

THE MONUMENT UNVEILED.

(Continued From Page Two.)

very serious condition of unrest and disaffection to the revolutionary administration and its measures, which existed in the upper and back country.

"The commission left Charles Town early in August, 1775, and on August 7 addressed a communication to the council of safety from the Congaree store, near Granby, in which they say:

"We have consulted with Col. Richardson (Col. Richard Richardson, colonel of the Camden regiment of militia) touching Mr. Sumter's application to the council. The colonel readily approved not only the measure, but the man, notwithstanding Kirkland' (a dissatisfied Tory, who had been a Whig) recommended him as his successor in the company of rangers, which he has so treacherously quitted and attempted to disband. The colonel, nevertheless, from his seeming connection with Kirkland, proposes to keep a sharp eye upon Mr. Sumter's conduct."

"To this the council of safety replied on the 13th of August, 1775:

"We think it best to postpone the consideration of a military appointment for Mr. Sumter until your return, or till we more clearly understand what duty he proposes to take upon himself and upon what consideration."

"The council, however, later made the appointment, for we find him in November, 1775, holding the office of captain in Col. Wm. Thompson's regiment of rangers.

"The position of affairs in the back country had become so threatening in November, 1775, that Col. Richard Richardson had been ordered to march to the assistance of Maj. Andrew Williamson, who was then actually besieged at Ninety-Six by the Tory insurgents. Col. Richardson was in command of the army, which, in addition to his own regiment and other bodies of militia, included Col. Wm. Thompson's regiment of rangers. This advance of Col. Richardson was entirely successful. All armed opposition was put down, the insurrection crushed and the leaders of the insurgents taken, while their followers were largely disarmed. The campaign was carried on under circumstances of uncommon exposure and hardship, so as to give it the name of the 'snow campaign,' but so successful was the result that the provincial congress in March, 1776, presented their thanks to Col. Richardson, and the officers and men under his command, for the important and signal services they had rendered. On this campaign Capt. Thomas Sumter of the regiment of rangers was constituted by Col. Richardson adjutant general, and Maj. Joseph Kershaw was appointed major of brigades, commissary general and treasurer.

"All of which appointments (says Drayton in his memoirs) were conducted and filled by the two above-named officers in a manner highly honorable to themselves, and advantageously for the public service."

Members of Second Provincial Congress.

"A new election had been held for members of the provincial congress in August, 1775, and Thomas Sumter was again elected a delegate from the district eastward of Wateree river—thus becoming a member of the second provincial congress. This provincial congress met in November, 1775, and one of its acts was to raise a regiment of artillery, constituting the fourth regular regiment in the service of the revolutionary government.

"The provincial congress adjourned on the 30th November, 1775, to meet again on the 1st February, 1776, having elected a new council of safety, with powers still more enlarged than the former. The provincial congress having reassembled on the 1st February, 1776, on the 22d February augmented their military establishment by raising two rifle regiments—thus making a total of six regiments in the regular military establishment. Thomas Sumter was appointed lieutenant colonel commandant of the second of these regiments, being the sixth regiment in order of the whole. At the same time William Henderson was appointed major of this second regiment of riflemen.

On March 26, this second provincial congress of which Sumter was a member as a delegate, from the district east of the Wateree river, resolved itself into the general assembly of the State and adopted a full form of government—executive, legislative and judicial—and elected a president, council, judges and other proper officers to carry on the government, and, after providing for the election of a general assembly to be held in October, 1776, adjourned on the 11th April, 1776.

Battle of Fort Moultrie.

The attack on Charles Town in June, 1776, found Sumter with his regiment as part of the defensive force in the city. While Col. William Moultrie, of the Second regiment was in command of the fort on Sullivan's Island, which became the object of the British attack. Col. Thomson of

the Third regiment was placed in command of a force on the eastern end of the island to hold that part of the island and prevent Sir Henry Clinton, who was with a large British force on Long Island (now called the Isle of Palms), from crossing over to Sullivan's Island. Col. Sumter appears to have been stationed along the mainland, from Haddrell's Point (now Mount Pleasant) towards Long Island to repel any attempted crossing of the enemy from Long Island to the mainland. Of the force so stationed, with the detachments from other regiments, he seems to have been in command.

"As the conflict that took place on the 28th June, 1776, was confined to the attack by the fleet on Fort Moultrie, and the skirmish between Col. Thomson's force and the enemy on Long Island, Col. Sumter had no active part in it.

