South Carolina in the American Revolution

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An Exhibition from the Library
and Museum Collections of
The Society of the Cincinnati

1783

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Text by Ellen McCallister Clark

Front cover illustration: *Captain Jacob Shubrick* by Henry Benbridge. See page 7.

Back cover illustration: *Major James Hamilton* by Charles Willson Peale. See page 33.

Left mainly to her own resources, it was through bloodshed and devastation and the depths of wretchedness that [South Carolina's] citizens were to bring her back to her place in the republic by their own heroic courage and self devotion, having suffered more, and dared more, and achieved more than the men of any other state.

— George Bancroft,
History of the United States (1857)

General William Moultrie, attributed to Charles Willson Peale.
See page 9.

INTRODUCTION

S outh Carolina was at the center of activity in the South during the American Revolution, from the earliest protests to the last battles of the war. The prosperous colony was home to a diverse population that was divided by stark economic, political and social contrasts between its low-country and backcountry regions. More battles and skirmishes were fought on South Carolina soil over the eight years of war than in any other of the thirteen colonies.

The transformation of South Carolina from colony to state was set in motion with the establishment of a provincial congress in 1775. Its members raised military forces, wrote a state constitution, and sent delegates to Philadelphia for the Second Continental Congress, where they voted to end ties with Great Britain. Even before the Declaration of Independence was signed, South Carolina patriots fended off a British attempt to capture the port city of Charleston during the battle at Sullivan's Island in June 1776.

Three years later the British launched a second campaign to take the South and successfully captured Charleston in May 1780. With the British in control of their capital, backcountry partisans fought with renewed determination against His Majesty's troops and loyalist forces in some of the war's most bitter engagements. Under the command of Gen. Nathanael Greene, Continental and militia troops combined forces to turn the tide in their favor, winning several notable victories that thwarted the British plan to conquer the South.

In August 1783, following the cessation of hostilities, officers of the South Carolina Continental line organized the Society of the Cincinnati of the State of South Carolina to perpetuate the ideals of the Revolution and their bonds of friendship formed over the years of war. This exhibition, sponsored by their successors in the Society, commemorates the contributions and sacrifices of South Carolina's citizen-soldiers who pledged their lives to the cause of American independence.

PREPARING FOR WAR

As one of Great Britain's wealthiest and most economically diverse colonies, South Carolina had much at stake as the revolutionary period began. Commercial and cultural activities were centered in the thriving seaport city of Charleston. The rice and indigo plantations of the surrounding lowcountry prospered with the labor of large numbers of slaves. Settlement followed the waterways into the backcountry, where yeomen farmers and pelt traders coped with the rough conditions and lawlessness of the frontier. They coexisted uneasily with the native Cherokee who had been pushed to the northwestern edges of the province.

The succession of revenue-raising acts imposed on the colonies by Parliament following the French and Indian War sharpened the antagonisms among the people of South Carolina. While the lowcountry elite organized protests and sent representatives to discuss common grievances with their fellow colonists to the north, the residents of the backcountry were struggling with basic issues of law and order at home. The political divisions produced a strong loyalist population that would endure through the war.

South Carolina patriots asserted their right to self-government with the establishment of a provincial congress in January 1775. The Provincial Congress set up a Council of Safety and raised two regiments of foot and one of cavalry, which were eventually put under the authority of the Continental army. While expressing hope for reconciliation with Great Britain, the Provincial Congress adopted a temporary constitution and sent delegates to the Second Continental Congress in Philadelphia. There, on July 2, 1776, South Carolina joined with the other colonies in voting unanimously for the independence of the United States.

Charleston, S.C. in 1780. **New York: G. P. Putnam, unknown date.**

The Robert Charles Lawrence Fergusson Collection

Known as the "London of the Lowcountry," Charleston had a population of about 12,000 by the early 1770s, nearly half of whom were African-American slaves. In addition to its bustling commercial activities, the city's cultural amenities included theaters, music societies, clubs, race tracks and a museum. This view of the city from the harbor shows the elegant Palladian customs house, known as the Exchange, where on March 28, 1776, Charleston's citizens gathered to hear the reading of their new state constitution.

Great Britain. Parliament. *An Act to Restrain the Trade and Commerce of the Colonies of New Jersey, Pensylvania, Maryland, Virginia, and South Carolina, to Great Britain, Ireland, and the British Islands in the West Indies …* **London: Printed by Charles Eyre and William Strahan …, 1775.**

The Robert Charles Lawrence Fergusson Collection

South Carolina was named along with four mid-Atlantic colonies in this trade embargo legislation passed by Parliament in November 1774: "During the Continuance of the Combinations and Disorders, which at this Time prevail within the Colonies…to the Obstruction of the Commerce of … his Majesty's Dominions, and in Breach and Violation of the Laws of this Realm, it is highly unfit that the Inhabitants of the said Colonies should enjoy the same Privileges of Trade, and the same Benefits and Advantages to which his Majesty's faithful and obedient Subjects are intitled…." This act banned the import and export of virtually all products and goods in and out of the named colonies, except for those commodities required for "His Majesty's Ships of War…or for His Majesty's Forces, Forts and Garrisons."

His Excellency Henry Laurens **[proof before titles]. Engraved by Pierre Eugène Du Simitière (ca. 1736-1784) for** *Portraits of the Generals, Ministers, Members of Congress and Others, Who Have Rendered Themselves Illustrious in the Revolution of the United States of North America* **(London: R. Wilkinson, 1783).**

The Robert Charles Lawrence Fergusson Collection

A leading Charleston merchant and patriot, Henry Laurens (1724-1792) was elected president of the Council of Safety in 1775, shortly after the news of the hostilities at Lexington and Concord reached South Carolina. Under his leadership the Provincial Congress

intensified measures to raise a military force and prepare for the colony's defense.

Laurens went on to represent South Carolina in the Continental Congress and was elected president of that body in November 1777. In 1780 he was captured by the British while on a mission to negotiate a treaty of friendship and commerce with Holland and was imprisoned in the Tower of London for nearly fifteen months. Exchanged for Lord Cornwallis after the American victory at Yorktown, he participated in the final peace negotiations in Paris.

***W. H. Drayton, Member of Congress.* Engraved by Burnet Reading (fl. 1780-1820), after Pierre Eugène Du Simitière. Published in *Thirteen Portraits of American Legislators, Patriots and Soldiers …* (London: W. Richardson, 1783).**

The Robert Charles Lawrence Fergusson Collection

William Henry Drayton (1742-1779) was an early and influential champion of the American cause. He was author of the 1774 pamphlet *Letter from a Freeman of South Carolina to the Deputies of North America Assembled in the High Court of Congress at Philadelphia*, which proposed a bill of American rights. As member of the Provincial Congress in 1775, he led an effort to negotiate a truce among patriots, loyalists and Cherokee leaders in the back-country. He was elected president of the Provincial Congress in late 1775, and under the state's new constitution he was appointed to the office of chief justice. He represented South Carolina in the Continental Congress from 1778 until his death from typhoid the following year.

