

Battle of the Hook

Gloucester, Virginia

OCTOBER 18 - 19, 2008

RECREATED MILITARY UNIT ACTIVITIES



To celebrate the Allied Victory at Gloucester,
authentic military encampments and a series of tactical
demonstrations will be held over the course of the weekend.

Highlights will include:

Participation by
2,000
Living History Interpreter
Volunteers

From more than
75 Recreated
Revolutionary War Regiments

Travelling from
27 States and Canada

Bringing recreated uniforms and equipment valued at over
\$2,000,000

Providing educational historical interpretation valued by the
National Park Service for the two days at over:
\$450,000



Event Highlights will Include:

Three Battle Reenactments

Dusk Artillery Demonstration

Fife and Drum Music Performances

Special Programs for Area School Children

Saturday evening Jollification

Historic Estate Close to Original Battlefield

Earthworks and Field Kitchens

*Financial Assistance for Charter Busses,
Horses and Artillery*

PROPOSED SCHEDULE OF EVENTS:

Friday, October 17:

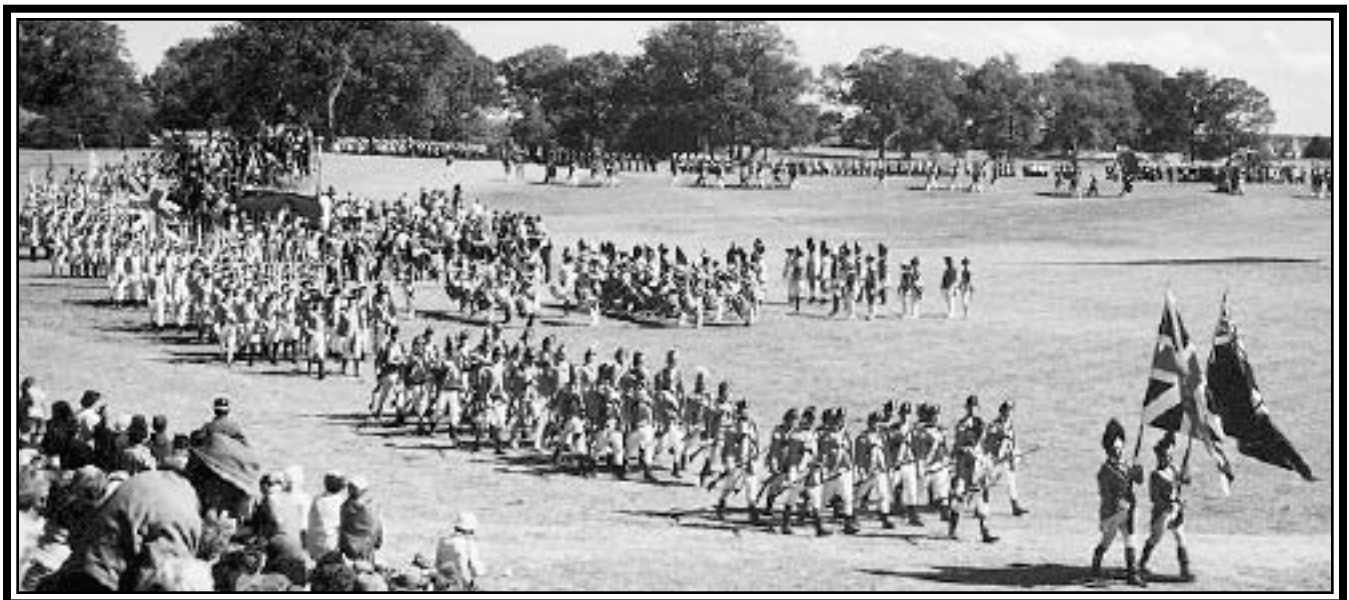
- ∞ Participants arrive and set up camps
- ∞ School Programs on site
- ∞ 18th c. Ball or other activities for local residents

Saturday, October 18:

- ∞ Musket and Rifle Drill Demonstrations
- ∞ Music Performance by Massed Fifes and Drums
- ∞ Military Camp Life Programs
- ∞ Battle of Greensprings Demonstration
- ∞ Evening Artillery Demonstration
- ∞ Jollification

Sunday, October 19:

- ∞ 18th Century Church Service
- ∞ Morning Battle Demonstration
- ∞ Music Performance by Massed Fifes and Drums
- ∞ Battle of the Hook Demonstration
- ∞ Pass in Review by Recreated Troops



The Battle of the Hook

When General Cornwallis occupied Yorktown in September 1781 he dispatched a portion of his troops to occupy and fortify Gloucester Point, across the river from Yorktown. This force would be able to secure the British Army's flank, protect a possible escape route, and forage for food and supplies in the fertile farmland of Gloucester County. Among the British forces in Gloucester were Col. Banastre Tarleton and his Legion, along with detachments from several regular British regiments.