"In August, 1776, Gen. Charles Lee undertook an expedition to East Florida with the expectation of easily taking possession of St. Augustine. He was allowed the assistance of the military establishment of South Carolina. Detachments from the four first regiments accompanied him on the 11th August, 1776. The remainder of the troops, including Sumter's regiment, followed. The expedition did not proceed beyond Savannah. There Gen. Lee received, in September, an express, calling him northward, whither he departed at once, expressing before he left his high sense of the conduct and behavior of the officers of the South Carolina troops. These troops suffered terribly from sickness incurred in the expedition to Georgia, whence they were gradually withdrawn.

A Continental Officer.

"In June and July, 1776, the Continental congress passed a resolution to take upon the continental military establishment all troops upon the regular establishments of the colonies. In pursuance of this action of congress the general assembly of South Carolina on 20th September, 1776, transferred to the continental establishment the six regiments of provincial regulars. This included Col. Sumter's regiment. All the officers of these regiments exchanged their commissions hitherto held from the province for commissions in the continental service of the same grade entering the continental line as youngest officers of their respective ranks. Sumter, therefore, became a colonel in the continental service, his commission ranking as of that date.

"Exactly when Sumter had received his commission as colonel does not appear. He was originally, in February, 1776, appointed lieutenant colonel of the Sixth regiment. There is no distinct mention of his appointment as colonel, but, inasmuch as in the orders of the time designating him to sit on court-martials and referring to him for other duties, refer to him as Col. Sumter—and these references are in the military order books of the time, and must be presumed to denote rank and precedence with military exactness, there can be no doubt he had received his commission.

"At the same time there is mentioned Lieut. Col. Henderson, of the Sixth regiment. If Henderson, who had been originally appointed major, was later lieutenant colonel, Sumter, who commanded the same regiment, was evidently colonel.

"On the 26th September, 1776, Francis Marion, then major, of the Second regiment, received his commission as lieutenant colonel of that regiment.

"Sumter, therefore, ranked Marion by seniority of promotion in the continental line. Neither of them ever received any higher rank in the continental service.

"In 1777 the command of the troops in South Carolina, after the departure of Gen. Lee and Gen. James Moore, devolved upon Gen. Robert Howe, who, upon information that the enemy were about to invade Georgia, went off to Savannah, where he was followed by a strong detachment of the continental troops in South Carolina, and Gen. Sumter, with his regiment, must have been part of it, as in March, 1777, his regiment was in Savannah, whence they returned some time in June.

"In December, 1777, Sumter was in Charles Town, as on the 13th December he sat as a member of a council of war to pass upon the question whether detachments from the continental regiments could with propriety be sent on the proposed expedition. In the names of the officers composing the council he is styled 'Col. Sumter,' whereas Elliot and Marion, who were also members, are styled 'lieutenant colonel.'

In Active Service Until 1778.

"Sumter seems to have continued with his regiment on service in and around Charles Town, for his regiment and himself are mentioned until April, 1778, in the order books of the First regiment, which have been published, and in Moultrie's letters. The last reference we have to him at this period is in a letter from Gen. Moultrie to Gen. Howe, dated April 10, 1778, wherein Sumter's regiment is mentioned as being in Charles Town. The order book of the First regiment refers to his regiment as in

Charles Town 5th February, 1778. From that date until after the fall of Charles Town in 1780 we find no mention of him in military service. He is not mentioned in any of the military operations during the last half of 1778, or in 1779, or the first half of 1780.

"The late Gen. Wilmot G. DeSaurure prepared a list of the names of the officers who served in the South Carolina regiment on the Continental establishment. This list was printed by order of the legislature of South Carolina in 1886, and republished in the Year Book of the city of Charleston for 1893. In this list it is stated that he resigned on September 23, 1778. No authority for this statement is given. The list gives his rank as lieutenant colonel of the Sixth regiment, which is evidently a mistake, as he was a full colonel. McCrady in his history states that domestic affliction having come upon him in the loss of all his children but one, the inactivity of the service at the time induced him to resign in September, 1777.

"However all this may be, in February, 1780, the Continental congress resolved to reduce the five infantry regiments in the establishment in South Carolina to three. The five regiments before known, respectively, as the First, Second, Third, Fifth and Sixth, were combined and reduced to three, and the officers named were: Col. C. C. Pinckney to the First, Lieut. Col. Marion to the Second, and Col. Thomson to the Third, with Henderson as lieutenant colonel of the Third.

British Overrun South Carolina.

