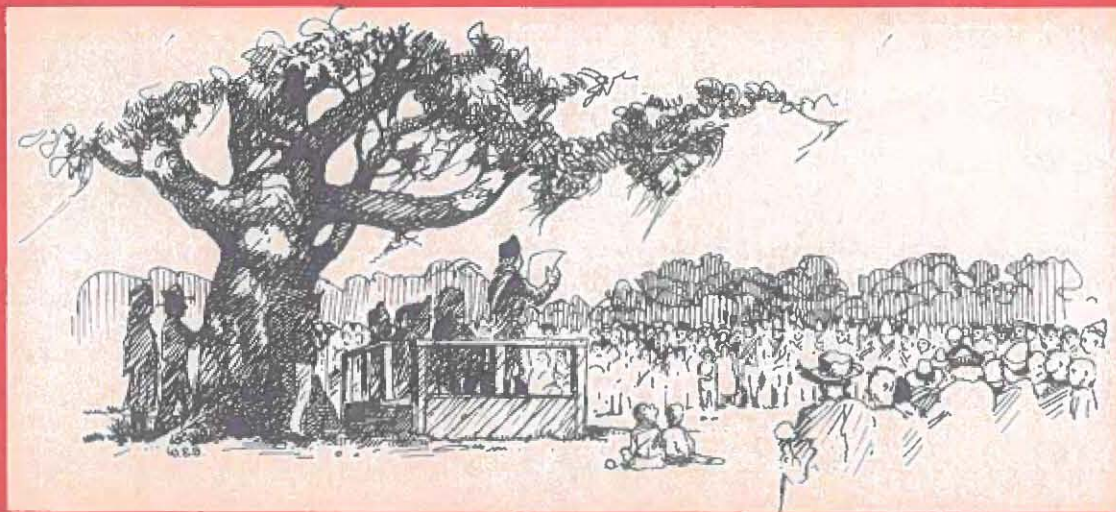


# SOUTH CAROLINA BECOMES A STATE

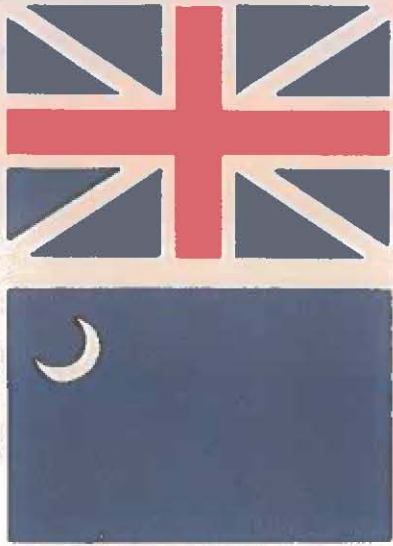
The Road from Colony to Independence

1765 ★ 1776



by Terry W. Lipscomb

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY



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PUBLISHED BY THE  
SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY  
1430 SENATE STREET, P.O. BOX 11669, COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA 29211  
FIRST EDITION, OCTOBER, 1976; REPRINTED JULY 1988

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THE COVER: As part of the ceremonies officially proclaiming independence in South Carolina, a military parade was held at the Liberty Tree outside Charlestown at 3:00 P.M. on August 5, 1776. The Declaration of Independence was read aloud to the assembled troops and citizens by Major Barnard Elliott.



1. Lord William Campbell



2. John Rutledge

## Foreword

When South Carolina joined with twelve other English colonies to declare its independence from King George III and the British Parliament, it was breaking radically with its past history and with long-cherished traditions. This might seem out of character for the tradition-conscious society that flourished on the banks of the Ashley and the Cooper, but whenever South Carolinians have taken up arms, they have generally pointed to the radicalism of their opponents as the cause. This was the case in 1776, when South Carolinians believed that the policies of the British government threatened their liberties as Englishmen. The issue was the preservation of South Carolina's century-old tradition of freedom and self-government, and their only recourse was in union with the other American colonies.

The transition from colony to state was marked by changes in the symbols of authority. In place of the British Union Jack, a crescent flag flew over the harbor forts and garrisons. The royal seal of the province, with its lion and unicorn, was replaced by the state seal, with its palmetto device and its twin dates of March 26 and July 4—commemorating the adoption of South Carolina's first constitution and of the Declaration of Independence. In the Assembly chamber of the State House, full length formal portraits of royal family members in their robes of state were removed from the walls and placed in storage. In that same chamber, the Provincial Congress ordered that an American rattlesnake standard be displayed, and drafted a new form of government under its aegis. Lord William Campbell, the well-intentioned but unfortunate royal governor, last in a succession dating back to William Sayle in 1670, took refuge on a British ship in 1775 and was succeeded six months later by John Rutledge, first president and governor of South Carolina and first in a line of state governors extending to the present day.

The passing of the royal government was a cause of deep regret among many South Carolinians, for few colonies had prospered more under the British imperial system or had enjoyed a more harmonious relationship with England. Founded under the Restoration government after the overthrow of the Puritan regime in England, Carolina had long defended Britain's southern frontier in America against the Spanish and French. The affluent Carolina society of the mid-eighteenth century recognized the Church of England as its established religion and shared the opinions and pastimes of contemporary English gentry. Sons of South Carolina's planter class prepared for public life by attending English private schools and universities and by studying law at the Inns of Court in London.

How South Carolina gradually became estranged from Great Britain, how it associated with the other colonies for common defense, and how in conjunction with them, it took part in the founding of the United States, is the subject of this booklet. We have not attempted to carry this narrative beyond August of 1776, feeling that the story of South Carolina's fight for independence properly belongs in a separate publication. The purpose of this booklet is to present in chronological outline, and in simple and readable form, the major events of South Carolina's progression from colony to state during the years from 1765 to 1776.



## Britain Attempts to Tax the Colony and Control Its Assembly

**OCTOBER, 1765.** This month marked the highest point of South Carolina's excitement over the Stamp Act. On Friday, October 18, the vessel *Planters Adventure* arrived in Charlestown harbor carrying a shipment of stamps which were to be used when the act went into effect on November 1. Protest demonstrations immediately broke out in Charlestown, forcing the lieutenant governor to transfer the stamps to a British warship and finally to Fort Johnson.

For nine days, civil disorder reigned in the city, while mobs searched the houses of prominent citizens suspected of having stamps or stamped paper in their possession. On October 28, both George Saxby and Caleb Lloyd, South Carolinians who had been appointed inspector and distributor of stamps under the law, resigned their commissions under pressure from their fellow citizens.

During this same period in October, South Carolina was being ably represented by Thomas Lynch, Christopher Gadsden, and John Rutledge at the Stamp Act Congress in New York, where delegates from nine colonies drafted statements of

colonial rights and petitioned the British government to repeal the controversial act.

**MAY 3, 1766.** Charlestown received its first news that Parliament, by a vote of 275 to 167, had repealed the Stamp Act on February 22. The news set off a general celebration in the city, though the townspeople had an even more enthusiastic holiday on June 4, when arrival of the official word from London happened to coincide with King George's birthday.

Actually, enforcement of the act had broken down in South Carolina by the beginning of February. With no stamps, the courts closed and the customs office was forced to suspend operations. Since the colony's rice export enterprise was carried on in the winter, Charlestown harbor was soon filled with an impressive fleet of stranded merchant vessels, and the town's waterfront and taverns were filled with a potentially dangerous crowd of out-of-work sailors. In order to undo some of the mischief that the Charlestown patriots had caused by keeping the stamps out of circulation, royal officials

3 The Exchange Building (right foreground) dominates the Charlestown waterfront in this 1773 painting by Thomas Leitch.

found it necessary to dispense with the stamps and issue special certificates clearing ships for departure.

**MAY 8, 1766.** The South Carolina Commons House of Assembly voted unanimously to provide for a statue of William Pitt, the Earl of Chatham, to be erected in the province in testimony of "the Obligations they lye under in Common with the rest of His Majesty's American Subjects, as well for his services in General to His King and Country, as for his noble Disinterested and Generous Assistance afforded them towards obtaining the Repeal of the Stamp Act."

Pitt, the British statesman who had led the empire to victory over the French only a few years before, had endeared himself to Americans by his eloquent opposition to the Stamp Act in Parliament. The statue was executed by the English sculptor Joseph Wilton and was erected in 1770 at the intersection of Broad and Meeting streets in Charlestown. Today it stands in Washington Park behind City Hall, only a few hundred feet from its original location. Pitt's missing right

arm, which originally held the Magna Charta, was carried away by a British cannon ball fired from James Island on April 16, 1780, during the siege of Charlestown.

**JULY 22, 1769–DECEMBER 13, 1770.** The Townshend Acts, passed by the British Parliament in 1767, were an attempt to raise revenue by levying duties on imported glass, lead, paint, paper, and tea. During this period of July 22, 1769, to December 13, 1770, the planters, mechanics, and merchants of South Carolina protested against the Acts by refusing to import most British manufactured goods. The non-importation movement in the colonies collapsed after April, 1770, when Parliament repealed all of the duties except for that on tea. Since the royal government had clearly not abandoned its scheme to tax the colonies, South Carolinians took a stand on princi-

ple and did not resume importing British goods until the other colonies had already abandoned the movement.

**DECEMBER 8, 1769.** The lower house of the South Carolina Assembly voted to send 1500 pounds sterling to aid John Wilkes, the English radical. Wilkes had been arrested and imprisoned for seditious libel against the king and government. Although he was an absolute rascal, the American colonies became interested in his case because, in its eagerness to prosecute him, the British government had violated his legal rights. By appropriating the Wilkes Fund and supporting the cause of liberty within Great Britain, the South Carolina Assembly turned the tables on the mother country.

For the first time, South Carolina had taken the initiative of the revolutionary movement away from New England. The



6. A Tudor rose was used in the design of the 1765 British revenue stamps which were intended to be used on most legal papers in the colonies as well as on some additional items, such as newspapers and playing cards.



4. For the statue, far left, commissioned by the South Carolina Assembly, Joseph Wilton portrayed William Pitt in the guise of a Roman senator.

5. John Wilkes, left, provoked the wrath of George III by attacking the monarch in issue No. 45 of his paper, the *North Briton*. Perhaps even more ill-advised was his attack on the artist William Hogarth in issue No. 17. Hogarth retaliated by drawing this likeness of Wilkes for posterity.

southern colony became the focus of the royal government's displeasure, and the king's ministers in London began to take a critical look at the financial power wielded by the South Carolina Commons House of Assembly.

The royal governor soon received an "additional instruction" requiring the concurrence of the colony's upper house, or Council, on matters relating to tax bills. The Commons House viewed this as an affront to its traditional powers and prerogatives, and the result was a legislative deadlock which paralyzed government in South Carolina for five years.

In fact, the colonial Assembly passed only two pieces of legislation during its last four years of existence. It is probable that this breakdown in the normal operation of representative government had as

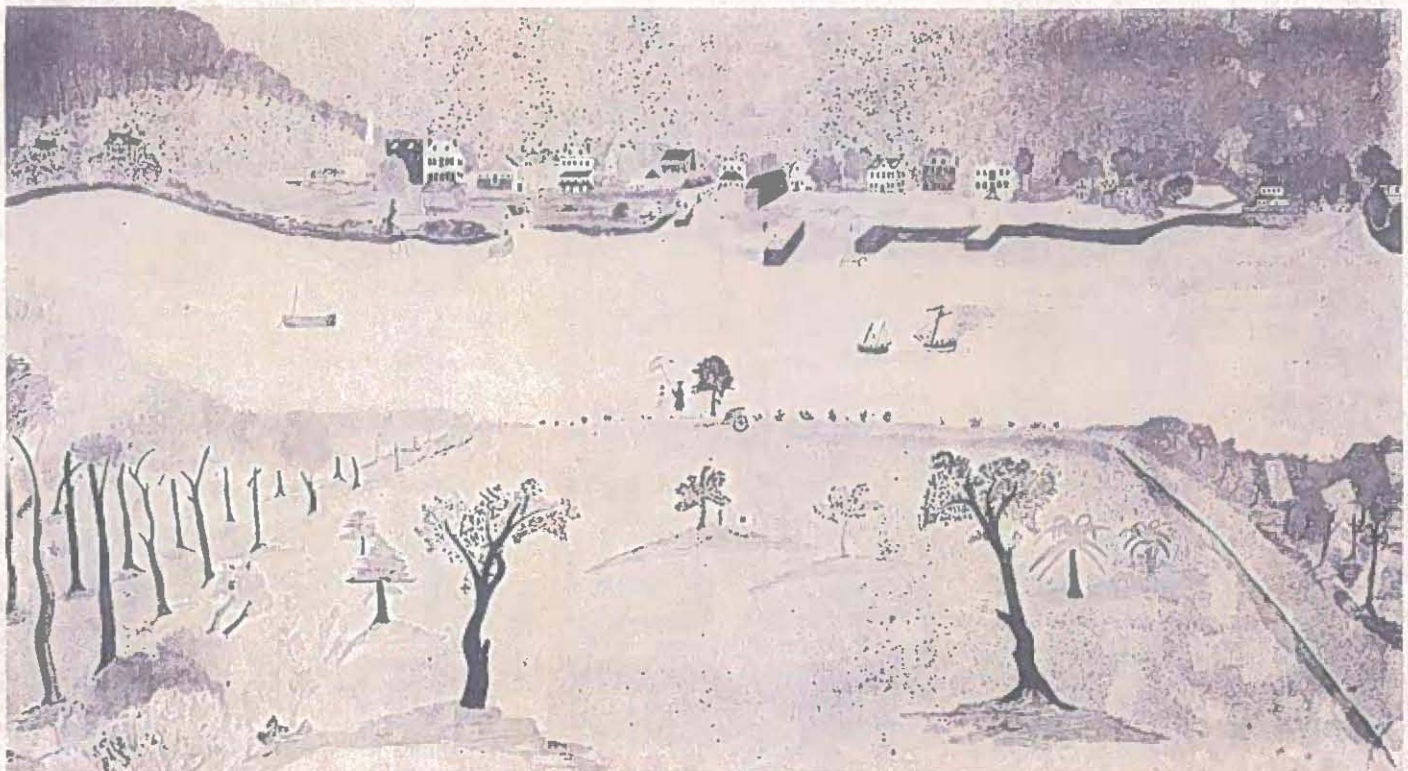
much to do with starting a revolution in this colony as did the succession of British revenue acts cited by history books.

**OCTOBER 8, 1772.** For over half of the turbulent decade that led to the Revolution, South Carolina was under the administration of its own native lieutenant governor, William Bull. The governors sent out from England during this period did little to maintain cordial relations between the colony and its parent government across the Atlantic.

