



# The Journal

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## About Us

### For the People

SCART is on a mission to preserve, protect and promote (in perpetuity) the stories, artifacts and history of South Carolina's role in the American Revolution. South Carolina changed the world. The Trust's collections highlight the pivotal times, places and people that helped us win our independence and catalyze over 250 years of change.

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# From the Editor

## *Cedar Springs: Work of Preservation for a Community's Heritage*

\* \* \*

South Carolina's Revolutionary War history extends beyond well-known battlefields, encompassing ancient roads, churchyards, spring branches, farm lanes, wooded ridges, and sites that bear witness to men and women who chose sides once neutrality was no longer feasible. The Cedar Springs Project stems from this understanding, urging us to carefully investigate a site that influenced the Spartan Regiment, the frontier conflicts, and the chain of events that shifted Patriot resistance from near defeat to renewed hope. Situated in Spartanburg, a town named after the Spartan Regiment, Cedar Springs served both as a Patriot training ground and a battlefield.

Family legend holds that in July 1780, as British control in South Carolina neared completion, Jane Black Thomas, wife of Colonel John Thomas Sr., founder of the Spartan Regiment, learned of a Loyalist plot to attack the Patriot militia at Cedar Springs. While caring for her husband, imprisoned at Ninety Six Star Fort, she overheard Tory women discussing their men's plans for a surprise attack on the rebel camp at Cedar Springs. Her son, Colonel John Thomas Jr., led the regiment in his father's absence. According to the legend, she rode sixty miles overnight to warn him, enabling the Spartans to evade the attack, take refuge in the woods, and turn the ambush into a Patriot surprise. Though brief, the event was highly significant, showing that the backcountry remained unclaimed despite Charleston's fall and that men continued to gather, resist, and fight for their homes.

The Cedar Springs Project aims to preserve and communicate its story in a way that is accessible and engaging for the public. Its vision is practical and essential: creating a historic site and small museum, an authentic interpretive setting, living history programs, school activities, trails, signage, and exhibits that bring the Spartan Regiment and its environment back to life. Equally vital is the belief that public history should be inclusive—accessible to hearing and deaf students, sighted and visually impaired visitors, lifelong learners, and children experiencing a reproduction object for the first time. Cedar Springs should educate through words,



*Richard C. Meehan, Jr.*

objects, sound, touch, place, and imagination.

This effort complements other key initiatives across South Carolina. The Liberty Trail links battlefield sites and historic locations to build a broader public narrative. The South Carolina Battleground Preservation Trust and the American Battlefield Trust have shown the value of combining land preservation, research, and modern storytelling. SC250 has inspired counties and communities to rediscover their Revolutionary War history, not just through famous figures but by highlighting stories of women, children, African Americans, Native Americans, Loyalists, militia families, and everyday people living through extraordinary times.

We see the same spirit at Fort Thicketty, where the July 1780 surrender shows how militia pressure could isolate Loyalist strongholds. It's evident at Walnut Grove Plantation, where family life, war, rumor, danger, and loyalty converged under one roof. The spirit is also visible at Camden, Cowpens, Kings Mountain, Ninety Six, Hanging Rock, Musgrove Mill, Blackstock's, Eutaw Springs, and numerous smaller sites—places where the Southern Campaign was fought by neighbors who knew each other's roads, creeks, churches, mills, and grievances. Each site holds its own significance, but collectively they reveal the true scale of the Revolution in South Carolina.

This is why projects like Cedar Springs are so important. Once a battlefield or camp landscape is forgotten, it's easy to lose it. Once a story is reduced to a marker or a paragraph, it's easy to assume there

is nothing more to learn. But preservation gives scholarship a place to stand. Interpretation gives the public a way in. Living history gives children a reason to ask questions. Archaeology, documentary research, family memory, maps, demonstrations, and careful storytelling can turn a neglected site into a classroom, a destination, and a source of civic pride.

The Journal's purpose is the same: we publish research because the Southern Campaigns merit careful examination. However, research shouldn't be confined; it should assist communities in understanding the significance of their local history. Cedar Springs isn't just a footnote to well-known battles; it's a foundational part of the roots that led to subsequent victories. Telling this story properly honors those who faced the hardest months of 1780 and refused to let the cause fade in South Carolina's backcountry.

Our task now extends beyond honoring the past; it is about creating something enduring for the future.

Cedar Springs has the potential to be a place where visitors discover the origins of Spartanburg's name, learn how Jane Black Thomas's bravery influenced a night attack, understand how the Spartan Regiment contributed to resistance, and see how the Revolution was won through the efforts of communities, not only by generals. Preserving this story is valuable, and supporting this project is worthwhile.

If you have no interest in this project but would still like to contribute to your local Revolutionary War history, seek out those working in your area toward the same end. There are many initiatives to preserve South Carolina's Revolutionary War history.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard C. Meehan, Jr.  
*The Journal*

<https://secure.qgiv.com/for/cedarspringsmuseumproject/>



FEATURED REVOLUTIONARY WAR HISTORY

# Our Story

The Revolutionary War of Colonel Robert and Mary Ouldfield Heriot

## Our Story



The Revolutionary War of  
Colonel Robert and Mary Ouldfield Heriot

Hugh T. Harrington

By Hugh T. Harrington

*Foreword by Jim Piccuch, Ph.D.*

### Not every Revolutionary War story is told from the battlefield.

Robert Heriot held the rank of colonel, yet likely never came under enemy fire. Mary Heriot left no famous political tract. Their correspondence, however, reveals how the Revolution reached into family life, private choices, and the struggle to endure war.

*"What, then, can be learned from the Heriots' lives and wartime experiences? The short answer is: much."*

- from the Foreword by Jim Piccuch, Ph.D.

### Inside this book

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Our Story

The Revolutionary War of Colonel Robert and Mary Ouldfield Heriot



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# Hear Ye, Hear Ye



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We primarily work with donors that have information, stories or artifacts related to South Carolina's role in the American Revolution. The Trust exists to honor your life's work and build a repository of stories, data, facts and artifacts from this period so that this information can be preserved for and accessed by future generations.

Are you interested in donating, but have some questions? Contact us below, and we will happily answer your questions or concerns about your potential donation.

**Wesley O. Herndon**

Executive Director

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***HISTORY BROUGHT TO LIFE!***



More than two decades ago Will Graves decided to remedy the great neglect of the Revolutionary War in the South by transcribing the pension applications of all who served from or in Georgia, the Carolinas or Virginia. I soon joined the effort, and with a few contributions from others there are now more than 30 thousand transcribed pension and bounty-land applications and several hundred rosters and other documents fully searchable at [revwarapps.org](http://revwarapps.org). Will has done the majority of the transcriptions and continues work on the South Carolina audited accounts. With the project nearing completion this seems like a good time for a look back.

LEON: Will, it is strange that with our different backgrounds we both got interested in transcribing Revolutionary War pension applications. When I was working on my PhD in biophysics at Penn State student deferments were canceled, and I was worried about being drafted into the Vietnam War. I wanted nothing to do with any war, past or present. Your experience was very different, I believe.

Will: Yes, I strongly opposed the war in Vietnam but felt it my duty to serve our country. Having lost the student deferment, I was drafted out of law school after completing two of the three

years required for a JD degree. Luckily, my entire two years of active duty as a draftee were spent at Fort Bragg. I was ordered to Vietnam twice but both times the Army changed its orders and kept me at Fort Bragg.

LEON: You did complete your degree at Duke and had a long career at a prestigious law firm in Charlotte. I didn't know much about the Revolutionary War and nothing at all about pension applications until about 2004, when I came across the application of an ancestor and saw that he had served in several important battles in the Carolinas that I had never even heard of. I was raised in Virginia and thought the Revolutionary War was all about Valley Forge and somehow ended up at Yorktown. Were you also surprised to learn that so much of the Revolutionary War was fought down here?

