



# The Sons of the American Revolution Catawba Coalition



A monthly Newsletter for  
The Catawba Valley Chapter of  
The Sons of the American Revolution

## President's Report Compatriots and Friends



Catawba Valley Chapter has been busy since our last issue of The Catawba Coalition. Catawba Valley Chapter President, Ben Setser, presented Cadet Lieutenant Darrell Lane with the Bronze JROTC



Medal on Friday, 12 May 2023, pictured on the left below. Chapter President and Compatriot Rick Hubbard set up at the Hickory Gun Show on May 13 and 14 to sell Wreaths Across America. We broke even. A few members came to Alamance Battle Ground on May 20th. We had a



great time. On the right are photos of "Governor Tryon" speaking about putting down the Regulator Uprising and the commemoration. We continued with Compatriot Rick Hubbard presenting the SAR Eagle Scout Certificate to Kenny Radecki on Sunday, May 21st, pictured below left, and President Ben Setser, presenting the Bronze JROTC Medal and Certificate to Cadet Jerry Clontz of Alexander Central High School on Friday evening, 26 May 2023, pictured below right. To continue the busy streak, we



conducted 2 Patriot Grave Marking for Isaac Wise and Jacob Haas on the 27th of May, at Old Haas Cemetery in Newton NC, and participated in a Patriot Grave Marking for William Harris on June 3<sup>rd</sup> at William Harris Cemetery in Elkin NC, and an Eagle Scout presentation for Sawyer Wright at his Court of Honor in Sherrill's Ford, NC, on June 4th. Photos of the Grave markings on Page 3.



My friends, this makes for a busy month. Please join us at any time you

can. There is a list of upcoming events on Page 4. The most significant event is our Commemoration of the 243 Anniversary of the Battle of Ramsour's Mill on June 16th and 17th in Lincolnton NC. This is our annual National Event. Your presence is greatly desired.

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10 June 2023

Volume 4 Issue 6

### Chapter Officers

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John Jay Cline

**Secretary**  
Roy C Lightfoot

**Treasurer**  
Dan Beal

**Historian**  
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**Past President & Registrar**  
Jack Bowman



## “The Battle of Stono Ferry”

The Battle of Stono Ferry occurred on 20 June 1779 after the fall of Savannah, Georgia, which was the first time the British military presence had been felt in the south since the beginning of the American Revolution, and as a precursor to the siege and eventual fall of Charleston, South Carolina. Although this occurred several months prior to the official beginning of the British Southern Campaign, the focus can clearly be seen as moving to the south.

As is widely known, the British had reached a stalemate in the north. British Commander-in-Chief, Sir Henry Clinton decided to move south, and in hopes of rallying the Loyalists support in the Carolinas, and choking off the support for the Patriots. With Savannah in British hands, Clinton decided to increase the grip on the south, especially South Carolina, by taking Charlestown. Patriot Major General Benjamin Lincoln kept the pressure on Savannah, and the surrounding area, leading to several skirmishes in the area, however, when the British learned that the Americans had weakened their rear guard on Charleston, British Brigadier General Augustine Prevost's army of 2,500 regulars marched out of Savannah and moved towards Charleston approximately 108 miles away. Prevost's army was in pursuit of Patriot Brigadier General William Moultrie's militia men. Subsequently, the British army was beaten down by the Lowcountry June weather, and the exhausting energy of crossing numerous rivers and swamps. In addition, they were far from their home base and low on supplies causing their advance to be slowed and finally stopping within seven miles of Charleston. Upon learning of mounting defenses on Charleston Neck, Prevost abandoned any attempts on the city, lingered just south on John's Island, and decided to evacuate by sea because of reports that Lincoln, learning of the threat on Charleston, had moved his expeditionary force back towards the region.

On 16 June, Prevost began the extraction of his army by boat from John's Island back to Savannah, leaving the 71st Highlanders, the Hessian forces, and the Loyalists, totaling 900 troops, to cover the retreat on the mainland at Stono Ferry under the command of Lieutenant Colonel John Maitland. Priority fell to moving the baggage, horses, and the sick across the Stono River, and not for a defense. The front of the British consisted of two square redoubts with a battery, each containing three artillery pieces aimed down the road. On the right was a marshy area and a deep creek leading to a very narrow causeway which was defended by a round redoubt with one piece of artillery posted outside of the last work. A small breastwork rested on the bank, and at the right angles with the river were two more field pieces. The ground chosen was flat, and covered at a small distance from the works by a grove of large pines. As the British established their area, Lincoln sent word to Charleston instructing Moultrie to bring his troops from the city down to take James Island, and eventually John's Island. Moultrie's main mission was to fool Prevost into thinking the main attack would be in the rear, skewing the actual plan of Lincoln's attacking from the mainland.

