

The Influence of Partisan Guerilla Warfare on the American Revolution in the South

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The British campaign in the South during the Revolutionary War is a prime study of contrasting tactics, military groups, and landscapes. The major battles in New England, with George Washington at the helm of the Continental Army, received the most attention, and, unfortunately, most of the credit for America's independence from Great Britain. The Southern campaign had to be fought in a more informal way, with very little European grandstanding and pomp on the battlefield. In order to win, the Americans went back to their colonial roots to accomplish victory in the only way they knew how – by hacking it out in the wilderness under commanders who knew the territory and the tactics suited to it. Partisan leaders like Francis Marion and the guerrilla warfare strategy they employed in South Carolina during the Revolution turned the tide towards an American victory.

I.

“We fight, get beat, rise, and fight again”

- Nathanael Greene¹

Though the Northern battles of the Revolution gained more press and fame, 80 percent of the war's actions took place in the Southern states.² The methods employed by both sides differed significantly in the North and South. Northern armies generally followed the more traditional European way of war. Soldiers would line up in their uniforms with the large red X's on their chests and fire one volley, retire to the back, and another line would take its place and do the same. On the European continent, soldiers used a combination of muskets, bayonets, and sabers to fight with and utilized lightly armored cavalry and medium-weighted field artillery. The infantry were extremely disciplined and skilled, and their commanders relied on these abilities.³ With a few exceptions, the battles in the North generally followed this model. European cavalry simply did not work with the rugged terrain of America: only two of the twenty-four British cavalry regiments that existed ever set foot in the colonies. When horse and rider were used, they were for pursuit and reconnaissance work. The artillery used in America had to be smaller than the pieces in Europe in order to negotiate the terrain. The heavy guns were too hard to navigate down the trails and over great distances. In the North, there was an emphasis placed on more light infantry tactics and open skirmishes, and both the British and Continental armies fought in basically the same way.

Not only was the strategy different between the Northern and the Southern campaigns, but the kind of war the Revolution was changed around the years 1780-1782 in the lower half of America. There was a real absence of formal battles, with the major exceptions being Camden, King's Mountain, Cowpens, Guilford Courthouse, and the culmination of the war at Yorktown, Virginia, in 1782. Instead of “real” battles, the war in the South consisted of dozens, perhaps even hundreds of skirmishes that are not even named. The only way history has a record of these is through soldiers' accounts long after the fighting took place.⁴

The most prominent difference between the Revolution in the North and South is the kinds of troops engaged there. The North had Continental soldiers and few militiamen. In the South, all kinds of Americans fought, sometimes in concert with one another, sometimes not. The Continental Army, militia from the states, and partisan fighters all took their place as the combined force of America. The Continental Army, the “real” Revolutionary army, was officially founded after the battles of Lexington and Concord in April 1775. Militiamen appeared in the Boston area that were in the process of being enlisted by the Massachusetts Committee of Safety. These men subsequently formed an actual army that reported to the second Continental Congress. Congress, wishfully thinking, set enlistment terms at eight months, or the end of the calendar year.⁵ Because of the prevailing fear of a standing army, Congress only authorized another year after this, but after George Washington’s defeat in New York in the fall of 1776, they approved a force of 88,000 men to enlist for three years or the war’s duration. The Continental officers really started recruiting in the spring of 1777, and accepted “vagabonds,” “strollers,” free African-Americans, and convicts. Very few artisans or farmers joined the ranks.⁶ In order to fill the lines, the government offered bounties and promises of land. After the fall of Charleston, the number of Continentals in the South was small; there may have been at most 1600 soldiers at the height of the campaign.⁷ Like the British troops of the same sort, the Continental army was filled with “society’s losers.” According to John Adams, the regiments raised in New England were the “meanest, idlest, most intemperate, and worthless” men. In total, there never seemed to be enough ‘real’ troops, but they provided the very core of the force and for the first time, symbolized the nation. The Continental Army “was the United States”⁸