***Journal of the Provincial Congress of South Carolina, 1776, Published by the Order of the Congress.* Charles-Town: Printed; London: Reprinted for J. Almon, 1776.**

The Robert Charles Lawrence Fergusson Collection

This volume covers the preparations for war and other acts of the South Carolina Provincial Congress from February through April 1776. On March 26, the delegates adopted the Constitution for the State of South Carolina, "so that during the present situation of American affairs, and until an accommodation of the unhappy differences between Great-Britain and America can be obtained (an event which, though traduced and treated as rebels, we still earnestly desire) some mode should be established by common consent, and for the good of the people, the origin and end of all government, for regulating the internal polity of this colony…."
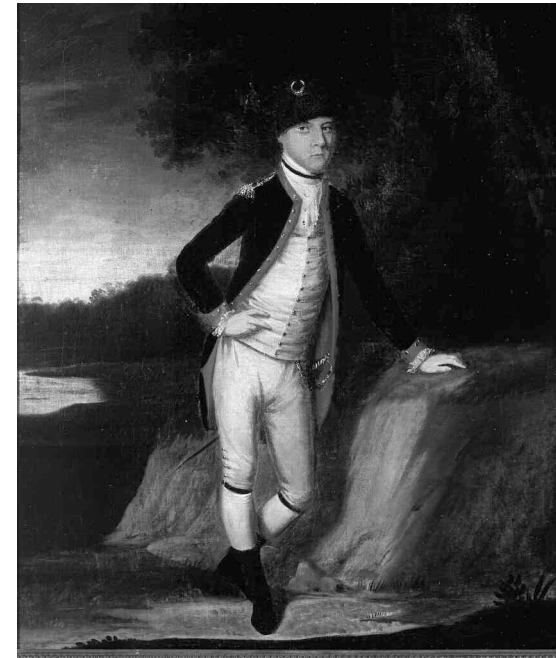
***Captain Jacob Shubrick* (1757-1778). Portrait by Henry Benbridge (1743-1812). Late 18th century. Oil on canvas.**

Gift of W. B. Shubrick Clymer, Society of the Cincinnati of the State of South Carolina, 1968

Jacob Shubrick was not yet eighteen when he enlisted in the Second South Carolina Regiment. He participated in the defense of Fort Sullivan in June 1776 and was promoted to captain the following year. He died in service on April 27, 1778.

In this portrait, believed to have been painted after Shubrick's death, he is shown wearing a grenadier officer's uniform of a blue coat with scarlet lapels, cuffs and lining. The silver crescent on his black mitre cap would have borne the motto "Liberty."

The Defense of Charleston, 1776

In early 1776, British officials conceived of a plan to reestablish royal authority in the southern colonies. With the attempt to take Boston at a stalemate, British commander-in-chief Gen. William Howe sent Maj. Gen. Henry Clinton on an expedition south. When his first target on the Cape Fear River proved unfeasible, Clinton, who had been joined by a naval force commanded by Commodore Peter Parker, set his sights on Charleston.

With intelligence of Clinton's movements, the Continental Congress sent Gen. Charles Lee to take command of the Army's Southern Department. At the same time, South Carolinians, under the leadership of state president John Rutledge, stepped up preparations to defend their capital city. Col. William Moultrie was put in charge of erecting fortifications on Sullivan's Island to protect the harbor. Lee arrived in Charleston in early June with 2,000 reinforcements from Virginia and North Carolina.

The long-expected British attack began on the morning of June 28, when nine British ships moved into position off Sullivan's Island and launched a volley of mortar against the partially constructed fort. Although severely out-manned and outgunned, the Americans held the advantage from their position on the island, returning fire that did considerable damage to the British ships. The fierce fighting across the water lasted until nightfall, when, with nearly 200 of their men killed or wounded, the British called off the action and prepared to withdraw. The decisive victory of the South Carolinians at Sullivan's Island boosted the morale of patriots across the colonies.

Major General William Moultrie (1730-1805). **Attributed to Charles Willson Peale (1741-1827). Unknown date. Oil on canvas.**

On loan from the Society of the Cincinnati of the State of South Carolina

William Moultrie's service as a colonel in the militia during the French and Indian War had earned him recognition as one of South Carolina's most respected military leaders. In June 1775 the Provincial Congress appointed him colonel in command of the Second South Carolina Regiment. On July 20, 1776, the Continental Congress passed a resolution of thanks to Moultrie and his men for repelling "with so much valor" the British attack on Fort Sullivan. Moultrie was named brigadier general the following September, and South Carolina renamed the fort at Sullivan's Island in his honor.

A Plan of the Attack of Fort Sulivan, near Charles Town in South Carolina, by a Squadron of His Majesty's Ships, on the 28th of June 1776 with the Disposition of the King's Land Forces, and the Encampments and Entrenchments of the Rebels from the Drawings Made on the Spot. **Engraved by William Faden (1750?-1836). London: Engrav'd & publish'd ... by Wm. Faden ... Aug't. 10th 1776.**

The Robert Charles Lawrence Fergusson Collection

South Carolina patriots had begun building fortifications on the southwestern end of Sullivan's Island in early 1776 to supplement the defenses of Charleston harbor. The fort was constructed from palmetto logs laid out in parallel rows and filled in between with sand. Only two sides of Fort Sullivan had been erected by the time of the British attack, but the strength and sponginess of the native materials of which it was constructed proved to be a remarkable barrier against enemy fire.
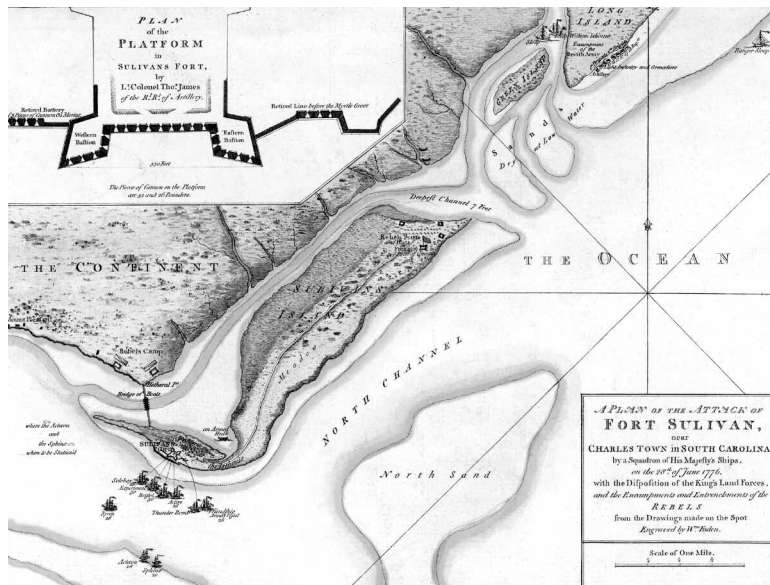
This map, published in London within six weeks of the event, shows the position of nine British ships firing on the American fort.

