American Revolution Sites in Savannah

Battlefield Memorial Park and Spring Hill Redoubt Located at the southwest corner of Louisville Road and M.L. King, Jr. Boulevard, the site upon which the 1779 Storm of Savannah took place. 800 granite squares are arranged in columns on the slope of the battlefield, representing the attack columns as they assaulted Spring Hill Redoubt. A small redoubt has been constructed at the top of the hill, but a marker indicates the actual site of the original redoubt just to the west. GPS: N32.076 W81.100

Savannah History Museum Located at 303 M.L. King, Jr. Boulevard. Operated by the Coastal Heritage Society, this museum showcases the city's history, including several Revolutionary War exhibits. GPS: N32.076 W81.100

Nathanael Greene Monument Located in Johnson Square, the site where the Liberty Boys raised the first Liberty Pole in Georgia. The 50-foot high, white marble obelisk honors Major General Nathanael Greene, the commander of the Southern Department through whose strategic genius the Patriots recaptured the South. The Marquis de Lafayette, another Revolutionary hero, dedicated this monument in 1825 during his tour through the South. GPS: N32.080 W81.091

William Jasper Monument Located in Madison Square. Dedicated by President Grover Cleveland in 1888, this monument honors Sergeant William Jasper, the hero of the British attack on Charleston who received a mortal wound at the Storm of Savannah in 1779. GPS: N32.074 W81.094

Casimir Pulaski Monument Located in Monterey Square. The 55-foot high, obelisk honors Brigadier General Casimir Pulaski, considered the "Father of the American Cavalry" who received a mortal wound during the Storm of Savannah in 1779. GPS: N32.071 W81.095

Colonial Park Cemetery Entrance at the southeast corner of Abercorn Street and Oglethorpe Avenue. A number of Georgia's Revolutionary War Patriots are memorialized here, including John Berrien, Archibald Bulloch, Joseph Clay, Samuel Elbert, Button Gwinnett, Joseph Habersham, John Habersham, and Lachlan McIntosh. GPS: N32.075 W81.090

Les Chasseurs Volontaires Monument Located in Franklin Square. This consists of life-size bronze statues of four soldiers atop a concrete pedestal, and honors the black Haitian soldiers who served in the Siege of Savannah in 1779. GPS: N32.081 W81.096

There are numerous commemorative historical markers honoring Revolutionary War events and personalities located in Savannah.

Annual Celebration of
1779 Siege of Savannah at Spring Hill

October 9th
Battlefield Memorial Park, Savannah, GA
GPS N32.076 W81.100

Georgia's Revolutionary War Trail

Cherokee Indians

Creek Indians

GEORGIA

EAST FLORIDA

SOUTH CAROLINA

CHARLES TOWN

PORT ROYAL
SAVANNAH

SUNBURY

ST. AUGUSTINE

MAP OF GEORGIA, 1778

OGEECHEE

SAVANNAH R.

ALTAMAHA

American Revolution in Georgia

1. Elbert County — Fight at Van(n)'s Creek
GPS: N34.162 W82.744

2. Wilkes County — Battle of Kettle Creek
GPS: N33.691 W82.886

3. Lincoln County — Elijah Clarke & John Dooly: Heroes of the Hornet's Nest
GPS: N33.856 W82.410

4. Augusta — Sieges of Augusta and Revolutionary Capital of Georgia GPS: N33.476 W81.964

5. Screven County – Battle of Brier Creek
GPS: N32.811 W81.466

6. Savannah – Battles of Savannah, Royal & Revolutionary Capital of Georgia
GPS: N32.076 W81.100

7. Liberty County — Sunbury, Fort Morris & Midway
GPS: N31.764 W81.279

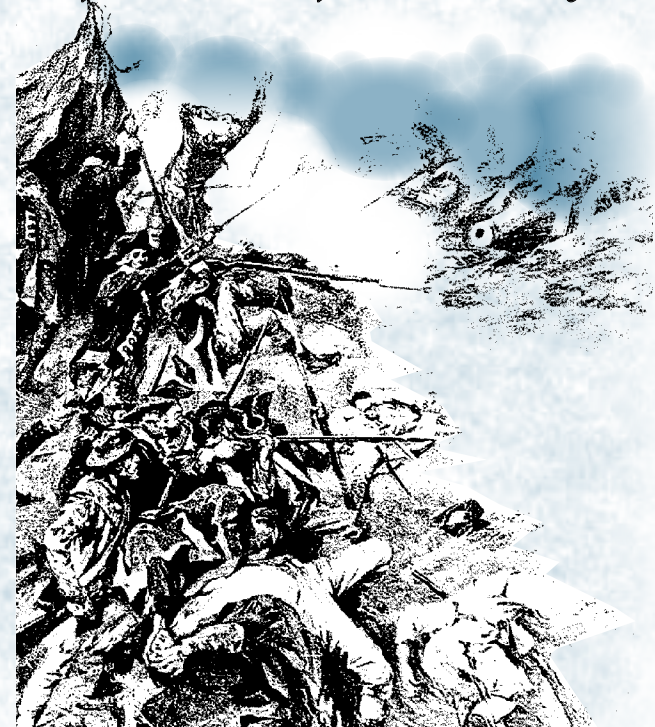8. St. Simons Island — Frederica Naval Action
GPS: N31.224 W81.393

Georgia's Revolutionary War Trail

1775 1783

"Discovering Our Heritage and History"

Savannah in the American Revolution

The Franco-American troops attacked with "spirit and patient bravery," and the British defended with "confidence and courage."