At the very heart of the patriot cause stood the state militias. After 1776, the states revived conscription, and that meant that all males between the ages of sixteen and sixty, except for government officials, minorities, or students were required to enlist. For instance, North Carolina divided up its state into five districts and the men into classes. Men over fifty were not put on active duty, but the other four classes had enlistment rotations of six months.⁹ The militia, put simply, was made up of part-time soldiers, and to the dismay of Continental commanders, seemed to have been subject only to state authority. These men were farmers, shopkeepers, and artisans by trade who were often swayed to join up through fat bonuses.¹⁰ Unlike the Continentals, who were mostly young and unmarried, militiamen had wives and families to worry about. Farmers among them had to tend to their fields and animals, especially around spring harvest. Colonial women were often as tough as their men were, but even with children they could not run a farm by themselves.¹¹ In general, the militia was never fairly judged. They were thought to be cowardly, inefficient, and worthless. The conflict between so-called ‘regular’ troops and militia began with the French and Indian War. Jealousy raged on both sides-- regulars could not fight like the Indians and were inadequate on the frontier, and militia did not have the formal training to be thought on par with their counterparts. This difference continued into the Revolution, with militia enlistments conveniently running out on the eve of battle and desertion was common due to personal and economic woes.¹² Even though Nathanael Greene, in referring to the American militia, said to Daniel Morgan that “militia are always unsuspecting and therefore more easily surprised. Don’t depend too much on them,” those same men were to form the core of one of the most successful military victories in American history – the Battle of Cowpens.¹³

The Battle of Cowpens was the first instance that a commander combined the Continentals with the militia successfully. Brigadier Daniel Morgan used the militia's ability in aimed fire, taking cover, and general agility combined with the Continental's bayonets and discipline to create quite a match for Lieutenant Colonel Banastre Tarleton and his Green Dragoons.¹⁴ Morgan's army was, in truth, inferior in equipment, numbers, and skill. Both armies contained around 1,100 men, but Tarleton had three trained regiments and cavalry units to Morgan's one. The battlefield was in open woods with trees with no underbrush and no swamp or river to the rear. It was aptly called 'Cowpens' because it was a place to keep cattle.¹⁵ A message was sent from Nathanael Greene to Daniel Morgan referring to the coming conflict: "Colonel Tarleton is said to be on his way to pay you a visit. I doubt not but he will have a decent reception and a proper dismissal."¹⁶

Daniel Morgan possessed an acute understanding of his troops' limitations, both physical and psychological. He had confidence in his regulars, and knew how to handle his militiamen as well, but most importantly, he predicted how the enemy would fight. His plan was genius in its simplicity. He divided the army into three parts. The first line would be the militia to receive the first shock of battle. The sharpshooters among them could use the trees to steady their arms, and altogether their instruction was to fire two volleys, then retire around the back of the whole force.¹⁷ The second line was made up of 450 Continentals on a low hill that overlooked the field. They were instructed to wait until the British were within range, fire two rounds, and retreat to the rear by their left flank much like the first line. The third and final line was the cavalry that were hidden behind another hill to the rear.¹⁸ After the plan was set, Morgan readied his troops. To make sure they were excited and fearless, he yelled from the top of lungs "They give us the British halloo, boys, give them the Indian halloo, by God!" Then commenced a huge Indian war whoop from all of the men.¹⁹ Colonel Tarleton was too eager to get to the fight, and he fully expected to win. He foolishly awoke his men before dawn and marched them forward without much rest. He then sent the Legion cavalry at the American first line, and the men did their job and fell back as told. The mounted men were shaken by the first volley but surged ahead. Tarleton formed a standard battle line, with infantry in the middle, dragoons on both wings, and a Highland regiment in reserve. His men rushed at the American second line, which simply and calmly fired shot after shot into the ranks. The Highlanders were moved against the American right flank. Sensing a victory, the British continued forward, but the rebels about-faced and sent a volley into the troops. At the same time the infantry were firing, the American cavalry and the original first line struck at the redcoats from their flank.

Cowpens was a complete and decisive victory for the rebels. Of the 1,100 British soldiers, 930 of them had been killed, wounded, or captured. The American force only lost 70, either killed or wounded.²⁰ It was the patriots' best fought battle, and referred to as "the most extraordinary event of the war." Cowpens was, quite possibly, the major turning point in the Southern campaign, and most notably, a victory with combined regular and militia forces.²¹

II.

