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Incident at Fair Lawn Plantation: How a Raid Ordered by Gen. Francis Marion Led to the Burning of a Hospital

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Burning hospitals and marching the patients off as prisoners is not the sort of thing for which Gen. Francis Marion is known, but it happened during a raid by troops under his command on November 17, 1781. After a bold but fruitless incursion into enemy territory with the aim of bringing on a battle, Colonels Hezekiah Maham, John Shelby, and Isaac Sevier went to Fair Lawn Plantation near Moncks Corner, South Carolina. There the British hospital at Colleton House was burned and sick and wounded soldiers taken as prisoners of war. Marion was not present, but his name is forever linked to the event. Questions persist. Did Americans burn the hospital, or was it the British? If Americans, who gave the order? What was the motive, and was it justified?



Figure 1. Gen. Francis Marion, Col. Hezekiah Maham, Col. John Sevier, and Col. Isaac Shelby, the four officers accountable for burning the British hospital at Fair Lawn Plantation. The portrait of Marion, which is based on a written description of him, is by Poindexter Page Carter (1851-1921) and hangs in the South Carolina State House. The portrait of Maham is by artist Gingi Martin of Pineville, SC. The portrait of Sevier was done by Charles Willson Peale in 1790, and that of Shelby was by Matthew Harris Jouett around 1818.

Brigadier General Francis Marion

In November 1781 Marion's reputation was at its peak.¹ Under Gen. Nathanael Greene, commander of the Southern Division of the Continental Army, and in collaboration with South Carolina 10-month State Troops and Lt. Col. Henry "Light Horse Harry" Lee's Partisan Legion, Marion's Brigade had driven the British from their outposts at Fort Watson and Fort Motte. In numerous skirmishes and ambushes in the swamps of South Carolina his militiamen suppressed British regulars and loyalist raiders with the guerilla tactics for which the Swamp Fox is still famous. In an ambush near Parker's Ferry on August 30, 1781, Marion's Brigade inflicted more than 200 casualties on a combined force of Hessians, British regulars, and loyalist militiamen. Marion received the most effusive accolades for the performance of his brigade at the battle of Eutaw Springs on September 8, 1781, in which they fought on the front line until they ran out of cartridges.² Greene was not overly fond of militias, but he wrote to Thomas McKean, President of the Continental Congress, that, "General Marion, Col^o Malmady and General [Andrew] Pickens conducted the Troops with great gallantry and good conduct, and the Militia fought with a degree of spirit and firmness that reflects the highest honor upon this class of Soldiers."³

¹ For details of Marion's life see John Oller, *The Swamp Fox* (New York: Da Capo Press, 2016). For information on his engagements see J. D. Lewis's monumental website carolana.com and John C. Parker, *Parker's Guide to the Revolutionary War in South Carolina*, 3rd ed. (Columbia SC: Harrelson Press, 2019).

² South Carolina Gov. John Rutledge reported to the SC Delegates in Congress, "the Militia, under Marion, & Pickens fired 17 Rounds p Man." Dennis M. Conrad, ed., *The Papers of General Nathanael Greene* (hereafter *PNG*), (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 1997), IX: 335 fn8.

³ Greene's Sept. 11, 1781 report to Pres. McKean. *PNG*, IX:328-338; Greene to SC Gov. Rutledge, Sept. 9, 1781, *PNG* IX:308. Col. Francis de Malmady, Marquis of Bretagne, commanded the North Carolina Light Dragoons Regiment. Congress awarded Greene a gold medal for his victory at Eutaw Springs and commended Marion for his victory at Parker's Ferry and his leadership at Eutaw Springs the following week. *Journals of the Continental*

The British Retreat to Fair Lawn Plantation

Greene left Eutaw Springs satisfied with the performance of his 2,080 men even though about a third of them had been killed, wounded, or captured. He marched the survivors and more than 400 prisoners about seven miles up Santee River to Burdell's Plantation (Fig. 2). Although technically the victor, Lt. Col. Alexander Stewart's 1,600 men had suffered an even greater proportion of casualties.⁴ Stewart held the battlefield, but it was a precarious situation. On the next day his troops destroyed the stores they could not carry, left the seriously wounded to Greene's care, and retreated toward the British post at Fair Lawn Plantation near Moncks Corner. Greene planned to renew his attack the next morning, but it poured rain.

Greene sent Marion with cavalry and Lee's Legion cavalry to get between Eutaw Springs and Fair Lawn to block British reinforcements and retard Stewart's withdrawal so that Greene could attack their rear. They did attack some of the retreating British troops, but the majority reached Ferguson's Swamp, 20 miles southeast, where reinforcements escorted them to the British post at Fair Lawn Plantation.⁵ Two days later, Greene moved his army from Burdell's Plantation to attack the British, but he was blocked at Ferguson's Swamp. The crossing could only have been over a long, narrow causeway (Fig. 2) and would have resulted in more casualties. Greene had lost many officers and men, as well as most of his artillery at Eutaw Springs, and his wounded and prisoners required the attention of hundreds of his fit men. Considering his men, materials, and supplies, as well as the risks of attacking a prepared defensive position at Fair Lawn Plantation, Greene displayed his usual caution and judgment. He marched back over the grounds from which he had come, and withdrew across the Santee River to a camp of repose in the High Hills of Santee (Fig. 2 inset).

Congress, 1774-1789 (Washington, DC: GPO, 1906), Resolution, Oct. 29, 1781, 21:1083

⁴ Patrick J. O'Kelley, *Nothing but Blood and Slaughter* (Lillington, NC: Blue House Tavern Press, 2005), 3:342.

⁵ Greene to McKean, Sept. 11, 1781, *PNG*, IX:332.

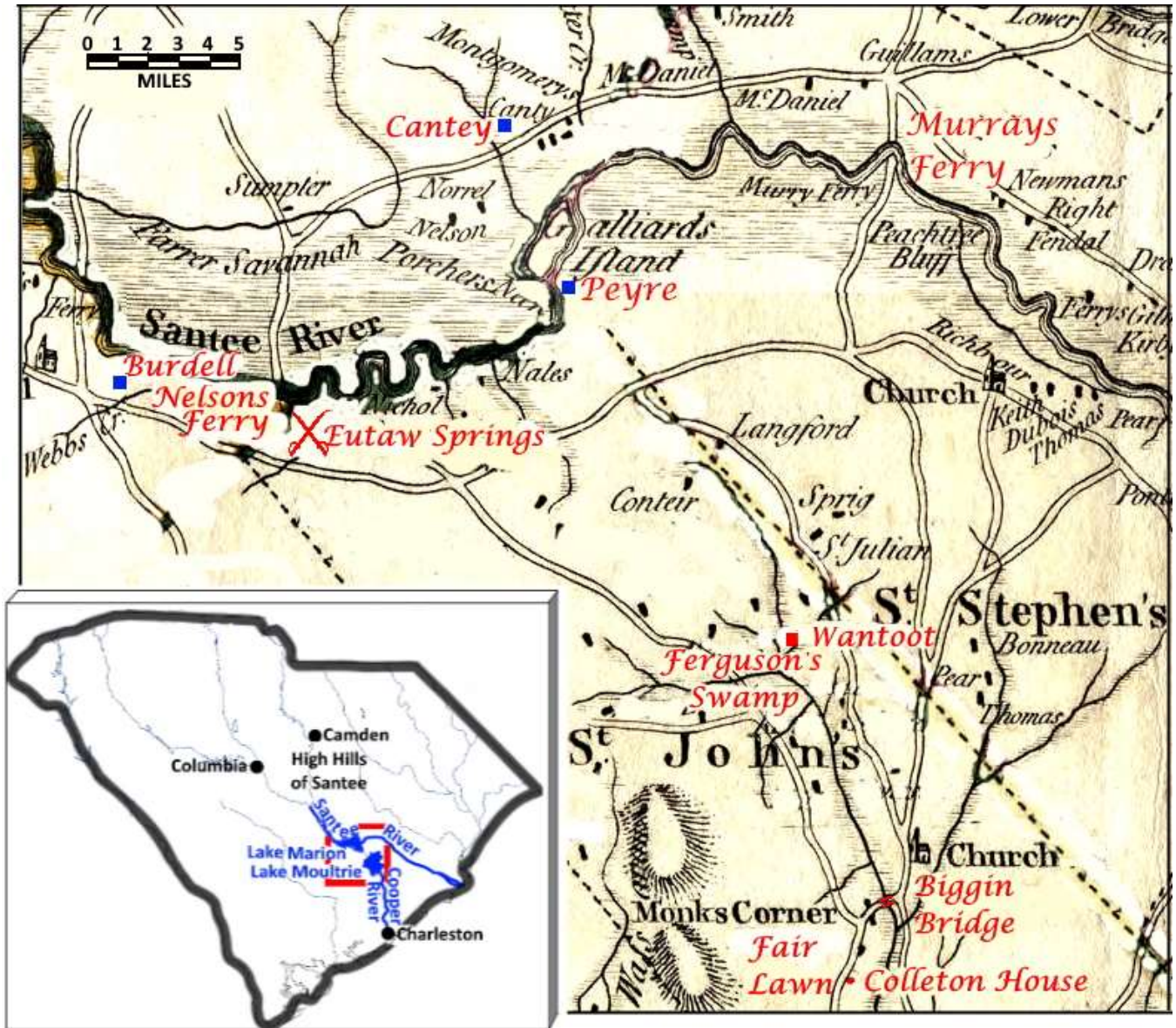


Figure 2. Part of Henry Mouzon's 1775 map showing major roads at the time, with locations mentioned in this article added in red. This part of Santee River and many of the roads and sites were flooded in the 1940s by Lake Marion and Lake Moultrie, as shown in the inset map. North is toward the top in this and other maps in this article. Annotated by C. Leon Harris.

Upon learning of Stewart's situation, Charlestown's British commander, Gen. Paston Gould, marched northwest to the Santee River crossings the Americans had used, but Greene had already safely recrossed and controlled all the boats. Stewart's British field army not only survived its drubbing at Eutaw Springs, but it soon reorganized and was reinforced. Within two weeks it retook the field. Stewart moved from Fair Lawn and established an advanced camp at Wantoot Plantation in St. Johns Berkeley Parish,

which the British called Ravenel's after the family that owned it.⁶

⁶ Wantoot Plantation was owned by Daniel Ravenel. British Maj. John Marjoribanks was left at Wantoot during the retreat from Eutaw Springs, dying from fever. Before the flooding of Wantoot by Lake Moultrie, his remains were removed to Eutaw Springs Battleground Park. Samuel Dubose, "Reminiscences of St. Stephen's Parish, Craven County". In T. G. Thomas, *A Contribution to the History of the Huguenots of South Carolina*. (New York: Knickerbocker Press, 1887), 64-65.

