



## Editor / Publisher's Notes

### Digging for Information

New and follow-through archaeology projects at several interesting South Carolina Revolutionary War sites are underway. South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology's (SCIAA) military archaeology team of Steve Smith and Jim Legg have finished some "quick and dirty" fieldwork for the Palmetto Conservation Foundation at Gen. Thomas Sumter's Blackstock's Plantation battlefield on the Tyger River. Smith's and Legg's work at Continental Col. John Laurens' Coosawhatchie battlefield and SC Patriot militia Col. William Harden's capture of Fort Balfour will be reported in a future edition of *SCAR*. Smith and Legg are also back in the field working at the Battle of Camden site with some highly skilled volunteers doing a more extensive metal detection survey, some ground penetrating radar studies, and again interviewing, cataloguing and locating old finds on the master GIS system collections gleaned over the years. If you have a Battle of Camden artifact collection, please contact *SCAR* about sharing your data. Smith and Legg's excellent and detailed phase one report on the Battle of Camden is at the printer and will be available for sale from the Palmetto Conservation Foundation. Scott Butler, military archaeologist with Brockington & Associates of Norcross, Ga. is wrapping up a SC DOT-funded survey at the site of Continental Col. Abraham Buford's defeat at the Battle of the Waxhaws (Buford's Massacre) by Lt. Col. Banastre Tarleton in anticipation of highway improvements at the modern intersection of SC Highways 9 and 522. He has located a wide musket ball scatter, possibly indicative of the battle. Brockington has also been awarded a contract by the Palmetto Conservation Foundation's Military Heritage Program to do phase two reconnaissance at the Eutaw Springs Battlefield in Orangeburg County, SC. The Hobkirk Hill Battlefield archaeology project is underway using the professional-amateur model described in *SCAR*. *SCAR* will keep you informed on the findings of these boots-on-the-ground research.

John Robertson has an exciting on-line project he has been refining for several years to the point it has become almost encyclopedic. Please spend a few minutes surfing his site, especially the collection of links to online books and articles on the Revolutionary War. The [ONLINE LIBRARY of the SOUTHERN CAMPAIGN of the REVOLUTIONARY WAR](#) is great for anyone wanting to read an old text; this is the place most likely to produce a link to an on-line version. This is only one of the on-line resources compiled by John. *SCAR* strongly suggests you take a quick tour.

### A Story Shared is a Site Spared

*SCAR* has future articles planned on the Second Siege of Augusta, and Battles of Hobkirk's Hill, Osborne's Landing, and Eutaw Springs. *SCAR* wants to publish materials on the Battles of Long Cane, 2d Cedar Spring-Thompson's Peach Orchard-Wofford's Ironworks-Clifton, Ramsour's Mill, Green Spring, Briar Creek, Great Bridge and Beattie's Mill. We are looking for reports, pension statements, private letters, maps & plats, and archaeological finds to explain the action and put these battles on the ground. If you will share information you have gathered on these battles, either privately or to submit something for publication, it would be greatly appreciated.

*SCAR* has located historians who are researching SC Patriot militia Gen. Thomas Sumter's Battles at Blackstock's Plantation and Hanging Rock; Gen. "Mad" Anthony Wayne's 1782 Campaign to free Georgia; and Gen. Nathanael Greene's Battles of Hobkirk Hill and Eutaw Springs. *SCAR* will eventually share the same

with you. If you have any information on these battles, please let *SCAR* know so we may share information you have gathered on these battles.

### *SCAR* Corps of Discovery – Early Spring Battlefielding Season

Now that the mild winter is blowing away to the earliest flowers, the cold nights are keeping most of the snakes, chiggers, and ticks in check, and the poison ivy has not refoliated, the Southern Campaigns **Corps of Discovery** invites those who enjoy researching, finding, and touring the actual Revolutionary War sites to join us in explorations. You are invited to join in the fun.

After starting the Race for the Dan River, Lt. Gen. Charles Earl Cornwallis was encamped on the old battlefield at Ramsour's Mill on January 25 thru January 28, 1781. To lighten his Army for the chase, Cornwallis burned his heavy baggage converting his army into a "flying army". Enjoy many more stories from the loquacious Lincoln County, NC historian Darrell Harkey as he leads a **Corps of Discovery tour** following Lord Cornwallis' march through southern North Carolina on his infamous Race to the Dan River on **March 11, 2006**. We will stop at Lincolnton, NC at the site of Lord Cornwallis' destruction of his heavy baggage on the Ramsour's Mill battlefield. See the Calendar of Upcoming Events for details.



Military historian and living history expert Patrick J. O'Kelley will lead a **Corps of Discovery** field trip on **April 1, 2006** to Revolutionary War sites in central North Carolina. Starting at Cross Creek (OK, modern Fayetteville, NC) we will go from Fort Bragg to the coast. This will include the sites of the Piney Bottom Massacre on Fort Bragg and the important [pre-Declaration of Independence] Patriot victory at Moore's Creek Bridge. Patrick knows the way around Fort Bragg, so that alone will be interesting since the ground is almost unchanged from what it was then, dirt roads and all. Patrick also relates that the U. S. Army's Airborne and Special Operations Museum in Fayetteville is terrific. See the Calendar of Upcoming Events for details.

Plan to join us as it sounds like fun! *SCAR* will keep you posted on the details in the Calendar of Upcoming Events. Upon invitation of a host and guide, *SCAR* will publish a meeting date, time and tentative Revolutionary War related sites to be visited. All interested are invited to car pool, join the hike and enjoy informal on-the-ground, interpretive presentations of research. A volunteer host/planner/guide is mandatory to plan the trip, to secure landowner permission for entry on private property in advance, to seek out local expertise, and to do some basic research on the sites. *SCAR* takes suggestions of field trips and volunteers to lead some trips. Public sites can also be included to insure knowledgeable guides are available to the group. These field trips are not "professionally" led, organized, or always presented by world-class scholars; however, they are free (except small admission fees to parks and the like) and you supply your meals and transportation. Your participation contributes to the dynamic exchange of information. Often the Corps' discovery of little-known battlefields creates the forum. **Tell us about your research and trips to discover our Revolutionary War heritage. Share in *SCAR*.**

Charles B. Baxley..... [Editor-Publisher](#)  
David P. Reuwer..... [grammarian & plenipotentiary](#)  
Steven J. Rauch..... [calendar](#)  
Jim Picuch..... [book reviews](#)  
Werner Willis..... [artist](#)  
John A. Robertson..... [cartographer](#)  
B. Caroline Baxley..... [Webmistress](#)

*Southern Campaigns of the American Revolution* is dedicated to the study of the War for American Independence in the Southern Department from 1760 to 1789. We facilitate the exchange of information on the Southern Campaigns' Revolutionary War sites, their preservation, historic signage, interpretation, artifacts, and archaeology as well as the personalities, military tactics, units, logistics, and strategy, and the political leadership of the states. We highlight professionals and amateurs actively engaged in Revolutionary War research, preservation and interpretation and encourage an active exchange of information. All are invited to submit articles, pictures, documents, events, and suggestions. Please help us obtain information from the dusty archive files, the archaeology departments, and knowledge base of local historians, property owners and artifact collectors. We feature battles and skirmishes, documents, maps, artifacts, Internet links, and other stories. We also facilitate the discovery, preservation, interpretation, and promotion of historic sites on the ground.

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*Southern Campaigns of the American Revolution's* letter and email publication policy: the author must sign all letters and emails and include a telephone number and return address for verification. We reserve the right to select those letters and emails that contribute to the cause, and to edit them for clarity and length. Letters and emails published may not reflect the opinion of your editor. Please submit all proposed articles as a MS Word document.

1776 Virginia Light Dragoon used in the banner is from an illustration by Charles M. Lefferts (1873-1923) now in the collections of The New-York Historical Society. Later cavalry uniforms were probably green or buff. Used by permission of The New-York Historical Society.

Please contact us at P. O. Box 10, Lugoff, South Carolina 29078-0010 or [cbbaxlev@charter.net](mailto:cbbaxlev@charter.net) or (803) 438-1606 (h) or (803) 438-4200 (w). [www.southerncampaign.org](http://www.southerncampaign.org) ★

## Placefinders

John Robertson is cataloguing and posting on a limited access Internet site a data exchange of Revolutionary War site maps and documentation – this exchange is called “placefinders”. If you are interested, please contact John at [jr1@jrshelbv.com](mailto:jr1@jrshelbv.com).

## Huzzah!

A SCAR's hat's off this month goes to Dr. Walt Andrae for his excellent US Army training film featuring the Battle of Kettle Creek [February 14, 1779] and to Walt and Steven J. Rauch for their boots-on-the-ground battlefield tours at the Kettle Creek battlefield in Wilkes County, Georgia.

## SCAR Roadtrips

March promises to be a great month for getting out in the southland. Guilford Courthouse 225<sup>th</sup> Anniversary events. See the Calendar of Upcoming Events for details. We hope to see you there!

## Help Wanted

SCAR needs the services of a graphic artist and someone to help with magazine layout. We also need an article and photos of the February 11 and 12 Boyd's Ferry and 229<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Moore's Creek Bridge events. We are also looking for columnist and feature editors for future SCAR editions. Volunteers are requested to contact SCAR editor Charles B. Baxley at [cbbaxlev@charter.net](mailto:cbbaxlev@charter.net).

## Event Planning

Planning is complete for the **Nathaniel Greene Symposium and Battlefield Tours** to be held on **April 21-23, 2006** in Lugoff and Camden, SC. SCAR hopes you can join us for our learning, sharing, fellowship, and entertainment. [See page 5 for more details and registration information.]

**June 2-3 Augusta, Georgia Conference and Corps of Discovery** battlefield tour.

SCAR will sponsor a conference on Gen. Nathanael Greene's greatest battlefield victory at the **Battle of Eutaw Springs** on **September 9, 2006** in Eutawville, SC. Noted Revolutionary War scholar and author John “Jack” Buchanan will keynote this conference. Mark this date on your calendar for great presentations, a battlefield tour (no you will not need SCUBA gear), commemorative ceremony, lively debates, and grand fellowship. ★

## New Fully Searchable CD Version of *Southern Campaigns of the American Revolution* Available

John Robertson, in cooperation with SCAR, is producing a fully searchable, composite compact disk (CD) of all issues of SCAR.

**Features/advantages of the SCAR magazine on Compact Disk (CD):** Each release of the SCAR on CD include full version of all previous SCAR newsletter up to and including the most recent at the time the CDs are mailed out. A menu is provided on the SCAR on CD that allows one to jump immediately to any issue of particular interest. Each issue of the magazine comes up on your computer displaying its first page, with a bar on the left showing "bookmarks" which function as table of contents;

one click allows you to jump directly to any magazine feature or article, and also provides a link back to the main menu. For some who have the capability of viewing the Adobe versions of the magazine on your computer, but have no way of downloading them from the Internet on your computer, the SCAR on CD will provide an alternative to receiving the expensive to copy and mail printed versions. The Adobe files show all images and maps in color, unlike the photocopied versions that are in black and white. For those would like to have printed color versions, it is possible to print (or to have your local Kinko's, Staples, OfficeMax, UPS Store, etc., do it for you) the color versions from the SCAR on CD just the same as it is possible to do with a downloaded version on your home computer's printer. Since all issues to date will be included on each SCAR on CD, this will require no hard drive space on your computer. When a new issue of the SCAR on CD is obtained, the old one may be discarded, donated to your local library, or given to a friend. Cartographer John Robertson ([jr1@jrshelby.com](mailto:jr1@jrshelby.com)) is offering a fully searchable and complete set of all issues of SCAR on one compact disk for sale quarterly. Those desiring to receive the next issue of the SCAR on CD should send a check for \$20.00 payable to John Robertson at 500 Woodside Drive, Shelby NC 28150.

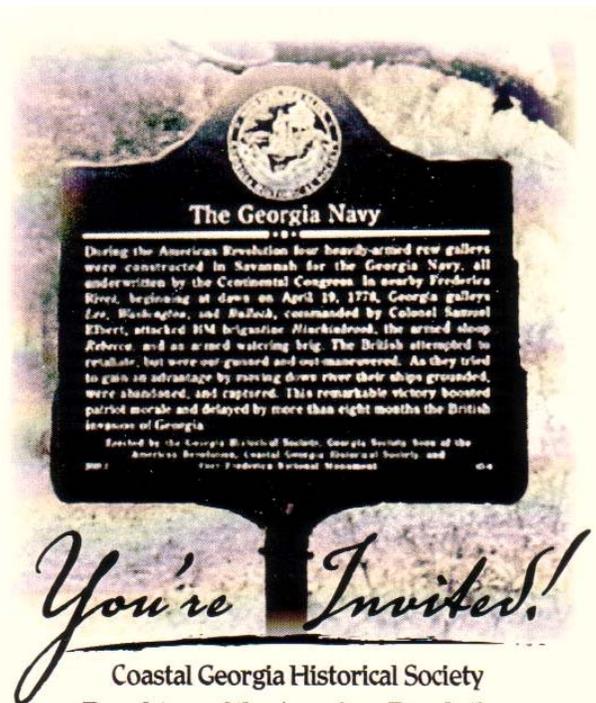
### Cowpens National Battlefield Restoration Plan Available Online

Palmetto Conservation has been working with the National Park Service for the past three years to restore Cowpens National Battlefield to its condition at the time of the battle 225 years ago. Copies of the report and restoration plan are now available online at [www.palmettoconservation.org](http://www.palmettoconservation.org).



After a long fight with cancer, American Patriot, amateur historian and avid collector Merle A. "Mac" McGee (1928 - 2006) passed away in February. He shared his love for those who fought for our country's independence and placed a portion of his great Revolutionary War artifact collection at Ninety Six National Military Site. He served a career with distinction in the

United States Air Force. Mac, shown with shovel and torch at hand, dressed as a miner and sapper explains Gen. Nathanael Greene's 1781 siege plan to visitors during an evening tour of Ninety Six battlefield where he volunteered. ★



Coastal Georgia Historical Society  
Daughters of the American Revolution  
Fort Frederica National Monument and  
Sons of the American Revolution

*invite you to attend the celebration of*

**Georgia Patriots Day**

**Wednesday, April 19, 2006, at 10:00 a.m.**

*Fort Frederica National Monument*

*St. Simons Island, Georgia*

The Celebration will focus on the Anniversary of the capture of three British ships on the Frederica River on April 19, 1778 and will include Sons of the American Revolution Color Guard and descendants. Wreaths, Bagpipe and Musket Salutes will be presented to honor the Georgia seamen and soldiers. No admission charged to participants.



**Georgia Society Sons  
of the American Revolution**

1-912-634-1293

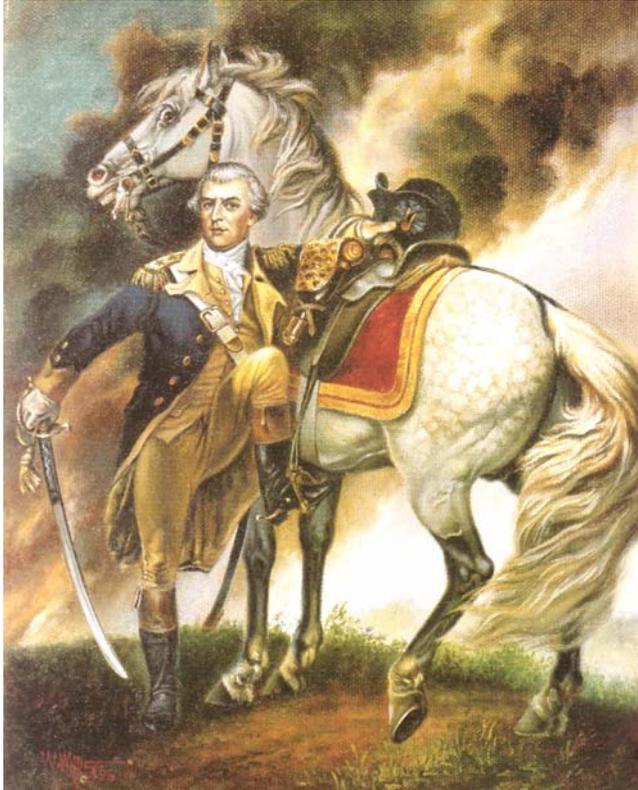
*Designed by Edward Fluker - Ocmulgee Chapter, GASSAR*

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## Major General Nathanael Greene Symposium & Battlefield Tours April 21-23, 2006

by Joanna B. Craig



**“General Nathanael Greene: The Fighting Quaker” by Werner Willis.**

Historic Camden Revolutionary War Site hosts the Major General Nathanael Greene Symposium and Battlefield Tours on April 21-23, 2006 in celebration of the 225th anniversaries of the American Revolution in South Carolina and the Battle of Hobkirk’s Hill.

The symposium will be held at the Best Western Motel in Lugoff, SC. Friday’s session opens at 1:00 pm with lead presenter, Dennis M. Conrad, early American historian for the US Navy and editor of the final volumes of the encyclopedic *Papers of General Nathanael Greene*. He will discuss Gen. Greene’s fight in Camden at Hobkirk’s Hill. Robert M. Calhoon, professor of history at UNC-Greensboro, author of numerous books on the Loyalists and the impact of religion in the Revolution, will review Greene, the politician and his moderate statesmanship. Novelist Charles F. Price will discuss Greene’s Eutaw Springs battle based on his research and writing of historical fiction. Jim McIntyre, a Camden Symposia regular and history instructor at Moraine Valley Community College will present the final paper of the afternoon. McIntyre will focus on Greene as a soldier-statesman. Friday evening the Historic Camden Foundation trustees will host a candlelight reception at the reconstructed Joseph Kershaw House, located at 107-acre outdoor museum complex. Now known as the Kershaw-Cornwallis House, the original colonial Georgian style mansion was commandeered by Charles, Lord Cornwallis to serve as British headquarters during the British occupation of Camden in 1780-81.

Saturday’s session at the Best Western will start at 8:30 am. Greg Massey, professor of history at Freed-Hardeman University, will discuss Greene’s actions in North Carolina after the Guilford Courthouse battle. Another Camden symposia

regular, Larry Babits, professor of archaeology at East Carolina University and author of the acclaimed analysis of the Battle of Cowpens, *A Devil of a Whipping...*, will present a discussion on battlefield archaeology: “Rifle Shot and Buck n’ Ball.” Jim Piecuch, starting this summer as a history professor at Kennesaw State University, Ga., will address “Greene and the Question of the Arming of Black Soldiers.” The final speaker before lunch will be John “Jack” Buchanan, author of *The Road to Guilford Courthouse*, *The Road to Yorktown*, and other books, who will discuss the partisan war. The Saturday academic session will close with a panel discussion about Nathanael Greene and his Southern Department command moderated by John Maass, symposium program coordinator.

Saturday afternoon 50-60 Revolutionary War re-enactors, encamped at Historic Camden for the weekend, will depict tactics from Battle of Hobkirk’s near the battle site. The April 25, 1781 engagement, waged between Greene and Francis, Lord Rawdon, British commandant of South Carolina and Camden post, caused Greene to reflect: **“We fight, get beat, and fight again...”**

After a brief 225th anniversary commemorative ceremony, attendees will enjoy a guided walking tour of the battlefield, which is located in one of three national registered districts in Camden. An elegant dinner and premier performance of a dramatic monologue on the “Fighting Quaker,” written and presented by noted British thespian and playwright, Howard Burnham, of Columbia, SC, will be the memorable finale to the symposium.

The early bird fees for the Greene symposium, due April 5<sup>th</sup>, are \$115.00 per person and \$220.00 per couple. The regular fees, due April 12<sup>th</sup>, are \$135.00 per person and \$260.00 per couple. Historic Camden and Kershaw County Historical Society members are offered a special rate of \$100.00 per person and \$180.00 per couple, due by April 15<sup>th</sup>. Registration fees include the scholarly presentations, candlelight reception, Saturday lunch, battle skirmish, Hobkirk’s Hill battle site guided tour, and Saturday dinner theater. Other registration options, due April 12<sup>th</sup>, include: Friday or Saturday session only \$60.00 per person, Saturday session and dinner theater \$80.00 per person, and dinner theater only \$35.00 per person.

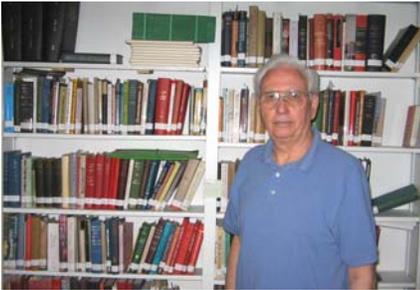
A post-symposium battlefield bus tour on Sunday for \$35.00 per person and includes lunch. Departing from Historic Camden, attendees will travel to the Eutaw Springs battlefield on the shores of Lake Marion, by Fort Motte and SC Patriot Col. William “Danger” Thomson’s Plantation, Belleville. We will return from Eutaw Springs by Fort Watson and Greene’s camp in the High Hills of the Santee. Guides will be Charles B. Baxley and David P. Reuwer, acclaimed battle sites tour guides of Historic Camden’s Tarleton, Camden Campaign, and Thomas Sumter symposia. An attorney, Baxley is past president of the Kershaw County Historical Society and editor-publisher of the in-depth magazine, *Southern Campaigns of the American Revolution*. Formerly an adjunct professor of historic preservation at the College of Charleston, attorney Reuwer was the historian and lead investigator of the 2002 ABPP survey of the Eutaw Springs battlefield. Sunday’s tour will encompass Greene’s Eutaw Springs fall 1781 campaign that pushed the British from the midlands of South Carolina to their tidewater enclave around Charleston.

Registrations for this Symposium and bus tour are limited by facility space. Payments may be made by cash, MasterCard/Visa, or check payable to Historic Camden. For information, free brochure or to register, please contact: Joanna Craig, Director - Historic Camden Revolutionary War Site, 222 Broad Street, P.O. Box 710, Camden, SC 29021; (803) 432-9841; fax (803) 432-3815; e-mail: [hiscamden@camden.net](mailto:hiscamden@camden.net) or see website postings on [www.historic-camden.net](http://www.historic-camden.net) and [www.southerncampaign.org](http://www.southerncampaign.org). ★

## A Short Time Spent With Dr. Bobby Moss

by Mickey C. Beckham

We in the South have our historians, our researchers and our writers. It will surprise people just learning about the American Revolution (and Lord knows that will be most of our population) that there is a need and academic place for all three types. The even better news is that when someone has the talent to do all of them, and be nationally recognized, that person is a full-blown scholar of legendary status. Meet, or reacquaint yourself with, Dr. Bobby Gilmer Moss of Blacksburg, SC.



**Dr. Bobby G. Moss in his library.**  
Photo by Charles B. Baxley.

“Bobby” as he insists on being called has been a force of research for American history for so long that he has become the “rock from whence we are hewn.” Other outstanding writers, who have done brilliant work have looked back and thanked him for thousands of hours of work in detailing and examining data and confirming it.

Dr. Lawrence E. Babits in his definitive book *Devil of a Whipping*, University of North Carolina Press, begins his acknowledgements with: “*This work is heavily indebted to Bobby G. Moss, Limestone College, Gaffney, South Carolina. He created the initial database of Cowpens participants. If it were not for his drudgework, this study would not be possible.*” That is pretty commendable stuff considering that Babits’ book is the piece that is praised the most when it comes to the Battle at The Cowpens, the acknowledged Southern turning point in the winning of the war for independence.

I have always been impressed that when Hollywood and Mel Gibson came calling to film “The Patriot” the actor playing the role of Cornwallis made the same trip which publisher Charles B. Baxley, historian Michael Scoggins and I made. The British actor Tom Wilkinson sat in the same chair as one of us and listened to the same Bobby Moss describe Cornwallis and the American Revolution. The studio did it for accuracy of the times

in 1780 and to make money; we did it for the same accuracy and to learn much more about the Revolution. Both succeeded.

Dr. Babits is correct when he used the phrase “drudgework.” The type of “drudge” Dr. Moss did in accumulating all his information would have finished off most researchers years ago. This accumulation was made more of a gargantuan task by traveling to Europe at his own expense, going back and forth to that continent, and copying records that are guarded and watched by the British scholars much like atomic secrets of post-World War II. Finally he said he wanted to just “buy the information.” How much information,” they asked? “All of it.” They blanched.

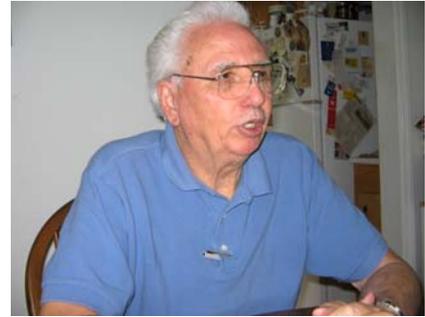
But by this time they knew they were not dealing with a brash, stereotypical “ugly” American, but a serious dead-on and pleasant, unbelievably determined man. They sold him all of it when he explained even further that he would save money not having to travel to Europe, pay airfare, meals and lodging, and plus, they would not have him around. All this if he could just get copies of everything he needed.

This is the same tenacious and dogged Dr. Moss who for years pursued the facts that he also holds in his brilliant mind and with which to regale you for hours on end. Truly, if there is such a thing as an “oral history”, then Bobby Moss is just that.

On this trip Mr. Baxley, Mr. Scoggins and I went to lunch with Bobby at a local restaurant that can only be described as a “local eatery.” It has good food, none of it “fast”, and has the required chrome and 1950’s tables in a room so big it looks like a small warehouse. It was perfect for the setting of eating home fried food (with emphasis on “fried”) and listening to Bobby talk about details that you would have paid a fee and stood in line to hear. We then went back to the house that he had built so it would give the maximum light and afford him the space to do what he does so well...in fact, better than anyone: study, research and write. His house, built on a ridge overlooking a valley with a view twenty-five miles away of beautiful up-country in Cherokee County, is the only house I know that was built by a writer specifically so he can write.

But Bobby has also been the willing victim of his own success. Most of the space away from his bedroom is loaded with file cabinets and then more file cabinets. It has walking around space that is grudgingly giving way to more file cabinets. Those cabinets contain the most meticulous files, indexed cards and information that one will find in a historians home or office. It is a monument of sorts to his work of collecting and perusing for how many hours? Just say

thousands and then be satisfied you may have underestimated the time he has spent in his academic lifetime of study.



What may be the most intriguing of Bobby’s trappings is his office and its size. One would be tempted to encourage him to ask the Guinness World Book of Records what is the smallest yet most functional office of a University Professor?

His office is a womb. It is away from the world but “fed” by the “umbilical” information around him in a safe and secure academic environment. It may be the near perfect creation of a mental haven. He has to get up just to get files from his cabinet. Just for thinking space, this seems to be wonderfully unique. Plus the results speak for themselves. Look at the prodigious work he has produced. His computer is right in your lap where it belongs. All records, files and necessary space is used to 100% efficiency. Indeed his office is not an office in space; it is a true closet. It more or less dictates total absence from 2006 and all the world’s problems and encourages just whatever is in front of you on a screen or in a book. Bobby Moss may be way ahead of his time in closeting himself away and producing information. Maybe we all should reconfigure our workspaces.

There are more surprises about him. Bobby is an ordained Baptist minister. Yes, he has preached from the pulpit just as he has “preached” from a local diner at lunch with his friends about the truth in American history. He is also a former captain at Fork Union Military Academy where he held forth as a teacher and lecturer. He earned a prestigious degree from St. Andrews University. Bobby taught for years before retiring at one of the least-known liberal arts colleges in North and South Carolina, Limestone College in Gaffney SC. Probably one reason is that Limestone College is near his home which land also was occupied and saw marches by both British and American forces during the Revolution. This fittingly almost makes the ground “hallowed” for the man whose family long-owned this property came back to settle there and build the house where he would do his life’s work. It also shows further his dedication to the people in his

area instead of a life at an Ivy League school where he most certainly would have gained more national and international recognition for his seminal work.

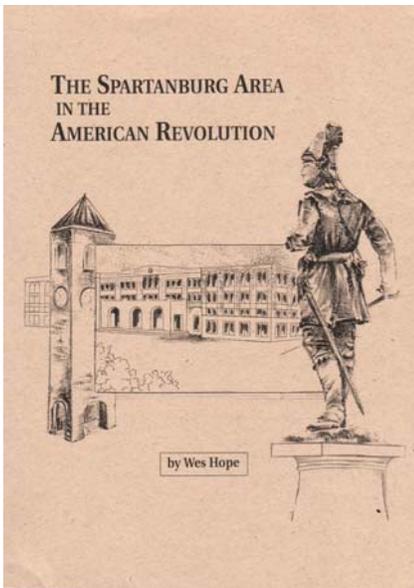
Dr. Bobby Moss is unique. Thank goodness he is. Before you leave, he walks you to the back porch that overlooks that vista and talks about butterflies and buzzards that migrate right past his back door over the view of the valley. He talks about the monarch butterflies that go to South America beginning in the Northeast and sometimes entirely cover one of the trees in his yard. He tells this with such knowledge and conviction that you listen quietly, attentively and enthralled at his descriptions and words.