Admiral Parker. *Engraved by A. Birrell (fl. 1770-1820) for John Andrews,* History of the War with America, France, Spain, and Holland: Commencing in 1775 and Ending in 1783 *(London: J. Fielding, 1785-6).*
The Robert Charles Lawrence Fergusson Collection

Peter Parker (1721-1811) commanded the British naval forces during Charleston expedition and persuaded General Clinton that Sullivan's Island would be their best mark. While directing his men from the deck of his ship *Bristol*, Parker was hit by American fire that literally tore his breeches from his body. Despite his humiliating defeat, he was knighted in 1782 in recognition of his bravery during the Charleston siege.
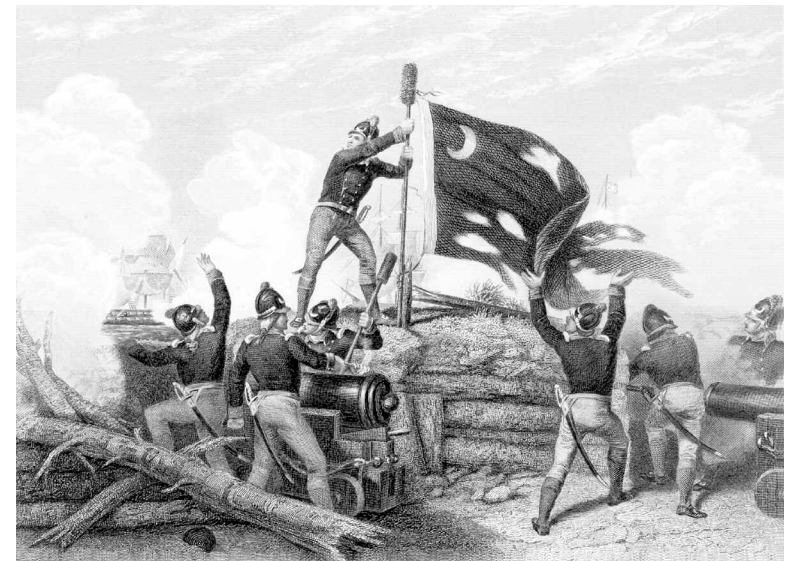
Defence of Fort Moultrie, S.C., Heroism of Sergt. Jasper. *Engraved by George R. Hall (b. 1818), after Johannes Adam Simon Oertel. New York: Martin, Johnson & Co., 1858.*
The Robert Charles Lawrence Fergusson Collection

During the exchange of fire, a British cannonball broke the mast of the South Carolina liberty flag that flew over the fort. One of Moultrie's men, Sgt. William Jasper of Georgia, rushed into the line of fire to rescue the fallen flag, tied it to a makeshift staff and raised it again over the fort. For his bravery, Jasper was presented with a dress sword by South Carolina President Rutledge. Jasper remained in service as a scout for the American forces until 1779, when he was killed planting the colors of the Second South Carolina Regiment on enemy lines in Savannah.

Charles Lee, Esqr., Major General of the American Forces. Published in *An Impartial History of the War in America* [Edmund Burke, supposed author] (London: Printed for R. Faulder, 1780).

The Robert Charles Lawrence Fergusson Collection

Gen. Charles Lee was the senior officer in command of the American operations in Charleston during the siege. Fearing that the uncompleted fort on Sullivan's Island would become a deathtrap, he advised Colonel Moultrie to abandon it, but his order was overridden by President Rutledge. Of the South Carolinians' accomplishment in holding the fort, Lee wrote, "The behavior of the garrison, with Colonel Moultrie at their head, I confess astonished me. It was brave to the last degree."

THE CAPTURE OF CHARLESTON, 1780

Four years after the first British attempt on Charleston, Gen. Henry Clinton returned to redeem his earlier defeat. Encouraged by their success in capturing Savannah in October 1779, the British had turned their attention to South Carolina's capital city. Charleston was the headquarters of Gen. Benjamin Lincoln, commander of the Continental army's Southern Department, whose garrison numbered 5,500 men nearly equally divided between Continental soldiers and militiamen.

Clinton, now commander in chief of the British forces in America, sailed from New York City in late December 1779 with 8,500 troops on a fleet commanded by Vice Adm. Marriot Arbuthnot. Remembering the lessons learned in 1776, Clinton planned an indirect approach, taking advantage of the network of islands and waterways that surrounded his target. After a difficult passage down the coast, the British fleet arrived at the mouth of the North Edisto River, about thirty miles south of Charleston. From there Clinton and his second-in-command, Gen. Charles Cornwallis, gradually moved troops overland toward the city. In April, as the British were building siege works to the north of the city, Arbuthnot sailed his fleet into Charleston harbor, effectively trapping the American garrison on the peninsula.

As the British closed in, Lincoln worked frantically to improve Charleston's defenses, but he was unable to repel the invasion or to move his men to safety away from the city. On May 12, 1780, after a six-week siege, Lincoln surrendered the city and his army of more than 3,000 soldiers, the largest capitulation of American forces during the war. Charleston would remain under British control until December 1782.

Edinburgh Evening Courant. **Extraordinary issue, July 9, 1780.**

The Robert Charles Lawrence Fergusson Collection

This issue announces the news of the capture of Charleston and reprints letters from General Clinton and others to Lord Germain, British secretary of state for the American colonies, describing the British victory. On June 4, 1780, Clinton wrote, "The troops … have pressed so effectually upon a body of rebels, which remained in the province, that the Earl [Cornwallis], by detaching his corps of cavalry, and with them the Legion Infantry (mounted) has completed the destruction of every thing in arms against us in this province."

The newspaper also reports that when the news of the British success was received in Edinburgh, "it was announced to the public by a round of artillery from the castle; the great bells were set ringing, and a considerable part of the city was illuminated…."

A Sketch of the Operations before Charleston the Capital of South Carolina, 1780. **Engraved by Thomas Abernethie. Published in David Ramsay, *The History of the Revolution of South-Carolina, from a British Province to an Independent State* (Trenton: Printed by Isaac Collins, 1785).**

The Robert Charles Lawrence Fergusson Collection

This map by Charleston engraver Thomas Abernethie details the fortifications and guns under the command of General Lincoln as well as the siege works of the British forces north of the city. It also shows a "boom" of sunken boats stretched in a chain across the Cooper River from the Exchange to Shutes Folly and ten American ships guarding the city above the chain.

