THE ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY OF
NINETY SIX NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

Prepared by Karen G. Rehm
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"... We have been prosecuting the Siege [sic] at this place with all possible diligence with our little force ... , and our poor Fellows are wore out with fatigue. ... The [British] Works are strong and extensive. The position [is] difficult to approach and the Ground extremely hard."

So wrote Maj. Gen. Nathanael Greene on June 9, 1781, in his report to the president of the Continental Congress with regards to the siege of the British fortifications at Ninety Six, South Carolina. Almost two hundred years later the United States Congress would establish a national historic site not only to commemorate this ill-fated siege but the colonial and early settlement history of a backcountry village known as Ninety Six.

Prior to the English settlement of South Carolina, the area known as Ninety Six was used by Native American tribes particularly the Saludas, the Waterees, and Cherokees for hunting and fishing. The name Ninety Six originated from its distance to Keowee, a Cherokee town farther along the Cherokee Path. Increased trading with Native Americans in the early to mid-1700s opened the backcountry to settlers. One such settler was Robert Gouedy, who purchased property at Ninety Six in 1751 and opened a trading post servicing settlers and Indian traders.

Hostilities between the British and French in the 1750s filtered down to the backcountry of South Carolina in the form of attacks by Cherokees on the English settlers. Gouedy's barn was enveloped by a small fort in 1759 in response to the threatening situation. It became known as Fort Ninety Six.
In 1760, Fort Ninety Six was attacked twice by the Cherokees but did not fall. With the capture of Fort Loudoun on August 7, 1760, Fort Ninety Six's importance as a supply station to the backcountry increased considerably. In 1762, a treaty with the Cherokees brought peace to Ninety Six, and with peace the lands reopened to new settlers.

The citizens of Ninety Six built a village about 500 yards north of Fort Ninety Six. After its designation as one of seven new judicial districts in 1769, a courthouse and jail were added to the prospering village in 1772. The populous of the backcountry differed from their coastal counterparts economically and politically. With the outbreak of war in 1775, many residents in and around Ninety Six remained loyal to the crown in opposition to their coastal neighbors, while others were indecisive and wavered from one side to the other. The American Revolutionary War was truly a civil war in South Carolina pitting neighbor against neighbor and brother against brother. Over the next six years the British would attempt to take advantage of this partisan atmosphere in their quest for control over the southern colonies. The burgeoning village would be pulled into the conflict repeatedly over the next six years.

The first act of partisan warfare in South Carolina involved Ninety Six in July of 1775. Fearing the backcountry Loyalists might use the arms and ammunition stored at Fort Charlotte against their Patriot neighbors, Whigs ordered Maj. James Mayson to remove the military supplies from Fort Charlotte to Ninety Six. Betrayed by his assistant, the ammunition was recaptured and Mayson was arrested by the local militia. Mayson was held in the Ninety Six
jail but was soon released on bail. Four months later, the first land battle of the American Revolution in South Carolina would be fought at Ninety Six.

In November, the Cunningham brothers (Loyalists) captured gunpowder on its way to Cherokees inciting more hostility between Patriots and Loyalists. A stockaded fort under the command of Andrew Williamson (Patriot) was built a short distance from Ninety Six. On November 19, three hours after being completed, the fort was surrounded by Loyalists under Patrick Cunningham. The battle lasted until November 21, when a truce was declared with both sides parting company. James Birmingham was killed in this battle becoming the first South Carolina Patriot to die for America's independence. Loyalist opposition subsided over the next four years but was revived with the British Southern Campaign in 1780. Ninety Six's strategic location in the backcountry made it a focal point for British operations. Patriots found themselves prisoners of war on parole with Loyalists in control.

In 1780, the Continental forces in the South were put under the command of General Nathanael Greene. Victories at Kings Mountain and Cowpens diminished the British position in South Carolina. By the spring of 1781, Lord Charles Cornwallis was in North Carolina on his way to Virginia leaving South Carolina with a greatly reduced British force. Greene took advantage of the situation by attacking the British outposts, finally reaching Ninety Six on May 22, 1781, with 981 men. The British forces fortified the village with a palisade enclosure and a star redoubt northeast of the village. The Continental army's siegeworks were engineered by Thaddeus Kosciuszko over the next four weeks drawing ever closer to the British position, ironically held by Loyalists under Col. Harris Cruger, an American. News of approaching British Troops
forced the Continentals to attack the star redoubt on June 18. Unable to capture the redoubt, Greene's army suffered heavy losses and was forced to retreat.

The British forces evacuated Ninety Six one month later, burning the village as they departed. A new village was built a quarter of a mile from the ruins of its predecessor. In 1787, the new village of Ninety Six became known as Cambridge after the school erected in the town in 1785. By 1860 Cambridge had lost its position as a judicial district. Even its stagecoach and railroad services were moved to a new town two miles to the north known as Ninety Six. Although the once prosperous village of "Old" Ninety Six ceased to exist, its history was still remembered by local inhabitants. In Benson Lossing's The Pictorial Field-Book of the Revolution, James M. McCracken was noted as observing that "The trees and shrubbery on the battleground are considered by the inhabitants too sacred to be molested." (Vol. 2, p. 485). Reverence for the battleground would be held by coming generations resulting in the establishment of a national historic site at this backcountry settlement.
Introduction

On August 19, 1976, Public Law 94-393 authorized the establishment of Ninety Six National Historic Site "in order to preserve and commemorate for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations an area of unique historical significance associated with the settlement and development of the English Colonies in America and with the southern campaign of the American Revolutionary War, including the Star Fort ... ." The passage of this act ended a fifty-year debate on the national significance of a site whose role in the American Revolution overshadowed its equal and possibly greater importance in the development of South Carolina as an English colony. The Star Fort Historical Commission (SFHC) of South Carolina which was created in 1963 was the primary force behind the park's establishment. This administrative history addresses the commitment of the dedicated group which recognized the integrity of an isolated and neglected historical landmark and strove to have it designated a national historic site.

