

# Battle of Cowpens, SC

## 17 January, 1781

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LTC, Old Guard of Gate City Guard

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# Bottom Line Up Front (BLUF)

- Cowpens led to Cornwallis' retreat from the South to Yorktown
- Cowpens was decisive victory for Continental Army
- Cowpens decimated British Dragoons and large part of British Army
- US lost an entire Army at Battle of Camden, SC (Routed), 16 Aug 1780
  - 4,000 US under MG Horatio Gates (900/1K Cap)    2,100 UK under LG Lord Cornwallis
- US MG Nathaniel Greene split his forces
- Gave "Light Maneuvering" Force to BG Daniel Morgan
- The only double envelopment in Revolutionary War
- One of the few Cavalry Engagements in Revolutionary War (LTC W)
- Hand-Picked terrain
- Hernando Cortez – Burn the Boats

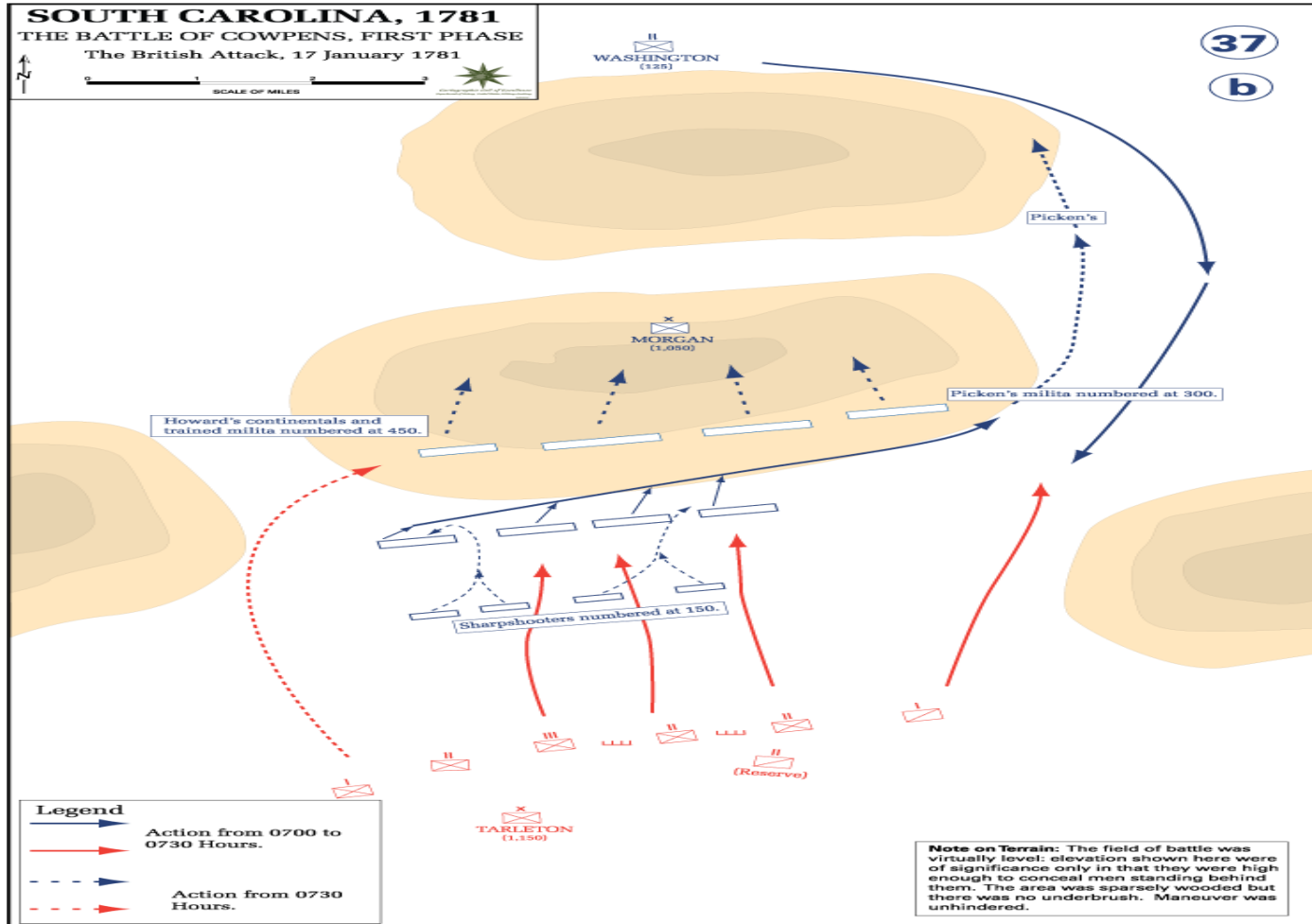
# Morgan's Orders and Tactics

- Gain “Backwoods” support and live off the land
- Raise, train and use militia and skirmishers integrated as significant parts of his fighting force
- Made British find and chase him (LTC Tarleton)
- Chose Terrain – River at back, Ravine to side, Swamp on other side, two hills at back of funnel
- Knew his troops and their abilities (1000-1900)
- Knew his enemy (1100-1500)
- Three lines
  - Skirmishers – shoot epaulets
  - Militia (COL Pickens) – “give me 3 rounds boys”
  - Continental Army at back
  - 4<sup>th</sup> - Washington's Cavalry

