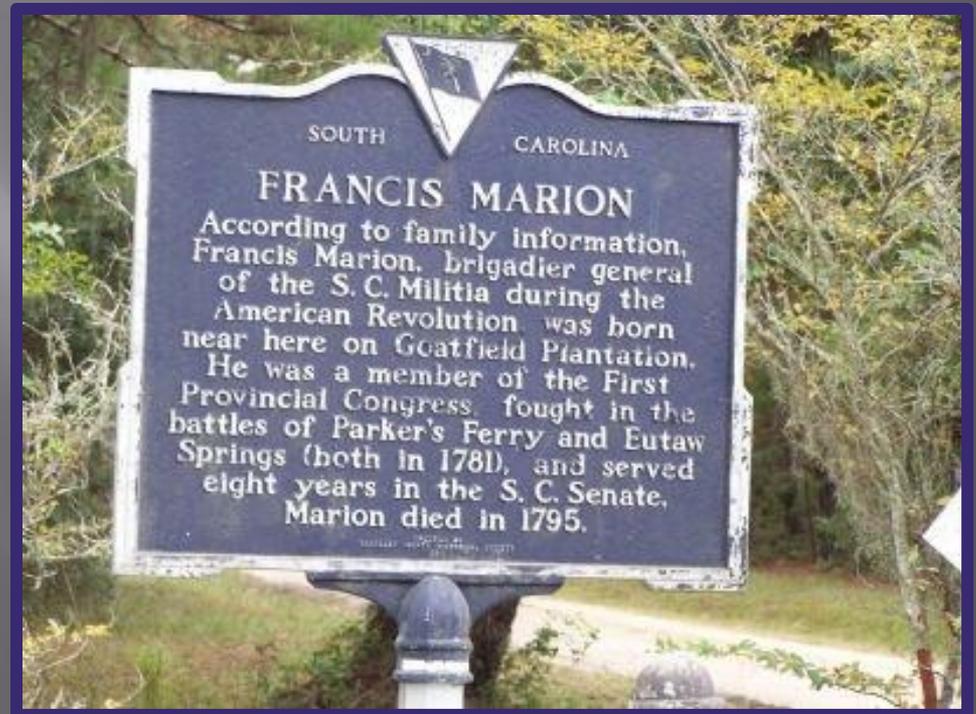


# FRANCIS MARION – SWAMP FOX

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# Francis Marion

Francis Marion was born in 1732 in Berkeley County, South Carolina. His family owned a plantation in Berkeley County, and Francis was the youngest of the children. At age 15, young Francis Marion joined a crew of sailors and sailed to the West Indies, but on the journey, Marion's ship wrecked and left him and a few others floating in a life raft for a week. Upon return home, Marion decided he would stay and farm his family's plantation.



# Off To War!

A few years later, the French and Indian War started and Francis Marion, at age 25, joined the militia to fight. He was quickly ranked Lieutenant Francis Marion. In the later years of the French and Indian War, Lieutenant Marion studied the ways that the Cherokee were ambushing them. The Indians were using the swamps!

Years later, during the Revolutionary War, General Marion formed his group of fighters and trained them to use the Cherokee's tactics to win their own battles.



**Author's Note:** Personally, discovering that the Swamp Fox used tactics that were once used on him, is amazing. Fascinating really!

# Pond Bluff

When the French and Indian War ended, Marion returned home and decided that he wanted a plantation of his own. In 1773 he purchased land near the Santee River. He called his plantation Pond Bluff, due to the fact that the land was located in a swamp bluff and his house was on the edge of a pond.

