The British called the backcountry "The Hornet’s Nest."

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Standing with your back to Brier Creek, you can suppose the Patriots during the Battle of the Riceboats. By 1778, the American Revolution had reached a stalemate, and the British high command initiated a “Southern Strategy” with an invasion of Savannah to restore British rule in Georgia and set the stage for capture of other southern colonies.

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1. **Fight at Van(n)'s Creek**

Encouraged by the capture of Savannah, the British commissioned Loyalist Col. Boyd to raise militia in the Carolina and Georgia backcountry. With over 700 Loyalists, Boyd attempted to cross the Savannah River at Cherokee Ford where the Patriots thwarted his approach. He moved five miles upstream and on February 11, 1779, crossed at Van(n)'s Creek in present day Elbert County, but severe Patriot opposition weakened his forces by about 100 men, many of whom deserted and returned to the Carolinas. See Cherokee Ford - Van(n)'s Creek Monument, located at Richard B. Russell State Park, Elbert County, GA.

2. **Battle of Kettle Creek**

Outnumbered more than two to one, Patriot Colonels Andrew Pickens, John Dooly and Elijah Clarke attacked when Loyalist Col. Boyd halted his troops for breakfast in a flat area between a steep hill and Kettle Creek. Boyd led about 100 men up the hill and was mortally wounded. The Loyalists were routed with 70 killed or wounded, and 150 captured. The Battle of Kettle Creek on February 14, 1779, was one of Georgia's most memorable victories during the American Revolution. Visit Kettle Creek Battleground, located 10 miles from Washington off SR 64 in Wilkes County, and see artifacts at the Washington Historical Museum, Washington, GA.

3. **Heroes of the Hornet's Nest**

Two of Georgia's heroes – Elijah Clarke and John Dooly – are buried close to where they fought the British, Loyalists and Indians. In addition to the Georgia battles, Clarke and other leaders of the Georgia Militia took decisive roles in the fighting in the Carolinas from May 1780, through September 1781, while Georgia witnessed a relative lull in the war. See log cabins, furnished and equipped like a Georgia backcountry home at the Elijah Clark State Park, Lincoln County, GA.

4. **Augusta – Two Battles**

Augusta, site of two major battles, was Georgia's Capital after the capture of Savannah. First Siege of Augusta – On September 14, 1780, Lt.Col. Elijah Clarke led an attack on Loyalist Lt. Col. Thomas Brown's garrison for four days until a British Maj. Gen. Nathanael Greene ordered Gen. Andrew Pickens and alist Lt.Col. Thomas Brown to evacuate Augusta to retaliate, but were out-gunned and out-maneuvered. As they tried to gain an advantage by moving down river their ships grounded, were abandoned, and captured. See Georgia Navy Historical Marker, located at Fort Frederica National Monument, St. Simons Island, GA.

5. **Battle of Brier Creek**

After capturing Savannah, British Lt.Col. Archibald Campbell proceeded to Augusta to recruit Loyalists, and then retreated 10 miles from Washington off SR 64 in Wilkes County, and see artifacts at the Washington Historical Museum, Washington, GA.

6. **Savannah – Three Battles**

**Battle of the Riceboats** – During March 2-7, 1776, British warships took possession of several rice-laden merchant ships, leading to a heavy exchange of cannon fire with the Patriots. **Capture of Savannah** – By 1778, the British initiated a “Southern Strategy,” Lt.Col. Archibald Campbell's 3,500 troops landed below Savannah at Brevton's Hill, brushed away token resistance, and on December 29, 1778, routed the Patriots who lost 83 men killed and 483 captured. Royal Governor James Wright returned to Savannah and revived the Colonial Parishes. **Siege of Savannah** – In September 1779, French Count Henri d'Estaing disembarked 4,000 troops at Beaulieu on the Vernon River, and Continental Maj. Gen. Benjamin Lincoln arrived from Charleston Town with 1,500 men. The Franco-American attack on the Spring Hill redoubt began early on October 9, 1779. British artillery and musketry ripped the attackers, and Scottish bagpipes responded to the French battle cry, “Vive le roi!” British, Loyalist, and Hessian defenders cut down those who reached the parapet and planted their colors. The Allied attack failed with 1,094 killed, of whom 650 were French. Sir Henry Clinton stated that the British victory at Savannah was “the greatest event that has happened in the whole war.” Visit Battlefield Memorial Park, located at Louisville Road and M.L. King, Jr. Boulevard, Savannah, GA.

7. **Sunbury, Fort Morris & Midway**


8. **Frederica Naval Action**

During 1776 and 1777, four heavily-armed row galleys were constructed in Savannah for the Georgia Navy, all underwritten by the Continental Congress. In the Frederica River at St. Simons Island, beginning at dawn on April 19, 1778, Georgia galleys Lee, Washington, and Bulloch, commanded by Continental Col. Samuel Elbert, attacked HM brigantine Hinchinbrook, armed sloop Rebecca, and a brig. The British attempted to retaliate, but were out-gunned and out-maneuvered. As they tried to gain an advantage by moving down river their ships grounded, were abandoned, and captured. See Georgia Navy Historical Marker, located at Fort Frederica National Monument, St. Simons Island, GA.

Prepared by Bill Rameau, Marshes of Glynn Chapter, Georgia Society Sons of the American Revolution

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