Then it hits you. Bobby Moss has researched and knows these subjects of butterflies and buzzards and their migration. This is the same man at the 225<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Cowpens to whom people came to his table, bought his books and treated him with the reverence of a man of the cloth as well as that of a great historian. And they would be right on both accounts. ★

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## ***The Spartanburg Area in the American Revolution* by Wes Hope** **Book Review**



This book provides a narrative, interpretive and illustrated history of the previously underestimated role of the Spartanburg area in the Revolution. Let me preface my review by admitting a substantial amount of bias towards this work. I had the privilege of knowing and briefly working with the author as a fellow volunteer on a project with the Spartanburg County Historical Association. His reputation as a man passionately dedicated

to local history impressed me. I, too, have a high regard for Spartanburg's often-neglected contributions to the American War for Independence, so I greeted the release of this book with great enthusiasm. I mention here that the book was published in two editions with two different formats: the first edition has spiral binding and the much improved 2003 second edition is available from the Spartanburg Regional Museum of History.

The reader will be treated to a history within a history when reading the acknowledgements and forward of this book. In these sections, Hope details how the book came to be and how he was influenced by a wide range of materials and personal experiences. Authors: Lyman Draper, J. B. O. Landrum, John Buchanan, and Lawrence Babis are his most heavily quoted references. It may appear when reviewing the bibliography that this book is light on primary sources, but the author notes that many of his primary accounts were drawn from this collection of works. I suppose he could have referenced the original sources but, at least for amateur historians like me, it is easier to reference books on my shelf than it is to run to some archive or another remote location if I need to check facts.

Hope shows the reader how the geography and diverse make-up of the population (especially the concentration of influential and charismatic leaders in the area) caused a chain of events that ultimately led to the Patriot victory, rather than treating it as mere happenstance that so many events occurred in one small area. The story spans the years 1775 to 1781 but focuses primarily on the six months of engagements from July 12, 1780 to January 17, 1781. The battles covered in the book include Cedar Spring, Earle's Ford, Wofford's Iron Works, Musgrove Mill, Kings Mountain, Blackstock's Plantation, and "the Grand Finale" at Cowpens. Passing mention is made of smaller encounters like Great Cane Break, Gowen's Fort and Fort Thicketty. Rather than merely providing an account of each battle, Hope links them together, showing how one led to another, and he adds local details missing from other histories. The chapter on Cowpens seemed unnecessarily long and included six maps, none of which really shed new light on the already heavily-interpreted battle. This treatment is somewhat justified perhaps given the number of local militia that composed Pickens's force and the fact that it certainly ended British and Loyalist activity in the area.

While theater maps are plentiful, the story could benefit from more detailed battle maps to help the reader identify approximate locations within the Spartanburg district and to clarify troop

movements. The illustrations are adequate but could use some "dressing up" to make them easier to read with a consistent look and feel. The text is effectively broken up and illustrated by excellent photographs of the battle sites as they appear today. It is unfortunate that so few images are available of the leaders and participants whose contributions meant so much to the cause of American independence. Only Georgia Patriot militia Col. Elijah Clarke, an early Spartanburg resident who settled in Georgia before the war began, is pictured in the book.

Two handy elements of the book are the timeline of events and the glossary. In the former, Hope shows how events in Spartanburg were chronologically juxtaposed with more widely known events outside the area. The glossary is especially helpful to readers less knowledgeable of military and colonial terms. Authors too often assume that anyone interested in their work must already possess enough background knowledge and vocabulary to comprehend the terminology. Hope intended his book as an introductory volume. These sections, in combination with the prologue, will enable the average reader to easily understand the storyline.

*The Spartanburg Area in the American Revolution* is highly recommended for readers of South Carolina history. The book is especially helpful to anyone attempting to understand the events between the British capture of Charleston and General Nathanael Greene's return to South Carolina less than a year later. Part of the appeal of the story is that the characters are not just from Spartanburg, but are backcountry residents and militia from across the South and regular soldiers, Patriot and Loyalist, from points farther north and across the Atlantic. By incorporating new insight and aided by more recent research, Wes Hope's volume surpasses in many ways J. B. O. Landrum's *History of Upper South Carolina in the American Revolution* as an outstanding account of the region's contribution to America's War for Independence.

**Ron Crawley**  
Gramling, SC

Wes Hope, *The Spartanburg Area in the American Revolution*, self-published, 2003. Copies are available from The Regional Museum of History of Spartanburg County, 100 East Main Street, Spartanburg, SC 29306 for \$25.00. (864) 596-3501

[http://www.spartanarts.org/history/Regional Museum/Museum text.htm](http://www.spartanarts.org/history/Regional%20Museum/Museum%20text.htm)

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## Calendar of Upcoming Events

Please submit items to post upcoming Southern Campaigns programs and events of interest to Revolutionary War researchers and history buffs. **Before you go, always call ahead to confirm events and admission policies.** To add events, please contact Steven J. Rauch, calendar editor at [sjrauch@aol.com](mailto:sjrauch@aol.com) or [steven.rauch@us.army.mil](mailto:steven.rauch@us.army.mil).

**March 4, 2006 — Lancaster, SC** – Andrew Jackson State Park Program: South Carolina Women in the Revolution. Andrew Jackson State Park will celebrate women's history month through education about the lives of women during the war. *Common Knowledge: Lifeways of the New Acquisition District* and at 3:30 p.m.—Heroines of South Carolina with presentations on Rachel & Grace Martin, Emily Geiger and Elizabeth Jackson. The park is nine miles north of Lancaster on U.S. Highway 521 at 196 Andrew Jackson Park Road. Admission to the park is \$2 adults; \$1.25 SC seniors; age 15 & younger free. For more information, call the park at (803) 285-3344.

**March 4-5, 2006 – King's Mountain National Park** - Park 75th Anniversary. Kings Mountain will mark the park's 75th anniversary with a series of special events. Explore the park's newly reopened museum. Guided tours to the battlefield and a militia encampment. Event is free, open Saturday 9-5 & Sunday 9-3. Info/contact: Kings Mountain National Military Park at 864-936-7921 or [www.nps.gov/kimo](http://www.nps.gov/kimo).

**March 5, 12, and 19, 2006 – Gunston Hall, Va.** – Faith of the Fathers Sunday lecture series. This lecture series examines the influence of religion upon public policy and includes presentation by James Hutson, Library of Congress; Daniel L. Dreisbach, The American University; and Frank T. Lambert, Purdue University. Lectures are free and open to the public. Light refreshments from 2:30 – 3:30 pm. Registration requested, but not required. Call 703-550-9220 for more information.

**March 11, 2006 – Lincolnton, NC - Corps of Discovery** field trip – southern North Carolina. Lincoln County NC historian Darrell Harkey will lead a Corps of Discovery tour following Lord Cornwallis route through south-central North Carolina on his infamous Race to the Dan River. We will stop at the site of Lord Cornwallis' destruction of his heavy baggage on the Ramsour's Mill battlefield of the previous summer to make a "flying army" to chase Gens. Daniel Morgan and Nathanael Greene to Virginia. The public is invited, but please call or email to reserve a space. We will meet and depart from 211 West Water Street, Lincolnton, North Carolina at 9:00 am. Info/contact: **Darrell Harkey 704-736-8442** (office) or **704-732-1221** (home) [hiscord@charter.net](mailto:hiscord@charter.net).

**March 14 - 19, 2006 – Greensboro, NC** - Battle of Guilford Courthouse 225<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration events. March 15, 2006 marks the 225th Anniversary of the Battle of Guilford Courthouse. The annual Guilford Courthouse Revolutionary War Lecture Series will begin at 7 pm at the Guilford Courthouse NMP visitor center on Tuesday, March 14 until Friday, March 17. Speakers include Raoul Camus, Dr. John Buchanan, Dr. Robert Wright, and Dr. Edward G. Lengel. An observance program is planned for Wednesday, March 15 with additional activities in the park and with the Greensboro Parks and Recreation Department in the Greensboro Country Park and Tannenbaum Historic Park on the weekend of March 18-19. The annual "battle re-enactment" will be staged at Price Park located on New Garden Road near Bryan Blvd. The re-enactment will take place on Saturday and Sunday afternoons, March 18-19, 2006. Public inquiries regarding the re-

enactment can be made by calling 336-545-5315. All programs for this year's events are free and open to the public. The Lecture Series requires reservations for attendance at each program (call 336-288-1776, ext. 228). Info/contact: [Guilford Courthouse National Military Park](http://www.guilfordcourthouse.org) or see [www.march1781.org](http://www.march1781.org).

**March 25, 2006 – King's Mountain National Park** - Women's History Program. The group *Common Knowledge* will present a program beginning at 2 pm on women's skills in the park visitor center, including: medicine, cooking, dyeing, spinning and weaving, and clothing. Info/contact: Kings Mountain National Military Park at 864-936-7921 or visit [www.nps.gov/kimo](http://www.nps.gov/kimo).

**March 26, 2006 – Yorktown, Va.** – Yorktown Victory Center 225<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Lecture Series. Free public lectures at 3 pm on Sunday afternoons explore aspects of American's momentous victory at Yorktown in October 1781. Presentation of "The Revolt of the Ruling Class: Indians, Debtors, Slaves and the Making of the American Revolution in Virginia" by Dr. Woody Holton, University of Richmond professor of history. For more information see <http://www.historyisfun.org/news/calendar.cfm> or call (888) 593-4682 or (757) 253 – 4838.

**April 1, 2006 – Fayetteville, NC – Corps of Discovery** field trip. Military historian and living history expert Patrick J. O'Kelley will lead a Corps of Discovery field trip to Revolutionary War sites in central North Carolina. The route will go east from Fayetteville to the coast including the Piney Bottom Massacre on Fort Bragg and Moore's Creek Bridge. This is a car pool trip, no fees. The public is invited, but please call or email to reserve a space. Meet at the Airborne and Special Operations Museum, 100 Bragg Boulevard in downtown Fayetteville at 9:00 am. Contact: Patrick O'Kelley, event host, at [goober.com@juno.com](mailto:goober.com@juno.com).

**April 1-2, 2006 – Mason Neck, Virginia** – Crisis on the Potomac. Held at Gunston Hall, at 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Commemorating the events of spring 1781 when Virginians faced danger from British raiders who were able to plunder some of Virginia's plantations, tobacco warehouses, and slaves, causing George Mason to evacuate his family and belongings to Maryland. Experience firsthand a battle on the Potomac at the plantation home of George Mason. Info/contact: Mike Cecere: [umfspock87@cs.com](mailto:umfspock87@cs.com) <http://www.gunstonhall.org>.

**April 2, 2006 – Yorktown, Va.** – Yorktown Victory Center 225<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Lecture Series. Free public lectures at 3 pm on Sunday afternoons explore aspects of American's momentous victory at Yorktown in October 1781. Presentation of "George Washington's Decision to March to Yorktown" by Dr. Edward G. Lengel, University of Virginia and editor of the *George Washington Papers*. For more information see <http://www.historyisfun.org/news/calendar.cfm> or call (888) 593-4682 or (757) 253 – 4838.

**April 5, 2006 – Winchester, Va.** - Lecture: "Women on the March: Military Life in the 18th Century." The fourth and final lecture in "The World the War Made: The French and Indian War in the Development of the American People" lecture series. A lecture by Dr. Holly A. Mayer, associate professor of history, Duquesne University, author of *Belonging to the Army: Camp Followers and Community*. Event will be held at The Knowledge Point, 20 South Cameron Street, Winchester, Va. at 7:30 pm and is free of charge. For more information see <http://www.theknowledgepoint.org>.

**April 9, 2006 – Yorktown, Va.** – Yorktown Victory Center 225<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Lecture Series. Free public lectures at 3 pm on Sunday afternoons explore aspects of American's momentous

victory at Yorktown in October 1781. Presentation of “The British Army...drums beat as if they did not care how” by Dr. William E. White, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. For more information see <http://www.historyisfun.org/news/calendar.cfm> or call (888) 593-4682 or (757) 253 – 4838.

**April 16, 2006 – Historic Camden, SC** - Public program on the Battle of Hobkirk’s Hill Archaeology Project (ARCHH). Held at the Historic Camden - Kershaw House basement at 3:00 pm - 4:30 pm with Questions & Answers, followed by a wine & cheese reception. For more information call Joanna Craig at Historic Camden (803) 432-9841 or see the Hobkirk’s Hill project postings on [www.hobkirkhill.org](http://www.hobkirkhill.org).

**April 19, 2006 – St. Simons Island, GA** – Georgia Patriots Day. Celebration of the capture of three British ships on the Frederica River on April 19, 1778. This year the Memorial Ceremony will be conducted at 10:00 am near the Fort Frederica Magazine ruins on the bank of the Frederica River. The focus will be on Colonel Samuel Elbert and the sailors & soldiers rather than a description of the battle. Descendants will be given special recognition - badges & seating. The ceremony will include musical selections, bagpipe and musket salutes, and wreath presentations. Free admission. For more info contact Bill Ramsaur, Marshes of Glynn Chapter, Georgia Society Sons of the American Revolution at 912-634-1293 or [wframsaur@aol.com](mailto:wframsaur@aol.com).



**April 21 - 23, 2006 – Camden, SC – 225<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Battle of Hobkirk’s Hill and Gen. Nathanael Greene Symposium.** Historic Camden Revolutionary War Site and SCAR will host a symposium and battlefield tours on Gen. Nathanael Greene in conjunction with the celebration of the 225<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Hobkirk’s Hill. Scheduled speakers include Chief Editor of the Greene papers,

Dennis M. Conrad; noted author John “Jack” Buchanan; Professor Robert M. Calhoun; novelist Charles F. Price; Professors Jim McIntyre, Greg Massey, Jim Piecuch, and Larry Babits, all Nathanael Greene scholars, who will speak on their latest research and publications. Saturday afternoon features a commemorative ceremony, living history demonstrations and a walking tour of the April 25, 1781 Hobkirk’s Hill battlefield between Greene and British commandant of South Carolina, Col. Francis Lord Rawdon. Saturday evening entertainment will feature acclaimed thespian Howard Burnham’s portrait of Gen. Greene. On Sunday, attendees may travel by bus to the Eutaw Springs battlefield on the shores of Lake Marion. Guides will be Charles B. Baxley and David P. Reuver. Sunday’s tour will encompass Greene’s Eutaw Springs campaign that pushed the British from the midlands of South Carolina to their tidewater enclave around Charleston. The field trips include opportunities to walk the actual battle sites and hear explanations by on-site guides. For more information call Joanna Craig at Historic Camden (803) 432-9841 or see the symposium postings on [www.southerncampaign.org](http://www.southerncampaign.org) or [www.historic-camden.net](http://www.historic-camden.net).

**April 22-23, 2006 - Petersburg, Va.** - 225th Anniversary Battle of Petersburg. This event is a commemorative recognition of the 225th anniversary of the 25 April 1781 Battle of Petersburg; it will also observe three additional 225th anniversaries related to the battle: the subsequent bombardment by General Lafayette on

British forces occupying Petersburg on 10 May 1781; the death and burial of British Major General William Phillips in Petersburg on 13 May 1781; and the arrival and occupation of Petersburg by Lord Cornwallis’ army (with Phillips’ merged army) on 22-25 May 1781. Info/contact: [robert.paul.davis@us.army.mil](mailto:robert.paul.davis@us.army.mil) or visit [www.petersburg-va.org/revwar](http://www.petersburg-va.org/revwar).

**April 23, 2006 – Yorktown, Va.** – Yorktown Victory Center 225<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Lecture Series. Free public lectures at 3 pm on Sunday afternoons explore aspects of American’s momentous victory at Yorktown in October 1781. Presentation “October 20<sup>th</sup>, 1781: The Day after the Surrender” by Dr. Robert Selig, historian and author. For more information call (888) 593-4682 or (757) 253 – 4838 or <http://www.historyisfun.org/news/calendar.cfm>.

**April 29, 2006 – Gaffney, SC** – Veterans Appreciation and History Day. Activities begin at 9 am and will end at 4 pm. A hotdog lunch will be served at noon. John Robertson will speak on Cowpens and Will Graves will discuss Col. James Williams. Reinactors from the Revolution and the Civil War and the American Legion museum will be open during the day. For more information contact Robert Ivey at [rivey2@bellsouth.net](mailto:rivey2@bellsouth.net).

**May 6, 2006 - Summerton, SC** - Victory at Fort Watson Living History Encampment, Re-enactment and Wildlife Expo. 225th anniversary of the 1781 Southern Campaign. Re-enactments of First Battle of Fort Watson (Feb 27, 1781) and Siege of and Victory at Fort Watson (April 16-23, 1781) and to honor the 225<sup>th</sup> of Marion and Lee at Fort Motte (May 6, 1781). Wildlife and nature expo includes guided nature walks/talks, wildlife exhibits. Open daily 10 am to 3 pm. May 6<sup>th</sup> at 2 pm the Francis Marion Swamp Fox Brigade Color Guard of the SCSSAR and the Scotts Branch High School JROTC will commemorate the Patriots victory. SCSSAR info/contact and wreath laying: call Muriel K. Hanna at 803-478-4179 or [www.singletonchapter.org](http://www.singletonchapter.org). Admission and parking are free, food is available. Sponsored by Friends of Santee NW Refuge and Swamp Fox Murals Trail Society. The Santee National Wildlife Refuge less than one mile from I-95, Exit 102, US 15/301, south of Summerton, SC. Encampment, re-enactment or wildlife expo info/contact: George Summers at 803-478-2645 or email [gcsommers@ftc-i.net](mailto:gcsommers@ftc-i.net). [www.francismariontrail.com](http://www.francismariontrail.com) or [www.santee refugefriends.org](http://www.santee refugefriends.org)

**May 6-7, 2006 – Kings Mountain National Park** - British Army Occupation Weekend. In 1781 the British Army under Cornwallis passed by the Kings Mountain battlefield on their way to Guilford Courthouse. This weekend re-enactors will camp at the park and represent the British Army on campaign. German Jaegers, Scottish Highlanders, British Regulars, and local Loyalists will discuss uniforms, equipment and weapons. Event is free, open 9-5 Saturday & 9-3 Sunday. Info/contact: Kings Mountain National Military Park at 864-936-7921 or visit [www.nps.gov/kimo](http://www.nps.gov/kimo).

**May 13 – 14, 2006 – Endview Plantation, Newport News, Va.** – Colonial Craftsman’s Faire. Endview is just outside Williamsburg, Va. in the City of Newport News. Over 40 nationally known craftsmen will be working at their trade and selling the goods they create. They will also be holding mini-workshops and seminars. Children will be encouraged to participate in some of the demonstrations. For an overview of the Colonial Craftsman’s Faire at Endview Plantation, please visit: <http://www.colonialfaire.com>

**May 12 - 14, 2006 - Ewing, Virginia - Wilderness Road State Park** - Raid at Martin’s Station. Slip into the shadows of Virginia’s 1775 wilderness as more than 150 living historians re-enact life at Joseph Martin’s frontier fort. Two cultures clash and the flames of war once again ignite on Virginia’s frontier.

Activities include a re-enactment of Native Americans burning a cabin at Martin's Station, tours of Native American warrior and colonial militia camps, frontier fort life, and 18th century vendors and colonial traders selling wares.

<http://www.virginia.org/site/description.asp?AttrID=23887&Sort=A&MGrp=3&MCat=11> Telephone: voice: (276) 445-3065 reservations: (800) 933-PARK Email: [wildernessroad@dcr.virginia.gov](mailto:wildernessroad@dcr.virginia.gov) Website: [www.dcr.virginia.gov/parks/wildroad.htm](http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/parks/wildroad.htm).

**May 20 - 21, 2006 - Ninety Six, SC** – Gen. Nathanael Greene's Siege of Ninety Six. The 225th anniversary celebration continues with an encampment of British, Loyalist and Patriot (Continental and militia) forces and will focus on the 28-day siege (the making of gabions/fascines and various components of siege warfare). A wreath-laying ceremony featuring 18th century entertainment & music. Contact [Ninety Six National Historic Site](http://www.ninety-six.org) for details.

**May 28-29, 2006 – Kings Mountain National Park** - Military through the Ages. Kings Mountain will host re-enactors representing every period in the nation's history, from Colonial through the modern military. Soldiers and sailors will discuss uniforms, equipment, weapons, and fighting vehicles. Event is free, 9-5 Saturday and 9-3 Sunday. Info/contact: Kings Mountain National Military Park at 864-936-7921 or visit [www.nps.gov/kimo](http://www.nps.gov/kimo).

**June 2 - 4, 2006 – Augusta, Georgia** – 225<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Liberation of Augusta. June 2<sup>nd</sup> symposium at the Augusta Museum of History - Dr. Edward J. Cashin, US Army historian [and SCAR contributor] Steven J. Rauch, Gordon Blaker and Dr. Russell Brown will speak about the operation and battle in 1781; Loyalist Col. Thomas Brown; Georgia Patriot militia Col. Elijah Clarke, SC Patriot militia Gen. Andrew Pickens, and Continental Lt. Col. "Light Horse Harry" Lee who recaptured Augusta from its British/Loyalist occupiers. On Friday evening, experience food, music, dancing and conversation at Saint Paul's Parish Hall where historical interpreters in dress from the 18th century will be your hosts & hostesses for a period dinner. Tickets for this event may be purchased from Lynn Thompson at 803-279-7560 or email [lynn@colonialtimes.us](mailto:lynn@colonialtimes.us). **Saturday** from 10 am – 8 pm at the Living History Park in North Augusta Historical interpreters will show colonial life and skills including sewing, woodworking, blacksmithing, and trades of the period. **Saturday** at 2 pm - Georgia Sons of the American Revolution will hold a wreath laying ceremony at Saint Paul's Church on Reynolds Street, Augusta, Ga., site of the original Fort Cornwallis. 4 pm – a reenactment of the Siege of Fort Cornwallis will take place adjacent to Saint Paul's Church behind the old railroad depot on Reynolds Street. **Sunday** 10 am – 4 pm everyday life during Colonial times. 10 am - please join us for an 18th century Anglican worship service at the Living History Park North Augusta. For more information see <http://www.colonialtimes.us/undercrown.html>.

**June 3, 2006 – Augusta, Georgia – Corps of Discovery** field trip. This event is still being coordinated but will include a visit to Revolutionary War sites in Augusta related to the events of 1780 and 1781. This will be a car-pool event and will last approximately 3 or 4 hours but will end no later than noon. Event will be free and open to anyone interested. Meeting location and time of departure TBD. More information will be published in the April edition of SCAR. For more information contact event coordinator Steve Rauch at [sjrauch@aol.com](mailto:sjrauch@aol.com) or [steven.rauch@us.army.mil](mailto:steven.rauch@us.army.mil).

**June 3-4, 2006 - Columbia, Va.** - 225th Anniversary Battle of Point of Fork. In keeping with the actual events of the

engagement, the reenactment will occur on either side of the river, and in the river using authentically reproduced 18th Century James River Bateaux. [www.virginiacampaign.org/pointoffork](http://www.virginiacampaign.org/pointoffork) or info/contact: Columbia events coordinator Sarah Anderson at Post Office Box 779, Columbia, Virginia or (434) 842-2277.

**June 3-4, 2006 – Beckhamville, SC** – Battle of Alexander's Old Field. Special memorial service and Loch Norman bagpipe band. For more information contact Mickey Beckham at [MCBAuctus@aol.com](mailto:MCBAuctus@aol.com).

**June 10 and 11, 2006 – Lincolnton, NC** - Battle of Ramsour's Mill anniversary weekend. Featuring a parade, BBQ, and presentations. Info/contact: event coordinator Darrell Harkey, 211 West Water Street, Lincolnton, North Carolina, 28092. 704-736-8442 (office) or 704-732-1221 (home) [hiscord@charter.net](mailto:hiscord@charter.net)

**June 24-25, 2006 - Williamsburg, Va.** - Under the Redcoat [home.earthlink.net/~colscov/UTR.html](http://home.earthlink.net/~colscov/UTR.html).

**June 24, 2006 – King's Mountain National Park** - Militia Encampment & Guest Speaker Keith Brown. Keith Brown of the Catawba Nation will give a presentation on the Catawba in the Revolution at 2 pm. The Backcountry Militia will have a military camp open to the public, offering living history demonstrations and weapons firings. Event is free, Saturday 9-6. For more information contact Kings Mountain National Military Park at 864-936-7921 or visit [www.nps.gov/kimo](http://www.nps.gov/kimo).

**July 1, 2006 – King's Mountain National Park** - Ferguson Rifle Presentation & Militia Encampment. Historians and gunsmiths Bryan Brown and Ricky Roberts will give a presentation on the Ferguson Rifle at 2 pm. Brown and Roberts have both done extensive research on this unique breech-loading weapon. Brown has built many flintlock weapons and Roberts has fired in many flintlock competitions. A firing demonstration of the rifle will follow the presentation. The Backcountry Militia will have their camp open to the public. Event is free, Saturday 9-6. For more information contact Kings Mountain National Military Park at 864-936-7921 or visit [www.nps.gov/kimo](http://www.nps.gov/kimo).

**July 15-16, 2006 – Williamsburg, Va.** - 225<sup>th</sup> of the Battle of Green Spring. This event is held on the grounds of the Williamsburg Winery. For more information, contact: [info@battleofgreenspring.org](mailto:info@battleofgreenspring.org) or see <http://www.battleofgreenspring.org>.

**August 12-13, 2006 – King's Mountain National Park** - Grand Militia Muster. Militia from five different states won the battle of Kings Mountain. Visit the park to learn about militia service, weapons, and military equipment of the Revolution. Re-enactment groups will be camped at the park offering programs. Event is free, Saturday 9-6 and Sunday 9-3. For more information contact Kings Mountain National Military Park at 864-936-7921 or visit [www.nps.gov/kimo](http://www.nps.gov/kimo).

**September 2 - 3, 2006 – Jacksonboro, SC** – 225<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Battle of Parker's Ferry Reenactment, Tuten Farm, For further information contact: Gale Doggette, Events Coordinator 843-542-9633, or [cchaps@lowcountryrv.com](mailto:cchaps@lowcountryrv.com) or Dana Cheney, Re-enactment Coordinator 843-542-6222, or [dancer1776@msn.com](mailto:dancer1776@msn.com).

**September 2-4, 2006 – Eutawville, SC** – Reenactment to commemorate the 225<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Battle of Eutaw Springs – event sponsored by Second Regiment SC Continental Line living history group. <http://www.2ndsc.org/frames.html>.

**September 2-3, 2006 – King’s Mountain National Park** - Labor Day Weekend Militia Encampment. The park’s Backcountry Militia will be camped at the battlefield this weekend offering living history demonstrations. Event is free, Saturday 9-6, Sunday 9-3. For more information contact Kings Mountain National Military Park at 864-936-7921 or visit [www.nps.gov/kimo](http://www.nps.gov/kimo).

**September 9, 2006 – Eutawville, SC – 225<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Battle of Eutaw Springs Conference & Tour.** SCAR and the Church of the Epiphany present a conference and guided battlefield tour on Gen. Nathanael Greene’s greatest battlefield victory at the Battle of Eutaw Springs. Noted author and historian John Buchanan will keynote this conference. Mark this date for great presentations, a battlefield tour (no, you will not need scuba gear!), commemorative ceremony, and fellowship. Conference fee of \$45.00 includes the conference, battlefield tour, lunch, snacks, reception, and materials; registration deadline is September 5th. Info/contact SCAR.

**September 12, 19, 26, and October 3, 2006 – Savannah, GA** - The Coastal Heritage Society has their Battle of Savannah Revolutionary War speakers planned for September 12, 19, 26, and October 3, 2006. Info/contact: [www.chsgeorgia.org](http://www.chsgeorgia.org).

**September 16, 2006 – Greenwood, SC** – Bridge Dedication/Constitution Day. Convoy tour of Greenwood and Newberry County Revolutionary War sites, including Liberty Springs, Coronaca Plantation House, Battle of White Hall Plantation, Williamson’s Fort and Ninety Six. For more information contact Joe Goldsmith at [joeg5950@yahoo.com](mailto:joeg5950@yahoo.com).

**September 23, 2006 – King’s Mountain National Park** - National Constitution Event and Colonial Craft & Trade Fair. Park volunteer David Sherrill will portray Dr. Benjamin Franklin and discuss the signing of the Constitution. Craftspeople will demonstrate woodworking, blacksmithing, weaving, and more. Musician R.G. Absher will perform period music. Event is free, Saturday 9-5. Info/contact Kings Mountain National Military Park at 864-936-7921 or visit [www.nps.gov/kimo](http://www.nps.gov/kimo).

**October 6–8, 2006 - Knoxville, Tennessee** - “Warfare and Society in Colonial North America and the Caribbean”. Sponsored by the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture and the University of Tennessee Center for the Study of War and Society <http://www.wm.edu/oieahc/conferences/warfare.htm> at the University of Tennessee Conference Center. Info/contact: the Omohundro Institute at (757) 221-1115.

**October 7-8, 2006 – King’s Mountain National Park** - Battle Anniversary Weekend. Commemorate the 226th anniversary of the Battle of Kings Mountain. Events will include a wreath laying ceremony on Saturday and re-enactor camps. Free, open Saturday 9-5, Sunday 9-3. Info/contact: Kings Mountain at 864-936-7921 or visit [www.nps.gov/kimo](http://www.nps.gov/kimo).

**October 18 - 22, 2006 – Yorktown, Va.** – 225<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Siege of Yorktown - In a four day commemoration is sponsored by the [Colonial National Historical Park](#), the [Brigade of the American Revolution](#) will collaborate with [Endview Plantation](#) as well as the [British Brigade](#) and other living history organizations to mark the 225<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the British surrender, concluding a series of observances along the Washington-Rochambeau Trail stretching from Rhode Island to Virginia. Musket and artillery demonstrations; civilian and medical programs; and military engineering demonstrations at Colonial NHP and Endview Plantation. Recreations of the Allied

assaults on Redoubts 9 and 10, defense of the Fusiliers’ Redoubt, and Abercrombie’s Sortie. Info/contact: [info@siegeofyorktown.org](mailto:info@siegeofyorktown.org) and see [www.siegeofyorktown.org](http://www.siegeofyorktown.org).