In the High Hills Greene set about reorganizing his army after the great loss of officers. He also had to arrange for sending his prisoners north and treating the sick and wounded, all while trying to prevent the British from raiding Whig plantations. To this end he detached Marion to watch the British on the Cooper River below Fair Lawn at Henry Laurens's Mepkin Plantation, then north to St. Stephens, then to Murray's Ferry.⁷

About the middle of September news reached Greene that turned his attention from Charlestown northward. The British under Cornwallis were in trouble in Virginia, threatened by the American and French land forces under Washington and Rochambeau and cut off from relief by sea by the French fleet under Comte de Grasse. Greene expected Lord Cornwallis to retreat through Charlotte North Carolina and on to Charlestown. On September 17 he wrote to Marion,

it is highly probably that his lordship will endeavor to retreat through North Carolina to Charles Town. I must therefore entreat that you will use every exertion to collect as large a body of militia together and as speedily as possible, that we may be able to intercept his lordship, and frustrate his design.⁸

The Overmountain Men

To further impede Cornwallis's retreat, Greene wrote to Col. John Sevier (1745-1815) and Col. Isaac Shelby (1750-1826) on September 16 asking them to meet him at Charlotte with "as large a

body of riflemen" as they could raise from beyond the Blue Ridge Mountains in what is now Tennessee.⁹ Both colonels were natural leaders, distinguished in both civil and military affairs. Shelby was a few years younger than Sevier but had even more military experience, first as a lieutenant in Lord Dunmore's War at the battle of Point Pleasant (October 10, 1774) and continuing as a colonel with the capture of Fort Thicketty (July 30, 1780) and victory at Musgrove Mill (August 19, 1780). Given Greene's distrust of militiamen, however, calling on the Overmountain Men may have been a last resort. They were a rough bunch of frontiersmen even by militia standards, accustomed to fighting Indian-style with rifles, tomahawks, and scalping knives. They did not stand in neat lines and shoot at each other like gentlemen. But there was no denying that they were able warriors, having proved themselves with the stunning defeat of Loyalist militiamen at Kings Mountain the year before (October 7, 1780). They were relatively safe in leaving their homes, since Sevier had destroyed the towns of the Chickamauga Cherokees in the previous December, and the Second Treaty of Long Island on the Holston had been signed on July 26. There were crops to be harvested, but that could be done by women.¹⁰

Sevier in Washington County and Shelby in Sullivan County soon recruited and conscripted several hundred militiamen for a three-month tour.¹¹ In late September and early October of 1781 the Overmountain Men mounted their horses at various places of rendezvous and began their journey to join Greene at Charlotte (Fig. 3). The first leg of the march was on winding paths to an elevation of 4,640 feet over the Blue Ridge Mountains and down to Quaker Meadows (just west of modern Morganton, NC) which some of

https://www.google.com/books/edition/A_Contribution_to_the_History_of_the_Hug/07gBAAAAMAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=inauthor:%22Samuel+Dubose%22&printsec=frontcover#v=onepage&q=marjoribanks&f=false

⁷ Patrick O'Kelley, *Unwaried Patience and Fortitude*. (West Conshohocken PA: Infinity Publishing, 2006), 551. Henry Laurens, fifth President of the Continental Congress, was a prisoner in the Tower of London, having been captured at sea in 1780. He was exchanged for Cornwallis after the surrender at Yorktown, October 19, 1781. Laurens's seat, Mepkin Plantation, is now Mepkin Abbey.

⁸ Greene to Marion, Sept. 17, 1781, Robert Wilson Gibbes. M.D., *Documentary History of the American Revolution*, (Columbia, SC: Banner Steam-Power Press., 1853), 3:166-167.

⁹ PNG, IX:351.

¹⁰ He "was absent in wheat Harvest and she, tho a weak female, rept & took in the Harvest." Elizabeth McNabb, widow of David McNabb, pension application W7438. The pension declarations are available at revwarapps.org.

¹¹ See Appendix D for a list of officers with Sevier and Shelby. The number under Sevier and Shelby is uncertain. Marion stated that about 380 were at the raid on Fair Lawn, but pension applications indicate that some of their men were out on patrol elsewhere.

the soldiers would have remembered from the year before.¹² They passed as close to Kings Mountain as Ramsour's Mill, scene of another victory over Tories on June 20, 1780. After pausing at Tuckasegee Ford on Catawba River, they continued on to Charlotte, expecting to find Greene.



Figure 3. Route of the “Overmountain” Men. Washington and Sullivan Counties, North Carolina, now in Tennessee, are shown as they were in 1781 before other counties were formed from them.

Having learned that Cornwallis was besieged at Yorktown with “no hopes of escaping.” however, Greene had returned to the High Hills of Santee. There he wrote to Sevier and Shelby on October 11 requesting that they join him there to suppress raids by the British and help drive them into

Charlestown.¹³ The mounted riflemen continued southward, past somber reminders of a different kind of enemy: Waxhaws with its mass grave of Virginia Continentals cut to pieces by Lt. Col. Banastre Tarleton’s dragoons on May 29, 1780; through the place of Sumter’s victory at Hanging Rock; the scene of Gen. Horatio Gates’s defeat near Camden on the following August 16, where Virginia and North Carolina militiamen fled from the army of Cornwallis; and crossed Hobkirk Hill, where Greene had been defeated on April 25, 1781. A little farther south they passed the ruins of Camden, partially burned by the British on May 9 to deny it to the Americans. Finally they reached Greene’s camp in the High Hills of Santee, where they were surprised to learn that they were to ride another 50 miles south to join Marion in the Santee swamps.¹⁴

Marion needed them, being chronically short of his own men, who showed up when there was fighting to be done but then drifted off to tend their crops and defend their homes. By October 25 at his camp at John Cantey’s Mount Hope Plantation, Marion had been assigned to patrol the large portion of South Carolina north and northeast of Santee River, which became the front line between the American forces and the British headquartered in Charlestown. Detachments from both sides frequently raided each other’s areas within the parishes of St. James Santee, St. Johns, St. Stephens, and St. Thomas and St. Dennis. From Wantoot Plantation the British raided as far as 31 miles up the Santee River to Henry Laurens’s Mt. Tacitus Plantation.¹⁵

Greene Sends in the Cavalry

The swamps were a different planet for the Overmountain Men more accustomed to hills, open forests, and clear streams, so Greene

¹² The trail to Kings Mountain is commemorated as the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail. <https://www.nps.gov/ovvi/planyourvisit/maps.htm>
The complete route is described in the following pension applications at revwarapps.org: William Boydston S3041, Landon Carter W900, Joseph Ford S15429, Darling Jones W7922, and James Stevenson S4009. The pension declarations are available at revwarapps.org.

¹³ PNG, IX:442.

¹⁴ George Doherty S1807, Thomas Gann S3388, William Gray S3410, Daniel Hill S1670, Elsi Hunt S7054, Zachariah Prewit S5952. All pension declarations cited are available at revwarapps.org.

¹⁵ Mt. Tacitus Plantation was on the south side of the Santee River and mostly within the modern Santee State Park at Santee, SC. PNG, IX:346 fn1 and unpublished colonial land records researched by Richard E. Watkins.

combined them with troops that were familiar with the territory. Expecting that the vanguard of Cornwallis's retreat would be led by Tarleton's cavalry, he had written to Lt. Col. Peter Horry (1743-1815)¹⁶ and Lt. Col. Hezekiah Maham (1739-1789) on September 17 to impress upon them "the necessity of using uncommon exertions to bring as many as possible of your Regiment[s] into the field with the utmost expedition." Horry and Maham each commanded a regiment of cavalry that Greene had authorized that summer as a more reliable alternative to mounted militiamen, who served short tours. These light horsemen were further distinguished from the motley militiamen by being dressed in blue coats and equipped and paid like Continental soldiers. Although essential to Greene and Marion, Horry and Maham also gave them headaches. As state officers they did not necessarily consider themselves subordinate to Marion, who was a brigadier general but only of militia. Moreover, Horry and Maham were constantly at odds over who was senior in command to the other. Greene and Marion sided with Horry, but Maham had other ideas.¹⁷ He appears not to have been an easy person to get along with. It is said that later in life when a deputy sheriff tried to serve him with a summons, Maham made him eat it.¹⁸

Maham was nonetheless an able officer. He had served as a captain at the battle of Stono Ferry (June 20, 1779) and again at the siege of Savannah (September 16-October 9, 1779). As a Lieutenant Colonel he commanded his regiment of state dragoons under Marion and Lee at the

¹⁶ Horry submitted an account of his services to Mason Locke "Parson" Weems for editing, and Weems transformed it into *Life of General Francis Marion*, which has left an indelible impression of Marion's character. Weems credited Horry as the author but admitted that he had turned his memoir into a "military romance." A. S. Salley, "Horry's notes to Weems's 'Life of Marion,'" *South Carolina Historical Magazine* 60(3) (July 1959), 119-122. www.jstor.org/stable/27566234. <http://boston1775.blogspot.com/2011/05/most-certainly-tis-not-my-history-but.html>

¹⁷ O'Kelley, *NBBS*, 3:fn 192, p. 501; Oller, 169-170.

¹⁸ *South Carolina Encyclopedia*: Maham, Hezekiah. <https://www.scecyclopedia.org/sce/entries/maham-hezekiah>. Marion also held a Continental commission as Lieutenant Colonel Commandant of the 2nd SC Infantry.

siege of Fort Watson in April 1781. It was Maham's idea to erect a tower from which riflemen could shoot into the fort, which led to its surrender on April 23. It has been known as a Maham tower ever since.

On October 23 Greene placed Horry and Maham under Marion's command. At Marion's camp at Cantey's their troops with those of Sevier and Shelby began "roving about the swamps of Santee." The objectives of these patrols were "scouting and harrassing the British," "scour[ing] the Country to repress the Tories and keep the British in check," and "preventing any communications or intercourse between the British & other persons in a clandestine manner."¹⁹ In the words of Abram Hill, "We gave their light horse many a handsome chase."²⁰

Marion's Camp at Peyre's Plantation

Around the middle of November Marion moved his camp to Peyre's Plantation (Figs. 2 and 4), a position he had occupied earlier in the summer after his base at Snows Island on Pee Dee River had been destroyed by Lt. Col. Welbore Doyle in the previous March. According to William Dobein James, who served as a teen with Marion, Peyre's plantation was "near the mouth of the present Santee canal." James wrote:

Marion retired to his favourite encampment, at Peyre's plantation, in Santee river swamp. On the banks of the river at that time there were extensive cornfields on all the plantations, and the most of the low places were cultivated in rice. The crops of three or four years past had been housed, and kept out of the enemy's reach by the difficulty of approach and their retired situation. Here the general fixed himself, much to his liking, in a cane brake, about a quarter of a mile from the river, which however was soon cleared to thatch the huts of himself and his men. Some lakes which

¹⁹ *PNG*, IX:357; Gibbes, 3:167; John Ashur R280; Zacheus Copland S2470; and George Doherty S1807. The pension declarations are available at revwarapps.org.

²⁰ Abram Hill pension application S15890.