General Washington and his French allies recognized the importance of this area to the ensuing siege and sent a force to block the British in Gloucester. This Allied force included Virginia militia, made up in part of former Continental soldiers. The French forces, under the command of General Choisy included Marines, as well as Lauzun's Legion, under the command of the flamboyant Duc de Lauzun.

Early on the morning of 3 October, Captain Phil Taliaferro of the Gloucester militia sent the following dispatch, probably from the militia's observation post at Perrin's (Little England), to the Allied commanders in Gloucester who were moving south from the vicinity of the Court House toward the enemy positions at Gloucester Point.

A party of the Enemy are now At Mrs Whitings & have sent out to collect the Cattle & Sheep adjacent, there being no one to oppose them. I thought proper to send this information to you & am with respect Your Most Obed't. Serv't.

Phil Taliaferro

Octr. 3. 1781

Lauzun linked up with Mercer at Seawell's Tavern, about five miles from the British positions, and they continued toward the enemy. When they met the British a couple of miles down the road at "the Hook" (where the Guinea Road now meets Route 17), Lauzun rode up and spotted Tarleton galloping toward him. Before they clashed, one of Tarleton's cavalymen's horses was wounded, and it struck Tarleton's, felling him and his horse in the process. His dragoons rescued him, retreated, then mounted a counter attack. They were thrown back, and broke for the protection of a company of the 23rd Regiment, who stopped Lauzun's infantry, but not Mercer's Virginians.

The British withdrew to their lines with the loss of their infantry commander and 12 men, and a wounded Colonel Tarleton. The Americans lost 2 killed and 11 wounded, and the French suffered 3 killed and 16 wounded, including Lauzun's second-in-command.

General Choisy penned the following to General Washington (his own spelling is used):

Obre 3th after noon at 2 o Clock

Sir,

I have the hounor to inform you that by our arrival at Saoul's Tavern we have met with the ennemi who was in number about 500 men Cavalry and Infantry, that the Cavalry of the Duc of Lauzun has attaqued them, pierced throug and that we have had a great advantage on them We can esteem they have 30 men killed or wounded The 200 men grenadier Americans who were the only Infantry advanced enough to have part in the affair and who have behaved excedingly well have killed one officer who was at the head of the Infantry of the ennemi. T'is a general report that Tarleton has been wounded. The ennemi have retired to Gloucester and we are quickly in our Camp where I expect you will join to morrow as we have al. agreed

I have the hounor to be your

Most humble servant,

Choisy

General Washington's general orders of the next day included the following:

... the General Congratulates the Army upon the brilliant success of the Allied Troops near Gloucester. He requests the Duke de Lauzern to accept his particular thanks for the Judicious disposition and the decisive Vigour with which he charged the Enemy, and to communicate his Warmest Acknowledgements to the Gallant Officers and men by whom he was so admirably seconded. He feels peculiar satisfaction at the inconsiderable loss on our part, that no ill effects are to be apprehended from the Honorable Wounds which have been received in this affair, and that at so small an Expence, the Enemy amounting to six hundred Horse and foot were compleatly repulsed and Reconducted to their very lines.

The Hook battlefield is now an empty field behind the Hardee's at Hayes, hallowed ground with nothing to note its significance except a small roadside marker and a small, deteriorating concrete monument. Seawell's Ordinary, which became General George Weedon's headquarters (with the French camped nearby) until the British surrender, still stands as one of the fine restaurants and taverns in this county.

