MATTHEW F. K. McDANIEL
Georgia's Forgotten Battlefields: A Survey of and Recommendations for Selected
        Revolutionary War Battlefields and Sites in the State
(Under the Direction of DR. MARK REINBERGER)

Although not entirely neglected by scholars, the American Revolution in Georgia

has essentially remained a footnote to the state's Civil War history. Several Federally-

and state-owned sites both interpret and commemorate Civil War battles fought on

Georgia soil. Despite active and important military participation in the Revolution,

Georgia contains only one state-owned site related to the Revolution, and it provides only

a broad interpretation of military events occurring there. The portions of some additional

sites are held by local municipal governments, but resources are not currently available to

appropriately protect, commemorate, or interpret the sites. Under direction of the

National Park Service's American Battlefield Protection Program and the Historic

Preservation Division of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, researcher Matt

McDaniel was able to research, visit, and document eleven Revolutionary War-era sites

in Georgia. He found a variety of site conditions, most of which lean towards neglect.

However, opportunities exist to continue to research and investigate some of these sites,

and, in the future, more appropriately protect and commemorate them.

INDEX WORDS: Battlefield(s), Historic Preservation, Augusta, Cherokee Ford, Fort

                    Cornwallis, Fort Grierson, Fort Morris, Frederica, Hutchinson Island,

                    New Ebenezer, Savannah, Sunbury, Battle of Brier Creek, Battle of

                    Kettle Creek, Battle of the Rice Boats, *Rebecca* and *Hinchinbrooke*

GEORGIA'S FORGOTTEN BATTLEFIELDS:

A SURVEY OF AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SELECTED REVOLUTIONARY

WAR BATTLEFIELDS AND SITES IN THE STATE

by

MATTHEW F. K. McDANIEL

B.A., Hampden-Sydney College, 1996

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of The University of Georgia in Partial

Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATHENS, GEORGIA

2002

GEORGIA'S FORGOTTEN BATTLEFIELDS:

A SURVEY OF AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SELECTED REVOLUTIONARY

WAR BATTLEFIELDS AND SITES IN THE STATE

by

MATTHEW F. K. McDANIEL

Approved:

Major Professor: Mark Reinberger

Committee: Richard Westmacott
    Ken Thomas, Jr.
    Judith Wasserman

Electronic Version Approved:

Gordhan L. Patel
Dean of the Graduate School
The University of Georgia
August 2002

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Georgia, like most of the early states of the United States, has an early history

marked by warfare. Indians fought each other for centuries, and were followed by a

century and a half of conflicts pitching European empires against one another for control

of what would become the southeastern United States. Then the colonies of England

rebelled, and again battles were fought over the land now known as Georgia. With

independence gained, Georgia would fight the native peoples for another half century, see

conflict on its soil during the War of 1812, and, finally, play a major role and suffer

greatly during the Civil War. Most casual historians of Georgia history are relatively

familiar with the state's Civil War history, but when it comes to the other conflicts,

specific knowledge is usually wanting.

Aside from the Civil War, the Revolutionary War period saw the greatest amount

of sustained military conflict in Georgia. Along the Atlantic coastline and up the

Savannah River to the Augusta area, American Patriots fought Tories and British regulars

for control of the state. When British strategy shifted to the southern theater in late 1778,

Georgia became an important tactical prize and was soon conquered by the British. From

an American perspective, Georgia's Revolutionary record is marred by more failures than

victories and few pitched battles on a grand scale. Nevertheless, actions within the state

proved vital in the outcome of the conflict. While several national and state commemorative sites preserve and interpret the state's Civil War history, only one, that of the state-owned site of Fort Morris at Sunbury, interprets a Revolutionary-era site. Literally hundreds of state historical markers across the state acknowledge Civil War-era sites, events, and actions, while only a few dozen markers acknowledge all other military actions in Georgia.

The sites of Revolutionary conflict in Georgia derive their importance from a brief but extraordinarily violent moment in time, and the outcomes affected Georgia's status during the Revolution and, arguably, the outcome of the war itself. So, is the current lack of recognition for Revolutionary War sites a matter of neglect or a legitimate representation of relative significance? Under the direction of the American Battlefield Protection Program (ABPP) of the National Park Service, the author endeavored to research, visit, and document several selected Revolutionary-era sites. The ABPP formed following the costly acquisition of portions of the Civil War-era Manassas battlefield in northern Virginia by the Federal government. As the area around that battlefield urbanized, developers were eager to develop a significant portion of the site that was not included in the National Park. Opponents of the development succeeded in convincing Congress to acquire the property, but not after a protracted legal battle and the passing of an enormous sum of money. Congress then appointed a commission to study the status of significant Civil War-era battlefields across the nation in the hopes of averting another costly Manassas situation. This effort eventually led to the creation of the ABPP within the National Park Service, and its goals were broadened to include sites and events from

all wars fought on U.S. soil and to examine a variety of means that might lead to their

preservation. A significant goal of the ABPP is to foster public-private partnerships to

identify and evaluate important sites as early as possible and incorporate them into land

use, site management, economic development, and tourism plans.[1] As Federal budgets

for land acquisition shrink, the ABPP encourages stewardship of battlefield resources at

the state and local levels by working with private landowners, developers, battlefield

friends groups, and state and local officials. An important focus of the ABPP is to foster

working relationships with private landowners, as oftentimes, battlefields are partially or

wholly located on private property. The ABPP promotes consensus solutions to

battlefield preservation encompassing the interests of preservationists, landowners,

development interests, and government.

ABPP survey efforts in Georgia afforded the opportunity to draw conclusions

regarding the significance of individual sites and of Revolutionary War sites in Georgia

in general. This evaluation led to recommendations for the further research, study,

recognition, and possible protection and preservation of the selected sites. Whether or

not the ABPP eventually takes an interest in preserving any of the Revolutionary War

battlefields documented in Georgia on the Federal level, the ABPP study and this paper

might provide at least a starting point for the assessment of the sites and for possible

preservation and commemoration on the local level.

---

1 Gossett, Tanya M., "Working Together," *Cultural Resource Management, Altogether Fitting and Proper: Saving America's Battlefields*, Vol. 20, No. 5 (1997).

METHODOLOGY

The ABPP survey methodology followed by the author provided the basis for the information contained within this thesis. This methodology was composed of several steps. Following the selection of significant sites by an advisory committee in Washington, D.C., the author examined the amount and availability of relevant secondary source material. This initial historical research typically provided the currently understood location of the event under consideration and associated geographical landmarks that helped identify the site of that event.

The author then undertook field investigations at the currently understood locations and documented the sites. This documentation consisted of extensive photography and notes on site condition, historic integrity, adjacent land use, the potential for land use change, threats to site integrity, and an inventory of defining features and associated interpretive elements located at the site. An important element of the ABPP Program was the documentation of the site using Trimble Pathfinder Geographical Positioning System (GPS) equipment and software. A Trimble GPS unit was employed to precisely locate important physical elements of the battlefield site. Such features included important geographical landmarks (almost exclusively water features at the sites examined), monuments, historical markers, buildings, ruins, roadways both historic and modern, railways, and bridges. Elements of the landscape that contributed and those that did not were logged into the GPS unit. Non-contributing features were typically limited to modern buildings or structures located within the site or in close proximity. Points, lines, and polygons representing relevant landscape features

could be logged into the GPS unit with one-meter accuracy, and additional descriptive

data could be typed into the GPS data-logger and attached to the geographic information.

For example, a historical marker or monument could be logged into the GPS unit, and its

title and subject information could be attached at the same time; or a building could be

logged, and its name, date of construction, and building type could be saved as well.

Notes pertaining to the condition of the site were then inserted by computer into

the ABPP's digital battlefield survey form along with a brief essay relating the events

and/or significance of the site in question. The GPS information gathered was also

entered into the computer and corrected to eliminate errors in the data. Photos were

either digitized using a scanner or were digital images to begin with. Lists of

bibliographical sources and important geographical features were also compiled and

saved digitally. Thus, all data obtained was eventually compiled in some digital format.

The ABPP intends to create a digital interactive encyclopedia of Revolutionary War sites

across the nation. This resource will then be used to assess sites according to their

significance and site condition, and then consider the prudence and feasibility of

acquiring different sites.

However useful this information is to the ABPP program, the purpose of this

thesis is to summarize the information obtained and present it in a condensed narrative

format, as well as to use the same information to provide preliminary recommendations

for protecting, preserving, or commemorating the sites studied. The sites selected by the

ABPP's selection committee represent that group's understanding of the most significant

Revolutionary War battles fought in Georgia, and also include additional skirmishes and

sites associated with the conflict. Therefore, the author determined to use the list of sites provided by the ABPP to present a 'cross section' of site conditions across the oldest part of the state.

The battlefields and sites are assessed in separate chapters, and each chapter begins with a very brief description of the battlefield or site's location and its significance. A historical narrative follows addressing the action and events taking place at the site. After the narrative history, the significance of the site is assessed in more detail, and then the site's condition is more thoroughly examined. The site's current National Register of Historic Place's status is then described, followed by a recommendation regarding expansion of an existing listing or the feasibility of proposing the site for inclusion in the National Register. Finally, the author may address the relative lack of information regarding a site and the need for additional historical or archaeological research, or, based on relatively sufficient current research, propose preliminary measures that could be undertaken to help properly protect, preserve, and/or commemorate a particular site.

Finally, a chapter is included summarizing specific recommendations for the individual battlefields and sites considered, and, in conclusion, more broad-based recommendations for the preservation, protection, and commemoration of the sites. This chapter includes commentary and observations regarding the use of real estate law to preserve and/or protect sites, interpretive treatments, the role of public involvement, and heritage tourism.
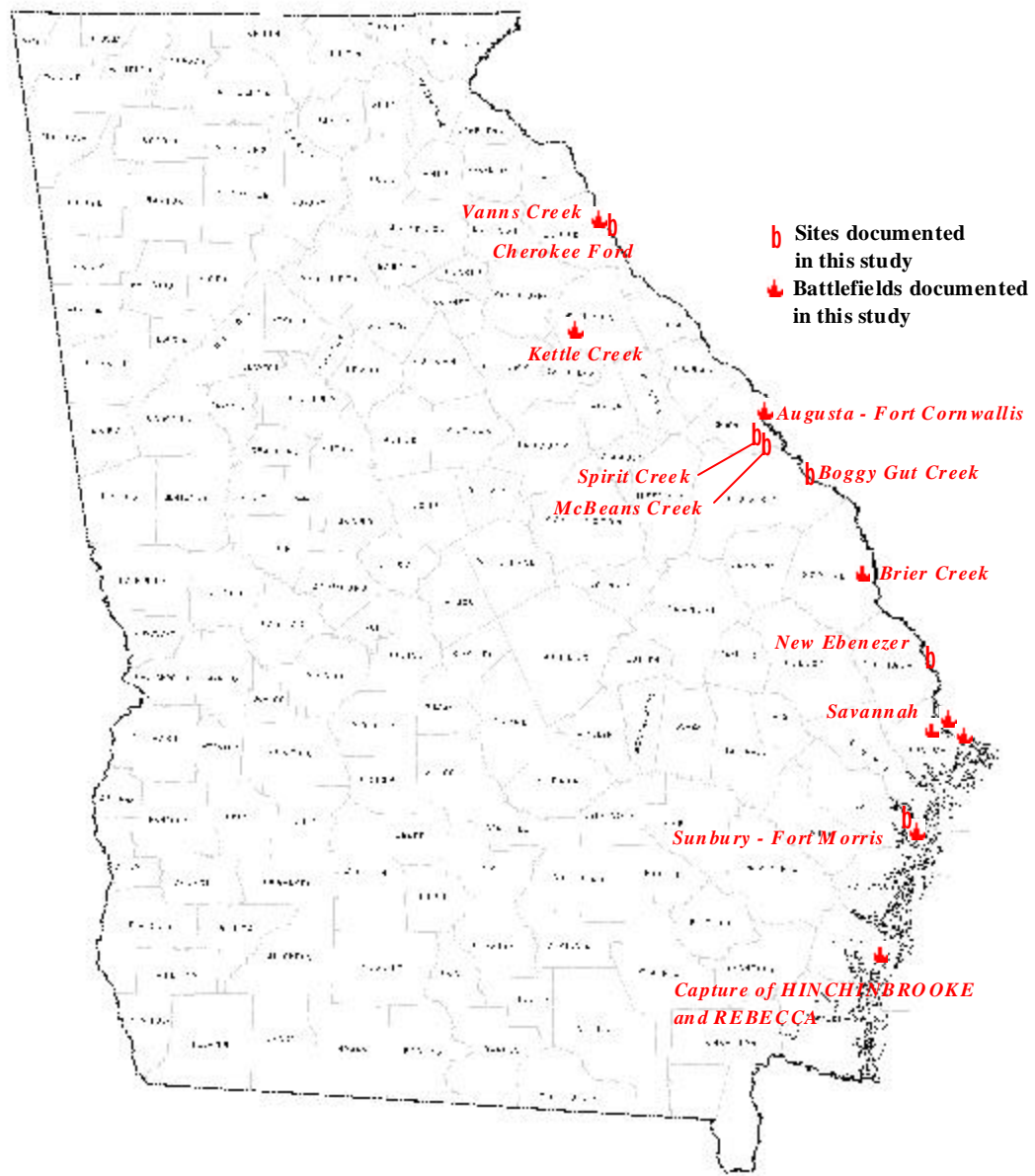
Figure 1: Overview map of Georgia showing sites included in this study

CHAPTER 2

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION IN GEORGIA

Georgia entered the American Revolution far more stubbornly than her elders, and rather than confuse such caution with cowardice, one must consider the situation of the youngest colony. The poorest and least populated of the English colonies, Georgia was wary of severing the ties to England that sustained her and was equally wary of what protections could be afforded her by sister colonies. However, the 'Revolutionary' spirit was alive and well in Georgia, particularly in Saint John's Parish and the infant town of Sunbury, and Georgia followed South Carolina's lead into open conflict with the mother country. In May 1775, the first violence broke out in Savannah, when Whigs, those who supported American independence, raided the Royal powder magazine. Though a bloodless affair, the colonials in Georgia were now in arms.

Hesitant at the outset, Georgia quickly made further preparations for war, and trouble soon found the small colony. In February 1776, four British men-of-war and supporting vessels appeared off the Tybee shore in search of food and other provisions. Royal Governor Sir James Wright, a popular man by any standard in Georgia, urged the Whigs to trade with the vessels or risk conflict that might severely damage the town. Wright's suggestion was met with his immediate arrest and the arrest of all other royal officials in Savannah, lest they should conspire with the enemy. The Georgians were

barred by the Continental Congress from trading with the British anyhow, and the British were prepared to seize rice boats anchored in the Savannah River opposite the town. On March 2nd, the British landed troops on Hutchinson Island and boarded several rice boats. The next day, the Council of Safety (the provisionary Whig government) sent a group to protect these same boats, and this group was subsequently surprised and captured by the British troops already in possession of the rice boats. As the British moved the rice vessels out to sea, a battery from the bluff at Savannah opened fire but the shots fell short. A fire ship deployed by the Whigs destroyed a few of the boats, but the British escaped with about 1600 barrels of rice.[2] Prisoners were released on both sides, and tiny and impoverished Georgia and the mighty British Empire were at war.

Following rebel Georgia's inauspicious military debut, the Whig government turned its attentions southward to the vexing problem of Saint Augustine and British Florida. Since the outset of open hostilities between the Crown and Whigs, many Tory families had fled to Florida, and bands of Tory and British irregulars and hostile Indians, known as Florida Rangers, were attacking villages and farms on the western frontiers and in southern Georgia. These incursions would eventually reach as far north as the Altamaha River. Georgia would make three separate attempts to invade Florida and capture Saint Augustine, all of which would end in miserable and embarrassing failure. The first offensive was launched in September of 1776, but few soldiers made it to Sunbury and still fewer to the Saint Johns River in northern Florida. Disease and mismanagement prevented any hope for success, and the expedition was abandoned.

---

2 Coleman, Kenneth, ed., *A History of Georgia,* Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1977, p. 73.

A second attempt was made in April of 1777 in which the new President of Georgia, Button Gwinnett, and Lachlan McIntosh, Continental Commander in Georgia, utterly failed to cooperate and the mission was turned over to Colonel Samuel Elbert. The argument between Gwinnett and McIntosh would result in a duel and the death of the former, a signer of the Declaration of Independence. Elbert moved Continental troops by sea and would rendezvous with mounted militia at the Saint Johns River. The troops did not meet as planned, and the militia repelled a small British force before retiring northward. Elbert arrived, but ascertaining the situation, decided to return to Savannah, thus ending the spring 1777 campaign. Much of the blame for this failure could be placed at the feet of Gwinnett, who planned the invasion without consulting McIntosh or General Robert Howe, Continental Commander for the Southern Department.[3] The unorganized expedition was doomed from the start.

Although Georgia was on the offensive, albeit ineffectively, the British were operating along the Georgia coast and some clashes did result. An early and relatively impressive victory came to the state when Colonel Samuel Elbert and his men captured the British ships *Rebecca* and *Hinchinbrooke* at Frederica in April, 1778. State galleys were used to outmaneuver the larger British boats, and the Whig victory was accomplished with little bloodshed.

In the summer of 1778, Georgia would yet again turn its attention to Florida and make an attempt on Saint Augustine. Incursions by the Florida Rangers were becoming more bold, more frequent, closer to Savannah, and the Whig government decided to make

---

3 Ibid., p. 78.

another effort on Florida. A naval and land movement was again planned, but divided

leadership and the severe southern climate doomed yet another Florida campaign to

failure. The annual invasions were total failures, economic disasters, and

embarrassments to Georgia's fractured leadership. The 1778 campaign was the last, for

the British Crown had decided to turn the table on the small colony.

Toward the latter part of 1778, the British were reeling from embarrassment in the

North and decided to turn their attentions southward, to the Carolinas and Georgia, where

Loyalist sentiment was the strongest, particularly along the frontier. The Crown figured

the South would be easier to subdue, that the patriots there would come to there senses,

and that after establishing a base of operations, the British would again invade the North.

The Crown was apparently unaware, or blind perhaps, to the fact that Whig sentiment

was still very strong in the Southern upcountry. The British strategy was to invade the

weaker and potentially more loyal Georgia and from there march on to Charleston. In

November of 1778 a British force 400 strong marched out of Florida and intended to

rendezvous with a larger force of British Regulars at Savannah now sailing from New

York.[4] On November 28, 1778, the Florida detachment, reached Sunbury, a bustling

seaport town at that time rivaling Savannah. Sunbury was protected by Fort Morris and a

small garrison under command of Lieutenant Colonel John McIntosh of the famous

McIntosh clan. When the British commander Colonel L. V. Fuser demanded the

surrender of the fort, McIntosh sent the curt, and now famous, reply: 'COME AND

TAKE IT.' Expecting reinforcements from British Lieutenant Colonel James Mark

---

4 Coulter, E. M., *Georgia, A Short History*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1960, p. 137.

Prevost but not receiving them, Fuser decided not to try the fort's defenses and returned to Florida with his troops.

Prevost skirmished with mounted militia as he approached Sunbury, and met a significant rebel force at Bulltown Swamp late in November. Prevost troops had been ravaging the countryside, and a detachment of militia and Continental troops under Colonel John Baker fought a delaying action before Prevost reached Midway. Upon entering this small settlement, located a few miles westward of Sunbury, Prevost fired the church. Militia continued to harass Prevost, and on November 24, as the British moved to return to Florida, another skirmish broke out a mile south of Midway, in which Georgia's General James Screven was mortally wounded. Prevost escaped, and this initial attempt at invasion in Georgia proved fruitless, much for the same reason Georgia had failed at Florida and Saint Augustine— failure of officers to properly communicate and coordinate.

In December, the aforementioned force from New York, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Archibald Campbell and sailing for Savannah, reached its target with approximately 3,500 British Regulars, New York Loyalists, and mercenary German Hessians.[5] A force of little more than a thousand Continentals and militia defended the small city under command of General Robert Howe. The small rebel force was hampered by, as usual, a lack of cooperation between senior officers. Although surrounded by a seemingly impenetrable marshland, Savannah was easily taken from

---

5 Ward, Christopher, and John Richard Allen, ed., *The War of the Revolution*, New York: The MacMillan Company, 1952, p. 680.

rebel hands. On December 29, 1778, a slave led the British through the marshes, and they surprised the defenders and routed the town. Over half the American force was killed, wounded, or captured, while the British only lost a handful of men. The defense had been a disaster, and the British now held Savannah. Howe retreated with his remaining Continental force to Carolina and hoped to defend Charleston from the attack so sure to come. The remnants of Georgia's militia force escaped northward toward Augusta in hopes of defending the upcountry town. Campbell quickly pushed north, and on January 2, 1779, took New Ebenezer, and by the end of the month, he outflanked Georgia's remaining forces and took Augusta as well.

At the same time Campbell was subduing Savannah, British General Augustine Prevost was marching his sizable force out of Florida toward Savannah and Campbell's army. Prevost had only one serious impediment to his objective—Fort Morris at Sunbury. After a brief siege, the young and inexperienced commander there, Major Joseph Lane, surrendered the fortification and its small garrison. Militia forces across the state scattered into the wilds of the upcountry frontier, and civilized Georgia now rested solely in British hands. The Royal government was thereafter reestablished, and Sir James Wright soon returned to head it.

Campbell remained at Augusta and dispersed Tory forces into the frontier lands to subdue further insurrections and take any remaining blockhouse fortifications maintained by Whig forces. Campbell also awaited the arrival of a significant Tory force under the command of Colonel James Boyd. Boyd, after resistance at Cherokee Ford and Vanns Creek on the Savannah River, entered Georgia from South Carolina in early February.

However, by February 14th, Campbell, disappointed by the small turnover of Whigs to the Loyalist militia battalions, and without any sign of the approach of Boyd's army, abandoned Augusta. On the same day, Boyd's force, moving through Wilkes County, was attacked by a Whig force under Colonels Andrew Pickens and John Dooly, and Lieutenant Colonel Elijah Clarke at a farm north of Kettle Creek. Colonel Boyd was killed, his force driven from the field, and the pursuit of Whigs in the upcountry halted.

Campbell retired to Savannah, and the upcountry remained in Whig hands. Prospects in Georgia burned brighter only briefly, for a rebel defeat soon followed this victory at Kettle Creek. The Continental high command considered a push into Georgia that might relieve the state and hurry the end of the war. General John Ashe crossed the Savannah River in early March, 1779, with a force of 1,400 North Carolina militia and about 100 Georgia Continentals and took a position on Brier Creek.[6] He ordered Marbury's Dragoons to destroy the bridge along the approach, and this was accomplished on March 2nd. Colonel Mark Prevost marched a small army of British Regulars and Torys against the Whig force, and on this same day encountered Marbury's Dragoons and dispersed them. By the morning of the 3rd, the British had crossed Brier Creek above Ashe's army and came around to surprise them from the rear. They met the unprepared rebel force along the road through the swampy area around the creek and quickly and completely routed it. The Whig offensive was over and hopes for the liberation of Georgia dashed.

---

6 Ward and Allen, *The War of the Revolution*, p. 683.

The Georgia theater of operations remained quiet until fall, when a combined French and American force made an attempt to retake Savannah. In a very brief window of opportunity, the rebel forces had the cooperation of Charles-Henri Comte d'Estaing, Vice Admiral of the French navy and the considerable forces under his command sailing from the West Indes. Governor John Rutledge of South Carolina had inquired about the possible assistance of the French, and d'Estaing appeared off the coast of Georgia in September much to the surprise of British and American alike. The British commander at Savannah, General Augustine Prevost, begged off d'Estaing, and bought enough time for reinforcements from South Carolina to arrive. American reinforcements under General Benjamin Lincoln arrived and regular siege operations were begun. The French and Americans launched a massive assault on October 9th and were readily repulsed, an action in which Polish aristocrat and American patriot Count Casimir Pulaski was killed. The siege continued, only to be abandoned a week later. Rebel losses quadrupled British losses, and the attempt on Savannah, although valiant, was an utter failure. Savannah, and thus Georgia, remained under British control.

Charleston was taken by the British under Sir Henry Clinton on May 12, 1780, and the entire American army under General Lincoln was captured. A Tory force under Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Brown, the King's Carolina Rangers, quickly moved on Augusta and took the Georgia town on May 25th essentially unopposed.[7] Brown, a Tory formerly subject to Whig abuses in Augusta, was given command of the small Georgia

---

[7] Cashin, Edward J. and Heard Robertson, *Augusta and the American Revolution, Events in the Georgia Backcountry, 1773-1783*, Darien: The Ashantilly Press, 1975, p. 41.

frontier town and ruthlessly exercised his vengeance. The Southern theater had fallen

to the British. Resistance continued in the Georgia upcountry and around Midway and

Sunbury, but British strength kept these forces from producing any consequence. An

irregular state government formed, but was able to do little more than occasionally supply

the Continental army with a militia battalion or two. Prospects were bleak in the deep

South.

   As Brown sent detachments out into the Georgia countryside to rid the state of

any Whig sympathies, murder and ruthless guerilla warfare became the order of the day.

Whigs that survived the persecution fled to the area that is now Tennessee, whilst

unlucky others, such as rebel Colonel John Dooly, were hunted down and murdered. The

murderers of the patriot Dooly were supposedly captured and put to death by the

legendary Nancy Hart. Frontier warfare in the Georgia and Carolina upcountry was some

of the most ruthless this country has ever seen.

   In September of 1780, remaining and returning Whigs to the Georgia upcountry

made an attempt to liberate Augusta from the hands of its British and Tory rulers. On the

14th, Colonel Elijah Clarke led this attack with a force of five or six hundred rebel

irregulars dispersed along three roads entering the town. Colonel Brown, upon hearing of

Indian allies being distressed on the outskirts of town, moved to their defense. Clarke

used the diversion as a means to move his main force into town, upon which Brown made

a hasty return and joined the forces he had left to defend the town, already engaged at the

McKay house. The Tory forces pushed the Whigs back and dug in. After several days of

siege and despite horrific conditions, Brown prevailed when, on the 18th, a force of

British Regulars and Torys from South Carolina appeared and drove off the Whig attackers. The fleeing Whigs were pursued by British, Tory, and Indian alike, and according to tradition, several were caught and murdered.[8]

By the fall of 1780, Lord Cornwallis and the main British army in South Carolina moved into North Carolina, leaving Georgia vulnerable to American and Whig forces in the area. In the spring of 1781, General Nathanael Greene, new Continental commander in the Southern Department, planned an offensive in Georgia and the Carolinas. As a part of this new offensive, Augusta was again attacked by militia forces under Colonels Elijah Clarke and Micajah Williamson and by Continental troops under General Andrew Pickens and Lieutenant Colonel Henry Lee. On May 22nd, siege was laid on the town under the direction of Lee, and Fort Grierson, a fort garrisoned by a detachment of Loyalist militia and outside the town, was attacked and taken on the same day. Fighting continued for several days until June 5th, when Augusta's Tory commander Lieutenant Colonel Brown surrendered the remaining fortification, Fort Cornwallis, to the Americans. Soon, all the remaining Tory and British outposts were back in Whig hands, and fleeing Tories headed for Savannah, where the hard-pressed little town and Royal Governor tried to accommodate them. Some militia companies were formed of these Loyalists, but Governor Wright knew the town could not withstand a serious Whig attempt to take it. The British command could do little to help Wright and warned him to evacuate the town if the situation became untenable.

---

8 Ibid., p. 48.

Cornwallis and his army were captured by the Americans at Yorktown, Virginia in October, 1781. The remaining British possessions of Charleston and Savannah soon became the target of a new Continental push into the deep South that could finally end the war. In January 1782, General Greene ordered General 'Mad' Anthony Wayne to Savannah with a force of 500 men.[9] The British marched 200 men from Charleston to Savannah to reinforce the defenses there, making a total of 1,000 men against Wayne's 500.[10] Wayne began a move on the Georgia city, fighting his way to within a few miles of the town. Although reinforced by Georgia militia as he progressed, Wayne's force weakened as South Carolina troops left upon expiration of their enlistments. The British had their problems too, as Whigs subverted their troop strength by convincing the German Hessians to desert and other half-hearted Loyalists to join the Whigs forces now surrounding the city. In April 1782, the new British Commander Sir Guy Carleton deemed Savannah indefensible and began withdrawing British forces. By July 1782, the last British and Tory troops had departed and the Americans took possession of the town. The Whig state government quickly returned, and although some Tory forces remained within the state, the war was over in Georgia. By April of 1783, the Continental Congress had demobilized the Continental Army, and the United States of America were free and independent.

---

9 Coleman, Kenneth. *The American Revolution in Georgia, 1763-1789*, Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1958, p. 141.
10 Ibid.

CHAPTER 3

CASE STUDY: BATTLE OF THE RICE BOATS

Description:

Hutchinson Island is located in the Savannah River immediately east of the historic downtown of the City of Savannah. The island saw the first armed resistance in Georgia during the Revolutionary War when a British fleet attempted to trade with the town and was rebuffed. After a brief action with limited casualties, the British did capture several rice barges moored off Hutchinson Island.

Historical Narrative:

Early in 1776, the Georgia Whigs were busily stripping the Royal government of its powers, conspiring with the Continental Congress, obtaining munitions, and enforcing a trade boycott against British goods. Rebellion was clearly on the horizon. Georgia was being governed by both the Whig-controlled Provincial Congress and Council of Safety, and soon they had an important decision to make. Reports came into Savannah in January that British warships were in the vicinity. The Whigs suspected the ships would raid along the Georgia coast or perhaps attempt trade in Savannah. If the British

approached Savannah, Georgia would either have to submit and betray the Continental

Congress (who were already suspicious of the colony's loyalties) or risk a military

encounter with a sizable imperial force.

Boldly, the small colonial city began marshalling what small resources it had in

order to fortify the town to the extent possible. The Whig government called out the

militia, and Samuel Elbert was placed in command, with Lieutenant Colonel Stephen

Drayton and Major Joseph Habersham his subordinate officers.

The first sign of British activity was the January 13th arrival of the warship *Tamar*

and several other ships off the Tybee Island coast. On the 18th, three more warships,

including the *Raven*, appeared off the coast. Georgia's Royal Governor, Sir James

Wright, was promptly arrested but pleaded with the Whig leaders to reconsider their

rebellious attitude. He insisted the small colony could not resist a sizable British force

and that should the Whigs have a change of heart, he could ensure the town's safety. The

Whigs, however, refused to relinquish authority or betray the Continental Congress.

Unable to make any headway with the Whigs, Wright fled house arrest on

February 11th and joined the British ships now anchored at the mouth of the Savannah

River. Wright took refuge on the *HMS Scarborough* and conferred with the British

Naval commander Captain James Barclay. The British continued to plead with the

Whigs to prevent a significant military clash.

The Whigs, however, were more interested in securing the town for certain attack

than compromising with the British. Aware of the potential for disaster, the Whig

leadership would rather the town be sacrificed than submit to British authority. Largely

for political reasons, they restructured their military leadership, placing Colonel

Lachlan McIntosh in command and Colonel Elbert and Major Habersham beneath him.

McIntosh soon grew frustrated with the convoluted relationship between his

command, the Provincial Congress, and the Continental Congress. His authority was

watered down, and he had only managed to raise 300 to 400 troops to protect the town.[11]

Barclay continued to ask the town to trade freely with his fleet, but the Whigs

bluntly refused. His ships were in bad need of resupply, and he eventually determined to

try and take some of the twenty or so merchant ships anchored against Hutchinson Island

in the Savannah River just north of the town.[12] The ships were laden with a variety of

goods and a plentiful supply of rice. The island lay just across from Savannah to the

south and below seemingly impenetrable swamps to the north in South Carolina.

McIntosh was certain the British goal was to take the town and reestablish

Wright's authority, and to that end he spread the town's already meager defenses to

protect various roads and landing sites along the river. Barclay, however, wanted the rice

boats, and he moved the warship *Cherokee* and several other vessels up the river a few

miles below Savannah. Here, about 150 militia under Colonel Archibald Bulloch were

protecting a landing site and, despite orders to the contrary, fired on the ships, missed,

and received no reply.[13]

On the evening of March 2nd, Barclay finally moved to take the rice boats. Under

the cover of darkness, the British schooner *Hinchinbrooke* and the sloop *St. Johns* moved

---

11 Jackson, Harvey H., "The Battle of the Rice Boats: Georgia Joins the Revolution," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 68 (Summer 1974), p. 235.
12 Ibid.
13 Ibid., p. 237.

upriver, but rather than assaulting the town, they slipped into a shallow passage behind

Hutchinson Island. McIntosh presumed they would maneuver around the island and fall

on the city from behind. He ordered a battery set up a quarter mile north of Savannah at

the tiny village of Yammacraw.

The British, of course, were interested in the rice, not the town, and

approximately 300 men were landed on the back of the island.[14] They quickly moved

across the swampy island and boarded the ships. The rice boats had been ordered

stricken of their rudders and rigging to prevent just such an occurrence, however, the

orders had not been carried out. On the next morning, March 3rd, when a small band of

Whig troops arrived on the island to hobble the ships, they were immediately surprised

and captured.

That same morning, the *Hinchinbrooke* and *St. John* moved around the island and

attempted to reconnoiter the captured rice boats. McIntosh believed the British were at

last moving against the town and ordered the ships fired upon. Struggling against the

river current and the sporadic fire from the Whigs, the British boats finally moved

alongside the captured ships that afternoon and prepared to make their escape. McIntosh

finally received intelligence that the rice vessels had been taken, and he sent two unarmed

officers to Hutchinson Island to treat with the British.[15] They too were promptly taken

prisoner.

---

14 Ibid., p. 238.
15 Stevens, William B., *A History of Georgia: From its Discovery By Europeans to the Adoption of the Present Constitution*, Savannah: The Beehive Press, 1972 reprint of 1847 edition, p. 135.

Receiving the news of this uncivil act, McIntosh ordered the British ships fired upon again, and the ships and batteries exchanged fire for several hours but to little consequence. The town became outraged at the news of events, particularly at the imprisonment of McIntosh's unarmed officers, and many urged the militia to try the British position. However, McIntosh could not muster the many boats he would need to cross to the island, and as a second attempt at negotiation for the prisoners failed, he determined to try to burn the British boats and their prizes.

About 4 PM, the Whigs sent a fireship upriver and toward the British position, but it was too large and grounded in the river.[16] A second, smaller sloop, made the passage and ignited two of the rice boats.[17] However, the British were able to slip down river and took ten of the rice boats along with them. Some British soldiers were left on the island, and they fled northward to the other side of the island and out of the Whig's range. The British made their way around to back of the island, picked up the remaining troops, and sailed away with its bounty of ten rice boats.

In all the fighting, the Americans had suffered but three casualties and the British reported only six. The British had their rice, approximately 1600 barrels of it, and the town of Savannah still stood.[18] The Whigs quickly arrested several members of Wright's governing council and used them to exchange for the Whig prisoners held by the British. Within days, the British fleet sailed away. The 'Battle of the Rice Boats' was over.

---

16 Jackson, *Battle of the Rice Boats*, p. 239.
17 Coleman, *The American Revolution in Georgia,* p. 70.
18 Coleman, *History of Georgia*, p. 73.

Historical Significance:

The 'Battle of the Rice Boats' is significant primarily for one reason: it was the first armed conflict between the fledgling colony of Georgia and the mighty British Empire. The boldness of the Whig government sealed the colony's fate for sure— Georgia was at war. Furthermore, the Georgians could exact some small degree of victory from the event. The British Navy had attacked the Savannah area, and the small colonial militia had protected the town and at length driven them off. Savannah stood relatively unmolested. One could imagine, however, that had the town truly been the objective, the British might have had little difficulty in subduing it. One might consider this fact in light of the British attempt then and later to treat the supposedly more loyal southern colonies with a lighter hand and convince them to fall back into the fold—a calculation that would later prove fatal.