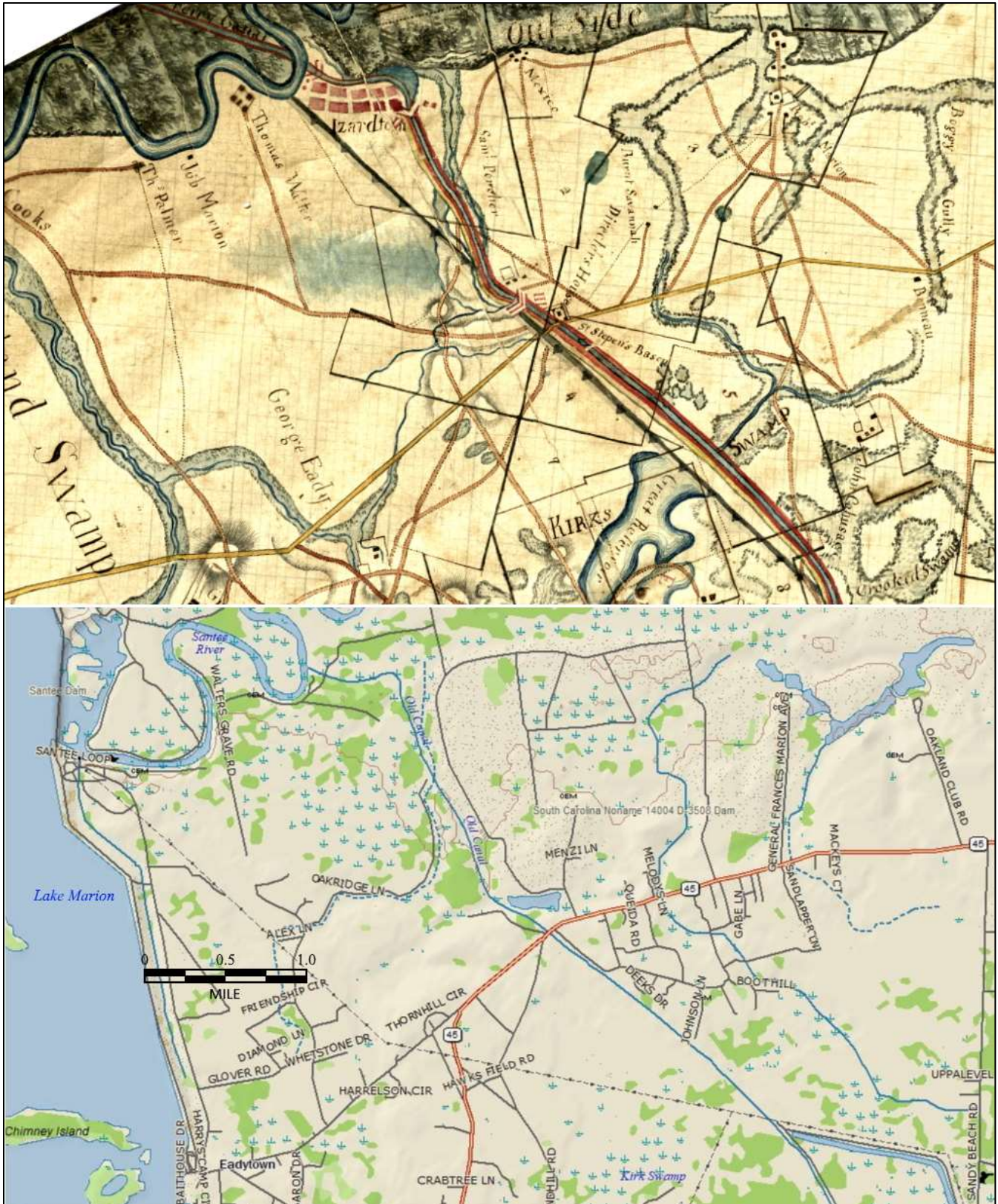


Figure 4. Marion’s camp at Peyre’s Plantation near Iazardtown on the historic Santee Canal about one-fourth mile from Santee River. (Top) Detail from a “General Survey” of the Santee Canal engineered by Christian Senf in the 1790s (outlined in red). (Bottom) The same area from a recent map (TopoUSA 7.0). Note the bodies of water that protected Marion’s camp to the south.

skirted the high land, rendered the post difficult of approach, and here was forage for horses, and beef, pork, rice, and green corn for the men, in the greatest abundance.²¹

Fair Lawn Plantation

Fair Lawn (or Fairlawn) Barony originated in 1663 as a 12-thousand-acre grant by King Charles II to one of the eight Lords Proprietors of the Carolinas, Sir John Colleton, First Baronet (1608-1666). None of the Lords Proprietors even visited the Carolinas, and Fair Lawn Barony was not surveyed until after the death of John Colleton. Fair Lawn Barony eventually passed down to the grandson, also named John Colleton (1701-1751), who settled at Fair Lawn around 1727. Over the years Fair Lawn Barony was divided into smaller plantations, including Fair Lawn Plantation and plantations known as Stony Landing, Gippy, Lewisfield, and Fairfield, as well as much of the present town of Moncks Corner.²²

Around 1730 John Colleton built a brick mansion called Colleton House on Fair Lawn Plantation.²³

²¹ James, William Dobein. *A Sketch of the Life of Brig. Gen. Francis Marion*, (Charleston, SC: Gould and Riley, 1821), 138

²² Strictly speaking, Fair Lawn and other grants to Lords Proprietors were signiories, and baronies were grants to those of lesser rank. Smith 1900; J. D. Lewis, "The Lords Proprietors of Carolana and Carolina", www.carolana.com/Carolina/Proprietors/home.html; Smith 1910; Smith 1911. Smith (1900) and others later confused Fair Lawn Barony with Wadboo Barony to the east. John Colleton's third son, James, inherited Wadboo Barony and became Governor of the colony in 1686. The manor house and grounds became Marion's last encampment and the scene of his last engagement. C. Leon Harris and Charles B. Baxley, 2019, "Francis Marion's Last Engagement: Wadboo Plantation, August 29 1782." *Southern Campaigns of the American Revolution*, 16(3.2).

<http://www.southerncampaign.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Wadboo-Fraser-v-Marion-Avenue-of-the-Cedars-3.2.pdf> See also J. E. Buchanan, "The Colleton Family and the Early History of South Carolina and Barbados, 1646-1775", PhD dissertation, Univ. of Edinburgh, 1989

²³ James Sevier S45889 described Colleton House as "a large brick tenement belonging to a Mr. Colleton." John Wilson W6540 and William Wilson W2218 referred to it as the "two and twenty mile house," perhaps confusing it with

His son, also named John Colleton (1738-1777) occupied the house until his death. His widow married again but still kept the title of Lady Colleton. The first known incident at Colleton House during the Revolutionary War occurred on April 14, 1780, when one of Tarleton's dragoons cut Lady Colleton's hand with his sword and threatened to sexually assault and murder her.

The British subsequently commandeered Colleton House as a hospital, and its patients probably included the wounded from the battle of Eutaw Springs. As will be related later, Colleton House was burned during the American raid on November 17, 1781, and the mansion has lain in ruins ever since (Fig. 5).



Figure 5. Part of the ruins of Colleton House. Brick fragments are scattered in the foreground. Intact bricks were presumably scavenged over almost two hundred and fifty years since its destruction. (Photo by C. Leon Harris).

Henry A. M. Smith wrote in 1910 that the ruins of the mansion "indicate an extent and style of construction not likely to have been undertaken, save by one who actually made the place his residence." In 1819, Louisa Carolina Colleton Graves, who was born in 1763 in the mansion that her father built, described it as of "great extent" and "very magnificent."²⁴ At her request Joseph Purcell surveyed Fair Lawn Plantation in 1789

an inn. The pension declarations are available at revwarapps.org.

²⁴ Louisa Carolina Graves. *Desultory Thoughts on Various Subjects*. (Brussels: British Press, 1819), 100.

and depicted the outline of Colleton House (Fig. 6). Presumably Louisa Graves had informed Purcell of the outline, but no representation of the house is known to exist. An 1821 survey shows a different outline, possibly because the footprint of the house was difficult to determine among the ruins.



Figure 6. Detail of the footprint of the ruins of the Colleton House or Mansion from the 1789 Purcell survey (left) and an 1821 survey by Vignoles (right).

British Defenses

Colleton House was one of several reasons the British chose Fair Lawn Plantation as a base (Fig. 8, next page). In addition to serving as a hospital, Colleton House and its outbuildings were a depot for military supplies. The plantation was also a convenient base for raiding the rich Santee River farmlands. Tides on Cooper River allowed easy transport of captured food, fuel, and forage from Stony Landing to Charlestown to support the thousands of citizens, slaves, soldiers, American prisoners, and Loyalist refugees with their families and slaves. Stewart's forces at Wantoot protected Fair Lawn from attack by Marion to the north. Cooper River and Biggin Creek protected the base from attack from the east. Biggin Creek was passable only at Biggin Bridge, where the British were building a blockhouse to defend it (Fig. 7).

Most of the British were in Fort Fair Lawn, a 100-foot-square redoubt almost nine-tenths of a mile to the east of Colleton House (Fig. 9). Like the

blockhouse at Biggin Bridge, the redoubt was still being worked on before the attack.²⁵



Figure 7. The blockhouse at Biggin Bridge may have been built like this reconstruction of a blockhouse from the Virginia frontier. (Photo by J. Brett Bennett.)

Even with these advantages the British encampment would have been difficult to defend, being spread over more than a square mile. About 150 Hessians had previously defended the camp but were relieved of duty “on account of a very alarming Desertion from them.”²⁶ They were replaced by only 50 men of the 2^d Battalion of the 84th Regiment Royal Highland Emigrants under Capt. Murdock MacLaine.

²⁵ Capt. Murdock MacLaine to Maj. John Doyle November 13, 1781, in Appendix B.

²⁶ Testimony by British Capt. Murdock MacLaine, in Appendix B.

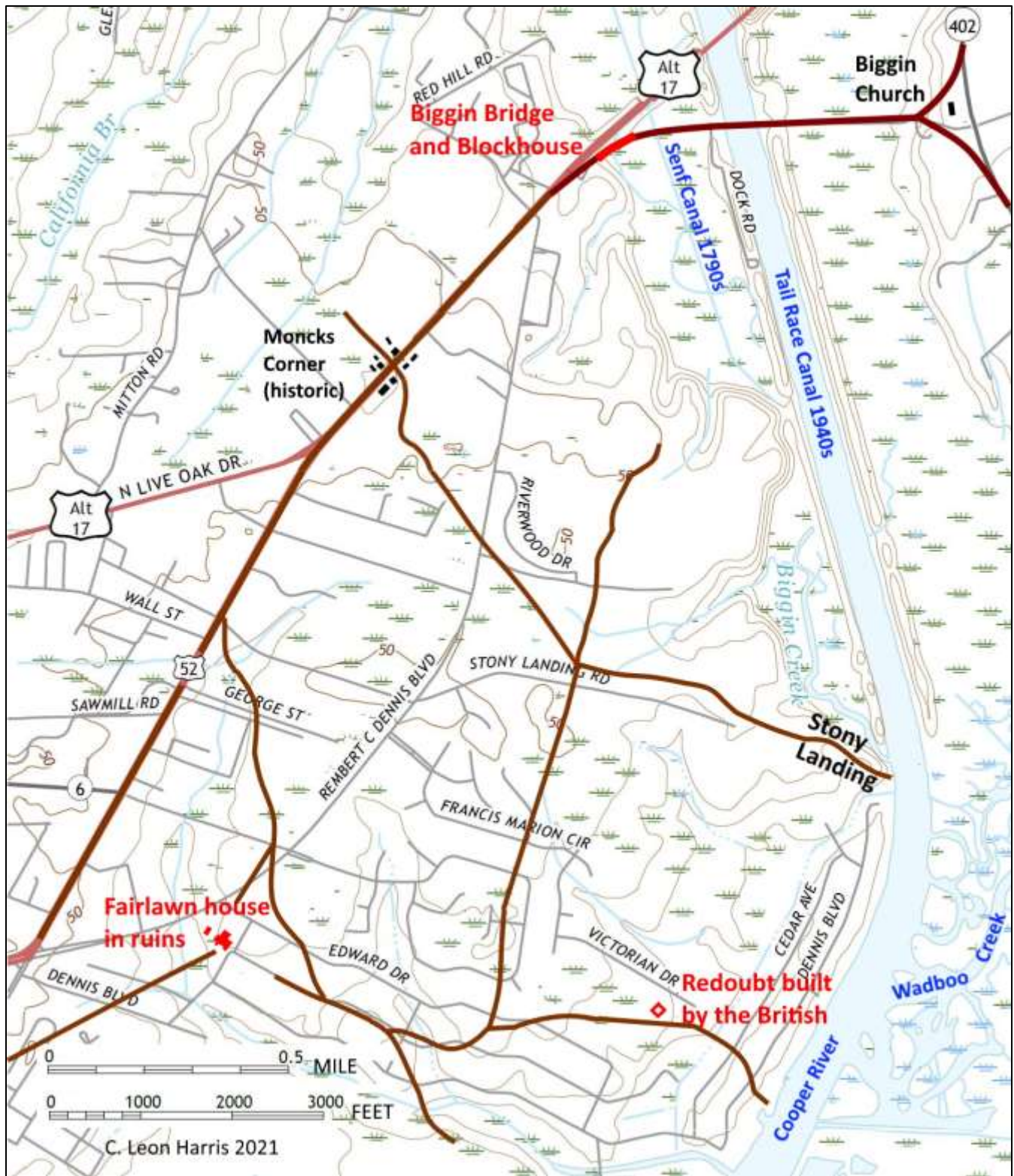


Figure 8. British defenses (red) and roads (brown) primarily from a 1789 survey by Joseph Purcell overlaid onto a modern USGS topographic map.



