

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: South Carolina	
COUNTY: Kershaw	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
69-07-41-0001	7/29/69

1. NAME

COMMON:
~~"Fort Camden"~~ (colloquial) Historic Camden Revolutionary War Restoration

AND/OR HISTORIC:
British Revolutionary War Fortifications

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
Southern area of city, DeKalb Township

CITY OR TOWN:
Camden

STATE	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
South Carolina	41	Kershaw	28

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/>	Public <input type="checkbox"/> Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/>	Occupied <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>
Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/>	Private <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/>	Restricted <input type="checkbox"/>
Object <input type="checkbox"/>	Both <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Being Considered <input type="checkbox"/>	Preservation work in progress <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
			No: <input type="checkbox"/>

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Agricultural <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Government <input type="checkbox"/>	Park <input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Comments <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Industrial <input type="checkbox"/>	Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Specify) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The property is
Education I <input type="checkbox"/>	Military <input type="checkbox"/>	Religious <input type="checkbox"/>	Athletic	largely open.
Entertainment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Museum <input type="checkbox"/>	Scientific <input type="checkbox"/>		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNERS NAME:
multiple ownership

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Kershaw County Court House

STREET AND NUMBER:
Broad Street

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE
Camden South Carolina 41

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1280 acres

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Kershaw County Historic Sites

DATE OF SURVEY: circa 1960 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Kershaw County Historical Society

STREET AND NUMBER:
P. O. BOX 710

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE
Camden South Carolina 41

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:
COUNTY:
ENTRY NUMBER
DATE
FOR NPS USE ONLY

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Pre-Columbian 16th Century 18th Century 20th Century
 15th Century 17th Century 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Aboriginal	Education	<input type="checkbox"/>	Political	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Urban Planning	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prehistoric	Engineering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Religion/Phi-	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Historic	Industry	<input type="checkbox"/>	losophy	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Agriculture	Invention	<input type="checkbox"/>	Science	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Art	Landscape	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sculpture	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Commerce	Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/>	Social/Human-	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Communications	Literature	<input type="checkbox"/>	itarian	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Conservation	Military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Theater	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	Music	<input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/>		

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Include Personages, Dates, Events, Etc.)

Camden's significance in the Revolutionary War is directly related to the British War Office's decision of late 1779 to establish total control over the southern colonies. This decision was predicated on the belief, a correct one, that there was widespread support for the King in the South. They also believed, incorrectly, that the Carolinas could be quickly conquered and easily held while serving as a base for the invasion of the middle colonies which had stubbornly repulsed British attempts to subjugate them.

Major General Henry Clinton was dispatched from New York to capture Charleston, South Carolina, which task he accomplished with stunning success on 12 May 1780, capturing virtually all the American continental and militia troops in the Carolinas. Clinton then initiated a plan to secure all of South Carolina for the British by sending detachments to establish control over three strategic inland towns: Camden, Ninety Six, and Augusta.

Lord Charles Cornwallis, with Lord Francis Rawdon as his lieutenant, commanded the detachment sent to Camden. He effected its seizure without resistance on 1 June 1780. Cornwallis soon returned to Charleston to undertake the re-establishment of royal government in that city (Clinton returned to New York), leaving Rawdon to fortify Camden.

Camden served as the principal British supply post for the next year. It became the storage house for all British campaigns in the South. The reason for its selection were related by General Banastre Tarleton in 1787: "The magazine was formed at that place on account of the convenience of water carriage by the river from Nelson's ferry, and because it was the most eligible position to support communications between the army and Charleston, when the King's troops moved forward into North Carolina."

In addition to being the main British supply point in the South from Spring, 1780 to Spring, 1781, Camden proved

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AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Aboriginal <input type="checkbox"/>	Education <input type="checkbox"/>	Political <input type="checkbox"/>	Urban Planning <input type="checkbox"/>
Prehistoric <input type="checkbox"/>	Engineering <input type="checkbox"/>	Religion/Philosophy <input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/>
Historic <input type="checkbox"/>	Industry <input type="checkbox"/>	Science <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Agriculture <input type="checkbox"/>	Invention <input type="checkbox"/>	Sculpture <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Art <input type="checkbox"/>	Landscape <input type="checkbox"/>	Social/Humanitarian <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Commerce <input type="checkbox"/>	Architecture <input type="checkbox"/>	Theater <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Communications <input type="checkbox"/>	Literature <input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Conservation <input type="checkbox"/>	Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		_____
	Music <input type="checkbox"/>		_____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Include Personages, Dates, Events, Etc.)

to be their garrison for two major Revolutionary War engagements, the Battles of Camden and Hobkirk Hill.

The first of these, which occurred 16 August 1780 about eight miles north of Camden, pitted General Horatio Gates, "the hero of Saratoga", against Lord Cornwallis, who had returned from Charleston on hearing of the American drive toward Camden. The result of the ensuing conflict has been described as "the most disastrous defeat ever inflicted on an American army." It was here that Baron Johann DeKalb, the cohort of the Marquis de Lafayette who had come from France to fight for America's independence, was mortally wounded. DeKalb died three days after the battle in the walled town of Camden.