"The whole Country is in Danger of being laid Waste by the Whigs and Tories who pursue each other with

as much relentless Fury as Beasts of Prey”
-Nathanael Greene²²

Along with the Continental Army and the state militias, the other major component of the American force in the South was the partisans. Unlike the two other groups, they were subject to no real authority. In fact, they probably had less to do with the independence ideology than any other group. The issues became personal. The war in the South was more of a civil war, with brother fighting against brother, than a conflict with one known enemy. There was a large Loyalist population in the Carolinas that resented the patriot activity in their area. Each side started blaming the other for “alleged brutalities” against their homes and families. Loyalists started grouping together to “settle scores” with their Whig neighbors and taking goods in the ‘King’s name.’²³ British commanders tried to pit American against American to win in the South. The destruction of two Continental armies and the disappointingly little support from the state governments spurred a move toward guerrilla warfare.²⁴ Most of the Revolutionary actions in South Carolina had no names, their casualties were few, but the damage that was done ran very deep because they involved both friends and family.²⁵ The partisan/ guerrilla fighter in the Carolinas was by nature an Indian fighter and hunter. They were used to defending their homes against those intruders and surviving out on the frontier and backcountry. Partisans usually only had their own personal arms and rode their own horses.²⁶ The men were volunteers who knowingly served without pay, without a specific time of service, and provided their own arms and transportation. Unfortunately for the formal commanders, they came and went as they pleased, making it hard to gather up a significant number when needed. No two of them fought for the same reasons.²⁷ The promise of plunder held a strong attraction to the guerrillas. The armed forces at the time paid very little, so partisans’ pay was supplemented with Tory goods. Most Patriot leaders took a middle of the road approach when it came to recruitment. They allowed minimum plunder to keep men, but not to excess. Francis Marion limited the loot to horses and food, but James Williams, another commander, publicly advertised that anyone who joined would certainly be compensated for their service. Thomas Sumter often gave his men property that could have been used for public good, especially if it came out of a Tory estate.²⁸ Partisans, as mentioned above, used their own weapons. Unlike the formal armies of Europe, spears and pikes were seldom used, pistols were uncommon, and there were little to no field artillery pieces. The guerrillas thought bayonets were “better for roasting a fowl” than for fighting with. Officers were the only men with swords, and even then good ones were rare. Partisans were more likely to use something with a blade more familiar to them – the hatchet.²⁹ The most common guns in the forces were “firelocks” and even these were not all uniform. Rifles were ideally suited to Southern terrain but they were difficult and expensive to produce. British ‘Brown Besses,’ with their small bullets and no rear sights, more often than not fell into patriot hands.³⁰ Guerrilla warfare, simply defined, is individual sniping, defensive operations, hit and run missions, and firing from cover. Partisan leaders struck blows at enemy supply lines or the troops themselves and quickly retreated so that pursuit was impossible.³¹ The job of the guerrilla fighter was not to win pretty battles in a dignified and formal manner. They never tried to hold territory. They were instructed to avoid open combat situations, wear down the enemy, cut off supply routes, and most importantly, to hit their target and run

fast to avoid being pinned down. These groups were successful only if they had a leader who understood their limitations and abilities instead of trying to act like a 'real' army.³² As the Continentals suffered defeat after defeat in formal battles, respect for European tactics quickly declined. To their credit, partisans could shoot accurately, use their weapons well, harass their enemies, and were masters of surprise and improvisation on their makeshift battlefields.³³

During the French and Indian War, those living out on the frontier had to learn basic self-defense in order to survive against both the wilderness and the Indians. The white men learned how to take cover, move silently, shoot more accurately, and make surprise ambushes much like the Indian tribes did. These abilities helped the colonists and the British regulars win the war. Throughout the time of the Revolution, tribes like the Cherokees and Catawbans were still raiding settlers in the Carolinas. So it is no wonder that these tactics should come into play while outsmarting another foe, the British, who did not pay too much attention to how to fight out in the wilds while they had a chance.³⁴ Horses played a big role in the partisan success as well. The men were almost always mounted and leaders had a hard time in persuading them to dismount long enough to march distances through the woods. Horses were mainly used for pursuit or flight, and the guerrillas almost always preferred to fight on foot and with their bare hands.³⁵

