

The Tories were encamped on a hill, three hundred yards east of Ransour's mill, and half a mile north of the present flourishing village of Lincolnton. The ridge stretches nearly to the east on the south side of the mill pond, and the road leading from the Tuckasee road by the mill, crosses the point of the ridge in a north-westerly direction. The Tories occupied an excellent position on the summit of the ridge; their front on the road fronting to the south. The ridge has a very gentle slope, and was then interspersed with only a few trees, the fire of the Tories had full rake in front for more than two hundred yards. The foot of the ridge was bounded by a glade, the side of which was covered with the bushes. The road passed the western end of the glade, at right angles, opposite the centre of the line, and on this road a fence extended from the glade to a point opposite the right of the line—the picket guard, twelve in number, were stationed on the road, two hundred and fifty yards south of the glade, and six hundred yards from the encampment. The companies of captains Hall, McDowell, and Brandon, being mounted, the other troops, under Col. Locke, were arranged in the road, two deep, behind them; and without any other organization or orders, they were marched to battle. When the horsemen came within sight of the picket, they plainly perceived that their approach had not been anticipated. The picket fired and fled towards their camp. The horsemen pursued, and turning to the right out of the road, they rode up within thirty steps of the line and fired at the Tories, who being in confusion had not completely formed their line; but seeing only a few men assailing them, they quickly recovered from their panic and poured in a destructive fire, which obliged the horsemen to retreat. They retreated in disorder, passing through the infantry who were advancing; several of the infantry joined them and never came into action. At a convenient distance the greater part of the horsemen rallied, and returning to the fight, exerted themselves with spirit during its continuance. The infantry hurried to keep near the horsemen in their pursuit of the picket, and their movements being very irregular, and their files were open six or eight steps, and when the front approached the Tories, the rear was at hundred and sixty yards back.

The Tories seeing the effect of their fire, came down the hill a little distance and were in fair view. The infantry of the Whigs kept the road to the point between the glade and the corner of the fence, opposite the centre of the Tories. Here the action was renewed. The front fired several times before the rear came up. The Tories being on their left, they deployed to the right in front of the glade, and came into action without order or system. In some places they were crowded together in each other's way; in other places there were none. As the rear came on they occupied those places, and the line gradually extending, the action became general and obstinate on both sides. In a few minutes the Tories began to retire to their position on the top of the ridge, and soon fell back a little behind the ridge to shelter part of their bodies from the fire of the Whigs, who were fairly exposed to their fire. In this situation their fire became so destructive, that the Whigs fell back to the bushes near the glade, and the Tories leaving their safe positions, pursued them half way down the ridge. At this moment Captain Harden led a party of Whigs into the field, and under cover of the fence kept up a galling fire on the right flank of the Tories; and some of the Whigs discovering that the ground on their right was more favorable to protect them from the fire of the Tories, obliqued in that direction towards the east end of the glade. This movement gave their line the proper extension. They continued to obliquely until they turned the left flank of the Tories; and the contest being well maintained in the centre, the Tories began to retreat up the ridge. They found part of their position occupied by the Whigs. In that quarter the action became close, and the parties mixed together in two instances, and having no bayonets they struck at each other with the butts of their guns. In this strange contest several of the Tories were taken prisoners, and others of them divesting themselves of their mark of distinction (which was a twig of green pine top stuck in their hats) intermixed with the Whigs, and all being in their common dress, they escaped unnoticed.

The Tories finding the left of their position in possession of the Whigs, and their centre being closely pressed, retreated down the ridge towards the mill, exposed to the fire of the centre, and of Captain Harden's company behind the fence. The Whigs pursued until they got entire possession of the ridge, when they perceived to their astonishment that the Tories had collected in force on the other side of the creek, beyond the mill. They expected the fight would be renewed, and attempted to form a line; but only eighty-six men could be paraded. Some were scattered during the action, others were attending to their wounded friends, and after repeated efforts not more than an hundred and ten could be collected.

In this perilous situation of things, it was resolved that Major Willson and Captain William Alexander, of Rowan, should hasten to General Rutherford, and urge him to press forward to their assistance. Rutherford had marched early in the morning, and at the distance of six or seven miles from Ransour's, was met by Willson and Alexander. Major Davie's cavalry were started at full gallop, and Colonel Davidson's infantry were ordered to hasten on with all possible speed. At the end of two miles they were met by others from the battle, who informed them that the Tories had retreated. The march was continued, and the troops arrived on the ground two hours after the battle had closed. The dead and most of the wounded were still lying where they fell.

