

Friends in Liberty ***North Carolina in the American*** ***Revolution***



**Activities, Ideas, and Resources for Students
Beyond The Exhibits
North Carolina Museum of History**

Friends in Liberty
North Carolina in the American Revolution
Activities, Ideas, and Resources for Students

Video Description

Friends in Liberty: North Carolina in the American Revolution is based on the journal of Hugh McDonald, the son of Highland Scots loyalists, who joined the Sixth North Carolina Regiment of the Continental Army in 1776. Through the eyes of this 14-year-old boy and his friend, a fictitious character named Anne Taylor, we learn about North Carolina during the American Revolution. Anne's experiences, such as her struggles with increasing responsibilities and worries at home after her brother Samuel joins the militia, help us understand a young girl's view of life during the Revolutionary War.

Friends in Liberty is an educational film produced by the North Carolina Museum of History and funded by the State Officers Club, North Carolina Society Daughters of the American Revolution. Copies of the DVD were distributed to North Carolina public middle and high schools in October 2009. **The film can be viewed via free streaming, at <https://www.ncmuseumofhistory.org/friends-liberty-north-carolina-american-revolution-form>.**



Explore the North Carolina Museum of History's many resources related to the American Revolution [BTE250.com](https://www.ncmuseumofhistory.org)

Preview Information

Friends in Liberty is a work of historical fiction—a fictional story based on a historical event or figure. It would be helpful to students to clarify the following points before viewing the video.

- Hugh McDonald was an actual historical figure from Carthage, North Carolina, who fought in the American Revolution. He served in the Sixth North Carolina Regiment, which was part of the Continental Army. The Sixth North Carolina saw action at Brandywine, Pennsylvania, and was also at Valley Forge, where McDonald's platoon was reviewed by General George Washington.
- The Continental Army was organized by the Second Continental Congress on June 14, 1775, to supplement local militia forces in the American Revolution.
- In the video, the fictitious character Samuel Taylor serves in a North Carolina militia unit. Militias usually fought within their home state or

region and were not part of the Continental Army. At times during the war, however, they joined the Continental forces in fighting the British.

- Flashbacks are used to explain North Carolina's involvement in the war.

Vocabulary

Please review the following terms with your class before showing the video.

1. **Continental Congress** – the first national government of the United States, composed of representatives from the 13 colonies: The First Continental Congress met from September 5, 1774, to October 26, 1774. The Second Continental Congress met from May 10, 1775, to March 1, 1781, when the Articles of Confederation were ratified.
2. **gazette** – a newspaper. Various North Carolina newspapers in the 18th century had “gazette” in the title.
3. **Intolerable Acts** – the name given by the American colonists to a series of punitive laws passed by the British Parliament in 1774. Also called the Coercive Acts, the laws sparked outrage and resistance in the colonies and were important developments in the growth of the American Revolution. Four of the five acts were issued in direct response to the Boston Tea Party of December 1773. The British government hoped these measures would, by making an example of Massachusetts, reverse the trend of colonial resistance to parliamentary authority that had begun with the 1765 Stamp Act. Many colonists viewed the acts as a violation of their rights and organized the First Continental Congress to coordinate their response.
4. **Loyalist/redcoat/Tory** – a person who supported English rule.
5. **minuteman** – an armed citizen ready to fight at a minute's notice.
6. **musket** – a shoulder gun loaded from the end of the barrel. Muskets were used during the Revolution.
7. **pacifist** – a person opposed to war or violence as a means of resolving disputes.
8. **Parliament** – the lawmaking body of Great Britain.
9. **Patriot/Whig** – a person who favored America's independence.
10. **Provincial Congress** – a formal assembly of representatives within the North Carolina colony.
11. **Quakers** – the Religious Society of Friends, a religious group who opposed the use of violence.
12. **regiment** – a military unit of ground troops.
13. **resolve** – a formal decision made by a group.
14. **royal colony** – a colony, like North Carolina in 1775, directly under the rule of the king of England.
15. **Sixth North Carolina Regiment, Continental Line** – Formed by North Carolina's Provincial Congress in 1776, this is the regiment Hugh McDonald joined. The Sixth saw action at Brandywine and Germantown, Pennsylvania, and was also at Valley Forge. With reduced numbers, it was combined with the First North Carolina Regiment and continued in action. It was taken in

the fall of Charleston in 1780 and officially ceased to exist in 1781.

