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National Historic Landmark Hopsewee Plantation, birthplace of signer of the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Lynch, Jr.

Hopsewee Plantation on the North Santee River is like a step into a still spot in history. The beautiful vista of golden river and the green and gray of moss-hung trees give one pause and time for contemplation.



Built between 1735-1740 Hopsewee is one of the oldest residences in South Carolina. Photo of rear of home.

Wooded trails through the old slave settlement add to the nature lover's pleasure. The North Santee River, with 28 feet of water depth at Hopsewee, is navigable from the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway and the Atlantic Ocean. Oceangoing ships called on Hopsewee's wharf to load naval stores, tierces of rice, hogsheads of tobacco, indigo and later bales of cotton and to unload English manufactured goods, Jamaican rum, sugar, and molasses, Spanish port, and Arabian horses.

Located on US 17 south of Georgetown, SC, the house is a typical lowcountry rice plantation dwelling of the early eighteenth century with four rooms opening into a wide center hall on each floor, a full brick cellar and attic rooms. It is a preservation rather than a restoration and has never been allowed to fall into decay as it has always been cherished. Only five families have owned Hopsewee, although it was built almost 40 years before the Revolutionary War. The house has a lovely staircase, hand carved moldings in each room, and random width heart pine floors are almost one and one half inches thick. Constructed on a handmade brick foundation that is covered by scored tabby, the house is built of black cypress, which probably accounts for the fact that it is basically the same house the Lynches built over 265 years ago. The grounds include two extant Barbadian influenced slave cottages and archaeological ruins of the slave village. It is furnished in eighteenth and nineteenth century furniture. Hopsewee's owners, Frank and Raejean Beattie graciously open their historic home and grounds to guests on a daily basis.

Hopsewee Plantation was originally part of the lands owned by Thomas Lynch, I (deceased 1738). He owned much of the

property on the North Santee River from Hopsewee to the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway, with seven tidal zone rice plantations in production. Hopsewee was built by the Lynch family between 1733 and 1740. This beautiful site is the first high ground on the North Santee River upstream from its mouth. This site was chosen of all the Lynch property for the family home of Thomas Lynch, Sr. (1726-1776). Hopsewee overlooks the beautiful North Santee River and its rice fields that were its primary source of income until the Civil War. Thomas Lynch, Sr. married Elizabeth Allston, of Brookgreen Plantation, another prominent Georgetown County family, and they had two daughters Sabina (b. 1747) and Esther (b. 1748) and one son, Thomas Lynch, Jr. (1749-1779). After Elizabeth Allston died (c. 1755), Mr. Lynch married Hannah Motte, and they had a daughter, Elizabeth (b. 1755).

The senior Thomas Lynch was a distinguished public servant and one of the most important Santee River planters. As a prominent indigo planter, he was the first President of the Winyah Indigo Society founded in 1755. In 1751 he was the delegate elected



Ancient Live Oak trees frame the 265 year old rice plantation house.

to the Commons House of Assembly from Prince George, Winyah Parish where he served with the exception of one term until his death. He served on the 1765 Stamp Act Congress and in 1774 was elected as a South Carolina delegate to the First Continental Congress in Philadelphia. Lynch was highly esteemed by the founding fathers and in October 1775, Lynch was appointed with Benjamin Franklin and Colonel Benjamin Harrison as an advisor to General George Washington. However, in February 1776 he was paralyzed when he suffered a cerebral hemorrhage while in Philadelphia. His son, Thomas Lynch, Jr, was serving in the South Carolina militia and requested leave of his commanding officer, Col. Christopher Gadsden, to join his ailing father. The request was denied so South Carolina's Second Provincial Congress selected the son as a delegate to join his father in Philadelphia. Thus Thomas Lynch, Sr. and

Thomas Lynch, Jr. were the only father and son delegates to serve in the Continental Congress. In 1776, Thomas Lynch, Jr. became the fifty-second signer of the Declaration of Independence at 26 years of age and thus gave his birthplace, Hopsewee Plantation, a place in American History. The elder Lynch remained a member of the South Carolina delegation but was physically unable to sign the Declaration of Independence in the space left between the names of Edward Rutledge and Thomas Heyward, Jr. In December, 1776, while returning to South Carolina, the senior Lynch died and is buried in Annapolis, Maryland. Thomas Lynch, Jr. returned to South Carolina and retired from public life due to a malingering fever contracted during his service with the South Carolina militia in 1775. Thomas Lynch, Jr. and his wife, Elizabeth Shubrick, resided at Peachtree Plantation on the South Santee River. In 1779 he and his wife left for France by way of the West Indies to improve his health. Their ship was lost at sea with all passengers. Thomas Lynch, Jr. and his wife had no children.



Hopsewee viewed from the North Santee River. Built on the first high ground inland from the river's mouth, Hopsewee has looked across the historic rice fields of the Santee delta for over 265 years. It's wharf was an 18th century deep water port.

Hopsewee is a National Historic Landmark so designated in 1971. On weekdays, you may tour Hopsewee for a nominal fee. For more information see www.hopsewee.com or call (843) 546-7891.

Modern Threat and Opportunity

In the 1930s, the State of South Carolina relocated the historic 18th century Charleston to Georgetown Road (a section of the "King's Highway") from its historic ferry crossing about one mile upstream to cross the Santee River delta on bridges and a causeway at Hopsewee Plantation. The South Carolina highway department built a swing bridge over the North Santee River at Hopsewee to maintain navigation of the North Santee River. As road traffic increased on US 17 in the late 1940s, the swing bridge was replaced with a fixed elevated steel bridge span, constructed about 150 feet upstream and closer to Hopsewee. Again, due to increased traffic on US 17, the highway was widened to four lanes, the causeways expanded and another bridge constructed. Unfortunately, the original bridge span was built only 300 feet downstream from the historic plantation house.



Looking downstream at the US 17 bridges over the North Santee River at Hopsewee. The dock on left is further from the highway than the house. The southbound bridge runs 300 feet from the historic house.

The South Carolina Department of Transportation is now designing a replacement bridge for the 1950 span. Their preferred route is to locate the new bridge on the 1950's bridgehead, widening the bridge even closer to the National Historic Landmark. There is now a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to mitigate the noise and visual pollution of Hopsewee from the highway by relocating the new bridge span downstream closer to the original swing bridge or further downstream. This would move the southbound traffic 100 feet or more further from this important Revolutionary War site. The traffic, speed, mix of heavy trucks, and local geography works to project significant noise onto these grounds.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Palmetto Trust for Historic Preservation and SCAR have taken a strong stand against reconstruction of the bridge on its present location. The State of South Carolina Historic Preservation Office has been requested to require maximum mitigation of the project to protect the view, noise and serenity of this site and to prohibit the use of construction blasting to remove the old bridge pilings near this 265-year-old historic structure.

Concerned friends have formed the Hopsewee Preservation Foundation and Hopsewee's owners have agreed to place the property under a permanent historic preservation easement to insure its permanent maintenance and public availability. ★

IN THIS EDITION:

Hopsewee Plantation.....	1
Editor's Notes.....	3
Letter to the Editor.....	3
Skirmish at Alexander's Old Field.....	4
Hill's Iron Works.....	9
Battle of Rugeley's Fort.....	11
Fish Dam Ford Battlefield.....	15
Rev. War Service of Pvt. James Johnson, 1 st	17
Continental Dragoons.....	22
Annotated Pension Statement.....	23
Calendar of Upcoming Events.....	25
NC Moravian Notes.....	26
Ramsour's Mill photos.....	

Editor's Notes

The new world of Internet publishing is opening up many connections between people and allows SCAR to reach a diverse group of interested scholars and researchers from all over the world. We appreciate the opportunity for your friendship, to share your scholarship and ideas and your feedback.

Southern Campaigns students are being treated to many 225th anniversary events as the British renewed their strategy in 1778 to reconquer their rebellious colonies in the Southern Department. Reenactments, memorial services, scholarly conclaves, and tours are scheduled. We will keep you informed with a list of events and contacts for which we need your help.

British Legion scholar, Dr. Tony Scotti, and Presidential biographer, Dr. Hendrik Booraem, in Lancaster, SC, treated approximately 75 people to two great presentations about Buford's Defeat. Scotti discussed Lt. Col. Banastre Tarleton and his Provincial regiment called the British Legion who defeated Col. Abraham Buford at the Waxhaws in May 1780. Booraem discussed the Virginia Continentals, retreating towards North Carolina after arriving near Charles Town too late to reinforce the besieged garrison. Their knowledge of the men, units, tactics wowed their audience.

Piccolo Spoleto, the literary festival of Charleston's world-class arts festival, hosted two great presentations on Gen. Nathanael Greene. Writers Seabrook Williston and Charles F. Price entertainingly examined Greene's letters as the art of written communications; self educated Greene could woo his charming wife, Caty, or tell off a gentleman with fluid prose without fear of inviting a duel. The later session added Revolutionary War historians Carl Borick and David P. Reuwer to debate the outcomes of Greene's actions at the Battle of Eutaw Springs. With all due respect to Carl Borick's presentation, SCAR thinks that the Battle of Eutaw Springs was clearly Greene's battlefield victory.

Lincolnton, NC hosted a great weekend gathering, parade and festival to commemorate the 225th anniversary of the Patriot victory at Ramsour's Mill. The BBQ was great, but SCAR thinks the Saturday morning speakers (David P. Reuwer, Esq. and yours truly) were too long-winded.

SCAR plans to attend the York, SC symposium on July 8, 2005. Its program sounds especially interesting for students of the Revolution in the Carolinas' backcountry; for details and pre-registration information see Calendar of Upcoming Events in this edition for more details.

Planning Stages

SCAR and friends are organizing the Southern Campaigns Revolutionary War Roundtable, loosely modeled on the successful New York and Philadelphia Revolutionary War roundtables and the many Civil War roundtables that meet across the United States. Our new roundtable has been invited to meet at a mansion on Hobkirk's Hill in Camden, SC, the historic Fireproof Building, in downtown Charleston, SC, home of the South Carolina Historical Society, and to Hopsewee Plantation on the North Santee River in Georgetown County, SC. Stay tuned for an announcement on how to join our group.

SCAR is also working with Historic Camden to plan a world-class symposium and battlefield tours on Gen. Nathanael Greene in April 2006 in conjunction with the 225th anniversary of the Battle of Hobkirk's Hill. This will likely include an opportunity to do a staff ride of the Hobkirk's Hill and Eutaw Springs Battlefields with knowledgeable battlefield guides. Your thoughts and input on both projects are invited.

Preservation

In South Carolina, the SCDOT is working on replacing several bridges at important Revolutionary War battlefield and cultural sites. Besides the bridge over the Broad River at Fish Dam Ford and for the southbound US Highway 17 bridge over the North Santee River at Hopsewee Plantation, SCDOT is designing replacement of the SC Highway 14 (Landrum Road) bridge over the Pacolet River in upper Spartanburg County at the site of the Battle of Earle's Ford. SCAR needs any information you may have about the locations of Earle's Fort and Earle's Ford and the battles and camps there. SCAR is discussing these projects with the SCDOT environmental management office, which is charged by law to protect vital historic and cultural resources. Information of relic recoveries from the area or plats, maps or documents locating the battle may provide the basis for a professional archaeological survey of the site and fund appropriate marking and interpretation.

The State of South Carolina appropriated \$200,000.00 towards additional land acquisition at the Battle of Camden site. This effort was initiated by SC State Senator Vincent Sheheen and strongly supported in the House by Representatives Laurie Slade Funderburk, Bill Cotty and Jay Lucas. The General Assembly overrode South Carolina Gov. Mark Sanford's veto of the appropriation. The Kershaw County (SC) Council also approved a \$20,000.00 grant towards the preservation, research, and interpretation project's 2005-2007 budget.

Battlefield and historic structures and sites' preservation is usually initiated and led by local groups. Have you worked on locating, preserving, and marking your favorite Revolutionary War cultural treasure? Your help is critical to identify and mark local Revolutionary War sites, as we have irrevocably lost many of the Revolutionary War sites' historic context by over-development. Civic groups may sponsor appropriate roadside historic markers and signed driving or walking tours. Spreading "on the ground" knowledge is the most powerful force we have to build public awareness and influence to encourage protective uses of these sites entrusted to our generation. We have over 230 Revolutionary War battle and skirmish sites to document in South Carolina alone. We need your help! Even the over-built sites can still be appropriately marked and interpreted

Discovery

Because of the current historic research and bridge replacement study, SCAR recently took a field trip to the area of the site of the Battle of Earle's Ford of the Pacolet River in upper Spartanburg County, SC and the site of Earle's Fort in Bryan County, NC.

In this edition, SCAR reports on their road trip to the site of SC Patriot militia Col. William Hill's home on the Big Allison Creek in the New Acquisition District (modern York County, SC) and his Aera Iron Works. SCAR also toured the site of Lacey's Fort in southwest York County, SC. Write and tell us about your trips to discover our Revolutionary War heritage.

More to come.

CBB ★

Letter to the Editor

Many thanks to Kip Carter, Tony Scotti and Rik Booraem. The Buford's Massacre presentations were right on target to spread the word about what really happened in the earliest and greatest conflict for our country on the world stage.

I looked at my watch and suddenly it was close to 9:00 pm. The time really got by and the question and answer period showed the inquiry of many people.

This presentation, and the seminars put together by Charles Baxley and Historic Camden are the heart of academic exercises in our area that people are responding to in such a heartening fashion.

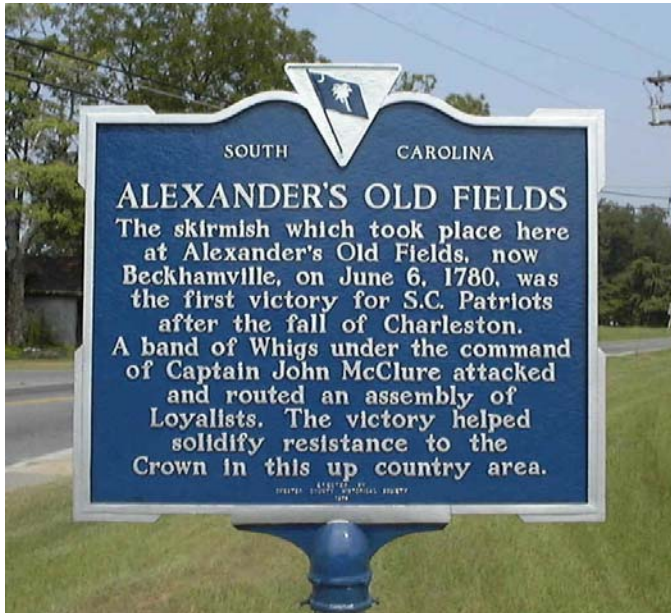
Congratulations again.

Mickey Beckham, Rock Hill, SC ★

ALEXANDER'S OLD FIELD, OR THE BATTLE OF BECKHAMVILLE

by Michael C. Scoggins

After the fall of Charleston on 12 May 1780, and the Battle of the Waxhaws or "Buford's Massacre" on 29 May, a small engagement occurred near the Catawba River in what is now Chester County that marked the beginning of American resistance to British control of South Carolina. Little has been written about this early armed encounter between Whigs and Tories in the upcountry, but some important primary and secondary source documents exist that have not been widely publicized. These documents give some significant details about this early battle, and they merit serious examination by those interested in the Revolution in the South Carolina backcountry.



Roadside marker at Beckhamville, just north of Great Falls, SC on SC 97 and SC 99.

Following Buford's Defeat on 29 May, the first armed engagement in South Carolina for which we have any records occurred at Alexander's Old Field on lower Rocky Creek in what was then the upper portion of the District between the Broad and Catawba Rivers, now southeastern Chester County. This skirmish was fought between Whig and Tory militiamen and there were no regular troops of either the American or British Army involved, although several of the Whigs were veterans of the Third South Carolina Continental Regiment (Rangers) and the Sixth South Carolina Continental Regiment (Riflemen). In the early nineteenth century the location of this battle became the site of the small community of Beckhamville, and since that time the engagement has come to be known both as the Battle of Alexander's Old Field and also as the Battle of Beckhamville.

Unfortunately for modern historians, nothing was written about the battle until long after it occurred, and consequently the exact date has become a matter of uncertainty. The best available evidence places the date of the battle on 6 June 1780, three days after Sir Henry Clinton's proclamation requiring all former members of the South Carolina militia to swear an oath of allegiance to King George III. The day before the battle a group of some fifty Loyalist militiamen, led by an officer known as Captain Houseman, assembled at Alexander's Old Field so that local inhabitants could swear their allegiance to the king in compliance and "take protection." Early on the morning of the next day, a group of about

thirty Whig militiamen under Captain John McClure of upper Fishing Creek launched a surprise attack on the Loyalist assembly and put them to flight. A few men were wounded on each side and several Loyalists were killed. This engagement constituted the beginning of armed resistance to British control of South Carolina, and marked the first Patriot victory over Crown forces after the fall of Charleston.