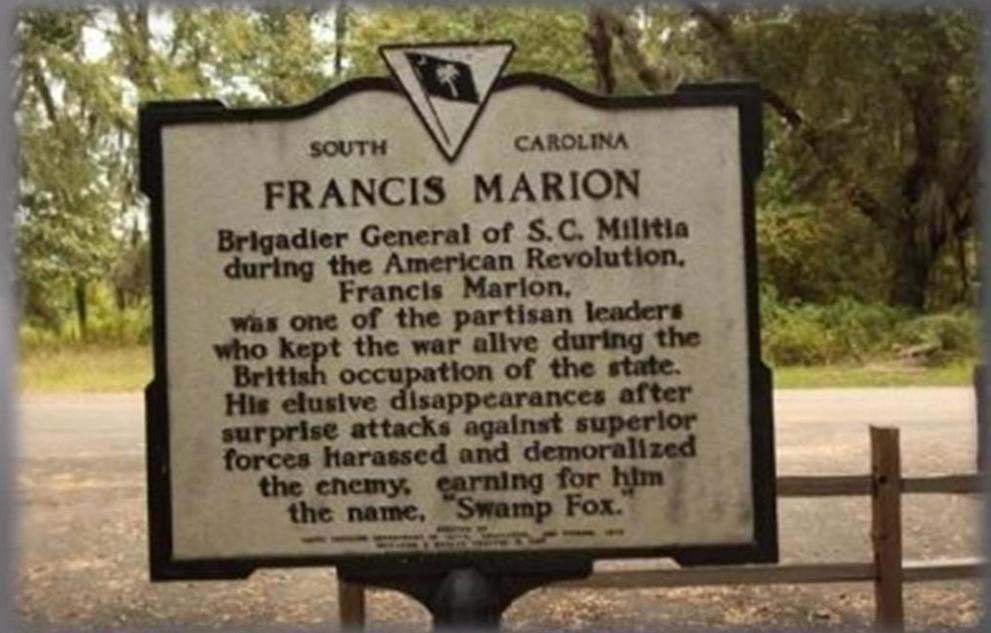
Marion farmed Pond Bluff during times of peace. He also owned slaves who worked on his plantation for him. Today, Pond Bluff is partially submerged under Lake Marion in South Carolina.



# The Swamp Fox

When the Revolutionary War started, Francis Marion became an officer in the Second South Carolina Regiment. Marion led a group of irregular fighters through the backlands of South Carolina. In the swamps, they attacked the British troops who were under the command of Lord Cornwallis.

Francis Marion soon earned the famous nickname the Swamp Fox. This was because he used the Cherokee fighting methods he had learned and attacked the British by using the swamps as cover. The British officer, Colonel Tarleton, stated, "As for this *danged* old fox, the Devil himself could not catch him!"



Author's Note: Colonel Tarleton's quote was altered slightly to avoid cursing.

# Fighting Tactics

The Swamp Fox was extremely famous for his fighting tactics. He and his group of irregulars would lead the British troops into an ambush. This tactic worked very well for the Swamp Fox.



Francis Marion and his men often crossed the Pedee and vanished into the swamps to avoid the British, as depicted in this engraving after William Ranney. (Courtesy The Anna S.R. Brown Collection, Brown University Library.)

Marion kept his troops in the swamps and backlands of South Carolina. This territory worked best to conceal them and give them the element of surprise. Using the land and nature this way, they were almost always able to defeat the British troops.

# Group Of Irregulars

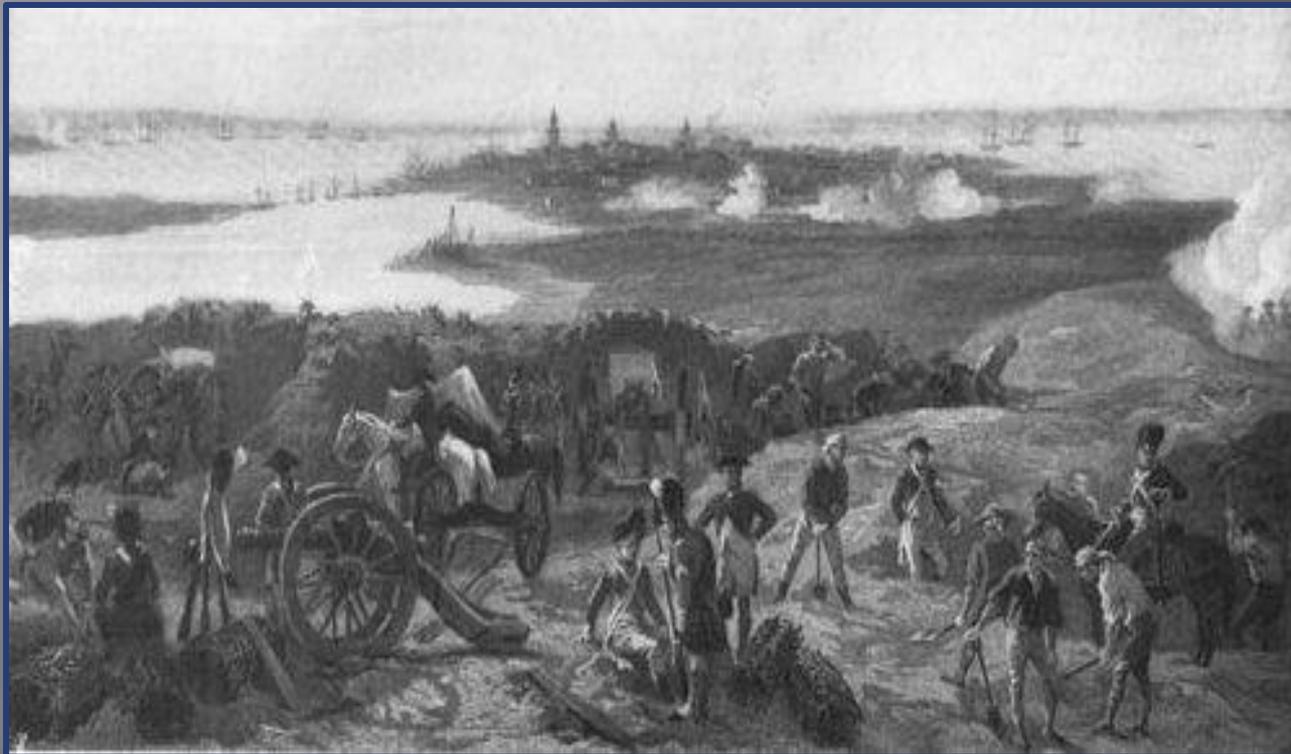
The Swamp Fox was also very well known for his fighting force. The men who fought alongside him were not exactly the “usual” type of fighters. They were made up of irregulars, freed blacks, slaves, and friendly Indians.