In summing up the defeat of Charleston, David Ramsay wrote, "Though Charleston and the southern army were
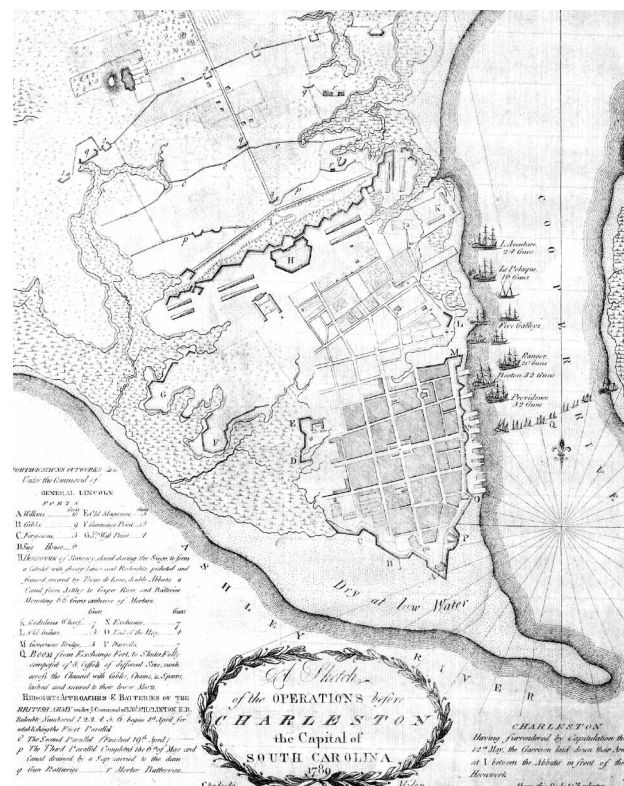
lost, yet by their long protracted defence, the British plans were not only retarded but deranged, and North-Carolina … was saved for the remainder of the year 1780."

Sir Henry Clinton, K. B. Commandant en Chef les Troupes de Sa Majesté Britannique dans L'Amérique. **Engraved by Jean Victor Dupin. Paris: Chez Esnauts et Rapilly, [1779?].**

The Robert Charles Lawrence Fergusson Collection

The capture of Charleston was a personal triumph in the long military career of Sir Henry Clinton. Shortly after Lincoln's surrender, he returned to British headquarters in New York City, leaving General Cornwallis in

SIR HENRY CLINTON, K. B.

Commandant en Chef les Troupes de Sa Majesté Britannique dans l'Amérique.
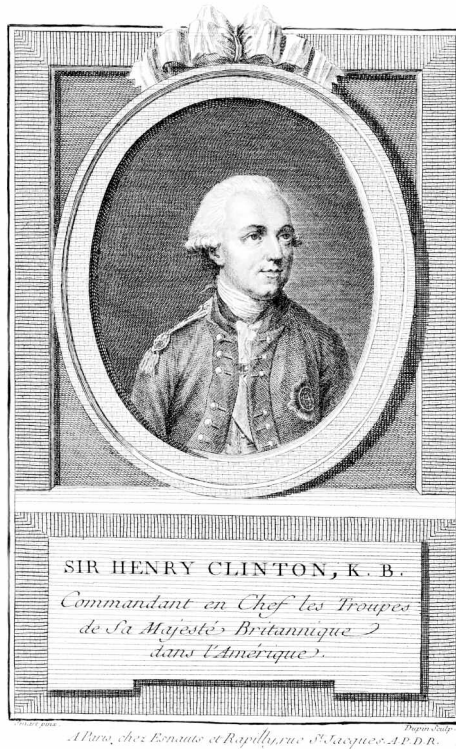
charge of operations in the South. His parting act was a proclamation that required South Carolinians on parole to sign an oath of allegiance to the Crown and take up arms against the rebels.

Nisbit Balfour (1743-1823). Extraordinary warrant to James Fraser, "being an account of Expenditures in the Barrack Master's Department…. Charlestown 13 Novemb. 1781." Partially printed document, signed.

The Robert Charles Lawrence Fergusson Collection

L t. Col. Nisbit Balfour, served as the commandant of Charleston during the British occupation of the city. This warrant conveys to his acting barrack master, James Fraser, two-thousand pounds sterling for the "contingent or

extraordinary Expences of His Majesty's Forces under the command of His Excellency General Sir Henry Clinton." Balfour's haughty disposition and his harsh treatment of the local citizens had the effect of keeping alive the patriot spirit across South Carolina.

David Olyphant (1720-1805). Portrait by Samuel F. B. Morse (1791-1872). Circa 1825. Oil on canvas.

Gift of Murray Olyphant, New York State Society of the Cincinnati, 1985

A s director general of hospitals in the Southern Department under General Lincoln, David Olyphant was taken prisoner at Charleston on May 12, 1780. He was exchanged the following year and returned to service in the hospital department for the duration of the war. He became a founding member of the Society of the Cincinnati of the State of South Carolina.
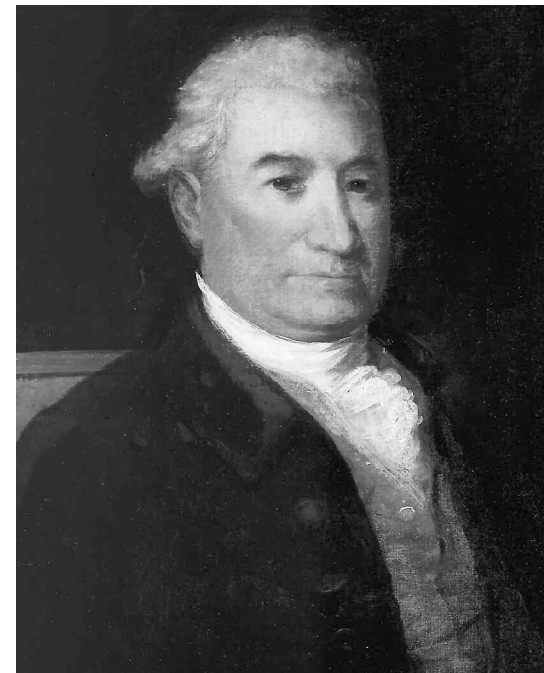
War in the Backcountry

The British capture of Charleston in May 1780 intensified the bitter civil war between patriots and loyalists in South Carolina's backcountry. General Cornwallis, now in command of the British forces in the South, established a wide arc of outposts across the state to secure lines of communication and rally loyalist support. As bands of patriot militia took on the loyalist forces and British regulars, three partisan leaders — Francis Marion, Andrew Pickens and Thomas Sumter — rose to prominence.

In July 1780, Congress appointed Gen. Horatio Gates to replace Benjamin Lincoln as commander of the Southern Department and sent him link up with Baron Johann De Kalb, who had already led forces into North Carolina. Soon after his arrival at Kalb's headquarters, Gates marched his troops into South Carolina for an ill-advised attack on the British base at Camden on August 16, 1780. It ended as a devastating defeat for the Americans.

Following the Camden disaster, Congress appointed Gen. Nathanael Greene to command the Southern Department. Greene built up the decimated Southern army and effectively joined forces with the partisans to turn the tide of the war to the patriots' favor. Though there were many setbacks at individual battles and skirmishes, the patriot armies won notable victories at King's Mountain (October 7, 1780) and Cowpens (January 16, 1781). By the time South Carolina's last major battle was fought at Eutaw Springs (September 8, 1781), Cornwallis had moved north to Virginia, where the outcome of the war would be decided on the battlefield at Yorktown.