WILL: Not really. I visited Moores Creek National Battleground as a kid growing up in eastern North Carolina and became fascinated by our state's involvement in the Revolution. Like your experience, however, the history taught in our public schools focused almost exclusively on the ideals underpinning the war and the military actions in the North with Cornwallis mysteriously ending up at the decisive engagement at Yorktown. Having majored in history as an undergraduate, I harbored a thirst to learn more about the Revolution but was unable to quench it until I retired in 1999. Upon retirement I became totally focused on learning more about the Revolution as fought in the South and our family's involvement in it.

LEON: After transcribing the pension application of my ancestor I decided to go to one of the Southern Campaigns American Revolution Roundtables that the late Charles Baxley and David Reuwer organized, I think in 2004. I mentioned my transcription to Charles,



C. Leon Harris (left) and Will Graves (right)

and he suggested I send it to you. And that was the beginning for me. How did you come up with the idea of transcribing the pension applications?

WILL: Upon retirement, I turned my attention to solving the family mystery of the surname “Williams” with some vague connection to the Revolution. I quickly learned that the source of pride in that name arose from the celebrated role that my great grand uncle six times removed, Col. James Williams, played at the Battle of Kings Mountain. I decided to write a book about him and in the process became very frustrated that there was no way to readily identify contemporary records related to him, including

pension applications filed by men who served under him. As a result, I plowed through the pension applications, transcribing those in which reference was made to either Williams or the Battle at Kings Mountain.

LEON: So researching our ancestors was the gateway drug that got us both addicted.

WILL: That effort resulted in the accumulation of roughly 4 or 500 transcriptions. I self-published a book about Williams in 2002 hoping that its publication would result in family members sharing further information about Williams. That did not happen. It

resulted, however, in my meeting Charles and David at their Tarleton seminar. The earlier book about Williams morphed into *Backcountry Revolutionary* which was published in 2012 after Charles graciously edited it and published it, I'm proud to say, as the first imprint of Southern Campaigns of the American Revolution Press.

LEON: *Backcountry Revolutionary*, is not only a wonderful biography of Col. Williams but also the best account of the battles of Kings Mountain and of Musgrove's Mill that I have seen. It's a model for how history should be documented.

WILL: Also at that seminar they introduced me to John Robertson who had several websites dedicated to celebrating the Revolution as fought in the South. Charles and David encouraged me to work with John to set up the free, fully searchable online database, now [revwarapps.org](http://revwarapps.org), containing the transcriptions of the pension applications of the men who fought in the South and inviting others to join the effort.

LEON: You and I are among hundreds inspired by Charles and David. John Robertson is another one who did amazing research. And now it's all preserved for future researchers thanks to the South Carolina American Revolution Trust. I was surprised that more people didn't pitch in with transcriptions.

WILL: Initially, the thinking was that there would be a deluge of transcriptions by others. That did not happen. A few transcriptions have been submitted by others over time, but it was only through your joining in the project that it came to fruition.

LEON: You have to be retired to have time for it, and old enough to have been taught cursive in grade school. And I'm sure many people doubted that the 50-year-old recollections of

people applying for money would be credible or worthwhile. It took me several years before I felt comfortable that relatively few of the applications were fraudulent, and that many added important historical details not found anywhere else.

WILL: As with any historical source, I knew that these accounts of the aged veterans needed to be read with a critical eye. Having read so many accounts, I'm aware that not all the statements can be fully relied upon. That said, however, the pension and the other records in our database are the largest collection of eye-witness accounts of the events of the Revolution as fought in the South. Interestingly, those accounts are told largely by common soldiers in their own words and viewed from their own unique perspectives.

LEON: Yes. I really enjoy some of the old soldiers' colorful comments. One that comes to mind now is Thomas Badget (S6593), who said his colonel Francis Taylor "had gone to the Devil long ago, for his cruelty to his soldiers." I like to think that giving the old soldiers the last word is our way of thanking them.

WILL: I'm very glad the project is still ongoing. Each new document is an opportunity to learn what a veteran said about his contribution no matter how small or insignificant. With each addition to our database, we have helped rescue a veteran from being buried in the sands of time.



AI Artwork generated by ChatGPT is not supposed to represent exactly the way it really was, only a hint of the way it might have looked.



# The Keg That Saved Hanging Rock

by

Richard C. Meehan, Jr.

**W**e Southerners, and in truth, everyone else, tend to enjoy colorful tales of daring-do more than straight historical accounts when it comes to what happened in South Carolina during the Southern Campaign of the American Revolution. With colorful characters like the Spartan Rifle sharpshooters, the Swamp Fox, the Gamecock, the Old Waggoner, and a sixty-year-old woman of great renown, who fill our history with heroic exploits that turned the tide of the war, how can we not? Especially when the embellished truth hides a disgraceful circumstance. Such was the case with the Battle of Hanging Rock, South Carolina, on August 6, 1780. Although the story is humorous, the outcome was far from successful as a military action. Alas, for a keg of rum.

According to legend, Jane Thomas rode sixty miles in the dark through a backcountry wilderness full of dangers for both man and beast to prevent an ambush of the Spartan Regiment at Cedar Springs. Francis Marion led a raid against a British encampment from the dark recesses of the great Santee Swamp. A Virginia pugilist and wagonmaster, Daniel Morgan, came south to lead farmers to victory against overwhelming odds at Cowpens. And one imposing figure, Thomas Sumter, with more brass than a rooster spurring a bull to protect his brood, makes for incredibly good reading. But not every story involving these unique individuals is complete, nor is every tale describing their brave deeds a stretch of the imagination. Legends are born of climactic events.

Historians seemingly thrive on dry facts and figures, but how can one continually read about heartache, sacrifice, mistakes, failures, and efforts to survive without begging for a less painful remembrance of the actuality? How many men on each side, who led, what the result was, and how it affected the overall picture—these are the purview of scholarly writers. What they uncover through research and deep analysis keeps the rest grounded; otherwise, our accounts of events like the Battle of Hanging Rock would be unfounded fiction.

After Charleston's fall in May 1780, Crown and Tory forces garrisoned a post at Hanging Rock, an area of the backcountry, named for a distinctive rock formation near present-day Kershaw. The post mattered because it sat on the road between Camden and Charlotte, close enough to threaten the Waxhaws and Catawba settlements. It served as a stark reminder to Whig families that King George III and his Tory friends were intent on reasserting control over the S.C. Colony. They were armed "neighbors," camped nearby, watching the roads, guarding supplies, and waiting for anyone bold enough to challenge them. In the summer of 1780, Patriot militias struck at Hanging Rock to dislodge them.<sup>1</sup>

Thomas Sumter had not yet become the "Gamecock," but his fierce guerrilla tactics were already evident. Recruiting militia from both Carolinas, he sought an opportunity to deliver a decisive blow to the British. His strategy was to attack Rocky Mount Fort on July 31, while Major William Richardson Davie, leading a unit from Waxhaws, created a diversion by assaulting an outlying Tory garrison at Hanging Rock, 12 miles to the east, at the same time. The plan succeeded, and the intelligence Davie provided to Sumter upon his return on August 5 about the garrison at Hanging Rock proved invaluable. With Davie's forces counted at about 500 North Carolinians under Colonel Robert Irwin and Davie himself, and roughly 300 South Carolinians under Sumter, William Hill, Edward Lacey, and other officers, they agreed to fall on Hanging Rock a week later.<sup>2</sup>

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1 William Richardson Davie, *The Revolutionary War Sketches of William R. Davie*, ed. Blackwell P. Robinson (Raleigh: North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, Division of Archives and History, 1976), 13-15. Internet Archive, <https://archive.org/details/revolutionarywar00davi>, Sameul K. Fore, "Hanging Rock, Battle of," *South Carolina Encyclopedia*, University of South Carolina, Institute for Southern Studies, last updated August 8, 2022, <https://www.scencyclopedia.org/sce/entries/hanging-rock-battle-of/>.

