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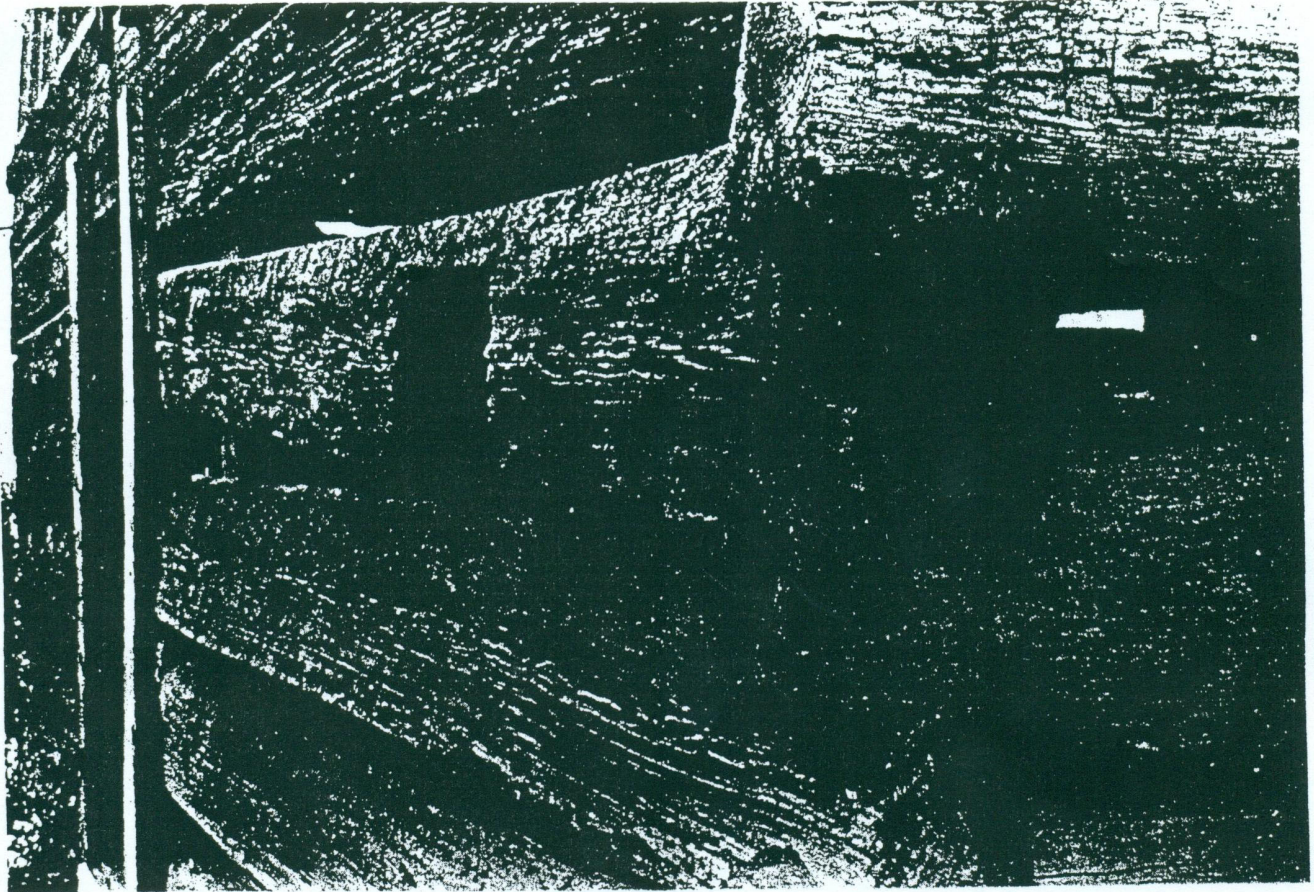
Fort Thicketty

Within sight of the rear of Goucher School in Cherokee County is what remains of Fort Anderson, built by the British during the Revolution. Located near Thicketty Creek, the fort was always better known as Fort Thicketty.

An almost square log building, which may have been a blockhouse, still stands. Jack Lipscomb, present owner of the property, has covered the fortress with a tin roof to provide protection against the elements.

The battle of Fort Thicketty receives scant attention in history books, even those concentrating on South Carolina. Perhaps the fact that not a shot was fired and neither side suffered casualties is the reason.

But it was a prelude to Cowpens and Kings Mountain, where the war was turned in favor of the colonists. The



Huge square-hewn logs form Fort Thicketty walls, with gun port cut in wall. Door was added later.

fall of Fort Thicketty fouled up the British timetable and threw them off-balance, setting the stage for Patriot victories to follow.