What is probably the earliest written account of the "Battle of Beckhamville" is contained in the text of a speech written by Joseph Gaston of Chester District in 1836. Joseph was the youngest of the nine sons of Justice John Gaston, all of whom fought in the Revolutionary War, and he was also the first cousin of John McClure, whose mother was one of Justice Gaston's sisters. Joseph Gaston enlisted in General Thomas Sumter's militia brigade in the summer of 1780 at the age of sixteen; although Joseph was not present during the skirmish at the "old field," three of his brothers and his cousins, John and Hugh McClure, were in the battle, and he drew on their recollections for his account, which he gave in speech on the Fourth of July in 1836. Gaston's speech was subsequently published as "A Reminiscence of the Revolution" in a newspaper called the *Columbia Hive* on 6 August 1836, and later reprinted in *The Southern Presbyterian* on 22 May 1873. His account of the battle is as follows:

Captain John McClure, a young man, perhaps twenty-five years old, had taken a part of his militia company on towards Charleston, and was at or near Monk's corner when the town surrendered. His men then returned home; and he, on his way, called at the house of John Gaston, Esq., in the then Chester county. When there, he and his friends received intelligence of the shocking massacre of Colonel Bradford's [i.e., Buford's] men by Tarleton two days previous, about twenty miles from the place where he had stopped—(This massacre took place perhaps on the 19th of May, 1780). On the reception of this news, he (Captain McClure), and three of said Gaston's sons, and Captain John Steel, I think, arose upon their feet and made this united and solemn declaration, "that they would never submit nor surrender to the enemies of their country; that liberty or death, from that time forth, should be their motto."! Each of these young men had served three years in the company of Captain Eli Kershaw, of the Third Regiment of South Carolina Militia, commanded by Col. Wm. Thompson, with the above motto inscribed on the front of their military caps. About this time, a man calling himself Col. Housman, came to the house of John Gaston, Esq., in a dress altogether plain, accompanied by about fifty of those plundering banditti, which British policy had dignified with the name of *loyalists* and exhausted a considerable share of his logic, in advising the old gentleman to have his sons brought in, on a certain day, to give up their arms at his encampment. (His camp was to be pitched at Alexander's old fields, now Beckhamville). The eloquence of the orator was inadequate to the task. True, they met him on the appointed day; but for a purpose very different from that which he desired. These young men immediately visited the settlements of Fishing Creek, Rocky Creek, and Sandy River, that they might obtain assistance to carry into effect the desperate effort they were about to make; and see who would favor the forlorn hope. In the course of the day and night they collected together, in all thirty-two volunteers: they were principally of the Knoxes, Walkers, Morrrows, McClures and Johnsons. James Johnson, then known as Adjutant Johnson, brother of Samuel and John Johnson of Fairfield, was among the most zealous and persevering on that occasion. With this Spartan band, Capt. McClure attacked Col. Housman, on the appointed day, and routed about two hundred men, without losing a man. Two of the Captain's men were wounded: Wm. McGarrety, (lately deceased) slightly; Hugh McClure, brother to the Captain, and father of James McClure, Esq., of this district, had an arm broke. It is most possible that McClure's men did not wish to kill, knowing that many good men might be there who knew of no relief, but to submit and take parole. Only one

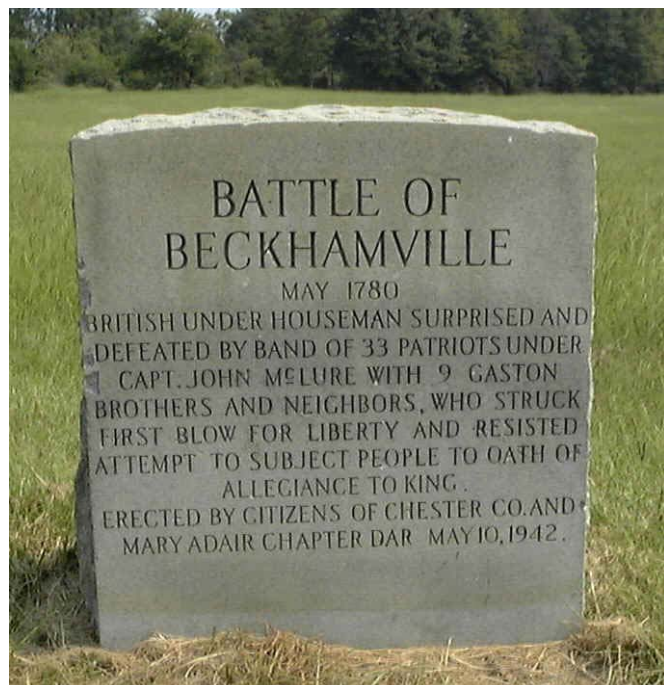
was killed, and he was known to be a real friend to his country. The design was to raise the fallen standard of liberty once more in South Carolina, though it should be at the expense of their lives. This little band then rushed to another collection of Tories, of still worse materials, at Mobley's meeting house in Fairfield, where the Tories suffered much. A number were killed! The intrepid movements of this little band surprised them like a peal of thunder from a clear sky.¹

Gaston's account, although detailed and based on first-person reminiscences, contains several errors. He mistakenly referred to the Battle of the Waxhaws, or Buford's Defeat, as "the massacre of Col. Bradford's men," and gives the date as "perhaps on the 19th of May, 1780," when it actually took place, as noted earlier, on 29 May. Gaston is also mistaken in referring to Colonel William Thomson's Third South Carolina Regiment as a "regiment of militia," when in fact the Third Regiment was one of six South Carolina state regiments that became Continental regiments in the summer of 1776. Although Colonel Thomson was also commander of the Orangeburg District Militia Regiment during the early years of the war, the Gaston brothers and their cousins the McClures served their enlistments under Thomson in the Third South Carolina Continental Regiment, also known as "Thomson's Rangers."

Another early account of the Beckhamville engagement was written by Revolutionary War veteran John Craig, and was originally published in the *Pendleton Messenger* newspaper in November 1839. Craig was a resident of the New Acquisition District (now York County) during the Revolution and moved to the Pendleton District after the war, where he settled in the area that is now Pickens County. Although Craig served in the New Acquisition Militia Regiment for most of the war, for a period of one week in the early summer of 1780 he was attached to the militia company of Captain John McClure and Lieutenant Hugh McClure, and served under the McClures at the Battle of Beckhamville and the Battle of Mobley's Meeting House in Fairfield County two days later. Craig's account, entitled "The War in York and Chester," was reprinted in the *Chester Standard* newspaper on 16 March 1854. Here is Craig's reminiscence of the battle of Beckhamville:

My next services were at Rocky Mount [i.e., Beckhamville] in the year 1780, after the fall of Charleston. I was commanded by Capt. John McClure, Lieut. Hugh McClure, and John Steel, at which place Lieut. McClure received a wound in the arm and we took 9 prisoners. Our number at this time was 27 soldiers and the three officers, against a formidable force of three hundred Tories. We had correct information by two brothers of the name of McKeown, of the enemy's number. These three brave officers with their twenty-seven men put the Tories to flight. This action took place on the 24th of May. Under the same officers two days after, we had an engagement at Mobley's meeting house, where we had success in defeating the Tories without any loss of men. The number of the enemy not known; our number the same as in the previous engagement.²

Craig's statement contains several interesting details about the skirmish at Alexander's, but his date of 24 May is too early. Most of the veterans of the skirmishes at Alexander's Old Field and Mobley's Meeting House stated that the battles occurred after Buford's Defeat on 29 May.



DAR granite marker at site of skirmish; note May 1780 date probably incorrect.

Several of Craig's fellow soldiers from Chester and York Counties mentioned the Battle of Alexander's Old Field or Beckhamville in their applications for Federal pensions in the 1830s and 1840s. Most of these depositions contain no significant details about the battle and do not give a precise date, but the pension application of Jane Porter McClure, the widow of Hugh McClure, is an exception in that it contains several actual references to the date of the battle. In 1846 Jane McClure filed for a pension based on her husband's Revolutionary War service, and she enlisted the aid of Chester District magistrate and local historian Daniel Green Stinson in an effort to determine the date of the skirmish at Alexander's. Stinson, who was born in 1794, was the son of a Revolutionary War veteran and knew most of the veterans in Chester District. In an effort to establish the date for the skirmish at Alexander's, Stinson interviewed several surviving Revolutionary War veterans who lived in Chester District, and concluded that the battle occurred on either 6 June or 7 June. Stinson's statement, appended to Jane McClure's pension application and dated 22 December 1851, reads as follows:

I do hereby certify that from the best evidence I could obtain from written documents and the declaration of several men of the Revolution who was [sic] in the skirmish at the old field near Beckhamville that it took place about the Sixth or Seventh of June 1780 that Hugh McClure was there wounded in the arm that I do recollect to hear the said Hugh McClure in his lifetime state that he received his wound at that place and saw him slip his arm and show the mark of the wound.³

Jane McClure's pension application also included a statement by Mary Johnston of Chester District attesting to the fact "that she helped to dress the wound of Capt. Hugh McClure, the night after the Battle at Beckham's old field on the 6 June 1780."⁴

Another important source for information on the battle at Beckhamville is the Thomas Sumter Papers in the Lyman C. Draper Manuscript Collection. Lyman C. Draper is a figure well known to

¹ Joseph Gaston, "A Reminiscence of the Revolution," *The Southern Presbyterian*, May 22, 1873, in Thomas Sumter Papers, Lyman C. Draper Manuscript Collection, 9VV159-160.

² John Craig, "The War in York and Chester," *Chester Standard*, March 24, 1854.

³ Daniel Green Stinson deposition, in Federal pension application W21789 for Jane McClure, widow of Hugh McClure. National Archives microfilm series M804, South Carolina Department of Archives and History.

⁴ Mary Johnston deposition, in Federal pension application W21789.

Revolutionary War historians; as secretary of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, he tirelessly collected documents and manuscripts concerning the Revolution and corresponded with many of the children and grandchildren of Revolutionary War veterans. As part of a projected biography of Thomas Sumter, Draper interviewed a number of local historians in York and Chester Counties during the summer of 1871, including Daniel Green Stinson. Draper's notes of his conversations with Stinson in August 1871 contain additional details regarding the skirmish at Beckhamville, and are transcribed here verbatim; all parenthetical comments, bracketed comments, strikethroughs and underlines are those of Draper:

This party under Capt. John McClure had previously fought the Tories at Beckhamville....four Tories killed & several wounded; Hugh McClure, a Lieut. in his brother John's company, was wounded—only 33 of McClure's party—reported abt. 200 British & Tories, a gathering of the people to go there & take protection. This was ~~early in June or last~~ 24th of May—see John Craig's Statement. Sam^l. & Alex. McKeown gave information—Whigs.⁵

Extracts from D. G. Stinson's original newspaper sketch of Mrs. Mary McClure, as published in the *Chester Standard*, Dec. 19, 1849—and which are written in Mrs. Ellet's sketch.

Beckhamville fight — Hugh McClure was badly wounded in the right arm, making him a cripple for life—& Joseph Morrow wounded in the arm. Thirty three routed an enemy of over 200, & half of them red coats. Several who had previously joined the British, changed sides on that day. Of these some were afterwards taken prisoners & hung by order of Cornwallis, at Camden. Joe Wade was afterwards taken near the same spot by Tarleton, & rec^d a thousand lashes. Stroud was hung.⁶

Mr. Stinson to me—[L. C. D.] that Wm. Stroud Jr. (son of Wm. Stroud—see sketch of Nancy Green) & Joe Wade—two mere youths—went to the Old Field, where Beckhamville now stands, on the morning in June, 1780 [last of May—see Craig's statement—L. C. D.], when the people were called together, to profess their allegiance to the Crown—and enlisted with the British. McClure and his little band came upon the assemblage and routed the enemy. While the greater number fled, Stroud and Wade fell on their faces upon the ground, & when McClure took possession of the field, they rose from among the dead, & joined their countrymen. Their after exploits proved them among the bravest of the brave. One morning when Stroud left Sumter's camp [at Land's ford, between the battle of Rocky Mt. & Hanging Rock, says Mr. Stinson verbally, L. C. D.] with a reconnoitering party, his father advised him to take a better horse. He went on, however, but was overtaken, by the Enemy, & hung on the roadside, with a Georgian who was in his company. Wade was taken [at the same time with Stroud & the Georgian—says Stinson], & beaten almost to death & recovered. [Lived till about 1818 in Lancaster Co.]⁷

Hugh McClure was wounded at the Beckhamville fight on the right arm above the elbow.⁸

In 1854, Elizabeth F. Ellet published the third volume of her famous series *The Women of the American Revolution*. In this volume, she gives a colorful account of the Beckhamville battle based on information obtained from Daniel G. Stinson and from Joseph Gaston's narrative. Her account also places the engagement after Buford's Massacre, and affirms that both the Beckhamville and

Mobley's Meeting House affairs were a direct retaliation for Buford's Defeat by Lieutenant Colonel Banastre Tarleton of the British Army:

Meanwhile, the British were taking measures to secure their conquest by establishing military posts throughout the State. Rocky Mount was selected as a stronghold, and a body of the royal force was there stationed. Handbills were then circulated, notifying the inhabitants of the country that they were required to assemble at an old field, where Beckhamville now stands, to give in their names as loyal subjects of King George, and receive British protection. After this proclamation was issued, Col. Houseman, the commander of the post at Rocky Mount, was seen with an escort wending his way to the residence of old Justice Gaston. He was met on the road by the old man, who civilly invited him into the house. The subject of this errand was presently introduced, and the Justice took the opportunity to animadvert, with all the warmth of his feelings, upon the recent horrible butchery of Buford's men, and the course pursued by the British government towards the American Colonies, which had at length driven them into the assertion of their independence. In despair of bringing to submission so strenuous an advocate of freedom, Col. Houseman at last left the house; but presently returning, he again urged the matter. He had learned, he said, from some of His Majesty's faithful subjects about Rocky Mount, that Gaston's influence would control the whole country; he observed that resistance was useless, as the province lay at the mercy of the conqueror, and that true patriotism should induce the Justice to reconsider his determination, and by his example persuade his sons and numerous connections to submit to lawful authority, and join the assembly on the morrow at the old field. To these persuasions the old man gave only the stern reply—"Never!"

No sooner had Houseman departed, than the aged patriot took steps to do more than oppose his passive refusal to his propositions. He immediately dispatched runners to various places in the neighborhood, requiring the people to meet that night at his residence. The summons was obeyed. Before midnight, thirty-three men, of no ordinary mould, strong in spirit and of active and powerful frames—men trained and used to the chase—were assembled. They had been collected by John McClure, and were under his command. Armed with the deadly rifle, clad in their hunting-shirts and moccasins, with their wool hats and deer-skin caps, the otter-skin shot-bag and the butcher's knife by their sides, they were ready for any enterprise in the cause of liberty. At reveillé in the morning, they paraded before the door of Justice Gaston. He came forth, and in compliance with the custom of that day, brought with him a large case bottle. Commencing with the officers, John and Hugh McClure, he gave each a hearty shake of the hand, and then presented the bottle. In that grasp it might well seem that a portion of his own courageous spirit was communicated, strengthening those true hearted men for the approaching struggle. They took their course noiselessly along the old Indian trail down Fishing Creek, to the old field where many of the people were already gathered. Their sudden onset took by surprise the promiscuous assemblage, about two hundred in number; the enemy was defeated, and their well directed fire, says one who speaks from personal knowledge, "saved a few cowards from becoming tories, and taught Houseman that the strong log houses of Rocky Mount were by far the safest for his myrmidons."⁹

Ellet's book also contains an interesting statement regarding the role of Reverend John Simpson in the incidents at Beckhamville and Mobley's Meeting House. Simpson was at the time the pastor of the two Presbyterian meeting houses on upper and lower Fishing Creek:

⁵ Lyman C. Draper, notes of conversations with Daniel G. Stinson, 8-18 August 1871, in Draper MSS, 9VV12.

⁶ Draper, conversations with Stinson, in Draper MSS, 9VV15.

⁷ Draper, conversations with Stinson, in Draper MSS, 9VV19.

⁸ Stinson to Draper, in Draper MSS, 9VV177.

⁹ Elizabeth F. Ellet, *The Women of the American Revolution* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1854), III:159-161.

The Rev. John Simpson was regarded as the head and counsellor of the band of heroes who had so signally defeated the enemy at the Old Field and Mobley's—and it was determined that his punishment should be speedy. In pursuance of this resolution, a party [under Captain Christian Huck] took their way to the church, where they expected to find the pastor with his assembled congregation, intending, as was believed at the time, to burn both church and people, by way of warning to other “disturbers of the King's peace.”¹⁰

Captain Christian Huck commanded a troop of dragoons in Tarleton's British Legion. In retaliation for the attacks at Alexander's and Mobley's, Huck and his men visited the Upper Fishing Creek meeting house on the morning of Sunday, 11 June and destroyed Reverend Simpson's manse, library, and probably the meeting house as well. Ellet's statement, based on information obtained from Daniel Stinson, has led many historians to conclude that Simpson joined McClure's militia company prior to the skirmish at the old field, and took part in that battle and the subsequent engagement at Mobley's. However, Simpson's own audited account for his militia service, which is preserved in the South Carolina Department of Archives and History, clearly states that he enlisted in the militia company commanded by Captain Alexander Pagan and Lieutenant John Mills, in the regiment commanded by Colonel Edward Lacey, on 10 June 1780.¹¹ Therefore if we accept a date of 6 June for the skirmish at Beckhamville, then we must also conclude that Simpson was not officially enrolled in the militia at the time. This does not mean that Simpson did not encourage his congregation to attack the Tories, or that he was not present during the attacks, but it certainly indicates that he had not yet enlisted in the militia at the time.