Attack on Spring Hill Redoubt, October 9, 1779

Savannah in the American Revolution

In 1774, the Liberty Boys in Savannah began meeting to express their grievances against the British Crown. Early in 1775, they became more active, and during the "Savannah Sugar Party" recaptured sugar and molasses seized by customs officials. Next, they stole the gunpowder stored in the city magazine and raised Georgia's first Liberty Pole. In July, they seized off Tybee a ship carrying gunpowder—the Patriots' first naval capture in Southern waters.

To enforce a ban on British trade and to wrest civil control from Crown officials, the Council of Safety organized in July 1775. Now, Georgia had two competing governments—Loyalist, with allegiance to King George III, and Whig, which favored independence.

British warships arrived in the Savannah River in January 1776, and the Council of Safety arrested the Royal Governor. The following month, the British ships took possession of several rice-laden merchant ships, leading to a heavy exchange of cannon fire with the Whigs at the "Battle of the Riceboats." The British sailed away with the fugitive Royal Governor. The Whigs countered with the Tybee Raid to clear the river of Loyalist raiders.

In February 1777, a convention in Savannah adopted Georgia's first Constitution, thereby becoming a state with Savannah as its capital. This document provided for a superior court in each county, a general assembly with an executive committee, and an elected governor. It also created eight counties from the provincial parishes, naming seven of them for British political figures sympathetic to the cause of American liberty and the eighth as Liberty County in honor of the early zeal by the Whigs of St. John's Parish.

The Georgia Whigs soon divided into Radical and Conservative factions, resulting in contention for civil and military dominance. This struggle led to a duel between Lachlan McIntosh and Button Gwinnett in May of 1777. Both men were wounded, and Gwinnett died of complications three days later.

McIntosh

By 1778, the American Revolution had reached a stalemate, so the British high command decided to initiate a "Southern Strategy." They felt that Loyalists in the Georgia backcountry would support the Crown. Sir Henry Clinton ordered Lt.Col. Archibald Campbell to invade Georgia, restore British rule, and set the stage for the British capture of the Southern colonies.

On December 28, 1778, Campbell's 3,500 troops landed below Savannah at Brewton's Hill, brushed away token resistance, and advanced on the Whig line, commanded by Continental Gen. Robert Howe along the east side of the city. Campbell sent a force of light infantry south to flank Howe's line, and thence north into Savannah in a move to trap the defenders. The British lost only seven men killed and ten wounded, while the Whigs lost 83 men killed and 483 captured—and the capital of Georgia. Royal Governor James Wright returned to Savannah in July of 1779, restored the parishes, and reorganized the Loyalist government and militia. Georgia became the only state to have its institutions returned to colonial status.
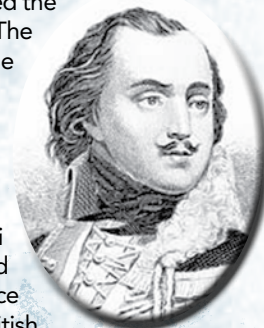
In September 1779, the French Mediterranean Squadron, commanded by Count Charles Henri d'Estaing, arrived off the Georgia coast. Four thousand troops disembarked at Beaulieu on the Vernon River. Continental Maj. Gen. Benjamin Lincoln joined them from Charleston with 600 Continentals, 200 men of the Pulaski Legion, and 750 militiamen.

Lincoln

D'Estaing demanded the surrender of Savannah on September 16. British Lt.Col. John Maitland led 800 Highlanders from Beaufort on a remarkable forced march through the marsh and swamps, slipping through the blockade into Savannah. Thus reinforced, British Gen. Augustine Prevost refused to surrender. D'Estaing's delay allowed Prevost to complete his defensive fortifications around the city.

The Franco-American attack began in the early morning of October 9, the British redoubt at Spring Hill being its principal objective. British artillery and musketry ripped the attackers as they advanced. Scottish bagpipes responded to the French battle cry, "Vive le roi!" British, Loyalist, and Hessian defenders cut down the French and Americans who reached the parapet and planted their colors. The attackers were unable to get inside the redoubt.

The combined Allied attacks failed with the loss of about 1,094 killed, of whom 650 were French. General Casimir Pulaski, Polish-born commander of the Pulaski Legion, received a mortal wound while conducting a reconnaissance in search of a breach in the British lines. He died two days later. Sergeant William Jasper, the hero of the British attack on Charleston, also received a mortal wound as he defended the South Carolina standard on the parapet. The British reported a loss of 16 killed and 39 wounded. Sir Henry Clinton in New York stated that the British victory at Savannah was "the greatest event that has happened in the whole war."

Pulaski

In January 1782, Maj. Gen. Nathanael Greene ordered Brig. Gen. Anthony Wayne to enter Georgia with a detachment of dragoons and artillerymen. Wayne's mission was to restore Whig authority and conduct a war of attrition against the British defenders of Savannah. Wayne established his headquarters at Ebenezer, and after a series of brutal fights around Savannah, Wayne drove the British outposts into the city and cut off their supplies. In a serious battle at Gibbons' plantation in June, Wayne defeated an attempt by Creek Chief Guristersigo and 300 warriors to break into Savannah.

On July 11, Gen. Alured Clarke, British commandant at Savannah, began the evacuation of the city. The British garrison of 1,200 regulars and Loyalists, along with Indian warriors and their families, and slaves, set sail for the West Indies, St. Augustine, and New York. Only about 750 white inhabitants remained in Savannah.

Lt.Col. James Jackson led his Georgia Legion into the city. Whig Governor John Martin convened the Georgia Assembly on July 13, and symbolically reclaimed Georgia. The last battle of the Revolution in Georgia took place on July 25, 1782, between Jackson's Georgia Legion and British Marines at Delegal's Plantation on Skidaway Island.