2 Ibid, p.13.

Sumter's forces, including Major Davie's men, were misled by their guides and ended up too far to the left of the main enemy bivouac, where the infantry of Tarleton's Legion were known to be encamped. This error threatened the element of surprise. However, by luck or Providence, the Patriots encountered an unprepared outlying Tory unit. The Tories were quickly routed by the surprise attack and retreated toward the center of the main encampment. When the British Legion infantry and Hamilton's regiment tried to restore order, Sumter's militia pressed forward so forcefully that they broke through and claimed victory.

Hanging Rock was not a complete American triumph, however. Although the British post was bloodied, shaken, and partially overrun, it was not destroyed. Sumter's men inflicted real damage. They lifted Patriot spirits when South Carolina desperately needed a sign that the British could be defeated. Yet the chance for a decisive blow slipped away—not because the enemy suddenly became brave, but because the Patriots could not hold their advantage long enough to finish what they had begun. This is not meant to scold the men who fought there. After all, they had marched all night, battled in the oppressive August heat, endured artillery and musket fire, and watched neighbors die or flee. Most were not Continental regulars. They were farmers, tradesmen, sons, fathers, and boys caught in a war that ran through their own roads and settlements. They fought strangers at times, but more often they fought men who sat in the same church meetinghouse pews with them. The American withdrawal, as described by Major Davie: "...as they loaded with plunder, encumbered with their wounded friends, and many of them intoxicated, it is easy to conceive that this retreat could not be performed according to the rules of the most approved tactics."<sup>3</sup>

The Patriots had overrun the garrison at Hanging Rock, seizing the commissary supplies. To the desperate backcountry Whigs, it was a treasure trove of goods and ammunition—and liquor—likely in kegs of rum, the standard stock. Before Sumter and leaders like Davie could stop them, the citizen soldiers had looted the supplies and discovered the liquor. Hundreds got tipsy, losing military discipline. Although Sumter claimed victory because the enemy withdrew from the field of battle, the Patriots did not secure an outright triumph.<sup>4</sup>

Hanging Rock was no trivial matter, even as men grew drunk amid a bloody fight. Courage pushed the Loyalists back and forced the British Legion and provincial troops to retreat. Yet courage alone couldn't supply gunpowder, maintain formation, protect prisoners, or turn captured supplies into a clear victory. The Southern Campaign is full of brutal drama, but it also shows that armies often fail in simple, everyday ways. Men tire. Men thirst. Men seize whatever they can carry. Men celebrate too early. That is why the rum story should not be dismissed as a comic footnote. It should be treated as a human detail in a rough, complicated war. The Revolution in South Carolina was not made only of foxes and gamecocks, gallant charges, and wicked Tories. It was roads, fields, blockhouses, hunger, heat, grudges, kinship, fear, and temptation. At Hanging Rock, the Patriots proved they could take the fight to the enemy. They also proved that victory could begin to unravel before the smoke cleared.

The legend of Hanging Rock sometimes refers to the Patriots as "young soldiers," and there is truth to that. Young men and boys served in the Southern Campaign, and Andrew Jackson, only thirteen, was connected with the militia at Hanging Rock. C. Leon Harris states, "According to Jackson's biographer, who knew him well, Jackson actually fought in the battle."<sup>5</sup> But there is no evidence that Jackson joined the drinking. That detail may be tempting for a storyteller, but true history is strong enough without putting a cup of rum in a boy's hand. The better story is what really happened in the summer of 1780, when British control in South Carolina seemed nearly unstoppable.

Militia from the Carolinas marched through the dark and struck at Hanging Rock. They broke up the Tory camp, shook the British garrison, seized horses, muskets, supplies, and prisoners, and showed every Whig family watching the roads that King George's outposts were not invincible. But victory is a doorway, not a resting place. Sumter's men opened the door, but too many stopped in the commissary. The keg did not win the battle for the British, but, for better or worse, it may have helped save what was left of the Hanging Rock garrison.

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3 William Richardson Davie, *The Revolutionary War Sketches of William R. Davie*.

4 "Battle of Hanging Rock," *Revolutionary War Journal*, retrieved June 11, 2026, <https://revolutionarywarjournal.com/battle-of-hanging-rock/>

5 Kendall, Amos: *Life of Andrew Jackson, Private, Military, and Civil*. New York: Harper, 1843. pp 24-25. Source provided by C. Leon Harris.

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PAUL IS ON VACATION. HE WILL RETURN NEXT MONTH. REPRINT.

by  
Paul Wood



*Ann Pamela Cunningham, by James Reid Lambdin, c. 1860. MVLA*

**M**y usual enjoyable duty is to write about a Revolutionary War Loyalist, but this month I'm focusing on Ann Pamela Cunningham (1816-1875), who was born 33 years after the war ended.<sup>1</sup> When a horse threw her at seventeen, the talented young woman was left with lasting impairment. The family's great wealth meant she could get medical care in Philadelphia for her ongoing pain, though it wasn't enough.

Spurred on by her father, Robert, and family friend Benjamin Franklin Perry, Ann Pamela sought to rehabilitate the image of the Cunningham family members who had remained loyal to the Crown during the War for Independence. She had access to the family's records and, in 1845, wrote what I consider reliable accounts of the lives of her great-uncle, Loyalist Brigadier General Robert Cunningham, and her grandfather, Loyalist Colonel Patrick Cunningham. Though her narratives of her distant relative William Cunningham proved valuable to researchers, much of what she wrote about "Bloody Bill" was slanted to justify the murders of the Bloody Scout (November-December 1781) and even to exonerate him.

Ann Pamela's bias toward all Tories and her stiff defense of Bloody Bill ignited the fury of South Carolina's literary giant and historian William Gilmore Simms. The following year, he published four articles that undermined Ann Pamela's points. In present-day terms, Simms slam-dunked his opponent.

Prodded by her mother, Ann Pamela embarked on a much more successful project in 1853. She posted a notice in the Charleston Mercury calling on Americans to raise funds to purchase and preserve the by-then-debilitated estate of George and Martha Washington, Mount Vernon. She proved an excellent communicator and organizer and, with other women, founded the Mount Vernon Ladies Association, the nation's first preservation society. Ann Pamela served as Regent, and each state chose a Vice-Regent. Donations poured in from around the country. The MVLA overcame enormous political obstacles, some stemming from pre-Civil War tensions. The property owner, John Augustine Washington III, had his demands met with remarkable speed by Ann Pamela and the association's

<sup>1</sup> Ann preferred to spell her surname with only one "n."

Vice-Regents. The MVLA paid the deceased President's great-grandnephew \$200,000 and took over the estate just months before the Civil War began.

Following the war, the Association secured additional funding and began preserving Mount Vernon. Each year, thousands of Americans tour the house, outbuildings, grounds, and the tomb of our first President. Despite her debilitating injuries and her controversial attempt to write history, Ann Pamela Cuninghame made history. She lived long after the war ended; however, she was a true heroine of the American Revolution.



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An illustration of Revolutionary War soldiers in a battle scene. In the foreground, a soldier in a blue coat and bicorne hat is firing a rifle. Behind him, another soldier in a brown coat is also firing. The background shows a hazy battle scene with smoke and other soldiers.

