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The colonial delegates listed the reasons why the American colonies should be independent and asked a committee headed by Thomas Jefferson to compile them in a formal document. Written primarily by Jefferson, the **Declaration of Independence** was adopted on July 4, 1776. The three Georgia delegates who signed the declaration were **Button Gwinnett, Lyman Hall, and George Walton.**



Match the items on the left to their description on the right.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. ____ Battle of Lexington and Concord | A. Author of the Declaration of Independence                           |
| 2. ____ Button Gwinnett                 | B. British soldiers  |
| 3. ____ Second Continental Congress     | C. Georgia delegate to the Second Continental Congress                 |
| 4. ____ Thomas Jefferson                | D. Statement of American independence from England                     |
| 5. ____ Redcoats                        | E. First armed conflict of the Revolutionary War                       |
| 6. ____ Declaration of Independence     | F. Meeting where colonies listed reasons for independence from England |

*SS8H3b: Analyze the significance of people and events in Georgia on the Revolutionary War; include Loyalists, Patriots, Elijah Clarke, Austin Dabney, Nancy Hart, Button Gwinnett, Lyman Hall, George Walton, Battle of Kettle Creek, and siege of Savannah.*

# Chapter 8

## Georgia and the Revolution

Loyalties of Georgians were split during the Revolutionary War. Many older people who had been born in England and supported by England during the colony's early years remained loyal to the mother country. Other settlers who had migrated from northern colonies supported independence from England. Even families were split by their beliefs on American independence.



People loyal to England were called **Loyalists** or **Tories**. Those supporting independence were called **Patriots**. Both formed military companies, and were involved in numerous conflicts and battles in Georgia during the war.

In the winter of 1778, British regiments began moving inland from the Georgia coast. The first major battle in the South took place in Savannah. Although the swamps surrounding Savannah served as protection for the city, British troops made their way through them and surprised the Patriot garrison. Savannah fell to the British on December 29, 1778. Augusta came under British control just a month later.



Who Said It?

Read the statements below. Write L if a Loyalist said it, or P if a Patriot said it.

*Answers only Read*  
*Think about who would think a certain way.*

1. \_\_\_ "England has supported this colony since the beginning. Some of these colonists are not grateful for that, but I certainly am!"
2. \_\_\_ "I believe in this battle for independence, and am willing to fight for it!"
3. \_\_\_ "I hope the British troops overwhelm this local, untrained militia."
4. \_\_\_ "I was born in England and remain loyal to her."
5. \_\_\_ "It's time to take a stand. We will no longer pay those taxes imposed on the colonies!"
6. \_\_\_ "Losing Savannah and Augusta to the British is a bad blow, but we must continue to fight!"

## Battle of Kettle Creek

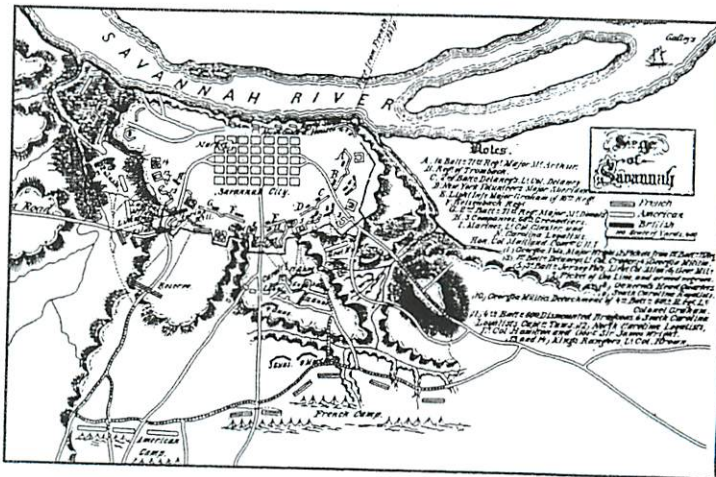
In February 1779, an important battle broke the British stronghold in Georgia. The British commander who had taken Augusta asked for more troops in an attempt to capture the entire colony. A group of 700 British troops and Loyalists traveled from North Carolina and camped on Kettle Creek near the present city of Washington. As they finished their breakfast, the British were



attacked by Patriot militia led by Elijah Clarke and John Dooly. This surprise attack led to a Patriot victory, and caused the British to withdraw from Augusta temporarily.