The ineptitude of the chief executives reached a high point on October 8, 1772, when Lord Charles Greville Montagu, royal governor of South Carolina, moved the government of the province from Charlestown to Beaufort. His intention was to make it inconvenient for Charles-

town patriots to attend the autumn session of the Assembly, leaving a rump legislature which could be more easily managed by the royal faction. Since only five members of the Assembly failed to appear on the specified day, the attempt was a complete failure, and within the month the governor and Assembly were back in Charlestown. This fiasco ended with Montagu's eventual return to England and his resignation. Four years later, the Declaration of Independence recorded the colonists' attitude toward this type of high-handedness in one of its charges against the king: "He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their Public Records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures."

7. This watercolor shows Beaufort about twenty-five years after it became the scene of Governor Montagu's confrontation with the Commons House of Assembly.





**MR. PALMER'S ASSORTMENT OF TEAS FOR AMERICA.**

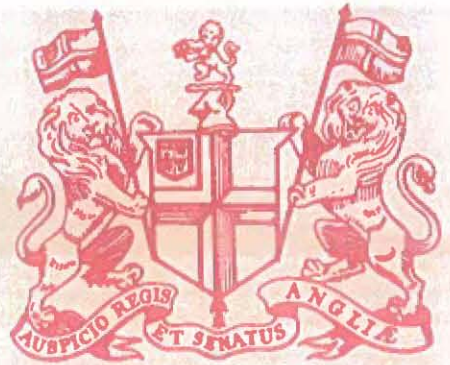
		Boston.	So. Carolina.	New York.	Philadelphia.	Total.
Bohea,	l. ch <sup>r</sup>	268	132	568	568	1536
Congo,	fm <sup>r</sup> d <sup>r</sup>	20	10	20	20	70
Single,	d <sup>r</sup>	80	50	80	80	290
Hylon,	d <sup>r</sup>	20	10	20	20	70
Souchong,	d <sup>r</sup>	10	5	10	10	35

**WEIGHT OF TEA EXPORTED TO AMERICA.**

Bohea,	562,481
Single,	22,546
Hylon,	5,285
Souchong,	2,392
Congo,	6,015
<b>Total lbs.,</b>	<b>598,719</b>

8. The original records of the East India Company show not only the different types of tea exported to South Carolina in 1773, but the quantity of chests by type. The shipment to Charlestown cost 157 pounds freight. The documents were printed in 1884 in Francis Drake's book, *Tea Leaves*.



9. The arms of the United East India Company were adopted in 1709, replacing the familiar "three ships in azure" that had originally served as the company's arms.

## The Tea Crisis and the Boston Port Act

**DECEMBER 3, 1773.** A mass meeting to protest the British tax on tea was held in Charlestown's handsome new Exchange Building. The tax in question was the same Townshend duty that had been imposed on tea since 1767, but recent events in England had again made it a source of irritation to Americans. As part of an effort to straighten out the East India Company's incredibly mismanaged finances, the British Parliament had granted the company special trading privileges in the American colonies. Specifically, the company was empowered to sell tea directly through its own agents in the colonies, saving the expense of middlemen and export duties. What the king's ministers hoped, and the patriots feared, was that the resulting increase in the volume of tea sales would lead to gradual acceptance of the tax.

The meeting at the Exchange was called on December 3 because 257 chests of East India Company tea had arrived in Charlestown two days before in Captain Alexander Curling's ship, the *London*. George Gabriel Powell was elected chairman of the meeting, and it became apparent in the ensuing debate that most of the citizens present favored absolute non-importation of teas subject to tax. The East India Company's consignees,

who were present at the meeting, received the thanks and applause of the assembly when they promised not to accept the tea.

If this had been the full extent of the meeting's historical importance, it would be an interesting, but hardly a remarkable event. Strangely enough, however, the present government of the state of South Carolina traces its lineage to this anti-tea rally. As historian David Duncan Wallace

10. For two hundred years, East India House served as the London headquarters of the East India Company. In this prospect of Leadenhall Street, the building is shown in the right foreground as it appeared in the eighteenth century. East India House had formerly been the town house of Lord Craven, one of the eight Lords Proprietors of Carolina.





11. This detail from the Thomas Leitch painting of Charlestown shows the Exchange Building as it appeared in 1773.

points out, the colonial Assembly was the predecessor, but not the parent of the modern legislature. The meeting of December 3 led without a break to subsequent meetings and then to the General Committee, the Provincial Congresses, and finally the state General Assembly.

**DECEMBER 22, 1773.** Robert Dalway Haliday, the collector of customs for Charlestown, had the tea shipment seized, unloaded, and stored in the warehouse under the Exchange for non-payment of duties. Since the consignees refused to receive the tea, it became liable to seizure by the crown after twenty days in port. A second meeting of the citizens on December 17 had resolved that the tea should not be landed, and Captain Curling received several anonymous letters threatening damage to his ship unless it was moved away from the wharf. When Lieutenant Governor William Bull was informed of the threats, he called an emergency meeting of the Council at his home. The sheriff was instructed by the lieutenant governor to assist the collector of customs if necessary, and to arrest anyone who attempted to obstruct the landing of the tea. Accordingly, the customs officers began moving the chests into the Exchange warehouse at sunrise on December 22, and by noon their task was almost finished. The patriots were

taken completely by surprise, but they declared themselves satisfied as long as the unpopular merchandise remained under lock and key.

South Carolina was the only colony to dispose of the East India Company tea in this manner. In Philadelphia and New York the ships were forced to carry the tea back to England, and Boston's entire consignment was thrown into the harbor on the night of December 16, 1773, during the famous "Tea Party." The outcome of the South Carolina story was quite curious. The tea remained in the Exchange until the government of the province fell into the hands of the patriots, and it was sold in 1776 to provide funds for defense of the colony against the British.

**JANUARY 20, 1774.** For the fourth time since the tea shipment had first arrived in Charlestown, the patriots held a mass meeting at the Exchange Building. Previous meetings had simply discussed measures and passed resolutions, then adjourned until a specific future date. This meeting appointed a committee which was empowered to fill vacancies in its own membership, to draw up agendas for future meetings, and to summon a general meeting whenever it considered one necessary. This was the first step in the creation of a shadow government con-

trolled by the patriots and existing alongside the legal government of the province.

**MARCH, 1774.** The British opinion of South Carolina's recent opposition to the Tea Act was summed up by the Earl of Dartmouth in his letter of February 5, 1774, to Lieutenant Governor Bull: "What passed at Charles Town . . . altho not equal in criminality to the proceedings in other colonies can yet be considered in no other light than that of a most unwarrantable insult to the authority of this Kingdom." The ministry's first order of priority, however, was to punish the impudent Bostonians who had thrown 342 chests of tea into the harbor.

In March, 1774, the British Parliament passed the Boston Port Act, closing Boston to all shipping until such time as the townspeople made restitution to the East India Company for the tea destroyed on December 16. Just prior to the passage of this bill, a petition was presented to the House of Lords by a group of Americans in London, protesting the injustice of the legislation and asking for restraint on the part of the British government. Over a third of the petition's signers were South Carolinians.

When Parliament later proposed two new bills, one of which would suspend the charter of Massachusetts, the American

community in London submitted a second petition in protest. Of thirty signatures on this document, no less than sixteen were those of South Carolinians. Parliament disregarded the petitions and proceeded to enact a series of measures designed to make an example of Boston. These acts came to be known in America as the Intolerable Acts, and they led directly to the American Revolution.

**JUNE 24, 1774.** A committee of Charlestown gentlemen officially organized and began receiving donations for the relief of Boston. When news of the Boston Port Act had reached South

Carolina on May 31, the citizens had reacted with anger and had begun making plans to send assistance to the Bostonians. The *South Carolina Gazette* termed the act "the crudest Policy that ever disgraced a British Senate." When a violent storm hit Charlestown on the same day the legislation was to go into effect, the newspaper considered it significant that the effects of divine wrath against British tyranny were being felt so far away from Boston.

A New England historian has stated that, although South Carolina was one of the last colonies to learn of the closing of

Boston, it was the first outside New England to come to the aid of the distressed inhabitants there. The first ship loaded with rice was ready to depart for Salem, Massachusetts, by June 27, and many others followed. The young people of Charlestown raised contributions for Boston by staging a benefit theatrical performance; tickets could be purchased in exchange for rice as well as money. According to a 1778 report published by the Boston committee appointed to accept contributions, the money and supplies received from South Carolina exceeded those from any other colony.

12 Two generations of William Bulls served as Lieutenant Governors of the province. The younger Bull's home, where the council met on December 21, 1773, is no longer standing. His father's home at 35 Meeting Street is shown.



## The First Continental Congress and the First Provincial Congress

**JULY 6-8, 1774.** A general meeting was held in Charlestown to consider the most recent acts of Parliament and to decide on an appropriate course of action. Even the most remote parts of the province were invited to send delegates to this meeting, so that it became the first revolutionary assembly in which the Carolina back country was represented. Indeed, this was the first time that back country men had been granted a significant voice in the public business of South

Carolina. Although a great part of the colony's population lived far from the Atlantic Coast, only the low country parishes were effectively represented in the Commons House of Assembly.

The most important outcome of this meeting was the election of delegates to a general congress in Philadelphia. The five men chosen to represent South Carolina were Henry Middleton, John Rutledge, Thomas Lynch, Christopher Gadsden, and Edward Rutledge. They were given

full power "to concert, agree to, and effectually prosecute, such legal measures, as . . . should be most likely to obtain a repeal of the late acts of Parliament, and a redress of American grievances." However, a loophole was left in their instructions at the suggestion of some thoughtful men, so that the province would not be bound by the decisions of the congress if it outvoted the South Carolina delegates and decided in favor of independence.

**SEPTEMBER 5–OCTOBER 26, 1774.**

The First Continental Congress met in Philadelphia. In an attempt to pressure Parliament into repealing all of its objectionable acts, this body not only revived the non-importation movement, but also agreed to cut off exports to Great Britain after one year. On October 22, 1774, Henry Middleton of South Carolina was elected president of Congress after Virginia's Peyton Randolph resigned.

**NOVEMBER 3, 1774.** A committee of Charlestown patriots, having discovered the presence of several tea chests in the cargo of a recently arrived merchant ship, persuaded the owners of the tea to destroy it. Accordingly, seven chests of tea were emptied into the Cooper River on November 3. A few weeks later, one chest of tea was thrown into Winyah Bay at Georgetown under similar circumstances.

**NOVEMBER 5–15, 1774.** The grand juries for Camden, Cheraws, and Ninety Six districts declared in their presentments, which were laid before the Commons House of Assembly and published in the newspapers, that Parliament's at-

tempts to tax the colonies were a grievance of the most alarming nature. The presentments were returned in answer to an inflammatory charge by circuit judge William Henry Drayton, an enthusiastic new convert to the patriot cause.

The grand jury for Cheraws District met at Long Bluff, an early courthouse town on Great Pee Dee River about fifteen miles downstream from Cheraw. The language of their presentment was typical of the others: "[We] are fully convinced, that we cannot be constitutionally taxed, but by Representatives of our own Election, or bound by any Laws but those to which they have assented. This Right . . . we deem so essential to our Freedom, and so ingrafted in our Constitution, that we are determined to defend it, at the Hazard of our Lives and Fortunes."

The names of the jurors for the three districts included many of upper South Carolina's most influential men and several future heroes of the fight for independence. At Long Bluff, for example, the jury included Alexander McIntosh and Henry William Harrington (later brigadier general of the North Carolina

militia), two of the most famous Revolutionary soldiers of the Pee Dee. On the Camden jury, we find John Cantey, whose home was later used as headquarters by Francis Marion, and Jasper Sutton, one of George Washington's 1791 hosts in the Camden area. On the Ninety Six jury appear the names of John Caldwell and Michael Watson, both destined to lose their lives in the Revolutionary War, and Patrick Calhoun, leader of the Long Cane community and father of the American statesman, John C. Calhoun.

**JANUARY 11–17, 1775.** When South Carolina's delegates to the First Continental Congress returned to the colony and made their report, the General Committee of the province decided to call a special assembly to consider the issues that had been raised.

The First Provincial Congress, a representative assembly with delegates apportioned by the General Committee, held its first session at Charlestown during January 11–17, 1775. Here again, the patriots' need to broaden their political base beyond the coast resulted in an increased role for the back country in the revolutionary government. For example, the area of South Carolina between the Broad and Saluda Rivers, which had no representation in the Commons House of Assembly, sent ten members to this session of the First Provincial Congress. Similar election districts were created throughout the northern part of the colony.

For the first time, delegates from both the back country and the low country sat down together in a formal legislative assembly to transact business. Arguments between the two factions were not long in arising. The blunt frontiersmen were unaccustomed to parliamentary procedure with its continual debating, moving, seconding, committing, recommitting, reporting, and amending. They were impatient with "fine speeches," and they considered all the procrastination and delay to be a deliberate plot by the rice planters and the townspeople "to weary them out in order to thin the House and transact business their own way." At one point, Henry William Harrington, a



13. Today the site of Long Bluff is designated only by a state historical marker. The inscription on the reverse side of this marker reads: "At a Circuit Court held here on November 15, 1774, more than a year before the Declaration of Independence, the Grand Jury of Cheraws District denied the right of Parliament to levy taxes on them and declared themselves ready to defend with their lives and fortunes the right to obey only those laws made by their own elected representatives."

spokesman from the Welsh Neck settlement of upper Pee Dee, stood up and threatened to lead a back country walk-out unless the assembly concluded its business that very day. As an exasperated Henry Laurens complained, "According to their Ideas everything might have been completed with extreme facility and no more words than are necessary in the bargain and sale of a Cow."

The principal topics of discussion at

this session were the measures adopted by the First Continental Congress, including the non-importation movement proposed under the newly created Continental Association. After September 10, 1775, colonial products were to be withheld from British markets, and hopefully British merchants would pressure their government into meeting American demands. South Carolina's delegates to the Continental Congress had secured an ex-

emption for rice in order to prevent their colony from bearing a disproportionate share of the economic burden imposed by the Association. This protected South Carolina's largest money crop, but planters of other crops were naturally angry over the arrangement. The Provincial Congress had to work out an elaborate compensation scheme for indigo planters and others affected by the Association.

## The Aftermath of Lexington and Concord

**APRIL 19, 1775.** In Massachusetts, British regular troops opened fire on New England minutemen at Lexington Common, and later that morning the colonists met the redcoats in force at Old North Bridge in Concord. This marked the beginning of the Revolutionary War.

**APRIL 21-22, 1775.** In South Carolina, the patriots seized the public arms and gunpowder in Charlestown. News had recently arrived from England that Parliament had not only refused to repeal the hated acts, but was shipping additional troops to America to enforce them. South Carolina patriots assumed that the British meant war.

