



The Shattering

The Battle of Hanging Rock 2, August 6, 1780





Biography of General Thomas Sumter (August 14, 1734 – June 1, 1832)

Thomas Sumter was born in colonial Virginia.

Little is known about Thomas Sumter's father. The elder Sumter may have been an indentured servant. He settled on a homestead at Freddy's Creek in Louisa County, VA, where Thomas was born.

William Martin, a childhood associate of General Sumter, would say that Thomas "seems as if he felt mortified at the idea of his low birth (his father being a miller, and his mother a mid-wife) and that he wished everything connected with his early life be forgotten." (1)

Sumter would play a role in the capture of Fort Pitt in the French and Indian War. At the conclusion of that conflict, Sumter would embark on another journey as an escort of Cherokee chiefs to London. When he returned, he found himself in some financial trouble while waiting to be paid by the Royal government. He would end up settling near the Eutaw Springs in South Carolina. (2)

He became a merchant and sought to move up in social standing in his new colony. He married Mary Cantey and increased his property. He was a planter, a trader and even a ferry operator. He made business and social connections that would turn into political collateral later. He was elected as a delegate to the first Provincial Congress in December, 1774 for the District Eastward of Wateree River. (3)

The British burned the future General out of his home just north of Sumter, South Carolina on May 20, 1780. At the time he had resigned his commission as a Continental officer. Left homeless with his physically challenged wife and young son, he made the decision to return to the fight at the age of 46.

Sumter's men gave battle to the British at Williamson Plantation, Rocky Mount, Hanging Rock, Cary's Fort, Fishing Creek, Kings Mountain, Fishdam Ford, and Blackstock's. They killed, captured, or defeated British Captain Christian Huck, N.C. Loyalist Colonel Samuel Bryan, Loyalist Lt. Colonel James Cary, British Major Patrick Ferguson, British Cavalry Major James Wemyss and British Legion Lt. Colonel Banastre Tarleton.

General Sumter continued his war efforts even after being wounded twice. He would help supply the war effort with intel and provisions, even when he was not in the field fighting. However, his preference of independent command often put him at odds with American General Nathaniel Greene.

After the war he served the citizens of South Carolina for five terms in the House of Representatives in Washington, DC. He also was elected to the U.S. Senate and served till 1810.

And for these and other momentous reasons, General Thomas Sumter is a proud hero of the South Carolina.

(1) Gregorie, A (1931) Thomas Sumter, RL Bryan Company (pg. 4)

(2) Jones, R (2011) Before They Were Heroes at King's Mountain, Daniel Boone Footsteps Publishing (pgs. 8-17)

(3) Gregorie, A (1931) Thomas Sumter, RL Bryan Company (pg. 39)



The Shattering

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The Shattering

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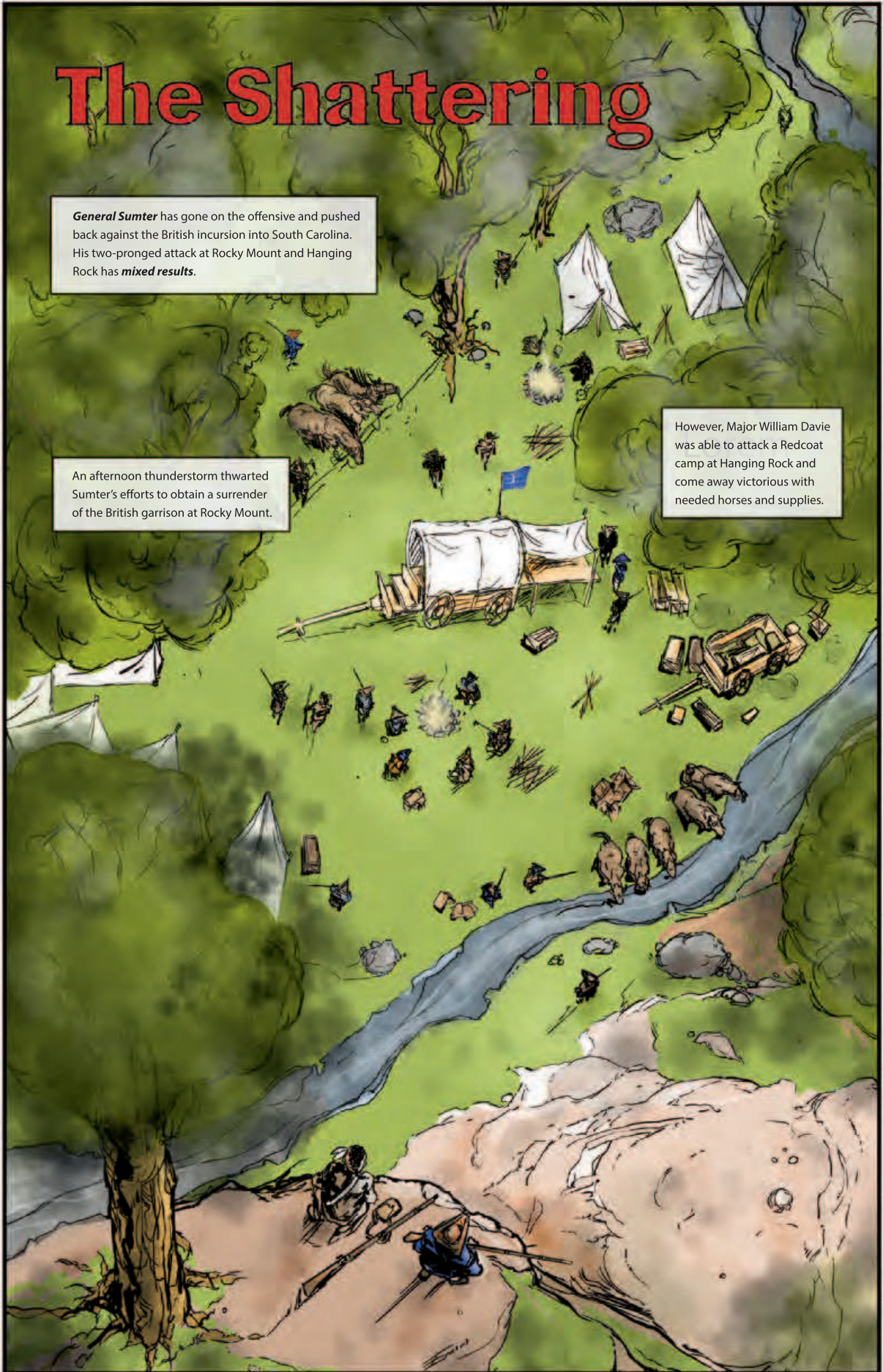