**October 21, 2006 – Williamsburg, VA** – Yorktown Victory Ball. The 2006 Yorktown Victory Ball sponsored by the Williamsburg Heritage Dancers at the Community Center on North Boundary Street, Williamsburg, on Saturday, October 21, 2006 from 7pm to 11pm. The dances reflect those that may have been included in a similar ball in 1781. Tickets will be sold in advance at \$25 per person payable to Williamsburg Heritage Dancers, 710 South Henry Street, Williamsburg, Virginia, 23185-4113. Non-alcoholic punch and light snacks will be served. All attendees will be expected to wear 18<sup>th</sup> century attire, whether civilian or military (but definitely not British military!), 757-229-1775.

**October 27-28, 2006 – Manning, SC** - 4th Francis Marion Symposium - “1781, The War Changes, Victory Starts in the South.” At the FE DuBose Campus of Central Carolina Technical College, I-95, Exit 122, US Highway 521, Manning, SC. Info/contact: organizer George Summers at 803-478-2645 or email [gsummers@ftc-i.net](mailto:gsummers@ftc-i.net) or [www.francismariontrail.com](http://www.francismariontrail.com) [www.swampfoxtrail.com](http://www.swampfoxtrail.com) or [www.clarendonmurals.com](http://www.clarendonmurals.com).

**November 4-5, 2006 - Camden, SC – Historic Camden Revolutionary War Site** Revolutionary War Field Days. Units interested in attending this event, please contact John Thornton at [john@rncr.org](mailto:john@rncr.org), Chuck Wallace at [cwallace@schr.org](mailto:cwallace@schr.org), or Joanna Craig, Historic Camden director, at [hiscamden@camden.net](mailto:hiscamden@camden.net) or call (803) 432-9841.

**November 11, 2006 – King’s Mountain National Park** - Veterans Day Program. Reenactors from the Backcountry Militia will be camped at the park this weekend. Visitors may enjoy weapons demonstrations and military drill. Event is Free, Saturday 9-5. For more information contact Kings Mountain National Military Park at 864-936-7921 or visit [www.nps.gov/kimo](http://www.nps.gov/kimo). ★

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## Letters to Editor

### Charles:

A couple of things. First, keep up the good work. Second, keep the size of each issue down to about 16 pages so it can be downloaded. I have a brand new computer and this last one was so big, it froze it up. I could print it, but not save it. This is important for those of us who are trying to write up the battles.

You had an interesting discussion of artist William T. Ranney’s 1849 painting of Cowpens. A couple of things were omitted. First, the British helmets look more like busbees than dragoon helmets and the American dragoons are shown in green (Lee’s Legion, not Washington’s 3<sup>rd</sup> Continental Light Dragoons). Finally, there is that puzzling bugler. I believe that if he were black, someone would have said something about it long before Ranney did his painting.

Eight years later (1857), Alonzo Chappell did a similar painting and showed the uniforms much more correctly (at least as far as the color went) and in his work, the bugler is white. Dan Murphy had a black and white version of this in his SCAR article. [See February 2006 SCAR, p. 22. Ed.]

Finally, the little noticed part of the whole Cowpens weekend is how fast the battle went off. I now believe it took less than 20 minutes if you start with the dragoon recon by fire and end with the Washington duel with the 17<sup>th</sup> Light Dragoon officers that occurred at the same time as the infantry surrender.

**Larry Babits**, East Carolina University, Greenville, NC

#### Dear Charles:

In your Vol. 1, #2 of the SCAR, a large amount of material is devoted to the Battle of the Waxhaws. Having reviewed this I wish to add a rather interesting tidbit I came across which I do not think Jim Piecuch cited in his work.

In A. L. Fries, *Records of the Moravians in North Carolina*, Vol. IV (Raleigh, 1930), on page 1544, mention is made in this volume that a number of the survivors of the so-called massacre came through Salem, N.C., one of the Moravian towns within their settlement of Wachovia on June 8th, 1780. The Moravian diarist who recorded the soldiers' account wrote:

*“Before they were aware of it they had been surrounded by the English, and laid down their arms, but as the English commander rode up one man seized a gun and shot at him, and then the massacre began. Between three and four hundred were killed or taken prisoner, and those who could ran away.”*

The "English commander," we might assume, was Lt. Col. Banastre Tarleton. This provides support to the assertion that Tarleton had moved forward to accept surrender, was shot at "unfairly" after American troops had laid down their arms, and that this event precipitated the massacre.

**John R. Maass** - Department of History at The Ohio State University 230 West 17th Avenue - 106 Dulles Hall - Columbus, Ohio 43210-1367

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"The meaning of things lies not in the things themselves, but in our attitude towards them." - Antoine De Saint-Exupery (1900-1944).

#### Greetings,

I work for the Virginia Department of Historic Resources and manage the state's historical highway marker program. We are currently in the process of replacing a state historical marker in Prince Edward County, Virginia that discusses British Lt. Col. Banastre Tarleton's July 1781 campaign through southwest Virginia. It was suggested that you might be able to provide me some insights. I am currently trying to confirm information regarding the possible route Tarleton took during his raid from 9 July 1781 to 24 July 1781 for a state historical marker to be erected in Prince Edward County, Virginia.

Traditionally Tarleton is stated as leaving Cobham and traveled to Prince-Edward courthouse, and from thence to New London in Bedford County and then returning a different route to Suffolk, Virginia. His recounting of the events do not get into much detail where he went exactly. His account does not specifically say he went to New London only to Bedford County. His orders from Lord Cornwallis state to go to New London. I have found correspondence that confirms that he did make it to New London in Virginia Records, so it possible he made it to Bedford County (which in 1781 included Campbell County).

There are a few people in Prince Edward County that want the text to say "On 15 July Tarleton abandoned his plan to proceed to Bedford County, turned south from here in to Lunenburg County and returned to Surry County on 24 July." They are basing this on the Herbert Clarence Bradshaw's *History of Prince Edward County Virginia* published in 1955. He cites a story of a man name Paul Hackett who might have seen Tarleton go in a different direction. The Hacket source is a 20th century biography in the Farmville Herald Newspaper. Hacket was born in 1769.

I am trying to locate potential source information that I have not reviewed or scholar(s) who may have studied this raid or Tarleton to assist me in deciding what to say on a marker. Do you have any suggestions?

Listed below are some of the sources I have consulted and excerpts from primary source material. Any assistance that you could provide would be greatly appreciated.

#### Scott Arnold

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[http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/hiway\\_markers/hwmarker\\_info.htm](http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/hiway_markers/hwmarker_info.htm)

Agency Website for more information:

<http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/home.htm>

#### Sources consulted:

**Robert D. Bass**, *The Green Dragoon* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1957), pp. 181-182.

**Mark M. Boatner, III** *Encyclopedia of the American Revolution* (New York: D. McKay Company, 1966), pp. 1088, 1089, and 1155.

**Herbert Clarence Bradshaw**, *History of Prince Edward County, Virginia, From Its Earliest Settlements through Its Establishment in 1754 To Its Bicentennial Year* (Richmond: Dietz Press, 1955), pp. 124-126, 739-740.

**Greg Eanes**, *Tarleton's Southside Raid: Prelude to Yorktown* (Burkeville, Va.: E&H Publishing Company, 2002)

**H. J. Eckenrode**, *The Revolution in Virginia* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1916), pp. 271-272.

**Gerald Tate Gilliam**, "Tartleton's Raid of 1781 Against Southside Virginia," *The Southsider* 13 (1994), pp. 50-56.

**William W. Hening**, *The Statutes at Large: Being a Collection of All the Laws of Virginia, from the First Session of the Legislature, in the Year 1619...* 13 Vols. (Richmond: 1809-1823), 10:447-448.

**William P. Palmer, ed.**, *Calendar of Virginia State Papers and Other Manuscripts ... Preserved in the Capitol at Richmond*, 11 vols. (1875-1893; reprint, New York: Kraus Reprint Corp., 1968), 2:220-221, 2:230-231, 2:232-234, 2:240-241, 2:245, 2:261, 2:263, 2:308-309, 2:310-311, and 2:323-324.

**John Graves Simcoe**, *A journal of the operations of the Queen's rangers, from the end of the year 1777, to the conclusion of the late American war. By Lieutenant-Colonel Simcoe, commander of the corps* (Exeter, England: Printed for the author, 1787) [contains nothing specific on the event].

**Lieutenant-General (Banastre) Tarleton**, *A History of the Campaigns of 1780 and 1781, in the Southern Provinces of North America* (Spartanburg, SC: Reprint 1967), pp. 358-359 and 402-403.

## A few excerpts:

Tarleton in *A History of the Campaigns of 1780 and 1781...* states pages 358-359 - "On the 9<sup>th</sup> of July, Lieutenant-colonel Tarleton Left Cobham.... The light troops soon reached Petersburg, advanced to Prince-Edward courthouse, and thence towards the river Dan... A halt of two days in Bedford county discovered that General Greene had made no detachment to the northward, but as he was engaged in the siege of the Ninety Six. This information inducted Tarleton to resume his march, by a different route, towards the royal army; and the dragoons and mounted infantry having completed an expedition of four hundred miles, ...joined the King's troops at Suffolk fifteen days after their departure from Cobham."

Page 402-403 provides the orders given to Tarleton from Cornwallis on 8 July 1781, which includes the following:

"I would have you begin your march tomorrow with corps of cavalry and mounted infantry under your command to Prince-Edward court house, and from thence to New London in Bedford county.... I shall leave a detachment at Suffolk to receive you on your return."

Excerpts Calendar of Virginia State Papers (Volume 2) discussion of the event [citations only related to Tarleton/British troops. Numerous correspondence regarding moving of stores from New London]:

Pages 220-221 - 15 July 1781 Maj. John Pryor to Col. Wm Davies from Charlottesville "they [British] were at Amelia Courthouse on Thursday Evening."

Pages 240-241 - 23 July 1781 David Garland to Gov. Nelson from Lunenburg Co. "Let me then inform you, Col. Tarleton with his Legion came through this County last week, and considering his rapid march (thirty or forty miles a day) has done considerable damage in destroying the public grain &c, as also wounding three persons & carrying off some others as Prisoners."

Page 245 - 24 July 1781 N. Hobson Co. Liet. & Others to Col. Wm. Davies-in reply to his Circular Letter of the 15th. From Lunenburg County "Their largest 'magazine of grain was destroyed by Col. Tarleton."

Page 261- 27 July T. Bentley to the Governor from Brunswick Co. "Also of Orders from Col. Davies, to send one fourth of the Militia to the field at once. Adds 'Col. Tarleton pass'd through our County last week on his return to Portsmouth, and distressed the inhabitants greatly'"

Page 263 - July 28 Col. Wm Davies to the Governor from War Office "Having heard that some of the States stores were at Col. Friends in Chesterfield, and fearing Tarleton then on his return from Prince Edward Co. might capture them, he ordered the Quarter Master to send wagons immediately for them, but, adds 'too my surprise was informed on the return of the wagons that the whole of them had been taken by orders of Genl. Wayne."

Pages 308-309 - 9 August Rev. Archibald McRoberts to Col. Davies from Providence [Halifax County?] "About the middle of last month Col. Tarleton passed through that part of the Country, encamped at his house...."

Pages 310-311 - Capt. Nathan Reid to Col. Davies 10 August 1781 from New London "I really expected when I heard of Tarlton's being at P. Edward C. House, that he intended to come as far as this place...."

Pages 323-324 - To Governor of Virginia from inhabitants of Lunenburg County 12 August 1781 "That in a late excursion of Col. Tarleton's Legion through this County, many good citizens were injured in their property"

## Miscellaneous information:

-Bedford County included Campbell County [Hening page 447-448 discusses the formation of Campbell County in 6 Nov. 1781]

-Also, Appomattox County was formed in 1845 from a number of counties including Buckingham, Prince Edward, Charlotte and Campbell Counties.

-New London community is in present day Campbell County that is off Route 460 near the Bedford County/Campbell County. ★

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## Victory at Kettle Creek Celebrations

by Robert F. Galer



"More than twenty-five battles, sieges and skirmishes were fought in Georgia during the American Revolution, but Kettle Creek in Wilkes County is first in the hearts of those who gather in February each year to commemorate one of our Patriot's rare victories in their struggle for Independence," said Bob Galer, Chairman of the Georgia Society Sons of the American Revolution Historic Sites and Celebrations Committee. He added, "Colonel Andrew Pickens reported 'The Battle of Kettle Creek was the severest check and chastisement the Tories ever received in South Carolina and Georgia.' "

The Celebration of the 227<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Battle of Kettle Creek – called Revolutionary Days -- took place on February 11, 2006, a cold and rainy day in Washington and at the nearby Kettle Creek Battlefield.

In spite of the bad weather, Dr. Walt Andrae and Steve Rauch, U.S. Army Historians, lead a hardy group on tours of the battlefield. Walt Andrae stated, "It was a good day to walk the battlefield. The weather on the day of the actual battle was similar to Saturday's -- cold, wet. It was good to walk through the woods and note the lack of vegetation, the cushioned footfalls, the opportunities provided by the terrain, and the largely open views through what was then a primary growth forest. The cold and the drizzle offered those hardy souls who walked with me an opportunity to see and experience the site as the Patriots and Loyalists once did."

Due to the rain, the "Revolutionary Days" Parade and Living History exhibits scheduled for Saturday morning in the historic Washington Town Square had to be cancelled, but the scheduled activities were held in the McGill-Woodruff Agricultural Center. Wilkes County Historian, Skeet Willingham, served as Master of Ceremonies and described Wilkes County in the 1770s to the assembled group of about two hundred. The festive occasion featured the award-winning Sons of the American Revolution Color Guard, many Revolutionary-era personalities, the U.S. Army Signal Corps Band, and the Continental Regiment Fife and Drum.

The Georgia Society SAR Color Guard, dressed in uniforms of George Washington's Continental Army Officers, was joined by representatives from Alabama, Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee. The SAR Color Guard, along with the Georgia Society Colonel Elijah Clarke Militia and others attired as backcountry partisans, presented fifteen flags of the Revolutionary War.

Living History presentations provided great fun and enjoyment for all. The personalities included George Walton (depicted by George Wheelless, SAR from Carrollton, GA), one of the three signers of Declaration of Independence from Georgia and a prominent citizen of Wilkes County.

A rebel patriot (Ted Smith, SAR from Clarkesville, GA) administered the Continental Congress Oath of Allegiance to the assembled citizens and recruited for the Georgia Militia with payment of a twenty dollar Continental note. Armed militia (Lewie Dunn, Bo Hill and Children of the American Revolution Color Guardsmen) "encouraged" the citizens to swear allegiance and join the Wilkes County Militia.

Lt. Col. Elijah Clarke, Commander of Georgia Patriot Militia at Kettle Creek and his wife, Hannah Clarke (Charlie Newcomer, SAR from Athens, GA, and Vickie Taylor from Elijah Clark State Park) entertained the audience with their description of the famous couple and their illustrious descendants.

Other personalities included Georgia Patriot militia Col. John Dooly and his wife (Mike & Cilla Tomme from Fayetteville, GA), prominent citizens of Wilkes County led some Georgia Militia at the Battle of Kettle Creek; Mrs. Peter Strozier (Julie Greer, DAR from Thomasville, GA), wife of a Kettle Creek soldier; James Hammett (Bob Galer, SAR from Columbus, GA), who owned the property on which the battlefield was located and whose son, William Hammett fought at Kettle Creek; Nancy Morgan Hart (Sara Lesseur, DAR from Hart County), who single-handedly captured six Loyalist troops; Ann Hannah (Tricia Pugh, DAR from Clarkesville, GA), wife of Thomas Hannah, a soldier serving under Elijah Clarke; Sarah Creel (Lela Wade, DAR from Clarkesville, GA) wife of Virginian, Charles Creel; Lettice Duke (Gloria Ramsaur from St. Simons Island, GA), wife of Militia Capt. Henry Duke, a Wilkes County neighbor of Stephen Heard on Fishing Creek; and a Partisan fighter and back-woods settler (Bob Perry, from Harlem, GA).

Visitors watched the half-hour Battle of Kettle Creek film produced by the U.S. Army Signal Corps Center at Fort Gordon. The film was followed by Walt Andrae and Steve Rauch's description of the Battle of Kettle Creek. Celeste Stover, Librarian at the Mary Willis Library, said that twenty-five children and adults attended noted Revolutionary War author, Dr. Christine Swager's "Backwoods Days" discussion. Many visitors attended the open house hosted Washington Historical Museum. Stephanie Macchia said, "They appreciated the warmth of the fire-place and enjoyed the new exhibits in the Kettle Creek Room."

The highlight of the Revolutionary Days Celebration was the Ninth Annual Memorial and Wreath Presentation Ceremony, beginning at 2:00pm on Saturday afternoon at the McGill-Woodruff Center. Col. George E. Thurmond, President of the Georgia Society Sons of the American Revolution, served as Master of Ceremonies, and the Ceremony was sponsored by the Georgia Society and Samuel Elbert Chapter, Sons of the American Revolution with the support of the Kettle Creek Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution. Colonel Thurmond stated, "The Revolutionary Days activities today were truly moving as we paused to remember and appreciate the courage and determination

of those who fought at Kettle Creek. Their great victory should never be forgotten by all freedom loving Americans."

The Ceremony honoring the 227<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Battle of Kettle Creek featured Presentation of Colors by the Combined Sons of the American Revolution Color Guard (Paul Prescott, Commander with twenty-six Guardsmen), musical selections by the 434<sup>th</sup> U.S. Army Signal Corps Band (WO1 Jonathan Ward, conducting) and the Continental Regiment Fife and Drum (Connie and Ron Aylor.)

Keynote speaker was the Honorable Nathan E. White, Jr. from Dallas, Texas, who serves as the Secretary General of the National Society Sons of the American Revolution. Judge White was introduced by Lt. Col. Robert F. Galer, Chairman, Georgia Society Sons of the American Revolution Historic Sites and Celebrations Committee. The Invocation was offered by Rev. Jack R. Bozeman, of the Samuel Elbert SAR Chapter.

Other speakers and participants included Carolyn B. Faz, Joanne B. Pollock and Oleta E. McAvoy from the Kettle Creek DAR Chapter in Washington, GA; Col. Joel Moore of the Samuel Elbert SAR Chapter in Elberton, GA; Lt. Col. Richard Karlsson, Provost General of Fort Gordon, GA; as well as George Wheelless II, Sr. Vice President of the Georgia Society SAR from Carrollton, GA, and Kline O. Pugh, Secretary of the Georgia Society SAR from Clarkesville, GA. C.D. Williams, Vice President General of South Atlantic District, National Society Sons of the American Revolution, Shelby A. Whitson, State Regent, Georgia State Society NSDAR and Nelson Noble, Superintendent, Elijah Clark State Park represented their organizations.

Seventy-five Wreaths were presented by members of the Children, Daughters and Sons of the American Revolution organizations, including many descendants of the soldiers who fought at Kettle Creek. The Greene County High School Air Force JrROTC Saber Team (Mstr. Sgt. Joe Miley, Instructor) formed an arch for an impressive presentation honoring the thirteen original states by the Georgia Society Children of the American Revolution, lead by the Georgia State CAR President, Sydney McRee, from Milledgeville, GA.

Following Taps, a Rifle and Musket Salute performed by the Installation Support Group from Fort Gordon (commanded by SFC Alfred Carter) and the Col. Elijah Clarke Militia (Charlie Newcomer, Commander), honored the memory of the Patriot Soldiers who participated in the Battle of Kettle Creek that occurred on February 14, 1779.

Sponsors of the Revolutionary Days activities included the Georgia Society and the Samuel Elbert Chapter Sons of the American Revolution. Kettle Creek Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, City of Washington, Mary Willis Library, Washington Historical Museum, and Wilkes County, Washington-Wilkes Chamber of Commerce and the Washington-Wilkes Historical Foundation.

In addition to the Revolutionary Days activities in Washington, a Special Program for Kettle Creek Participants was conducted on Sunday, February 12, at the Elijah Clark State Park, near Lincolnton, GA. The Program included a Wreath Presentation Ceremony at the gravesite of Gen. Elijah Clarke, tours of the Elijah Clarke Museum, and Living History Presentations.

Col. George Thurmond said, "We look forward to the Revolutionary Days Celebration on February 10, 2007, when the weather is bound to be better, and we can perform the Parade and Living History in the historic Washington Town Square. ★

# Most Astonishing Efforts: William Washington's Cavalry at the Battle of Eutaw Springs

By Lee F. McGee

## Introduction

The Battle of Eutaw Springs on September 8, 1781 was the last major battle in the Southern theater. Hostilities continued for another year, and many of the Continental soldiers would serve for another 20 months. In many ways though, the battle heralded a change in the Southern Department and the southern Patriot army under General Nathanael Greene.

The battle has not been well studied. To the author's knowledge, no single book has been published on the subject to date. This is regrettable for many reasons. The size and intensity of the fight rivaled any of the battles in the South in 1780 and 1781. It was the first time that Greene as the overall commander conducted an offensive battle, rather than waiting for the attack to come to him. The engagement offers many interesting features, ranging from the use of the cavalry and artillery arms to the great proportion of officers who were wounded and killed.

One of the most compelling stories during the Battle of Eutaw Springs is that of Continental Lt. Col. William Washington. Washington was wounded and captured during the battle, thereby ending six years of valuable service, and more specifically, concluding a year in which the cavalry under his command performed hard valuable service while continuously and seriously undermanned. Studying Washington's service is not easy. He was never one to brag about his own service. (1) His leadership inspired loyalty (Wells pension), and he created and molded a force very much in his own image. The story of Washington at Eutaw Springs is also the story of the troopers under his command.

Far too often the traditional story of William Washington and the Continental Cavalry under his command at Eutaw Springs has been limited to a fateful charge on a well-defended position, resulting in his capture and the decimation of his corps. A close examination of the primary sources combined with an attempt to understand the cavalry's role in the context of 18<sup>th</sup> century European cavalry shows that the story is not quite so straightforward. The charge on the American left was not a reckless attempt led by an impatient commander. The detachment of First and Third Dragoons under Washington was not destroyed, and continued to serve in the remainder of the battle and beyond. There were many factors beyond Washington's control, including events two states away in Virginia, which shaped the actions of the force under his command that day.

The complete story of the Battle of Eutaw Springs still remains to be discovered in archives, collections and on the ground. This article does not attempt to explain the broader context that led to the battle, or its effects on the war in the South. Each American and British unit in the Battle of Eutaw Springs has its own story of hardship and strenuous service. Each unit was undermanned. This is the story of one man and of one corps of troopers who put everything on the line for their commander and for General Nathanael Greene.

## Washington's detachment

The detachment of cavalry under William Washington consisted of his own regiment, the Third Light Dragoons, and some troopers

of the First Light Dragoons. The core of this detachment had been together since the beginning of 1781 and had fought in three major battles: Cowpens, Guilford Courthouse and Hobkirk's Hill. They had also been in several small skirmishes while scouting and screening for the main army under Greene, particularly during the race to the Dan and Greene's return to North Carolina. Most recently they had assisted Lee's Legion in delaying Lord Rawdon's advance to the relief of the siege of Ninety-Six, allowing valuable time for Greene to lift the failed siege.

Greene saw the need for a superior cavalry force in the South. (2) In each of the major battles, however, Washington was never able to field more than between eighty and one hundred troopers. At Cowpens, he had 72 effectives (3); at Hobkirk's Hill, 87 (4); and at Eutaw Springs, between 83 and 100. (See below).

After the retreat to the Dan River Washington detached Continental Major Richard Call with some commissioned officers to Virginia to recruit and refresh the Third. Continental Colonel Anthony White had been already sent with the majority of the First to Virginia to rebuild. (5) Both light dragoon regiments had success recruiting men and horses. As early as April, 100 men were recruited for the two regiments from the eighteen-months Virginia regulars. (6) Nearly 300 troopers had been recruited by August. (7)

In late 1780, because of the price of horses and difficulty with filling the regiments, the Continental Congress approved of a plan recommended by General George Washington and Baron von Steuben to convert the cavalry regiments to "legionary corps." These were distinguished from "partisan corps" like those of Continental Lt. Col. Henry Lee and Col. Charles Armand. White was rebuilding the First Dragoons on this model - on a return dated March 7, 1781 the fifth and sixth troops were designated as "dismounted." (8) In Washington's detachment the infantry of either the Virginia or Delaware line was serving as Washington's dismounted element, when necessary. (9) While there were 31 of 87 troopers listed as dismounted at Hobkirk's Hill (10), Greene had been trying to obtain cavalry horses. (11) Some horses were ready for the Southern Army from the state of North Carolina in August; Lt. John Linton of the Third was sent to North Carolina to collect them. (12) Greene was also to obtain some horses from Gen. Francis Marion's SC Patriot militia. (13) There is no primary source evidence that any troopers in Washington's detachment at Eutaw Springs were dismounted.

Even with all of the efforts to refurbish the First and Third Light Dragoons, the increasing threat posed by Lord Charles Cornwallis in Virginia made it difficult to bring the recruits and horses to the South. The Marquis de Lafayette urged White to join him with the First Dragoons. (14) His preference would probably have been to have all the dragoons of the First and Third Regiments but it was clear that Call was recruiting specifically to reinforce Colonel Washington in the Carolinas. (15)

Lafayette wanted to use White's Dragoons for the proposed combined operations with General Washington. In a letter of August 24, 1781 to Washington, Lafayette wrote, "We have 120 dragoons and a chance to obtain 60 more. Had we Accoutrements we could have 200 more whom Col. White has in readiness with 200 excellent horses 60 of which I hope to equip by dismounting volunteers." (16)

On September 1<sup>st</sup>, 1781 Lafayette informed General Washington that he had ordered White to send one hundred of his horses to him at Holt's Forge to mount the French "Huzzards." The editors of the Lafayette papers note that he wrote to White on August 31,

September 4 and September 8 urging him to gather horses and equipment for the French and the American Army. (17)

The total number of troopers in William Washington's detachment at Eutaw Springs is not exactly known. Estimates vary from 83 (18) to 100 (19). Organization of these troopers is less well known. On September 8, Washington had two Captains present: William Parsons of the Third and John Watts of the First. On August 15, Washington decided to allow William Barrett to return to Virginia. In a letter to Greene he referred to Barrett as a lieutenant. Barrett referred to himself as "Captain" after he was captured at Guilford Courthouse (20). It is not known if some officers were serving as "Captain Lieutenants" in Washington's detachment. After First Light Dragoon Captain Griffin Fauntleroy's death from his wounds obtained at Guilford Courthouse, he was replaced by a captain: John Watts.

Regardless of the actual number of troopers present, Washington did not have enough First and Third Dragoons to form two troops (120 troopers). It is not known at this time if Washington maintained a four or six mounted troop structure in his detachment in the South, or if he operated with a modified structure to accommodate his numbers. If Washington maintained four mounted troops, each troop could only have contained between 20 and 25 troopers. With the distinct possibility that one of his lieutenants was functioning as a Captain, and with the numbers available, Washington may have wanted a fourth Captain present. (For further discussion of a possible operational arrangement, see below.)

Attached to Washington's detachment were two units. Third Light Dragoon trooper George Hood stated in his pension application "... Washington and cavalry, assisted by SC Patriot State Troops Lt. Col. Wade Hampton and a company of mounted volunteers - also Geo. Griscom a Virginian with a company of mounted volunteers, a particular acquaintance of mine, was along side..." (21) Hampton's cavalry was part of Patriot Col. William Henderson's South Carolina State troops. Hood's phrasing suggests "Griscom" was in command of a company of volunteers, but appears to also describe another troop of mounted volunteers. The only other mention of these mounted volunteers this author has found is from author Patrick J. O'Kelley; he mentions them as being Guilford County Mounted Volunteers under Captain Thomas Hamilton. (22)

George Gresham was born in Goochland County, Virginia, and moved to Georgia with his mother after the death of his father. He originally served in the Georgia Patriot State Troops under Colonel Samuel Elbert. He was promoted to cornet in Captain Rutherford's Light Horse troop in 1779, and promoted to Captain in September of 1779, attached to Captain John Twiggs' regiment. After the fall of Charleston, his troop was involved in skirmishing, but rejoined Greene's army just before Cowpens. At Cowpens, Gresham was attached to William Washington; at Guilford Courthouse, he was attached to Henry Lee. Just before the Battle of Eutaw Springs, his troop joined some South Carolina "volunteers and militia" heading to Greene's army. The troop was attached to Henry Lee, and fought in the initial actions of the vanguard before they were ordered to the rear to join Colonel Washington. (23). The strength of Gresham's troop is not known. With the addition of Hamilton's and Gresham's troops, Washington's strength could have reached 100 or more. Washington's detachment was to form the corps de reserve for the approach to the British Army. (24)

"Lieutenant Col Washington with his horse, and the Delaware Troops under Captain Kirkwood formed a Corps de Reserve."

