

THIS BATTLE OF  
THE AMERICAN  
REVOLUTION IN  
WHICH THE  
BRITISH WERE  
SEVERELY DE-  
FEATED CHECKED  
THEIR INVASION  
OF GEORGIA



## BATTLE OF KETTLE CREEK

The Battle of Kettle Creek, fought here on February 14, 1778, was one of the most important battles of the Revolutionary War in Georgia. At that time, the State was almost completely under British control. Col. Boyd, with 400 British sympathizers (Loyalists or Tories) crossed the Savannah River into present-day Elbert County to rejoin the British army then at Augusta. Patriots Col. Andrew Pickens with 200 S.C. militia and Col. John Dooly and Lt. Col. Joseph Clark with 140 Georgia militia marched to overtake the Loyalists. On the morning of the 14th, Boyd and his men were camped here at a bend in the river named Kettle Creek. Their horses were grazing, sentries were posted, and most of the men were sleeping. Sentries on watch for some time. The Patriots were alerted to attack the Loyalist camp by surprise but failed and a desperate battle raged on both sides of the creek for three hours before the Loyalists finally broke and fled. Col. Boyd and 20 of his men were killed and 21 captured. Pickens and Dooly lost 200 men killed and 14 or 15 wounded. Pickens later wrote that Kettle Creek "was the severest check and abandonment the Tories ever received in South Carolina or Georgia."

## The Battle of Kettle Creek-War Hill Wilkes County, Georgia

A Report on the development of the Kettle  
Creek Battlefield Park and its potential for

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**Preserving Kettle Creek Battlefield makes cent\$!**

**2014**

**Kettle Creek  
Battlefield Park  
Wilkes County, Georgia**

A report on the development

of the

**Kettle Creek Battlefield Park**

and the

***\$Economic Potential\$***

of the Kettle Creek Battlefield Park

**Kettle Creek Battlefield Association, Inc.**

**P.O. Box 729, Washington, GA 30673**

# Kettle Creek

## Battlefield Park

### Wilkes County, Georgia

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Directions from Athens, GA. to the Kettle Creek Battlefield in Wilkes County, Ga.

**Kettle Creek Battlefield Association, Inc.**  
**P.O. Box 729, Washington, GA 30673**

Kettle Creek flows into the Little River near the Tyrone community in Wilkes County. It likely takes its name from a local fish trap, called a kittle.

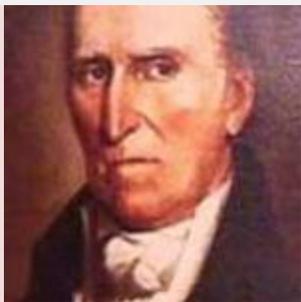
## Battle of Kettle Creek Site by Robert Scott Davis

Wallace State College, Hanceville, Alabama, 12/08/2003

The most important event to occur at Kettle Creek took place on Sunday, February 14, 1779. On that morning 600 American supporters of the British cause, popularly known as Loyalists or Tories, encamped atop a hill in a bend of the creek. They were following an established trail to the nearby Quaker settlement of Wrightsbrough in route to Augusta. Aside from the defensive qualities of the position, the hill offered the new arrivals food in the form of cattle penned there.

The leader of this expedition, James Boyd, an Irishman from Raeburn Creek, South Carolina, had traveled to Georgia with a British invasion force from New York. He carried an open commission (as a colonel) to recruit southerners for the British military from settlements behind the rebel lines. Boyd left Savannah sometime after January 20, 1779, and reached Wrightsbrough, deep within the Georgia backcountry, by the 24th, looking for guides to the South Carolina frontier. Within a week he established a camp near present-day Spartanburg, South Carolina. With 350 recruits he set out for Augusta on February 5. During their march south along the Indian frontier, Boyd and his followers were joined by 250 North Carolinians under the command of John Moore.

