

readily available resource for the last twenty-five years or more, aside from taking our potential title, only whets the appetite for those wanting to know what really happened.

Whereas the other works have largely echoed traditional Whig and British accounts of the battle without actually analyzing their contents, Baker's booklet raised questions about what actually happened with the North Carolina militia on the first line. Did they all really panic and run away? The same questions come up about the second line, where some Virginians apparently fought very well while others took flight. The third line is better understood, but such details as the sequence of attacks and Cornwallis's ordering his artillery to fire into a melee of British and American soldiers were obviously only singular events in the climactic struggle to decide the battle's outcome. Finally, there is the problem of what happened on the southern flank, where the 1st Battalion of Guards and Hessians of the Von Bose Regiment fought Virginia Continentals, riflemen, and dragoons. Our work attempts to resolve these details once and for all.

We see this book as a successor to *A Devil of a Whipping*. However, Guilford Courthouse was fought on a larger scale than Cowpens. Where Cowpens might be seen as a company-oriented engagement, Guilford Courthouse was clearly fought at the battalion level of organization. Moreover, the difficulties faced by the combatants at Guilford create similar problems for historians. Unlike some other Revolutionary War battles, the ground fought over on 15 March 1781 was obscured by both landform and ground cover. Whereas Gen. Daniel Morgan and many other participants could see most of the Cowpens battlefield, neither Nathanael Greene, Charles Cornwallis, nor anyone else could see very much of the fighting around Guilford Courthouse, and that has contributed to some obscurity in the historical record. Consequently, it has been important not only to identify precisely *where* an observer was located but *when* he saw what he reported. Guilford Courthouse was a very fluid battle, and the same zones were fought over more than one time in many cases.

In determining what actually happened on 15 March, we have followed the steps utilized in *A Devil of a Whipping*. We treated participant accounts, whether written soon after the battle or as pension depositions, as artifacts. We sought internal consistency and agreement between the accounts of other combatants. In some cases, subsequent details confirmed the first account and then expanded our understanding by providing other material.

The status of the observer was also considered important. A general would not only be able to see more because he sat on horseback, at least some of the time, but also because he knew something of how the fighting was supposed to occur. A senior officer, major or above, would also be more likely to write down his initial account very soon after the battle, usually as a report of his unit's activity. A person with field-grade rank would have also likely been on horseback and would have moved over the field much more than someone ranked captain or below. Enlisted personnel, by contrast, were more likely to record their impressions long after the battle, as they were required to present confirmatory details of their services to claim a pension. Since the most utilized pension laws were not passed until 1818 and 1832, a veteran's account

PREFACE

Guilford Courthouse was the largest Revolutionary War battle in North Carolina. Although Lt. Gen. Charles, Second Earl Cornwallis succeeded tactically on 15 March 1781, his army was crippled. Forced to withdraw to Wilmington for reinforcements and resupply, Cornwallis made the fateful decision to stop chasing Nathanael Greene across the Carolinas, instead deciding to march into Virginia and destroy what he perceived as his opponent's supply base. Guilford, therefore, was one step, admittedly a very big step, in the British army's path to Yorktown.

Incredible as it seems, given its importance, there has been no in-depth scholarly monograph on the battle. Sad to say, this is true of most southern campaign engagements, although the situation is being rectified. Scholarly works on the southern campaign have devoted chapters to the battle, including John Buchanan's *The Road to Guilford Courthouse*, M. F. Treacy's *Prelude to Yorktown*, and John S. Pancake's *The Destructive War*. Two small works have been produced on the subject, John Hairr's *Guilford Courthouse* and Thomas Baker's *Another Such Victory*. Baker's account, perhaps the most

would be affected by elapsed time. Elapsed time itself affects the memory of events, but recollections are also influenced by the generation of a common memory of what happened, in this case a “Whig version” of historical events that might or might not reflect the reality of 15 March 1781.

Similarly, most participants’ accounts concentrated on their “stand” at Guilford. The few who attempted broader overviews provided good details, but they were often very confusing as to timing, units involved, and precise location on the field. The most lucid account was given by the Hessian commander, Major Du Buy, and it is limited to what his regiment did. Even then it is confusing. Otho Holland Williams reported that the volume of gunfire was the worst he ever heard, and he had seen considerable fighting with even larger forces in the northern theater. In the dense woods around Guilford Courthouse, the confusion was simply magnified.