The Shattering

General Sumter has gone on the offensive and pushed back against the British incursion into South Carolina. His two-pronged attack at Rocky Mount and Hanging Rock has *mixed results*.

An afternoon thunderstorm thwarted Sumter's efforts to obtain a surrender of the British garrison at Rocky Mount.

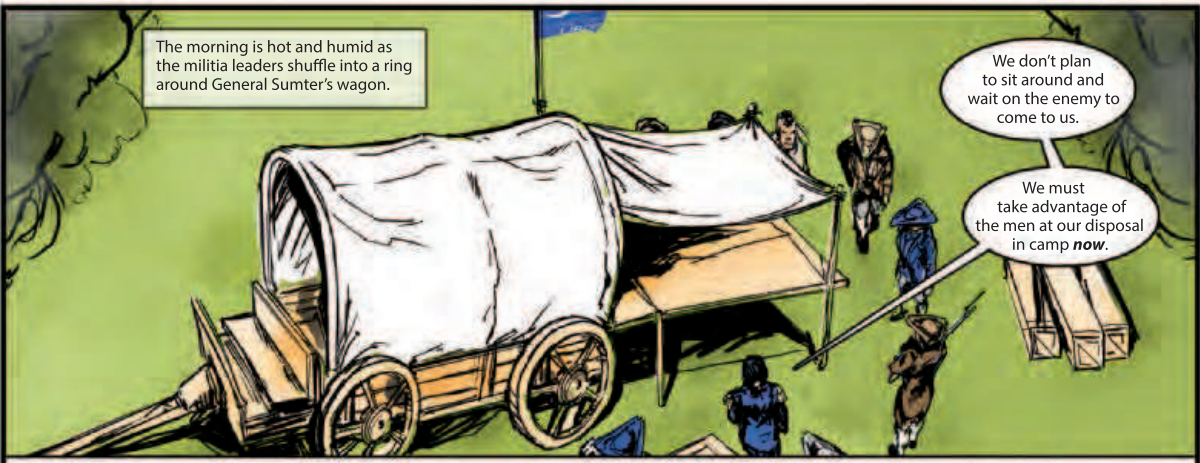
However, Major William Davie was able to attack a Redcoat camp at Hanging Rock and come away victorious with needed horses and supplies.



The morning is hot and humid as the militia leaders shuffle into a ring around General Sumter's wagon.

We don't plan to sit around and wait on the enemy to come to us.

We must take advantage of the men at our disposal in camp **now**.



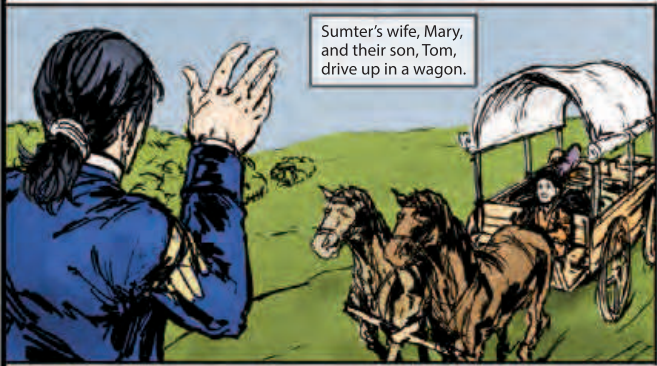
Sir, your family is here in camp.