William Henry Drayton, Arthur Middleton, Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, William Gibbes, and Edward Weyman were appointed a Secret Committee of five to put the colony in a state of defense. On the night of April 21, parties were sent to seize the public gunpowder in Cochran's magazine on Charlestown neck and in Hobcaw magazine on the east side of the Cooper River. At eleven o'clock the same night, a group of patriots presided over by such respected citizens as Thomas Lynch and Henry Laurens broke into the State House armory and removed eight hundred stands of arms, two hundred cutlasses, and a quantity of cartouches, flints, and matches. The heavier part of this armament was carried no further than the basements of two brick buildings adjoining the State House, and the enterprise

was completed in less than three hours. The patriots would have carried out the break-in in broad daylight but did not wish to offend the well-loved Lieutenant Governor William Bull.

The next morning Governor Bull, attempting to discover the perpetrators of

14 The two brick buildings at the northwest corner of the State House were owned by Secret Committee member William Gibbes. Charlestown patriots took advantage of this situation when they raided the royal armory in the upper story of the State House.





the deed, interrogated the commander of the town watch and Mrs. Mary Pratt, the keeper of the State House. Although both of these individuals had seen and recognized the people involved, they protested their ignorance. Bull proceeded to inform the Commons House of Assembly about the theft, although he was well aware that the principal culprits were members of that body. Upon receiving the governor's message, the members of the Commons House first broke into laughter, then formally referred the matter to a committee which deliberated for two days. The governor finally received a copy of their report to the house, which stated: "That with all the inquiry your Committee have made, they are not able

to obtain any certain Intelligence relative to the removal of the Public Arms and Gun Powder, as mentioned in His Honor's Message; but think there is reason to suppose that some of the inhabitants of this Colony may have been induced to take so extraordinary and uncommon a step in consequence of the late alarming accounts from Great Britain."

**MAY 8, 1775.** Not until this day was the first news of Lexington and Concord received in South Carolina, carried on a thirteen-day voyage from Salem, Massachusetts, by the brigantine *Industry*. Captain Edward Allen, the ship's master, arrived in Charlestown bringing the complete newspaper account of the

battles as published in the *Essex Gazette*. The paper was dated April 25, the same day he sailed from Massachusetts.

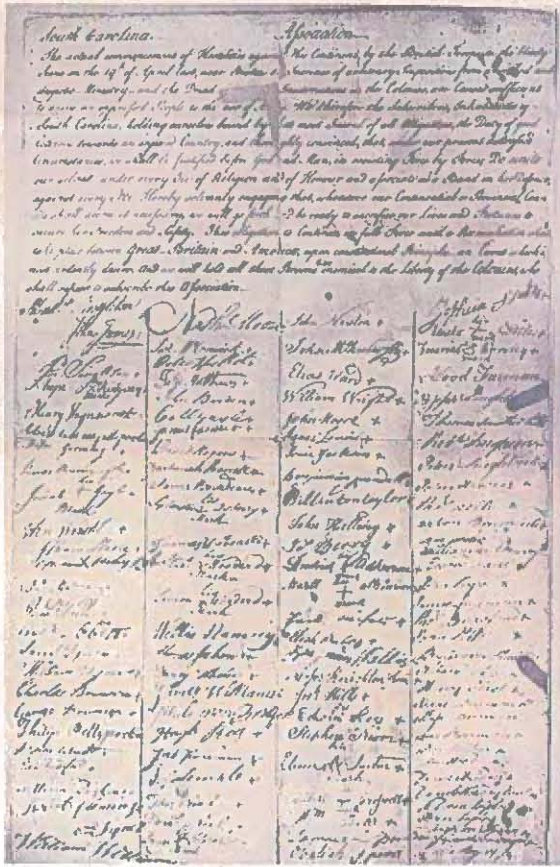
In this instance, eighteenth century sea transportation proved more efficient than land transportation, for Captain Allen arrived two days ahead of the Committees of Correspondence couriers riding down the coast. Captain Allen's vessel reached Charlestown on Monday, while the overland dispatch first reached South Carolina early Tuesday morning, at the Boundary House on Little River. It is therefore likely that people living on the coast along the Waccamaw Neck to Georgetown heard the news first from the dispatch riders.

In South Carolina, as in other colonies, the realization that actual fighting was taking place in New England caused local revolutionaries to adopt a more militant policy toward the British.

**JUNE 1-22, 1775.** A very eventful session of the First Provincial Congress was held at Charlestown. Its members were aroused not only by news of war in the North, but also by rumors that the British ministry was planning to incite a slave rebellion and an Indian uprising.

15 and 16. Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, above left, and William Gibbes, below right, served on the Secret Committee of the Provincial Congress. The other members were William Henry Drayton, Arthur Middleton, and Edward Weyman.





17. One original copy of the Association, left, still exists in the South Carolina Archives. This particular document was signed by settlers living on the east side of Wateree River in the present-day Sumter County area.

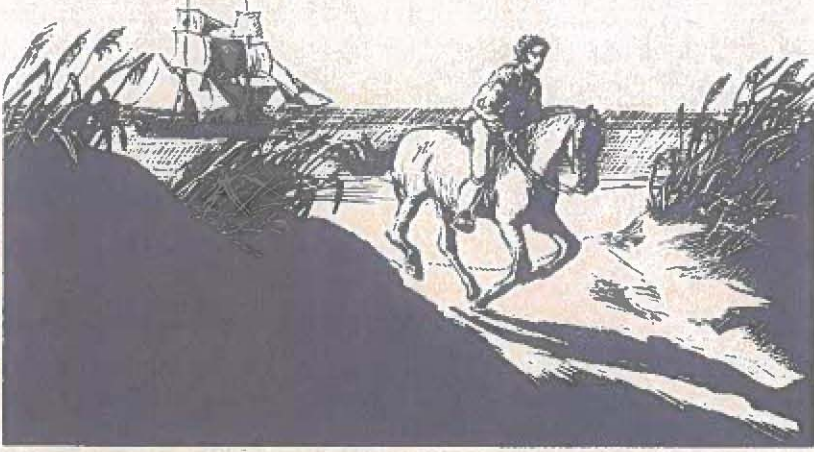


19. The two regiments of light infantry raised by the Provincial Congress were outfitted in blue uniforms with red facings. The uniforms were probably a close copy of those worn by South Carolina troops in the Cherokee War of 1760.

Their first important step was the adoption on June 3 of an Association of the inhabitants of South Carolina. Copies of this document were to be printed, distributed throughout the colony, and signed by all friends of American liberty. The language of the Association was quite uncompromising: "We therefore, the subscribers, inhabitants of South Carolina, holding ourselves bound, by that most sacred of all obligations, the duty of good citizens towards an injured

20. The Lexington correspondence was forwarded by a member of the patriot committee at Brunswick, North Carolina, to Isaac Marion at the South Carolina boundary line. This copy of the cover letter, below right, is in the South Carolina Archives. Isaac Marion was an older brother of Francis Marion.

18. The brigantine *Industry* outran the couriers and reached South Carolina with the first news of Lexington and Concord:



*Mr Isaac Marion Brunswick May 3<sup>rd</sup> 1775*  
*9 o'clock in the even*

*I*

I take the liberty to forward by Express the enclosed Papers which I just recd from *Wilmington*. & I must intimate you to forward them to *Coventry* at *Gett's Town* to be convey'd to *Charles Town* from *ft with* all speed in *Inclosed* is *a News Paper* given an *act* of *beginning* of the *distress* a *Letter* of what happened after *proy* had *Neglect* a moment in *forward* of *you*

I am of *Hon'd* *Yours*  
*Richd Guinness*

country . . . DO UNITE ourselves, under every tie of religion and of honour, and associate, as a band in her defence against every foe: Hereby solemnly engaging that, whenever our Continental or Provincial Councils shall decree it necessary, we will go forth, and be ready to sacrifice our lives and fortunes to secure her freedom and safety . . . And we will hold all those persons inimical to the liberty of the colonies, who shall refuse to subscribe this association."

On June 6, Congress authorized three regiments of regular troops to be raised—two regiments of light infantry and one regiment of mounted rangers. This placed a reliable military establishment at the disposal of the patriot government. Many men in the existing colonial militia were sympathetic to the patriot cause, but the militia was divided in sentiment just as the colony was divided. The three regiments of provincial troops raised by Congress eventually became part of the army of the United States—the Continental army—which was created that same month of June, 1775, in Philadelphia.

One further decisive action was taken by the Provincial Congress before it adjourned. On June 14, it created a Council of Safety, with great executive powers, to exercise the authority of the revolutionary government in conjunction with the Provincial Congress and during its adjournment.

**JUNE 18, 1775.** Lord William Campbell, the new royal governor of South Carolina, disembarked from the H.M.S. *Scorpion* and was formally received in Charlestown. He must have felt that his welcome left something to be desired. Royal governors were traditionally greeted in South Carolina with spectacular receptions, usually including cannon salutes from all the forts and bastions in the harbor, ranks of militia drawn up in the streets in full dress, cheers, formal processions, musket salutes, a welcoming committee including all the public officials and prominent men of the town, and an entertainment at a suitable tavern on Broad Street. Charlestonians were so fond of this ritual that even when one royal governor arrived at three A.M., they



21. Lord William Campbell was a son of the fourth Duke of Argyll. He had served as governor of Nova Scotia before being appointed chief executive of South Carolina.



were unwilling to omit a detail of it.

Upon Campbell's arrival, only a handful of royal placemen and British naval officers assembled to greet him. The militia did turn out, with the grudging permission of the Provincial Congress, but they fired no salutes, and when Lord William's commission was read from the portico of the Exchange Building it was received with sullen silence.

**JULY 12, 1775.** Two companies of patriot troops occupied Fort Charlotte on the Savannah River fifty miles above Augusta. The Council of Safety was anxious to secure the military stores kept in the fort and to establish a garrison of rangers there. The post commanded an important ford on the Savannah River and protected the exposed Long Cane settlement from Indian raids. It was manned by a small force of royal militia under the command of Captain George Whitefield. Major

James Mayson's troop of rangers was instructed to take possession of Fort Charlotte with its arms and gunpowder, to send the two brass field pieces down to Charlestown, and to use every effort to enlist Captain Whitefield and his men in the service of the revolutionaries.

The peaceable seizure of the fort on July 12 gave the patriots an important strong point in the interior, but it also aroused the resentment and suspicions of a large back country faction who opposed the proceedings of Congress.

**JULY 21, 1775.** An express boat loaded with 5000 pounds of gunpowder put to sea from the mouth of North Edisto River and sailed for Philadelphia. The cargo was intended for the use of George Washington's army, which was seriously short of powder, and it was sent in response to an urgent request from South Carolina's delegates at the Con-

tinental Congress.

The patriots of the southern colonies had fortunately secured a windfall of gunpowder not long after the letter from Philadelphia arrived. A joint expedition mounted by South Carolina and Georgia had captured a British merchant vessel at the mouth of Savannah River, and the two colonies had divided its 16,000-pound cargo of gunpowder between them. For the shipment to Congress, Georgia loaned South Carolina 5000 pounds from its share. Charlestown's Secret Committee loaded most of the powder in a ship that had been specially sent from Philadelphia for that purpose, concealing the casks of powder in bushels of rice to avoid arousing suspicion should the vessel be stopped by a British warship. The important cargo reached Philadelphia safely and was eventually used in the siege of Boston and the invasion of Canada.

## The Back Country Mission and the Fall of the Royal Government

**AUGUST-SEPTEMBER, 1775.** During this period, a delegation of patriot spokesmen commissioned by the Council of Safety made a journey through the Carolina back country to explain to the inhabitants the causes of the quarrel between Great Britain and the American colonies. William Henry Drayton, one of the young radicals on the Council, and the Reverend William Tennent, minister of the Congregational Church, were appointed commissioners, and the Council soon increased their party by the addition of Oliver Hart, a Baptist minister, and Joseph Kershaw and Richard Richardson, two highly respected residents of the back country.

Because of recent developments in the interior, the leaders of the revolutionary party on the coast had begun to wonder whether a majority of the back country could be counted on to support them when the military struggle in the South began in earnest. The people of upper South Carolina were mostly recent immigrants to the province who were not inclined to side with the low country



22. William Henry Drayton took a more lively interest in back country affairs than did many of his rice planter colleagues. Drayton never lived to see the final outcome of the Revolution he had done so much to start. He died of typhus in Philadelphia on September 3, 1779.

planters. The dispute with England seemed very remote and irrelevant to many of them and, besides, the source of their own "taxation without representation" problem was Charlestown and not London.

Some up country settlers, on the other hand, were definitely supporters of the patriot cause. One such sympathizer was the venerable Justice John Gaston of Fishing Creek (present Chester County) who kept abreast of developments by sending his son on horseback every week to pick up the Charlestown papers. At that time, the nearest place where one could buy a newspaper was Camden—fifty miles from the Gaston home.

The leaders of the loyalist faction in the upper part of the province were Colonel Thomas Fletchall and his lieutenants, Joseph Robinson and Robert and Patrick Cunningham (Cunningham, in the correct original spelling). They had been joined by Moses Kirkland, a ranger captain who had deserted the patriots after the capture of Fort Charlotte. Kirkland had invited Robinson and the Cunninghams to seize

part of the fort's military stores, transferred to Ninety Six by the patriots. The loyalist leaders not only took possession of the gunpowder, they also arrested Major James Mayson for stealing the king's property. Lord William Campbell sent his congratulations to Robert Cunningham from Charlestown.

Obviously, if the back country were to welcome the redcoats when they arrived, the Revolution would have a short career in South Carolina—and it was certain that Governor Campbell would encourage the British ministry in this belief. Concern by the Council of Safety over this problem was the reason for the Drayton-Tennent mission. The five travelers were to tour the back parts of the colony, speaking to groups of settlers and persuading as many as possible to sign the revolutionary Association.

The first series of stops made by the delegates were in the Congaree and Dutch Fork settlements. Today, Columbia and its metropolitan area dominate this part of the state, but in 1775 a rural community of Germans occupied the banks of the Broad, Saluda, and Congaree rivers near their junction. These hard-working people were unsympathetic to the patriots, but did not actively oppose them. They had a special reason for remaining loyal to George III, who was a German monarch as well as an English monarch, and since their land grants were issued in the name of the king, they believed that they would lose their land if they revolted against him.

The commissioners achieved some limited success in this area by persuasion, but whenever they encountered obstinate resistance they threatened non-associators with loss of trading privileges at Charlestown. This was a serious threat because the back country depended on the coast for salt to use in preserving meat.