Therefore, the evaluation of accounts involved looking for commonalities and, more important, sequencing: that is, confirmation that if Unit A did something, another unit (on either side) had to have done something first and/or reacted to what Unit A did. Fortunately, after placing units on the landscape and organizing their activities in chronological fashion, this has been possible in a great many cases. In situations where this sort of confirmation was not possible, repetitive reporting of the same, or similar, events by men who served in the same units tends to confirm these accounts.

Finally, if a veteran reported that he was wounded or a brother was killed, or he provided a chain of command confirmed by others, thus indicating knowledge of the facts on the ground, his account had more credibility than a veteran who garbled chronology, commanders, and details. This is not to say that an account that was garbled, perhaps because the veteran was elderly when he gave it, lacked credibility, but rather that other accounts were rated higher. A few veterans who were definitely at Guilford, such as Virginians

Nathaniel Cocke and Peter Perkins, even had their pension applications rejected for various reasons.

As with Cowpens, there were spurious historical “events” attributed to Guilford that were obvious fabrications, such as the idea that Cornwallis fired his guns into the melee on the third line despite the remonstrations of Brig. Gen. Charles O’Hara. We have run many of these stories to ground and sorted them out. Sometimes the fabrication was simply an attempt to add detail, as in the stories told about Peter Francisco; others seem to be deliberate falsehoods. In all cases we could identify, something of the truth has emerged from tracing the tale through time and comparing what others had to say about the same incident.

As with archaeological artifacts, it is the patterns that emerge that make telling the battle’s story possible. At some points of the battle, where only suppositions can be made from the documents, archaeological evidence provides confirmation. Such is the case in the route of the British 33rd Regiment of Foot on the northern flank and the second line fighting along the Great Salisbury Road.

In this text, we have attempted to bring the letters, memoirs, diaries, pension accounts, oral histories, and archaeological artifacts together to illuminate the battlefield. We make no claim that we have gotten all the facts right, or for that matter, that we have gotten all the facts. After 225 years, that would be impossible because in their own day not even the participants could relate

much beyond their immediate experience, and any questions we might have of them cannot be asked so long after the battle. As we collected the data, we found new questions that required answers. Some we could lay to rest, others are waiting additional research. *Long, Obstinate, and Bloody* is a baseline from which we, and others, can build to a better understanding of what happened to the men who fought their way through the woods west of Guilford Courthouse on 15 March 1781.