Gentlemen, that will be all for now. We'll meet here, again, soon.



Sumter's wife, Mary, and their son, Tom, drive up in a wagon.

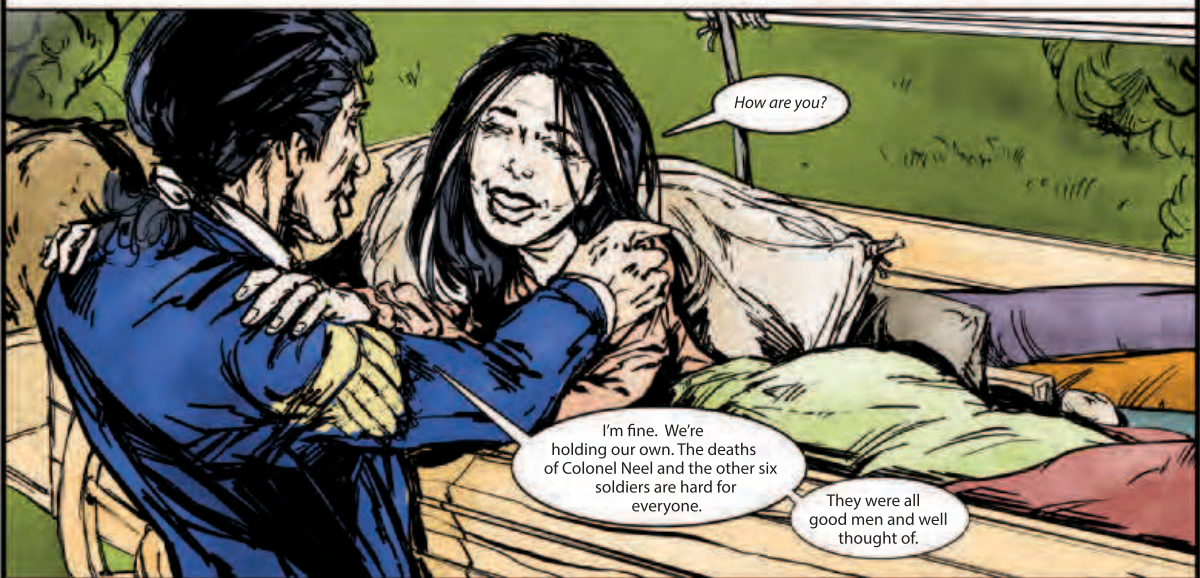
It's so good to see you.



How are you?

I'm fine. We're holding our own. The deaths of Colonel Neel and the other six soldiers are hard for everyone.

They were all good men and well thought of.



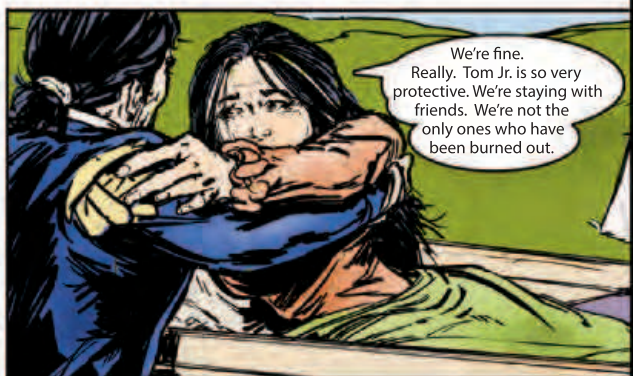


But enough about me, are you ok?

Tom?



We're doing fine, Dad.



We're fine. Really. Tom Jr. is so very protective. We're staying with friends. We're not the only ones who have been burned out.



Oh, Mary. I promise to get our homes back. This is a terrible situation we're living through. We have a chance here to make a stand and push back. I am hopeful that we can return to our home places soon.



Tom, I know you will. You are a fighter. I've always known that. But you need to know that I am safe.

Knowing that, you can go do what you need to do.



Tom, go see if you can rustle us up some food.

Mary, you're the real warrior. You give me strength. Let's enjoy our time for the moment.



The loss of Colonel Neel and our brave soldiers is felt by all of us. No doubt there will be more loss and pain. None of us are guaranteed tomorrow.

It is important to remember what we're fighting for. We're fighting for our rights to determine our own destinies.