The Loyalists were ineffectively pursued by small groups of rebel militiamen. Boyd's command captured Fort Independence and the outpost at Broad Mouth Creek in South Carolina, but they declined to attack the garrison of McGowan's Blockhouse on the Cherokee Ford of the Savannah River. The Loyalists crossed the river further north at Vann's Creek on February 11. The garrison of Cherokee Ford, with reinforcements, attacked Boyd's men at the crossing but was repulsed. As Boyd and his men camped at Kettle Creek on February 14, he dispatched his prisoners to Augusta. He could not know that the British troops sent there to rendezvous with him had that morning begun a withdrawal toward Savannah.



Andrew Pickens

At the same time 340 South Carolina and Georgia militiamen, under Colonel Andrew Pickens of South Carolina and Colonel John Dooly and Lieutenant Colonel Elijah Clarke of Georgia were preparing to attack Boyd's camp at Kettle Creek. They had been besieging Loyalist horsemen at Robert Carr's Fort on nearby Beaverdam Creek when they abandoned their prey to intercept Boyd's party. Four days of pursuit brought them almost where they had started.

Pickens led his 200 men in a direct assault on the rocky hill on Kettle Creek, while Dooly and Clarke attacked the camp across the creek on the left and right respectively. Pickens's advance guard disobeyed orders and fired on the Loyalist sentries, announcing the attack.

Boyd led his men in ambushing Pickens's troops while Dooly's and Clarke's men were entangled in the swamp.

Boyd fell mortally wounded, shot by a party of Georgia militiamen who had become lost and found themselves in the Loyalist camp. With their leader down, the Loyalists panicked and were driven across the creek. Boyd and nineteen of his men were killed, and twenty-two others were taken prisoner. Pickens and Dooly lost seven men, and fifteen were wounded. Counting the Loyalists who went home and later surrendered to local authorities, about 150 of Boyd's men were eventually taken prisoner.

They were held at Augusta and later at Ninety Six, South Carolina. Five of their number at Ninety Six and two others in North Carolina were eventually hanged.

Two hundred and seventy of Boyd's command escaped the Battle of Kettle Creek and safely reached the British army. They were formed into the North Carolina Royal Volunteers under John Moore and the South Carolina Royal Volunteers (later the second battalion of the South Carolina Royalists Regiment). Both units virtually disappeared by the summer of 1779 because of desertions and transfers.

The Battle of Kettle Creek provided the rebel cause with a victory, however small, in the midst of a string of much larger defeats. The British had expected thousands of loyal southerners to rally to their flag and restore the whole South to the king. However, Boyd proved only able to assemble 600 men, some of whom were criminals in flight. Other men who traveled with him were allegedly coerced into joining under threats to their lives and property.

After Kettle Creek, British leaders should have realized that practical Loyalist military support in the South, if it ever existed, had disappeared. Campaigns to find a great Loyalist army in the South continued, however, through the defeats at King's Mountain, Hammond's Store, Ramsour's Mill, and even Yorktown. On the local level, many of the southerners who shared Boyd's dream to return the South to the king's cause learned the futility of their hopes on impromptu gallows at the hands of their rebel neighbors.

Today a county park preserves the Kettle Creek battlefield. Rechanneling in the early 1920s turned the original cane-choked creek into a dry ditch. Monuments were erected on the hill by the federal government in 1930 and the state of Georgia in 1979. The Kettle Creek Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution maintains a cemetery in the park for the remains of Revolutionary War veterans. The Georgia Compatriots of the Sons of the American Revolution supports the preservation of the site.

Note by Larry Wilson: There is more to tell of the outcome of this battle, for it was the first major victory in Georgia and led the so-called Patriots into conflicts they believed they could win. Consequently, battles at King's Mountain, Cowpens, and Guilford Courthouse occurred and these major victories (Guilford Courthouse was not a victory in the sense General Nathaniel Greene withdrew the Patriots before the British could inflict damage to the Patriots). The Patriots escaped with little casualties compared to the British and ultimately General Cornwallis elected to return back to the Northern Colonies where, in November 1781, Cornwallis was defeated by Gen. George Washington and with the help of his French friends and thus the end of the American Revolutionary War became a reality....the British surrendered.