16. **skirmish** – a minor encounter between two small bodies of troops.
17. **smallpox inoculation** – In the American colonies, smallpox was a deadly virus that spread easily from person to person. Fearing devastation to his troops after a winter of smallpox early in the war, General George Washington ordered inoculation centers to be created for all Continental soldiers. Inoculation was not a vaccination but a process where a live virus was given to a person through a cut in the skin. While contracting the disease in this process, the person had a milder and usually survivable case.
18. **state militia** – a group of armed citizens who were not members of a regular army.
19. **volley** – a large number of shots fired by many men at the same time.

Events

1. **Battle of Moores Creek Bridge** – Battle on February 27, 1776, in which Highland Scots loyalists were defeated by a Patriot militia led by future governor Richard Caswell. Patriot sentiment grew in response to the victory, which helped discourage the British from engaging in other southern battles at the beginning of the Revolution.
2. **Boston Tea Party** – Demonstration in 1773 by colonists opposing the tax on tea. Disguised as Indians, the men raided three British ships in Boston Harbor and dumped hundreds of chests of tea into the water.
3. **Edenton Tea Party** – Demonstration in 1775, organized by Penelope Barker, in which 51 women in Edenton, North Carolina, signed a petition stating their refusal to purchase or drink British tea. The group wrote a letter explaining their opposition to the tea tax. The event, which was lampooned in the London newspapers, is considered the first political protest by a group of women in the American colonies.
4. **Guilford Courthouse** – Site of a major battle between the army of General Nathanael Greene and the army of General Charles Cornwallis on March 15, 1781. The British retreated to Wilmington after being defeated.
5. **Halifax Resolves** – The 83 delegates of the Fourth Provincial Congress of North Carolina met in Halifax on April 12, 1776, and authorized delegates to the Continental Congress to vote for independence. This was the first official action by a colony calling for independence.
6. **Ramsour's Mill** – Site of a battle between Whigs and Tories on June 20, 1780. The Whig forces held out against the Tories, who eventually ran from the field.
7. **Stamp Act of 1765** – This was the fourth Stamp Act to be passed by the Parliament of Great Britain, but the first attempt to impose a direct tax on the colonies. The act required all legal documents, permits, commercial contracts, newspapers, wills, pamphlets, and playing cards in the American colonies to carry a tax stamp.

8. **Tory War** – In 1781 former Whig David Fanning led Tory militia forces against Whigs in skirmishes in North Carolina. Fanning and his men captured Governor Thomas Burke and some 200 Whigs. While Whig militia battled his forces at Lindley’s Mill, an injured Fanning delivered his prisoners to the British in Wilmington. The British evacuation from Wilmington in November 1781 left Fanning without support, and he eventually fled North Carolina.