**SC 250**  
ANNIVERSARY  
*American Revolution*

# GET INVOLVED

South Carolina's Revolutionary War story isn't a single tale or event. It's thousands. Discover where ordinary people proved extraordinary, and experience Revolutionary South Carolina for yourself. There are so many ways to be a part of the 250th anniversary of The American Revolution in South Carolina.



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# BATTLE OF SULLIVAN'S ISLAND FILM

Produced by Wide Awake Films, journey back in time to learn how the Patriot Forces defeated the British Navy for the first time on June 28, 1776 — what would later become known from 1777 on as “Carolina Day”. Funded by the South Carolina American Revolution Sestercentennial Commission.



Click image to view or watch on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V065pp-iZ0w>



AI Artwork generated by ChatGPT is not supposed to represent exactly the way it really was, only a hint of the way it might have looked.



# HUNTING TORIES: RESEARCHING THE “GOOD AMERICANS” OF THE REVOLUTION

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Robert Scott Davis

## Researching Loyalists

Many Americans opposed the Revolution. Given the monikers Claybiters, Russellites, Scopholites, and Tories, the Loyal Americans supported King and country, but not independence. In Georgia, Quaker leader Joseph Maddock and Swiss-born German Reform Minister John Joachim Zubly supported the colonists’ grievances, but not the American Revolution. The latter even served in the Continental Congress.<sup>1</sup> Many of the Loyalists chose to remain in the United States after the war, including Maddock, or eventually returned to help build the new nation, such as William Lee of Georgia.

The rare surviving writings are valuable for providing insight into the beginnings of a republic founded on personal conscience and individual rights. Yet, these records have often been ignored, and the information they contain shunned by American descendants. Until their memoirs were recently reprinted, for example, Loyalists William Lee and Elizabeth Lichtenstein Johnston had no biographical information at the Georgia Archives, Morrow.<sup>2</sup>

These “Good Americans,” as scholar Wallace Brown called them, included African-Americans, Indigenous Native Americans, and women.<sup>3</sup> During the war, they sacrificed and, in some cases, died for the right not to rebel from what they knew, and what had been the government and King of all America before 1776. They have a story to tell about America in their era, but finding their words is difficult, especially given the limited surviving records from the South.<sup>4</sup>

- 
- 1 Robert S. Davis, “Children of Dissent and Revolution: Joseph Maddock and the Wrightsborough, Georgia, Quaker Community,” *Quaker History* 99 (Spring 2010): 1-14; Joseph Locke, “Compelled to Dissent: The Politicization of Rev. John Joachim Zubly, 1760-1776,” *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 94 (2) (2010): 453-478; Anthony Stokes Book and Notes, Mss 1406, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah.
  - 2 See, for example, the publications of Georgia Attorney General Anthony Stokes. Anthony Stokes Book and Notes, Mss 1406, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah. Having ancestors who fought for the King became a scandal that sometimes led to duels. See for example Kate Haynes Fort, *Memoirs of the Fort and Fannin Families* (Chattanooga: MacGowan & Cooke, 1903), 17; and Jonathan Dean Sarris, “Hellish Deeds. . . in a Christian Land’: Southern Mountain Communities at War, 1861-1865,” (Ph. D. diss., University of Georgia, 1998), 34. As late as 1950, Edith Duncan Johnston wrote a history of her prominent Houstoun and Johnston ancestors, *The Houstouns of Georgia* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1950), without mentioning their loyalty.
  - 3 Wallace Brown, *The Good Americans: The Loyalists in the American Revolution* (New York: Morrow, 1969).
  - 4 For the Loyalist experience, see, among other works, Rebecca Brannon and Joseph S. Moore, eds. *The Consequences of Loyalism: Essays in Honor of Robert M. Calhoon* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2019); Robert M. Calhoon, *The Loyalist in Revolutionary America, 1760-1781* (New York: Harcourt Bruce Jovanovich, 1965); Timothy Compeau, *Dishonored Americans: The Political Death of Loyalists in the Revolution* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2023); Jim Piecuch, *Three Peoples, One King: Loyalists, Indians, and Slaves in the Revolutionary South, 1775-1782* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2013); Lorenzo Sabine, *Biographical Sketches of the American Loyalists* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Company, 1864); and Claude Halstead Van Tyne, *The Loyalists in the American Revolution* (New York: MacMillen, 1902). For Loyalists who served in the Southern campaigns, see Murtie June Cartel, *Loyalists in the Southern Campaign of the American Revolution*, 3 vols. (Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1981).

The most extensive source for Loyalist research is the claims for property loss and service, among other related records, in the National Archives of the United Kingdom in Kew, London, available in various microfilm and transcript forms in multiple archives and libraries and on Ancestry.com. No complete copy of all the original manuscripts is available. The archives of Georgia and North Carolina have microfilm copies of these materials from their respective colonial records projects. When a Loyalist filed a claim, the intent was to secure compensation; the information they provided was brief, incomplete, and sometimes suspect.<sup>5</sup>

The Loyalist sources that have survived are frequently fragmentary and incomplete, and some have even been suppressed, as their descendants in America sought to hide that legacy. Today, significant collections are found in archives and libraries across the country, especially the extensive Revolutionary War holdings of the William L. Clements Library in Ann Arbor, Michigan.<sup>6</sup> Documents, as with the Loyalists, were scattered across America, the Caribbean, Great Britain, and even in Africa and the South Pacific.<sup>7</sup>

A few Loyalists left memoirs, and British observers kept journals. Among the most famous of these Southern memoirists were Alexander Chesney, David Fanning, Elizabeth Liechtenstein Johnston, and William Lee.<sup>8</sup> Individual state archives have information on their citizens who opposed the rebellion, especially regarding banishment, confiscated and returned property, and repatriation. Some of the records have been misidentified, such as the “Georgia Declaration of Independence,” which is, in reality, a signed oath by Loyalists who asked to be allowed to remain as citizens of Georgia after the war.<sup>9</sup>

This story is important. British leaders at all levels believed that Loyalists would rise in a counter-revolution and volunteer to serve as American provincial or militia soldiers to win the war for them. Throughout the war, the King’s Cabinet sought a compromise in which Britain would retain at least a loyal Georgia and South Carolina, challenging American and Spanish domination of the future of North America and supplying beef and rice to the rich sugar plantations in the Caribbean. Minister for the Colonies, Lord George German, believed that all of the colonies from Georgia to Maryland, at least, could be recovered.<sup>10</sup>

These Americans, although supporting the British cause, also carried revolutionary ideals of independence that had long existed in America and Britain, which would help change the world. The Southern campaigns provide outstanding examples of the importance and limits of this research. What survives also shows the value of what was lost or remains to be found.

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5 See Wallace Brown, *The King’s Friends: The Composition, and Motives of the American Loyalist Claimants* (Providence, RI: Brown University Press, 1965). For searching the Loyalist claims, begin with Peter Wilson Coldham, *American Migrations, 1765-1799* (Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Company, 2000); Hugh Edward Egerton, ed., *The Royal Commission on The Losses and Services of American Loyalists 1783 to 1785 Being the Notes of Mr. Daniel Parker Coke, M. P.* (Oxford, UK: Roxburghe Club, 1915); Alexander Fraser, comp., *Second Report of the Bureau of Archives for the Province of Ontario*, 2 vols. (Toronto, CAN: L. K. Cameron, 1905); and Gregory Palmer, *Biographical Sketches of Loyalists of the American Revolution* (Westport, CT: Meckler Press, 1984).

6 See the free website Archivesgrid.org: <https://www.oclc.org/research/areas/research-collections/archivegrid.html>.

7 See Maya Jasanoff, *Liberty’s Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary World* (New York: Vintage, 2011). For an example of these valuable records found in distant lands, see the letters of the famed Loyalist Thomas Brown (1750-1825), the person for whom more has been written than any other Georgian in the American Revolution in the bibliography in Edward J. Cashin, *The King’s Ranger: Thomas Brown and the American Revolution on the Southern Frontier* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1989).

