

**Kings Mountain and Its Heroes** by Dr. Lyman C. Draper, LL. D., 1881, Peter G. Thomson; reprinted 1969 by The Overmountain Press, Johnson City, Tennessee.

## Chapter XIII

### Moore's at Kings Mountain

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The exact strength and losses of the British at King's Mountain can only be approximately determined. Ferguson's Rangers may be set down at one hundred—though they may have somewhat exceeded that figure. The general estimate is, in round numbers, one thousand militia or Loyalists,, which would make a total of eleven hundred; or, perhaps eleven hundred and twenty-five, as the American official report has it, founded on the provision returns of that day. In General Lenoir's account it is stated, that <sup>11</sup> "not a single man of them escaped that was in camp at the commencement of the battle." This is probably true, and goes to show that the party of foragers, who returned at the close of the battle and fired on the Americans, mortally wounding Colonel Williams, had left previously without coming under this category. It is pretty evident that a detachment left camp that morning—doubtless on a for-

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aging expedition; and this returning party were probably a portion of the number. Gordon, in his *American War*, usually good authority, says four hundred and forty escaped; and Haywood's *Tennessee* gives the same statement, evidently copied from Gordon; while Mills' *Statistics of South Carolina* gives the number as three hundred. Judge Johnson, in his *Life of General Greene*, says two hundred escaped; and this accords with the statement of Alexander Greer, one of Sevier's men, who adds that they were under Colonel Moore,\* perhaps the Tory commander at Ram-

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sour's Mill. Joseph Kerr, one of Williams' men, after enumerating the killed and prisoners of the enemy, adds—"the balance escaped." General Alexander Smythe, who lived on the Holston, said in a speech in Congress, in 1829, "only twenty-one escaped"—referring, perhaps, to that party of foragers who mortally wounded Colonel Williams. Andrews, in his *History of the War*, says "very few escaped;" and Tarleton mentions about picking up some of the fugitives.

We may conclude that Moore's foraging detachment numbered about two hundred; which would have left about nine hundred altogether under Ferguson with whom to fight the battle. The British Lieutenant Allaire says, the Loyalists consisted of eight hundred, and Ferguson's corps of one hundred, \* which tallies pretty well with Tarleton's account in his *Southern Campaigns*, of about one

thousand Loyal militia, supposing that two hundred of them were on detached service at the time of the battle; and it agrees also with Lord Rawdon's statement, made towards the close of October, that Ferguson had "about eight hundred militia " in the engagement – to this, of course, should be added his one hundred Provincial Rangers. Allaire, and other British writers, assuming as true that the exaggerated account of the entire Whig strength, including those in the rear, was well-nigh three thousand, assign as a reason of their overwhelming defeat, the great superiority of their antagonists – three to one, as they assert, against them. In point of fact, the numbers of the opposing forces were about equal; and it was their persistency, their pluck, and excelling in the use of the rifle, that gave the mountaineers the victory.