

# *Savannah Under Fire, 1779:*

## IDENTIFYING SAVANNAH'S REVOLUTIONARY WAR BATTLEFIELD

**A**fter lying dormant for 229 years, parts of the American Revolutionary War sprang back to life in 2008. Coastal Heritage Society archaeologists, supported by the National Park Service's American Battlefield Protection Program, revealed Revolutionary War archaeological sites throughout downtown Savannah.



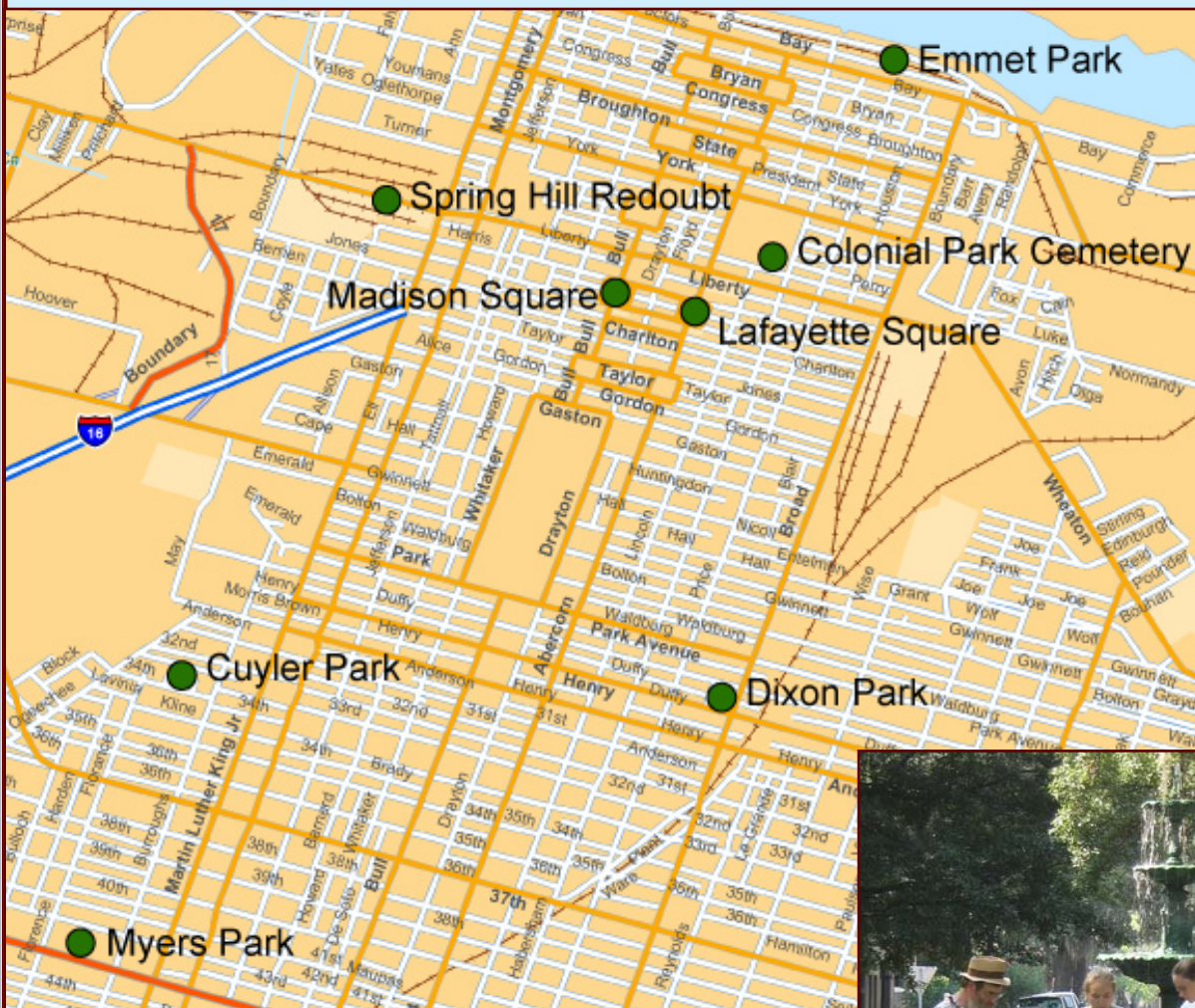
Left: Dan Battle and Laura Seifert “digging” their jobs in Madison Square.



