Through the Eyes of a Soldier

During the battle much of the fighting occurred in the forest. The landscape and topography became an integral part of the battle tactics and how each side approached the battle.

At that time, portions of the forest would have been very dense with low visibility. The soldiers had to come within feet of each other in order to get an accurate shot without hitting any trees.

The British were accustomed to engaging their enemies with straight lines, but because the forest was so dense they had to abandon this tactic at times to move around trees and through the forest. Both armies had cannons that they had to drag through the woods, across creeks, and up hills. The trees made battle more difficult for everyone because they had to fight around them.

This drawing represents what the soldiers had to carry through the trees. Maneuvering with all of their equipment would be difficult through the thick woods.

A Threat to this History

Invasive plants can be a treat to the natural story around us. An invasive species becomes a problem when it pushes native vegetation out of its habitat, preventing growth and re-seeding of native plants. An invasive plant is typically a non-native or "exotic" species that was brought to the area from a foreign place.

During the 18th and 19th centuries, many plants were brought to North America for their beauty or for potential agricultural use. Even if the species have been here for many years, they may still pose threats to native plants. Today many plants that are used to make our lawns more elaborate are foreign to this area. These plants may then compete for space and resources with native plant options.

Our mission within the park today is to return the vegetation in the forests back to their state at the time of the American Revolution. In order to protect the species around us, at Guilford Courthouse, we conduct projects and studies to eliminate invasive plants to restore our local environment.

**Guilford Courthouse
National Military Park**

Main Visitor Center
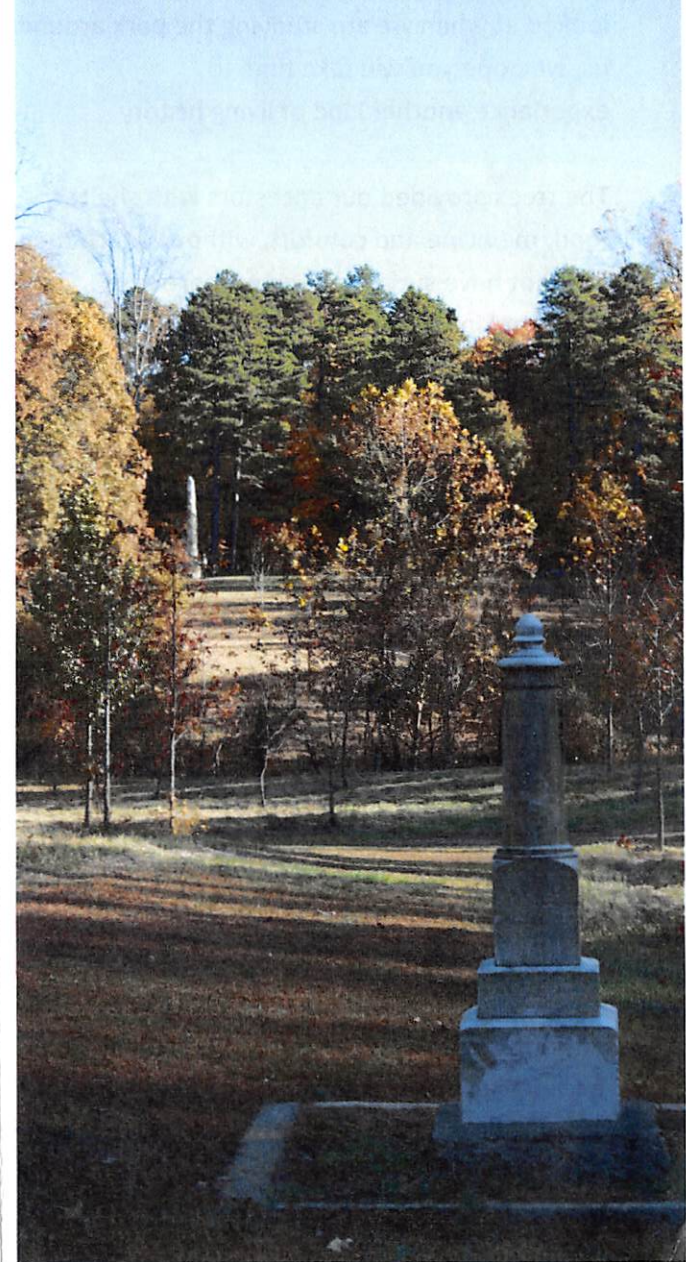2332 New Garden Road
Greensboro, NC 27410