Many scholars say the American Revolution was won in the northern colonies, but after the British failed in their Southern Strategy to capture the Southern Colonies and take the loyal citizens in the South and return back to the Northern Colonies with a superior army and defeat Gen. George Washington, the questions arise: Did the South essentially win the war with the success of many skirmishes won by the Patriots in the South. Did the Battle of Kettle Creek lead the way to send a signal to the Loyalist that the British cannot succeed in winning the war?

Note: In the 1770's and 1780's the turmoil of the settling of Wilkes County occurred between dissatisfied Cherokee and Creek Indians, the Loyalists (Loyal to the Crown), and the Patriots (or the so-called Rebels). The Indians wanted their land back and often attacked helpless settlers. Consequently, for protection, over 35 forts were built in the original Wilkes County to protect themselves from Indian attacks, and Loyalist attacks. And, even the Loyalists built forts to protect themselves, not only against the Indians, but against those so-called Rebels or Patriots who wanted their free land, their individual freedom, and the freedom of religion. Many horrible stories come out of this time period in Wilkes County including stories about Mammy Kate, Daddy Jack, and Capt. Stephen Heard (later Governor) (Heard County named for him); stories about Nancy Hart (Hart county was named for her); about Capt. John Dooley and his untimely assassination; stories about the clashes with the Indians and much more. The Kettle Creek Battlefield Park hopes to embellish these stories and tell the story through interpretation via historic trails, museum displays, shows, and much more.

# The Preservation Fund

## Preserve America's History - Kettle Creek Battlefield

### History for Preservation

In 1930, the NSDAR acquired added funds from the War Department- Federal Government to erect a 16 foot obelisk monument to permanently mark and commemorate the Kettle Creek Battle site. In 1958, 1962, 1973, and 1974, historic signs were placed on the battle site -one commemorated in the presence of US Senator Richard B. Russell. In 1975, Robert Scott Davis and Ken Thomas of the DNR of GA placed the Battle of Kettle Creek on the National Register of Historic Places. In 1962, Dr. Bryson and the DAR transferred the deed of War Hill over to the Government and added (in 1980) with an additional 2 acres. Rev. War Soldiers' gravesites were moved on top of War Hill to create the cemetery and a cobblestone fence was erected (funded by the Government) and a permanent gate placed at the entrance. In 1998, the Georgia Society SAR began the annual ceremony of commemorating the annual recognition of the Battle of Kettle Creek and has continued every February since. In 2004, the Georgia Society CAR (Children of the American Revolution) raised funds to place grandstands on top of War Hill. In 2008, the City of Washington, GA. received a "Preserve America" grant to study the archaeology of the battle site-Lamar Institute did the study. In 2011, Plum Creek Timber Company granted funds for developing highway signage. In 2012, on the square, the City of Washington placed a bronze bust depicting the Black Patriot. In 2012, the Plum Creek Timber Company granted \$5,000 for brochures and publications. In 2012, the Kettle Creek Battlefield Association was founded to lead the movement to create a Park. In 2013, the Lamar Institute, through an archaeology study found the location of Carr's Fort within 5 miles of Kettle Creek Battle Site. Recently, in 2013, \$125,000 was donated from donors, KCBA, GASSAR, and the CAR to purchase 60 acres of land from the Plum Creek Timber Company. Finally, the Carl Vinson Institute was contacted and they are in the process of assisting toward developing a critical plan to continue toward the development of a park.