## The Siege of Savannah

The city of Savannah saw the second bloodiest battle of the American Revolution in the fall of 1779. American General Benjamin Lincoln and a French fleet commanded by Count Charles Henri D'Estaing attempted to regain control of Savannah. The battle on October 9 lasted only ninety minutes, but led to



the deaths of thousands of French and American soldiers. Count Casimir Pulaski, a famous Polish soldier who had come to America to fight for freedom, died in a cavalry charge. Pulaski County was named for him.

After this American defeat, Georgia saw constant battles between Patriots and Loyalists. But soon the tide of war slowly began to turn in favor of the Americans. Augusta was recaptured by the Patriots in the spring of 1781, and the British withdrew from Savannah the following year. In 1783, the Treaty of Paris granted America her independence from England!



Read the following questions. Circle Y for Yes, and N for No.

1. Were Loyalists allied with the British? Y N
2. Was the Battle of Kettle Creek an American defeat? Y N
3. Was the siege of Savannah the bloodiest battle in the Revolution? Y N
4. Were the French allied with the British during the siege of Savannah? Y N
5. Is there a Georgia county named for Casimir Pulaski? Y N
6. Did the Treaty of Paris of 1783 give America its independence from England? Y N

# Heroic Georgians

Georgia heroes emerged during the Revolutionary War. In 1780, most of South Carolina and Georgia (including Augusta) were under British control. Colonel Elijah Clarke and a small group of men disrupted the British and Loyalists with surprise attacks behind enemy lines. He and his men moved up to the Carolinas, leading frontier men in the same guerrilla tactics he had used in Georgia. In 1781, Clarke returned to Georgia and helped regain Patriot control of Augusta. He survived several battle wounds, smallpox, and the mumps during the war!



## Word Definition

**guerrilla:** member of a small group of soldiers who attack suddenly and disappear into hiding



What makes guerrilla tactics successful in wartime?

Austin Dabney also served as a Patriot in the Battle of Kettle Creek. A Georgia slave, Dabney was freed to serve in his master's place in Colonel Clarke's corps. After being seriously wounded, a white man named Giles Harris took Dabney to his home to recover. Georgia's General Assembly gave Dabney his freedom in 1786 to prevent his former master from claiming him and taking advantage of Dabney's fame.

Nancy Morgan Hart showed no fear when six British soldiers turned up on her farm during the war. They demanded she cook for them and began to get drunk on Hart's homemade corn mash. When the soldiers discovered that she was hiding their weapons, they charged at her. Nancy killed one and wounded another. She then held the others at gunpoint until her husband returned home. It is said that the soldiers were hanged and buried right on her property. And in 1912, railroad workers came across a grave near the Hart property with six skeletons in it!



Other sources say that Hart may have acted as a spy for the Patriots and entered the British camp at Kettle Creek dressed as a man. She also reportedly crossed the Savannah River on a raft to get information about enemy camps. This six-foot-tall redhead certainly was a true patriot! Today, Georgia's Hart County and Nancy Hart Highway are named for her.



**Answer the following questions.**

1. What kind of tactics did Elijah Clarke use so effectively against the British?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What city did Clarke help recapture in 1781? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Name two diseases that Clarke battled during the Revolutionary War. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Why was Austin Dabney serving as a soldier? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Why did the General Assembly give Dabney his freedom? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. In what battle did Dabney suffer his wounds? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Why did the British soldiers charge at Nancy Hart? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. What was found in a grave near Nancy Hart's property in 1912? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. Who is Hart County named for? \_\_\_\_\_

# Political Leaders



Button Gwinnett

## A Man of Passion

Button Gwinnett was a merchant and plantation owner who became an important figure in Georgia's early government. During the early years of the Revolutionary War, Gwinnett was an important figure in the Whig Party, and became the leader of the radical St. Johns Parish patriot group. (A parish is similar to a county.)

