



**The Florida Society of the
Sons of the American Revolution**
Fort Lauderdale Chapter Newsletter



APR 2015

website: <http://www.learnwebskills.com/sar/index.html>
Fort Lauderdale Chapter chartered December 8, 1966

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President's Message

Compatriots:

A CHANGE OF VENUE

Remember that we have changed our luncheon location. We are back at the **Colony West Country Club!** Each member can pay for their own lunch which starts as cheaply as \$6.00.

The March meeting was a great beginning to our three part series on OLD FT LAUDERDALE. All present enjoyed the talk and even the long time natives learned something new. Only FIVE members attended.

Joe Motes is in the process of mailing out our new membership directory. The last one was done in 1994. Please notify Joe Motes of any errors or corrections.

Last month's speaker, Dan Smith, spoke about the early settlers. He passed around pictures of buildings which they had constructed and which still exist. He invited all to visit the Historical Museum which houses an extensive collection of early Ft Lauderdale memorabilia.

The three part series continues on April 18th with author Keith Mitzner's speaking on Tom Bryan and other Notables. We look forward to seeing you.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April 18th *Tom Bryan and the Other Movers and Shapers of early Ft. Lauderdale.*
Speaker: Author Keith Mitzner

May 16, 2015 *Frank and Ivy Stranahan*
Speaker: Valerie Kooyker

June thru August Summer Break

So come and learn about our early history. Friends are most welcome and the price is right!
Hoping to see you on April 18.

Fraternally,
William W. Zimmer
954 783 0887 email wwz2620@gmail.com

Minutes of March meeting.

The March meeting was held on March 21 at the Colony West Country Club in Tamarac and lasted from approximately 12 noon until 2 pm. There were five members and two guests present. After the Pledge of Allegiance, the SAR Pledge, and the invocation, members and guests introduced themselves. The items of business included:

*A motion was made and seconded to elect three new Trustees to oversee the Chapter's Trust Fund. David Kramer was elected for the term ending 12/31/2017; Bill Zimmer was elected for the term ending 12/31/2016; and Ted Duay was elected for the term ending 12/31/2015.

*President Zimmer discussed if the chapter had any interest in sponsoring a Liberty Tree as it has been about a few years since the chapter last did one. Ted Duay made the suggestion that the chapter put a commemorative plaque on an existing tree as opposed to planting a new one. This would be in keeping with the custom of our patriot ancestors who used existing trees for their Liberty Trees. President Zimmer said he would see if a chapter member was interesting in chairing this project.

After lunch, a speaker from the Fort Lauderdale Historical Society gave an interesting talk on the early pioneer history of Fort Lauderdale. He focused on pioneer Edward T. King who was a master carpenter and boat builder. Mr. King built many of the structures in early Fort Lauderdale, some of which still stand today.

After this interesting presentation, the benediction was given and the meeting adjourned.

Minutes by Ted Duay.

NEXT MEETING - APRIL 18, 2014

Colony West Country Club
6800 NW 88th Ave, Tamarac, FL 33321

Future Dates:

Saturday ,05/16/15
Saturday ,09/19/15
Saturday ,10/17/15
Saturday ,11/21/15

Time: 11:30 AM social gathering; Lunch at noon

FOR RESERVATIONS CALL: **954-559-3202**
or e-mail **Joe Motes at: joemotes@aol.com**

Battles of the American Revolution

The Battle of Cowpens

Overview:

The Battle of Cowpens (January 17, 1781) was a decisive victory by American Revolutionary forces under Brigadier General Daniel Morgan, in the Southern campaign of the American Revolutionary War. It was a turning point in the reconquest of South Carolina from the British.

Prelude:

On October 14, 1780, George Washington chose Nathanael Greene to be commander of the Southern Department of the Continental forces. Greene's task was not an easy one. The Carolinas had seen a long string of disasters in 1780, the worst being the capture of one American army at the Siege of Charleston and the destruction of another at the Battle of Camden. A victory of Patriot militia over their Loyalist counterparts at the Battle of Kings Mountain in October had bought time, but most of South Carolina was still under British occupation. When Greene took command the southern army numbered only 2300 men, of whom just 949 were Continental regulars.

On December 3 Daniel Morgan reported for duty to Greene's headquarters at Charlotte, North Carolina. At the start of the Revolution, Morgan, whose military experience dated back to the French and Indian War, had served at the Siege of Boston. Later he participated in the epic 1775 invasion of Canada and its climactic battle, the Battle of Quebec. That battle, on Dec. 31, 1775, ended in defeat and Morgan's capture by the British. Morgan was exchanged in January 1777 and placed by George Washington in command of a picked force of 500 trained riflemen. Morgan and his men played a key role in the victory at Saratoga that proved to be a turning point of the entire war. Bitter after being passed over for promotion and plagued by severe attacks of sciatica, Morgan left the army in 1779, but a year later he was promoted to Brigadier General and returned to service in the Southern Department.