Partisan forces were largely made up of farmers and mechanics that were used to doing things for themselves without the proper equipment. The men were able to devise genius ways to deceive the enemy. When Francis Marion and "Light Horse Harry" Lee were attacking Fort Watson, Maham, an officer, proposed building a high, rectangular boxish tower of green logs with rifles mounted on top. Soldiers could then take shelter and command from within the British fort. In fact, Maham towers surfaced later in many other sieges in the Revolution. Fire was also a friend to the partisans. The same pairing of Lee and Marion took Fort Motte by setting the roof of the main building on fire. They also were apt to use fake or "Quaker" guns, which were nothing more than tree trunks mounted on wagon wheels to intimidate the enemy.³⁶

Leading the charge for the partisan movement were many talented strategists and commanders. Francis Marion, Thomas Sumter, and Andrew Pickens made up a trinity of South Carolinian guerrilla leaders. Francis Marion, who will be discussed later in this paper, exemplifies the partisan spirit and was a major player in stopping the British foray into the Carolinas. Thomas Sumter was an aggressive, recklessly brave man who was a "natural rallying point" for the rebels and had an aversion to authority and control.³⁷ He lacked material support so he rewarded his men with slaves and other items stolen from Loyalists' homes. This became known as "Sumter's Law."³⁸ Andrew Pickens equaled Sumter in skill, daring, and devotion, but less in creativity. Marion prowled inland from the coast, Sumter took the middle, and Pickens rode in the western part of South Carolina. Partisan troops fought successfully if they stuck to the mission at hand and did not try to use European tactics. Taken one by one, these Southern skirmishes amounted to little, but taken as a whole, American victories in these scuffles slowed down Cornwallis' plan to conquer the South.³⁹ What made all the difference, however, were those special individuals that understood their men and their strengths and weaknesses. Such a man as this was Francis Marion, the greatest partisan leader in the South.

III.

“...but as for this damned old fox, the Devil himself could not catch him!”

-Colonel Banastre Tarleton⁴⁰

Francis Marion was born in the winter of 1732 to Huguenot parents in the Santee River region of South Carolina. It is written that he was so small as a boy that he was not “larger than a New England lobster” and could fit in the same pot. The first six years of his life were filled with learning and work, but he had very little formal education until he moved North to near Georgetown where he may have had more training. Georgetown is a port city, and Francis was always fascinated with the sea. He was fifteen when he boarded a boat headed to the West Indies, and on the return trip a whale rammed the boat and caused it to wreck. Needless to say, that was the end of any sailing ambitions for him. Marion was twenty-five when he started his military career. The French and Indian War had just begun and it had not reached South Carolina yet, but Cherokees were already raiding along the backcountry. He and his brother both enlisted in the militia infantry regiment on January 31, 1756. His company disbanded due to the Treaty of Paris, but only after Marion had reached the rank of First Lieutenant for his bravery against the Cherokees. With no more action to take part in, Marion went back home to his plantation, Pond Bluff, and as a planter, acquired wealth through his land.⁴¹ After a thirteen-year absence from the public eye, Marion returned from Pond Bluff to serve in South Carolina’s First Provincial Congress as a delegate from St. John’s Parish. This group did little except prohibiting the selling of British goods. Even at this point in 1775, the men still professed allegiance to the King. Of course, this attitude changed after Lexington and Concord, so the Congress voted to raise two regiments of infantry and one cavalry unit that were eventually to become Continental soldiers. Francis became the Captain of the second regiment. His first job was to recruit men for the cause, and his region was along the Santee, Black, and Peedee Rivers. He was able to sign sixty men and brought them back to Charleston to train them. His first mission as an officer was to take Fort Johnson on James Island in the Charleston Harbor to control the water traffic. He took part in fortifying Charleston and helped drive the royal government out of the city.⁴²

