



After the fall of Charleston, Cornwallis became Britain's chief commander in the South. He planned to secure the area without much resistance.

On the 16th of August, 1780, he won at Camden. Next came the invasion of North Carolina - except now he faced serious resistance from patriot forces. After three weeks in Charlotte, he pulled out his men and wintered in South Carolina where Francis Marion and his brigade frequently harassed his troops.

Hoping for a major conflict, which he could use to win the war, Cornwallis was forced to wait until 1781.

Learning that the American army in the South was split in half, Cornwallis planned an operation to cripple the rebel forces. Instead, Colonel Banastre Tarleton lost the Battle of Cowpens where he was defeated by General Daniel Morgan.

By the time the patriots were reunited under Nathanael Greene, Cornwallis' men were exhausted. Even though he decided to leave behind items which were slowing down marching progress (like supply wagons), Cornwallis was unable to reach Greene.

Although he had come close - about a mile separated the two armies - another engagement would not happen until the Battle of Guilford Courthouse. Cornwallis won there, but at a great cost. The victory actually pushed the British out of South Carolina, and Cornwallis had to leave his wounded behind as the rest of the troops retreated to Wilmington.

He would soon be effectively trapped on land (where Lafayette, Baron Friedrich von Steuben and General Anthony Wayne had joined forces) and by sea (where the French, under Count de Grasse, were in control). In his own country, Cornwallis would soon be known as "the man who lost America."

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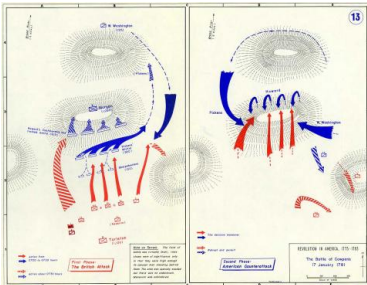
Banastre Tarleton (1754-1833) - Portrait and Bio

Images, U.S. National Archives.

Information, National Park Service - *The American Revolution* web site.

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Cowpens - Annotated Battle Map from USMA

Annotated map, courtesy United States Military Academy.

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Lord Charles Cornwallis - Britain's Southern Commander

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