"On the 12th April, 1780, Lieut. Col. Tarleton at the head of the British cavalry, surprised and practically destroyed the American cavalry, commanded by Gen. Huger, at Monk's Corner. On 12th May the city of Charles Town had been surrendered to the British, under Sir Henry Clinton, carrying with this surrender the entire regular American army in South Carolina. On the 6th May, Tarleton had again surprised and defeated the remnants of the American cavalry at Lenud's ferry, on the Santee. The only organized body of American troops left in South Carolina was a force of about 350 Continentals, under Col. Buford of Virginia, who, after the fall of Charles Town, was in full retreat towards North Carolina. Tarleton pursued him with great celerity—came up with him at Waxhaws, in what is now Lancaster county, and, although having a much inferior force, attacked at once and practically destroyed Buford's entire force—Tarleton's troops refusing quarter, and continuing the massacre after surrender in a way that gave proverbial force to the term 'Tarleton's quarters.'

"The effect of this succession of defeats was to practically terminate armed resistance in South Carolina. The entire State lay, as it seemed, prostrate and helpless at the mercy of the enemy.

"On the 4th June, 1780, Sir Henry Clinton wrote from his headquarters in Charles Town that he could assert that there were few men in South Carolina who were not either his prisoners or in arms with him.

"This was true. Every continental organization had been captured or dispersed. The militia were stunned and despondent at home, awaiting each man to see what would be the next step. The only armed men in the field were the British troops and their Tory sympathizers, who now gathered, organized and began to assert themselves. It was the lowest ebb of the tide.

British Burn Sumter's Home.

"In his pursuit of Buford Tarleton passed through Clearmont, now the region around Stateburg, in Sumter county. In his passage the British went to the plantation of Sumter and burned his house, turning his family out of doors. In the preface to some verses on Sumter, published in the Charleston Courier on 14th November, 1863, the writer states that Gen. Sumter was aroused from sleep by his servants on the approach of the British and took shelter in a thicket, within a few hundred yards of his family mansion, and from that place he saw his family expelled from the dwelling, which was then set on fire and destroyed.

"McCrady, in his history, says he left his house a few hours before Tarleton reached his plantation and escaped into North Carolina, and that Tarleton, on reaching Sumter's plantation and finding he was gone, burnt his house.

Sumter Begins Organized Resistance.

"Buford's force had been destroyed on the 26th May, 1780. Within less than two months thereafter, viz. about the middle of July, Sumter returned from North Carolina and established a camp on Clem's creek, in what is now Lancaster county. This camp represented the first organized force in the State formed after Buford's defeat. There had preceded it conflicts between Whigs and Tories, but these had been conflicts between parties gathered, so to say, for the occasion and which dispersed when the occasion was over. Sumter's camp represented an attempt to create a continuing body on the basis of a military

organization. He held at this time, apparently, no commission which gave him any legal right to control the organization so effected by him. His men were, like himself, only volunteers. Their organization was purely voluntarily and equally so was their selection of Sumter as a leader. It was the recognition of the capability and not of any legal right. After the formation of this camp it was not long before the number of Sumter's command was swelled by the accession of Whigs from all parts—so that he soon had nearly 500 men under his command. Of stores, supplies, arms and ammunition they were at first nearly destitute.

"Says Moultrie in his memoirs: 'They sometimes began an action with not more than three rounds per man, and were obliged to wait to be supplied with more by the fall of their friends or enemies in battle. When they proved victorious they supplied themselves with arms and ammunition from the killed and wounded.'

"And Ramsay states with more particularity:

"His followers were in a great measure unfurnished with arms and ammunition, and they had no magazines from which they might draw a supply. The iron tools on the neighboring farms were worked up for their use by common blacksmiths into rude weapons of war. They supplied themselves in part with bullets by melting the pewter with which they were furnished by private housekeepers. They sometimes came to battle when they had not three rounds a man and some were obliged to keep at a distance till by the fall of others they were supplied with arms. When they proved victorious they were obliged to rifle the dead and wounded of their arms and ammunition to equip them for their next engagement. At the head of these volunteers Col. Sumter penetrated into South Carolina and recommenced a military opposition to the British, after it had been suspended for about six weeks.'

"This initiation of organized resistance was made at a time when the inhabitants of the State had generally abandoned all idea and effort of further armed opposition, and to Sumter is due the credit.

Huck's Defeat.

"Action soon followed organization.