The physical characteristics of Francis Marion were not those of the typical American handsome hero. He was described as lean, “swarthy”, and short, with an aquiline nose, projecting chin, large high forehead, and black, piercing eyes.⁴³ His personality was full of contradictions. On the one hand, he could be humane or even kind, but as a commander, he was a disciplinarian to a fault. Marion was so strict that an officer in his South Carolina regiment called him an “ugly, cross, knock-kneed, hook-nosed son of a bitch.” His mixture of caution and daring and his understanding of guerrilla tactics made him a veritable foe to the British.⁴⁴ He was forty-eight years of age when the Revolution began – past the typical prime of a soldier. Whatever his personality flaws may have been, Marion was a born leader and a model field commander with excellent cavalry skills. He rode into the battlefield at the head of his men, but like any other leader, rarely did any of the fighting himself but instead directed the action in front of him with a “calm brilliance.” What made Francis Marion so special was his handling of guerrilla warfare. He and his men operated largely without any support, and they were

all unpaid volunteers and mostly untrained. The troops used whatever weapon they could find, even if they were sabers made by a local blacksmith or their own hunting rifles. In other words, nothing was uniform about Marion's partisan band.⁴⁵ His territory was the Low Country between the Peedee and Santee Rivers and no redcoat or Tory was safe. He had so many spies and informers that hardly anything happened without his knowledge. The area had perhaps more Loyalists than others, but if a group of them assembled to cause trouble, they had no chance against Marion's force.⁴⁶

Marion was the master of surprise in the Revolution, and twenty-three of the sixty-five main operations in the South were complete surprises.⁴⁷ One of the commander's favorite strategies when pursued was to retreat at his own pace until he came upon a stream running through the swamp. After crossing it, he concealed men on either side under cover and waited. When the enemy arrived and tried to ford the water, they would be caught in the fire from the hidden men's guns.⁴⁸ If the enemy tried to cross anyway, Marion and his men would have already moved on to another position deeper in the swamp. The enemy would get tired of this cat and mouse game and simply stop. The partisans were also known to ride fifty miles at night just to attack a camp by surprise in the early morning and fade back.⁴⁹ His force was able to inflict many casualties on the enemy quickly at short range; part of the men fought mounted with sabers, while the main portion of them were on foot, attacking with firearms like smoothbore rifles. Marion's favorite ammunition for this weapon was a multiple pellet because there was a good chance of hitting several men at once. He also tricked enemies into traps, leading them there with false information. He also made his force seem smaller than it was to give the British a sense of false confidence to swoop in and demolish them. Marion once used this tactic against a Cherokee war party. He sent a deliberately small cavalry unit to attack then apparently retreat in a panic. The Indians pursued and were lured within point-blank range of the rest of the partisan force.⁵⁰

The period between August of 1780 and August of 1781 contained most of Francis Marion's more well-known skirmishes as a guerrilla commander. By this time, he had attained the rank of Brigadier General of the South Carolina militia. He had instructions from his superiors to destroy any boats along the Santee River to trap and destroy any British soldiers there, so his band of men started the sixty-mile march towards the river. General Horatio Gates had expected to win at Camden, South Carolina, but this did not happen and Marion did not tell his troops for fear of losing some to discouragement.⁵¹ Great Savannah was Thomas Sumter's old plantation, and Marion found out there were over a hundred American prisoners being held there by thirty-six British guards. The British captain Jonathan Roberts had no idea that the rebels were lying in wait for them, so he foolishly stacked all the arms outside the house. Marion planned his attack for right before dawn. On the morning of August 20, 1780, he sent Hugh Horry with sixteen men forward as a block, while the rest of the troops attacked from the rear. A sentry started firing, but Horry still led the charge down the lane to the house to get the weapons before the guards could. At the same time, Marion's men attacked from the other side. The action took only minutes, but the Americans counted only two wounded, while the enemy suffered twenty-six losses. The band freed all 147 Continental prisoners. It was this event that made Cornwallis stop and order an investigation of this little man and his guerrilla force.⁵²

A few days later, on September 4th, Francis Marion led his fifty-two mounted men east

and camped at Ports Ferry on the Peedee River. When British captain Jesse Barfield learned of Marion's position, he lined up his Tory force and waited for an attack. Marion retreated in a confused way that suggested fear, and set up an ambush at Blue Savannah. Barfield's men pursued but when they came upon the hidden troops, their discipline broke. Rebels had come at them on their horses in full charge with pistols and sabers drawn. The Tories' surprise turned into fear, so they immediately retreated into the swamps.⁵³ Even though the attack only wounded three, Marion's success broke the Tories' spirit east of the Peedee River, and brought in another sixty men to double the fighting force.⁵⁴