APPENDIX A ORDER OF BATTLE

British Army: Lt. Gen. Charles, 2nd Earl Cornwallis, 1,900–2,200 men

The Brigade of Guards: Brig. Gen. Charles O'Hara, 481 men

1st Battalion: Lt. Col. Chapple Norton, 160–80 men

2nd Battalion: Lt. Col. James Stuart, 160–80 men

Guards Light Infantry Company: Capt. John Goodricke, 70–90 men

Guards Grenadier Company: Capt. William Home, 70–90 men

Webster's Brigade: Lt. Col. James Webster, 472 men

23rd Foot: Capt. Thomas Peter, 238 men

33rd Foot: Capt. Frederick Cornwallis, 234 men

Leslie's Brigade: Maj. Gen. Alexander Leslie, 565 men

2nd Battalion, 71st Foot: Capt. Robert Hutcheson, 244 men

Von Bose Regiment: Maj. Johann Du Buy, 321 men

Auxiliary Troops, 356 men

British Legion: Lt. Col. Banastre Tarleton, 272 men

Jaeger Company: Capt. Wilhelm Friedrich von Roeder, 84 men

Royal Artillery, 45–50 men

1st Section: Lt. John McLeod, 18–20 men, 2 six-pounder cannon

2nd Section: Lt. Augustus O'Hara, 18–20 men, 2 six-pounder cannon

3rd Section: Lt. John Smith, 10–12 men, 2 three-pounder cannon

Baggage Train Guard, 220–60 men

Royal North Carolina Regiment: Lt. Col. John Hamilton, 100–140 men

Detached from Guards Brigade: Capt. Charles Horneck, 40 men

Detached from Webster's Brigade: Capt. Henry Broderick, 54 men

Detached from Regiment Von Bose—Unknown lieutenant or ensign,
23 men

American Army: Maj. Gen. Nathanael Greene, 4,000–4,400 men

Maryland Continental Brigade: Col. Otho Holland Williams, 700–800 men

1st Maryland: Col. John Gunby, 350–400 men

2d Maryland: Lt. Col. Benjamin Ford, 350–400 men

Virginia Continental Brigade: Brig. Gen. Isaac Huger, 800–900 men

1st Virginia: Col. John Green, 400–450 men

2nd Virginia: Lt. Col. Samuel Hawes, 400–450 men

Lt. Col. Henry Lee's Partizan Legion, 190–240 men

Legion Infantry: Capt. Michael Rudolph, 120–50 men

Legion Dragoons: Maj. Joseph Eggleston, 70–90 men

Brig. Gen. John Butler's North Carolina Militia, 500–600 men

Caswell County Militia: Col. William Moore, 100–150 men

Granville County Militia: Col. Joseph Taylor, 100–125 men

Orange County Militia: Col. Thomas Farmer, 100–125 men

Orange County Militia: Col. John Taylor, 100–125 men

Rockingham, Randolph, and Chatham County Militias: unknown officer,
50–75 men

Rowan and Mecklenburg County Militias: Capt. James Billingsley,
20–25 men

Guilford County Militia: Col. James Martin, 60–70 men

Brig. Gen. Thomas Eaton's North Carolina Militia, 500–600 men

Warren County Militia: Col. Benjamin Williams, 150–200 men

Franklin County Militia: Col. Pinkatham Eaton, 150–200 men

Nash, Edgecombe, Halifax, Martin, and Northampton County Militias: Col.

William Linton, 150–200 men

Brig. Gen. Edward Stevens's Virginia Militia, 550–750 men

Pittsylvania County Militia: Col. Peter Perkins, 150–200 men

Halifax, Lunenburg, and Prince Edward County Militias: Col. Nathaniel
Cocke, 150–200 men

Augusta County Militia: Maj. John Pope, 100–150 men

Augusta and Rockbridge County Militias: Maj. Alexander Stuart,
150–200 men

The casualty figures given for the British side are from Charles Cornwallis's official report to Lord George Germain. The figures given for the American side are from Otho Holland Williams's after-action report to Congress. In some cases, the numbers have been broken down to the battalion or company level, while others are only available at the brigade level. The totals include officers and enlisted men, and the known casualties among the officers are identified using the following symbols: k = killed, m = missing, mw = mortally wounded, pow = captured, w = wounded. For our interpretation of those statistics, see Chapter 9, "The Aftermath."

British Army: 93 killed, 413 wounded, 26 missing

Brigade of Guards: 37 killed, 157 wounded, 22 missing. Brig. Gen. Charles

O'Hara (w), Brig. Gen. John Howard (w)

1st Battalion: Capt. William Maynard (mw), Capt. Augustus Maitland (w),

Ens. John Stuart (w), Adj. James Colquhoun (w)

2nd Battalion: Lt. Col. James Stuart (k), Capt. William Schutz (mw), Capt.

Thomas Swanton (w)

Guards Light Infantry Company: Capt. John Goodricke (k)

Guards Grenadier Company: Capt. William Home (mw)

Cocke's Regiment: Lt. Matthew Maury (w), Ens. James Speed (w)

Lawson's Brigade, Virginia Militia: 1 killed, 16 wounded, 87 missing

Skipwith's Regiment: Ens. Jack Smith Davenport (mw)

Kirkwood's Delaware Continental Light Infantry Company: 4 killed, 5 wounded, 15 missing. Lt. George Vaughan (w)

Rifle Battalions: 3 killed, 16 wounded, 94 missing (Williams lumped all the rifle units together)

Lynch's Virginia Rifle Battalion: Capt. William Jones (k), Capt. Thomas Helm (mw), Capt. James Moon (mw), Capt. David Beard (w)

Campbell's Virginia Rifle Battalion: Capt. John Thompson (k)

North Carolina Rifle Battalion: Lt. Robert Taliaferro (k)

Continental Light Dragoons: 3 killed, 8 wounded, 3 missing (whether this includes Watkins's Virginia Militia Dragoons Company is unknown).