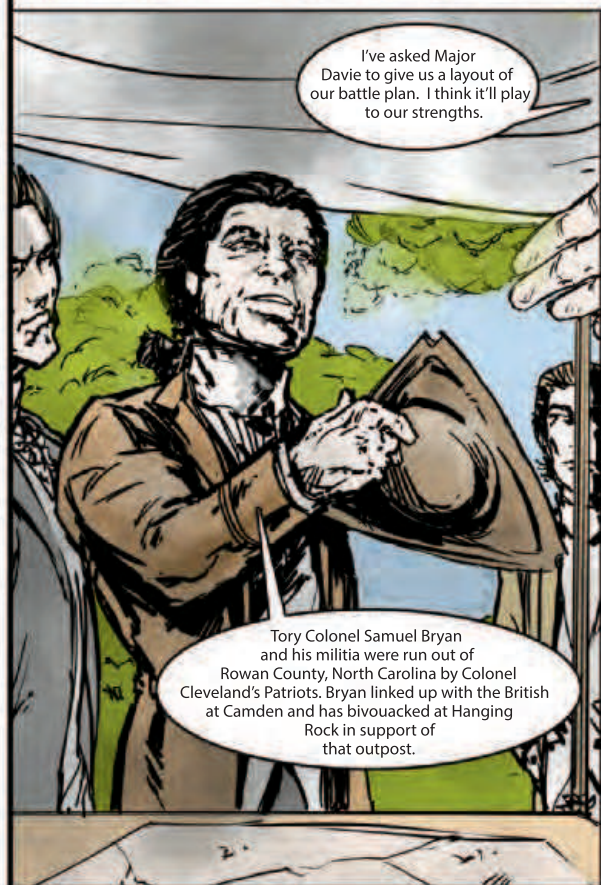


Many of us have been burned out of our homes. Our families live wherever the night catches them. Food is scarce.

At the moment, it is only us. No one is coming to help anytime soon.



Davie's men won at Hanging Rock last week. We're going back to hit them again.



I've asked Major Davie to give us a layout of our battle plan. I think it'll play to our strengths.

Tory Colonel Samuel Bryan and his militia were run out of Rowan County, North Carolina by Colonel Cleveland's Patriots. Bryan linked up with the British at Camden and has bivouacked at Hanging Rock in support of that outpost.

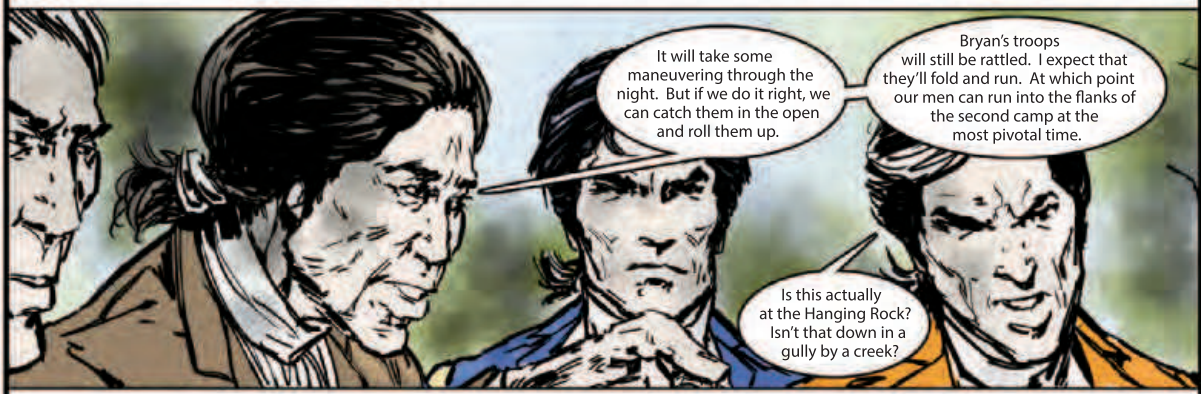


Their camp is situated in the most northerly of the three camps in the Hanging Rock vicinity. After Bryan's camp you have the Prince of Wales Regiment and then a camp full of Legion troops.



We have the men, so I propose that we split our forces.

We'll hit the British camps simultaneously, so that neither can support the other.



It will take some maneuvering through the night. But if we do it right, we can catch them in the open and roll them up.

Bryan's troops will still be rattled. I expect that they'll fold and run. At which point our men can run into the flanks of the second camp at the most pivotal time.

Is this actually at the Hanging Rock? Isn't that down in a gully by a creek?



You're right. The British camps are up by the road, in some pastures with some water.

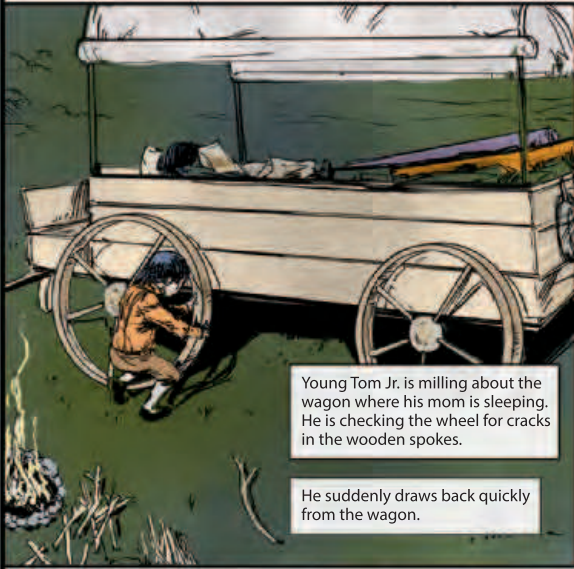
But the gully will be a good place for our guards to hold our horses while the fight takes place up on the level ground.



