

Fort Rutledge

The Battle of Esseneca Town



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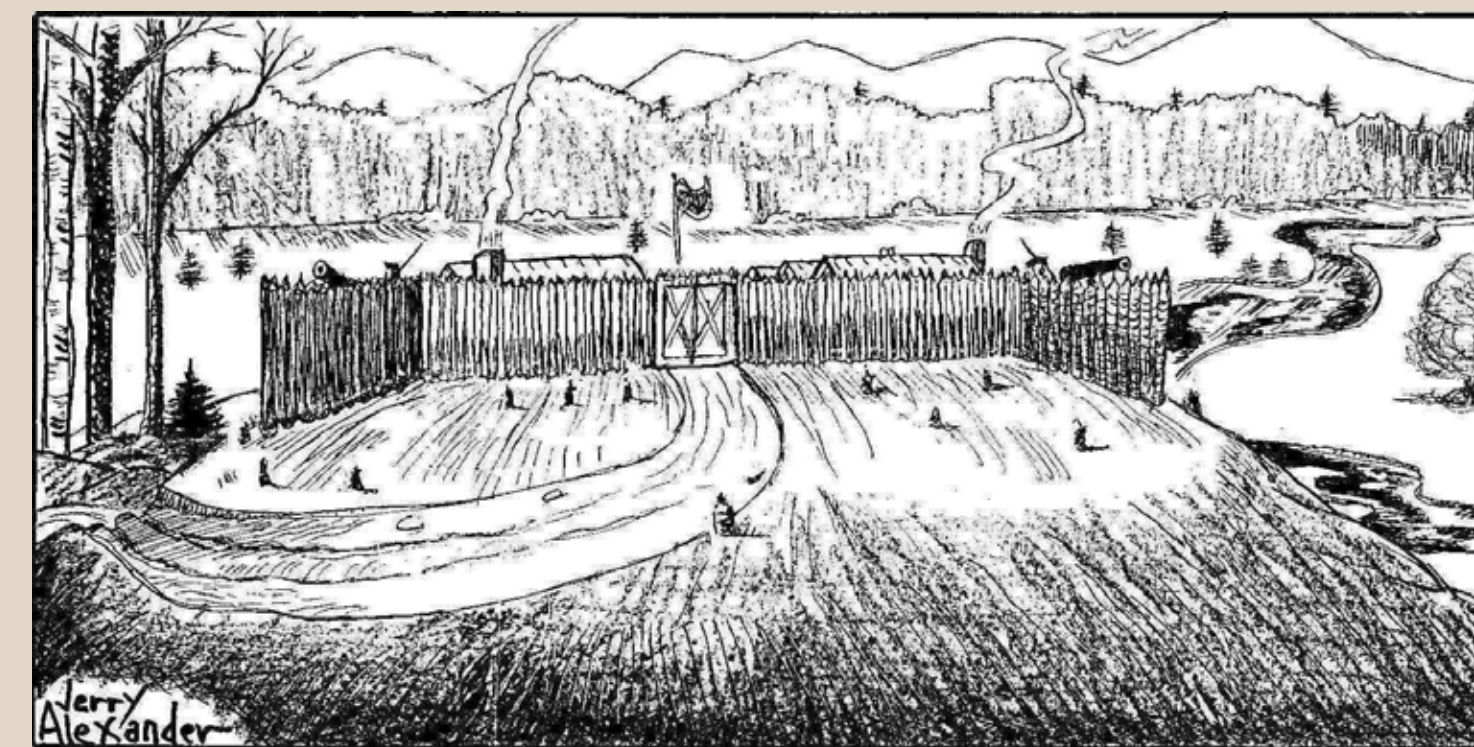


Esseneca Town, located along the Seneca River, was a Cherokee "Lower Town." On August 1, 1776, Major Andrew Williamson's South Carolina militia, on a raid against these towns, was ambushed by Loyalists and Cherokees. In that fateful conflict, Francis Salvador became the first Jewish American to be killed in the Revolution.



The above diorama depicts the Battle of Esseneca Town where then Captain, future General, Andrew Pickens was among the soldiers.

In September 1776, soon after the Battle of Tamassee in present day Oconee County, Williamson returned to build a log fort. Williamson at Esseneca encamped with a force of 2,300 and left 300 men garrisoned at Fort Rutledge during his three month campaign against the Cherokee nation.



Erected in 1776 by Patriot Troops, Fort Rutledge was named for John Rutledge, President of the colony of South Carolina.

In 1780, Fort Rutledge and its 300 men surrendered to Loyalists. In 1908 the concrete block monument was built at the request of the Daughters of the American Revolution by Trustees of Clemson Agriculture College following historical research and archaeology. Portions of the site were later flooded by the construction of Lake Hartwell.

The exact location of Fort Rutledge is unknown. Some say it is underwater while others maintain that it is where Tillman Hall now stands on Clemson University Campus.



The replication of the fort and the placement of the marker by the Daughters of the American Revolution established this site as a destination for military enthusiasts.



The marker, placed by the Daughters of the American Revolution in 1908, is maintained today by Clemson Historic Properties and looks similar to a rook on a chess set.