Figure 9. (Top) Part of the remains of Fort Fair Lawn. (C. Leon Harris) (Bottom) The redoubt from the east toward Colleton House based on preliminary archaeology. A moat and pointed logs (fraise) protected the walls except at the sally port. The inner walls were supported by wood, with a firing step for soldiers to shoot over the parapet. (Digital representation by Matt Luke, courtesy of the South Carolina Battlefield Preservation Trust.)

MacLaine's orders were "to occupy the post you are now in [the redoubt], and leave the Block-House in its present Situation." Gen. Stewart "ordered a party with Captain Platt of the Camden Militia to the Bridge, which was the place most expected to be attacked."²⁷ Even without responsibility for the bridge, MacLaine's troops were spread so thin that he informed his superiors that "as my small Detachment cannot afford a Guard for the Hospital, I have ordered so many of

²⁷ Maj. William Brereton to MacLaine, November 10, in Appendix B.

the recovering Convalescents to do Duty there."²⁸ Defense of the hospital was up to the patients.

Maham's Bold Raid into Enemy Territory

The burning of Colleton House on November 17, 1781, appears to have been the unplanned consequence of Marion's order for Maham to lead a raid into enemy territory with his cavalry and the mounted riflemen of Sevier and Shelby. The raid began on November 15, and Maham's troops did not get back to camp at Peyre's Plantation until the early hours of November 18. On that day Marion described the objectives of the raid in a report to Greene:

Finding the Enemy Constantly Patrolling on the river and plundering the Inhabitants of St Stephens and St Johns of Negroes, and every article of Life, I sent Col. Maham with one hundred & Eighty horse & two hundred of Colo Shelys and Seviars riflemen, to Indeavour to Intercep them, or Draw out their Caveldry & to recover if possible A Number of Negroes they were sending to town He Set out on Thursday [Nov. 15] & went around their Incampment, but they kept Close. He then went below Monks Corner, to Fair Lawn where the Enemy had their Hospital.²⁹

Marion gave two objectives for ordering the raid, one being an attempt to either intercept the British foragers or to engage the 200 British cavalry (the South Carolina Royalists) stationed at Wantoot Plantation together with 1700 infantry.³⁰ The cavalry was under Maj. Thomas Fraser, who was still probably sore from being trampled by his own horses at Parker's Ferry less than three months before. It seems unlikely Fraser would have been lured into a similar disaster, but Marion evidently thought it was worth the attempt to hinder Stewart's mobility and communication

²⁸ MacLaine to Lt. Col. Nesbit Balfour, November 15. Appendix B.

²⁹ PNG IX:589-590. "Around their camp" means Wantoot Plantation

³⁰ See note 2 to Marion's Nov. 25 letter to Greene in Appendix A.

with Charlestown by injuring his cavalry. The first objective failed, because the British “Cavalry...and two hundred Infantry were on the Santee under the Command of Major Brereton searching for Forage.”³¹

The second objective of the raid was to recover slaves that had been seized from Whig plantations and were to be shipped to Charlestown. This latter goal may have been what brought Maham to Fair Lawn Plantation. It also failed, because the 155 slaves had already been sent from Wantoot to the dock near Fair Lawn and on to Charlestown on November 14.³²

As a precaution against spies or in case a soldier was captured, it is likely that only Maham, Sevier, and Shelby were apprised of the goals of the mission. Five decades later two pension applicants still believed the attack at Fair Lawn began as a routine scout.³³ In 1814, while he was Governor of Kentucky, Shelby gave another explanation for the raid, stating that Fair Lawn was Marion’s objective from the start, and the mission was timed to take advantage of insurrection among Hessians there. Shelby’s recollection is suspect, however, because of errors in the date and numbers of troops.³⁴

In November of 1781, general Marian rec. information that 4 or 500 hessians in Garrison at Colliton Hall near Monks Corner, were in a state of insurrection he detached Col. Mayam of the Dragoons, Colonel Shelby and Colonel Sevier, with a

party of eight hundred men to attack the post. The party was commanded by Colonel Mayam. They appeared before the British Garrison early on the 26th day of November, 1781. The Hessians had been sent to Charlestown the day before, under an apprehension of their disaffection.

Marion’s report to Greene stated that Maham left on November 15, and Col. John Doyle wrote to Greene (Appendix A) that the attack on Fair Lawn occurred on “the morning of the 17th.” If both dates are correct, then Maham must have taken a long route toward the British camp at Wantoot and spent much of November 16 trying to engage the British cavalry and intercepting the slaves. To avoid detection and mislead spies, it seems likely that Maham left Peyre’s after dark on the 15th, crossed Santee River and circled around to the west, then recrossed the river possibly at Nelson’s Ferry.³⁵ From there he could have taken the road from Eutaw Springs to Wantoot, a total distance of nearly 50 miles (Fig. 10). The day of the 16th was spent in frustration.

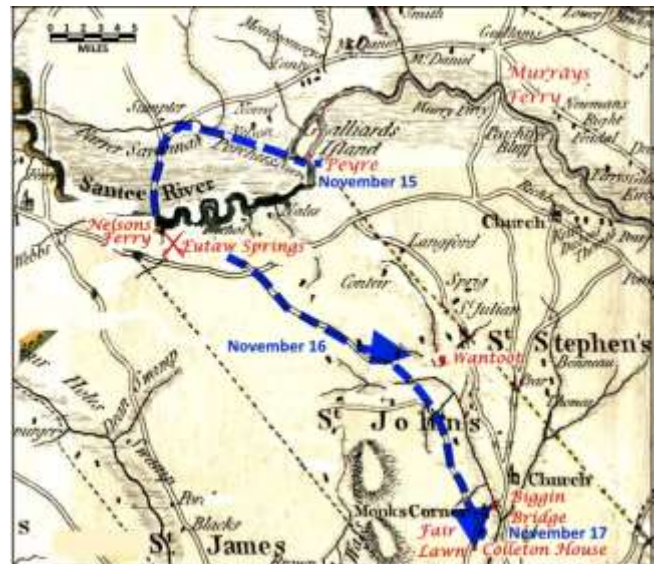


Figure 10. One of several possible routes Maham’s troops may have ridden from Marion’s camp at Peyre’s Plantation toward Wantoot and Fair Lawn.

³¹ Testimony by Stewart in Appendix B.

³² Appendix B, Nov. 14 letter from Maj. John Doyle to Capt. MacLaine and MacLaine to Doyle dated Nov. 15.

³³ John Canterbury (R1667) wrote, “on a reconnoitering party they came upon a British Hospital.” John Wheeler (W8999) stated: “A detachment under Colonels [Henry] Clark and Sevier was ordered out by Marion to watch the enemies movements. My company comprised a part of this detachment – and our orders were to come to no engagement, but to cut off as many of the enemy as possible.” (We could not identify a Col. Henry Clark.)

³⁴ Shelby’s letter is Appendix C. Intelligence about the Hessians was partly correct. Documents in Appendix B state that 150 Hessians were to be relieved by 50 men under Capt. Murdoch MacLaine “on account of a very allarming Desertion from them.”

³⁵ Echoing Marion’s statement that Maham “went around their Incampment,” Thomas Laughlin (W9112) stated, “We took the British piquet guard then marched around the British army.”

Maham's approach did not go undetected. Between 3 and 4 PM on the 16th Capt. Murdoch MacLaine sent the following express to Stewart:³⁶

I was just now given to understand that there is a party of mounted Rebels between Monk's Corner and Cooper's Plantation about two Miles from this. The Bearer brought me the intelligence, and called them in Number between Three and four Hundred.

Such warnings were frequent and often false, however, and Stewart did not come to the rescue. MacLaine had only 50 under his command when Maham arrived at Fair Lawn Plantation about 8 AM on the 17th.

The Attack on Colleton House

The accounts of the participants in the American attack on the British base at Fair Lawn Plantation provide unique insights. The only eyewitness accounts known to us are Maham's defense of the raid written to Greene on November 27 (in Appendix A), testimony by British participants at a court of inquiry (Appendix B), a letter by Shelby dated in 1814 (Appendix C), and declarations by veterans applying for pensions after 1832.³⁷ Accounts written soon after the event are presumably more reliable than those written five or more decades later, and older accounts by eyewitnesses are more reliable than those of people who were not present.

Maham described to Greene what he did on arriving at Fair Lawn:

When I marchd down, I left my troops a Little distance behind, and went up and Rec^{td} [reconnoitered] the post. I seen a number of soldier moving about, which I took to be the guard. I Returnd to my Command, orderd a few Rifle men to dismount, go up as near as possible and fire on them. At this same time I was to march in full view with my force and make a

demand of the post. In consequence of which they Emeadeately surrendered them selves prisoner of war.³⁸

The pension declaration of John Canterbury (R1667) is in general agreement that they fired on the post "but the fire not being returned they marched up and took it without the effusion of blood." Benjamin Birdwell (W218) likewise stated that they captured the post "after the firing of a few guns," and Darling Jones stated that they took the post "without fighting."³⁹ Shelby believed in 1814 that the British "surrendered at discretion, under the impression that the Americans had Artillery."

Like Maham, William McIntosh (S9424) stated that this occurred "in sight of the British Army," who offered no resistance. Capt. Murdoch MacLaine and his 50 men watched helplessly from the redoubt. The mounted riflemen had a clear advantage in numbers, fire power, and maneuverability.

Maham may not have known initially that Colleton House was a hospital, because it and adjacent buildings had been surrounded by abatis (tree limbs with sharpened ends which lay horizontally and/or pointed upwardly to repeal horsemen). In his defense of the raid written to Greene on November 27, Maham described Colleton House as follows:

The House at Fairlawn, is defensible for any hosp^l Of it self, But thay had abbattd it strongly all around, in the next place, it was within half a mile of a fort Which was in full view.⁴⁰ Thay made it a stage for there troops to go in and from Charlestown. I have none [known] Maj^r Frasher [Major Thomas Fraser], to Quarter his Cavalry

³⁸ PNG, IX:630-631, Appendix A.

³⁹ In the pension applications of Landon Carter (W900) and John Sevier W6011. But see Walter Greer S3415: "without firing a gun."