Site condition:

Hutchinson Island is currently undergoing extensive redevelopment. After spending time as rice plantations following the Revolution and in the nineteenth century, then as an industrial complex in the twentieth century, and most recently as a sports car racing track, Hutchinson Island is being redeveloped as a convention complex and residential neighborhoods. A modern multi-story hotel and convention assembly hall have been recently constructed on the island immediately across the river from the historic district. A golf course has also been developed on the island along with residential lots that are currently for sale. As more accommodating bridges are

completed to Hutchinson Island, it is probable that extensive residential growth will occur. Although several industrial complexes remain on the island, most are now idle or vacant.

No plans have been undertaken to interpret or commemorate the site or events related to the 'Battle of the Rice Boats' on Hutchinson Island or in the Savannah Historic District. No state historical markers exist that acknowledge the events related to the battle.

National Register Status:

Delineating a potential National Register boundary on Hutchinson Island specifically for the 'Battle of the Rice Boats' proves problematical. Current documentation suggests only vague descriptions for the geographic location of events. For instance, the rice boats themselves were anchored off Hutchinson Island 'north' of town, and British warships moored 'behind' the island and landed troops. These troops moved 'across' the island to capture the rice boats. No physical evidence remains to suggest precise locations, and little reason exists to suppose that additional information may become available to ever precisely locate this action's events. However, Hutchinson Island has been an important part of Savannah's history throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. A potential National Register nomination and boundary could be based on other areas of significance on the island and supported by the island's military history during the Revolution as well as its commercial and agricultural history. Hutchinson Island has always played a significant role in Savannah's commercial and

maritime history with rice cultivation, shipping, and industry. Based on these significant associations, one can assume that further research into these areas may bolster an argument for inclusion of a significant portion of the island within a potential National Register boundary. A potential National Register boundary on the eastern half of the island would include the banks on both sides of the island. The area between was historically used for rice cultivation and likely included the majority of the area on which military action during the 'Battle of the Rice Boats' took place.

National Register Recommendation:

As mentioned above, basing a National Register boundary solely on the Battle of the Rice Boats may be practically impossible. Batteries located on the western shore within the historic town of Savannah would be included within the Savannah National Historic Landmark District, and the sites of batteries located north of town have been obliterated by industrial development. On Hutchinson Island, most military events probably occurred east of the Talmadge Memorial Bridge (US Highway 17 Alternate). This bridge is located approximately 4000 feet west of the traditional center of Savannah. Although boats were typically anchored above Savannah for protective purposes during this period, it is difficult to imagine that many boats were moored almost one mile west of the small colonial city. The rice boats were also apparently the majority of vessels in the Savannah harbor at the time, so it is reasonable to assume that most of the boats were anchored just west of the town and therefore below the modern Talmadge Bridge. By delineating a potential National Register boundary to include all portions of Hutchinson

Island east of the Talmadge Bridge, the boundary would therefore likely include all

portions of Hutchinson Island on which events related to the Battle of the Rice Boats took

place. This boundary's justification could also be bolstered by recognizing Hutchinson

Island's historic commercial maritime and agricultural significance. (The western third

of this island is composed primarily of waste lagoons.)

Preliminary site recommendation:

Further research and/or archaeological investigation may be required to better

define the exact locations of actions, events, and the locations of batteries and boats

involved in the Battle of the Rice Boats. Importantly, it should be considered that such

research may prove extremely difficult and may yield little or no information regarding

the exact locations of fighting, troop movements, troop placements, or the location of the

moored rice boats. However, without question, the general location of these events are

Hutchinson Island itself, the Savannah River, and the historic district of the City of

Savannah. All action was probably concentrated in close proximity to the location of the

town.

The researcher proposes a series of signs, plaques, or state historical markers to

interpret and acknowledge the battle. Such interpretive instruments would be installed

along the riverfront on both the Savannah side of the river and on Hutchinson Island.

Currently, no markers indicate the important events that occurred at the site in the early

stages of the Revolution. Three to four historical markers or interpretive signs would

likely prove sufficient to relate events pertaining to the Battle of the Rice Boats.

Commemorative monuments can serve as an important tool to signify the importance and the grave seriousness of armed conflict. However, the cost of constructing such monuments can be prohibitive. The researcher believes that the design of such monuments should be considered carefully, and that careful attention should be given to both a monument's aesthetic and educational value. No permanent commemorative monuments should be constructed unless sufficient funds can be produced to design and execute a monument of exceptional design and material quality. As little bloodshed and no fatalities resulted from the Battle of the Rice Boats, the researcher considers that any funds to construct a commemorative monument for this action might be better spent at other important Revolutionary War sites in Savannah (see Chapter Five, Capture of Savannah, and Chapter Ten, The Siege and Battle of Savannah).

No acquisition of land is feasible or warranted regarding this action. The 'battlefield' is widespread and ill-defined. Even if the locations of principal units involved in the action could be determined, the same educational benefit could be derived simply by marking the sites as by acquiring them. The nature of this action does not lend itself to battlefield acquisition.

Figure 3.1: View from Downtown Savannah to Hutchinson Island

Figure 3.2: View from Hutchinson Island to Downtown Savannah

Figure 3.3: Battle of the Rice Boats Location Map
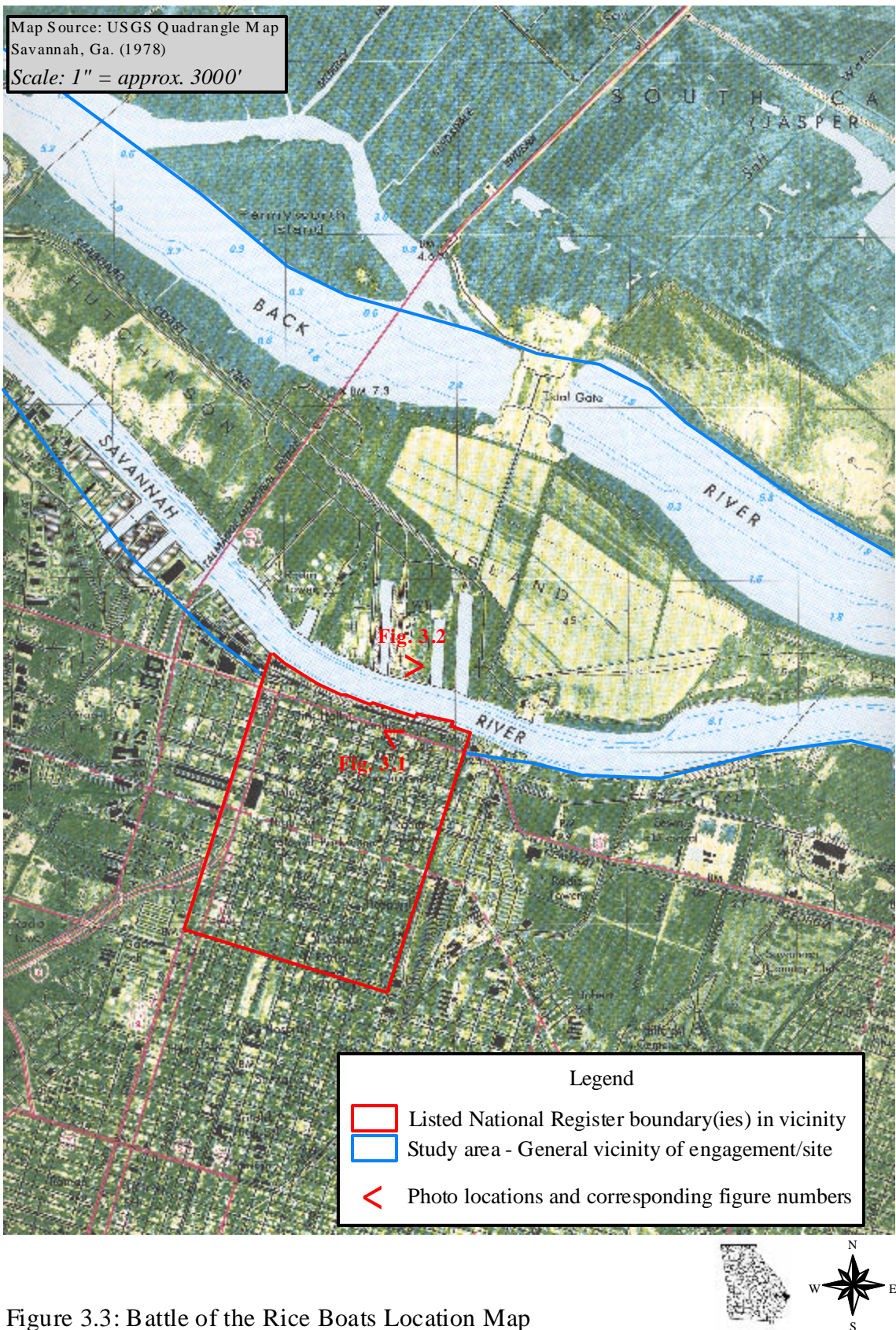
CHAPTER 4

CASE STUDY: CAPTURE OF *REBECCA* AND *HINCHINBROOKE*

Description:

The site of the dead colonial town of Frederica is located on the Frederica River on the western edge of Saint Simons Island. Here, a small group of American galleys captured the two British warships *Rebecca* and *Hinchinbrooke*. The town site is currently a National Monument and administered by the National Park Service.

Historical Narrative:

Available information regarding the American capture of the British ships *Hinchinbrooke* and *Rebecca* appears to be scanty. Narrative histories that address the little known event draw information exclusively from a letter from Georgia's Colonel Samuel Elbert to Continental General Robert Howe relating what happened at Frederica on April 19th, 1778. Virginia Wood, an employee and researcher at the Library of Congress, is currently preparing a manuscript addressing the historical significance of Georgia's Revolutionary War-era navy. Ms. Wood was able to provide additional information regarding this event.

Frederica, a declining village on the western side of Saint Simons Island, had once been a prominent and prosperous colonial town. The British prize brigantines *Hatter* and *Rebecca* (the latter former property of the state of South Carolina) and the brig *Hinchinbrooke* were at that place in search of the galleys that comprised Georgia's navy.[19] Built by shipwrights sent from Philadelphia to Savannah, these boats were charged with protecting the inner passage from Florida to Georgia. The flat-bottomed, oared vessels sat low in the water and carried heavy ordnance. Highly maneuverable, the boats were well suited to the close fighting in the rivers and channels that made up the inner passage. The larger British vessels were poorly suited for operations in the same environment, and thus the British made designs to capture galleys from the Americans for their own use. For this reason, the aforementioned British boats were waiting at Frederica for an opportunity to capture some of Georgia's galleys.

Colonel Samuel Elbert had marched 350 men from Darien to Fort Howe on the Altamaha River, and there he learned of the British boats at Frederica.[20] Just as the British were intent upon capturing the American boats, Elbert devised a plan to deprive the British of their conveyances. He boarded his men on the galleys *Washington* under Captain John Hardy, *Lee* under Captain John Braddock, and *Bulloch* under Captain Archibald Hutcher.[21] A flatboat was loaded with artillery and commanded by Captain George Young. The small army departed Darien on April 17th and landed near Frederica, at Pikes Bluff north of the village, on the evening of the 18th. Officers and a

19 Wood, Virginia, Phone Interview by researcher. Washington, D.C.: 26 February 2002.
20 Ibid.
21 Stevens, *A History of Georgia*, p. 161.

small contingent of soldiers were left aboard the boats to protect them, and Elbert sent a

Lieutenant Colonel Ray and a Major Roberts with 100 men into Frederica, where they

promptly captured three marines and two sailors of the *Hinchinbrooke*.[22]

The American galleys attacked the British ships the next morning, the 19th, and

took them by surprise. The British vessels were able to position themselves for their

defense, but the powerful ordnance of the American galleys "damped the courage" of the

British sailors.[23] The American shot severely damaged the rigging of the *Hinchinbrooke*

and the *Rebecca*. With large guns on the sturdy galleys, the Americans were able to keep

their distance and still hit their targets, whereas the British ordnance could not reach the

American boats. The British tried to escape downstream on the Frederica River, but they

soon ran aground and abandoned both the *Hinchinbrooke* and the *Rebecca*. The *Hatter*

successfully evaded the Americans, rescued British crewmen, and sailed to Jekyll Island.

Elbert planned to continue the attack and seize that vessel, but it promptly departed and

ended the engagement.

The Americans had successfully defeated the British navy in a direct engagement,

captured two ships, and had accomplished the feat without a casualty of any kind.

Historical Significance:

Revolutionary War naval operations along the Georgia coast is an area of study

almost entirely neglected by historians. As additional research, such as that currently

---

22 Ibid., p. 162.
23 Ibid.

being undertaken by Ms. Virginia Wood, further illuminates this part of Revolutionary

War and Georgia history, the significance of all such operations will likewise be brought

to light.

The action considered here was a significant victory by an American naval force

over a small but powerful British naval force. The event highlights the unorthodox

tactical fighting that took place along the southeastern tidewater. Due to the nature of

this fighting, a small state navy, such as Georgia's, could not only compete with the

powerful British imperial navy, but, in cases such as this, defeat it.

Site condition:

The site and extant ruins of the town of Frederica are currently well preserved and

have been designated a National Monument by the Department of the Interior. The site is

administered and maintained by the National Park Service. Extant ruins include the

tabby ruins of both the town's fort and infantry barracks. Some masonry foundations of

homes have been excavated and exposed to interpret the residential nature of the town.

Trees have been planted to outline former streets. A large number of interpretive signs

located throughout the site acknowledge the town's importance as a self-sustaining

colonial village and military outpost. However, no interpretation has been attempted

regarding the area's Revolutionary War history and, most particularly, the capture of

British ships in April of 1778. The historic site includes a visitor's center and museum

devoted to Frederica's colonial history.

Although residential development pressure continues to pose a threat to historic sites throughout Saint Simons Island, to this point, Frederica has been spared any substantial development in its vicinity.

National Register Status and Recommendation:

The site of the town of Frederica is listed on the National Register and is designated a National Monument. No justifiable extension of its boundary over the waters of Frederica River at the town site would provide additional land use protections. Therefore, it is considered that the property associated with the American capture of the British boats *Hinchinbrooke* and *Rebecca* is currently adequately protected by the boundary of Fort Frederica National Monument.

Preliminary site recommendation:

Although Frederica is a well preserved site and its colonial history documented and interpreted, the site's Revolutionary War history could very easily be integrated into the interpretation program. A pair of interpretive signs could be located at the town's wharf site. One could provide information noting the importance of the town's wharf and maritime history. The second could give an account of the town's status during the Revolutionary War and the capture of the British ships *Rebecca* and *Hinchinbrooke.* Further, a state historical marker could be located at the entrance to the site (either at the visitor's center or on Frederica Road at the entrance to the National Monument) indicating and giving a brief account of the naval actions. Finally, the capture of the

British ships could also be integrated into the visitor's center and museum's interpretive program.

As the site of Frederica is owned and administered by the Department of the Interior, no additional land acquisition at the site is recommended at this time. Research into this military action is preliminary, and the exact locations of principal military units is undetermined and may remain so, barring extensive and successful historical and archaeological investigation. As the action was of a nautical nature, land acquisition would likely prove unnecessary.

Figure 4.1: View of ruins of colonial Fort Frederica, Frederica River behind

Figure 4.2: View of ruins of colonial Frederica barracks

Figure 4.3: Capture of REBECCA and HINCHINBROOKE
Photo Map

Legend

Listed National Register boundary(ies) in vicinity

Study area - General vicinity of engagement/site

< Photo locations and corresponding figure numbers
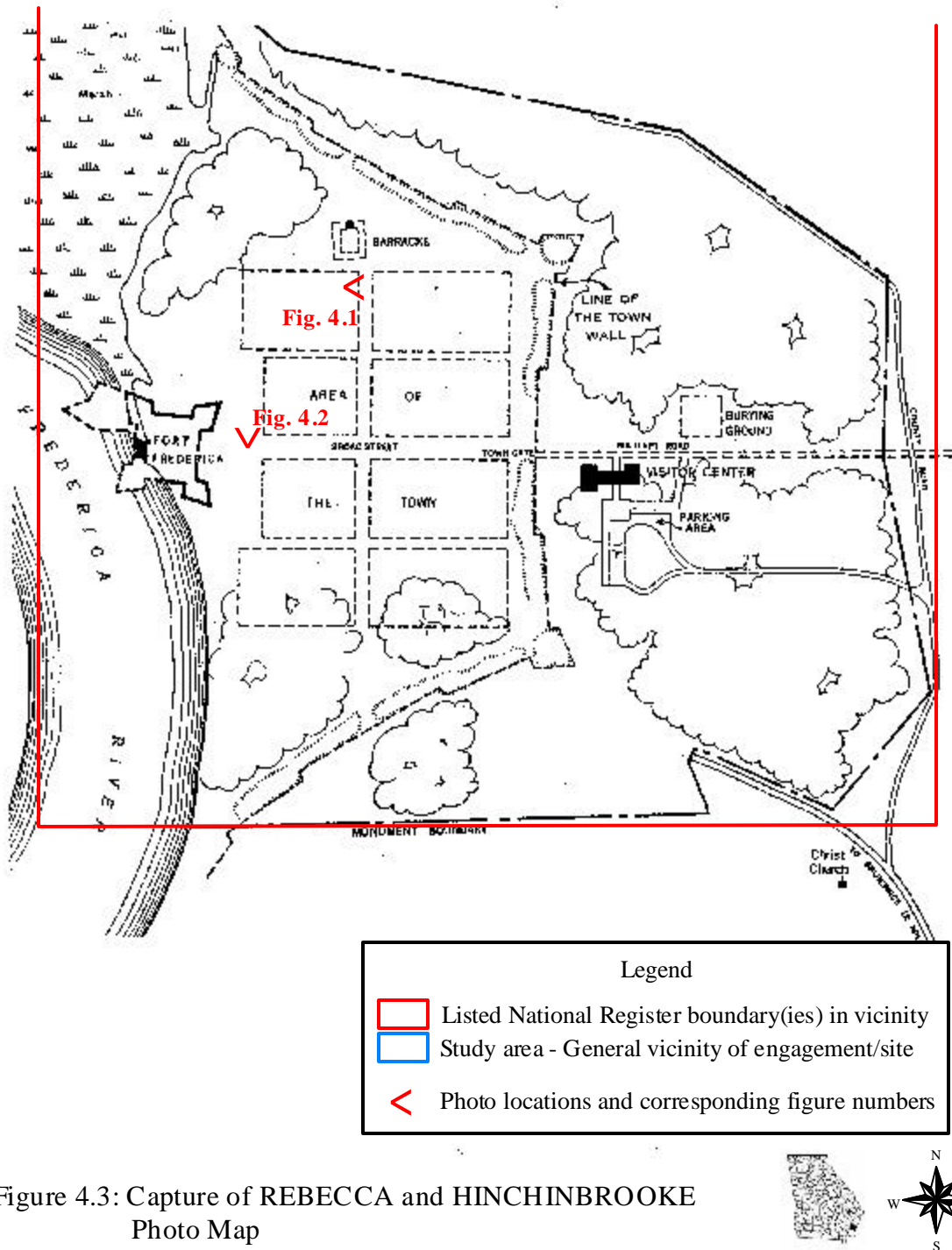
Figure 4.4: Capture of REBECCA and HINCHINBROOKE
Location Map
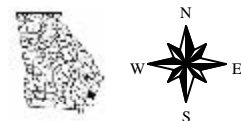
CHAPTER 5

CASE STUDY: CAPTURE OF SAVANNAH (BREWTON HILL)

Description:

The Brewton Hill plantation site is located east of downtown Savannah and on the

Savannah River in a heavily industrialized section of the town. The particular site is a

concrete form plant. At or in the area surrounding the Brewton Hill plantation, on the

Tybee Island Road, the American army defending Savannah from the British invasion

force of late 1778 fortified a position in preparation of a defense of the town. However,

the British, with the help of a local slave, easily maneuvered around the American

position and surprised the patriot army from the rear. The American force was crushed,

and Savannah was immediately occupied. The British then had a foothold in the South.

Historical Narrative:

In late 1778, the British high command made a significant change in their overall

strategy for reasserting the Crown's authority. Rather than continuing to toil in the

northeast, where their operations had resulted in little more than disappointment, the

English looked southward with hopeful eyes. Reports suggested the southern colonies

were full of Loyalists waiting for a significant British presence to assert themselves. The British military supposed they could land a significant force in the Carolinas or Georgia, swell their ranks with Loyalist militia, and march northward, subduing colonies along the way.

The strategy was adopted, and in late November of 1778, a sizable British force sailed from New York bound for the Georgia coast. The convoy, under command of Commodore Hyde Parker, moved Lieutenant Colonel Archibald Campbell's command— approximately 3,500 men, made up of the 71st Regiment of Foot, the Hessian mercenary units of Woellworth and Wissenbach, four Tory battalions made up primarily of New York Loyalists, and a detachment of artillery.[24] Campbell was to rendezvous before Savannah with General Augustine Prevost, who was marching a force northward from British Florida, but Campbell reached Tybee Island on December 23rd and Prevost had not yet arrived. Campbell, however, did not delay and determined to go ahead and try Savannah's defenses.

Meanwhile, General Robert Howe, the Continental commander of the army in the south, quickly removed from Sunbury and marched a force of about 850 men northward to defend the colony's poorly fortified capital.[25] The smaller force was composed primarily of militia, about 700 men from Georgia and South Carolina, and about 150 South Carolina Continentals.[26]

---

24 Ward and Allen, *The War of the Revolution*, p. 680.
25 Searcy, Marth Condray, *The Georgia-Florida Contest in the American Revolution, 1776-1778*, Tuscaloosa, The University of Alabama Press, 1985, p. 164.
26 Ibid.

Campbell landed at Girardeau's Plantation east of Savannah on December 27th. The troops disembarked transport ships and were supported by the man-of-war *Vigilant*, the galley *Comet*, the armed brig *Keppel*, and the sloop-of-war *Greenwich*. A pair of American galleys briefly opposed the landing but came under fire from *Vigilant* and were quickly dispersed. As the British moved up the landing at Girardeau's and moved toward the plantation house, they were met with brief but sharp fire from a group of South Carolina Continentals under Captain John Carraway Smith. Howe had ordered the small group to give a defense of the landing, and the British moved on their position under a Captain Cameron. After a brisk exchange, Smith fell back, but the fighting left Cameron and two of his privates dead and five others wounded.

Smith fell back to the American position. Howe, having considered Savannah's inadequate fortifications, had decided to take a position along the river road about a half mile east of Savannah. This put the American lines in the vicinity of Royal Governor Sir James Wright's Fair Lawn Plantation and Brewton Hill Plantation. The Americans formed along the road, the right flank composed of two regiments of South Carolina Continentals, the 1st Rifles under Isaac Huger and the 3rd Ranger under Lieutenant Colonel William Thompson, and supported by 100 Georgia militia and an artillery piece under George Walton.[27] This line ran from the road down to wooded swampland alongside. The left flank was composed of Georgia militia along with a fieldpiece under Colonel Samuel Elbert, and it was similarly situated from the road to the wood. Two

---

27 Ward and Allen, *The War of the Revolution*, p. 680.

other artillery pieces were situated in the middle of the road, and a trench was dug along the entirety of the American line.[28]

Howe felt comfortable that the approach to Savannah was now well defended, but he had not counted on the British receiving intelligence that would undermine his position. Campbell had learned of a passage through the swamps and around the American position from one Quamino 'Quash' Dolly, an elderly slave at Fair Lawn. With some prompting and a small bribe, 'Quash' described a gully that he would lead British troops through and then around to attack the American right flank from behind.[29]

On the 29th, Campbell advanced up the road and within sight of the American line. There he fortified his position and placed cannon in the road. Fully expecting a frontal assault, Howe waited for the attack. Campbell did not fail him and attacked Howe's left but in a feint maneuver to conceal the real thrust of his assault. Sir James Baird's Light Infantry and Turnbull's New York Loyalists pushed through the swamps behind 'Quash Dolly' in order to turn the American's right flank.

Howe ordered the artillery to open on Campbell's installation along the road but to no reply. Then, with little warning, Baird's men and the New Yorkers appeared and fell on the rear of the American's right flank. The Georgia militia were surprised and quickly routed and dispersed. At the same time, Campbell moved his artillery forward on the road and opened fire on the American left and then followed with a frontal assault by the main body of the British force.

---

28 Ibid.
29 Russell, Preston, and Barbara Hines, *Savannah: A History of Her People Since 1733*, Savannah: Frederic C. Beil, 1992.

Soon, the Americans were in complete confusion, the enemy coming from every direction and at once. They began to fall back and then fled in a panic. Soldiers retreating from the right flank were mostly able to make good their escape, but those on the left were forced to cross a deep tidal creek, and many were drowned or stopped and taken prisoner at its banks.

With nothing to stop them, the British moved forward, taking prisoners and quickly occupying Savannah. Parker, commander of the British fleet that had landed Campbell's force, moved upriver as well, and took the boats docked at the town's wharves. The British soldiers worked their way through the town, arresting suspected rebels and occupying and pillaging their homes.

The defense of Savannah had been a disaster. British losses were light, and over half the American force had been killed, captured, or were missing. Howe and the remnants of his force fled into South Carolina, leaving Georgia solely in the hands of the British.

Significance:

The engagement at Brewton Hill and the subsequent capture of Savannah are significant for several reasons. Following the 'Battle of the Rice Boats,' the British essentially left Georgia alone for several years and concentrated their efforts in the northeast. However, all was not quiet as Georgia kept herself busy militarily. During that time, the new state of Georgia became obsessed with the idea of capturing Saint

Augustine and British East Florida, and the government launched three disastrous

campaigns in an attempt to accomplish that end.

In 1778, however, the British strategy shifted southward, and Archibald Campbell

landed a sizable British army in Georgia late that year. The new strategy required a

British foothold in the south, and the weak colony of Georgia and her small capital of

Savannah seemed a favorable candidate. The British hoped to raise an army of Loyalists

to reinforce their numbers and then sweep through the south and then northwards to

retake the lost colonies. The British, however, overestimated the southern colonies'

loyalism. Thus, the Battle of Brewton Hill is significant as the first sizable action in

Georgia since the rice boats episode, as the first serious attempt by the British to take

Georgia, and as the first British move that opened the southern campaign. Furthermore,

the fall of Savannah represented the beginning of the British occupation of the town

which would last throughout the rest of the war. Finally, considering it as the first real

thrust of the new British strategy that led to the southern campaign, one must note that

the flawed thinking that led to the southern campaign in the first place, and finally to

British defeat, was first manifested in Georgia.

Site condition:

The approximate site of the Brewton Hill plantation site and the immediate

surroundings of this location are comprised of flat, deforested, open fields and heavy

industrial manufacturing complexes. The industrial complexes include both

manufacturing and warehouse buildings, as well as expansive gravel lots for outdoor

storage and assembly. The industrial complexes typically front the Savannah River and have small wharves. No trace remains of the many plantations that existed in the area or of the old Tybee Road. Continued industrial development is likely to occur in this area.

National Register Status and Recommendation:

Delineating a potential National Register boundary for this property is somewhat problematic and possibly irrelevant. The site has been completely obliterated by a corporation producing concrete trusses for highway bridges. The surrounding property has also been obliterated by heavy industrial redevelopment. However, the property in question can fairly conclusively be identified as the old Brewton Hill plantation site. However, locating specifically where certain actions took place will be difficult at best. The historic Tybee Island Road and the entrances to the plantations that once cluttered that road are now lost. The potential NR boundary would include that portion of land containing the Standard Concrete Plant, bounded by the Savannah River to the north, Wahlstrum Road on the east, and Forbes Road on the south and west. The boundary would encompass what can be reasonably deduced as the old Brewton Hill plantation. The fighting that resulted in the 1778 British capture of Savannah took place primarily in and around this site.

Preliminary Site Recommendation:

The most viable approach to acknowledging the action at Brewton Hill is the placement of a historical marker both along a major arterial highway near the site as well

as a marker in close proximity to the site. The setting of the site has been entirely

compromised by a major change in local land use. Acquisition of land would likely

prove quite costly and reclaiming the land from industrial development perhaps even

more so. Even if such an undertaking were attempted, the benefit of acquisition may

prove marginal. The setting would remain, in large part, entirely compromised, and a

rebuilt landscape would remain featureless. Former wetlands, which played a significant

role in the battle, have long since been filled and cannot be recreated, and, likewise,

substantial forestland no longer remains intact. Recreating the battlefield, a site which

would still have to be subject to more thorough research and archaeological investigation,

would most likely prove practically and economically unfeasible. However,

opportunities exist to interpret the action within local museums. The Savannah Museum

is the most obvious and appropriate place, and this museum does interpret the

Revolutionary-era Siege of Savannah and attack on the Spring Hill redoubt. The site's

relative proximity to Fort Pulaski National Monument and Tybee Island also makes the

museum at the fort and the Tybee Island Museum potential venues for interpreting the

battle at Brewton Hill.

Figure 5.1: View of Savannah River at Brewton Hill Plantation site

Figure 5.2: View of general condition of Brewton Hill Plantation site

Map Source: USGS Quadrangle Map
Savannah, Ga. (1978)
Scale: 1" = approx. 1000'

Legend

Listed National Register boundary(ies) in vicinity
Study area - General vicinity of engagement/site

< Photo locations and corresponding figure numbers
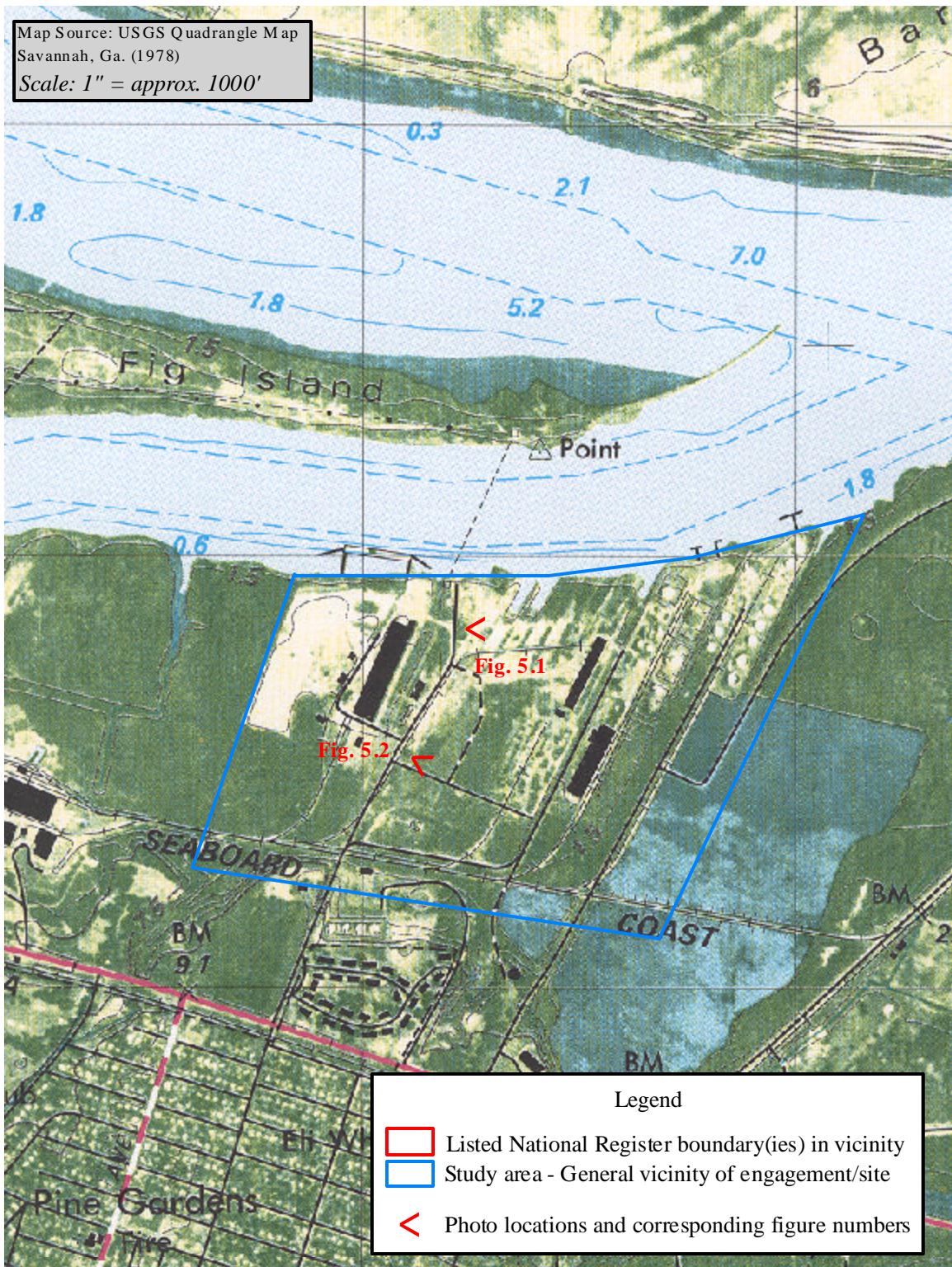
Figure 5.3: Capture of Savannah (Brewton Hill) Location Map
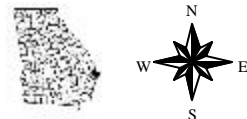
CHAPTER 6

CASE STUDY: SUNBURY AND FORT MORRIS

Description:

The colonial port and village of Sunbury once rivaled Savannah. Now one of the

many 'dead' towns of Georgia, Sunbury remains a place name, but the colonial village is

long gone. Fort Morris defended the town during both the Revolutionary War and War

of 1812. The fort saw action during the Revolution, and the town and Fort Morris was

captured in early January, 1779. The town site is currently being redeveloped with

modest residential growth. Fort Morris is owned and administered by the State of

Georgia and open to the public as a state historic site.

Historical Narrative:

The village of Sunbury, Georgia was founded in 1758 by a migratory group of

Puritans whose origins in America date to seventeenth century New England. Late in

that century, some of this group moved from Dorchester, Massachusetts first to

Connecticut, and then to South Carolina where they established a second village of

Dorchester. Again, members of the Dorchester settlement were eager to pursue new opportunities, and, in 1752, a group moved into the Midway district of Georgia.

As rice plantations in the swampy Midway area began to prosper, and as its inhabitants began to feel the unhappy effects of their unhealthy situation, a general need for a port and village in a healthier location was realized. Thus, in 1758, 300 acres along the Medway River belonging to Mark Carr were conveyed to various persons for the purpose of establishing a town.[30] The town was established and became successful quickly. By 1763, the village boasted some 80 homes and 3 stores, and Governor Wright favorably described the town's situation on 'an exceeding good harbour and inlet from the sea.'[31] By 1770, the town was considered a rival of Savannah. In a 1773 report, Wright listed only Savannah and Sunbury as the state's ports.[32] This same report noted that 56 vessels had cleared customs in Sunbury during the preceding year. By 1775, 317 of the town's original 496 lots had been sold.[33] In short, Sunbury was a success.

As with any frontier village, successful or not, defense was a concern. Scant records exist identifying Sunbury's earliest fortifications, but it appears at least some works were in place during the colonial period. A fort may have been installed in the Sunbury area as early as 1756, but no record available indicates its location.[34]

---

30 Jones, Jr., Charles C., *Dead Towns of Georgia*, Savannah: Oglethorpe Press, 1997 reprint of 1878 edition, p. 145.

31 McIlvaine, Paul, *The Dead Town of Sunbury, Georgia*, Hendersonville, N.C.: Paul McIlvaine, 1971, p. 13-14.

32 Jones, *Dead Towns*, p. 157.

33 McIlvaine, *Dead Town of Sunbury*, p. 15.

34 Sheftall, John McKay, *Sunbury on the Medway*, Norcoss, Ga.: Daughters of the American Colonists, Georgia State Society, 1995 reprint of 1977 edition, p. 93.