8 Alexander Chesney, *Journal of Alexander Chesney, A South Carolina Loyalist in the Revolutionary War and After*, ed. Alfred E. Jones (Cleveland: Ohio State University Press, 1921); David Fanning, *The Narrative of Col. David Fanning*, ed. Lindley S. Butler (Davidson, NC: Briarpatch Press, 1981); Elizabeth Lichtenstein Johnston, *Recollections of a Georgia Loyalist*, ed. Arthur Westwood Eaton (New York: M. F. Mansfield & Co., 1901); and William Lee, *The True and Interesting Travels of William Lee* (York, UK: T. and R. Hughes, 1808).

9 Georgia Declaration of Independence, Keith M. Read Collection, ms921, Box 4, file 59, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia Libraries, Athens, Georgia.

10 Robert S. Davis, “The British Southern Strategy in the American Revolution, 1775-1782,” *British Journal for Military History*, 11 (August 2025): 2-24, <https://bjmh.gold.ac.uk/index.php/bjmh/article/view/1889/1994>

## Examples From the Loyalist Archives

African Americans David George, George Liele, and Henry Washington (the first enslaved person to escape from George Washington's plantations) spread the goals of independence and liberty, as well as racial civil rights, far beyond America. They left memoirs, supported by additional sources. Liele never spoke out against the institution of slavery, and his sermons were heavily censored. His followers, however, a few years after his death in 1826, began the Baptist War in Jamaica, which ended slavery in the British Empire in 1832. George and Washington led resistance movements in Nova Scotia and Sierra Leone.<sup>11</sup>

Daniel Dougherty (*also given as Doty, Doughty, Dutte, etc.*), however, is anything but famous. He left no memoirs and is absent from the Loyalist claims and other frequently used sources. A surveyor and one of many backcountry residents living in South Carolina and North Carolina, he had supported the Regulators, frontier North Carolinians who opposed corruption by local government officials in 1768. This resistance movement was defeated by Governor William Tryon and the colonial militia at the Battle of Alamance on May 16, 1771.<sup>12</sup>

The career of this Loyalist is documented in scraps of records at the Clements Library and in the extensively indexed copies of North Carolina colonial records from Great Britain held at the North Carolina Archives in Raleigh. Dougherty claimed that he took oaths from 5,000 men in support of the King's cause on behalf of Joseph Martin and Lord William Campbell, the royal governors of North and South Carolina, respectively, in 1775.

This mysterious Loyalist also claimed that he remained active on the frontier and that the men he signed were ready to march to the King's army if encouraged.<sup>13</sup> Dougherty surely was one of the men described as coming among the South Carolina frontier families from North Carolina, "seducing and terrifying" them into opposing the Revolution. He came to Georgia and joined the King's Army in 1779.<sup>14</sup>

Loyalist captains Christopher Neely and Zachariah Gibbs stated that they served under Dougherty. They were officers in a Loyalist Carolina regiment that had been forming for years in the North and South Carolina frontier for years and came to Georgia to join the British forces, only to be defeated at the Battle of Kettle Creek, Georgia, on February 14, 1779.<sup>15</sup> Extensive research has been done on that battle and campaign, but no reference to Dougherty has been found.

A mysterious Colonel John Boyd led the Loyalists at Kettle Creek, said to be an Irishman who had settled on the Southern frontier and returned there with the British invasion from New York in December 1778. In the few records of him, his name is given as James or John, depending on the source read, and he was mortally wounded

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11 Tom Zoellner, *Island on Fire: The Revolt that Ended Slavery in the British Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017), 50. For more on the international African American revolution for freedom see, among other works, Douglas R. Egerton, *Death or Liberty: African Americans and Revolutionary America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009); Simon Schama, *Rough Crossings: Britain, the Slaves and the American Revolution* (New York: HarperCollins, 2006); and David T. Shannon, Sr., et al, *George Liele's Life and Legacy* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2013).

12 Walter Clark and William L. Saunders, eds., *The Colonial and State Records of North Carolina*, 26 vols. (Raleigh, NC: State Printers, 1886-1907), 7: 735; Isaac Ramsey, plat, February 9, 1768, Series S213184, Volume 10, p. 215, South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia, SC. For the North Carolina Regulators, see Carole Waterson Troxler, *Farming Dissenters: The Regulator Movement in Piedmont North Carolina* (Raleigh, NC: North Carolina Department of Cultural Affairs, 2011).

13 "Return of Loyal refugees who have come into Georgia for Protection and Assistance," Savannah, April 15, 1780, boxes 83, "Account of Expenses," Box 86:5A, and "List of Loyalists" [Charleston?], May 28, 1780, by G. Townsend, volume 101, folder 30, Henry Clinton Papers, 1736-1850, William L. Clements Library, Ann Arbor, Michigan; Memorial of Daniel Doty to Lord Balfour, n. d., Foreign Archives, British Records, Treasury Board Papers, T50/5, page 1313B, copy in North Carolina Archives, Raleigh.

14 Proclamation of Governor John Rutledge, *Gazette of The State of South Carolina* (Charleston), April 14, 1779, p. 2 c. 2.

15 Carolyn Faz, *Kettle Creek: How a Few Hours Changed Ordinary Eighteenth Century Men into Icons and Villains* (Crawford, GA: The Author, 2018), 611-612, 622-623.

in the battle. Dougherty is on a list of South Carolinians, along with John Boyd and other Kettle Creek names, of Loyalists who had joined the British. Most of the other officers at Kettle Creek are known.<sup>16</sup>

If Dougherty served in that campaign, why does his name appear nowhere in what survives in the records of that campaign (or in any other event he alluded to)? Much of the leadership among the Southern Loyalists in the backcountry remains a mystery, including shadowy figures like Boyd and Dougherty, because of a lack of documentary sources.

The Clements Library manuscripts also show that Dougherty left for British (soon after Spanish) East Florida in 1783. He filed no claim for his losses, and no records of him are found in the archives of the St. Augustine Historical Society or the Special Collections of the Thomas G. Carpenter Library of the University of North Florida. He may be the man who was reportedly born in Basking Ridge, Somerset County, New Jersey, in 1729 and died in Rowan County, North Carolina, on January 1, 1788.<sup>17</sup> A final mystery is why he was not banished or had his property confiscated.

The rarest of these documents are those by women, but they offer much that can only be seen through their perspective. Elizabeth Lichtenstein Johnston (1764-1848) left little of record beyond an engaging memoir of life in Revolutionary War Georgia that she wrote in 1836 at age seventy-two. Her mother, Catherine Delegal Lightenstone, of French and Scots-Irish descent, died in 1774, and, at age twelve, she successfully petitioned patriot officials not to confiscate her grandfather's property because of her father, John Lightenstone. A Russian in the Georgia colonial bureaucracy, he had fled Georgia with a bounty on his head for being a Loyalist in 1776.

During the American and French siege of Savannah in 1779, Elizabeth and her family hid in cellars with the other refugees. Neither side allowed them to leave the town. To escape the bombardment, they were moved to Hutchinson Island, where Cherokee warriors and armed enslaved men protected them. At age fifteen, Elizabeth Lichtenstein married Captain William Martin Johnston, a captain of the Loyalist New York Volunteers before he joined Thomas Brown's King's Rangers in Georgia, as did her father, also as a captain.