Although it is one of the lesser-known areas in the National Park System, the cultural resources of Ninety Six are impressive and include 18th century military features and archeological remains which make this site worthy to be acknowledged for its place in American history. The site's 18th century history was discussed briefly in the Foreword of this study. Additional references will be made as they apply to the development of the park or the management of its resources. Its history is thoroughly examined in the Historic Resource Study and Historic Structure Report, Ninety Six: A Historical Narrative by Jerome A. Greene (1981).
over by better known colonial and Revolutionary War sites. It will also examine the development of the park from a state-supported area to a unit in the National Park System.
I. Legislative Background

The first attempts to recognize the site were based on its American Revolutionary War merits alone. In 1907, Representative Wyatt Aiken from South Carolina introduced H.R. 3984 to the 60th Congress. This bill proposed that a monument be erected, and the Ninety Six battlefield be enclosed. Although the bill was referred to the Committee on the Library, no action was taken, and it was not reintroduced.(5)

With the approaching sesquicentennial of the American Revolution, the United States Congress sponsored a study in the 1920s to examine the country's battlefields to be prepared by the United States War Department. The report "A Study and Investigation of Battlefields in the United States for Commemorative Purposes—Classification of Battlefields" was introduced to the 69th Congress as H.R. Report 1071 on May 4, 1926. The study determined the Star Fort to be a Class IIb site. Class IIb battles were those "of sufficient historic interest to be worthy of some form of monument, tablet or marker to indicate the location of the battlefield."(6) In Senate Document 187 of the 70th Congress presented on December 12, 1928, a marker and one acre of land was proposed for the commemoration of the site. A small commemorative marker erected by the Daughters of the American Revolution in 1925 was accepted as a suitable alternative to the erection of a monument by the War Department.
As a result of this study, various areas associated with the American Revolutionary War were set aside by the War Department as national battlefields or military parks in the late 1920s and early 1930s. In South Carolina, Cowpens National Battlefield Site and Kings Mountain National Military Park in 1929 and 1931 respectively were authorized with provisions for obelisk-shaped monuments to be erected. Supporters of the Old Star Fort once again approached their congressmen on proposing legislation to attain recognition for the site. Congressman John C. Taylor of South Carolina introduced H.R. 7542 to the 74th Congress on April 22, 1935, "to provide for the establishment of a national monument and cemetery in Greenwood County, South Carolina, to be known as the 'Star Fort National Monument and Cemetery.'"

The National Park Service's recommendation was solicited at this time, and the Service "reported favorably"(7) on the establishment of a national monument at the Star Fort. Additional studies were needed on the site to ascertain its integrity and importance to the American Revolution. The studies were conducted by the Service in 1937 under historian Dr. Charles Porter and in 1939 by an assistant research technician, Mr. Ralston B. Lattimore. The conclusion of these studies was that the site represented state and local importance and therefore did not merit national recognition.(8) As was to occur over the next twenty-five years, the site was considered for its role in the American Revolutionary War excluding its significance to the development of South Carolina as an English colony.

The matter lay dormant for the next twenty years but was rekindled in the late 1950s. In a cooperative effort, the National Park Service sent Albert C. Manuoy (a historian in the regional office) to the site in April of 1959. In a report submitted to Marshall T. Mays (Chairman of the Committee for
Restoration of Landmarks and Historical Markers, Greenwood County Historical Society), Manucy "outlined a conservation program to be undertaken by Greenwood County Historical Society in cooperation with the state to preserve the site for public use . . . as possibly a State Historical Park."(9) Representative William Jennings Bryan Dorn from the Third Congressional District, South Carolina, discussed the matter with Herbert E. Kahler, Chief Historian of the National Park Service, in 1961. Mr. Kahler stated that the National Park Service's view of the site was as follows:

[its] history is of state and local importance. This was the opinion of the War Department in 1930, and it has been the Service's opinion after separate investigations in 1937, 1939 and 1959. It was considered by the Service a fourth time on the occasion of the Revolutionary War theme study with the same conclusion. . . . [he] urged that the area be developed as a part of the State Park System . . . .(10)

In the Revolutionary War Theme Study referred to by Mr. Kahler, the Star Fort was listed in the section entitled "Other Sites Evaluated." The study briefly mentioned the site's role as "an important frontier post for years before the war"(11) and then recounted its military history. Its pre-war history was finally being considered as one aspect of the site's significance. The National Park Service Advisory Board discussed the status of the Star Fort in September 1960 as it was identified in this study and again in 1962. The minutes for the 1962 meeting stated that the site dealt "primarily with
interest in the history of South Carolina and does not possess exceptional value (national significance) as commemorating or illustrating the history of the United States."(12)