Saint Johns Parish, soon to be Liberty County, was the hotbed of Revolutionary sympathy in Georgia. Two of Georgia's signers of the Declaration of Independence, Lyman Hall and Button Gwinnett, were residents of the immediate area (Hall was a resident of Sunbury, and Gwinnett owned Saint Catherines Island but kept property in the town). In 1776, when it became clear the colonies (including a somewhat reluctant Georgia) were headed for war, the bustling village of Sunbury began its own preparations. Able-bodied men were called to train, and a fort was planned on a bluff 500 yards south of town.[35] The bluff sloped south to marshes separating it from Colonels Island and east to the marshes and the Medway River. The fort was designed to protect the town from attack by sea and by land, but also from upriver, should enemy boats pass the town and attack by river from the north. An attack on this position by land from the east or south would be practically impossible due to the extensive marshland troops would have to pass through.

The original earthwork fort must have been an impressive structure. The parade was approximately a full acre. Due to its location, the fort was by necessity irregularly shaped. The breastwork facing the river was 275 feet in length, the north 191 feet, the west 240 feet, and the south 140 feet.[36] The fort boasted 25 pieces of ordnance, mostly small cannon, including 4, 6, 9, 12, 18, and 24 pounders.[37] It is believed some of the cannon may have come from the then defunct fort at Frederica on Saint Simons Island.[38] The guns were mounted 'en barbette,' or on platforms and positioned so they would fire

---

35 McIlvaine, *Dead Town of Sunbury*, p. 30.
36 Ibid., p. 31.
37 Ibid., p. 32.
38 Ibid.

over the walls. The exact dates of the fort's construction are not known, but its existence was noted in a letter of Colonel Samuel Elbert in December of 1777.[39]

As war approached, the Continental Congress began raising troops. An artillery company was raised and stationed at the Sunbury fort under a Captain Morris, who would become the fort's namesake. Two of Georgia's disastrous raids on British Florida involved Sunbury and the fort at some point. The first of these expeditions was mounted in the early fall of 1776, and all troops involved were to rendezvous at Sunbury. Unfortunately, many of the arriving soldiers became sick, many died, and the campaign was doomed before it even began.

Undaunted by the initial fiasco, a second attempt on Florida was made in early 1777. Georgia Continentals and militia under General Lachlan McIntosh rendezvoused in April at Sunbury to prepare for the invasion. Rivalry between officers led to a multitude of problems for the expedition, which again failed, and during the retreat from the Florida border back to Savannah, Colonel John McIntosh with a force of 127 men was left at Sunbury to garrison Fort Morris.[40] A third and final attempt to invade Florida (before Georgia itself was invaded) was made in May of 1778, but it too would fail miserably.

In late 1778, British strategy shifted southward, and an invasion of Georgia was planned. A fleet of ships left New York bound for Savannah carrying a British army under Colonel Archibald Campbell. As a diversion, British General Augustine Prevost

---

39 Sheftall, *Sunbury on the Medway*, p. 29.
40 Jones, *Dead Towns*, p. 184.

sent his younger brother Lieutenant Colonel James Mark Prevost and Lieutenant

Colonel L. V. Fuser each with 400 men northward out of Florida to attack southern

Georgia and ultimately Sunbury.[41] In November, Prevost began attacking plantations and

taking able-bodied men prisoner. Fuser, meanwhile, moved along the Florida and

Georgia coast by boat. Prevost's advance was disputed at Bulltown Swamp, the

Riceboro bridge, and at Midway, but he was not stopped. On November 24th, after the

fighting at and around Midway, Prevost sent troopers into Sunbury to determine if

Fuser's force had arrived. When he received the news that Fuser had not landed his men,

Prevost decided not to try the fort at Sunbury. He was unsure of the strength of the fort's

garrison and did not want to risk an attack with only half the men originally intended.

Prevost retired to Florida, but left a wake of destruction in his path.

Fuser arrived on Colonels Island, just south of Sunbury, on November 28, 1778.

He marched across the island to Sunbury and surrounded the fort, and the boats circled

around and took positions in the Medway River across from the town. Sporadic small

arms fire ensued as Fuser immediately demanded the surrender of Fort Morris. The

commander at the fort, Colonel John McIntosh, defiantly and famously refused, daring

the British to 'COME AND TAKE IT!'[42] Fuser, probably unimpressed, waited for news

of Prevost's force before attacking, but when he learned of Prevost's retreat, he too fell

back, also not wishing to try the fort with only half the strength originally planned.

---

41 Ibid., p. 185.
42 Sheftall, *Sunbury on the Medway*, p. 35.

Campbell reached and took Savannah in late December of 1778, and the state of Georgia's defenses practically collapsed. After Campbell reached Savannah, British General Augustine Prevost once again moved his forces northward out of East Florida to participate in the invasion against Georgia. His force sailed from Saint Augustine and consisted of some 2,000 men including British Regulars, Loyalists, and friendly Indians.[43] The first, and practically the only, impediment from the south was Fort Morris defending the village of Sunbury.

Meanwhile, as Howe retreated from Savannah, the American general sent a dispatch to Sunbury ordering Major Lane, commanding at Fort Morris, to abandon his post and rejoin Howe's retreating army on the Savannah River. Lane commanded a garrison of 195 men at Fort Morris—150 Continentals and 45 militia.[44] He initially followed orders and began recalling troops stationed south of Sunbury at Newport Ferry and Colonels Island. Then, according to Lane's own account, he realized he had no idea how to make his way to the Savannah, nor did any of his men. He convened a meeting of the townspeople remaining at Sunbury, and not only could they not provide him a guide, but they begged him not to quit his station.

Thus, amid protests from the townsfolk and his own unfamiliarity with a route northward, Lane decided to remain at the fort and make what defense was possible—a decision that would prove costly and later lead to the young officer's court martial and dismissal from service. He wrote to Howe of his decision but got no reply, and now the

---

43 McIlvaine, *Dead Town of Sunbury*, p. 45.
44 Jones, *Dead Towns*, p. 196.

young major, feeling isolated and exposed, considered a retreat from the fort by sea.[45]

Lane remained in contact with the captains of the ships *Bulloch*, *Washington*, and

Rebecca, but his designs for an escape by boat came too late.

On January 6th, 1779, Prevost's force began arriving at Sunbury. On the evening

of the 6th, a party of cavalry and rangers, having marched overland under Lieutenant

Colonel James Marc Prevost (General Prevost's younger brother), surrounded the town.

The British quickly took up and fortified a position along a ditch a few hundred yards

behind and west of the fort. These troops kept a steady small arms fire on the fort and

prevented any chance of Lane's garrison making a retreat. The Americans returned fire

with musket and cannon from the fort and with additional cannonading from the naval

vessels in the sound, but the American ordnance could not dislodge the British force.

The following day, General Prevost landed at Colonels Island, just south of

Sunbury, with additional light infantry and artillery troops. He then marched these troops

behind the fort, reconnoitered the troops under his brother, and secured the town.

Reinforced, the British continued a steady musket fire on the fort, to which the

Americans replied but could make no impression. The fort was besieged.

The remainder of Prevost's force, including the artillery's ordnance, arrived on

the 8th. Precisely how the ordnance reached their proper emplacements remains a matter

for speculation. One account suggests that when the tide went out later that evening, the

British used the low water of the Medway River to pass behind a marsh island that

screened their vessels from the American defenses. Despite heavy fire from the fort,

---

45 Sheftall, *Sunbury on the Medway*, p. 41-42.

from the American galleys *Bulloch* and *Washington*, and from the armed sloop

Rebecca, British boats managed to pass in front of the American defenses and land a

nine-inch British howitzer and two royals north of the town.[46] Other accounts, including

Prevost's own letters, seem to indicate the artillery was simply drug up from the Newport

River and across Colonels Island with some difficulty.[47] Regardless, the artillery arrived

and was then positioned at batteries previously prepared by the forward British force.

The British positioned the howitzer south of the fort at an 'old battery,' and the two

royals were placed west of the fort.[48] The forts weakest sides were thus exposed to the

British's angular fortifications. Of note, however, the British did not use the town to

screen their emplacements. By fortifying the western and southern approaches to the

fort, the town itself was essentially out of the line of fire. Also on the 8th, in his memoirs,

British officer Patrick Murray recalled that the Americans made a small sally from the

fort, but were quickly driven back.[49]

On the 9th, with his heavy ordnance in place, Prevost demanded the unconditional

surrender of Fort Morris. Lane refused, and the British artillery opened on the fort the

next morning. The rebels returned fire, but the British armament quickly proved itself

superior. Shells crashed into the fort, and one smashed into a barracks building, leaving

it in flames. The British were advancing under the heavy fire of their cannonade, and

soon they were in possession of the gate. Lane, realizing the hopelessness of a continued

resistance, pleaded for better terms. Prevost, fully aware that he had separated the

---

46 Jones, *Dead Towns*, p. 195.
47 Sheftall, *Sunbury on the Medway*, p. 44.
48 Ibid.
49 Ibid., p. 155.

Americans from their only chance of escape—the American boats in the river— refused, and the fighting continued. Finally, that evening, and after a second attempt at better terms having failed, Lane surrendered the fort. The British made prisoners of Lane, seventeen officers, and 195 non-commissioned officers and privates of both the Continental line and the militia, and also captured 24 pieces of artillery, a cache of ammunition, as well as what provisions the Americans had stored.[50] In the fighting, the Americans had lost one captain and three men killed, and seven men wounded, and the British had lost one man dead and three wounded.[51]

An unfortunate fate also met each of the three American naval vessels guarding Sunbury. During the fighting at Sunbury, the *Bulloch*, *Washington*, and *Rebecca* had alternately supported the fort and then taken refuge upriver in the Medway. Lane's stalling tactics with Prevost had at least given these boats a chance at escape. The American boats passed Sunbury safely and headed for Ossabaw Island, but, during this passage, the American captains undoubtedly took note of the British seizing and manning a number of the private vessels remaining at the town. Fearing the British had designs to capture their vessels, the Americans determined to prevent their ships becoming British possessions. Thus, both the *Bulloch* and *Washington* were beached on Ossabaw and burned by their crews. The crewmembers of all three boats then attempted to escape to Charleston on the *Rebecca*. However, this ship was promptly captured by another British naval vessel, and all the American seamen were made prisoner and returned to Savannah.

---

50 Jones, *Dead Towns*, p. 196.
51 Ibid.

Having seized the fort, General Prevost renamed it Fort George and began making repairs and improvements to the fortification. He placed a Lieutenant Colonel Allen and a small force of men to control the town, and Roderick MacIntosh as captain of the newly named fort. Having successfully secured Sunbury, Prevost then turned his attentions northward and marched his army toward British-held Savannah.

After the British capture of Sunbury, the town began to receive paroled Whig officers captured during the fall of Savannah. The most notable of these parolees was Colonel George Walton, a signer of the Declaration of Independence. However, previous residents of Whig sympathy who had not left already departed in droves following the British capture. The town would never again recover its pre-war population. The town remained under British control until the end of the war, when it was abandoned in the spring of 1782.

Some previous inhabitants did return to the town following the Revolution, although, of course, no Loyalists did, and, in fact, few Whigs did. But, town life did return to a more normal state of affairs during peacetime. The first Supreme Court of Liberty County held since the beginning of the war was conducted at Sunbury on November 18, 1783, Chief Justice George Walton presiding. Sunbury would remain the seat of government in Liberty County until 1797 when the courts were moved to Riceboro—yet another blow to the already struggling town.

When tensions between the young United States and the British empire were aggravated in the early nineteenth century, Sunbury again prepared for war. Whatever remained of the Revolutionary Fort Morris were again made ready for hostilities. Slaves

from nearby plantations were used to clean out the ruins, strengthen the walls and parapet, and dig out the moat. What ordnance remained was cleaned and returned to a serviceable condition, and additional artillery was requested. The 'rebuilt' fort was dubbed Fort Defense. The town organized a company of forty men under John Cuthbert to protect the town, and another company of the local academy's students and the town's teenagers under a Captain Floyd.[52] Three other companies were raised in Liberty County, including the Liberty County Independent Troop. However, no fighting would ever reach the county. Although, on occasion, the smoke of a doomed merchantman, crippled by British warships, might be seen on the horizon, what little fighting that took place in Georgia occurred to the town's south. This time, Sunbury had been spared the ugliness of war.

Sunbury, however, straggling at best, continued its descent into historical obscurity. The last vessel of any consequence to come to port at Sunbury was a Swedish boat, calling to carry away a load of cotton in 1814.[53] The Liberty County Independent Troops's annual Fourth of July celebrations, held at Sunbury since the company's organization, were discontinued in 1833. The post office was removed in 1841.[54] The famous Sunbury Academy closed. By the Civil War, only the Baptist Church remained, along with a dozen or so frame houses and the earthen walls of the old fort. When Sherman's Union Army entered the area, they burned the church to signal to offshore Union ships that the village was secure. With the abolition of slavery, the economy of

---

52 Jones, *Dead Towns*, p. 219.
53 Ibid., p. 220.
54 McIlvaine, *Dead Town of Sunbury*, p. 54.

Liberty County collapsed, and what plantation owners had remained in the vicinity

soon left to look for opportunities elsewhere. Sunbury was dead.

The Georgia historian C. C. Jones visited the site of both the town and the fort in

1877 and described the remains of the old work:

> Seven embrasures may still be seen, each about five feet wide. The parapet, ten feet wide, rises six feet above the parade of the fort, and its superior slope is about twenty-five feet above the level of the river at high tide. Surrounding the work is a moat, at present ten feet deep, and ten feet wide at the bottom, and twice that width at the top. Near the middle of the curtain may be seen traces of a sally-port or gateway fifteen feet wide. Such is the appearance of this abandoned work as ascertained by a recent survey. Completely overgrown by cedars, myrtles and vines, its presence would not be suspected, even at a short remove, by those unacquainted with the locality. Two iron cannons are now lying half buried in the loose soil of the parade, and a third will be found in the old field about midway between the fort and the town.'[55]

Jones went on to describe the desolate condition of what had once been one of Georgia's

most prominent and culturally sophisticated towns. Now, not only was the site a ghost

town, but no remnant existed to indicate that the town had ever existed at all, save the fort

and the equally overgrown cemetery. The neglected condition Jones wrote of remained

just so until the mid 1970's, when the State of Georgia acquired the site of the fort and

began to clear brush and expose its old earthen works.

Significance:

Fort Morris is one of the most significant fort sites in Georgia. Initially

constructed during the Revolution to protect the important colonial port of Sunbury, the

fort remained viable during both the War of 1812 and the Civil War. The site saw

---

55 Jones, *Dead Towns*, p. 182.

significant action during the Revolution. Determining or verifying the period of construction of the current remnants of the fort will help determine the site's significance. Regardless, the Sunbury area and Fort Morris together are one of Georgia's most significant colonial and Revolutionary War sites.

When the British strategy shifted to the southern theater in late 1778, the British commanders determined a two-pronged attack appropriate for subduing Georgia. Campbell would sail from New York and attack from the north, and Prevost would march overland from British Florida and support from the south. Although the attack was not successfully coordinated, the invasion itself was a success. Although later than intended, Prevost's capture of Sunbury was an integral part of the British strategy for the conquest of Georgia.

Site Condition:

Sunbury began to decline following the Revolution and was essentially a dead town by the time of the Civil War. The site saw little activity until the 1970's when the State of Georgia acquired the Fort Morris site and residences began appearing on the old town site. Modest residential growth has continued to occur in the area. The only traces of the original town of Sunbury are the old cemetery and the remnants of Fort Morris. A lone historical marker indicates the site of the old town.

Fort Morris State Historic Site includes a visitor's center containing a museum that interprets the history of Sunbury and the fort. The interpretive program includes information regarding the status of both the village and fort during the Revolutionary

War and the War of 1812. The earthen walls of the fort are preserved, but no interpretive signs are located around the site. A state historical marker is located on the lawn between the visitor's center and the ruins of the fort. The site has a quiet, pleasant park-like atmosphere. A picnic area is located along the entry road, and wooden swings are located along the marsh overlooking the Medway River. The site also includes a colonial garden interpretation area and a nature trail along the marsh and woodlands surrounding the site.

Following a trend and demographic projections affecting all of tidewater Georgia, the area consisting of the Sunbury town site and surrounding the Fort Morris State Historic Site is likely to be subject to considerable residential growth. Such development pressure may prove harmful to historic sites in the Sunbury area. State ownership at Fort Morris does not extend far enough on the north or south to provide an adequate buffer from potential development. Modern residential growth already abuts the old Sunbury cemetery. The cemetery was enclosed by a fence in the early twentieth century, but the fence clearly does not contain the full extent of the burying ground. Dozens of depressions, likely sunken graves, can clearly be seen outside of the fenced portion of the cemetery. It is not unlikely that one of the nearby residential parcels may contain graves. Furthermore, modern residential development closer to the river and on the old town site is undoubtedly located atop extensive archaeological remains. Additional residential development at the town site and near the cemetery will likely continue to destroy archaeological evidence of the once-bustling port and town of Sunbury.

National Register Status and Recommendation:

The Fort Morris archaeological site is currently listed on the National Register. However, designating the site of the town of Sunbury, including the extant cemetery and Sunbury wharf, as well as Fort Morris, would provide the connection the fort site currently lacks with the remnants of the former important colonial town and the military operations considered here. Although it would undoubtedly be eligible for the National Register based solely upon the possibility of providing archaeological information, a potential National Register boundary for the Sunbury and Fort Morris sites together would be drawn to include what is known to be the historic location of the town. This boundary would include the site of the remnants of Fort Morris, as currently designated, and include those properties located to the immediate west of the fort, north of the fort to the Medway River and old cemetery, and just south of the fort to include British positions relating to the January, 1779 British siege. This boundary would be considered only to demonstrate the connection of the fort to the town of Sunbury, and to recognize the importance of the town site as well as the fort site.

Preliminary Site Recommendation:

A variety of priorities could be considered at the Sunbury and Fort Morris sites. The additional destruction of archaeological evidence at both the Sunbury town site and cemetery should be considered extremely undesirable. Ideally, an extensive archaeological investigation at both areas might indicate the most sensitive portions of these sites, and these most sensitive areas could then be protected by easements or

outright acquisition. However, in the event the sensitive areas could not be protected or acquired, the proposed intensive archaeological investigation would likely provide a wealth of information about the town and its residents. Such an effort would also prove vital in preventing any further disturbance of graves at the cemetery. The continued occupation of the site and use of the place name is desirable. The continued redevelopment of the Sunbury site and the protection of its remaining historical resources do not have to be mutually exclusive. Following archaeological investigation, residents and interested parties should develop a plan to best provide for both the protection of historic resources, and continued and responsible residential growth.

Additional archaeological investigation is already proposed at Fort Morris and may commence soon. This effort will likely shed light on the extent of the original Revolutionary-era fort and the origins of the existing ruins. If no effort is immediately extended to the wooded area north of the fort site (the area separating the fort site from the Sunbury town site), some archaeological investigation should be proposed for that area in the future. This area would not only prove an excellent buffer to protect the fort site from residential encroachment, but the ground separating the two interconnected sites might yield significant archaeological results. A successful archaeological effort here might help solidify an argument regarding the acquisition of this area for the Fort Morris State Historic Site.

Determining potential for additional interpretation or commemoration of the Sunbury or Fort Morris sites is somewhat difficult without substantial archaeological effort. Archaeological excavation may shed light on particular sites in the vicinity that

warrant interpretive signs, historical markers, or, perhaps, commemorative monuments.

Single state historical markers are currently located near the center of the Sunbury town

site, at the cemetery, and at Fort Morris. Additional historical markers could be

considered at both Sunbury and Fort Morris to help interpret military actions in the

vicinity, and additional markers could be located around Sunbury if archaeological

research identifies the locations of important sites within the town.

The Fort Morris site currently contains no interpretive signs, save a simple sign

indicating the presumed western wall of the Revolutionary-era fort. However,

considering the small size of the site and the close proximity of the visitor's center and

museum, one might consider this lack acceptable. Too many signs in such a small space

could clutter the visual field. In the likelihood further archaeological investigation

warrants the installation of some interpretive signage, such signage should be minimal

and installed low to the ground to minimize its appearance on the landscape.

Figure 6.1: View of Fort Morris State Historic Site Visitors Center

Figure 6.2: View of ruins of Fort Morris

EXISTING FERRY ROAD

FILLED MARSH

ORIGINAL TOWN OF SUNBURY

ORIGINAL SUNBURY TOWN LIMITS

LOT 93   LOT 92   LOT I

STATE PROPERTY LINE

LOW MARSHY AREA

Fig. 6.2 ∧

Fig. 6.1

EXISTING ROAD

SCALE :"= 200'
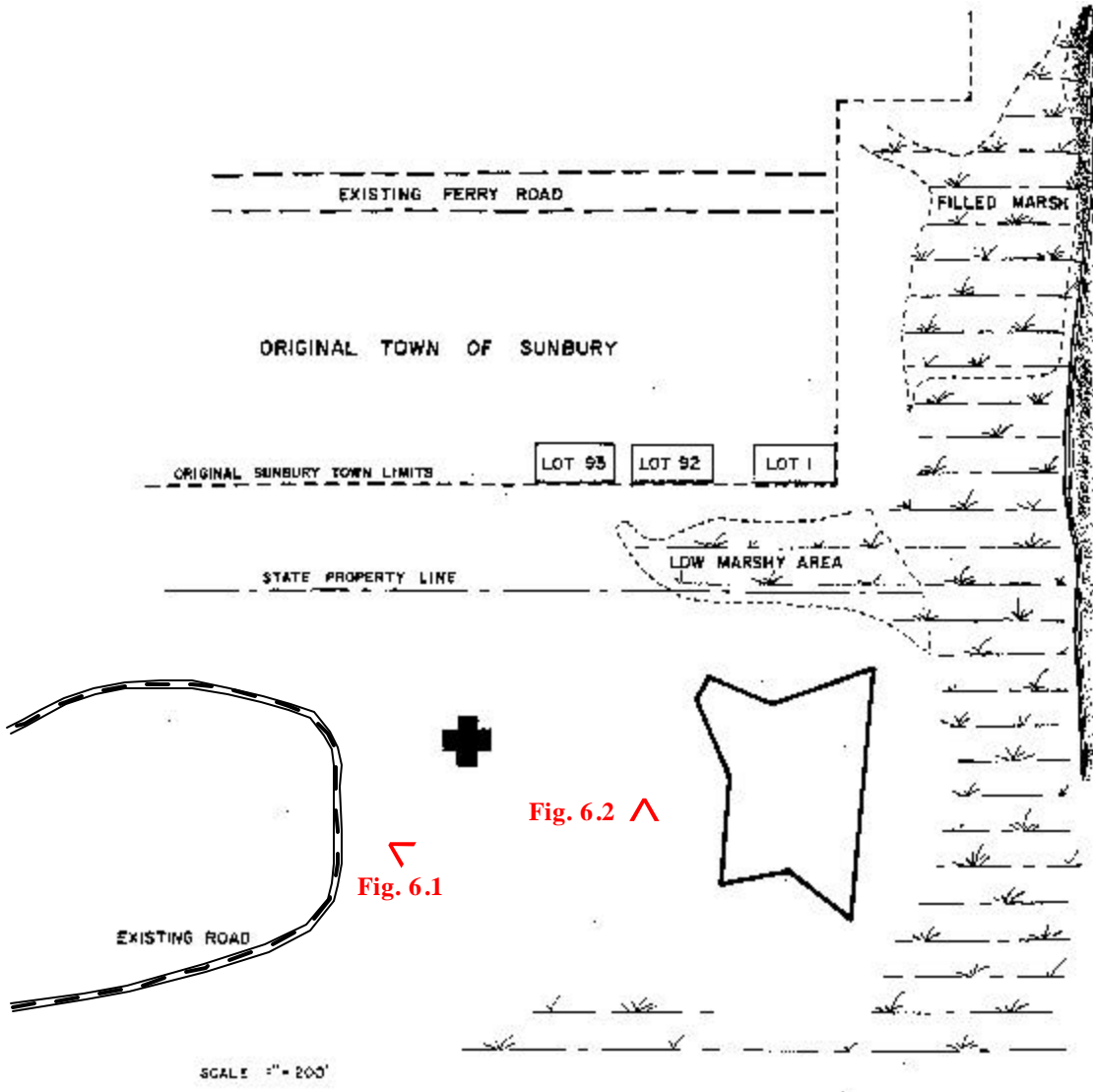
PLAT SHOWING THE LOCATION OF THE PRESENT
FORT IN RELATION TO THE TOWN OF SUNBURY

Legend

Listed National Register boundary(ies) in vicinity
Study area - General vicinity of engagement/site

< Photo locations and corresponding figure numbers

N
W   E
S
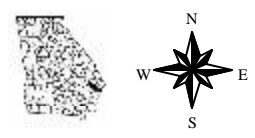
Figure 6.3: Sunbury and Fort Morris Photo Map
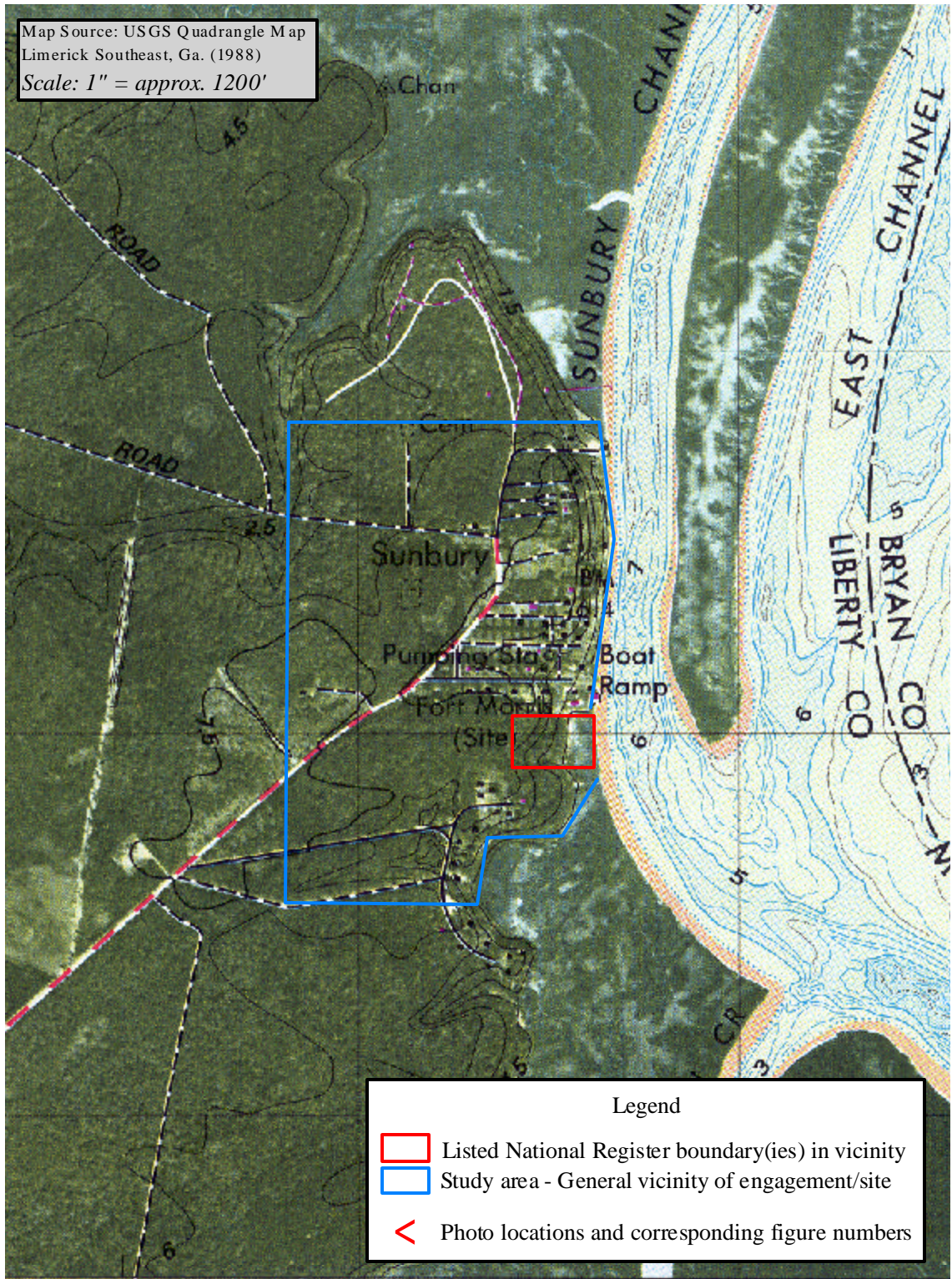
Figure 6.4: Fort Morris and Sunbury Location Map

CHAPTER 7

CASE STUDY: CAPTURE OF AUGUSTA (CAMPBELL'S AUGUSTA CAMPAIGN)

Description:

Following the British rout of the American forces defending Savannah and the subsequent capture of that town in late 1778, British commander Lieutenant Colonel Archibald Campbell was relieved by General Augustine Prevost advancing from Florida. Campbell promptly moved his forces northward in early January of 1779. The objective of his campaign was Georgia's principal upcountry post, the village of Augusta. With a minimum of effort, Campbell dislodged what little resistance was attempted and captured the town.

Historical Narrative:

Following the capture of Savannah in December, 1778, and the occupation of Ebenezer in January of 1779, the British continued to move north in an attempt to subdue the interior of Georgia. As Whig forces in Georgia were in a state of confusion following the rout at Savannah, what defenses remained made attempts to hinder the invaders and defend the important town of Augusta.

Lieutenant Colonel Archibald Campbell moved his small army out of Ebenezer the morning of January 24th. In column, the Florida Rangers under Colonel Thomas Brown and a group of Carolina Loyalists were posted at the advance, followed by Tawe's Light Dragoons and light infantry and then the 71st Regiment of Highlanders.[56] The eight wagons of provisions followed the 71st, the New York volunteers followed the wagons, and mounted Carolina militia under Lieutenant Colonel Joseph Robinson covered the rear.[57] The British army of approximately 1000 troops would march in twos and maintain the same organization during the campaign for Augusta.[58] After a march of nine miles, Campbell's force made Treutlen's plantation in the evening and camped.

On the 25th, Campbell made Hudson's Ferry, and sent some of the Carolina militia and Sir James Baird's Light Infantry ahead to secure the bridge at Brier Creek and take a position on the opposite bank. The detachment surprised a party of rebels defending the bridge (who had in desperation set the bridge ablaze) and took a few prisoners. The British extinguished the fire and took their position at the creek. The following day, the main body of the army reached Brier Creek, and Campbell was ordered by British commander General Augustine Prevost to send Brown and the Florida Rangers to Burke County Jail to disperse rebel forces rallying there under Continental Lieutenant Colonel James Ingram, adjutant to General Benjamin Lincoln. Campbell grudgingly followed the orders, and Brown's party was later defeated in the Battle of

---

56 Campbell, Colin, ed., *Journal of An Expedition against the Rebels of Georgia in North America Under the Orders of Archibald Campbell, Esquire, Lieut. Colol. Of His Majesty's 71st Regiment. 1778*, Darien: The Ashantilly Press, 1981, p. 48.

57 Ibid.

58 Coleman, *American Revolution in Georgia*, p. 122.

Burke County Jail by militia under Ingram and militia colonels John Twiggs and Benjamin Few, and Lieutenant Colonel William Few. The Burke County militia would later join Elbert's force, continuing to retire before Campbell's advancing British.

Later, on the evening of the 26th, Campbell reported that a group of about thirty rebel raiders from Carolina skirmished with some of his light infantry, and Campbell's men killed several of the party and took the rest prisoner.

After fortifying the position at Brier Creek, Campbell's army again moved north. On the 27th, after marching another twenty-three miles, they reached Greiner's plantation and camped. In the early hours of the next morning, Campbell learned of the Florida Rangers defeat at Burke County Jail, and Brown and his men rejoined the main British force soon after. Campbell judged the Whig troops between his force and Augusta had united and were some 900 men under General Samuel Elbert and colonels Le Roy Hammond, Ingram, and the Fews.[59] He understood the rebels had taken a position at Telfair's Saw Mills about twenty-four miles ahead.

Campbell reached Telfair's plantation and mill later that evening, but no enemy position was discovered. In the meantime, a returning scout sent beyond the mills to reconnoiter Elbert's position was chased back by rebel horsemen. In turn, Campbell ordered dragoons to pursue the rebels, and two prisoners were taken, through whom he confirmed the union of the remaining rebel forces under Elbert and their new position at

---

59 Campbell, *Journal*, p. 49.

Boggy Gut.[60] The British replenished themselves at Telfair's plantation before

marching for Boggy Gut the next day.

At Boggy Gut, the British were again disappointed, as what rebel force had

located there had since departed, leaving only "traces of their fires."[61] Campbell's scouts

informed him that Elbert had now taken a position on McBeans Creek and intended to

confront him there. Campbell concocted a clever plan, and gave orders to Colonel

Maitland, Baird's Light Infantry, and the Florida Rangers to return to Telfair's plantation

for provisions. Privately, he changed the orders and sent them with two cannon to the

west and to cross the creek above and then move behind Elbert's position on the creek.[62]

When in position early the next morning, the 30th, Maitland was to open with his cannon

to signal to Campbell his successful march, and then Campbell's men on the south side of

the creek would answer with their own attack. The morning of the attack, Campbell

formed his men in line, and following the discharge of Maitland's artillery, opened with

his own on the most "suspicious part of the swamp" surrounding the creek, but to no

success.[63] Campbell's force advanced across the creek, only to meet Maitland moving

toward them. Campbell soon learned from Maitland that two foraging Florida Rangers

had been discovered by the rebels, and Elbert, realizing the situation, quickly retreated.[64]

Campbell, disgusted by the continued lack of discipline shown by Brown's rangers, noted

---

60 Ibid., p. 50.
61 Ibid., p. 51.
62 Ibid.
63 Ibid., p. 52.
64 Ibid.

the haste of the rebel retreat and thus a wasted opportunity. He wrote the rebels had left their "pork and beef by unattended fires" and their water "barely heated."[65]

After exchanging letters with George Galphin (a noted Whig sympathizer and Indian trader in the area) warning against his continued insubordination to the Crown, Campbell took ninety of his slaves for security against Galphin's good behavior. The same morning, he left the Florida Rangers and light infantry at McBeans Creek to refresh themselves and moved ahead with the 71st and the New York Volunteers and cavalry to pursue Elbert's force. That evening, the detachment came upon the rebels at Spirit Creek, in southern Richmond County, and Campbell watched as some 200 men fortified Fort Henderson, a small stockaded fort guarding the north bank of the creek.[66] Campbell found high ground that commanded the fort, and, within ten minutes, his artillery blasted the Whigs from the fort. His force crossed the creek, occupied the fort, and the rebels fell back to Augusta. Alarmed by the sounds of battle, the remaining British force rushed to Spirit Creek, but, finding the situation in hand, the entire group made camp.

At daylight on the 31st, the small British army broke camp at Spirit Creek and advanced toward Augusta. Returning scouts alerted Campbell that a Colonel Lytle and 300 troops had joined Elbert, and the whole had laid an ambush at Cupboard Swamp.[67] As the British approached the swamp and flanked the supposed rebel position, a few American horsemen exchanged fire before retiring, and Campbell's men took a few prisoners. Campbell learned Elbert had fallen back toward Augusta, where he planned to

---

65 Ibid.
66 Ibid., p. 53.
67 Ibid., p. 54.

defend the town from a "masked" battery on the opposite side of the river that commanded the River Road.[68] With this intelligence, the British made a circuitous route to the west of Augusta and entered the town unopposed. Upon entrance to Augusta, the British took a handful of prisoners and learned that Elbert, along with General Andrew Williamson, had evacuated their 1,800 man army and retreated to the South Carolina side of the river, having taken the town's ferry boats with them and awaiting immediate reinforcements from North Carolina.[69]

Eagerly received by the town's Loyalist sympathizers, the British set about fortifying Augusta. Campbell described the town as a number of "straggling houses" on a long street paralleling the river.[70] He noted the location of the ferry, the width and depth of the river, the church, and the condition of the town's defenses, namely Fort Grierson, located just east of the main thoroughfare. At that time, the wooden, stockaded fort consisted of four bastions with eight small cannon.[71] Campbell's campaign, at that point, had been almost a complete success. His small army had moved quickly up the Savannah River valley, practically without hindrance, and secured the strategic frontier town. For the time being, all the important towns and posts in Georgia were under complete British control. (Campbell would not hold Augusta and abandon the town on February 14th.)