After leaving the Congarees the commissioners separated, with Kershaw accompanying Drayton between the Broad and Saluda, Hart taking an independent route through the same section, and Richardson accompanying Tennent up the east side of the Broad. At a meeting some distance southeast of modern Whit-

23. Rosemont plantation, the home of Patrick Cunningham, was probably not built until after the Revolution, but its architecture was typical of up country plantation houses of the Revolutionary period. Rosemont stood on the east bank of the Saluda River until 1930, when it was destroyed by fire.



mire, Drayton and Kershaw were particularly annoyed when the loyalists Robert Cunningham and Thomas Brown appeared and insisted on having a debate. On August 17, the various patriot groups converged at Thomas Fletchall's plantation on Fairforest Creek. There they attempted to win over Fletchall with arguments and flattery, but the Tory chieftain was too much under the control of his subordinates, Cunningham and Robinson. His last word on the subject was that he "would never take up arms against his King, or his countrymen; and, that the proceedings of the Congress at Philadelphia, were impolitic, disrespectful, and irritating to the King."

On August 21, Drayton and Hart attended a barbecue at Captain Wofford's on Lawson's Fork Creek. At this gathering, they found the greatest enthusiasm for the patriot cause that they had so far encountered in their travels. The settlers in this area were within the boundaries of Colonel Fletchall's militia district, but they wanted to be organized into a separate, patriot militia regiment. Drayton was in agreement with this plan, and so the Spartan Regiment, commanded by Colonel John Thomas, was formed. The modern city and county of Spartanburg were named for this body of troops.

A muster of Fletchall's regiment was held on August 23 at Ford's on the Enoree River. Fletchall had promised to allow the commissioners an opportunity to address his men, but Cunningham and

the other captains had spread the word that it was unnecessary for them to attend the muster if they were satisfied with their present opinions. The size of the gathering that turned out to hear Drayton and his companions was disappointing and, in addition, the commissioners had to share speaking time with Moses Kirkland and Thomas Brown. Few, if any, converts were made.

In fact, Kirkland and the other loyalists were secretly planning to raise an army and attack Fort Charlotte. Drayton received definite news of their intentions on August 29, while he was staying at Snow Hill, LeRoy Hammond's home overlooking the Savannah River falls above Augusta. He reacted with speed and firmness, issuing orders to the patriot forces in the back country commanded by Andrew Williamson, William Thomson, and Richard Richardson, and setting up a base of operations at Ninety Six. These decisive measures had a definite psychological effect. Moses Kirkland fled to Charlestown to seek Governor Campbell's protection, and Drayton was able to bluff Fletchall into signing a treaty of neutrality at Ninety Six on September 16, much to the disgust of Robert Cunningham and the more militant loyalists. In this treaty, the back country agreed not to give aid to the British in return for the right to avoid taking sides in the dispute with England.

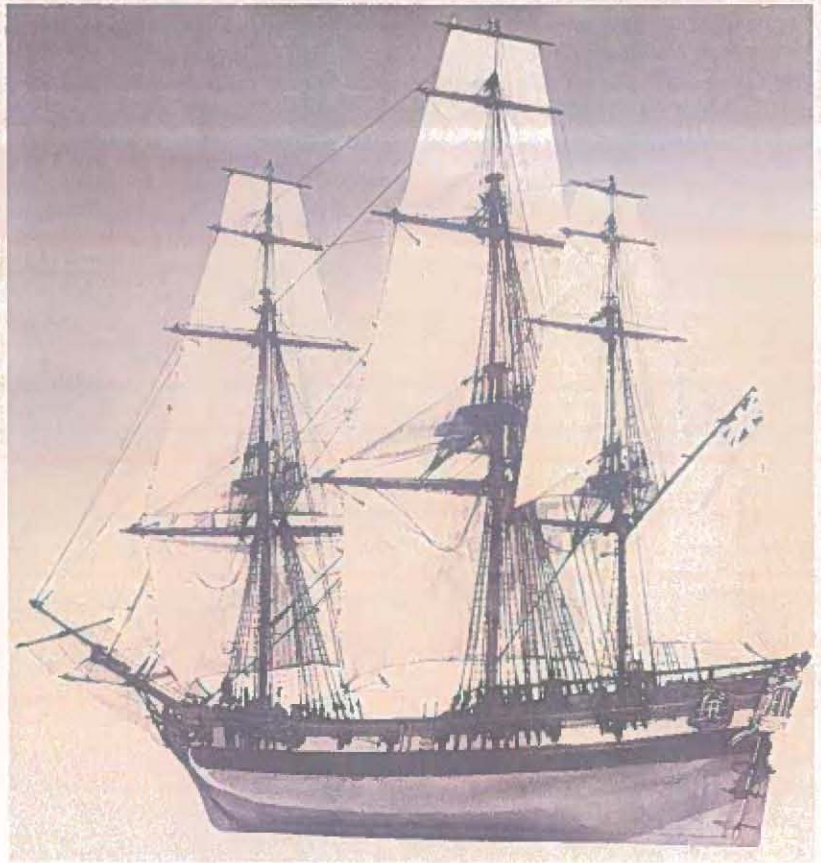
Many settlers of the interior were to remain loyalists throughout the Revolution, but when British troops finally invaded

South Carolina, the most stubborn resistance they encountered came from the back country patriots.

**SEPTEMBER 15, 1775** was a major turning point in South Carolina history. Before this day was over, a force of provincial troops had captured Fort Johnson, the royal stronghold on James Island guarding Charlestown harbor, and the government of South Carolina had passed completely into the hands of the patriots.

Near midnight on the evening of September 14, three companies of infantry boarded the Carolina and Georgia packet boat at Gadsden's wharf. After the vessel sailed, Colonel Isaac Motte called Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, Barnard Elliott, Francis Marion, and the other officers to a meeting in the ship's cabin and gave them the first official word that their destination was Fort Johnson. The orders had been issued by William Moultrie, the senior patriot military officer at Charlestown, and authorized by Henry Laurens, president of the Council of Safety.

In the early morning hours, the ship anchored about a quarter of a mile from the James Island shore. The troops disembarked in small boats, rowed as far as the



24. Lord William Campbell's residence on Meeting Street, left, was actually owned by the family of Lady Campbell, formerly Sarah Izard of Charlestown.

25. The British sloop-of-war shown above in this model is similar to H.M.S. *Tamar* in size and armament.

mud flat, then waded ashore in the dark through waist-deep water. At dawn they mounted an attack on the royal fort only to discover that its gates were open and a mere token garrison remained within.

Suspecting that the patriots would make an attempt on the fort, the British had no intention of leaving it fully operational. A naval force from the H.M.S. *Tamar*, a British warship in the harbor, had visited the fort earlier and dismounted all the cannon, throwing the guns and their carriages off the platform. The provincial troops took possession of Fort Johnson that morning, sending word to

the Council of Safety that an artillery tripod and tackle were needed to begin re-mounting the cannon.

These events were the outcome of an interview that had taken place on the night of September 13 at Lord William Campbell's Meeting Street residence. It had become apparent to the Council of Safety that Governor Campbell was carrying on an extensive secret correspondence with the back country loyalists.

To gather some accurate information on the governor's activities, Captain Adam McDonald was sent to his house disguised as a backwoodsman sym-

pathetic to the royal cause. The Council of Safety was later provided with a transcript of the conversation, which confirmed their suspicions but also contained the following unexpected exchange:

*Lord William:* I have a letter from the King; and he is resolved to carry his scheme into execution, from one end of the continent to the other.

*McDonald:* Will he send any soldiers here, between this, and the fall?

*Lord William:* Yes, he will; and this will be a place of settled soldiers; and a seat of war shortly.

For some time, the patriots had been thinking about securing the harbor defenses. This revelation spurred them into action.

With Fort Johnson in patriot hands and his relationship with the local ruling class in a shambles, Lord William Campbell decided that it would be unwise for him to remain in Charlestown, and so he

fled to the British warship *Tamar* on the afternoon of September 15. Before leaving, he issued a proclamation dissolving the Commons House of Assembly for the last time, and when he left he carried the great seal of the province away with him.

Thus, in that afternoon, more than a century of British government came to an end in South Carolina.

A few months after these events, the South Carolina flag was raised for the first time. The patriots decided not long after they captured Fort Johnson that a flag was necessary for the purpose of signals. Apparently they had the British garrison flag of Fort Johnson in their possession but thought it appropriate that a colonial flag should be used to confront the British ships in the harbor.

The Council of Safety directed that a flag be adopted and requested Colonel William Moultrie, as commander of the troops, to have one made. The new South Carolina provincial banner was of

Moultrie's own design. A large blue flag with a white crescent in its dexter corner (the upper corner nearest the flag staff), it was inspired by the blue uniform coats of the South Carolina regulars and the silver crescent emblems they wore on their caps.

According to Colonel Moultrie, this was the first American flag to be raised in South Carolina and it caused a considerable commotion among the patriots at the time it was adopted. To those who were still hoping for reconciliation with England, the hoisting of this flag appeared too much like an act of rebellion.

The modern South Carolina state flag, officially adopted by the General Assembly on January 28, 1861, differs from Moultrie's basic design only by the addition of a white palmetto tree symbolizing the 1776 victory at Sullivan's Island. South Carolina has the distinction of possessing a state flag that is unique as well as one of the most historic in the entire nation.

## War Comes to South Carolina

**OCTOBER 23, 1775.** As South Carolina entered the first autumn of the Revolutionary War, its territory was still undisturbed by open fighting between the patriots and the king's supporters. This situation was destined to be dramatically changed within a few weeks by events taking place in Ninety Six District and Charlestown harbor.

On October 23, 1775, John Caldwell made an affidavit against Robert Cunningham at Ninety Six, charging him with sedition. Cunningham had openly declared that he would not be bound by the Treaty of Ninety Six, and the patriots wanted him taken into custody. Andrew Williamson issued orders for Cunningham's arrest, an action that was in itself a violation of the treaty. The outspoken loyalist was apprehended within a few days by Captain Benjamin Tutt, who escorted him to Charlestown guarded by a small party of men.

Cunningham was placed in the town jail by the Provincial Congress, and Cap-

tain Tutt was presented with a handsome sword in gratitude for his services. The Cunninghams, recent immigrants from Virginia who had settled at Island Ford on the Saluda River, were a family of great influence in the back country. The news of Robert's arrest set off a new wave of resentment against the revolutionaries of Charlestown.

**NOVEMBER 1, 1775.** The Second Provincial Congress convened in Charlestown and began its first session.

**NOVEMBER 3, 1775.** Back country loyalists intercepted a shipment of ammunition being sent by the Council of Safety to the Cherokee Indians. The purpose of the shipment was to keep the Indians friendly to South Carolina. The civil quarrels going on within the colony had disrupted the normal peacetime trade between the Cherokees and Charlestown, much to the confusion and resentment of the Indians. Unless the patriots allowed some ammunition to be carried to the

Cherokee Nation before the hunting season began, it seemed likely that South Carolinians of all political persuasions would soon be fighting Indians. The Council of Safety accordingly dispatched a wagon loaded with a modest amount of powder and lead.

Unluckily, the shipment passed through the back country about the same time that the loyalists were gathering a body of armed men to attempt a rescue of Robert Cunningham. On November 3, a party of 150 men led by Patrick Cunningham and Jacob Bowman stopped the wagon near Mine Creek (about five miles from the modern town of Saluda), made prisoners of the ranger escort, and carried off the powder in their saddlebags. Moses Cotter, the driver, unhitched one of the horses from the empty wagon and hurried off to Ninety Six to report the theft. As soon as the news reached Andrew Williamson, he called out the patriot militia and began making plans to recover the powder.

At this critical time, the Indian trader Richard Pearis began to exert a great influence on the course of events. Pearis was the first white man to settle near the Reedy River falls on the present site of Greenville; Paris Mountain still preserves his name on the map of Greenville County. In the fall of 1775, he defected from the patriot side to that of the loyalists and accused his former friends of attempting to start an Indian war against their back country opponents. He swore that the ammunition shipment captured by Cunningham was intended for this purpose. Pearis's knowledge of Indian affairs was widely respected and the backwoodsmen believed him without question. The loyalist army began to fill its ranks faster than did Williamson's army.

**NOVEMBER 11-12, 1775.** The first military engagement of the Revolution in South Carolina took place in Charlestown harbor. Alarmed by reports that the British were bombarding coastal towns in New England, the Provincial Congress

ordered the troops at Fort Johnson to fire on any British warship attempting to approach Charlestown. However, the town would remain insecure as long as ships could reach the Cooper River through Hog Island channel, out of effective range of the fort. The patriots, therefore, intended to block the channel by sinking four schooners in it. The expedition was to be escorted by the armed schooner *Defence*, commanded by Captain Simon Tufts.

The patriots came down Hog Island Creek with the ebb tide on the afternoon of November 11 and set about their business in full view of the British sloops-of-war *Tamar* and *Cherokee*, anchored in Rebellion Road. Captain Edward Thornbrough, the British commander, fired either a single warning shot at them or six shots, depending on whether one believes his log book or the patriot history books. The Americans then opened up on the British with their two heaviest guns, and a brief exchange

took place. About a quarter after four the following morning, while the patriots were waiting for the next ebb tide, the British ships approached as near as they could and began a three-hour cannonade which inflicted little damage and no casualties. In Charlestown, the troops sounded the alert and spectators ran to the bay to watch the fireworks. The Provincial Congress afterward heralded this affair as "the actual commencement of hostilities by the British arms in this colony against the inhabitants."

This was a military engagement conducted by politicians. Captain Thornbrough, an elderly British naval officer who opposed using excessive force against the colonists, was obliged to carry out the wishes of Lord William Campbell, the exiled royal governor who had taken up residence on board the *Cherokee*. Captain Tufts, on the other hand, took his orders directly from William Henry Drayton, president of the Provincial Congress. Drayton had per-

26. According to Moses Cotter's narrative, Patrick Cunningham mounted the wagon himself, loosed the strings of the cloth and took up a keg of powder. "There," said he, "is what we are in search of."



sonally accompanied the crew of the *Defence* to see if he could provoke the British into creating some effective propaganda for the patriots.

**NOVEMBER 15, 1775.** Back country delegates in the Provincial Congress made their first attempt to move the new government out of Charlestown when an anonymous member made a motion "that the future meetings of the Provincial Congress be held at Camden, or some other more central and convenient place." The proposal was voted down at the time, but the idea was destined to gain support. On March 22, 1786, only about ten years later, the General Assembly passed an act creating the city of Columbia and making it the seat of government. As South Carolina broke its ties with England and set up a more equal system of representation among its various regions, a changed outlook among the state's people made possible the establishment of a central, inland capital.

**NOVEMBER 19-21, 1775.** One of the earliest land battles of the Revolution in the South took place at Ninety Six when the Council of Safety's missing gunpowder shipment brought two hostile back country factions into open conflict. The patriots, assembling at the court-

house town of Ninety Six under Major Andrew Williamson's command, learned that a vastly superior loyalist army was crossing the Saluda River on its way to attack them. Williamson and Major James Mayson moved their troops a short distance west to John Savage's Old Field and hastily erected a makeshift stockade of fence rails, straw, and beef hides, connecting a barn and some out-buildings. This was completed in three hours on Sunday morning, November 19, just before the loyalists arrived and surrounded the fort.