Francis Marion **(1732-1795). Portrait by John [Johann] Stolle (fl. 1880-1907). 1880. Oil on canvas.**

On loan from the City of Charleston, South Carolina

A native of the South Carolina lowcountry, Francis Marion served under General Moultrie during the defense of Charleston in 1776 and rose to the rank of colonel in the Second South Carolina Regiment. After the fall of Charleston in 1780, Marion was appointed brigadier general of State Troops and launched an effective campaign of harassment against British detachments around the state. His cunning and success in eluding capture in the coastal lowlands earned him the grudging admiration of his opponents and an enduring place in South Carolina lore as the "Swamp Fox."

General Thomas Sumter (1734-1832).
**Unknown artist, after Rembrandt Peale (1778-1860).
20th century. Oil on canvas.**
From the collection of Thomas Sumter Tisdale, Jr., of the Society of
the Cincinnati of the State of South Carolina

Thomas Sumter moved to South Carolina from Virginia
in the 1760s and built a plantation in the rolling
midland section of the colony known as the High Hills of
the Santee. He served in the Provincial Congress and
became a lieutenant colonel in the Second Continental
Rifle Regiment. He resigned from the army in 1778, but
returned to the field as a brigadier general of State Troops
after his home was burned by the British. In January 1781,

the Continental Congress voted its thanks for the "gallantry
and military conduct of General Sumter" during several
successful actions against the British. After the war, Sumter
represented South Carolina in the United States House of
Representatives and in the United States Senate. Called
the South Carolina Gamecock, Sumter is considered the
first practitioner of the guerrilla tactics of partisan warfare
that proved so effective in the South.

Captain Thomas Shubrick (1755-1810). **Portrait by
John Trumbull (1756-1843). 1791. Oil on wood.**
Gift of W. B. Shubrick Clymer, Society of the Cincinnati of the State
of South Carolina, 1968

Thomas Shubrick joined the Second South Carolina
Regiment in January 1777 and was promoted to
captain the following year. He served as an aide-de-camp
to General Greene during the southern campaign. By an
Act of Congress on October 29, 1787, Captain Shubrick
was awarded an official commendation "in testimony of
his particular activities and good conduct during the action
at Eutaw Springs, South Carolina."

Lieut. Coll. Tarleton. **Engraving after Joshua Reynolds
(1723-1792). Published in the *London Magazine*,
March 1782.**
The Robert Charles Lawrence Fergusson Collection

The young Lt. Col. Banastre Tarleton (1754-1833)
commanded the British Legion, a cavalry regiment
of loyalist troops from New York and Pennsylvania who
served in the southern campaign. Although his feared
legion won many engagements throughout the South,
Tarleton's sound defeat at Cowpens brought the severe
criticism of his superiors. Tarleton's fierce battle tactics
and cruel treatment of southern patriots gave rise to his
nickname "Bloody Ban."

COL. WASHINGTON AT THE BATTLE OF COWPENS.

Drawn and Engraved, expressly for Graham's Magazine by S. H. Gimber.

***Col. Washington at the Battle of Cowpens.* Engraved by Stephen Henry Gimber (1810-1862) for *Graham's Magazine*.**

The Robert Charles Lawrence Fergusson Collection

This engraving depicts the climax of the battle at Cowpens, when Col. William Washington (1752-1810), commander of a troop of Continental dragoons, met Lt. Col. Banastre Tarleton in face-to-face combat. Although his sword was broken and his horse killed, Washington's actions helped secure the American victory. A Virginian and distant kinsman of Gen. George Washington, William Washington settled in Charleston after the war and became a founding member of the Society of the Cincinnati of the State of South Carolina.

Orderly Book from the Headquarters of General Nathanael Greene, Southern Department, April 5-September 4, 1781.

The Robert Charles Lawrence Fergusson Collection

This orderly book, kept by Capt. William Lamar of the Maryland Brigade, covers troop movements and critical actions of the year 1781: the valiant effort of the

American troops at Hobkirk's Hill on April 25; the drawn-out siege at Ninety-Six, May 22 to June 19; and the preparations for the major engagement at Eutaw Springs which would take place on September 8.

As commander of the Southern Department, Greene was coordinating the efforts of both the Continental and militia forces. In a general order issued on April 16, 1781, Greene announced several partisan successes:

> *The general has the pleasure to inform the army that Col. [Elijah] Clarke of South Carolina, with a small Corps of Militia, lately defeated Major Dunlap … killed upward of Thirty and took the Major with forty of his men prisoners of war…. Col [Peter] Horrey defeated a detachment of Eighty men … the Rear of Lord Cornwallace's army suffered considerably in his retreat by the frequent attacks of the Bladen County Militia. These circumstances sufficiently evince the disposition of the Inhabitants and may be considered as preludes to Victories, more decisive and more Glorious.*

Nataniel Green Major General in the American Armies: a Patriot, a Hero and a Friend.* Engraved by Juste Chevillet (1729-1790), after Charles Willson Peale. Paris: Chez L'Auteur, 1786.

The Robert Charles Lawrence Fergusson Collection

A Rhode Island Quaker, Nathanael Greene (1742-1786) enlisted at the beginning of the war and proved to be the Continental army's most brilliant strategist. He remained in command of the Southern forces until August 1783. After a brief period of settling his affairs in Rhode Island, Greene returned to the South and established a home on confiscated loyalist land near Savannah in 1785. He died the following year of sunstroke.

This engraving, published in France the year of his death, celebrates Greene as the eminent citizen-soldier and includes the South Carolina palmetto as a symbol of his service in the South.

Awards for Valor

Over the course of the war, the Continental Congress voted to award ten gold or silver medals and ten presentation swords to individual officers for meritorious conduct and distinguished service in specific actions. Although the resolutions were passed within weeks of the actions they honored, the press of the war, funding difficulties, and disagreements over wording and design delayed the actual manufacture and presentation of the awards, often for years.

The battle at Cowpens, considered the turning point in the South, inspired more of Congressional awards than any other action of the war. A gold medal, two silver medals, and a presentation sword were awarded to individual officers for their roles in securing the American victory.

The only other South Carolina engagement to be so cited by Congress was the battle at Eutaw Springs, for which the commander of the Southern army, Gen. Nathanael Greene, was awarded a Congressional gold medal.
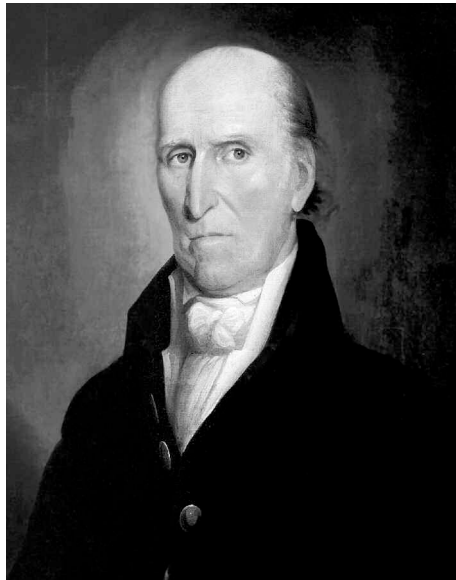
Andrew Pickens portrait and sword.