The Greenwood County Historical Society under Bruce Ezell did not accept the decision of the Advisory Board as final. Approaching their goal as if anew, they decided to work through the necessary channels and take one step at a time in gaining national recognition for the Star Fort and Old Ninety Six. The first step taken was to approach the South Carolina General Assembly for support of the site. Archeological field work completed in 1960-61 by Dr. W. E. Edwards and historical research by Margaret Franklin (hired by the Society) supported their claim of the significance of Ninety Six. The Society's efforts were rewarded with the passage of Act 556 in 1963 which created the Star Fort Historic Commission (SFHC) in Greenwood County, South Carolina. This act provided that the SFHC "acquire, protect and restore the site in Greenwood County containing the ruins of Star Fort and village of Old Ninety Six."

The next five years witnessed little advancement towards achieving the goals of the Greenwood County Historical Society. The newly created SFHC did not have any members appointed to it and basically existed on paper only. However, on April 16, 1968, an amendment to Act 556 was passed which provided that "the committee shall be composed of ten members to be appointed for terms of four years each by the Governor . . . ." By September 30, 1968, the ten members were appointed. They were as follows:

Dr. Boyce M. Grier--Chairman

John H. Roberts
With the appointment of Mr. W. Bruce Ezell (president of the Greenwood County Historical Society) as project director(13), the SFHC began its steady and unwavering movement towards the establishment of Ninety Six National Historic Site. Mr. Ezell would serve as director until his resignation in 1972, thus becoming a member of SFHC. Based on his recommendation, Michael J. Rodeffer became the second project director of the site.

The Commission's goals were clearly stated in its enabling act. This allowed Bruce Ezell to move into action quickly to accomplish his assigned tasks. As stated earlier, the three goals were to acquire, protect, and restore the site. The acquisition and restoration programs will be discussed in later chapters, but protection objectives which led to the establishment of the park will be examined at this time.

*Later members of the commission were: Mrs. J.S. Stroud, John Eck, and Ed Barnett. Eck, Barnett, and Parker would eventually serve as chairman of the commission.*
Mr. Ezell's first step towards the protection of the site was to nominate it to the National Register of Historic Places. With the assistance of the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism, a nomination form for Old Ninety Six and Star Fort was prepared. The nomination defined the site's significance as being:

"Three distinct phases

1. As a trading and meeting junction in Colonial years, reflecting South Carolina's Indian and frontier period.

2. As the northwestern area's farthest English settlement from the coast, a thriving Colonial village from as early as 1740 and a busy courthouse town for the huge Ninety Six District from 1768 until shortly after 1800.

3. As a Revolutionary War stronghold and also a focal point of violent Patriot-Tory strife."(14)

The nomination with a suggested level of national significance was approved, and Old Ninety Six and Star Fort entered the National Register of Historic Places on December 3, 1969. The SHPO's assessment of the site as nationally significant allowed it to be sent to the Historic Sites Survey to be considered for National Historic Landmark designation.

At the October 1-3, 1973, meeting of the National Advisory Board, Old Ninety Six and Star Fort was considered for landmark status. Based on the National
Park Service Theme Study of 1970, the site represented three themes—English Exploration and Settlement, Development of English Colonies, and Major American Wars (American Revolution, War in the South). The Advisory Board expressed its approval of the site as a national historic landmark in a memorandum dated November 7, 1973. It was officially designated as such on February 17, 1974. SFHC gained considerable ground in reaching its primary goal—establishment of a national historic site at Old Ninety Six—in a relatively short period of time. The landmark designation and the approaching commemoration of the bicentennial of the War for American Independence increased the momentum and overall support for the site. However, it was realized that congressional support was mandatory to push through the necessary legislation. Such support was found in the efforts of Congressman William Jennings Bryan Dorn and Butler Derrick from the Third Congressional District and Senators Strom Thurmond and Ernest F. Hollings of South Carolina.

Congressman Dorn supported the site for ten years prior to its establishment and continued to be an influential source out of office. Through the efforts of an additional member to SFHC, Thurmond Bishop, Senator Thurmond was approached to visit Old Ninety Six and assist with the campaign. Mr. Bishop was a nephew of the senator as well as his namesake and brought the merits of the site to the senator's attention in the latter part of 1974. Senator Thurmond was impressed by what he saw and especially with the strong local support which was highly evident. (15) With the backing of Senators Thurmond and Hollings as well as Congressman Derrick, the campaign went into high gear in 1975.
On September 11, 1975, H.R. 9549 was introduced to the 1st Session of the 94th Congress by Congressman Derrick to "provide for the establishment of the Old Ninety-Six Star Fort National Battlefield." This bill mentioned the Star Fort with no reference to the town site. Senators Thurmond and Hollings introduced S. 2642 on November 11, 1975, to Congress which proposed the establishment of Old Ninety Six and Star Fort National Historical Park. The bill stressed the site's association "with the settlement and development of the English Colonies in America" in justifying the significance of the site. This obvious aversion to stressing the Star Fort and its military history may have been based on a recommendation made by the Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings and Monuments a month earlier. At that time, the Advisory Board "recommended to the Secretary of the Interior that the area should be added to the National Park System"(16) and further stated that "the fort is but one of several Revolutionary War historical resources at the site. ... Accordingly, we do not believe the Star Fort needs to be emphasized in designating the site."(17) To show support in both houses for the site, Congressman Derrick introduced H.R. 11203 on December 17, 1975, which was a duplicate of S. 2642. This bill was reintroduced in the 2nd Session of the 94th Congress by James G. O'Hara of Michigan as H.R. 12434 on March 11, 1976. The bill now faced the mandatory hearings and approval process by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