While the patriots were conducting a parley with Patrick Cunningham and Joseph Robinson, commanding the loyalist forces, two of Williamson's men were seized outside the fort. The defenders promptly opened fire, and the ensuing battle lasted for three days. One group of Tories occupied the brick jail in the town and kept up a dangerous fire against the patriots, but the majority of their comrades fought from behind houses, trees, logs, stumps, and fences, a respectful distance from the swivel-guns manned by the patriots. These small cannons could be rotated on their bases to sweep the field.

After several unsuccessful attempts to burn the stockade and the barn, the

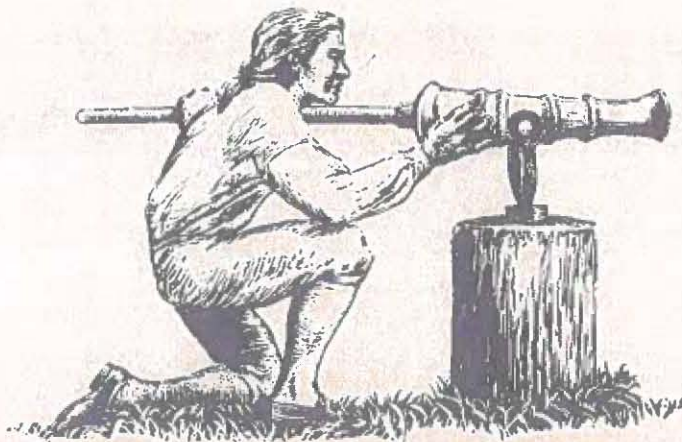
loyalists finally became nervous over the attacks that small bands of patriot reinforcements were making on their rear. On the morning of November 22, the two sides signed a truce, and Cunningham and Robinson led their army back across the Saluda.

A terrific amount of gunfire was kept up during the siege, but the actual amount of damage was small. There was bloodshed in this affair, however—the first to occur in South Carolina during the Revolution. On the patriot side, James Birmingham was killed and twelve men were wounded. The loyalists were believed to have sustained a greater number of casualties.

By the autumn of 1775, the war that had begun months earlier in New England was spreading to the South, both to South Carolina, where fighting had broken out at Charlestown and Ninety Six, and to Virginia, where the inhabitants were carrying on an open war with their royal governor, the Earl of Dunmore.

**NOVEMBER-DECEMBER, 1775.** In an expedition known to historians as the Snow Campaign, patriot troops commanded by Colonel Richard Richardson suppressed loyalist resistance in the back country. Richardson had received his marching orders on November 8, shortly after the Provincial Congress learned that Patrick Cunningham had seized the gunpowder shipment. He was given command of the rangers and patriot militia in the back country and was instructed to do everything necessary to put down the insurrection and to discourage loyalists from starting others in the future.

When he heard of the siege of Ninety Six, Richardson altered his line of march into the interior, but the peace terms were concluded before he could come to Williamson's relief. At a council of officers in the patriot camp at the Congarees, it was decided that the main army, being under orders from the authorities in Charlestown, was not subject to the cease-fire negotiated by Williamson at Ninety Six. The march continued, and for the remainder of the campaign, a steadily dwindling loyalist force retreated before a steadily growing patriot army.



27. The sketch shows a swivel gun in action at Ninety Six. By the end of the three-day siege, the patriots' powder reserves were almost exhausted, and they were on the verge of attempting to force the issue by sending out assault parties under Andrew Pickens, Robert Anderson, and others.



28. At the time of the Snow Campaign, Richard Richardson was seventy-one years old and an acknowledged leader of the back country settlers.

Militia units came in from all parts of the back country to join Richardson's force; even the North Carolina Continentals sent a detachment. Many of the loyalist rank and file came into camp to surrender their arms. The most important of their leaders were arrested and sent to Charlestown. Colonel Thomas Fletchall, who had given his approval to the uprising, was found hiding in a hollow sycamore tree on Fairforest Creek.

By late December, the gunpowder was being gradually recovered and the only remaining hard core of enemy resistance was Patrick Cunningham's band. These diehards had retreated to a camp in the cane brakes along the Reedy River, on Indian land. Colonel William Thomson detached about thirteen hundred men from Richardson's force, marched across the Indian line into what is now southern Greenville County, and surrounded the loyalist camp on the morning of December 22. Fighting began when the patriot force was spotted. A number of Tories, including Cunningham, escaped through an opening in the encirclement and fled,

with their enemies in hot pursuit. Most of the men in the camp, however, were captured along with all of their arms and baggage. This affair is known as the Battle of Great Cane Brake.

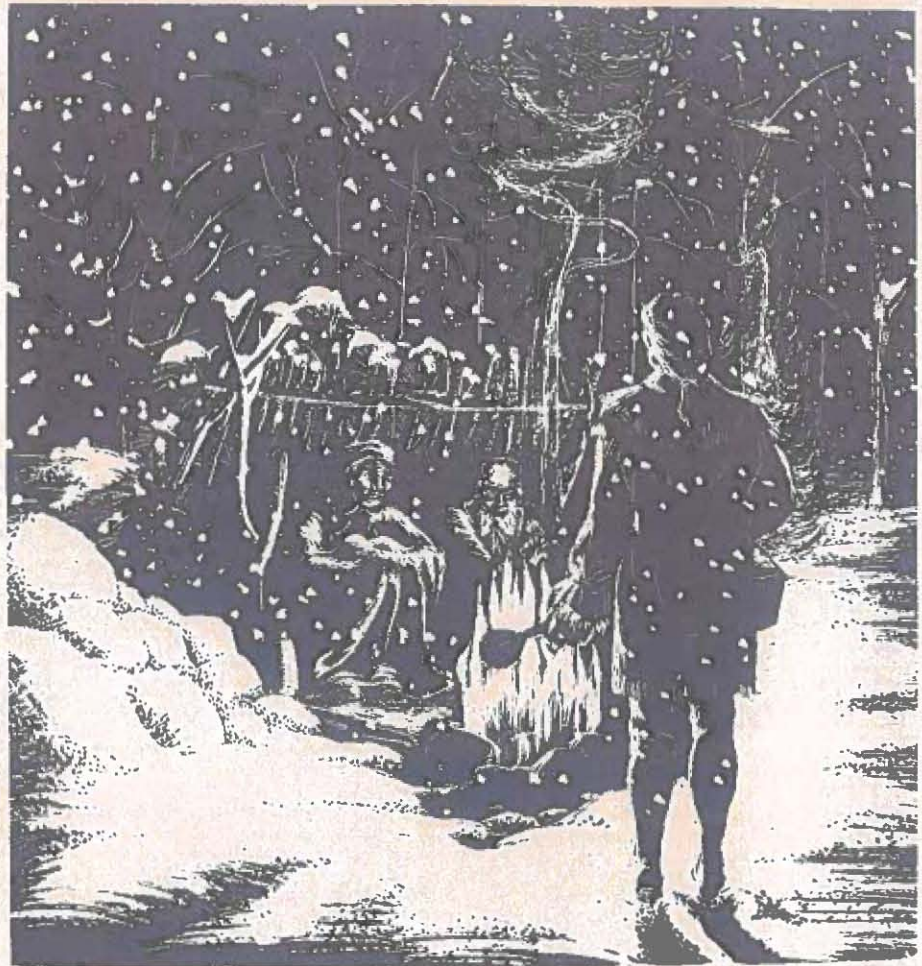
On December 23, it began to snow in the northern part of South Carolina, and the snowfall continued for thirty hours without stopping. By Christmas day, the ground was covered to a depth of between fifteen inches and two feet. Colonel Richardson dismissed part of his troops, sent some of the captured gunpowder to its rightful owners, the Cherokees, and

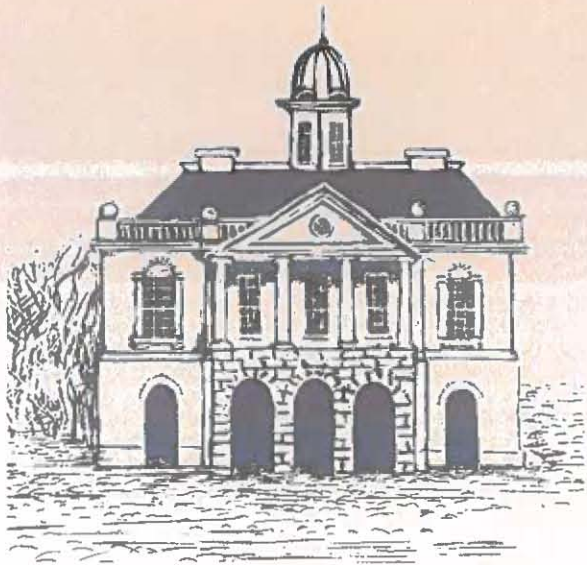
began his return march southward. "Eight days we never set foot on the earth or had a place to lie down, till we had spaded or grabbed away the snow," he wrote in his report to the Council of Safety. When his troops finally reached the Congarees, they were suffering from exposure and frostbite.

The Snow Campaign was an impressive demonstration of the military force the patriots could summon in support of their cause. For several years thereafter, the king's men in the back country remained at peace with their neighbors.

29 The great snowfall of 1775 caught Colonel Richardson's men at Hollings-

worth's Mill in what is now the western part of Laurens County.





30. South Carolina's first State House was begun in 1753 at the corner of Broad and Meeting streets in Charlestown. The colonial Assembly met in the Old State House until the Revolution, and the building was used by the state General Assembly until the late 1780s.

## The Colony Adopts a Constitution

**FEBRUARY 10, 1776.** During a Saturday morning session devoted to planning a new constitution for South Carolina, Christopher Gadsden startled the Provincial Congress by openly advocating American independence. Gadsden, a man always in the forefront of the American Revolution, had just returned from the Continental Congress to accept command of the South Carolina troops, and to resume his seat in the provincial assembly.

Gadsden's announcement came at the conclusion of an interesting week in his life. On February 5, while sailing from Philadelphia to Charlestown in Mr. Waldron's pilot boat, the *Hawke*, he had narrowly escaped being captured by a British warship. The H.M.S. *Syren*, commanded by Captain Tobias Furneaux, was stationed a short distance off Cape Fear waiting for the arrival of the British fleet. As Gadsden's party passed the *Syren's* position, they suddenly found the British ship bearing down on them. The pilot boat was chased into shore, but the crew and passengers managed to escape with their baggage in the ship's boat

before the American vessel was taken as a prize. Captain Furneaux reported the capture of several small cannons and a quantity of cutlasses left on board. The *Syren* was the advance ship of Sir Peter Parker's fleet, then preparing to sail from Ireland to the Carolina coast.

Gadsden continued his journey on land and arrived in Charlestown on Thursday evening, February 8. The next morning he took his seat in the State House, where the South Carolina Provincial Congress was meeting. The State House in 1776 was located at the northwest corner of Broad and Meeting streets, where the Charleston County courthouse now stands.

During the course of business that day, Gadsden presented to the Congress an elegant flag that he described as the standard to be used by the commander-in-chief of the American navy. The flag had a yellow field with a lively representation of a coiled rattlesnake in the center, and beneath the snake was the motto "DON'T TREAD ON ME!" The Congress ordered that the flag be carefully preserved and displayed in their meeting room. This banner was a copy of the

standard that Commodore Esek Hopkins used on his flagship, the *Alfred*, and Gadsden presented it to the South Carolina assembly as a memento of one of his proudest achievements in the Continental Congress. As a member of the Naval Committee of Congress, Gadsden had played a major role in founding a Continental navy to challenge the formidable British navy—a venture that his fellow delegate Edward Rutledge compared to an infant taking a mad bull by the horns.

The flag was not the only interesting item Gadsden brought with him from Philadelphia. He had in his possession the first copy of *Common Sense* to be brought into South Carolina. The small pamphlet, which had been published anonymously in Philadelphia on January 10 by the talented propagandist Thomas Paine, attacked the institution of monarchy and argued the case for American independence.

On the tenth of February, the Provincial Congress took under consideration a committee report concerning South Carolina's proposed new constitution. Gadsden, armed with arguments from



Paine's pamphlet, declared himself in favor not only of a constitution, but of the absolute independence of America.

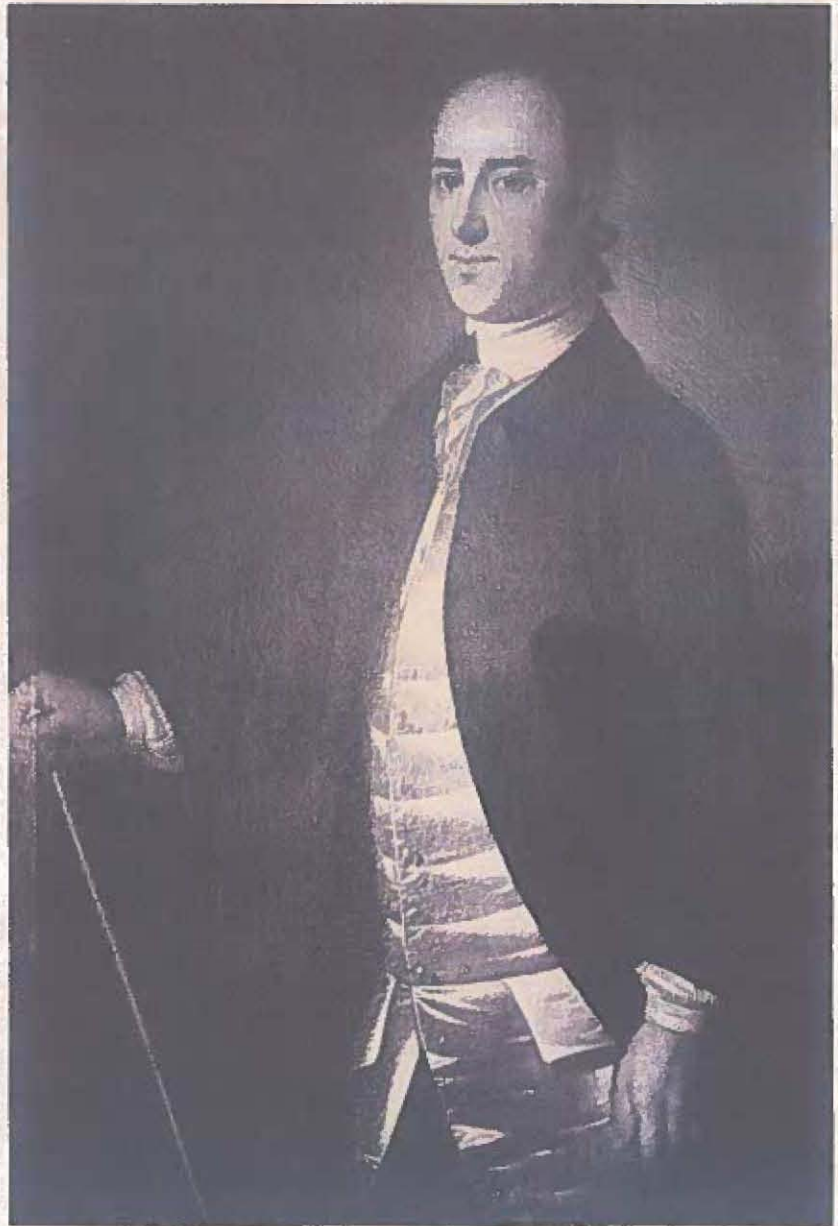
According to our best account of this episode, Gadsden's remarks had the same effect on Congress as an explosion of thunder. John Rutledge declared the idea abhorrent and swore that he would, if necessary, ride night and day to Philadelphia to assist in reuniting Great Britain and America. Henry Laurens condemned the "indecent expressions" with which Paine's pages were filled. An unidentified member called the author of *Common Sense* an (expletive deleted). Even the few members who secretly agreed with Gadsden thought that his openly expressed sentiments were premature.

