



Saltketcher Bridge	3/18/1780	GPS: 32.70416°N 80.82625°W	Confidence: 4
Saltketcher Bridge	3/20/1780	GPS: 32.70416°N 80.82625°W	Confidence: 4
Red Hill	4/8/1781	GPS: 32.72101°N 80.80187°W	Confidence: 3
Harden vs. Fenwick	4/9/1781	GPS: 32.69548°N 80.82596°W	Confidence: 3
Fort Saltketcher	ca.5/9/1781	GPS: 32.70416°N 80.82625°W	Confidence: 4

Directions: From Yemassee, go northeast on US Highway 17A & 21 to the bridge over the Salkehatchie River. **Red Hill** is about 1.7 miles northeast of the modern Saltketcher Bridge. From the intersection of US Highway 21 and SC Highway 68 in Yemassee, go southeast on SC Highway 3 (Castle Hall Road) about 1.1 miles, then turn left onto Le Creuset Road and go about 1.5 miles to the bend to the left. This is the site of **Harden vs. Fenwick**. The **Saltketcher Bridge** site is about .7 mile further on Le Creuset Road to the Railroad Bridge over the river. Use caution on Le Creuset Road as portions may be poorly maintained.

Saltketcher Bridge 1st Action: Gen. James Patterson's British army reached the Saltketcher (now the Salkehatchie) River on March 18th, where approximately 80 South Carolina Patriot militiamen under Capt. Thomas Ladson had destroyed the bridge. The Patriots occupied a tavern on the east bank to harass the British troop advance. Part of the British Legion returned the American fire and kept them occupied while the remainder of the advance guard forded the river further downstream. This pin and flank maneuver outflanked Ladson's men and they were attacked from the rear. Several Americans were shot or bayoneted and the rest fled.

Note: On modern maps the river is labeled the Combahee in this area. Farther north, it is named the Salkehatchie. The name changes somewhere in this area. In the *1825 Mills Atlas*, he designates the site as Saltketcher Bridge, the old variant form of the name, which is also found in many accounts of the Revolution.

Saltketcher Bridge 2nd Action: The British crossed the Saltketcher River in boats, swimming their horses on 3/19. The crossing was made where the bridge had been destroyed. The causeway on both sides of the river was flooded with 2 to 3 feet of water at the ferry house, which was about .25 of a mile from the river. They marched on for 1.5 miles to a tavern kept by Mr. Gibson, who had been previously sent to Charleston by the Patriots as a prisoner for not supporting the American cause.

(Continued on the next page.)

150

The next day, the British army marched about two miles from the river when orders were received to halt. The rear guard had been fired upon. The British troops attacked were the New York Volunteers (Loyalists) who had been putting the boats on their carriages at the river. A party of Patriots on the southwest side of the river executed this attack killing three of the New York Volunteers. The casualties on the American side are unknown. The British march this day was limited to 7 miles as they were detained by the skirmish and the repairing of bridges on the road. The British camped that night at Godfrey's Savannah.

Red Hill Action: Col. William Harden's men came upon a Loyalist post at Red Hill commanded by a Capt. Barton on the night of April 8. Maj. John Cooper was sent with 15 men to surround the house and attack its occupants. According to Harden, only Barton and six men composed the garrison. Even so, the skirmish lasted for an hour and resulted in the killing of 1 Patriot and 4 Loyalists, including Barton.

Harden vs. Fenwick Action: The Patriots continued their march toward Pocatigo Swamp, intending to surprise the enemy dragoons posted there. About midnight, however, they encountered Loyalist militia Col. Edward Fenwick and 30 horsemen on the high, narrow causeway leading to Saltketcher Bridge or Patterson's Bridge as Patriot Capt. Tarleton Brown called it in his *Memoir*. Harden first attempted an unsuccessful Marion-style ambush, then charged the British cavalry on the causeway. The skirmish ended in a rout of the Patriots after casualties had been suffered on both sides.

Fort Saltketcher Action: Portions of a letter from Patriot Lt. Col. William Harden to Patriot Brig. Gen. Francis Marion written at:

Camp at Horseshoe 12th May 1781

Dr General,

I have sent commands One in the Fort Saltkecher; they kild two Sad Villains & Took a Capt Jones Prisoner. Since I Parole[d] him, tho he wanted to Join me, would not let him till I hear from you.

Yr. Most Obt Servt
William Harden Colo

Note: Harden was camped at Snipe's Horseshoe Plantation in Colleton County at this time. (See Colleton County for Snipe's Horseshoe Plantation location.) Harden sent several commands in different directions from Snipe's to gather information and harass the enemy as opportunities were presented. This portion of the letter is presented here as Harden wrote it. It is a little hard to understand, but this is typical of the letters written in the 1780s. Letter courtesy of David Neilan, editor of the *Brig. Gen. Francis Marion Papers*.

References: Lipscomb in Red Hill Folder