

## **GENERAL MICHAEL MCLEARY**

General Michael McLeary was born in 1762. He first entered the service as a private in Captain William Alexander's company, in the regiment commanded by Colonel Robert Irwin, William Hagins, Lieutenant Colonel, and James Harris, Major. The regiment was encamped on Coddle Creek, near which time Colonel William Davidson, a Continental officer, was appointed to the command of a battalion. In a short time afterward, his command marched to Ramsour's Mill, to disperse a large body of Tories, under Colonel John Moore, but failed to reach that place before they had been subdued and routed by Colonel Locke and his brave associates.

General McLeary was in the fight against a considerable body of Tories assembled at Coulson's Mill, at which place General Davidson was severely wounded.

After this service he again volunteered in Captain William Alexander's company, Colonel Irwin's regiment, watching the movements of the enemy. About two miles south of Charlotte, Lieutenant James Taggart captured two wagons loaded with valuable supplies from Camden for the British army, then encamped near the former place. In this dashing exploit, two of the British guard were killed, and the remainder made prisoners, who were afterward turned over to Colonel Davidson. At the same time, an express was captured from Lord Cornwallis to Colonel Turnbull, in command of the forces at Camden. Here, as elsewhere in the surrounding country, it will be seen the vigilant "hornets" of Mecklenburg were engaged in their accustomed work.

Captain Alexander's command continued to hang on the enemy's rear for the purpose of making rapid captures and picking up stragglers, and followed them to the Old Nation Ford, on the Catawba. Colonel Davidson having been promoted in the meantime to the rank of Brigadier General, marched down and encamped near Six Mile Creek, where he was joined by Generals Morgan and Smallwood, in November, 1780. Near this time General Morgan was ordered to move with a detachment to the relief of the upper districts of South Carolina. He set off immediately, and remained there until after the battle of the Cowpens, on the 17th of January, 1781.

General McLeary again volunteered in Captain John Brownfield's company, in General Davidson's brigade, watching the movements of Lord Cornwallis in his pursuit of General Morgan, encumbered with five hundred prisoners on his way to a place of safety in Virginia.

General Davidson, anticipating the movements of Cornwallis, had placed guards at four or five crossing-places on the Catawba river, making his headquarters near the Tuckasege Ford, on the eastern bank of the river. On the 31st of January, he left his headquarters to inspect the position of his guard at Cowan's Ford. Here the British army crossed at dawn of day, on the 1st of February, 1781. At the close of the skirmish which ensued, General Davidson was killed. General McLeary continued in service until after the battle of Guilford, when he returned home, and was soon afterward discharged. He was highly respected, represented his county several times in the State Legislature, and died at a good old age.

Source: Sketches of Western North Carolina, Historical and Biographical  
by Author: C. L. Hunter