COMMISSIONED BY YOU

The Museum of the American Revolution owns two paintings by Italian artist Xavier della Gatta, which were commissioned by a wealthy Irish soldier who fought in the Revolutionary War named Richard St. George. In 1776, St. George joined the British Army and crossed the Atlantic to quell the rebellion. He battled with George Washington's army around New York and Philadelphia, and at the battles of Brandywine, Germantown, and Paoli, he saw firsthand the brutality of war. In fact, St. George was wounded in the head at the Battle of Germantown, the pain from which would plague him for the rest of his life.

Before St. George arrived in the colonies, he was already a published cartoonist. As a soldier, he drew sketches of his experiences fighting in the war, which may have helped him process his experiences. After being wounded, St. George traveled to Italy in the 1780s in search of a warmer climate to relieve the pain he continued to feel from his injury. In Naples, he met artist Xavier della Gatta and worked with him to capture the drama of the battles of Paoli and Germantown in two paintings. In one interesting detail, St. George had himself included in the Germantown painting, showing the moment when he was carried off the battlefield.

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BATTLE OF GERMANTOWN BY XAVIER DELLA GATTA