Capt. Griffin Fauntleroy (mw, pow), Capt. William Barrett (w, pow)

North Carolina Militia Dragoons: 1 killed, 1 wounded

Webster's Brigade: Lt. Col. James Webster (mw)

23rd Foot: 13 killed, 55 wounded. 2nd Lt. William Robins (k)

33rd Foot: 11 killed, 65 wounded. Ens. Talbot (k), Capt. Lt. Charles Curzon (w), Lt. Arthur Beaver (w), Lt. James Harvey (w), Lt. Anthony Slavin (w), Lt. George Wynard (w), Ens. John Fox (w), Ens. Ralph Gore (w), Ens. John Hughes (w), Ens. John Kelly (w)

Leslie's Brigade

2nd Battalion, 71st Foot: 13 killed, 50 wounded. Ens. Malcolm Grant (k), Ens. Archibald McPherson (k), Ens. Donald McPherson (k)

Von Bose Regiment: 15 killed, 47 wounded, 12 captured. Capt. Alexander Wilmousky (mw), Ens. Phillip Ernst Von Trott (mw), Capt. Johann Eichenbrodt (w), Lt. Johann Schweiner (w), Lt. Phillip Ernst Geise (w)

Auxiliary Troops

British Legion: 3 killed, 14 wounded. Lt. Col. Banastre Tarleton (w)

Jaeger Company: 4 killed, 3 wounded, 1 missing

Royal Artillery: 2 killed, 4 wounded. Lt. Augustus O'Hara (k)

American Army: 79 killed, 184 wounded, 1,046 missing

Greene's Staff: Capt. Alexander Ewing (w)

Maryland Continental Brigade: 15 killed, 42 wounded, 97 missing (plus 3 killed, 8 wounded, in Peter Jacquett's Delaware company in the 1st Maryland)
1st Maryland: Capt. Samuel Hobbs (k), Capt. John Smith (w), Lt. Roger Nelson (w)

2nd Maryland: Maj. Archibald Anderson (k)

Virginia Continental Brigade (includes the casualties in the light infantry companies): 29 killed, 40 wounded, 39 missing. Brig. Gen. Isaac Huger (w)

Huffman's Virginia Light Infantry Company: Capt. Phillip Huffman (k)

Wallace's Virginia Light Infantry Company: Capt. Andrew Wallace (k), Ens. Alexander Brownlee (k)

Lee's Partizan Legion: 3 killed, 9 wounded, 7 missing

Legion Dragoons: Lt. Jonathan Snowden (w)

North Carolina Militia Brigades: 6 killed, 5 wounded, 563 missing

Martin's Regiment: Capt. Arthur Forbis (mw), Lt. William Wiley (w)

Stevens's Brigade, Virginia Militia: 11 killed, 36 wounded, 141 missing. Brig. Gen. Edward Stevens (w), Maj. John Williams (m)

Pope's Regiment: Capt. James Tate (k), Ens. Robert Dunlap (k)

Stuart's Regiment: Capt. Alexander Tedford (k), Maj. Alexander Stuart (w, pow), Capt. John Paxton (w)

Perkins's Regiment: Capt. William Fitzgerald (w)

APPENDIX C POSTWAR LOCATION OF PENSIONERS BY STATE OF SERVICE

STATE OF SERVICE	TOTAL	POSTWAR RESIDENCE														
		AL	AR	GA	IL	IN	KY	LA	MD	MO	MS	NC	NJ	OH	PA	SC
Virginia																
Continental	128	1			4	4	31		2			9		9		5
Militia/Riflemen	211	6			6	8	36		5		1	7		7		4
North Carolina																
Continental	15	1		1			2					7			1	1
Militia/Riflemen	186	6	1	15	8	10	21	1	4	2	2	55	1	1	1	8
Maryland/Delaware																
Continental	21						2		5			1	1	6		1
New Jersey/Pennsylvania																
Continental	2						1					1				

Note: Figures in boldface are the number of pensioners who remained in their home state.