People

1. **Richard Caswell** – A member of North Carolina’s colonial assembly for 17 years, he led militia forces at the Battle of Moores Creek Bridge. He was a member of the Continental Congress and also North Carolina’s first elected governor, serving six one-year terms.
2. **Catawba** – American Indian tribe in North Carolina that sided with the Patriots during the American Revolution.
3. **Cherokee** – American Indian tribe in North Carolina that sided with the British during the American Revolution.
4. **Continental** – a soldier in the Continental (American) Army.
5. **General Horatio Gates** – Originally a British military leader, he moved to Virginia and took up the Patriot cause. As commander of the southern army, he unsuccessfully led mostly untrained forces against the British at the Battle Camden, South Carolina, in August 1780. He received much blame for the loss and was replaced by General Nathanael Greene.
6. **George III** – king of England during the American Revolution.
7. **General Nathanael Greene** – Replacing Horatio Gates as head of the southern army, he pursued a course of strategic retreat until he had enough troops and militia to fight General Cornwallis at Guilford Courthouse. While victory eluded the Patriots, the British suffered much greater losses and were forced to retreat to Wilmington after this battle and leave North Carolina in Patriot control.
8. **Hessian** – a German mercenary in the British army during the Revolutionary War.
9. **Joseph Hewes** – A wealthy businessman in Wilmington, he served in the Provincial Assembly from 1766 until it was dissolved by the royal governor in 1775. He was appointed to the Committee of Correspondence, elected to the Provincial Legislature, and sent to the Continental Congress. He was known as a tireless worker in committee and the leading expert on maritime concerns. In 1776 he signed the Declaration of Independence and placed his ships at the service of the Continental armed forces. He served the Congress as secretary of the Naval Affairs Committee until 1779, when he fell ill. He died at age 50.
10. **William Hooper** – A representative from Wilmington in the General Assembly of North Carolina in 1773, he was a delegate to the Continental Congress from 1774 to 1776. In 1789 he was appointed a federal judge but retired a year later due to failing health. He died in October 1790.

11. **John Murray, Earl of Dunmore** – royal governor of the colony of Virginia who promised freedom to any enslaved person who joined the British in their fight against the Patriots.
12. **General Francis Nash** – Leader of the North Carolina Brigade (the combined North Carolina regiments) at Brandywine, he was wounded at Germantown in October 1777 and died of his wounds.
13. **John Penn** – A lawyer in Granville County, he was elected to the Provincial Congress and the Continental Congress in 1775. He served in the Continental Congress until 1777, participating in committee work. He was reelected in 1779 and appointed to the Board of War, on which he served until 1780. He declined a judgeship in his native state around that time, due to failing health, and returned to practicing law. He died at the age of 48.
14. **Griffith Rutherford** – A general in the North Carolina militia during the American Revolution, he defeated the Cherokee in July 1776 in Burke County and led a counterattack in August 1776, assisted by the Catawba Indians. His militia destroyed 36 Cherokee villages, pushing the Cherokee back to the mountains.

As You Watch

Introduce the video using the following important points as a guide.

- The American Revolution (1775–1783) ended years of British rule and brought American independence. North Carolina numbered among the first to protest British policies.
- A group of women from the area of Edenton pledged not to drink any more British tea in 1774, and the signers of the Halifax Resolves urged on April 12, 1776, that other colonies declare their independence.
- Not all North Carolinians wanted to break ties with Great Britain. Citizens were divided: some wanted independence, others supported the British Crown, and some were neutral and desired no part of war.
- North Carolinians served in militia units and in the Continental Army within and outside the state. The first engagement in North Carolina ended with the defeat of Loyalist forces at Moores Creek Bridge in February 1776. Other major battles fought in North Carolina included Kings Mountain in 1780 and Guilford Courthouse in March 1781.
- Within the state, not everyone agreed on supporting the Revolution. Loyalists and Patriots, neighbors and family members fought a “civil war” in skirmishes and battles.
- Women and girls supported the war effort in numerous ways. They worked the farms and raised food for troops and for themselves. They made cloth and used it for uniforms, blankets, and tents needed by the fighting men. Some women followed their husbands, cooking and nursing the wounded as needed. Others served as spies and even disguised themselves as men to fight for liberty.

HISTORY COMES ALIVE

Learning as a Group

Use these questions in a class discussion to assess your students' understanding of the colonial and Revolutionary periods and to encourage original and critical thinking skills.

1. What was the French and Indian War? How did this war influence the American move for independence?

From 1754 to 1763, England fought France for control of the rich lands of Canada and the land between the Mississippi River and Allegheny Mountains. The colonists sided with the English; the French were aided by American Indians. After winning the costly war, the English sought to recover some of the money spent by taxing the colonists.

2. Discuss the idea of taxation without representation.

Americans did not think England had the right to tax them, because the colonies were not represented in the British Parliament.