Phone: (336) 288-1776

Another Kind of Living History

The Backdrop of the Battle

Living history is a term we use to describe how we show visitors what it was like to experience the time of the Battle of Guilford Courthouse. The natural history of the area is not always looked at when we are studying the park around us, we hope you will take time to experience another kind of living history.
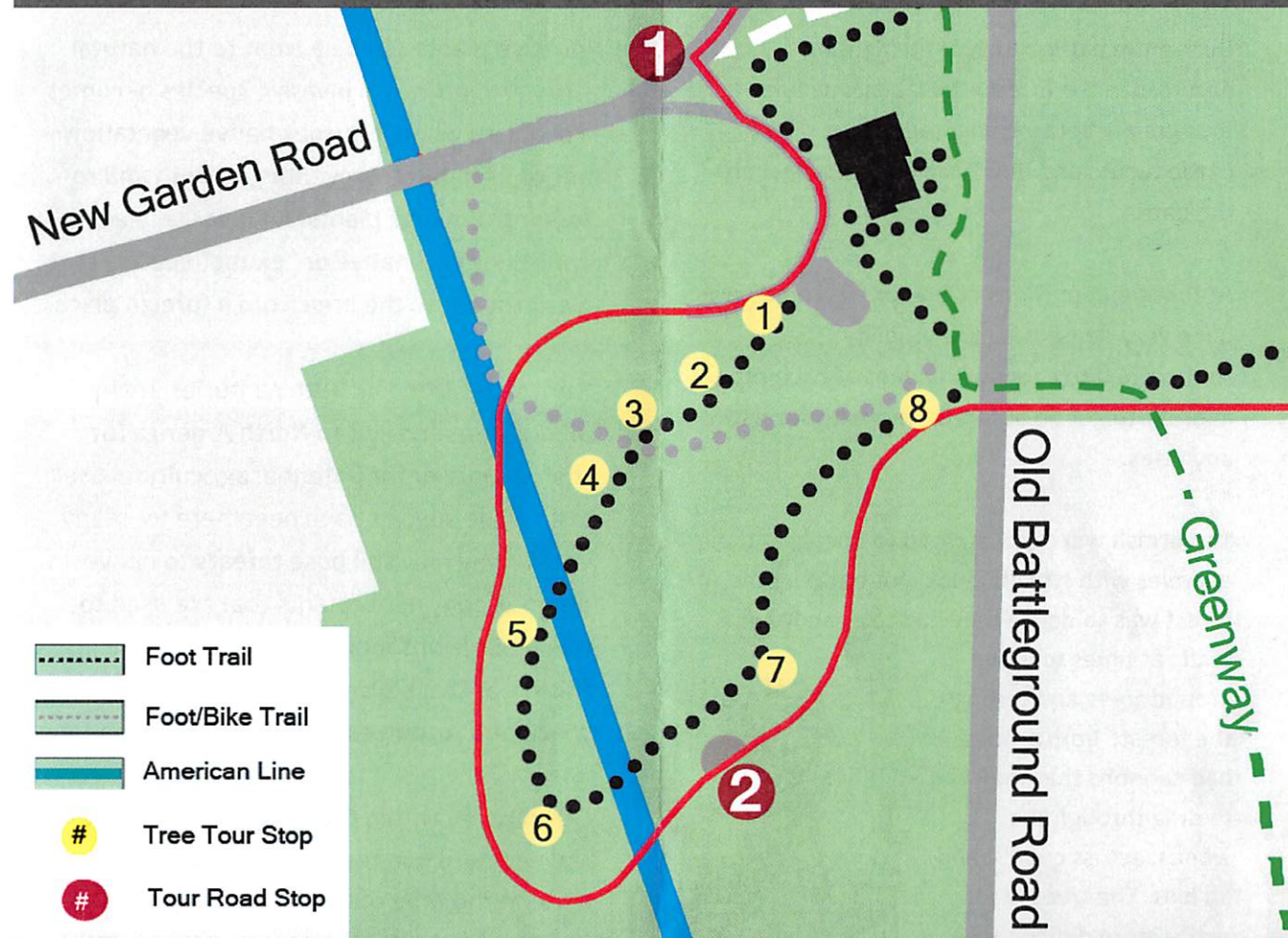
The trees provided our ancestors with shelter, food, medicine and comfort, without which they may not have survived. The properties of different kinds of wood was common knowledge. For example, our ancestors knew that pignut hickory made good wagon wheels. They knew that both black walnut and pine made good furniture, but that pine was a poor choice for a cooking fire since it burns to ashes instead of the coals needed to bake bread.

From our ancestors, we also learned to enjoy a refreshing drink called root beer, originally made from the roots of the sassafras tree. Because Sassasfras root is now known to have harmful properties, it is no longer used in root beer, but we still have similar recipes.

For our ancestors, the forest seemed endless and even frightening. Today we know that, without proper management, this valuable resource and all that it provides can be lost.

Map of Tree Tags in the Park

Foot Trail

Foot/Bike Trail

American Line

\#   Tree Tour Stop

\#   Tour Road Stop

Exploring Trees in the Park

From the Visitor Center parking lot you will see a side walk and trail leading into the woods, just to the left of the opening of the Tour Road.

Follow the paved trail walking in a loop back to the Visitor Center parking lot.

Signs along the way will tell you a bit about each type of tree.

Tree Tour Stops:

1) Pignut Hickory

2) Bur Oak

3) Sassafras

4) Sweet Gum

5) Northern Red Oak

6) Yellow Poplar

7) Sugar Maple

8) White Oak