With the approaching Bicentennial celebrations of the American Revolution, patriotic fervor was on the rise in 1975. The SFHC took advantage of this fervor to gain support for the site in the private as well as the public
Michael J. Rodeffer, the newly appointed project director of Old Ninety Six and Star Fort, wrote to numerous influential individuals across the country to petition their congressmen in support of the pending bills. This effort resulted in advocacy from congressmen in states such as North Carolina and Maryland, universities, and notable citizens such as Louis Wright of the National Geographic Society and George B. Hartzog, Jr., former director of the National Park Service. Mr. Hartzog was retained as a consultant for the project and guided the legislation through the system. 

State support for the bill was clearly evident in the passage of S. 649 by the South Carolina General Assembly on January 22, 1976, which resolved "to memorialize the Congress of the United States and the Department of the Interior to Establish the Old Ninety Six and Star Fort National Historical Park in the state of South Carolina." This sentiment was reiterated in a Greenwood County resolution passed on February 3, 1976.

Over the next few months, Senator Thurmond campaigned ardently for the passage of his bill. To assist OMB with their evaluation of the site, he wrote a letter to its director, James Lynn, on February 16, 1976, which stated that "a close examination of the merits of Old Ninety-Six -Star Fort by you and your staff will reveal this to be an area of truly exceptional historical and cultural resources, which can be acquired and preserved with a minimum of expenditures of taxpayer dollars." His reference to the minimal expenditure for this area was based on the donation of 695 acres (actually 693.9 acres) encompassing the site by SFHC to the United States government upon establishment of the park. In light of the apparent support for the site and limited fiscal liability connected to its establishment, OMB did not object to the bill.
The views of the Department of the Interior through the Service were then sought by the Senate Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs. Although the Service had consistently voiced opposition to the establishment of a national park at the site, the recent decisions of the Advisory Board and apparent congressional support convinced the Service to accept Old Ninety Six for its proven significance as more than just a Revolutionary War site. In his memorandum to Senator Henry "Scoop" Jackson, chairman of the aforesaid congressional committee, Assistant Secretary of the Interior Nathaniel Reed recommended a "minimum degree of acquisition and development by the National Park Service" and the name of the area to be changed to "Old Ninety Six National Historic Site, since Historic Site is used for nearly all historical area additions to the National Park System."(21) Revision of the future park's name was sought by SFHC as well, as Mike Rodeffer recommended dropping "Old" from the area's name in his "Statement in Support of H.R. 11203" prepared on April 23, 1976. With the consensus in favor of the site, the bill moved through the hearings procedures smoothly, and its passage was imminent.

On May 13, 1976, S. 2642 was passed by the Senate. Over the next few months, the specifics were addressed in both houses. In the Senate, amendment number 142 deleted special references to the siege of 1781 from the bill, deleted "Old" from the title, and increased the development limit from $50,000 to $2,463,000. The House approved H.R. 12434 with amendments that reflected the Senate's revisions on June 8, 1976. The Senate agreed to the House amendments
on June 30, 1976, and the House agreed to the Senate amendments on August 10, 1976. Finally on August 19, 1976, P.L. 94-393 was signed into law by President Gerald R. Ford authorizing establishment of Ninety Six National Historic Site. The long campaign conducted by the dedicated members of SFHC had reached a successful and gratifying end.
II. Land Acquisition

The enabling legislation for Ninety Six National Historic Site authorized the United States Government "to acquire lands and interests . . . not to exceed one thousand one hundred and twenty acres . . .: Provided, that lands and interest therein owned by the State of South Carolina or any political subdivision thereof may be acquired only by donation."(22) As previously stated, SFHC conceded the donation of 693.9 acres to the Service for the establishment of the historic site. The remaining acreage which would eventually complete the 989-acre site would be either bought or condemned by the federal government by the summer of 1980. SFHC bought most of the tracts of primary historical significance during its first five years. The additional land to be purchased would attend to administrative and visitor services as well as insure protection of the resources.