As soon as the action began, those of the Tories who had no arms, and several who had, retreated across the creek. They were joined by others when they were first beaten back by the

ridge, and by two hundred that were well armed, who had arrived two days before from Lower creek, in Burke county, under Captains Whitson and Murray. Colonel Moore and Major Welch soon joined them, and those of the Tories who advanced the fight to the last, crossed the creek and found themselves surrounded, the Whigs got possession of the ridge. Believing that they were completely beaten, they formed a stratagem to secure their retreat. About the time that Willson and Alexander were dispatched to General Rutherford, they sent in a flag under a pretence of proposing a suspension of hostilities, to make arrangements for taking care of the wounded and burying the dead. To prevent the flag officers from perceiving their small number, Major James Rutherford, and another officer were ordered to meet him a short distance in front of the line. The proposition being made, Major Rutherford demanded that the Tories should surrender as prisoners within ten minutes, and that the arrangements should be made which were requested. In the next time Moore and Welch gave orders, that such of their men as were on foot, or had inferior horses, should move off singly as fast as they could; and when the flag returned, not more than fifty remained. They immediately fled, Moore with thirty men reached the British army at Cauley, when he was threatened with a trial by a court-martial for disobedience of orders, in attempting to embody the royalists before the time appointed by the commander in chief. He was treated with disrespect by the British officers, and held in a state of disagreeable suspense; but it was at length deemed impolitic to order him before a court-martial.

As there was no organization of either party, nor regular returns made after the action, the loss could not be ascertained with correctness. Fifty-six lay dead on the side of the ridge where the heat of the action prevailed; many lay scattered on the banks, and over the ridge towards the mill. It is believed that seventy were killed, and that the loss on each side was nearly equal. About an hundred men on each side were wounded, and fifty Tories were taken prisoners. The men had no uniform, and it could not be told to which party many of the dead belonged. Most of the Whigs wore a piece of white paper on their hats in front, and many of the men on each side being excellent riflemen, this paper was a mark at which the Tories often fired, and several of the Whigs were shot in the head. The trees behind which both Whigs and Tories occasionally took shelter, were grazed by the balls; and one tree in particular, on the left of the Tory line, at the root of which two brothers lay dead, was grazed by three balls on one side, and by two on the other.

In this battle, neighbors, near relations, and personal friends fought against each other; and as the smoke would from time to time blow off, they could recognize each other. In the evening, and on the next day, the relations and friends of the dead and wounded came in, and a scene was witnessed truly affecting to the feelings of humanity.

After the action commenced, scarcely any orders were given by the officers. They fought like common soldiers, and animated their men by their example, and they suffered severely. Captains Falls, Dobson, Smith, Bowman, and Armstrong were killed; and Captains Houston and McKissick wounded. Of the Tories, Captains Cumberman, Murray, and Warlock were killed; and Captain Carpenter wounded. Few either of the officers or men had ever been in battle before.

FLORIAN.
* Son of the General. He was killed at the battle of the Eutaws.

Communication.

FOR THE STAR.

To the Hon. Wm. S. Blackledge.
SIR—The electioneering struggle is over—you are elected the Congressional Representative of the Newbern District, your public character has now become the property of your constituents. I claim the privilege of an independent elector to address you during your brief repose from political achievement and before you again leave the "agricultural employment," which you so much dignity and "from which nothing can separate you but the call of your constituents in the service of your country." It is possible that at the philosophic retreat in which your brilliant talents must be buried for the short period that precedes their dazzling exhibition in the councils of the nation you may find leisure to reflect upon the honorable course which you have recently pursued. At such a time, should conscience wake unceremoniously upon your solitude and "point the slow moving finger of scorn" at seeds that you have done, remember the triumphant issue of your treachery and be comforted. You will need this consolation to sustain you against the indignant feelings of an outraged people. The minor plots of your political intrigues are, it is true, too insignificant to be seen from the dizzying height you have attained, but there are actions of a bolder stamp, which, I fear, all your philosophy cannot coax into oblivion. I really feel almost contaminated by indulging in the analysis of conduct so flagitious. I have before me, sir, your letter against the Banks; permit me to submit its lucid views of polity to the overwhelming majority who have rendered you their highest tribute of respect. The following is a copy of this matchless document:

To the Freemen of Johnston, &c.
"The times in which we live are portentous, and clouds of difficulty and embarrassment hover around us." The farmer looks forward to a remuneration for his labour and his trouble with despondency—he sees that however industrious he may have been and however great the Almighty may have blest his industry, he is to reap but a small reward. When his produce is offered for sale there is no money to purchase it, even at any reduced price; this is owing entirely to the monied institutions of our country. Before the establishment of Banks the farmer had some encouragement to cultivate the soil;

he then had some expectancy to be rewarded for the sweat of his brow. Few then were the debts of the community, neighbour could take the word of his neighbour, one could be the security of another and not be called upon in a very few months to pay the debt; in fact, security was not then so often required, and could trust one another without security, but the banks trust no one without it. This has involved many innocent men, and at this time there are more industrious men broke by paying security money than any other way, they will have their money if the rest of the community is ruined. Thousands who might have had at this day a competency if not affluence, by the establishment of Banks and their operations on the community, have been reduced to beggary. Look around you on your own county and the counties adjoining, and see if this is not a fact. Yet, you are called upon to support men to your state and national councils who are concerned in these monied monopolies and are daily scattering wider and wider the difficulties that surround you. For take notice, the Banks cannot prosper unless you are in debt, unless the community owe them they cannot make money; it is their interest to get you in debt to them. What say Mr. Davie is not a stockholder by right but by courtesy, is he not a Bank Director and is it not his interest to be so? A Bank Director, Gentlemen, can borrow thousands and use it as long as he is a Director by paying the interest, while you and me are obliged to pay a tenth as well as interest, and if we fail but a short time, we are protested, sued, and in many instances ruined and our securities with us. Has then Mr. Davie no interest in Banks? Is it not very much to his advantage to have the opportunity of speculating upon the people's money, and is it not then his interest to have Banks and have the people in debt, that he may have the opportunity of speculating upon the Stockholder's money? Who are the individuals that endeavour to plaster over this business and tell you that Mr. Davie's interest in Bank is nothing? Observe them well—endeavour to see out their motives and see if they themselves are not tainted. Have they not an interest in telling you this? Are they not concerned in Banks directly or indirectly? Do they not owe them, and are induced to act as they do through fear? But, gentlemen, it is unnecessary to swell the black catalogue of corruptions and evils occasioned by Banking Institutions, and I caution you, as you value your own independence and wish to hand down the sacred inheritance to your children un sullied and unimpaired, to guard it from the deadly grips of those monied institutions—there is no tyranny so odious, no despotism so horrid as that which is bottomed and based upon money.

I am, &c.

WM. S. BLACKLEDGE.
Who would suspect that the writer of this letter was a candidate for Congress, a body having no influence whatever on our Banks—that the Director, who is the object of his maledictions, was a competitor for a seat at the national councils? Who would suspect that this mushroom Neckar had been a member of the only Legislature that could remedy the evil deprecated, that he had looked calmly on and seen its ravages without so much as lifting his little finger to relieve the people of their burdens, that he had in fact voted in their favour and had resigned the power of controlling our monied institutions without ever having hinted at their ill effects, but the moment he perceived the enemy among us was preparing to quit the scene of action to figure in another field. But let us review his solemn commiserations with the people.

"The times in which we live are portentous, and clouds of difficulty and embarrassment hover around us," (how awful!) "The farmer looks forward to a remuneration for his labour and his trouble with despondency—he sees that however industrious he may have been, however greatly the Almighty may have blest his industry, he is to reap but a small reward, when his produce is offered for sale there is no money to purchase it, even at any reduced price—this is owing entirely to the monied institutions of our country."

Jupiter Ammon: What profound finance—"there is no money," "owing entirely to the monied institutions." You might as well tell your brother planters there is no rain, owing entirely to the clouds. Perhaps, however, the learned gentleman explains this paradox.

"Before the establishment of Banks the farmer had encouragement to cultivate the soil, he then had some expectancy to be rewarded for the sweat of his brow."

Had he indeed—and pray honorable sir, which of your ancestors told you all this, you were too young to know any thing about the matter yourself; but doubtless, some of your mentors in the second childhood have informed your tender mind. Let me tell you sir, they have duped you, they have wheedled you into an automation of party, and have put this jargon into your lips to wheedle others. If I understand your language you intend to say that corn, bacon and lumber sold at higher prices before Banks were erected than they have since. Ask the merchant who then exported them (whose head is silvered now with venerable age,) the prices which he gave before the Banks were introduced and mark how plain a tale shall put you down. Look at the prices current of those days, then trace the gradual diffusion of our paper currency and blush at your ignorance while you see produce constantly appreciating to a price unheard of in the times you eulogise. But you proceed—

"Few then were the debts of the community, neighbour could take the word of his neighbour, one could be the security of another and not be called upon in a very few months to pay the debt."