Lincoln moved his army of 1,200 on 20 June with the North Carolina militia on the right under the command of Brigadier John Butler, and a group of Continentals on the left under Brigadier General Jethro Sumner. The flanks were covered by the light troops of Lieutenant Colonel William Henderson, and Colonel Frances de Malmedy leading the corps. The Patriot reserve consisted of the cavalry, and a small group of Virginia militia.

Maitland's pickets announced the Patriot force's approach at 7:00 am. The 71st Regiment of Foot was posted on the right, Lieutenant Colonel John Hamilton's Royal North Carolina composed the center, and regiment of Hessian auxiliaries held the left. The British flanks were secure as one rested on a deep ravine, and the other near a swampy morass, both of which were assailable, and firm enough to bear infantry, and the other was not connected to substantial water. Two companies of the 71st moved into position where the retiring pickets were, and as they rushed into the fight, were mostly destroyed until only eleven men were left standing. This early success encouraged the Patriots, who were now ordered to conserve their ammunition, and let the battle depend solely on the use of the bayonet.

In the opening moments of the battle, the Patriots overwhelmed the garrison with the British responding with artillery, and small arms fire when the attackers were within fifty yards. Disobeying orders, the Patriot line returned fire, which continued without ceasing for thirty minutes. The Patriot surge became generalized and penetrated the British line driving them back. Maitland moved quickly with the 71st from the right to the left and supplied the vacancies with his reserves. The Highlanders renewed the battle on the left, and the Hessians rallied being again brought into the line where the action raged with increased fury. Lincoln, annoyed by the fact his battle plan had been interrupted, exerted himself to stop the firing. After a slight pause, the Patriot charge renewed itself, however, was unsuccessful. As the fight extended to an hour, Prevost's force showed itself materializing on John's Island to reinforce Maitland's defenses.

**Continued on Page 3**

## “The Battle of Stono Ferry” Continued from Page 2

Lincoln ordered retreat only after seeing that the causeway leading from John’s Island, measuring approximately three-fourths of a mile long and 28 feet wide was completely covered with British reinforcements. At this point, Lincoln believed the assault was pointless. Mounted Patriot units, and the Virginia militia covered the disordered withdrawal, which was perceived by Maitland who advanced on Lincoln with his entire force. The Patriot cavalry, under the command of Brigadier General Casimir Pulaski, was ordered to charge the British whose zealous pursuit had thrown them into some disorder. Pouring full fire from his rear rank, the front held its ground and charged bayonets, subduing the charging Patriots, and allowed them to retreat. Maitland had no horse in order to pursue Pulaski, so he returned to the three redoubts. Moultrie finally arrived; however, the battle had already concluded. In total, the British reported losses of 26 killed, 93 wounded, and 1 missing, while the Patriots lost 30 killed, 116 wounded, and 155 men missing with many of these being attributed to desertion.

From the Patriot perspective, Moultrie failed with the diversion because he lacked enough boats to move his troops and weather is cited as causing a delay as well as pure incompetence, while Lincoln was short of ammunition (Author’s note: This author questions what made this happen since the force should have had a supply line, which in no way would have been threatened by the British, and there should not have been a shortage.), his force was unfamiliar with the broken swamps and creeks, and Maitland’s reinforced fortification of the three redoubts were too strongly entrenched, and defended. In addition, the British ship *Thunder* lay off the coast of John’s Island and fired into the Patriot lines. All factors caused Lincoln’s assault to be poorly executed. In the days which followed, both armies continued to harass each other from a distance. Patriot galleys from James Island captured a British schooner which was loaded with furniture plundered from local households. On 23 June, the British moved from the area to Beaufort on Port Royal Island. Prevost had lost Charleston; however, he would continue to successfully defend Savannah from a Continental and French siege in September.