Acquisition of the land associated with Old Ninety Six and the Star Fort was one of the three directives in the state legislation establishing SFHC. Through the state's Parks, Recreation and Tourism Department, SFHC was able to apply for federal assistance to acquire the historic property with Land and Water Conservation Funds (LWCF). This fund, which was established in the 1965 Land and Water Conservation Fund Act (Public Law 88-578, 78 Stat. 897), provided assistance to states "in preserving, developing, and assuring accessibility to all citizens of the United States of America of present and future generations . . . such quality and quantity of outdoor recreation resources as may be available and are necessary and desirable." The LWCF Act
allowed matching grants to states "For the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities." (23)

SFHC identified three phases for the acquisition of Old Ninety Six and Star Fort in their application to the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation which managed the fund. Their application was approved on September 11, 1969, and listed the following acquisition phases:

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<th>Phase</th>
<th>Parcel No.</th>
<th>Acres</th>
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<tr>
<td>Phase I</td>
<td>Parcel No. 1</td>
<td>226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase II</td>
<td>Parcel No. 2</td>
<td>283.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase III</td>
<td>Parcel Nos. 3-6</td>
<td>238.2</td>
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The total cost of the project was $748,800 with the LWCF providing $374,400. The remaining costs were paid by the State of South Carolina and Greenwood County. On January 23, 1970, the project agreement was amended slightly to reflect a change in the land parcels to be acquired in each phase:

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<td>Parcel No. 1</td>
<td>226</td>
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There are two discrepancies in this amended agreement which should be noted. The period of time covered by the agreement was September 11, 1969, to December 31, 1973, and yet Phase III—the Star Fort addition—was not
acquired until 1974. Additional time was needed to purchase the parcel, and a separate project agreement was drawn to cover this phase. The second discrepancy is the total number of acres (747.8) identified in this agreement and the number of acres (693.9) eventually donated to the Service in 1976. The 53.9-acre difference is found in Phase II whereby three parcels of adjoining land were not acquired by SFHC as originally planned. The largest parcel of 52 acres would eventually be condemned by the federal government in 1978 to prevent any inholdings within the park. (24)

The land donated by SFHC to the National Park Service on December 28, 1976, included the primary historic sites and related natural features. Phase I contained the eastern tract of the property. Phase II, the western tract, contained the Old Ninety Six Village, Cambridge and Holmes Redoubt sites, and the Star Fort. Phase III presumably included the Robert Gouedy Trading Post site in the south central tract. (25) Appendix C identifies the owners of the acreage acquired by SFHC from 1969 to 1974.
National Park Service Acquisition—

Harry Catherine and Pat Goode of the Southeast Regional Office managed the acquisition program for the new park. SFHC continued to operate the site as the commission was under contract to the National Park Service. The Service was not able to provide a staff for the park until 1977. The two acquisition officers worked with Mike Rodeffer, the second SFHC project director, in identifying the acreage to be acquired and negotiated with the owners for the purchase of the land.

The 693.9 acres extended between two rural highways—248 and 27. The Tract Map prepared by the Division of Land Acquisition, Southeast Region, and dated January 1977, identified the parcels of land within the site's authorized boundary and those which would require amendatory legislation before acquisition. There were several small plots from less than one to three acres along 248 and the previously mentioned 52 acres inholding which were essential to the park's development. An additional 157 acres along 248 contained significant sites including an 18th century cemetery and possibly a Continental Army campsite. Additional boundary parcels were needed to protect the site's resources from possible encroachment.

According to Superintendent Robert Armstrong and Michael Rodeffer, the acquisition process ran smoothly except for the one condemnation. Joe Williams who owned the 52-acre parcel did not want to leave his family's homesite despite its dilapidated condition. The property was condemned and acquired by the National Park Service in November of 1978. The first parcels
were acquired in November of 1977 with the remaining acreage purchases made over the next three years. The last parcel acquired was the Tolbert piece of 44+ acres on July 24, 1980. (26) This parcel formed a section of the northern boundary of the park. The Master Deed List for Ninety Six National Historic Site is provided in Appendix C.

During the NPS acquisition program, one of the goals of the first superintendent was to identify acreage which was in excess of the needs of the park. This acreage did not contain significant historic sites and merely added to the buffer zone which was already adequate at its present size. As a result, a total of 100.36 acres along the site's southern boundary, 214.6 acres of the western boundary (across 248), and 486.6 acres of the northern boundary were not acquired.

The park reached its present size of 989.9 acres in 1980. Additional acreage will not be needed to protect the existing resources.
III. Development

The final goal of SFHC yet to be discussed is the restoration of the site which entails the development of the area prior to and after the establishment of the national historic site. In 1974, the Master Plan of Development was prepared by Marvin L. Cann, Michael J. Rodeffer, and Louise M. Watson. This document described the area, defined the research needs, and proposed the various areas of development for the recently designated landmark. Prior to 1974, some improvements had been made to the site. The plan cited them as follows: a temporary trail, pertinent features marked, an unpaved twenty-car parking lot, bridle paths, a 27-acre lake for fishing, and a log house which was moved to the site in the 1960s and served as the staff office, maintenance shop, and visitor center.(27) Between 1974 and 1976, when the site came into the National Park System, some of the commission's goals would be achieved while others would be revised or never be realized.

In analyzing the site, the Master Plan emphasized the development of the "historic complexes—Gouedy's post, the town and fortifications of Ninety Six, and the community of Cambridge"(28) over the recreational facilities. However, it was conceded that activities such as picnicking, primitive camping, hiking, and fishing would not threaten the historic resources.(29) Holmes Redoubt was determined to be the first priority of the development program. Its Revolutionary War significance enabled SFHC to apply for a grant from the American Revolution Bicentennial Commission for $24,500 to partially reconstruct the structure. The grant also covered the excavation of the siegeworks and the construction of trails. The reconstruction began in
September of 1975. (30) Additional federal funding through Grant in Aid Action covered Development Phase II which provided for the restoration of the colonial village and the Star Fort. The three year project cost $30,700 ($15,350 from South Carolina with matching funds from the federal government). (31) The development of the historic resources will be discussed further in Chapter IV.