GLOSSARY

- adjutant** The military title of an administrative officer of a regiment who issues orders on behalf of the commander, provides details about men assigned to detachments, and maintains muster rolls and other records.
- aide-de-camp** An officer who assists higher-ranked officers (usually generals), providing them a number of services, carrying their orders, and speaking with their authority. The aide received extra pay and was often considered a member of the general's "family."
- backcountry** The interior of the southern colonies adjacent to the frontier. This was a thinly settled zone of small farms and few towns.
- battalion** A unit of infantry composed of at least four companies. The term also came to be used interchangeably with "regiment," in part because most Revolutionary War regiments by the time of Guilford Courthouse were under strength. See **regiment**.
- bayonet** A triangular steel blade that attached to the muzzle of a musket. In effect, this made the musket a spear for close combat. The bayonet allowed men to attack the enemy and defend themselves when their muskets were unloaded.
- brevet** An unpaid rank awarded an officer to recognize achievement that gave him a higher command and served to establish seniority; for example, a brevet major, paid the same as a captain, would outrank a captain.
- brigade** A tactical and administrative formation that consisted of at least two regiments (or two battalions). Ideally, a brigade would consist of four regiments and be commanded by a brigadier general. During 1781, brigades usually had two regiments and might be commanded by a colonel, lieutenant colonel, or, in rare cases late in the war, a major.
- brigadier general** The lowest ranking general, who usually commanded a brigade.
- buck and ball** A musket cartridge that has one big lead ball (.69 to .75 caliber), plus three to seven smaller balls (.28 to .33 caliber) called buckshot. Designed to increase lethality, it was mandated by Gen. George Washington as early as 1777.
- captain** The military rank of an officer between major and first lieutenant who usually commands a company.
- captain lieutenant** A military rank usually found in an artillery regiment that signified greater responsibility for the lieutenant. In an infantry regiment, a captain lieutenant commanded the colonel's company.
- case shot** A close-range antipersonnel artillery projectile formed by putting a quantity of small iron or lead shot, equivalent in weight to the cannon's solid ammunition, into a tin container, or canister, that fit the cannon's bore. Also called canister shot.
- colonel** The military rank of an officer who leads a regiment, or occasionally, a brigade.
- commissary** The person responsible for obtaining, inspecting, and issuing the provisions and stores of an army. The commissary was usually a civilian appointment, but during 1781, officers filled this role.
- commission** The authority to hold a rank granted by the government.
- company** In the eighteenth century, a military unit generally consisting of 40–100 men and led by a captain. Four companies formed a battalion and eight a regiment. A company usually had two tactical sub-units called platoons. Under the system devised by Baron Friedrich Wilhelm von Steuben, two companies comprised a tactical combat unit called a division.

Continental Pertaining to the American regulars, men who usually were enlisted for three years or "during the war" in the permanent standing army of the United States. Many were well trained and fully equal to the British regulars on southern battlefields. Late in the war, due to a shortage of enlistments, some Continentals were enlisted for only nine, twelve, or eighteen months.

cornet The junior officer in a cavalry troop, equivalent to an ensign in the infantry.

Crown Referring to the British monarchy, or more generally, to Great Britain.

division A military unit within a regiment composed, ideally if at full strength, of two companies (four platoons) for marching or firing. Due to the shortage of men late in the war, a single company might occasionally serve as a division. Alternatively: A tactical and administrative unit composed of at least two brigades and led by a major general.

dragoon Originally, a mounted infantryman, but over time the term became generally interchangeable with "cavalryman."

ensign The lowest ranking infantry officer, so called because they traditionally carried the regimental colors.

fusilier Originally, an infantryman who carried a lightweight musket called a "fusil" and distinguished by special headgear when the Revolutionary War began, although this practice did not extend to the Southern campaigns.

grape shot A long-range antipersonnel artillery projectile composed of small shot, sized to fit the bore of the cannon, that was bagged and wrapped with cord. At sea, it was designed to cut rigging and limit damage to a potential prize.