---

68 Ibid.
69 Ibid.
70 Ibid.
71 Ibid.

Significance:

Campbell's march to Augusta and the subjugation of that town marked the success of the British invasion of Georgia. All points of importance, namely Savannah, Sunbury, and now Augusta, were under British control. A blow to Whig pride, the American leadership in South Carolina immediately began plotting to retake the state. The subsequent victory at Kettle Creek would boost such hopes, but the soon to follow disaster at Brier Creek would crush them.

The new British strategy of reconquering the colonies by campaigning from the south had opened successfully. Although Campbell's occupation of Augusta was initially short-lived, the British would return to reoccupy the town. For the most part, Georgia would remain a British possession for the rest of the war.

Site condition:

Determining the site 'condition' of the course of a military campaign that stretched approximately 100 miles is, of course, somewhat problematic. The river road that Campbell's men traversed is fragmented, preserved here and there as asphalt-paved portions of the original route. However, in large part, at least through Effingham, Screven, and Burke counties, the setting of the route remains rural and agrarian in nature. In Richmond County, however, the setting changes rapidly to an industrial corridor and then suburban sprawl.

National Register Status and Recommendation:

Without documentary evidence, no potential National Register boundary is justifiable within the City of Augusta. Furthermore, the actual entrance of Campbell's army into Augusta was practically a non-event. The story of the capture of Augusta was Campbell's campaign up the Savannah River valley and the attempted resistance by the remaining Whig militia. However, within Augusta, four listed National Register resources are related to the location of Campbell's entrance into Augusta. Downtown Augusta comprises three National Register districts: Greene Street Historic District, Broad Street Historic District, and Pinched Gut Historic District. Pinched Gut District generally covers the colonial portion of Augusta, although no colonial buildings or structures survive. Broad Street and Greene Street districts also contain portions of colonial Augusta. Saint Paul's Epsicopal Church remains on its original site and dates to colonial times. The church was originally contained within, and then located adjacent to, the town's original colonial fort.

Preliminary Site Recommendation:

In the case of Campbell's Augusta campaign, acquisition of property is neither reasonable or necessary. The route and events relating to the campaign could be easily marked by a series of historical markers at and/or near important sites. Thus, site interpretation would be accomplished by interpretive signs located along Campbell's route in the fashion of a history 'trail.' Local museums located in counties along Campbell's route would be the best venues for interpreting the Augusta campaign in

detail. The Augusta Museum is the most appropriate place for inclusion of a program

interpreting the campaign in its entirety, as that town was the campaign's objective.

Figure 7.1: Starting point of Augusta Campaign, view of Ebenezer

Figure 7.2: Along the route, view at Boggy Gut Creek

Figure 7.3: Along the route, view of highway improvements at McBeans Creek

Figure 7.4: End of Augusta Campaign, view of portion of colonial Augusta site

Ebenezer
Landing

275

Jerusalem
Ch

Fig. 7.1

275

61

Legend

Listed National Register boundary(ies) in vicinity

Study area - General vicinity of engagement/site

< Photo locations and corresponding figure numbers
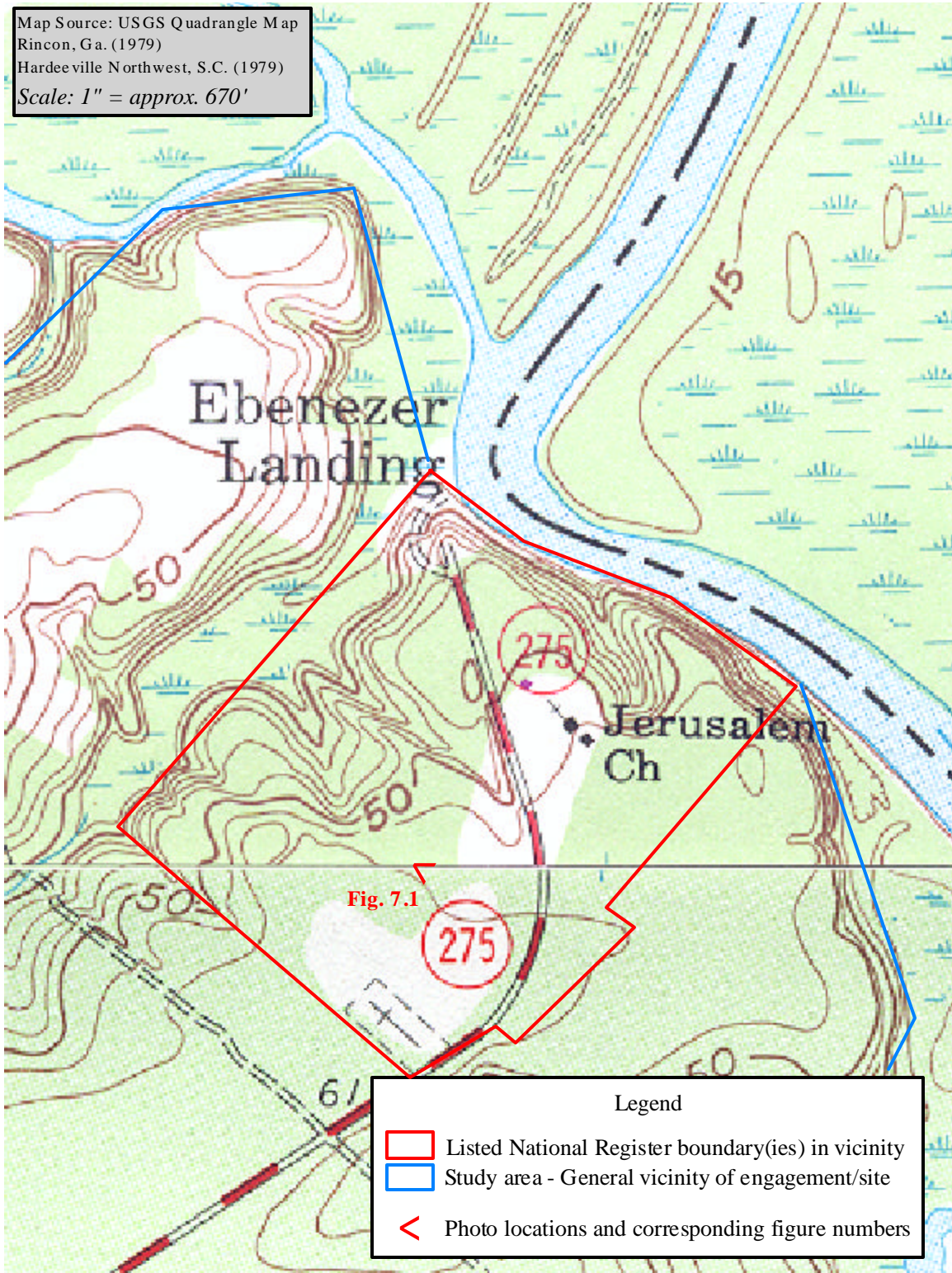
Figure 7.5: Capture of Augusta - New Ebenezer Location Map

Map Source: USGS Quadrangle Map
Brier Creek Landing, Ga. (1988)
Scale: 1" = approx. 500'

Roadside
Park

BM
68

Brannons
Bridge

Legend

Listed National Register boundary(ies) in vicinity

Study area - General vicinity of engagement/site

<   Photo locations and corresponding figure numbers
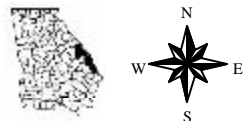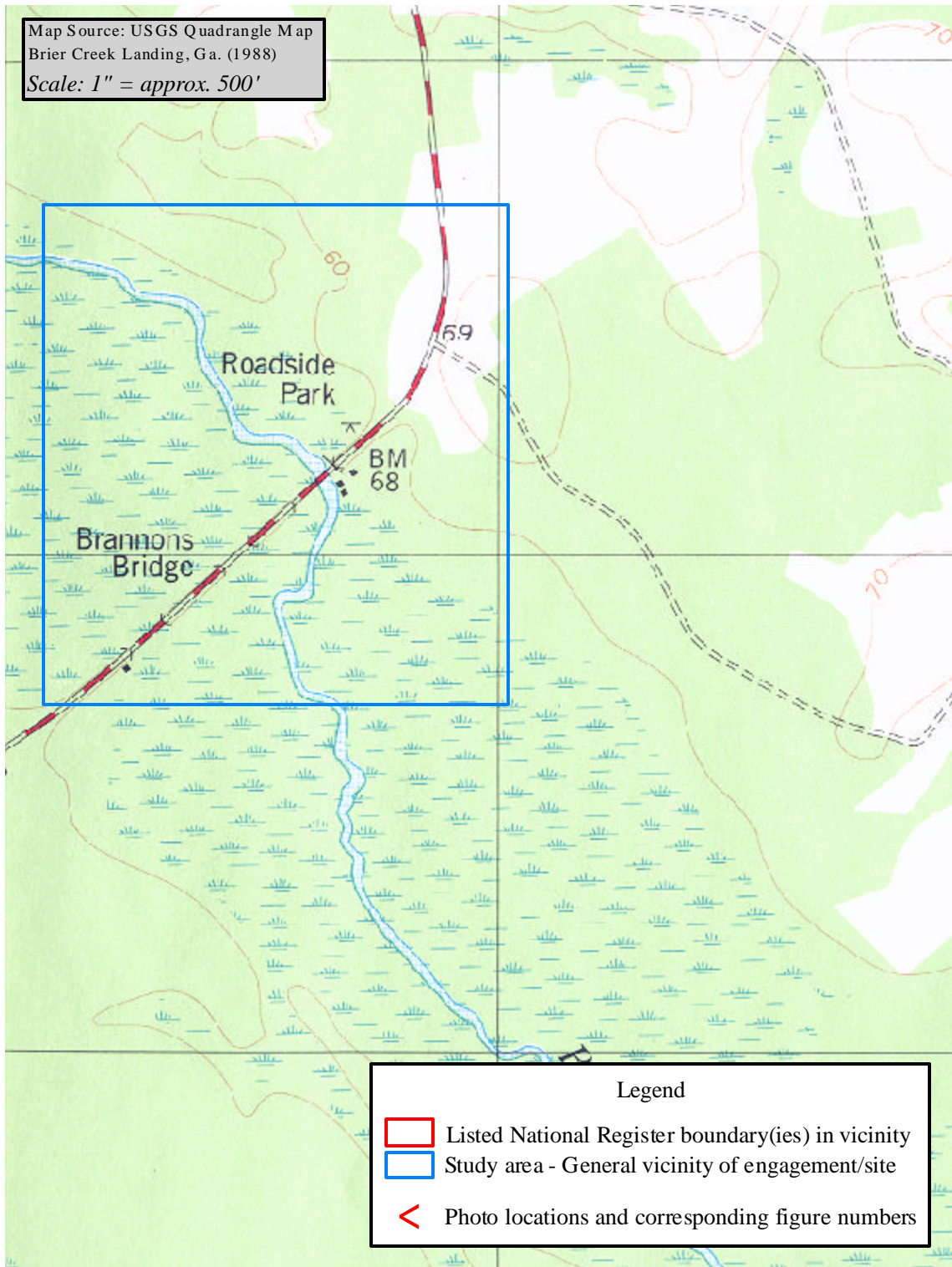
Figure 7.6: Capture of Augusta - Brier Creek Location Map

Fig. 7.2

Legend

Listed National Register boundary(ies) in vicinity

Study area - General vicinity of engagement/site

< Photo locations and corresponding figure numbers
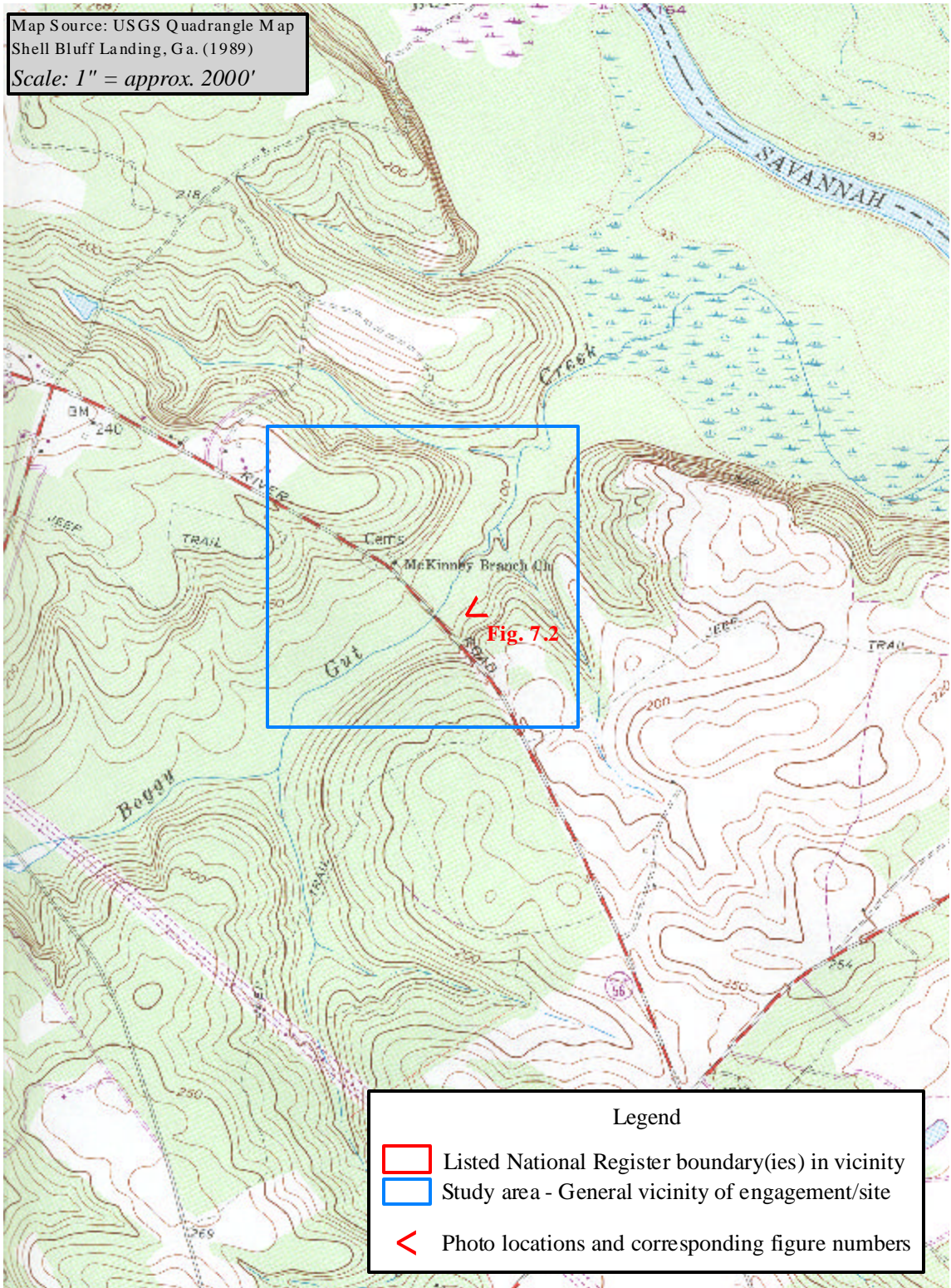
Figure 7.7: Capture of Augusta - Boggy Gut Creek Location Map
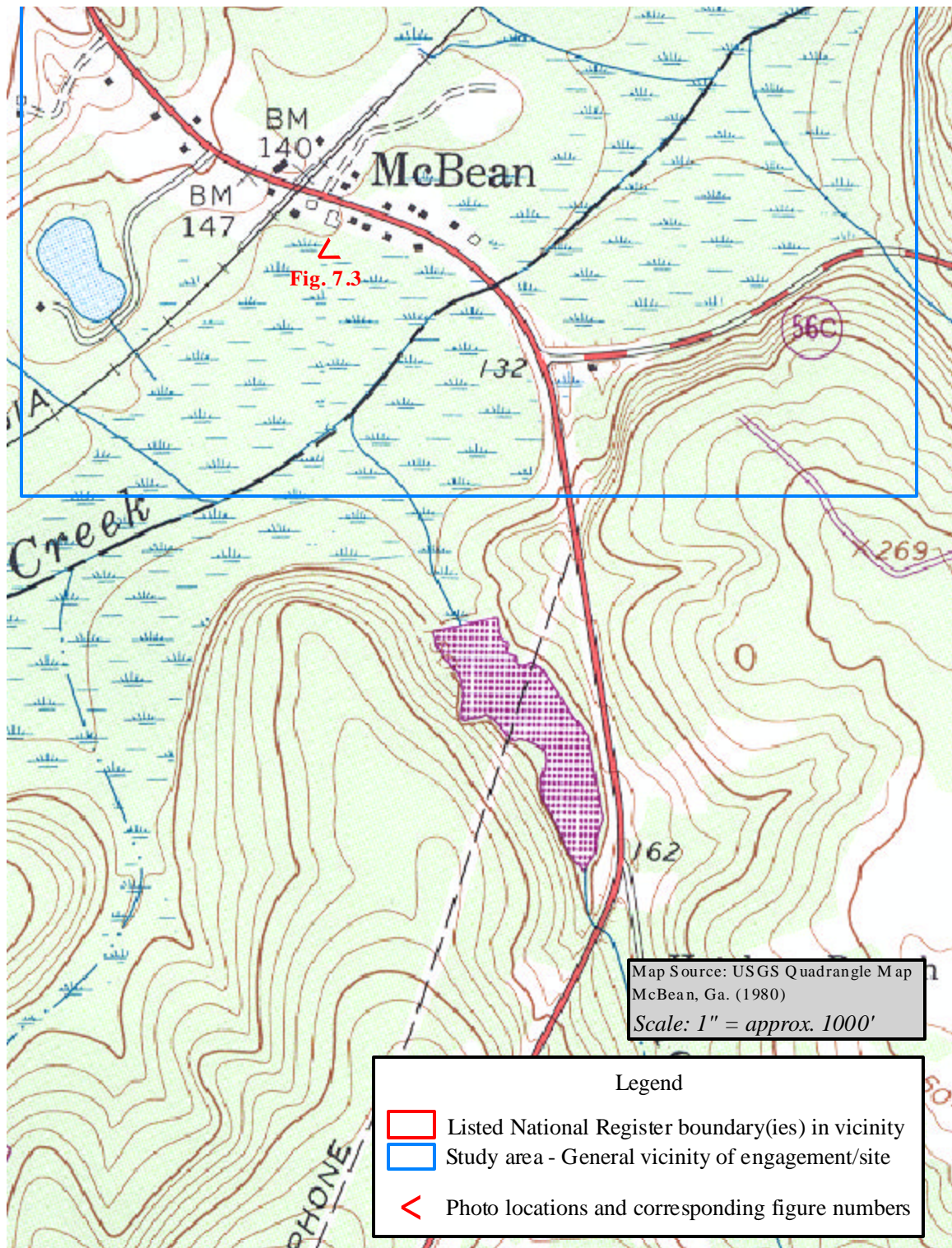
Figure 7.8: Capture of Augusta - McBeans Creek Location Map

Spirit Creek

Little Spirit Creek

Legend

Listed National Register boundary(ies) in vicinity

Study area - General vicinity of engagement/site

< Photo locations and corresponding figure numbers
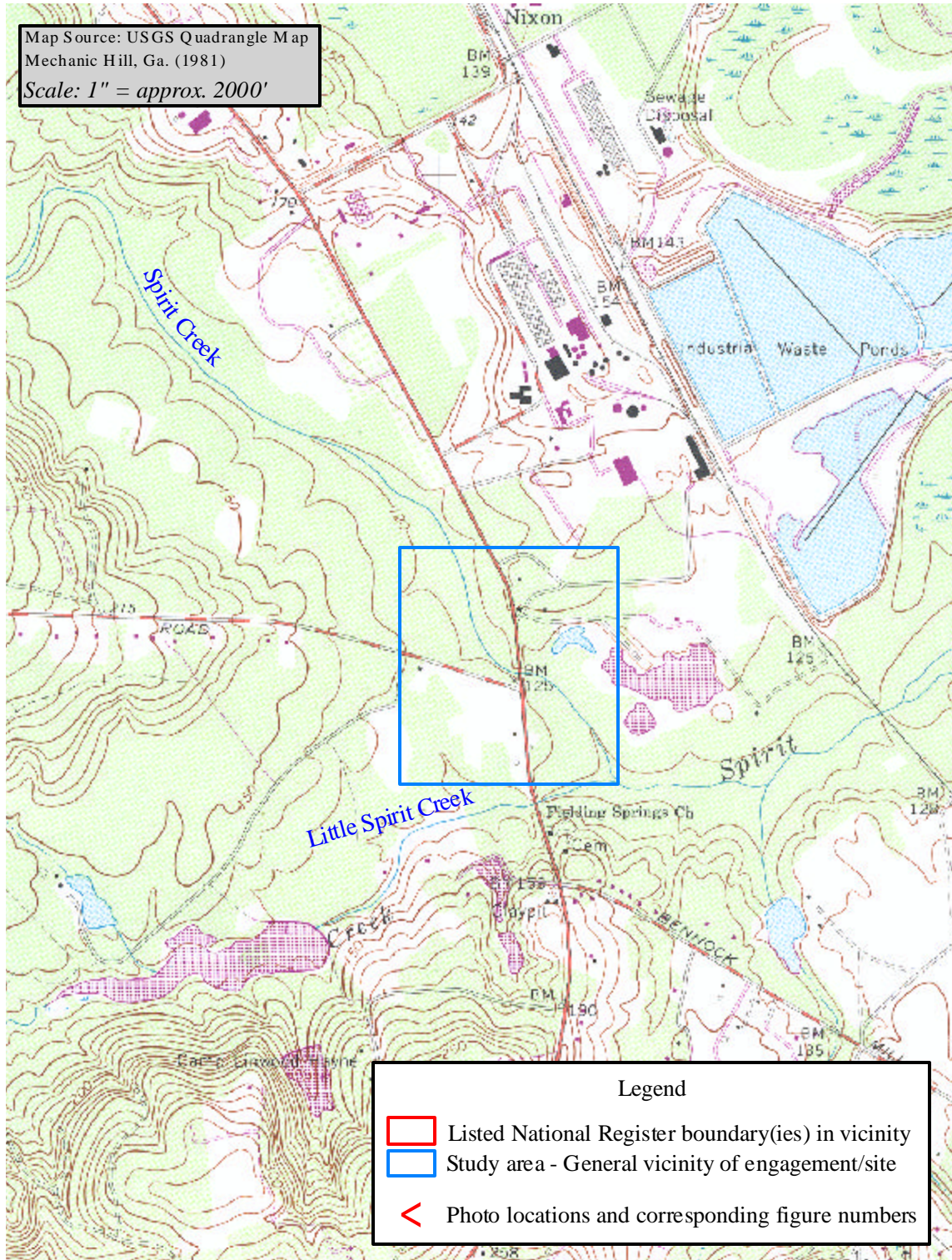
Figure 7.9: Capture of Augusta - Spirit Creek Location Map

Map Source: USGS Quadrangle Map
Augusta East, Ga. (1980)
Scale: 1" = approx. 750'

SAVANNAH

Hamburg

Broad Street Historic District

Greene Street Historic District

St Pauls Ch

Fig. 7.4

Pinched Gut Historic District

Legend

☐ Listed National Register boundary(ies) in vicinity
☐ Study area - General vicinity of engagement/site
< Photo locations and corresponding figure numbers
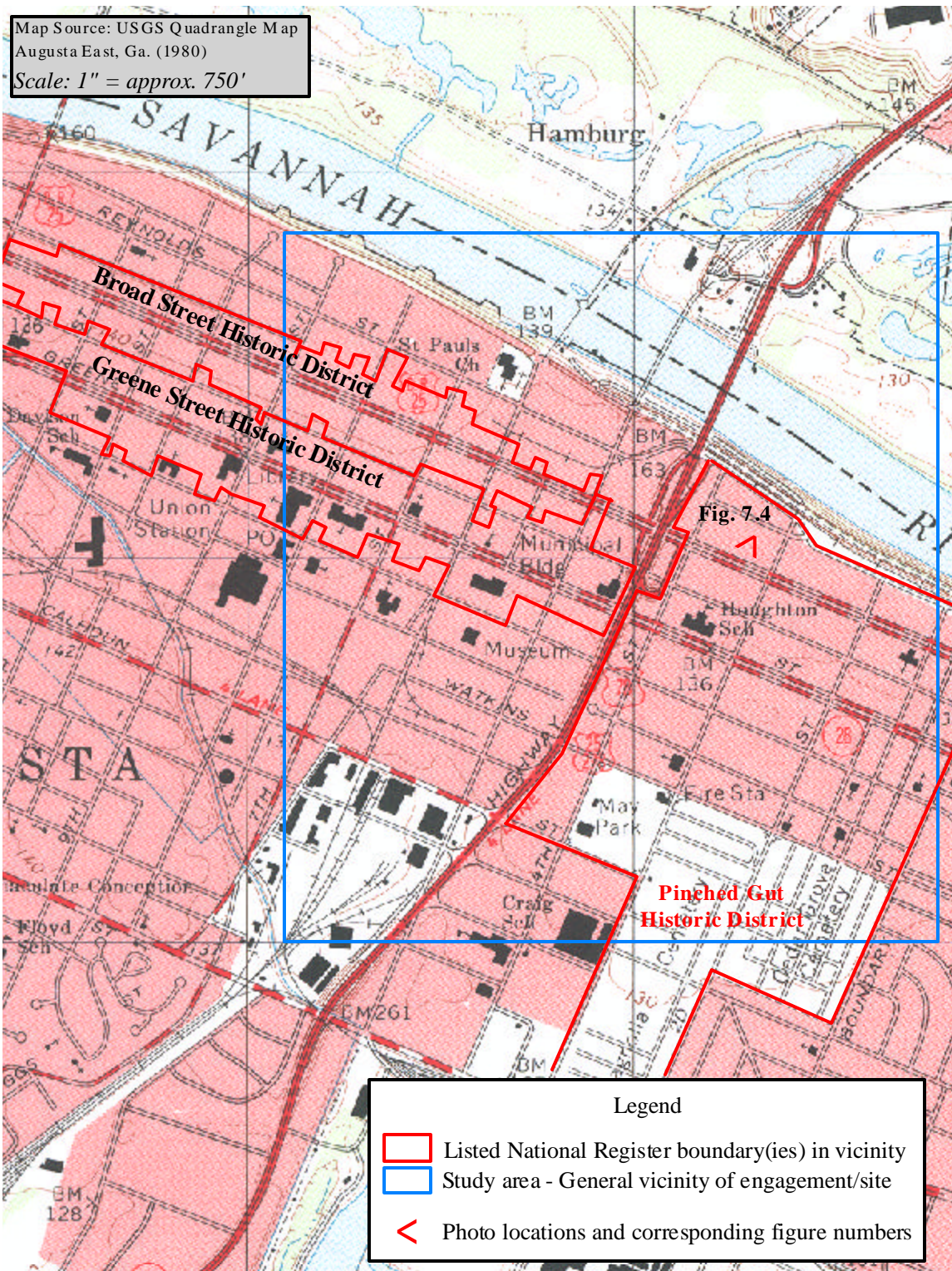
Figure 7.10: Capture of Augusta - Colonial Augusta Location Map
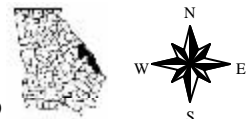
CHAPTER 8

CASE STUDY: BATTLE OF KETTLE CREEK

Description:

As British Lieutenant Colonel Archibald Campbell moved on Augusta in early
1779, Tory Colonel James Boyd moved south from North Carolina with a small militia
force. One of Campbell's campaign objectives was to combine with this force at
Augusta. Boyd, however, was being monitored by American militia, and his movements
would not go unchecked. Opposed by limited forces at Cherokee Ford and Vanns Creek
on the Savannah River, Boyd dispatched the Whig militia and moved from South
Carolina into Georgia. An smaller American force would catch up with Boyd's force at
Kettle Creek in Wilkes County on February 14, 1779, and a sharp battle was fought.
Boyd was mortally wounded and his small army dispersed. The American victory was
total, and only a few hundred of Boyd's men would ever reach Campbell. The site is
commemorated by a small, county-owned park at 'War Hill' in southwest Wilkes
County, near Tyrone.

Historical Narrative:

Following the occupation of Savannah, Colonel James Boyd, who had traveled with Campbell from New York and of whom little is known, moved out of Savannah and into the Georgia and Carolina backcountry on a mission to recruit Loyalist militia. Boyd, apparently a native of South Carolina, was staunchly loyal and had traveled to New York to meet with British officers and lend his assistance. He claimed to be an influential backwoodsman who could rally 'thousands' of troops to the British cause if and when the opportunity afforded. With the new British invasion strategy, Boyd's assistance quickly became both viable and crucial to their success in the south. Thus, following the British army's successful entrance into Georgia, Boyd was deployed and moved quickly into the backcountry of Georgia and the Carolinas he knew so well.

Colonel Boyd and his officers did have some success, but not nearly the success Boyd predicted. Boyd began moving south again with approximately 600 to 700 men, all raised in North and South Carolina.[72] At the same time, Campbell, still in Augusta, dispatched horsemen into the Wilkes County backcountry to give the loyalty oath to its inhabitants and to promise that no harm would come to them should they remain loyal to the crown. These same horsemen were to rendezvous with Boyd's force, but they were besieged by militia at two frontier forts, finally being surrounded at Carr's Fort by South Carolina and Georgia militia under Colonels Andrew Pickens of South Carolina and John

---

72 Davis, Jr., Robert S., and Kenneth H. Thomas, Jr., *Kettle Creek: The Battle of the Cane Brakes, Wilkes County, Georgia*, Atlanta: Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Section, 1975, p. 33.

Dooly of Georgia.[73] Pickens soon learned, however, that Colonel Boyd was moving through the Carolinas with a sizable Loyalist force, and they retired the siege at Carr's Fort and headed back to South Carolina as no doubt some of the militia were concerned for their families and property.

On February 11th, Boyd was trying to cross into Georgia, but was denied by a small Whig force garrisoning a blockhouse at Cherokee Ford on the Georgia-South Carolina border. Boyd did not try this defense but moved north and completed a more difficult crossing at Vann's Creek. However, a sizable portion of the Whig force at Cherokee Ford had moved north along the opposite bank to oppose them and fought them at Vann's Creek. Hopelessly outnumbered, the Whigs fell back with heavy losses, but Boyd's position was now being monitored. When Pickens received word that Boyd had crossed into Georgia, he and Dooly immediately returned to the state to pursue him. They followed closely behind the Tories, careful to keep themselves between Boyd and his probable objective—Campbell's main force at Augusta.

Meanwhile, Campbell was well aware of a patriot army forming on the opposite bank of the Savannah in South Carolina, of the more sizable Patriot army south and across the river at Purysburgh, which could cross and cut him off from Savannah, and of Augusta's lack of supply for his own force. Concerned his force was exposed to attack and fearing the Whigs might move between he and Savannah, Campbell pulled his British army out of Augusta on February 14, 1779.

---

73 Ibid., p. 27-28.

On that same morning, Boyd, who had no idea that Campbell had withdrawn from Augusta or that Pickens and Dooly were so close behind him, made camp in a bend on the north bank of Kettle Creek in Wilkes County. His men had come upon some cattle grazing, and they had stopped to slaughter some of them.

Pickens realized he had an opportunity to surprise Boyd. With a force of 400 against 700 or more, Pickens needed the advantage of surprise and drew up his plan accordingly.[74] He would deploy an advanced guard with orders not to fire and send both Colonel Dooly and Lieutenant Colonel Elijah Clarke with 100 men each around to attack the enemy's left and right.[75] Pickens himself would advance in the center with the main force of 200 men.[76]

Had the plan been executed correctly, Pickens might have had his surprise and a rout, but his men had difficulty in carrying out his orders. His advance guard opened fire on Tory pickets, thereby alerting the rest of Boyd's men and foiling any opportunity of surprise. Hearing the skirmishing, Boyd took 100 of his men and stationed them behind a crude fence and fallen trees along the hill overlooking the path of Pickens's advance.[77] Pickens continued to advance and was ambushed by Boyd's men. Meanwhile, both Clarke and Dooly were trying to make their circuitous routes to the action, but they were literally mired in the swampy terrain around Kettle Creek and unable to give Pickens any immediate relief.

---

74 Ibid., p. 36.
75 Ibid., p. 37.
76 Ibid.
77 Ibid., p. 38.

The Whigs plan of attack had fallen apart, and, had the whole of the Tory force managed to form, certain defeat loomed. But the Loyalist's leader, Colonel Boyd, fell in the fighting, and his men faltered and fell back. Pickens sensed the situation and did not waste the opportunity. He ordered his men forward and down the hill to attack the retreating enemy. At the same time, both Clarke and Dooly finally emerged from the swamps and reinforced the attack.

The Loyalists crossed the creek and tried to reform with the rest of their men on the rising ground on the opposite bank. This time, Clarke seized the opportunity and took about 50 of his men, crossed the creek, and charged the hill.[78] While the Tories tried to re-form under Major William Spurgin on the right side of the hill, Clarke and his men attacked from the left. In this daring attack, Clarke had his horse shot out from under him, but the charge succeeded in preventing the Tories from reorganizing. Now under heavy fire both from Clarke's determined force and the rest of the Whig force, the Tories failed to rally, and, after a half hour of sharp fighting, fell back and finally fled in confusion.

The Whigs had scored a victory. Casualty reports varied, but averaging accounts, the Whigs lost about 20 men killed, and the Tories lost the same number killed or wounded and the same again captured.[79] The remnants of Boyd's force limped southward in the direction of Campbell's retreating army, but only 270 of the original 600 to 700 men ever joined the British army.[80] No doubt most of Boyd's recruits, many

---

78 Stevens, *History of Georgia*, p. 191.
79 Davis and Thomas, Jr., *Kettle Creek*, p. 40.
80 Ibid., p. 39.

of whom had been coerced into joining by some of Boyd's unscrupulous officers, were sick of the experience and returned home.

Following the battle, Pickens is said to have returned to the dying Colonel Boyd. Although accounts differ as to the exchange, this encounter appears to have been relatively cordial, proving the two officers were of honorable demeanor and likely acquaintances.[81] Boyd may have given Pickens his effects to send along to his wife in South Carolina, but he refused to renounce his king and was pleased to die in the Crown's defense.

Pickens allowed some of the Tory captives to bury the dead on the field in return for their paroles. The Colonel was good at his word and released those upon completion of their duties and marched the rest of their Loyalist prisoners towards South Carolina. In the days following the Battle of Kettle Creek, the Whigs continued to pick up straggling Tories, and by the time they entered Augusta, they held 150 of Boyd's men.[82] The prisoners were marched to Ninety-Six District in South Carolina to stand trial. Of the 150 prisoners, 20 were sentenced to hang, though only five were actually executed.[83] Testimony showed the coercive tactics Boyd's officers had used in raising troops— namely threatening the colonial's family and property should they refuse to join. Those officers who appeared to be the ringleaders were the few who did hang.

---

81 Ibid., p. 39, 43.
82 Ibid., p. 43.
83 Ibid.

Significance:

As a general rule, much of the action that took place in the South has been overlooked by scholars and by preservationists. Nowhere is that more apparent than in Georgia. Assuredly, Georgia was the weakest, poorest, and least populated of all the colonies in rebellion. This fact is precisely why the new British strategy of southern invasion indicated Georgia as the first in the sequence of states to attack. How could such a meager colony even hope to prevent such an incursion?

But, the British had overestimated their ability to recruit Loyalist militia. They had overestimated the strength of Loyalist sentiment in the backcountry and along the frontier. It was there to be sure, and there were recruits to be had, but they numbered in the hundreds, not the thousands as the British had supposed and hoped. As time wore on and Boyd failed to appear with his thousands of Loyalist militia, Campbell's situation at Augusta became increasingly uncomfortable. With a sizable Whig force forming opposite Augusta in South Carolina and a Continental Army between him and Savannah on the South Carolina side, he withdrew from the upcountry town and fell back toward the coast.

