

ALAMANCE



BATTLEGROUND Self Guided Tour



The Battle of Alamance was the culmination of the Regulator Movement, a complicated series of events involving abuse of power, civil unrest, protest, and violence in the North Carolina backcountry. Follow the map on the second page to read outdoor exhibit panels and learn more about the site and its history.

What did the Regulators Protest?

During the ten years just before the American Revolution, many people in the backcountry of North Carolina were upset with local officials, and their abuse of power. Grievances included excessive taxes, dishonest sheriffs, and illegal collection of fees. A scarcity of printed money contributed to economic strain and growing resentment. A court system controlled by the same corrupt officials led colonists to see justice as unattainable.



Who were the Regulators?

Groups of farmers, mostly from Anson, Rowan, and Orange counties, who formed associations in the 1760s to protest corruption among local officials. In 1768 these associations gave themselves the name "Regulators", a name that had already been used in England to describe popular movements against the corruption of powerful leaders. The Regulators held meetings, wrote petitions, and supported their leaders in local elections.

Who Fought at the Battle of Alamance?

Governor Tryon's militia, mostly from eastern counties like Craven, Beaufort, and New Hanover, with a large group from Orange. These militias were led by officers like Francis Nash and Richard Caswell, who would later go on to fight in the Revolutionary War against the British. They were opposed by a crowd of about 2,000 Regulators, mostly from Orange County. No records were kept at the time of which Regulators fought in the battle.



The Site Today

Visitors to Alamance Battleground may view the field of battle, marked by a granite monument dedicated in 1880. An orientation film dramatizing the events of the Regulator movement is offered in the Visitor Center. Visitors may also experience life in the North Carolina backcountry by visiting the Allen House, a log dwelling built around 1780 that is characteristic of those lived in by people of the area during that time. The Allen House was home to John Allen and Rachel Stout Allen, who lived in the community of Snow Camp where John worked as a carpenter and school teacher and Rachel cared for members of the community acting as a physician with her own book of herbal remedies.



1. Governor Tryon & the Militia

From this spot, North Carolina militia under the command of Governor William Tryon engaged a large group of Regulators in open battle. The ensuing engagement involved 3,000 people, 8 cannons, lasted nearly 2 hours, and left scores killed and wounded.

2. A Revolutionary War Connection

Ten years after the Battle of Alamance, this ground once again witnessed conflict during the Southern Campaign of the Revolutionary War. Archaeological evidence confirms the account of Delaware soldiers who engaged the British Army in March 1781.

3. The Allen House

Local Quakers John and Rachel Allen lived in this log home with their 12 children. The home was moved from nearby Snow Camp to Alamance Battleground in 1766, to offer visitors a chance

to learn more about how small farmers lived in the 18th century.

4. The Regulators

From this hillside, nearly 2,000 Regulators stood in the face of Governor Tryon's militia and dared them to fire. Without officers, adequate weapons, or a battle plan, their hopes of victory in pitched battle were slim, but they hoped to intimidate Governor Tryon with their superior numbers.

5. A Soldier's Dilemma

Archaeologists exposed a mystery near this spot, where two artifacts found very close to each other revealed an interesting story with an uncertain end. What do you think happened?

6. Pugh's Rock

Local legend holds that Regulator James Pugh used this rock as a fighting position during the battle. But deeper

research revealed a mystery of mistaken identity, leaving more questions than answers.

7. Battle of Alamance Monument

Over a century after the battle, local citizens built this monument to assert the claim that the Battle of Alamance was the "First Battle of the Revolution" and that the Regulators fought for liberty. Learn what might have prompted them to make this argument, and why the full story is more complicated.

8. The Colonial Column

This monument, dedicated in 1901 and commemorating the Regulator James Hunter and North Carolina's role in the American Revolution. Amid controversy it was moved from Guilford Courthouse National Military Park to Alamance Battleground in 1962. Explore the reasons for its dedication and why it was moved.