

# A tribute to the Overmountain Victory Trail Marchers

tacks on the frontier settlements and to massacre and scalp unwarned and unprotected men, women, and children.

In subsequent times Cornwallis' subordinate, Lieutenant Colonel Banastre Tarleton, a regular British officer, rightly earned for himself the opprobrious nickname "Bloody Ban" by the numerous barbarities he practiced upon the Scotch Irish in South Carolina. For example, on one occasion he exhorted from the grave in which it had lain for six weeks the corpse of a highly respected Whig, Brigadier General Richard Richardson, and explained that this ghoulish act was motivated solely by his desire to "look upon the face of such a brave man." Circumstances indicate, however, that the opening of the grave was motivated by the suspicion that family treasures might have been buried in it.

After this ghoulish act, Tarleton committed another atrocity similar to those he perpetrated elsewhere at other times. He herded the cattle, swine, and poultry of the Richardsons into a barn, set the barn afire, and had them consumed in the ensuing flames.

On other occasions Tarleton wantonly slaughtered in cold

blood American soldiers who were seeking to surrender and pleading for quarter. It is not surprising that thereafter Southern Whigs often entered combat with the war cry: "Remember Tarleton's quarter."

During the weeks preceding the Battle of King's Mountain, another one of Cornwallis' subordinates, Major James Wemyss, a British regular, and his Tory confederates deliberately devastated an area 70 miles long and 15 miles wide lying along Blacl River, Lynchs Creek, and the Pee Dee River in South Carolina. In so doing, Wemyss and his confederates robbed known Whigs of their tangible possessions, wantonly slaughtered their cattle and swine, burned their homes, and in some cases murdered them.

These atrocities boomeranged against the British and Tories. Instead of cowering the Scotch Irish into submission, they implanted in them the implacable resolve to fight to the death for American independence.

The significance of the Battle of King's Mountain cannot be rightly appraised by studying it in isolation. If one is to understand its tremendous impact on America's fight for freedom, he must consider it in the light of related events which preceded and followed it.

Preceding related events make it plain that at the time the Battle of King's Mountain was fought the American cause in the South had become well-nigh hopeless. I describe these events:

Sir Henry Clinton, the Commander in Chief of British forces in America, decided to transfer the main theatre of hostilities from the North to the South. His decision was motivated by the conviction that by so doing the British could subjugate South Carolina and Georgia and deprive the other states of their aid.

Accompanied by a vast naval force under Vice Admiral Marriot Arbuthnot and several thousand English regulars and their Hessian and Tory allies in transports, Sir Henry sailed from New York, and by March, 1780, laid siege to Charleston, S.C., the most important Southern port, by land and sea.

Unfortunately Major General Benjamin Lincoln, an inept Continental officer from Massachusetts, was in command of all the disciplined Continental troops in the South. He unwisely left only 200 of them in the field, and permitted Clinton to bottle up all the others as well as vast numbers of the militia in Charleston. He offered an uninspiring resistance to Clinton until May 12, 1780, and on that day surrendered the entire defending force of 7,000 Continentals and militia to him.

This disaster left South Carolina prostrate before the enemy and severed Georgia from the other states. Governor John Rutledge fled the state to escape capture and possible assassination and set up a government-in-exile in distant Hillsborough, the then capital of North Carolina. Manifestly, he was handicapped in his efforts to govern South Carolina effectively from that distance. The only military units left in South Carolina to oppose the British and Tories were small bands of militia composed in large part of the Scotch Irish who had settled along the Santee, the Black, and the Pee Dee Rivers.

These small bands repeatedly emerged from their hide-aways in the South Carolina swamps and forests and made surprise guerrilla attacks with their own meagre resources upon detachments of the British and the Tories. They acted under the inspiring commands of Francis Marion, "The Swamp Fox," and Thomas Sumter, "The Game Cock", and other partisan leaders.

The fall of Charleston convinced Clinton that his Southern mission had been accomplished. He delegated the British command in the South to Lord Charles Cornwallis, assigned him the mission of holding South Carolina and Georgia and conquering North Carolina, and returned to New York with 4,500 of his troops.

George Washington recommended that the Continental Congress assign Major General

Nathanael Greene, a Continental officer of Rhode Island, whom some historians consider second only to Washington as a military strategist, to command an army of Continental and Virginia troops led by the valiant Baron deKalb which was marching through North Carolina to rescue the Southern states from Cornwallis.

Congress ignored this recommendation, and assigned this command to Major General Horatio Gates, a rather inept Continental officer. Its action was undoubtedly prompted by the popular acclaim erroneously crediting Gates with the American victory over English General John Burgoyne at Saratogo. In reality, this victory was attributable to Generals Philip Schuyler and Benedict Arnold rather than Gates. Regrettably Arnold afterwards became a traitor to America.

Before Gates went South to assume his new command, a northern neighbor, Charles Lee, gave him this warning: "Take care lest your Northern laurels turn to Southern Willows."

Gates assumed the command of the army DeKalb was leading on Deep River in North Carolina. Notwithstanding none of the troops had been battle-tested except the relatively small groups of the Delaware and Maryland Continentals and Col-

onel Armand's Legion, and notwithstanding his army was debilitated by hunger and dysentery, Gates recklessly pushed forward by forced day and night marches to attack Cornwallis, who had concentrated some 2,200 battle-tested veterans at Camden, S.C.

In the ensuing Battle of Camden on August 16, 1780, Gates' forces suffered what has been described by some historians as the "most disastrous defeat ever inflicted upon an American army."

The gallant DeKalb, and the battle-tested Continentals who stood and fought cornwallis, were slaughtered. Other members of Gates' army who did not flee were captured. While no accurate account of their casualties is available, American losses in killed, wounded, and captured have been estimated at above 2,000. The British suffered 68 killed and 245 wounded.