As noted earlier, prior to the publication of John Craig's account in the *Chester Standard* in 1854, Stinson was convinced that the Battle of Beckhamville occurred on 6 or 7 June 1780. Draper's notes, transcribed above, indicate that he also originally believed the battle occurred at the end of May or in early June. However, after Craig's article appeared in the *Chester Standard*, Stinson apparently changed his mind and accepted Craig's date of 24 May for the battle. After interviewing Stinson in August 1871, Draper went back and inserted comments in his notes stating that the battle occurred on 24 May. Unfortunately, most of Craig's dates for the battles of 1780 are simply wrong. Although his account of his war experiences was one of the most coherent and well written of the period, he clearly had trouble remembering dates. For instance, Craig stated that the Battle of Ramsour's Mill occurred on 26 June 1780, when that battle is well documented as occurring on 20 June. He gave a date of 23 July for the Battle of Rocky Mount and 30 July for Hanging Rock; both dates are about a week too early. His date for the Battle of Huck's Defeat (12 July) is the only date which he actually got right for the entire summer of 1780. Craig's date of 24 May for Beckhamville, and his statement that Mobley's occurred two days later, created a ripple effect among early historians of the war and caused many of them to place both battles in May instead of June. Craig's account was almost certainly the original source that prompted the Fairfield County Historical Society to use 26 May as the date on their historical marker for the Battle of Mobley's Meeting House, which was erected in 1969.¹²

In May 1873 Stinson wrote an article for the *Chester Reporter* in which he cited Joseph Gaston's account of the Battle of Beckhamville. After inexplicably stating that “the massacre of Beaufort's men [*sic*] by Tarleton, was on the 20th of May,” Stinson went on to say that “I have a statement in my possession in the handwriting of Joseph Gaston, Esq., who says that the fight at

Beckhamville was on or about the 28th of May.” Once again, an incorrect date for Buford's Defeat led to an incorrect date for Beckhamville, but if we accept Stinson's chronology that the battle occurred eight days after Buford's Defeat, then that brings us back to a date of 6 June for Beckhamville. Stinson went on to add these anecdotal details regarding the Beckhamville battle:

[The Loyalists] were taken by surprise and a general stampede took place, about four killed, Hugh McClure severely wounded in the right arm; he was the only one of the Whigs wounded. John Featherston, a Tory, ran off bearheaded, and having a very large bushy head of hair, it was so tempting to James Wylie that he could not bear it, and he concluded to take him on the wing, and took aim and fired at his head as he ran, but was in such a hurry that he missed his aim and John ran on. Two young men were found lying among the dead unhurt, who immediately after joined McClure.¹³

The two young men “found lying among the dead” were Joe Wade and William Stroud Jr., mentioned earlier.

Another problem related to the Battle of Beckhamville is the identity of the Loyalist commander, whom Joseph Gaston referred to as “Colonel Housman.” At least two other nineteenth century sources called him “Captain Houseman,” and a rank of captain in the Loyalist militia seems more probable in light of Gaston's statement that he commanded about fifty mounted Tories.¹⁴ However, no source gives his first name or any details about where he came from or who he was. Lyman Draper thought that Houseman was “perhaps a New York Tory” and “the first commandant at Rocky Mount,”¹⁵ but his name does not appear on any known muster rolls or pay rolls of Loyalist militia or Provincial regiments in the Southern Campaign of the Revolution. Draper tried repeatedly to obtain further information on Houseman from his correspondents, but was unable to do so. Furthermore, the 1790 census for South Carolina shows no individuals named Houseman under any likely spelling of the name. The actual commander of the British fort at Rocky Mount was Lieutenant Colonel George Turnbull, a career British officer from Scotland who commanded a Provincial regiment known as the New York Volunteers. Turnbull took post at Rocky Mount sometime between 6 June and 10 June, as shown by British records, and by the middle of June his garrison included at least two companies of his own regiment, a troop of dragoons under Captain Christian Huck, and about sixty Loyalist militia drawn from the present-day counties of Fairfield, Chester, Lancaster, and Union.

Turnbull's letters to Lord Rawdon and Lord Cornwallis give the names of only three Loyalist militia officers during this period, and Houseman is not one of them. However, in a letter to Lord Cornwallis dated 15 June, Turnbull stated that “I have appointed one Cap^t. of Militia at Cedar Creek until your Lordships Pleasure is further known. Indeed He was the Choice of the People and I thought him Deserving.”¹⁶ Although Turnbull never mentioned the militia captain's name, the fact that he lived on Cedar Creek is an important clue. Cedar Creek empties into the east side of the Catawba River directly across from Rocky Mount, and is shown on the map of Lancaster District in Robert Mills' 1825 atlas of South

¹⁰ Ellet, III:217.

¹¹ John Simpson, Audited Account 7019, South Carolina Department of Archives and History.

¹² *South Carolina Highway Historical Marker Guide*, Second Revised Edition (Columbia: South Carolina Department of Archives and History, 1998), 92.

¹³ Daniel G. Stinson, “Communication,” *Chester Reporter*, 29 May 1873, in Draper MSS, 9VV223. See also Draper MSS, 9VV215-217.

¹⁴ Benson J. Lossing, *The Pictorial Field Book of the American Revolution* (Cottonport, LA: Polyanthos, 1972), II: 451n1; “Battle of Huck's Defeat,” *Yorkville Enquirer*, 2 October 1903.

¹⁵ Draper MSS, 9VV37.

¹⁶ Lieutenant Colonel George Turnbull to Lord Cornwallis, 15 June 1780, in Cornwallis Papers, PRO 30/11/2/158-159.

Carolina.¹⁷ During the Revolutionary War, a prominent landowner named Henry Houseman seems to have lived in this same area. Houseman was a British attorney who moved to Charleston from Great Britain sometime before March 1775, but by 1780 he was apparently living in the Camden District on the east bank of the Catawba opposite Rocky Mount.¹⁸ Henry Houseman was almost certainly the “Captain Houseman” who commanded the Loyalist militia at Alexander’s Old Field.

The number of individuals present at the battle also needs some attention. The assembly at Alexander’s Old Field was called in order to recruit Loyalist militia and induce local residents to “take British protection,” or sign the Oath of Allegiance to King George III. Gaston’s testimony indicates that many of the men were present at the meeting to “submit and take parole,” most likely in compliance with Sir Henry Clinton’s proclamations of 22 May, 1 June and 3 June 1780. The total number of individuals present at the assembly was variously estimated at 200 to 300, “including red coats,” which sounds like a reference to uniformed Loyalist militia. This number may be exaggerated, and it is likely that not all of those individuals present were bona fide Loyalists. In fact, many of those assembled at the old field were probably Whig sympathizers who felt they had no choice but to give their paroles and accept British protection. Had there been any substantial presence of battle-seasoned British soldiers like the Provincial troops of the New York Volunteers and the British Legion, it is extremely doubtful if McClure’s small band could have dispersed them so easily, and the battle would probably have turned out much differently.

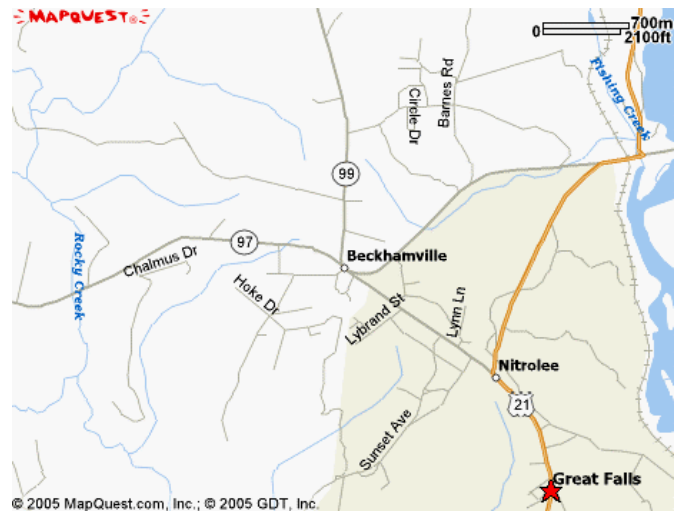
Only two Whigs are known to have been wounded in the skirmish: Lieutenant Hugh McClure and William McGarrety (or McGarity). One of Stinson’s statements, cited earlier in this article, indicated that Joseph Morrow was also wounded at Beckhamville, but it appears that this was a mistake and that Morrow was actually wounded at Hanging Rock in August 1780.¹⁹ Among the Tories, several were killed (Gaston says one, Stinson says four), several were wounded, and according to John Craig, nine were taken prisoner. Also, two young “Loyalists”—William Stroud Jr. and Joe Wade—took a dive during the battle and switched sides, after having already signed the oath of allegiance. Both young men later paid dearly for their actions—Stroud was hung and Wade was whipped almost to the point of death. Gaston’s account also indicates that one “Tory” casualty was actually a Whig who was giving his parole, although regrettably Gaston does not give the man’s name.

In spite of the difficulties endemic to assigning a precise date to this skirmish, and in spite of the later exaggerations and inaccuracies that developed concerning the nature of the engagement, the Battle of Alexander’s Old Field or Beckhamville still stands as the earliest known resistance to British Crown forces in South Carolina following the fall of Charleston. That much, at least, seems certain.

¹⁷ J. Boykin, 1820 survey of Lancaster District, in Robert Mills, *Mills’ Atlas of South Carolina* (Lexington: The Sandlapper Store, 1979).

¹⁸ Brent H. Holcomb, *Lancaster County, South Carolina Deed Abstracts 1787-1811* (Easley: Southern Historical Press, 1981), 95; Brent H. Holcomb, *South Carolina Deed Abstracts 1773-1778, Books F-4 through X-4* (Columbia: SCMAR, 1993), 158, 180, 206, 242.

¹⁹ Stinson to Draper, 19 October 1871, in Draper MSS, 9VV59; Joseph Morrow, South Carolina Audited Account 5364; Bobby G. Moss, *Roster of South Carolina Patriots in the American Revolution* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1983), 705 [Joseph Morrow].



MapQuest map to Alexander’s Old Field at Beckhamville, SC. Battlefield lies at “B” in Beckhamville on map.

For more information about the annual reenactment and commemoration of The Battle at Alexander’s Old Field see:
<http://www.battleofbeckhamville.com/greatfallshometown.html>



Michael Charles Scoggins is employed as a research historian by the Culture & Heritage Museums of York County, South Carolina. He has a life-long interest in military history and Southern history and has spent the last six years researching the colonial and Revolutionary War history of the South Carolina upcountry. Scoggins has an Associate of Science from the University of South Carolina, an Associate of Electronics Engineering Technology from York Technical College, a Bachelor of Arts in History (*magna cum laude*) from Winthrop University, and is currently pursuing his Master’s degree in History at Winthrop. He is the author of *The Day It Rained Militia: Huck’s Defeat and the Revolution in the South Carolina Backcountry, May-July 1780* (The History Press, 2005) and contributed an introduction and bibliography to The History Press reprint of Benson Lossing’s 1889 classic, *Hours with Living Men and Women of the Revolution* (2005). He is also the co-author, along with Dr. Bobby Gilmer Moss, of *African-American Patriots in the Southern Campaign of the American Revolution* (Scotia-Hibernia Press, 2004) and the forthcoming *African-American Loyalists in the Southern Campaign of the American Revolution*. He has contributed articles to *The South Carolina Encyclopedia* (soon to be published by the University of South Carolina Press); *War, Literature and the Arts* (the journal of the Air Force Academy English Department); numerous historical and genealogical journals; and writes a monthly column on the early history of York County for *YC Magazine*. Scoggins is a member of the Company of Military Historians, the Brigade of the American Revolution, the Scotch-Irish Society of the USA, and the Amateur Radio Relay League. He is a board member of the York County Genealogical and Historical Society and is District 3 Representative for the Confederation of South Carolina Local Historical Societies.

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Hill's Iron Works, South Carolina The Presbyterian Rebellion -- 18 June 1780 (or June 9th or 11th)

by Patrick O'Kelley

The New Acquisition Militia (SC Patriot) had moved their camp to Col. William "Billy" Hill's Aera Iron Works after they discovered that Loyalist Capt. Christian Huck and his British Legion dragoons were after them. When Lord Rawdon learned that they had gathered there he sent an officer to persuade them to put down their arms and take up British protection. The officer "began by asserting that Congress had given up the two Southern states, & would not contend further for them that as Genl. Washington's army was reduced to a small number of men, & that he, with that small army had fled to the mountains."

William Hill stopped the officer, and told the men gathered there "that Congress had come to a resolution not to give up any of the States, and that Genl. Washington was in a more prosperous way than he had been from some time, that he had actually appointed an officer with a considerable army and was then on their march to the relief of the Southern States."

The militia refused the British offer and the officer left quickly, "for fear of the resentment of the audience." Hill then told them that they should elect two colonels for the New Acquisition Regiment. They elected Andrew Neal as their colonel and William Hill as their lieutenant colonel. Hill wrote that they "then formed camp and erected the American Standard." After a few days men from Georgia and South Carolina came in and the regiment became a force to be reckoned with.

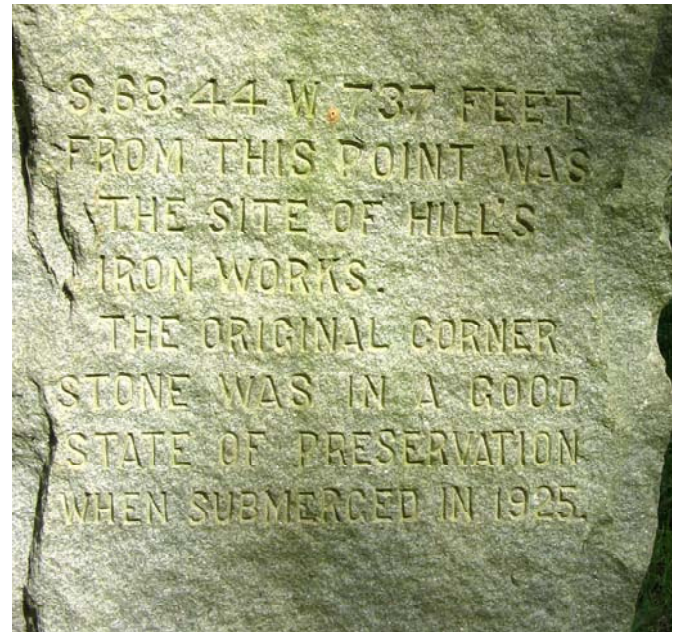
Col. Neal learned that a Loyalist named Mathew Floyd was taking a group of Loyalists to Rocky Mount to form a militia. Neal took most of the men and rode out to intercept Floyd's Loyalists, leaving twelve to fifteen men under Hill to guard the ironworks. Lt. Col. George Turnbull, commander of the provincial Volunteers of New York, stationed at Rocky Mount, wrote to Lord Cornwallis and told him that Patriot militia Cols. William Bratton, Richard Winn and John Patton abandoned their plantations and "gone amongst the Catawba Indians" in North Carolina, instead of taking British protection. He also wrote that the "Irish settlements" have abundant provisions for his men, but they had become violent. He proposed to send troops into the settlement and destroy "Billy" Hill's Iron Works, owned by Patriot Cols. William Hill and Isaac Hayne. The Aera Iron Works supplied ammunition for the Continental army.

Refugees came into Rocky Mount and told Col. Turnbull that they were being driven out by the attacks against them by the New Acquisition militia. When Mathew Floyd arrived with his Loyalists, Turnbull made him a colonel, and created the Upper District Loyalist Militia.

On June 16th Capt. Huck was ordered to destroy the Iron Works. He took with him sixty men under Captain Abraham Floyd, the son of Colonel Floyd. They went to Moses Ferguson, who was a representative in the Provincial Congress, who lived two miles east on Little Allison Creek. Huck told Ferguson that he must take him to Hill's Iron Works "or they would make mince meat of him."

There were about fifty militiamen at the iron works, consisting of a store, furnace and mills. Col. Hill did not command the militia since he was with Gen. Thomas Sumter at the time. Two men from Col.

Bratton's militia arrived at the iron works on June 18th and warned the men there that two or three hundred British dragoons were marching towards them, but they didn't know which road they were on.



Granite marker on SC 274 in York County, near Big Allison Creek, (now Lake Wylie) erected by the Kings Mountain Chapter DAR and the Winnie Davis Chapter UDC in October 1919.

Huck's men crossed the ford of Allison's Creek undetected, and were not on a road at all. They rode up to the surprised Patriot militia guards and fired. The militia thought that this small force of cavalry had to be the vanguard to the hundreds of British they had been told about. When they heard the shots they all fled, but not before the British killed seven and captured four.

Huck destroyed the forge and burned all the buildings, including Hill's home and the slave's cabins. They confiscated ninety slaves, and took them with him. Mrs. Hill and her family were able to get away and took refuge in the cabin of a neighbor.

When Cornwallis heard of the fight at Hill's Iron Works, he wrote to Gen. Henry Clinton in New York that it "put an end to all resistance in South Carolina." Cornwallis also wrote to Clinton and told him that he was going to postpone offensive operations until fall. Captain Huck rode to Walker's Crossroads and set up camp, ordering all the inhabitants in the area to take British protection and swear allegiance to the King. The men who showed up at the Crossroads were mainly older men, since the younger men had gone off and joined Sumter. When Huck tried to get them to take the protection, he offended the men "in blasphemy by saying that God almighty had become a Rebel, but if there were 20 Gods on that side, they would all be conquered." Huck could see that his speech was not going to convince anyone to come to the British side, so "he had his officers & men taking all the horses fit for his purpose, so that many of the aged men had to walk many mile home afoot."

Maj. Joseph McJunkin wrote, "A large portion of this district had been settled by Presbyterians and persons of this persuasion were numerous in adjacent parts of North Carolina, particularly in Mecklenburg County. These were generally known as the staunch advocates of independence. Hence, when the Whigs were expelled

from the country lying west of Broad River they found an asylum in the Presbyterian congregations in the Valley of the Catawba.”

