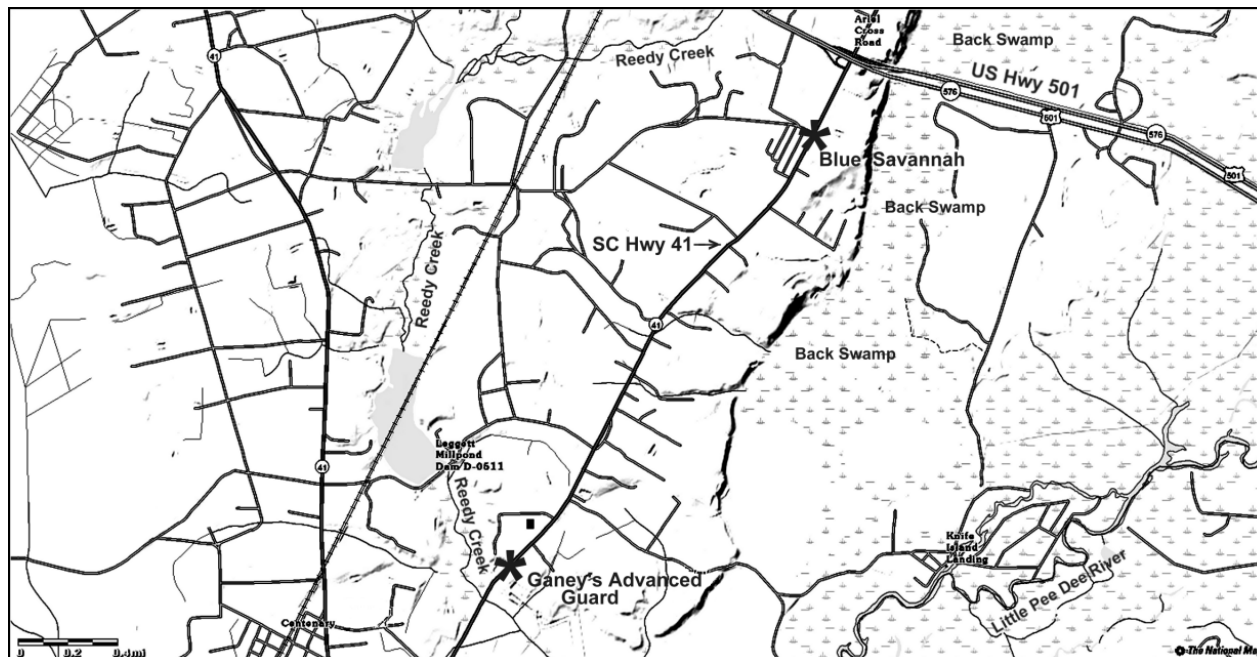


Ganey's Advanced Guard and Blue Savannah



Ganey's Advanced Guard	9/4/1780	GPS: 34.03560°N 79.33607°W	Confidence: 3
Blue Savannah	9/4/1780	GPS: 34.06991°N 79.30709°W	Confidence: 3

Directions: From the junction of US Hwy 501 and SC Hwy 41, go southwest on SC Hwy 41 for about .5 mile to Smith Mill Pond Road (S-34-46). The action took place here close to the rim of the Carolina Bay called **Blue Savannah**. The **Historical Marker** is located on the right side of US Hwy 501 about .5 mile east of SC Hwy 41. **Ganey's Advanced Guard** is located south on SC Hwy 41 about 3 miles from Blue Savannah (about .5 mile south of Davis Landing Road) on the high ground next to the swamp on the north side of Reedy Creek.

Blue Savannah and Ganey's Advanced Guard Action: “On the 3rd Instant [September, 1780] I [South Carolina Patriot militia Lt. Col. Francis Marion] had Advice, that upwards of two hundred Torys Intended to attack me the next day. I immediately marched with 52 men, which is all I could get, on the 4th in the morning I surpris'd a party of 45 men which I mistook for the main Body. I killed and wounded all but 15 which Escaped. I then marched immediately to attack the main body, which I met about 3 miles [at Blue Savannah] in full march towards me. I directly attacked them & put them to flight (though they had 200 men) & got into an impassable swamp [Back Swamp] to all but Torys. I had one man wounded in the first Action & 3 in the second & two horses killed; finding it impossible to come at them I retreated to Camp—the next day I was informed they all disperst—On the 5th I was joined by about 60 men; I then threw up a small redoubt to secure my Camp [on the north side of Port's Ferry] from being surpris'd by the Tories Should they again collect.”