The Master Plan prefaced all developmental projects with the need for archaeological research and assessments with consideration of the natural constraints. For the most part, it stressed a sensitivity to the historic resources. Reconstructions were limited to the palisades of the Holmes Redoubt and the siege lines. Other sites were to be stabilized and interpreted through signs. As the second project director of the site, Michael Rodeffer was responsible for this attitude. He stated that his "major focus [during his term] was to expand the knowledge of the areas." (32) As an archeologist, he recognized the value in research and presenting the information obtained through interpretive exhibits and messages.

The site did require physical development to attract visitors and to provide the basic amenities. The seven proposals for improvements identified in the Master Plan according to their priority were as follows:

1. Data collection covering a topographical survey, a botanical inventory and a wildlife survey.
2. Visitor Center to provide offices, exhibit areas and an adequate parking lot.

3. Utilities.

4. Traffic Plan excluding all vehicular traffic from the historical area and closing the county road which ran through Old Ninety Six.

5. Maintenance Area providing a workshop and storage facility.

6. Recreation Facilities providing hiking trails, bridle paths and picnic areas.

7. Ranger Residence for security and supervision purposes.

Funding was a key element in the planning and development program. After 1973, SFHC reported to the Greenwood County Council. Personnel and operational costs were a line item on the limited county budget. In 1976, a trailer for the administrative offices was donated to the site. Grants from state and federal programs enabled SFHC to conduct archeological research and resource management projects. With the approaching bicentennial, additional monies from the state Bicentennial Commission, the Self-Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Humanities would be used to complete interpretive projects such as surfacing trails and providing interpretive signage.

During the last two years under SFHC's control, Ninety Six was developed into a site worthy to be considered for inclusion in the National Park System. Under Rodeffer's directorship, four major projects were completed:

1. Partial reconstruction of Fort Holmes.

2. Expansion of park boundaries to include the Clarke property.
3. Expansion of the interpretive program to tie it in with the Bicentennial--Revolutionary War musters were held in 1974 and 1975.

4. Completion of surface trails and exhibit signs in time for the Bicentennial.\(33\)

Although not all of these projects would meet the policy guidelines of the Service, they did produce a cornerstone the Service could expand upon to meet the needs of the public and to preserve the historic resources.
National Park Service Assumes Control--

SFHC managed the new national historic site until September 30, 1977, thirteen months after it was authorized. The land and property were transferred to the federal government on December 28, 1976, but the Service was not able to staff the site at the time. An agreement between the Service and SFHC authorized the existing staff to continue operations with compensation from the Service. The staff consisted of Mike Rodeffer as site manager, Linda Parks, secretary, and Dave Gentry, maintenance. When the site came under NPS control in October of 1977, Dave Gentry and Linda Parks were hired by the Service; Mike Rodeffer moved on to other projects. He was offered a position as an archeologist at the site, but the salary and grade did not appeal to him. For the next four months, various National Park Service employees in the Southeast Region would serve as acting superintendent for one to six-week intervals. Then on February 29, 1978, Robert S. Armstrong became the first superintendent of Ninety Six National Historic Site. Armstrong began his career with the National Park Service at Mammoth Cave National Park as a Jobs Corps counselor. In 1972, he transferred to the Southeast Regional Office as the training officer for the region. His next two assignments were at Castillo de San Marcos National Monument as chief, Interpretation and Resource Management from 1973 to 1975, and at Natchez Trace Parkway as North District ranger from 1975 to 1978.

The goals of the first superintendent centered on the development of the site in accord with National Park Service standards. Of primary importance was the completion of an Assessment of Alternatives and a General Management Plan to
provide direction to the staff. Charles Lee, South Carolina State Historic Preservation Officer, was involved with the planning facilitating a cooperative atmosphere between the state and Service. Another goal—the reduction of acreage—was previously discussed in Chapter II, Land Acquisition.

Upon his arrival, Armstrong found only a few existing structures. Except for the donated trailer and log cabin, there were only two dilapidated barns and Gus Williams’ house on the property, all of which would eventually be destroyed—one by fire and the other two by management. A second trailer was acquired in 1978 for additional office space. Most of the land was either cultivated in soybean, open fields, or heavily wooded. (36) It was evident that administrative and visitor service facilities was desperately needed to bring the site up to the minimum standard of the Service.

In 1980, the General Management Plan was completed. The document stated that the three primary management objectives were:

1. To provide adequate staffing, facilities and equipment to manage the park resources to assure high standards of visitor services.

2. To provide a park headquarters including space for administration and maintenance.

3. To cooperate with local governments and organizations in planning and developing historical and cultural resources of the area for the use and benefit of the public. (37)
Of the three objectives, cooperation with local governments was the only viable one at the time. Former members of SFHC and Greenwood County Council were very supportive of the Service in their efforts to further develop and promote the site. The bicentennial of the siege was approaching requiring months of planning and preparations. The community, in particular Bruce Ezell, assisted the staff willingly with this program. By the time the celebration arrived, the only improvements to the site were the construction of an interpretive kiosk designed by Harpers Ferry Center in 1979, surfacing of the trails through and around the siegeworks and fort, and the placement of exhibit panels which were also designed by Harpers Ferry. Unfortunately, the majority of the Bicentennial funds allotted to the National Park Service were exhausted or were earmarked for higher profile projects. The visitor center proposed by Denver Service Center lacked funding and would be shelved for the present. Regardless, the celebration of the bicentennial of the siege in 1981 was well-attended and generated goodwill with the community. This support was beneficial to the development and protection of the resources.