The Johnstons suffered more than property losses in the war. Elizabeth's brother-in-law, Captain Andrew Johnston of the King's Rangers, died in fighting in Augusta, Georgia, in 1780, and another, John, was captured and executed on May 3, 1781, by Patriot partisans. After the British evacuation of Georgia, this extended family would leave the reclaimed state on a long odyssey across and around the North Atlantic as exiles until finding a home in Nova Scotia. Over time, their descendants became one of Canada's most prominent families.<sup>18</sup>

Widow Catherine Eirick, by contrast, left no memoir but only fragmentary records. She had to plead with the restored colonial government of Georgia for assistance in 1780. In 1778, British soldiers evicted her from her home in Savannah to use her house as a hospital. They tore down her farm buildings for firewood. With her children grown and gone, she had no support.<sup>19</sup> Eirick remained in Georgia after the war and recovered enough financially to leave an inheritance to her grandchildren in 1793, the beginnings of her family's rise to prominence.<sup>20</sup>

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16 Robert S. Davis, "Loyalism and Patriotism at Askance: Community, Conspiracy, and Conflict on the Southern Frontier," in Robert M. Calhoon, ed., *Tory Insurgents: The Loyalist Perception and Other Essays, Revised and Expanded Edition* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1989), 280-281 n 100.

17 Family Trees, Ancestry.com, <https://www.ancestry.com>.

18 Elizabeth Lichtenstein Johnston, *Recollections of a Georgia Loyalist*, ed. Arthur Wentworth Eaton (New York: M. F. Mansfield, 1901), 5-17, 23-24, 31-32, 37, 40-47.

19 Petition of Mrs. Catherine Eirick, June 12, 1780, and "Return of Loyal refugees who have come into Georgia for Protection and Assistance," Savannah, April 15, 1780, and "Return of Loyalist Refugees," Box 83, Henry Clinton Papers, 1736-1850.

20 Mabel Freeman La Far and Caroline Price Wilson, comps., *Abstracts of Wills, Chatham County, Georgia, 1773-1817* (Washington, DC, National Genealogical Society, 1933), 35; William Harden, *A History of Savannah and South Georgia*, 2 vols. (Chicago, IL: Lewis Publishing Company, 1913), 2: 1074-75. Much valuable information from little-known sources can be found in the back issues of genealogical periodicals, especially the *Georgia Genealogical Society Quarterly*, *Georgia Genealogical Magazine*, and *South Carolina Magazine of Ancestral Research*.

## The Case of Dr. Thomas Taylor

The letters of Dr. Thomas Taylor further illustrate the human stories of high adventure found within the surviving documents. What was initially discovered in his letters has led to a challenging search for additional papers. He filed claims with the King's government for losses as a Georgia Loyalist and for being removed from East Florida to Jamaica when the British evacuated the former in 1784. His claim papers, however, have little of consequence and pale in comparison to the importance of what is in his private letters.<sup>21</sup>

In the 1970s, Dr. Edward C. Cashin discovered two detailed personal letters from Taylor at the Clements Library, one dated January 13, 1776, to Reverend Doctor Thomas Percy (1729-1811), Bishop of Dromore. The other missive was to the famous religious leader Reverend John Wesley (1703-1791).

The 1776 letter points to more missives that Taylor wrote. He also sent his regards to the prominent Dr. George Berkeley Jr. (1733-1795). That letter included a newspaper clipping quoting a copy of the letter sent to John Morrison of Birkley White House, in Durham, implying that other letters were published in newspapers. A search has been conducted into the history of sales of the original two letters.<sup>22</sup>

A search for other documents uncovered details of Taylor's identity and life that enhance his letters. Baptized on November 26, 1752, he was likely born in Alnwick, north of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, the son of entrepreneur flax dresser and smallware dealer Thomas Taylor and his wife Isabel Bowmaker.

With the help of the Reverend John Wesley, a friend of his mother's brother, Thomas Jr. attended Kingswood School by 1768, where he aided the headmaster. He had brief medical training at the University of Edinburgh as a surgeon and was listed as such on his passenger list. He claimed the more prestigious title of physician, however.<sup>23</sup>

A letter from Thomas Sr., the doctor's father, from Alnwick, to Lord Dartmouth, the Secretary for the Colonies, was written in 1772. He described himself as an associate of John Wesley and George Whitefield of the Great Awakening; served at sea as an unpaid volunteer in putting down the Highland Rebellion of 1745; sailed to the East Indies and China with Henry Fletcher, a director of the East India Company; and did a one-year tour of Maryland, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania.

Taylor urged the Secretary to consider wine and other exotic commodities for places like the New York backcountry and for encouraging American manufactures. He had fathered eleven boys, seven of whom still lived, as did his aged parents.<sup>24</sup>

Thomas Sr. drowned at sea in 1774. The following year, his son, the letter writer Dr. Thomas Taylor, joined a scheme led by sea Captain William Manson to establish a settlement on the Georgia frontier for immigrants from

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21 Loyalist claim of Dr. Thomas Taylor, Audit Office Papers 13/87/246-50 and East Florida Claims Commission, Treasury Papers, T77/17/5, National Archives of the United Kingdom, Kew.

22 Dr. Thomas Taylor to Thomas Percy, January 13, 1776, Miscellaneous Collection, and to John Wesley, February 28, 1782, Shelburne Papers, William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan. The Walter R. Benjamin Company offered the 1776 letter for sale in 1933 and 1935. Helen Cripe and Diane Campbell, *American Manuscripts, 1763-1815: An Index to Documents Described in Auction Records and Dealer's Catalogs* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1977), 49, 70. No record survives on how it came to the Benjamin Company or the Clements Library. William L. Clements bought the 1782 letter as part of the William Petty, 1st Marquis of Lansdowne, 2nd Earl of Shelburne Papers, 1665-1885, in England in 1928.

23 John Wesley to Joseph Benson, January 31, 1779, in John Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, ed. Randy Moore, 32 vols. to date (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1975-2025), 28: 129-130; *Three Old Boys, The History of Kingswood School* (London, UK: Charles H. Kelly, 1898), 110; Robert S. Davis, "A Georgia Loyalist's Perspective on the American Revolution: The Letters of Dr. Thomas Taylor, 1776-1782," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 81 (Spring 1997): 118-138.

24 Wesley to Christopher Hooper, January 5, 1769, in Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 28: 196; Thomas Taylor [Senior] to William Legge Dartmouth, August 21, 1772, Dartmouth Manuscripts, microfilm, David Center for the American Revolution, American Philosophical Society, Pennsylvania; Dr. Taylor to Wesley, October 21, 1774, *Arminian Magazine* 10 (April 1787): 215-216.

North England, an idea like what his father had advocated.<sup>25</sup>

Aside from the letters already cited, other letters would have gone unknown but for clues in the letters found in the Clements Library. They were discovered in the *Newcastle Courant*, the local newspaper for Alnwick, source of the newspaper clipping in his 1776 letter, the writings of John Wesley, the papers of William Manson, and a private collection in Jamaica.

More letters may yet be located, but none were discovered through the British bibliographies of manuscript collections, even though Taylor at least tried to correspond with important English religious leaders. So far, the number of letters found has grown from the original three at the Clements Library to fifteen, though five of them have nothing to do with the American Revolution.

For the scholar of that topic, the remaining ten letters are a remarkable example of first-hand, non-governmental sources. In his 1775-1777 letters, Taylor described the successful seizure of rice boats in Savannah by the Royal Navy in early March 1776, his move to the frontier during a rare snowstorm, the frontier settlement of Wrightsborough, the failure of Manson's Friendsborough settlement, and the politics of Revolutionary War Georgia in general.<sup>26</sup>

Taylor reached British-occupied New York by 1777, in hopes of obtaining passage back to England. In Georgia again in 1779, Taylor wrote to Morrison of the British capture of Savannah in December 1778 and the successful defense of the town by the King's army against American and French troops in the autumn of 1779, including the bloody battle of October 9.