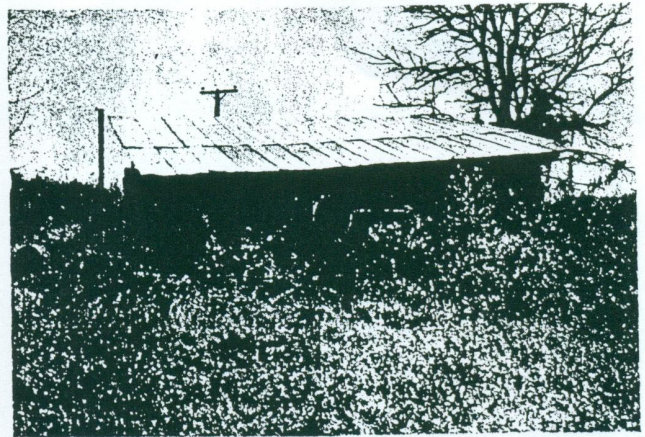
Fort Thicketty was originally built by the British as a refuge from Cherokee and Creek Indians. During the Revolution it became home base for Tory raiding parties preying on families and farms of colonists who were off fighting the British. Thicketty was commanded by Col. Patrick Moore.

Fort Thicketty was an excellent location for Tory

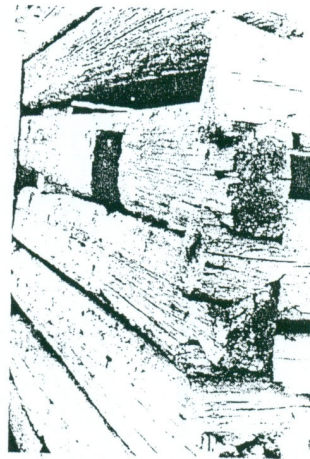
raiding parties. They could move in any direction, pillage the countryside and return to the fort for safety. It was strong and well built for defense. In addition to the stout portion which still stands, a stockade probably enclosed a courtyard. Outside the walls a strong **abatis** surrounded the fort. This abatis was a ring of trees cut down with their butts against the base of the stockade and the thick, heavy limbs and branches pointed outward toward the attacking enemy. (Perhaps this was a forerunner of World War II barbed wire concertina barricades.) Only entrance



These stairs, not original, apparently went to attic which no longer exists.



Present owner Jack Lipscomb put on tin roof to preserve remains of Fort Thicketty.



More details of hand-hewn logs and colonial craftsmanship are seen in these two Fort Thicketty photos.

to the fort through the abatis was a narrow crawl space so cramped it could only be used single file.

Fort Thicketty was considered almost impregnable. Eighty men had once successfully defended it against 300 attackers. Col. Moore and his men were confident of their ability to hold the fort.

Six hundred men from Sumter's command were dispatched to capture Fort Thicketty. They assembled at Cherokee Ford on the Broad River and began moving toward the Fort at sunset on July 29, 1780.

At daybreak the next day they surrounded the Fort and William Cooke, who later became a Senator from Tennessee, was sent to demand the surrender of the Fort. Remembering how the Fort had been successfully defended previously, Tory Col. Moore said he'd fight to the last man.

The colonial troops moved into position, closing in around the fort, and Col. Moore surrendered with the provision that his men would be paroled on condition they not serve in the war again.

Thus Fort Thicketty fell without bloodshed and without a shot being fired. The Revolutionary Forces gained a significant victory which had a profound effect on the Battle of Cowpens shortly afterward.

Spoils of victory for the colonials was some 250 weapons, 93 Loyalist soldiers and a British sergeant-major. There is circumstantial evidence that Col. Moore was a traitor to the British, that he deliberately brought about the surrender of Fort Thicketty. The story is that he told his men he was going to tell the Colonials the Fort would fight; instead, he returned through the abatis followed by

Rebel officers and their men. The astonished defenders had no choice but to surrender.

Meanwhile, British Col. Ferguson, camped along Thicketty Creek, sent orders for Col. Moore to hold the Fort as long as possible. Shortly after the messenger returned to Col. Ferguson, word arrived that the Fort had fallen. This prevented Ferguson's carrying out his plan to surprise the Rebels while they were besieging the Fort.

British General Tarleton was commanding "Tarleton's Legion". It was his responsibility to pacify the colonists, by force if necessary. Force became necessary. A group of Scotch-Irish Presbyterians rallied against him. Tarleton and his men were especially brutal. Their trail through the Piedmont was marked by the ashes of Presbyterian churches and homes.

