

Williams, Henry ^[1]

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by Carole Watterson Troxler, 1996

fl. 1778–1807

Henry Williams, active [Loyalist](#) ^[2] during the [Revolution](#) ^[3], was a native North Carolinian who owned 369 acres on or near the Pee Dee River in [Anson](#) ^[4] and [Bladen](#) ^[5] counties. His father, Samuel Williams, raised a company of Loyalist militia in [Anson County](#) ^[4] in January 1776. After the defeat at [Moore's Creek Bridge](#) ^[6] Samuel left North Carolina with at least four sons: Samuel, Jr., Henry, Jacob, and William. They went to the frontier of Georgia, and Henry bought 200 acres. In the autumn of 1778 they moved to East Florida, where the father commanded a company of the East Florida Rangers.

After the British took Georgia, Henry accompanied the East Florida Rangers to the Georgia backcountry and also served as a major in the Georgia Loyalist militia. He was captured and released and finally driven from his Georgia land. He fled to the British post at Augusta and was taken prisoner when the Americans took the fort. His wife and seven children had joined him in Georgia. In the summer of 1782 he was exchanged to Savannah, and his family went to East Florida with him at the evacuation.

The postwar experiences of the greater Williams family illustrate Loyalist dispersion. The father, Samuel, lost his sight during the war and died prior to 1787. Samuel, Jr., who had joined the British forces in East Florida in 1777, ended the war with the Barrackmaster General's Department in New York. He participated in the Loyalist exodus from New York to New Brunswick. In 1792 he left his New Brunswick property for the newly opened lands of Upper Canada, where he was given 300 acres in 1794. In 1785 Jacob Williams entered a London workhouse and ended his days there, blind and insane. Meanwhile, in 1784 Henry and William Williams left East Florida for the Bahama Islands, where they lived several years as planters. Henry seems to have returned to Anson County, for in 1807 a Henry Williams owned land near the family's pre-Revolutionary home.

References:

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Audit Office 12:36, 65, 109, 13:82, 138 (Public Record Office, London).

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Wilkes County Court Minutes, August 1779 (Georgia Department of Archives and History, Atlanta).

Subjects:

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[Biographies](#) ^[8]

[Military personnel](#) ^[9]

Authors:

[Troxler, Carole W.](#) ^[10]

Origin - location:

[Bladen County](#) ^[11]

[Anson County](#) ^[12]

From:

[Dictionary of North Carolina Biography, University of North Carolina Press.](#)^[13]

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