

Messrs. Davis and McCulloch were licensed. At Duncan's Creek, Oct. 14, 1788. Ordered to supply at Williamsburg, Indian Town, Hopewell, P. D. and Indian, each one Sabbath. Preached the ordination sermon of John Newton, the Rev. Francis Cummins giving the charge; "and Mr. Newton was solemnly set apart to the exercise of the whole work of the gospel ministry, by *fasting*, prayer, and the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery. Mr. Newton was received by Messrs. Park and Gilham, in the name of the people who called him in Georgia." Present at meeting at Bullock's Creek, Oct. 13, 1789; chosen Moderator; appointed to supply one Sabbath at Waxhaw. Present at Presbytery, Bethesda, Sept. 28, 1790. Appointed to preside at the ordination of Mr. Stephenson, at Williamsburg, to take place on the first Wednesday in December. Subsequently to this, for several years, his name appears among the absentees, and is mentioned last in the records of Presbytery, April 8, 1794. Thus Mr. Edmonds appears through life, till incapacitated by physical infirmity, to have been a laborious and useful minister, and to have performed good service in laying the foundations of Zion, and strengthening the things which were ready to die, in the early periods of our Southern Church. H.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF MAJOR JOHN JAMES, AN UN-  
DAUNTED PATRIOT AND SOLDIER OF THE REVOLUTION.

The subject of this memoir was born in Ireland, in the early part of the year 1732,\* and was the oldest son of William James, an officer who had served King William in his wars in Ireland against King James II. From this circumstance originated the name of Williamsburgh, which is now one of the Districts of South Carolina. William James, with his family and several of his neighbors in Ireland, emigrated to that District near the close of the year 1732. They assisted in making the

\*April 12th, A.D. 1732, Family Record of Wm. James; in his own handwriting.—H.

first settlements in that new, and then uninhabited section of country, and in honor of King William gave his name also, to a village laid out on the east side of Black River. The village is now called Kingstree, from a large white Pine Tree, as was supposed, which grew immediately on the east bank of the river, and was reserved, as all white pines were, in the old grants of land, for the use of the king, and hence the name of the village has been since called the Kingstree, and that of Williamsburg transferred to the District. To this place Maj. James was brought, when an infant, by his parents, in the fall of the year 1732. Of his early history, but little is now known by the writer,\* except that he and his compatriots, some of whose names will hereafter be given as conspicuous actors in the American Revolution, appear to have been trained up to defend and love their country. Their opportunities for acquiring anything more than a common English education in those days, as is well known, were slender indeed, but for obtaining religious instruction were very ample. He was not only brought up under the care and example of his pious parents, but under an eminent Presbyterian Minister, the Rev. John Rae, who officiated as the Pastor of the original Church of Williamsburgh, from the year 1743 to 1761, inclusive, and whose labors during that period were greatly blessed. At the commencement of the Revolutionary war, in 1775, Major James, being then forty-three years old, had acquired a competent portion, both of property, and of military reputation, having been a Captain of the Williamsburgh Militia, under King George III. Disapproving of the measures of the British government, he resigned his royal commission, but was soon after reinstated by a popular vote of the District in his former command. In the year 1776, he marched with his company, to the defence of Charleston. In 1779, he was with General Moultrie on his retreat before General Provost, and commanded 120 Riflemen in the skirmish at, or near Tulifing Bridge. When Charleston was besieged in May, 1780, Major James marched to its defence, but Governor John Rutledge or-

\* The first recollections of young James were of a stockade fort, and of war between the first settlers and the natives—H.

dered him back to embody and train the country militia. The town having surrendered to the British, he was appointed by a public meeting of the citizens of Williamsburgh, to wait on some of the conquerors, and to enquire of them and ascertain what terms they would give. Under this appointment Major James repaired to Georgetown, being\_ the nearest British post, which was then under the command of one Captain Ardesoif. Attired as a plain backwoodsman, James obtained an interview with Ardesoif, and in plain and prompt terms, entered at once upon the business of his mission. But when he demanded of Ardesoif the meaning of the British proclamation, offering freedom and protection to all who would acknowledge their allegiance to the British Crown, and asked upon what terms the submission of the citizens must be made, he was peremptorily informed "that the submission must be unconditional." To an enquiry whether the inhabitants were to be allowed to remain upon their plantations, he was answered in the negative.