"The British had established a military station at Rocky Mountain, in what is now Lancaster county. The commandant at this post sent Capt. Christain Huck—the notorious Capt. Huck—to repair among the Tories the consequences of the dispersal of a party of them shortly before at Fishing creek. Huck commanded 35 dragoons of Tarleton's legion, 20 mounted infantry of the New York volunteers and about 60 Tory native militia. He was, therefore, in command of a force of regular British soldiers in addition to militia. Huck in his progress destroyed the forage, furnace and mill at Hill's iron works, and advanced, destroying the country and committing offensive outrages on inoffensive inhabitants until, on the 12th July, he had taken post at Williamson's plantation, in York county. Here in the early morning Huck was attacked by a detachment of volunteers from Sumter's camp and, after a short engagement, Huck was killed and his command entirely dispersed. The British lost between 30 and 40 killed and 50 wounded. The Americans lost one man killed.

"The effect upon the representatives great. It has been well characterized as one of the turning points in the Revolution. It was the first success gained over the royal forces since their landing for investment at Charles Town. It was a success won by an enemy composed in part at least of regular British troops. Its result was to reinforce Sumter's force by 600 additional men.

"The effect upon the representatives of the royal cause was equally great. They had considered the State practically conquered, and armed resistance at an end. From this pleasant dream the fight at Williamson's and the death of Capt. Huck awakened them.

"They found themselves faced by an army—although small—in organized shape and led by commanders who were evidently in earnest and knew their business.

"Among the British commanders who had asserted in their official dispatches that the inhabitants from every quarter had declared their allegiance to the king and that there were few men in South Carolina that were not either prisoners or in arms for the king, this unlooked for impediment of a military force in arms against the king, which had actually defeated and dispersed a force composed in part of regular British troops, flushed with continuous success—in short this impediment, named Thomas Sumter, 'routed all the passions, which disappointed ambition can inspire.' They were 'overwhelmed with astonishment and filled with indignation.'

"Sumter—essentially a leader of action—did not long remain quiescent. On the 1st August, 1780, he made a spirited attack upon the British entrenched post at Rocky Mount. The post was too strong to be carried without artillery and Sum-

ter's assault was repulsed.

Fight at Hanging Rock.

"A few days later, on the 6th August, 1780, he attacked the garrison at Hanging Rock. That garrison consisted of 500 men, consisting of the infantry of Tarleton's legion, the Prince of Wales' American regiment, part of Col. Browne's corps of provincials and Col. Bryan's North Carolina loyalists. The whole was under the command of Maj. Carden, of the Prince of Wales' regiment. The attacking force numbered about 800. The result of the action was not conclusive. The British camp was taken and plundered, but the American force finally withdrew, leaving the field in possession of the British, whose loss exceeded that of the attacking forces.

"Within the space of a month the command under Sumter had had three engagements with British regular troops, and in each case the Americans had been the attacking party.

"While these operations of Sumter—contemporaneously with similar operations, but on a smaller scale, by other partizan leaders—were in progress, an army was on its way from the northward to assist the hard-pressed American forces in the south. This army consisted of about 1,200 continental soldiers, composed of regiments from the Maryland and Delaware line, and were under the command of Gen. De Kalb, but on the 25th July De Kalb was superseded in his command by Gen. Horatio Gates, the so-called hero of Saratoga. Gen. Gates, with additional reinforcements, crossed the South Carolina line on the 4th August, and, having formed a junction with the North Carolina militia under Gov. Caswell, pressed down towards Camden, where the British army lay. There Lord Cornwallis had taken command and was present in person. Sumter, who, with the force under him, had reached Gates, heard that a large convoy, with clothing and stores for the British army at Camden, was on its way to that point by the road between McCord's ferry, on the Congaree, and the ferry over the Wateree, about a mile from Camden. He proposed to Gates that he should intercept this convoy. Gates assented and sent to join him in the attack on the convoy a detachment of 400 continental regulars, with two brass field pieces.

"Sumter's attack was made on the 15th August and was wholly successful. The entire convoy and its guard were captured, and Sumter, with his prizes and prisoners in his possession, commenced his retreat up the western side of the Wateree river.

"Gates, without waiting for Sumter's return, had advanced toward Cornwallis who, in like manner, was advancing himself. The two armies joined in battle near Camden on the 16th August, and the result was one of the most complete defeats ever inflicted upon an American Army."

After telling of Sumter's defeat at Fishing Creek, his subsequent rally, the commission of Gov. Rutledge, making him a brigadier general, and reciting his history as the great "Game Cock" leader, down to and including the date of his resignation from the army, in January, 1782, Mr. Smith read many testimonials paid to his valor and bravery. His service in the general assembly was then told of, and then his services in the national house of representatives and the United States senate, down to the date of his resignation in 1810.