Notes: 1. The above account is a portion of a letter from Lt. Col. Francis Marion to Maj. Gen. Horatio Gates dated 9/15/1780. It is contained in the *Lyman Draper Manuscripts*, Wisconsin Historical Society, Series 7VV38-40.

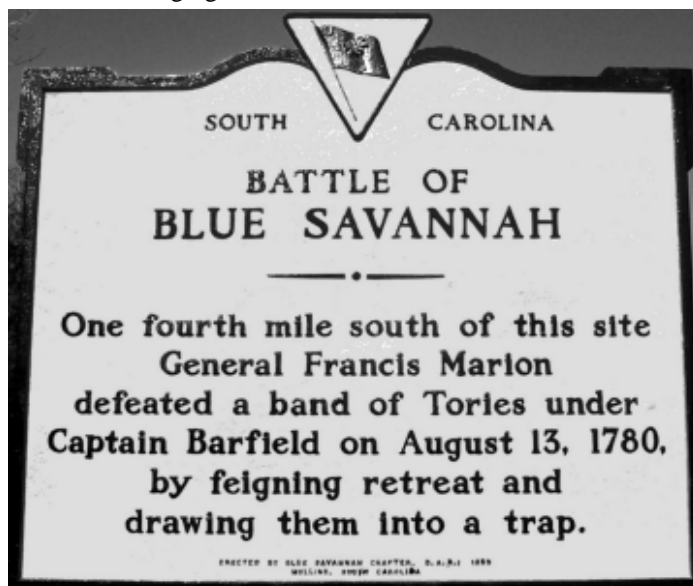
2. Ganey's (Gainey) Advanced Guard was the 1st action as Marion moved north along SC Hwy 41. Local residents of the savannah during the Revolution, named Lewis and Wall, were among the Tories gathered at Blue Savannah and probably leading Ganey's Advanced Guard. Blue Savannah was the 2nd action as stated in Marion's letter, noting the impenetrability of the swamp, i.e. Back Swamp, and written about 11 days after the actions. Since there is a ridge, presumably sandy, at Ganey's Advance Guard location, these locations seem the most logical after reading all the pertinent documents and visiting the area.

3. Discovering the location of Blue Savannah, which is a Carolina Bay, was done by Jo Church Dickerson, who was kind enough to share her work with this author. Blue Savannah was named for the blue water in the savannah (bay), which was sometimes knee deep, and the blue mud that stuck to wagon wheels crossing the savannah. Both had a bluish color. The oval shape of the Carolina Bay, Blue Savannah, can be seen faintly in a satellite view of the area. Other well-defined Carolina Bays can also be seen nearby in the satellite view. The location of these actions is based on several accounts by people who participated in the fighting since there is no archaeological proof of their actual

(Continued on next page.)

locations, to date. Loftis R. Munnerlyn seems to have considered them one action in his Federal pension application of 1833.

4. Before these actions, Marion was camped in the vicinity of Port's Ferry (Great Pee Dee River, east of Poston, SC) to the south, and Ganey was coming from the Catfish Creek area to the WNW of the Blue Savannah. For this reason, Marion who was traveling north, fought Ganey's Advanced Guard first, then continued to move north on SC Highway 41 seeking the Ganey's main body, as stated in Marion's letter to Gates. There was no ambush mentioned in Marion's letter to Gates, just the two forces charging each other.



5. The historical marker was relocated from the intersection of US Highways 501 and SC Highway 41, its original location, when US Highway 501 was made a 4-lane highway, and no longer gives the correct location of the savannah, but gives the location of Back Swamp, into which the Tories fled. It gives the action and date as they are related in most books, written long after the Revolution. The actions were actually on 9/4/1780, and there was no account of a trap or ambush. Loyalist Militia Capt. Jesse Barfield had no documented part in these actions, although he may have been with Ganey as they were often allied. His name is included in later published accounts. Marion's rank at the time was lieutenant colonel in the Continental Army.

6. A "Carolina Bay" is a regional term for a geographical feature, probably a depression caused by a meteor strike thousands of years ago, which over time filled with water to create what the early settlers called "bays". There are many of these scattered all across South Carolina. Most became or are in swamps. Below is a partial cross section of a Carolina Bay exaggerated to show elevation of the rim. Note that the center is filled with water and the rim is sand thrown up as if by some unknown impact. The rims of several Carolina Bays filled with water can be seen on satellite views just north of this area. Due to 225 plus years of draining and farming, the Blue Savannah bay is now a faint oval image without water in it, but the sand rim can be seen as a change in color of the soil. Carolina Bays are oval depressions in the land oriented southeast to northwest, each one is surrounded by a sandy rim.