"His majesty," said Ardesoif, "offers you a free pardon, of which you are undeserving, for you all ought to be hanged ; but it is only on condition that you take up arms in his cause." James, whom we may well suppose to have felt indignant at the tone and language in which he was addressed, very coolly replied, that "the people whom he came to *represent*, would scarcely submit on such conditions." The republican language of the worthy Major could not but provoke the representative of His Royal Majesty. The word *represent*, in particular, smote hardly on his ears; something too, in the cool, contemptuous manner of the Major may have contributed to his vexation. "*Represent*," he exclaimed, in a fury, "you d—d rebel, if you dare speak to me in such language, I will have you hung up at the yard arm." Ardesoif, it must be known, was a sea-captain. The ship which he commanded lay then, in the neighbouring river, the Sampit. He used only an habitual form of speech when he threatened the "yard arm," instead of the tree. Major James gave him no time to make the correction. He was entirely weaponless, and Ardesoif wore a sword, but the inequality in the moment of his

anger, was unfelt by the high-spirited citizen. Suddenly rising, he seized upon the chair on which he had been sitting, and with it, instantly floored the insolent subordinate at a blow.\* Then hurrying forth, without giving his enemy time to recover, he mounted his horse and made his escape to the woods before pursuit could be attempted. His people were soon assembled to hear his story. The exactions of the British, and the spirit which this gallant officer had displayed in resenting the insolence of Ardesoif, at once aroused their own. Required to take the field, it did not need a moment to decide "under which king." The result of their deliberations was the formation of the distinguished corps known in the latter period of the Revolutionary war, by the name of Marion's Brigade. Four Captains were chosen for as many companies. These were, Captains Wm. McCottry, Henry Mouzon, John James, (of the Lake,) a cousin of Major James, and John McCauley. These were all under the immediate command of Major James. He instantly put them in motion, and after some successful skirmishes against small parties of British and Tories, he advanced one of the four companies, McCottry's, to the pass of Lynch's Creek, at Witherspoon's Ferry. Here McCottry heard of Col. Tarlton's crossing the Santee at Lenuid's Ferry, and of his arrival at the plantation of Gavin Witherspoon, near the lower bridge on Black River. Here Maj. James determined to encounter him, and with all the means in his power to arrest his career through Williamsburgh, and his onward march to Camden. This movement was about the 20th or 25th July, 1780. Tarleton had been apprised of the gatherings of the people of Williamsburgh, under James, and at the head of some 200 or 250 well mounted cavalry, was pressing forward with the hope of surprising or meeting James at, or near the Kingstree. James, with as much solicitude to meet Tarleton and give him battle, advanced with his whole force, being probably, somewhat greater than Tarleton's, or about 300 men, chiefly undisciplined; and having arrived within five miles of Kingstree, he

\* "He suddenly seized the chair in which he was seated, *brandished it in the face* of the Captain, and making his retreat good," &c.—Judge James' Life of Marion, p 42.—H.

first despatched an active and intrepid young man, Henry Durant, as a spy, to examine narrowly, Tarleton's force and position, while he lay at the plantation of Gavin Witherspoon, near the lower bridge. Durant having very unexpectedly met Tarleton and his legion, who had just crossed at the lower bridge, on their route to Camden, and near the plantation of Robert Witherspoon, (the writer's father,) he, During, as may well be supposed, became panic-struck, suddenly wheeled his noble steed, on the back track, and being closely pursued by some twenty or more of Tarleton's best cavalry, for three-fourths of a mile, made a very narrow escape for his life, by leaving his horse, leaping a high and substantial fence, and running on foot, almost with the speed of a hunted stag, across Mr. R. Witherspoon's corn field, then well covered with pea-vines and a heavy crop of corn in the roasting-ear state, Durant having in that way, eluded the pursuit of the enemy. Tarleton rode up to the piazza steps of Mr. R. Witherspoon's house, demanding to know the name of the spy, and the object of his mission, as well as the particular position and force of Major James, (then only five miles distant,) whom he expressed, or affected a strong desire to meet. When informed by Mr. Witherspoon of James' proximity, and his expected arrival in the course of a few hours, Tarleton's purpose was suddenly changed, and instead of his great desire to meet his opponent in open combat, he felt himself compelled to proceed forthwith with his well-mounted legion, to the relief of Lord Rawdon, at Camden, nor did he allow himself scarcely a moment's delay as he passed through Kingstree, being still within five miles of James' encampment. It may be remarked here, that Tarleton was then accompanied by the notorious Elias Ball, of Wambaw, as aid or guide, who embarked for England at the close of the war, and his large estate being afterwards confiscated by the Legislature of his own State, the British Government settled upon him, a large pension during life, \$20 or \$25,000, as a reward for his active services and influence in their unrighteous cause. It may also be here stated, that Tarleton's legion of well-mounted cavalry, consisted then, of about two hundred and fifty man, and James' corps of