Excellent logic! "Few were the debts of the community." Why? because "neighbour could take the word of his neighbour," ergo neighbour would not trust neighbour. Is this your meaning—one would conclude so, but in the very next sentence you go on to say "one would be

the security of another," which, implies something like debt, but that of spotless men who could take each other had the audacious insolence to ask when they gave credit. O tempora! O mores! The next sentence, however, qualifies us against Mr. Blackledge's "gold." In fact, security was not then so often required, we could trust one another without it, but the Banks (see that the rub) to our without security; this has involved innocent men, and at this time there are industrious men broke by paying security money than any other way. And pray Mr. Blackledge, what does all this prove; why do you say that the Banks have been liberal enough to lend to men at the request and on the security of friends whom they could not trust alone, and the consequence has been, that in some instances, securities have suffered. When have they to blame sir? Did the Banks ask them to endorse? Did the Banks ask the bankrupt promissors to endorse? No, an endorsement is virtually a loan by the endorser to the drawer of the note, and if the man who is security for his neighbour, is by that neighbour ruined, he has to go to blame but his own folly; and let me ask you sir—were there none ruined by being securities before the creation of Banks? Are there not as many ruined for endorsing even now by private creditors as by Banks? We now come to "the unkindest cut of all."

"They (to wit the Banks,) will have their money if the rest of the community is ruined." When General B. was a dagger in his heart he did not recede with greater horror from the ingrate than the Banks must from this foul aspersion. "They will have their money." Do you speak from experience sir? Have they forced you to pay them at the cost of your ruin? Who saved your property from the hammer of the public officer? Who paid for the land you cultivate—the dwelling you inhabit, and this is the return you make to those who snatched you from destruction, and who now sustain you, but for them, hanging above the gulf of ruin. But we leave this part of your communication for your private meditations in the closet—for your comfort in the retrospect of your recent expenditures by aid of the very institutions you vilify.

"Thousands, who might have had at this day a competency if not affluence—by the establishment of Banks and their operations in the community, have been reduced to beggary."

Pray sir, how do you pray all this?—Why the Banks lent them money and they have been sinking deeper and deeper in difficulty; till at last all their property must be sold to pay their Bank debts. This is the truth, but not the whole truth. The Banks lent money—the people became speculators and their speculations were disastrous—or they became extravagant and squandered their borrowed capital as some of our acquaintance very recently have done—and what was the consequence of this imprudence? Why they have failed. Did the Banks make them fail? Were some eye improvident before? No Banksrupt in your golden age. I would for a school boy who should be fool enough to think so. You next enforce your observations by a pathetic picture of the times—

"Look around you in your own county and the counties adjoining and see if this is not fact."

Yes, many men are reduced to indigence—but to impute their ruin to the Banks is like ascribing death to the vital air we breathe. The vigour it inspires sometimes allures us into enterprises under which our constitution sinks—but the ailment of existence never caused dissolution. The get of all this reasoning at last breaks out with characteristic candour.

"Yet, you are called upon to support men to your state and national councils who are concerned in these monied monopolies and are daily scattering wider and wider the difficulties that surround you."

State and national councils.—One would think sir, you were opposing some candidate for a seat in the Legislature as well as Congress—perhaps your banking friend, Mr. —, in his pursuit of a Senatorial election—a candidate of this description might have some small influence in our Banks, but a candidate for Congress cannot have the least.

"For, take notice, the Banks cannot prosper unless you are in debt—unless the community owe them they cannot make money."

True—but for every cent they lend you do they not become debtors also? Do they not in uttering their own notes for your use assume the obligation to redeem their whole amount—and is not interest a moderate compensation for doing you this favor in a community where but for Banks you would be compelled to resort to shavers and get money at the exorbitant premium of twenty-five per cent.—The Banks cannot prosper unless you owe them. Why did you not add—and pay them too? Good punctual debtors are profitable to the Banks 'tis true—but do they want debtors—whom they must see—sell out, and after all, lose half their claims? No sir—The Banks are anxious to diminish the number of their debtors. They are pressed from every quarter with demands to pay with specie those very notes which they lent years ago to you and others, without ever having been repaid. It is not the interest of the Banks to have such debtors: But you say—"it is their interest to get you in debt to them."

And do you think Mr. Blackledge, that your constituents will thank you for telling them they are such gulls as to be decoyed into borrowing money that the Banks may profit by them? The insinuation is an insult to their common sense. To proceed; speaking of Mr. Davie, you say, "Is he not a Bank Director? Is it not his interest to be so? A Bank Director, gentlemen, can borrow thousands and use it as long as he is a Director by only paying the interest."

Where did you get this information? From your —, who is a Director of the State Bank—or from your friend —, who is also a Director of the same Institution? I suspect either of these gentlemen could tell you better.