⁴⁰ Maham misstated the distance from the house to the fort (redoubt) by half. The ground between the house and redoubt were undoubtedly cleared, but at an actual distance of 0.88 mile the redoubt could hardly be said to have been "in full view" except from the mansion's upper stories.

³⁶ See testimony by MacLaine in Appendix B.

³⁷ The pension declarations are available at revwarapps.org.

within the Abbaotis, which he did, a few nights before it was taken, and from the information we could git, thay allways kept a strong guard, which I expected To finde there.

Shelby referred to Colleton House as a garrison or fortification.⁴¹ James Sevier (S45889) stated that the British “had fortified round a large brick tenement belonging to a Mr. Colleton,” and Thomas White (S31474) described it as “a hose [house] surrounded by logs &c.” Numerous other pension applicants, however, referred to it as a hospital.⁴²

As the patients came out and surrendered it must have become apparent that Colleton House was a hospital. According to one of the surgeons, within a half hour of arriving the Americans set the hospital on fire.⁴³ Only two pension applicants mentioned burning Colleton House, and without calling it a hospital. William Sympson (S15669) stated that they “burnt the fortification,” and Thomas Laughlin (W9112) said they “burned one of their public stores.”⁴⁴

Maham’s report to Greene described the prisoners as follows, referring to them as soldiers rather than patients:

I found three Surg^{ts} [surgeons] one Liu^t [lieutenant] and 94 British solders, near or about 300 stand of arms, and a good Quantity of other stores, that I could not possibly get off[f]

⁴¹ John Anderson W9329, Landon Carter W900, George Clark S32179, William Clark W6680, John Sevier W6011, William Sympson S15669, Samuel Thompson S3798. The pension declarations are available at revwarapps.org.

⁴² James Anderson S1786, Samuel Boydston R1096, Thomas Broughton W897, John Canterbury R1667, Zacheus Copland S2470, John Franklin R3756, Thomas Gist S1762, Henry Hicks R4962, John Mallugan S4186, Abel Pearson S3661, Thomas Wallace W11739, John Watson S16287, John Wilson W6540, William Wilson W2218.

⁴³ Surgeon Dowse in Appendix B.

⁴⁴ John Wheeler (W8999) stated that the house was already burning when they arrived: “came to a large brick house which had been set on fire – some of our men dismounted and saved some articles from the flames.”

Maham’s numbers differ somewhat from Marion’s statement to Greene that Maham “took one L^t, two surgeons & brought of Eighty Convellessent. Parole the Off^r & two Doctors who was very sick.” Some pension applicants stated the number of prisoners was in the 90s, in agreement with Maham,⁴⁵ while others were in the 80s, closer to Marion’s number.⁴⁶ William Sympson (S15669) stated that “there were 93 men & 3 women whom they made prisoners.” Thomas Broughton (W897) stated that they “took ninety three regulars, two Doctors and three Sergeants.” Some gave estimates higher than those of Maham, but none as high as stated by Shelby in 1814: “one hundred and fifty surrendered at discretion.”

The higher numbers of prisoners might include 12 who were too weak to travel and released on parole (promise not to take up arms until exchanged). Maham stated that

Surg^{ts} & Leu^t complained of being unwell. I ga them paroles to the Limits of Charles Town. All there bagage of Every kind was Restord to them. When I came to Examin the prisoners I found 12 not well enough to bring of. I order them to be caried fort in site [to the redoubt within sight]

Marion’s report stated that Maham released a sick lieutenant and two doctors on parole. Henry Hicks (R4962) stated that they “took the officer and Doctor and paroled them, took those able to travel along & left the sick.”

After arranging for the prisoners, packing what stores they could carry, and burning Colleton House and remaining stores, Maham withdrew back to camp at Peyre’s. In his letter to Greene, Maham wrote that he had the prisoners “all put on horseback, and whould not suffer one to walk.” Shelby also stated that “the Detachment were all

⁴⁵ Thomas Broughton W897, Joseph Ford S15429, Walter Greer S3415, Daniel Hill S1670, David McNabb W7438, Charles Moore S30599, William Patterson S3648, James Roberson S1718, James Stanaland S18215.

⁴⁶ John Canterbury R1667, John Franklin R3756, Thomas Gist S1762, Thomas Laughlin W9112, William McIntosh S9424, Abel Pearson S3661, Philip Roberts W2170, Samuel Thompson S3798.

mounted and carried the prisoners by turns through the woods on their horses and arrived the night after about one o'clock at General Mariani's headquarters in the Swamp of the Santee river, at the distance of near fifty miles from where the British surrendered." If the return trip was nearly 50 miles, Maham's troops probably retraced his route back to Marion's camp. They arrived about one A.M. on November 18 according to Shelby, and Thomas White (S31474) stated that they "travelled nearly all night until near day."

Maham's statement that he had the prisoners "all put on horseback, and would not suffer one to walk" gives the impression it was an act of pure kindness, but another consideration was that he could not have prisoners slowing his retreat for fear of being attacked from the rear. In fact Shelby stated that "General Stewart sent a strong detachment to regain the prisoners but could not come up with them." According to James Roberson (S1718), "the British pursued us near our camp but did not make an attack on us." Thomas White (S31474) stated that "we expected the enemy to follow us which they did until they came to the swamp and sounded a Charge whilst we Lay in ambush waiting for them they retreated back toward their Fort."⁴⁷ The prisoners were delivered to Marion, who arranged for them to be conducted to Camden.⁴⁸

Who Burned Colleton House?

It is clear that the American rebels burned the hospital at Colleton House, but there does not appear to be any documentary evidence regarding who, if anyone, gave the order, and who carried it out. It may be, however, that Marion left a clue in his report to Greene (Appendix A) when he wrote: "Col. Maham Gives Colo Shelby the greatest Applause for his readiness & the good order he kept his men." Why did Marion mention Shelby and not Sevier? Was Marion relaying to Greene an accusation by Maham that Sevier had not kept his men in good order, suggesting perhaps that it was they who burned the hospital?

⁴⁷ See also John Ashur R280

⁴⁸ William Gray S3410, Darling Jones W7922.

There have been questions whether Sevier was even at the attack at Fair Lawn,⁴⁹ but Marion clearly stated that he "sent Col. Maham with one hundred & Eighty horse & two hundred of Colo Shelby's & Sevier's riflemen." Several pension applicants, including Col. Sevier's son, James Sevier (S45889), stated that he was at the action.⁵⁰ Marion added to his report written on the day after the burning, "Col Shelby has my permission to retire to No Carolina." The omission of Sevier's name suggests that his troops had already left for North Carolina soon after burning Colleton House. The state of discipline in Sevier's regiment is indicated in a letter to Greene written a week before the raid in which Sevier worried that some of his regiment might desert.⁵¹

One can easily imagine that Sevier's men were not happy about having been lured hundreds of miles from home. It is tempting to speculate that they expressed their frustration as they had against the Cherokees less than a year before – with fire.

The Flame War – the War of Words for the Moral High Ground

Marion wrote to Greene on the 18th that Maham continued "below Monks Corner, to Fair Lawn where the Enemy had their Hospital... & burnt Fair Lawn house with a Number of Arms & stores which they could not possibly bring off." It is not clear from this whether Marion knew then that it was in fact a hospital that had been burned. If not, he soon found out from a letter sent to him on November 20 by Maj. John Doyle of the Volunteers of Ireland, adjutant to Brig. Gen. Alexander Stewart (Fig. 11).

⁴⁹ Boatner, Mark M. *Encyclopedia of the American Revolution*. 3rd ed. (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1994), 998.

⁵⁰ John Anderson W9329, Samuel Boydston R1096, Thomas Broughton W897, George Clark 32179, Thomas Gist S1762, Andrew Hannah W794, John Mallugan S4186, Charles Moore S30599, Abel Pearson S3661.

⁵¹ Sevier gave as a reason for his concern the fact that some of his men were thought to have stolen clothing, which suggests they were not well provided for. *PNG*, IX:552.



Figure 11. Maj. John Doyle by unknown artist c. 1795.

Doyle's letter (in Appendix A), protested the "outrage that has been committed by a party of your Corps under the command of Colo. Mayham upon a parcell of Sick helpless Soldiers, in an Hospital at Colleton's House, on the morning of the 17th Instant [and] The burning an Hospital." Brig. Gen. Stewart (who had apparently been promoted from Lt. Col. after the battle of Eutaw Springs) did not deign to write to Marion, perhaps like many British officers regarding him as a mere leader of "banditti," but he did send Greene a copy of Doyle's letter.

From his new headquarters on Buck Head Creek,⁵² Greene replied to Stewart on November 24. Greene stated that he would request an explanation from Maham, but he was clearly inclined to side with Maham.

That making those in hospitals prisoners is opposed to the practice of all civilized nations is not admitted where no agreement

⁵² Buck Head Creek flows past Col. William "Old Danger" Thomson's Belleville Plantation, Fort Motte, and into the Congaree River near McCord's Ferry.

to the contrary exists between the belligerent powers or the commanding Officers.... I readily agree that hospitals are not objects for military prowess nor ought the least violence to be offered to their inhabitants where no resistance is made but I cannot think there is any impropriety in making them prisoners and you have no right from the practice of this war to expect security to your hospitals without a flag or a sufficient guard to protect them.

Greene did concede that "Burning the hospital unless it was absolutely necessary for the destruction of public stores is unwarrantable," and that "Burning either private or public buildings for any other purpose than the destruction of public stores is reprobated by all civilized nations tho' this Country affords many melancholy marks to the contrary." Greene closed by pointing out the hypocrisy of condemning Maham's treatment of prisoners while refusing to release American prisoners "disagreeably situated on board prison ships."

On the same day, Greene wrote to Marion requesting "a particular report of the condition of the prisoners he made, as well as the manner of making them; also of the special reasons which induced him to burn the hospital." Greene added, "I have not the least doubt but that their charges are groundless as to inhumanity, and that burning the hospital was to destroy the stores, which could not be affected any other way, but I wish to have materials to contradict their charges with."

Maham defended himself against Doyle's accusations on November 27, as quoted above and in Appendix A. Doyle's charges do appear to have been exaggerated, since there is no evidence of "dragging away a Number of dying people to Expire in Swamps." For his part, Maham's report also appears to have been less than forthright in not acknowledging that the burned house was a hospital and the captured British soldiers were its patients.

The British React -- Defensively

If it were true that ends justify means, then the burning of the hospital was clearly justified. One week later the British left Fair Lawn “in great haste & is gone towards town,” as Marion reported to Greene.⁵³ This fact appears to confirm that Colleton House was militarily significant to the British. Lord Cornwallis was a prisoner of war, and his successor as commander of the British Southern Department, Maj. Gen. Alexander Leslie (Fig. 12), arrived in Charlestown on November 8, relieving Brig. Gen. Paston Gould. Leslie’s orders from Lt. Gen. Sir Henry Clinton were, “that you will endeavor to preserve such of the Posts in that Province in actual Possession of the Kings Troops, as you judge will be conducive to H M. [His Majesty’s] Interest. Always regarding the Safety of Charlestown as the Principal Object of your Attention, to which every other Consideration must of course give way.”⁵⁴

Leslie could not maintain all his outposts while still preserving the safety of Charlestown. Together with Fair Lawn he ordered the garrison at Wantoot to withdraw to Goose Creek, 22 miles closer to Charlestown.⁵⁵ Additionally he ordered the garrison at Wappetaw Meeting House to withdraw about 8¼ miles closer to Charlestown, probably to Christ Church. These contractions made British forage expeditions into St. Thomas and St. Stephens Parishes more difficult and put this South Carolina territory mostly back in Whig control. But the British could still forage in this area in force, and they did. They also still maintained their post 19 miles from Charlestown on the upper Ashley River at Dorchester.⁵⁶

⁵³ Nov. 25, 1781, *PNG*, IX:628.