about one hundred more, *i.e.*, from three to four hundred mounted militia, chiefly riflemen, both undaunted and expert marksmen. The writer will be excused for speaking here of himself, by remarking, that though then, scarcely six years and five months old, (July 1780,) he still retains a distinct recollection of Durant's flight and extraordinary escape, and of Tarleton's interview with his father, especially of Tarleton's brandishing his sword over the head of the venerable patriot, and threatening to hew him down, if Durant was found in his house. The writer has, also, a clear recollection of seeing Durant as he passed through, or across the corn field, in front of the mansion, at his utmost speed, on his way to the river, without calling to tell the appalling news. This impressive scene forms, as he believes, one of the earliest reminiscences of the writer's life, being now in his 73d year. But to proceed with the narrative. It will be recollected, that as Durant did not return to make his report, and James being still anxious and fully prepared to encounter his high-spirited enemy, dispatched one of his intrepid officers, Capt. Wm. McCottry, at the head of seventy of his expert riflemen, in the afternoon of the same day, to watch Tarleton's movements. To McCottry's great disappointment, as well as that of his gallant commander, Tarleton had passed suddenly through Kingstree, some hours before McCottry reached the place, and was too far ahead to be overtaken by James, clearly evincing a desire or design to avoid the intended or expected combat.

Tarleton, on his route up Black River, and ten miles above Kingstree, burned the mansion of the patriot Mouzon, one of Major James' Captains. The next account which was had of Tarleton, was his arrival at the house of Mr. James Bradley, in Salem, (thirty miles above Kingstree,) on the next day, where, by a stratagem, he made a prisoner of that stern and influential patriot, and after forcibly conveying him to Camden, had this worthy gentleman closely confined in the loathesome jail of that place, and loaded for the space of seven months, with heavy bars of iron around his legs, the swarthy sears of which were visible to the day of his death, as were often seen by the writer when a lad at

the Latin Academy in Salem, and an inmate in Mr. Bradley's family. The British while in Camden, frequently had this worthy man conveyed to the gallows to witness the execution of some of his countrymen, and though frequently offered his freedom on condition of swearing allegiance to his Britanic Majesty, Mr. Bradley would as often fearlessly refuse; nor would they suffer his worthy lady to visit him while in prison. Major James, in that cruel and desultory warfare, which was waged against the people of Williamsburgh by the British under Watson and Wemyss, and other marauding parties of Tories, suffered severely, being reduced at one time, from easy circumstances in life, almost to poverty, having had his comfortable mansion and furniture burned, and nearly all of his moveable property, either destroyed or carried off. But with his accustomed firmness, he still bore up under all these misfortunes, and was willing to devote, not only all of his possessions, but life itself, if necessary, for the good of his country. After General Greene, as Commander-in-Chief, had superseded Gen. Marion, Major James continued to serve under the former, and fought with him at the battle of Eutaw, and it is believed, that no corps of Green's army fought with more determined bravery than that of Maj. James. It will be proper to mention here, that besides the officers before noticed, viz: McCottry, Mouzon, (Lake) James, and McCauley, of Santee, who, at first, formed James' corps, there were several others who soon afterwards joined, viz: Captains Gavin Witherspoon and his brother John of Pedee, Thomas Potts, of Black River, Daniel Conyers, of Salem, Jas. Witherspoon, of Kingstree, (the writer's brother,) John James, the son of the Major, &c., some of whom joined this distinguished corps after Gen. Marion assumed the command, about the middle of August, 1780. The Colonels who were at one time or other attached to this celebrated corps, were Peter and Hugh Horry, Postel, Giles, and Erwin, of Pee Dee, &c. It would, perhaps, not be extravagant to say, that no brigade of the same number of men and officers, were ever formed during the Revolutionary war, that was composed of braver, more enlightened, and more patriotic soldiers, than that of Marion, in a word,

“they were hard to beat.” The writer, who was personally acquainted and related to that brave and patriotic soldier, Major John James, would gladly extend this brief narrative, in some further reminiscences of his military services, and daring exploits, as in the hard fought battle at Quimby, and skirmishes at Black Mingo, Little Pee Dee, Georgetown, Lower Bridge on Black River, with the British Colonel, Watson, and more particularly at Wambaw Bridge, where, by a close pursuit of two British Dragoons, this intrepid man, weighing upwards of 200 pounds, was obliged to leap on horse-back, a chasm of that bridge of at least twelve or fifteen feet wide, and as high above the water. Some of his men, forgetting that he was still in the rear, had thrown off twelve or fifteen of the plank into the deep stream below, leaving all in the rear to cross over on the string pieces of the bridge. The writer has since seen this noted place, situated a few miles from, and south of the Santee River. The narrative of this worthy and most excellent man, will be continued in another number, embracing his civil and religious character, his age, family, usefulness in the Church of Indian Town, in which he acted as a prominent elder, his death, &c.