Greene had decided that his weak army was unable to meet the British in a standup fight. He then made the unconventional decision to divide his army, sending a detachment west of the Catawba River to raise the morale of the locals and find supplies beyond the limited amounts available around Charlotte. Greene gave Morgan command of this wing and instructed him to join with the militia west of the Catawba and take command of them. Morgan headed west on December 21, charged with taking position between the Broad River and Pacolet River and protecting the civilians in that area. He had 600 men, some 400 of which were Continentals, the rest being Virginia militia with experience as Continentals. By Christmas Day Morgan had reached the Pacolet River. There he was joined by 60 South Carolina militia led by the experienced partisan Andrew Pickens. Other militia from Georgia and the Carolinas joined Morgan's camp.

Meanwhile, Lord Cornwallis was planning to return to North Carolina and conduct the invasion that he had postponed after the defeat at Kings Mountain. Morgan's force represented a threat to his left. Additionally, Cornwallis received incorrect intelligence claiming that Morgan was going to attack the important British fort at Ninety Six, South Carolina. Seeking to save the fort and defeat Morgan's command, Cornwallis on Jan. 2 ordered Lt. Col. Banastre Tarleton west.

Tarleton was only 26 years old but had enjoyed a spectacular career that began when he and a small party surprised and captured Patriot Gen. Charles Lee in New Jersey in December 1776. He served with distinction at the Siege of Charleston and the Battle of Camden. Commanding the British Legion, a mixed infantry/cavalry force that constituted some of the best British troops in the Carolinas, Tarleton won decisive victories at Monck's Corner and Fishing Creek. He became infamous amongst Patriots after his victory at the Battle of

Waxhaws, when his men killed American soldiers after they had surrendered.

Tarleton and the Legion marched to Ninety Six and found that Morgan was not there, but Tarleton decided to pursue Morgan anyway. Tarleton asked for reinforcements of British regulars, which Cornwallis sent. Tarleton then set out with his larger command to drive Morgan across the Broad River. On the 12th he received accurate news of Morgan's location and continued with hard marching, building boats to cross rivers that were flooding with winter rains. Morgan, receiving word that Tarleton was in hot pursuit, retreated north, attempting to avoid being trapped between Tarleton and Cornwallis. By the afternoon of the 16th Morgan was approaching the Broad River, which was high with flood waters and reported difficult to cross. He knew Tarleton was close behind. By nightfall he had reached a place called the Cowpens, a well-known grazing area for local cattle. Pickens, who had been patrolling, arrived that night with a large body of militia. Morgan then decided to stand and fight rather than continue to retreat and risk being caught by Tarleton while fording the Broad River. Tarleton, for his part, received word of Morgan's location and made haste, marching at 3:00 a.m. instead of camping for the night.

The Continental Force

Although Morgan claimed in his official report to have had only a few over 800 men at Cowpens, historian Lawrence Babits, in his detailed study of the battle, estimates the real numbers as:

- A battalion of Continental infantry under Lt-Col John Eager Howard, with one company from Delaware, one from Virginia and three from Maryland; each with a strength of sixty men (300)
- A company of Virginia State troops under Captain John Lawson[24] (75)
- A company of South Carolina State troops under Captain Joseph Pickens (60)
- A small company of North Carolina State troops under Captain Henry Connelly (number not given)
- A Virginia Militia battalion under Frank Triplett[27] (160)
- Two companies of Virginia Militia under Major David Campbell (50)
- A battalion of North Carolina Militia under Colonel Joseph McDowell (260–285)
- A brigade of four battalions of South Carolina Militia under Colonel Andrew Pickens, comprising a three-company battalion of the Spartanburg Regiment under Lt-Col Benjamin Roebuck; a four-company battalion of the Spartanburg Regiment under Col John Thomas; five companies of the Little River Regiment under Lt-Col Joseph Hayes and seven companies of the Fair Forest Regiment under Col Thomas Brandon. Babits states[31] that this battalion “ranged in size from 120 to more than 250 men”. If Roebuck's three companies numbered 120 and Brandon's seven companies numbered 250, then Thomas's four companies probably numbered about 160 and Hayes's five companies about 200, for a total of (730)
- Three small companies of Georgia Militia commanded by Major Cunningham[32] who numbered (55)
- A detachment of the 1st and 3rd Continental Light Dragoons under Lt-Col William Washington(82). Washington was second cousin to Gen. George Washington.