Bob Armstrong realized the difficulties in funding an expensive structure which never ranked very high on the region's or Service's priority list, so he sought an alternative method of accomplishing the first two objectives. For $123,000, less than half of the estimated cost of the proposed visitor center, two pre-fabricated octa-structures and a large metal shed were constructed in 1983 and 1984. The octa-structures served as the administration building ($54,000) and the visitor center ($46,779), while the large shed housed the maintenance facility ($22,137).
In order to stay within their budget, the park staff completed the interior of the structures except for the plumbing and carpeting. Landscaping was also completed by the staff. The visitor center provided museum space, an auditorium for film presentations, an information desk/sales area, and office space for the interpretive staff. The administration building provided ample office space for the superintendent, administrative officer, and chief of maintenance. Although the structures were quite modern in appearance, they were not obtrusive to the wooded landscape and presented an attractive sight for visitors.

The completion of these structures meant more than just accomplishing management objectives to those involved. It gave the staff and local community which had supported the site for so many years a sense of pride in their national historic site. There were still a few amenities to be completed such as paving the parking lot (completed in 1986) and a proposed picnic area for school groups, but the basics of any park were available to the public. It should be noted that management had decided that park housing would not be required for the site.

In 1986, an observation platform was constructed to the rear of the reconstructed siegeworks. Designed by Ray Price of Harpers Ferry Center, the platform was intended to provide the visitor a panoramic view of the battlefield to enhance his appreciation of siege warfare. In 1987, Superintendent Bill Springer's concern for historical accuracy in this section of the battlefield led to his proposal to revise the interpretation and existing
appearance of the battlefield. These changes will be discussed in the final chapter in consideration of Bob Armstrong's reassignment to the park at this writing.

The development of the cultural resources of the site by SFHC and the Service will be presented in the next chapter as it is an integral part of the park's story and deserves special attention.
IV. Resource Management

As previously stated, the cultural resources at Ninety Six are impressive, not only with the evident physical remains of the siege, but the potential archeological material yet to be uncovered. Prior to the creation of SFHC, Greenwood County Historical Society sponsored archeological and historical research to determine the full significance of the site. The research conducted by Dr. William Edwards in 1960-61 would be the first of several seasons of archeological field work to occur prior to the establishment of the park. His research consisted of extensive archeological testing at the star redoubt and Ninety Six village site. (39) Throughout SFHC's tenure, research would be a vital part of the management of cultural resources. In examining this aspect of the park's history, it should be noted that many of the decisions made in this area were biased by SFHC's need to interpret the history of the site and to have something of interest for the visitors to see. In this chapter, the research, reconstructions, and interpretation of the resources by both SFHC and the Service will be discussed. However, with the park's continual growth and the inevitable revision of management goals, further discussion of this topic will be presented in the last chapter.

SFHC's goal to restore the site required extensive archeological field work. In 1970 and 1971, Stanley South of the University of South Carolina's Institute of Archeology and Anthropology was hired to test and map out the primary resources of Gouedy's Trading Post site, Fort Ninety Six site, Holmes Redoubt site, Ninety Six village site, and the Kosciuszko mine. Bruce Ezell's
strong support of the project was evident in his willingness to assist with
digging the slot trenches. The testings determined the sizes and configura-
tions of Fort Williamson and Holmes Redoubt and disputed historical documents
on the structures. (40) The information provided by the excavations led to the
partial reconstruction of the Holmes Redoubt in 1975 on the original site.
Although it is not an accurate reconstruction in materials, techniques and
possibly design, the structure is useful for interpretive purposes.

South's field work also resulted in a request for funds to excavate the Ninety
Six jail and the village complex. In a letter dated June 21, 1974, Ronald
Berman, Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, advised Ed
Barnette, Chairman of SFHC, that a grant "for $11,121 had been approved for
the excavation of the jail—but there was no commitment for the entire
complex." (41) The excavation of the jail determined its location and provided
some clues as to its measurements. Once the data had been collected, the
pit was filled in with earth, replacing much of the original brick debris, and
resodded. The sites of the jail and possible village structures were later
marked by corner posts, and are interpreted through signs.

Additional archeological field work was conducted in 1973, 1976, and 1977. In
1973, site personnel examined the eastern section of the Williamson/Holmes
complex, the star redoubt, and the siegeworks. This research led to the
partial reconstruction of the American siegeworks--parallels and saps--above
the original trenches in 1974-75. They, too, do not accurately represent the
original works in length or height. The 1976 work primarily expanded upon
earlier research on the redoubt and jail. In 1977, Rodeffer uncovered a
post-contact Native American site now known as Old Field Site (38GN26) which
contained lithic scatter and some artifacts. This was the only aboriginal site to be included in the documentation prepared for the National Register in 1986.