### Kettle Creek Battlefield Association, Inc.

*It was in 1899, when the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR) bought 12.5 acres that the preservation of the battlefield began. It was primarily during the 1920's-1930 that the NSDAR began placing markers on the gravesites of those brave soldiers who fought for our freedom. Over 400 revolutionary war soldiers have been identified just in original Wilkes County alone (the ceded lands -original Wilkes County) and many have been marked with an appropriate DAR military marker (furnished by the Veterans Administration). NSDAR marked many gravesites in the 1930's!*

**Funding history-past funding since 1899 for the preservation of the Kettle Creek Battlefield**

**\$617,800**

NSDAR (1899)	Land Donated (1960)	30,000.00
NSDAR(1960-1980)	Signage(Historic)(-1980)	4,000.00
NSDAR/Gov	Cemetery, Markers, gate	7,000.00
Wilkes Co.	Fed. Obelisk Marker(1930)	35,000.00
GADNR/NPS	Maintenance (1930-2013)	53,000.00
GASSAR	Stud. for Nat. Register (1975)	15,000.00
NSCAR	Rev. War Days Annual budget (1998....	37,500.00
Archaeology	Grandstands for War Hill	10,000.00
Plum Creek Tmbr	City of Washington(2008)	42,000.00
CSRA/GA DCA	Highway Signage -Direction to War Hill	2,000.00
KCBA	Site Plan Developed (2013)	50,000.00
Plum Creek Tmbr	Donated toward land acq.	20,000.00
City of Washing'	Brochures, Publications, etc	5,000.00
Archaeology	Sculpture-bust of African-Am. Patriot	100,000.00
NSCAR	Carr's Fort-Lamar Institute	62,000.00
Land Acqui.	Children of Revolution Donation-land	6,300.00
KCBA	Initial Land Donations.....	100,000.00
Strategic Plan	KCBA Memberships since 2012	37,000.00
	Carl Vinson Institute OG	2,000.00
	<b>Total Funds expended since 1899</b>	<b>617,800.00</b>

## *Preservation Can Reap Economic Benefits for the Wilkes County, Georgia Community*



'Last Words' by William G. Kurtz (about 1930's)

Kettle Creek Battle, Feb. 14, 1779 by William Kurtz. (Sketched in the 1930's for the Atlanta Journal after the War Hill obelisk monument was put in place). The picture depicts Col. Andrew Pickens giving aid to Col. Boyd as Boyd gave Pickens his "last requests".

**C**ommunity leaders in Wilkes County have been wrestling with issues involving the development and historic preservation of the battle site of Kettle Creek.

**N**owhere are the struggles for preservation fiercer than in communities with American Revolution battlefields and Civil War battlefields. Since most of these battles were fought over transportation networks and areas that have since become urban centers, these sites are particularly vulnerable to modern development pressures. As a result, local officials in these communities are confronted with a situation with few easy solutions. For example: several major battles in Georgia have been enveloped (and swallowed up) by commercial development from surrounding communities. Augusta, where two major battles were fought have token monuments and an enclosed small area in place to commemorate the two battles. Savannah, at their Battlefield Park has some room to place memorials, but has little room to "tell the complete story" of the several battles at Savannah. The Spring Hill battle site was almost completely obscured by encroaching industrial commercialization. The Battle of Brier Creek north of Savannah in Screven County, GA. is located out in a hunting preserve. In Elbert County, Vann's Creek is inundated with water from Lake Russell. Fort Morris south of Savannah is the only fort preserved in Georgia (for the American Revolution) but has no land outside of the enclosed fort.

**O**ne of the most important stories to tell of the American Revolution involves the back country of North Georgia in rural communities. Many horror stories occurred when colonist wanted to settle free land being offered, and the Creek and Cherokee Indians were angry about losing their ceded land to the Colonists. And where the Colonists were divided between being loyal (Loyalist) to the King of England and loyal to the Patriots (or Rebels) who wanted free unrestricted land, a free county and freedom of religion. The Story must be told.