The Battle of Hobkirk (or Hobkirk's) Hill had more favorable results for the Americans. General Nathaniel Greene replaced Gates, who had been disgraced by his behavior at the Battle of Camden, as commander of the American forces in the South. Greene felt it imperative that the British battlements at Camden be destroyed. However, after the Battle of Camden, Cornwallis had ordered his chief engineer, Lt. Henry Haldane, to strengthen the town's fortifications, and, when he arrived in the Camden vicinity in April, 1781, Greene was moved to write the Continental Congress, "The fort is much larger than we had been informed. We could neither storm the town nor invest the works with any prospect of success." An engineer, probably General Thaddeus Kosciuszko, accompanying Greene prepared a plan of the extremely strong fortifications. As a result of the strength of the British position, Greene retired to Hobkirk's Hill, about two miles north of Camden, where Lord Rawdon launched a surprise attack against the Americans on the morning of 25 April 1781. Despite Greene's good strategy and early success in the fighting, a weak link in Col. John Gunby's line opened the way for the British to eventually take the field. However, this, as were many others including Guilford Court House, was most certainly a pyrrhic victory for the British. They and the Americans

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PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Pre-Columbian 16th Century 18th Century 20th Century
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SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Aboriginal <input type="checkbox"/>	Education <input type="checkbox"/>	Political <input type="checkbox"/>	Urban Planning <input type="checkbox"/>
Prehistoric <input type="checkbox"/>	Engineering <input type="checkbox"/>	Religion/Philosophy <input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/>
Historic <input type="checkbox"/>	Industry <input type="checkbox"/>	Science <input type="checkbox"/>	
Agriculture <input type="checkbox"/>	Invention <input type="checkbox"/>	Sculpture <input type="checkbox"/>	
Art <input type="checkbox"/>	Landscape <input type="checkbox"/>	Social/Humanitarian <input type="checkbox"/>	
Commerce <input type="checkbox"/>	Architecture <input type="checkbox"/>	Theater <input type="checkbox"/>	
Communications <input type="checkbox"/>	Literature <input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation <input type="checkbox"/>	
Conservation <input type="checkbox"/>	Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
	Music <input type="checkbox"/>		

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Include Personages, Dates, Events, Etc.)

8. SIGNIFICANCE

had both lost about 260, killed, wounded, and missing, but this amount was so damaging to Rawdon that he felt compelled to evacuate Camden, since his provisions were also in short supply. After destroying virtually all the battlements in Camden, Rawdon effected his withdrawal from the town on 10 May. Greene, on learning of the evacuation, ordered General Thomas Sumter to complete the destruction of Camden to prevent re-occupation by the British and remarked to an aide, "Now all the British posts (in the Carolinas) will fall." By the following autumn, only Charleston remained in British hands.

Though Camden's role as chief garrison for these two battles is quite significant, it is important to remember that the town served as the logistical headquarters for all British activities in the South during the year preceding the surrender at Yorktown. Along with King's Mountain and Guilford Court House, the fall of Camden was a pivotal point in the eventual defeat of the British.

Three historical notes directly connected with the fortifications or the area they covered should be mentioned: The house outside the walls of the town around which was erected a pallisade was the home of Joseph Kershaw, the founder of Camden, and was, of course used as the headquarters of Lord Cornwallis and later Lord Rawdon. Its common name is the "Cornwallis House".

Andrew Jackson said that he witnessed the Battle of Hobkirk Hill from the second story of the fortified jail guarding the road to the north of town. It is on record that he was imprisoned there, probably following the incident when he refused to shine the British officer's boots and received a saber wound for his impudence.

Though the fortifications had been destroyed ten years previously, George Washington visited Camden in 1791 during his southern presidential tour. After crossing the Wateree River, he travelled up the old Ferry Road into the town and was received at the intersection which had served as the hub of activity during the British occupation.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Ward, Christopher, The War of the Revolution, Vol. 2. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1952), pp. 700-703, 712-731, 802-808.
 Kirkland, Thomas J., and Kennedy, Robert M., Historic Camden, Part One, Colonial and Revolutionary. (Columbia, S. C.: The State Company, 1905), pp. 146-147, 153-171, 203-209, 224-235, 267-271, 273.
 Calmes, Alan, "Revolution Era Camden Battlements Unearthed," South Carolina Magazine, March 1968, pp. 6-9.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN ONE ACRE		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	34° 14' 15"	80° 37' 51"		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	34° 14' 24"	80° 36' 09"				
SE	34° 13' 27"	80° 36' 04"				
SW	34° 13' 20"	80° 37' 47"				

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
William H. Byrnes, Executive Director

ORGANIZATION: **Camden District Heritage Foundation** DATE: **4 June 1969**

STREET AND NUMBER:
BOX 710

CITY OR TOWN: **Camden** STATE: **South Carolina** CODE: **29020** CODE: **41**

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: Charles E. Lyle
 Title: Director, S.C. Dept. of Archives & History

Date: June 22, 1969

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Ernest Allen Cawally
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: JUL 29 1969

ATTEST:
William J. [Signature]
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: JUL 29 1969

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