Event Planning and Organization

The Battle of the Hook reenactment is being organized by the recreated First Virginia Regiment, Inc., in conjunction with the three umbrella groups that incorporate most of the reenactment units in the hobby. These three umbrella groups are The Continental Line (of which the First Virginia is a founding member), the British Brigade and the Brigade of the American Revolution. These three umbrella organizations are made up of the many reenactment groups that portray the original units that fought in the American Revolution. These three large groups have worked together over the last 20 years to organize most of the major reenactments of the Revolutionary War.

The First Virginia Regiment

The First Virginia Regiment (www.1va.org) was organized in February, 1975 and is incorporated in Virginia as a nonprofit, educational organization. The group has organized a number of large events since 1975, including the largest Revolutionary War reenactment at Yorktown, VA in 1981. The First Virginia has also organized large reenactments at Mount Vernon in 1999 and 2007, as well as at Gunston Hall, Leesburg, Virginia and Colonial Williamsburg.

The Site

This is a site of major historic importance and reenactors will enjoy their visit. Warner Hall (www.warnerhall.com) was founded in 1642 and is listed by both the National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission. Augustine Warner received the acreage in exchange for bringing twelve settlers across the Atlantic Ocean to the Jamestown Settlement, a colony desperately in need of manpower to survive in the New World. Warner Hall served for a time as Nathaniel Bacon's headquarters during "Bacon's Rebellion" in 1676.

The estate was the home of George Washington's great-grandfather Augustine Warner II, whose daughter Mildred married Lawrence Washington. George Washington was a visitor to the estate where his grandmother was raised, as was Lafayette, the Duc de Lauzon, and Merriweather Lewis (who also was a descendant of Augustine). Queen Elizabeth II, also related to Augustine Warner, visited the estate in 1957.

The main house was damaged by fire in 1740 and the present structure was rebuilt in 1849 in the Colonial Revival style. The main house, along with the original 17th century west wing dependency (the plantation schoolroom and tutor's quarters) has been completely restored and offers a rare glimpse into the past. Historic outbuildings include 18th century brick stables, a dairy barn and smokehouse. The Warner-Lewis family graveyard, maintained by the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities, offers a remarkable collection of 17th and 18th century tombstones. The property includes over 500 acres, most of it farm fields.

The Event

The event is planned as a "Big Three" reenactment, to include units from the Continental Line, the British Brigade, and the Brigade of the American Revolution. Commanders of all three umbrella organizations have sanctioned the event as the major event for fall 2008.

Planning for this event began in 2003 in preparation of the 225th reenactment at Yorktown (in 2006). When Yorktown became a joint BAR-NPS event, plans for Gloucester were placed on hold so as not to conflict with the Yorktown 225th celebration. In January 2007 planning was restarted in Gloucester for the event to be held in 2008.

Three Battle Reenactments:

In addition to reenacting the Battle of the Hook, we will also reenact the Battle of Greensprings, another major battle of the 1781 Virginia Campaign. We expect to schedule a third, less formally scripted battle. In short, we expect there to be plenty of battle "action" over the weekend.

Mounted Troops:

According to historian Dr. Robert Selig, the Battle of the Hook was probably the largest cavalry engagement of the American Revolution, with several hundred mounted troops involved. We hope to attract as many recreated mounted dragoons as possible and a special fund has been created to provide a travel stipend for reenactors bringing horses.

Other Activities:

In addition to the battles, we plan to organize a variety of other activities throughout the weekend. Some of these activities will include school programs, Dragoon, Artillery & Musket Demonstrations, music and dance programs, Soldiers and Ladies Party at Warner Hall, and more.

Charter Bus Fund:

We are happy to announce that we will provide financial assistance for charter buses. Any group interested in organizing a charter bus to the event should contact the organizers for more information (e-mail: carlgnam@comcast.net).

Horse Fund:

We will provide financial assistance for people bringing horses to help offset the excessive cost of