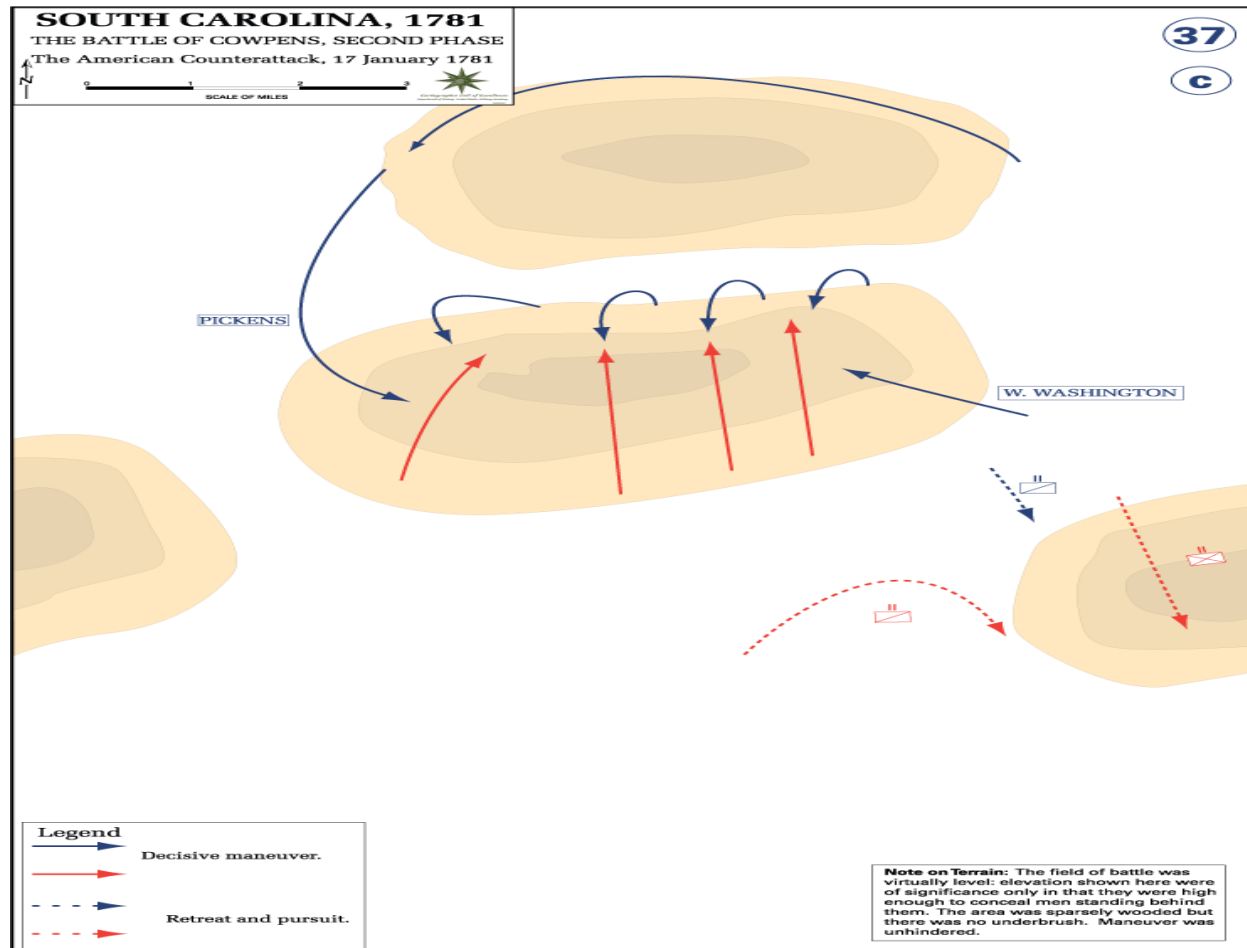
## Prelude to Battle

- Tarleton driving his troops for 3-4 days to engage Morgan
- Tarleton assumed this was the usual worn, afraid militia force
- Morgan chose time and place of battle
- Morgan knew who and what his enemy was
- Morgan's men rested and familiar (with one day) of location
- US troops had high morale
- Morgan had a layered in-depth plan using each unit's abilities to their maximum potential
- Morgan **planned** a double envelopment
- Morgan kept Cavalry as a hidden surprise element