In the end, South Carolinians were to be convinced of the necessity for independence neither by Paine nor Gadsden, but by the British warships and troop transports that were already preparing for a rendezvous off the coast of North Carolina.

The yellow flag has long since disappeared from the collections of the South Carolina legislature (and no copy has survived in the North), but Gadsden's personal copy of *Common Sense* still exists in a Charleston library.



31. All modern pictures of the yellow rattlesnake flag are based on contemporary written accounts. The artist's sketch above follows literally the description in the South Carolina Provincial Congress journal: "a rattle-snake in the attitude of going to strike."



32. Christopher Gadsden's revolutionary fervor was aptly described by Silas Deane, who observed the impetuous South Carolinian during the First Continental Congress. As Deane noted, "Mr. Gadsden leaves all New England Sons of Liberty far behind."



**FEBRUARY 27, 1776.** At Moore's Creek Bridge, about twenty miles above Wilmington, North Carolina, an army of loyalist Highland Scots was defeated by the patriots. The royal governor of North Carolina had unwittingly invited disaster by giving the signal for a loyalist uprising months before the British fleet and army could arrive to support the king's friends in that colony.

**MARCH 26, 1776.** South Carolina adopted a temporary constitution to regulate its internal affairs until, in the words of the preamble, "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)." Gadsden's suggestion that the constitution should publicly recognize South Carolina's independence was unconditionally rejected by the Provincial Congress. Nevertheless, Henry Laurens (who sat on the drafting committee) was privately willing to assure an English friend that this constitution would serve as the basis for an independent government in case of a final separation from the mother country.

This was the second constitution to be adopted by an American colony and the first to outline a complete system of government. The original engrossed manuscript, one of the important documents to have survived from America's past, is kept in the South Carolina Archives. Unlike most constitutions, it makes lively reading, mainly because of the ambitious preamble that consumes over one third of its length, attacking abuses by the British government in a manner comparable to the Declaration of Independence. This was not the original preamble to the document; it was written in angry response to a new act of Parliament which did not arrive in South Carolina until March 21, 1776, a few days before the constitution was completed.

33. John Rutledge is portrayed here by Charles Mason Crowson, a twentieth-century artist. The original likeness of the South Carolina statesman was painted by John Trumbull, who once visited Charleston and enjoyed Rutledge's hospitality as a house guest.

South Carolina.

In a Congress begun and held at Charleston on Wednesday the first day of November one thousand seven hundred and seventy five, and continued to several days to proceed the twelve next day of March, one thousand seven hundred and seventy six.

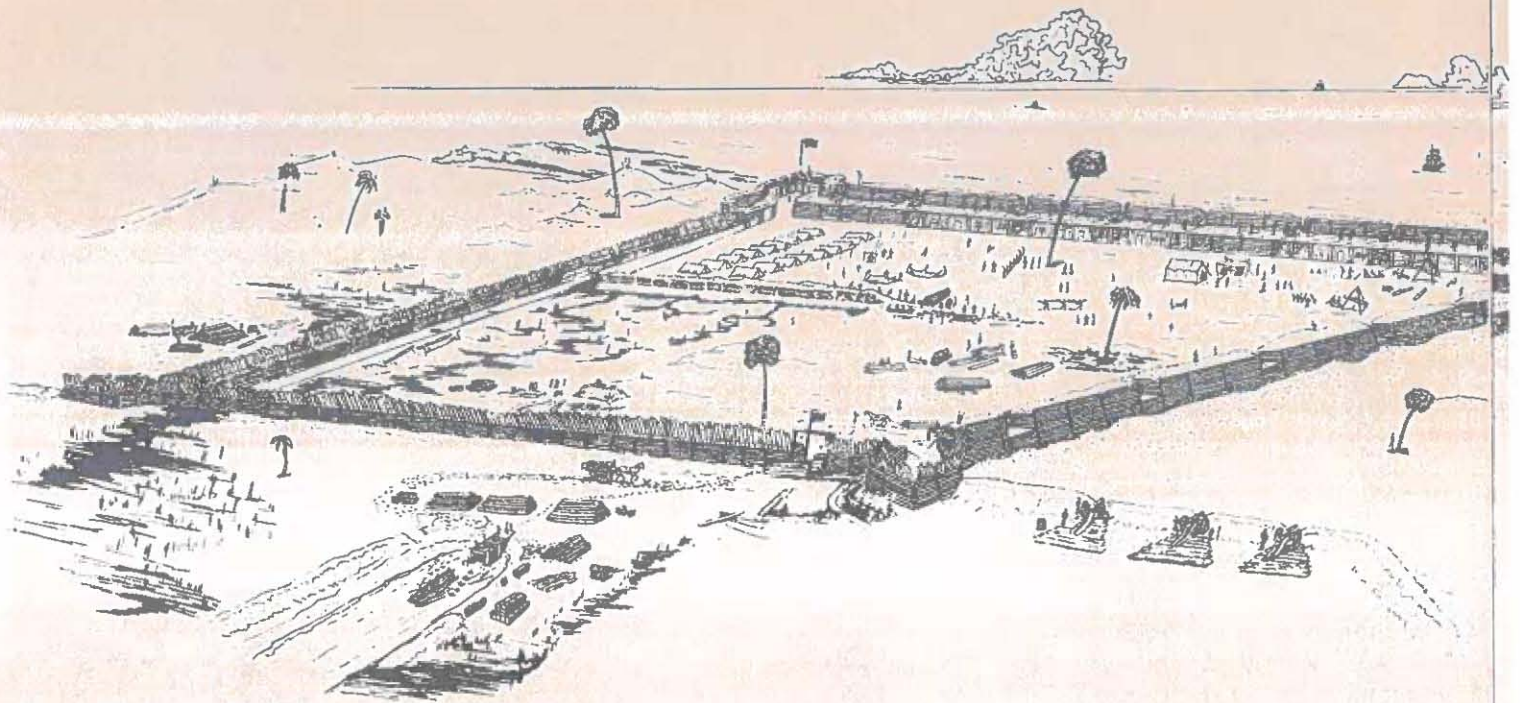
A Constitution in Form of Government agreed to and received upon by the Representatives of the Colony of South Carolina:

Whereas the British Parliament claiming of late some a right to bind the North American Colonies by Law in all Cases whatsoever have enacted Statutes for raising a Revenue in those Colonies and disposing of said Revenue as they thought proper without the consent and against the will of the Colonies. And Whereas it appearing to them that (they acting as representatives in Parliament) such claims were altogether unnecessary and if admitted would at once reduce them from the rank of Freemen to a State of the most perfect Slavery, the same Statutes therefor generally resented against the persons and Petitioned for the repeal of the said Statutes in vain. And Whereas the same Statutes being permitted in other unconstituted and oppressive Statutes have been enacted by which the powers of Admiralty Courts in the Colonies are extended beyond their ancient limits, and Jurisdiction is given to such Courts in cases similar to those which in Great Britain are tried by Jury. Persons are liable to be sent to and held in Great Britain for an offence created and made capital by one of those Statutes, though committed in the Colonies. The Liberties of Boston was likewise seized and given for Murder in the Massachusetts Bay, may at the will of a Governor be sent for trial to any other Colonies in Great Britain. The chartered Constitution of Government in that Colony is materially altered. The English Laws and a free Government, for which the Inhabitants of Quebec were entitled by the Kings Royal Proclamation, are abolished; and French Laws are restored: The Roman Catholic Religion (although before tolerated and freely exercised there) and an absolute Government are established in that province, and the limits extended through a wide tract of Country, so as to border on the free Protestant English Colonies with design of joining a whole People differing in Religion Principles from the neighbouring Colonies, and subject to arbitrary power, so fitly to excite to violence and outrage the Colonies. And Whereas the Delegates of all the Colonies in this Continent for Virginia in a general Congress at Philadelphia in the most dutiful manner layd their complaints at the feet of the King, and humbly implor'd their Majesty that his Royal Majesty and interposition might be used for their relief from the Grievances occasion'd by those Statutes, and that his Majesty should remove those Grievances between Great Britain and America, and really desired by the Colonies would be thereby immediately restored, and that the Colonies in the Magnanimity and Justice of his Majesty and Parliament for redress of the many other Grievances under which they laboured. And Whereas these complaints being wholly disregarded, Statutes still more cruel than those above mentioned have been enacted extending the Liberties of the Colonies with such other, menacing laws have and requiring many thousands of the

This act declared the colonies to be in open rebellion. Having been drafted by a committee of eleven men, including three future signers of the Declaration of Independence and two future signers of the United States Constitution, the South Carolina Constitution of 1776 was adopted by the Provincial Congress on March 26. The document was signed by William Henry Drayton as president and Peter Timothy as

secretary. The Second Provincial Congress then adjourned to five o'clock the same afternoon, when it reconvened as the South Carolina General Assembly. Two days later, the constitution was publicly read from the Exchange Building, and John Rutledge was proclaimed as president of the colony, amid the shouts of spectators and cannon salutes from the artillery and the provincial ships in the harbor.

34. This photograph shows the first page of the South Carolina Constitution of 1776. In a fit of anger at the British Parliament, the framers of the constitution expanded its preamble into a lengthy and polemical review of recent colonial history.



## Sullivan's Island and the Cherokee Attack

**JUNE 28, 1776.** In the Battle of Sullivan's Island, American troops successfully defended Charlestown harbor against the naval and military forces of Great Britain. This was the most dramatic reverse the royal forces had yet sustained in a major battle with the patriots.

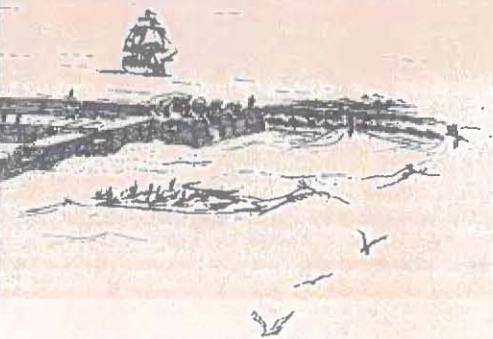
The 1776 British expedition to the southern colonies had assembled off the coast of North Carolina during the month of May, when Sir Peter Parker's fleet of ships and troop transports arrived from Ireland to join the force that Major General Henry Clinton had brought down from Boston. The original plan drawn up by British strategists in London called for Parker and Clinton to support a loyalist uprising in North Carolina, and to restore royal authority in that province. In view of the patriot victory at Moore's Creek Bridge, this objective was no longer practical, and the British turned their attention to Charlestown.

The South Carolina patriots had greatly expanded their harbor defenses since the previous year, erecting a battery at Haddrell's Point and a large new fort on Sullivan's Island. The fort commanded the entrance to Charlestown harbor, but it was still in an unfinished state, occupied only by the construction crew. Its walls were built of palmetto logs laid one upon the other in two parallel rows, sixteen feet apart, with the space between the rows packed with sand. The Second South Carolina Regiment was camped on Sullivan's Island, ready to move into the fort when the laborers departed.

Parker and Clinton decided that the works on Sullivan's Island were a suitable objective for a short military operation. Since they were committed to join General Howe for the summer campaign in the North, it is unlikely that they had any immediate designs on Charlestown itself, but a British post on Sullivan's Island

would give them a fine beachhead for any future southern campaign. In the course of a month's reconnoitering, planning, and maneuvering, Clinton's troops were landed on Long Island (the Isle of Palms) so that they could attack Sullivan's Island from the north. The fleet, meanwhile, crossed Charlestown bar and anchored in Five Fathom Hole, making preparations to carry out a frontal attack on the fort.