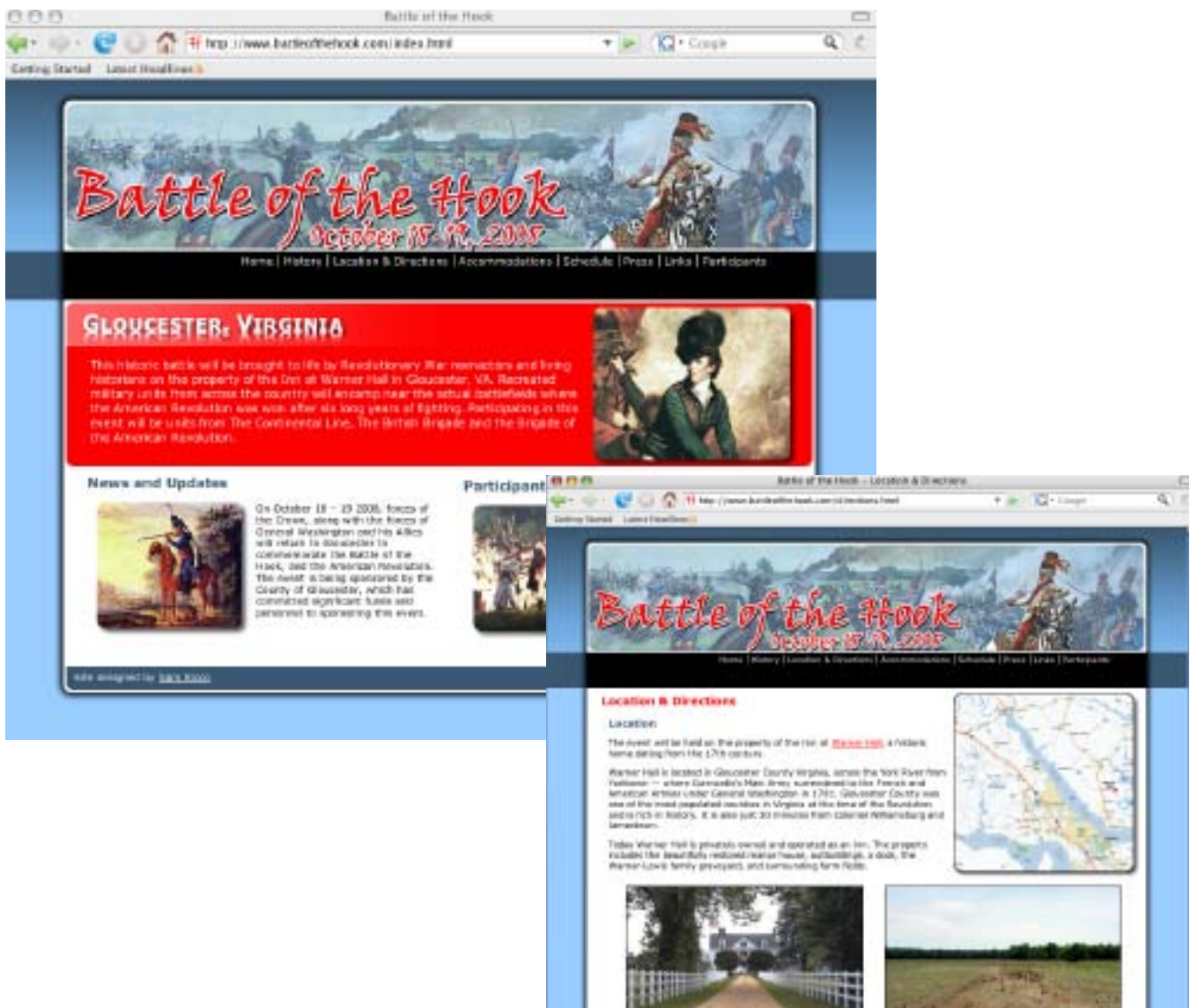
gasoline when hauling a trailer full of horses. The Battle of the Hook was probably the largest cavalry engagement of the War so we want to have as many mounted troops as possible. It's our hope that assisting with the fuel cost will encourage all riders to attend. contact us via e-mail (carlgnam@com-cast.net) for more information.

Artillery Powder Fund:

We will be providing a powder allowance to artillery units to help offset the cost of gunpowder.

Event Website

The event will be managed, in part, with a unique website: www.battleofthehook.com. This site has already been created and was promoted to the reenactment community via the "RevList" and Continental Line message boards. The site will be used to provide information to the reenactors, as well as the public and the press. In the coming months information will be added, along with a registration form for reenactment units.



Warner Hall, Gloucester, VA
Tentative Plan, View 1



100 Yards

Battlefield

Registration

American Camp

British Camp

American Camp

Warner Hall

629

Participant Parking

Boat House & Dock

0 100 m 300 ft