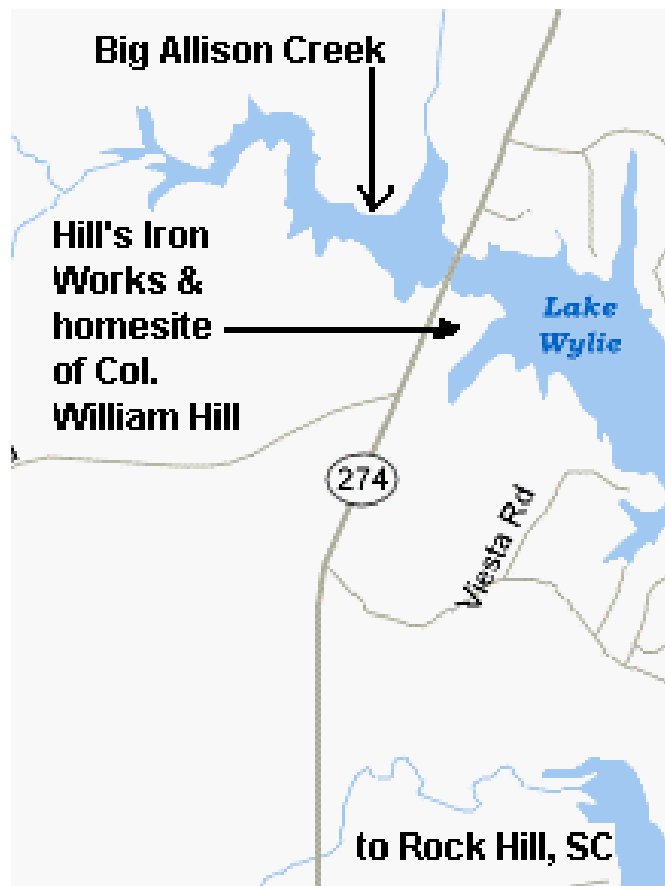


DAR/UDC marker which is also site of Patriot Col. William Hill's famous grandson's home, Gen. A. P. Hill, CSA.

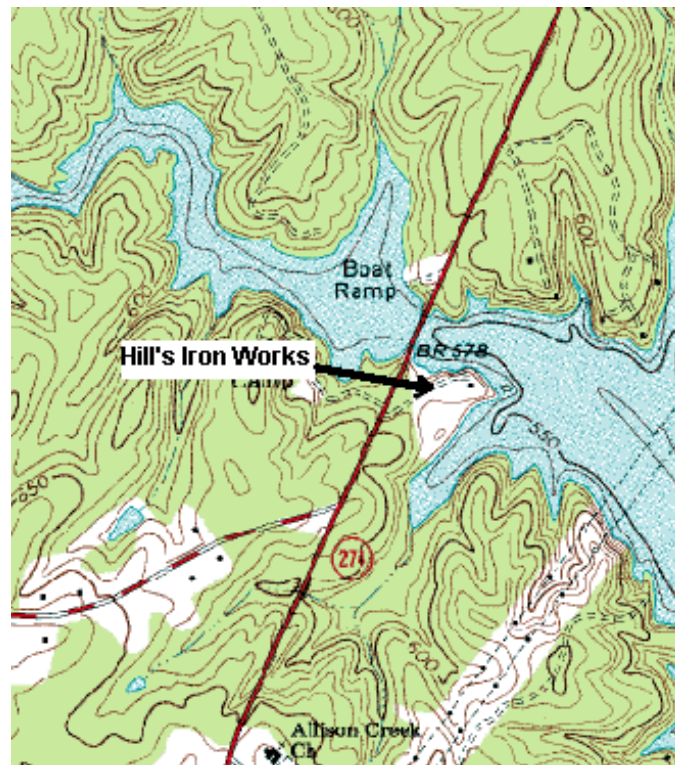
“Huck commenced his work in good earnest by burning churches, dwelling houses, and murdering the Whigs whenever they fell into his hands. He often used the most profane and impudent expressions while persecuting his work of pillage and carnage. Among other things, he swore that if the rebels were as thick as trees and Jesus Christ Himself were to command them he would defeat them. When his words and doings were reported in Sumter's camp the Presbyterian Irish who rallied around his standard could stand it no longer. They demanded to be led against this vile man, Capt. Huck.”

In the end Capt. Huck did make an impression on these men. They now considered it a holy war, and “they would be made instrumental in the hand of Heaven to punish the enemy for his wickedness and blasphemy.” Capt. Huck soon met his end at the Battle of Williamson's Plantation.

Patrick O'Kelley (<http://www.2nc.org>) is the author of *"Nothing but Blood and Slaughter" The Revolutionary War in the Carolinas*, Volume One 1771-1779, is which is available at: <http://www.booklocker.com/books/1469.html>; Volume Two - 1780 <http://www.booklocker.com/books/1707.html>; and Volume Three - 1781 at <http://www.booklocker.com/books/1965.html>. ★



MapQuest map of area of Hill's Iron Works marker, on Big Allison Creek, Lake Wylie, north of Rock Hill, SC.



USGS 7.5 minute topographic map, Lake Wylie quad.

The Battle of Rugeley's Fort "... a spirit of enterprize and intrepidity still prevails."

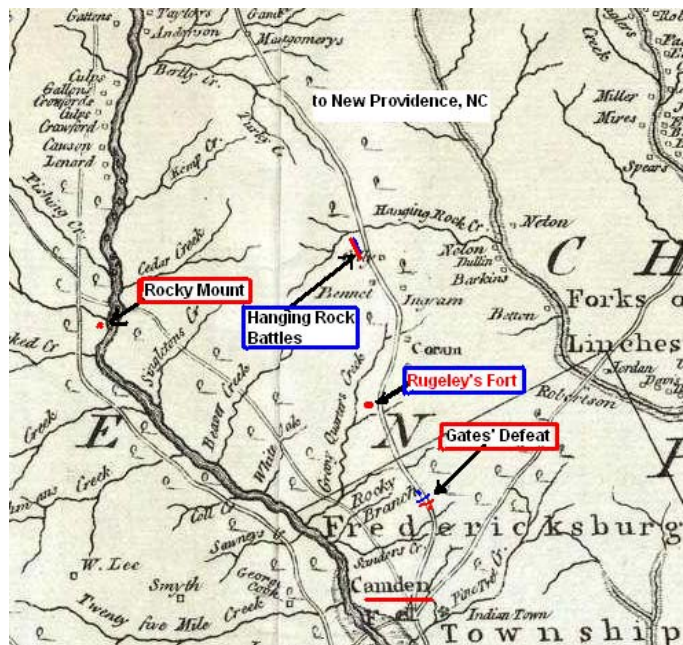
by Lee F. McGee

This article is respectfully dedicated to my father, Lowell F. McGee (1934-2005).

Lieutenant Colonel William Washington's attack on Colonel Henry Rugeley's fortified barn in December 1780 is briefly discussed in studies of the Southern Campaigns of the American Revolution. It is thought notable for two reasons: the date of the affair is usually reported as December 4, the date that Major General Nathanael Greene assumed command of the Southern Army, and it was effected by a "stratagem" by Colonel Washington using a pine log disguised as a cannon.

The most available yet seldom used information about this incident comes from the correspondence between Lord Francis Rawdon, commanding at Camden, and Lieutenant General Charles Earl Cornwallis, the British commander then stationed at Winnsborough. These letters provide considerable detail, including timing for the affair. The evidence also suggests that Washington's ruse may not have been the primary factor in the surrender of the post by Rugeley.

By late November 1780, the area between Charlotte, North Carolina, and Camden, South Carolina had been traversed and foraged by three armies. General Horatio Gates' American Army had passed through the area before, and after, the Battle of Camden, actually camping at Rugeley's prior to that engagement. Lord Cornwallis' Army, moving north to secure North Carolina, then advanced as far as Charlotte before pulling back to Winnsborough, South Carolina after the defeat of Patrick Ferguson at King's Mountain on October 7th which had left Cornwallis' left wing exposed. Most recently, the American Army had returned to the border region around Charlotte under General William Smallwood and General Daniel Morgan to screen against the British and protect foragers in the Waxhaws area.



Excerpt of Wateree River and the Great Waxhaws Road north of Camden, SC from Cook's map of South Carolina, 1773 and annotated by Charles B. Baxley.

The forward camp of the rebuilding Southern Army was New Providence, NC near Six Mile Creek on the Great Wagon Road, southeast of Charlotte. From here, Morgan operated with a "flying army" composed of three light infantry companies drawn from the Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware continentals, a corps of Virginia riflemen, and a collection of dragoons under the command of Lieutenant Colonel William Washington. Two battalions of North Carolina militia under General William L. Davidson were also present.¹ Washington's force was composed primarily of the remnants of his own Third Regiment of Light Dragoons, some of Lieutenant Colonel Anthony Walton White's First Dragoons and part of a company of Virginia State Horse belonging to Major John Nelson.² General Gates intended to follow these advance elements with the remainder of the Army from Hillsborough, NC.

Operating in the Waxhaws area near the border between North and South Carolina was a detachment under American militia Colonel William Davie, trying to gather forage and to prevent supplies from being drawn off by the British. In early November, Smallwood sent Morgan's command to the Waxhaws to provide security for Davie's force. Smallwood also had intelligence that a British force had advanced to Hanging Rock, and he desired Morgan to strike this force if practicable.³ Nothing of consequence happened on this expedition, and when Gates arrived with the remainder of the rebuilding army at New Providence⁴ the area was felt to be wanting for provisions and forage. A Council of War was held on November 25th, and the commanders agreed that the main Army would return to Charlotte.⁵

Gates' intention was for Smallwood's force to return to Charlotte as well.⁶ Before Smallwood could leave New Providence, though, he received a letter dated November 26th from an individual we know only as G. Wade, reporting a supply of pork and corn that he was willing to give to the American Army. Part of these supplies were at a place Wade called "Mr. Mases" at "Woch's Saw Creek." Wade's location at the time of this communication is not known.⁷ Smallwood also learned that Cornwallis might be heading out of Winnsborough, but he did not know His Lordship's destination. In Smallwood's opinion, going after this forage was too risky; wagons would be needed, and not enough time would be allowed to provide any aid to any inhabitants wishing to move to the North.⁸

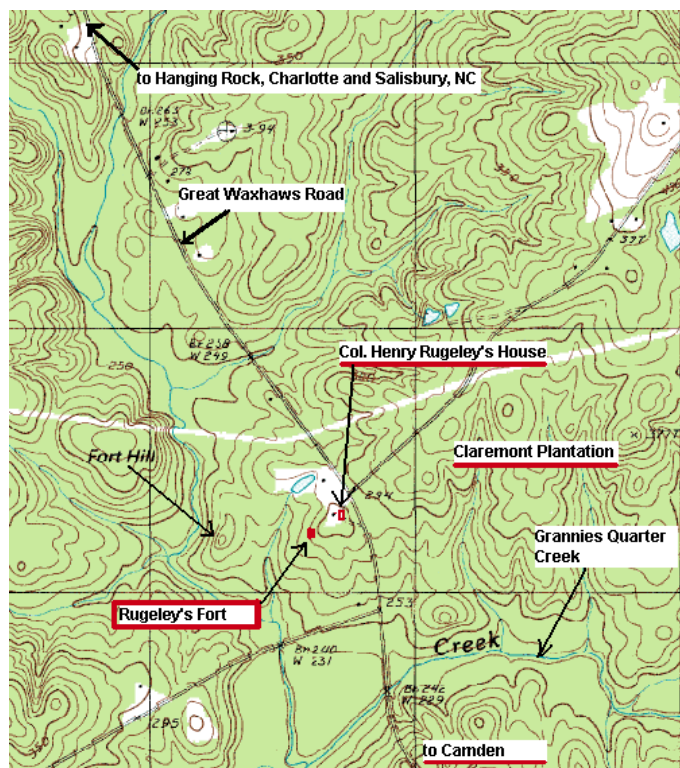
Daniel Morgan, however, disagreed. His force needed forage, and he wrote to Gates directly for permission to make the trip.⁹ Gates consented to the idea, as long as Smallwood, Davidson, and Washington agreed with Morgan's decision.¹⁰ Morgan's force left New Providence on November 28th.¹¹ Morgan hoped that Smallwood would be able to remain at New Providence to support him if necessary, and to supply wagons for the forage.¹² Morgan's force was augmented by 100 men from Davidson's command.¹³

Heading south, Morgan's men were first reported by the British south of the Waxhaw Creek area.¹⁴ Apparently no forage had been found.¹⁵ Intelligence of Morgan's advance was communicated to Lord Rawdon, commanding in Camden, by one "Makey," who reported that Morgan commanded a force of infantry and cavalry, advancing by the Rocky Mount Road. They had "carriages of some kind." Rawdon received a separate report that a party of cavalry was at "Murphy's" near Lynchess Creek on the night of November 30th. This informer thought the cavalry was under the control of "Major Marshall," likely Colonel John Marshall of South Carolina.

On the approach of Morgan's column, a British force in the area retreated south down Lynchess Creek. This force was described by Rawdon as "Harrison's people"¹⁶ and noted by Smallwood in his letter to Nathanael Greene.¹⁷ Major John Harrison had been commissioned by Cornwallis to raise and command the South Carolina Rangers.¹⁸ Rawdon estimated that the American cavalry

was 25 miles away. Rawdon communicated this intelligence to Cornwallis in a letter at 3:00 pm on December 1st.¹⁹ He suspected that an attempt was to be made against the outpost at Clermont, the name of the plantation belonging to Rugeley, who commanded local Loyalist Militia. The outpost contained several mills, a store, and a tavern²⁰, in addition to a recently fortified barn. Rawdon had advised Rugeley to send out patrols and to retire to Camden if he was approached by a large force. Finally, Rawdon reported to Cornwallis that a Light Dragoon sergeant had come in with a letter from Smallwood, and that he would detain the sergeant for the present.²¹

The cavalry force in the area of Lynches Creek was Washington's dragoons. He had been detached ahead of Morgan²² and on the morning of December 1st rejoined Morgan's command three miles above the location of Rugeley's blockhouse, which was just west of the Great Waxhaws Road. A dragoon accompanied by guides was sent by Washington to reconnoiter a ford crossing a creek on the approach to Rugeley's. The dragoon broke from the guides, rode up to Rugeley's and informed him of Washington and Morgan's approach. Meanwhile a patrol from Rawdon had arrived at Rugeley's, and Rugeley sent the deserter on to Rawdon. Arriving at Camden just before 7:00 p.m., the deserter reported that Morgan had 600 men, and that Washington had 100 horse and no artillery. Morgan's plan was to "storm" Rugeley's fortification. Based on the deserter's report, Rugeley's description of his fortified barn, and Rugeley's assurance, Rawdon felt confident that Rugeley would be able to hold out against a force lacking cannon.²³



Excerpt of USGS 7.5 minute topographic map, White Oak Creek quadrangle. Annotations by Charles B. Baxley based on diagram in Lt. Col. H. L. Landers' *The Battle of Camden, S.C., August 16, 1780*, precise locations as of yet unverified by artifacts.

Lord Rawdon did consider dispatching a force to attack Morgan, but in the end decided to only send a small mounted patrol - he reasoned that if the intelligence from the deserter proved incorrect,

a larger detachment would leave the post at Camden too exposed. He instructed this patrol to fire on the enemy's rear if Rugeley's were found to be under attack. If Washington realized that the deserter had provided information to the enemy, and that the alarm had been sounded, Rawdon believed he would be forced to move off.²⁴ Cornwallis would later agree with Rawdon's decision not to engage his whole force.²⁵ On December 1st the sun set at 5:13 p.m. The moon rose at 5:33 p.m., and was just beginning to wane.²⁶ It was likely already dark when the party accompanying the deserter set out from Rugeley's to cover the approximately 15 miles to Camden. Within a half hour of the departure of the deserter, Washington moved to surround Rugeley's blockhouse.²⁷

Rawdon's early intelligence of December 1st suggested that Washington's cavalry was operating without infantry or artillery.²⁸ Washington's initial detachment of 82 men in late October, composed of First and Third Dragoons, and State Cavalry²⁹, had since been augmented by the remainder of the fit Third Dragoons, brought forward under Major Richard Call with the main Army.³⁰ Rawdon's intelligence was faulty: Washington also commanded "Militia Horse."³¹ Militia from North and South Carolina claimed to be at Rugeley's³²; a large number of Virginia infantry claimed service as well.³³ The Virginia troops may have been the 60 riflemen under Major Alexander Rose mentioned by Otho Williams as being part of the Flying Army.³⁴ Most can be identified as being under Captains Patrick Buchanan, Edmund and James Tate, John Combs (nee Francis Triplett) and James Winn. This group was then commanded by Major Francis Triplett of Virginia.³⁵ Men from all of these companies claimed to be at Rugeley's. The exact composition and formation of the mounted militia serving with Washington cannot be determined at this time.³⁶

Rugeley's post consisted of his fortified barn, with earth piled up against the sides and surrounded by an abatis. Inside, platforms were erected to allow a higher position for musket fire.³⁷ The barn had served previously as the old local council chamber.³⁸

Upon Washington's arrival, after sunset, Rugeley immediately dispatched another runner to Camden to inform Rawdon- this messenger arrived at about 7:30 p.m.. Rawdon sent another letter to Cornwallis, remaining confident that Rugeley could hold out until Washington abandoned his attack for fear of British relief. He reiterated that he felt he had made the right decision not to move with a larger relief force. By the time Rawdon began his third letter to Cornwallis concerning Morgan and Washington's expedition³⁹, Rugeley had probably already surrendered.