Make no mistake men, these are trained troops we are going up against and they have cannon.

Hopefully, we can overrun them before they open up a cannonade. Don't mistake the easy victory by Davie last week as a sign that this will be a walkover.

The camp takes on a solemn air as the men prepare for the coming battle. The sun begins to dip towards the western horizon and the night noises of tree frogs, cicadas and wolves start their serenade.



Young Tom Jr. is milling about the wagon where his mom is sleeping. He is checking the wheel for cracks in the wooden spokes.

He suddenly draws back quickly from the wagon.



My Lord!



We just about got brought down by a copperhead!



shush



At midnight, Sumter and his band of warriors file past his wife and son. Mary and Tom watch them trail off south. As a small campfire burns by their wagon, the shadow soldiers disappear into the night.

This war, this war...
...when will it end?



Tell me Colonel Winn.
How are we provisioned?

We've a good
many men and horses, all with
good officers. Guns are a 'plenty. But
we are limited to about 5 bullets
per man.



That being said, we
will need to rely on stealth. Surprise
will do a great deal to even out the odds. We will
appear larger than we are, especially if we hit them
all at once. If they run, they won't
be shooting back.

If.

- Boston Massacre March 5, 1770
- Charleston Tea Party December 3, 1773
- Boston Tea Party December 16, 1773
- Intolerable Acts March-May-1774
- 1st Continental Congress September 5, 1774
- Continental Congress passes Associational Acts October 18, 1774
- Camden Resolves November 5, 1774
- War begins at Lexington/Concord April 19, 1775
- Thomas Paine's "Common Sense" January 15, 1776
- British evacuate Boston, MA March 17, 1776
- British failed attack on Charleston, SC Sullivan's Island June 28, 1776
- Declaration of Independence July 4, 1776
- The Ring Fight October 12, 1776
- Washington crosses Delaware river December 25, 1776
- Winter camp at Valley Forge December 18, 1777
- Battle of Monmouth, NJ June 28, 1778
- British occupy Savannah, GA December 29, 1778
- Battle of Stono Ferry, SC June 20, 1779
- Battle of Stoney Point, NY July 15-16, 1779

1. Burning of Sumter's home in High Hill of the Santee
2. Williamson Plantation
3. Rocky Mount
4. Hanging Rock
5. Cary's Fort
6. Fishing Creek



- Fall of Charleston, SC May 12, 1780
- Thomas Sumter's House burned May 27, 1780 Dark Times Need Heroes
- Buford's Massacre in Waxhaws May 29, 1780
- Battle of Ramsour's Mill June 20, 1780
- Battle of Williamson's Plantation July 12, 1780 Huck's Defeat
- Battle of Rocky Mount and 1st battle of Hanging Rock July 31, 1780 A Rocky Response
- 2nd Battle of Hanging Rock August 6, 1780 The Shattering
- Battle at Cary's Fort August 15, 1780 On the Warpath to Cary's Fort
- Battle of Camden August 16, 1780
- Battle of Fishing Creek August 18, 1780 The Battle at Fishing Creek
- Battle of Musgrove Mills August 19, 1780
- Battle at Blue Savannah September 4, 1780
- Battle of Kings Mountain, SC October 7, 1780
- Battle of Fishdam Ford, SC November 9, 1780
- Battle of Blackstocks, SC November 20, 1780
- Battle of Cowpens, SC January 17, 1781
- Raid on Georgetown, SC January 24, 1781
- Battle of Guilford Courthouse, NC March 15, 1781
- Capture of Fort Watson, SC April 23, 1781
- Battle of Hobkirk Hill, Camden, SC April 25, 1781
- Battle of Hayes Station, SC May 8, 1781
- Capture of Orangeburg, SC May 11, 1781
- Capture of Ft. Motte, SC May 12, 1781
- Capture of Ft. Granby, SC May 15, 1781
- Capture of Augusta, GA June 6, 1781
- Siege of Ninety-Six, SC May 21-June 18, 1781
- Battle at Shubrick's Plantation, SC July 17, 1781
- Battle of Eutaw Springs, SC September 8, 1781
- British surrender at Yorktown, VA October 19, 1781
- British evacuation day in Charleston, SC December 14, 1782
- Peace Treaty of Paris September 3, 1783

The Battle of Hanging Rock 2: Patriots



Thomas Sumter, 46 yoa, District Eastward of the Wateree River, SC
(Stateburg and Eutaw Springs), Husband, Father,
Businessman, Planter, Soldier, Politician



Richard Winn, 30 yoa, Fairfield County,
SC, Husband, Father, Planter, Soldier



William Hill, 39 yoa, York County, SC,
Husband, Father, Proprietor (Ironworks), Soldier



