



Local History

by Jim Hayes

Canada's Top Confederate Was Stationed Here.

Colonel James Henry Rion was born in Montreal, Canada on April 17, 1828. He was of English extraction and his father was a British officer.

He came to Pendleton, S.C. as a young boy with his widowed

mother. After graduating from South Carolina College (USC) in 1850, he studied law in the firm of Calhoun and Noble. As a young adult, he practiced law in Winnsboro, S.C. and taught math at the State College.

In the War Between the States, Rion led the 7th S.C. Battalion and the 22nd S.C. Infantry Volunteers. Most of the battles and scrimmages in which he was engaged took place in the Carolinas.

He commanded a night attack on the Morris Island trespassers on the night of July 15th, 1863. Of the 150 men carried into the action, he had ten wounded, including himself. He had been bayoneted. "One man dead and three missing," was stated on his battle report. He went on to claim three POW's and forty dead enemy.

After the War, Col. Rion helped frame (and sign) the 1865 S.C. Constitution. When the Hayes-Tilden Affair came along in 1877, he was a member of the Wade Hampton negotiating team.

He died at Winnsboro on December 12, 1886 at the age of 58.

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