Washington informed Rugeley by messenger that if his garrison surrendered they would be treated as prisoners of war. This messenger, a corporal according to Colonel Otho Holland Williams⁴⁰, and a sergeant according to Sergeant William Seymour⁴¹, was identified as Jeremiah Ferguson by Virginia militiaman Jourdan Gillum.⁴² Rugeley refused to surrender, challenging Washington to attack. Whether or not Washington had any original intention to storm the fortified barn, he now decided he would not be able to take the position by force. Williams stated that Washington's original purpose was only to reconnoiter the post⁴³, and Henry Lee suggested Washington's had intended to surprise the post; the fortification was unexpected.⁴⁴ Washington's alternative, which he now pursued, has come down in history as a "stratagem."⁴⁵

He ordered his men to cut pine logs, which were then "sealed and scauled"⁴⁶ and mounted on the wheeled carriages of the baggage wagons. Some of the cavalry troopers were dismounted to appear as infantry, and the remainder of the cavalry was formed.⁴⁷ As noted above, some of the dismounted men were probably mounted infantry. The courier was sent back into Rugeley, and again demanded surrender, else Washington would "blow them across the millpond."⁴⁸ Rugeley yielded: the whole affair lasted only twenty

minutes⁴⁹ without a shot being fired. Washington moved off with the prisoners, and burned the fortification.⁵⁰

Exactly when Rawdon's mounted force arrived at Rugeley's is not clear, but on their arrival, the last logs of the "house" were still burning. Fires were also discovered a mile beyond Rugeley's post- the commander of Rawdon's detachment, an officer of the New York Volunteers, believed them to be the campfires of Washington's force. Rawdon concluded that they had moved off from the area the evening of the 1st. He responded by sending out patrols and spies to discover the positions and intentions of Morgan's command. Two had already returned when Rawdon wrote to Cornwallis, reporting that Rugeley capitulated without firing a shot, and that the enemy had retired from the area.⁵¹

Rawdon's spies continued to report in. He wrote to Cornwallis on December 3rd that the niece of an "emissary" had gained access to the American camp and reported that Sumter had arrived in camp, and after a council of War, Gates had decided to move to Charlotte- an action that had already been taken several days earlier. Another deserter from Washington's force, a "Scotchman," came in to report that Rugeley surrendered to cavalry only and the dragoons had lacked carbines. Washington had by then returned to Six Mile Creek.⁵² On Morgan's arrival back at camp, a *feu to joie* was fired.⁵³ Cornwallis received intelligence that while Washington had returned to camp with the prisoners, a party of Americans remained at "Wade's Mill".⁵⁴

Rawdon reported the number captured at 103, including Colonel Rugeley and his son-in-law, Major Cook.⁵⁵ The total number given for Rugeley's men in available sources varies from 100⁵⁶ to 200.⁵⁷ Washington and Morgan began moving back towards New Providence, and then to Charlotte, where they arrived on December 4, and the prisoners were sent to Hillsborough on December 5th under an escort of Colonel Moore's North Carolina militia.⁵⁸

Washington's American contemporaries put the success squarely on the shoulders of the fabricated artillery, both in accounts immediately after the affair, and in later narratives.⁵⁹ Henry Lee stated that Washington knew Rugeley's character⁶⁰, but this only might serve to make Washington more confident that Rugeley would be easily induced to surrender.

The question of Rugeley's character was taken one step further by the British; the timing of letters between Cornwallis and Rawdon is not clear enough to determine who suggested first that Rugeley was a traitor.⁶¹ On December 3rd, Rawdon wrote in code to Cornwallis "I am confident he has betrayed his men," and that he suspected that it was always a possibility.⁶² Cornwallis intended to hold an inquiry into his behavior,⁶³ and referred to him as "that rascal Rugeley" in a letter to Balfour.⁶⁴

Rugeley's surrender, regardless of his own perception of the threat, served to diminish both American and British perceptions

of his military ability.⁶⁵ While Cornwallis felt that Rugeley's force was numerically not a large loss, he believed the effect on the morale of the local militia would be negative.⁶⁶

The letters of December 1st from Rawdon to Cornwallis shed new light on Rugeley's decision. Intelligence received by Rugeley, and confirmed by Rawdon, reported correctly that Morgan's force did not have any artillery.⁶⁷ If only cavalry was approaching to "storm" the fortification, Rugeley's confidence appears well founded. Washington did have infantry; the concept of fake artillery (the "Quaker gun") may have led Rugeley to believe that the intelligence which caused him to have confidence was faulty. But at a distance close enough for the defenders of the barn to see that Washington had cannon, would they not have been able to see that Washington was in fact only armed with logs? The timing of Rawdon's letters and the fact that a runner could have arrived at Camden within an hour suggest that Washington approached Rugeley's barn after dark, making it more difficult to discern exactly what Washington had.

The reason for Rugeley's decision must be examined in the light of the intelligence he had received. If visibility was a factor in discerning the true nature of the threat, Rugeley's motives for accepting the terms of surrender were probably based on perception that the threat was real.

Lord Rawdon's letters to Cornwallis show that analysis of the reasons for the ease of the fall of Rugeley's post must include the possibility that Rugeley was easily swayed into giving up his post, but also that, due to conditions having to do with time of day and waning visibility, he believed he would be attacked by real artillery.

The "stratagem" served as a sign to the American Army under Nathanael Greene that better days lay ahead. In Nathanael Greene and Daniel Morgan, William Washington found commanders willing to let him act boldly and independently when opportunity arose. The American cavalry rank and file, which would become a leaner 85 strong before Cowpens, gained much needed confidence both in themselves and in their commander. In 1781, the regular Continental cavalry would come into it's own and would play an important role in Greene's famed Southern Campaign.

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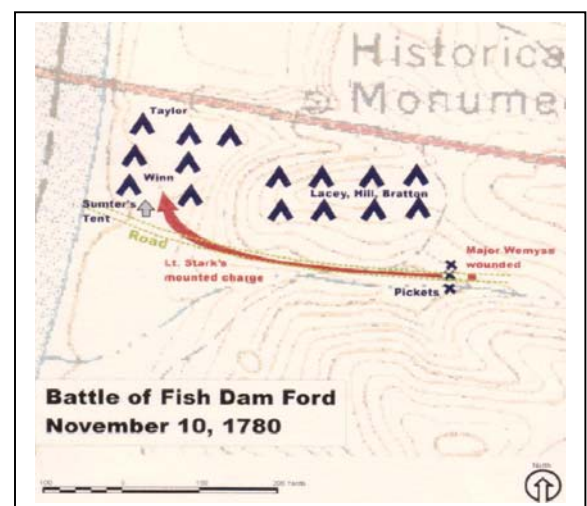
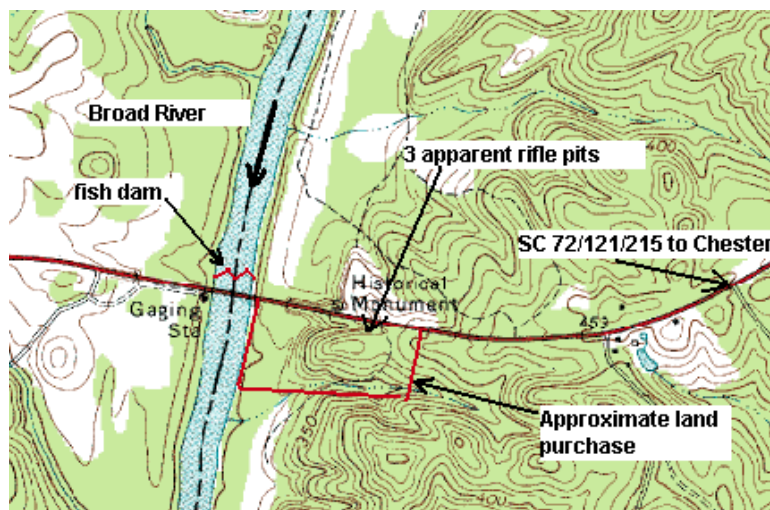
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Gen. Thomas Sumter's Fish Dam Ford Battlefield

To mitigate any impacts on the Fish Dam Ford battlefield resulting from a bridge replacement project over the Broad River at the Fish Dam Ford, the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) purchased approximately 146 acres in Chester County, SC on May 25, 2005. SCDOT commissioned Brockington and Associates to complete a preliminary archaeological reconnaissance of the site that yielded three probable rifle pits and numerous Revolutionary War military artifacts. This location and study appears to confirm the battle map drawn by Col. Richard Winn and may settle the debate on which side of the Broad River hosted this battle. Unfortunately the proposed bridge construction may impact on one or two of the rifle pits that are very rare structures. SCAR has requested that SCDOT review the new bridge construction plans and try to save these pits. SCDOT archaeologist Wayne Roberts and York County Cultural Resources Commission researcher (and SCAR contributor) Michael Scoggins played important roles in the research and coordination of the acquisition of this important Revolutionary War site. The SCDOT plans to transfer title to the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources' Heritage Trust.



Excerpt from USGS 7.5 minute topographic map Carlisle quad with annotations by Charles B. Baxley. The battlefield site is in Chester County, SC overlooking the Broad River at the SC Highway 72/121/215 bridge. Battlefield map from Brockington and Associates report.

This 146 acre tract, outlined in red above, includes what is believed to be site of British Maj. James Wemyss' November 10, 1780 attack on Gen. Thomas Sumter's camp. Wemyss was seriously wounded and captured by Gen. Sumter's men at this battle. Mining has destroyed any relics in the area just north of the land purchased. The area on both sides of the Broad saw Native American activities, colonial and

Revolutionary War era camps and modern uses on both sides of the Broad River. This is a major Revolutionary War battlefield preservation victory. SCAR will publish an edition detailing this action.



SCAR has been informed that colonial era relics have been recovered on both sides of the river, both above and below the highway. Please send your information about camps on both sides of the Broad River at the Fish Dam.



The historic fish weir - the fish dam - at low water. Photo from Todd Braisted's website.

Charles B. Baxley.....editor
William T. Graves.....contributor
Werner Willis.....artist

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Dignitaries pose at the 225th Anniversary Commemorative ceremony at Col. Abraham Buford's Battlefield, Lancaster County, SC.
Photo by Charlie Williams.



Unveiling of new SAR monument to the Patriots at the Battle of the Waxhaws.

Unraveling the Mystery of the Revolutionary War Service of Pvt. James Johnson, 1st Continental Light Dragoons

by Charles F. Price

Introduction

Drawing on family history to write historical fiction can be an exhilarating adventure into the vanished world of the past. But it can also challenge the patience and test the will of the researcher who hopes for quick and easy answers. Historical research is full of pitfalls and snares that can turn the quest for the facts of an ancestor's life into something approaching a detective mystery. When that happens, enthusiasm can carry one only so far. Then tenacity and deliberation must take over. Such work can be demanding, often bewildering. But the rewards, when they come, are great.

In researching a prospective novel based on the Revolutionary War experiences of my maternal ancestor James Johnson, I embarked on just such an odyssey. Although I write fiction, it is important to me that my fiction be grounded in fact. The chief purpose of my work is to tell as truly as possible what the past was like. This is not just an obsessive desire to recreate the past for its own sake, as if it were a ship in a bottle. I want to use history to show how the great issues of the past resonate today and can help us understand the problems of the modern world. Thus my treatment of history needs to be accurate – or at least as accurate as I can make it.

What follows is an account of the challenges I encountered in my research, how the obstacles were overcome, and what the journey taught me. I hope that what I learned will be of value to others who wish to write truly about the past.

Background

During the American Revolution my ancestor James Johnson served as a private soldier in a military unit known as the 1st Regiment of Continental Light Dragoons. The term *dragoon* was used in that time to denote a mounted soldier – a cavalryman. Technically there is a distinction in military terminology between light and heavy dragoons and between dragoons and cavalymen, but these distinctions were not applicable during the Revolution and consequently are of no importance in this discussion. All Revolutionary cavalymen were considered *light dragoons*.¹

A *regiment* of dragoons was a body of horse soldiers divided into five or six subunits called *troops*. Each troop consisted (in 1781) of 60 privates and a number of noncommissioned officers, and was commanded by a captain, two lieutenants and a junior officer called a cornet. In actual practice, troop strengths often fell far below the prescribed 60-man total. The commander of a regiment was a colonel. Often, however, the lieutenant-colonel – the second-in-command – actually directed the regiment in field operations.²

There were four regiments of light dragoons in the *Continental Army*. The Continental Army was the national army, paid by and acting under the supervision of the Continental Congress. Other dragoon units existed, but they were raised and paid by individual states, or were parts of another kind of Continental unit called *partisan legions*, which also contained infantry (Lt. Col. Henry "Light Horse Harry" Lee's famous Partisan Legion was one of these; it served ably in both in the Northern and Southern theaters of the war). Of the four Continental dragoon regiments, two had been raised in Virginia. They were the 1st and 3rd Regiments of Light Dragoons. These two regiments were transferred from the Northern theater to the North Carolina-South Carolina-Georgia area, the 1st in 1779 and the 3rd in 1780, to counter the British invasion of the South. They served

together in the South until the end of the war in 1783. In 1782 the 4th Regiment, raised in Pennsylvania, marched South to join them. The 2nd Regiment remained in the North.³

The commander of the 1st Regiment during most of James Johnson's service was Col. Anthony Walton White. The 3rd Regiment had been commanded for some time prior to Johnson's enlistment by its Lieutenant-Colonel, William Washington, a cousin of the Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army. A year before Johnson enlisted, Col. White's 1st Regiment was shattered in two engagements in South Carolina. One troop of the 1st remained, at different times under the command of Capt. John Watts, Griffin Fauntleroy and others. This troop was incorporated into Lt. Col. Washington's 3rd Regiment while Col. White returned to Virginia to recruit more soldiers and try to rebuild the 1st Regiment.⁴

During 1781 and early 1782 the 1st and 3rd Regiments both had detachments in Virginia as well as in North and South Carolina. The activity in Virginia mainly involved the recruiting of replacements and the gathering of horses, clothing, supplies and equipment to be shipped to the combat units operating in the South, which were a part of the main American army in the region commanded by Maj. Gen. Nathanael Greene. On 8 September 1781 Greene's army fought a bloody battle with the British under Col. Alexander Stewart at a place in South Carolina called Eutaw Springs. The engagement has been variously characterized as an American defeat, an American victory and a drawn battle. But, as had become Greene's habit during the Southern campaigns, he inflicted such severe losses on the British that they were compelled to retreat to the immediate vicinity of Charleston. The officer corps of Lt. Col. Washington's 3rd Regiment of Light Dragoons was devastated in this engagement and there are varying accounts of the numbers of rank and file lost. Washington himself was wounded and captured. The 3rd Regiment continued in existence, however, and was for some time commanded by several different junior officers, including Capt. Watts, Capt. William Parsons and Major Richard Call.⁵

In early 1782 the 3rd Regiment was rebuilt with replacements from Virginia and Col. White rejoined the Southern army with his reconstituted 1st Regiment. The 4th Regiment also came to the South. These dragoon units served variously during the last year of the war. Detachments operated with Brig. Gen. Anthony Wayne against the British and Tories and their allied Creek Indians in Georgia, while others remained with Greene's army, as part of a corps of light troops commanded first by Lt. Col. Henry Lee of the Partisan Legion and later by Lt. Col. John Laurens and finally by Brig. Gen. Mordecai Gist, helping keep the British penned up in Charleston. On 9 November 1782, to compensate for attrition, the 1st and 3rd Regiments were consolidated into five troops nominally commanded by Col. George Baylor but actually under the direction of Maj. John Swan.⁶

In May 1783, when it was evident that hostilities had ended but a formal peace remained to be ratified, approximately 100 members of the consolidated dragoons, complaining that the war was over and they were not being adequately provisioned, left Greene's army without permission and marched to Virginia, where they turned themselves in to military authorities. They stated their grievances to the governor of Virginia and to the Secretary of War and the Continental Congress and were eventually pardoned for their "mutiny". James Johnson was one of these "mutineers".⁷

Pension Applications

The fullest information we have on the Revolutionary War service of James Johnson is found in his several applications for a government pension and their supporting papers. In 1818 Congress passed a law granting half pay to officers and enlisted men who had served in the

Continental Army if they were in need of financial assistance. Johnson, born in 1760, would have been about 59 years old when he filed a claim for aid under this act. In 1832 Congress passed a more liberal pension act, granting pay to anyone who could prove he had served on active duty in the Revolution, regardless of financial need. When he filed under this act, Johnson would have been about 73 years of age.

Thus, when Johnson was relatively younger and his memory presumably more fresh, he had less reason to give precise details about his military service. It was more important to provide proof of poverty. By the time he responded to the 1832 act, when the facts of military service needed to be proven, his memories of the war years were somewhat muddled and clearly fading. Consequently, the information he gave at the different times he filed pension papers tends to be contradictory and confusing. Following are the verbatim statements he gave (Italicized phrases indicate apparently contradictory claims):⁸

Pension Claim of 1819:

"Enlisted in the *Spring of 1782* in the State of Virginia to serve *one year and six months* in the company commanded by Lieutenant John Harris of the Virginia Continental Line commanded by General Steuben at Point of Fork on James River and in the same year he reinlisted (sic) in the Light Dragoons Service under the command of Colonel White and that he continued in said service of the United States until on or about the year *1784* he together with about one hundred more of the said Light Dragoons Service came away from the State of Georgia without permission not designing to desert but knowing their times to have expired according to the terms of their enlistments, and proceeded to Prince Edward County in Virginia at which place they surrendered to General Morgan and was marched from their (sic) to Winchester where he received a furlow (sic) from Capt Morrow to return home and he remained at home two or three years and then received an honorable discharge signed by Lieutenant Harris in about 1786 & he further sayeth that he adduced proof about 1814 and recd his land warrant for his Revolutionary service and that he was in several skirmishes one where Colo. Lawrence (Laurens?) was killed another with General Wayne against the Creek Indians..."

