

CHAPTER 10

THREATS: FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC

- I. Unrest in the Backcountry
 - A. Introduction. To colonial South Carolinians, the backcountry was any territory more than 50 miles from the coast. Beginning in the 1750s, thousands of Scots-Irish and Germans had left Pennsylvania, traveled south through the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, and settled in the Piedmont of the two Carolinas. In South Carolina, these settlements stretched from the Waxhaws on the North Carolina line to Long Cane Creek near the Georgia border.
 - B. The backcountry settlers came to South Carolina seeking land and safety from Indian attacks.
 - C. The Cherokee War (1760-1762) devastated the frontier, caused social dislocation, and created an atmosphere of lawlessness.
 - D. The Response of the Government in Charleston
 1. There was no local government of any kind in the backcountry, not even parishes or commissions.
 2. The backcountry had no real representation in the Commons House of Assembly.
 3. All land in South Carolina, whether rich rice land in the lowcountry or sand hills soil in the backcountry was taxed by the Assembly at the same rate!
 4. All courts were in Charleston.
 - E. Decent, law-abiding settlers were having a difficult time.
 - F. The Outlaws
 1. Well-organized outlaw bands operated from Georgia to Virginia.
 2. They used terrorist tactics to get folks to tolerate their activities.
 3. They terrorized or killed anyone who opposed them.
 4. The summer of 1766 was one long, horrible crime wave.
 5. The summer of 1767 was even worse (just read the Charleston newspapers).

6. The outlaws operated with impunity because there were no law enforcement officials in the backcountry to stop them.

G. The Regulator Movement

1. Law abiding citizens formed vigilante groups known as "The Regulators."
2. Charleston officials ordered the Regulators to disband, but they didn't.
3. The backcountry erupted into armed conflict between outlaw bands and the Regulators.
4. Backcountry leaders sent a petition to the Commons House asking for courts, roads, schools, etc.
 - a. The Commons House passed the Circuit Court Act of 1768.
 - b. The Governor deputized some of the Regulators to hunt down the outlaws.
5. The King vetoed the Circuit Court Act of 1768, but the Commons House passed another one in 1769.
6. By the time of the American Revolution, law and order was pretty well established in the backcountry.

H. Summary. The Regulator Movement was led by settlers who were determined to put an end to lawlessness, even if it meant taking the law into their own hands. The Movement also pointed up one of the difficulties of having all governmental authority centered in Charleston. The hard feelings that resulted from this episode in the state's history were lasting: for nearly 200 years after the Regulators, there were tensions between the lowcountry and the backcountry (or upcountry as it was later called).

I. Readings

1. Edgar, South Carolina: A History, pp. 204-216
2. Bridenbaugh, Myths and Realities, pp. 119-196
3. Brown, The Regulators

4. Horne, South Carolina, 122
5. Jones, South Carolina, pp. 254-276
6. Woodmason, The Carolina Backcountry

II. South Carolina In The British Empire, Part I

A. Introduction. Although a proprietary colony, one of the motives behind the awarding of the Carolina charter had been to expand the boundaries of England's Empire at the expense of the Spanish Empire. The French Empire in North America included not only Canada, but also Louisiana. During the 18th century, these three European powers became embroiled in a series of war in Europe and overseas. When the mother countries went to war, so did the colonies. As the southern outpost of the British Empire, South Carolina often found herself at war with Great Britain's European enemies and their Indian allies.

***B. Queen Anne's War (1702-1713; War of the Spanish Succession)**

- *1. South Carolina attacked St. Augustine.**
- *2. South Carolina raided Spanish mission settlements in west Florida.**
- *3. A joint Franco-Spanish invasion of South Carolina is repulsed.**
- *4. South Carolina's military successes shifted Indian alliances in her favor.**

***C. King George's War (1745-1748; War of Austrian Succession; also War of Jenkins' Ear)**

- *1. Spanish privateers terrorized the Carolina coast.**
- *2. South Carolina militia, under General Oglethorpe of Georgia, attacked St. Augustine.**
- *3. A large Spanish army landed in Georgia determined to capture Beaufort, but was defeated at the Battle of Bloody Marsh.**

***D. French and Indian War (1754-1763; officially 1756-1763; Seven Years War; also The Great War for the Empire)**

- *1. Charleston was heavily fortified.**
- *2. The Cherokee went on the warpath and devastated the frontier.**

