

Lord Cornwallis got his grinding done during his short stay in Charlotte".²² This mill was to remain in existence for almost 100 years and to figure prominently in later development of the gold mining industry of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County.

Hanna reported that "the immigrants to the Piedmont section of the Carolinas, as soon as securely settled, began to hunt for gold" and that prospecting was done at several places including "the Oliver Mine in Gaston County, near the Catawba River, from which an old German miner was frightened away by the approach of Cornwallis' troops".²³

During the Revolutionary War, the people of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County, again being very practical, were more concerned with Lord Cornwallis and the British than with searching for gold. Their attention did not go unnoticed by Lord Cornwallis for, although he remained in Charlotte only 16 days, he received such resistance that he referred to the town as "The Hornet's Nest". During a British expedition foraging for supplies to McIntyre's farm north of Charlotte on October 3, 1780, a small company of men under Captain James Thompson attacked and thwarted their efforts. A British captain wounded in the attack died 2 days later at the house of Samuel McComb in Charlotte.²⁴ Samuel McComb (or a son?) was to survive the war and make a discovery 45 years later that would launch Charlotte into the forefront of the Carolina gold rush.

While gold may not have been in the minds of Americans during the Revolutionary war, iron certainly was. It became increasingly difficult to secure sufficient iron through trade, so attention was turned to extensive occurrences of iron ore in Gaston and Lincoln Counties (figure 2).

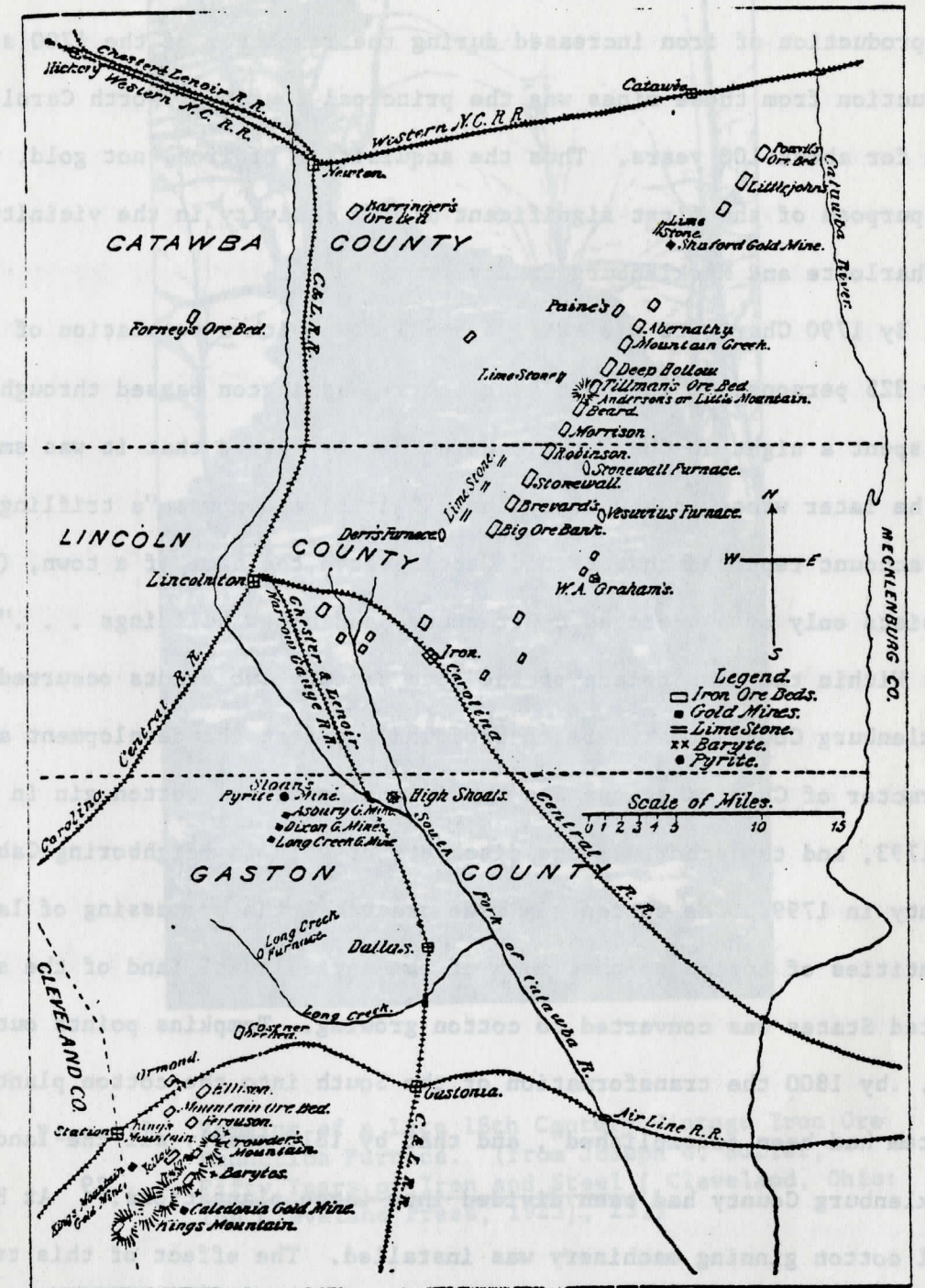


Figure 2. IRON DEPOSITS OF GASTON, LINCOLN AND CATAWBA COUNTIES.
From Kerr and Hanna, Ores of North Carolina, p. 156. (Ref. 13)