Meanwhile, Boyd had finally entered Georgia with his small Tory army, but his circuitous route allowed the force under Whig Colonels Pickens and Dooly to catch up with him at Kettle Creek in Wilkes County and rout and defeat him. Although some of that force would eventually reach the main body of the British army in Georgia, several problems with the British plan had been exposed. Many of the backcountry men were neither patriot or Tory. Their allegiances were convenient: for instance, Campbell

recruited almost 1000 men at Augusta, but they disappeared when he withdrew from the town. Furthermore, the numbers of those who were staunchly Loyalist and willing to fight had been greatly exaggerated. Boyd's march through Georgia and North and South Carolina had netted the British only 700 to 800 men, many of whom were half-hearted about the cause and fought out of fear of reprisal. The British had also underestimated the strength of Whig sentiment in the southern backcountry. It seems that the British may have expected practically everyone in the south, particularly in poor Georgia, to more or less fall back into the royalist fold once the British had regained control of their province. But the British had not expected fierce resistance such as that which met Colonel Boyd on the muddy banks of Kettle Creek.

If the early action in Georgia gave any indication of what lay ahead for the British in South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia, it must certainly have given the British officers pause. Certainly the southern invasion had been generally a successful one to that point, but it must have been clear that the subjugation of the south would not be as simple as the British high command had hoped. With Continental regulars garrisoned in South Carolina and with crafty, determined Whig militia moving undetected through the rugged countryside, it must have been clear that the war for the south would be a bitter struggle.

The first true indication of both the determination of the Patriot cause in the south and of the fatal flaws underlying the new British strategy was the Battle of Kettle Creek in Georgia. Pickens would later describe the event as "the severest check and

chastisement the Tories ever received in Georgia or South Carolina." The importance
and implications of this battle were lost on no one.

Site Condition:

Of all the Revolutionary War sites in Georgia on which an action was fought,
Kettle Creek may be in the best condition. The site remains in a rural and agrarian
section of Wilkes County. In the immediate vicinity of the site, cattle and forestry are the
predominant land uses. The site of the battle itself is a small but well-kept
commemorative park, focused primarily on War Hill. The park contains a few picnic
tables, a small cemetery (local veterans of the Revolutionary War, not necessarily of the
Battle of Kettle Creek, have been reinterred here), a state historical marker, and two
granite monuments: a circa 1930 obelisk and a 1979 slab marker. Kettle Creek is located
west of and below War Hill. Of significant note, Kettle Creek was channelized in the
early part of the twentieth century and actually relocated several hundred feet to the west.
The old creek bed remains and is clearly discernible to a visitor familiar with the
relocation of the waterway. Aside from the top of War Hill, the ground on the eastern
side of Kettle Creek is heavily wooded. On the western side of the creek, and to the
south, the ground rises and is forested. This area was a strategic portion of the battlefield.
To the north are open meadows, which have been fenced to enclose cattle.

The relocation of Kettle Creek is the single significant change to the battlefield,
but to what degree this change diminishes the integrity and importance of the site is
debatable. As a strategic point on the battlefield and namesake of the action, Kettle

Creek is an important, if not the most important, component of the landscape. Justifiably, some historians and preservationists might consider the creek's alteration a significant blow to the site's historical integrity. The researcher believes any attempts to interpret the site must acknowledge and interpret the relocation of Kettle Creek. If properly done, the researcher believes the relocation of the creek proves an interesting example of how landscapes, even rural and isolated, are in a constant state of flux, both naturally and artificially. An alternative treatment for consideration could be the restoration of the original creek bed. This alternative would have to be thoroughly investigated on historical, archaeological, and ecological grounds; however, the restoration could provide significant interpretive and ecological benefits.

The single-biggest threat to the Kettle Creek site is continued timbering in its immediate vicinity. Although land adjacent to the memorial park has not been timbered recently, no regulations would prevent it. Evidence of clear-cut logging can be seen within a few miles of the park, and a number of small clearings have been made in much closer proximity. If any additional historical research or archaeological evidence reveals the extent of the battle to be larger than the park and its immediate surrounding, archaeological evidence, if not already so, could be severely damaged or lost.

The Kettle Creek park is currently maintained by Wilkes County and the Washington-Wilkes Historical Society, who, by all accounts, appear to be doing as good a job as possible considering their limited resources.

National Register Status and Recommendation:

The current National Register boundary for this site encloses 12.5 acres on the north side of Kettle Creek and should be expanded to include the north and south banks of the creek, the high ground on the south side of the creek, and a portion of the flat, open agricultural fields just west of that rise. This boundary could be more particularly described as a broad corridor of approximately 1000 feet, centered on Kettle Creek and running from west to east, beginning just east of the confluence of Kettle Creek and Carlton Branch and ending 500 feet east of War Hill and swelling to include both the existing National Register boundary north of the creek at 'War Hill' and the rising ground opposite of that hill on the south side of the creek.

This boundary would include all relevant events and natural features related to the action at Kettle Creek. Strategic natural features include the creek and both hills: War Hill and the rise on the opposite bank. By extending the boundary as a corridor further east and west of these hills, the site would incorporate troop movements made along and across the creek but not in the immediate vicinity of the action itself—most notably Colonel Dooly's and Lieutenant Colonel Clarke's flanking movements on opposite sides of War Hill. The initial action was fought on the slopes and in the immediate vicinity of War Hill, and following the first Tory retreat, on the rising ground south and across the creek.

Preliminary Site Recommendation:

The Kettle Creek site is probably the best opportunity for Federal or state acquisition of a relatively intact Revolutionary War battlefield in Georgia. A number of reasons support this conclusion. Aside from the relocation of Kettle Creek, the site remains similar to its condition at the time of the battle, making the Kettle Creek site one of high aesthetic value that would likely draw visitors for this reason as well as for its historic value. Other sites of significant pitched battles have been largely obliterated in urban areas at Savannah and Augusta. Moreover, the Battle of Kettle Creek was Georgia's lone signal victory over British forces. Finally, such an undertaking could provide a valuable asset and economic stimulus for Wilkes County and the immediate area while protecting, maintaining, and acknowledging the importance of the historic Kettle Creek battlefield. Given the surrounding land use, it is not unlikely that additional property in the area may be available and at reasonable cost. It is true that recent state budgetary constraints have prompted the consideration of closing state-owned historic sites and parks rather than acquiring new ones. However, this site is of paramount importance to the State of Georgia within the context of the formation of the United States.

If a park could be created, interpretive possibilities are extensive. A visitor's center should be located within walking distance but not adjacent to significant portions of the battlefield. Parking should be located the furthest away from historical points at the site and paved with a porous surface, such as loose gravel. Likewise, trails leading to and within the site should be of a porous nature, such as pea gravel or pebbles. All

structures should be built of natural material, and any structures and facilities should be kept to a minimum and away from historical points on the battlefield. Interpretive signs should be kept to a minimum and not be obtrusive. Finally, a preservation and landscape plan should be developed to protect the site and avoid maintenance that might be a detriment to historically significant portions of the landscape. Nature trails and camp sites might prove a viable portion of a park plan, but such amenities should also avoid important historic points on the battlefield.

According to the relatively high or modest ambitions of the creation of a park at Kettle Creek, the site could be maintained with a minimum of manpower. Several small military parks in the southeast and mid-Atlantic that are Federally or state-owned do not have a permanent staff presence on-site. The parks are maintained, monitored, opened, and closed on a daily basis, but personnel are not maintained on-site on a regular schedule. A couple of examples of such parks are Sailor's Creek Battlefield in southcentral Virginia and Fort Gadsden in northwestern Florida.

Barring the creation of a Federal or state park at the Kettle Creek site, it might be suggested that either additional historical markers or an interpretive sign be installed to give visitors a better understanding of what took place during the Battle of Kettle Creek.

Figure 8.1: View of 'War Hill' at Kettle Creek battlefield park

Figure 8.2: View of Kettle Creek at battlefield park
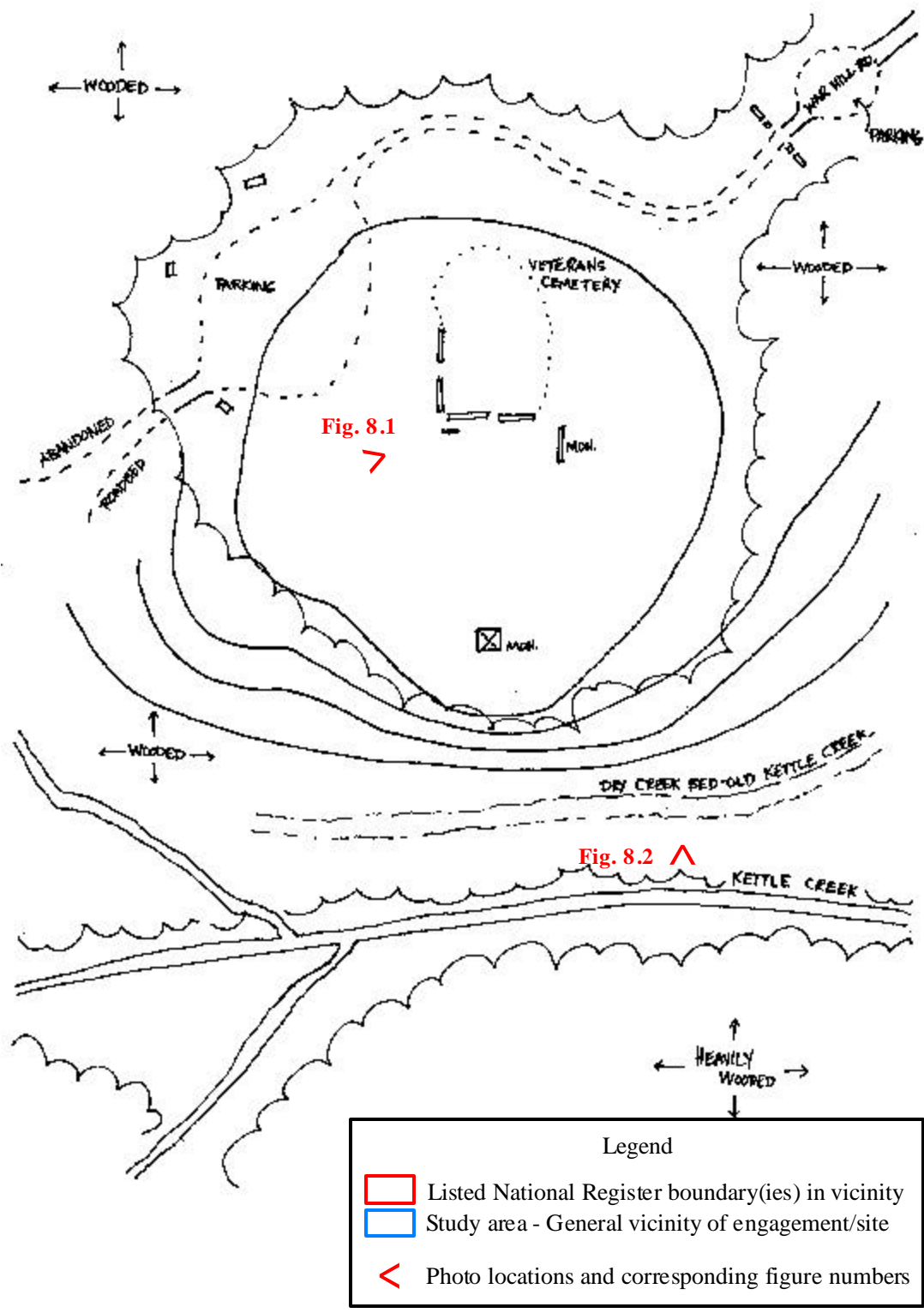
Figure 8.3: Battle of Kettle Creek Photo Map

Map Source: USGS Quadrangle Map
Philomath, Ga. (1981)
Scale: 1" = approx. 2000'

Legend

☐ Listed National Register boundary(ies) in vicinity

☐ Study area - General vicinity of engagement/site

< Photo locations and corresponding figure numbers
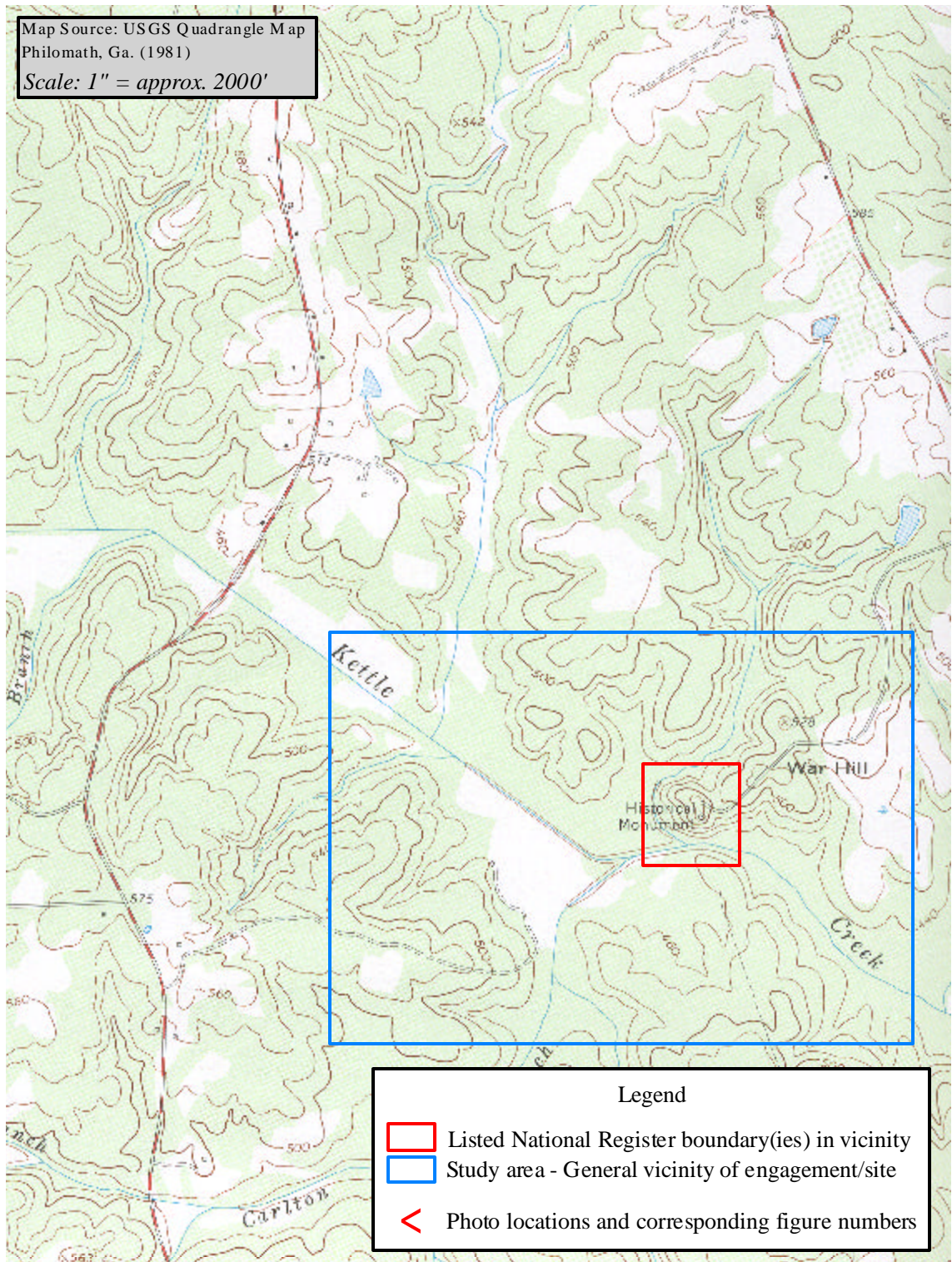
Figure 8.4: Battle of Kettle Creek Location Map

CHAPTER 9

CASE STUDY: BATTLE OF BRIER CREEK

Description:

After American victories at Kettle Creek in Georgia, and Beaufort in South

Carolina, General Benjamin Lincoln proposed an invasion of Georgia to expel the

British. Three separate columns would enter the state. The invasion plans were quickly

abandoned, however, when one of the armies, commanded by General John Ashe and

composed primarily of North Carolina militia, was surprised and routed at Brier Creek, in

Screven County. A small commemorative park is now located on the creek in what is

most likely a portion of the battlefield.

Historical Narrative:

In late January of 1779, a British army of some 1000 men under Lieutenant

Colonel Archibald Campbell had occupied Augusta, Georgia practically unopposed.[84]

Now, the British waited to reconnoiter with an army of Tory militia being assembled in

the Carolinas by a Colonel James Boyd. However, the strength of the force Boyd

---

84 Coleman, *American Revolution in Georgia*, p. 122.

originally assembled would never be realized by the British army, as that Tory force was surprised and dispersed at the Battle of Kettle Creek in Wilkes County, Georgia.

Following the successful defense of Beaufort, South Carolina and then the victory at Kettle Creek, Whig sympathy grew stronger in the southern colonies. General Benjamin Lincoln and his patriot army, installed at Purysburg, South Carolina, benefited from these advances and the army's ranks swelled, nearly doubling the size of the force. With this renewed strength, Lincoln saw the opportunity to reenter Georgia and recover the state from the British and Tories. Lincoln quickly went into action and ordered General Andrew Williamson of Georgia and 1,200 troops to the eastern bank of the Savannah River opposite Augusta, General Griffith Rutherford with 800 men to the Black Swamp in South Carolina, and General John Ashe with 1,400 North Carolina militia and 100 Georgia continentals under Colonel Samuel Elbert below Augusta.[85]

As Williamson took his position across from Augusta and Ashe's force began to move closer, Campbell saw his occupation of the town as untenable and began to withdraw. He was concerned the Whigs might defeat his force outright or cut him off from the British base of operations in Savannah. Grossly overestimating the size of the Whig forces opposing him, Campbell decided to retreat and fall back to Savannah. On February 14th, the same day Boyd was defeated at Kettle Creek, Campbell quietly left Augusta. Ashe then crossed into Georgia with the intention of opposing him.

Campbell's force crossed and then destroyed the pontoon bridge on Brier Creek at Odoms Ferry. They reconnoitered with the remnants of Boyd's force from the Kettle

---

85 Ward and Allen, *The War of the Revolution*, p. 683.

Creek defeat before continuing south to Ebenezer and then on to Savannah. Ashe's

force left Augusta on February 27th, and unaware of which route the British might have

taken, took the River Road along the Savannah River. They were stopped at the ruined

bridge at Brier Creek and made camp. The rebels quickly set about repairing the bridge

and building a road to the Savannah River to receive reinforcements from South Carolina.

Ashe had expected his force to be bolstered by significant reinforcements but was

disappointed by the addition of only about 200 light-horse militia under a Colonel

Marbury.[86]

British General Augustine Prevost moved to defend the state so recently

conquered. Concerned Ashe's installation at Brier Creek would cut off the British from

the upcountry, Prevost determined to 'dislodge' the Americans. He dispatched a Major

MacPherson with the 1st battalion of the 71st Regiment of foot, along with some Tory

irregulars and two fieldpieces, and ordered them to the south bank of Brier Creek to

impede Ashe's pursuit of Campbell and to mask the movements of Prevost's brother,

Lieutenant Colonel Mark Prevost.[87] Lieutenant Colonel Mark Prevost's force,

composing the 2nd battalion of the 71st, Sir James Baird's light infantry, three companies

of grenadiers from the 60th Regiment, a troop of provincial light horse, and about 150

Tory militia, some 900 in all, made a miraculous 50 mile march during the evening of

---

86 Cox, William E., "Brigadier-General John Ashe's Defeat in the Battle of Brier Creek," *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* Vol. 57, No. 2 (Summer, 1973), p. 297.
87 Ward and Allen, *The War of the Revolution*, p. 684.

March 2nd to the east of Ashe's force, crossed Brier Creek above them, and came around to surprise Ashe's small army from the rear the following morning.[88]

Disregarding sketchy intelligence suggesting a British military presence in the area on the afternoon of March 2nd, Ashe failed to prepare his force for a possible attack. The next morning, when scouts reported Prevost's force only a few miles away and moving quickly, Ashe hurriedly formed his small army into column and posted Elbert's Georgia Continentals in front. The force moved north on the River Road to meet the attackers, only minutes before their appearance. With Brier Creek and an unfinished bridge at his rear, Ashe was in a near desperate situation. As the enemy approached and prepared to attack, one British Highlander cried, 'Now my boys, remember Poor Macalister!' The reference was to a slain British officer who had been assigned to protect the family of a captured Whig officer, but Macalister was killed by a raiding party from the Carolinas and his body hacked to pieces.[89]

Elbert moved his men 100 yards forward, and the Georgia Continentals opened fire on the enemy from the right side of the Whig line.[90] Poorly armed and equipped, the North Carolina militia was never composed and soon began to fall apart, many fleeing without having discharged their weapons. Elbert's Continentals continued to hold their ground for several minutes before realizing the disintegration behind them and the hopelessness of their stand. Soon, they too broke ranks and fled. Ashe would later

---

88 Ibid.

89 Cashin, Edward J., *The King's Ranger: Thomas Brown and the American Revolution on the Southern Frontier*, Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1989, p. 92.

90 Ward and Allen, *The War of the Revolution*, p. 684.

complain that Elbert had moved his Georgia troops into his North Carolinian's line of fire and blocked them from firing on the enemy. Several accounts, however, suggest that the North Carolina militia were discombobulated from the outset and never gave the appearance of making an effective stand.[91] As the militia shifted and began to break, a hole opened in the center of the Whig line that was quickly exploited by the attacking British. As the American line collapsed, Ashe made a desperate attempt to rally his men before he too fell back toward the swamps and the Savannah River. Most of the fleeing rebels tried to retreat across the river and back into South Carolina, and many were drowned in the surrounding swamps, if not in the river itself. British officers would later speculate that if Prevost had been at the head of his attacking force, rather than toward the rear, none of the retreating rebels could have escaped.[92]

Ashe, whose reputation was destroyed by the crushing defeat, would later write that had the British not initially hesitated when coming upon his force, the whole army might have been captured. He blamed the defeat on disobedient officers, unruly soldiers, and 'mutinies and desertions' within the regiments.[93] Later accused of cowardice himself, Ashe was absolved of that charge but criticized for the strategically poor location of his encampment at Brier Creek and the lack of security there.[94] Later accounts would also partially exonerate Ashe. He had deployed some of Marbury's dragoons as scouts,

---

91 Ashmore, Otis, and Charles H. Olmstead, "The Battles of Kettle Creek and Brier Creek," *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* Vol. 10, No. 2 (June 1926), p. 109.

92 Campbell, *Journal*, p. 77.

93 Killion, Ronald G., and Charles T. Waller, *Georgia and the Revolution*, Atlanta: Cherokee Publishing Company, 1975, p. 189-191.

94 Stevens, *History of Georgia*, p. 197.

and although the scouts had discovered Prevost's circuitous march around Ashe's force well before the attack, the messenger sent to alert him was intercepted by the British.[95]

The Americans lost some 200 men between the fighting and the subsequent retreat.[96] Eleven Whig officers and approximately 160 non-commissioned officers and privates were captured by the British, including Colonel Elbert.[97] Of those who fled the field and escaped, only about 450 ever returned to service, the remainder having returned to their homes.[98] The Americans had lost, aside from the men, some seven cannon, almost all their small arms and ammunition, and their colors and baggage. The British losses were light: only five privates killed and one officer and ten men wounded.[99]

Thus, General Lincoln's plan for removing the British from Georgia, or at least restricting them to the coast, had met a serious setback. The disastrous American defeat at Brier Creek left Georgia firmly under British control. American General William Moultrie would call the battle "nothing less that a total rout" and complain that many of the North Carolina militia had not stopped running until they reached their homes.[100] The coast of Georgia remained occupied by the British, and their influence and communications with upcountry Tories and backwoods Indians remained intact.

---

95 Ashmore and Olmstead, "The Battles of Kettle Creek and Brier Creek," p. 106.
96 Ward and Allen, *The War of the Revolution*, p. 684.
97 Ibid.
98 Ibid.
99 Cooper, *The Story of Georgia*, Vol. 1, p. 610.
100 Ashmore and Olmstead, "The Battle of Kettle Creek and Brier Creek," p. 111.

Significance:

Following the impressive Whig victory just weeks earlier at Kettle Creek, the British forces in Georgia were briefly in a defensive posture. American General Benjamin Lincoln saw an opportunity to recover the state and began to position his forces for a possible assault. Ashe's movements were a precursor to such an attempt. The British, however, were not unaware of Lincoln's designs and, following a brief period of vulnerability, moved to protect the state so recently conquered. Following the total rout of Ashe's force at Brier Creek, any possible invasion by the Americans to retake Georgia was made impossible. The opportunity lost, the Whigs in South Carolina reassessed their situation, and the British hold on Georgia was strengthened.

Site Condition:

The site of the Battle of Brier Creek is located in rural, eastern Screven County, only a few miles west of the Savannah River. A small commemorative park (owned and operated by Screven County) is located on what is presumed to be a portion of the battlefield. The park contains a picnic shelter, an interpretive state historical marker, a Masonic historical marker devoted to Samuel Elbert, and several trash dumpster bins. The site appears to double both as a park and a rural trash collection facility. A small, sandy beach area is located along the banks of Brier Creek and is used for recreation. Graffiti covers both the Brannens Bridge Road bridge over Brier Creek, as well as the picnic shelter. Although the dumpsters are located away from other features of the park, they are a significant element of the site. Two piles of concrete block rubble are the

remains of two men's and women's restrooms. Visitors to the park stated that the restrooms had previously been well-kept and were an important amenity. They were disappointed the park was no longer being maintained to previous standards.

Local land use is of an agricultural nature, and the setting is a mixture of fields and forests. The most significant land use in the immediate vicinity of the Brier Creek park is silviculture. Several acres of land in close proximity to the park have been recently mechanically logged. As the location of the battlefield and all its components is not certain, such activity could have seriously adverse effects to remaining archaeological evidence.

National Register Status and Recommendation:

The potential National Register boundary would be drawn to include the current bounds of the Brier Creek Battlefield Park. This boundary would contain that parcel of land located immediately east of Brier Creek and north of Brannens Bridge Road. Barring an archaeological assessment conclusively identifying this location as the site of the battle, no increase in the proposed National Register boundary is proposed.

Lacking more than one geographical feature to conclusively locate the battlefield site (such as at Kettle Creek), and without a definitive archaeological investigation, the battlefield boundary should be drawn to incorporate the location historically understood to be the battlefield site. This site currently serves as a memorial park and is interpreted as the center of the fighting at Brier Creek.

Preliminary Site Recommendation:

Of paramount importance at the Brier Creek site is a thorough archaeological investigation to confirm the location of the battle. The results of such research and examination would greatly influence, if not determine, the course of action needed to protect and adequately commemorate and interpret the site.

Currently, interpretation at the site is made by an over-sized state historical marker based on the Ashmore-Olmstead article in the Georgia Historical Quarterly. The Ashmore-Olmstead understanding of the battle is the best to date, but archeologists note that the location of the site has never been confirmed by archaeological research and investigation.

Until the site of the Battle of Brier Creek can be confirmed, the current small, commemorative park is adequate. Ideally, the trash dumpster bins should be removed, and the restroom facilities restored. Graffiti on the bridge and picnic shelter could be abated, and more vigilance on the part of county sheriff's deputies might help alleviate some of that problem. However, one should consider the likely limited resources a rural county has at its disposal before criticizing the current status of the park. Although the interpretive state historical marker at the site is adequate, an additional marker on nearby State Route 24 would indicate to interested passersby the close proximity of the historic site.

A successful archaeological investigation could greatly increase the urgency for the site's preservation. As at Kettle Creek battlefield in Wilkes County, the general setting of the Brier Creek site is relatively similar to what it would have been at the time

of the battle: rural and agricultural, fields and forests. Should more defined battlefield

boundaries emerge, the Brier Creek site could provide the same opportunities for Federal

or state acquisition and for subsequent protection, commemoration, and interpretation.

General guidelines could be similar to those proposed for the Kettle Creek site (see

above).

Figure 9.1: View of Brier Creek Park
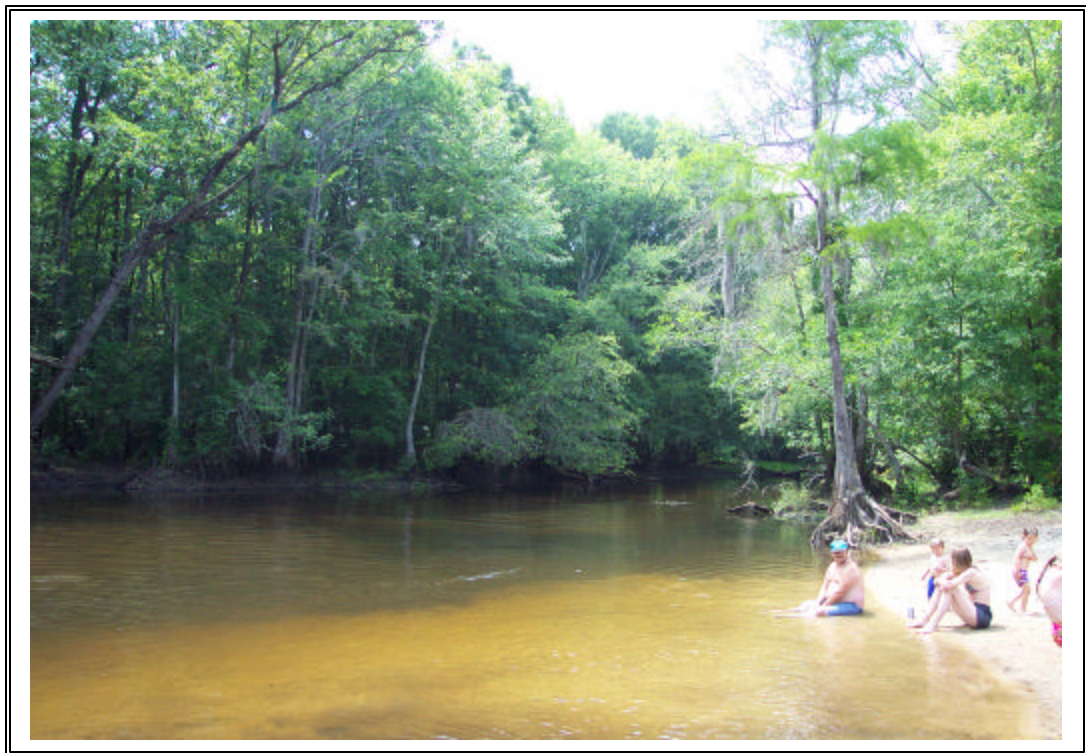
Figure 9.2: View of Brier Creek at park
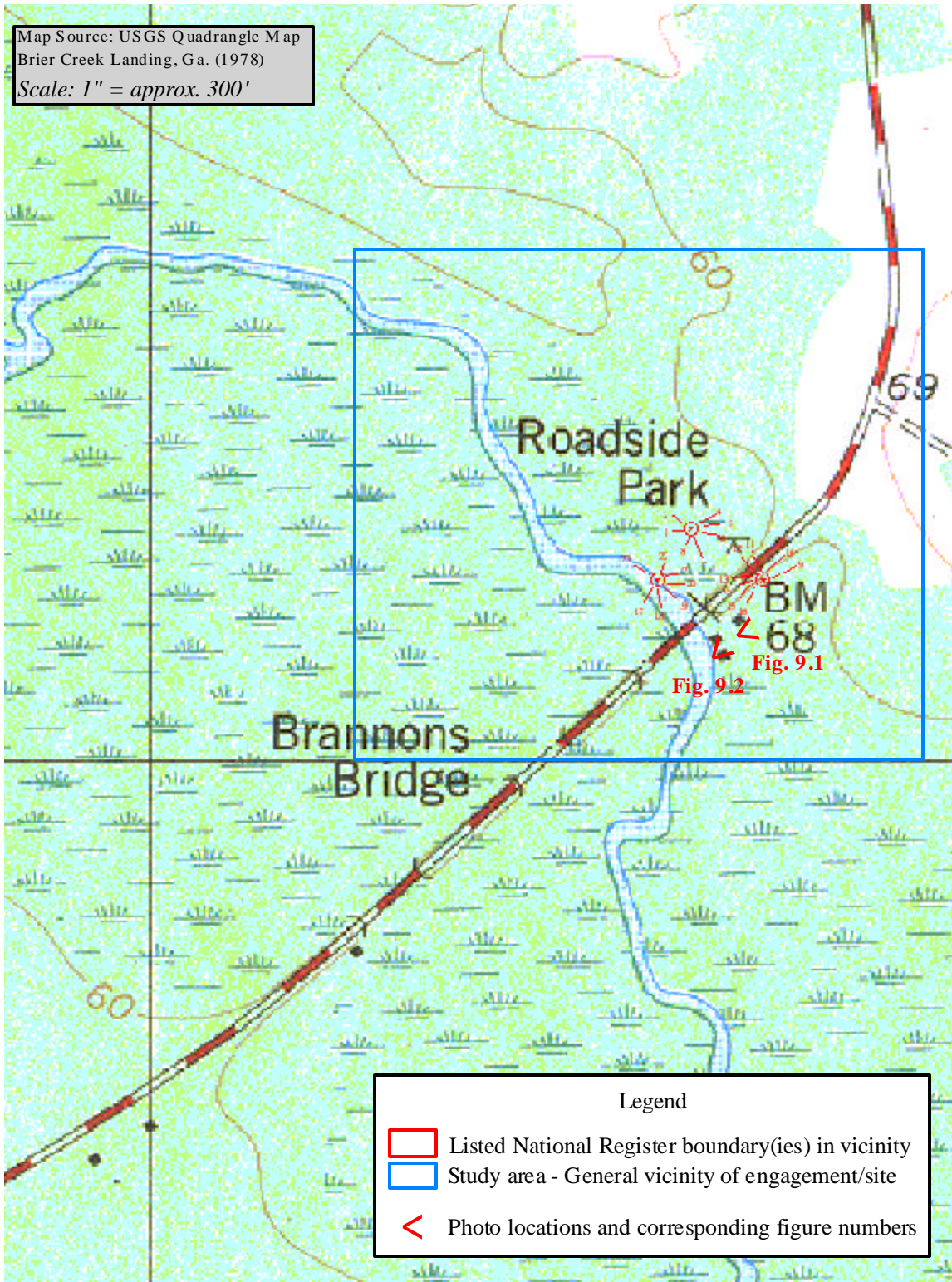
Figure 9.3: Battle of Brier Creek Location Map

CHAPTER 10

CASE STUDY: THE SIEGE AND BATTLE OF SAVANNAH (SPRING HILL)

Description:

Following the successful British invasion of Georgia in late 1778 and early 1779,

the American commanders were determined to dislodge the British foothold in the South

and expel the enemy from Georgia. When the assistance of a French fleet and substantial

army were provided for a short time in the early fall of 1779, the Americans eagerly

coordinated a plan to relieve Savannah of its British captors. A combined American and

French army laid siege to the town in mid-September of 1779 and then attacked on

October 9th. The operation was a disaster, and the Franco-American army was repulsed

with heavy losses. The strongest attack and fiercest fighting occurred at the Spring Hill

redoubt, a heavily fortified position at the northwest corner of the city's defenses.

Following the defeat, the French boarded their boats and sailed away, and the Americans

retreated to South Carolina. The opportunity to retake Savannah had been lost.

The Spring Hill redoubt site is located at the old Central of Georgia Railway

shops and related facilities in Savannah. The actual redoubt site is supposed to be a

vacant lot to the south of the Central of Georgia Terminal Depot (now the Savannah

Visitor's Center and Savannah Museum). The lot and the surrounding area has seen

substantial land use change and the almost complete reengineering of the landscape. No

trace of the old fortifications remain, and the setting has been drastically altered since the

time of the battle.

Historical Narrative:

Following the British capture of Savannah in December 1778, the American army

in the south under Major General Benjamin Lincoln was eager to try and retake the town.