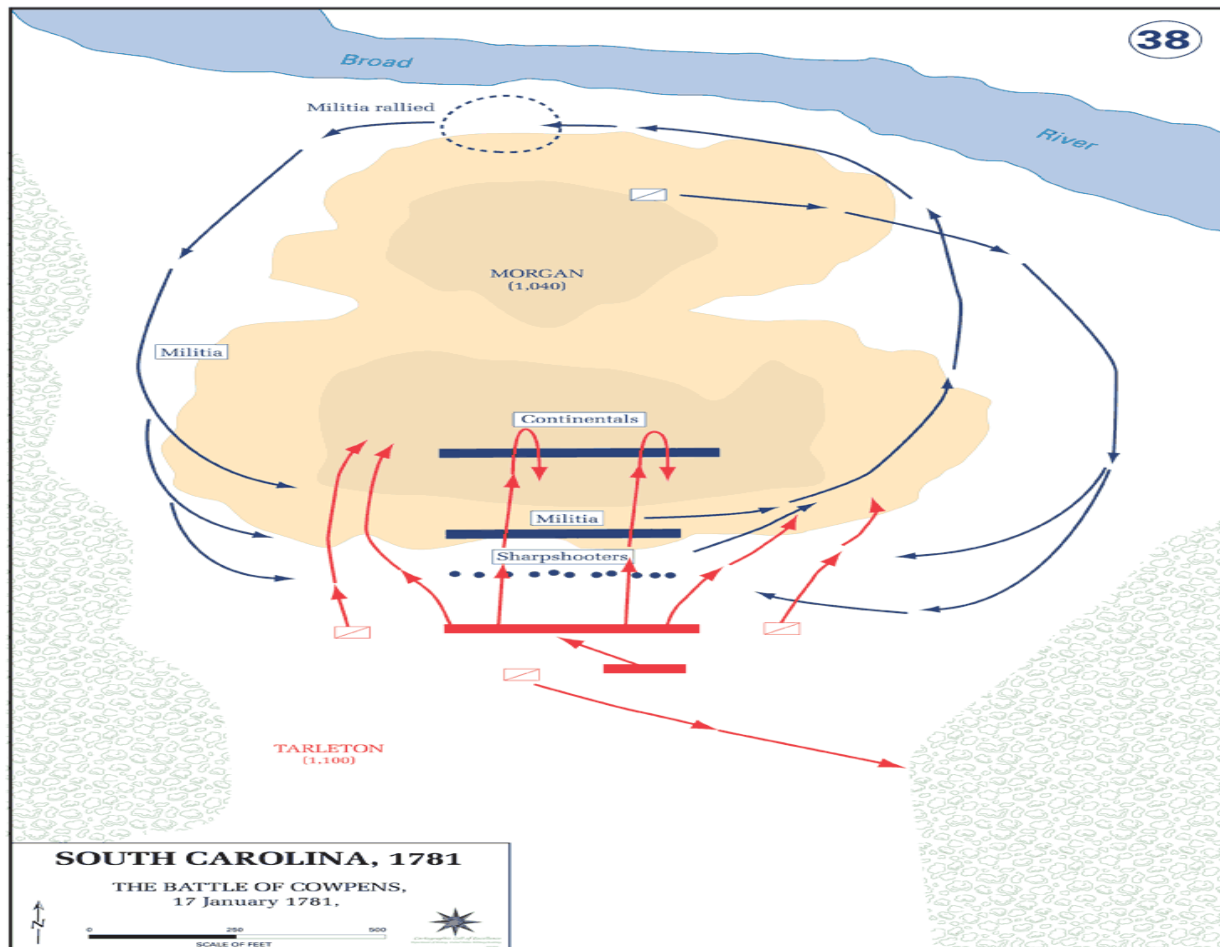
# Initial



# Phase 2



# Conclusion



# Aftermath

- British Loss
  - Tarleton's Dragoons – suffered 86% Casualty Rate
  - 110 KIA
  - 712 British prisoners
  - All Artillerymen killed or incapacitated
- US Loss
  - 128 Killed or wounded
- Cornwallis' Dragoons and Cavalry gone
- Colonial victory – raises morale, boosts support throughout Colonies
- Battle of Guilford Court - Pyrrhic victory that damaged Cornwallis' Army
- Departure from the south to Yorktown
  
- Hazzah!!!!