

## **Skirmish of Halfway Swamp    December 13, 1781**

**Location:**                Near Rimini, South Carolina

**Commanders:**            American – Gen. Francis Marion

                                  British – Maj. Robert McLeroth

**Casualties:**            American – 6 wounded

                                  British – 6 killed

On December 13, 1781, Francis Marion and his men came upon British Maj. Robert McLeroth escorting 200 green recruits from England along with some seasoned British regulars. Their destination was to deliver these recruits to Cornwallis' army at Winnsboro, SC just below Camden.

Marion began by firing upon the rear guard causing McLeroth to wheel around and begin an attack. Marion's men attacked the flank and front, killing or wounding several. McLeroth, who was at a disadvantage, sent his men into an open field behind a rail fence. As a waiting game became tedious, Marion issued a unique challenge – 20 of their best marksmen against 20 of his to settle the question with a duel. Later that day, the duelists were picked from each side and the two lines faced each other. They marched forward to within 100 yards when suddenly the British shouldered their arms and retreated back to their main body. Both sides retired for the night to plan the next day's operations.

It turns out that McLeroth was stalling for time. He had sent for reinforcements. He set campfires burning to create appearances and before dawn slipped away toward Singleton's Mill, nearly 15 miles away. It was one of the few times that the Swamp Fox had been outfoxed. McLeroth left his supply wagons and heavy baggage behind, a costly sacrifice that indicated how much he wanted to avoid a general engagement.

### **Sources**

Bass, Robert D., *The Swamp Fox The Life and Campaigns of General Francis Marion*, 1959

Oller, John, *The Swamp Fox, How Francis Marin Saved the American Revolution*, 2016