Marion’s group was the only organized fighting force for a period of time during the Revolutionary War and is believed to be the first fighting force to have non-whites join their ranks. Despite the mix of people, the group was vicious and dangerous to the British because they worked as one and they all believed passionately in their cause. The irregulars were excellent under the command of Francis Marion, and they are one of the major reasons the Americans won the war.



# The Fall of Charleston (and a broken ankle)

During a tea party in Charleston, South Carolina in 1780, Francis Marion suffered a broken ankle. This was due to the fact that Marion jumped out of the window of a second story building, to avoid a tea party of Loyalists. He broke his ankle then left Charleston just in time. A few days later, Charleston fell to General Henry Clinton and his 10,000 British troops.



# Stalling



After the fall of Charleston, George Washington appointed General Greene to take over Southern administration. While they were waiting for General Greene to make it down South, General Marion decided he had to stall the British troops. Marion and his swamp fighters constantly ambushed and attacked British troops and soldiers, buying General Greene more time to arrive.

# “Choking” the British

One of the Swamp Fox’s favorite ways to harass the British was to use the “choking points.” These points were along the Santee River and the Black River. Being the two main supply lines for the British, these rivers were perfect for the patriots to attack and choke off the British supply line.

British troops found this highly annoying, to say the least. While the British were distracted with defending their supply lines, General Greene was able to gain safe passage to the South.



# End of the War



1783 finally marked the end of the Revolutionary War. The British fell to the Patriots at Yorktown, Virginia, and surrendered their arms. General Marion was not present to see the surrender, but he is one of the major reasons the Patriots won the war. Marion, The Swamp Fox, did many little things to help the war effort, but in the end they all added up to one huge distraction for the British. Without Francis Marion, we might not have won this vital war for independence from England.

# Post Revolutionary War



GENERAL FRANCIS MARION.