Guards A composite British brigade composed of fifteen men from each company of three infantry regiments designated Foot Guards (1st, Coldstream, 3rd) that served in North America.

jaeger Member of a German unit that fought for the British comprised largely of hunters and woodsmen, who carried rifles and served as scouts, skirmishers, and flankers.

legion A combined arms force of dragoons and infantry, the best known of which were Henry Lee's Partizan, or Partisan, Legion and the British Legion under Banastre Tarleton.

lieutenant The military rank of a subaltern or junior officer. The first lieutenant in a company was second in command to the captain and often commanded a platoon. The second lieutenant was junior to the first.

lieutenant colonel The military rank of the assistant to a colonel. As the war went on, many lieutenant colonels were placed in command of regiments, with the title lieutenant colonel commandant.

light horse Another term for cavalry or dragoons.

light infantry Lightly equipped, highly mobile troops, used for scouting and covering flanks and rear, often regarded as elite soldiers.

loyalist One who was "loyal" to the king. Also called a "Tory" or a "royalist."

major The military rank of an officer between lieutenant colonel and captain who is second in command of a battalion and responsible for its training, equipment, and management.

militia Initially, the colonial self-defense force. During the Revolution, militias were called up (drafted) for service as needed, serving for short periods, such as six weeks or three months, or in emergencies, for only a few days. Generally, militiamen were not well trained and did not turn out in great numbers or in a timely fashion.

musket Also called the firelock, this was the most common shoulder arm of the Revolutionary War. A flintlock, smoothbore, .65 to .75 caliber weapon, the musket could take a bayonet, was easier and faster to load than a rifle, but was accurate for only about 50 yards. The British used a .75 caliber musket called the "Brown Bess," while American regulars by the time of Guilford Courthouse were armed with French weaponry.

parole The release of a prisoner of war who promises to return when ordered and not to take up arms again until exchanged.

partisan, partizan An irregular soldier, or light trooper, used for scouting and raiding. The equivalent modern term would be "guerilla."

patriot A person who served his country. Since the Whigs won and the American colonies became independent, the term has come to mean one who supported the Whig side in the Revolutionary War. In reality, both Whig and Tory saw their actions as patriotic.

paymaster The officer charged with paying a regiment. This position did not require other service and was not always filled by a commissioned officer.

pioneer In eighteenth-century military terminology, a skilled laborer responsible for building fortifications, repairing roads, and general construction.

provincial Pertaining to Americans or American military units fighting on the British side on a full-time basis, such as Tarleton's British Legion.

quartermaster An officer assigned to encamping a regiment, issuing equipment and supplies, and making returns of them.

ranger A scout, or raider, usually mounted and generally operating on the frontier. When formed into companies or battalions, rangers served in advance of main force units. Their role in the South was primarily against Indians and Tories. Among the southern states, only South Carolina raised a Continental Ranger unit (the 3rd South Carolina).

regiment A military formation composed of at least five, and as many as ten, companies commanded by a lieutenant colonel or colonel. "Regiment" and "battalion" were used interchangeably during the Revolutionary War. Technically speaking, a regiment was composed of two battalions; but a regiment with less than 350 men would be formed as a single battalion.

regular A member of a permanent standing army. In the eighteenth century, this term referred to the British soldier enlisted for long service and generally well trained and disciplined.

rifle A shoulder weapon with spiral grooves cut into the barrel's interior that cause the bullet to spin, thus giving great accuracy. Rifles of the eighteenth century were slow to load, could not use a bayonet, and thus were not as numerous as one might think, being used mainly by specialized units or experienced frontiersmen.

royalist One who supported the king, or the king's side, during the American Revolution.

state troops The "regulars" raised by some states who were restricted from serving outside their states and generally enlisted for 18 months, or half the term demanded of Continentals. Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia raised several such groups including infantry and cavalry. Occasionally, the term was applied to those who enlisted for less than three years, although many of these units were called Continentals.

surgeon The chief medical officer of a regiment or a hospital.

Tidewater The low-lying coastal zone of the southern states.

Tory An American who supported the British king and opposed American independence.

Whig An American who supported the revolutionary movement against royal authority and for independence.

NOTES

ABBREVIATIONS

<i>Hetrina</i>	Veröffentlichungen der Archivschule Marburg, Institut für Archivwissenschaft. <i>Hessische Truppen im amerikanischen Unabhängigkeitskrieg</i> (Publications of the Institute at Marburg for Archival Science. Hessian Troops in the American War for Independence). 6 vols. Marburg, Ger.: Archivschule Marburg, 1974.	NAE	National Archives, Kew, England
		ODNB	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i> . Edited by H. C. G. Matthew and Brian H. Harrison. 60 vols. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.
		RWP	Revolutionary War Pension Application Files, Microcopy M805, National Archives, Washington, D.C.
MHS	Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore	WLCL	William L. Clements Library, Ann Arbor, Mich.