



Beaufort County 250 Committee
Revolutionary Era Biographies

*Captain Felix Warley
Dragoon Commander
and
Guerilla Fighter*

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Beaufort County 250 Committee Biographical Sketch
Captain Felix Warley
Dragoon Commander and Guerilla Fighter

Felix Warley entered the service in 1775, along with brothers James and Joseph, initially serving under Captain John Purvis in a company of Rangers. His company was involved in the defense of the eastern end of Sullivans Island in June 1776 when the British attempted an amphibious assault during the naval attack on the fort, which was later named Fort Moultrie.

After the Patriot victory at Sullivans Island, Warley's company engaged in the Battle of Savannah in December 1778 and later in numerous skirmishes in southern Beaufort District. He later was promoted to captain himself, commanding one of nine companies in the 3rd South Carolina Regiment under Colonel William Thomson.

In March 1780, he led a company of Light Horse cavalry in a skirmish against British foragers in the Battle of McPherson's Plantation. Warley's dragoons had been alerted to the British Regulars in the area, and riding toward the McPherson house, they were surprised by the redcoats in loose formation attacking from off road. The British prevailed after a brief disorganized fight, and Warley led his men to the defenses of Charleston.

Warley's regiment was involved in the Siege of Charleston helping to guard a flank of the American line when they were surrounded by British forces approaching from their rear. The siege culminated in the city's surrender to British forces on May 12, 1780, and Warley and his men were taken as prisoners of war during this engagement.

Following his parole Warley continued to serve in various capacities and his name appears on the muster rolls of several regiments. In May 1781, Warley's cavalry company served under Col Thomas Sumter and was involved In the Defense of Orangeburg, where 89 British soldiers were captured.

Warley's regiment was also involved in the July 10-12,1781 cannon duel at Orangeburg between General Nathaniel Greene's forces and about 1,350 British soldiers under Colonels Lord Rawdon and Alexander Stewart. Due to the extreme heat, which had already created casualties among the British, Greene decided not to

attack and withdrew to the high hills of Santee, where they recovered and recuperated from the effects of heat and disease.

Warley served in the South Carolina Continental troops until March 1783, after which he was elected a state legislator and helped shape the early governance and development of the State of South Carolina.