

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE FAMOUS COLONEL JAMES
H. RION TAKEN FROM THE SOUTH CAROLINA HISTORICAL
AND GENEALOGICAL MAGAZINE AND THE OLD SOUTH CARO-
LINA COLLEGE MAGAZINE CALLED "THE COLLEGIAN", IN
THE SOUTH CAROLINIANA LIBRARY, COLUMBIA, S. C.

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COLONEL JAMES HENRY RION OF WINNSBORO, SOUTH CAROLINA

Biographical Sketch taken from the South Caroliniana Library and the old South Carolina College "Collegian" in the South Caroliniana Library, Columbia, South Carolina.

Outstanding as lawyer, citizen and soldier in the War Between the States.

Practical testimony in his possession given him by his mother indicated and gave proof of his royal heritage.

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Thomas Woodward, D.A.R.

Winnsboro, South Carolina

1965

Biographical Sketch from the South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine and the South Carolina College Collegian of COLONEL JAMES HENRY RION, Son of the lost Dauphin of France. In University of South Carolina Library, Columbia, S.C.

He was born April 17, 1826, in Montreal, Canada, of English and French heritage. His father was an engineer. He received intuitive knowledge from his father. He inherited a remarkable memory, habits of methodical religious belief from his mother. With his natural powers of advantage of head and heart, which properly improved, but could result in greatness.

He and his mother were inmates of the John C. Calhoun home, which no doubt moulded his character. When 12 he was remarkably advanced for his age. Providence aided him.

In the Clarisophic Society, from Anderson, he procured a scholarship of the society. At the request of Dr. Brumby Rion gave the graduating address, an essay on teachings of modern geology, which he claimed did not contradict with the belief of the Bible. No graduate in the state on S.C. history of in S.C. college ever gave us so distinguished a student or more scholarly man.

He began teaching at Mt. Zion College at Winnsboro, S.C. He entered college among the first. He was in the War (between the States) to the end. As a lawyer he had no equal.

Though great a soldier, lawyer, he was greater as a man. He gave the Clarisophic Society real Scholarship. He was selected for many honors. He designated his own hymns for his funeral at Sion Presbyterian Church, where was sung "I Would not Live Alway". Mrs. Alice Buchanan Walker, an intimate friend of the family, sang this at his request. The whole state was saddened.

He was under the patronage of John C. Calhoun and William Preston. Rion worked out his own success with discipline of perseverance and determination in keeping with his intellect.

He had at 14 years finished "Analytical and Descriptive Geometry" in the French language. He was Anniversary orator of the Clarisophic Society May, 1850, at the request of the students. He was appointed by the S.C. College faculty to deliver an address on John C. Calhoun.

He was admitted to the Winnsboro bar 1854. In 1857 he was offered the chair of mathematics at Mt. Zion Institute in Winnsboro. In 1858 he was Colonel of the

of the 25th Regiment of S.C. Militia. 1859 he was President of the Planters Bank of Fairfield County. He answered the call of the 6th Regular S.C. Volunteers. He resigned from the 6th and raised a command for the War, there being no volunteer company in S.C. for over a year. Colonel Rion was major of the company. Then he was raised to rank of colonel January 24, 1864. Rion had been promoted for gallantry June 18th by President Davis, confirmed by the Confederate Senate.

He received bayonet wounds at Morris Island. He was complimented several times by Beauregard and high officers in reports of many battles. As major, the Secretary of War in 1863 offered Rion command of the 22nd Regiment, which he declined. After the Battle of Bentonville, Joseph E. Johnston, Secretary of War, offered him the role of temporary Brigadier-General, which he declined. Taking 60 days Petersburg Battle as 1 battle he participated in 21 continuous battles.

After surrender he returned to Winnsboro and resumed law practice May 1865. He was never before the people as candidate for office. He was a delegate to the Constitutional Convention of Conservative and Democratic parties. He was elected member of the National Executive Democratic Committee for South Carolina 1876.

In 1877, he, with General Kershaw and others, was sent to Washington as members of the Hampton Committee. For a long time he was a member of the Board of Trustees of Mt. Zion Institute at Winnsboro, and a member of the Board of Trustees of South Carolina College.

In Masonry he was Worshipful Master of the Grand Lodge, and High Priest of the Chapter, and three times Illustrious Grand Master of the Council. He was Knight of Red Cross, Knight of Malta, and Knight of Templar and once Deputy Grandmaster of Odd Fellows.

He was general counsel of the Charlotte, Columbia, and Augusta Railroad and general solicitor of the Wilmington, Columbia, and Augusta railroad companies. He was solicitor of the National Bank of Columbia and attorney of the town of Winnsboro, S.C.

In private life Colonel Rion was quiet, liberal and charitable. Many of the Confederate widows and orphans were grateful recipients of his liberality and kindness. In business he was systematic, punctual, with a somewhat reserved disposition. Shortly after graduation he married Miss Weir, daughter of Samuel Weir, an old Columbia journalist. Colonel Rion was survived by 5 dau-

ughters; Floride, married Jake Barron; Margaret; Lucy, married Edmunds, ---, Clarke; Kitty, married Fleming McMaster; Hanna, married W.V. Abell, Leroy Williams, Dr. Alphous Baker. Sons: Preston, married Sallie Huffman; William, married Mary Addison; Holbrook, married Helen Berry.

Submitted by Alike A.B. Walker, Genealogist of Thomas Woodward D.A.R Chapter, Winnsboro, S.C. 1964. Other Rion data will be added in 1965.

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He and mother inmates of John C. Calhoun home.

Member of Clarisophic Society at S. C. College.

Page 2 - He was under patronage of Calhoun and Preston.

Was brilliant boy at fourteen years old.

Orator appointed by college faculty.

Admitted to bar in Winnsboro, S. C., Teacher.

Page 3 - Colonel of 25th S. C. Regiment. Raised company.

Wounded. Offered command of 22nd Regiment.

Also, Secretary-of-War offered role of Brigadier-General. He declined both.

Page 4 - Civilian honors. Selected by 3 railroads and several corporations in S. C. as counsel for them.

Marriage.

Page 5 - His children.