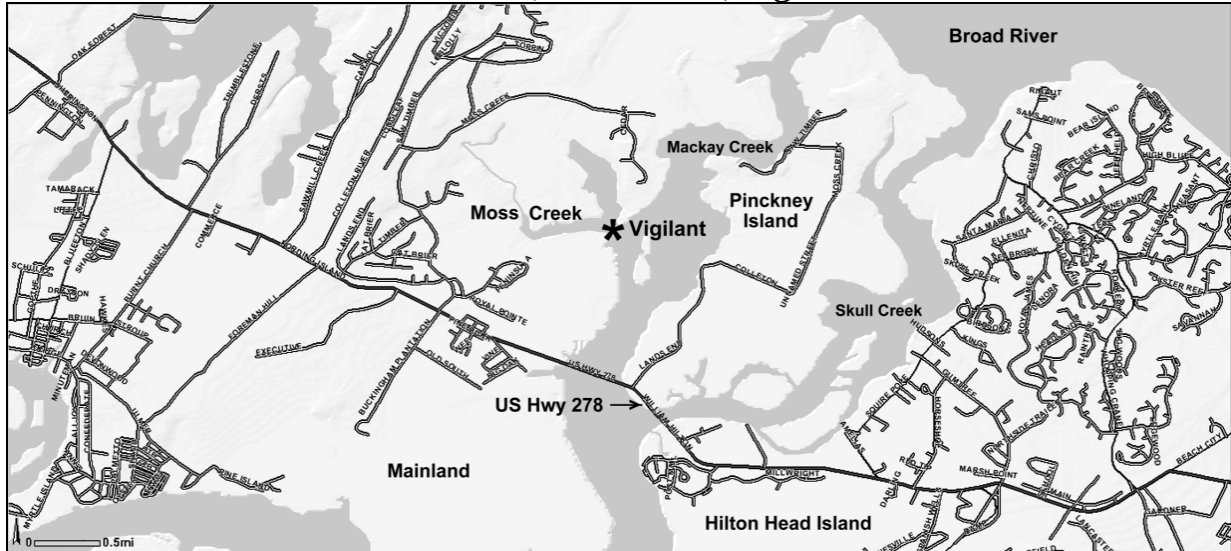


British (Privateer?) *Vigilant*



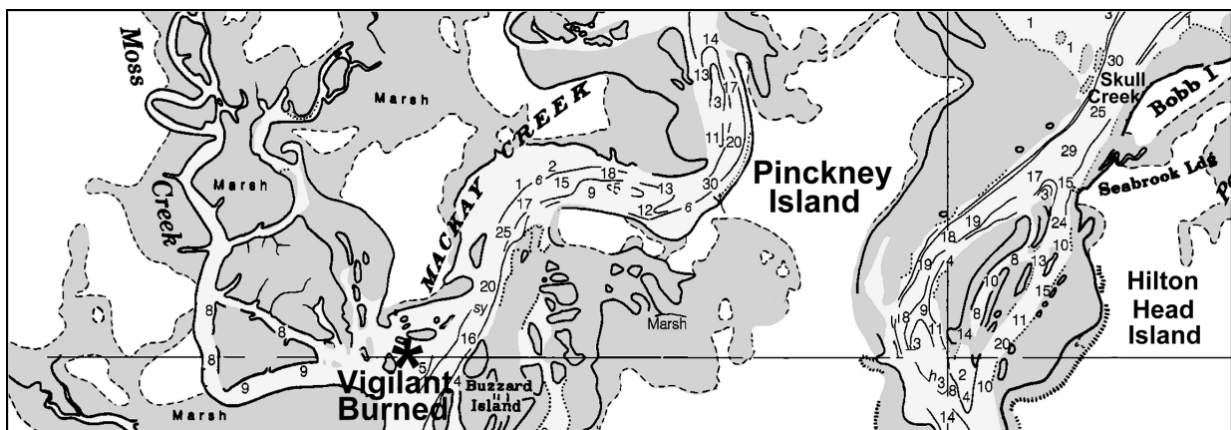
British (Privateer?) *Vigilant* Between 2 & 5/12/1780 GPS: 32.24904°N 80.78804°W Confidence: 4

Directions: The location of the *Vigilant* is somewhere in the mouth of Moss Creek with no close road access.

Action: Little is known about the *Vigilant*, under the command of Captain Thomas Goldesbrough, except that it was a British privateer which mounted 20 guns and was burned in 1780 according to Robert Marx's *Shipwrecks of the Western Hemisphere*. The *Vigilant's* final resting-place was in Moss Creek. Reference: *Nothing But Blood And Slaughter* by Patrick J. O'Kelley: Vol. Four, p. 39.

Note: HMS *Vigilant* was an armed ship purchased by the British in 1777, formerly the *Empress of Russia*. The HMS *Vigilant* was a large ship, but was in such bad condition by 1779, it could not be used for ocean service. The masts, rigging and ballast had been removed, so it could be utilized as an inland waterway troop carrier and gun platform. The *Vigilant* was well suited for this purpose in 1779, even though it had to be towed by rowing vessels through the narrow creeks and waterways. There was another HMS *Vigilant*, a 64-gun third-rate ship of the line of the Royal Navy, launched on 10/6/1774. Thus there were two HMS *Vigilants* from 1777 to 1780, one a formidable fighting ship and the other a troop transport in bad shape. Reference: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HMS_Vigilant

The *Vigilant*, as reported by Robert Marx, seems to be the purchased *Vigilant* which was used in the attack on Port Royal Island. It would be easy to mistake the *Vigilant* for a privateer since many of her exploits were in the company of privateers. It is likely that the *Vigilant*, while being towed by rowing vessels, ran hard aground while being towed in Mackay Creek at the mouth of Moss Creek in 1780. She was burned by the British partly because the rowing vessels were unable to pull her free, having limited pulling power, partly because of her poor condition, and to prevent the ship, or parts of her, from being used by the Patriots. A different company of British troops discovered the *Vigilant's* remains in 1782 while searching the creeks around Beaufort for hidden American vessels.



The modern chart above shows Moss Creek, Mackay and Skull Creeks, Pinckney and Hilton Head Islands.