Andrew Pickens (1739-1817).
Unknown American artist. Circa 1793. Oil on canvas.

Andrew Pickens Congressional Presentation Sword and Scabbard. Made by C. Liger (fl. ca. 1770-1793). 1785. Steel, silver and gold, with lizard skin and silver scabbard.

Letter of Henry Knox (1750-1806), War Office of the United States, to Andrew Pickens, May 27, 1786.
All three Andrew Pickens items on loan from Andrew Pickens Miller, Secretary General of the Society of the Cincinnati, 1995-1998

At the outbreak of the Revolutionary War, Andrew Pickens left his farm at Long Cane Creek to serve in the backcountry militia. He quickly established himself as a bold partisan leader and participated in numerous engagements against the loyalists in South Carolina and Georgia. He won his greatest recognition for his performance during the battle at Cowpens, when the militia under his command crushed Tarleton's advancing lines. For his actions he was promoted to brigadier general of the South Carolina State Troops.

On March 9, 1781, the Continental Congress voted to award a sword to "Colonel Pickens of the militia, in testimony of his spirited conduct in the action of the Cowpens." Manufactured in France in 1785, the sword bears the arms of the United States on one side of its grip and plaque with the inscription: "Congress to Colonel Pickens March 9th 1781" on the other. Also on exhibition is the letter by which Secretary of War, Henry Knox, transmitted the sword to General Pickens on May 27, 1786: "This sword while it perpetuates your fame will operate as a principle to advance the true interest of your country. The glory of the reward will induce others to emulate your bravery and patriotism."

After the war Pickens was elected to the state legislature and later served one term in the United States House of Representatives. It is believed that this portrait, which has

descended in his family, was the basis for Thomas Sully's well-known portrait of Pickens in military uniform, commissioned by Andrew Pickens, Jr., after his father's death.

Daniel Morgan Congressional Medal.
Designed by Augustin Dupré (1748-1833).
20th-century copies of the original 1789 medal. Bronze.
Gift of Captain and Mrs. William Jeffries Chewning, Jr., Society of the Cincinnati in the State of Virginia, 1963

On March 9, 1781, the Continental Congress passed a resolution awarding Brig. Gen. Daniel Morgan of Virginia a gold medal for his role in the Cowpens victory seven weeks earlier. The allegorical scene on the obverse of the medal depicts America as an Indian crowning a general who bows before her. The Latin inscription translates: "The American Congress to Daniel Morgan, general of the army." The reverse shows Morgan on horseback leading a charge against the fleeing enemy and is inscribed, in translation: "Victory, the protector of freedom — the enemy put to flight, taken, or slain at Cowpens, 17 Jan. 1781."

William Washington Congressional Medal.
Designed by Pierre Simon Benjamin Duvivier (1728-1819).
20th-century copies of the original 1789 medal. Bronze.
The Society of the Cincinnati Collections

Congress awarded a silver medal to Lt. Col. William Washington of Virginia. On the obverse of his medal, Colonel Washington rides towards the enemy with the figure of Victory flying above him. The Latin inscription, in translation, begins on the obverse: "The American Congress to William Washington, cavalry regiment commander" and continues on the reverse: "Because, having vigorously pursued the enemy with a small band of soldiers, he gave a brilliant example of innate valor in the battle of Cowpens, 17 Jan. 1781."

John Eager Howard Congressional Medal.
Designed by Pierre Simon Benjamin Duvivier (1728-1819).
1881 reproduction and 20th-century copy of the original 1789 medal. Bronze.
Gift of Captain and Mrs. William Jeffries Chewning, Jr., Society of the Cincinnati in the State of Virginia, 1963

Lt. Col. John Eager Howard of Maryland also received a silver Congressional medal for his valor at Cowpens. The obverse of his medal depicts Howard on horseback chasing an enemy soldier, while Victory flies above him holding a laurel wreath. The Latin inscription reads in translation: "The American Congress to John Eager Howard, commander of an infantry regiment." The legend on the reverse elaborates: "Because, rushing suddenly on the wavering line of the foe, he gave a brilliant example of martial courage at the battle at Cowpens, 17 Jan. 1781."

Nathanael Greene Congressional Medal.
Designed by Augustin Dupré (1748-1833).
20th-century copies of the original 1787 medal. Bronze.
Gift of Captain and Mrs. William Jeffries Chewning, Jr., Society of the Cincinnati in the State of Virginia, 1963

In October 1781, Congress voted to honor Maj. Gen. Nathanael Greene with a gold medal commemorating his leadership during the battle at Eutaw Springs, the last major battle fought in South Carolina. The medal was struck in 1787, the year after Greene's death, and was presented to the general's widow, Catharine Littlefield Greene.

Arching over a bust profile of Greene, the Latin inscription on the medal's obverse translates: "The American Congress to Nathaniel Green, the distinguished leader." The reverse depicts Victory with the broken arms of the enemy under her feet, honoring "the safety of the Southern regions — the enemy conquered at Eutaw, 8 Sept. 1781."

The Society of the Cincinnati of the State of South Carolina

In May 1783 a delegation of Continental army officers in cantonment at Newburgh, New York, founded the Society of the Cincinnati to commemorate the achievements of the Revolution and to address their common concerns as they were preparing to disband. They took their name from the classical hero Cincinnatus, the citizen-soldier who led Rome to victory in war, but gave up his power and position to return to his home and plow. Their Institution, adopted May 13, 1783, laid out the "immutable principles" to which all members must subscribe and called for the establishment of a branch of the Society in each of the thirteen states.

On August 29, 1783, Maj. Gen. William Moultrie convened a meeting of Continental officers at City Tavern in Charleston to consider the proposals of the Institution. After careful deliberation, the officers voted to form the Society of the Cincinnati of the State of South Carolina, becoming the eighth of the constituent societies to organize. General Moultrie was elected president; Brig. Gen. Isaac Huger, vice president; Maj. Thomas Pinckney, secretary; Capt. Charles Lining, treasurer; and Lt. James Kennedy, assistant treasurer.

The South Carolina Society is the only branch among the southern states to have remained in continuous existence since its founding. Its members played a leading role in welcoming President Washington to Charleston during his 1791 tour of the southern states. In 1825, the surviving veterans and their descendants hosted a dinner for the Marquis de Lafayette, who added his signature to the South Carolina Society's original membership roll. Holding fast to their allegiance to the "One Society of Friends," South Carolina continued to send delegates to the General Society meetings during the Civil War. Three South Carolinians have served as president general of the Society of the Cincinnati: Charles Cotesworth Pinckney (1805-1825); Thomas Pinckney (1825-1828) and William McGowan Matthew (1995-1998).

Letter of William Moultrie (1730-1805), Charleston, to Maj. Gen. Baron Steuben, October 13, 1783, enclosing "The Proceedings of the Society of the Cincinnati of the State of South Carolina," August 29-October 6, 1783, endorsed by Thomas Pinckney.
The Society of the Cincinnati Archives

Writing to Steuben, who as acting president has sent out the original call from the General Society, Moultrie announces the formation of the South Carolina

branch of the Cincinnati in Charleston and forwards a copy of their proceedings and printed bylaws. He writes "So Laudable, so Honorable, & So Virtuous a Society cannot but meet with the approbation of every good man. My exertions shall not be wanting to give it every support."