By the evening of June 9, Colonel William Moultrie and his troops had broken camp and moved inside the partially completed fort, ready to assume their battle stations. On June 28, Sir Peter Parker's ships approached the fort and began their attack, but the British plans soon began to go awry. The *Active*, *Bristol*, *Experiment*, and *Solebay* anchored too far from the American battery for their bombardment to inflict maximum damage. While attempting to sail clear of the larger British ships and take position on the



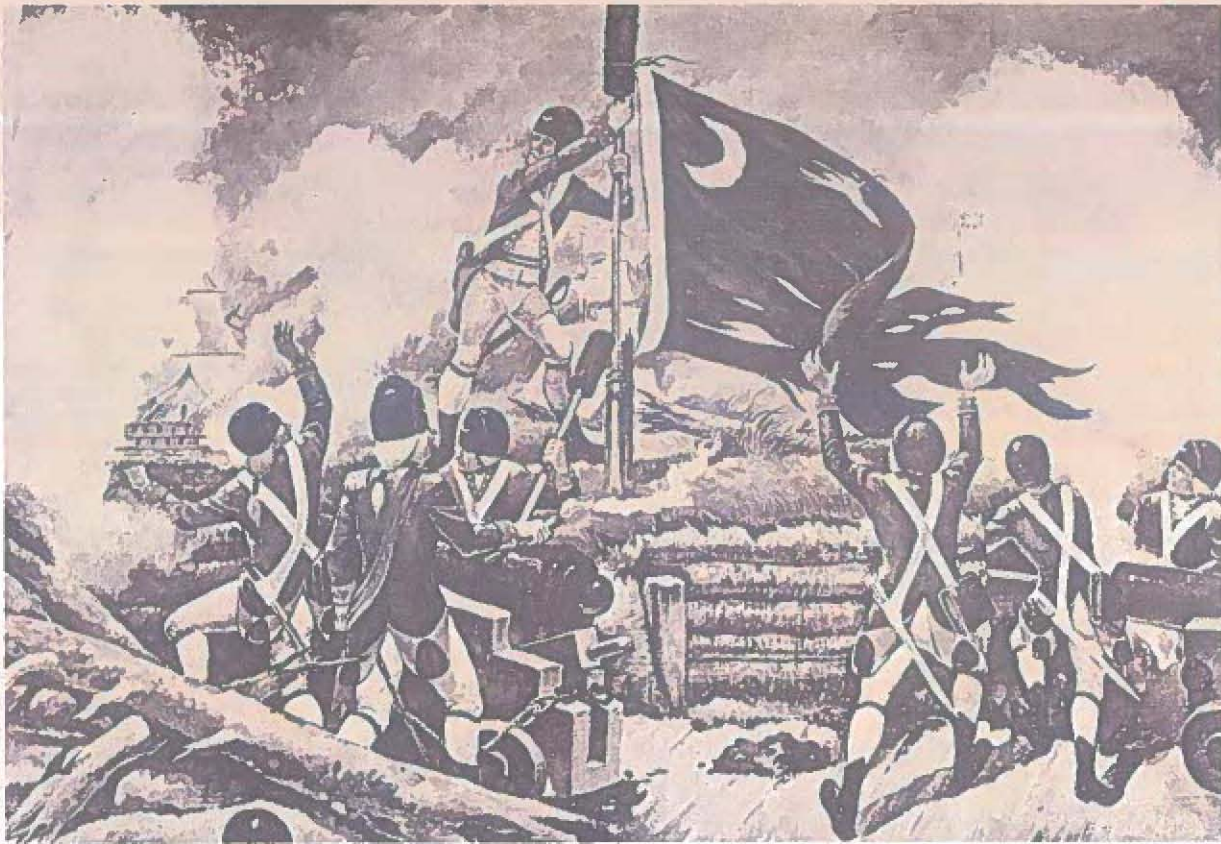
flank of the fort, the frigates *Acteon*, *Syren*, and *Sphinx* passed too close to the harbor shoals and ran aground. Further, the palmetto wood used in construction of the fort proved remarkably resistant to cannon fire, absorbing the shots without splintering. The South Carolina troops,

on the other hand, kept up a very effective fire which seriously damaged the British ships and killed or wounded many sailors. Among the wounded was South Carolina's exiled governor, Lord William Campbell, who had volunteered to command a division of guns on board the *Bristol*.

35. This perspective drawing of the fort on Sullivan's Island was prepared by the South Carolina Institute of Archeology and Anthropology to accompany a report on their excavations at the site.

36. This view of the Battle of Sullivan's Island, done by Nicholas Pocock in 1783, vividly shows the naval engagement. Before he achieved distinction as a marine painter, Pocock had been a British merchant captain carrying cargo from England to South Carolina and the West Indies.





37. This painting of Sergeant Jasper raising the flag differs from other versions in one important respect: the uniforms worn by the troops are historically authentic.

On the southeast bastion of the fort, the provincial flag was displayed, its blue field adorned only by the familiar white crescent. Very shortly after the beginning of the action, a shot from one of the British vessels cut down the flag staff, and the colors fell outside of the fort on to the beach. Sergeant William Jasper of the Second Regiment's grenadier company immediately shouted to Moultrie, "Colonel, don't let us fight without our flag!" "How can you help it?" replied Moultrie, "The staff is broke." "Then I will replace it," said Jasper, whereupon he jumped from one of the embrasures, retrieved the flag, and fastened it to a sponge staff. Disregarding the hail of grape shot coming from the ships, he mounted the wall of the bastion nearest the enemy and calmly fixed his im-

proved flag staff in place.

Across from the opposite end of Sullivan's Island, Henry Clinton was finding it impossible to even move his 3000 troops to the scene of battle. Breach Inlet, separating Long Island from Sullivan's Island, had proved to be much deeper than Clinton had supposed, and the opposite shore was defended by a detachment of South Carolina rangers, entrenched behind works and armed with field pieces as well as small arms. These troops (including one entire company of Catawba Indians) had come down from the back country to defend the colony. Their commanding officer was Colonel William Thomson of Orangeburg District. Although Thomson's men did not become as famous in this battle as Moultrie's regiment, they nevertheless

deserve some credit for the American victory. If Clinton's redcoats had succeeded in crossing Breach Inlet, the palmetto fort could easily have been stormed from its unfinished side.

The British ships did not give up the attack and withdraw until after darkness had set in; the battle had been going on since before noon. The crew of one of the grounded frigates, the *Acteon*, was unable to get its ship afloat again, and the next day found it necessary to abandon the vessel after setting fire to it. When the flames reached the ship's powder magazine, an explosion sent up a tall column of black powder smoke from the very center of the derelict British vessel. According to the testimony of every eyewitness who left a description of this scene in words or pictures, the cloud seemed to take on the



38. This engraving of William Moultrie is based on the portrait by John Trumbull. Moultrie is shown in the uniform of a general officer in the Continental army; he attained the rank of brigadier general in September, 1776, and became a major general in October, 1782.

shape of a palmetto tree. It is probable that this spectacle, as transformed by the sketch pen of William Henry Drayton, was the basis for the obverse side of the Great Seal of South Carolina—an upright palmetto tree growing from the center of a shattered English oak, and underneath, the Latin inscription MELIOREM LAPSA LOCAVIT (having fallen, it has set up a better).



39. The great seal of South Carolina.



40. One of the most interesting records of the June 28 battle is a series of three gouaches painted on the spot by Walter Miles, a young British engineer who observed the conflict from a vantage point inside the harbor. The third picture shows the powder explosion that William Moultrie described as a "grand pillar of smoke, which soon expanded itself at the top, and to appearance, formed the figure of a palmetto tree."

A number of weeks after the American victory, the General Assembly complimented William Moultrie by naming in his honor the palmetto fort, which had previously had no official designation. Every fort that has stood on the site down to the present day has been called Fort Moultrie.

In the early years of independence, South Carolinians celebrated the anniversaries of June 28 and July 4 as tandem holidays, and it is difficult to determine from contemporary accounts which day was celebrated with more enthusiasm.

**JULY 1, 1776.** At dawn on this day, the Cherokee Indians descended on the South Carolina frontier, massacring settlers without regard to age or sex. The long-dreaded Indian war had finally come to the back country.

Among the first victims of the sudden Indian attack was the family of Anthony Hampton. The Hamptons had migrated to the province from Virginia and built their cabin on a fork of the Tyger River near the Cherokee boundary line (now the Greenville-Spartanburg county line). Ei-

ther on July 1, 1776, or shortly thereafter, a war party approached the Hampton residence. Recognizing several of the Indians and having no knowledge of their hostile intentions, Anthony Hampton advanced to greet them as friends. As he was shaking hands with one of the chiefs, he saw a gun fire and his son Preston fall to the ground. The elder Hampton turned in astonishment, but the hand that he had grasped in friendship only a moment before, was now holding a raised tomahawk.

The Indians killed Anthony Hampton, his wife, his eldest son Preston, and an infant grandson. The cabin was burned and only a young boy named John Bynum lived to tell the story, after being held as hostage by the Indians for many months. Anthony was survived by his sons Wade, Richard, Edward, and Henry, all of whom became prominent military leaders in the Revolutionary War. In an Indian battle later that same year, Henry Hampton killed with his own hand a Cherokee warrior who was wearing a coat belonging to Henry's brother—the same coat

that Preston Hampton had been wearing when he was murdered.

It is not easy to determine the degree of British responsibility for this Indian uprising. The royal Indian superintendent, John Stuart, and his deputy, Alexander Cameron, had kept the Cherokees loyal to the king, but the Indians had their own reasons for being angry with the back country settlers. In North Carolina, for instance, the Watauga settlers were encroaching on Cherokee land. In May, a delegation of northern Indians had visited the Overhill Cherokee towns preaching a war of extermination against the white men, and the Cherokees had been stirred up further by a threatening letter from a Virginia patriot committee.

South Carolinians living in 1776, however, had no such view of the situation. Rumors of British plots involving the Indians had been circulating for the past year, and when an Indian war actually broke out, Stuart and Cameron were automatically assumed to be responsible. The atrocities taking place on the frontier were regarded by Americans as the work of the British government.

## South Carolina Becomes a State

**JULY 2, 1776.** In Philadelphia, the Continental Congress voted on the most important matter ever to be brought before it and the central issue of the American Revolution: the question of independence.

On June 7, Richard Henry Lee of the Virginia delegation had introduced a resolution "That these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States, that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved." In the debates on the Lee resolution, it appeared that all of New England and most of the South were in favor of it, while the Middle Atlantic colonies and South Carolina were opposed to it.

At this time, South Carolina was represented in Congress by Edward Rutledge,

Arthur Middleton, Thomas Heyward, Jr., and Thomas Lynch, Jr.; the elder Thomas Lynch was also a delegate, but he had taken no part in the debates of Congress since February 18, when he suffered a paralytic stroke. The four active delegates had not always shared the same political views during their previous careers in their native colony, but they seem to have been in agreement on their attitude to the Lee resolution.

The South Carolinians were not opposed in principle to independence, and they probably believed that union with Great Britain was no longer possible or desirable. But in typically conservative fashion, they believed that the colonies should first devise a practical plan of confederation, form themselves into an effective union, and then declare independence. As Edward Rutledge noted, "No reason could be assigned for pressing into this Measure, but the reason of every

Madman, a shew of our spirit."

There were other considerations that prompted caution on the part of the South Carolina delegation. Since some form of national government would be necessary in an independent union, they were concerned over the degree to which their state's powers and rights would be surrendered to a central government.

They also had to consider the wishes of their constituents. Some of South Carolina's most distinguished elder statesmen had made it emphatically clear that they did not want the door closed to possible reconciliation with England. Unlike many of the other delegations present, the South Carolinians had received no instructions from their Provincial Congress to vote for independence. If they joined with other colonies in supporting the Lee resolution, it would be solely on their own responsibility; there was no guarantee that anyone at home would back them up.





41. Arthur Middleton, his wife, and child.



42. Thomas Lynch, Jr.



43. Edward Rutledge

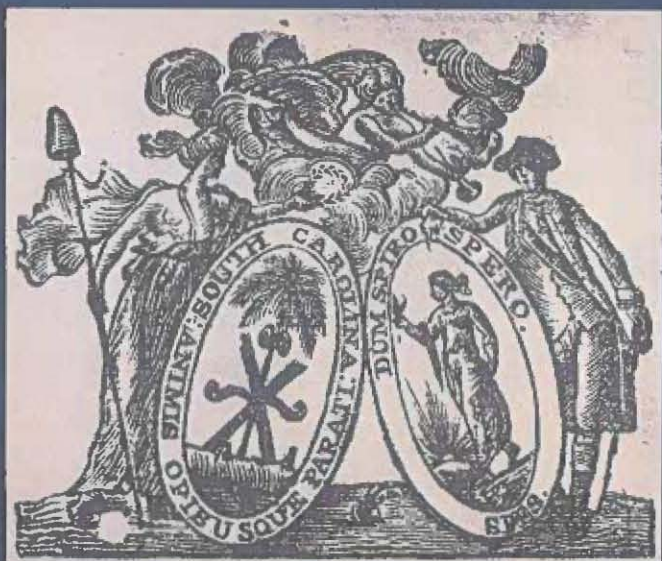


44. Thomas Heyward, Jr.

The four South Carolina signers of the Declaration of Independence.



45 These engravings are taken from issues of the South Carolina Session Laws before and after the Revolution. The royal arms were routinely used on the title pages of these slim volumes until the end of the royal government in South Carolina. In the 1780s, the state seal with supporters and crest was introduced as a substitute. In this design, the goddess of liberty, the Revolutionary soldier, and the allegorical figure of fame with trumpets are used for decorative purposes only and do not legally constitute part of the seal.



Partly because he was the colony's senior delegate in length of service, and partly because of his outspoken temperament, Edward Rutledge provided South Carolina's principal voice in the debate over independence. The youngest member of Congress at age twenty-six, Rutledge was, like his older brother, John, a brilliant lawyer. He had behind him three years of legal training at the Middle Temple in London, and he had acquired an impressive courtroom reputation as defense attorney in a politically significant Charlestown trial. Rutledge was an accomplished orator (although he had a tendency to talk through his nose). His style, as observed by John Adams and others, was characterized by impetuosity, a rapid-fire delivery, and frequent eye, head, and body movements to punctuate his remarks. With the exception of Pennsylvania's John Dickinson, he was probably the most eloquent spokesman on the negative side of the Lee resolution.

Since the members of Congress were badly divided on the question, the vote on independence was postponed from June 7 to June 10, and then was put off until July 1. In the meantime, a committee was appointed to draw up a Declaration of Independence, which was reported to Congress on June 28, the same day of the American victory at far-away Sullivan's Island.

When the vote finally came on July 1, nine colonies supported the resolution on independence, Pennsylvania and South Carolina voted against it, New York abstained, and Delaware split evenly on either side. The resolution had been carried by a majority, but the dissenting colonies accounted for three of the four largest cities in the colonies and a substantial part of America's wealth and power. It must have been painfully apparent that a Declaration of Independence adopted under these circumstances would impress neither friend nor foe.

At this point the four South Carolinians decided to assume the authority that their colonial assembly had never explicitly given them. Their new instructions, which had been adopted by the South Carolina Provincial Congress only three months previously, did not expressly authorize them to vote for independence. But they were empowered "to concert, agree to, and execute, every measure which they . . . shall judge necessary, for the defence, security, interest or welfare of this colony in particular, and of America in general."

Since their prudent counsels had failed to deter Congress from immediately declaring independence, Rutledge, Middleton, Heyward, and Lynch may well have reasoned that the good of both South Carolina and America required that the colonies speak with a single voice. Accordingly, Edward Rutledge rose from his chair, after the vote had been recorded on July 1, and requested Congress to delay the final decision until the next day, when he thought that his colleagues would change their votes for the sake of unanimity.

In the short time remaining before the crucial vote, behind-the-scenes maneuvering took place in other delegations as well, and when the results were recorded on July 2, twelve colonies were in favor of independence, with the New York delegates abstaining only because they were bound by an old set of instructions from their colony. When favorable word arrived from the New York convention on July 15, the document which Congress had adopted by that time could be entitled "The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America."

