



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_



## BACKGROUND: North Carolina Militia

Look closely at the detail from the 1781 map, “Battle of Guilford” to find blue lines marking the first and second positions of Americans soldiers in the fight. N.C. militia formed the front line, Virginia militia the second line, and the Continental troops behind. Militia men were part-time soldiers, often



“Battle of Guilford” (Philadelphia: Hayes & Zell, 1781) MC.175.1781hz,  
State Archives of N.C.

serving 3-month terms and fought battles regionally, while Continental Line soldiers signed up for longer terms (9 months to 3 years), had more formal training, and traveled throughout the states and even to Canada to fight. If militia men deserted, they were drafted into Continental Line service.

Greene commanded the county militias to be on the front line, fire two rounds, and then fall back. Militia troops did not have bayonets, and to avoid hand-to-hand combat with British bayonets, some fell back after the first round, seeing there was not time to re-load. Greene reported disappointment in the militia’s performance.



British musket and bayonet, 1762, Smithsonian Museum of American History collection, 1980.0399.0881.

# ACTIVITY: North Carolina Militia

## Quick Fact Check

Name a difference between soldiers of the militia and the Continental line.

What was the N.C. militia's position at the Battle of Guilford?

What arms were the militia unlikely to have?

What does the map of the Battle tell us about the landscape (look closely at the symbols)?

In the H. of Commons 4 July 1781

M. Speaker & Gentlemen

We send for your concurrence a Resolve Recommending to Major General Green to discharge those persons who fled from the action at Guilford Court House & who <sup>were</sup> turned over into the Continental <sup>Service</sup> so soon as the Situation of affairs will admit Of such an act of Benevolence

Tho<sup>s</sup> Benbury SC [Speaker, House of Commons]

By order of J Hunt ChC [Clerk, House of Commons]

House of Commons Resolve, General Assembly Session Records, House Joint Resolutions, July 2-7, 1781, box 1, State Archives of N.C.

*Read* the above resolution from the House of Commons. *Imagine* you are a member of the Senate. Would you support it?

*Argue in support of this resolve.*

*Argue in opposition of this resolve.*