3. Discuss the three types of government in the American colonies. Although all of the colonies operated fairly independently of England for years, the formal government of each colony depended on the king.
 - A. royal colony – governed directly by the king
 - B. corporate colony – governed by a group of shareholders who were granted ownership rights by the king
 - C. proprietary colony – governed by individuals who were granted land by the king

4. How did the two opposing sides compare militarily at the onset of Revolution?

The British army and navy far surpassed those of the American colonies and were better trained. But the British army's traditional means of fighting put it at a disadvantage: Redcoats marched in straight lines wearing bright uniforms; Americans fought more like Indians—hiding behind trees and ambushing the enemy.

5. What was the difference between the Provincial Congress and the Continental Congress?

The Provincial Congress in North Carolina, as in most colonies, held formal assemblies to help make decisions for the region. Representatives from across the colony were selected to attend. The Continental Congress was composed of representatives (delegates) from each colony throughout the “continent” and

performed the same types of functions as the Provincial Congress.

6. How did North Carolinians make a living when the Revolutionary War started?

Along the coast, merchants and larger plantation owners relied on trade with Europe. Farther inland, small farmers made a living selling the products from pine trees. Naval stores—tar, pitch, turpentine, and rosin—and lumber were the basis for economic survival. Livestock provided a means of income for those who lived inland, away from river highways. Corn, wheat, and flour were also important trade items.

7. In the video, both Hugh McDonald and Samuel Taylor leave their family farms. Suggest some problems that this could create for a family.

Some ideas your students might mention include loss of income, decreased food production, loneliness, the inability to maintain heavy repairs on home and outbuildings, and the hardship of increased daily chores.

8. American Indians participated on both sides of the Revolutionary War. In the summer and autumn of 1776, militia forces from three states, led by General Griffith Rutherford and containing Catawba tribe members, fought against the Cherokee, who sided with the British. Why did the tribes choose sides? How did their choices affect them after the war?

Because King George III prohibited colonizers from crossing the Appalachian Mountains, the Cherokee fought on the side of the British. The Catawba, a Piedmont-based tribe, survived by absorbing smaller tribes and lived on a reservation near present-day Rock Hill, South Carolina. They believed that siding with the colonists would help them keep their reservation, which they feared the British would take. General Rutherford's militia destroyed many Cherokee villages during this campaign, and the Cherokee sued for peace. The tribe retreated further into the mountains of North Carolina after the war. British forces burned much of the Catawba reservation, but the Catawba did keep their reservation after the war.

9. At the time of the Revolution, there were some 70,000 African Americans in North Carolina, of whom around 5 percent were free. All people of color—enslaved or free—responded to the war. Enslaved people identified with the cause of liberty, but questioned whether the American forces or the British offered the best route to freedom. Discuss this topic.

Lord Dunmore, the royal governor of Virginia, promised freedom to enslaved people and indentured servants of Patriots who joined the British army. Thousands took this opportunity. Others chose to fight for the Patriot cause and sued for their freedom at

the war's end. George Washington recognized the contributions of the enlisted free men of color, and some states did offer freedom to enslaved men who joined the Continental Army. Free people of color joined the militia and regiments of many states, including North Carolina. After the war, some free people of color remained in the new United States, while others went to Canada, Britain, or Sierra Leone, then a British colony. Many African Americans were returned to slavery. The promise of liberty for all would be postponed for many decades.

Writing

Integrating history with language arts helps students interpret, analyze, and respond to historical facts and interpretations.

Write a short report on one of the following topics:

1. Find out where Flora MacDonald came from and why she was famous.
2. Who was David Fanning? Describe the trouble he caused the Patriots during and after the Revolution.
3. Read about the Moravians and the Quakers who lived in North Carolina during the Revolution. Write a report that describes how they felt about going to war. Did they fight in the Revolution? Why or why not?
4. John Jasper White was an enslaved man who fought for the Patriots. Find out about how he saved a ship and gained his freedom.