Detachments of state dragoons from North Carolina and Virginia (30)

- A detachment of South Carolina State Dragoons, with a few mounted Georgians, commanded by Major James McCall (25)
- A company of newly-raised volunteers from the local South Carolina Militia commanded by Major Benjamin Jolly (45)

The figures given by Laurence E. Babits total 82 Continental light dragoons; 55 state dragoons; 45 militia dragoons; 300 Continental infantry; about 150 state infantry and 1,255-1,280 militia infantry, for a total of 1,887-1,912 officers and men. Broken down by state, there were about 855 South Carolinians; 442 Virginians; 290-315 North Carolinians; 180 Marylanders; 60 Georgians and 60 Delawareans. Morgan's Continentals were veterans, and many of his militia, which included some Overmountain Men, had seen service at the Battle of Musgrove Mill and the Battle of Kings Mountain.

The British Force

Tarleton's force included:

- The British Legion: 250 cavalry and 200 infantry
- A troop of the 17th Light Dragoons (50)
- A battery of the Royal Artillery (24) with two 3-pounder cannons
- The 7th (Royal Fusiliers) Regiment (177)
- The light infantry company of the 16th Regiment (42)
- The 71st (Fraser's Highlanders) Regiment under Major Arthur MacArthur (334)
- The light company of the Loyalist Prince of Wales' American Regiment (31)
- A company of Loyalist guides (50)
- A total of over 1,150 officers and men.

Broken down by troop classification, there were 300 cavalry, 553 regulars, 24 artillerymen and 281 militia. Tarleton's men from the Royal Artillery, 17th Light Dragoons, 16th Regiment and 71st Regiment were reliable and good soldiers: but the detachment of the 7th Regiment were raw recruits who had been intended to reinforce the garrison of Fort Ninety-Six where they could receive further training rather than go straight into action. Tarleton's own unit, the British Legion were formidable "in a pursuit situation" but had an uncertain reputation "when faced with determined opposition".

The Battle

Morgan's strategy worked perfectly. The British drove in successive lines, anticipating victory only to encounter another, stronger line after exerting themselves and suffering casualties. The depth of the American lines gradually soaked up the shock of the British advance.

At approximately 6:45 a.m., which was a few minutes before sunrise, Tarleton's van emerged from the woods in front of the American position. Tarleton ordered his dragoons to attack the first line of skirmishers, who opened fire and dropped fifteen dragoons. The dragoons promptly retreated, whereupon Tarleton immediately ordered an infantry charge, without pausing to study the American deployment or to allow the rest of his infantry and his cavalry reserve to make it out of the woods. Tarleton attacked the skirmish line without pausing, deploying his main body and his two grasshopper cannon. The American skirmishers kept firing as they withdrew to join the second line manned by Pickens' militia. The British attacked again, this time reaching the militiamen, who (as ordered) poured two volleys into the British who—with 40% of their casualties being

officers—were astonished and confused. They reformed and continued to advance. Tarleton responded by ordering one of his officers, Ogilvie, to charge with some dragoons into the "defeated" Americans. His men moved forward in regular formation and were momentarily checked by the militia musket fire but continued to advance. Pickens' militia fired their second volley and filed around the American left to the rear as planned.

Taking the withdrawal of the first two lines as a full blown retreat, the British advanced headlong into the third and final line of disciplined regulars which awaited them on the hill. The 71st Highlanders, led by Major Archibald MacArthur, were ordered to flank the American right. John Eager Howard spotted the flanking movement and ordered the Virginia militiamen manning the American right to turn and face the Scots. However, in the noise of battle Howard's order was misunderstood and the militiamen began to withdraw. It was now 7:45 am and the British had been fighting for nearly an hour. They were tired and disorganized, but they saw the militia withdrawing and believed the Americans were on the run. They charged, breaking formation and advancing in a chaotic mass. Morgan ordered a volley. Howard's militia stopped their withdrawal and made an about-face. The Virginians fired into the British at a range of no more than thirty yards, with deadly effect, causing the confused British to lurch to a halt. John Eager Howard then shouted "Charge bayonets!"

The Continentals, as ordered, then mounted a bayonet charge. Tarleton's force, faced with this second terrible surprise, began to collapse; some surrendering on the spot, while others turned and ran. Howard's men charged forward and seized the British cannon. Washington's cavalry came around from behind the American left to hit the British on their right flank and rear. Pickens' militia, having re-formed, charged out from behind the hill—completing a 360-degree circle around the American position—to hit the 71st Highlander Scots on the British left flank and rear. Howard ordered the Virginia militia, whose withdrawal had brought on the British charge, to turn about and attack the Scots from the other direction.

