Savannah Congress Coaster Set #1 – Battle

Austin Dabney / Kettle Creek - Austin Dabney was an African American who fought against the British in the American Revolutionary War. When the Georgia Militia was called up for the war, Richard Aycock sent Dabney in his place. To address objections that Dabney was a slave, Aycock claimed he had been born free. Dabney served in LTC Elijah Clarke's unit. He was shot in the thigh during the Battle of Kettle Creek in 1779. He recovered, but was crippled for life. Giles Harris, a white soldier who lived in the area, cared for the injured man in his home. A close bond formed between Dabney and the Harris family. After the death of Aycock, a legislature act of Georgia officially emancipated Dabney. The state paid Aycock's heirs 70 pounds for Dabney's freedom. Dabney was granted 50 acres in Washington County, becoming the only African American to be granted land by Georgia for his Revolutionary War service. He also received a state pension (an obligation later taken on by the federal government).

Dabney worked for and supported the Harris family, sending Giles' son William to Franklin College. Afterward, Dabney continued to support William financially while he studied for the bar. William Harris named his son Austin Dabney in his benefactor's honor.

When Dabney was barred from the Georgia Land Lotteries, Upson arranged for the state legislature to grant him 112 acres in Walton County, resulting in resentment among some white residents. Once Dabney rode to Savannah to collect his annual pension along with his white neighbor, Colonel Wiley Pope. Pope suggested that Dabney ride slightly behind, in accordance with the mores of the time, which Dabney did. However, when the two passed the house of Governor James Jackson, Jackson ran out to Dabney and invited him to be his houseguest during their stay - while Colonel Pope had to stay in the public tavern. Pope was amused by this and often told the story. Austin Dabney died in 1830 in Zebulon, Georgia.

Fort Morris - Fort Morris is an earthen works fort in Liberty County, Georgia, in the United States. The fort is on a bend in the Medway River and played an important role in the protection of southeast Georgia throughout various conflicts beginning with the French and Indian, through the American Revolutionary Wars and War of 1812, and finally the Civil War.

When the Continental Congress convened in 1776, the delegates recognized the importance of a fort to protect their growing seaport from the British. Soon afterward, a low bluff on the Medway River at Sunbury was fortified and garrisoned by 200 patriots. When the British demanded the fort's surrender on November 25, 1778, the defiant Col. John McIntosh replied, "Come and take it!" The British refused and withdrew back to Florida. Forty-five days later, they returned with a superior force, and on January 9, 1779, Fort Morris fell after a short but heavy bombardment. Under the name of Fort Defiance, this bulwark was once again used against the British during the War of 1812.

Siege of Savannah - On the morning of October 9, the Franco-American Allies launched a major Fog shrouded assault. Fronting the Spring Hill Redoubt, the Allied objective, under the mistaken impression that it was lightly defended by local Loyalist militia they faced a militia backed by battle-hardened British Regulars. When the fog lifted, the French lines were fully exposed, crumbling in the face of a withering and incessant fire from the redoubt's defenders. d'Estaing himself was wounded twice while personally leading the attack. Mortally wounded in the assault was the Polish cavalry mastermind, Casimir Pulaski, Sullivan Island hero Sgt. William Jasper, and many others. The two sides observed a four-hour truce to collect and bury the dead and to retrieve the wounded. The French listed 151 killed and 370 wounded, while the Patriots lost 231 killed and wounded, nearly all Continentals. British losses were only 18 killed and 39 wounded. For the allies, Savannah was the bloodiest battle of the war.

A week later the French commander sailed away, leaving Lincoln behind. On October 19, Lincoln lifted the siege. Savannah would remain in British hands until the end of the war.

Chasseurs-Volontaires de Saint-Domingue - The regiment from French Saint-Domingue, present day Haiti, was open to all gens de couleur, not just free blacks of mixed race, but also slaves who were promised their freedom on their return if they joined. The regiment accompanied the Comte d'Estaing as part of the expeditionary force for service in the American Revolutionary War. 545 men participated in the Siege of Savannah.

Twelve-year old slave-boy Henri Christophe, who served as a drummer, would later become the King of Haiti.

Siege of Augusta – The Siege of Augusta began on May 22, 1781. Conducted by General Andrew Pickens and Colonel Henry "Light Horse Harry" Lee, the British troops occupied Fort Cornwallis. The forces defending Cornwallis numbered about 300 Loyalist militia under the command of Col. Thomas Brown, who commanded the King's Carolina Rangers. They were assisted in defensive works by about 200 African-Americans. The fort was well-constructed and the Patriots could not find a ready means of attack, since they only had a single cannon.

Lee suggested the use of a wooden Mayhem tower that had successfully ended the Siege of Fort Watson. Under cover of a nearby house, they constructed a wooden tower of 30 feet. The tower was high enough to top the fort's walls the Patriots began firing into the fort. Brown sent out one of his men, pretending to be a deserter, to gain access to the tower with a view to setting it on fire. He suggested to Lee that he could direct the cannon at the fort's magazine, and nearly succeeded when Lee became suspicious and placed him under guard. The cannon atop the tower raked the interior of the fort, knocking guns off their mounts and destroying the barracks. Patriot forces prepared for an assault on the morning of June 4, while Pickens and Lee sent a demand for surrender. Brown turned it down since it was the King's birthday. The attack was delayed one day. The next day, Brown offered to negotiate terms of surrender. To avoid the fate of being tortured and killed, he was specifically surrendered to a detachment of Continental Army troops. Brown survived the war, moving first to Florida and then the Bahamas.