Right: Dan Elliott (in hat) explains the project to curious visitors. More than a thousand tourists and local citizens stopped by our Madison Square excavations.

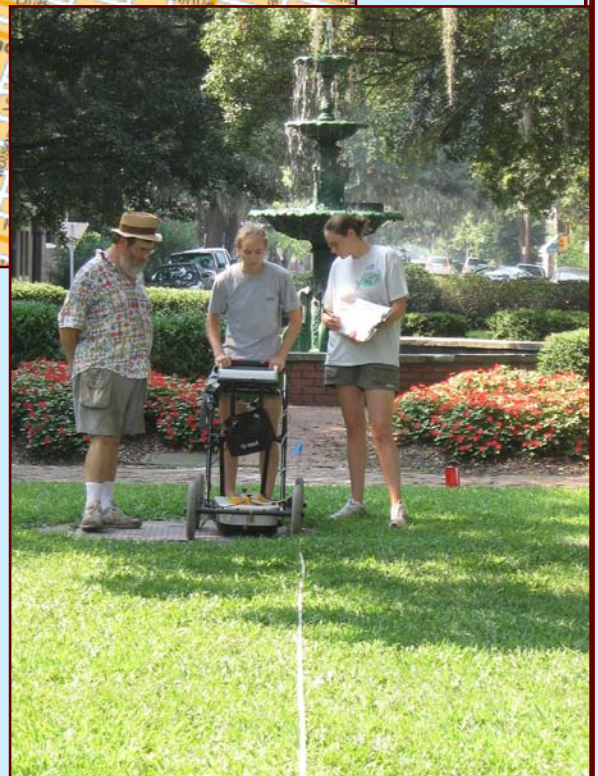
## We used a targeted, “surgical,” methodology for finding archaeology sites.

- In the lab, archaeologists used ArcView GIS, a computerized mapping program, to overlay historic and modern maps.
- Armed with maps showing areas related to the 1779 Battle of Savannah, archaeologists used ground penetrating radar to pinpoint specific dig sites.
- Lastly, we dug small test holes in six parks to determine if the historic resources were intact.



Above: Locations we examined for archaeology sites.

Right: Conducting a ground penetrating radar survey in Lafayette Square.



## Our Discoveries:

- **Madison Square:** We found and excavated a 5 1/2 foot deep ditch made by the British in 1779 and defended by them in the Battle of Savannah. American troops filled the ditch in 1782.
- **Lafayette Square:** We located evidence of the brick barracks the British dismantled in 1779. The area between Madison and Lafayette Squares was the location of the feint during the 1779 battle.
- **Emmet Park:** We uncovered a deep feature that may be related to the gun battery or to Fort Prevost.



Top: Gun cock from a British Brown Bess musket that archaeologists uncovered in the ditch the British dug in 1779.

Upper left: The most important part of fieldwork is documenting what we find.



Bottom left: While Dan and Laura dig for artifacts and features, Mike uses a screen to sift artifacts from the dirt. The screen allows us to trap even the smallest artifacts. Features are clues in the soil, such as burnt soil from a hearth.

**T**hrough this project, we have identified a strong starting place for additional research and protection of these highly significant and well-preserved resources.

We would like to thank everyone who supported the project, including the enthusiastic tourists and citizens of Savannah who visited the site and were as excited about this project as we are.



Top: Students from St. Vincent's Academy see history uncovered right before their eyes in Lafayette Square, for a better understanding of Savannah's role in the American Revolution.

Right: Locals chat with Laura about our project.



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