Establishment of the Society of the Cincinnati. Charleston: Printed by J. Miller, 1783. Opening shown: "Rules and Bye-Laws of the Society of the Cincinnati Established in the State of South Carolina."

The Society of the Cincinnati Collections

At a meeting on September 18, 1783, a draft of the South Carolina Society bylaws was presented to the assembled members and, after "a paragraph by paragraph" debate, a final version was adopted along with the resolution that two hundred copies be printed. Reflecting the simmering controversy over the Society that had arisen in their state, the first article confirms the members' allegiance to the Society's Institution, but adds "with this reservation, that if any of the said Propositions or Rules, should by any construction be held obligatory on the Society to interfere, in any shape whatsoever, with the Civil Polity of this, any other of the United States, or the United States in general, this Society will not deem themselves bound thereby…."

The second article expands the Society's principle of supporting indigent officers and their wives to include the education of their children, "taking care to have the male children instructed in the mathematics, and such science as officers should be acquainted with, that if this country should be ever again unhappily plunged in war they may be more readily qualified to defend those Rights and Liberties, their Fathers were instrumental in establishing."

In a reference to the color of their enemy's uniform, the bylaws' final article, number 25, states: "No member shall appear in scarlet at any meeting of the Society."

Aedanus Burke (1743-1802). *Considerations on the Society or Order of Cincinnati; Lately Instituted by the Major-Generals, Brigadiers, and Other Officers of the American Army. Proving that It Creates a Race of Hereditary Patricians, or Nobility; and Interspersed with Remarks on its Consequences to the Freedom and Happiness of the Republick; Addressed to the People of South-Carolina, and Their Representatives. By Cassius.* Charleston: Printed for A. Timothy, 1783.

Library Acquisitions Fund Purchase, 2004

Aedanus Burke, the author of this anonymously issued pamphlet, immigrated to South Carolina from Ireland on the eve of the Revolution and quickly became an ardent supporter of the American cause. Burke heard about the establishment of the Society of the Cincinnati from General Moultrie in August 1783 and immediately determined that he would oppose it. His pamphlet denouncing the Society as an anti-Republican, aristocratic organization was published in Charleston in early October. While his attack was against the Society in general, he argued that the impact of such an hereditary peerage "will be sooner and more severely felt" in the stratified society of South Carolina. *Considerations* was reprinted in pamphlet form in Philadelphia, Hartford, New York and Newport, and published in newspapers in Massachusetts and Connecticut. The following year Honoré-Gabriel de Riquetti, comte de Mirabeau, drew from Burke's work for his own *Considerations sur l'Ordre de Cincinnatus*, further spreading the controversy.

Society of the Cincinnati Eagle of William Smith Stevens. Made by the firm of Duvall and Francastel, Paris, after sketches by Pierre Charles L'Enfant. 1784. Gold and enamel.

On loan from William Smith Stevens, Society of the Cincinnati of the State of South Carolina.

"List of members of the South Carolina Society who ordered Eagles from Major Pierre L'Enfant." Copy endorsed by Henry Knox, secretary general, July 21, 1787.

The Society of the Cincinnati Archives

William Smith Stevens was a surgeon's mate in the General Hospital of the Southern Department during the war. He was present at the founding meeting of the South Carolina Society and signed his name to the original South Carolina roll. The accompanying document, shown here, lists William Smith Stevens among twenty-six subscribers from South Carolina who ordered an Eagle from the first issue made in France at the direction of Pierre L'Enfant.

Six of William Smith Stevens' lineal descendants have been members of the Society of the Cincinnati of the State of South Carolina and, with one exception, they have been named in his honor. The most recent representative of the line is William Smith Stevens, Jr., M.D. — a surgeon as was his propositus.

Copperplate of the Society of the Cincinnati of the State of South Carolina Membership Certificate. Engraved by William Keenan of Evans & Cogswell Engravers, Charleston, 1821.

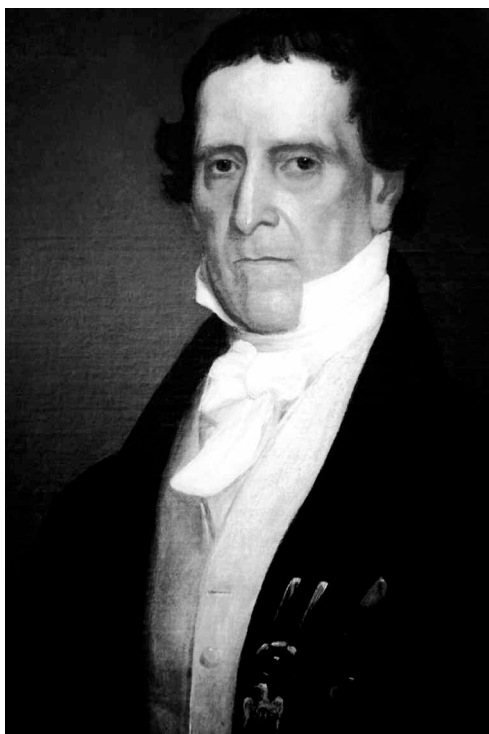On loan from the Society of the Cincinnati of the State of South Carolina

The original members of the South Carolina Society were eligible to receive a membership certificate, known as a "diploma," from the General Society signed by George Washington. By 1821, the South Carolina Society had created its own certificate for hereditary members. Based on the original design by Pierre L'Enfant, the iconography of the diploma depicts the triumph of America and her French allies over Great Britain.

Major James Hamilton **(1750-1833). Miniature portrait by Charles Willson Peale (1741-1827). Late 18th century. Watercolor on ivory.**

Gift of the Society of the Cincinnati of the State of South Carolina, 2002 (Back cover illustration)

Born in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, James Hamilton left his medical studies to join the Pennsylvania Rifle Battalion at the outbreak of the war. As a captain in command of a company of the First Pennsylvania Regiment, he won praise for his actions at the Battle of Long Island in 1776. He participated in nearly every major action in the north until 1781, when he was sent as part of Gen. Anthony Wayne's brigade to Virginia in time to take part in the Yorktown siege. After the British surrender, his regiment was detached to reinforce General Greene in South Carolina.

After the war, Hamilton signed his name to both the Pennsylvania and South Carolina Society's rolls, but he married and settled in South Carolina. He was elected president of the South Carolina Society in 1829, serving until his death in 1833.

Dr. William Read (1754-1845). Unknown artist. Circa 1835. Oil on canvas.

On loan from Oliver Middleton Read 3rd, Society of the Cincinnati of the State of South Carolina

William Read joined the Continental army in New Jersey at an early age and saw action at the battle of Monmouth. In 1780 he was sent to join the southern campaign, serving in the Hospital Department under David Olyphant. He settled in Charleston after the war. Depicted here wearing his Eagle, Dr. Read was a founding member of the South Carolina Society and succeeded James Hamilton as its president in 1834. The last surviving original member of the South Carolina Society, Dr. Read died at age ninety-one in 1845.