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SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE:

The sequel to the preceding history has not been found among the papers of Dr. Witherspoon. Whether he ever executed his purpose of writing at, is unknown. Major James died January 29, 1791, and was interred in the church yard at Indian Town. He was one of the first elders of that church, and held this office before the war of the Revolution. Probably the style of piety as manifested in himself and others, in connection with the church, was less staid and sober than in these days, is regarded as fitting those who represent the Christian name. When the first settlers located themselves in the country, all around was wild and savage; they dwelt at first, as we have seen the Irish in our own day, in rude houses of earth, or in “*shanties*.” Gradually they erect-

ed better dwellings, yet it was but slowly that the free and somewhat jovial life of the woodsman was laid aside. The forests abounded an game, and resounded with the crack of the rifle. Much of life was spent on horseback, and in hunting. And when the people met together, the men would now try the speed of their horses in the race, and now engage with the fairer portion of society in the merry dance; nor had the day of total abstinence from intoxicating drinks yet come, nor was it so very disgraceful to make merry with ones' friends, and to reach that point when the worse wine could be set forth safely, the men having well drunk. The times of that ignorance many a one winked at. Nor would we be surprised to learn that the brave soldier and good elder, sometimes was present and participated in those scenes. Stock was wild, and if a horse was wanted, one was caught from the woods, mounted and made to obey the rein. In feats of horsemanship the young men delighted, and to ride the fleetest horse and subdue the most ungovernable, was a point of emulation. There was not wanting to Maj. James some spice of humour. The belief in ghosts was common, and the spirit-world was not thought so separate as since it has been thought, from this our world of flesh and blood. Major James had as little dread of these imaginary beings, as he had of the enemy on the field of battle. On one occasion he was driven into the session house to escape the fury of a storm. Taking his saddle from his horse, he lay down to rest, and, using the saddle as a pillow, fell asleep. Night came on, and a neighbour entered to enjoy the same friendly shelter. In moving about, he stumbled over him unawares, and took to his heels in pale affright. James aroused, uttered a loud and terrific cry, which gave new speed to the trembling fugitive. Out of this rather *material* incident, a new ghost-story was now set on foot, which filled the neighbourhood with alarm, and continued current till the secret transpired, to the great mortification of the terrified neighbour. On another occasion, Maj. James, passing his father's grave one night, saw what appeared to be a white sheet, hanging over the cedar head-board which marked the spot. He supposed it placed there by design to inspire terror. He deter-

mined to see what it was. As he drew near he saw bare feet beneath the sheet, and soon a female form started up. It appeared that she had been engaged at her private devotions, and belonged to a company of “*movers*,” who had sought the church yard as their camp for the night. She besought him not to disturb her, and he, remonstrating with her for such exposure of herself, induced her to seek shelter within the walls of the church. Major James was universally respected. He was under six feet in height, with full breast, broad shoulders, weighing about 200, commanding in his look and gait, so as to attract attention in a crowd of men. He was in the battle of Eutaw, was at Snow Island with Marion, and held a seat in the first Legislative body, to which he was elected shortly after the battle of Eutaw.

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## ARTICLE VIII.

### CRITICAL NOTICES.

1. *Views of the Holy Trinity: Doctrinal and Experimental.* Charleston: JOHN RUSSELL, 256 King Street. 1853.

This book deserves a much more extended and elaborate notice than we are able to give of it now. It is in the form of a letter, divided into two general parts, each of which is again subdivided into chapters. The first part is occupied with what, in the title, are called Doctrinal, the second, with Experimental, views of the Trinity. It is the second part which constitutes the principal charm of the book. It is a rich repository of Christian experience, and though we are aware that many, who profess to take the Scriptures as their guide, will turn from such exercises as the writer describes with incredulity and disgust, will even denounce them as fanatical and absurd, we confess that we have recognized in them nothing but the genuine operations of the spirit of grace. That the persons of the Trinity should be manifested to the consciousness of believers, that they should have communion with