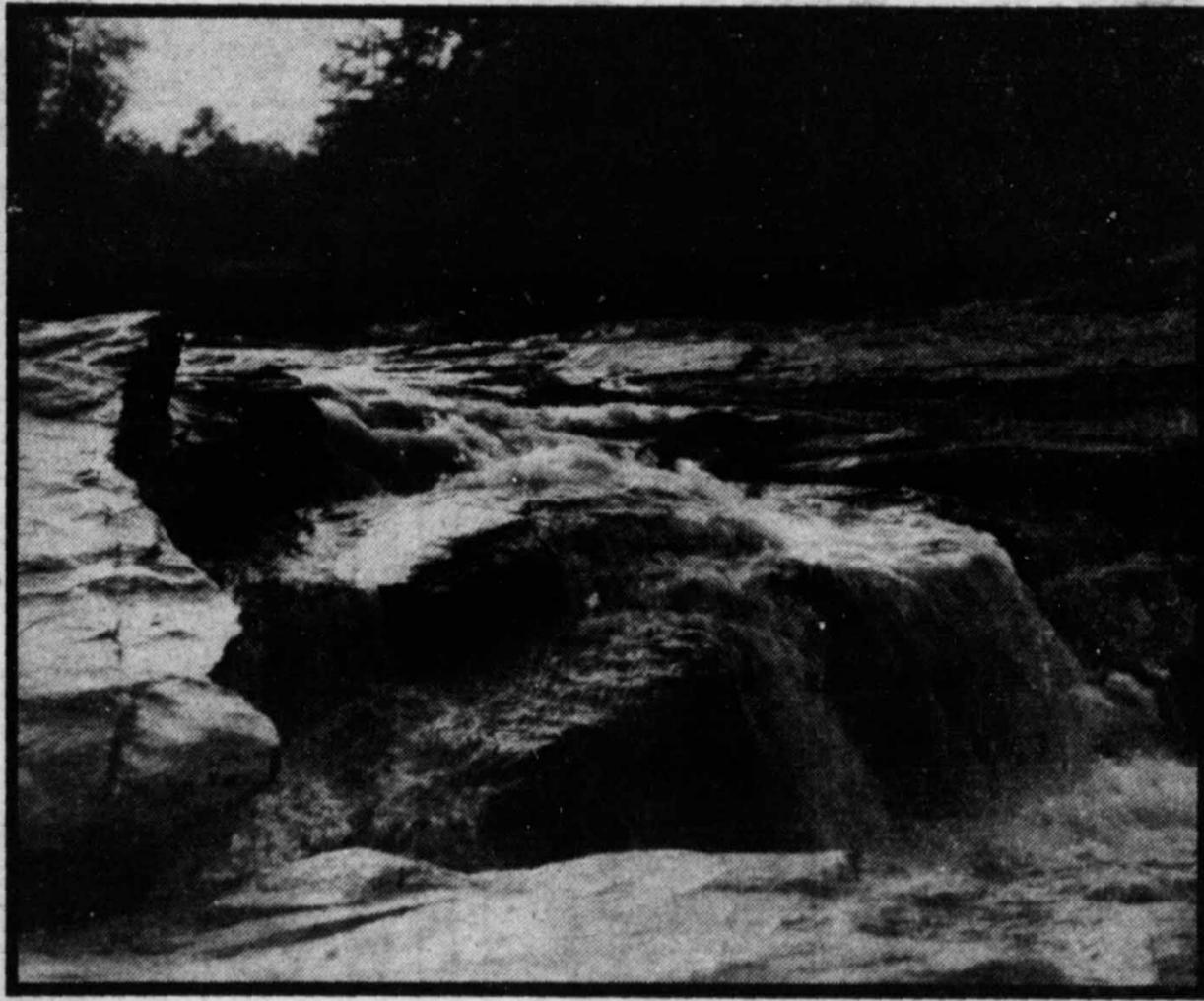


Near Musgrove's Mill Battle Field

State - Nov. 15, 1936



Photograph and text for "The State" by Carl T. Julien.

The Revolutionary battle of Musgrove's mill, while a comparatively small engagement, was yet a rather important one for its effect upon the morale of the sorely beset patriots in upper South Carolina. Too, it proved the mettle of the ever-mountain men, from North Carolina and Tennessee, and led, more or less directly to the crushing defeat of Ferguson at King's Mountain a short time later. It was at the battle of Musgrove's mill that the British regular, Capt. Abraham DePeyster, of the King's Mountain regiment, first heard the war-whoops of the mountain men of Clarke and Shelby. Hearing them for the second time at King's Mountain, he remarked to Ferguson: "These things are ominous; these are the damned yelling boys."

Being one of those engagements in which a comparatively small American force completely routed a superior British one, well officered and trained, it captivates the fancy. As could naturally be expected because of the irregular character of the American forces involved, no accu-

rate account of the number of men in Clarke and Shelby's command is on record, but it is variously estimated at from 200 to 700. Seven hundred is probably nearer correct as the Tory force which they were to engage was reported as of 500 or 600 men. Meanwhile, during the time of Shelby's march against the Tories that force had been strengthened by the addition of several hundred regular troops on the evening before, so that when the American commanders were ready to attack in the dawn of the 18th of August, 1780, they were informed by a countryman that the enemy had been reinforced. The American commanders were now between "the devil and the deep," for during their night march to Musgrove's mill they had passed very near Ferguson's camp and they knew that if by any chance that doughty soldier had by that time learned of it he would soon be down upon them like the traditional ton of bricks. Characteristically, however, they did not long hesitate, but determined to attack. At a council they decided to barri-

cade themselves across the road leading down to the ford on the opposite side of the river from the British camp and send out a small skirmishing party to engage the enemy and draw them out. A brave Georgian, Shadrack Inman, was selected for this duty. He carried with him 25 men. So well did he do the job for which he was selected that he led the Tories romping hilariously up the hill in pursuit of his little band on what they thought was a picnic, all unsuspecting, into the waiting arms of Shelby, Clarke, and Williams, and to complete rout. Unfortunately, the brave Inman was killed during the battle which followed, and is buried beside the old road not far from the spot which I have pictured here, the falls of Cedar Shoals creek, just above the juncture of this creek with Enoree river. His grave is marked by a simple stone.

Across the river is the grave of Mary Musgrove, the heroine of the story, "Horseshoe Robinson," an historical novel based upon the incidents of that place and time.