



LANDIS WADE

AUTHOR OF THE INDIE RETIREMENT MYSTERY SERIES

Landis Wade is a recovering trial lawyer turned author who writes award-winning mysteries and legal thrillers. His publication credits include six works of fiction, eight non-fiction books, and many short stories. His love of history led to his Indie Retirement Mystery series. Landis splits his time between Charlotte, Durham, and the North Carolina mountains.

THE NOVELS

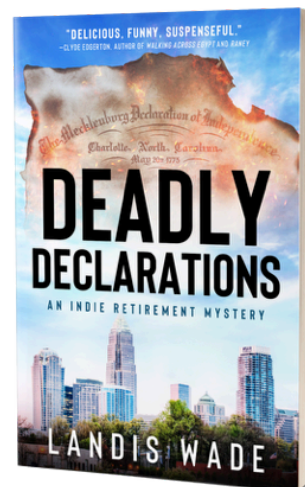
The two novels in the series, **Deadly Declarations** and **Deadly Gold Rush**, tackle mysteries connected to North Carolina's role in the first American Declaration of Independence and the Carolina Gold Rush.

THE SETTING

The Independence Retirement Community is the fictional setting for Landis Wade's cozy mystery series that Kirkus Reviews and avid readers compare to Richard Osman's Thursday Murder Club...but it comes with a decent helping of Southern charm, a sharp group of sleuthing retirees, and a healthy dose of interesting North Carolina history.

DEADLY DECLARATIONS: THE NORTH CAROLINA COLONIAL PERIOD NOVEL

Deadly Declarations, winner of ten awards, including the 2022 Cozy Mystery Winner in the American Fiction Awards, dives into the history of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence that some want to keep secret. The characters in the novel face a 250-year-old mystery that President John Adams called "one of the deepest mysteries that ever occurred to me." The story mixes history, mystery, humor, and suspense, with three retirees who try to unravel a mysterious death tied to the controversial long lost Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence; that is, if they don't die trying.

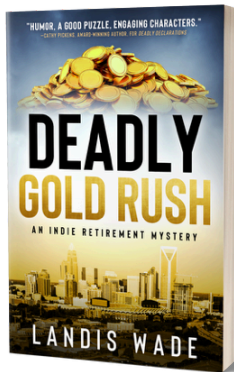


It is true that in the turbulent wake of British hostilities at Lexington and Concord, local North Carolina leaders met at a log courthouse in Charlotte on May 20, 1775, came to a decision, and commissioned a tavern owner named Captain Jack to ride his horse 500 miles to the Second Continental Congress in Philadelphia to deliver documents. Did he carry with him the first American Declaration of Independence?



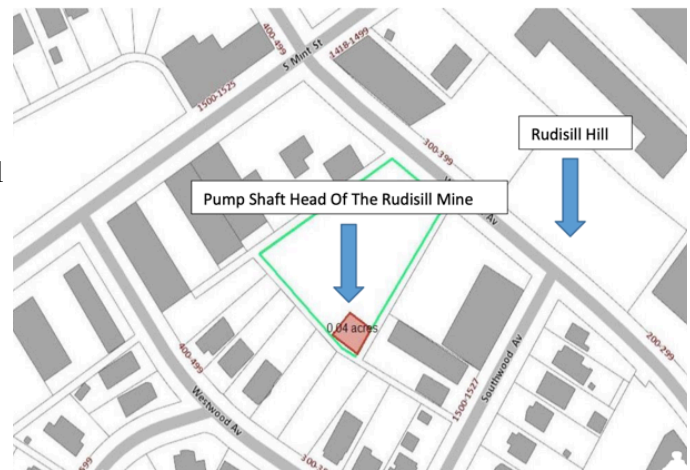
It's hard to know for sure the truth about the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence because the delegates in Philadelphia turned Captain Jack away, and the documents later burned in a house fire. And yet, curiously, virtually identical phrases appeared in the Meck Dec and the Declaration of Independence, causing John Adams to ask in private letters whether Thomas Jefferson copied from the Meck Dec when he drafted the 1776 Declaration of Independence.

DEADLY GOLD RUSH: THE CAROLINA GOLD RUSH PERIOD NOVEL



Deadly Gold Rush starts fast with a dead body in an abandoned Charlotte, North Carolina mine shaft covered in 1830s gold coins manufactured at the first branch of the U.S. Mint in Charlotte. Unlike the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence, there is no doubt that the first United States gold rush sprung from twelve-year-old Conrad Reed's discovery in 1799 of a seventeen-pound gold nugget in Little Meadow Creek in Cabarrus County, North Carolina, not too far from Charlotte. This discovery led to close to sixty mines popping up across Mecklenburg County, making it the county with the most mines in the state. Many of the mines went by the names of their landowners. Others were more creative, such as the Black Cat, Queen of Sheba, King Solomon, and Yellow Dog.

But one mine—the Rudisill—stood out for its longevity. Mining on the Rudisill land lasted one hundred years, from the early days of deep shaft mining to the late 1930s. And that's where the body is found in *Deadly Gold Rush*, covered in gold coins. Full of references to interesting historical characters and locations, the novel taps into how gold fever brought flamboyant characters and booming trade to a small town, and why an April 8, 1929, headline in *The Charlotte Observer* reflecting back, read: "Streets of Charlotte Literally Paved with Gold."



DISCUSSION TOPICS WITH A HISTORICAL FOCUS

- Did John Adams really accuse Thomas Jefferson of copying from the Meck Dec?
- Did Captain James Jack really ride 500 miles from Charlotte to Philadelphia to deliver resolutions to delegates of the Continental Congress in May, 1775?
- What are the arguments for and against the existence of the Meck Dec?
- What sparked the first U.S. Gold Rush and how did it change Charlotte?
- Who were some of the interesting people who mined gold in Charlotte in the 1830s?
- Are there still underground gold mines in Charlotte, North Carolina?
- Why was the first branch of the U.S. Mint located in Charlotte and how did it eventually become the first art museum in North Carolina?