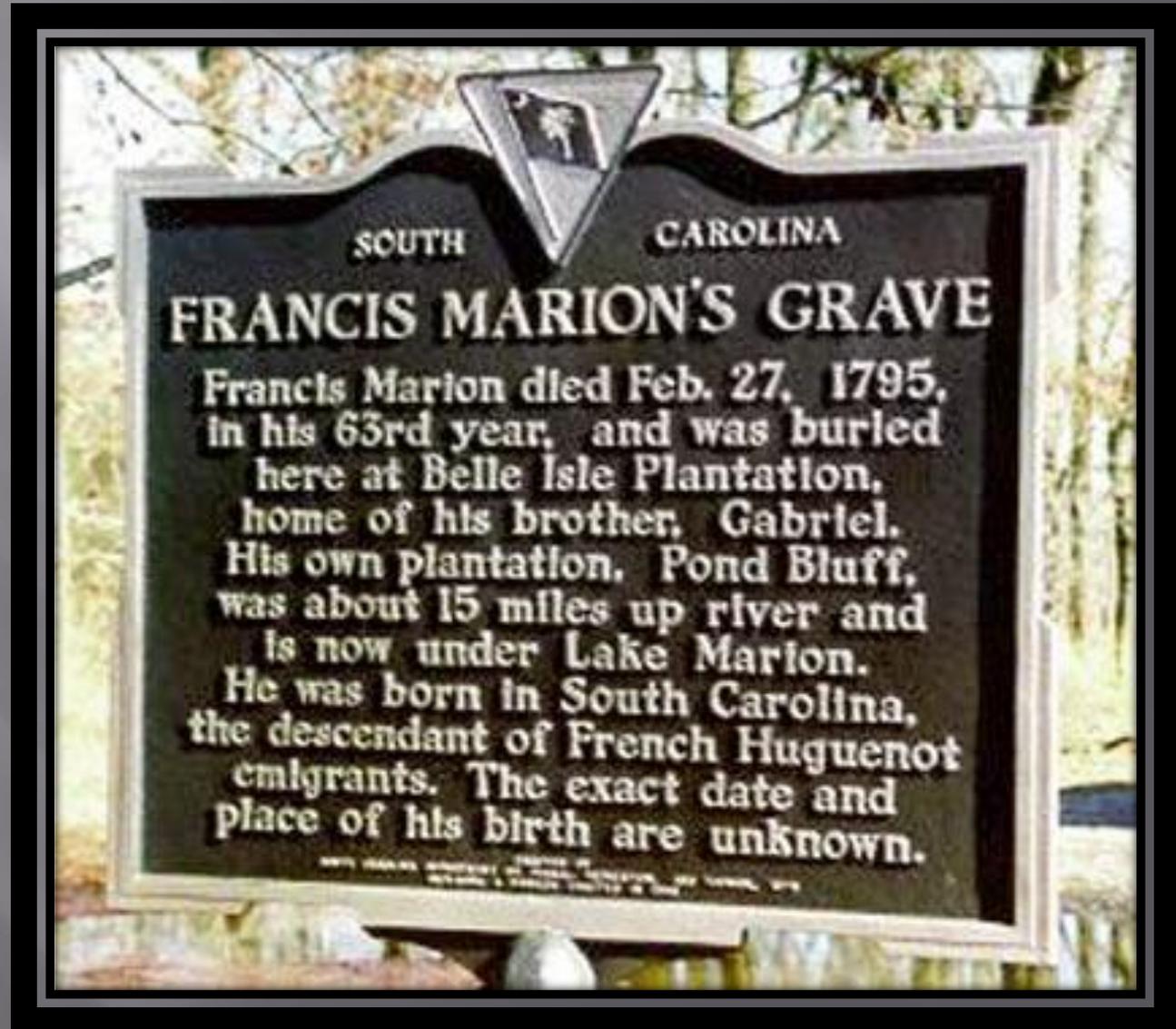
After the war was fully over, Francis Marion left fighting and returned to farming. The war had left many plantation homes destroyed and Marion's was one of those left damaged.

Marion served in the South Carolina State Senate after the war was over. Deciding too, that the war had taken a huge portion of his life, Francis Marion finally married at the age of 56 and began his post-war life, settling down to farm.

# Death of the Swamp Fox

On February 27, 1795, the great American legend, Francis Marion, died at his plantation, Pond Bluff. The Swamp Fox had left his mark on our nation in a big way while he lived.

He helped win America's most important war, defeated so many British troops, and just five years before he died, Marion also helped my state write the South Carolina State Constitution.



# Author's Notes:

I live in South Carolina. As a matter of fact, I live fairly close to Lake Marion and have been there to see it myself. I have also hiked through Francis Marion National Forest. It is a beautiful area and I would highly recommend visiting it, if you ever get the chance.

I decided to do my report on Francis Marion because all my life I have studied the Swamp Fox and have loved to hear the stories told about his victories. Personally, he is someone I can honestly say I look up to. He is a truly awe-inspiring individual and I hope all of you who read and see my report can understand what an amazing person he was. I also want you to understand how large of an impact he had upon American history, and America today.

Sincerely,  
SM



Sunset over  
Lake Marion,  
South Carolina