

Even in 1850s, tourists hung out at Hanging Rock

More odds and ends:

■ At Hanging Rock below Lancaster, where a major Revolutionary War battle was fought, there was a resort in the 1850s that attracted a large number of visitors. The main attraction was the

Hanging Rock Mineral Spring.

Those who came to this "watering place" were generally attracted by the healing waters and the bath-

houses, but there were other attractions. There was a racetrack that rivalled the tracks at

Stateburg and Aiken. Other amusements included a billiard hall and a tennis alley. In 1994 the Lancaster County Historical Commission placed a marker at the site.

■ In May 1901, the Rock Hill Buggy Co. shipped more than 500 buggies, including some that were sold overseas and as far away as South Africa. John Gary Anderson's company was thriving. That June, the company organized a Carriage Maker's Club limited to employees of the company.



Louise Pettus

NEARBY HISTORY

The prospectus stated that the club had 10 rooms — a lecture room, reading and lounging rooms, billiard parlors, smoking room, bathrooms, kitchen and kindergarten room. The lecture room was for discussions on the best methods of carriage-making. The kindergarten was for the young children of members, who would be supervised by Winthrop students under the direction of Miss Minnie Macfeat. There were 75 charter members.

■ There was a great sesquicentennial (150 years) celebration Oct. 7, 1930, of the colonists' victory over the British at Kings Mountain in 1780. The featured speaker was President Herbert Hoover. The governor of South Carolina, John G. Richards, and the N.C. governor, O. Max Gardner, both made welcoming speeches. The National Guard was present in such numbers that it was said to be the largest gathering of National Guard soldiers in history.

Both York and Rock Hill had set up the dates of Oct. 3-7 as homecoming days and announced that they expected 100,000 people to attend the Kings Mountain ceremonies.

President Hoover came by train and was in South Carolina for four hours. He ate on the train both coming and going, which was a great relief for the welcoming committee — they didn't have to figure out how to feed him at the mountain.

■ In 1926, the S.C. attorney general, John McDaniel, ruled that at no time shall an automobile travel at a greater rate of speed than is reasonable nor shall an automobile exceed 35 mph.

■ Did buffalo ever roam in this area? Yes, not only are there mentions of buffalo in the reports of traders and travelers but there is a Buffalo Creek in York County and a community called Buffalo in upper Kershaw County. It is thought that the earliest roads were originally buffalo paths (deer don't create paths). The buffalo tended to follow the ridges or high ground, and their weight and hooves packed the ground. The Indians found it easy to follow the same paths.

An early historian of the S.C. upcountry, John H. Logan, wrote about the buffalo country of the 17th century and the early 18th century as a region "... interspersed with forests, and prairies and vast brakes of cane — the latter often stretching in unbroken lines of evergreen for hundreds of miles...."

Logan wrote that as late as 1775 (the eve of the Revolutionary War), "the woodlands, carpeted with grass, and the wild pea-vine growing as high as a horse's back, and wild flowers of every hue, were the constant admiration of the traveler and adventurous pioneer."

The widespread meadows, especially in the blackjack areas, along with cane and pea-vine provided an excellent food supply for the buffalo as well as for deer and numerous small animals.

Louise Pettus is a retired history professor from Winthrop University. Her column appears Saturdays.

“Now's the time to Get 'em in & Get 'em Growin'!”