"He was an ardent follower and supporter of Mr. Jefferson and an unswerving opponent of the Federalists and all the measures which culminated in the alien and sedition laws of 1798. In the life of Gen. Sumter in Appleton's Encyclopedia of American Biography it is stated that Gen. Sumter was 'a zealous Federalist.' No authority is given for this statement and if we are to be guided by Sumter's actions in opposing all Federalist measures and his own declaration he was exactly the opposite. He was an admirer as well as a supporter of Mr. Jefferson and declared the Virginia and Kentucky resolutions of 1798 to embody the true construction of the constitution.

"So close were the relations between Jefferson and himself that on March 24, 1801, Mr. Jefferson writes him a personal letter addressing him as 'My Dear General,' and telling him that he had determined in future to name the secretaries of legations in place of allowing ministers to take a private secretary of their own. That Chancellor Livingston had accepted the mission to France and that he had selected Gen. Sumter's son as the secretary of legation to France if the appointment would be acceptable to him, and requesting the general to make the proposition to his son.

Retires to Private Life.

"After his resignation Gen. Sumter retired to his private estate, South Mount, near Stateburg, in Sumter district, in the district he had so long and faithfully represented. He was at the time of his retirement 76 years of age. Although he retired from active public life to the quiet and unobtrusive life of a South Carolina planter and country gentleman, he nevertheless continued to take an act-

ive interest in all affairs affecting his country.

"Before his death the contest between the federal and State governments, which he presaged in 1788, had become intense. The system of tariff protection inaugurated in 1816, intensified in 1818, carried to greater length in 1824, had culminated in 1828 in a series of statutes which resulted in laying a most burdensome and oppressive taxation upon the southern portion of the United States. This led to great discontent throughout the south and in South Carolina especially, to the formation of the party which advocated active measures to nullify statutes they declared to be unjust and unconstitutional invasions of the liberties of the State. Mr. Calhoun was the exponent leader in the south of this party, which numbered among its warmest supporters Gen. Sumter. He was still in the active possession of his faculties, both physical and mental. His son, Thomas Sumter, Jr., in a letter to his daughter, dated 26th December, 1825, says:

"As to the health of your grandfather, I saw him yesterday and, in his 88th year, he mounts and rides his horse almost like a young man."

Member of State Rights Party.

"The State Rights party claimed him as a member, as indeed he himself declared. In 1830 he had written a letter unequivocally denouncing as unconstitutional the tariff acts passed by congress and supporting the construction of the constitution which reserved to the States, if these rights were invaded by unconstitutional legislation, the power to resist its enforcement or withdraw from the Union. Some contention arose in 1832 as to his position. A newspaper in the State, 'the Camden Journal,' published an item stating that he had changed his views. This misstatement was quickly corrected. Gen. Sumter wrote a letter to his grandson, which was published in the Charleston Mercury for 2d September, 1831. This letter is written with all the clearness and vigor of his early days. In the letter he ridicules the statement in the Camden Journal, declares his views not only unchanged, but to be what they had always been, and calls attention to a letter of his dated 29th October, 1830, which had previously been published and in which he had set out his opinion and convictions.

Supports Nullification.

"I this last mentioned letter he had referred to as expressing the true construction of the constitution—the Virginia and Kentucky resolutions of 1798, and Mr. Calhoun's (the then vice president of the United States) letter maintaining and defending the principle and enforcement of nullification. Gen. Sumter declared in his letter that the principle 'that the legislature as a sovereign power can nullify the unconstitutional acts of the general government is the primary and principal doctrine of the State Rights party.'

"At a meeting of the States Rights party, held in Charleston in September, 1831, a series of resolutions were adopted thanking Gen. Sumter for his expressed support and declaring that he stood by State Rights then as he did in the hot times of 1798.

"This is the last public utterance of the aged soldier and statesman that we find. He died the 1st June, 1832, at his home at South Mount, in Sumter county, the last surviving officer of his rank in the continental army. Notwithstanding the embittered state of public feeling then, when the struggle between the State Rights and the Union parties in the States was at its height, the mourning over the State was universal and deep.

"Gen. Sumter left but one child, Thomas Sumter, Jr., who was born in 1768. He entered the diplomatic service first as secretary of legation to France, appointed by President Jefferson, and afterwards served as United States minister to Portugal. He married Mde. Natalie de Delage and left several children at his death in 1840.

"I have now finished the task that I allotted to myself. I am conscious, deeply conscious, that my performance has been totally inadequate to the subject, but if I have been able to rescue from oblivion anything or any act that deserves to be remembered concerning one to whom justice has been so tardy in her memorials, or if I have been able to add one more laurel to the chaplet on the brow of one who so worthily won them, then I shall feel that my efforts has not been in vain."

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