

Beaufort County 250 Committee Historic Site Tours

Zion Chapel of Ease Cemetery – Hilton Head



Petitioned for in 1780 by St Lukes Parish Church worshipers Isaac Fripp and John Stoney, who provided the funds for its construction, the chapel of ease was built from 1786-1788 due to the partisan violence in the area during the war years.

It was placed on donated land which held a militia muster house built in the 1730's or early 1740's, and it was said to be a simple wooden structure, 30 x 40 feet, built on a brick pier foundation. It was described as ordinary from the exterior but "elegantly appointed" on the interior.

The grounds served as the muster point for the Hilton Head Island Militia, where intelligence was exchanged, raids were planned, and patrols were mounted and disbanded. A small parade ground was reported to have been used for drill and maneuver training during the war.

The muster house was intact and in use as late as 1825, and the chapel was used continuously for services from 1788 until 1861 when the Union invaded Hilton Head and Port Royal Sound.

The mausoleum is the oldest intact structure on the Island and was built in 1846.