The British commander, Major General Augustine Prevost, however, had converted

Savannah into a veritable fortress. Lincoln knew his army did not have the strength or

confidence to make an attempt on the town, and therefore the Americans bided their time.

A unique opportunity afforded itself in September of 1779. The French fleet and

army operating in the Caribbean under Count Charles-Henri d'Estaing was offered to the

Americans for an allied operation against British-held Savannah. D'Estaing's

remarkably diverse force was composed of some 4,000 troops, including French, Irish,

and Haitian soldiers, and the role of officers read like a who's who of French aristocratic

families.[101] On the 12th, d'Estaing landed his sizable force unopposed at Beaulieu

Plantation on the Vernon River, about eight miles south of Savannah. There his army

regrouped and began moving northward.

---

101 Russell and Hines, *Savannah*, p. 62.

Lincoln, eager to regain Savannah, marched 2,100 Continentals and militia southward from Charleston and joined d'Estaing on the 16th.[102] The joint Franco-American force immediately called on Prevost to surrender the town.

Prevost was in a difficult position. Eight hundred of his finest soldiers, the 71st Highlanders under Colonel John Maitland, were moving south from operations in South Carolina but had not yet arrived.[103] Prevost begged d'Estaing's and Lincoln's patience while he 'considered' their offer. When Maitland arrived on the 23rd, after an amazing march through the swamps separating Savannah and Port Royal, South Carolina, Prevost defied the allied commanders' request for surrender. The Franco-American force then dug in and commenced regular siege operations.

The allies opened fire on Savannah on October 4th with artillery, and although the fire did considerable damage to the town, it did little to weaken the formidable British works. The bombardment continued sporadically for several days. The Americans, however, did not have French support indefinitely, and d'Estaing was already concerned about the safety of his fleet. It was hurricane season, and the French commander was eager to complete operations at Savannah and move his ships to safety. He suggested the allied army make a determined assault to overwhlem British defenses and take the town.

He proposed a plan in which a force of about 500 militia under Brigadier General Isaac Huger would feint against the southeastern corner of the British works in order to disguise a massive assault against the works in the southwestern corner at the Spring Hill

---

102 Cooper, *The Story of Georgia*, Vol. II, p. 7.
103 Ward and Allen, *The War of the Revolution*, p. 690.

redoubt.[104] D'Estaing's plan might have been a good one if the allies had not stalled at Prevost's request when they first arrived and had the intelligence of this plan not reached the British.

The allies launched their attack on the 9th, and the swampland surrounding Savannah would prove to be a formidable opponent in its own right. Huger's force struggled in the difficult terrain and failed to make a convincing feint. Worse, a sizable portion of the force moving on Spring Hill redoubt also became mired in the swamps and turned back. Only about 1,200 French troops and American Continentals made the assault as originally devised.[105] They moved across the cleared glacis and obstacles effectively, and South Carolina Continentals under Francis Marion actually mounted the ramparts and achieved the top of the wall before being beaten back. Fierce fighting and confusion ensued, and American casualties mounted rapidly. Over the course of one of the bloodiest hours of the entire Revolutionary War, the Americans tried the line three times, each time faltering and falling back over the corpses and mangled bodies of their comrades. British artillery continued to pour cannonballs, grape, chain, and other metal debris into the advancing lines. Unfortunately for and unbeknownst to the Americans, the British had suspected the location of their attack, and Prevost had wisely positioned his best troops, Maitland's 71st, at Spring Hill to meet them. The attack had been doomed before it started.

---

104 Ibid., p. 693.
105 Ibid.

Among the allied casualties were d'Estaing himself, wounded in the left breast by a musket ball. Sergeant William Jasper of the 2nd South Carolina Continentals died heroically while trying to retrieve his company's fallen flag on the ramparts of Spring Hill, as did Lieutenant John Bush. Count Casimir Pulaski, a daring and flamboyant calvary officer of noble Polish birth, was killed under the steady stream of British grapeshot.

The assault had failed, and the French and Americans, suffering horrific casualties, retreated. Some 800 French, American, and Irish soldiers fell at Spring Hill.[106] The British suffered only about 100 casualties.[107] Lincoln was eager to attempt the defenses again, but d'Estaing had completely lost confidence in the operation and lifted the siege. D'Estaing quickly loaded his ships and removed from the Georgia coast.

The battle for Savannah had been a terrible defeat for the French and Americans and did little to solidify French support for the American cause. However, the battle had been an important and resounding victory for the British who maintained their foothold in the south at Savannah. News of the victory made its way to London and was greeted with jubilation.

Significance:

The brief siege of Savannah and the ensuing battle, concentrated at the Spring Hill redoubt, was the largest single military event that occurred in Georgia during the

---

106 Cooper, *The Story of Georgia*, Vol. II, p. 17.
107 Ibid.

Revolution. The number of troops and casualties involved can be more easily

compared with other larger conflicts throughout the former colonies than with the smaller

events that regularly occurred within Georgia. The bloody and disappointing result make

this battle no less significant than other better known American victories in Georgia or

elsewhere.

The diversity of the Franco-American force is also fascinating. The French army

included French, Irish, and Haitian soldiers. Officers were among some of the most

notable names in France, many of whom would meet their end later at the guillotine.

Henri Christophe, who would one day rise to become the ruler of free Haiti, saw action

and bled at Savannah. The names of notable American officers, such as Lincoln, Pulaski,

Marion, and Jasper, resound through our nation's history in part due to their actions at

Savannah.

Finally, the end result of this battle was the continued occupation of Savannah by

the British. New British strategy demanded a strong base of operation for military units

in the south, and had the Americans retaken the town, that policy might have been in

jeopardy. By maintaining Savannah, the British were able to continue southern

operations against the Carolinas and their plans to retake their former colonies from

below.

Site Condition:

The complete battlefield relating to the Franco-American siege and battle for

Savannah has long since been built over as the port city has grown over the last two

centuries. Most portions of the battlefield and remnants of the town's fortifications

are no doubt located below structures that possess their own historical significance. The

general location of the Spring Hill redoubt (the scene of the heaviest fighting) is also the

site of the Central of Georgia Railroad's terminal facilities—itself a National Historic

Landmark District.[108] The Central of Georgia was one the nation's earliest railroads.

Because of the relative enormity of the battlefield of the siege of Savannah and

the town's system of defenses, and because of the urban growth that now covers this area

completely, research has focused on the Spring Hill site. Local interested parties have

also focused their efforts on this site and are hoping to commemorate the battle with a

park in the area, perhaps at the vacant lot which is supposed to be the actual site of the

redoubt. This lot formerly contained Central of Georgia masonry buildings that have

since been demolished. The lot is owned by Norfolk Southern Railroad and may harbor

lead contaminants. The area containing the old Central of Georgia Railroad terminal

facilities, including the depot, warehouses, car barns, and rail yards, has been extensively

graded and leveled to provide for the construction of these facilities. This fact explains

why multiple archaeological investigations in the vicinity have yielded very little

archaeological evidence of the battle, and why additional archaeological effort may not

provide much more.

In the vicinity of the Spring Hill site, both historic and non-historic structures are

prevalent. The Savannah Visitor's Center and Savannah Museum are located in the old

---

108 By overlaying period maps of Savannah and through historical and archaeological research, scholars
       have concluded that the location of the Spring Hill redoubt is the area composed of the Savannah
       Visitors Center and Museum parking lot, and the vacant lot located immediately to its south.

Central of Georgia Terminal Station just north of the Spring Hill lot, and the Central

of Georgia Roundhouse Museum is located immediately to the west. Commercial

property is located to the east and south. Martin Luther King Boulevard bounds the lot

on the east and is a five-lane and very busy thoroughfare. The Martin Luther King Jr.

Boulevard corridor has also recently been the subject of city planning and economic

development efforts to revitalize and encourage responsible development in the area.

The Savannah Museum does have a permanent display interpreting the siege of

Savannah and, in particular, the fighting at the Spring Hill redoubt. A miniature diorama

shows what the redoubt probably looked like during the attack by the Americans. A pair

of state historical markers are also located in the parking lot of the visitor's center and

briefly describe the events of the battle.

National Register Status and Recommendation:

The proposed National Register boundary would comprise that portion of land

bounded by Louisville Road to the north, Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard to the east,

Harris Street to south, and Ann Street to the west. This boundary would be immediately

adjacent to the Savannah National Historic Landmark District on the east, the National

Historic Landmark Central of Georgia Depot and Trainshed on the north, and the

National Historic Landmark Central of Georgia Railroad Savannah Shops and Terminal

Facilities on the southwest.

Although the entire town of Savannah was fortified by the British after their

capture of the town, and the Franco-American siege efforts encompassed the entirety of

those defenses, the main assault of the allied forces was at the Spring Hill Redoubt.

No trace of any Revolutionary-era fortifications exists within Savannah, and, in fact, at

many locations, the landscape has been radically altered by changing land uses such as

commercial and residential development. The location of many of these early

fortifications would already be included within the existing Savannah National Historic

Landmark District.

Interested organizations and persons in Savannah are determined that a memorial

park of some nature be established to commemorate the 1779 battle fought there. These

persons have focused their attentions on the empty lot to the south of the Visitors

Center/Museum. This location is certainly a significant part of the battlefield and a

reasonable and justifiable location to establish some type of memorial for this event.

Since the entire area has been redeveloped, regraded, and is more or less unavailable, and

since the site is surrounded by other significant and NHL listed historic resources, it

seems reasonable to consider this portion of the battlefield for NR listing specifically for

its role in the siege of Savannah and the fierce fighting at the Spring Hill Redoubt.

Preliminary Site Recommendations:

For the past several decades, extensive planning efforts have been made to create

a battlefield park in the Spring Hill redoubt vicinity for the past several decades, but,

currently, no such park exists. The current plans for the park incorporate the existing

Central of Georgia shop facilities with an interpretive area containing a partial

reconstruction of the Spring Hill redoubt and its associated earthworks. Although dubbed

the 'Battlefield Park Heritage Center,' the complex pays particular attention to the railroad operations in the area—and appropriately so. The extant historic railroad buildings are a tangible and authentic link to the site's railroad history, whereas nothing exists related to the defensive earthworks that once protected Savannah.

Although it is not certain that current plans will come to fruition, caution is strongly urged with regard to the planned reconstruction of the Spring Hill redoubt at the Battlefield Park Heritage Center for several reasons. Firstly, care must be taken whenever a historic building or structure is reconstructed. A reconstruction should be undertaken for educational purposes primarily, and the result should be as genuine as possible. Otherwise, a reconstruction could be confusing, deceiving, and lack value. If a close to exact replica of the redoubt could not be constructed (whether due to lack of space within the park complex or lack of detailed plans) then a reconstructed redoubt would fail in its purpose. A smaller model of the redoubt or a conjecture of how the redoubt appeared may not fulfil its educational purpose and/or could be accomplished in a different way at much less expense.

Also, when considering the recreation of a historic structure, one must also consider the context within which the new structure will be located and if that context complements or detracts from the recreation's intended purpose. Obviously, the context at the Spring Hill site is radically different from that at the time of the battle. The area has changed visually, and physically as well. Historic grading at the site for the Central of Georgia Railroad's terminal facilities has changed the site's topography, including its elevation and surrounding contours. Historic relics within the context of a modern city

can often be poignant and important reminders of our past, but the park designer's

must thoroughly examine whether or not rebuilding the redoubt within the site's current

context will fulfil the purpose of the reconstruction. Finally, the visual aesthetic of a

reconstruction should be considered. Several historic buildings are located in close

proximity to the lot in which a reconstructed redoubt would be located. Visual impacts to

these historic resources should be considered. As the site is essentially within the Central

of Georgia Railroad's National Historic Landmark District, effects to that resource are of

paramount importance. In that context, a reconstructed redoubt will be no more than a

large, if not very large, pile of dirt on an otherwise completely flat landscape.

The balance of evidence suggests that the Spring Hill redoubt should not be

reconstructed. No archaeological research can pinpoint the exact location or footprint of

the redoubt, and it is doubtful that sufficient information exists to create an authentic

reconstruction. It is also probable that not enough space exists at the site to build the

redoubt at its appropriate scale. Furthermore, the context is severely altered, and the

antebellum railroad complex might be adversely affected by the construction of the

redoubt.

More appropriate would be a passive use memorial park at the Spring Hill redoubt

site. The park would mimic some landscape features of Savannah's other parks and

historic squares, including the planting of live oaks and some native ornamentals. Rather

than a reconstruction of a redoubt, a major monument and/or sculpture would be the focal

point of the park. This monument, of a traditional design in keeping with Savannah's

other monuments and addressing the graveness of the site's importance, could depict the

attack on the Spring Hill redoubt, or could simply memorialize those who fell during

the fighting. A second important feature of the park would be an interpretive area

explaining the battle as a whole, showing the entirety of the town's defenses, the feint to

open the fighting of the Battle of Savannah, the battle at Spring Hill redoubt, and the

debarkation and embarkation of the French army at Beaulieu. This interpretive area

could consist either of a number of interpretive signs or markers, or a second monument

that in some way depicted an aerial view of the town in 1779. Walkways could connect

the Central of Georgia Railroad facilities to the Visitor's Center, and the immediate

vicinity of monuments could be paved (although paving should be kept to a minimum).

Although such a park may not be considered exciting or 'cutting edge' by modern

standards, it should be considered that the site is being commemorated because of a

rather somber event—hundreds of Americans died there in a disastrous military

engagement. Additional state historical markers might also be placed at additional points

of interest relating to the siege and battle for Savannah, such as at the location of

Beaulieu Plantation (D'Estaing's landing point) and at the location of Huger's initial feint

against the British lines.

In sum, due to the existing context of the Spring Hill site, the commemoration of

the site outweighs the importance of interpreting it on-site. Although interpretation

should obviously be an important consideration when designing a park, it is more

practical to memorialize the event rather than propose an ambitious interpretation

program considering the site's existing limitations. It would be impossible to

appropriately interpret the battle through the recreated redoubt, and thus a memorial park

for the many hundreds who so gallantly gave their lives at that location may prove to

be a more appropriate commemoration.

Figure 10.1: View of Spring Hill Redoubt vicinity

Figure 10.2: View of vacant lot at Spring Hill site
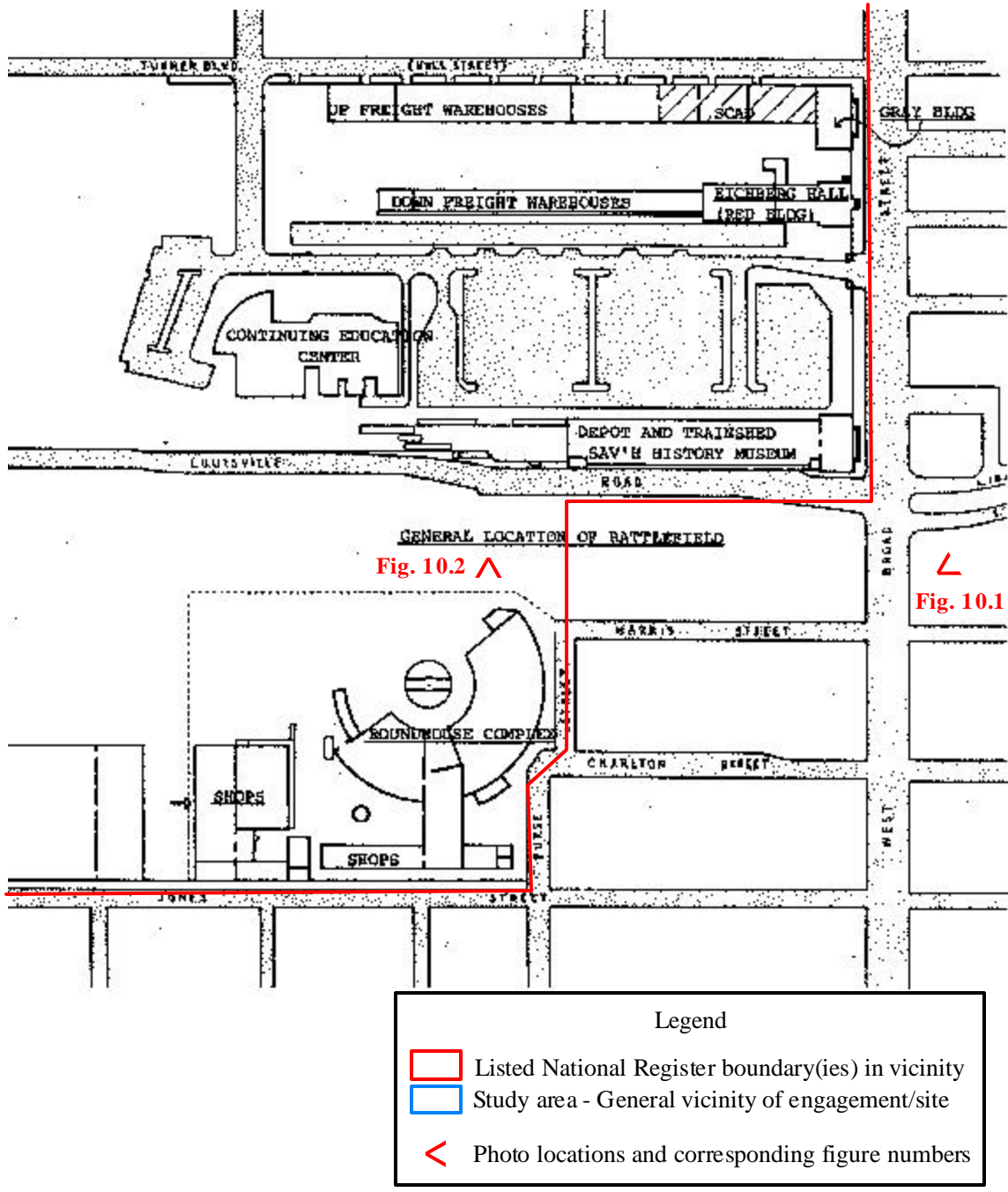
Figure 10.3: Siege and Battle of Savannah Photo Map

Map Source: USGS Quadrangle Map
Savannah, Ga. (1978)
Scale: 1" = approx. 3000'

Fig. 10.2

Fig. 10.1

Legend

☐ Listed National Register boundary(ies) in vicinity
☐ Study area - General vicinity of engagement/site

< Photo locations and corresponding figure numbers
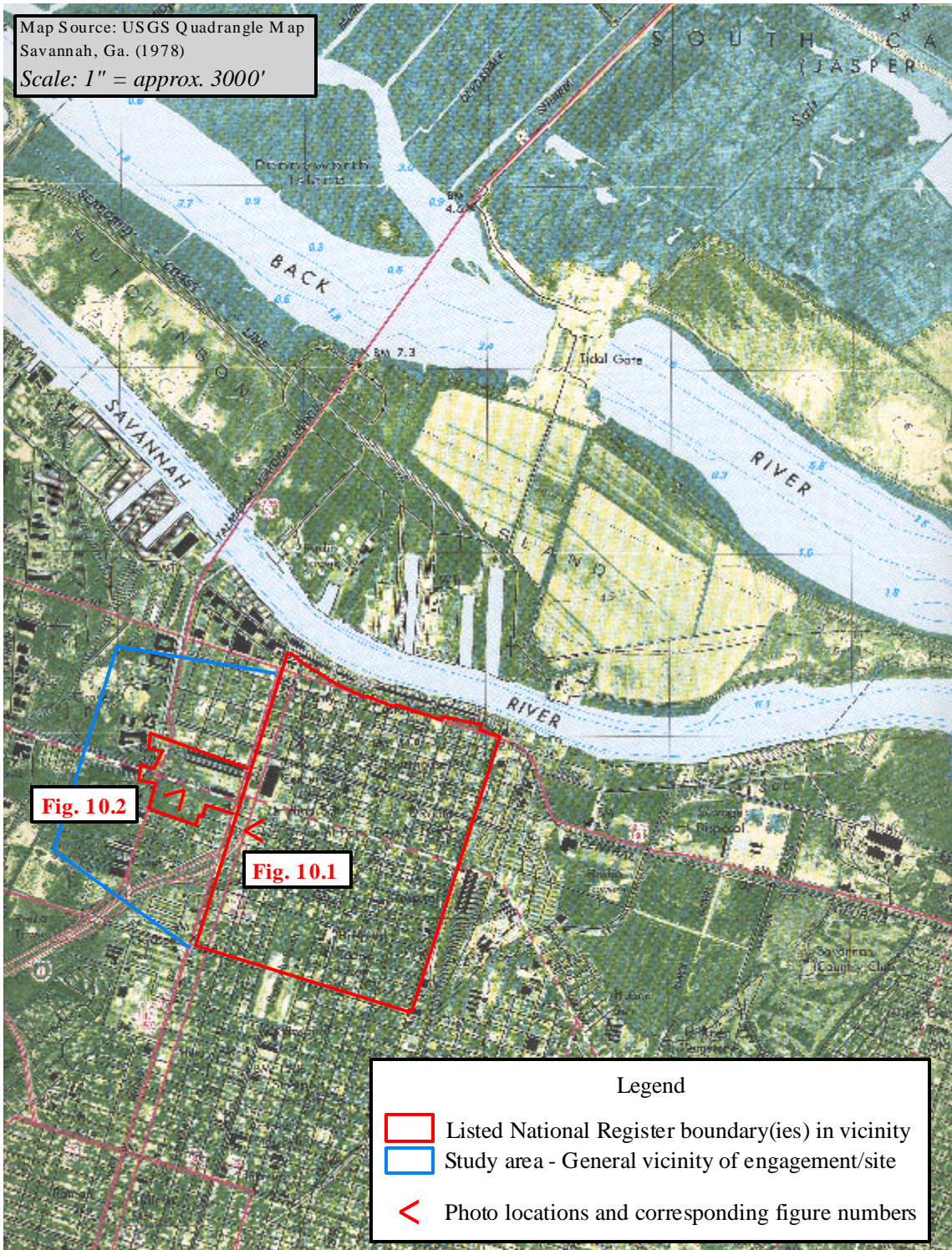
Figure 10.4: Siege and Battle of Savannah Location Map

CHAPTER 11

CASE STUDY: BATTLE OF AUGUSTA (FORT CORNWALLIS)

Description:

In the spring of 1781, with General George Washington cornering British General Lord Cornwallis in Virginia, General Nathanael Greene released Georgia militia under Colonel Elijah Clarke to return to their native state and attempt to relieve British-held Augusta. Unable to attempt the Augusta's two forts without assistance, the Georgians laid siege to the town and waited. Fort Grierson, a fortified house, and the renovated colonial fort, Fort Cornwallis, were under command of British Loyalist Colonel Thomas Brown and garrisoned by Loyalist militia. When joined by an army under Continental General Henry 'Lighthorse' Harry Lee and South Carolina militia General Andrew Pickens, the Americans reduced one fort and then the other, employing a unique artillery tower in the latter case. The sites of both forts and their respective battlefields have long since been absorbed into urban Augusta. No colonial structures of any kind remain in Augusta.

Historical Narrative:

With British General Lord Cornwallis operating in Virginia in late April, 1781, and soon to be confined there, the American high command was able to turn some attention to British held South Carolina and Georgia. As General George Washington and the Marquis de Lafayette dealt with the army of Cornwallis, General Nathanael Greene moved south, intent upon driving the British out of South Carolina. Whig Colonel Elijah Clarke, a native of upcountry Georgia who had been with Greene's command, was eager to return home and try and wrest Augusta from Loyalist militia Colonel Thomas Brown. As the Americans were having success in South Carolina, Greene released Clarke and his men and allowed him to return to Georgia.

When Clarke and his force reentered Georgia that April, he became ill and passed his command to Lieutenant Colonel Micajah Williamson. The militiamen initially dispersed and agreed to reunite when the officers determined the time was appropriate for a move against Augusta (the town had changed hands several times and was currently under Tory control). On April 16th, the men met on the Little River west of Augusta, and, still under the command of Williamson, moved towards the outskirts of the frontier town. Williamson's force was supported by the addition of South Carolina militia under Majors James Jackson and Samuel Hammond. Poorly equipped and lacking any artillery, the American force approached Augusta and prepared to begin siege operations.

Although outnumbered, the American force was able to secure a perimeter around Augusta and prevent any Loyalist troops from entering or leaving the town. The Tories held two strong positions: the old colonial fort, strengthened and renamed Fort

Cornwallis, in the center of the village, and Fort Grierson, a smaller, stockaded house about half a mile west of Fort Cornwallis. Colonel Brown commanded a garrison of 250 militia and 300 Creek Indians at Fort Cornwallis, and Colonel James Grierson held the stockaded fort that bore his name with 80 Georgia Loyalists and four pieces of artillery.[109]

For weeks the Americans held this position, some 1,200 yards from the Tory fortifications, and waited for reinforcements from Greene's army in South Carolina before planning an attack.[110] Growing impatient of inaction and losing confidence in the possibility of reinforcement, many of the militia were contemplating abandoning the operation. Major Jackson, however, implored the men to stay on with a passionate speech, and, on May 15th, Colonel Clarke, recovered from his illness, returned to his command and brought another 100 men with him.[111] This turn of events lifted morale, and the siege continued. However, an assault still depended on reinforcements from Greene.

Help was in route. Greene had been dispersing his top lieutenants and ordered Lieutenant Colonel Henry 'Lighthorse Harry' Lee and militia General Andrew Pickens to support the siege operations against Augusta. This army, moving toward Georgia, included Georgia and South Carolina troops, Lee's Legion of dragoons and infantry, and Major Pinkerthan Eaton's North Carolina infantry. Lee moved ahead of the main force and would arrive in Georgia first.

---

109 Ward and Allen, *The War of the Revolution*, p. 814.
110 Cooper, *The Story of Georgia*, Vol. II, p. 57.
111 Ibid.

In the meantime, Brown and Grierson were not idle while the Americans schemed against them. Brown sent emissaries to treat with the Cherokee Indians but was disappointed. He ordered daring sorties against his besiegers, some of which were successful and netted his force horses and supplies. Brown was also concerned an attempt might be made on the variety of stores held at Fort Galphin, a fortified masonry house located at Silver Bluff, twelve miles south of Augusta. At Fort Galphin were munitions, supplies, and other presents intended for the Indian allies of the British. Brown was able to retrieve munitions from the fortifications and garrisoned that position with a company of rangers under Captain Samuel Roworth.

Further, Brown was hopeful of reinforcements from British-held Savannah. Major Philip Dill was sent by Royal Governor Sir James Wright to collect militia in the countryside north of Savannah and then march north and lift the siege on Augusta. Colonel Clarke, however, anticipated the possibility of reinforcement from the south and sent a force under Captains Isaac Shelby and Paddy Carr to intercept any such reinforcements. Dill was repulsed at Walker's Bridge on Brier Creek and his mission ended, and Shelby and Carr ambushed another party of Tories and Indians at a plantation at New Savannah, just south of Augusta.

By mid-May, with Clarke back in his regular command, Pickens had arrived in the Augusta area, just across the Savannah River in South Carolina. Lee, reinforced by Georgia and South Carolina militia, had arrived in Georgia by forced march, and, as Brown had rightly worried, was anxious to gain the stores held at Fort Galphin south of Augusta. On May 21st, Lee arrived at the fort and quickly attacked it. Splitting his force,

Lee ordered the smaller body of militia to make a feint against one side of the fortification. When the garrison rushed to meet this threat, the main body of regulars attacked the fort, easily taking it. The Americans secured badly needed supplies, arms, and medicines. Following this action, Lee quickly reorganized and moved north to join Pickens, who had subsequently moved across the Savannah River and into Georgia. Pickens and Lee joined Clarke's force at Augusta on the evening of the 21st, and, informing Brown of the arrival of their army, Lee requested his surrender. Brown, however, refused even to make a reply.

On the 22nd, Pickens, Lee, and Clarke surveyed the situation at Augusta and planned the assault that would liberate the town. Lee was surprised to discover that the enemy had divided itself between Fort Grierson and Fort Cornwallis and had no direct means of communication between them. He immediately planned and launched an attack on Fort Grierson. Pickens and Clarke with the militia attacked the fort from the west. Major Eaton's North Carolina regulars and Georgia militia under Major Jackson attacked from the south and supported the militia assault. Lee, with infantry and artillery, moved to the southeast, prepared to support as necessary or intercept Brown coming to the aid of the fort. Cavalry under Captain Joseph Eggleston took a position opposite Fort Cornwallis and were prepared to attack Brown's force from behind should they move from the fort.

The attack was effective. Brown did prepare to come to the aid of Grierson, but, seeing the hopelessness of such an attempt, he could only position artillery and fire on the advancing Americans. Lee's artillery returned fire, but, despite the cannonading, little

effect was made to either side. Fort Grierson was quickly abandoned, and the Tories

suffered heavy casualties. Some, including Grierson himself, were able to escape to Fort

Cornwallis. Although American losses were light compared to those of the Loyalists,

Major Eaton, a popular and promising officer, was among those killed.

Thus, Fort Cornwallis became the final objective in the fight for Augusta. Lee,

considering the strength of the fort, knew a direct assault would be costly. Instead, he

decided upon a siege of the fort and began the task of digging approach trenches the

following day, the 23rd. This tedious task continued for days. By the 27th, trenches to the

east of the fort and those approaching from the west were nearing completion. Within the

western trench, Lee's men were building a 'Maham' tower, a design of South Carolina

Colonel Hezekiah Maham.[112] The tower, successfully employed to reduce Fort Watson

in South Carolina, was a 30-foot tall structure of notched logs, filled with earth and stone,

and topped by a platform mounting a six-pounder cannon—a cannon larger than anything

available to Brown inside Fort Cornwallis. Within the tower were also positions for

riflemen. Brown, deeply concerned over this development, ordered attacks on this

position during the nights of the 28th and 29th, but these sallies were repulsed. Within the

fort, Brown's riflemen were having little luck affecting construction of the tower, as a

wooden house between the fort and tower effectively screened the American engineering.

By June 1st, the Maham tower was completed. Brown had constructed a new

battery at the southwest angle of Fort Cornwallis in which were mounted two cannon to

fire on the tower. On June 2nd, the six-pounder was mounted on top of the Maham tower.

---

112 Cashin, *The King's Ranger*, p. 133-134.

With almost complete command over Fort Cornwallis, the tower gun soon disposed of the two cannon opposing it and began pounding the interior of the fort.

On June 3rd, Lee again requested Brown surrender, and again the Loyalist commander refused. Brown had one last hope: he had ordered most of the remaining houses around the fort burned, but, under one of the remaining houses he had left standing, his troops had tunneled and placed explosives. Brown hoped the Americans might take positions in the houses, and, if so, he would blow them up. It almost worked. Deciding at last to attack the fort directly, Lee made preparations and sent Pickens and some his men to examine the remaining houses and determine if they might lend appropriate shelter during the fighting to come. When one of the houses exploded, although apparently with little harm to the Americans, Lee recognized the trap.

Finally, on the morning of the 4th, just before the assault was to begin, Lee again asked Brown to surrender the fort. This time, his last card played, Brown was willing to consider the offer. Brown did ask for a delay, which Lee understood, as the Tory officer did not wish to surrender on the king's birthday—June 4th. On June 5th, Brown surrendered Fort Cornwallis and thus what was left of Augusta.

Concerned for the safety of the Tory officers, Lee allowed them to surrender inside the fort and then placed them under the protection of a heavy guard. On the 6th, the officers were paroled and sent to Savannah. However, in a brutal act typical of the partisan conflict in upcountry Georgia, Colonel Grierson was murdered while a prisoner by an unbeknownst assailant. Although a bounty was made available for information leading to the arrest of the murderer, no such information would ever be forthcoming.

Significance:

       In April, 1781, as American General Nathanael Greene returned to South Carolina with the intention of expelling the British from that place, he likewise determined it an appropriate time for an invasion of Georgia. Both states had been held by the British for the latter half of the war and had become their stronghold. With British General Lord Cornwallis in Virginia, he left South Carolina and Georgia exposed. General George Washington opposed Cornwallis in Virginia, thereby releasing Greene's force to move south and liberate the British possessions.

       The subsequent invasion of Georgia by American forces under militia Colonel Elijah Clarke, and then Continental Lieutenant Colonel Henry 'Lighthorse' Harry Lee and militia Colonel Andrew Pickens, was the turning point that would eventually confine the British in Georgia to Savannah. Likewise, with Cornwallis cornered at Yorktown, Virginia, and Greene pushing the British back to Charleston in South Carolina, the tide of the war had turned. The Americans now had the momentum in the southern theater, and this momentum would eventually lead to victory and the end of the war. The alleviation of the British hold on Georgia was a significant contribution to this victory.

Site Condition:

       The sites of both Fort Cornwallis and Fort Grierson were long ago absorbed into the urban fabric of Augusta. Saint Paul's Episcopal Church stands at the Fort Cornwallis site, but the current sanctuary dates to early 1900's. A small memorial park to the rear of

Saint Paul's churchyard and immediately at the base of the levee of the Savannah

River, commemorates the church as the site of Fort Cornwallis and the fighting in the

spring of 1781. The park is essentially composed of a granite monument and small

garden. A state historical marker in front of the church also acknowledges Saint Paul's as

the site of the old fort and the scene of fighting during the Revolution. The location of

the Maham tower is the historic City Cotton Exchange (now a museum) and is also

marked by a state historical marker. A city fire station, historic late nineteenth century

houses, and a vacant lot now compose the vicinity of the site of Fort Grierson. A state

historical marker located at the fire station denotes the site as that of Fort Grierson.

Essentially, the entire battlefield of the fight for forts Cornwallis and Grierson now

consists of mixed urban land-uses, including office buildings, institutions, commercial

properties, residential properties, and vacant lots.

National Register Status and Recommendation:

Due to the loss of integrity to the battlefield site, a potential National Register

boundary will most likely be determined by archaeological assessment. However, based

on relatively precise information regarding significant battlefield features, a boundary

could be drawn to incorporate these elements. Such a boundary could be drawn either

along Reynolds Road and include properties north of that road to the Savannah River and

between 13th Street on the west and Gordon Highway on the east, or the boundary could

be drawn to include the discontiguous sites of Fort Grierson at Reynolds and 11th Street

and the 'Maham' tower at Reynolds and 8th Street. Saint Pauls Church, the site of Fort

Cornwallis, is currently listed on the National Register. At this time, a determination for a potential National Register boundary for the siege and battle for Augusta is not possible.

An appropriate National Register archaeological historic district boundary for this battlefield can only be determined following extensive archaeological investigation. It is not unlikely that most archaeological evidence in the area from the Revolutionary-era has been obliterated due to extensive redevelopment of urban Augusta. An appropriate National Register boundary for the siege and battle for Augusta is not considered at this time.

Preliminary Site Recommendation:

As the researcher is unaware of any significant archaeological investigation specifically intended to locate or otherwise record information regarding the fighting at Fort Cornwallis or Fort Grierson, the undertaking of such an archaeological investigation would be worth considering. Regrettably but understandably, archaeological evidence at the sites of the two forts and their related battlefields have likely been damaged as Augusta has grown and multiple structures have been constructed in the areas of the sites. However, determining what information remains and if such information can confirm the exact locations of the forts would be a valuable endeavor. Such an enterprise would be beneficial to the consideration of a more ambitious interpretation program.

Without a thorough archaeological investigation or if such an undertaking proved inconclusive, additional steps could be taken to improve the interpretation and

commemoration of the site. State historical markers in the vicinity interpret the battle

as well or better than any other series of Revolutionary War related markers. Ideally, the

existing memorial park behind Saint Paul's Episcopal Church could be expanded into

existing parking located immediately in front (west) of the park. A substantial historical

marker (larger than the existing state model) could be installed to depict the fighting in its

entirety. However, the researcher concedes that such a modest expansion is unlikely, as

church parking is regularly increased rather than decreased. The Saint Paul's site, as the

site of Fort Cornwallis and the site of an existing memorial park and monument, would

be the most appropriate location for a memorial park.