Gates himself departed hastily from the battlefield on the fastest horse in his army and did not stop to rest until he reached Charlotte, N.C., 60 miles from Camden. After sleeping there, he continued his personal retreat on the two succeeding days and established headquarters at Hillsborough, N.C. about 180 miles from Camden. He then attempted to rebuild his army.

After he crushed Gates at Camden, Cornwallis planned to invade North Carolina, set up headquarters in Charlotte, enlist North Carolina Tories, and subjugate the State.

He undertook to safeguard his plans against the only substantial hazard he apprehended — an attack on his left flank by Whigs from the Western backwoods and mountains.

Cornwallis assigned the task of protecting his left flank to a native of Aberdeen, Scotland, Major Patrick Ferguson, a career officer, who commanded a well trained regiment known as the American Volunteers, which had been recruited for British service among the Tories of New York and New Jersey.

Cornwallis was convinced that Ferguson would perform this task successfully. He knew Ferguson to be a brave man, who was known for displaying at times a spirit of chivalry and for disapproving of "Bloody Ban" Tarleton's wanton blood-thirstiness. He was convinced that Ferguson could speak with persuasive power to the western Whigs, most of whom were also of Scottish blood. Cornwallis ignored the fact, however, that the western Whigs knew that Ferguson deemed the plundering and burning of the homes of Whigs an appropriate method of subduing them.

## Fall Bazaar Is Scheduled By Recreation Department

Kings Mountain Parks and Recreation Department will be sponsoring a Fall Bazaar on Sat., Nov. 22 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. in the Gymnasium of the Kings Mountain Neighborhood Facility Center.

Any groups or individuals interested in participating and selling any articles on that day are urged to contact the Neighborhood Facility Center as soon as possible. There are only a limited number of table set-ups available, which consist of 2-8 ft. long tables and will rent at \$10 for the entire day.

Reservations will be taken up until all set-ups are sold out or

until Fri., Nov. 14, whichever comes first. Reservations can be made at the office of the Kings Mountain Neighborhood Facility Center, Room 102, located at 208 N. Cleveland Avenue.

All table set-ups area selections will be done on a first-come, first-served basis at registration.

For more information on the Fall Bazaar, please call the Kings Mountain Neighborhood Facility Center at 739-3549.

All proceeds from this bazaar will go towards a Universal Weight Machine to be used in the physical fitness room of the Center.

## East Fourth Graders Earn Books For Running

Ten fourth graders of East Elementary School entered the

### Speeding Car

### Cuts Power Off

Cont. from page 1

operating his 1977 Pontiac at a high rate of speed on rain slick roads. The car left the road in the pouring rains and clipped a city utility pole, spun around and hit a parked car in the driveway of the home of Joe Bridges.

Bell was taken to Kings Mountain hospital for treatment and also charged with reckless driving and exceeding safe speed.

Damages from the wreck were excessive. Bell's car was damaged approximately \$4,000, the city damage was placed at \$3,000 and Bridges 1970 Cadillac was damaged approximately \$250, according to police reports.

## Pvt. Montgomery In Basic Training

Private Steven K. Montgomery, son of Mr. and Mrs. Ozie Montgomery of Kings Mountain is attending basic training at Fort Knox, Ky.

During the training, students receive instruction in drill and ceremonies, weapons, map reading, military courtesy, military justice, first aid, and Army history and traditions.

### TRUSTEES MEET

The Cleveland Technical College Board of Trustees will meet on Tuesday, Oct. 21, beginning with dinner at 6:30 p.m. in the Conference Room in the 2100 Building on Tech Campus.

### BAKE SALE, BAZAAR

The Ladies Auxiliary of Bethlehem Volunteer Fire Department will sponsor a hot dog supper Saturday beginning at 11 a.m. at the Fire Department. A bake sale, yard sale, and bazaar, featuring crafts, will also be featured during the day.

Battle of Kings Mountain Rotary Run.

Each child was sponsored by a Kings Mountain citizen who pledged a book to the school library if the runner completed the race. All ten runners finished and earned 10 books for the East School Library.

Runners were Toni Aldrich, Amanda Ball, Tammy Hamrick, Ann Hawkins, John Hill, Brian Rockholt, Candy Taylor, Christa Weld, Malon Williamson and Angela Woods.

These fourth graders are students of Mrs. Cynthia Wood.



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**ACROSS**

1. Advantage of independent agent
4. Neat
10. Fast
11. Basis or Bonheur
12. Family member
13. The maximum claim never exceeds ...
15. Popular cult
17. Additional Living Expense (Abbr.)
19. Kipling boy
20. Three- Prefix
21. Doc
23. Bunny food
25. Agent representing many companies
28. "Thurs not to ... why"
29. Part of an address in D.C.
30. Editor's concern
31. OPQ ...
33. Galahad's title
36. Preposition
37. Insurance business man
39. Earth: Prefix
40. Small case
42. Grand - National Park
44. ... of Windsor
45. Scornful sound

**DOWN**

1. Tibetan priest
2. Precious stone
3. Where L.A. is
4. Actual Cash Value (Abbr.)
5. Bean-spoiling
6. H.S.T.
7. Caviar
8. ... if real?
9. Girl's dorm head
14. Needed to be an agent
16. Catcher's need
18. Horse yaggs
20. Subject to wind damage
22. Thing: Legal
27. ... and Best (Gershwin)
28. "La Douce"
29. Made a home
35. ... insurance protects the landlord
37. Sea bird
38. % coverage, off-premises contents
41. B - ... brute (Shakespeare)
43. Preposition

Answer Next Week

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