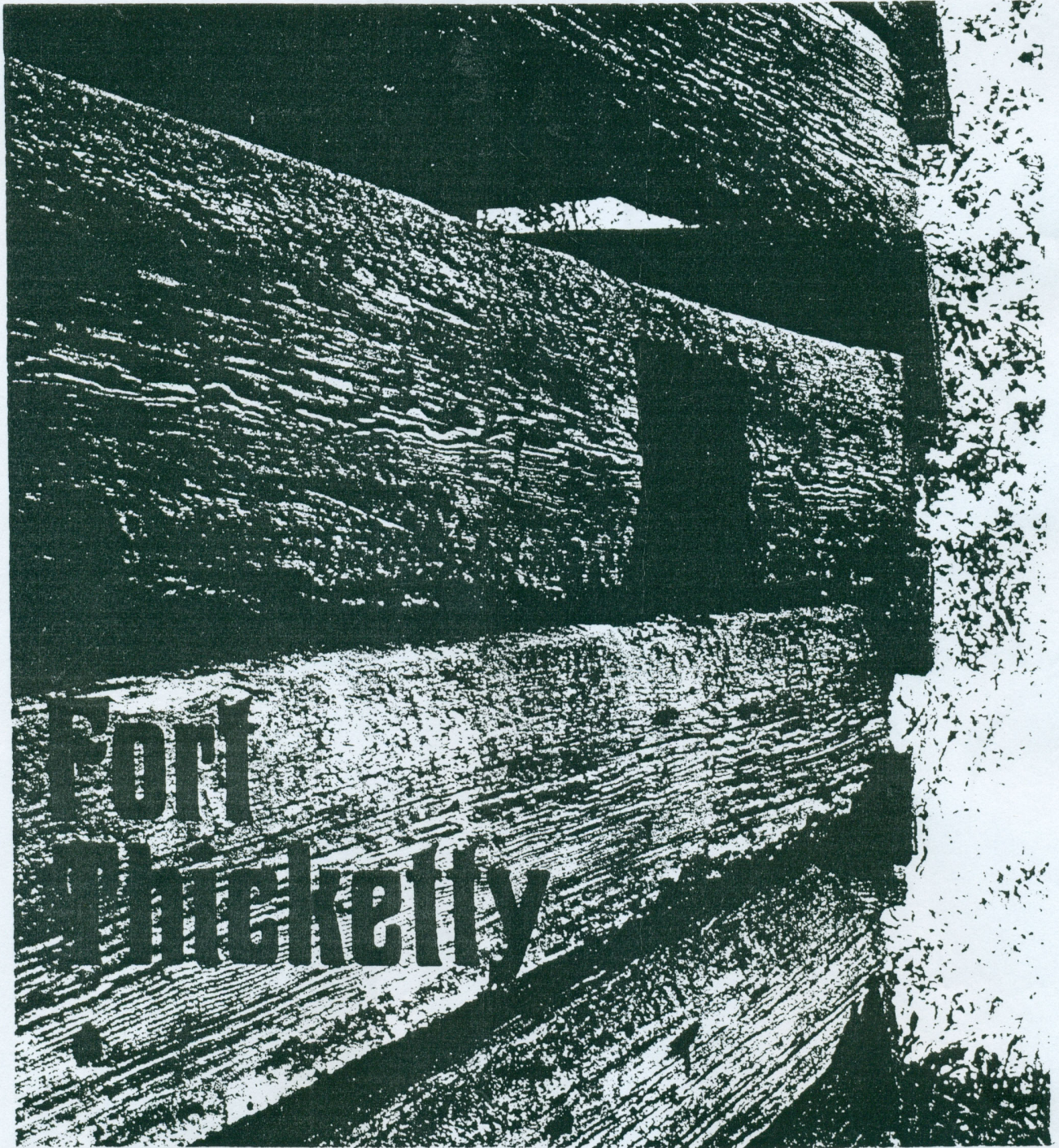
Tarleton's acts of terror and wanton destruction, often even against British sympathizers, were expected to subdue the Rebels. Instead, it angered them and, with the Presbyterians, turned the war into a crusade.

Col. Sumter, who had left the war and was suspected of being a Tory sympathizer, was infuriated when Tarleton burned his home. He again took up arms and led the Rebels against the British. Sumter was ever after a thorn in Tarleton's side. Sumter's victory over Captain Huck of Tarleton's Legion was the first victory for the South Carolinians since the fall of Charleston.

It was the beginning of a trail from Fort Thicketty all the way to Yorktown . . . often with small engagements and skirmishes but always pointing toward final freedom for the colonies.

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Participants in Morgan's March Re-enactment view remains of Fort Thicketty in January, 2007.



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View of interior remains of Fort Thicketty in January, 2007.



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