As the entirety of the battlefields related to the fighting in May and June of 1781

have been built over, a battlefield park in Augusta is unreasonable and, most likely,

unnecessary. Archaeological evidence may be scanty and difficult to obtain. Existing

but unrelated historic structures are also located in the vicinity of the battlefield. With the

existing state historical markers and the small memorial park at Saint Paul's currently in

place, the researcher only suggests modest improvements to the existing condition. (The

researcher does suggest relocation of the Fort Grierson marker [at 11th Street and

Reynolds Street], as its current position is difficult to see.)

Figure 11.1: View at Fort Cornwallis site within downtown Augusta

Figure 11.2: View of Saint Paul's Episcopal Church

Map Source: USGS Quadrangle Map
Augusta East, Ga. (1980)
Scale: 1" = approx. 750'

Broad Street Historic District

Greene Street Historic District

Fig. 11.2

Fig. 11.1

Pinched Gut Historic District

Legend

Listed National Register boundary(ies) in vicinity

Study area - General vicinity of engagement/site

< Photo locations and corresponding figure numbers
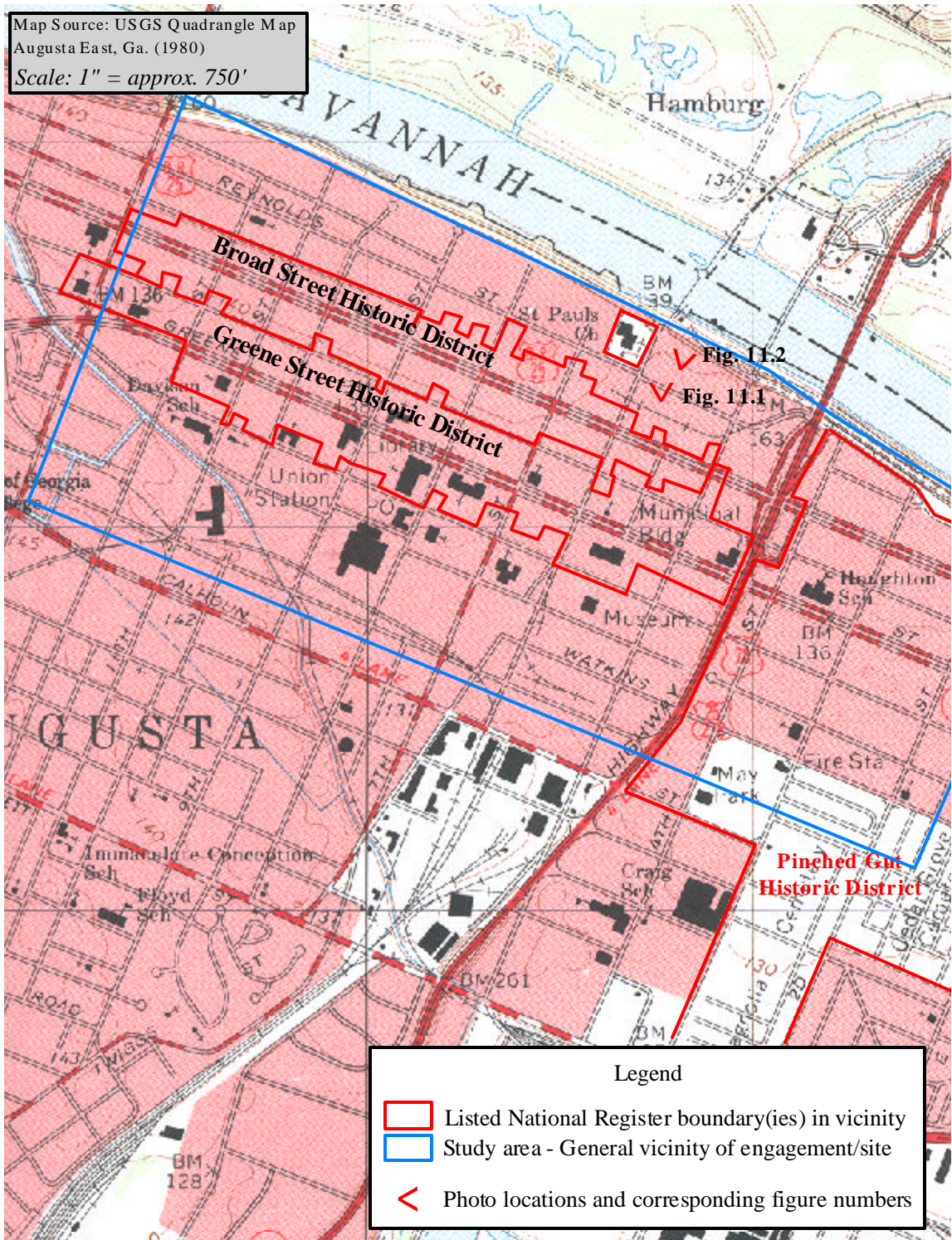
Figure 11.3: Battle of Augusta (Fort Cornwallis) Location Map

CHAPTER 12

CASE STUDY: NEW EBENEZER

Description:

New Ebenezer, one of the many 'dead' colonial towns of Georgia, was located

approximately twenty miles northwest of Savannah. Settled in the 1740's by German

Salzbergers, the town declined following its rough treatment during the Revolutionary

War and did not recover. The town changed hands several times during the war, and

buildings and property were damaged. Many residents of the town fled, and many never

returned. Jerusalem Church (built 1769) is the oldest church building in the state and one

of only a few standing colonial structures. It is the only building remaining from the

colonial town of New Ebenezer and also suffered during the conflict.

Historical Narrative:

The New Ebenezer settlement was originally conceived as a military post by

Georgia's founder, James Oglethorpe. However, the town's founding Salzbergers were

decidedly non-violent and grudgingly accepted their military responsibilities.

At the outset of the Revolution, New Ebenezer became an important Whig stronghold, although sympathies for the British monarchy remained. In March of 1776, the town was fortified by a series of earthworks under the direction of Captain Jacob Walthour. From that point until November of 1778, the town served as a supply depot, storing a variety of munitions, food, and other supplies. The town's magazine held some 7000 weight of gunpowder and was expanded in November of 1778 to accommodate munitions being evacuated from Savannah. During the pivotal year of 1778, the guard at New Ebenezer was increased from 12 to 17 men.[113]

From the outset of hostilities until the British landed at Savannah in November of 1778, New Ebenezer remained an important rebel post. However, after the quick fall of Savannah, New Ebenezer was soon occupied by British troops who were welcomed by the Loyalist sympathizers in the town, including the pastor of Jerusalem Church, Rev. Triebner. Colonel Archibald Campbell, charged with subduing the northern interior sections of Georgia, made New Ebenezer his headquarters. Campbell and a force of some 1000 soldiers left the town on January 24, 1779 and moved north toward Augusta.[114]

Following events in the upcountry, including a brief occupation of Augusta, Campbell eventually fell back and returned to New Ebenezer on February 24, 1779. Campbell's secretary, Ensign John Wilson, was a capable engineer and set about strengthening the town's fortifications. The British were increasingly aware of the

---

113 Elliott, Daniel T., and Rite Folse Elliott, " Archaeological Excavations, New Ebenezer, Georgia, 1992 to 1999," *LAMAR Institute Publication* 18 (in press 2002).

114 Coleman, *A History of Georgia*, p. 73.

American forces occupying Purrysburg, South Carolina, just across and downstream from New Ebenezer. Wilson noted that some 20 houses comprised New Ebenezer at that time, along with the remnants of a failed silk factory, and earthworks that had been established to fortify the town. Under Wilson's direction, Campbell's force constructed new redoubts and posted additional artillery. The British well understood the important link New Ebenezer made in the chain of communications between the Georgia upcountry and British headquarters in Savannah. Although the British had a tenuous hold in the outer reaches of Georgia, maintaining garrisons in southern Georgia, such as at New Ebenezer, held that part of the province under tight British control.

Wilson's improvements to the defenses at New Ebenezer were accomplished during January of 1779. These improvements included a series of redoubts connected by palisade lines that completely encompassed the town and the mouth of Ebenezer Creek. Campbell left the 2nd battalion of the 71st Regiment of Highlanders as a permanent guard to occupy the strategic village. Although most of the soldiers probably lived outside the town in camps, some (most likely the officers) made their quarters in homes in the village, likely to the annoyance of the owners. Again New Ebenezer served as a supply post, but this time for the British. The town also served as a collection point for rebel soldiers captured in engagements in the area. Jerusalem Church, the only contemporary building extant from the Revolutionary period, was extensively used as a hospital, stable, and commissary. In fact, modern parishioners complain that paint will no longer adhere to the church's interior walls due to the British having hung salted meet against them. Bullet holes on the exterior of the building are supposedly remnants of British boredom.

Some accounts indicate that the British occupation of the town may have been disagreeable for some of its residents. Whigs reported the seizure of property by the British and Tory Salzbergers and the burning of houses in town and on outlying plantations owned by rebel sympathizers.[115] The total number of troops occupying the town fluctuated somewhat during this first British occupation of New Ebenezer, but the British command later decided to abandon the post. They burned the magazine and withdrew in early September of 1779.

Soon after the British withdrawal, a large American army under General Benjamin Lincoln and General Lachlan McIntosh camped briefly at New Ebenezer. This relatively sizable force numbered nearly 5,000 men and was preparing to move on British-held Savannah.[116] They were having considerable trouble attempting to cross at Zubly's Ferry and had camped outside New Ebenezer as they commandeered boats and made rafts to effect the slow crossing of the Savannah River.

Following the disastrous but valiant attempt by the combined Franco-American force to retake Savannah in December of 1779, the British reoccupied New Ebenezer on March 6th, 1780 with a force of some 1,500 men under Campbell.[117] Lieutenant Anthony Allaire, of the Loyal American Regiment, made note of the town's 20 houses, church, and the four redoubts and lack of any artillery.[118] In May of 1781, New Ebenezer remained under British control and was garrisoned by 200 Hessians under a Major

---

115 Jones, *Dead Towns*, p. 37.
116 Elliott, " Archaeological Excavations."
117 Ibid.
118 Ibid.

Goebel.[119] Of note, correspondence during this period between officers stationed at New Ebenezer and the British colonial government indicate the use, and probably the frequent use, of slave labor to maintain the town's fortifications.[120]

In December of that same year, British General Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown, Virginia, and the British hold on Georgia grew tenuous as the outcome of the war began to become certain. British and Loyalist troops, as well as Loyalist citizens, evacuated Ebenezer for Savannah, and then Savannah for Florida, and in some cases onward to the Bahama Islands.

In April of 1782, New Ebenezer was again firmly under American control, as General 'Mad' Anthony Wayne and his force occupied the town and made it their headquarters. In May, the British made an unsuccessful cavalry and infantry sortie on New Ebenezer in an attempt to remove Wayne from the town, but the action failed. Also in May of 1782, State Governor John Martin planned to convene the State Assembly at Ebenezer in July. By June, New Ebenezer had effectively become the interim capital of Georgia. The Treaty of Paris in September of 1783 ended the war.

Despite attempts to the contrary, New Ebenezer's decline, which had begun before the war, was only accelerated by the destructive occupations and re-occupations by both armies. Following the war, this state of deterioration slowly vanquished most traces of the colonial city, and New Ebenezer joined the ranks of the many 'dead towns of Georgia.'

---

119 Ibid.
120 Ibid.

Significance:

New Ebenezer served as an important logistical position for both the Americans and British throughout the war. Fortified and refortified, the town served in a variety of capacities for both sides, such as a camp for hundreds of troops, headquarters for operations in the vicinity, hospital, supply warehouse, and armory. This constant 'use' was a detriment to the town. Property was often damaged if not destroyed altogether, and citizens came and went according to the town's current occupants. Many, however, would never return, and the once prosperous village would never recover from its many Revolutionary War-era occupations.

New Ebenezer, one of Georgia's many 'dead' colonial towns, is one of the few places in the state where any contemporary above-ground evidence reminds a visitor of Georgia's Revolutionary past. Jerusalem Church and several portions of the town's original fortifications are intact.

Site condition:

New Ebenezer remains a quiet spot on the Savannah River, bisected by and at the terminus of State Route 275. Jerusalem Church remains the most prominent and important historical structure on the site and possesses two other historic buildings on its campus. A private boat launch is located on the river just north of the church, and a religious retreat center (the New Ebenezer Retreat Center, owned and operated by the Jerusalem Church, New Ebenezer Kessler Trust, and Trustees-Evangelical Lutheran

Churches of Effingham County.), with an extensive campus of its own, is located across the road and to the west from Jerusalem Church. A large cemetery, containing both historic and modern gravesites, is located at the most westernmost end of the New Ebenezer Road. An easily recognizable remnant of the Old Augusta Road is located to the south of and across from the cemetery. A few residential properties are sprinkled around the site, but these residences, as well as the retreat center, are effectively screened from the highway by vegetation and are not obtrusive. The most recognizable land use at New Ebenezer is unmolested forest. Currently, archaeological investigations are taking place on-site under the direction of the LAMAR Institute, a state non-profit organization devoted to studying Georgia's history through archaeology.

Threats to the New Ebenezer site could include looting of archaeological evidence (having already occurred), expansion of the retreat center and/or church without thorough archaeological screening, and additional residential development.

National Register Status and Recommendation:

The site of New Ebenezer is currently listed on the National Register. As most features contributing to the Revolutionary War-era events are included within this boundary, only a minor extension of the current boundary is proposed, namely the inclusion of the Old Savannah Road trace located immediately south of the town site. However, as additional archaeological information becomes available from studies currently underway, the boundary could be expanded as needed.

Preliminary Site Recommendation:

Archaeological investigation is likely to yield a wealth of information regarding the New Ebenezer site and its role during the Revolutionary War. Ideally, the continuation of current archaeological efforts would be extended to cover the entirety of the site. Furthermore, a preservation plan should be developed by local landowners and interested parties to protect the remaining resources at New Ebenezer. Such a plan should consider both the importance of extant cultural resources as well as maintaining the viability of the site as a religious center, a residential neighborhood, and a tourist attraction.

With regards to Revolutionary-era New Ebenezer, archaeological investigation could focus on the town's defenses and the locations of the town wall and redoubts, portions of which remain aboveground. Beyond the town limits, archaeological screening could be undertaken to locate the military camps that were pitched outside the town itself for occupying armies. More thorough historical research may shed additional light on the role New Ebenezer played during the war and direct additional archaeological research.

An interpretative program could be developed to more thoroughly educate visitors both about the old colonial village and its role during the Revolution. On the campus of Jerusalem Church is the Salzberger Museum, providing an opportunity for interpretive displays related to the war. Additionally, historical markers or interpretive signs could be located at various significant portions of the town site. However, any additional markers or signage should be as unobtrusive as possible. Furthermore, any trails to direct persons

to significant points on the New Ebenezer site should be of an impermanent nature. New trails through sensitive areas (such as some of the currently hidden remnants of town fortifications) must be considered carefully to avoid damage to archaeological resources. New Ebenezer does provide additional opportunity for interpretation of Revolutionary events in the area, but, as the site is primarily an archaeological one, great care must be taken to protect the remaining cultural resources on-site.

Figure 12.1: View of Jerusalem Church at Ebenezer

Figure 12.2: View from Jerusalem Church towards Savannah River
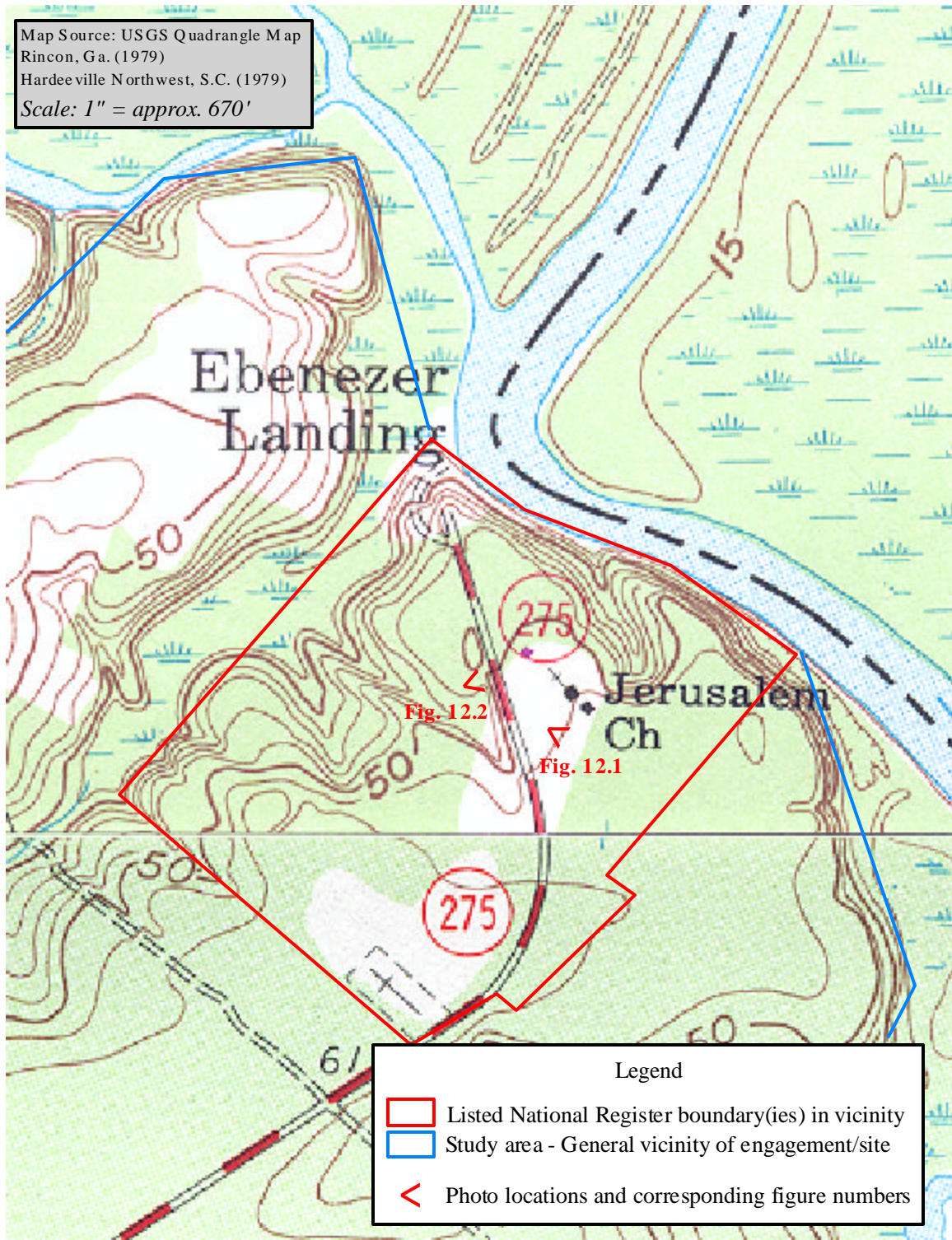
Figure 12.3: New Ebenezer Location Map

CHAPTER 13

CASE STUDY: CHEROKEE FORD

Description:

Cherokee Ford was an important crossing of the Savannah River, connecting upcountry Georgia with upcountry South Carolina. Undoubtedly the scene of many movements by military entities during the Revolutionary War, the site played a significant role in operations leading up to the Battle of Kettle Creek and the occupation of Augusta by British troops. The site, now inundated by the Richard B. Russell Reservoir, was located on river south of Vanns Creek, flowing out of Georgia, and north of Rocky River, flowing out of South Carolina, in Elbert County.

Historical Narrative:

Cherokee Ford, an important colonial crossing on the Savannah River, was located approximately 70 miles north of the frontier town of Augusta, Georgia. The ford was more precisely located within the few miles between the confluence of the Savannah River and Vann's Creek on the north and the confluence of the same river and Rocky

River on the south. The site was inundated by the Richard B. Russell reservoir project in the mid-1980s.

The ford played an important strategic role during the British invasion and conquest of Georgia in 1778 and 1779. With British Colonel Archibald Campbell's occupation of Augusta in January of 1779, that small British army awaited a force of Tory militia from North Carolina moving toward them under Colonel James Boyd. Campbell's hold on Augusta was a nervous one, as Whig movements in South Carolina foreboded an attempt to retake the town. Campbell's military intelligence was sketchy, and he worried the rebel force massing on the opposite side of the Savannah far outnumbered his own.

Boyd, meanwhile, was moving south toward Georgia with about 800 men and had passed through the Long Cane settlement in the 96th District of South Carolina.[121] He reached Cherokee Ford on about February 10th and found the crossing defended by a blockhouse on the Carolina side. The small fortification, known as McGowin's Blockhouse, was located on a hill overlooking the ford and commanded the site entirely. Whig Captain Robert Anderson, who had been monitoring Boyd's movements near the Savannah River, had garrisoned the blockhouse with eight men under Lieutenant Thomas Shanklin.[122] The defenders' orders were to oppose Boyd and prevent his force from

---

121 Davis and Thomas, *Kettle Creek*, p. 33.
122 Kane, Sharyn, and Richard Keeton, *Beneath These Waters: Archaeological and Historical Studies of 11,500 Years Along the Savannah River*, Atlanta: National Park Service – Southeast Region, 1993, p. 164

crossing into Georgia if they evaded pursuing Whigs troops under colonels Andrew

Pickens and John Dooly. The garrison's ordnance included two small swivel cannons.[123]

When Boyd and his relatively sizable force reached Cherokee Ford, he demanded

the rebels abandon the fort and allow their passage into Georgia. Shanklin, in turn,

boldly refused to do either. In the meantime, Shanklin was reinforced by 40 men under

Captain Jason Little, who likewise refused to permit Boyd to pass.[124] Little also sent a

dispatch to Anderson, who was operating in the area, to apprise him of the situation at

Cherokee Ford.

When Boyd insisted the rebels surrender, one account suggests the response was a

cannon shot from the fort.[125] Regardless, Boyd decided not to try the defenses at

Cherokee Ford, and he removed with his force northward and searched for an easier,

uncontested crossing of the Savannah River. His force moved approximately five miles

north to a point on the South Carolina side opposite the mouth of Vann's Creek. Boyd's

men crossed, moving their baggage on rafts and swimming their horses.

Anderson and some 80 men arrived at Cherokee Ford from the South Carolina

side, and, after joining with the 50 already stationed there, crossed into Georgia.[126] The

small force moved north in the hopes of opposing Boyd at Vanns Creek. The Tories

were still moving across the river when Anderson attacked, but the low ground and cane

brakes along the riverbank shielded many of Boyd's men. Some of the Tories were able

123 Boatner, Mark Mayo, *Landmarks of the American Revolution: A Guide to Locating and Knowing What Happened at the Sites of Independence*, Harrisburg, Pa.: Stackpole Books, 1992, p. 79.

124 Davis and Thomas, *Kettle Creek*, p. 34.
125 Kane and Keeton, *Beneath These Waters*, p. 164.
126 Ibid., p. 165.

to cross the river behind Anderson and attack. Faced with overwhelming numbers on either side, Anderson fell back, with one man killed, fifteen wounded, and eighteen captured. Boyd may have lost as many as 100 men, but most of these were likely deserters.[127] Anderson retreated to Cherokee Ford and then to rejoin Pickens' main force.

Pickens and Dooly were moving in the 96th District in South Carolina and crossed back into Georgia at Cedar Shoals. After being reinforced by Anderson's retreating men, Pickens had about 400 men to place between Boyd and his likely objective—Campbell's British army at Augusta.[128] The rebels marched to Fish Dam Ford on the Broad River on February 12th.

Significance:

Cherokee Ford was a prominent crossing on the Savannah River and linked the upcountry of Georgia with the same of South Carolina. The ford played a significant role in military operations in the area as troops moved back and forth across the river. The ford played a particularly prominent role during the British invasion of Georgia, as Colonel Boyd marched Loyalists out of the Carolinas to meet Campbell near Augusta. The Whigs garrisoning Cherokee Ford refused to let Boyd cross and then made an attempt to stop his force at Vanns Creek.

---

127 Davis and Thomas, *Kettle Creek*, p. 36.
128 Ibid.

Site Condition:

The site of Cherokee Ford was inundated by the construction of the Richard B. Russell Reservoir in 1980's. The site is now completely underwater.

National Register Status and Recommendation:

The site of Cherokee Ford has been completely inundated by the Richard B. Russell Reservoir and dam project. Therefore, no National Register boundary is proposed.

Preliminary Site Recommendation:

The researcher recommends several historical markers be placed in the vicinity of Cherokee Ford and Vanns Creek to commemorate the importance of the sites and the actions that took place there. Historical markers should be placed as close to the sites as possible, as well as additional markers on well-traveled through routes to indicate to passersby the close proximity of the significant historic sites. The researchers suggests placing additional markers on State Route 72 at Richard B. Russell Reservoir (Savannah River) to locate markers acknowledging both the important sites to the north of the highway and bridge.

Barring the draining of the lake or underwater archaeological investigation, the latter of which would likely provide little additional information, Cherokee Ford will not produce any physical evidence to enhance our understanding of the Revolution in

Georgia or provide significant opportunities for historical interpretation. However,

the researcher suggests the location of historical markers in the vicinity of Cherokee Ford

and Vanns Creek would be a poignant reminder of the variety and significance of

resources lost when river valleys are flooded for reservoirs.

Figure 13.1: View of Richard Russell Reservoir at Vanns Creek

Figure 13.2: View of Richard Russell Reservoir at Rocky River
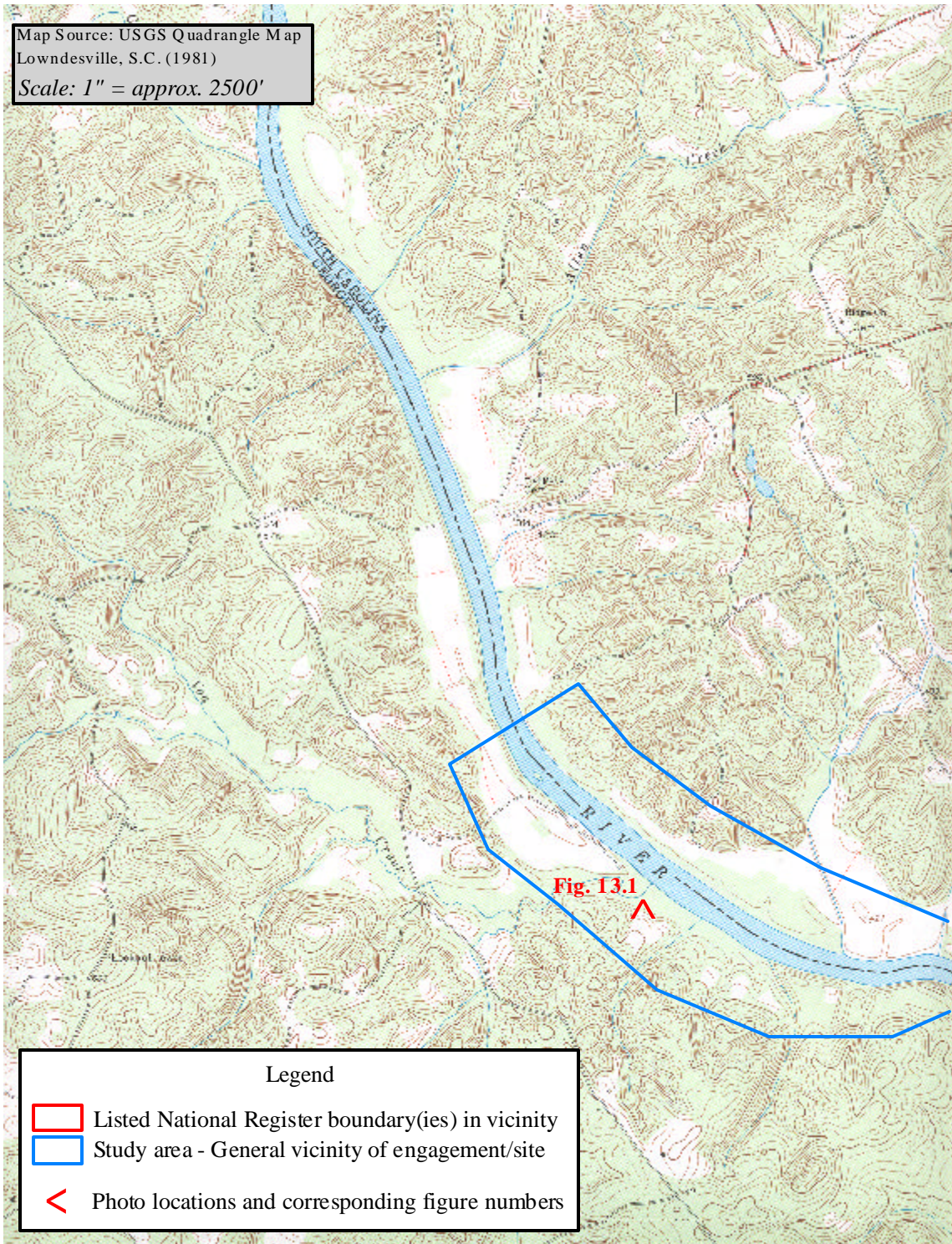
Figure 13.3: Cherokee Ford - Vanns Creek Location Map

Fig. 13.2

Map Source: USGS Quadrangle Map
Heardmont, Ga. (1981)
Scale: 1" = approx. 2500'

Legend

Listed National Register boundary(ies) in vicinity

Study area - General vicinity of engagement/site

< Photo locations and corresponding figure numbers
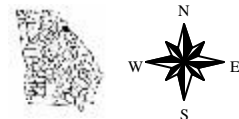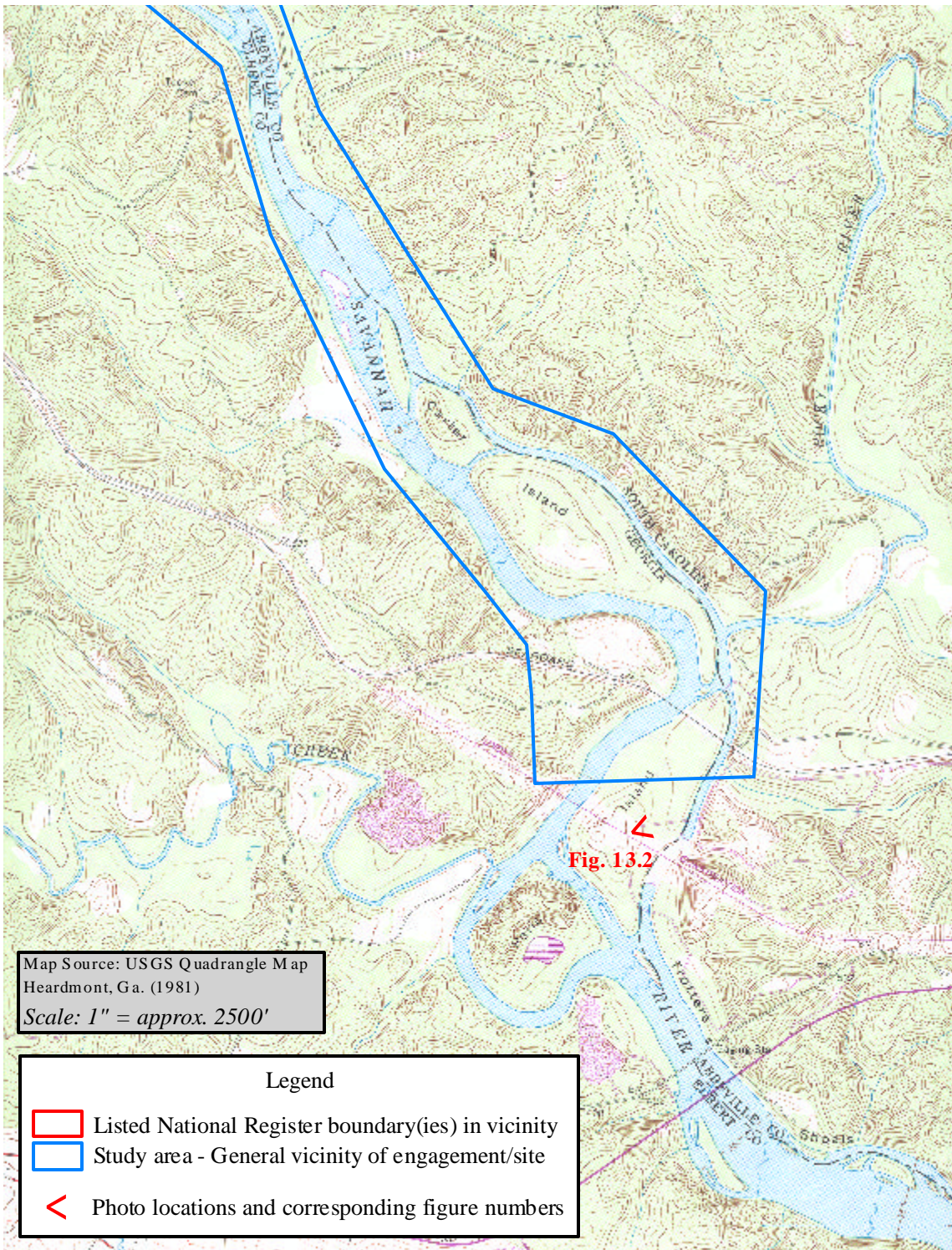
Figure 13.4: Cherokee Ford - Rocky River Location Map
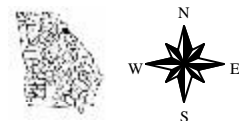
CHAPTER 14

CONCLUSION

Revolutionary War sites in Georgia exist in a variety of conditions, but their

collective lack of recognition does not bode well for their preservation, protection, or

commemoration. Although all the sites considered here were either compromised by

physical changes to the landscape or have not yet been confirmed at their understood

locations, all the sites lack the recognition deserved by events that led to the

independence of the United States.

Based on the sites considered in this study, the researcher does not propose a

sweeping program to accomplish the preservation of the Revolutionary War sites

considered. Rather, modest measures could be undertaken to commemorate the events

and/or sites. To raise the awareness of the public, the researcher proposes a series of state

historical markers to commemorate Revolutionary War sites throughout the state. These

markers will educate the public, relate events at the site within the context of the war, and

recognize the significance of the site within the context of the significance of the

Revolution itself. Furthermore, markers would be a sensible and inexpensive alternative

to the possible acquisition of some sites, particularly those where acquisition would be

neither prudent nor feasible because of site integrity issues.

The potential for real estate acquisition may prove problematic in many cases. The historical record and archaeological investigation may not prove conclusive in many cases, particularly when considering smaller actions in rural areas. Before the federal or state government should consider the acquisition of any particular site, a more thorough historical and archaeological investigation than attempted here should be conducted. The researcher believes these efforts would not only justify the nature of the acquisition but provide the basis for the site's interpretation. Importantly, the researcher believes that such investigations need not prove precisely the exact locations of troop movements or artillery placement, but should provide a relatively accurate estimate of the battlefield boundaries. Although the researcher hoped to provide some of this information, readily available primary and secondary source material generally lacked enough specific information to conclusively locate the sites. Often, the dramatic changes to the local landscape made precise determinations difficult if not impossible. When acquisition is considered an option, additional real estate laws and methodologies might prove useful in the protection of the site.

Even if sites cannot always be located conclusively (and it should be understood that some sites may never be, the researcher believes commemoration should be the primary concern when considering Revolutionary War sites in Georgia. The lack of integrity of a site should not be considered a legitimate reason to ignore its existence. The use of historical markers and monuments is an excellent way to remind the public of today of important events in our past, and the Revolution is certainly an important event worthy of commemoration.

Briefly, preliminary recommendations for each site are summarized below:

Battle of the Rice Boat (Savannah, Chatham County): The site is largely composed of the historic center of Savannah and Hutchinson Island, located immediately to its east. The site is not listed on the National Register. Although a potential National Register boundary is described, it is considered problematic. An archaeological investigation is suggested. Historical markers and/or interpretive plaques are proposed at important points in the battlefield vicinity to relate the event to the public and denote the site's historic significance.

Capture of Hinchinbrooke *and* Rebecca *(Frederica, Saint Simons Isl., Glynn County):* This maritime action took place in the Frederica River, just west of the colonial village of Frederica (now ruins). The Frederica site is listed in the National Register and is administered by the National Park Service as a National Historic Monument. The researcher proposes the inclusion of this event in the site's interpretive program and the erection of additional historical markers and/or interpretive signs to acknowledge the action.