The flag flown during the battle became known as the Cowpens flag. The shock of the sudden charge, coupled with the reappearance of the American militiamen on the left flank where Tarleton's exhausted men expected to see their own cavalry, proved too much for the British. Nearly half of the British and Loyalist infantrymen fell to the ground whether they were wounded or not. Their ability to fight had gone. Historian Lawrence Babits diagnoses "combat shock" as the cause for this abrupt British collapse—the effects of exhaustion, hunger and demoralization suddenly catching up with them. Caught in a clever double envelopment that has been compared with the Battle of Cannae, many of the British surrendered. With Tarleton's right flank and center line collapsed, there remained only a minority of the 71st Highlanders who were still putting up a fight against part of Howard's line. Tarleton, realizing the desperate seriousness of what was occurring, rode back to his one remaining unit that was in one piece, the Legion Cavalry. He ordered them to charge, but they refused and fled the field. The Highlanders, surrounded by militia and Continentals, surrendered. Desperate to save something, Tarleton managed to find about forty cavalrymen and with them tried to save the two cannon he had brought with him, but they had been taken. Tarleton with a few remaining horsemen rode back into the fight, but after clashing with Washington's men, he too retreated from the field. He was stopped by Colonel Washington, who attacked him with his saber, calling out, "Where is now the boasting Tarleton?". A Cornet of the 17th, Thomas Patterson, rode up to strike Washington but was shot by Washington's orderly trumpeter. Tarleton then shot Washington's horse from under him and fled, ending the battle. It was 8 a.m. and the Battle of Cowpens had lasted approximately one hour.

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Conclusion>

Morgan's army took 712 prisoners, which included 200 wounded. Even worse for the British, the forces lost, especially the British Legion and the dragoons, constituted the cream of Cornwallis' army. Additionally, 110 British soldiers were killed in action. Tarleton suffered an 86% casualty rate, and his brigade had been all but wiped out as a fighting force. John Eager Howard quoted Maj. McArthur of the 71st Highlanders, now a prisoner of the Americans, as saying that "he was an officer before Tarleton was born; that the best troops in the service were put under 'that boy' to be sacrificed." An American prisoner later told that when Tarleton reached Cornwallis and reported the disaster, Cornwallis placed his sword tip on the ground and leaned on it until the blade snapped.

Historian Lawrence Babits has demonstrated that Morgan's official report of 73 casualties appears to have only included his Continental troops. From surviving records, he has been able to identify by name 128 Patriot soldiers who were either killed or wounded at Cowpens. He also presents an entry in the North Carolina State Records that shows 68 Continental and 80 Militia casualties. It would appear that both the number of Morgan's casualties and the total strength of his force were about double what he officially reported.

Tarleton's apparent recklessness in pushing his command so hard in pursuit of Morgan that they reached the battlefield in desperate need of rest and food may be explained by the fact that, up until Cowpens,

every battle that he and his British Legion had fought in the South had been a relatively easy victory. He appears to have been so concerned with pursuing Morgan that he quite forgot that it was necessary for his men to be in a fit condition to fight a battle once they caught him.

Battlefield monument Nevertheless, Daniel Morgan, known affectionately as "The Old Waggoner" to his men, had fought a masterly battle. His tactical decisions and personal leadership had allowed a force consisting mainly of militia to fight according to their strengths to win one of the most complete victories of the war.

Coming in the wake of the American debacle at Camden, Cowpens was a surprising victory and a turning point that changed the psychology of the entire war—"spiriting up the people", not only those of the backcountry Carolinas, but those in all the Southern colonies. As it was, the Americans were encouraged to fight further, and the Loyalists and British were demoralized. Furthermore, its strategic result—the destruction of an important part of the British army in the South—was incalculable toward ending the war. Along with the British defeat at the Battle of Kings Mountain, Cowpens was a decisive blow to Cornwallis, who might have defeated much of the remaining resistance in South Carolina had Tarleton won at Cowpens. Instead, the battle set in motion a series of events leading to the end of the war. Cornwallis abandoned his pacification efforts in South Carolina, stripped his army of its excess baggage, and pursued Greene's force into North Carolina. After a long chase Cornwallis met Greene at Guilford Court House, winning a pyrrhic victory that so damaged his army that he withdrew to Yorktown, Virginia, to rest and refit. This gave Washington the opportunity, which he seized, to trap and defeat Cornwallis at the Battle of Yorktown, which caused the British to give up their efforts to regain their colonies.

In the opinion of John Marshall, "*Seldom has a battle, in which greater numbers were not engaged, been so important in its consequences as that of Cowpens.*" It gave General Nathanael Greene his chance to conduct a campaign of "dazzling shiftiness" that led Cornwallis by "an unbroken chain of consequences to the catastrophe at Yorktown which finally separated America from the British crown."

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Presented Bill Zimmer presented a Certificate of Appreciation to our March guest speaker Dan Smith.