William Davles, 24 yoa, Chester County, SC,
single, Lawyer, Soldier

The Battle of Hanging Rock 2: British

General Cornwallis, 41 yoa, Suffolk County,
England, Widower, Father, Soldier



Major John Carden (Prince of Wales Regiment),
38-42 yoa, Husband, Father, Soldier



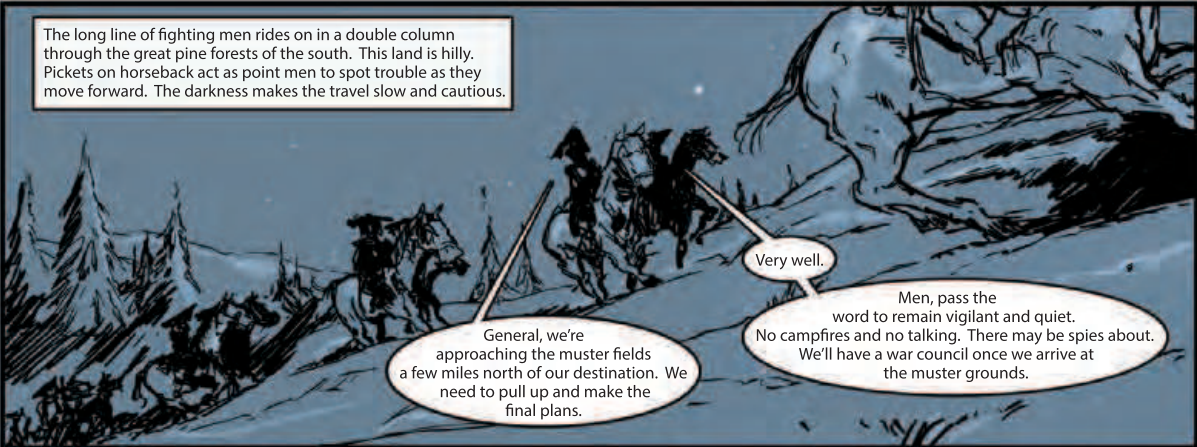
NC Loyalist Colonel Samuel Bryan, 54 yoa, Rowan County, NC,
Husband, Father, Businessman, Soldier



SC Loyalist Colonel Henry Rugeley, 37 yoa (?), "Clermont" above
Camden, SC, Husband, Businessman, Soldier



The long line of fighting men rides on in a double column through the great pine forests of the south. This land is hilly. Pickets on horseback act as point men to spot trouble as they move forward. The darkness makes the travel slow and cautious.



General, we're approaching the muster fields a few miles north of our destination. We need to pull up and make the final plans.

Very well.

Men, pass the word to remain vigilant and quiet. No campfires and no talking. There may be spies about. We'll have a war council once we arrive at the muster grounds.




As they arrive on the muster grounds, the horses are given to some young men nearby. The colonels gather around Sumter and Davie in a small, close-knit circle.



Sir, I've identified three men to guide the three wings of our force to the various staging areas. Each will be given time enough to arrive at their various points.




Good. The battle will start when Davie and I begin shooting. That's when you begin your attack on the other camps.



Sir, the encampment is through this thicket, over the creek and up that hill. I suggest we leave the horses here and move up on foot.

I think we ought to get across the creek before dismounting.



That's a bad idea. There's too much ground to cover after we head through the brush. The noise will give us away and we'll be easy targets.

Major Davie, this isn't a suggestion at this point. Move the men across the creek and go at them hard from there.



Yes sir.

Sumter and Davie wait for the first light of dawn to break through the darkness.

The tree branches and the hill in front of Sumter take shape. His blood begins to rise as he readies himself for battle.

Let 'em have it boys.

CHARGE!

SPLASH!

Oh no!! We are all at the same camp! How could we get lost in such a moment like this? Quickly boys, charge!

We'll just need to run them into the remaining camps! Get at 'em, men!

Meanwhile, the other wings of the Patriots have converged onto their targets at different points. Upon hearing the battle commence they charge into the British camps. But there is a huge **miscalculation** that only becomes apparent in the early morning light. Gazing across the field they see all three columns have broken into the clearing and are **charging headlong into the first camp of the NC militia.**

The British attempt to rally, but their officers are cut down almost immediately.

Pandemonium reigns as the Patriots swarm into the camp.


BAM

BANG


CRACK

BANG


BOOM



Davie, riding ahead of his dragoons, turns in his saddle to look back at the first camp.




Stupid! Stupid! Stupid!
My poor men! I have lost some good men because Sumter wanted to make a splash!