- *3. Great Britain sent two separate expeditionary forces to South Carolina to help subdue the Cherokee.**

***E. New Colonial Indian Policy**

- *1. Before the war, each colony had handled its own Indian relations.**
- *2. Now, the British government established a Superintendent for Indian Affairs for the southern colonies.**
- *3. Treaty of Augusta signed by the governor of all the southern colonies and the chiefs of the Cherokee, Creek, Chickasaw, Choctaw, and Catawba.**
- *4. The British government established the Proclamation Line.**

***F. Summary. During the first century of its existence, South Carolina was involved in three imperial contests. It is clear that until Georgia became a viable buffer colony, South Carolinians considered the Spanish in St. Augustine to be the main threat to their safety. During the first two conflicts, the colonials were left pretty much to their own devices. However, during the French and Indian War, the British government actively participated in the frontier fighting and their participation in America and elsewhere was expensive. Trying to get the colonies to pay for the expenses incurred in eliminating the French and Spanish threats to the American colonies, including South Carolina, eventually would lead to the American Revolution.**

G. Readings

1. Barck & Lefler, Colonial America, pp. 455-474, 492-496
2. Blum, Catton, The National Experience, pp. 76-88
3. Horne, South Carolina, 123-127
4. Jones, South Carolina, pp. 143-144, 182, 210-212, 269-274
5. Tindall, America, pp. 152-164

III. South Carolina in the British Empire, Part 2

A. Introduction. There were advantages and disadvantages for South Carolina as a colony of the British Empire. Among the disadvantages were

the colonial wars and the potential threat of more stringent imperial control of local affairs. Among the advantages were special economic considerations that helped make South Carolina one of the wealthiest colonies in the empire.

***B. Mercantilism was designed to make the empire self-sufficient. In order to make the empire self sufficient, colonies were given financial incentives to produce certain crops.**

C. Advantages.

1. Bounties were paid for the production of naval stores and indigo.
2. South Carolina's rice could be shipped directly to Portugal, one of the main rice markets in Europe.
3. The Royal Navy protected South Carolina's commerce from pirates and Spanish privateers.

***D. The Navigation Acts that regulated the commerce of the empire included the following provisions:**

- *1. All trade between England and her colonies had to be carried in English or colonial ships.**
- *2. All European produce (with a few exceptions) had to be shipped to England first and then to the colonies.**
- *3. Certain colonial products were enumerated and could only be shipped directly to England.**
- *4. After 1696, the Navigation Acts were enforced by the Admiralty Courts which meant a trial without a jury.**
- *5. Until the French and Indian War, the British government did not enforce the Navigation Acts too strictly.**

***E. Impact of the French and Indian War**

- *1. The war had been costly and England thought the colonies should pay their fair share.**
- *2. Revenue Act (1764)**
 - *a. It was designed to raise revenue in the colonies by levying import duties in luxury goods.**