Later in the same month of September, on the 29th, at Black Mingo Creek, Marion met up with Captain John James after his victory at Charlotte. This added sixty riders to the guerrilla force. The combined troops rode South towards Shepherd's Ferry and met John Ball and his forty-six Tories. Marion had planned a surprise attack at midnight, but a Tory sentry heard horses' hooves on the bridge and alerted the others. Even though they had lost the surprise, Marion continued to move towards a tavern and told the men to fight on foot.⁵⁵ Unfortunately, Ball's men were set up in a field right in the Rebels' path and held their fire until they got to thirty yards away. Three officers were killed and a quick and disorderly retreat followed by some of the partisans, but Captain James led a cautious advance, and Captain Thomas Waites circled the tavern and attacked the Tories there. Only 107 men were involved in the scuffle, which lasted fifteen minutes, but sixteen Tories were dead or wounded and the rebels acquired some needed goods. Included in the stash was Ball's horse. Marion renamed it 'Ball' and rode it for the rest of the war.

Marion received instructions from General Gates to keep harassing the British rear, and called together his militia and established a base at Ports Ferry. On October 24th, he learned that Colonel Samuel Tynes' Tories were camped at Tearcoat Swamp.⁵⁶ One scout reported that the men were just sitting around, playing fiddle or cards, or sleeping, so Marion told his men to rest for a while and woke them up at midnight to start a fast march towards the Tories. He led them in a frontal assault with cavalry on either flank, with the men "whooping, hollering, shooting, and slashing" the enemy. Most of the Tory force fled, and the other forty-three who did not make it that far offered little resistance. Because of this skirmish, men spread stories about Marion and many of Tyne's men later joined up with the Rebels.⁵⁷ Following that battle, Cornwallis gave Tarleton permission to track and destroy Marion and his men. After following the guerrillas for seven hours through the swamps, Tarleton unknowingly gave him his nickname, the Swamp Fox.⁵⁸ After a failed attack at Georgetown, South Carolina, Marion and his troops marched to meet British Major Robert McLeroth between Charleston and Winsboro. The partisan force of nearly 700 mounted men came into contact with the Tories just above Halfway Swamp on December 12-13, 1780. The British pickets were driven in, and their rear guard attacked, so McLeroth was forced to take a defensive position. With his path blocked, the British Major sent a flag to protest the rebels' shooting of the pickets and dared Marion to meet him out in the open. To this, Marion replied that as long as the British kept burning houses and raiding, then he would keep firing at the pickets. He sent word to the British side that "if Major McLeroth wishes to see mortal combat between teams of twenty men picked by both side, I will gratify him." The challenge was apparently accepted, and both sides chose men, but on the Major's orders, the redcoats

marched off the field. He was merely stalling for time.⁵⁹

In early 1781, Marion assisted “Light Horse Harry” Lee at Fort Watson on April 23rd and Fort Motte on May 12th. His men occupied Georgetown on May 28th, and supported American troops at Augusta and ninety-six. Marion’s men came under the order of Thomas Sumter and suffered in a skirmish at Quinby Bridge on July 17th. In August, American Colonel William Harden tried to settle a Tory uprising of 450 men led by British Major Thomas Fraser, but needed Marion’s help. So the guerrillas marched 100 miles, mostly at night undetected and met Harden on August 13th. Marion set up an ambush on the causeway that led to Parker’s Ferry and sent some horsemen to lure Fraser into the trap. Fraser took the bait and charged in. His men found themselves in front of fierce buckshot fire, tried to fire back, but were overcome when the Marion’s cavalry came up to meet the other partisans. The Americans killed or wounded 100 Tories without losing any men, but their ammunition was nearly exhausted so they did not pursue but marched to join Nathanael Greene at Eutaw Springs.⁶⁰ Eutaw Springs was the last major battle in the South. The rebels lost, but they forced the British to withdraw from Charleston.

