



Beaufort County 250 Committee  
Revolutionary Era Biographies

*Notable Tories  
of Beaufort District*

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*By  
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## NOTABLE TORIES OF BEAUFORT DISTRICT

The partisan enmity in Beaufort District was especially deep due to the geographic isolation presented by fingers of land and islands separated by water on at least three sides and on which residents of like political leanings tended to cluster. Additional bitterness came from the extremes of loyalty represented in the district by the long-standing resident members of some of the first families of Carolina, who tended to be fiercely loyal to the Crown, and the newly-arrived immigrant farmers, ranchers and artisans from several European nations, who had no particular allegiance to England and whose new country offered limitless opportunity.

Partisan action was especially frequent and violent along the borders of Beaufort District as well as in the vicinity of the Town of Beaufort itself, and it was organized along the lines of Loyalist and Patriot militia units from different areas of the overall territory. Each side had its leaders, and some were more notorious than others, and this paper will focus on four of the most active and most noteworthy Loyalist or Tory leaders of Beaufort District during the war years.

### (Bloody) Thomas Brown

In the turbulent era of the American Revolutionary War, few figures embody the raw, brutal conflict of divided allegiances like Thomas Brown. Born in 1750 in Whitby, Yorkshire, England, Brown arrived in Savannah with dreams of prosperity and peace. His journey, however, veered swiftly into violence, vengeance, and notoriety, placing him at the heart of one of the most bitterly contested regions of the war – Georgia and Lower South Carolina.

At the age of 24, Brown ventured to Georgia, determined to establish himself as a gentleman planter. Backed by substantial family funds, he purchased 5,600 acres of land and founded Brownsborough near Augusta. His enterprise began to grow and attracted the attention of partisan militant groups starting to form. On August 2, 1775, a mob of over 130 Sons of Liberty stormed his settlement, demanding he pledge allegiance to the Patriot cause. Brown's staunch loyalty to Britain and his refusal led to a savage attack: he was brutally burned, tarred and feathered, and partially scalped. The physical scars of this assault – including lasting head trauma and the loss of two toes – transformed him into one of the most resolute and vengeful Loyalist leaders in the South.

Driven by both trauma and conviction, Brown aligned himself with British authorities and sought refuge in East Florida. There, he began forging strategic relationships with Native American tribes, especially the Creek and Cherokee, whose support would become vital to the British campaign. By 1779, he had been appointed Superintendent of Indian Affairs and took command of a fierce Loyalist cavalry unit known as the King's Carolina Rangers. Under his leadership, the Rangers engaged in numerous confrontations, including the Siege of Savannah and the Battles of Augusta, raids and skirmishes along the Savannah River and into Beaufort District, where Brown gained a reputation for both tenacity and ruthlessness.

Accusations were made that he ordered summary executions of Patriot prisoners and encouraged brutal tactics. He steadfastly denied such claims, arguing he adhered to the codes of military conduct. Regardless of historical debate, his legacy was indelibly marked by his uncompromising approach and the visceral fear he inspired in his enemies.

Following the collapse of British control, Brown's life took yet another dramatic turn. Along with thousands of Loyalist exiles, he fled southward, ultimately landing in the Caribbean. The British government, recognizing his service, awarded him extensive land across North and Middle Caicos. There he established sugar and cotton plantations operated by hundreds of enslaved laborers. Brown later moved to Saint Vincent, where he oversaw the construction of the Black Point Tunnel, a bold infrastructure project designed to improve transport across his estate. He died in 1825, having never returned to the land where his Loyalist fervor had ignited a personal war.

### Andrew DeVeaux

Andrew Deveaux IV was born on April 30, 1758, in St. Helena's Parish in Beaufort, South Carolina, into a prominent and wealthy colonial family. His father, Andrew Deveaux III, owned vast estates across Prince William's Parish and Port Royal Island, commanding over 9,000 acres along with enslaved people and livestock. His mother, Catherine Barnwell, came from one of the Lowcountry's most influential families, further cementing young Andrew's place among the colonial elite. As revolutionary fervor spread across the American colonies, Beaufort became a hotbed of political tension. The elder Deveaux's Loyalist stance drew harassment and hostility from local Patriots, who viewed British allegiance as a betrayal. Despite initially joining the Continental Army at the age of seventeen, Andrew Jr. soon

reversed course to defend his family's position and properties. He formed a dedicated band of Loyalist partisans, disrupting Patriot activities and becoming a defiant—and sometimes ruthless—figure within his community.