***b. South Carolinians didn't get upset with this act.**

***3. Stamp Act**

***a. South Carolinians reacted violently.**

***b. The stamps were not sold in the colony and all business and governmental activity ceased.**

***c. South Carolina elected 3 delegates to the Stamp Act Congress.**

***d. South Carolina's court ruled that citizens had the right to justice with or without stamps.**

***e. Parliament repealed the act.**

***f. Commons House voted to purchase a statue of Williams Pitt for his role in the repeal.**

***g. A Commons House committee drew up a list of grievances against the British government.**

***i. Judges should hold their offices for "good behavior."**

***ii. Multiple office holding should be eliminated.**

***iii. South Carolina should be able to export rice to European countries north of Portugal.**

***iv. South Carolina should be able to export lumber, and foodstuffs to any country.**

***4. Townshend Duties**

***a. Duties were levied on lead, tea, paint.**

***b. South Carolina Commons House received the Massachusetts Circular Letter and the Virginia Resolves.**

***c. A non-importation association was formed.**

***d. Britain repealed all duties except that on tea.**

- F. Local issues perhaps as important in South Carolina.
1. The Laurens-Leigh Controversy (1767-1768)
 - a. This was a controversial case involving that inflamed colonial resentment of the injustices of multiple office holding.
 - b. The case brought the entire machinery of the colonial government into disrepute.
 2. The Wilkes Fund Controversy (1769-1770)
 - a. The Commons House voted to send money to London to help defend John Wilkes.
 - b. The royal governor and council said the act was illegal.
 - c. The Commons House sent the money anyway.
 - d. After this controversy in 1771, colonial government in South Carolina began to disintegrate.
- G. Summary. There certainly were economic advantages for South Carolina as a colony in the British Empire. The Royal Navy protected the shipping that was the colony's economic lifeline and the bounties added to the profits that planters were already making on naval stores and indigo. On the negative side, there was little that excited South Carolinians until after the French and Indian War when the British government tried to get better control over and pay for the newly enlarged empire.
- H. Readings
1. Edgar, South Carolina: A History, 216-219
 2. Barck & Lefler, Colonial America, pp. 475-532
 3. Horne, South Carolina, 139-151
 4. Jones, South Carolina, pp. 280-291
 5. Morgan, The Stamp Act Crisis, see index for "South Carolina"
 6. Tindall, America, pp. 166-182

7. Weir, Colonial America, pp. 265-290

IV. The Reluctant Road To Revolution

A. Introduction. The 1770s began inauspiciously for the British Empire in South Carolina. After the struggle between the governor and the Commons House over the Wilkes Funds controversy, the Commons House, the representatives of the people, ceased to function. Filling the void as voices of the people were a series of extra-legal organizations, heirs to the non-importation associations of the 1760s.

***B. Taxes, Tea, and Protest**

- *1. The Townshend Duties were repealed, except for those on tea.**
- *2. King George III and his government were determined “to try the matter with the Americans” on the tea duty.**
- *3. In 1773, the East India Company sent a shipload of tea to South Carolina.**
- *4. The arrival of the tea led to the calling of a “Mass Meeting,” which evolved into a semi-permanent political body.**
- *5. The Mass Meeting**
 - *a. It voted to form a Non-Importation Association and boycott British goods.**
 - *b. It expressed outrage and anger over the Intolerable Acts.**
 - *c. It called for election of representatives from all sections of South Carolina to meet in Charleston in July 1774.**

***C. The General Meeting of the People**

- *1. This was the first colonial gathering where the backcountry had any real representation.**
- *2. It elected delegates to the First Continental Congress.**
- *3. It elected a “Committee of 99” with virtually unlimited powers.**
- *4. The Commons House of Assembly gathered in Charleston and ratified the actions of the General meeting.**

- *5. **New elections were called for to create a Provincial Congress to govern South Carolina (British officials were still here!).**

***D. The Provincial Congress (1775)**

- *1. **The Lowcountry with 1/3 of voting population had 138 representatives.**
- *2. **The backcountry with 2/3 of the voting population had only 64 representatives.**
- *3. **The Congress saw to it that the Non-Importation Association was strictly enforced.**
- *4. **It authorized the seizure of gunpowder and weapons from the basement of the State House and the powder magazines on Charleston Neck.**
- *5. **In May, the Congress received with alarm the news of Lexington and Concord.**
- *6. **The Congress began to intimidate those opposed to its actions.**
 - *a. **British officials, including the last royal governor, began to flee for their lives.**
 - *b. **South Carolinians who did not support the Congress were proclaimed public enemies.**
- *7. **A Council of Safety was formed to protect the province.**
- *8. **A delegation was sent to try to persuade the backcountry to support the Non-Importation Association and the Provincial Congress. It met with indifference and hostility.**

E. Summary. The revolutionaries in the Provincial Congress had only a tenuous hold on South Carolina. The lowcountry was divided and the backcountry, at best, was neutral to what was happening in Charleston. Although there were British warships in Charleston harbor, they did nothing to try to stop the progress of what was clearly a revolution. South Carolinians, even those who were angry at Great Britain, assumed the title of revolutionaries very reluctantly. The tug of empire and old loyalties were still strong in 1776.

F. Readings

1. Edgar, South Carolina: A History, 219-225
2. Blum, Catton, The National Experience, pp. 98-106

3. Horne, South Carolina, 151-157
4. Jones, South Carolina, pp. 280-297
5. Tindall, America, pp. 180-186, 188-200
6. Walsh, Charleston's Sons of Liberty, pp. 26-76
7. Weir, Colonial South Carolina, pp. 291-320