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During the Revolutionary War the bad feelings between the Lowcountry and Upcountry folks only continued to worsen. The majority of the people in the Lowcountry were patriots whereas the people in the Upcountry were loyalists. Plantations, roads and commerce—throughout the state—had been damaged by the War and life was forever changed.

South Carolinians had many problems they had to solve, and the first one involved rebuilding their state.

The first change was that the backcountry was now called the Upcountry. This was the northwestern part of the state and it had been the area where the Cherokees had called home.

The first white settlers to the Upcountry had been traders and woodsmen (because the terrain was rugged and

not well traveled). Because of this, the Lowcountry plantation farmers—and others—viewed the Upcountry as being backward and uncivilized. The Lowcountry had been settled first and, due to the plantation system, many owners had become successful and extremely wealthy due to rice and indigo.

The Lowcountry was mainly Charleston and the surrounding area along the Atlantic coast.

The differences in the economy between the areas was the main focus of the tension. The Upcountry farmers were mostly poorer than the plantation owners in the Charleston area. Most people in the Upcountry worked their own farms, or small plantations, with little-to-no help from slaves. Few in the Upcountry could afford to own slaves, unlike the plantation owners in the Lowcountry whose economic and social status was highly influenced by how many slaves they owned.

After the Revolutionary War, however, both sides were suffering. Fighting had taken a heavy toll on the state due to the numerous battles which were fought there. British soldiers had helped themselves to livestock, slaves and goods. Plantation homes had been taken or destroyed by the British. As a result, the economy was very slow to improve.

People in the Lowcountry had benefited greatly from the mercantile system from Great Britain because they were given subsidies and protected markets. Since South Carolina was now free of Great Britain, the mother country no longer protected the crops from South Carolina.

To make matters worse, the planters also owed vast amounts of money to Great Britain which they no longer had the ability to repay. Increasing the problems for the planters, federal and state governments were unable to pay for the goods they had commandeered from South Carolina's citizens during the war.

Whether it was due to the many battles, or due to the fighting, the land was not cultivated well. The end result was poor crops until the 1880s when cotton became "King."

The Lowcountry people believed (and acted) as though they were superior to the Upcountry folks in every way. There was a larger white population living in the Upcountry due to all the slaves in the Lowcountry. Only white men who owned property could vote, at first, and later only white men over twenty-one could vote.

Political power resided in the Lowcountry:

- The Lowcountry had more representatives than the Upcountry;
- The capital of the state was in Charleston;
- The main source of trade and commerce was located in Charleston;
- All legal business took place in Charleston.

All of these factors meant that the elite in Charleston wielded major influence on the state and national government. The Upcountry people did not like having to travel to Charleston to conduct their business or to present their legislative issues there.

In 1785, the state created counties and county courts were established. The General Assembly decided to chose a new capital that would be closer to the Low and Upcountry people. The choice was a place in the Midlands that was located near the Congaree River.

This wide river flowed down to the Santee-Cooper Rivers and allowed traffic to flow into the port of Charleston. Columbia, the new capital, was very small at first as it only had two main streets. The names of those two main streets were Assembly and Senate Street. Later streets were named after Revolutionary War heroes.

Columbia needed a State House, so one was built out of wood. For over seventy years, the representatives met in this state house. The moving of the capital from Charleston helped ease some of the tensions between the two sides but, since the Lowcountry still had more representatives, things were not-yet totally equal.

The main reason that the Lowcountry resisted giving the Upcountry more representation was because they feared the Upcountry would not support slavery (since people in the Upcountry did not own many slaves). Then the cotton gin was invented by a man named Eli Whitney, and that changed things.

A shorter-fiber cotton was able to be grown as a result of the cotton gin. The long fiber cotton had to be grown close to the sea and the short fiber cotton made collecting all the seeds from the boll very difficult. The cotton gin changed the need for slave labor to collect all the seeds.

Cotton became a cash crop for the Upcountry and, suddenly, there was a large need for slaves.

As the Upcountry had more slaves, the Lowcountry began to share power in the government. In the Compromise of 1808, the legislature agreed to reappointment. Now representation of white men and taxable property (including slaves) became more balanced between the Upcountry and Lowcountry.

The area that had the largest number of slaves continued to have the most political power, but both areas had their share of slaves and power.

Footnotes:

1) jewelgummybears, Tensions of Upcountry and Lowcountry of SC after Revolution War, Quizlet, Jul/19/2015, Jul/19/2015,

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2) Encyclopedia Britannica, Congaree River, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc, Jul/19/2015, Jul/19/2015,
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3) City of Columbia, History of Columbia A Brief History of Columbia, CITY OF COLUMBIA, Jul/19/2015,
Jul/19/2015, <https://www.columbiasc.net/about-columbia>

4) History.com Staff, Cotton Gin and Eli Whitney, History.com, Jul/19/2015, Jul/19/2015,
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5) Harrison, Valerie; Jones, Cathy; plus others, Grade 8 Support Document, SC Dept of Ed, Jul/19/2015,
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See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/The-Development-of-the-New-National-Government-South-Carolina-History>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/The-Development-of-the-New-National-Government-South-Carolina-History>