The role of a corps de reserve in an 18<sup>th</sup> century army was multifaceted. Its uses were both practical and psychological. Marshal Saxe said "... for any man who has nothing behind him on which to retire or depend for aid is half beaten..." (25)

The reserve's primary function was to assist at any portion of the lines that was faltering or sustaining heavy casualties. It was crucial to plug any such gaps where the enemy appeared to be breaking through before they were able to exploit the gap. (26)

Function dictated the composition of a reserve. In the Prussian Army, the corps de reserve contained light and heavy cavalry in addition to infantry (usually light troops prepared for any occasion). (27) In the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, infantry had been less frequently used in this position, primary for the reason that it would take longer to reach any given point on the battlefield when needed. (28) Even after the Seven Years War, the Prussians still did not want to rely on infantry as the main reserve for the same reasons (29) but composition would often be dictated by the ground. (30) Ideally, there would be three divisions of the reserve - one behind each wing, and one in the center. In Prussia, this was not always possible due to lack of manpower (31), a characteristic of the army under Nathanael Greene, as well.

The Prussian reserve was also occasionally the vanguard of the army on the march. This was true of Gresham's Georgia unit at Eutaw Springs, which joined Washington in the reserve after marching in the van under Henry Lee. (32)

For the main function of supplying timely assistance, it was occasionally placed on the battlefield behind a point where trouble might be expected (33), though De Saxe often did not position his reserve directly behind a solid line of battle. By placing battalions in a checkerboard pattern, they could more easily be moved forward such that retreating forces would not run into and disrupt the second line or reserve. (34) Often, however, the reserve was intended to be in the way of retreating or withdrawing troops. (35) The effect of retreating troops on established lines was not lost on Continental Gen. Daniel Morgan at Cowpens, who allowed for gaps in his infantry line for militia to pass through. What effect the retreating militia had on the second line at Eutaw, if any, is unknown. Washington had been used at Cowpens to prevent the militia from retreating (36), and he would do the same at Eutaw Springs. The first detail available on Washington's activity at Eutaw Springs involved rallying militia. Third Light Dragoon trooper George Hood noted "By Col Washington's orders we rallied the militia and brought them back into line- Col Washington ordered them to keep their places; in a few minutes they would see him in front, among the Buffs, and then to cease firing." (37) The South Carolina militia was placed back into line with the Virginia Continentals, and the North Carolina militia joined the Maryland Continentals. (38) The psychological role of a reserve was not lost on Washington.

In addition to playing a "stopgap" role, the reserve could also be used at the right time in offensive operation (39), especially when the enemy infantry seemed about ready to break. This was demonstrated by Washington's discretionary orders at Cowpens, and would prove to be the main use at Eutaw Springs. The infantry, as noted above, were still not thought to be effective in an offensive role; they were used primarily to cover retreat, if necessary. (40) Whether or not Delaware Continental Captain Richard Kirkwood's infantry should have operated in a primarily offensive role or not is one of the enduring controversies in the Battle of Eutaw Springs and will be addressed later.

In the event that the Army was defeated, the role of the *corps de reserve*, specifically the infantry, was to cover the retreat. (41) As

the Battle of Eutaw Springs progressed, Wade Hampton, then commanding the remainder of Washington's corps along with his own South Carolina dragoons, would be asked by Greene to prepare to cover for possible retreat. (42)

Lieut Col Washington brought up the Corps de reserve up on the left, where the Enemy seemed disposed to make farther resistance, and charged them so briskly with the Cavalry and Captain Kirkwoods Infantry as gave them no time to rally or form.

The initial resolve of the militia on the front line was seconded by the Continentals from North Carolina under General Jethro Sumner, sent forth to bolster the line after the militia retreat. Henderson's SC state troops on the left and Henry Lee's Legion infantry on the right remained firm. Sumner's troops behaved equally as well, but they too eventually were forced to retreat. The advance of the British line, particularly the 63<sup>rd</sup> and 64<sup>th</sup> Regiments of Foot on the British left, in response to the retreat of the American militia and Sumner's NC Continentals was met by the Virginia and Maryland Continentals. After firing a volley 40 yards away from the British line, they performed a bayonet charge. Though the battle was far from over, the tide began to turn in favor of the Americans.

Most traditional, secondary source accounts of the Battle of Eutaw Springs describe the actions of Washington's corps in the same way. As Greene's men forced the British line forward, the left of the American line became increasingly exposed to flanking fire from Marjoribanks' battalion, posted within the blackjack thicket bordering the Eutaw Creek. Washington charged, or was ordered to charge, the thicket. As Washington reached the thicket and found he could not penetrate it with cavalry, he perceived an opening on the right of Marjoribanks position whereby he might gain the rear of the British. He ordered his corps to wheel left, thereby exposing the front section to direct fire from Marjoribanks. A large percentage of the troopers and officers of the First and Third Dragoons were killed or wounded; Washington himself was taken prisoner. The remains of Washington's corps were then rallied by Wade Hampton, who charged the British position again with his own South Carolina corps and the remains of Washington's troopers. This charge was also repelled, and only when Kirkwood arrived at the thicket was Marjoribanks driven back. (43)

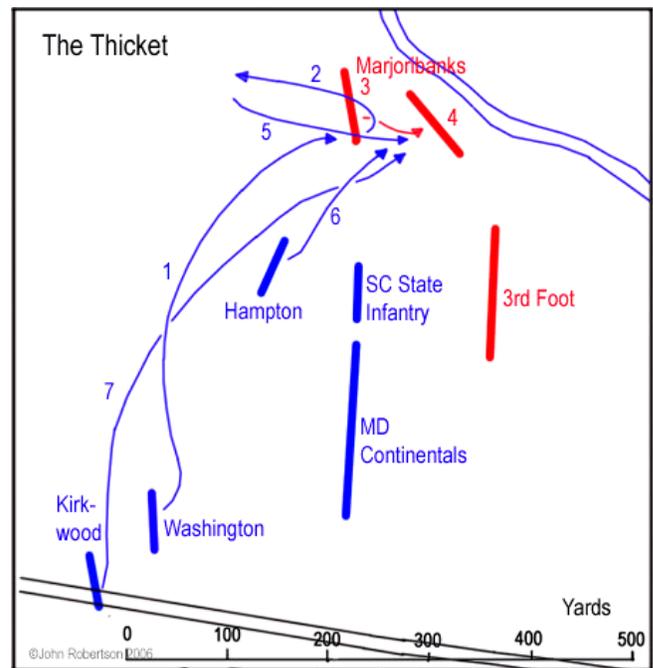
Several confusing issues arise in this traditional description. Greene's report of the battle to Thomas McKean, President of the Continental Congress, contains a statement that seems to contradict most secondary descriptions. Greene first describes a successful charge by Washington, with Kirkwood's infantry. The enemy had "... no time to rally or form....;" hardly the description of Washington's charge on the thicket. In this report, Greene describes Washington's activities as two separate actions, separated by the retreat of the British line through the camp. (44)

The second problem arises in the nature of the charge itself. Contemporary 18<sup>th</sup> century cavalry doctrine is very clear on the use of cavalry on a wooded battlefield. Frederick the Great stated, "you should never use it in large forests, where it cannot operate." (45) and "... it must not in any event approach woods where infantry will fire upon it." (46). The battlefield at Eutaw Springs was covered in wood (47) up to the eight-acre clearing where the British camp was located. (48) The thicket in which Marjoribanks was posted is described as "... an impenetrable thicket, consisting of a cragged shrub called a black Jack." (49) In later accounts by participants, the position is "...thickly set with blackjack, almost impervious to cavalry." (50)

The third problem involves the appropriate use of infantry. Maryland Continental Col. Otho Holland Williams, in his letter of September 23, 1781, was critical of Washington for making this charge. "But Colonel Washington, impatient perhaps of a more favorable opportunity..." (51) Williams in his "account" printed in Johnson's *Life of Greene*, stated "Had he had the good fortune to have taken on Kirkwood's Infantry behind his men, all would have gone well; to have been detained by their march, would have been inconsistent with his general feeling." (52) Williams seems to suggest that the charge was ill advised, and that if Washington would have made the charge with infantry it might have turned out otherwise.

Most primary and secondary accounts seem to suggest that this charge was doomed to fail from the start. Marjoribanks' position was unassailable to cavalry, and Washington's personality led directly to the decision to charge the thicket.

**"Lt. Col. Washington made most astonishing efforts..."**



Map 1. The Thicket. Washington ordered to charge the forward platoons of Marjoribanks (1), and reforms (2). Forward platoons (3) retreat to thicket (4). Washington charges thicket (5), while Hampton supports (6). Kirkwood supports Washington and Hampton (7)

The nature of cavalry actions at times makes their description more difficult than sustained infantry actions. Most of the infantry actions at Eutaw Springs were over the same ground along a linear axis, involving the same units, although there are many subplots within the clash of the infantry lines at Eutaw that have yet to be described. Brisk cavalry charges, however, are only occasionally followed by hand-to-hand cavalry combat, and may be followed by a charge on a different part of the field. In pension applications, dragoon troopers frequently confused and blended charges. A close examination of the available primary accounts and the reliable secondary accounts should take into account the above factors, examining subtle clues in the context of cavalry operations under Greene in the South and in the context of 18<sup>th</sup> century, European cavalry practice. Here emerges a possible explanation for why this fateful charge was made.

As early as the militia fight in the first line, the flank battalion commanded by Major John Marjoribanks posted in the thicket on the British right (53) was creating problems for the American left. Otho Holland Williams described this corps and its position. "In the thickets which border the creek, Major Marjoribanks, with three hundred of his best troops, was posted, with instructions to watch the flank of the enemy, if ever it should be open to attack. This command had assumed a position having some obliquity to the main line, forming an obtuse angle." (54) According to Williams, Henderson, commanding both infantry and cavalry, had requested and been refused, permission to charge Marjoribanks in order to relieve the fire his corps was receiving. As the British left gave way and both armies wheeled back obliquely in front of the now fortified house, the British Flank Battalion position became an immediate threat to American success. Greene stated "Thus secured in front, and upon the right by the House, and a deep Ravine upon the left by the Picquetted Garden, and in impenetrable Shrubbs, and the rear also being secured by the Springs and deep hollow ways, the Enemy renewed the Action." (55) The time had come for Greene to commit the *corps de reserve*.

Nathanael Greene had high praise for the cavalry under his command. Writing to Continental General Anthony Wayne on July 24, 1781 he said that Washington and Lee were "...the heroes of the South and bear down all before them." (56) Regarding their action at the Battle of Guilford Courthouse on March 15, 1781 he wrote, "The Corps of observation under Washington and Lee were warmly engaged and did great execution." (57) One month later, after the Battle of Hobkirk's Hill, Greene wrote of Washington, "The Colonels behavior and that of his Regiment upon this occasion did them the highest honor." (58) In fact, at Hobkirk's Hill, Greene had ordered Washington to charge through a wooded field. However, in Henry Lee's (son of Lighthorse Harry Lee) 1824 book *The Campaign of 1781 in the Carolinas with Remarks Historical and Critical on Johnson's Life of Greene*, Lee quotes John Eager Howard on both the charges at Hobkirk's Hill and Eutaw Springs, in both of which battles Howard was a participant:

"As to Washington's having made a circuit too extensive, it is evident from the nature of the ground between Hobkirk's and Logtown, it being covered with thick underwood, that cavalry could not act in it with effect. Washington was therefore obliged to move round to the commons. The absurdity of cavalry charging infantry in a thick underwood, was shown at Eutaw." (59)

Washington's charge at Hobkirk's required him to pass through wooded ground, and he appears to have adjusted his course during the charge. Greene's perception of Washington's actions of that day, in total, was nothing but praiseworthy. (60).

The decision to charge through the wood at Eutaw Springs must have been made in light of the experience of Hobkirk's Hill. The thicket, however, is another matter entirely. Any descriptions of the thicket available were only made after the battle, and after the outcome was known. Each described the thicket as unassailable by cavalry. (61) With that knowledge, it would have been unwise to charge the thicket with cavalry. Advanced intelligence might have prevented this decision. As noted above, Henderson wanted to charge Marjoribanks position to relieve his own left flank. If Henderson proposed charging with cavalry, then he too may have been ignorant of the thicket. If he proposed charging the infantry, he may have known that infantry alone could have reached Marjoribanks. Exactly who refused to allow him to charge is unknown. From Greene's description of his disposition, no one officer was in charge of the second line. (62) Williams himself would have had command of the leftmost brigade, and would have outranked Henderson. It is more likely that Henderson would

have reported directly to Greene. Henderson was wounded before Washington charged. If he had intelligence about the thicket, it may not have been communicated to Greene. It is not known what intelligence Washington may or may not have had of the ground prior to the battle, or if he performed any reconnaissance before the charge.

Greene himself is not clear if he directly ordered Washington to make the charge, or if Washington was operating on his own judgment. In their later writings, both Williams and Lee would state that Washington was ordered to do so. (63) In his 1781 letter, however, Williams' comment that Washington acted "impatient perhaps of a more favorable opportunity" (64) suggests that Washington had some discretion. Unfortunately the available primary sources do not provide a definite answer.

Col. Otho Holland Williams and Henry Lee made additional statements about the specifics of this charge. They suggest that if Washington would have waited for Kirkwood's infantry, the outcome may have been different. (65). Indeed, it was only after the arrival of Kirkwood on the scene that Marjoribanks was driven back. (66) Williams' narrative suggests that this was the better course of action, and the reason it was not pursued was because of Washington's "general feeling." (67) In the context of 18<sup>th</sup> century cavalry practice, however, Williams' and Lee's suggestion is not sound. As noted above in the discussion on the function of the *corps de reserve* (68), cavalry, not infantry, was best suited to this quick response to a need on the field. Charging with infantry, or as would have been the case, marching with infantry, would have exposed the cavalry to fire from which they could not have defended themselves, and would have negated the whole reason to use cavalry to begin with. Von Warnery stated:

"... for in a line thus composed, the cavalry would be obliged to march with the same pace as the infantry, and to halt when they did; this alone is sufficient to deprive them of their greatest advantage, which is, rapidity. Let it likewise be considered, by advancing thus slowly against a line of infantry, what repeated discharges they must receive, without being in any manner enable to take their revenge; the enemy's infantry and artillery, which happens to be opposed to them, will be perfectly at their ease, and enabled deliberately to take their aim, and re-load, without interruption; and the destruction of the cavalry would be certain, before it is arrived within 200 paces of the enemy's line." (69)

Washington commanded the cavalry and infantry of the *corps de reserve*. Asking the infantry to assail Marjoribanks might not have been the best decision. Waiting for the infantry was certainly not the best decision.

The exact appearance and formation of any cavalry charges in the southern theater are not known. Few descriptions exist and First and Third Light Dragoons tended to not provide much detail in their pension applications. One Third Light Dragoon did provide some detail regarding the charge. George Hood stated, "Washington and Infantry went round and got in their rear- Washington and cavalry assisted by Wade Hampton and a company of mounted volunteers - also Geo. Griscom a Virginian with a company of mounted volunteers, a particular acquaintance of mine, was along side, when Washington's horse was shot from under him - We then charged the Buffs in the rear in solid column 12 deep - the slaughter was great on our side; but we cut through their line and wheel'd for the second charge." (71) Hood's description of a 12 deep column is the only description this author has found as to the exact formation of a charge under William Washington. In general 18<sup>th</sup> century European practice, a column that deep was not recommended. Von Warnery stated "Experience has shown, that forming cavalry six deep rendered one half of them useless, and that besides the impossibility of

rallying them when thrown into disorder; the destruction made by artillery in such a mass was enormous.” (71) Von Warner recommended three ranks. Charging in column was utilized by the Prussians - but only when there was a sufficient number of troopers to form troops and squadrons. Three ranks were still maintained, but the columns were made up of successive troops or squadrons. (72) Baron von Steuben advocating filling the regiments to form squadrons capable of performing charges in column. (73) As noted above, two captains were present at Eutaw Springs: William Parsons, of the Third Light Dragoons, and John Watts, of the First. If Washington maintained four mounted troops, each troop could only have contained between 20 and 25 troopers. With the distinct possibility that one of his lieutenants was functioning as a Captain, and with the numbers available, Washington may have wanted a fourth Captain present. Washington did not have enough men to form two complete troops, let alone one squadron.

With no other description of the formation of a charge under Washington, the exact reason for a 12 deep column can only be speculated. It may have been that charging through woods required a tighter formation to maintain cohesion. Since the regiment was operationally divided into sections (74), Washington may have intended to deploy into line if a clearing was reached. Given the two available sources for Washington’s numbers, Ashe (83) (75) and Hood (100) (76), a “12 deep column” allows for a column of 12 ranks and 8 files 96. The exact numbers would be varied depending on how noncommissioned officers and officers were counted.

Greene and Washington must have been confident that a charge could be made through the woods. Success from past experience and the need for adaptability contribute to this confidence. Using infantry to charge may not have been warranted due to the need for rapid neutralization of the problem. One factor remains which may negate the question of bad, or no, intelligence, or even the decision to act on intelligence suggesting an unassailable position.

This factor is suggested by John Marshall in his *Life of Washington*, published in 1805. Marshall was not at Cowpens, but like Henry Lee’s son twenty years later, corresponded with Maryland Continental Lt. Col. John Eager Howard, a participant at the battle on the left of the American line (77). Marshall was also known to have communicated with William Washington, on at least the subjects of Cowpens, Guilford, and Hobkirk’s Hill.

In describing the Battle of Eutaw Springs, Marshall wrote:

“As the continental troops came into the engagement colonel Washington was ordered to bring up the reserve, and to act on the American left. After viewing the situation of the enemy he determined to turn the right flank of the corps commanded by Majoribanks, and to charge its rear. *The platoons on the right were at first broken; but they retreated into a thicket of scrubby oaks scarcely penetrable by cavalry.* While attempting to force through it, the regiment received the British fire, which had at first been reserved, and suffered very severely.” [Italics by author] (78)

In his memoirs, Henry Lee wrote after describing the advance of the Virginia and Maryland Continentals to the front line “Marjoribanks now for the first time was put in motion, which being perceived, Lieutenant-Colonel Washington, with the reserve, was commanded to fall upon him...” (79). Another clue is found in a letter written from John Rutledge to the South Carolina Delegates in Congress on September 9. Rutledge’s information was at least second hand, but he wrote “...whose Corps charged, thrice, thro’ their Infantry, whilst unbroken...” (80)

If Marjoribanks had platoons stationed in front of the thicket as suggested by Marshall, who then retreated into the thicket, several disparate statements come in to focus. If Washington at first charged troops posted in front of the thicket, he could indeed have “charged them so briskly with the Cavalry and Captain Kirkwood’s Infantry as gave them no time to rally or form.” (81). In this context, Hood’s statement that “We then charged the Buffs in the rear in solid column 12 deep- the slaughter was great on our side; but we cut through their line and wheel’d for the second charge” (82) might be a memory of charging troops in the open field, then attempting to assail them in the thicket. George Gresham, the native Virginian commanding a troop of Georgia cavalry with Washington, stated “... we then cut our way through the old Buff regiment in the best way we could.” (83). Hood’s statement was made forty-eight years after the battle; Gresham’s fifty-one years after the battle. In *Devil of a Whipping*, Dr. Lawrence Babits wrote “Even fifty years after the battle, with faulty recollection about dates and places and a tendency to enhance their own participation, sworn pension applications contain details that did not otherwise survive. Even with misspelled names and the wrong date and rank, most accounts fit into useful patterns and are valuable precisely because the information was not intended for historians.” (84)

The author acknowledges that each of the above sources can be interpreted in several ways. The possibility of a failure of intelligence, a bad order or bad judgment could all have contributed to Washington charging right into the thicket. It is, however, also possible that all the inconsistencies might add up to a plausible explanation.

### **“I have the Misfortune to be a Prisoner of War.”**

Wade Hampton with the South Carolina State cavalry was ordered to charge Marjoribanks’ position with Washington. Hood mentions his presence, but he did not reach the field at the same time as Washington with the main body of cavalry. (85) Williams mentioned that Hampton attempted to gain Washington’s left, as he would have by seniority. The reason for Hampton’s delay in arriving is not exactly known. If, however, Washington remained behind the American line as it wheeled toward the open area around the house, he would have been farther away from the position Hampton still held on the American left. In this instance, Washington’s impatience, described by Williams (86) may have been to blame. Hampton may have been delayed because the order to charge him reached him at the same time that Washington, who received the order immediately, was passing Hampton’s left.

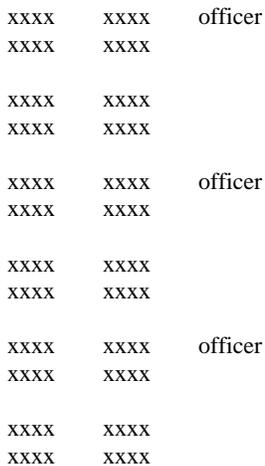
Charging into exposed troops, and reforming to charge the thicket, or charging the thicket directly, Washington’s corps was badly handled. None of the available primary sources mention Washington perceiving an opening on the right of Marjoribanks’ position between the thicket and the creek. Secondary sources invariably mention this perception, and Washington’s attempt to have his column wheel by sections to the left to gain this advantage.

The pattern of casualties in Washington’s corps as well as the statement of George Gresham suggests a possible addition to formation of the “12 deep column” described by George Hood. George Gresham stated “He was with the Colonel when his horse fell and he was taken.” (87) Washington had a tendency to get ahead of his troops in a charge. He was “perhaps 30 yards” ahead of them at Guilford. (88) Gresham’s troop would most likely have been on the left of the Continental Dragoons, and based on Gresham’s statement, he may have been out ahead of his own troop with Washington. This practice is not necessarily

unwarranted. Von Warnery stated that a field officer should be in the front of a charging officer. Only one should be used for that purpose, the others to direct the lines from within or in the rear. (89)

Casualties among the officer corps offer an additional clue to the 12-deep column formation. Among the wounded were one Captain and four subalterns. These included Captain John Watts, Lieutenant Ambrose Gordon, Lieutenant James Simons, Lieutenant Elijah King, and Lieutenant Philip Stuart. George William Carlyle, a volunteer cadet serving with the regiment, was also killed. (90) Sergeant Major Perry was also wounded. (91) The only officer unwounded was Captain William Parsons. If all of these officers were wounded in the thicket charge, a possibility for the placement of the officers would be along the right side of the column. If each section contained 12 troopers (large for a section) the number of commissioned officer would correspond to six sections. The noncommissioned officers could have been posted on the left of the column. In addition to the wounded Sergeant Major Perry, one sergeant was killed in the battle, and they could have been covering the left front ranks as the thicket was approached. It is possible, however, that some of the officers could have been wounded later in the battle.

**Column Grid (based on “12 deep column” per G. Hood)**



In the above diagram, each block of four x’s represents one section. The formation is hypothetical, based on two troops, side by side, each containing 48 troopers. This formation would have been able to deploy into a line two ranks deep. There were not enough commissioned officers present for each to command a section (as described by Henry Lee), though each could have commanded two sections - a platoon. Only five noncommissioned officers at Eutaw Springs have been identified. Actual placement of officers is only speculative, but it is likely that the killed and wounded officers would have been in front or along the right flank of the column.

Henry Lee described Lieutenant Philip Stuart leading the front section. His horse was shot from under him (92) and he was wounded twice. Lieutenant Ambrose Gordon received a slight wound (93) and was the only officer able to help Captain Parsons rally the dragoons. (94) Lieutenant Elijah King was slightly wounded twice. (95) Lieutenant James Simons was also wounded twice. An account of the role of James Simons at Eutaw Springs is printed in Joseph Johnson’s *Traditions and Reminiscences*, but it is unfortunately unsourced. It is worth mentioning, however. Simons’ wounds were described as “severe” and he was not far

from Washington when he fell, also trapped underneath his horse. The account reads:

“In this advance, the infantry came to the wounded, prostrate horsemen. Over Washington the bayonet was uplifted, and in the next instant he would have been transfixed, but the soldier’s arm was seized by Marjoribanks, exclaiming ‘It is Washington.’ The name of Washington was a talisman; his life was saved...”

Simons did not fare as well: “Having no such high name to screen him from the impending danger, he cried out for quarter, and distinctly heard the reply, ‘oh yes, we’ll quarter you.’ He expected, of course, that in the next moment he would be killed, when his horse, roused by the gleam of arms and array of steel flashing before him, or more probably by the well known call of his own bugle sounding a retreat, made a sudden effort to get up, and rose with Lieutenant Simons clinging to his neck, and did succeed in bearing him off in that way, until they reached his retreating comrades, when the horse again fell down and died; but Simons was taken up by his own men and recovered.” (96)

A dramatic anecdote, but not without precedence, at least in anecdote form. Von Warnery describes an instance in which a horse that had one of his hind hooves shot off returned to its exact place in the line. In another instance, a fallen horse was gotten up by a cuirassier and ridden three hundred paces before dying. (97) Later in the Johnson text, Simons is said to have received “two one ounce balls in his hip, and fell within a few feet of Colonel Wade Hampton.” (98) By November 9, 1781 he was able to return to duty. He was ordered on that day by Captain Nathaniel Pendleton with six dragoons to escort “Mrs. Motte,” her daughters, servants, and property from Congaree to her place on the Santee. (99)

Less dramatic but perhaps more dangerous was the fate of Captain John Watts, who received a “bad Wound in the side” and had developed pleurisy. He was still unable to be moved from the flying hospital at McCord’s Ferry on September 27, 1781. (100)

Cadet George William Carlyle had traveled south to join the Army under Nathanael Greene. Carlyle expected to be appointed a cornet in the Third Light Dragoons, but had not yet received a commission. (101) Carlyle was from Alexandria, Virginia (102) and carried with him dispatches from Virginia (103).

As noted in Simons’ account, Washington became trapped under his horse when it was wounded. Most of the eyewitness accounts of the charge on the thicket described Washington’s capture. George Hood wrote “We saw our Col defending himself among the Buffs, with sword in hand, but he had but few men left and could not get to his assistance.” (104) John Chaney, serving in the South Carolina State Dragoons stated “Washington jumped his horse into the midst of the enemy and was suddenly taken prisoner. A British soldier appeared to be in the posture of attempting to stab Colonel Washington, one of his men rushed forward and cut him down with one blow.” (105)

A confused account of the cavalry action comes second hand from Colonel John Baptist Ashe, who related to William Hooper “... his horse being shot <under him> he fell under him and as he fell received a slight wound from a Bayonet, thus incumbered with the weight of his horse he was taken prisoner. One of his Captains were killed and four of his lieutenants wounded; It is with pleasure I inform you that one only of his officers is dangerously wounded...” (106) To which Captain Ashe referred is unknown. Most severely wounded was Captain John Watts. Otho Holland Williams wrote to Edward Giles on September 23: “In an instant his breast was pierced with a Bayonet, which wounded him but

slightly.” (107). This account may have come from Washington’s letter to Greene (see below)

Private troopers in their pension accounts generally did not mention Washington’s capture. One of the few who did was Third Light Dragoon Benjamin Copeland. “...until many of them took shelter in a garden full of thick shrubs and bushes and our Col viz Washington was while commanding us and attempting to dislodge them from that place was taken prisoner after being wounded and his horse shot from under him...”(108) Trumpeter Lawrence Miller stated he was taken prisoner in the charge made by Colonel Washington. Miller also describes saber wounds, however, which most likely would have occurred in a later charge. (109)

Perhaps the best account of Washington’s fate came from Washington himself. He wrote to Greene: “I have the Misfortune to be a Prisoner of War. I am wounded with a Bayonet in my Breast, which together with the Contusion from the fall off my Horse which was kill’d- makes me extremely sore: But I am in hope not dangerous.... being informed by Col. Stuart that I am not be indulg’d with a Parole of any Latitude. I have been treated politely by many of the British officers.” (110)

**“Washington’s Dragoons is almost totally annihilated”**

The fate of the private troopers under Washington is less well understood. Wound patterns suggest that some were wounded later when they would confront Coffin’s cavalry and so a full assessment of the “annihilation” of the First and Third Light Dragoons will be made later. Suffice it to say initial reports were not as pessimistic as tradition has become. Henry Lee stated on October 2 “... his men were but little hurt.” (111) Ashe related to Hooper that there were “... very few of his privates hurt.” (112)

Arriving at the thicket, Wade Hampton rallied the survivors of Washington’s horse and with his own attempted to charge the thicket once again. The cavalry was again repulsed, and only after Kirkwood’s infantry arrived and charged the thicket was Marjoribanks pushed back. (113) Wade Hampton was experienced as a cavalry officer in South Carolina state service, and had worked in conjunction with both Henry Lee and William Washington in scouting for the main Army. (114) Though unsuccessful, it is likely that Hampton’s charge was made with every bit of order possible given the conditions.

As the battle progressed and the American lines moved through the British camp, Wade Hampton with the cavalry was ordered to take a position along the road to cover a retreat that Greene anticipated (116) The remaining troopers of Washington’s corps would still be asked to perform an equally daunting task: saber-to-saber combat with British Major John Coffin’s cavalry.