Two years later, in Augusta; he barely escaped Fort Grierson to reach Fort Cornwallis before it surrendered to the besieging Americans on June 5, 1781. He then wrote of murder having reached such a scale that the killing of unarmed prisoners of war was cynically called granting a "Georgia parole."<sup>27</sup>

Taylor remained a Loyalist, hoping for British victory to the end. In the besieged Loyalist capital of Savannah, Taylor married Bellamy Johnston, daughter of prominent Doctor Andrew Johnston and niece of James Johnston, publisher of *The Royal Georgia Gazette*. Taylor thus became related by marriage to later Loyalist memoirist Elizabeth Lichtenstein Johnston and to Patriot Governor John Houstoun.<sup>28</sup>

Thomas Taylor took an oath to the State of Georgia and was removed from the Banishment Act, although no evidence has been found that he ever returned to the state.<sup>29</sup> The Taylors evacuated Georgia for East Florida in 1782 and from there to Jamaica.<sup>30</sup> Thomas died a land speculator and planter at Rio Bueno, Jamaica, in 1802.<sup>31</sup>

The hunt for the writings of such Loyalists/Tories in the Revolutionary War South continues. So far, it has proven well worth the journey!

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25 Robert S. Davis, *Quaker Records in Georgia: Wrightsborough 1772-1793 Friendsborough 1776-1777* (Augusta: Augusta Genealogical Society, 1986), 175, 177-178, 205.

26 No title, *Newcastle Courant* (Newcastle upon Tyne), hereafter cited as NC, September 9, 1775, p. 3 c. 4, October 28, 1775, p. 3 c. 1, February 17, 1776, p. 4 c. 2, January 25, 1777, p. 2, c. 1, and p. 4, c. 3; Taylor to Mrs. Manson, November 9, 1777, D2/9/15, Orkney County Library, Kirkwall, Scotland.

27 No title, NC, March 6, 1779, p. 4 c. 4, and December 24, 1779, p. 4 c. 2-3; Taylor to Wesley, February 28, 1782, Shelburne Papers; Murtie June Clark, *Loyalists in the Southern Campaign of the Revolutionary War*, 3 vols., (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1981), 1: 437-438, 3: 385.

28 Marriage notice, *Royal Georgia Gazette* (Savannah), December 13, 1781, p. 1 c. 2; Edith Duncan Johnston, *The Houstouns of Georgia* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1950), 163.

29 Undated oath of allegiance, "Georgia Declaration of Independence"; Allen D. Candler, comp., *The Revolutionary Records of the State of Georgia*, 3 vols. (Atlanta: Franklin-Turner Company, 1908), 3: 623-264.

30 Taylor to Wesley, November 1, 1782, and June 8, 1783, *Arminian Magazine* 13 (November 1790): 610-611 and 14 (May 1791): 272-274.

31 William Henry Siebert, *Loyalists in East Florida*, 2 vols. (Deland, FL: Florida Historical Society, 1929) 2: 362; Taylor to Bryan Edwards, June 8, 1791, Bryan Edwards Papers, C107, Public Record Office of Jamaica; Pritchard James Papers and Thomas Taylor will, June 15, 1803, 1b/11/3/102, folio 23, Jamaica Archives, Spanish Town.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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*Original article was published by Kim Stacy*

*"Venereal Disease in the 84th Regiment, 1775-84." JSAHR 77 (fall 1999)*

Mrs. Daly of Major McDonell's company is ordered out of the barracks immediately and the soldiers are cautioned against having any carnal connection with her as their is the greatest reason to believe that she is dangerously disordered. The sentry at the barracks gate are to have orders to prevent her entering on any account whatever until further orders.<sup>1</sup>

## **VENEREAL DISEASE IN THE 84TH REGIMENT OF FOOT DURING THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION<sup>2</sup>**

- 1 Fraser Papers, MG 23, K1, vols. 1-30, National Archives of Canada. All quotations other than noted.
- 2 Originally published in the *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research*, 77, Winter 1999, No. 312. Updated August 2009.

The Young fellows are so fond of dancing and seeing the ladies of Halifax they are constantly plaguing me for leave to go down there and they'll think it hard when I refuse them...<sup>3</sup>

During the American Revolution, venereal disease was rampant all theaters of war in both armies. The 84th Regiment had the most extant documentation of this love affliction. Large numbers of the King's troops, including the men of the 84th Regiment of Foot (Royal Highland Emigrants), were incapacitated and unable to perform their duties due to venereal infections.<sup>4</sup> It was not unusual for a regiment to have an active infection rate of 75%. According to an estimate of Doctor Robert Hamilton: "A regiment of 400 men had an average of 300 cases of venereal disease a year."<sup>5</sup> Ascertaining an exact number is impossible; however, Dr. Hamilton tells us that "many of the men were infected two or three times a year." One regimental surgeon stated that venereal diseases were "so prevalent that no reproach follows it, either from their comrades or from their officers."

A soldier or officer, infected or re-infected, could be lost to his regiment anywhere from three weeks to four months, depending on the severity of the infection. Due both to the fear of the "cure" and punishment, most cases of venereal infection went unreported.

- 3 "Letter Book of Captain Alexander McDonald of the Royal Highland Emigrants 1775-1779." (New York Historical Society; Collections: (1882).
- 4 At this time, Gonorrhoea, Syphilis, Chlamydia and other venereal diseases were considered the same infection. Symptoms for: Gonorrhoea; yellowish discharge, extremely painful and frequent urination. Symptoms develop from 2 to 30 days after infection: Syphilis (French Pox), infectious lesions (chancre) appear 10 to 90 days after infection. From 6 weeks to 6 months, there may be a symmetrical reddish-pink non-itchy rash on the trunk and extremities. Common symptoms include fevers, sore throat, malaise, headache and extreme irritability! Chlamydia; white discharge. Multiple infections of more than one disease were common.
- 5 *The Duties of the Regimental Surgeon considered; with observations on his general qualifications, and hints relative to a more respectable practice, and better regulation of that department; wherein are interspersed many medical anecdotes, and subjects discussed, equally interesting to every practitioner.* By Robert Hamilton, M.D., London, 2 vols.

Many regiments deducted "venereal money" from the pay of infected soldiers. This money then went to the regimental hospital.<sup>6</sup> The fines seem to have had little effect in discouraging soldiers from associating with "lewd and disorderly women."

The problem of venereal infection in the army was so prevalent that it came to the attention of the political satirist Philip Earl of Chesterfield. In his *Advice to the Officers of the British Army with the Addition of Some Hints to the Drummer and Private Soldier*, we find some remarkable advice:

*To the surgeon: if it is the custom of your regiment for the soldiers to be cured of the venereal disease gratis, give yourself but little concern about them, and be sure to treat them as roughly as possible. Tenderness towards patients of that kind, is only an encouragement of vice; and if you make a perfect and speedy cure, they will soon forget the inconveniences of the disorder: whereas if they carry some mementos about them, it will make them henceforward the more cautious. If you are paid for it, you may observe nearly the same conduct towards them; for experience shows that cure them as often as you will, they soon contract it again; so it is only so much labor and medicine thrown away. Besides, as the ladies of the camp or garrison are pretty much in common, these men may, by circulating the disorder, procure you some practice among the officers.*

*To the drummer: Be sure of bringing off a girl from every quarter. After infecting her with a certain disease, and selling her clothes, you may introduce her to the officers, your employments making you a dependent on Mercury as well as Apollo. This will at least insure you the thanks of the surgeon and his mate.*