Capture of Savannah-Battle of Brewton Hill (Glynn County): This battle took place east of Savannah, between that town and Tybee Island. The site is not listed on the National Register and, due to site integrity issues, may be an unlikely candidate for listing. Historical markers are proposed to acknowledge the historical significance of the location.

Sunbury-Fort Morris (Liberty County): Sunbury village and Fort Morris are located on the Medway River in eastern Liberty County. Fort Morris is listed as an archaeological site in the National Register and managed as a state historic site by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. Based on Sunbury's historical significance and the likelihood of extant archaeological evidence, the researcher proposes additional archaeological investigation and possibly the expansion of the National Register boundary to include the site of the village. Additional historical markers and/or interpretive plaques are proposed.

Capture of Augusta-Campbell's Augusta Campaign: Campbell's route is located within the Georgia counties comprising the Savannah River valley between Savannah and Augusta. The campaign's origin, the site of New Ebenezer, and portions of Augusta, the campaign's target, are listed on the National Register. No sites are specifically listed for their role in the Augusta campaign and listings for this reason are not proposed. A series of historical markers are proposed to mark the route of Campbell's Augusta campaign.

Battle of Kettle Creek (Tyrone Vicinity, Wilkes County): The site of the battle of Kettle Creek is located southwest of Washington, near Tyrone. The site is listed in the National Register and a modest boundary increase is proposed. The Kettle Creek site may be a viable candidate for acquisition. Additional interpretive elements are suggested, including historical markers and/or interpretive plaques.

Battle of Brier Creek (Sylvania, Screven County): The site of the Battle of Brier Creek is not listed on the National Register. A small boundary incorporating the current

memorial park is proposed. Additional archaeological investigation is also proposed

and may lead to additional boundary increases. The Brier Creek site may be a viable

candidate for acquisition. Additional interpretive elements are suggested, including

historical markers and/or interpretive plaques.

Battle (Siege) of Savannah-Spring Hill (Chatham County): The site of the Spring

Hill redoubt, the most important component of the battlefield of the 1779 siege of

Savannah, is surrounded by National Historic Landmark districts. The researcher

proposes the inclusion of the Spring Hill site within one of these districts as a

contributing historic element of the fabric of the City of Savannah. Current efforts are

underway to commemorate the site with a memorial/interpretive park. The researcher

supports this effort and suggests interpretive efforts be of a restrained nature. Recreated

landscape elements are components that should be considered carefully during park

design. Monuments, historical markers, and interpretive plaques are proposed within the

memorial park.

Battle of Augusta (Fort Cornwallis): The siege and attack on forts protecting

Augusta occurred within the current downtown area. Various sections of the oldest parts

of Augusta are listed on the National Register, and some likely incorporate portions of

the Augusta battlefield. The site of Fort Cornwallis, historic Saint Paul's Epsicopal

Church, is also individually listed. Eventual archaeological investigation may warrant

expansion of these boundaries. Additional historical markers and/or interpretive signs are

proposed. An existing, small memorial park at the Fort Cornwallis site could be

improved and possibly expanded, or a separate and new memorial park could be established within Augusta near the battle site.

New Ebenezer (Effingham County): New Ebenezer, one of Georgia's many 'dead' colonial towns, is located on the Savannah River, northwest of Savannah. The town site is listed as an archaeological resource in the National Register, and a modest expansion of this boundary is proposed. Ongoing and additional archaeological investigation may warrant additional expansion of these boundaries. Development of a preservation and interpretive program is proposed and may included additional historical markers and/or interpretive plaques.

Cherokee Ford (Elbert County): This old colonial river ford on the Savannah River east of Elberton lies at the bottom of the Richard Russell Reservoir. The site is not listed on the National Register and inclusion is not proposed. Historical markers near the site are proposed to recognize its significance.

Revolutionary War battlefields and sites in Georgia, although generally of modest size, are a diverse group of resources, each with unique attributes and varying possibilities for preservation, protection, or commemoration. Attempts at protecting or memorializing all or portions of a particular site will likely prove as diverse as the sites themselves. Various site conditions will lead to differing approaches to real estate acquisition or protection or, in several cases, prove to be a moot point. Methods of interpretation will also vary according to the condition of the landscape. The political climate within a particular municipality and the local interest in preserving cultural resources therein will also undoubtedly prove to be an important factor when considering

the protection of a battlefield. Likewise, the economic condition of a municipality or region will likely play a role when determining the possibilities for local battlefield preservation. Any person interested in protecting or commemorating a battlefield in Georgia should set reasonable goals and be sensitive to local interests.

The following sections include information related to land acquisition and protection in Georgia, comments on interpretive treatments related to battlefields, the potential economic benefits of battlefield preservation and commemoration, and the basic role and benefits of local public involvement.

Using Existing Laws to Preserve and Protect Battlefields

Federal and state laws and case law, most of the latter relating to real estate, provide a variety of means through which Revolutionary War battlefields in Georgia could be potentially acquired and preserved or protected. Many of these laws are applicable to significant cultural resources in general but could easily be applied to battlefields.

One method for battlefield preservation is the national, state, or local government's assertion of its right of eminent domain. Georgia law provides that "the right of eminent domain is the right of the state, through its regular organization, to reassert, either temporarily or permanently, its dominion over any portion of the soil of the state on account of public exigency and for the public good." The right of a government to assert eminent domain to acquire a battlefield property was upheld by the United States Supreme Court following an act of Congress approved in March of 1893.

This act appropriated monies in order to memorialize the field at Gettysburg. The proposed undertaking would require almost the entire field of operations at Gettysburg and a tremendous expenditure on the part of the government to acquire this land. Ultimately, the money was short and the time nigh, and Congress gave authority to the then Secretary of War to condemn lands in order to keep the battlefield intact. Thus, battlefield preservation became a bona fide public use and passed Constitutional muster. An interesting aside in this case was a correlation drawn by the Court considering the power of Congress to take land for battlefield parks resting on the same footing as the right of Congress to take land "for the burial of deceased soldiers ... and is connected with and springs from the same powers of the Constitution."

Another case with implications for battlefield preservation in Georgia is *Flaccomio v. Mayor and City Council of Baltimore*. In this case, the City of Baltimore wished to condemn land surrounding the Star Spangled Banner House in order to create a 'symbolic park or memorial.' The house itself was where Mary Pickersgill "made, or started to make, the flag which flew over Fort McHenry during the bombardment by the British in 1814" and was seen by and inspired Francis Scott Key to write the Star Spangled Banner. This case actually involved not the house but the property *around* the house. The Court of Appeals of Maryland decided that although no battle had been fought on the spot, in the days of 1814, when Baltimore was expecting momentarily an attack which might destroy the city, the citizens had rallied to defend their city, and here was commenced the making of the flag which caused the writing of our National Anthem. To make a symbolic memorial of the ground was a fitting way to impress upon

the present and future citizens of Baltimore the connection of the city with the flag and

its anthem. The court stated that they had "no hesitation in holding that the purpose of the

condemnation was for a public use." Herein, we see the appropriate state condemnation

of private property surrounding an important historic site and the possible use of such

property by a private association rather than just the state itself. This case sets precedent

then for the possibility of condemning land around battlefields in order to preserve the

integrity of land on which the actions were actually fought and also for such

condemnation and the subsequent use by a private association for public benefit.

Thus, precedents have been set for the state's assertion of its powers of eminent

domain over lands upon which battles have been fought and over lands otherwise

associated or surrounding these primary sites. These precedents have been exercised and

can be continually exercised by our National and state governments with regard to

battlefield preservation, but one could also encourage local municipalities to take the

same steps and utilize the same precedents. In a recent case here in Georgia, the Superior

Court of Athens-Clarke County upheld the condemnation of property by a local

municipality for historic preservation purposes in *Unified Government of Athens-Clarke

County v. 1.8308 Acres of Land*. In this case, the court stressed that "historic

preservation has long been recognized as an important public purpose by the United

States Congress as well as the United States Supreme Court" as underscored by the

National Historic Preservation Act. The court also emphasized that it should not

"interfere with a condemning authority's exercise of discretion absent bad faith." In this

case, the court ruled the action was in good faith and it was upheld. Therefore, should a

local municipality consider preserving a site of what it deems unusual historical interest, it could proceed with good conscience and condemn property associated with such a site as long as the action was in good faith and the historical significance of the site well established.

Often, a government will first work through a series of devices to preserve properties and then exercise its powers of eminent domain only once these devices have been exhausted without success. One method, and again one that seems simple at first, is a government's ability to purchase outright or lease property of or relating to a battlefield, but the complexity here is that a government must authorize itself or have given authority to a government agency to purchase or lease such property. The Historic Sites Act of 1935 establishes that "it is a national policy to preserve for public use historic sites, buildings and objects of national significance for the inspiration and benefit of the people of the United States" and gives the Secretary of the Interior power to acquire such properties by gift or purchase of title (or condemnation, if necessary). This authority is unusual in that most Federal acquisitions for resource protection purposes are done under authorizing legislation for each particular area to be acquired.[129] Thus, the Secretary has been enabled to protect resources he or she deems appropriate through a variety of acquisition methods subject to appropriations made by Congress, but the key is the enabling act itself and the discretionary authority it provides. The authority delegated by

---

129 Hamlin, Lars A. "Federal Framework for Historic Landmark Protection" in *Real Estate Law and Practice, Course Handbook Series, No. 168: Historic Preservation Law,* chmn. Nicholas Robinson, (Practicing Law Institute, 1979), p. 33.

this act passed Constitutional muster, but the powers given to the Secretary in the act

have been limited to the National Historic Landmark program as part of the National

Historic Preservation Act of 1966. Therefore, if the Secretary determined that a

battlefield in Georgia was significant enough to warrant government acquisition as a

National Historic Landmark (or was convinced of such), then subject to the Historic Sites

Act of 1935 and the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, he or she could begin the

process of obtaining the land and lobby Congress for appropriations to purchase or lease

such property.

In Georgia, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) would operate to

preserve historic sites of primarily state significance. The DNR is charged with several

duties with regard to historic sites and properties in Preservation of Historic Properties,

including promoting and increasing:

> knowledge and understanding of the history of this state from the earliest times to
> the present, including archeological, Indian, Spanish, colonial, and American eras,
> by adopting and executing general plans, methods and policies for permanently
> preserving and marking objects, sites, areas, structures, and ruins of historic or
> legendary significance, such as ... mountains, valleys ... places of treaties ...
> cemeteries and burial mounds; and battlefields, fortifications and arsenals.

Hence, battlefields are well in the scope of the DNR's preservation duties and

responsibilities. These duties are confirmed as official state policy, whereby it is

declared to be the public policy of the State of Georgia, in furtherance of its responsibility

to "promote and preserve the health, prosperity, and general welfare of the people, to

encourage the preservation of historic properties which have historical, cultural, and

archaeological significance to the State." Therefore, should the DNR determine or be

convinced of a battlefield's "significance to the State," then the Department can begin the

process by which it should acquire the property. The typical means and method by

which the DNR would acquire and use such property would be the creation of a state park

or recreational area, defined as any land which, by reason of "natural features or scenic

beauty, with or without historical, archaeological, or scientific buildings or other objects

thereon, possesses distinctive, innate or potential physical, intellectual, creative, social, or

other recreational or educational value or interest." Battlefields would certainly fit into

this definition and could be identified by the State whereby "the department shall also

conduct a survey to identify land suitable and desirable for acquisition by the state as part

of the state park system, due consideration being given to scenic, recreational, historical,

archeological, and other special features." The ever important enabling language for

proper state acquisition of historic property is also found in this Code section and

provides the Department "to acquire in the name of the state, by purchase, lease,

agreement, or condemnation, such land within the state as it may deem necessary or

proper for the extension of the state park system" and:

> To accept in its discretion, in fee or otherwise, land entrusted, donated, or devised
> to the state by the United States government, by a political subdivision of the
> state, or by any person, firm, association, or corporation, with the intent that the
> land shall become a part of the state park system.

The DNR is also authorized to receive monies from local municipalities in order to

purchase properties and add to the park system. Thus, we have seen that the Department

of Natural Resources is authorized to increase the state park system through a variety of

means, any of which could be easily applied to the acquisition of battlefield properties.

Over the years, the State of Georgia has provided other means by which historic

property could be protected and preserved. One such means is the Heritage Trust Act of

1975, which created a Heritage Trust Commission, the duties of which were transferred to the Department of Natural Resources in 1988. The Heritage Trust Act noted that certain property in Georgia, because it exhibited unique natural characteristics, special historical significance, or particular recreational value, constituted a valuable heritage which should be available to all Georgians, now and in the future. The General Assembly concluded that much of this property, because of Georgia's rapid progress over the past decade, had been altered, that its value as part of our heritage had been lost, and that such property which remained was in danger of being irreparably altered. The General Assembly then declared that an urgent public need to preserve important and endangered elements of Georgia's heritage existed, so as to allow present and future citizens to gain an understanding of their origins and their roots in the culture of the past. Thus, the Heritage Trust Program should seek to protect this heritage through the acquisition of interests in valuable properties and by utilization of other available real estate acquisition methods. Such 'valuable properties' can be any significant historical site or property, such as any battlefield would be construed, and will be converted to a 'Heritage Preserve' defined as "an area of land, marsh, or water which has been identified by the board (of the DNR) as having significant historical, natural, or cultural value ... to which the state holds fee simple title" or a lesser interest in. The Board of the DNR is therefore charged to acquire such properties as provided by law, and the preserves themselves, once acquired, shall be "put to the designated use or uses which confer the best and most important benefit to the public." One can easily see how battlefield

preservation could be affected through the provisions of this act and that the Board

would certainly recognize practically any battlefield as having significant historic

interest.

Another method by which the State gives provision to protect historic properties

is through regional authorities that can act on behalf of the state. One such authority is

the North Georgia Mountains Authority, created by the General Assembly and

administered by the Department of Natural Resources. This authority may acquire, hold,

and dispose of real property; may exercise the power of eminent domain; may accept loan

or grants from the United States government; may receive gifts or donations; and may do

any other things necessary or proper to beautify, improve, and render projects self-

supporting. The authority may undertake a wide variety of projects, but among them, the

acquisition, maintaining, and managing of 'historic sites and attractions' are provided for.

Such an authority would be an excellent way for local municipalities, perhaps in

partnership, to recognize and preserve sites or battlefields of local or regional

significance. The regional authority, through enabling legislation enacted by the General

Assembly, would have the ability to acquire and create a park of its own volition and

capacity.

If a government or its entities could not afford to purchase or lease properties

associated with a battle or battlefield, or could not realize its power of eminent domain,

or could not afford to purchase or lease properties surrounding such a site that upon

development would alter the nature of the site, then the procurement of conservation

easements would become relevant. An open space or scenic easement, obviously the

most profitable for battlefield preservation, would strip all or some of the development

rights associated with a parcel of land from the fee.[130] This easement then would have

value, and the donation of such would have tax benefits for the grantor, or a government

agency could purchase an easement at lesser cost than purchasing a property or leasing it.

In an easement, the grantor may agree to allow certain activities to take place on the

property, too meet certain obligations, or to refrain from certain activities that affect the

integrity of the property, whereas the grantee accepts responsibility for the easement.[131]

Thus, the government agency, or perhaps a private non-profit group wishing to protect

battlefields, could purchase or receive, or otherwise possess, an easement on endangered

battlefield property. In Georgia, easements can be granted in order to preserve historical,

architectural, archeological, or cultural aspects of real property, but they cannot be

created, altered, or affected by condemnation. Other lesser interests a government entity

or private non-profit could use to protect battlefield properties are attaching covenants

and restrictions on developing such properties at the time of their conveyance. Such

devices can be highly successful *if* they are transferable beyond the immediate transferee

and thereby ride with the land. Otherwise, they are only a momentary solution— but

perhaps an effective tool none the less. If a government agency, non-profit organization,

or person might donate land associated with a battle or battlefield to another government

agency or foundation, the donor might also attach conditions to these properties that will

---

130 Brenneman, Russell L. "Techniques for Controlling the Surroundings of Historic Sites." *Duke University School of Law: Law and Contemporary Problems: Historic Preservation*. Vol. 36, No. 3 (Summer 1971), 417.

131 "Establishing an Easement Program to Protect Historic, Scenic and Natural Resources." *National Trust for Historic Preservation Information Sheet*, No. 25 (1980), 4.

ensure their protection, but if the conditions are not met or sustained, then the title will

likely revert to the original holder. The above devices then are not perfect but are

legitimate and often highly effective tools in protecting battlefield properties, or any such

historical property.

Another highly effective tool for protecting historic sites that could be easily used

on areas contained within or without battlefield areas are historic districts. In Georgia,

ordinances are locally drafted and applied, but their origin is the National Historic

Preservation Act of 1966, which eventually gave birth to the Georgia Historic

Preservation Act. This act declared that the General Assembly found that the historical,

natural, and aesthetic heritage of Georgia was among its most valued and important

assets, and that the preservation of this heritage was essential to the promotion of the

health, prosperity, and general welfare of the people. Therefore, in order to protect and

enhance the state's historical and aesthetic attractions to tourists and visitors and thereby

promote and stimulate business in Georgia's cities and counties, the General Assembly

established a procedure for use by each county and municipality in the state in enacting

ordinances providing for the protection, enhancement, perpetuation, and use of "places,

districts, sites, buildings, structures, and works of art having a special historical, cultural,

or aesthetic interest or value." This act allows for the designation of historic districts,

described as "geographically definable" areas, "urban or rural, which contain structures,

sites, works of art, or a combination thereof, having special character or special historical

or esthetic interest or value." Certainly then battlefields could be considered historic

districts and offered the same protections any other historic district in a municipality

would receive (assuming, of course, the municipality containing such property had initiated local ordinances providing for historic districts). The Georgia Historic Preservation Act provides for a commission to oversee local implementation and to enforce and act in a judicial capacity to determine alterations to properties designated as historic or contained within districts. According to the scope of protections afforded by local ordinance, these protections could be applied to a district encompassing a battlefield, parts of a battlefield, land surrounding a battlefield, or a combination thereof. Of note, the right of a municipality to regulate land use was upheld in the landmark Supreme Court case *Euclid v. Ambler Realty Co.*, and the right of a municipality to enforce a local historic preservation ordnance was likewise upheld in *Penn Central Transportation Company v. New York City.* These cases set precedents in the often contentious legal arena of 'takings law,' an area constantly debated in courts still today.[132]

Lastly, one could look at the creative application of existing laws or the development of partnerships with organizations having different but mutually beneficial goals. For instance, on a battlefield where graves may be located, various state laws regarding cemetery identification and protection could be applied. One could also look to the Georgia Scenic Trails Act, an act essentially charging the Department of Natural Resources with creating a system of bike trails through the state but without use of the powers of eminent domain. In such a case, a local non-profit might like to protect small

---

132 Gilliam, Catharine M., "Takings Law: Fact and Fiction," *Cultural Resource Management Magazine: Altogether Fitting and Proper: Saving America's Battlefields*, Vol. 20, No. 5 (1997).

amounts of land adjacent to a battlefield park but does not have the money. What is to stop this group from lobbying the DNR to use its means to create a bike trail around the park, thereby adding to its recreational value and protecting some property? A number of other acts could probably be applied in the same way, if those who wish to protect such resources are aware of the variety of means provided by the state that could be creatively used to accomplish their original goals and some beyond. Most recently, the state has established the Georgia Greenspace Program by which urban or urbanizing counties are eligible to receive state funding to preserve open space within their municipal boundaries. This program could easily be applied to battlefields in any case where a site is located on open property and would be preserved as open space or parkland. Finally, persons interested in preserving battlefield property should also be open to partnerships with organizations that have different purposes but similar goals. For instance, the Trust for Public Land and The Nature Conservancy are organizations that strive to protect land through acquisition. The Trust for Public Land might wish to protect land for its natural or cultural value, or its value as open space within an urban context, and may wish to make such land available to the public. The Nature Conservancy might wish to protect land primarily for its ecological importance. If battlefields are located in areas other organizations might be sympathetic to, battlefield preservationists can consider developing relationships with such organizations in the hopes of mutually beneficial outcomes.

Interpretation Treatments and Economic Benefits

Issues relating to the historic landscape have been addressed on a case-by-case basis above. At several of the sites, the historic landscape has been obliterated and its significance lost. In these cases, interpretation of the landscape is either difficult or irrelevant. However, generally speaking, where historic landscapes have remained intact, modest interpretive signage and its unobtrusive placement has been proposed. This treatment has been proposed to avoid cluttering the visual field and harming the site's remaining historic integrity. In some cases, it may be possible (although perhaps a tremendous undertaking) to 'restore' portions of the historic landscape. This endeavor should be considered carefully, as both proponents and opponents of this treatment argue over its validity. The author agrees with the more "honest" approach of interpreting the multiple layers of a historic landscape as a "continuum."[133] The goal of historic landscape restoration is to make the landscape appear as it did at a particular moment in time—in the case of a battlefield, as it looked during the battle. Regarding the Revolutionary War sites in Georgia, little primary documentation exists to accurately portray *any* of the battlefield landscapes. Furthermore, as a natural landscape is in a constant state of flux, the maintenance of a 'fixed' landscape is difficult at best. This maintenance would prove costly and would be inappropriate if a landscape restoration was based on conjecture. However, the author would agree that restoration could have

---

133 Birnbaum, Charles A., "Treatments for Historic Battlefield Landscapes," *Cultural Resources Management* Vol. 20 No. 5 (1997), p. 21.

significant value if enough documentary evidence could be provided to substantiate

the undertaking. Thus, no efforts to restore a landscape should be attempted unless

significant documentary evidence exists to support the restoration, and any restoration

based on conjecture should be avoided. Legal protection of a battlefield site should be

acquired first and foremost and followed by intensive research to determine if a

landscape restoration is even possible based on documentary evidence.

Potential may exist for more creative landscape treatments at sites where

landscape restoration or maintenance of the existing landscape conditions are undesirable

or not feasible. Non-traditional monuments or designed landscape elements could be

installed at certain sites. Such features would rely more on their creative design to

interpret events than monument text or traditional signage. These creative, possibly

artistic, landscape features might provide an emotional link to the landscape and events

where traditional interpretive elements might fail. A visitor might pause to reflect on the

events that occurred at a particular site, rather than read one interpretive sign and then

quickly move on to the next.

Due to condition and size of most of the sites included in this thesis, erection of

state historical markers has been a frequent recommendation. These markers

simultaneously provide an interpretive and commemorative element to the landscape in

the vicinity of the significant site. The markers provide a narrative addressing the

significance of the event or site, and also provide a fixed point on the landscape that

acknowledges the often somber events that took place there. Currently, the Georgia

Historical Society administers the state historical marker program. However, this

program erects markers only when approached by organizations, and the partner

organization is responsible for half the cost of the marker's production and its

maintenance. To erect the large number of markers proposed for the sites included in this

thesis, local historical organizations would have to coordinate resources, or a state-wide

group, or partnership of groups, would have to facilitate their erection. Significant

interest from such organizations, including their political support and financial resources,

are necessary to contemplate the installation of such a large number of markers.

So-called 'history trails' are a recent and seemingly popular interpretive treatment

used to connect distant historical points of interest. These trails are automobile based,

and users follow a brochure and map to interpretive signs or kiosks along the route.

Several trails have been developed in rural Virginia and have reportedly provided a

significant regional economic stimulus and increased interest in historic preservation

generally.[134] Although the trails in Virginia are based on specific Civil War campaigns

that have a historical starting point and ending point, a similar 'Revolutionary War

History Trail' could be developed for southeast and coastal Georgia. The author would

encourage a brochure-based program with conservative signs to point interested persons

in the direction of sites. Large information kiosks would be inappropriate as the sites

themselves are typically small. The creation of a history trail for Georgia's

Revolutionary War sites would be relatively inexpensive to develop and might prove

---

134 Ruth, David, and Mike Andrus, "Lee vs. Grant: Battlefields and Tourism in Virginia," *Cultural Resource Management* Vol. 20 No. 5 (1997), p. 31.

popular among local politicians interested in the potential economic benefits of heritage tourism. A history trail system would coincide well with the historical markers proposed.

The economic benefits of battlefield preservation are the benefits of heritage tourism. Simply put, historic sites attract tourists, and tourists support area economies by buying gas, renting hotel rooms, eating at restaurants, and shopping. It is difficult to determine precisely how preserving or acknowledging Revolutionary War sites in Georgia might affect local economies without a marketing study, but, assuredly, even a modest increase in tourism would have a beneficial effect. Although a small tourism boost might not be felt in Savannah, as several of Georgia's Revolutionary War battlefields are located in rural areas, a modest effect in those areas could be substantial.

The Importance of Public Involvement

The best impetus for battlefield preservation or commemoration is local interest and grassroots support. Local interest can manifest itself publicly through individuals or organizations, such as the local historical society, local chapters of national societies such as the Daughters or Sons of the American Revolution, or battlefield 'friends' groups created for a particular site. Local groups have frequently proven their ability to understand and navigate their own unique political landscape better than outside interests. No one can know their community better than the people who live there, and, thus, no

one is better equipped to make a preservation project succeed than local supporters.[135]
Preservationists interested in battlefields on a state-wide basis should be sure to make
contacts and foster relationships with local groups.

Manifesting support for Revolutionary War battlefield preservation on the state
level could provide a valuable stimulus to fostering interest locally. The state has
convened a commission to study Civil War battlefields in Georgia, and this commission's
scope could be expanded to include all battlefields in the state, or a separate group could
be commissioned to study Revolutionary War sites independently. As has been noted
above, the state has acknowledged the importance of protecting historic resources within
its borders, and Revolutionary War sites, long neglected by state enthusiasm, could
benefit greatly from even a modest amount of government interest.

When plans are contemplated to promote battlefield preservation or
commemoration, a diverse group representing local interests should be assembled. Local
government officials, business leaders, real estate professionals and developers, as well as
historians, preservationists, and conservationists should work together to develop a
course of action. Including as many local leaders and professionals early in the process
will undoubtedly lead to more realistic goals, a greater likelihood of success, and a less
contentious process.

As has been noted by battlefield preservationists elsewhere in the country,
Revolutionary War battlefields often suffer from lack of recognition as a result of the

---

135 Brent, Joseph E., "Preserving Kentucky's Civil War Legacy," *Cultural Resource Management* Vol. 20
     No. 5 (1997), p. 35.

many defeats suffered by the Americans compared to victories.[136] This case is

certainly true in Georgia. Despite the fact that the 1779 Battle of Savannah was one of

the largest of the Revolution, its only commemoration has been a granite monument

which has since been removed from the site. Kettle Creek, the best known of the

Revolutionary War battles in Georgia, is probably the most popular as the only

significant victory in the state. However, when one looks more closely at the defeats

within the context of the broader war, the significance of the sites of defeats often

becomes evident. Persons interested in protecting or commemorating the sites of defeats

should be sure to communicate to all parties involved, friend or adversary, this

significance.

Georgia, the thirteenth British colony in North America (and its poorest and weakest),

was a part of one of the most daring military exploits in the history of the world—the

fledgling American colonies revolt against the all powerful British Empire. Although,

within the state, the locations of all the significant sites related to this endeavor are not

certain, and although the current understanding of these sites may vary in size,

significance, and condition, one cannot argue their significance regarding Georgia's

participation in the formation of and its inclusion in the United States of America.

Continued historical and archeological research, publicly or privately funded, should

address these sites and the dozens more that were not included in this thesis. Additional

---

136 Webster, Nancy V., "Revolutionary Preservation," *Cultural Resource Management* Vol. 20 No. 5
      (1997), p. 42.

information is critical to the interpretation, protection, and preservation of these

important sites. Georgia, home of the nation's first battlefield preservation project at

Chickamauga, should take pride in its surprisingly extensive Revolutionary heritage,

acknowledge it, and protect it for future generations.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ashmore, Otis, and Charles H. Olmstead. "The Battles of Kettle Creek and Brier Creek." *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 10 (June 1926): 85-125.

Birnbaum, Charles A. "Treatments for Historic Battlefield Landscapes." *Cultural Resources Management, Altogether Fitting and Proper: Saving America's Battlefields* Vol. 20 No. 5 (1997).

Boatner, Mark Mayo. *Landmarks of the American Revolution: A Guide to Locating and Knowing What Happened at the Sites of Independence*. Harrisburg, Pa.: Stackpole Books, 1992.

Brenneman, Russell L. "Techniques for Controlling the Surroundings of Historic Sites." *Duke University School of Law: Law and Contemporary Problems: Historic Preservation* Vol. 36, No. 3 (Summer 1971).

Brent, Joseph E. "Preserving Kentucky's Civil War Legacy." *Cultural Resource Management, Altogether Fitting and Proper: Saving America's Battlefields* Vol. 20 No. 5 (1997).

Campbell, Colin, ed. *Journal of An Expedition against the Rebels of Georgia in North America Under the Orders of Archibald Campbell, Esquire, Lieut. Colol. Of His Majesty's 71st Regimt. 1778*. Darien: The Ashantilly Press, 1981.

Cashin, Edward J. *The King's Ranger: Thomas Brown and the American Revolution on the Southern Frontier*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1989.

Cashin, Edward J. and Heard Robertson. *Augusta and the American Revolution, Events in the Georgia Back Country: 1773-1783*. Darien: The Ashantilly Press, 1975.

Coleman, Kenneth. *The American Revolution in Georgia, 1763-1789*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1958.

Coleman, Kenneth, ed.. *A History of Georgia*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1977.

Cooper, Walter G. *The Story of Georgia*. New York: The American Historical Society, 1938.

Coulter, E. Merton. *Georgia: A Short History*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1960.

Cox, William E. "Brigadier-General John Ashe's Defeat in the Battle of Brier Creek." *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* Vol. 57, No. 2 (Summer, 1973): 295-302.

Davis, Jr., Robert S., and Kenneth H. Thomas, Jr. *Kettle Creek: The Battle of the Cane Brakes, Wilkes County, Georgia*. Atlanta: Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Section, 1975.

Davis, Jr., Robert S. *Georgians in the Revolution: At Kettle Creek (Wilkes County) and Burke County.* Easley, S.C.: Southern Historical Press, Inc., 1986.

Davis, Jr., Robert S. "March 3, 1779: The Battle of Brier Creek." *The True Citizen* (Waynesboro, Ga.), June 30, 1976: 4-8.

Elliott, Daniel T. *Archaeological Investigations of City Parking Lot Number 2, Liberty Street, Savannah, Georgia*. Ellerslie, Ga.: Southern Research Inc., 1999.

Elliott, Daniel T. *Cultural Resource Survey and Testing of the Proposed Civic Center Parking Garage, PB-315, in Savannah, Georgia*. Ellerslie, Ga.: Southern Research Inc., 2001.

Elliott, Daniel T. "Ebenezer: An Alpine Village in the South Georgia Swamp." *Ebenezer Archaeological Report Series* 1 (1988).

Elliott, Daniel T., and Rita Folse Elliott. "Archaeological Excavations, New Ebenezer, Georgia, 1992 to 1999." *LAMAR Institute Publication* 18 (in press 2002).

"Establishing an Easement Program to Protect Historic, Scenic and Natural Resources." *National Trust for Historic Preservation Information Sheet*, No. 25 (1980).

Fleming, Berry. *Autobiography of a Colony: The First Half-Century of Augusta, Georgia*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1957.

Fiske, John. *The American Revolution*. New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1891.

Georgia Forts Committee. "Fort Morris." *Georgia Magazine*. Vol. 12, No. 1 (June-July 1968): 21-23.

Gilliam, Catharine M. "Takings Law: Fact and Fiction." *Cultural Resource
Management Magazine, Altogether Fitting and Proper: Saving America's
Battlefields* Vol. 20, No. 5 (1997).

Gossett, Tanya M. "Working Together." *Cultural Resource Management, Altogether
Fitting and Proper: Saving America's Battlefields*, Vol. 20 No. 5 (1997).

Granger, Mary, ed. *Savannah River Plantations*. Savannah: Oglethorpe Press, 1997
reprint of 1947 edition.

Gross, Arthur. "Battle of Brier Creek Was Fought 200 Years Ago." *The Sylvania
Telephone* (Sylvania, Ga.), March 1, 1979: 1, 10.

Hall, Leslie. *Land and Allegiance in Revolutionary Georgia*. Athens: University of
Georgia Press, 2001.

Hamlin, Lars A. "Federal Framework for Historic Landmark Protection." *Real Estate
Law and Practice, Course Handbook Series, No. 168: Historic Preservation Law*,
chmn. Nicholas Robinson (Practicing Law Institute, 1979).

Jackson, Harvey H. "The Battle of the Rice boats: Georgia Joins the Revolution."
Georgia Historical Quarterly 68 (Summer 1974): 229-243.

Jones, Jr., Charles C. *Dead Towns of Georgia*. Savannah: Oglethorpe Press, 1997 reprint
of 1878 edition.

Kane, Sharyn, and Richard Keeton. *Beneath These Waters: Archaeological and
Historical Studies of 11,500 Years Along the Savannah River*. Atlanta: National
Park Service – Southeast Region, 1993.

Killion, Ronald G., and Charles T. Waller. *Georgia and the Revolution*. Atlanta:
Cherokee Publishing Company, 1975.

Kennedy, Benjamin. *Muskets, Cannon Balls & Bombs: Nine Narratives of the Siege of
Savannah in 1779*. Savannah: The Beehive Press, 1974.

Knight, Lucian Lamar. *Georgia and Georgians*. Chicago: Lewis Publishing Company,
1917.

Lawrence, Alexander A. *Storm Over Savannah: The Story of Count d'Estaing and the
Siege of the Town in 1779*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1951.

Lodge, Henry Cabot. *The Story of the Revolution*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1898.

Lossing, Benson J. *The Pictorial Fieldbook of the Revolution*. New York: Harper and Bros., 1859.

McIlvaine, Paul. *The Dead Town of Sunbury, Georgia*. Hendersonville, N.C.: Paul McIlvaine, 1971.

McIntosh, John H. *The Official History of Elbert County, 1790-1935*. Atlanta: Cherokee Publishing Company, 1968 reprint of 1940 edition.

Moultrie, William. *Memoirs of the American Revolution*. New York: David Longworth, 1802.

Russell, Preston, and Barbara Hines. *Savannah: A History of Her People Since 1733*. Savannah: Frederic C. Beil, 1992.

Ruth, David, and Mike Andrus. "Lee vs. Grant: Battlefields and Tourism in Virginia." *Cultural Resource Management, Altogether Fitting and Proper: Saving America's Battlefields* Vol. 20 No. 5 (1997).

Rutsch, Edward S., and Brian H. Morrell. *Archaeological Survey of the Savannah Revolutionary Battlefield Park, City of Savannah, Chatham County, Georgia*. Newton, N.J.: Historic Conservation and Interpretation, Inc., 1981.

Scruggs, Carroll Proctor. *Georgia During the Revolution*. Norcross: Bay Tree Grove, 1975.

Searcy, Martha Condray. *The Georgia-Florida Contest in the American Revolution, 1776-1778*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1985.

Sears, Robert. *The Pictorial History of the American Revolution*. New York: Robert Sears, 1847.

Sheftall, John McKay. *Sunbury on the Medway*. Norcross, Ga.: Daughters of the American Colonists, Georgia State Society, 1995 reprint of 1977 edition.

Stevens,William Bacon. *A History of Georgia: From its First Discovery By Europeans to the Adoption of the Present Constitution*. Savannah: The Beehive Press, 1972 reprint of 1847 edition.

Stokes, Thomas L. *The Savannah*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1951.

Waller, Jac. "Revolutionary War Artillery." *Georgia Historical Quarterly*. Vol. 46, No. 3 (September 1962): 265-273.

Ward, Christopher, and John Richard Allen, ed. *The War of the Revolution*. New York: The MacMillan Company, 1952.

Webster, Nancy V. "Revolutionary Preservation." *Cultural Resource Management, Altogether Fitting and Proper: Saving America's Battlefields* Vol. 20 No. 5 (1997).

Wood, Virginia. Phone interview by researcher. Washington, D.C.: 26 February 2002.