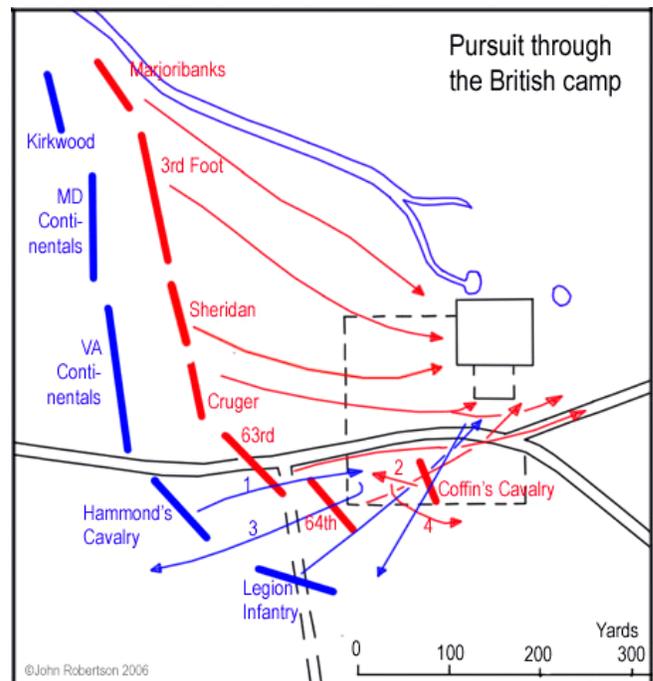
**“My troops were not so unfortunate...”**

In order to understand how Wade Hampton’s troops and the remains of Washington’s corps came to engage Coffin’s cavalry in hand-to-hand or saber-to-saber, combat in the thick of the fight, the actions on the American right must be reviewed.

The infantry of the Legion had continuously been engaged on the right through the withdrawal of both the militia and Sumner’s brigade. Sumner’s withdrawal, however, had prompted the British left to advance. Stewart stated that he then moved his reserve, including Coffin’s cavalry, to support the British left. (116) The forward move of the British left placed the Legion infantry under Captain Michael Rudolph in a flanking position and Lee ordered

them to wheel on the British flank. The fire was followed by a bayonet charge, which in combination with the charge of the Maryland and Virginia Continentals, caused the British left to retreat. (117)

SC Patriot militia Col. Samuel Hammond was commanding a regiment of South Carolina militia cavalry acting with Henry Lee on the American right. According to Hammond, if an opportunity to use the cavalry arose, he would lead the charge, and be seconded by the Legion cavalry. As the British left collapsed, Hammond perceived such an opportunity, and charged the British troops, passing through them, wheeling, and charging back again. This occurred at the same time that Rudolph with the Legion Infantry was attacking the same troops on the flank. (118)

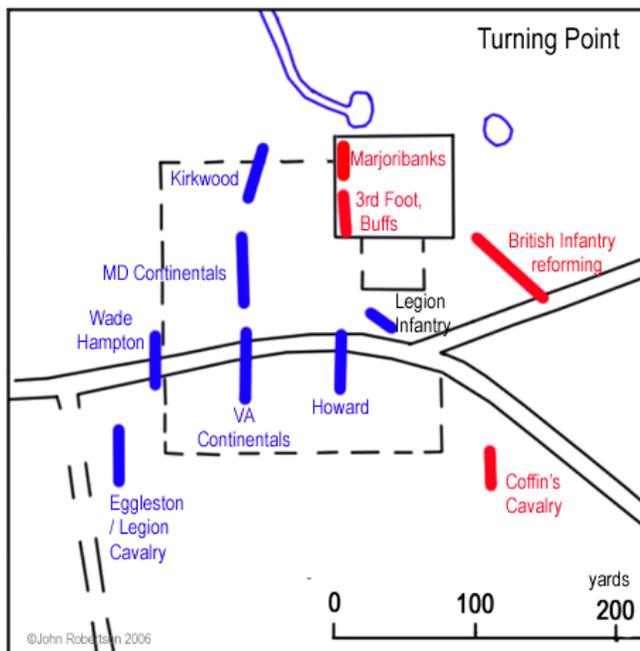


Map 2. Pursuit through the British Camp. The American line pushes the British back through their camp. Samuel Hammond's cavalry charges the British left (1), and is met by Coffin's cavalry (2). Hammond retires to the American rear (3), and Coffin retires to the British rear (4). The Legion Infantry pursues the British left to the house.

Rudolph’s infantry pursued the British as the entire British line retreated through the camp, towards the house, and the area around the road junction south of the house. Rudolph’s pursuit took them all the way to the door of the house. (119). In doing so, they moved across the axis of pursuit of the American Continentals. Hammond’s charge placed him in view of Coffin’s cavalry, covering the withdrawal of the British left rear, and he was charged by that corps. Coffin’s move, however, placed his troops in front of some of Hammond’s and Rudolph’s men, who had moved to capture a British field piece near the road junction. Those troops struck at the rear of Coffin’s cavalry, causing him to withdraw, but still facing Hammond. Hammond’s regiment now found itself between Coffin and some of the infantry it had originally charged through and taken prisoner. Those British soldiers who had originally surrendered to Hammond took up their arms again and presented a front to Hammond’s rear. Hammond decided the time had come to pull back to his original position in the woods, charging again through the reformed British infantry. (120)

When Henry Lee wrote his *Memoirs*, he did not mention Hammond's presence or actions. He stated that after the Legion infantry was repulsed at the brick house, their left was exposed to the enemy, and he ordered them to withdraw. He claimed to be commanding his infantry at the junction of the Legion's left, and the Virginians right, and stated that he was with Virginia Patriot militia Colonel Richard Campbell when he was struck. (121) Hammond saw Campbell's wounding, and describes it as happening as he was charging. When Hammond withdrew to his original position in the woods, he confirmed that Lee was up with the main line of the infantry. Hammond was ordered to retreat by an aide of Greene's; along the way, he met Captain Armstrong with some of the Legion Cavalry, who told him that they had not been engaged in the battle. (122)

Samuel Hammond's version of events, though, differs from Lee's memoirs and Williams' account in an important way. Part of Lee's Legion cavalry was engaged against Coffin. By Lee's own admission, the Legion cavalry were to be used at Greene's discretion. (123) Lee himself does not describe what action the Legion cavalry participated in, but according to Williams' account, they were ordered to charge Coffin, who had moved toward the American right. (124) This occurred, according to Lee, on the "left" of the American line. (125) Neither Williams nor Lee, in their letters written shortly after the battle mention Eggleston's charge. Greene himself did not mention it in his report to Thomas McKean (126), though on October 7, 1782, he wrote to Lee "... nor was the Cavalry blameable but less fortunate. They did not make a successful charge in the course of the day tho they attempted it several times." (127)



Map 3. Turning Point. Howard, with some MD Continentals, passes south of the Legion Infantry before they retire from the house. American troops become distracted in the British camp.

Even as the success of the charge of the Continentals and the Legion Infantry drove the British towards the house and the road junction in its front, events occurred which began to unravel the American success. As before noted, Lt. Colonel Campbell had been shot as the Virginia Continentals drove the British through their camp. This may have contributed to the disorder that ensued among the American troops as they entered the British camp. William Hooper stated that "Part of the Maryland troops however

in pursuing found so much moveable property as tempted them to halt..." (128)

Williams noted that the Legion infantry had passed around the camp, and so were not caught in that disorder (129). A portion of the Maryland Continentals also managed to make it through the camp in the pursuit of the British. Lt. Col. John Eager Howard stated "I had orders to pass the house to the South, and <?> the Charleston road near the wood." Lee confirmed that the bulk of the American line inclined to the right, in order to pass around the makeshift fortifications of the garden and the house. This drew them further from the artillery, and also began to cause the regiments to become mixed together. (130) Howard was shot and wounded, and moved back to the American rear. (131)

Campbell, the Virginia Brigade commander, and Howard, commanding the most advanced Maryland troops were wounded. The American troops in the camp, distracted by "... the liquors and refreshments they afforded..." fell into disorder. (132) Williams wrote, "Our loss in Officers kill'd and wounded was very considerable, and the eagerness of the pursuit had thrown most of the Troops into disorder, which could not now be remedied. Some were taking prisoners and others plundering the Enemys Camp..." (133) In the brick house, and in the "hollow way" (134) between the house and the head of the ravine, the British began to regroup. "...their fire began to gall us considerably." (135)

Stewart saw his opportunity to regain the upper hand. "When the left of the line was broke, matters were in a very critical situation, I myself got them rallied and put on (really) good order. After they had retired about three hundred yards, I told them if they would follow me, I would assure them success. I instantly charged the Rebels in front, and the flank Battalion under Major Marjoribanks attacking them in the flank at the same instant, we totally routed them..." (136) "...Three of his wounds were in the head, from a sabre, two of which opened his skull, the bone of which has since closed, and the other across his face, extending from his left eye south to his mouth..."

The relationship between Eggleston's charge on Coffin and the subsequent charge of Hampton is suggested in the account of Ashe, related in a letter from William Hooper to James Iredell, dated October 1, 1781. The account is second hand, and appears confused. The positions of Washington and Lee are reversed, right and left. Greene received news that the British cavalry had fallen on the militia. Greene sent an aid to Lee, but Lee could not be found. Washington was then ordered to make the charge. Ashe's account then describes Washington as being captured during this charge. It does not fit with the attack on Marjoribanks, and appears to be a combination of several events, but it does suggest that Greene was acting to deal with Coffin, a task that he believed Lee should have been doing. (137)

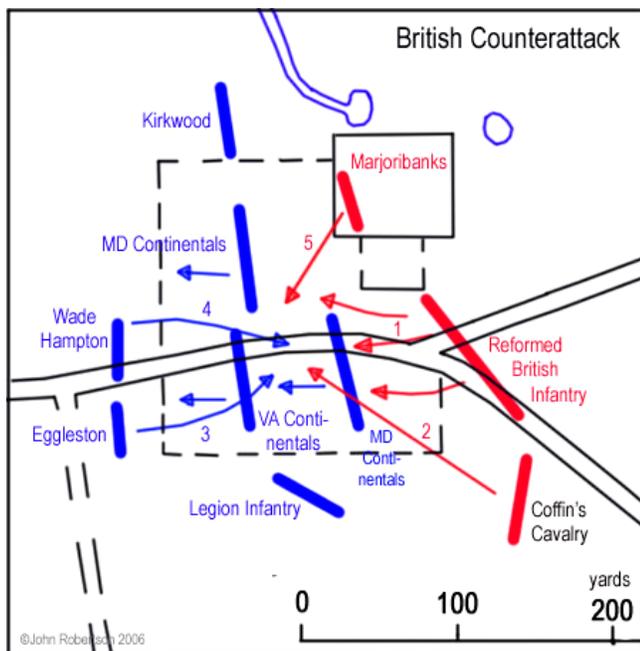
During the American retreat under the fire of the house, Coffin charged again. "... He hastened on to charge the rear of the Americans, now dispersed among the tents." (138)

Hampton, now acting as reserve, was ordered to attack Coffin. "Coffin met him with firmness, and a sharp conflict, hand to hand, was for a while maintained. But Coffin was obliged to retire, and in the ardour of pursuit, the American Cavalry approached so near Marjoribanks, and the picketed garden, as to receive from them a fatally destructive fire." Colonel Thomas Polk stated "that he thought every man was killed but himself." Hampton was able to rally the cavalry, and retreated back to the edge of the wood. (139)

Unfortunately, not much detail exists in primary sources for this cavalry-on-cavalry clash. Of the six First and Third Dragoons

who described being wounded at Eutaw Springs, two mentioned receiving saber wounds; only one mentioned a musket wound and three did not specify how they were wounded. With an admittedly very small sample size, there were twice as many saber wounds described as musket wounds. It may be that many of the deaths in the Continental dragoons occurred in the initial phase of the battle. But the surviving wounded troopers were probably more likely wounded in this later charge.

The only context in which Henry Lee discusses Eggleston's actions during the battle is the effect its absence had on his ability to charge Coffin. What is more puzzling is that Henry Lee described Coffin's cavalry as being stationary on the far left of the British line. (140). Coffin's cavalry advanced forward at least one time, and may have stayed engaged in the main battle line for the remainder of the battle on the British left. In his memoirs, Lee described calling on his cavalry to execute a charge on Coffin, which, if Coffin were in his original position just west of the Charleston road, would have allowed Lee to push forward to the head of the ravine behind the house. (141)



Map 4. British Counterattack. Reformed British Infantry charge American Infantry in British Camp (1). Coffin charges rear of retreating American Infantry (2), and Eggleston with the Legion Cavalry is ordered to charge Coffin (3). Eggleston retires, and Hampton is ordered to charge Coffin (4). Hampton is exposed to enfilading fire of Marjoribanks. (5).

Lee's plan for the use of his cavalry is sound. It would have resulted in an envelopment of the British between the ravine and the creek, and an arc of the American army, with Lee anchored at the head of the ravine on the American right, and Kirkwood at the creek on the American right. Lee's explanation, however, fails to account for several descriptions of Coffin actively participating in the action in this late phase of the battle. (142) In his October 2, 1781 letter, Lee does not mention the use of the cavalry against Coffin, either as he wanted or as it actually acted. He only comments that thick blackjack impeded the cavalry both on the left and right of the American line. (143)

It seems unlikely that if Coffin charged the American troops in front of the house and in the British camp that Lee did not see him charging. The timing of Lee's account suggests that Eggleston

was used before Lee decided that a charge of Coffin (still stationary near the road, according to Lee's Memoirs) was necessary to prevent the battle from turning against Greene. It is plausible, however, that Greene perceived the moment just as Lee did. Stewart was beginning to regroup. Coffin was in a position to charge. Lee's position on the battlefield behind his infantry on the left was far from where his cavalry was in the American rear. In his Memoirs, Lee stated, "When Lieutenant-Colonel Lee took charge of his infantry, General Greene was pleased to direct that the cavalry of the Legion should be placed at this disposal. It accordingly followed, at a safe distance, in the rear of the Infantry." (144)

When the British began to advance again against the American line, Greene may have realized that the Legion cavalry was not in a position to charge Coffin where he stood in the British rear. They were in a position to be ordered by Greene against Coffin. Henry Lee may have realized what needed to be done too late. At the moment Lee decided that Coffin could be charged, they may not have already been committed as he describes in his memoirs. By the time Coffin moved forward, and Captain Armstrong arrived at Lee's position, they had been committed to meet Coffin. The timing of Lee's description in his memoirs is the missing piece in the puzzle that accounts for the discrepancy in the accounts of Lee and Williams, in this author's opinion.

There is an additional account that suggests that Lee's leaving the cavalry behind was not Greene's wish. Samuel Hammond related a conversation among the officers at Martin's Tavern, after the battle. In Hammond's opinion, Greene stated that the Legion should not have been left back as a reserve. (145). It was fortunate, however, that Greene was able to utilize them at the right moment to repel Coffin.

The conflicting accounts over Henry Lee's actions on the American right are played out over a several year period in Lee's *Memoirs*, Johnson's *Life of Greene*, and Henry Lee, Jr.'s *Campaign of 1781*. For an understanding of the cavalry actions in the later battle, the controversy is best used to illustrate the confused nature and timing of actions on the American right. Hammond's charge occurred as the British were retreating; when he became engaged between Coffin's cavalry and the British infantry, the Americans were probably already among the tents of the British camp, and the disorder was beginning to occur.

The disorder of the infantry, being driven back by the British, the loss of the artillery and much of the cavalry, and the loss of so many officers convinced Greene that the time to retreat was at hand. To cover the retreat, he left some cavalry and infantry as a picket. The picket would also have served as a check on any movement of the enemy after Greene's withdrawal.

Some First and Third Dragoon troopers may have participated in this picket. According to Otho Williams, Colonel Hampton had command of the picket. (146) The exact composition is not clear, but was probably a combination of various depleted forces. John Rutledge wrote, quoting a letter from Williams, that the picket consisted of "Lee's, Marion's & Maham's, Horse." (147)

British Lt. Colonel Alexander Stewart acknowledged that Greene left cavalry to cover his retreat, but took exception to the fact that Greene claimed to leave a picket on the field. (148)

***"I am not to be indulg'd with a Parole of any Latitude."***

According to one American account, after Washington's capture he was taken to the brick house. (149) Lee's *Memoirs* contain an account that after the battle, Washington was accompanied by two officers who then abandoned him during the flight of the British army. The mistake was soon discovered, however. Lee stated that Washington told this story to Greene's aide Nat Pendleton "after his exchange." (150) Washington must already have felt himself under the obligation of his patrol. Washington's reaction is not surprising, given descriptions of his contemporaries.

Washington was permitted to write to Greene after his capture. Washington was wounded, and "sore," (151) but according to Stewart was "...in no Danger from the Wound he received in the action yesterday." (152) He requested that his clothing be sent to him. (153)

The day after the battle, Greene sent Marion and Lee, with the Legion cavalry, to try to get between Stewart and any reinforcement. He also hoped to be able to delay any withdrawal of the British army, that he might have another opportunity to attack them. (154) September 9, 1781 was a rainy day. (155) Marion reported to Greene that Lee and SC Patriot militia Col. Hezekiah Maham within four miles of Monck's Corner encountered a party of the enemy heading south. (156) Henry Lee did comment on this in his memoirs - he related that this encounter was with the rear guard of the Army, with wagons conveying the wounded. He instructed Captain Joseph Eggleston to charge the enemy, but they were repelled, in part because they could not get through woods "thickly set with blackjack." Lee stated that he did come up to some of the wagons, but that the wounded were so poorly off that he requested to be allowed to proceed. He does mention taking off his own wounded - but which wounded wanted to proceed he does not say. (157)

An entirely different view of this affair comes from Samuel Hammond, who was no fan of Henry Lee. Hammond described the party they encountered as being the wagons of the wounded, including Washington, escorted by 50-60 infantry. Hammond's view was that after Eggleston was repulsed, he and Maham expected to be sent forward, but were instead ordered to retreat. He also stated that he and Maham requested to make the attempt with their own commands, taking responsibility for the result, but their request was refused. (158)

### **"Entirely Broken Up"**

The state of the Third Dragoons after Eutaw Springs was no doubt disrupted. Most accounts leave the impression that the regiment lost so many troopers and officers as to be only a shadow of itself.

From the British perspective, that was what happened. In one of Alexander Stewart's letters to Cornwallis he stated "...Washington's Dragoons is almost totally annihilated." In perspective, however, Stewart admits "... they acknowledge to have had fifty officers killed and wounded, from that you may calculate the number of men they must have lost in proportion..." (159)

Francis Marion wrote to Greene on September 13<sup>th</sup> that the British were circulating accounts that the cavalry had suffered greatly. The editors of the Greene papers note that the September 12<sup>th</sup> edition of the Charleston *Royal Gazette* stated that "...the British infantry had 'hemmed in' William Washington's cavalry, allowing the British artillery to fire upon them 'with great effect.'" (160)

Indeed, some participants remembered it that way as well. The 1829 account of George Hood, who was in the Third Dragoons, does seem a bit more harsh: "... the slaughter was great on our

side..." and "We had upwards of 100 strong belonging to the cavalry - after the action we had not 48 men capable of duty - not one taken prisoner but Colonel Washington." (161)

John Chaney was serving as a SC State Dragoon. By Chaney's own admission, he was "in the rear" of Washington's troops in the "heat" of the battle. Chaney stated that he retreated with twenty-five other men, and that they were joined by five of Washington's men. According to Chaney, these five troopers stated they only escaped out of many troopers who were in the first charge. This group made its way to the High Hills of the Santee, though Chaney's account does not make clear whether this was with the main Army, or on their own. He became sick, and after he recovered never rejoined his own troops. Chaney stated "Washington's troops were never collected and reorganized within his knowledge after the Battle of Eutaw Springs." Chaney's admission that this statement was based on "his knowledge" is enough to cast doubt on his assessment of the Third Dragoons after the battle. (162)

One of the most common sources cited to describe the state of Washington's corps is the account of Col. Otho Holland Williams, written at an unknown date and published in Johnson's *Sketches of the Life and Correspondence of Nathanael Greene* in 1822.

"On the left, Washington's Cavalry, routed and flying, horses plunging as they died, or coursing the field without their riders, while the enemy with poised bayonet, issued from the thicket, upon the wounded or unhorsed rider."

"The melancholy group of wounded men and officers, who soon presented themselves to the General's view, convinced him of the severity of his misfortune; but, he had not yet been made acquainted with the full extent of it." (163)

It is conspicuous that Williams does not expressly say that a large proportion of the regiment was killed, wounded or captured. His much earlier - and probably more accurate - description is in his letter to Edward Giles of September 23, 1781; he does not describe a large loss among the men of the Third. (164)

Other contemporary American accounts are similar. General Greene himself in his letter to Thomas McKean describing the battle does not describe such severe loss (165); neither does SC Patriot Gov. John Rutledge, in his letter to the South Carolina delegates in Congress dated September 9, 1781. (166)

In an account to James Iredell from William Hooper, which appears in large part derived from a report of NC Colonel John Baptist Ashe, who was present, stated "It is with pleasure I inform you that one only of his Officers is dangerously wounded and very few of his privates hurt." (167)

Additional insight can be gained from Henry Lee. In an October 2, 1781 letter to an unknown correspondent, Lee stated "... his men were but little hurt. My troops were not so unfortunate, only in men & horses." He later states that one in four on his legion was lost, which was the proportion of casualties in the whole Army. (168)

Most historians of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, however, continued to describe the casualties of the First and Third Dragoons in a similar way. Christopher Ward, in *The War of the Revolution* stated, "A half half of Washington's whole corps were killed or wounded." (169) Mark M. Boatner, III, probably citing Ward, wrote, "... half of the command was wiped out..." (170) Burt Loescher, in the only full-length treatment of Continental Dragoons, stated "Half of the Third Continental Light Dragoons were killed or wounded." (171)

Even William Washington's most recent biographer, Stephen E. Haller, claimed that Marjoribanks action resulted in the "- killing, wounding or capturing over half of the Americans." (172)

Are there actual numbers to support one view or another? In terms of officers, it does appear that Captain Parsons was the only officer not wounded. Colonel Washington was wounded and captured; Captain Watts was wounded; Lts. Philip Stewart, James Simons, Elijah King, and Ambrose Gordon were all wounded. Cadet/Volunteer William Carlyle was killed.(173) Research has not shown any other commissioned officers present. The loss among the officers was severe. Watts, Stewart, Simons and Gordon did all return to active duty, however.

As noted in the previous chapter, there are only two figures that can be documented in primary sources for the number of dragoons present under Washington (and, as noted, it cannot with certainty be determined if these numbers represent Third Dragoons, Third and First Dragoons, and/or Continental Dragoons and State/Militia horse.) Hood claimed 100 were present (174): Colonel Ashe noted 83. (174)

In a return of the casualties of the battle, dated September 25, 1781 from the High Hills of Santee, one sergeant and 10 rank and file were killed. One Lt. Colonel, one Captain, four Subalterns, one sergeant, and 8 rank and file were wounded. Three rank and file were missing. The total killed, wounded, or missing, rank and file and officers is 29. (175) The proportion of these casualties will depend on how the above total numbers are viewed. It would seem that one-quarter of Washington's Dragoons were casualties in one form or another.

Half wiped out? Certainly not. Annihilated? Hardly. Entirely broken up? Perhaps only from the perspective of one trooper who does not himself appear to have returned to the High Hills and the accounting of September 25<sup>th</sup>.

In his report to Thomas McKean, Nathanael Greene said "Our loss in Officers is considerably more from their value than their number..." (176) In the case of William Washington this is true. The Third and First Dragoons were badly handled at Eutaw Springs. But the regiment would continue to function, and grow in strength. Under the leadership of Parsons, Watts, Call, Swan, and, again, Col. George Baylor, the Third Dragoons would never regain their form of 1781; none of these officers had the same opportunities for glory as Washington.

## Recruiting the Regiment

Immediate command of the regiment devolved to Captain William Parsons - he was the most senior officer of the regiment on detachment with the Southern Army. Some sources describe Captain John Watts as being second-in-command of the detachment at the Battle of Eutaw Springs (177), but there is no primary documentation to support this notion. And, Watts was too severely wounded to actively take the field. In a list of the wounded provided to the SC delegates in Congress by SC Gov. John Rutledge, Watts' wound was described as "bad" though this same list also described "Cornet Stuart" as mortally wounded. (178) Greene wanted to move the wounded to Camden - Henry Lee wrote from the High Hills of Santee on September 25<sup>th</sup> that the wounds of Watts, William Henderson, and John Eager Howard were "by no means safe" and that moving them would not be wise. (179) The physician attending Watts, Dr. James Browne, wrote Greene from the Flying Hospital at McCord's Ferry September 27<sup>th</sup> that he could move all of the officers except Henderson and Watts, who had a "bad Wound in the side, and is just recovering from a Pleurisy." (180) While severe, Watts' wound would not

require him to return to Virginia, and he would return to service in 1782 with the First Dragoons.

Even though things seemed to be going poorly for Washington's Corps, reinforcement was in the works from Virginia, and expectation was high. Henry Lee writing to Greene on September 24<sup>th</sup> was discussing raising additional volunteer cavalry regiments, and expressed his expectation that Washington's horse would be "filled up." (181) Parson's command would remain for the time recruiting and refreshing. Parsons did send word to Major Richard Call, in Virginia, via Trooper John Betsill, after the Battle of Eutaw Springs. (182) Many other troopers were also sent to Virginia, including John Bartlett, who ended up serving at the siege of Yorktown. (183) The long waited for reinforcements for the Regiment would be much more greatly needed, and a field officer would be greatly wanting. Despite the events of September 8, 1781 in South Carolina, help from Virginia would still lag behind for two more months.

## Efforts in Virginia

Raising and recruiting the First and Third Dragoons in Virginia in 1781 was difficult enough. The fact that the British were conducting raids into the interior of the State compelled Gen. Lafayette to practically beg for cavalry. Many of the horses impressed for the Dragoon service would be taken for the use of the combined American and French forces laying siege to Yorktown. Eventually all of the cavalry in Virginia would be ordered to the South. Ironically, by the time that happened, Nathanael Greene was beginning to feel that the need for cavalry was decreasing. (184)

## First Light Dragoons in Virginia

The Battle of Eutaw Springs did not change the need for cavalry in Virginia. On September 12<sup>th</sup>, Lafayette wrote again to White to send available horses and equipment, in addition to sending a corps of Dragoons, properly officered. If White had any reply to Lafayette's impressment of the First Dragoon horses for the operations at Yorktown, it has not been found among public records. (185) He does continue correspondence trying to improve the situation of, and advocate for, the First Dragoons under his command. On September 19 from Ruffin's Ferry, he wrote to Virginia Continental Col. William Davies. Captain Hughes had arrived at Ruffin's Ferry with clothing for 100 of the First Dragoons. He wrote that due to the shortage of clothing, he was willing to consent to let his Dragoons wear overalls, but that he could not take them into the field without caps or hats. They had already seen service without boots. He urged Davies to assist him in completing clothing his Dragoons that they might take the field. (186)

On October 1<sup>st</sup>, White wrote to Virginia Rebel Governor Thomas Nelson that Lt. Colonel Benjamin Temple had horses that he was requesting for his dismounted troops, in consequence of his having to furnish to the "French Troops Gen'l and Field Officer" horses from the First Dragoons. (187)

## Third Light Dragoons in Virginia

Lafayette wrote to George Washington on September 9, the day after the Battle of Eutaw Springs. He describes Maj. Call at Richmond, "almost without Saddles and Dragoons." He also implies that Greene has orders for Call to proceed to the South as soon as practicable (William Washington's orders) because he notes that he has "...stopped him in Richmond." (188) Greene wrote to Lafayette on September 17<sup>th</sup> about the Battle, but did not

provide any particulars relating to the cavalry - Lafayette was to obtain further particulars from Greene's letter to Washington and from Captain William Pierce. No doubt Lafayette was told of the capture of William Washington, and the further losses of his corps. (189) No further communication from Lafayette regarding Major Call and the Third Dragoons in Virginia is known to exist.

The orders often referred to from William Washington to Richard Call are not now specifically known. It does appear from Lafayette's efforts to obtain a cavalry force throughout the Spring and Summer of 1781, and the letter of September 8<sup>th</sup>, that these orders appeared to conflict with the overall sentiment in Virginia regarding the need for cavalry in that state - and the seeming orders of Gens. von Steuben and Lafayette that Call was to superintend recruiting all cavalry in the State. Apparently, finally, with the Battle of Eutaw Springs, Lafayette would have to concede that Call and the Third Dragoon recruits were needed in the South. The surrender at Yorktown would make that decision very simple.