In 1776, Georgia's provincial congress elected Gwinnett commander of the state's continental battalion. Members of the rival Christ Church Parish objected, so Gwinnett stepped aside and became a delegate to the Continental Congress where he signed the Declaration of Independence. Gwinnett's bitter enemy Lachlan McIntosh commanded the battalion after Gwinnett's departure.

Later, Gwinnett was chairman of the committee that wrote the Georgia Constitution of 1777. He became governor in 1777 after the sudden death of Governor Archibald Bulloch, but only served for several months. During his brief time as governor, Gwinnett feuded with General McIntosh over attacking the British at St. Augustine. Gwinnett challenged McIntosh to a duel, and died of his injuries three days later. Gwinnett County is named for him.



### Hard to Believe but True!

Button Gwinnett's autograph is worth a lot of money! Since he died soon after signing the Declaration of Independence, his signature is rare and quite valuable. In 1979, it sold for \$100,000 — a world record at the time!



### Fill in the blanks.

1. Button Gwinnett was a member of the \_\_\_\_\_ Party.
2. As a delegate to the Continental Congress, Gwinnett signed the \_\_\_\_\_
3. Gwinnett chaired a committee that wrote the \_\_\_\_\_

- Gwinnett was elected \_\_\_\_\_ in 1777.
- Lachlan McIntosh shot Gwinnett in a \_\_\_\_\_.

### **A Strong Leader**

**Lyman Hall** was a minister and doctor from a prominent New England family who practiced medicine in South Carolina and Georgia. Hall joined Gwinnett in leadership of the radical St. John's Parish during the Revolutionary War. He signed the Declaration of Independence in 1776 as a member of the Georgia delegation to the Second Continental Congress.



After the war, Hall returned to his medical practice. He was elected governor in 1783. Important issues during his term in office included rebuilding the state's economy and dealing with problems involving Loyalists and Indians. Hall County is named for him.

### **Soldier and Statesman**

**George Walton** was a successful lawyer who became active in Georgia's government during the American Revolution. He served in the provincial congress, was elected president of the Council of Safety, and was named as a delegate to the Continental Congress. Walton was the third Georgian to sign the Declaration of Independence in 1776.

Walton served as a Patriot colonel in the Revolutionary War. He was wounded and captured by the British during the assault on Savannah. His injury caused him to walk with a limp for the rest of his life. After the war, Walton again became involved in Georgia politics. In a 30-year political career, Walton served as representative to Congress, circuit court judge, chief justice of Georgia, governor of Georgia, and U.S. Senator. Walton County is named for him.



### **Fill in the blanks.**

*Answers only*

- This patriot was a minister and a doctor. \_\_\_\_\_
- This lawyer was wounded in the Revolutionary War. \_\_\_\_\_
- Gwinnett, Hall, and Walton all held this Georgia political office. \_\_\_\_\_



## Road Trip!

Lyman Hall, George Walton, and Button Gwinnett traveled from Georgia to Philadelphia for the Second Continental Congress. As you can see from this map, that's a long way to travel in the 1770s!



Use the facts below to answer the questions about this trip.

• The distance from Savannah to Philadelphia is 633 miles.

• A man can travel 70 miles a day on horseback.

• A man can travel 110 miles a day in a horse-drawn carriage.

1. How many days is the journey from Savannah to Philadelphia on horseback? use division
2. How many days is the journey from Savannah to Philadelphia in a horse-drawn carriage? \_\_\_\_\_
3. How many hours would it take you today to drive from Savannah to Philadelphia if you were traveling 60 miles per hour? \_\_\_\_\_

## SS8H4 – Historical Understandings

*Describe the impact of events that led to the ratification of the United States Constitution and the Bill of Rights.*

# Chapter 9

*SS8H4a: Analyze the strengths and weaknesses of both the Georgia Constitution of 1777 and the Articles of Confederation and explain how weaknesses in the Articles of Confederation led to a need to revise the Articles.*

## Georgia Constitution of 1777

Shortly after the Declaration of Independence was adopted, Georgia's provincial congress met to create a stable state government. A new state