**P**reservation of land and development of a park requires financial resources. The Kettle Creek Battlefield Park has just begun development but the questions keep arising about cost versus economic income. Can the park bring enough income in to pay for the maintenance, workers, and facilities? The answer is “yes”! After reviewing many documents, the following report indicates a historic park can more than pay for itself through heritage tourism. But, Georgia, with 63 State Parks to fund has difficulty keeping their heads afloat. However, there is “hope ahead”. The economy of Georgia is changing as is the nation’s. Several cited studies are included in this paper, but the author has found many other cited studies to verify similar conclusions. **State Parks do fund the economy!**

**1. Ninety Six National Historic Site** - Tourism Creates \$3,711,000 in Local Economic Benefit; *Part of \$30 billion impact that supports 252,000 jobs nation-wide (Ninety Six National Historic Park would be in a comparative size of Kettle Creek)*

A small historic park, Ninety Six, South Carolina: A new National Park Service (NPS) report for 2011 shows that the 70,099 visitors to Ninety Six National Historic Site spent \$3,711,000 in communities surrounding the park. This spending supported 54 jobs in the local area.

"Ninety Six National Historic Site is a wonderful place to learn about America's story," said park superintendent John Slaughter. "We attract visitors from across the U.S. and around the world that come here to experience the park and then spend time and money enjoying the services provided by our neighboring communities and getting to know this amazing part of the country. The National Park Service is proud to have been entrusted with the care of America's most treasured places and delighted that the visitors we welcome generate significant contributions to the local, state, and national economy."

The information on Ninety Six National Historic Site is part of a peer-reviewed spending analysis of national park visitors across the country conducted by Michigan State University for the National Park Service. For 2011, that report shows \$13 billion of direct spending by 279 million park visitors in communities within 60 miles of a national park. That visitor spending had a \$30 billion impact on the entire U.S. economy and supported 252,000 jobs nationwide.

Most visitor spending supports jobs in lodging, food, and beverage service (63 percent) followed by recreation and entertainment (17 percent), other retail (11percent), transportation and fuel (7 percent) and wholesale and manufacturing (2 percent.)

**2. In the State of Pennsylvania-State Parks** study the following table indicates heritage tourism is a success:

Table 1: Pennsylvania State Parks Economic Significance Data Comparisons 2008, 2009 (estimated), and 2010\*

Input Data	2008	2009**	2010
Official Park Attendance	34,112,309	38,687,616	38,364,432
Calendar Year General Funds	\$60,950	\$54,756	\$52,276****
Total Statewide Economic Significance***			
Sales	\$818,309	\$928,072	\$1,145,721
Jobs	10,551	11,966	12,630
Labor Income (in \$000's)	\$291,440	\$330,532	\$397,763
Value Added	\$464,730	\$527,062	\$648,991
Cost to Benefit Ratio	\$1 to \$7.62	\$1 to \$9.63	\$1 to \$12.41

Note: The cost of every \$1 for the parks yields back to the public funds of anywhere from \$7.62 to \$12.41!

**3. From the “Government Must Preserve National Parks”** report, Todd Davidson, *The Hill*, September 19, 2013, it is reported: .....,” because national parks are one of the best investments this country has ever made. In addition to supporting the U.S. travel and tourism industry, which is a cornerstone of the U.S. economy that represents \$1.8 trillion in economic output and supports 14 million American jobs, every dollar invested in the National Park Service generates \$10 in economic activity. National parks are veritable economic engines critical to supporting the livelihood of businesses and communities across the country”.

**4. In a report, “Measuring the Economics of Preservation: Recent Findings”-INTRODUCTION-**“America is rich in its historic resources. Those resources include not just individual buildings but historic districts, archeological sites, structures, and historic landscapes. The stewardship of this heritage has been encouraged because of the educational, cultural, aesthetic, social, and historical values those historic and cultural places represent. In most cases the men and women who built those places built them not just for themselves but for generations that would follow. We are both heirs and guardians of those historic resources. If we are good stewards of our inheritance it will be available for our children and their children. And the values incorporated into these places ought to be reason enough to protect them.