As noted before, general recruiting of the cavalry of both the First and Third Dragoons had fallen to Major Richard Call. Officers of both regiments were scouring the countryside for recruits and mounts. Captains Morrow, Thornton, and Jones were active in the state recruiting men and horses. Also documented are Lts. Garnett and Yarborough. Benjamin Garnett was particularly active in Orange County impressing horses. Public Claims document Garnett in Orange, with some Dragoons, still impressing horses from October 1<sup>st</sup> to October 9<sup>th</sup>. (190)

Major Call, in Richmond, wrote to Governor Thomas Nelson via Cornet Yarborough, who had been sent to the northern counties of Virginia to procure horses, but he had little success. Call had written to the County Lieutenants asking them to furnish 25 horses each, but because none were forthcoming, he asked Davies to write to the Governor of Maryland for horses. (191)

Captain Swan was in Philadelphia attempting to procure clothing. He wrote to Call on October 13<sup>th</sup>. "Your favor of the 22<sup>nd</sup> ultimo came to hand the ... contents of which are surely notes, and sorry I am to inform you that no attention can be paid to them..." Swan's attempt to obtain equipment was being hampered in part by, in Swan's opinion, Continental Superintendent of Finance Robert Morris. Saddles were stripped down to holsters only, and in place of valises and mail pillion straps, Swan was given an order for portmanteaus. Swords and clothing were being collected and manufactured. The Board of War wanted to send them to Greene directly without the recruits in Virginia being specifically supplied. Swan notes in this letter that Colonel Baylor had informed him that he had taken command of the Regiment. Swan did think he would be able to obtain sword belts, swords, pistols, some clothing, and brushes. Because of the expense of staying in Philadelphia during this time, Swan was going to go to his home outside of Baltimore to await these items. (192)

There is no documented evidence of elements of the Third Dragoons at the Siege of Yorktown, which concluded on October 19, 1781. During the siege, General Washington would make clear to Lewis Morris his intentions regarding the cavalry after capitulation: the forces sent to the South would include "... and as many of White's, Moylan's and Baylor's Cavalry as can be mounted, Cloathed and equipped..." (193) On October 20, General Washington ordered the cavalry to the South to reinforce General Greene. (194)

Assuming that Colonel George Baylor was again in overall command of the Third Dragoons, Richard Call attempted to communicate with him regarding his actions. In a letter from Richmond dated October 26<sup>th</sup>, Call stated he had written Baylor

twice "since my departure from Camp" with no reply. His first letter requested Baylor's permission for him to proceed to the south with clothing and accouterments. Captain Presley Thornton had apparently been requested by Major Moore Fauntleroy (of the Fourth Dragoons) to assemble the detachments of the Third. Call, however, felt the recruits were not quite ready to travel South. They were sick, and horses were scarce. Yarborough was at Dumfries, Virginia with a party of sick Third Dragoons, and only two horses. (195)

Adding to Call's difficulty was his inability to settle accounts. He had attempted to have Lafayette settle these, but had not been able to. He wrote to Colonel Tench Tilghman, General Washington's aide on October 26<sup>th</sup> regarding his difficulty in settling accounts and obtaining equipment, specifically mentioning the stripped down saddles referenced by Captain Swan.

Maj. Call's communication with Tilghman and Baylor betrays the contents of Parsons' dispatch from the South. It has already been noted above that John Betsill was sent to Virginia with dispatches after the Battle of Eutaw Springs. It is not known if all of the information provided by Parsons was contained in one dispatch, or multiple dispatches. Parsons specifically requested that Dr. Wallace be sent to the South for the assistance of "our wounded." Wallace was at the First Dragoon camp in Hanover, Virginia. It does not appear that Dr. Wallace proceeded to the South this early. On November 28<sup>th</sup>, Captain Churchill Jones, in Petersburg, Virginia, would write to Colonel Baylor that the doctor was with him, seeing to the inoculation of the Third Dragoon recruits, and that one had contracted small pox. (196)

Major Call wrote on October 26<sup>th</sup> that if it was his intention for any of the regiment to proceed to the South, that 30-40 could probably be well armed and accoutered. But Call was concerned that most of the troopers left behind would be too ill to take care of the remaining horses. Call was going to proceed to Petersburg. Despite the order from General Washington to Major Fauntleroy to distribute the captured accoutrements and horses from Yorktown for the First and Third, in addition to the French Legion, Call was of the opinion that all the equipment and horses would go to the French Legion. He asked Baylor to help intercede in preventing this. (197)

It is clear from General Washington's correspondence with Colonel Stephen Moylan of the Fourth Dragoons of October 26<sup>th</sup>, that the captured accoutrements and horses were to equip the First, Third and Fourth regiments, in addition to Colonel Armand's Legion. Washington wanted those cavalry elements to assemble at Petersburg, Virginia to then proceed to General Greene in the South. (198) On October 31<sup>st</sup>, Washington wrote to Moylan, White and Baylor that their respective regiments were to rendezvous at the place directed by Major General Arthur St. Clair, commanding a detachment to the South. Of note, Washington mentions that included in this order was the "infantry of the First, Third, and Fourth Regiments." (199) It can be seen from prior returns that the First was recruiting the fifth and sixth troops as dismounted (200) - this is the first and only reference in 1781 to any dismounted troopers of the Third Dragoons. Washington did note that some officers could be left behind to attend to those troopers not yet prepared to move to the South. In a diary entry of November 5<sup>th</sup>, Washington noted that the detachment for the South, including the cavalry, had departed. (201)

John Swan from Baltimore wrote to Colonel Baylor on November 25, 1781. "...I hope those or that part which are with General Greene were not so much hurt and cut in pieces in the manner I have had reason to report from what information I have been able

to collect - It destroys my idea of having the whole regiment collected and completely equipped in Virginia.” (203)

Nathanael Greene’s intention for the Third Dragoons was that they would still be accompanied by the Delaware Regulars under Kirkwood. On November 3, he urged Parsons to prepare his cavalry to take the field. (203)

On the 18<sup>th</sup> of November, Greene, with the whole of the Army, moved out of the High Hills of Santee to take a position at the Four Holes Swamp. (204) On Saturday, November 24, 1781 Greene ordered that Colonel Henry Lee was to command all of the Cavalry until further orders. (205) In less than one week, the First and Third Dragoons would enter combat again before Dorchester, SC. (206.)

## Conclusion

The Battle of Eutaw Springs is complex combat, not easily understood. Cavalry played a key role in preparations for the battle, and while there was no decisive cavalry action, study of the cavalry in this battle reveals valuable insight into 18<sup>th</sup> century military practice. This battle was the last in a series of fierce large-scale actions in the Southern theater, and as such, also marked the last action of the war for William Washington. The loss of the field commander for the Third Continental Light Dragoons was a difficult blow, and like all units in the battle, it was struck hard by casualties. But the regiment did continue to function, and function well, for the remainder of the war. Regardless of the reasons for the charge on Marjoribanks and of the conditions surrounding that charge, the survivors in both Washington’s and Hampton’s corps regrouped themselves and were prepared to operate again. The cavalry actions may not have been successful but they did credit to the American cavalry under General Nathanael Greene in the Southern theater.

The year 2006 marks the 225<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Eutaw Springs, and interest in the battle will grow. There are many untapped resources on the battle, not the least of which are the pension applications of the participants. New archaeological research is being undertaken. The time for the Battle of Eutaw Springs to assume its’ rightful place in the history of the American Revolution is now.

**Return dated September 25, 1781, Camp, High Hills Santee** (207):

**Note:** The following table has been modified to estimate probable casualties in the First and Third Light Dragoons at the Battle of Eutaw Springs, based on the available return and pension applications.

Killed:	Sergeant: 1 (May) R & File: 10 (Healey)
Wounded:	Lt. Colonels: 1 (Washington) Captains: 1 (Watts) Subalterns: 4 (Simmons, Stewart, Gordon, King) Sergeants: 1 (Perry) R & File: 8 (Brumback, Clearwaters, Franklin, Gibson, Hill, Thornton, Croes, Pritchard)
Missing:	R & File: 3 (Miller, Story)

## Third Light Dragoons at Eutaw Springs:

**Note:** the following is based on the casualty report of September 25, 1781 and available pension and bounty land warrant applications. Ages are estimated at the time of the Battle of Eutaw Springs. The list is not meant to be definitive, and represents the author’s opinion. Many dates and battles as noted by the pensioners are incorrect.

Lt. Colonel William Washington: captured, wounded  
Captain William Parsons  
Lt. James Simmons: wounded  
Lt. Philip Stewart: wounded  
Lt. Ambrose Gordon: wounded  
Lt. Elijah King: wounded  
Volunteer George William Carlysle: killed

Sgt. Major John Perry: wounded

Sergeant William Shope or Shoup: of Shepherdstown, Virginia, at “Stoney Church, Monck’s Corner, Lenud’s Ferry, Cowpens, Eutaw Springs, and Yorktown. (208)

Sergeant William May: Enlisted December 1779 at Cold Harbor, VA. (209)

Sergeant Sherrod Griffin: aged 22, of Amherst Co, VA. Prior service guarding prisoners from Cowpens and in militia. Enlisted June 1781 at Culpepper CH for 18 months, appointed Sergeant, at Eutaw Springs and Dorchester. Discharged November 1782 at Button Hall 30 miles from Charleston, SC. (210)

Corporal Rush Hudson: aged 28, prior service under Colonels Hawes and Spotswood, at Long Bridge, Brandywine, Germantown, Camden, Cowpens, Guilford Courthouse, and Eutaw Springs. Enlisted on December 1777; Furloughed Nelson’s Ferry on June 13, 1783. (211)

Corporal John Franklin: aged 33. Enlisted in SC in April 1780 under Captain Churchill Jones. At Camden, Cowpens, Ninety-Six, and wounded at Eutaw Springs. Appointed corporal June 1781. Discharged 1783 at Aquia, VA. Post War occupation common laborer. (212)

Trumpeter Dennis Dailey: age 20, from Brunswick Co, VA. Prior militia service, enlisted by a sergeant November 6, 1780 at Hillsborough 3<sup>rd</sup> troop under Captain Barrett. At Cowpens, in addition to “several skirmishes.” Appointed trumpeter March 1781 Discharged June 11, 1783 at Nelson’s Ferry SC. (213)

Trumpeter Lawrence Miller: prior infantry service under General Muhlenburg. Appointed trumpeter after Guilford (when trumpeter killed). Wounded five times at Eutaw, and taken prisoner. Also at Cowpens, Guilford Courthouse, Ninety-Six, Dorchester, and Congaree Fort. (214)

Betsill, John: Aged 20. Enlisted VA January 1, 1779 in 5<sup>th</sup> troop under Captain Barrett. At Monck’s Corner, Lenud’s Ferry, Cowpens, Guilford Courthouse, Ninety-Six. After the battle of Eutaw, “he was sent by Capt. Parsons with dispatches to Virginia to Maj. Call who was recruiting.” Discharged by Baylor. Post War occupation millwright. (215)

Biggs, John: Aged 30. Prior service in 13<sup>th</sup> VA. At Cowpens and Eutaw. Discharged at Bacon’s Bridge by Greene. Post War occupation farmer. (216)

Brown, Samuel: aged 18. Of Pittsylvania Co, VA. Drafted as militia, marched to Hillsborough. Enlisted at Hillsborough NC fall (last August/first Sept) under Captain Barrett and Lt. John Linton. At Rugeley's Fort, Cowpens, Guilford Courthouse, Ninety-Six, and Eutaw Springs. Contracted Small Pox after Cowpens. Recalled in 1835 that Col. Washington was wounded by a bayonet at Eutaw Springs. Brown remembered that the command of the regiment fell to a major, which he thinks was Swan. He noted that after Eutaw, they marched to Charleston, SC after the British. The British crossed the river, and kept their fires up. At daylight, the British were gone. The Army then moved to Charleston, and attempted to besiege the City, but they were compelled to retreat back into the country. (217)

Brumback, Peter: Prior Georgia service. Enlisted 1779 at Hillsborough. Served under Linton, Parsons, Morrow. At Reedy River [Weitzel's mill] (wounded in arm), Cowpens, and Guilford Courthouse where shot in groin. Shot in right thigh at Eutaw Springs. Post War occupation blacksmith. (218)

Busby, Robert: aged 22. From Hanover Co., VA. Prior service under Maj. William Spotswood as a bowman. Enlisted after Stony Point. At Georgetown, Cowpens, missed Guilford Courthouse while guarding foraging party, at Eutaw Springs, and Yorktown. (219)

Casey, John: aged 18 of Culpepper Co., VA. Enlisted 1779 or September 1780 in Barrett's troop at Hillsborough, NC. Prior service in Albemarle guards (broke arm falling off Magazine while putting cover on). At Camden, Cowpens, Guilford Courthouse, Ninety-Six, and Eutaw Springs. Discharged Santee River. Post War occupation farmer. Note: charge of desertion by Henry Roberts. (220)

Clearwaters, Benjamin: aged 31. Enlisted "February 1776" in VA under Captain Barrett. At Brandywine, Germantown, Monck's Corner, Camden, Cowpens, and Eutaw Springs. Discharged June 1782 or 1783 discharged at Richmond (furloughed at Nelson's ferry). Wounded at Monck's Corner by bayonet above left knee. Was wounded twice at Eutaw Springs, in the right arm with a horseman sword, and across head with a sword, a wound of "great length and depth." Post War occupation farmer. (221)

Copeland, Benjamin: aged 17. Enlisted August 20, 1780. At Rugeley's Fort, Sumter's Defeat, Hammond's Store, Cowpens, Guilford Courthouse, Whitsell's Mill, Hobkirk Hill, Eutaw Springs, and Dorchester. (222)

Ferrill, Zephaniah: aged 19. Enlisted Alexandria VA under Captain Cadwallader Jones. At Camden, Cowpens, Guilford, and Eutaw Springs. Furloughed at Winchester, VA. (223)

Evans, Samuel: aged 16. Enlisted 1779 in NC under Captain Gunn. At Cowpens, Guilford Courthouse and Eutaw Springs. (224)

Fletcher, James: aged 19. Enlisted 1777 in Caroline Co, VA under Captain William Parsons or Captain Walker Baylor. At Cowpens, Guilford Courthouse, and Eutaw Springs. Wounded, unknown date. Discharged 1782 at Richmond. Post War occupation laborer and barkeep. (225)

Franklin, John (2): aged 32. Enlisted 2<sup>nd</sup> troop under Barrett, August 10, 1776. At Camden, Cowpens, Guilford Courthouse, and Eutaw Springs. Wounded both legs at Eutaw. Discharged June 25, 1782 by Morrow at Winchester, Va. Post War occupation farmer. (226)

Frey, John: aged 39, of Albemarle Co, VA. At Eutaw Springs and Yorktown. (227)

Griffin, Reuben: aged 20- 22. Enlisted February 1777 at Fredericksburg. At Tappan, Monmouth, Cowpens, Guilford Courthouse, and Eutaw Springs. Discharged by Baylor. Post War occupation farmer. (228)

Gunnell, John, Jr.: aged 18. Enlisted 1780 at Petersburg under "Ensign Hutchinson" and Captain Linton. At Cowpens (wounded by saber in sword arm, hand and head), several skirmishes and Eutaw Springs. (229)

Harris IV, John: aged 19, of Brunswick Co, VA. At Brandywine, Germantown, Camden, Broad River, Cowpens, Guilford Courthouse, and Eutaw Springs. (230)

Hawkins, Bartlett: aged 22 of Orange Co, VA. Enlisted summer 1777 at Fredericksburg under Barrett. At Tappan, Cowpens, Guilford Courthouse, and Eutaw Springs. Wounded at Tappan and skirmish in High Hills. Discharged April 18, 1782 at Bacon's Bridge by Greene. Post War occupation farmer. (231)

Hawkins, Benjamin: aged 21, of Orange Co, VA. Prior service 7th VA, Monmouth, Stoney Point. Enlisted early 1780. At Cowpens, Guilford Courthouse, Camden, and Eutaw Springs. Discharged Lenu's Ferry in June 1783. Post War occupation farmer. (232)

Healey, Daniel: enlisted at Guilford, killed at Eutaw Springs. (233)

Hill, George: prior service in Colonel Green's VA Regiment at Guilford Courthouse, then enlisted in Parson's company, at Hobkirk's Hill and Eutaw Springs, where wounded; musket ball passed through leg, breaking bone. Discharged June/July 1783. (234)

Hood, George: aged 19, enlisted July or August 1779, Philadelphia. At Cowpens, Guilford Courthouse, Ninety-Six, and Eutaw Springs. (235)

Jacobs, John: aged 18, enlisted 1780 under Francis Dade. Also stated in Third troop of Boyer at Cowpens, Guilford, Ninety-Six, and Second Camden [Hobkirk's Hill]. Wounded four times. Discharged at Winchester, VA. (236)

Jones, James: aged 21, enlisted November 1777 at Fredericksburg under Churchill Jones. At Brandywine, Cowpens, Guilford Courthouse, 96, and Eutaw Springs. Discharged on Santee. (237)

Lockett, Benjamin: Born VA, enlisted May or June 1779 under Captain Churchill Jones. Also in 3<sup>rd</sup> troop of Barrett. At Camden, Cowpens, Guilford, and Eutaw Springs. Discharged by Furlough at Charleston, SC on July 4, 1783. (238)

Minton, Ebenezer: aged 21, enlisted August 1, 1777 at Pattonsburg, VA under Captain Churchill Jones. At Paoli, Monck's Corner, Buford's Massacre, Cowpens, Guilford Courthouse, Second Camden [Hobkirk's Hill], and Eutaw Springs. (239)

Neal, Charles: aged 19, of Culpepper Co, VA, enlisted October 6 1780 at Hillsborough under Captain Barrett. At Camden, Cowpens, Guilford, and Eutaw Springs. Discharged June 12, 1783, Nelson's Ferry. (240)

Pritchard, James: aged 18, prior service under Colonel Davis. Enlisted April 27, 1781, served under Dade, Bowyer. Cowpens, Guilford, Camden [probably Hobkirk's Hill], 96, and Eutaw Springs. Wounded right leg. (241)

Story, John: Of Culpepper Co., VA, enlisted 1780 Hillsborough, NC under Captain Barrett. At Camden, Cowpens, Guilford Courthouse (wounded), Ninety-Six, and Eutaw Springs, where captured. (242)

Teas, William: served as cornet at some time, at Cowpens, Guilford Courthouse and Eutaw Springs. Wounded at some point by saber cut in hand, and musket ball to leg. (243)

Tennell, George: aged 24, enlisted 1776 under Captain Fauntleroy. At Lenuď's Ferry, Cowpens, Guilford Courthouse, and Eutaw Springs. Served as corporal, sergeant. (244)

Tenney, Edward: Of VA. Enlisted Hillsborough NC under Captain Bell. At Cowpens, Guilford Courthouse, Camden [Hobkirk's Hill], and Eutaw Springs. Wounded between hand and wrist in engagement with a small party at Stono Ferry. (245)

Thornton, William: enlisted October 30, 1780 in Barrett and Jones' company, lost right eye at Guilford Courthouse, wounded in leg and hip at Eutaw Springs. (246)

### First Light Dragoons at Eutaw Springs:

Captain John Watts

Biswell, John: Enlisted July 10, 1780 at Hillsborough, stated he was "at the Eutaw Springs under Capt. Watts where he saved his life." Discharged at Nelson's Ferry. (247)

Conner, Joseph: Aged 27, enlisted November 1778 at Point of Fork, VA, under Captain Gunn. At Monck's Corner, Cowpens, Guilford Courthouse, Eutaw Springs, Yorktown, and an Indian skirmish near Savannah. Discharged at Winchester. Post War occupation farmer. (248)

Croes, Joseph: aged 23 of Hanover County, VA. Enlisted 1778 or 1779 under Lt. Fauntleroy. At Cowpens, Guilford Courthouse, Eutaw Springs, Gibbon's, and Yorktown. Wounded at Cowpens and Guilford, cut with a saber on the head. Discharged in Charleston. Post War occupation hatter. (249)

Dawson, James: aged 27, enlisted August 20, 1779, New Providence, SC, under "Captain William Watts" Cowpens, and Eutaw Springs; missed Guilford due to small pox. (250)

Fitts, Sr., John: aged 17, enlisted about 10 September 1780 under Captain Fauntleroy. At Camden, Cowpens, Guilford Courthouse, and Eutaw Springs. (251)

Gibson, Thomas: aged 31, enlisted June or July 1776 in First Dragoons under Cornet Watts. At Brandywine, Germantown, Monmouth, Cowpens, Guilford Courthouse where leg broke, and Eutaw Springs where "severely wounded" in the head. (252)

Gunnell, William: aged 22, enlisted March 1778, Hughes Company. Possible prior infantry service. At Guilford Courthouse, Eutaw Springs, White Bluff, and Combahee Ferry. Discharged Winchester July 1782. (253)

Poe, John: Enlisted 1777, Winchester, VA under Captain Belfield. Buford's defeat, Hanging Rock, Cowpens, Guilford Courthouse,

Hotwater, where wounded, captured and exchanged, Eutaw Springs. (254)

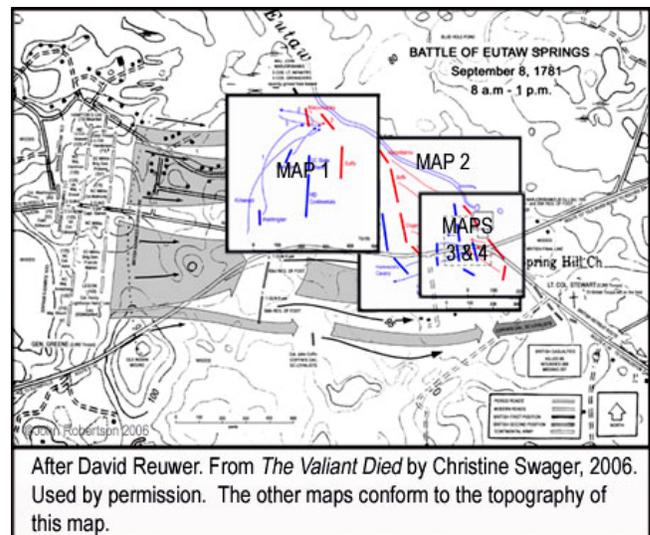
Seaburn, Jacob: Enlisted June 10, 1781 New Kent Co, VA under Captain Hughes. At Eutaw Springs and on Georgia expedition. Discharged July 10, 1783 at Lenuď's Ferry. (255)

Weatherall, John: Enlisted Culpepper Co, VA 17 Dec 1777 in Robert Yancey's troop. At Savannah, Cowpens, Guilford Courthouse, Ninety-Six, Hobkirk's Hill, and Eutaw Springs. Discharged December 26, 1781 by Belfield. (256)  
Average age, when known: 22.3

### Acknowledgements

The majority of this research would not have been possible without Special Collections Librarian Sam Fore of the John D. Rockefeller Library in Williamsburg, Virginia. John Batzell's research provided some unknown pensioners from the First and Third Dragoons. David P. Reuwer has done the most on-the-ground research at Eutaw Springs. His generosity in sharing his findings is truly valuable. Charles B. Baxley has been a good friend and a generous, patient supporter of this work. Lawrence Babits provided much needed advice along the way. The works of authors Patrick J. O'Kelley and Stephen E. Haller pointed out new sources of information. Cartographer John Robertson, based upon David P. Reuwer's map of the battle, produced battlefield graphic maps with high quality. Finally, I would like to thank author Charles F. Price. It has been a long journey. I hope that James and Benjamin would be proud. My apologies to anyone I have neglected to thank. All errors and conclusions are my own.

**Editor's Notes:** The maps used to illustrate this article depict approximations of troop positions based upon the historic reports, some archaeological finds, topographic, and man made features; however, much work needs to be done to verify by additional proofs the actual layout of the brick tavern and outbuildings, the garden and the eight acre open field in which the British camped and both sides hard fought. The editors believe that no contemporaneously produced map of either this battle or in detail of the site has been located. The small scale archeological excavation by Brockington & Associates in the ABPP funded survey actually located a brick foundation oriented at about a 45-degree angle to the normal north-south/east-west orientation of the stylized tavern/house, with its' curtilage, garden and field depicted by the map by Johnson in his *Life of Greene* (H. S. Tanner 1800 map); in Carrington's *Battlefield Atlas*, and in these maps.



It is important to note that Map 1 only depicts a sector of the battlefield at The Thicket.

## Endnotes

- (1) Lee, Jr. *Campaign of 1781*, 281.
- (2) Showman, *Greene Papers*, 7: 35, 89, 111-112, 174, 231, 291, 294.
- (3) James Martin, Federal Pension Application, NARA M804-1639.
- (4) Field Return submitted by Otho Williams, April 26, 1781, George Washington Papers, Library of Congress, online, accessed February 22, 2006.
- (5) Showman, *Greene Papers*, 7: 202-204.
- (6) Showman, *Greene Papers*, 8: 99.
- (7) Richard Call to William Davies, August 2, 1781, Library of Virginia Digital Collections, accessed February 22, 2006.
- (8) Return, March 7, 1781, Steuben Papers, NYHS.
- (9) Richard Call to William Davies, August 28, 1781, Library of VA, Digital Collections, accessed February 22, 2006.
- (10) Field Return, April 26, 1781, George Washington Papers online, accessed February 22, 2006.
- (11) Showman, *Greene Papers*, 8: 90, 161.
- (12) Showman, *Greene Papers*, 9: 146.
- (13) Showman, *Greene Papers*, 8: 192, 214-5, 355-6.
- (14) Idzerda, *Lafayette in the Age of the American Revolution*, 4: 320.
- (15) Idzerda, *Lafayette in the Age of the American Revolution*, 4: 317-8.
- (16) Idzerda, *Lafayette in the Age of the American Revolution*, 4: 350.
- (17) Idzerda, *Lafayette in the Age of the American Revolution*, 4: 382-3.
- (18) Higginbotham, Don, *James Iredell Papers*, 303.
- (19) George Hood, Virginia Bounty Land Warrant Application, Library of VA Digital Collections, accessed February 22, 2006.
- (20) Showman, *Greene Papers*, 9: 187); Cornwallis Papers, PRO
- (21) George Hood BLW Application
- (22) O'Kelley, *Nothing but Blood and Slaughter*, 3: 337.
- (23) George Gresham Federal Pension Application, NARA 804: 1129.
- (24) Henry Lee to unnamed correspondent, October 2, 1781. At least one Third Light Dragoon trooper, Nathan Dobbs, was attached to the baggage guard before the battle. (Dorman).
- (25) Phillips, *Roots of Strategy*, 236.
- (26) Nosworthy, *Anatomy of Victory*, 288.
- (27) Nosworthy, *Anatomy of Victory*, 283, Von Warnery, *Remarks on Cavalry*, 79.
- (28) Nosworthy, *Anatomy of Victory*, 298.
- (29) Von Warnery, *Remarks on Cavalry*, 79.
- (30) Von Warnery, *Remarks on Cavalry*, 73.
- (31) Von Warnery, *Remarks on Cavalry*, 74.
- (32) George Gresham Federal Pension Application, NARA 804: 1129.
- (33) Nosworthy, *Anatomy of Victory*, 82.
- (34) Nosworthy, *Anatomy of Victory*, 154.
- (35) Duffy, *Military Experience*, 242.
- (36) Babits, *Devil of a Whipping*, 77, 124.
- (37) George Hood BLW Application.
- (38) Higginbotham, *James Iredell Papers*, 302.
- (39) Nosworthy, *Anatomy of Victory*, 298.
- (40) Nosworthy, *Anatomy of Victory*, 298.
- (41) Von Warnery, *Remarks on Cavalry*, 74, 80.
- (42) Johnson, *Life of Greene*, 230.
- (43) Johnson, *Life of Greene*, 229; Ward, *Delaware Continentals*, 462.
- (44) Showman, *Greene Papers*, 9: 331.
- (45) Luvaas, *Frederick the Great*, 149.
- (46) Luvaas, *Frederick the Great*, 159.
- (47) Showman, *Greene Papers*, 9: 329; Otho Williams to Edward Giles, September 23, 1781, MDHS.
- (48) Johnson, *Life of Greene*, 224.
- (49) Showman, *Greene Papers*, 9: 331.
- (50) Lee, *Memoirs*, 2: 286.
- (51) Williams to Giles, September 23, 1781, MDHS
- (52) Johnson, *Life of Greene*, 228.
- (53) Stewart to Cornwallis, September 9, 1781, in Gibbes, *Documentary History*, 1853
- (54) Johnson, *Life of Greene*, 224.
- (55) Showman, *Greene Papers*, 9: 331.
- (56) Showman, *Greene Papers*, 9: 75.
- (57) Showman, *Greene Papers*, 7: 435.
- (58) Showman, *Greene Papers*, 8: 157.
- (59) Lee, Jr. *Campaign of 1781*, 281.
- (60) Showman, *Greene Papers*, 8: 157.
- (61) Lee, Jr. *Campaign of 1781*, 281; Showman, *Greene Papers*, 9:331; Johnson, *Life of Greene*, 2: 228.
- (62) Showman, *Greene Papers*, 9: 328-9.
- (63) Johnson, *Life of Greene*, 2: 228; Lee, *Memoirs*, 2: 286.
- (64) Williams to Giles, September 23, 1781, MDHS
- (65) Johnson, *Life of Greene*, 2: 228; Lee, *Memoirs*, 2: 298.
- (66) Ward, *Delaware Continentals*, 462.
- (67) Johnson, *Life of Greene*, 2: 228.
- (68) Nosworthy, *Anatomy of Victory*, 298; Von Warnery, *Remarks on Cavalry*, 79.
- (69) Von Warnery, *Remarks on Cavalry*, 85-6.
- (70) George Hood BLW Application
- (71) Von Warnery, *Remarks on Cavalry*, 17.
- (72) Von Warnery, *Remarks on Cavalry*, 76-8; Luvaas, *Frederick the Great*, 155-6.
- (73) Steuben to Washington, October 23, 1780, George Washington Papers, LOC, online, accessed February 22, 2006.
- (74) Lee, *Memoirs*, 2: 286.
- (75) Higginbotham, *James Iredell Papers*, 303.
- (76) George Hood BLW Application
- (77) Hobson, *John Marshall Papers*, 6: 344.
- (78) Marshall, *Life of George Washington*, 4: 546.
- (79) Lee, *Memoirs*, 2: 285.
- (80) Rutledge to SC Delegates, September 9, 1781. SCHGM, 18: 139.
- (81) Showman, *Greene Papers*, 9: 331.
- (82) George Hood BLW Application
- (83) George Gresham Federal Pension Application
- (84) Babits, *Devil of a Whipping*, xvi.
- (85) Johnson, *Life of Greene* 2: 228.
- (86) Williams to Giles, September 23, 1781, MDHS
- (87) George Gresham, Federal Pension Application
- (88) John Eager Howard to John Marshall, November 14, 1804, in Hobson, *John Marshall Papers*, 344.
- (89) Von Warnery, *Remarks on Cavalry*, 21-2.
- (90) Clark, *State Records*, 15: 637-8.
- (91) Rutledge to SC Delegates, SCHGM, 18: 139.
- (92) Lee, *Memoirs*, 2: 287.
- (93) Rutledge to SC Delegates, SCHGM, 18: 139.
- (94) Lee, *Memoirs*, 2: 287.
- (95) Rutledge to SC Delegates, SCHGM, 18: 139.
- (96) Johnson, *Traditions and Reminiscences*, 300-305.
- (97) Von Warnery, *Remarks on Cavalry*, 19.
- (98) Johnson, *Traditions and Reminiscences*, 300-305.
- (99) Showman, *Greene Papers*, 9: 551.