⁵⁴ Clinton to Leslie, Oct. 28, 1781, Sir Henry Clinton (British Army Headquarters) Papers, Vol. 33, Oct. 1 - Nov. 30, 1781, 3850.

⁵⁵ Marion to Greene, Nov. 30, 1781, *PNG*, IX:642 fn 4 and 650 fn 2; Marion to Greene, Dec. 1, 1781, *PNG*, IX:646; *PNG*, X:5 fn 4, and X:45 fn 2. Leslie to Lord George Germain, Jan. 3, 1782, British National Archives, Public Records Office (PRO) 30/55 # 4035.

⁵⁶ Marion to Greene, Nov. 10, 1781, *PNG*, IX:557, 631. Wappetaw Meeting House was located on 15 Mile Landing



Figure 12. Portrait (circa 1783-1787) of British Maj. Gen. Alexander Leslie by Thomas Gainsborough. Private collection in Scotland.

Greene mobilized his army at the High Hills, crossed the Wateree and Congaree Rivers and took post at Col. William Thomson’s Plantation, Belleville on November 21.⁵⁷ He was preparing for a bold strike of his own on the British post at Dorchester on December 1st and to move his main army into the South Carolina Lowcountry. The British were not finally forced out of South Carolina, however, until the evacuation of Charlestown on December 14, 1782.

Road (S-10-584) near US Highway 17 North of Charleston; its graveyard is extant. From Wappetaw the British could support their forward control points for the roads into the Mount Pleasant area at Awendaw Creek and Miller’s Bridge over the upper Wando River.

⁵⁷ Greene’s army crossed the Wateree River at Simmon’s Upper Ferry, later called Garner’s Ferry, now US 378 over the Wateree River. Then Greene marched south to McCord’s Ferry and crossed the Congaree River to Belleville Plantation and nearby Fort Motte which were located just south of the Great Loop of the Congaree River on Buckhead Creek, just west of where US Highway 601 crosses the Congaree River today in Calhoun County, SC. *PNG*, IX:586, 591 and 594.

APPENDIX A

LETTERS OF MARION, GREENE, DOYLE, AND MAHAM

*Brig. Gen. Francis Marion to Maj. Gen.
Nathanael Greene (excerpt)* ⁵⁸

S^r Peyre's Plant^a East of Santee 18th Nov^r 1781
Finding the enemy Constantly Patrolling on the river and plundering the Inhabitants of S^t Stephens and S^t Johns of Negroes, and every article of Life, I sent Col. Maham with one hundred & Eighty horse & two hundred of Col^o Shelbys & Seviars riflemen, to Indeavour to Intercep them, or Draw out their Caveldry & to recover if possible A Number of Negroes they were sending to town He Set out on Thursday & went around their Incampment, but they kept Close. He then went below Monks Corner, to Fair Lawn where the Enemy had their Hospital. He took one L^t two surgeons & brought of Eighty Convellesent. Parole the Off^r & two Doctors who was very sick & burnt Fair Lawn house with a Number of Arms & stores which they could not possible bring off. Col. Maham Gives Col^o Shelby the greatest Applause for his readiness & the good order he kept his men....
I have the Honor to y^r Ob^t s^t
Fran^s Marion

NB Col Shelby has my permission to retire to N^o Carolina.

*John Doyle, (Dep. Adj. Gen.-British) to Brig.
Gen. Francis Marion* ⁵⁹

Sir: H^d. Quart^{er} Camp at Ravenels, Nov^r 20th 1781
I am directed by Brig^r. General Stewart to represent to you an outrage that has been committed by a party of your Corps under the command of Colo. Mayham upon a parcell of Sick helpless Soldiers, in an Hospital at Colleton's House, on the morning of the 17th Instant__ The burning an Hospital & dragging away a Number of dying people to Expire in

⁵⁸ PNG, IX:589-590

⁵⁹ Peter Force Papers and Collection, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Swamps, is a species of Barbarity hitherto unknown in Civilized Nations Especially when that Hospital has been left without a Guard for its defence that could Justify an attack upon its defenceless Inhabitants__ For the sake of humanity sir__ the General is willing to beleave that such unmanly Proceedings could not meet your Countenance & He therefore Expects that those unhappy sufferers may be sent Immediately as Prisoners on Parole to prevent their perishing for want of necessaries & Medicines. The Sick & helpless seem not propper objects for Military prowess, & attacks on Hospitals are, among your own Continental Army, hitherto Unprecedented & the hospital at Camden was by Gen^l. Greenes Order protected, altho' it had an Armed Guard for its internal police.

I have the honour to be, Sir, Your most
obd^t hum. Servt. J. Doyle, D. Adj. Gen

*Brig. Gen. Francis Marion to Maj. Gen.
Nathanael Greene (excerpt)* ⁶⁰

Sr S^t Stephens 21st Nov^r 1781
The Enemy Left Ravenels yesterday morning & is gone Downwards, how far I have not yet Learnt, but beleive they will go below Goos [Goose] Creek.
I have the Honor to be y^r Ob^t s^t
Fran^s Marion

*Maj. Gen. Nathanael Greene to Colonel
Alexander Stewart* ⁶¹

Sir Head Quarters Nov^r 23, 1781
Your letter of the 20th enclosing a copy of one from Major Doyle to General Marion I have had the honor to receive. The prisoners you mention had arrived at the High Hills of Santee before your letter came to hand. I have given orders for such as are proper objects to be received into our hospitals and the others to be comfortably provided for untill further orders.

⁶⁰ Abstract in PNG, IX:606

⁶¹ PNG, IX:612-613

[Annotations from PNG IX:628]

2. Gen. Alexander Leslie explained the British movement in a letter to Sir Henry Clinton of 30 November, writing: "I found the corps under Colonel Stuart consisting of one thousand seven hundred infantry and two hundred cavalry posted a few miles above Monk's Corner waiting the movements of the rebel army which had been on the High Hills of Santee since the action at the Eutaws: but upon the approach of their reinforcements from Virginia which are now near at hand, Greene has moved across the Santee and I have directed Colonel Stewart to fall down on this side of Goose Creek. This movement I was led to make not only to avoid any decisive action but from the present disposition of the [British] army, which I am with regret obliged to say appears to want confidence in a great degree." (PRO 30/55)

3. According to the information provided by the sergeant, Stewart had 1,193 men fit for duty, another 695 in the hospital, and 233 sick in camp, for a total force of 2,121. (The estimate is with the ALS.) That number is close to the one given by Leslie, as seen in note 2, above.

Colonel Hezekiah Maham to Maj. Gen. Nathanael Greene⁶³

D Gen^l [Huger's Bridge, S.C.] Nov^r 27: 1781

Agreeable to your Request, have indeavoured to give your Honour as correct an accounts of the State of the Enemy post at Fairlawn as possib Both in regard, to the strenth of the place, The number of men, arms & stores &c. The House at Fairlawn, is defensible for any hosp^l Of it self, But thay had abbattd it strongly all around, in the next place, it was within half a mile of a fort Which was in full view. Thay made it a stage for there troops to go in and from Charlestown. I have none [known] Maj^r Frasher [Thomas Fraser], to Quarter his Cavalry within the Abbaotis, which he did, a few nights before it was taken, and from the information we could git, thay allways kept a strong guard, which I expected To finde there. When I marchd down, I left my troops a Little distance behind, and went up and Rec^{td} [reconnoitered] the post. I seen a

⁶³ PNG, IX:630-631.

number of soldier moving about, which I took to be the guard. I Returnd to my Command, orderd a few Rifle men to dismount, go up as near as possible and fire on them. At this same time I was to march in full view with my force and make a demand of the post. In consequence of which they Emeadeately surrenderd them selves prisoner of war. I found three Surg^{ts} one Liu^t and 94 British solders, near or abought 300 stand of arms, and a good Quantity of other stores, that I could not possibly get of, noing at the same time, that there was A Strong party of the british then out on comm^d I had all the Reason to think that thay where In pursute of me.

Surg^{ts} & Leu^t complaind of being unwell. I ga them paroles to the Limits of Charles Town. All there bagage of Every kind was Restord to them. When I came to Examin the prisoners I found 12 not well enough to bring of. I order them to be caried fort in site, 76 of the others was fit for duty, and the Rest where all able to walk, but However, so far from Exec^s aney crueltys amongst them, I had them all put on horseback, and whould not suffer one to walk The above is as true an account as can be given and hope it will meet with your Honours approbⁿ I have the Honour to yor most Ob H Ser

H MAHAM

Brig. Gen. Francis Marion to Maj. Gen. Nathanael Greene (excerpt)⁶⁴

Sr Hugers Bridge S^t Thomas 27 Nov^r 1781
My last of the 25^h Ulto mention that I sent Col^o Maham, to attack the Enemys post at Wappetaw, when he got there he found it Just Evacuated, & the Enemy retreated to town in Great precipitation. The last Account of their main body was they Was below Goos [Goose] Creek. I have the Honor to be y[our] Ob^t s^t
Fran^s Marion

NB All the mountaneers are returned home.

⁶⁴ Tr. Roger Parks, ed. PNG project

Brig. Gen. Francis Marion to Maj. Gen. Nathanael Greene (excerpt) ⁶⁵

Sr Hegers Bridge S^t Parish 30 Nov^r 1781
Yourse of the 24th Came to hand. Col. Maham has wrought [wrote] his reasons for carrying of the men from Coleton^s house, but say he forgot to mention that the Lieut^t & Doct^r refused giving a receipt for them.

Col^o Severe [Sevier] went away before yourse came to hand, he offerd to Inlist the men for a Year and Satisfy them in respect to bounty untill the state can refund it to him, the bounty to be at what you will fix it, if you Conclude to Employ them, he will raise them as soon as he receive y^r Letter, where he Lives.... I have the Honor to be y^r Ob^t s^t Fran^s Marion

APPENDIX B

BRITISH COURT OF INQUIRY

[The following are proceedings from a Court of Enquiry held at Charlestown “for the Purpose of enquiring how & in what manner the Hospital at Fair Lawn was destroyed & the Sick made Prisoners by the Enemy, when under the Command of Captain McLean [Murdoch MacLaine] of the 2^d Battalion of the 84th Regiment.”⁶⁶ MacLaine had requested the Court of Inquiry to clear his name for remaining in the redoubt during the American raid. We are grateful to Kim Stacy for sharing his extensive research on this provincial regiment and the Court of Inquiry and to Jim Piecuch for providing excerpts from the court record. It is not often that we are able to see what the British were thinking about a particular incident, what they knew, and when they knew it.]

⁶⁵ PNG, IX:641-643 with annotation

⁶⁶ British Headquarters Papers, Vol. 90, Nov. 18, 1781 - June 30, 1782, no. 9945 from a copy at the David Library of the American Revolution, excerpted by Dr. Jim Piecuch.

B. Gen. Paston Gould⁶⁷ served as president, with members Lt. Col. John Harris Cruger of DeLancey’s Brigade provincials, Maj. James Henry Craig of 82^d Regt. of Foot, Lt. Col. Isaac Allen of the NJ Volunteers provincials, and Major John McGill of 19th Regt. of Foot. Capt. John Blucke of 23^d Regt. of Foot as the Deputy Judge Advocate. Court met in Charlestown on January 29, 1782.