By April 1779, Deveaux's faction was implicated in the destruction of the Prince William Parish church at Sheldon, a symbolic act meant to provoke and intimidate the revolutionary forces. That same year, he fought alongside British troops under Major General Augustine Prévost at the Siege of Savannah, a decisive British victory that deepened his reputation for boldness and loyalty to the Crown. Recognizing his potential, British high command—particularly Lord Cornwallis—tasked Deveaux with raising a Loyalist regiment known as the Royal Foresters. His rapid success led to his promotion to colonel, and he quickly demonstrated his aptitude for guerrilla-style warfare. His regiment was also given the use of two captured galleys by the Royal Navy, *HMS Adder* and *HMS Scourge*. He led ambushes and waterborne raids in the Sea Islands, patrolled against Patriot privateers, captured two American generals, and temporarily occupied Beaufort in March 1782. These actions underscored his strategic abilities and his personal commitment to the Loyalist cause, even as Patriot forces gained ground throughout the Southern theater.

With the British evacuation of Charleston in December 1782, Loyalist families, including Deveaux's, fled to St. Augustine, Florida, which remained under British control. His family's estates had been confiscated by the new Patriot government, and the young colonel found himself a refugee with a reputation for daring and resolve. In 1783, Deveaux launched what would become one of the final military actions of the Revolutionary War—the recapture of the Bahamas from Spanish control. Nassau had fallen to Spain the previous year, but despite peace negotiations already underway, Deveaux seized the opportunity to assert British strength and restore his own fortunes. Leading a small force of seventy men from Florida and recruiting an additional 170 volunteers from Harbour Island by aligning with his distant cousin, Captain William Lyford in the Bahamas, he confronted a Spanish garrison of 600 soldiers with just 150 muskets at his disposal.

Through a mix of deception, psychological warfare, and strategic bluffing—such as repeatedly ferrying the same men to different locations to simulate a larger force—Deveaux convinced the Spanish to surrender on April 17, 1783, without a single shot fired. The boldness of this mission cemented his legend and marked the last foreign occupation of Nassau. His victory earned him a vast land grant on Cat Island, where he built a mansion at Port Howe, and other lands throughout the Bahamas. Though now in ruins, that mansion still stands as a tribute to his exploits and legacy.

After his success in the Bahamas, Deveaux traveled to London and was awarded half-pay as a lieutenant colonel in the British Army. He eventually settled in Dutchess County, New York and though he frequently visited his land in the Bahamas, his primary residence remained in New York. About one month after the War of 1812 officially began, on July 11, 1812, Andrew Deveaux died after falling from a balcony and was buried in Upper Red Hook, New York.

### Phillip Martinangel Jr

Captain Philip Martinangel Jr. was born in 1747 on Daufuskie Island of Italian and English lineage, his parents having met in Beaufort in the early 1740's. His father, Phillippo Martinangele had emigrated to Charleston from England circa 1735. The elder Martinangele had been born in 1715 in Rome, Italy to the Lord Protector of Italy and had secretly converted to Protestantism as a teenager. Divulging his secret to his mother, she had him arrested and confined in their castle dungeon to await the arrival of the Inquisitioners. With his sister's help, he escaped on horseback and lived briefly with an aunt in France before emigrating to England, booking passage to America from Dover and arriving in the port of Charleston.

Martinangele Sr was granted a plot in Purysburg in 1835 and, after his marriage to Mary Foster, moved to Daufuskie in 1743 and became an indigo planter there before purchasing additional land on Hilton Head Island. By 1756, Martinangele was enrolled in the Euhaws Company of the Granville County Militia, and the following year he had moved to some new land on Port Royal Island, where he served on the Beaufort Petit Jury. Three years later he gave 50 Pounds Sterling to hire a school master to educate the poor children of Prince William Parish. He died in 1761, and following his death, his widow purchased 500 acres adjacent to their original parcel on Daufuskie and moved her family there.

Young Phillip Martinangel Jr, by now 29, lived on St Helena Island and was elected to the St Helena Safety Committee in 1776. For one reason or another, as happened on occasion with a number of Patriots in the early days of the war, Martinangel changed his allegiance, moved to Daufuskie with the rest of his family, and signed on with the Royal Militia unit there. Daufuskie Island was geographically isolated yet politically charged during the Revolution. Its location—between Savannah and Hilton Head—positioned it as a strategic, albeit discreet, base of operations for British influence. Becoming aligned with the British garrison in Savannah and establishing a combined British Regulars and Loyalist militia camp near the Martinangel land at Bloody Point, he rose to become Captain of the Daufuskie Militia by 1779.