- (100) Showman, *Greene Papers*, 9: 401.
- (101) Showman, *Greene Papers*, 8: 493.
- (102) Lee, *Memoirs*, 2: 287.
- (103) Showman, *Greene Papers*, 9: 58.
- (104) George Hood BLW application
- (105) Dann, *Revolution Remembered*, 232.
- (106) Higginbotham, *Iredell Papers*, 303.
- (107) Williams to Giles, September 23, 1781, MDHS.
- (108) Benjamin Copeland, Federal Pension Application, M804.
- (109) Lawrence Miller, Federal Pension Application, M804.
- (110) William Washington to Nathanael Greene, September 8, 1781, Western Reserve HS.
- (111) Lee to unknown correspondent, October 2, 1781, VAHS.
- (112) Higginbotham, *Iredell Papers*, 303.
- (113) Johnson, *Life of Greene*, 2: 229.
- (114) Showman, *Greene Papers*, 9: 62-4, 132.
- (115) Johnson, *Life of Greene*, 2: 231.
- (116) Stewart to Cornwallis, September 9, 1781, in Gibbes, *Documentary History*.
- (117) Johnson, *Life of Greene*, 2: 226-7, Lee, *Memoirs*, 2: 286.
- (118) "Original Account of the Battle of Eutaw," *Charleston Daily Gazette*, July 21, 1858.
- (119) Lee, *Memoirs*, 2: 288.
- (120) "Original Account," *Charleston Daily Gazette*, July 21, 1858.
- (121) Lee, *Memoirs*, 2: 292.
- (122) "Original Account," *Charleston Daily Gazette*, July 21, 1858.
- (123) Lee, *Memoirs*, 2: 290.
- (124) Johnson, *Life of Greene*, 2: 230.
- (125) Lee, *Memoirs*, 2: 289.
- (126) Showman, *Greene Papers*, 9: 232.
- (127) Conrad, *Greene Papers*, 12: 40.
- (128) Higginbotham, *Iredell Papers*, 303.
- (129) Johnson, *Life of Greene*, 2: 230.
- (130) Lee to unknown correspondent, October 2, 1781, VAHS.
- (131) John Eager Howard to William Johnson, 1822.
- (132) Johnson, *Life of Greene*, 2: 230.
- (133) Williams to Giles, September 23, 1781, MDHS.
- (134) Lee to unknown correspondent, October 2, 1781, VAHS.
- (135) Williams to Giles, September 23, 1781, MDHS.
- (136) Alexander Stewart to Cornwallis, PRO 30/11/6
- (137) Higginbotham, *Iredell Papers*, 302.
- (138) Johnson, *Life of Greene*, 2: 230.
- (139) Johnson, *Life of Greene*, 2: 231.
- (140) Lee, *Memoirs*, 2: 288.
- (141) Lee, *Memoirs*, 2: 289.
- (142) "Original Account," *Charleston Daily Gazette*, July 21, 1858; Johnson, *Life of Greene*, 2: 231.
- (143) Lee to unknown correspondent, October 2, 1781, VAHS.
- (144) Lee, *Memoirs*, 2: 290.
- (145) "Original Account," *Charleston Daily Gazette*, July 21, 1858.
- (146) Johnson, *Life of Greene*, 2: 231.
- (147) Rutledge to SC Delegates, SCHGM 18: 139.
- (148) Stewart to Cornwallis, November 29, 1781, PRO 30/11/71.
- (149) Jesse Alsbrook Federal Pension Application, Clark, *NC State Records*, 22: 85-6.
- (150) Lee, *Memoirs*, 2: 298.
- (151) Washington to Greene, September 8, 1781, Western Reserve HS.
- (152) Showman, *Greene Papers*, 9: 310.
- (153) Washington to Greene, September 8, 1781, Western Reserve HS.
- (154) Showman, *Greene Papers*, 9: 332; Lee to unnamed correspondent, October 2, 1781, VAHS.
- (155) Lee to unnamed correspondent, October 2, 1781, VAHS.
- (156) Showman, *Greene Papers*, 9: 343.
- (157) Lee, *Memoirs*, 2: 299.
- (158) "Original Account," *Charleston Daily Gazette*, July 21, 1858.
- (159) Stewart to Cornwallis, September 26, 1781, PRO 30/11/6.
- (160) Showman, *Greene Papers*, 9: 343.
- (161) George Hood VA BLW application
- (162) Dann, *Revolution Remembered*, 232.
- (163) Johnson, *Life of Greene*, 2: 228.
- (164) Williams to Giles, September 23, 1781, MDHS.
- (165) Showman, *Greene Papers*, 9: 328-333.
- (166) Rutledge to SC Delegates, SCHGM 18: 139.
- (167) Higginbotham, *Iredell Papers*, 303.
- (168) Lee to unnamed correspondent, October 2, 1781, VAHS.
- (169) Ward, *War of the Revolution*, 2: 832.
- (170) Boatner, *Encyclopedia*, 354.
- (171) Loescher, *Washington's Eyes*, 94.
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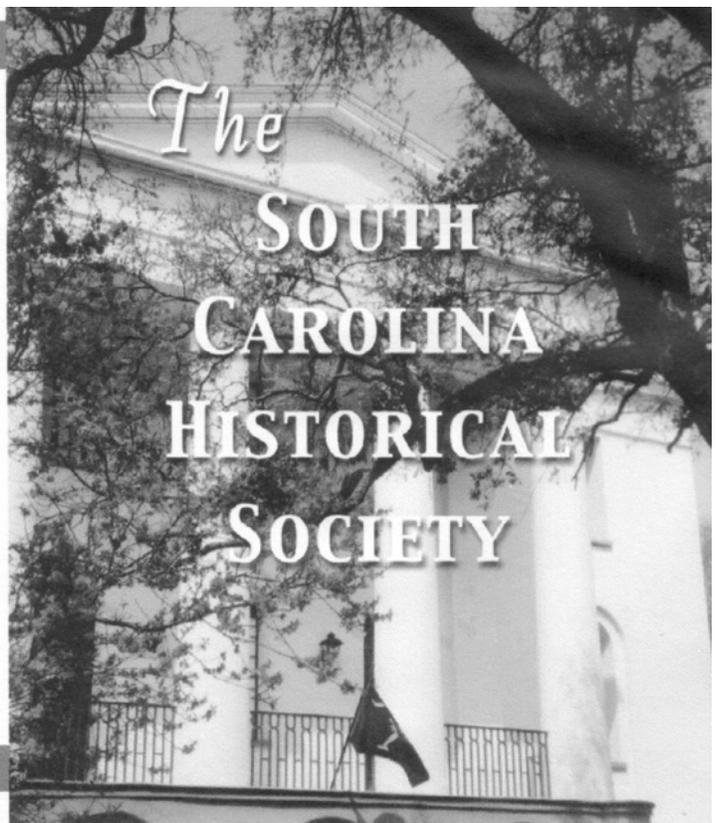
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## Prelude to Guilford Courthouse

Robert M. Dunkerly

This March brings the 225th anniversary of the pivotal Battle of Guilford Courthouse. While this battle is of immense importance to the southern campaigns, several smaller battles leading up to it have been largely overlooked. Through February and early March of 1781, detachments of the American and British armies maneuvered across the modern-day counties of Alamance, Guilford, Orange, Chatham, and Caswell fighting in the lesser-known engagements of Pyle's Defeat, Clapp's Mill, and Weitzel's Mill.

Having unsuccessfully chased General Nathaniel Greene's small, ragged army across North Carolina, British forces under Lord Charles Cornwallis moved to the state capital at Hillsborough to announce their liberation of the state and call Loyalists to come forward and support them. Greene's army had retreated across the Dan River into Virginia, where he awaited supplies and reinforcements.

Cornwallis received a lukewarm welcome in the Hillsborough area, yet some Loyalists did organize to fight for the British. The army was small and desperately short of supplies. Sergeant Roger Lamb of the 23rd Regiment wrote, "Such was the scarcity of provisions at Hillsborough, that it was found impossible to support the army in that place. They were even obliged to kill some of their best draft horses. They therefore passed the Haw, and encamped in Alamance Creek. This movement much dispirited the Loyalists, and raised the drooping hopes of the Americans."<sup>1</sup>

Lamb continues, describing their hardships: "Sometimes we had turnips served out for food, when we came to a turnip field; or arriving at a field of corn we converted our canteens into rasps and ground our Indian corn for bread; when we could get no Indian corn, we were compelled to eat liver as a substitute for bread, with our lean beef."<sup>2</sup>

In fact, Cornwallis became forced to take oxen from the local farmers, a measure he had previously promised not to do. The civilians in the area saw a weakened, desperate British army that did not have the appearance of liberators. The army could not even support itself, relying on foraging supplies from the civilians.<sup>3</sup>

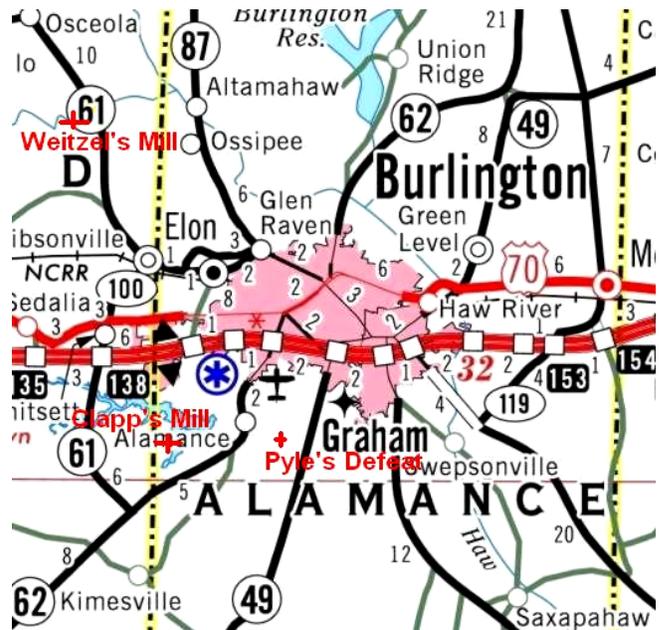
Greene now took the opportunity to send part of his army back into North Carolina from Virginia. He also was in need of resupply after the grueling marches since January. The weather had been cold and many troops lacked adequate clothing. An estimated one-fourth of his best troops – the Marylanders – were sick. On February 20, 1781 Colonel Otho H. Williams led the Delaware and Maryland light infantry back across the Dan River to observe the British and screen the movements of the main American army.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Don Hagist, ed., *A British Soldier's Story* (Baraboo, WI: Ballindaloch Press, 2004), 83.

<sup>2</sup>John Buchanan, *The Road to Guilford Courthouse* (New York: Wiley & Sons), 367.

<sup>3</sup>Ward, *The Delaware Continentals* (Wilmington, DE: Historical Society of Delaware: 1941), 403.



Area of operations, February - March 1781. Map excerpt courtesy of NC DOT.

The cavalry and light infantry of each army gradually drew closer with each side foraging the countryside and scouting for signs of the enemy. Much of the coming action took place in the region that had been the field of the 1760s Regulator movement – an internal vigilante conflict that had divided Piedmont settlers before the war. Frustrated settlers began enforcing laws in response to a corrupt and inefficient Colonial government. High taxes unfairly distributed among settlers fueled their anger. The movement was crushed in a battle near Alamance Creek. Many divisions and hard feelings lingered from the Regulator movement.

Greene's American army, a small core of Continentals augmented by North Carolina militia, took position to the northwest of Cornwallis. He sent his light infantry and cavalry ahead to watch and harass the British. Lt. Col. 'Light Horse' Harry Lee, commanding a Legion of infantry and cavalry, wanted to engage Tarleton. Lee set out to meet his adversary, but was soon distracted by a group of Loyalists.

### Pyle's Defeat

Lt. Col. "Light Horse Harry" Henry Lee set out on February 25, 1781 with his Legion and a group of North and South Carolina militia under Gen. Andrew Pickens including Catawba Indians from the Rock Hill area of South Carolina fought actively with the Americans in the Revolution armed with not only rifles and muskets but also with more traditional spears.<sup>5</sup> Lee learned that a group of about 400 Loyalists under Col. John Pyle were in the area, riding to join the British. Lee apparently intended to avoid them in his search for British Lt. Col. Banastre Tarleton.

Joseph Graham, a North Carolina Patriot militia officer, recalled:

*Pickens and Lee put their forces in motion at an early hour, and came into the great road eight miles west of Hillsboro, near Mebane's farm. The whole of the militia cavalry, seventy in*

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Rollin M. Steele Jr., *The Lost Battle of the Alamance* (Burlington, NC: Powell Enterprises, 1999), 92.

number, that had swords, were placed under Captain Graham, and in the rear of Lee's horse. Such of Graham's men as had not swords were ordered to join another company. They followed the enemy's trail on the road to Haw River, with the cavalry in front. During the whole day's march every man expected a battle and hard fighting. Men's countenances on such occasions indicate something which can be understood better than described in words. The countenances of the whole militia, throughout the day, never showed better.<sup>6</sup>

The Americans met up with two riders from Pyle's column. Thinking they were British, the riders informed Lee's men of Pyle's location. Lee had them report back to Pyle that he (who the riders thought was Tarleton) would be along soon to join them<sup>7</sup>. John Pyle, who had been living in the region for some time, was a former Regulator. He was a physician and has been described as an "amiable man," who helped treat wounded American troops after the Battle of Cane Creek the previous year.<sup>8</sup> Lee had divided his force taking part of the Legion cavalry himself, while Captain Joseph Eggleston commanded the remainder of the dragoons. SC Patriot militia Gen. Andrew Pickens led the militia. Lee wrote later that he intended to ride up to the Loyalists and offer them the chance to surrender. He maintains that his purpose was to move past them to engage Tarleton. He had Pickens' militia (who wore green twigs in their hats), move into the woods.<sup>9</sup> Pickens and other officers do not mention the intention to reveal themselves in their writings. Either they simply fail to mention this, or Lee did not inform them of his plan. Perhaps he did not have time to inform Pickens or the others as events unfolded rapidly.<sup>10</sup>

That evening Lee wrote to Greene describing the day's events. He explained that his command rode up to Pyle, intending to move past them. "I did this, that no time might be lost in reaching Colonel Tarleton. The enemy discovered their mistake on the near approach of our militia and commenced action. The rear cavalry were instantly ordered to charge by Captain Eggleston and in 10 minutes the whole body of the Enemy was routed, the greatest part of them were left on the field dead and wounded." His is a simplified explanation that requires further investigation.<sup>11</sup>

Soon the forces met along the path where Pyle's mounted men moved off to the right side of the road. Lee's dragoons rode up alongside them, Lee at the head. As he passed, Lee was "smiling," and "dropping occasionally, expressions complimentary to the good looks and commendable conduct of his loyal friends." It was a perfect deception. As Lee reached the head of the column, he extended his hand to greet Col. Pyle.<sup>12</sup> Pyle's men were mounted, just like Lee's, but had their rifles and fowlers slung over their shoulders, with muzzles down and pointed away from Lee's troopers. Lee's men had their swords drawn as they rode alongside them. Pyle's men were not suspecting anything when the Americans rode up beside them.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>6</sup>David Schenck, *North Carolina 1780-81* (Bowie, MD: Heritage Books, 2000), 278.

<sup>7</sup>Robert E. Lee, ed. *The Revolutionary War Memoirs of General Henry Lee* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1998), 256-7.

<sup>8</sup>Schenck, 283.

<sup>9</sup>Lee, 256.

<sup>10</sup>William Johnson, *Life and Correspondence of Nathaniel Greene*, Vol. 1 (New York: Da Capo Press, 1973), 454; Daniel Barefoot, *Touring North Carolina's Revolutionary War Sites* (Winston-Salem, NC: John F. Blair, 1998), 402.

<sup>11</sup>Dennis Conrad, Ed., *The Papers of General Nathaniel Greene*, Vol. VII (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 348.

<sup>12</sup>Lee, 257, 258; Johnson, 454.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.



**The site of Pyle's Defeat. Photo by author.**

Lee explained that he was grasping Pyle's hand in the act of informing him of the true situation when the rear of the Loyalist column discovered Pickens' militia in the woods and began firing on them and Eggleston's troopers in the rear.<sup>14</sup> Horrified, Pyle cried out, "Stop! Stop! You are killing your own men! I am a friend of his Majesty! Hurrah for King George!"<sup>15</sup> Graham disagrees with Lee as to the start of the fighting.

*The true statement of this is, that Major Dickson, of Lincoln, who commanded the column on our right (when their disposition for attack had been made at the last farm), and been thrown out of his proper order of march by the fences and a branch, and when Pyle's men were first seen by the militia they were thought to be the party under Dickson, which had come round the plantation and gotten in the road before them, Captain Graham discovered the mistake; seeing them with cleaner clothes than Dickson's party, and each man having a strip of red cloth on his hat. Graham, riding alongside of Captain Eggleston, who commanded the rear of Lee's horse, remarked to him: "That company are Tories. What is the reason they have their arms?" Captain Eggleston, addressing a good-looking man at the end of the line, supposed to be an officer, inquired, "To whom do you belong?" The man promptly answered, "A friend to his majesty." Whereupon Captain Eggleston struck him over the head. The militia looking on and waiting for orders, on this example being set, rushed on them like lightning and cut away. The noise in the rear attracted the notice of Lee's men, and they turned their horses short to the right about five steps, and in less than a minute the attack was made along the whole line.<sup>16</sup>*

Another account states that some of the Loyalists recognized a Maryland detachment at the rear of the line as Americans and opened fire on them. Perhaps all accounts are true, as it is possible that both sides discovered the truth simultaneously in different areas.<sup>17</sup> Andrew Pickens, writing to Greene the next day, recalled that "Our Men were in some measure under the same mistake, but soon found out, and nigh 100 were killed and the greatest part of the others wounded, unfortunately the Dragoons got separated from us and our Militia could not be kept from firing." Thus, Pickens explains that his men were as confused as the Loyalists and that the encounter was not well managed.<sup>18</sup>

Moses Hall in his pension application stated that his militia captain yelled, "Colonel Lee, they are every blood of them Tories!" To which Lee signaled to keep moving, hoping to continue the ruse. No doubt other soldiers of each side, talking

<sup>14</sup>Lee, 258.

<sup>15</sup>Barefoot, 402.

<sup>16</sup>Schenck, 279.

<sup>17</sup>Johnson, 454.

<sup>18</sup>Conrad, 335.

informally, would have discovered the reality at about the same time.<sup>19</sup> Graham's account is one of the best of the unfolding incident:

*At the time the action commenced, Lee's dragoons in the open order of march, extended about the same distance with Pyle's men, who were in close order, and on horseback; most of them having come from home on that day, were clean, like men who now turn out to a review. Lee's movement was as if he were going to pass them five or six steps on the left of their line. When the alarm was given in the rear, as quickly as his men could turn their horses, they were engaged; and the Tories were over two to one of our actual cavalry, by pressing forward they went thorough their line, leaving a number behind them. The continual cry by the Tories was, 'You are killing your own men! I am a friend to his majesty. Hurrah for King George!' Finding their profession of loyalty, and all they could say were of no avail, and only the signal for their destruction, twelve or fifteen of those whom Lee's men had gone through, and who had thrown down their guns, now determining to sell their lives as dearly as possible, jumped to their arms and began to fire in every direction, making the cavalry give back a little. But as soon as their guns were empty, they were charged upon every side by more than could get at them, and cut down in a group together. All the harm done by their fire was that a dragoon's horse was shot down. Falling very suddenly, and not moving afterwards, the rider's leg was caught under him, and by all his efforts he could not extricate himself, until the action began to slacken, when two of his comrades dismounted, and rolled the horse off him.*

*Lee's men had so recently come to the South that they did not understand the usual marks of distinction between Whig and Tory, and after the first onset, when all became mixed, they required of each man, before they attacked him, to whom he belonged. The enemy readily answered, 'To King George.' To many of their own militia they put the same question. Fortunately no mistakes occurred, though in some instances there was great danger of it.*

*At the close of the action the troops were scattered and mixed through each other - completely disorganized. General Pickens and Colonel Lee gave repeated orders to form, but the confusion was such that their orders were without effect.<sup>20</sup>*

As the melee developed, Lee wrote that "in some parts of the line the cry of mercy was heard, coupled with assurance of being our best friends; but no expostulation could be admitted in a conjuncture so critical. Humanity even forbade it, as its first injunction is to take care of your own safety, and our safety was not compatible with that of the supplicants, until disabled to offend."<sup>21</sup>

Lee exonerates himself of wrongdoing at this event explaining that he could not command his men to stop while the Loyalists were still armed and resisting. He probably could not stop his men in any case because, as when the fighting broke out, the two groups grappled with each other at close quarters. Was Lee guilty of the same crimes as Tarleton? No doubt Pyle's Defeat would be treated as Buford's Defeat if the tables were turned. Lee was never called into question for his actions here, suffered no criticism from fellow officers or his superiors. While British officers like Lord Cornwallis and Charles Stedman decried the event, accusations were not pursued.<sup>22</sup> Lee, unlike Tarleton at Waxhaw (where he was accused of massacring surrendering American troops under Col. Abraham Buford); however, one American soldier wrote, "Colonel Lee knew what he was about,"

thus calling into question Lee's intentions. The Legion simply fell into that passion that affects men in combat, resorting to instinct and acting uncharacteristically savage on this day.<sup>23</sup>

Casualties have been estimated at about 100 Loyalists killed, and many times that wounded. Pyle's entire command was dispersed; the lone American casualty was a horse. Colonel Pyle himself was wounded but escaped, hiding in a nearby pond until rescued by other survivors.<sup>24</sup>

The day was late and his men were now fatigued. Lee still hoped to ride on and engage Tarleton. He hoped to apply the same ruse, using a captured Loyalist to gain access to Tarleton's column, but could not find an unwounded man among his prisoners. As Lee interviewed survivors, one said to him, "Well, God bless your soul, Mr. Tarleton, you have this day killed a parcel of as good subjects as ever his Majesty had." Lee, who at this time was not in the humor for quizzing, interrupted him, saying: "You damned rascal, if you call me Tarleton I will take off your head. I will undeceive you: we are the Americans and not the British. I am Lee of the American Legion, and not Tarleton." The poor fellow appeared chop-fallen.<sup>25</sup>

The killing went on after the prisoners had been rounded up. Moses Hall, a North Carolina militiaman, observed: "We went to where six were standing together. Some discussion taking place, I heard some of our men cry out, 'Remember Buford,' and the prisoners were immediately hewed to death with broadswords."<sup>26</sup> Graham recalled, "The next day our militia counted ninety-three dead, and there was the appearance of many more being carried off by their friends. There were certainly many more wounded. When Lee and Pickens retired, it appeared as if three hundred might be lying dead. Many, perhaps, were only slightly wounded and lay quietly for security."<sup>27</sup>

Unfortunately few accounts of this engagement exist; some American pension applications mention it but few go into detail. This author has not identified any Loyalist accounts of the action. The account of militiaman George Gresham of Georgia is typical:

"Col. Lee heard of Tarleton and Simcoe, who were in the neighborhood of the Allamance for the purpose of joining the Tories under Colonel Piles. We missed Tarleton, but fell in with Pile and a strong party, who were routed with the loss of many killed, wounded, and prisoners."<sup>28</sup>

It was a disaster for the fledgling Loyalist movement to support Cornwallis. The British General noted in his report, "Unluckily a detachment of the rebel light infantry . . . by accident fell in with about 200 of our friends, under Col. Pyle, on their way to Hillsborough, who, mistaking the rebels for Lt-Col Tarleton's corps, allowed themselves to be surrounded, and a number of them were most inhumanely butchered, when begging for quarters . . ."<sup>29</sup>

General Greene wrote that, "It has had a very happy effect on those disaffected Persons, of which there are too many in this Country." Andrew Pickens observed that, "It has knocked up Toryism altogether in this part."<sup>30</sup>

For many Loyalists it was the last straw. The British army who had come to protect them could not even feed itself. Now a group that had taken the risk of coming forward to join them was deceived and cut down. Pyle's defeat is an example of

<sup>19</sup>Steele, 91.

<sup>20</sup>Schenck, 280-1.

<sup>21</sup>Lee, 257.

<sup>22</sup>Steele, 89.

<sup>23</sup>Charles Royster, *Light-Horse Harry Lee* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1981), 38.

<sup>24</sup>Schenck, 282.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

<sup>26</sup>Buchanan, 364.

<sup>27</sup>Schenck, 279.

<sup>28</sup>George Gresham, Federal Pension Application, W 2933.

<sup>29</sup>LC to G, 1UU3

<sup>30</sup>Barefoot, 402; Johnson, 453.

what can happen in this type of civil war in which many troops had similar uniforms (Tarleton's Legion and Lee's Legion both wore short green coats) or no uniforms at all (as was the case with both Loyalist and American militia). It was not the first case of mistaken identity in the campaign and would not be the last.<sup>31</sup>

To visit the site of Pyle's Defeat, take exit #145 (at Burlington, NC) off Interstate-85, which is Route 49. Take 49 South, and get into the right lane (which become a turning lane), and make a right turn onto Route 1148 (Anthony Road). At this intersection there is a state historic marker for Pyle's Defeat. To see the battle site, continue on Anthony Road for about one mile until the intersection with Route 1157 on your left (this will be the next paved road on your left). Just beyond the paved road is a historic road trace and a monument for the battle. Pull into the gravel road and park at the monument. This is the old lane where the two forces met. Benson Lossing visited the site in 1849 during his tour of Revolutionary War sites and sketched the pond where locals told him Pyle had hidden. The mass graves of the Loyalists are also thought to be nearby.<sup>32</sup>



**Benson Lossing's 1849 sketch of Pyle's Pond.**



**Monument for Pyle's Defeat. Photo by author.**

For more information on Col. Pyle's Defeat, SCAR recommends Dr. Carole W. Troxler's monograph on the same. It is available from the Alamance County Historical Society at

<http://facstaff.elon.edu/troxlerc/Pyle.html>

<sup>31</sup>Steele, 78

### Clapp's Mill

The opposing forces clashed at Clapp's Mill on March 2, 1781 in what is also been called the Battle of Alamance. Cornwallis' army moved on February 27, 1781 from Hillsborough to the Haw River, camping on the south side of Alamance Creek at an important crossroads.<sup>33</sup> The same day, Colonel Otho H. Williams, with the Maryland and Delaware light infantry, Gen. Pickens' militia, Washington's dragoons and Lee's legion, and Virginia riflemen under Maj. Thomas Rowland, moved to the north side of Alamance Creek, just a few miles from the British. Greene's main army set up camp at Speedwell Ironworks on Troublesome Creek to the north. For the next ten days the armies were never still: maneuvering and marching across the wooded countryside. Captain Robert Kirkwood of Delaware recorded in his journal that his men marched 230 miles in this time period, including 60 miles in two days.<sup>34</sup>

Clapp's Mill, possibly in operation for up to twenty years, was built with eight to ten foot locally quarried rocks with smaller stones filling the gaps. The farm included a double barn, house, and various outbuildings. This area was settled largely by German immigrants, who built prosperous farms and tried to stay neutral during the war. Several fields with what may have been worm (zigzag) fencing stood around the buildings.<sup>35</sup>

Williams now took his turn to try and bait Tarleton, attempting a trap along the lines of Cowpens two months earlier. Williams took his force to Clapp's Mill on Alamance Creek and deployed his militia in front, with his Continental troops in the rear. The arrangement was a mirror image of Cowpens, and he hoped for the same result: drawing in the British and weakening them as they attacked. Greene had moved forward with the main army, within supporting distance.<sup>36</sup>

Early on the morning of March 2nd, a British patrol was foraging from their camp and spotted the American militia in front of them at Clapp's farm. Tarleton describes the action next:

*The British cavalry were ordered on the 2d of March to forage about three miles in front of their encampment. Captain Hovenden, of the legion, who commanded the covering party,*

<sup>32</sup>National Park Service, American Battlefield Protection Program, Revolutionary War Battlefield Site Survey, Pyle's Defeat, Kings Mountain National Military Park Archives.

<sup>33</sup>Ward, 404.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., 179.

