

YANKEE TRANSPLANT DOESN'T THINK MUCH OF OUR HISTORY

Sometimes when you cast this bread out on the waters, you never know what is going to come back.

I recently heard from an Ohio transplant who resides in one of the garden spots in Georgia. He is a Viet Nam veteran (bless him) who doesn't like George W. Bush (neither do a lot of other people), or the war (ditto) or me (welcome to the club... the line is long). He also doesn't think much of our state's history.

His problem with Georgia isn't the Civil War but rather our perceived performance in the Revolutionary War. "Georgia is an area where there was negligible support for the American Revolution," Mr. Ohio declares. "The majority of Georgians fled for the hills. Even the Georgia signers of the Declaration of Independence met with resistance by their Gov. Wright, and didn't sign on until the last day ... and only then after literally putting Wright on a Savannah ship and shipping his butt back to England."

I'm still trying to figure out why Georgia's history is of any concern to somebody from Ohio. Maybe he is bored because he misses the smell of the tire plants back home, or the pollution in Lake Erie. That might also account for the slightly skewed view of what really happened in Georgia during the Revolutionary War days. For one thing, Gov. James Wright was an avowed and unapologetic royalist sent here by an English king who didn't know Georgia from George Clooney. That's why we shipped his butt back to England. Even in those days, we didn't appreciate people coming here and acting stiff-necked and thinking they were better than us.

Our transplant also failed to mention that Ohio didn't do squat in the American Revolution. History books say that is because the place was still a territory and the locals were too busy trying to decide if they wanted to belong to any union that would include people who ate grits. Their one shining moment in the Revolutionary War came in 1778 when an American army of 1,200 men marched into the Ohio territory. The army was commanded by General Lachlan McIntosh, from the Great State of — dare I say it? — Georgia. McIntosh stayed just long enough to build a fort in the territory and then got the hell out of there because he was afraid he might end up stationed in Cleveland, or worse, start talking loud and acting like an expert on everything.

The fact is there were a number of Georgians who did more than provide "negligible support" for the American Revolution: George Walton, a signer of the Declaration of Independence was wounded in Savannah. James Bulloch, James Houstoun, James Jackson, Elijah Clark and Samuel Elbert, among others, commanded troops that fought bravely during the war. Unfortunately, Button Gwinnett, another signer of the Declaration of Independence, wasn't around to see the end of the war. He was killed in a duel with General McIntosh, who was probably still mad about having been ordered to go to Ohio. Ohioans who distinguished themselves in the American Revolution were — umm, er.

I'm not sure what the writer's point is. Maybe he is tired of hearing me talk about the brave men and women of Georgia's 48th Brigade Combat Team in Iraq and wants to believe that fighting doesn't come naturally to us. If so, he needs to spend a Saturday night at a roadside tavern in rural Georgia. Speaking of the 48th, he also informed me I was part of an "orchestrated fabrication" while in Iraq last October with the troops. How he could know that, I have no idea. (Yankees seem to know a lot of stuff the rest of us don't know.) If he is referring to the IED we hit while out on patrol, that was one orchestrated fabrication I could have done without.

At the risk of appearing ungrateful for the unsolicited history lesson, it is my wish that Yankees who don't like Georgia or our history may one day return to the rust bowl from whence they came, and live there happily ever after. Until then, they can kiss my grits.