The Daufuskie Royal Militia often joined forces with the May River Neck Loyalist Militia and participated in the Siege of Savannah as well as in missions along the Savannah River. One of their frequent targets for raiding was the Patriot stronghold of Hilton Head Island. One of the defining moments of Martinangel's wartime activity came on October 22, 1781, when he was involved in the ambush that led to the death of Charles Davant, a prominent Patriot leader on Hilton Head Island.

### Richard "Tory Dick" Pendarvis

Born into a prominent colonial family, Pendarvis was the eldest son of Josiah Pendarvis, owner of the Montpelier Plantation, a 640-acre tract nestled along the May River. A member of a family that could trace its ancestry in Carolina to the 1670's, Richard inherited not only land but a deep-rooted loyalty to the British Crown. In 1778 Josiah divided Montpelier, selling 200 acres to Richard, who built his home overlooking the May River. Two years later, he married Margaret Martinangele of Daufuskie Island, herself from a Loyalist family. This union further cemented Richard's allegiance to Britain, even as revolutionary fervor swept through the colonies.

As the British launched their "Southern Strategy," aiming to rally Loyalist support in the Carolinas and Georgia, Pendarvis emerged as a key ally. With Savannah falling in 1778 and Charleston in 1780, Loyalists like Pendarvis believed their cause was ascendant. He made little effort to conceal his sympathies, and Patriot patrols noted his correspondence with Loyalists in Georgia. By late 1780, Pendarvis had become the leader of a Tory militia operating along the May River.

One of the most infamous episodes involving Pendarvis occurred in December 1780, when he led a group of Tories to apprehend Captain James Doharty, a Patriot officer residing near Pinckney Island. Accounts of the encounter diverge sharply. The Loyalist version, published in the *Royal Georgia Gazette*, claimed Dougherty and his men fired first, killing one Tory and wounding another, prompting a retaliatory volley that killed Doharty. The Patriot narrative, however, painted a darker picture: Pendarvis, driven by personal animosity, orchestrated a murder. Doharty, warned of the impending attack, attempted an ambush with Captain Thomas Talbird and his nephews, James and William Leaycraft. But the Tories arrived early. Dougherty was shot and, while wounded, asked to shake hands with his attackers—only to be executed on the spot.

The violence didn't end there. The Tories entered Dougherty's home and found 14-year-old William Leaycraft. They tortured him, suspending him by a rope around his neck to extract information, but the boy refused to betray his companions, and the Tories, impressed by his courage, released him. Four months later, vengeance came swiftly. Captain James Leaycraft, now leading the Hilton Head Patriot militia known as the "Bloody Legion," returned to Pendarvis's plantation after hearing that Pendarvis was sailing to St Augustine for refuge. On April 13 or 19 (newspaper typeface unclear), 1781, they shot Pendarvis dead just yards from his home. According to family lore, initially intending to offer himself for capture so he could later be paroled and escape, when he realized his attackers' intent, Pendarvis turned to face the gang and declared, "Shoot and be damned!" before falling to Leaycraft's bullet. His lieutenant, William Patterson, was also killed when Leaycraft ran him through with his sword. The Legion then insulted Margaret Pendarvis and stole three horses and Richard's gun.

The aftermath of Pendarvis's death rippled through the community. His widow, Margaret, later married Captain William Mongin, a Patriot whose relatives had participated in the Bloody Legion. Ironically, Margaret's brother, Phillip Martinangele, a Tory captain, would later kill Patriot Charles Davant—an act that prompted another retaliatory strike by the Legion. Richard Pendarvis' legacy is one of contradiction. To Loyalists, he was a steadfast defender of the Crown; to Patriots, a traitor and murderer. His death marked a turning point in the localized violence that plagued the Beaufort District, where neighbors and even family members found themselves on opposing sides. His sister Elizabeth married Patriot Lieutenant John Screven, and their descendants would go on to shape the region's post-war identity. Though no marked grave exists, Pendarvis is believed to be buried near the site of his former home in what is now Palmetto Bluff. The land he once owned passed to his sister Elizabeth, and the Screven-Hipp Cemetery nearby contains burials of several Revolutionary War figures.