Although the archeological research uncovered vital information on the early settlement and military features in the area, it was clearly evident to SFHC and the Service that additional research and archeological testing were needed. Such research could possibly determine not only the locations of other key elements in the site's story, e.g., Greene's camp site, but enhance the understanding of the complete story of Ninety Six. The Service reiterated these needs in its primary management documents.

According to the 1980 General Management Plan for Ninety Six, additional studies were needed to provide or determine:

- regional context for prehistoric sites,
- Indian tribe ethnohistory of South Carolina and development of Indian trade and travel routes from prehistoric into historic periods, and
- exact affiliation of depressions, foundations and house outlines near the Gouedy Trading Post site. . . .(42)

Two of the resource management objectives as specified in the document focused on identifying and evaluating the cultural resources and "implementing a research program . . . for the preservation and management of park resources."(43) The 1983 Resource Management Plan and Environmental Assessment of Ninety Six stressed that "the most significant problem related to the archeological resources is one of research deficiencies."(44)
In 1977, the Service conducted some archeological field work with the assistance of the Southeast Archeological Center, which prepared a cultural resources inventory and conducted remote sensing (proton-magnetometry). Anomalies identified at that time in the Greene camp site area would be examined by Mike Rodeffer in 1984 with unfortunately no major discoveries. Since that time, funding has not been available to support additional archeological research or testing. However, in the 1987 management objectives for the park, Superintendent Bill Springer identified archeological research funding for a study of the Gouedy complex as a short-term objective to meet an immediate need of the park.

Another related objective was a result of the extensive archeological work completed in the early 1970s by the University of South Carolina whereby the entire collection of recovered artifacts are still in their possession. At that time, there were no suitable structures to house the collection. Even though this situation was corrected, the university was better equipped and staffed to manage the artifacts. There has never been the intention to abandon the material, and in the wake of Special Directive 80-1, the care of this resource was addressed in another 1987 short-term objective. The Service in cooperation with the university will initiate the necessary steps to meet the standards specified in the directive.

Those early archeological studies fostered many projects which are evident today. In addition to the reconstruction of Holmes Redoubt, the Holmes Caponier was excavated and interpreted. The Kosciuszko mine's interior was repaired and stabilized, but as a safety precaution remains closed.
All of this work was completed prior to the Service's acquisition. Since 1977, the major focus of management has been the preservation and stabilization of the resources with special attention to scene restoration and the star redoubt. Future plans for the park's cultural resources will be discussed in the following and last chapter, Final Stages.

With regard to the park's natural resources, there are no federally recognized endangered wildlife species in the park. There is, however, a large stand of Oglethorpe oaks which is monitored by Clemson University. The natural resources are generally maintained or monitored as required to protect or stabilize the cultural resources.
V. Final Stages

In 1985, Robert Armstrong left Ninety Six for a position in the Southeast Regional Office. Management of the park was assigned to William Springer, Superintendent of Cowpens National Battlefield, who would manage both parks for the next two and a half years. Springer's career with the National Park Service began in 1977 as a planner for the Southeast/Southwest Team at Denver Service Center which led to his transfer to the Southeast Regional Office in 1980 as the Regional Environmental Coordinator. In 1983, he became the chief, Division of Park Operations at Cape Lookout National Seashore. Springer was reassigned to Cowpens National Battlefield as superintendent in 1984. Springer focused on updating and revising the park's management documents to reflect existing conditions and the objectives to emphasize the primary needs of the park. The revised long-term goals were basic to any park stressing the protection and preservation of the resources, insuring visitor and employee safety, and cooperation with the various levels of governments. It was the short-term objectives to be acted upon in the next two to three years that could lead to significant changes at Ninety Six. With the return of Robert Armstrong to the park superintendency in July of 1987, the relevance of these objectives to future park management was questionable. However, in a telephone interview with Armstrong in August of 1987, he stated that he was in general agreement with the goals and would proceed accordingly.

Some of these goals were discussed in the previous chapter--the funding for archeological research of the Gouedy Complex and the management of the
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Chapter I: Legislative Background

5. United States Congress, Congressional Record - House, 60th Congress (1907).
7. Herman Kahn, Memorandum to Verne Chatelaine regarding Study on Star Fort by Colonel Landers (22 August 1935). Legislative files, Ninety Six, Cultural Resources Repository, WASO, NPS (Washington).
8. Herbert E. Kahler, Chief Historian of NPS, to Director of NPS, Washington, 15 November 1960. Legislative files, Ninety Six, Cultural Resources Repository.
9. Ibid.
12. Advisory Board on National Parks, Minutes from April 30 - May 3, 1962, Meeting. Legislative File, Ninety Six, Cultural Resources Repository.
18. Bruce M. Ezell interview.

Chapter II: Land Acquisition


Chapter III: Development

29. Ibid.
30. American Revolution Bicentennial Commission File, ARB Administration Grant #8-3PM-73. Star Fort Historic Commission Records, Greenville County Library, South Carolina, Box 1.
31. National Register Files (Microfiche copy), Cultural Resources Repository.
32. Rodeffer interview.
33. Ibid.
35. Armstrong interview.
36. Rodeffer interview.
38. Armstrong interview.

Chapter IV: Resource Management

Chapter V: Final Stages