History Projects

1. During the American Revolution, one of the few newspapers operating in North Carolina was the *North Carolina Gazette*. Design your own front page for a newspaper from a North Carolina city. Be sure to include a banner with a title, date, and price; one illustration; and three or four articles based on events and people from the year you choose. Select any year between 1775 and 1781.
2. Once independence was declared in 1776, colonists needed their own flag. Design a flag for North Carolina on poster board. Use symbols and colors that are meaningful to the Revolutionary War period. Explain their meaning.
3. Look up the term "Pyrrhic victory" and write down the definition. Read about the outcome of the Battle of Guilford Courthouse in March 1781. Explain how it was an example of a Pyrrhic victory. In debate format, argue who "won" this important battle. One side will represent General Greene, and the other will represent General Cornwallis.
4. In the winter of 1780, General Nathanael Greene wrote a letter to Colonel Daniel Morgan in Charlotte putting him in command of half his troops in

South Carolina. He said, “Give protection to that part of the country and spirit up the people.” Write and tape a speech that Morgan could have given to his troops the night before a big battle.

GOING FURTHER

Places to Visit

Check each site for tour information, hours, and admission fees.

Alamance Battleground State Historic Site – Site of the battle between the Regulators and Governor William Tryon on May 16, 1771.

Burgwin-Wright House – Reported headquarters of General Cornwallis during the British occupation of Wilmington. Located on Market Street.

Clapp’s Mill – A memorial marker at Lake Macintosh Park lies less than a mile from the site of the battle between Patriots under the command of General Henry “Light Horse Harry” Lee and British troops led by General Charles Cornwallis on March 2, 1781. Located on Huffman Mill Road south of Burlington.

Cowpens National Battlefield – At this pasture near the Broad River, North Carolina troops aided in the 1781 victory over the British army. Located near Chesnee in Cherokee County, South Carolina. Free admission.

Guilford Courthouse National Military Park – Site of the 1781 battle between the forces of British general Cornwallis and Patriot general Nathanael Greene. A visitor center and museum provide information.

Historic Edenton – Coastal port town that was home to many Revolutionary War leaders and where many important decisions were made that influenced the fight for independence.

Historic Halifax State Historic Site – Site of the signing of the Halifax Resolves in 1776. Many of the buildings have been restored to their mid-1700s appearance. The site includes a visitor center with orientation program and museum, guided tours, and an annual celebration of the signing of the resolves. Located off I-95 in Halifax County

House in the Horseshoe State Historic Site – Historic house built in 1772 by Philip Alston, and the site of a skirmish between Alston’s Whigs and David Fanning’s Tories in 1781. The skirmish is reenacted annually in the summer. Located eight miles north of Carthage.

Kings Mountain National Military Park – Victory by the Patriots at this site in October 1780 delayed the British movement through the South and marked the turning point of the war. Located southwest of Charlotte in York County, South Carolina.

Moore's Creek National Military Park - Site of the 1776 battle of Moore's Creek Bridge. This decisive victory for the Patriots prevented the full-scale invasion of the South by the British. The park includes a self-guided trail, cannon, field exhibits, monuments, and markers. Located 25 miles northwest of Wilmington.

Old Burying Ground – This cemetery includes fascinating examples of artwork that grace the early tombstones of American and British soldiers. Located in Beaufort.

Old Salem Historic District – Settled by Moravians in 1766, the site includes 30 restored buildings. Salem Tavern served General George Washington during his southern tour in 1791. Located in Winston-Salem.

Old Stone House – Historic house reportedly used by the British to hold Patriot prisoners. Located four miles south of Salisbury.

Person's Ordinary – This restored tavern was once owned by noted Revolutionary War figure Thomas Person. It is one of only a handful of stagecoach inns still standing in the South. Located in Littleton, Halifax County.

Richard Caswell Memorial State Historic Site. – Small museum commemorating the first governor of the independent state of North Carolina. Located west of Kinston.

Tryon Palace State Historic Site – Built between 1767 and 1770 by Governor William Tryon, this building served as the seat of government from 1770 until 1791. The original structure burned but was rebuilt in the 1950s. Located in New Bern.