In the summer of 1781, it became apparent that America would win the war. Tories without deep feeling were willing to change sides if they were not punished. Francis Marion negotiated a treaty with the Tory leader Major Ganey that allowed a number of Tories to live at home as neutrals with no penalty. South Carolina governor John Rutledge also passed a proclamation that gave any Tory a full pardon and citizenship if they volunteered in the state militia for six months. Many Tories took advantage of this.⁶¹

Francis Marion came home to Pond Bluff to find it and all of his belongings destroyed. He had served without pay for three years. The South Carolina senate eventually gave him a seat in the assembly and a gold medal. For the rest of his life, he was commandant at Fort Johnson for pay of \$500 a year, but resigned when he married at the age of fifty-four. The excitement of the Revolutionary War never left Marion. He would take his wife and mule to wander over the hills overlooking the Santee to visit his old haunts and to relive his exploits. He grew old gracefully, as folk hero in his own time and as a politician until his retirement from public life and his death at age sixty-three on February 27th, 1795.⁶²

Even though Marion’s military service in the Revolution only spanned three years, his life has become a mixture of fact and fiction. His first published biographer, Mason Weems, probably started the legend, calling Marion a “celebrated partisan officer,” and pictured him as the “Robin Hood of the Revolution.”⁶³ William Cullen Bryant even wrote the “Song of Marion’s Men”: “Our band is few but tried and true/ our leader frank and bold/ The British soldier trembles/ when Marion’s name is told.” Robert D. Bass probably put it best when he described the Swamp Fox as

“neither Robin Hood nor Chevalier Bayard. He was a moody, introverted, semiliterate genius who rose from private to Brigadier General though an intuitive grasp of strategy and tactics, personal bravery, devotion to duty, and worship of liberty.”⁶⁴

The Revolutionary War in the South was of extreme importance to winning the war against the British as a whole. The cause in the South received little aide from the

Northern colonies, but managed to end the conflict. It was a brother against brother, bloody, and vicious civil war. Continental leaders that took on state militias and partisan leaders and their guerrilla tactics led the colonies to victory, fighting the only way they knew how--the American way. Officers like Marion, even though they were not involved in the major European-type battles, will live on as the men who did the little things that made all the difference.

Notes

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3 *Ibid.*, 119.

4 Don Higginbotham, *The War for American Independence*, (New York: Macmillan, 1971): 362.

5 John S. Pancake, *This Destructive War: The British Campaign in the Carolinas, 1780-1782*, (University: University of Alabama Press, 1985): 44.

6 *Ibid.*, 45.

7 *Ibid.*, 49.

8 *Ibid.*, 50.

9 *Ibid.*, 51.

10 Mark Mayo Boatner, *Encyclopedia of the American Revolution*, (New York: McKay, 1966): 707.

11 John Buchanan, *The Road to Guilford Courthouse: The American Revolution in the Carolinas, 1780-1782* (University: University of Alabama Press, 1985): 182.

12 Robert C. Pugh, "The Revolutionary Militia in the Southern Campaign, 1780-1781," *William and Mary Quarterly* 14, (April 1957):156.

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15 Lt. Col. Joseph B. Mitchell, *Decisive Battles of the American Revolution*, (Greenwich: Fawcett, 1962):181.

16 Callahan, *Daniel Morgan*, 202.

17 Mitchell, *Decisive Battles*, 182.

18 Weller, "Partizan Tactics", 130.

19 Agniel, *Rebels Victorious*, 99.

20 Mitchell, *Decisive Battles*, 184.

21 Callahan, *Daniel Morgan*, 202.

22 Pancake, *Destructive War*, 73.

23 Higginbotham, *War for Independence*, 360.

24 *Ibid.*, 362.