<sup>36</sup>Steele, 116, 120.

observing some of the American dragoons in the neighborhood of the plantations where he was directed to collect forage, rode forwards to examine more closely; when, perceiving the enemy's infantry, he dispatched the foragers to camp without their burdens, and, on his return, reported the circumstances he had discovered. This intelligence induced Lieutenant-colonel Tarleton to make a patrol with his whole corps, which consisted of the cavalry, a few mounted infantry, the light company of the guards, and one hundred and fifty men of Colonel Webster's brigade, after having conveyed to Earl Cornwallis, by express, his reason for such a proceeding.<sup>37</sup>

The American front line was deployed in and around the barn, house, and outbuildings of Barney Clapp.<sup>38</sup> Captain Graham describes the American front line deployment:

*The whole of Lee's Cavalry with Major Rudolph and some Catawba the cavalry and Riflemen were divided 20 of each placed 100 yards on the right of the road under Capt. Simmons and the same number the same distance on the left side of the road under Capt. Graham Those officers were instructed when meeting the Enemy the Cavalry & Riflemen should protect each other alternatively if circumstances should require it 6 Cataba Indians & 4 of Lee's troopers and a sergeant kept the road 30 poles in front of Major Rudolph Graham & Simmons were instructed to keep an equal front with the indians 100 yards from the road Major Dickson of Lincoln led 200 mounted infantry on the left in the rear of Grahams party & Colo. Preston the same number of Virginia Riflemen in the rear of Simmons . . .*

Tarleton picks up the action again,

*The approach to the ground where the enemy were described to have been proving unfit for the operations of cavalry, Tarleton directed the infantry to form for the advance, and to explore the thick woods upon the flanks with great attention. The light company of the guards, commanded by Captain Dundass, led the column, the light infantry of the line followed the guards, and the cavalry brought up the foragers in the rear, till the country would allow the dragons to move on to the front. When the British drew near to the plantations which were to furnish the forage, a heavy fire from some thickets on each side of the road discovered the situation of the enemy. The guards formed with the usual alacrity, and Captain Ingram, of the 33d regiment, who commanded the hundred and fifty men of Webster's brigade, was directed to dress his left by their right, whilst the cavalry moved to his right, where the country appeared most favourable for their exertions. The gallantry of the British troops, after a short conflict, dislodged and dispersed a corps of eight hundred men, composed of Lee's legion, Washington's dragoons, and Preston's backwoodsmen; the continentals retreated early, and did not wait the charge of the British dragoons, who were much impeded in their advance by a thick wood and high rails, which prevented the action from being more general and decisive.<sup>39</sup>*

Graham explains the American perspective:

*The columns advancing under Major Dickson & Colo. Preston instantly dismounted tied their horses at the fence and advanced in line Major Rudolph put Lee's Dragoons in Column behind the double Barn while these arrangements were making*

*the Indians and Riflemen kept up a desultory fire in front. As the American line advanced Graham & Simmons had their men to oblique to the flanks out of their way the woods were so thick the foe could not be seen until they came within 60 or 70 steps of him when a heavy fire commenced on both sides the Indians who had hitherto been very alert could not stand it turned and run off like a Turkey . . . the saplings and bushes were so thick the bark and twigs were continually flying hit men on the cheeks shoulders or kept them dodging and to the neglect of their own business of loading and firing as fast they might have done after firing about 3 rounds (The enemy still in their first position) they became panick struck evidently from the twigs and bark flying about and the whole line turned neatly at once without orders and retreated.<sup>40</sup>*

The Continentals under Kirkwood and Oldham became engaged as the militia and cavalry withdrew. Graham wrote that they "were drawn up on the rise about 80 yards before opened a brisk fire on the enemy over the heads of the retreating troops caused their Cavalry to recede a little back until their infantry arrived."<sup>41</sup> He explains that the British did not advance further, the action taking about 20 minutes. As before, several pension statements mention the battle, but do not go into great detail. Jacob Smith, for example, testified that "at a place called the Old Regulation ground again met the British and these had another skirmish with them - three of our men were killed, their names were Archy Hill, Phillip Watkins and William Harvey, then marched on to Guilford".<sup>42</sup>

Apparently several of the Virginia militia from Botetourt and Montgomery Counties were hit in the action. Robert Harris suffered several cuts on his head and had one hand cut off. Such wounds indicate close action with Tarleton's saber-wielding cavalry.<sup>43</sup> William Seymour of the Delaware Regiment summed up his view of the battle: "Having set down a party of militia to draw them out, we having formed the line of battle at some distance off, the militia meeting with and firing on them, upon which were several shots exchanged on both sides with various successes, when the militia retreated and in regular form, thinking to draw on them, which however they thought proper to decline."<sup>44</sup>

Col. Otho H. Williams wrote to Greene that "We skirmished about fifteen minutes with the enemy. . ." Going into more detail, he explains, "I advanced Lt Col Lee with the Legion & Major Rowlands Rifle Battalion early in the morning & he was joined by a small detachment of General Pickens' mounted Riflemen about nine o'clock. We lay upon our arms ready to advance or retire as circumstances might require." When contact was made with the enemy, Williams observed that, ". . . the Infantry of the Legion were making a handsome defense, when I ordered a gradual retreat which was well enough effected considering the irregularity of the order. I believe very few fell on either side. We have about 10 or 12 wounded."<sup>45</sup>

Tarleton broke off the action. The battle ended with total British losses were approximately 21 killed and wounded; the Americans lost about 8 killed and at least two prisoners (John Mitchell and John Stinson, both of Graham's unit and taken by Tarleton's Legion).<sup>46</sup>

<sup>37</sup>Banastre Tarleton, *A History of the Campaigns of 1780 and 1781 in the Southern Provinces of North America* (North Stratford, NH: Ayer Co., 2001), 234-5.

<sup>38</sup>Steele, 121.

<sup>39</sup>Tarleton, 235.

<sup>40</sup>Steele, 122-3.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., 123-4.

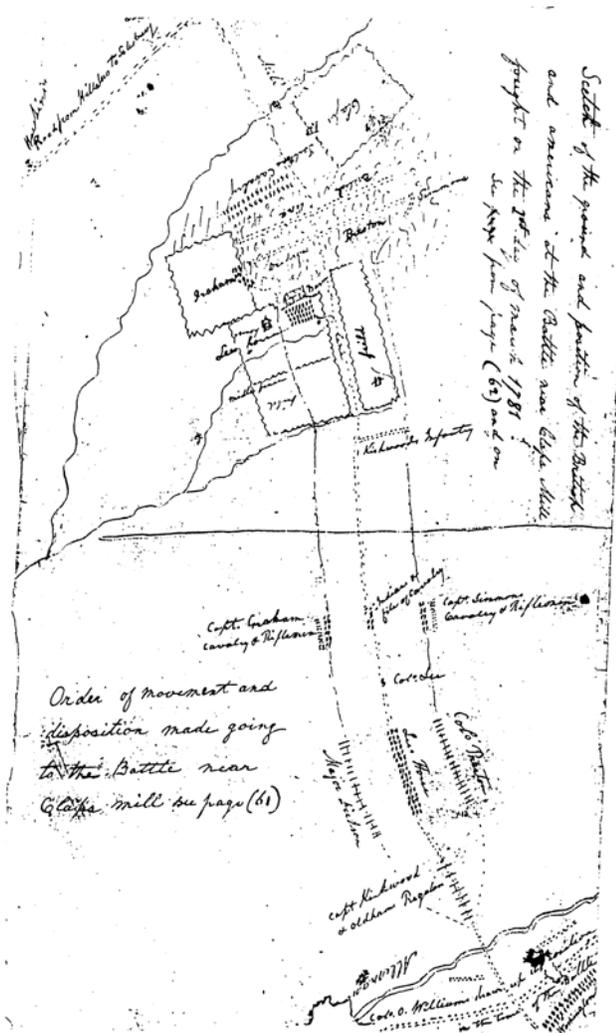
<sup>42</sup>Ibid., 131.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., 134-5.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., 139.

<sup>45</sup>Conrad, 381.

<sup>46</sup>Tarleton, 236; Steele, 120, 135.



Sketched by Joseph Graham, this map shows troop positions and physical details of the Clapp's Mill battlefield. Rollin M. Steele, Jr., *The Lost Battle of the Alamance*. Burlington, NC: Powell Enterprises, 1999, p. 223.

Most of the American commanders including Lee, Washington, Greene, Williams, and Kirkland, make little, if any, mention of the Battle of Clapp's Mill. Perhaps, because it was a disappointment. In a letter to General Greene, Col. Williams only says, "Colonel Tarleton appeared, but kept at a due distance."<sup>47</sup> Cornwallis wrote simply: "I directed Lieutenant-colonel Tarleton to move forward with proper precautions, and endeavor to discover the designs of the enemy. He had not advanced far when he fell in with a considerable corps, which he immediately attacked and routed; but being ignorant of their force and whether they were supported, with great prudence desisted from the pursuit. He soon learned from prisoners that those he had beaten were Lee's legion, three or four hundred back mountainmen under Virginia Patriot militia Colonel William Preston, with a number of militia; and that General Greene, with a part of his army, was not far distant."<sup>48</sup>

Was Tarleton more gun-shy after the Cowpens fiasco? Possibly. Or perhaps he sensed there was more to this than meets the eye. Either way, Tarleton did not push and instead broke off

the engagement. Clapp's Mill had the potential to destroy a significant portion of the British army if Tarleton had fully engaged - a disaster given the weak state of Cornwallis' already outnumbered army. If the fighting had escalated here, there very likely would have been no battle at Guilford Courthouse.

Casualties are difficult to estimate. The Americans lost about three killed, ten wounded, and according to Tarleton British losses were 21 killed and wounded.

The next day British troops buried sixteen of their men at the farm, and placed a killed officer into a wagon to take back to camp. Several wounded were also taken back in wagons.<sup>49</sup> Graham's militia also returned to the scene the next day. He wrote that, "The plantation was open ground I left half the force back to support if pursued until the other half explored and found the enemy were gone. They then came forward by a signal. Our dead were on the ground in number 8 two of whom were Grahams men . . . saw a large grave where the enemy had buried their dead in which Mr. Clap stated he seen them put 16 and an officer they had carried off to bury at headquarters."<sup>50</sup>

To reach the Clapp's Mill battlefield, take Exit #143 off Interstate-85, Route 1158, and proceed south until it meets with Route 1149 (Hoffman Mill Road). Follow this for about three miles to Lake MacIntosh Park on your left. Turn in there, and proceed to the right, following signs for the clubhouse. At the parking lot there is a monument with two flags. Consisting of several plaques around a millstone, the monument tells the story not only of the battle and the armies, but also of Clapp's Mill and the area's local history.



Clapp's Mill Monument. Photo by author.



Stones from Clapp's Mill. Photo by author.

<sup>47</sup>Johnson, 460; Steele, 73, 140.

<sup>48</sup>Tarleton, 266.

<sup>49</sup>Steele, 148.

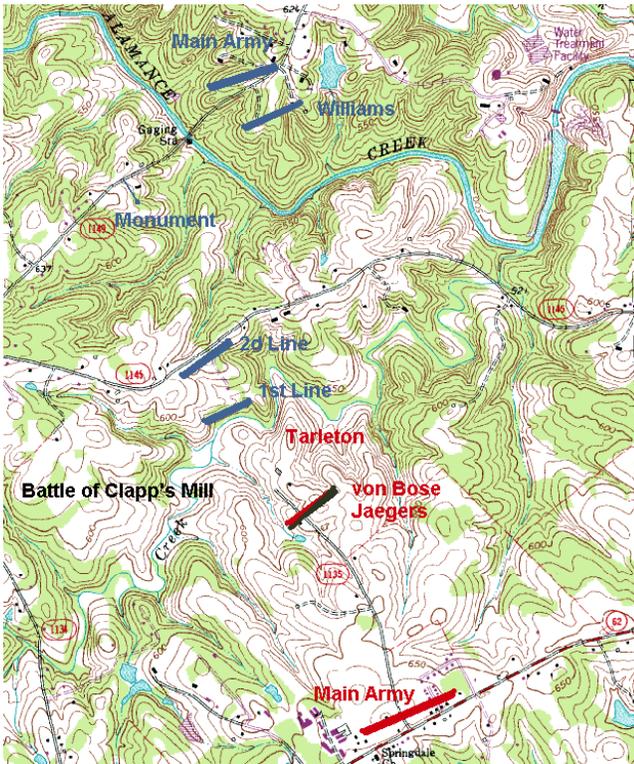
<sup>50</sup>Ibid., 158



**Killed of both sides, listed on monument. Photo by author.**

The mill and other buildings no longer stand, but their locations have been identified by local researchers. Today the site has been partially flooded by the construction of Lake MacIntosh.<sup>51</sup>

To view the battle site, return to Hoffman Mill Road and turn left, continuing south. Take the first left (a sharp turn) onto Pond Road. Proceed slowly; as you drive you are crossing the battle site, as the Americans retreated from your right across the fields and the road to your left. The mill sat to your right, on Beaver Creek, and its foundations remain in the woods. Pond Road dead-ends at the lake, you may turn around here. There is no opportunity to pull over on the battlefield, and the entire site is private property. Please do not trespass.



**This topographical map, made before the damming of the Alamance Creek to create Lake McIntosh, shows the Clapp's Mill Battlefield. Excerpt from USGS 7.5 minute**

**topo map, Gibsonville quad. Map annotations by author.**

### Weitzel's Mill

The last of these skirmishes occurred at Weitzel's Mill (also spelled as Wetzel's or Wiley's). Cornwallis was becoming more determined to strike at the Americans to either force a general battle, which he felt his veteran army could win, or destroy the isolated detachments operating near him. Frustrated with recent setbacks, the inability to trap the Americans and running low on supplies, Cornwallis ordered his most aggressive officer, Tarleton, to hunt down the Americans on Reedy Fork of the Haw River. Williams, along with the Virginia light infantry, militia and dragoons of Lee and Washington had taken post near Weitzel's Mill on the Reedy Fork. Sergeant Lamb of the British 23rd Regiment recalled that, "In this situation, Lord Cornwallis gave orders to beat up the American post at Reedy Fork, in order to compel them to a greater distance, or perhaps allure Greene, who lay in the direction of Guilford Court-house, to a general engagement."<sup>52</sup>

At 3 am on March 6, 1781 Cornwallis sent a strike force out to aggressively engage the Americans. The troops crossed Allamance Creek and moved quickly towards the Americans in front of Weitzel's Mill.<sup>53</sup> Luckily, Col. Williams had sent out a scouting party that morning who reported the British approach. Williams quickly had his troops in motion, pulling back to cross the creek at the mill. It became a desperate race. Williams reported to Greene that, "I detach'd an Officer with a small party designing under cover of the Fogg to have Surprized and brought off one of the Enemys parties station'd at a Mill about a mile from their Camp. Soon after I was inform'd by one of my reconnoitering Officers that the Enemy had Decamped early in the morning and had taken a rout leading to my left. We were instantly in motion."<sup>54</sup> "I immediately order'd the Troops to march to Wileys Mill and soon after was inform'd by two Prisoners that the Enemy were marching for the same place on a road parallel to that in which we were. We annoy'd them by Light flanking parties and moved briskly to the Mill, but were so closely press'd by Coll Websters Brigade & Lt Coll Tarltons Legion that I found it absolutely necessary to leave a covering party under the Command of Coll Preston. The rest of the Troops pass'd the Reedy Fork and form'd on the north shore without interruption."<sup>55</sup>

Thus for several miles leading up to Weitzel's Mill a running fight occurred between the American and British forces. This would have been ragged, confused fighting: quick ambushes and counterattacks by isolated detachments in the woods and fields along the road. It was a tactic that was ideally suited to slowing the British down, but the race was close. The Americans made a more determined stand just below the mill and ford. Graham wrote:

*Colonel Tarleton and corps were within one hundred yards of the front of their infantry, and though so many opportunities offered for attacking scattering parties of militia coming in on the flanks, he never attempted to charge or pursue them. The appearance of Lee and Washington before him must have prevented him from improving such advantages as frequently offered in the course of the day. Washington and Lee superintended the rear alternately in person. The pursuit continued in this manner for ten miles. Washington's cavalry and Graham's reduced squad of militia dragoons, one hundred yards*

<sup>52</sup>Hagist 83.

<sup>53</sup>Ward, 404.

<sup>54</sup>Conrad, 407.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., 193-4.

on the right, and rather in the rear of Williams' line. A column of the enemy's infantry, which had not yet been brought into line, came on to the ford, and Tarleton with his cavalry came through. In the rise of the hill, he sounded his bugle. As soon as it was heard, Colonel Washington yet in his position on the right, about forty poles from Tarleton, sounded his bugle also, and Major Rudolph, at the head of Lee's corps on the left sounded his. Upon this, Washington and Lee's cavalry went off at a canter, meeting each other in the road, about twenty poles from Tarleton's front. As they met, they wheeled up the road in a gallop (though in good order), after Colonel Williams. Tarleton was halted on the hillside, and suffered them to pass without moving. The infantry on the opposite hill kept firing until they were out of view. When Washington and Rudolph came to Williams' rear, they turned out of the road, about sixty steps on each side, along his flanks. His men were marching briskly, and the cavalry officers gave orders that if the infantry was charged by the enemy in the rear they should wheel and take him in each flank. Washington himself and eight of his troopers took the rear. At such parts of the road as a view could be had, two of them were stationed, who, on seeing the front of the enemy, galloped up and reported. . .<sup>56</sup>

Williams wrote of the fighting south of the creek that “. . . a brisk fire began on Coll Prestons Party which they return'd with great Spirit; in the meantime Coll Campbell who had previously, in concert with Lt Coll Washington, served as a covering to the retiring Troops pass'd the Creek above the Mill. The ground on this side being very unfavourable I waited only 'till Coll Preston cross'd and then order'd the Troops to retire. The Enemy pursued some distance but receiving several severe checks from small covering parties and being cow'd by our Cavalry he thot proper to halt.”<sup>57</sup> Thus Campbell's Virginia riflemen, along with the dragoons of Washington and Lee, formed a rear guard that held off Webster until the American regulars had crossed.<sup>58</sup>



**British view of the horse ford looking North on NC 61. Here the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 71<sup>st</sup> Regiments attacked across the ford. Photo by author.**



**American view of the horse ford. Looking south, this was the defender's perspective on modern NC 61. Photo by author.**

Graham wrote of the fighting below the mill: “The day was still cloudy, a light rain falling at times; the air was calm and dense. The riflemen kept up a severe fire, retreating from tree to tree to the flanks of our second line. When the enemy approached this, a brisk fire commenced on both sides . . . The ford was crowded, many passing the watercourse at other places. Some, it was said, were drowned.”<sup>59</sup> Lee wrote of the action south of the creek, “During this movement, Webster made several efforts to bring the rear-guard to action, having under him the British cavalry. All his endeavors were successively counteracted by the celerity and precision with which the Legion horse manoeuvred . . .”<sup>60</sup> As the British approached the Americans braced for a major attack. Lee's memoirs provide the best overview of the action:

*Lieutenant-Colonel Lee, having detachd a company of Preston's militia to guard the pass at Wetzell's Mill, a little distance upon his left, drew up his infantry in one line, with its right on the road, and its front parallel with the creek; while the riflemen under Colonels Campbell and Preston occupied a copes of heavy woods on the right of the road, with their left resting upon the right of the Legion infantry.*<sup>61</sup>

*The British van appeared; and after a halt for a few minutes on the opposite bank, descended the hill approaching the water, where, receiving a heavy fire of musketry and rifles, it fell back, and quickly reascending, was rallied on the margin of the bank. Here a field-officer rode up, and in a loud voice addressed his soldiers, then rushed down the hill at their head, and plunged into the water, our fire pouring over him. In the woods occupied by the riflemen stood an old log school-house, a little to the right of the ford. The must stuffed between the logs had mostly fallen out, and the apertures admitted the use of the rifles with ease. In this house twenty-five select marksmen, of King's Mountain militia, were posted by Lee, with orders to forego taking any part in the general resistance, but to hold themselves in reserve for particular objects. The leading officer, plunging into the water, attracted general notice; and the school-house party, recollecting its order, singled him out as their mark. The stream being deep, and the bottom rugged, he advanced slowly; his soldiers on each side of him, and apparently some of them holding his stirrup leathers. This select party discharged their rifles at him, one by one, each man sure of knocking him over; and having reloaded, eight or nine of them emptied their guns a second time at the same object. Strange to tell, though in a condition so perilous, himself and the horse were untouched; and having crossed the creek, he soon formed his troops, and advanced upon us. The moment that*

<sup>56</sup>Stephen Haller, *William Washington* (Bowie, MD: Heritage Books, 2001), 104.

<sup>57</sup>Conrad, 407-8.

<sup>58</sup>Ward, 405.

<sup>59</sup>Barefoot, 348.

<sup>60</sup>Lee, 265.

<sup>61</sup>*Ibid.*, 266.

*the head of his column got under the cover of our banks, Lieutenant-Colonel Lee directed the line to retire from its flanks and gain the rear of the cavalry. In the skirmish which ensued in our centre, after some of the enemy ascended the bank, three or four prisoners fell into our hands. The enemy's column being now formed, soon dislodged our centre; and pushing Lee, came in front of the cavalry. Here it paused, until the British horse, which followed the infantry, passed the creek, and took post on the enemy's right - the nearest point to the road, which we must necessarily take.*<sup>62</sup>



**This view shows the site of the British attack from the perspective of the Maryland defenders. Below, in the creek, Webster bravely dashed into the water, leading his men forward. Photo by author.**

Lt. Col. James Webster had survived an incredible charge, with some of the best marksmen in the American army aiming at him. His bold dash into the creek inspired his men and forced the issue with the defenders; it was truly remarkable and an uncommon act of bravery. Webster would be killed just days later at Guilford Courthouse.

Tarleton wrote his perspective of the action:

*Early in the morning he passed the Allamance: The light troops led the column, supported by Colonel Webster's brigade: The regiment of Bose was followed by the brigade of guards; and Hamilton's corps, with the waggons, brought up the rear. The British dragoons soon pushed Colonel Lee's cavalry from their advanced situation: They retired to Wetzell's mill on the Reedy fork: Lieutenant-colonel Tarleton discovered the enemy to be in force at that place, and reported the circumstances to Earl Cornwallis, who directed Colonel Webster to form his brigade into line with the light company of the guards and the yagers. This disposition being made, the front line advanced, the rest of the King's troops remaining in column. The enemy did not oppose the right wing of the British so easily as the left: The 23d and 71st moved forwards to the creek without any great impediment; and the ardent bravery of the 33d and the light company of the guards soon dislodged them from their strong position. The infantry mounted the hill above the creek, and dispersed the Americans so effectually, that the cavalry could only collect a few stragglers from the woods in front.*<sup>63</sup>

Graham observed that the fight was "equal to anything that had been seen in the war." A significant statement, given the actions that Graham participated in during the conflict. Another militiaman recalled it as "a smart skirmish, in which a great many

Tories were sent to the lower region."<sup>64</sup> Casualties were vaguely reported by both sides. The Americans lost a little over twenty: Graham estimated two Continentals killed and three wounded, and 20 to 25 militia killed and wounded. Tarleton wrote of "about thirty" British killed and wounded.<sup>65</sup> The Americans had managed to pull their troops back across the creek and Greene moved his army farther from danger. Soon the two forces would meet again in the showdown at Guilford Courthouse.

One last incident must be mentioned, which sets the tone for the campaign. Two days after the fight at Weitzel's Mill, Captain Kirkwood with the Delaware company and 40 riflemen approached Tarleton's forward camp at about 1 am. This was a routine patrol, no different from others the armies had sent out lately.<sup>66</sup> According to Kirkwood, the British sentries "challenged very briskly and no answer being made . . . they immediately discharge their pieces and ran in to their guard." The Americans captured one guard who showed the way to Tarleton's main camp. Kirkwood's men took position, "Upon which we fired very briskly upon them."<sup>67</sup> Tarleton's startled dragoons retreated to the main camp of the British army, two miles away. Along the way, in the darkness, they met a group of Loyalist militia "and mistaking them for our militia, he charged on them very furiously, putting great numbers to the sword. On the other hand, they taking Colonel Tarleton for our horse and infantry, there commenced a smart skirmish in which great numbers of the Tories were sent off to the lower regions."<sup>68</sup>

It was Pyle's Defeat all over again, yet this time the tragedy was a case of friendly fire. If the rout of Pyle's column had not done enough to hurt the prospects of Loyalists in the region, this surely did. For the second time in as many weeks, local Loyalists turning out in good faith were deceived and paid a heavy price for it. Kirkwood continues the action, writing, "We marched for camp which we reached about daybreak, after a very fatiguing journey, having marched all night through deep swamps, morasses, and thickets, which rendered our marching unpleasant and tiresome, twenty six miles."<sup>69</sup>

To view the site of the battle of Weitzel's Mill, take Route 61 north from I-85 at exit #138. The battlefield is about ten miles north on Route 61, which winds and makes several turns along the way. As you approach Reedy Fork, bear in mind that you are on the road used by Webster as he approached the mill. Along this road the Americans skirmished with the British advance, delaying their march. Watch for the intersection with Sackwell Road on your right. Here you are passing through the site where the Americans made a brief stand south of the creek. The British pushed through here and up to the ford.

Cross the creek slowly, as there is no good place to stop, and observe the terrain. The mill stood to your left, on the north bank. The 23<sup>rd</sup> and 71<sup>st</sup> Regiments attacked across this ford, known as the horse ford. Once on the north shore you are driving through the position of the American defenders. Soon after crossing watch for Bellflower Road (where some old farm buildings stand), the second road on your left, and pull in here. This road went down to the lower ford defended by Campbell. It dead-ends at some houses, but you may drive in and turn around here. Return to Route 61 and head back down to the first road you passed, Woellers Way, and pull in. This road dead-ends at the creek, and here you have an excellent view Williams' defensive position. In front of you, Webster gallantly led the 33<sup>rd</sup> in their attack across the creek. As at Clapp's Mill, there is little

<sup>64</sup>Barefoot, 348.

<sup>65</sup>Ward, 406; Conrad, 408.

<sup>66</sup>Ward, 406.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid.

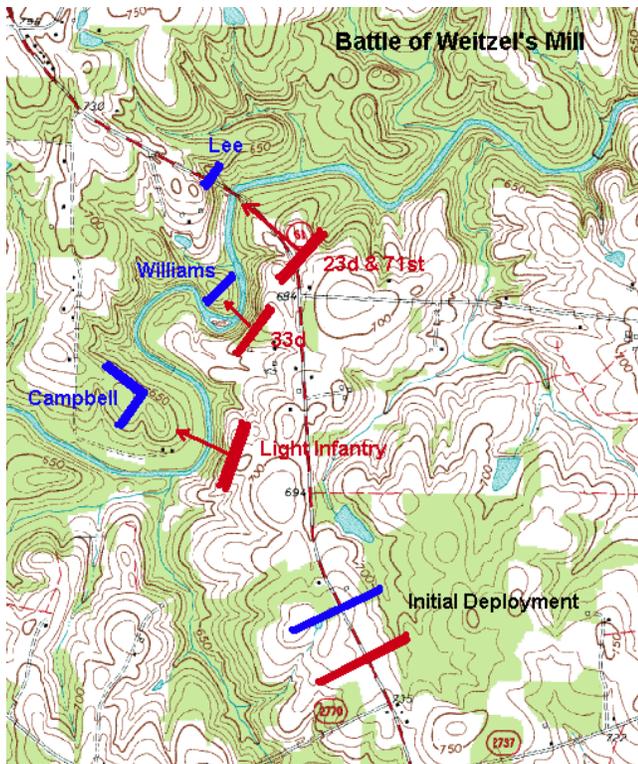
<sup>68</sup>Ibid.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid., 407.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., 266-7.

<sup>63</sup>Tarleton, 338-9.

opportunity to get out and explore here, as the entire battlefield is private property. From here you may return to Route 61.<sup>70</sup>



**Modern topographical map of the Weitzel's Mill Battlefield on the Reedy Fork of the Haw River. Excerpt from USGS 7.5 minute topo map, Ossipee quad. Map annotations by author.**

One result of this action was the departure of Pickens' South Carolina and Georgia militia who felt they had been misused at Weitzel's Mill as Pickens explained to Greene in his letters. They had also been in the field for a long time serving far from home. Pickens wrote that they were "miserable" for want of good clothing. Militia rarely served so long and so far from their local region. The loss of Gen. Pickens with his valuable leadership and of the experienced militia would hurt Greene in the coming battle at Guilford Courthouse.<sup>71</sup>

These three action battles - Pyle's Defeat, Clapp's Mill and Weitzel's Mill - served as harbinger for the larger battle at Guilford Courthouse just a few days later. They were fast-paced, small-unit actions that tested the abilities of both armies as troops skirmished in the woods and fields, over hills and through creek valleys. The armies became adept at this type of fighting and skirmishing. They used tactics and concepts we would consider modern by emphasizing cover, concealment, line of sight, and avenues of access and egress. While losses on both sides were small, they should not be forgotten. Not every casualty was "fortunate" enough to be hit at the famous engagements like Cowpens or Guilford Courthouse. Many men were killed or wounded from the actions at these smaller, lesser-known battles. The sacrifices made here were no less significant, and no less real. Fortunately the sites of these smaller battles may be visited today. It is hoped that they will remain pristine for future visitors as well. Hard lessons on small fields. [A story shared is a site spared.]

<sup>70</sup> Angus Konstam and Adam Hook, *Guilford Courthouse, 1781* (Osceola, WI: Osprey Publishing, 2002), 51.

<sup>71</sup> Buchanan, 364; Conrad, 410, 408, 399.

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**Drum and fife perform at the Kettle Creek Celebration.**