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Fulenwider, John [1]

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by Emmett R. White, 1986

ca. 1756–4 Sept. 1826

John Fulenwider, iron manufacturer, was born in Switzerland and as a young boy came to America with his father and family, who settled in Rowan County [2]. During the American Revolution [3], he was a Whig [4] and, as a member of the Rowan County militia, fought at Ramsour's Mill [5] and Kings Mountain [6]. After the war he moved to Lincoln County [7], where he soon entered the iron manufacturing business. Fulenwider was one of the first in the area to make pig iron from iron ore. From iron extracted from the rich deposits of mid-Lincoln County, he produced such items as wagon tires, plows, horseshoes, chain iron, nails, and farm tools; during the War of 1812 [8] he made cannon balls for the American army. His most important foundry was located at High Shoals on property that he had purchased earlier from Martin Phifer, Sr. He also operated several forges in Lincoln County.

As a result of his industry and resourcefulness, Fulenwider became a prosperous citizen and acquired a considerable amount of property. At his death at least 20,000 acres of land as well as a good deal of capital were distributed to his heirs. He married Elizabeth Ellis, an aunt of Governor John W. Ellis [9]. They had eight children: John, Jr. (m. Lavinia Forney, daughter of Peter Forney), Henry (m. Ann Ramsour, daughter of David Ramsour), William (m. Martha Hayes, daughter of John Hayes), Jacob (m. Mary Hoyle, daughter of Andrew Hoyle), Sarah (m. George Phifer, son of Martin Phifer, Jr.), Esther (m. John Phifer, another son of Martin Phifer, Jr.), Elizabeth (m. Alfred Burton, son of Colonel Robert Burton), and Mary (m. Robert H. Burton, another son of the colonel).

Fulenwider died at the age of seventy and was buried at High Shoals, N.C.

References:

Deeds and Wills of Lincoln County (North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh).

William L. Sherrill, *The Annals of Lincoln County* (1937).

Additional Resources:

John Fulenwider, NC Highway Historical Marker O-54: http://ncmarkers.com/Markers.aspx?cp=Markers&MarkerId=O-54 [10]

Iron Works, NC Highway Historical Marker O-9: http://ncmarkers.com/Markers.aspx?cp=Markers&MarkerId=O-9 [11]

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