25 Buchanan, *Road to Guilford Courthouse*, 105.

26 Weller, "Partizan Tactics", 120.

27 Jac Weller, "The Irregular War in the South," *Military Affairs* 24, (Autumn 1960):135.

28 Weller, "Partizan Tactics", 136.

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- 31 Ibid., 123.
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- 33 Weller, "Partizan Tactics", 124.
- 34 Ibid., 123.
- 35 Ibid., 123.
- 36 Ibid., 128.
- 37 Lancaster and Plumb, *Book of the Revolution*, 295.
- 38 Henry Lumpkin, *From Savannah to Yorktown: The American Revolution in the South*. (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1981): 80.
- 39 Lancaster and Plumb, *Book of the Revolution*, 295.
- 40 Boatner, *Encyclopedia*, 677.
- 41 Hugh F. Rankin, *Francis Marion: The Swamp Fox*, (New York: Crowell, 1973): 11.
- 42 Ibid., 7-11.
- 43 Lumpkin, *From Savannah to Yorktown*, 69.
- 44 Buchanan, *Road to Guilford Courthouse*, 181.
- 45 Lumpkin, *From Savannah to Yorktown*, 69.
- 46 Weller, "Irregular War", 135.
- 47 Weller, "Partizan Tactics", 126.
- 48 Lumpkin, *From Savannah to Yorktown*, 69.
- 49 Ibid., 70.
- 50 Weller, "Partizan Tactics", 126.
- 51 Boatner, *Encyclopedia*, 449.
- 52 Buchanan, *Road to Guilford Courthouse*, 183.
- 53 Ibid., 184.
- 54 Boatner, *Encyclopedia*, 82.
- 55 Buchanan, *Road to Guilford Courthouse*, 191.
- 56 Boatner, *Encyclopedia*, 1092.
- 57 Buchanan, *Road to Guilford Courthouse*, 245-246.
- 58 Boatner, *Encyclopedia*, 677.
- 59 Boatner, *Encyclopedia*, 476.
- 60 Ibid., 832.
- 61 Weller, "Irregular War", 136.
- 62 Rankin, *Swamp Fox*, 290-296.
- 63 Higginbotham, *War of American Independence*, 361.
- 64 Boatner, *Encyclopedia*, 679.

These strategies were also influenced by the geography of the region, which often affected the outcome of the battles. Both sides had their own ideas on how to accomplish these goals and the strategies they used have been widely studied, scrutinized and even recreated. The British strategy at the beginning of the war was simply to contain the American Revolution in Massachusetts and prevent it from spreading. Another strategy the Americans used to their advantage was the use of guerrilla warfare, which many of them had learned as soldiers during the French and Indian War in the 1750s-60s, according to an NPR interview by Steve Inskeep with author Max Boot: <https://www.americanpartisan.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Radio-Contra-Ep027.mp3>. Congratulations to the winner of the Upheaval Giveaway, Linda D! The Second American Civil War has begun. NC Scout is on the show today to offer a military perspective on the escalating violence occurring in American cities around the country. Read the rest of this entry The post URGENT: Civil War 2.0 Just The Beginning of Sorrows, Book Three NOW AVAILABLE! The American Revolutionary War, also known as the American War of Independence. A war between the Kingdom of Great Britain and thirteen British colonies in North America from 1775 to 1783. Learn about the armies & navies, leaders, facts and records! The war of American independence could be summed up as a civil war fought on foreign soil, as opposing forces comprised both nations' residents. That said, it is a war that America could not have survived without French assistance. In addition, Britain had significant military disadvantages. Distance was a major problem: most troops and supplies had to be shipped across the Atlantic Ocean. When American colonists won independence from Great Britain in the Revolutionary War, the French, who participated in the war themselves, were both close allies and key participants. Several years after the revolt in America, French reformists faced political, social and economic hardships that mirrored the colonists' struggles. Enlightenment philosophy was a major influence. Many experts believe that the same ideologies that sparked the American Revolution had long percolated through French culture. During the war in North American colonies, some allied Frenchmen fought side by side with soldiers of the Continental Army, which allowed for the exchanging of values, ideas and philosophies. The South American Revolutions. The Spread of Revolution. The Latin American Wars of Independence, which took place during the late 18th and early 19th centuries, were deeply influenced by the American and French Revolutions and resulted in the creation of a number of independent countries in Latin America. Learning Objectives. The revolutionary fervor of the 18th century, influenced by Enlightenment ideals of liberty and equality, resulted in massive political upheaval across the world, starting with the American Revolution in 1776 and the French Revolution in 1789. Haitian Revolution: A successful anti-slavery and anti-colonial insurrection that took place in the former French colony of Saint Domingue from 1791 until 1804.