Claim of 1820:

"...he entered the service of the Ustates (sic) in the Continental war at Prontifok (sic) in Virginia & Corps commanded by the Baron de Stuban (sic) after which he *reinlisted* (sic) in the Regt commanded by Colo White of the Virginia Line after which he was *transferred* to the Corps of Light Horse or Dragoons *commanded by Colo Wm Washington*, in which service he continued until the close of the war – in all in the service *about three years...*"

Claim of 1823:

"...That he entered the service of the United States in the Continental Army at Point of Fork in Virginia in the regiment commanded by Colo. White of the Virginia Line after which he was transferred to the Corps of the Lt Horse or Dragoons commanded by *Colo. Washington* in which service he continued as a private until the close of the war. He served as a private and ultimately received a discharge from Lieutenant Harris which discharge he has lost, that at the close of the war he was under Captain Watts in whose company said Harris was Lieutenant, that Captains Green and Hughes were acting officers in this division of the Army, that just before he left the army he came from the South to Prince Edward Courthouse Virginia, then marched under Captain Morrow to Winchester where they were all furloughed and sent home, and this war having ended we were not again called on. And he obtained the discharge sometime after from said Lieutenant Harris in the State of Virginia..."

Claim of 1833:

"...enlisted in the war of the revolution *for the term of during the war* and served as a private in the Regiment No. not recollected *under the command of Colonel William Washington* of the Virginia Line; and that I continued in the service aforesaid until the end and termination of the war aforesaid..."

Second Claim of 1833:

"...in 1779 this affiant enlisted as a private soldier in the war of the revolution *for and during the war*, whilst a citizen of the State of Virginia, with Col. White, that I *was placed in Col. William Washington's Regiment*, in a company of which John Harris was the Lieutenant the name of the Captain not recollected, Capt. John Hughes & Capt. Gunn occasionally commanded this affiant's company – that in said Regiment Major Polson was the acting major, that he continued in said Regiment until the close of the war for which he enlisted, which took place in *June 1783...*"

Claim of 1837:

"...who on his oath declares that he is the same person who formerly belonged to the company commanded by Captain Watts in the Regiment Commanded by *Colonel Washington* in the Service of the United States..."

National Archives Information

To confuse matters further, Johnson's Pension Application File from the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) includes an undated 20th-century U.S. Bureau of Pensions/Department of the Interior form, filled out by a government clerk at the request of a descendant seeking information about Johnson's military service, showing the following in part:

Date of Enlistment	1779
Length of Service	<i>June 1783</i>
Rank	Private
Captain	John Hughes Green Watts
Colonel	White <i>William Washington (crossed out)</i>
State	Continental Dragoon
Battles engaged in	Blank
Residence at time of Enlistment	
Enlisted at	Point of Fork, Va.

Johnson's Military Service Record, as received by the writer from NARA, is very sketchy, and the little that does exist seems contradictory. There are two cards summarizing records of pay due to Johnson. Oddly, both are for the same month of January 1783 and each shows a private's wage of 8 1/3 dollars as due. One card says Johnson belongs to the 5th Troop, commanded by Capt. John Hughes; the other shows him as a member of the 2nd Troop, commanded by Capt. John Watts.⁹ Thus, the pay records seem to suggest that Johnson belonged to two different troops at once.

NARA microfilm records show the manuscript payrolls for the 2nd and 5th Troops of the 1st Dragoons for the month of January 1783, which the cards in Johnson's Military Service Record file evidently summarize.¹⁰ A James Johnson is again shown as a member of both troops. Whether there were two James Johnsons, one in each troop, or whether for some reason a single James Johnson was carried on the rolls of both troops, cannot now be determined. However, the bounty land warrant records¹¹ of the Virginia State Library contain affidavits by former 1st Dragoon cavalymen Robert Green and George Terrell (or Tennil) in which each man claims to have been acquainted with the same James Johnson as a private in Watts' 2nd Troop. But Green was in the 5th Troop and Terrell/Tennil in the 2nd, somewhat compounding the mystery. While it is certainly possible

that soldiers serving in different troops would know each other, the affidavit also raises the intriguing possibility that there may have been some interchangeability between troops that would account for Johnson's double enrollment and for the three men's acquaintance.

Analysis

Johnson's muddled testimony makes it difficult to sort out the actual facts of his service. His references to Baron Steuben and the Point of Fork Arsenal suggest an enlistment date sometime in the Spring of 1781 - when Steuben was at that place¹² - rather than either in 1779 or 1782 as Johnson variously claims, times when Steuben was known to have been elsewhere. In the Virginia bounty land warrant records, Researcher Lee F. McGee has found and shared with the writer an affidavit signed by a Capt. William Barrett certifying that Johnson enlisted in the 1st Dragoons in July 1781 (Barrett was an officer in the 3rd Dragoons).¹³ Furthermore, the mutiny of the dragoons, in which Johnson admits taking part, occurred in May 1783 and not in 1784 as Johnson thinks.¹⁴



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

He also claims to have served in the dragoons with Lt. Col. William Washington. As noted above, Lt. Col. Washington was wounded and captured at the battle of Eutaw Springs on 8 September 1781. If Johnson served under Lt. Col. Washington's *personal* command, he must have joined him prior to that date by being absorbed into the 1st Dragoon troop of Washington's 3rd Regiment. Until 1782 the whole of the cavalry force in the South - except Lee's Legion - seems to have been known as "William Washington's dragoons" even after Washington himself ceased to be in actual command. Orders as late as 9 November 1782 show him as Lieutenant Colonel of the

consolidated cavalry, though he remained a prisoner of the British at the time.¹⁵

In his various pension papers Johnson mentions serving under or knowing several officers - Baron Steuben, Col. White, Lt. Col. Washington, Lt. (Capt.) Harris, Maj. (John) Poulson, Capt. Watts, Capt. (John) Hughes, Capt. (James) Gunn, Capt. (Berryman) Green, Capt. (Robert) Morrow, Brig. Gen. Wayne and Lt. Col. Laurens ("Lawrence"). At first, the intermixture of names seems implausible because most of these officers served in different commands at different times and seldom, or never, together. But thanks to an analysis by Revolutionary War dragoon scholar John T. Hayes, Johnson's claims can actually be verified in large part, if allowances are made for his failing memory at the times he applied for a pension.

In his earliest pension application Johnson says he enlisted in the company commanded by Lt. John Harris, under Baron Steuben at Point of Fork, VA. John Harris, actually a captain, did command a company, not of cavalry but of infantry, in a 400-man detachment of 18-month recruits commanded by Col. Thomas Gaskins at Point of Fork in May and June 1781 during the confusion surrounding Lord Cornwallis' invasion of Virginia. Col. Gaskins' immediate superior was Baron Steuben. Second in command to Col. Gaskins was Maj. John Poulson, whom Johnson also mentions but in a way that erroneously suggests a connection to the cavalry at a later period of time.¹⁶

In late June 1781 Col. Christian Febiger temporarily succeeded Gaskins in command of this battalion.¹⁷ Among the 90-odd pages in Johnson's pension application file at NARA is a sheet that seems to be a set of notes summarizing Johnson's service, perhaps written by one of the lawyers helping the veteran get his pension reinstated after it was temporarily revoked. One line of the notes appears to read "Ky 18 Oct 1821 - Febiger Virg (illegible) One (illegible)". A separate line of the notes apparently summarizes another document in the file, Johnson's 1819 pension application, suggesting that the line mentioning Febiger may refer to another document, now lost, that describes Johnson's service in the battalion during the brief time Febiger commanded it (19 June-6 July 1781). This is the only evidence among the Johnson pension papers that may explicitly tie him to the Gaskins Battalion.

Further indirect evidence, however, is provided by a letter of Febiger dated 30 June 1781 complaining to his superiors that he had recently lost 100 men from his unit "by transfer to the cavalry".¹⁸ As noted above, Capt. Barrett's statement asserts that Johnson joined the cavalry - the 1st Dragoons - in July 1781. The two dates are suggestively close in time and prove that cavalry recruiters were in fact taking men from the Gaskins/Febiger Battalion into the mounted service in the June-July period of 1781. Johnson himself says he "reinlisted" in the 1st Dragoons "commanded by Col. White" *in the same year* that he joined Harris' company.

Col. Anthony Walton White did indeed command the 1st Dragoons, and was, as previously noted, in Virginia recruiting men to rebuild his regiment during July 1781. In fact, we have an account from a soldier who may have served with Johnson in the Gaskins/Febiger Battalion and then volunteered with him for service in the 1st Dragoons. A Virginia veteran named Thomas S. Brown stated in a Revolutionary War pension application located by Lee McGee that he enlisted as a private in the 1st Dragoons "in the summer of 1781" after having served since the previous March in a regiment of "eighteen months men". He identifies his captain as an officer named Lamb; but his "lieutenant", he says, was John Harris; and his description of his service in the spring and early summer of 1781 exactly parallels that of the Gaskins/Febiger Battalion, including duty at Point of Fork.

Brown may even have left us an eyewitness description of the very moment when James Johnson joined the dragoons. According to his narrative, his regiment had been maneuvering on the York-James

Peninsula east of Richmond for several days and then encamped at a place called Chickahominy Swamp. Here, he says, "Col. White of the dragoons came to camp and (we) were paraded. He requested that all men who would enlist for the war would ground their arms and march five paces in front and offered a bounty of \$1,000 and half pay during life." Brown says he and "thirty or forty others stepped out and enlisted in the 1st Virginia Regiment of Dragoons."¹⁹

According to Capt. Barrett's statement, Johnson, in joining the 1st Dragoons, enlisted for the duration of the war. Joining Capt. Harris' company earlier that year, he had evidently enlisted for a period of only 18 months. This explains the apparent contradictions in his several pension papers, where he variously describes his term of enlistment as "18 months", "one year and six months", and "during the war". He actually signed up twice – the first time apparently in May 1781 for a period of 18 months; and then a second time in July, this time for the duration of the war.

After joining Col. White's 1st Dragoons, Johnson says he was later "placed" in or "transferred" to Lt. Col. Washington's command. He does not say when; neither do any of the extant records. He could have joined Washington, who was with Greene's army in South Carolina, at any time after July 1781; and it is barely possible that he could have arrived in time actually to have served in the 1st Dragoon troop under Washington's personal command as early as August, before the battle of Eutaw Springs in early September when Washington was captured. However, if Johnson participated in that severe battle – which was extremely costly to the dragoons – it seems likely that he would have mentioned it in his pension applications. He does not.

Capt. (or Lt.) John Harris is named throughout Johnson's pension papers in a way that suggests the two had a continuing relationship. Johnson says that in 1786 or thereabouts Lt. Harris provided him his certificate of discharge. Harris was not only Johnson's likely company commander in the Gaskins Battalion, he may have also served with Johnson in the consolidated dragoons in Maj. Gen. Greene's South Carolina army. A lieutenant by that name is listed in the consolidation order.²⁰ The possibility exists, of course, that the John Harris who served with the dragoons was not the same John Harris who was a captain in the Gaskins/Febiger Battalion. Johnson does refer to Harris throughout his pension papers as a lieutenant, and his memory for ranks seems to be generally more reliable than his memory for dates and places.

However, if the John Harris of the dragoons and the John Harris of the infantry were one in the same despite the apparent difference in rank, John Hayes believes it is possible that Harris may have left the Virginia army and come South in the late summer of 1781, perhaps carrying dispatches to Greene; and that he afterward remained to become an officer of the Southern Dragoon force. Hayes speculates that Harris may have brought Johnson with him to act as his bowman or batman – his orderly. But a statement in the pension application of veteran Blan Shiflet, who served in Harris's company of the Gaskins Battalion, appears to undercut this theory. It suggests that Capt. John Harris remained in Virginia at least through the Yorktown Campaign of October 1781.²¹

There is, however, another possibility. In late August 1781 Lt. Ambrose Gordon of the 3rd Dragoons arrived in Charlotte, North Carolina with eight wagonloads of clothing destined for his regiment. The uniforms had been shipped from Philadelphia and thus would have had to pass through eastern Virginia at the time Johnson was likely there. On 31 August 1781 a Capt. John Hamilton wrote Greene from Charlotte that the eight wagonloads of clothing were still at that place for lack of contracted transportation to carry them on to the army.²²

Records show that Lt. Gordon was wounded at the battle of Eutaw Springs only a few days later.²³ If he was there, then so perhaps was James Johnson. Johnson could have been part of an escort detailed to accompany Lt. Gordon to Charlotte. In the absence of the necessary transportation for the clothing, it may be that Gordon and his escort proceeded south to join Greene, arriving just in time for the battle. We can only speculate whether this is what happened. But at least we know it could have happened.

Hayes concedes it is far more likely that Johnson – with or without John Harris – did not actually come South until 1782, when Col. White finally returned from Virginia. In January of that year, forces under Maj. Gen. Arthur St. Clair and Brig. Gen. Anthony Wayne, detached from the Virginia army after Cornwallis' surrender at Yorktown, reinforced Greene in South Carolina. The following March, another Virginia detachment joined Greene under Col. Thomas Posey.²⁴ Both commands included cavalry reinforcements for the 1st, 3rd and 4th Regiments of Light Dragoons, and James Johnson, and maybe John Harris, were likely among these. But an intriguing question remains. Johnson is as silent about the siege of Yorktown as he is about the battle of Eutaw Springs. If he were a witness to the surrender of Lord Cornwallis – which marked the beginning of the end of the Revolution – or even if he were only stationed somewhere nearby, would he not have mentioned it in his pension applications? Instead, he claims only to have seen action in two relatively small engagements.

The account of Thomas Brown, the veteran who may have joined the 1st Dragoons with Johnson, raises a much less dramatic possibility. After enlisting in Col. White's regiment, Brown says, he and his fellow recruits "marched under a sergeant to Powhatan County and took care of horses. They then marched to Ruffin's Ferry on Pamunkey River and remained until the siege of York. From there they marched to Petersburg...". In the spring of 1782 Brown marched with "part of the 3rd regiment of Dragoons...to South Carolina where he joined his own regiment (the 1st Dragoons). He was attached to Capt. Watts' troop", which was, we know, James Johnson's troop – or at least one of the two troops in which a James Johnson served.²⁵

Whenever and however Johnson arrived in the South, we can safely conclude from his accounts of the skirmishes he witnessed that he served in the 1st Dragoons under Col. White in Wayne's expedition against the Creeks and British around Savannah, Georgia in the spring and early summer of 1782; then returned to Greene's main army near Charleston in time to participate in Lt. Col. Laurens' ill-fated clash with the British at Combahee Ferry in August. He then remained in South Carolina until May 1783 when the consolidated dragoons "mutinied" and went home to Virginia without authorization.

Conclusion

What are the lessons to be learned from this account of the effort to uncover the facts of James Johnson's Revolutionary War service? First, historical research is seldom quick or easy. The truth about what happened to an individual in the past is usually hard to find and is almost never wholly recoverable. Documentary evidence is not always available to support oral statements, and when it is, can sometimes raise more questions than it answers, as in the case of Johnson's double payroll record. Memories fail, records are lost (Johnson lost his discharge papers), and sometimes individuals simply lie to put themselves in the best possible light.

Generally speaking, Johnson seems to have testified in good faith; the one area where he might have stretched the truth is in his claim to have actually served with William Washington. As we have seen, the claim is doubtful; but since he did serve in what had been known as

Washington's dragoons, it is perhaps not surprising that he went one step further and claimed to have served under the great hero himself. Maybe by the time he filed his pension application he really believed he had.

Second, research into primary sources dealing with a given individual must be supplemented by additional research into the background against which the individual's life was lived. It was not enough simply to locate Johnson's Military Service Record and Pension Application File at NARA, or to consult the genealogical material about Johnson that had been preserved by his descendants. One had to learn about the history of the light dragoon service in the Revolution; about the conduct and course of the war in Virginia, North and South Carolina and Georgia; about the organization of the Continental Army; about the officers who led the army; about the difference between the pension laws of which Johnson hoped to take advantage; and about a host of other subjects.

For example, one of the most valuable resources was *The Papers of General Nathanael Greene*, a multi-volume collection of Greene's orders and correspondence, published by The University of North Carolina Press, which gives detailed contemporary evidence about the location and activities of the cavalry in which Johnson served during the period in question. E.M. Sanchez-Saavedra's *Guide to Virginia Military Organizations in the American Revolution, 1774-1787* was another vital source; it provided the key to discovering Johnson's first enlistment in Gaskins' Battalion. Burt Garfield Loescher's *Washington's Eyes: The History of the Continental Light Dragoons* was useful for an overall understanding of the operations and structure of the Revolutionary horse.

But by far the most crucial factor in understanding what might have happened to my ancestor in the Revolution was the help of two individuals, John Hayes and Lee McGee, whom I have mentioned in several places above. They represent another lesson I learned about historical research – that it is most successful when its burden is shared. My natural working habit is a solitary one; but the reader will have noticed that it was the material offered me by John and Lee that finally made matters as clear as they could be made.

Their assistance was spontaneous and unsolicited. John is probably the world's foremost authority on the mounted service in the Revolution and is writing a serial history of that service in a periodic publication called *The Saddlebag Almanac*. He has also edited the diary of an officer of the 1st Dragoons, *A Gentleman of Fortune: The Diary of Baylor Hill, 1777-1781*. Lee is a physician whose passion is the 3rd Dragoons; he is writing its history. Lee has accumulated a treasure trove of reference materials, which he readily shares. He has also done intensive research tracing out the Revolutionary War exploits of two of his own Virginia ancestors, brothers Benjamin and Bartlett Hawkins-Fitzgerald (both enlisted in the Continental Army in 1777, Bartlett in the 3rd Dragoons and Benjamin in the 7th Virginia; then in 1779 or 1780, Benjamin joined his brother in the 3rd Dragoons, serving in the South, perhaps simultaneously with James Johnson).