Capt. Murdoch MacLaine’s Narrative

I regret exceedingly that I had not the good fortune to be called on to account for the loss of the Hospital at Colleton House on the 17th. day of Novr. 1781, recently after the event happened, as then every circumstance relative to it, being fresh in my memory, I would be the better able to give the wish’d for information, than at this distance of time; however, I have endeavoured to recollect the following facts, which it is hoped will appear to this Court a satisfactory account so far as I am concerned.

I had orders from the Commandant of Charlestown⁶⁸ on the 7th. of Novr. 1781, to march next morning with two Subalterns and fifty Men, to relieve the Post at Fair Lawn, then occupied by two Captains, four Subalterns and an Hundred and Fifty Hessians – learning the disproportion, I signified a desire to know the reason – it was answered, that while our Army was so near and between that post and the Enemy, no danger cou’d be apprehended, and therefore that I was not to furnish Guards from the Redoubt, as the Hessians had been in the practice of doing, but that I was only to defend and protect the Landing, so as to keep up the communication for the purpose of supplying the Army with Ammunition Provisions &ca.

Not finding myself at liberty to start further difficulties I march’d next Day with the 64th. Regiment under the Command of Major [William] Brereton, and he remaining near

⁶⁷ Replaced as commandant of the British Southern Department by Maj. Gen. Alexander Leslie about November 8, 1781.

⁶⁸ North American B. Gen. Paston Gould of the 30th Regt.

Colleton House all the evening of the 10th.⁶⁹ I communicated to him the Situation of the Place, as well as my strength. He forbad me to relieve the Hessians, 'till he wrote to Brigadier Genl. Stuart [Alexander Stewart] on the Subject – in the course of the Night I received the following note from Major Brereton, which I obeyed vizt.

Major William Brereton to Capt. MacLaine
Colleton's 10 oClock Nov. 10, 1781

“Sir, I have just received orders from Brig'r Genl. Stuart, for the Hessians to march to *morrow morning at Day break, with the utmost dispatch for Charlestown*: You will therefore please to see his orders put into execution; you are only to occupy the post you are now in, and leave the Block-House in its present Situation.”

However, I reported to the General [Stewart] my situation, and he ordered a party with Captain Platt⁷⁰ of the Camden Militia to the Bridge,⁷¹ which was the place most expected to be attacked & lest any misfortune should happen, I transmitted to the Commandant every information in my power, as my Letters of the 11th. 12th. 15th. and 16th. Novr. will evince. I also reported occurrences to Brigr. Genl. Stuart.

The following Letters were laid before the Court. Vizt.

Capt. MacLaine to Gen. Alexander Stewart
Fair Lawn Redoubt 11th. Novr. 1781

“Sir, In consequence of instructions from the Commandant of Charlestown, I came here to relieve one hundred & fifty Hessians (with only fifty Men) but as I am to relieve the Post at the Bridge (which you ordered to be maintained) I have with Major Brereton's approbation detained the Hessians untill I have your orders; and the

⁶⁹ Maj. William Brereton (1752-1830) held field command of the 64th Regiment of Foot in the Southern Department.

⁷⁰ Capt. George Platt was a company commander in Col. Robert English's Camden Loyalist militia regiment.

⁷¹ “The Bridge” was Biggin Bridge over Biggin Creek.

propriety of keeping that Post is evident, while this Place is occupied. Should circumstances require my sending Expresses to you or elsewhere, I am deprived of the means as the Militia that were stationed here for that Purpose, left it this day without the permission of any Officer at this place. For further particulars I refer you to Major Brereton.”

Maj. John Doyle to Capt. MacLaine
Head Quarters Camp Ravenell's
Novr. 11th. 1781

“Sir, Mr. Bard the Assistant Deputy Quarter Master General is sent down by Genl. Stuart with a Number of Negroes, who are to be embarked in Sloops at your Post, & forwarded by water to Charlestown. It will be necessary to send a Guard on each Vessell with them, for which purpose the General thinks the Convalescents left by Captain Sutherland would answer.

You will please therefore to send such a number as you think proper, under the care of a careful Noncommissioned Officer, who will deliver the Negroes to the order of the Commandt. of Charlestown.” Addressed to “Officer Commanding at Fair-Lawn,” signed by J. Doyle, Dep. Adj. Genl.

Capt. MacLaine to Maj. John Doyle
Fair Lawn 11th Novr. 1781

“Sir, Yours of this date communicating General Stuart's orders relative to the transporting of Negroes to Charlestown is received, and will be executed as soon as Vessells arrive for that Purpose. at present there are none here. In the mean time the Negroes are secured under a proper Guard &ca.

Captn. Sutherland is gone from here, but I find there are as many of the Convalescents recover'd, as will answer to discharge that Duty.

The Non commissioned Officer will have orders to deliver the Negroes properly.”

Maj. John Doyle to Capt. MacLaine
Head Quarters Camp at Ravenell's
Novr. 12th. 1781

“Sir, A Captain and twenty Men of the Camden Militia are sent down to occupy the Block House at Biggin's Bridge, and to receive their orders from you.

There is also a small party of mounted Militia sent to your Post for the purpose of going Expresses. the whole of these Parties will be relieved weekly from the Army, while it continues in the vicinity of your Post. They must be victualled from Fair Lawn.

P. S. Since writing the above I am favour'd with your Letter. We have just heard that the Post at Wappataw is surrounded by the Enemy's Militia.”

Capt. MacLaine to Lt. Col. Nesbit Balfour
Fair Lawn **12th. Novr. 1781**

“Sir, The party that escorted the Negroes here last Night went back this morning to the Army; with them I sent your Dispatched for Genl. Stuart &ca.

As the Bearer's Horse could not proceed for some time, and as I have been deprived of the Mounted Militia, who were posted here for the purpose of going Express &ca. & ca. I thought best to return him to Town; and now beg leave to inform you that there being no Vessels here to receive those Negroes, keeping them will be attended with some inconvenience, but with the assistance of a few of the Convalescents now fit for Duty, all due care will be taken of them.

The Number in the enclosed List was demanded from me this morning by Mr. Cords, but from the Deputy Adjutant General's Letter of which I send you a Copy, I did not think myself authorized to part with any of them, therefore wait your Directions on that head.

As you'll observe from the Artificer's Report, Mr. Cords detained his Negroes from this work untill he learnt the cause of those in the List, being taken from St. Stephen's.”

Maj. John Doyle to Capt. MacLaine
Head Quarters Camp **Novr. 13th. 1781**

“Sir, Genl. Stuart sends by this escort such Convalescents as are unable to march in the event of the Army's moving; He wishes that such of them as are not likely to recover at your Post, shou'd be sent down immediately to Town by Water; & also that the Negroes should be forwarded as expeditiously as possible.

The Surgeon at your post can determine what men should go to Charlestown. The General hopes you will be able to supply the Convalescents with fresh Meat.”

Capt. MacLaine to Maj. John Doyle
Fair Lawn **13th. Novr. 1781**

“Sir, I am honoured with yours by the Bearer, and observe General Stuart's Instructions with attention, but I am sorry to be under the necessity of reporting that it's out of my Power to execute them so expeditiously as he would wish, there being no Vessels here for transporting either the Sick or Negroes. The Convalescents will be victualled and arranged as directed.

I employed the Negroes this Day in working about my little Redoubt, and wish to know from the General if I am to finish the Block-House at the Bridge. Captn. Platt and twenty Men of the Camden Militia are come to that post, as mentioned I yours of Yesterday's Date: but of the twelve mounted Militia you mention, only six came here, nor could Capt: Platt give me any account of them.”

Capt. MacLaine to Maj. John Doyle
Fair Lawn **14th. Novr. 1781**

“Sir, One Vessel is arrived this morning, and another is expected by this tide of Flood.

I expect to send about fifty of the Sick from the Hospital, and the Negroes in them in the Evening. Should any further orders from the General be necessary, it may overtake, as the Tide will not answer 'till late; for that purpose I send a Man by way of Escort for the Commandant's Express and to bring me his Order.”

Maj. John Doyle to Capt. MacLaine
Head Quarters Camp Ravenell's
Novr. 14th. 1781

“Sir, A Party of Negroes was sent from hence this morning to your Post under the escort of a Serjeant and 12 Dragoons; by whom I had not time to write.

The General wishes they may be sent down with the others by the first opportunity. I am to acknowledge the receipt of your Letter of this day's date.”

Capt. MacLaine to Maj. John Doyle,
Nov. 15, 1781

“Your favor came to Hand, and all the Negroes sent from Head Quarters to this Post are shipped and gone for Charlestown last Night, to the number of 155. The Commandant order'd me to give Mr. Samuel Cordes his Number being 21. A Vessel is just in sight, by which I mean to send about 50 Sick Soldiers from the Hospital.”

Capt. MacLaine to Lt. Col. Nesbit Balfour
Nov. 15, 1781

“Sir, Your favor of the 12th. I received yesterday, in obedience thereto have order'd 155 Negroes on Board the *Apollo* Schooner, & they are gone for Town: a Return of them is enclosed. Mr. Cordes has taken charge of his own Negroes, and sends a Number to this work daily. I have got twenty Militia from Head Quarters, who are posted at the Block-House, and as my small Detachment cannot afford a Guard for the Hospital, I have ordered so many of the recovering Convalescents to do Duty there.

I have orders to send away a Number of Sick for Town, but have no Vessels for that purpose.”

Maj. John Doyle to Capt. MacLaine
Nov. 16, 1781, 4 p.m.

“Sir, The General desires me to lose no time in forwarding the Bearer to you, who will tell you what he has seen. Our Patrole in the morning also

saw a number of Tracks: It will certainly be designed against the Militia Post at the Block House at Biggin's Bridge.

The mounted Militia are sent down to reinforce it, but the appearance of a few Soldiers, would spirit them up, to make a proper defence; if you could spare them with a Serjeant to command.

The Rebels have not been seen, but their Trail shows them to be only Horsemen.”

Capt. MacLaine to Gen. Alexander Stewart
Fair Lawn, Nov. 16, 1781

“I was just now given to understand that there is a party of mounted Rebels between Monk's Corner and Cooper's Plantation about two Miles from this. The Bearer brought me the intelligence, and called them in Number between Three and four Hundred.

I sent off an Express to you yesterday about twelve o'Clock with Dispatched received from the Commandant: as he has not return'd, I wish to know if he went your length.”

Capt. MacLaine to Lt. Col. Nesbit Balfour
Fair Lawn, Nov. 16, 1781

“A Copy of my Letter to General Stuart in consequence of intelligence now received is sent you enclosed, to which I beg leave to add that a woman who says she crossed the Santee from Canty's Plantation to Mayham, with about 500 Rebels Monday last [November 12], is now here, and she was made to believe that 500 more with Marion himself was to follow immediately, he being then Commanding at Canty's.⁷²

One Vessel is arrived with Rum & Rice, am told another is a short way down the River.”

Maj. John Doyle to Capt. MacLaine
Head Quarters Ravenell's, Nov. 17, 1781

⁷² This is probably a report of Marion moving his camp from Cantey's to Peyre's Plantation. Col. Hezekiah Maham's plantation was about 10 miles southeast of Cantey's near modern Pineville.