But the reality is this: in challenging economic times, educational, cultural, aesthetic, social, and historical values may be insufficient to make the case for preserving our legacy of historic places. Politicians and public servants, citizens and scholars, bankers and bureaucrats, voters and volunteers now expect that in addition to those other values, historic preservation should demonstrate an economic value as well”.

**The good news is historic preservation is good for the economy.** In the last fifteen years dozens of studies have been conducted throughout the United States, by different analysts, using different methodologies. But the results of those studies are remarkably consistent — **historic preservation is good for the local economy.** From this large and growing body of research, the positive impact of historic preservation on the economy has been documented in six broad areas: 1) jobs, 2) property values, 3) heritage tourism, 4) environmental impact, 5) social impact, and 6) downtown revitalization.

**5. North Carolina's state parks reports,** they “potentially contribute \$289 million to local economies annually as well as \$120 million to local residents' income, according to an intensive study researchers at N.C. State University conducted for the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation. Fourteen state parks examined in the yearlong study contributed at least \$139 million annually when spending by tourists was combined with direct spending in the local communities by the parks. The study found that 'tourist' visitors to those parks spent an average of \$23.56 a day to enjoy the outdoors. In addition, the parks' impact on local residents' income was estimated to be \$56 million annually”.

**6.** In the Civil War's Blue Grey and Green report on “Economic and Tourism Benefits of Battlefield Preservation”, **“A typical family of four normally spends \$1000 per visit (of a battlefield park)”**. That spending is spent on the way to and from the park as well as on the park through bed and breakfast accommodations, restaurants, and gasoline stations in addition to mementos found in nearby stores.

**7. The “Blue, Grey and Green” report research shows:**

BATTLEFIELD	JOBS SUPPORTED	VISITORS NEEDED TO SUPPORT ONE JOB
Antietam	309	641.8
Bentonville	15	1,384.7
Brice' s Cross Roads	2	981.5
Corinth	5	817.6
Franklin	32	559.8
Fredericksburg & Spotsylvania	387	965.0
Gettysburg	2,653	596.3
Mill Springs	4	1,093.8
New Market	34	1,194.8
Perryville	5	1,020.0
Port Hudson	7	1,109.3
Shiloh	316	1,072.3
Wilson' s Creek	69	1,456.0
<b>Total/Average</b>	<b>3,838</b>	<b>702.3</b>

**8. From Georgia's Economic Development website, it is reported on TOURISM, ....**

"Tourism can drive significant business growth and increase revenue for companies operating in Georgia. A \$51.2 billion industry for the state, the gem of the south enjoys a proven, commercial appeal of southern sensibilities and modern possibilities. Plus, Georgia's business-friendly climate that is home to 16 Fortune 500 headquarters enables companies beginning business or expanding business in Georgia to drive profits with less risk.

With metro Atlanta's booming population leading the country, world-class attractions, easy access to swelling consumer markets, smart tax incentives, moderate climate, long travel season, and the top-ranked airport and highway system in the nation, tourism-related companies are able to leverage Georgia's powerful attraction for in-state and out-of-state visitors to increase sales."

From other reports, Georgia has recently sold off five parks to private ownership (out of 63 they presently own) , and already, the private ownership has shown potential profit after changing the operating methods and is expected to profit from the transaction. During this low economic time (2008-2013), the State Parks budget has been cut severely and several parks have either been closed or service cut almost in half.

**9. In Conclusion**, state parks and national parks do "fuel" the economy! It is clear to the Kettle Creek Battlefield Association and the Wilkes County citizens, that they have as its purpose to preserve, as living past, the historical and cultural foundation of the community and nation utilizing the Kettle Creek Battlefield and its history, and as artifacts are discovered and walking trails established to outline its history, our mission is to portray and teach America's future generations and help maintain the legacy of this site. Wilkes County is rich in history and our mission is to help preserve the past for the future of our citizens.