

Stephen Heard  
1740-15 November 1815.

Stephen Heard, lawyer, planter, surveyor, served under General George Washington in the French and Indian Wars; was captured by the British in the Battle of Kettle Creek and imprisoned but was saved from execution by his faithful slave, Mammy Kate; acted as Governor in 1780 when most of Georgia was under British rule; lies buried in his own rose garden at Heardmont where the Daughters of the American Revolution maintain a woodland park.



Stephen Heard came to Georgia in 1773 to build Heard's Fort, now called Washington, Georgia. He came from Virginia where he was born in 1740. He fought under General George Washington, his Virginia neighbor from whom he had bought Arabian horses.

When the Revolutionary War started, he fought bravely for the Liberty Boys. He fought with General Elijah Clarke at the Battle of Kettle Creek where he was taken prisoner. Kettle Creek was an important battle in the war because it turned the tide of the warfare in the South.

When Heard was captured and jailed in Augusta, he was sentenced to die. Upon hearing of her owner's troubles, Heard's faithful slave, Mammy Kate, followed him to the jail to take care of him. Mammy Kate has been described as the strongest, tallest black woman ever seen. She herself claimed to be the daughter of an African king.

One morning, carrying on her head a large covered basket, Mammy Kate walked up to the soldier on duty and asked to see her master. She wanted to give him some clean clothes. The soldier replied that he didn't need any clean clothes because he would soon be hanged. "Let him hang in clean clothes,"

begged Kate. The soldier let her in. She put Heard, a small man, in the basket and covered him with clothes. She put the basket on her head and walked past the soldier and out of the jail. Outside with the help of her husband, Daddy Jack, she had waiting two fine horses, Silver Heels and Lightfoot. They climbed on the horses and rode to safety.

Following this event, Stephen Heard gave Mammy Kate and Daddy Jack their freedom. But the two refused to be freed and remained with him all their lives. Today their graves can be seen in the family cemetery at Heardmont.





Following the war in 1784 gifts of land were given to the soldiers and patriots who fought bravely in the war. The State of Georgia gave Stephen Heard 6,850 acres for his service. It was about this time that Heard moved into the area of Elbert County, now called Heardmont. It was in this neighborhood that Dan Tucker, whom we will learn about later had built his home. Heard built the first lathed and plastered house in the county. People for miles around came to see it. Many had never seen so grand a building. He had solid mahogany furniture shipped in from Europe. Some of these pieces of furniture are still in the county today - prized by their owners.

Records show that during the war, Heard's first wife and child had been driven from their home

in cold weather and died. In 1785 , Heard married Elizabeth Darden, a grand niece of Martha Washington. Together they reared nine children. Heard in the following years represented the area in the legislature--making laws and building the government. In 1790 when Elbert County was divided from Wilkes County Stephen Heard, along with two other men rode on horseback through the county and decided where Elberton should be built.

Today Heard's grave can be visited in the peaceful family cemetery at Heardmont. His marker reads:

Scared to the memory of Colonel Stephen  
Heard  
He was a soldier of the American Revolution  
and  
fought with the great Washington for the  
liberties  
of his country. He died on the 15th of  
November,  
1815, in the 75th year of his age beloved by all  
who know him."

"An honest man is the noblest work of God."

Nearby are buried his faithful servants--  
Mammy Kate and Daddy Jack.

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