When the South Carolina delegation sent a copy of the Declaration home on July 9, the invalid Thomas Lynch, Senior, added his signature to the cover letter, indicating both his approval of his

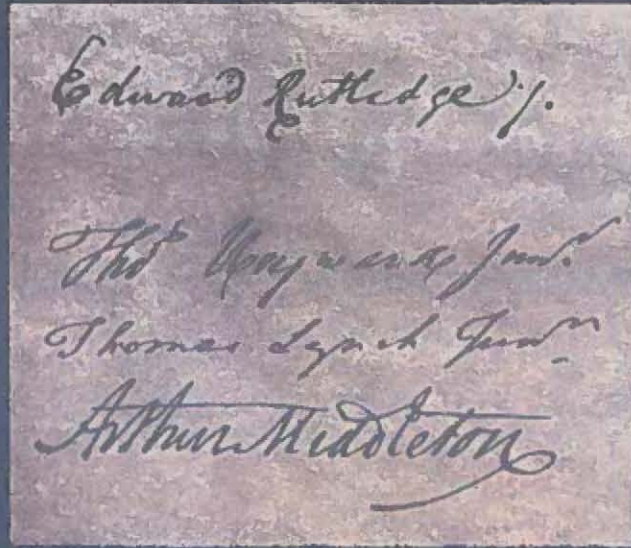
younger colleagues' action and his willingness to support them in it. Unknown to any of the South Carolina delegates in Philadelphia, the recent attacks on their colony by redcoats on the one side and Indians on the other had prepared a more favorable reception for news of independence than they could have imagined.

**JULY 4, 1776.** On this day, Congress approved and adopted the Declaration of Independence. John Hancock, acting in his capacity as president, was the only member who signed the Declaration on July 4; his signature was attested by Charles Thomson as secretary of Congress. Copies of the Declaration were ordered to be printed, a task which began that very night at John Dunlap's printing shop in Philadelphia.

Although Congress actually voted on July 2 to declare independence, the adoption of Thomas Jefferson's Declaration, rather than Richard Henry Lee's resolu-

tion, has always been regarded as the birth date of the United States. The action on the Lee resolution was a decision made by Congress in closed session, but the document written in Jefferson's famous prose was America's declaration to the world.

**JULY 19, 1776.** An exciting dispatch from Charlestown, South Carolina, was presented to the Continental Congress shortly before it adjourned for the day. The letter which was now read before Congress was written by General Charles Lee, commander of the Southern army and William Moultrie's superior officer, and it described the decisive American victory that had been won three weeks before in Charlestown harbor. To appreciate the reaction this news caused in Philadelphia, it must be remembered that Lee's dispatch arrived in the midst of bad news from the other military fronts, and not long after independence had been declared.



46 The four South Carolina delegates signed the Declaration of Independence on August 2, 1776.

Congress ordered extracts of the letter to be printed and passed a resolution that the thanks of the United States of America be sent to Major General Lee, Colonel William Moultrie, Colonel William Thomson, and the officers and soldiers under their command. John Hancock wrote personal letters on behalf of Congress to each of the three officers named.

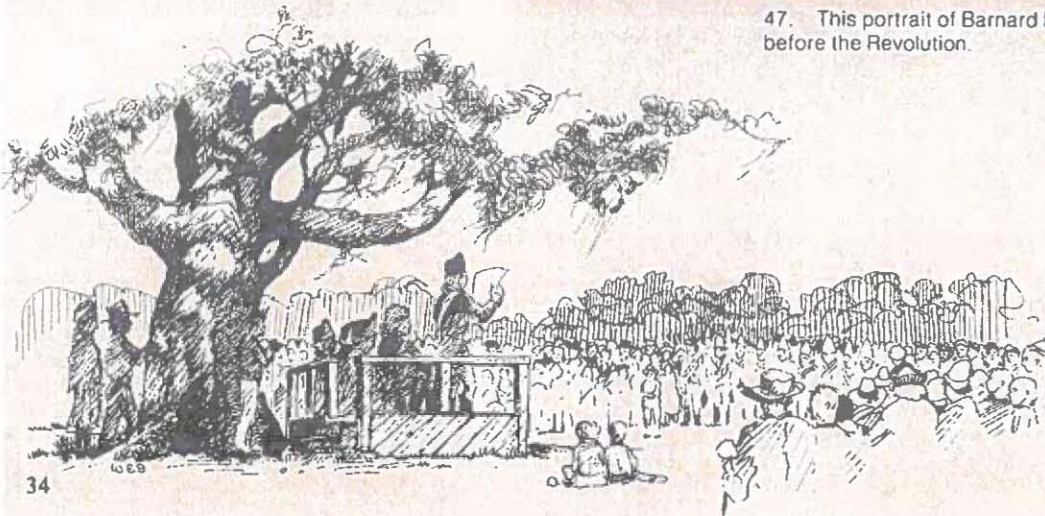
Another member of Congress (probably Benjamin Rush) penned a warm letter to General Lee in which he described the mood in Philadelphia: "It would take a volume to tell you how many clever things were said of you and the brave troops under your command, after hearing of your late victory. It has given a wonderful turn to our affairs. The loss of Canada had struck the spirits of many people, who now begin to think our cause is not abandoned, and that we shall yet triumph over our enemies."

**AUGUST 2, 1776.** At the State House in Philadelphia (Independence Hall), the engrossed copy of the Declaration of Independence was signed on parchment by every member of Congress present. Not all of the delegates who were present on July 4 were still members of Congress by August 2, nor were all of the fifty-six men who eventually signed the document present for the ceremony. But there is little doubt that August 2 was the day when all of South Carolina's signers—Edward Rutledge, Arthur Middleton, Thomas Heyward, Jr., and Thomas Lynch, Jr.—affixed their names to the document.

When the South Carolina delegates



47. This portrait of Barnard Elliott was painted by Jeremiah Theus before the Revolution.



signed, Rutledge and Heyward left a space between their names for the signature of Thomas Lynch, Senior, the missing member of their delegation. Lynch, however, never recovered from his illness and he died later that year. For this reason, there is a blank space remaining among the South Carolina signatures.

By coincidence, August 2 was also the day when Charlestown first learned of the Declaration of Independence. The news arrived just in time to be printed in the August 2 issue of the *South Carolina and American General Gazette* in a brief note following a lengthy account of the Battle of Sullivan's Island. (This was the first paper to be printed in Charlestown since May, the printing press having been moved out of town in the alarm created by the British invasion.) With this issue, the royal arms disappeared from the masthead of Robert Wells's newspaper.

On this same day, the last ships of the British fleet raised anchor and sailed out

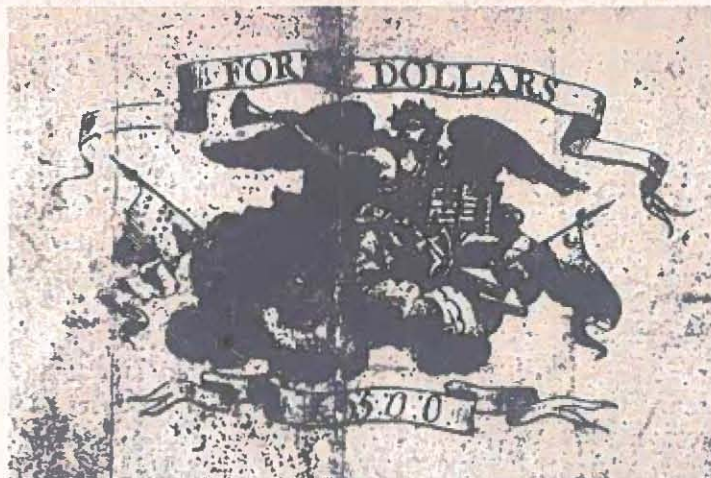
of the harbor, leaving the South Carolina coast clear of British troops and warships for the first time in many weeks.

**AUGUST 5, 1776.** Independence was officially proclaimed in South Carolina by the state government, a grand procession being held in Charlestown to celebrate the event. President John Rutledge was accompanied by all civil and military officers. In the afternoon a military parade was held near the Liberty Tree. Charlestown's Liberty Tree was a live oak as opposed to the Bostonians' elm tree. It was located in the countryside just outside the city and, like its New England counterpart, it was ultimately chopped down by British troops.

The parade of troops at the Liberty Tree must have been impressive, due to the number of Virginia and North Carolina Continentals then stationed at Charlestown in addition to the regular troops of the South Carolina establish-

ment. Major Barnard Elliott read the Declaration of Independence to those assembled and an address was delivered by the Reverend William Percy, a young Anglican minister of strong patriot sentiments who frequently occupied the pulpit of St. Michael's Church during this period.

Although the story of South Carolina's road to statehood ends here in August, 1776, the Palmetto State's contributions to the War for Independence had scarcely begun by that time. In the years 1779-1782, some of the decisive campaigns of the American Revolution were fought on South Carolina soil. The partisan warfare of Francis Marion, Thomas Sumter, Andrew Pickens, and their numerous followers, together with the pivotal battles of Kings Mountain, Cowpens, and Eutaw Springs, and the victorious strategy of General Nathanael Greene, contributed directly toward the final defeat and withdrawal of British forces in America.



48. The message contained in this engraving, found on the reverse side of a 1779 piece of state currency, seems to be that South Carolina has united its destiny with that of the new nation. On the left is the flag of the United States, adopted in 1777, its thirteen stars arranged in a 4-5-4 pattern. The state flag is displayed on the right. In the center the muse of history, perhaps with a view toward the next two centuries and beyond, is displaying a volume entitled the "Annals of America."

## Illustrations

- Cover. Liberty Tree Ceremony. Drawing by William E. Scheele.
1. and 2. Lord William Campbell and John Rutledge. Drawings by Pelham Erd.
  3. View of Charlestown, S.C. Painting by Thomas Leitch. Reproduced by permission of the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts, Winston-Salem, N.C.
  4. Statue of William Pitt by Joseph Wilton. Photograph by Julia Ellen Hill.
  5. John Wilkes. Engraving by William Hogarth. *Hogarth Engravings*, Dover Publications, Inc.
  6. Tax Stamp. Drawing by Pelham Erd.
  7. Bay Street, Beaufort, Watercolor by unknown artist. Beaufort County Library, Beaufort, S.C.
  8. Tea Shipment Records. *Tea Leaves*, Francis Drake, 1884. Photograph by Julia Ellen Hill.
  9. Arms. United East India Company. Photograph by Julia Ellen Hill.
  10. East India House. *The East India House*, William Foster, 1924. Photograph by Julia Ellen Hill.
  11. Exchange Building. Detail from Leitch painting, Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts.
  12. Home of Lieutenant Governor William Bull, Charleston, S.C. Photograph by Julia Ellen Hill.
  13. Long Bluff Official State Historical Marker. S.C. Department of Archives and History, Columbia, S.C.
  14. Secret Committee Raid. Drawing by Pelham Erd.
  15. Charles Cotesworth Pinckney. Painting by Henry Benbridge. Reproduced by permission of the National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.
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  17. The Association. S.C. Department of Archives and History. Photograph by Julia Ellen Hill.
  18. Brigantine and Courier. Drawing by Pelham Erd.
  19. Regimental Uniform. Drawing by Pelham Erd.
  20. Lexington Note. Gibbes Collection, S.C. Department of Archives and History. Photograph by Julia Ellen Hill.
  21. Governor Lord William Campbell. Painting by Francis Cotes. Reproduced by permission of His Grace, the Duke of Argyll, Inveraray, Scotland. Photograph courtesy of the Naval Historical Center, Department of the Navy, Washington, D.C.
  22. William Henry Drayton. The South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia, S.C. Photograph by Julia Ellen Hill.
  23. Rosemont Plantation. Drawing by Pelham Erd.
  24. Home of Lord William Campbell, Charleston, S.C. Photograph by Julia Ellen Hill.
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  27. Swivel Gun. Drawing by Pelham Erd.
  28. Colonel Richard Richardson. Reproduced by permission of Brigadier General John W. Richardson, Sarasota, Florida. Photograph courtesy of John Adger Manning, Lexington, S.C.
  29. Snow Campaign. Drawing by Pelham Erd.
  30. First State House. Drawing by Pelham Erd.
  31. Rattlesnake Flag. Drawing by Pelham Erd.
  32. Christopher Gadsden. Attributed to Jeremiah Theus. Reproduced by permission of George D. Shore, Jr., Sumter, S.C. Photograph by Julia Ellen Hill.
  33. John Rutledge. Painting by Charles Mason Crowson after a portrait by John Trumbull, S.C. State House. Photograph by Richard Taylor.
  34. South Carolina Constitution. S.C. Department of Archives and History. Photograph by Photo-graphics, Inc.
  35. Fort Moultrie. Drawing by the Institute of Archeology and Anthropology, University of South Carolina.
  36. Attack by the British Fleet. Engraving by Nicholas Pocock. The South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina. Photograph by Photo-graphics.
  37. Sergeant William Jasper at the Battle of Sullivan's Island. Painting by Lucy Brown based on an engraving by G.R. Hall. Reproduced by permission of the S.C. Commission of Forestry, Columbia, S.C.
  38. General William Moultrie. Engraving based on a portrait by John Trumbull, *Dictionary of American Portraits*, Dover Publications, Inc.
  39. Great Seal of South Carolina. S.C. Department of Archives and History. Photograph by Richard Taylor.
  40. Battle of Fort Moultrie. South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina.
  41. Arthur Middleton, Wife, and Child. Painting by Benjamin West. Reproduced by permission of Middleton Place, Charleston, S.C.
  42. Thomas Lynch, Jr. Pencil sketch by John Trumbull. Reproduced by permission of the Yale University Art Gallery, gift of Mrs. Winchester Bennet.
  43. Edward Rutledge. Painting by Philip Fishbourne Wharton after a portrait by James Earle. Reproduced by permission of the Independence National Historical Park Collection, Philadelphia, Pa.
  44. Thomas Heyward, Jr. Painting by Charles Fraser after a portrait by Jeremiah Theus. Reproduced by permission of the Independence National Historical Park Collection.
  45. Royal Arms and State Arms. S.C. Department of Archives and History. Photograph by Richard Taylor.
  46. Signatures of the South Carolina Signers of the Declaration of Independence. Photograph by Julia Ellen Hill.
  47. Barnard Elliott. Painting by Jeremiah Theus. Reproduced by permission of the Carolina Art Association, Gibbes Art Gallery, Charleston, S.C.
  48. 1779 South Carolina Currency. S.C. Department of Archives and History. Photograph by Richard Taylor.

## Suggestions for Further Reading

The intention of this booklet is to place in the hands of the general reader a source of accurate information on the outbreak of the Revolution in South Carolina. Those readers wishing to learn more about this subject, or about South Carolina history in general, should first consult three paperbacks of related interest in the Tricentennial Booklets series, published by the University of South Carolina Press:

Robert M. Weir, "*A Most Important Epoch*": *The Coming of the Revolution in South Carolina*. This covers the same period, but with different emphasis and greater depth of interpretation.

George C. Rogers, Jr., *A South Carolina Chronology 1497-1970*. This booklet expands the chronology time-frame to include all of South Carolina history, placing the Revolution in perspective.

Lewis P. Jones, *Books and Articles on South Carolina History*. As the author states in his preface, this guide aims to enable intelligent readers to satisfy some of their interests in South Carolina history or even to conduct their own "teach-yourself-history" course.