The Battle of Stono Ferry sealed Prevost’s fate on the move on Charleston in 1779. Although the move was a failure, the battle was marked as a British victory since they held the field at the end of the day. In addition, this failure allowed the British army to gain valuable intelligence on the grounds and defenses around Charleston. Since they had already traveled the area, they were able to map out the marshy swamps, and creeks to the south, and have this information readily available, which would prove to be valuable the following year with the siege of Charleston. Also, the British observed how disorganized the Patriots were, especially the militia, and realized the areas citizenry were in fact Loyalists simply awaiting the arrival of British regulars instead of being against the King. Understanding this battle allows historians to explain what made the British revisit an attack on Charleston the following year. Although they still reeled from the attempt on Charleston in 1776, the events of the battle and the information provided by Prevost assisted Clinton, and the ministers in London to attack again.

Today, although truly unrecognizable, a portion of the garrison along the Stono River has been preserved thanks to the efforts of the South Carolina Battleground Preservation Trust. Also, a nearby plaque commemorating the battle can be seen in modern-day Hollywood, South Carolina.

**Roy C. Lightfoot**  
Chapter Secretary, Contributing Editor

### Photos from Wise, Hass and Harris Grave Markings

Isaac Wise  
and Simon  
Haas,  
Old Haas  
Cemetery  
Newton NC



William Harris  
Harris  
Cemetery  
Elkin NC



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## LOGISTICS

### SAR-DAR Happenings

- \***Battle of Ramsour's Mill**, Friday & Saturday, 16 – 17 June 2023, reception Gala, Friday evening at Lincoln Cultural Center, 6:30 pm, Commemoration Saturday morning, 10:am at 301 Jeb Seagle Dr, Lincolnton, NC 28092.
- \***Liberty Point Resolves**, Saturday, 24 June 2023, 10:00 am, 102 Ann St, Fayetteville, NC 28301.
- \***Independence Day**, Tuesday, 4 July 2023, Parades in Faith NC and Glen Alpine NC.
- \***Chapter Meeting**, Saturday, 8 July 2023, 11:00 am, Palermo's Family Italian & Greek Restaurant, 942 Conover Blvd, Conover NC 28613.
- \***Grave Marking**, Saturday, 15 July 2023, 10:00 am, 10140 Providence Church Lane, Charlotte, NC 28277
- \***House in the Horseshoe**, Saturday, 29 July 2023, 10:00 am at 101-499 Alston House Rd, Sanford, NC 27330.
- \***Old Soldiers Parade**, Thursday, 17 August 2023, 10:00 am and 3:00 pm, Downtown Newton NC
- \***New Bern Resolves**, Saturday, 26 August 2023, 9:45 am, 320 Pollock St, New Bern, NC 28560.

### Compatriots and Friends

In my terms as President of this chapter, I thought it important to have things for us to do, events to go to, missions to perform. It was my idea that having things to do would and could keep a small Chapter together and viable. and I think this helped, even during COVID when all that we could do was via ZOOM. As my term comes to an end, I would like to encourage all members to assist the new President in all of his undertakings. This new President will have his hands full, taking on new responsibilities. Help him all that you can. He will not be me, and I will not be him, but that is exactly the way that this Chapter, and a constitutional republic should work. Thank you for allowing me to be your President for two terms.

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### The Sons of the American Revolution

Is a nonpolitical, patriotic, educational 501c3 organization of men who have ancestors who fought for, or otherwise supported the War for independence from Great Britain that established the United States of America.

- Working to preserve our nation's past
- Assisting schools, teachers and the public
- Sustaining and preserving our history and constitutional principles

Membership is open to any male (no age limit) who can direct descent from a man or woman who contributed to our country's Independence. A patriot did not necessarily have to serve in the military, but might have supported the Revolution by paying a supply tax, providing food for troops, serving as a juror, or being a local public servant.



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The Catawba Coalition  
welcomes submissions,  
comments and/or  
suggestions.

Please send them to

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### Did you Know?

During the American Revolution, colonial forces received daily rations. These included a pound of meat per day, which might be beef, salt pork, or salt fish. The states, however, struggled mightily to sustain their men, leading to frequent periods of extreme scarcity. Salt, primarily provided by foreign sources, was quite rare, so meat was usually not stored and stockpiled.

Each man received a pound of flour every day, as well. In addition, troops ate peas or beans, milk, and a smaller ratio of rice, corn, and molasses.

But troops didn't always receive full rations. When they marched, fresh milk was hard to find. And during the long winter in Valley Forge in 1777, many men faced starvation rations.

"Sutlers" were licensed merchants who sold staples and luxury items in camp. They were able to fulfill some of the soldiers' needs that were unmet by more official services.