

The Capital was Jacksonboro

Note: The information in the following story was taken from a speech delivered by Laura Lynn Hughes during the Colleton County Historical Society's pilgrimage on Saturday, February 20, 1982. Her sources included: books by Miss Beulah Glover; "Short History of S. C." by D. D. Wallace; articles by Virginia J. Sams; "History of S. C." by McGrady; Bicentennial Report 1976; "History of S. C." by Mary S. Oliphant; articles by A. S. Salley and Todd and Curti's "Rise of the American Nation."

Did you know that Jacksonboro was once the capital of the South Carolina?

During the Revolutionary War, the state legislature met in Jacksonboro for 40 days – from January 8 to February 26, 1782 – thus making the town the provisional capital of S. C. during that period.

The original schedule called for the assembly to meet in Camden, but General Nathaniel Greene, commander of the Continental Forces in the South, feared that the Tories of North Carolina might be a danger to the assembly members and suggested the change to Jacksonboro because he felt that he could provide the best protection of the legislature in this small community.

The second reason was to antagonize the British by meeting that close to Charlestown, which was still under siege even though Cornwallis had already surrendered.

The House of Representatives met in the town Masonic Hall and Peter DuBose allowed the Senate to meet in his tavern (there is one account that states that the assembly was held in the Jacksonboro court house, but according to Beulah Glover, local historian, the court house was not built until the early 1800's.)

DuBose remodeled his tavern for the occasion, knocking out a wall so that the senate could have a larger area in which to work.

Thirteen senators and 74 representatives attended the meeting at Jacksonboro and the list included a variety of individuals who were to become historically famous for their contributions to the freedom of the United States.

Among the noted persons attending were three signers of the Declaration of Independence: Thomas Heyward Jr., Edward Rutledge and Arthur Middleton. Francis Marion, the "Swamp Fox" and Thomas Sumter, the "Gamecock" two of S. C.'s most well-known guerilla leaders, attended, as well as: John Rutledge, who served as president and governor of S. C.; Thomas Pinckney, a governor of S. C. and ambassador to Spain; Charles Cotesworth, a delegate to the Constitutional Convention; William Moultrie, who defended the state at Fort Sullivan and Christopher Gadsden, who lit the torch under the "Liberty Tree."

Colleton County was represented by members from both St. Paul's and St. Bartholomew's parishes. Senator Joseph Bee and representatives Thomas Bee, Thomas Ferguson, George Livingston, Christopher Peters, Joseph Slann and Marion Wilkinson were present from St. Paul's parish. Attending from St. Bartholomew's parish were Senator John Lloyd and representatives Joseph Glover Sr., Edmund Hyrne, James Postell, William Skirving and John Ward.

A number of major decisions were made during the 40-day meeting of the assembly including the Amercement and Confiscation Acts. These acts banished people not loyal to the American cause and allowed the selling of the property of known Tories to pay war debts (as there were more battles fought in S. C. than any other state, S. C.'s debt was enormous.)

Rules were also laid down for the punishment of Tories, improving the militia and raising Continental troops. Support was given to the Continental Congress to levy an import tax and a law was passed to end the use of paper money.

Today nothing remains on the spot where these famous men gathered. The fate of DuBose's Tavern (later known as Allen's Tavern) is not known, but according to Beulah Glover, the Masonic Lodge is still standing and is being used as a residence by a farm family in Meggett.