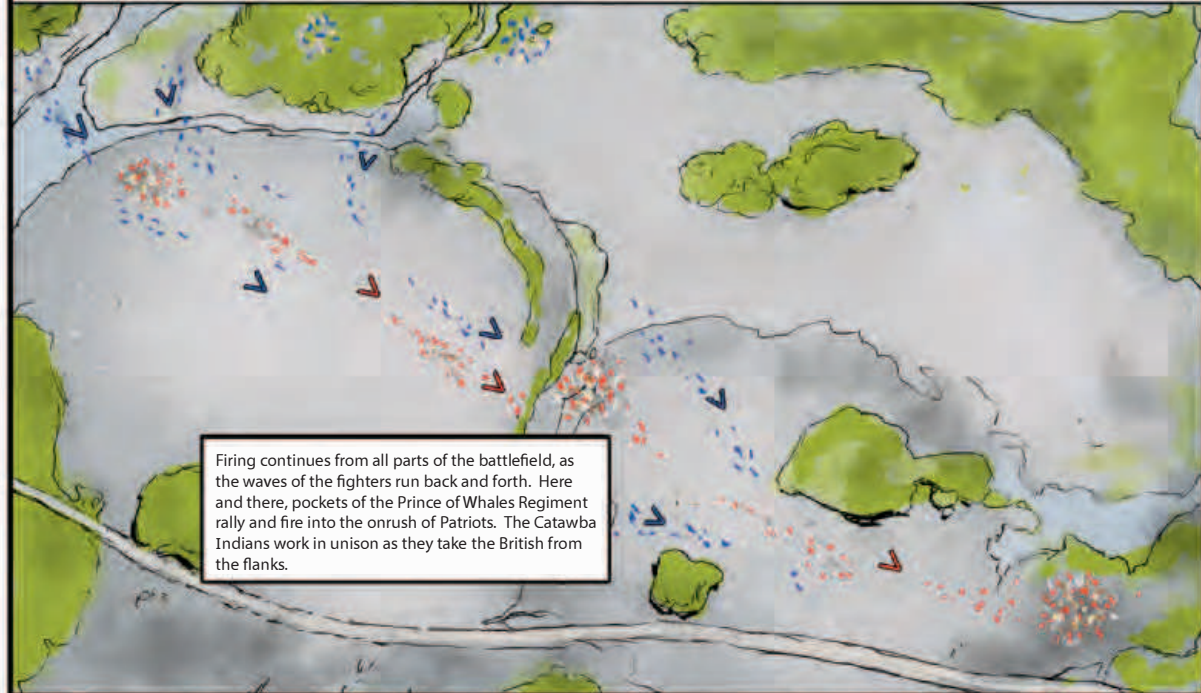


At the second camp, Davie realizes that the militia elements are stopping the fight because they're pilfering the food.

Beyond the tents he sees British soldiers running towards the third camp.



Men, we still have fighting to do! Get to it! There is another camp beyond here!



Firing continues from all parts of the battlefield, as the waves of the fighters run back and forth. Here and there, pockets of the Prince of Wales Regiment rally and fire into the onrush of Patriots. The Catawba Indians work in unison as they take the British from the flanks.



Just east of the battlefield, a gully is hidden by a canopy of trees. Here the horses of the Patriots are being held by old men and young teenagers.



One of the teenagers, a thin, but rugged boy of 13 years of age, is listening to the sounds of battle above,

Suddenly a man crashes through the thickets!



I'm hit! Oh Lord, I'm hit!



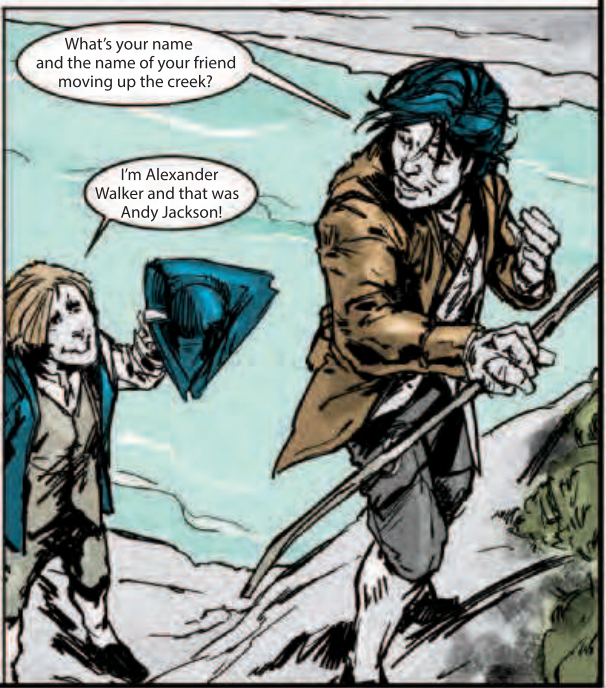
Is there anything I can do?

I think it must be bad and deep. I feel it pouring down the back of my leg. I need some water and rest. I'm so thirsty!



Sir, I don't see any blood, but your powder horn is leaking.

What!? Well, what do you know about that? That must have been powder that I felt on my leg, and not blood. What a relief! *Kinda funny though, don't you think?*



What's your friend and the name of your friend moving up the creek?

I'm Alexander Walker and that was Andy Jackson!

A group of British dragoons arrive, just down the road from the fighting. Davie makes General Sumter aware and points in the direction.



