Backcountry** William Graves

James Williams was the highest-ranking officer to die from wounds suffered at the Battle of King's Mountain, fought October 7, 1780, on the border between North and South Carolina. Although little known, the patriots victory at this battle played a significant role in America's ultimately gaining its independence from England. The story of Williams' life provides fascinating insights into the vicious civil war fought between Carolina backcountry neighbors evenly split by loyalist and patriotic sympathies. Equally fascinating is the story of Williams' struggle for command of the South Carolina militia with rival, Thomas Sumter, the famous "Fighting Gamecock," for whom residents of that state derive their nickname. Evidence strongly suggests that unquestioning acceptance of slanderous comments directed at Williams by one of Sumters subordinates in memoirs written long after the Battle of Kings Mountain has resulted in the memory of Williams sacrifices made in the name of Liberty being almost totally forgotten. Williams deserves a better place in American history than that to which he has been unjustly consigned by Sumter and his subordinates. In this account, the author seeks to restore Williams to his rightful place.

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