

Palmetto State
Souvenir Impression
of the
Great Seal
of the
State of South Carolina



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South Carolina's Great Seal was authorized by resolution of the General Assembly on April 2, 1776. The seal is made up of two distinct elliptical areas, linked by branches of the palmetto tree. The image on the left is dominated by a tall palmetto tree and another tree, fallen and broken. This scene represents the battle fought on June 28, 1776 between defenders of the unfinished fort on Sullivan's Island, and the British Fleet. The standing tree represents the victorious defenders, and the fallen tree is the British Fleet. Banded together on the palmetto with the motto "Quis Separabit?" ("Who Will Separate?"), are 12 spears that represent the first 12 states of the Union. Surrounding the image, at the top, is "South Carolina," and below, is "Animis Opibusque Parati," or "Prepared in Mind and Resources." The other image on the seal depicts a woman walking along a shore that is littered with weapons. The woman, symbolizing Hope, grasps a branch of laurel as the sun rises behind her. Below her image is the word "Spes," or "Hope," and over the image is the motto "Dum Spiro Spero," or "While I Breathe I Hope."