Sir, make ready for more company. We'll run them off, but you need to decide soon.



The British dragoons want no part of Davie and his men. They flee south on the roadway.

Charge!



Meanwhile the third camp of British have been able to form a hollow square, like the Romans of old.



In this defensive position in the open field, they're able to create a fortification of sorts out of supplies from their camp. The two cannon sit just to the west of the square.

Huzzah, Huzzah, Huzzah!

Three Huzzahs for the King!



Three Huzzahs for General Washington!

Huzzah, Huzzah, Huzzah!



The sun is high in the midday sky. Sumter, Winn, and Bratton look on the scene, just out of cannon range.

"We're low on ammunition and we've been fighting close to four hours now."

"We've scattered the North Carolina Loyalists under Bryan and the Prince of Wales Regiment is no more. If we try and pursue this victory further, disaster may follow."

"We'll be hard-pressed to continue the fight if re-enforcements arrive from Camden."

"Though I would love to find a way to capture those cannon, I'm afraid we must pull off and head home."



The Patriots remount their horses and head north, back from where they came. A column of British prisoners march along with them. Winn and Sumter pull off the road and allow the men to pass by.

I'd not be surprised if the British pull in their outposts after this. We gave them a proud fight today.

I will need you to get the casualty report to me soon.

It was a good day.

Will do. I think Justice Gaston lost some of his sons. But the lobster-backs suffered the most.



In reality, I bet this might be one of the best fights in this part of the country.



Perhaps, but I won't place my men under your command again.

Back in camp the officers gather around Sumter's wagon. The smiles and laughter are in direct contrast to the solemn attitudes in camp before they set out for the battle.

Men, thanks to the excellent preparation of Major Davie and the superb execution of the plan, we have shattered the hopes of the British in taking South Carolina so easily. **Congratulations.**

General Gates is coming at the head of a large Continental army. Rest up. We're not done!



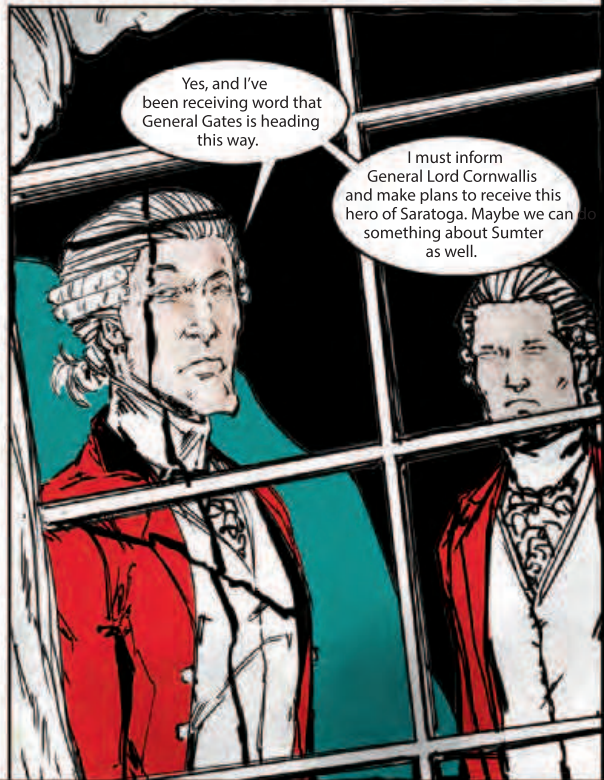
Meanwhile at Camden at the confiscated Joseph Kershaw house



Sumter is gaining men by the day and we're losing this part of the country.

Yes, and I've been receiving word that General Gates is heading this way.

I must inform General Lord Cornwallis and make plans to receive this hero of Saratoga. Maybe we can do something about Sumter as well.





Footsteps of Heroes: William Davie

When he was eight, William Davie's Scottish family moved to the Waxhaw settlement near Lancaster, South Carolina. After graduating from Princeton University in 1776, he joined the Patriots. He was wounded at the Battle of Stono Ferry in 1779. While healing, he studied law in Salisbury, NC. Then, he went back to the battlefield. He attracted admirers like young Andrew Jackson.

At the second battle of Hanging Rock, Major William Davie yelled to the British, "Soldiers, if you value your lives, ground your arms, and officers surrender at once!" They didn't. The redcoated Prince of Wales Regiment was defeated.

Later, in the streets of Charlotte, NC, his 150 men harassed British General Cornwallis' 2000-man army. This event gave Charlotte the nickname, "Hornet's Nest."

He helped convince the North Carolinians to ratify the U.S. Constitution. His work was a pivotal and controversial strategy that highlighted troublesome aspects of that time. However, had he not succeeded, the United States would not have included North Carolina and may have slipped back into the "Old World" views of governing.

He was a soldier and lawyer. He became the governor of North Carolina and a co-founder of UNC Chapel Hill. He lived an intrepid life of service so that we could be free. Freedom reigns!



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THE SHATTERING