Admittedly such generosity is rare – all too often, expert researchers tend to hoard their holdings like misers. I think Lee and John were anxious to help simply because they love their subject so much that their enthusiasm compelled them to lend a hand. One cannot expect very often to encounter two such lively and unselfish helpmates as these; but one can always hope to find a kindred soul or two who will offer some small hint or some piece of informed advice or perhaps even a scrap of vital evidence that will shed light on the mystery one is trying to solve.

The final lesson to be learned about historical research is that it never ends. There are always open questions, loose ends, knots that can't be untangled. There is always a space remaining to be filled. And

for a writer, that space is where imagination lives. It is where novels are born.

In addition to Lee McGee and John Hayes, I wish to express my gratitude to C.F. William Maurer of Park Ridge, New Jersey, long-time 3rd Dragoon scholar, now serving in the Ranger Interpretive Section, Statue of Liberty National Monument and author of Dragoon Diary: The History of the Third Continental Light Dragoons, who generously gave me the use of both his book and his masters thesis on the 3rd Dragoons; and Samuel K. Fore, former archivist with the South Caroliniana Library in Columbia and now Special Collections Librarian at the John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Library at Colonial Williamsburg, for their help and encouragement in the research that led to the writing of this article. It goes without saying that I alone am accountable for the conclusions I have drawn and for any errors made.

NOTES

¹ Georges Guillet de St. Georges, *The Gentleman's Dictionary, II., The Military Art*, H.Benwicke (London, 1704), 30; Randy Steffen, *The Horse Soldier, 1775-1943, Vol. I: The Revolution, the War of 1812, the Early Frontier, 1776-1850* (University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 1977), 88,111.

² Robert K. Wright, Jr., *The Continental Army* (Center of Military History, United States Army, Washington, DC, 2000), 160.

³ Burt Garfield Loescher, *Washington's Eyes: The Continental Light Dragoons* (The Old Army Press, Fort Collins, CO), 3 - 97; E.M. Sanchez-Saavedra, *A Guide to Virginia Military Organizations in the American Revolution, 1774-1787* (Willow Bend Books, Westminster, MD, 1978), 101-107.

⁴ Loescher, *Washington's Eyes.*, 13-15.

⁵ Ibid.,15, 78-96; Christopher Ward, *The War of the Revolution, Vol. II* (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1952), ed. By John Richard Alden, 823-834; Richard K. Showman, ed., *The Papers of General Nathanael Greene, Vol. VII* (University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 71-72, 119, 204, 36, 445, 412-413; Dennis M. Conrad, ed., *The Papers of General Nathanael Greene., Vol. VIII* (1995), 26; Ibid., Vol. IX (1997),127, 104, 141, 183, 395-396, 401-402, 359, 393, 492, 506-507, 524.

⁶ Loescher, *Washington's Eyes*, 19-21, 95, 138.

⁷ Ibid., 20; Papers of the Continental Congress M247, Reel 149, Item 137, Vol. 2, 557.

⁸ The claims of James Johnson in his various pension papers are from his Pension Application File, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

⁹ Military Service Record, James Johnson, 1st Regiment of Continental Light Dragoons, National Archives.

¹⁰ Revolutionary War Rolls, M246-115, 1775-1783, Continental Troops: 1st Regiment Light Dragoons, 1777-1783 (1-11), National Archives, microfilm images from Heritage Quest Genealogical Services, Bountiful, UT.

¹¹ Library of Virginia Digital Records, Revolutionary War Bounty Land Warrant Files No. 00325, James Johnson.

¹² Showman, *The Papers of General Nathanael Greene, Vol. VII*, 428.

¹³ Library of Virginia Digital Records, Revolutionary War Bounty Land Warrant Files No. 00315 James Johnson.

¹⁴ Conrad, *The Papers of General Nathanael Greene, Vol. XII* (2002), 660-661.

¹⁵ Loescher, *Washington's Eyes*, 138-139.

¹⁶ Sanchez-Saavedra, *Guide to Virginia Military Organizations*, 91.

¹⁷ Richard C. Bush III, PhD., "The End of Colonel Gaskins's War: May-October 1781", originally published in the Bulletin of the Northumberland County Historical Society, Vol. XXXIII, 1996, accessed on the Internet 8/5/02 at

<http://www.virginiacampaign.org>, 6.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ John Frederick Dorman, *Virginia Revolutionary Pension Applications, Vol. 11* (Washington, DC), 1965, 70.

²⁰ Loescher, *Washington's Eyes*, 138.

²¹ Shiflet's pension application is reproduced online at <http://www.virginiacampaign.org/gaskins/Soldiers/shiflet.html>, accessed 9/17/02.

²² Conrad, *The Papers of General Nathanael Greene, Vol. IX*, 273.

²³ Walter Clark, ed., *The State Records of North Carolina, Vol. XVI* (Goldsboro, NC, 1895-1914), 638.

²⁴ Sanchez-Saavedra, *Guide to Virginia Military Organizations*, 91-93.

²⁵ Dorman, *Virginia Pension Applications*, 70.

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Charles F. Price is the author of the *Hiwassee* series, four works of historical fiction set in his native Western North Carolina which comprise a single narrative cycle interweaving the partly imagined private history of his 19th-century ancestors with the public history of the Southern Appalachians.

Hiwassee: A Novel of the Civil War tells the story of ordinary people caught up in that conflict both on the home front and the battlefield. His second novel, *Freedom's Altar*, carries the story of these same families into the Reconstruction period. It won the Sir Walter Raleigh Award as the best fiction of 1999 written by a North Carolina author. *The Cock's Spur*, his third title, received an *Independent Publisher* Book Award as one of the Ten Outstanding Books of 2001 and Price was named Story Teller of the Year; it also won the Historical Fiction Award of the North Carolina Society of Historians. The latest in the series, *Where the Water-Dogs Laughed*, was released in 2003; it takes its setting in 1898 and rounds out the quartet. It also garnered the Society of Historians' award, was a nominee for a second Sir Walter Raleigh Award and was a first finalist for the *Independent Publisher* Book Award for historical fiction that year.

Price is a native of Haywood County, NC and is descended on both sides of his family from some of the earliest settlers in the mountains of Western North Carolina. His four published novels are loosely based on the lives of his father's ancestors, the Curtis and Price families of Clay County. One of the chief characters in his new novel on the Revolutionary War is a maternal ancestor who served in the Continental Army. Members of this side of Price's family, the Johnsons and Bakers, have lived in what are now Burke, Avery and Mitchell counties since the 1780's.

Price has been a Washington lobbyist, management consultant, urban planner and journalist. In 1995, after working for 19 years in the nation's capital, he retired to his beloved North Carolina mountains to devote full time to writing. He holds a Masters in Public Administration from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and an undergraduate degree in History and Political Science from High Point University. **Charlesfprice@aol.com**

The Pension request of William McGarity, Sr., of Chester District, South Carolina

The Pension request of William McGarity, Sr., of Chester District, South Carolina, was rejected on 10 December 1802 and the rejection agreed upon by the Comptroller General in November of 1803. Mr. McGarity requested a pension again in November of 1826 which included a thorough account of the battles in which he fought and was accompanied by numerous affidavits of fellow soldiers. On December 4, 1826, the Committee on Pensions of the House of Representatives acted in favor of the petition and it was sent to the Senate for consideration. In December of 1826, William McGarity was granted a pension of \$60.00 annually.

Mr. McGarity also received from the State of South Carolina, 18 pounds, 17 shillings and a penny half penny sterling for sundreis provided during the Revolutionary War. The document is dated 08 October 1785.

William McGarity, Sr., was born 14 February 1756, possibly in Cecil County, Maryland. He died 03 February 1836, in Chester County, South Carolina. He was, at one time, a member of Catholic Presbyterian Church in Chester County, South Carolina, and is buried at Union ARP Church Cemetery, Richburg, Chester County, South Carolina, next to his wife, Mary (possibly Mary Polly Jacke). William McGarity's parents may have been Patrick and Martha McGarity who also moved to the Chester County area from Cecil County, Maryland. He entered the War a Private and was promoted to Lieutenant. His grave in Chester County is marked with both the original tombstone purchased according to his Last Will and Testament and a Military Marker dedicated in modern times.

The petition of William McGarity states that he was a "volunteer under Captain Patton under the command of Colonel (Richard) Richardson, we defeated the Tories and Indians at reddy river (Reedy River in Greenville County, SC) under the command of Colonel (William) Cunningham and Paris this was since known by the name of the snowy campaign (Snow Campaign) after his return home he turned out under Captain Nixon went to Purinsburgh (Purrysburg) and was under the command of General Linkhorn (Gen. Benjamin Lincoln). He was transferred and put under the command of General Wilkinson crossed the Savannah River was in the battle at (unknown) (Kettle Creek) creek where we defeated the Tories and Indians we then returned into South Carolina joined General Linkhorn (Lincoln) was at the Battle of Stono (Ferry) then returned home. He then turned out under Captain (John) McClure was in a scrimmage with the Tories at Beckhamsville (Alexander's Old Field) where he received a slight wound in the arm he was at the Battle of Williamson old place where Hood (Christian Huck) and Ferguson was defeated. He then joined General Sumpter was at the battle at Rocky Mount. He was then in five days at the Battle of Hanging Rock. We then marched down the side of the Wateree River till we heard of Gates defeat (at Camden) we then retreated back was sent out by Sumpter to destroy the houses at Rocky Mount which prevented your petitioner from being at the Battle of Fishing Creek where Sumpter was surprised. He then took his family and moved them into North Carolina for safety, then returned back rejoined General Sumpter was at the battle of the Fishdam Ford on Broad River where we defeated the British Tories. In a few days was in the Battle at Blackstock on Tyger River where General Sumpter was wounded. He then returned home and moved his family from North Carolina home; in the year 1781 he turned out under Captain Hannah and joined General Greene at the old cross roads and marched to Orangeburg against the British under Lord Rawden who was entrenched so strongly. He was then sent in a small detachment to the Quarter House near Charleston where we had a scrimmage with the British and Negroe. He then marched to Biggen Church, when the British found us approaching they burnt the church and retreated. We then followed them to Quinby Bridge where we overtook them and had a scrimmage with them. He then returned home and in the year 1782 he turned out and went to Orangeburg and remained there three months and returned home which is the last tour that he was out..."

The petition of William McGarity was recorded by Thomas Reid and signed with Mr. McGarity's mark (X). He stated that his health was very poor and that he was in the 70th year of his age.

Joseph Gaston, James Harbison, William Knox, and George Weir signs affidavits affirming the involvement of William McGarity in the service of his country. The pension application was further accompanied by an affidavit from his Physician stating that he was in poor health.

This pension statement is edited for punctuation, capitalization, and explanatory notes added by Charles B. Baxley.



Calendar of Upcoming Events

Please submit items to post upcoming Southern Campaigns programs and events that may be of interest to Revolutionary War researchers and history buffs.

June 3, 2005 – Charleston, SC - Piccolo Spoleto: 10:00 am – “General Nathaniel Greene: A Defining Moment in Colonial America” by Charles Price and Seabrook Wilkinson. This session of the literary festival explores the life and significance of General Nathaniel Greene as a cultural and military icon. Novelist Charles Price examines the literary contributions of this American hero. Greene's descendant Seabrook Wilkinson moderates. Event sponsored by the Charleston Library Society, 164 King St. Annex. Tickets required and admission charged.

<http://www.piccolospoleto.com/events/default.aspx?progid=3&eventid=102> Ticket also includes an 18th century garden reception and refreshments at 4:30pm at the Old Powder Magazine, 79 Cumberland Street.

3:00 pm "Modern Perspectives on Nathaniel Greene from Two Historians, a Novelist, and a Descendant" by Carl Borick, David Reuwer, Charles Price, and Seabrook Wilkinson. This session of the literary festival deals with the climatic moment of Greene's life, the Battle of Eutaw Springs, South Carolina. Novelist Charles Price, historians Carl Borick and David Reuwer and descendant Seabrook Wilkinson provide their unique perspectives on this event which ended British dominance of South Carolina. Afterwards, enjoy an 18th century garden reception and refreshments at 4:30pm at the Old Powder Magazine, 79 Cumberland Street. Event sponsored by the Charleston Library Society, 164 King St. Annex. Tickets required and admission charged.

<http://www.piccolospoleto.com/events/default.aspx?progid=3&eventid=102>

June 3, 2005 – Great Falls, SC Reception and Historical Drama at Republic Amphitheatre, Dearborn Street. Admission \$2.00 adults, \$1.00 children 6-12. For more information call 803-482-2370 or gassociation@infoave.net

June 4-5, 2005 - Beckhamville (Great Falls), SC - 225th Anniversary of the skirmish at Alexander's Old Field. Battle reenactments at 2 pm on Saturday and Sunday. Enjoy period music, dancing, colonial craftsmen, children's activities, sutlers shops and concessions. Sunday there will be a period church service. Admission \$5.00 adults, \$3.00 for children 6-12 and under 6 free. <http://www.battleofbeckhamville.com/index.html>

June 11-12, 2005 – Lincolnton, NC - Battle of Ramseur's Mill 225th Anniversary event featuring free Bar-B-Que, and for campers, straw, wood, and water are available as well as choice camp sites. Events including a real shooting match with the 1st prize being a custom made rifle by Todd Carpenter, gunsmith. Hosted by Locke's Militia and Davie's Partisan Rangers. June 11th will feature a parade through downtown Lincolnton that starts at 9:30 am [Anyone with patriotic flag can enter] followed by a presentation on "The Revolution in the Carolinas Backcountry" by SCAR Editor Charles B. Baxley and David P. Reuwer. For more information call Darrell Harkey, Lincoln County Historical Coordinator, 704-736-8442 (w) or 704-732-1221 (h). 211 West Water Street, Lincolnton, NC 28092 hiscord@charter.net or wharkey@charter.net

June 18, 2005 - Ninety Six, SC - Living History Saturdays Living History volunteers (in period dress) show and acquire early American daily living skills. Examples are woodworking, fireplace cooking,

candle making, baking in the beehive oven, and repairing shingle roofs.

June 25-26, 2005 – Salem Crossroads, SC (near Winnsboro, SC) - The Battle of Mobley's Meetinghouse 225th Anniversary. A small band of Whig militia under Capt. John McClure, Maj. Richard Winn, and Col. William Bratton attacked and dispersed a gathering of local Tory militia in northwest Fairfield County, South Carolina near the Little River in early summer of 1780. The re-enactment will be held on the grounds of the historic Feasterville Female Academy and Boarding House, 7 miles north of Salem Crossroads on SC Highway 215 North. The public is invited to watch morning drills, an encampment, and a small re-enactment will bring this historic event to life. Contact Pelham Lyles at Fairfield County Museum, 231 South Congress Street, Winnsboro, SC 29180. 803-635-9811 or fairfieldmus@chestertel.com

June 25, 2005 - Museum of York County, Rock Hill, SC - *Liberty or Death: Rebels and Loyalists in the Southern Piedmont*, an exhibition on the Revolutionary War in the Carolina backcountry between 1780-1782, opens at The Museum of York County, 4621 Mt. Gallant Road, Rock Hill, SC 29732.

<http://www.chmuseums.org/HBrevexhibit.htm>

June 27, 2005 – Charleston Museum - BATTLE OF SULLIVAN'S ISLAND 6:30 p.m. In school, students learned that Gen. William Moultrie commanded the fort on Sullivan's Island. Gen. Charles Lee doubted the fort would hold, Sgt. William Jasper selflessly jumped upon the parapet to replant the blue rebel flag and the backcountry S.C. Militia and SC Continentals, commanded by Col. William "Danger" Thompson of Belleville plantation, stopped Lord Cornwallis' Army at Breach Inlet. But, what happened to the main characters in the drama that was the Battle of Sullivan's Island once all the smoke cleared? Carl Borick, assistant museum director, will lecture on the interesting fates of the heroes and villains of the famous battle in commemoration of Carolina Day (June 28). <http://www.charlestonmuseum.org/event.asp?ID=55>

July 3-4, 2005 - Cowpens National Battlefield Park, SC – weekend of events, performances by bands, noted actor Howard Burnham portrays South Carolina militia leader Gen. Thomas Sumter, interpretive walks and fireworks displays at night! Featured speaker David K. Wilson will discuss his new book, *The Southern Strategy – Britain's Conquest of South Carolina and Georgia, 1775 – 1780*, published this year by USC Press which covers the major Southern Campaign battles through May 1780 and then purports to explain why the British lost the war.

<http://www.nps.gov/cowp/events.htm>

July 8, 2005 - McCelvey Center, York, SC and the Museum of York County, Rock Hill, SC - 8:00 AM—5:00 PM. "Huck's Defeat and the Revolution in the South Carolina Backcountry, May-July 1780," a symposium at the McCelvey Center, 212 East Jefferson Street, York, SC 29745. Presentations: "The British Strategy in the South in 1779 and 1780" by Dr. Rory Cornish, Associate Professor of History and History Department Chair, Winthrop University, Rock Hill, SC; "The Partisan Counteroffensive in the Carolina Backcountry in the Summer of 1780" by Dr. Walter Edgar, Claude Henry Neuffer Professor of Southern Studies and the George Washington Distinguished Professor of History, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC; "Loyalist Mobilization in the Carolina Backcountry in the Summer of 1780" by Dr. Carole Troxler, retired Professor of American History at Elon University, North Carolina; "Provincial Soldiers at the Battle of Huck's Defeat" by Todd Braisted, commander of the Brigade of the American Revolution and creator/editor of The Online Institute for Advanced Loyalist Studies; "Rev. John Simpson, Presbyterian Minister and Rebel Leader" by Melissa Massey, research assistant at Kennesaw State University and curatorial assistant at the Root House Museum of Marietta, Ga.;

“Whig and Tory Leaders at the Battle of Huck’s Defeat” and “The Battle of Huck’s Defeat” by Michael Scoggins, research historian, Culture & Heritage Museums, York, SC. Followed by a reception at the Museum of York County to highlight the opening of the *Liberty or Death* exhibition.