“I send you back your Express, who delivered the Letters safe to General Stuart: you will of course write to the Commandant on the Subject of our misfortune, and I am in hopes you will be convinced that no exertion was wanting from hence to prevent it. You will be so good to forward the Letters to Town that go by the Bearer.”

“Captain MacLaine farther address’d the Court as follows. (Vizt.)

On the 16th. Novr. the Deputy Adjutant General wrote me. His Letter will shew that the Bridge, (and by no means the Hospital) was the Place to be guarded against an attack – and from another Letter from him of the 17th. Novr. it appears that it was more apprehended I would complain at not being timously supported, than that I had given any reason to be found fault with myself.

Here it may be proper to observe that I never had any orders to keep any part of my small detachment at the Hospital, nor indeed could it well be expected; and the Convalescents there fit to do Duty were ordered to Town from time to time as Escorts to Negroes &ca. – whereby the number of them remaining able to do any sort of Duty were so few, that all that could be expected from them, was to keep a look-out, so as to prevent a Surprize, which was directed accordingly.

If it is asked why I with my Detachment of 50 Men did not march out to disperse the Party of mounted Rebels who destroyed the Hospital on the 17th, Novr. the Answer is that they appear’d in such force (being about 400) that it could not be considered an eligible undertaking. – my Brother Officers agreed in opinion with me – for should we not be successful (which could be hardly expected, considering the great disparity in our Numbers) a Retreat to the Redoubt could not in that event be effected, the distance from thence to the Hospital being near a mile, and the Rebels being mounted, their movements would of course be rapid, and the consequence would be an additional and a greater loss than the destruction of the Hospital and capture of the Sick.

It struck me that had there been an intention of keeping a Post at Colleton’s House, Captain Sutherland who commanded the Convalescents there to the Number of Eighty for a considerable time before my arrival, would not have been called away without an Officer’s being sent to relieve him.

The moment the Enemy appear’d, an Express was sent by me to direct the Militia (that I thought were at the Bridge) to preserve the Communication from thence to the Redoubt at Fair Lawn open; but in place of the aid I looked for from that Quarter, I was informed by a note from Captn. [George] Platt, that all the Infantry (Militia) under his Command at the Bridge, were just going to leave him, as the Enemy appear’d in numbers about him; also that the mounted had already gone off.

I have great reason to think that had it not been for a small Party from General Stuart’s Army under Major Doyle’s Command, together with some Cavalry from Charlestown under Major Fraser, having appear’d just in time to prevent it, the Bridge must have been burnt as well as the Hospital.

Let it be observed that when the Post was kept (previous to my relieving it) by the Hessians, they, after furnishing their Out Guards, had seventy men more in the Redoubt than my whole Party.

The attention I had to the orders I received, & in communicating every intelligence in my Power to General Stuart and Col: Balfour, will appear from a Correspondence I have already laid before the Court.

By the Court to Captn. MacLaine

Q. How far was the Hospital from the Redoubt in which you commanded?

A. Near a Mile

Q. (By Do.) How far was General Stuart’s Army from your Post

A. About nine Miles.

Q. (By Do.) On what Day, & at what time of that Day, did you send your information of the Enemy’s being near you?

A. Between three & four o’Clock of the Afternoon of the 16th. Novr.

Q. (By Do.) At what time did the party under Major Doyle arrive with you?

A. On the Noon of the 17th. Novr.

Q. (By Do.) What was the Strength of that Party?

A. I think about an hundred Men (Militia.)

Q. (By Do.) How far was the Bridge from your Post?

A. About two Miles.

Q. (By Do.) At what time in the morning was the Hospital attacked?

A. I think about Eight on the 17th. Novr.

Major John Doyle was called before the Court and examined.

Q. (By the Court.) Do you recollect Genl. Stuart or yourself having received a Letter from Capt: M. Lean any time in the Afternoon of the 16th. Novr. mentioning the Enemy's being in the Neighbourhood of his Post, and at what Hour did you receive it?

A. Yes, about six o'Clock that Evening.

Brigadier General Stuart appear'd before the Court, and was examined.

Q. (By the Court.) Do you recollect having received a Letter from Capt: Mc. Lean of the same import as Letter No. 14?

A. It is very likely I might, but I don't exactly recollect the words of it. However, in consequence of the information, I sent all the mounted Militia I had in Camp to the Bridge. It must be observed that at this time all the Cavalry under my Command, and two hundred Infantry were on the Santee under the Command of Major Brereton searching for Forage.

Q. (By Do.) Did you understand that Capt: Mc. Lean's Detachment was to defend the Hospital as well as the Redoubt?

A. Yes, and also to cover the Landing.

Q. (By Do.) Do you mean by that that you thought his Detachment adequate to detaching to the Hospital?

A. I thought a small Detachment from him, & some Convalescents in the Hospital, were sufficient to defend it.

Q. (By Do.) What was your reason upon your receiving Capt: Mc. Leans information on the Afternoon of the 16th. Novr. that you did not

detach to support his Post 'till late in the day of the 17th.?

A. I had not certain information of the Enemy being gone against his Post; & I thought if they meant to strike at any thing, it would be the Post at Biggin-Bridge, to which I sent the mounted Militia.

Capt. MacLaine was again examined.

Q. (By the Court.) In consequence of the intelligence you received, did you send to the Hospital to put them on their Guard?

A. Doctor Dowse⁷³ having been acquainted with the Information as well as myself, I did not think it necessary to give any further Directions about it, as I did not conceive the Hospital could, or was intended (in it's then situation) to make any Defence.

Lieutenant Colonel Balfour inform'd the Court that the Hessians were relieved at Fair Lawn on account of a very allarming Desertion from them; & that all the British Troops that could possible be collected were composed of the 84th Regiment, & sent up under the Command of Capt. Mc. Lean – That he certainly recollects having told Capt. Mc. Lean, that upon his arrival at Fair Lawn, he was to report his Situation to General Stuart, who would be within seven Miles of Him – He further added that he did not conceive the Post at Fair Lawn to be at that time at all in the same situation it was, when the [American] Army was on the Santee at a great distance from it.

Doctor Dowse of the General Hospital informed the Court that the Day the Hospital was burnt, he was there, and knew nothing of the Enemy being near, (but from flying Reports, which were so continual, as never to be credited) 'till it was surrounded, & ordered to surrender, which was done, & the House sett fire to; all which was effected in twenty minutes or half an hour – so that there was no time given for the Men (who were able) to take their Arms: & that had there been time he supposed not more than twenty or thirty Men at farthest were able to do it at so very critical a Period – That, in fact, there was not a

⁷³ Probably Joseph Dowse, a British surgeon's mate.

Man in the Hospital he could return to Capt. McLean fit for any Kind of Duty.

Q. (By Capt: McLean) Did I not frequently call upon you, or send to you for a State of the Convalescents?

A. You did.

Q. Did I not tell you that any Men you might find fit, were to be employed to look out, & give us any allarm of the Enemys approach?

A. You did.

Q. (By the Court.) Had you received sufficient notice of the Enemy's approach, could you not have sent a considerable Number of those Sick Men to the Redoubt, that they might not have been made Prisoners?"

A. Yes.

Doctor Hebden of the Genl. Hospital was examined.

Q. (By the Court.) In case you had previous notice of the Enemy's approach, how many of the Sick could have stood to their Arms?

A. About fifteen, but at most twenty.

Q. (By Do.) Had you any notice of their coming?

A. The Evening before we had a Report by a Negro that they were within three or four miles of us – but as they did not appear during the Night, we looked upon it as one of the usual false Alarms."

Signed by B. Gen. Paston Gould and Capt. John Blucke.

APPENDIX C

GOV. ISAAC SHELBY TO COL. WILLIAM HILL AUGUST 26, 1814⁷⁴

"The American Arms from this period was successful to the end of the revolution. In November of 1781, general Marian rec. information that 4 or 500 hessians in Garrison at Colliton Hall near Monks Corner, were in a state of insurrection he detached Col. Mayam of the Dragoons, Colonel Shelby and Colonel Sevier,

with a party of eight hundred men to attack the post. The party was commanded by Colonel Mayam. They appeared before the British Garrison early on the 26th day of November, 1781. The Hessians had been sent to Charlestown the day before, under an apprehension of their disaffection. But the British in the Garrison amounting to one hundred and fifty surrendered at discretion, under the impression that the Americans had Artillery— This post was six or eight miles below the Enemys Grand Army at Fergusons Swamp commanded by General Stewart. The Detachment were all mounted and carried the prisoners by turns through the woods on their horses and arrived the night after about one o'clock at General Marians headquarters in the Swamp of the Santee river, at the distance of near fifty miles from where the British surrendered.

General Stewart sent a strong detachment to regain the prisoners but could not come up with them.

The Enemys whole army retreated to Charlestown two days after the reduction of the post at Colliton Hall and never came out again during the Revolution."

⁷⁴ King's Mountain: Letters of Colonel Isaac Shelby. *Journal of Southern History* 4(3) (Aug 1938), 367-377.

APPENDIX D

ORDER OF BATTLE⁷⁵

Americans – Detached from Gen. Francis Marion

Lt. Col. Hezekiah Maham - SC 3^d Regiment of State Dragoons⁷⁶

Col. John Sevier - Washington County Regiment of Militia (NC)⁷⁷

- Lt. Col. Charles Robertson
 - Capt. Landon Carter⁷⁸
 - Capt. George Doherty
 - Capt. David McNabb
 - Capt. James Roddy
 - Capt. Valentine Sevier, Jr.
 - Capt. William Trimble
 - Capt. Samuel Williams
 - Capt. James Wilson

Col. Isaac Shelby - Sullivan County Regiment of Militia (NC) ⁷⁹

- Lt. Col. Anthony Bledsoe
 - Capt. Moses Cavett
 - Capt. Roger Topp
 - Capt. Thomas Wallace

British – detached from Gen. Alexander Stewart

Capt. Murdock MacLaine - 84th Regiment of Foot detachment - 50 men

British Hospital Staff and guards, unknown number

Blockhouse at Biggin Bridge garrison – Capt. George Platt – Camden Loyalist militia

Relief columns: Maj. John Doyle; Maj. Thomas Fraser – South Carolina Royalist (mounted)

⁷⁵ Adapted from J. D. Lewis's order of battle at carolana.com, accessed November 2, 2020 https://www.carolana.com/SC/Revolution/revolution_fair_lawn_plantation.html. As noted below, some names listed by Lewis are not included here, because their presence is not supported in the more than 75 pension applications that refer to the action, as transcribed at revwarapps.org. Marion's letter to Greene dated November 18, 1781, mentions "Col. Maham with one hundred & eighty horse & two hundred of Colo Shelbys and Seviars riflemen." The pension application of James Sevier (S45889) states that the "officers commanding the party included "Oree of Horse," meaning Col. Peter Horry, but there is only ambiguous evidence that Horry was present in the pension applications of Loftus R. Munnerlyn S18136, Philip Roberts W2170, and James Stanaland S18215. The pension declarations are available at revwarapps.org.

⁷⁶ John Franklin R3756 stated that he served under a Capt. Donalson, but no such officer could be identified.

⁷⁷ John Mallugan S4186 and Joel Callahan S21110 also claimed to have acted as captains but did not claim to have been at Fair Lawn.

⁷⁸ Nicholas Hale S4313 and Darling Jones W7922 stated that Capt. Carter was in Shelby's regiment.

⁷⁹ Robert Tredway W316 stated that he served under a Capt. John Carnes, but Zachariah Prewit S5952 stated that John Carnes was a lieutenant in the company of Capt. Moses Cavett.

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