According to hospital records, the 84th Regiment had lower incidence of infection in comparison with other British regiments.<sup>7</sup> The lower rate of the "clapor pox" (Gonorrhea, Syphilis and other urinary tract infections) was due to several reasons: Most of its troops were on

northern frontier postings, the men were mostly raised in the colonies and not in Britain where venereal enjoyed epidemic proportions. The 84th had local access to their wives. Monogamy greatly decreased the chance of contracting the dreaded "French pox."<sup>8</sup>

Below is a regimental order addressed to all companies of the First Battalion. This incident was reported because infection had become so debilitating that the men could not work. Medical attention was not something a soldier willingly sought out due to the cost and the total lack of confidence soldiers had in the medical profession --

#### **Regimental Order:**

*The doctor having reported that several men of the Regiment, by their debauchery with whores, have brought disgrace upon their selves, which not being only the scandal of their own [illegible], but the prejudice of the King's services there by disgracefully rendering themselves incapable to do their duty, it is ordered that 10 shillings necessary money shall be stopped of each man who the doctor shall find who has got the clapor pox to be appropriated for the use of the regimental hospital. The noncommissioned officers are to take to allow no other woman, than the soldier's wives to come into the barracks rooms and none of the men to go from the barracks after tattoo.*

The next step to curb infection was to limit men's access to "women not their wives" and publish strict penalties for not reporting infections to the surgeon for treatment --

#### **Regimental Order:**

*Any noncommissioned officer or soldier having venereal complaint will be punished for disobedience of orders unless he reports it immediately to the surgeon as will those who are ordered to take any medicines that is proscribed by him.*

Any soldier disobeying orders would be fined and would be humiliated in front of the Regiment while his charges were read off. Despite the severity of the punishment, it was probably less stressful than taking the "cure". It is interesting to note that the men must be ordered to take their medications, though this is not surprising considering the nature of the cure.

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6 "Medical Services in the British Army, 1742–1783," P.E. Kopperman, *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*. 1979; XXXIV: 428-455.

7 Comparisons from the many hospital returns found in the British Library, Sir Frederick Haldimand papers, Add. MS 21661, and other papers relating to the 84th Regiment of Foot.

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8 *Syphilis sive morbus gallicus*.

The basic treatment, if the soldier could pay for it, was the administration of mercury compounds, given orally and applied as a topical salve on open cankers. Mercury's toxic effects are quite painful and include heavy salivation,<sup>9</sup> cramps in the abdomen and limbs, renal (kidney) problems, vomiting, diarrhea, and loosening of the teeth. A long and lingering death could result from an overdose.

If the soldier could not pay for this treatment, he was given a dose of elixir made up of spring water, sumac roots and gunpowder. Another elixir was a mix of salts and turpentine. The topical application was quite painful. One of the least painful treatments was to soak the afflicted appendage in warm raw milk. One of the more painful treatments was an injection of sulfuric acid into the urethra. Bloodletting was common.<sup>10</sup> There were no set regulations for "medications" mixed by the doctor. He could, and often did, concoct his own brew of useless "snake oil" and sell it to the men as a cure. Officers who could pay for their treatments were usually given a diet of greens and milk as well as time off to take curative water treatments. Laudanum<sup>11</sup> was available at a high premium. The officers were often given furloughs for their "health" and occasionally went to Europe to take the cure.

In extreme cases, it was necessary to surgically intervene.<sup>12</sup> This was usually done when the soldier could no longer urinate due to a closed or constricted urethra. There were a number of cures: reopen the urethra by pounding the penis with a mallet; surgical reaming with a probe; or irrigation large caliber syringe four times a day.

For the irrigation ritual, the use of light oils, astringents, green tea or a preparation of lead were

common prescriptions. In conjunction, a series of purging laxatives were given which, no doubt, increased the tendency to urinate with predictable results. Bleeding was also inflicted but the period texts do not say exactly where.<sup>13</sup> For swelling of the testicles and buboes in the groin, leeches were applied, and, in some cases, the afflicted parts were lanced and drained. All of these procedures were done without anesthesia, and none of the cures available to the men could have been popular.

Quarters were very primitive in most cases. There was rarely any consideration given to privacy. The concept of privacy was an alien idea among lower classes. In garrison, women and children were crammed in with the troops and often slept on the floor or shared a bed with two or three other soldiers. Women and children were not considered in the calculations for issuing barracks furniture and bedding. Some official effort was made to limit promiscuity in quarters by "separating every two to three couples... to prevent misbehavior."<sup>14</sup> "Although no child abuse was reported for the 84th Regiment, children in the army faced the prospect of rape and venereal disease. Court Martial records show that child rape was not uncommon. Rape only came to the attention of the authorities when parents were forced to seek medical attention for their children.

The officers could limit the men's exposure to the local women, but they had very little effect on controlling the wives and children of the men who lived in the overcrowded barracks. The wives presented less risk of infection than the "unofficial" women who were not regulated. The officers of the 84th were never able to completely control the men's access to "women not their wives," and venereal infection continued to be a problem until the Regiment was disbanded.

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9 Mercury induced heavy salivation was a common "cure" in the early 18th Century and continued until the beginning of the 1820s despite the proven treatment by modernistic physicians like Cockburn (1779) who proved that lesions will heal spontaneously with proper cleaning and bandaging. (Don't tie that knot too tight!)

10 Buchanan, William, M. D., *Domestic Medicine*, 1785.

11 Laudanum is an opium tincture made by combining ethanol with opium and contains the alkaloids of morphine and codeine.

12 *A Treatise on the Venereal Disease*: By G. Renny, Surgeon to the Athol Highlanders, published by printed for J. Murray, 1782

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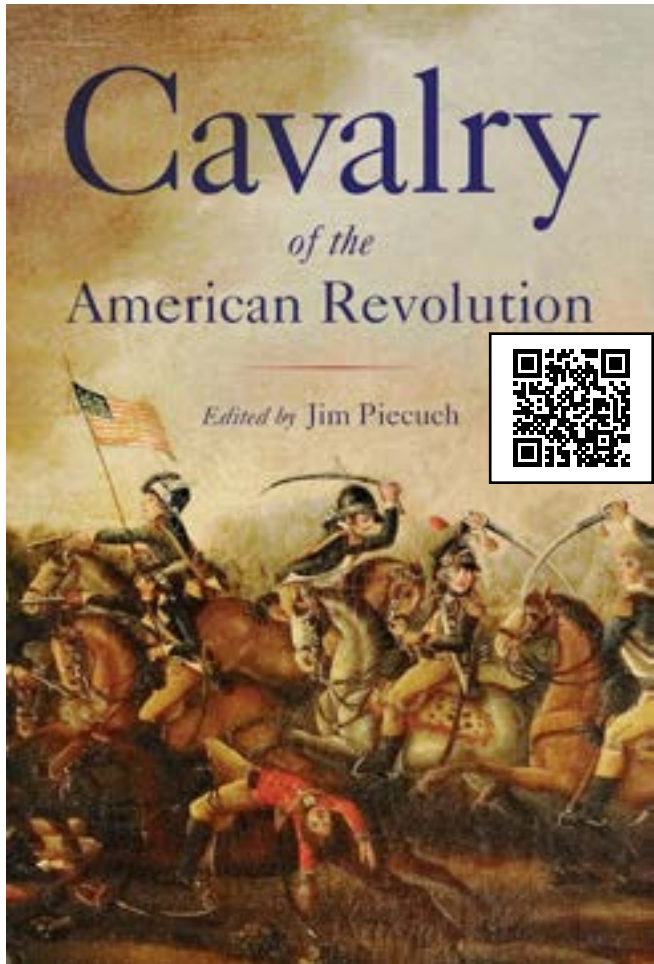
13 *The Domestic Medicine*, W. Buchanan, 2nd Ed. London, 1785

14 Frey, Silvia R. *The British Soldier in America: A Social History of Military Life in the Revolutionary Period*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press. 1981.

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