

Benjamin Benaja Hughes

4th Great Grandfather (SAR National Number: 206938) of Thomas Anthony Taroni

South Carolina Line Continental Army

Massacre at Clouds Creek

What: Revolutionary War Skirmish

Where: Clouds Creek - SC Hwy 391 above Leesville near the Lexington-Saluda County line

Who: Major William "Bloody Bill" Cunningham, Captain Stirling Turner, Captain James Butler, James Butler Jr.

When: 17 November 1781

Events: After allowing Col. Williams and his loyalists to leave Edgefield County, Capt. Stirling Turner camped at Clouds Creek against the advice of Capt. James Butler. It had rained so hard and long that their guns were unable to fire. Capt. Turner went to Mr. Carter's cabin in hopes of getting food and a place to dry out their guns.

Major Cunningham found out that they were occupying the cabin and struck at daybreak. The Patriots returned fire, but, seeing they were losing, asked for terms of surrender. Cunningham asked for the names of the men in the cabin. Upon learning that James Butler Jr. was in the house, he refused to grant any terms excluding Butler from execution, thinking he was the same Butler who had killed Capt. Radcliffe.

Capt. James Butler Sr. offered himself for his son, but James Butler Jr. ended all discussion by firing out of the cabin and killing a Tory.

The Patriots saw no hopes of victory and surrendered. Cunningham killed Turner, Butler, and all of the men with the exception of Benjamin Hughes and Bartlett Bledsoe. Butler's body was so cut up that his wife could only identify him by his Bible in his pocket.

Benjamin Hughes escaped when Mr. Carter's cattle became frightened and stampeded. He hid in some driftwood that had caught on a log across the creek. The Tories stabbed into the driftwood but didn't touch Hughes.

Bartlett Bledsoe came out of Carter's house hugging onto Benjamin Rabun. When Cunningham demanded their names, the men refused to tell. Benjamin Rabun's skull was split in two by a saber, but Bartlett Bledsoe was not killed. It was said that he was never right after that. Major Cunningham stopped at Towles Blacksmith shop to have their horses shod. When Oliver Towles had finished, Cunningham killed Towles, his son and a Negro. Before leaving, he set fire to the blacksmith shop and all the buildings.

Tom Taroni has [many other grandfathers](#), not yet proven, who served in the American Revolution and Texas History.