<http://www.chmuseums.org/HBhucksymp.htm> registration at <http://www.chmuseums.org/HB225hucks.htm>

July 9-10, 2005 – Brattonsville, SC - Battle of Huck’s Defeat at Williamson’s Plantation. Historic Brattonsville hosts a 225th anniversary celebration of this backcountry Patriot victory. Saturday, July 9, will feature reenactments of Huck’s Defeat at Williamson’s Plantation on the actual site of this Patriot victory and Gen. Thomas Sumter’s first action as commandant of the SC Militia at the Battle of Rocky Mount. Sunday, July 10 will feature reenactments of the Battle of Stallions (or Stallings) Plantation, which took place in York County in the late summer of 1780, and Gen. Sumter’s victory at the second Battle of Hanging Rock. For fans of Revolutionary War battle reenactments, this promises to be a great weekend. Saturday activities will also include a reunion, at Historic Brattonsville, of descendants of the men who fought on both sides of the Battle of Huck’s Defeat, including descendants of Whig militiamen, Tory militiamen, and Provincial soldiers of the British Legion and New York Volunteers. A list of known and probable soldiers who fought in this battle is posted at <http://www.chmuseums.org/HBancestors.htm> and the organizers are actively seeking to communicate with descendants of these soldiers. <http://www.chmuseums.org/HBhucksymp.htm>

July 16 & August 20, 2005 - Ninety Six, SC - Living History Saturdays Living History volunteers (in period dress) show and acquire early American daily living skills. Examples are woodworking, fireplace cooking, candle making, baking in the Beehive oven, and repairing shingle roofs.

July 16, 2005 - Spartanburg, SC - History will come to life on this air conditioned bus tour of five Revolutionary War battle sites in Spartanburg County: Cedar Springs, Gowen’s Old Fort, Earle’s Ford, Lawsons Fork, and Fort Prince. In July of 1780, these battles pushed the British Army from the foothills of South Carolina. Fee of \$35.00 includes lunch in historic Landrum. The tour, sponsored by Palmetto Conservation Foundation, will be lead by Military Heritage Preservationist, Dr. George Fields. Bus will leave at 10 am from the Spartanburg Convention and Visitors Bureau, located in the historic downtown train depot at 296 Magnolia Street, and return at 4 pm. The tour is limited to 54 persons. Call 846-948-9615 for reservations or register on website www.palmettoconservation.org

August 13, 2005 – Spartanburg, SC - Discover regional history in a new way on this air conditioned bus tour of Revolutionary War battle sites in the Spartan District: Wofford Iron Works Battlefield, Union County Museum, Fairforest Headquarters of Colonel Ferguson, Blackstock’s Battlefield, and Musgrove Mill State Historic Site. In the summer and fall of 1780, these battles turned the tide of British power toward defeat later at Yorktown. Fee of \$35.00 includes lunch in historic Union. The tour, sponsored by Palmetto Conservation Foundation, will be lead by Military Heritage Preservationist, Dr. George Fields. Bus will leave at 10 am from the Spartanburg Convention and Visitors Bureau, located in the historic downtown train depot at 296 Magnolia Street, and return at 4 pm. The tour is limited to 54 persons. Call 846-948-9615 for reservations or register on website www.palmettoconservation.org

August 20-21, 2005 – Historic Camden Revolutionary War Site, Camden, SC - 225th Anniversary of the Battle of Camden programs and reenactment of the patriot defeat, 10:00 am – 5:00 pm daily. Visit the military and camp followers camps; see battle reenactments on Saturday, August 20th at 11:00 am and 3:00 pm. Shop at sulders row, attend a Patriot’s funeral, courts-martial, round-table talk, period

fashion show & dancing and children’s activities. Admission charged. www.historic-camden.net and www.camden225th.org

August 20, 2005 – Musgrove’s Mill State Historic Site, Clinton, SC - 225th Anniversary celebration of the Patriot victory at the Battle of Musgrove’s Mill. Guided tour of the battlefield followed by a memorial service at the battlefield. Space is limited, contact Brian L. Robson, Interpretive Ranger, Musgrove Mill State Historic Site at 864-938-0100 brobson@scprt.com

September 3, 2005 – Kings Mountain National Military Park, SC - 8th Annual Kings Mountain Forum, Colonial Trade and Craft Fair, music and military camps. Musician Ken Bloom will also be performing. www.nps.gov/kimo/pphtml/events.html

September 15, 22, 29 and October 6, 2005 – Savannah History Museum - Battle of Savannah Lecture Series, TBA.

September 17, 2005 – Laurens County/Newberry County, SC - The Belfast House at 10:00 am (rain make-up 24th Sept.) Revolutionary War hero Gen. James Williams Bridge dedication and naming ceremony and with wreath laying, followed by installing the pistol that the State of North Carolina gave to Col. James Williams to the museum at Musgrove Mill State Historic Site and a tour of Laurens County Revolutionary War historic sites.

October 4-10, 2005 – Savannah, Georgia. Reinterment and Hero’s Funeral Mass for American Revolutionary War Patriot Gen. “Count” Casimir Pulaski and rededication of the Pulaski Monument in Monterrey Square. The last remains of Polish American Revolutionary War hero, Gen. Casimir Pulaski, the father of the Patriot cavalry, will lie in state in with honor guards in several Savannah area churches and Temple Mickve Israel before funeral mass and reinterment in the Pulaski Monument in Monterey Square on Sunday, October 9, 2005. A Roman Catholic funeral mass will be held at the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist on October 9, 2005. Monument rededication will be held on Monday, October 10, 2005. The Mickve Israel Temple museum on Monterrey Square honors Savannah Patriot Col. Mordecai Sheftall, who served as Deputy Commissary General of Issues for all Continental Troops in South Carolina and Georgia and Commissary General of Georgia troops. For museum tours, see www.mickveisrael.org.

October 7-8, 2005 – Kings Mountain National Military Park, SC - 225th Anniversary of the Battle of Kings Mountain and grand re-opening of museum. Hundreds of reenactors will bring the past to life. Museum renovation will be complete and brand new exhibits will tell the story of the battle. 11:00 am wreath laying ceremony. 3:00 pm guest speaker and arrival of Overmountain Victory Trail marchers. <http://www.nps.gov/kimo/pphtml/events.html>

October 8, 2005 - Ninety Six, SC - Annual Candlelight Tour - Guided tours proceed along the one-mile historic trail, which is illuminated by the soft glow of candlelight and torchlight. Along the way, costumed volunteers portray Colonial citizens and soldiers who tell stories of peace and war at old Ninety Six in the 1700’s. Tours begin at 7 pm & leave every 10 minutes until 8:20pm

October 15-16, 2005 - Summerton, SC - American Revolutionary Living History Encampment/Re-enactment and Wildlife Expo. 4th Celebration of “Victory at Fort Watson” at the Santee National Wildlife Refuge, I-95, Exit 102, US 15/301, Summerton, SC. To commemorate the 225th anniversary for the 1780 South Carolina campaigns. Please check website for updates: www.francismariontrail.com or call: 803-478-2217 or 803-478-2645.

October 22, 2005 – Brattonsville, SC - Historic Brattonsville will host a reenactment of the Battle of King's Mountain, fought on October 7, 1780. One of the most famous battles of the Southern campaign, this Patriot victory has been described as the Southern militia's finest hour. To be placed on a mailing list and receive registration materials for York County Cultural History Museum 225th Anniversary events, contact Jeannie Marion, CHM Director of Marketing and Public Information, at jemarion@chmuseums.org.

November 5-6, 2004 – Camden, SC – “Camden 1774”. 10 am to 5 p.m. daily featuring: Camden Grand Jury, Royal militias drill, military music, period fashion show and dancing, military roundtable discussion, 18th century church services, and kids' activities. Colonial craftsmen and demonstrations and sutlers row teaming with unique traditional 18th century gifts.

<http://www.historic-camden.net>

December 17, 2005 – Clinton, SC – Musgroves Mill State Historical Site – 10:00 am - Sam Fore (SCAR contributor) special collections librarian at the John D. Rockefeller Library of Williamsburg, Virginia will present a paper on South Carolina Patriot Lt. Col. James McCall of the Long Cane settlement, commander of the SC State Dragoons. McCall fought at Ninety Six in 1776, the Cherokee battles, Kettle Creek, Musgroves Mill, the siege of Augusta, Fish Dam Ford, Blackstock's Plantation, Long Cane, with Lt. Col. William Washington at the Battle of Hammond's Store, Cowpens, Wetzell's Mill, and at Beattie's Mill. He died of small pox contracted during the campaign. Small admission. For additional information call Brian Robson at 864-938-0100 or email brobson@scprt.com ★

Staying at Peace in Wartime

By William Thomas Sherman

At present, I continue to gather material for the second edition of my *Calendar and Record of the Revolutionary War in the South: 1780-81*. One very interesting work I am gleaning from this time around is *Records of the Moravians in North Carolina, Vol. IV: 1780-1783*, edited by Adelaide L. Fries, Edwards & Broughton Company, Raleigh: 1930. The Moravians, a Protestant sect or denomination which practices and preaches pacifism, possessed three prosperous towns in mid-western North Carolina, namely Salem, Bethabara, and Bethania, which often acted as both supply and wayfaring focal points for both American and British forces during the Revolutionary War. The records of the congregations' minutes then provides an unusual and instructive picture of these Christian (and predominantly German) settlements trying to stay above the partisanship of the conflict, while attempting to feed and care for soldiers of the opposing sides. The following are some selected extracts from those records. *To write with your comments send to William Thomas, Sherman, 1604 NW 70th St., Seattle, WA 98117, or e-mail gunjones@netscape.com*

from minutes of the Salem Congregation

"Aug. 22. [1780] Toward noon Colonel [John] Armstrong and his brother the Major arrived. They had been in the battle [i.e. the Battle of Camden, Aug. 16, 1780], and through them we heard that Brigadier [Griffith] Rutherford was taken prisoner. An attempt will be made to gather the scattered troops, and half the militia are to be called out. The people are in extreme fright because of the English..."¹

"Aug. 26. This morning Col. Armstrong and Mr. Sheppard and Mr. Commans [Cummings] arrived, on their way to Hillsborough. The

first-named told Br. [Brother] Bagge confidentially that men were speaking angrily against us as Tories, from whom an uprising might be expected from Virginia, who were known to deal sharply with such people. He promised to give the necessary orders for our protection, for he did not consider us Tories..."²

"Aug. 28. ...We hear that a company of light-horse, under Captain Caldwell, are on a Tory hunt in the neighborhood. They have beaten several men, and threatened Br. Steiner, claiming that he had spoken against *Liberty*. May the Lord mercifully turn this aside from us..."³

"Sept. 5. ...There is much distress in Bethabara, for 300 soldiers from Virginia are there, who have camped in the orchard, where they do as they please..."⁴

"Oct. 9. ...Andreas Volk's son came for the doctor for his brother-in-law Johann Krause, who was shot in the leg yesterday while standing guard at Richmond, which was again visited by a strong party of Tories under Gideon Wright. The bullet had remained in his limbs; Joseph Dixon was sent to bind up the wound. The Tories had expressed sympathy for the injured man, saying the ball had not been meant for him but for some one else, and so on. What consequences this may have remains to be seen..."⁵

"Oct. 19. ...A Proclamation of [Maj.] General [William] Smallwood had been published, in which he stated that any soldier caught robbing would be brought to the camp and hanged. This order will have a good effect, for barbarous and unjust treatment has driven many to the Tories who would gladly have remained peaceful..."⁶

from minutes of the Bethabara Congregation

"Feb. 6. [1781] During last night [Brig.] General [Andrew] Pickens arrived with his men and something over twenty wagons. Corn, hay, bread, and brandy were given to him at his request. He kept good order among his men. His manner was fatherly and mild, and he voted his belief that we would take no part in anything that was partisan or low. In the afternoon Colonel [Elijah] Clark arrived with more than fifty horse-men, and another company passed by the mill, all hurrying after General Pickens. So it went all day, partly with the passing of militia, partly with people fleeing from the war..."⁷

"Feb. 9. We expected the return of our guests of yesterday, but instead about eleven o'clock, a company of English dragoons arrived, bringing an order from Lord Cornwallis, for brandy, meat, meal and bread, and instructions that our mill should grind all it could, and that in the afternoon our wagon should take it to Bethania, where there were more than seven thousand men. In the afternoon the Commissary came for 100 gallons of brandy, more than 300 lbs. of bread, and all the meal that was ready...Then came a company of German Tories, with an order for cattle for the army, -- just now the question is not who are friends of the land but who are friends of the king. The last named company seized several travelers here, and took them to Bethania, to the main camp..."⁸

"Feb. 16. The company in the tavern was called out at three o'clock this morning. The guard hailed some one, who replied: *Good Friend*. To the question: *Whose friend?* Came the answer: *King George's*.

"Then it was quiet until nearly four o'clock when the advance guard of General Pickens company arrived with orders for meat, corn and meal...The General and his officers were polite and courteous, and assured us that no damage should be done; and as it would be necessary for our wagon to take the meat and meal to the camp late in the evening they promised that it should not be pressed. Our supply of bread was all taken, largely without pay. The company that was here last night returned, and it was in all respects a much disturbed time..."⁹

“March 10. The above-mentioned guests remained until noon. Last night they broke into the spring-house; and they took all the eggs, even from geese that were setting. We were glad that no more damage was done by these people, who have been robbing and plundering wherever they go. Several Brethren went from here to the election of new members of the Assembly. Colonel [William] Preston and Colonel [Walter] Crocket[t] arrived and spent the night. The fire from General Pickens’ camp, between Rank’s and the lower meadow, broke out, and before it could be extinguished a hundred rails were burned. The fence was probably set on fire, for it was discovered after they left.”¹⁰

¹ *Records of the Moravians in North Carolina, Vol. IV: 1780-1783*, p. 1560.

² *Ibid.* p. 1561.

³ *Ibid.* p. 1561.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 1563.

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 1571.

⁶ *Ibid.* p. 1572.

⁷ *Ibid.* p. 1741.

⁸ *Ibid.* p. 1742.

⁹ *Ibid.* p. 1743.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* p. 1747.

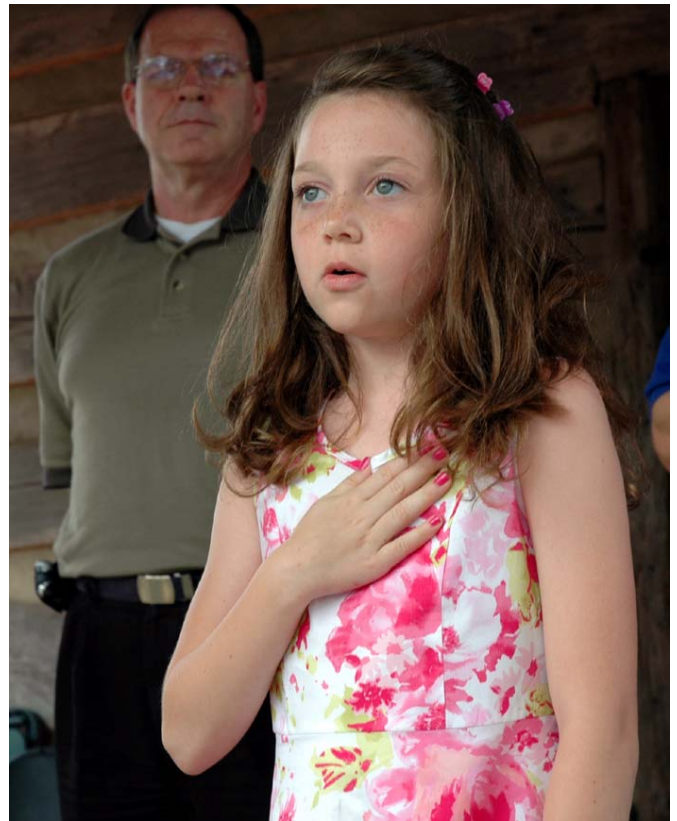


Ramsour’s Mill 225th Anniversary

Photo report by Bob Bowen



Howard Burnham of Columbia, SC portraying Lord Charles Earl Cornwallis, Lt. General and British Commandant of the Southern Department, sits on the porch of the 1770 Cline log cabin, relocated to the Ramsour’s Mill battlefield in Lincolnton, NC from near the North and South Carolina line. Note noose in background patiently awaiting. Lord Cornwallis, captured by the allied Patriots and French at Yorktown, Virginia, escaped the noose and was eventually exchanged for United States President Henry Laurens, late resident of the Tower of London.



Megan Dunbar, daughter of Todd & Julie Dunbar of Lincolnton, NC thrills the crowd as she sings “The Star Spangled Banner”.



David P. Reuwer, grammarian of Camden, SC incites the gathering with Gen. Nathanael Greene’s words.



Your editor holds forth on the campaigns of the Carolinas' backcountry, fought in 1780 and 1781 when the men of central and western North Carolina rose, crossed the mountains and piedmont and defeated British Maj. Patrick Ferguson and his Loyalist at Kings Mountain, Lt. Col. "Bloody Ban" Tarleton at Cowpens and blooded Lord Cornwallis at Charlotte, Cowan's Ford, and Guilford Courthouse.



Hilltop graveside and historical marker commemorative wreaths and honor guard in the background.



Joshua David Wyatt, piper at commemoration ceremony with honor guard in the background.



Members of the recreated British 84th Regiment camp on the Ramsour's Mill battlefield.



"Hawkeye", rumored to be champion with the war hatchet, is the denizen of Rural Hill Farm, NC.



Locke's Patriot Militia fires a twenty-one-gun salute. ★