South Carolina in the American Revolution: A Brief Chronology

1775

January 11-17. First Provincial Congress meets at the State House in Charleston.

April 21. Whigs in Charleston seize arms and gunpowder from royal authorities.

June 14. Provincial Congress elects Council of Safety and names Henry Laurens council president.

July 4. Loyalists seize ammunition at Ninety Six in Newberry County.

September 15. Whigs capture Fort Johnson in Charleston Harbor. Royal Governor William Campbell flees the city and takes refuge on the HMS *Tamar*.

November 19-21. Whig garrison at Ninety Six is besieged by Loyalists.

December. The Whig "Snow Campaign" temporarily subdues Loyalist resistance in the backcountry.

1776

March 26. First state constitution is adopted by the South Carolina Provincial Congress.

June 28. Battle at Fort Sullivan — the first major defeat of the war for the British forces.

July-August. Whig campaign to break up alliance between the Cherokees and Loyalists in the backcountry, concluding with the "Ring Fight" in Laurens County, August 3-15.

1777

May 20. Treaty of Dewitt's Corner secures Cherokee allegiance to Whigs and opens Cherokee lands to settlement.

1779

February 3. British forces are repulsed at Port Royal Island by Gen. William Moultrie and the South Carolina militia.

May 11-June 20. Gen. Augustine Prevost launches a campaign against Charleston, but is defeated by Moultrie at Stono River.

1780

February 11. Gen. Henry Clinton begins a second campaign against Charleston.

April 14. Lt. Col. Banastre Tarleton and Maj. Patrick Ferguson capture Moncks Corner, blocking the escape of Continental troops from Charleston.

May 6. Fort Moultrie is captured by British forces.

May 9-12. Bombardment of Charleston by British forces encircling the city.

May 12. Gen. Benjamin Lincoln surrenders Charleston and 5,000 troops to Gen. Henry Clinton.

May 29. Buford's Massacre, Lancaster County. Tarleton's dragoons brutally defeat Col. Alexander Buford's Virginia Continental troops.

July 12. Huck's Defeat, York County. Pennsylvania Loyalist commander Christian Huck is killed by Whig partisan troops at Williamson's Plantation.

August 16. Battle at Camden, Kershaw County. Gen. Charles Cornwallis' forces defeat Americans under the command of Gen. Horatio Gates.

August 19. Battle at Musgrove's Mill, Union County. Whig partisans defeat the Loyalists.

October 7. Battle at King's Mountain, York County. Americans defeat Loyalists under the command of Maj. Patrick Ferguson, who is killed in the battle.

November 9. Battle at Fishdam Ford, Chester County. British regulars from Tarleton's Legion attack Whig militia led by Gen. Thomas Sumter.

November 20. Blackstock's Plantation, Union County. Tarleton leads his troops against Sumter's militia. The battle is inconclusive but demonstrates that militia could withstand open combat with British regulars.

December 5. Gen. Nathanael Greene of Rhode Island takes command of the Southern Department, replacing Gen. Horatio Gates.

1781

January 17. Battle at Cowpens, Cherokee County. Gen. Daniel Morgan leads Continental and militia forces to defeat Tarleton's Legion. Cowpens was one of the largest battles in South Carolina and a turning point for the Americans.

April 25. Battle at Hobkirk's Hill, Kershaw County. British Col. Francis Rawdon defeats Greene's troops just north of Camden; however, the British suffer greater casualties than the Americans and abandon Camden to fall back toward Charleston.

May 8-12. Fort Motte, Calhoun County. Francis Marion besieges the fortified plantation home of Rebecca Brewton Motte, who authorizes the Americans to burn her house to drive out the British.

May 19-21. Fort Galphin, Aiken County. British and Loyalist forces surrender this key fort on the Savannah River.

May 22-June 19. Siege of Ninety Six, Newberry County. Loyalists successfully defend the Star Fort and fortified town from American attack for twenty-eight days.

June 5-6. Georgetown, Georgetown County. Francis Marion's partisans force the British to evacuate the town of Georgetown and consolidate their forces in Charleston.

August 4. The execution of Col. Isaac Hayne for spying and treason inflames the citizens of occupied Charleston against the British.

September 8. Battle at Eutaw Springs, Orangeburg County. General Greene, commanding partisan and Continental troops, attacks British regulars near Nelson's Ferry on the Santee River. The battle was inconclusive but the British suffer irreplaceable casualties.

October 19. Yorktown, Virginia. Gen. Charles Cornwallis surrenders his army of 8,000 British and Hessian troops to General Washington and French Admiral de Grasse.

1782

April 21. Fort Dorchester, Dorchester County. American troops capture this strategic town on the Ashley River, upstream from Charleston.

August 27. Tar Bluff, Colleton County. Col. John Laurens leads a detachment of Continental troops into an ambush by Loyalist militia. Laurens, son of the South Carolina statesman Henry Laurens, is mortally wounded.

November 14. Dills Bluff, Charleston County. This skirmish on James Island was the last verifiable combat in South Carolina.

December 14. The British evacuate Charleston.

1783

August 29. Continental army officers meet at the City Tavern in Charleston to establish the Society of the Cincinnati of the State of South Carolina.

September 3. Peace Treaty signed in Paris, concluding the American Revolution.
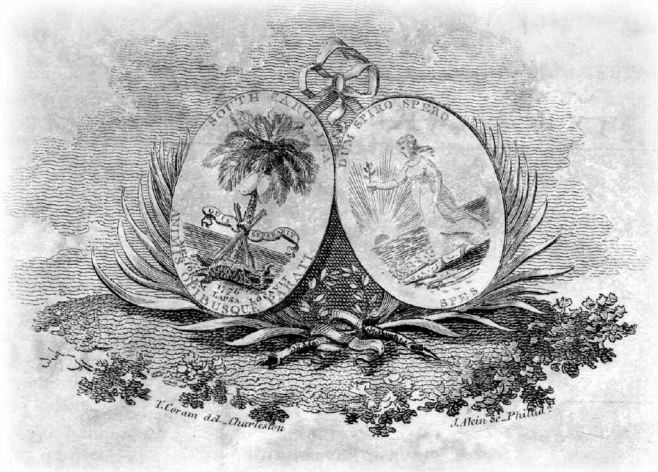
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

THE ROBERT CHARLES LAWRENCE FERGUSSON COLLECTION

Established in 1988, the Fergusson Collection honors the memory of Lieutenant Robert Charles Lawrence Fergusson (1943-1967). A member of the Society of the Cincinnati in the State of Virginia who died of wounds sustained in combat in Vietnam, Lieutenant Fergusson was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, the Bronze Star Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, and the Purple Heart. The growing collection that bears his name includes rare books, broadsides, manuscripts, maps, works of art and artifacts pertaining to the military history of the American Revolution and the art of war in the eighteenth century.