

1778 OF SUBSCRIPTION—ONE DOLLAR AND FIFTY CENTS PER ANNUM IN ADVANCE FOR SIX MONTHS. ...

BY E. B. MURRAY & CO.

ANDERSON, S. C., THURSDAY, JUNE 27, 1878.

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SIEGE OF NINETY SIX.

A BRAVE DEFENCE, BUT A BRAVER ASSAULT.

A short sketch of what our ancestors did for American Liberty.

The village of Cambridge was situated in the southeast corner of the present county of Abbeville. In a direct line it was about twenty miles, nearly due east, from the site of Abbeville Court House, six miles west of the Saluda River, and about a mile north of the line which divides the Carolina from the Virginia. A short time prior to the revolutionary war, the name Cambridge had been exchanged for that of Ninety Six. Tradition has preserved two reasons for this change of name. The first is that Cambridge was about six miles distant from Fort Prince George. The other is that at one time, after the Indian tribes had planned a massacre of the frontiers settlers, an Indian girl mounted a high tree in the day and pointed a hand, ninety-six times, to give the white settlers warning of the impending danger. The point at which she communicated to the whites the contents of her message was the site of Cambridge. From this point, says one tradition, the name Cambridge was exchanged for that of Ninety Six. At an early period in the settlement of the up-country, Cambridge, or Ninety Six, was a place of importance second to none other in the State of South Carolina. To protect the frontier settlements against the attacks of the Indians the place was fortified. From time to time, as necessity demanded, these fortifications were enlarged and improved. When the difficulties between the colonies and the mother country began to assume a threatening aspect, Ninety Six became the scene of bloody conflicts between the patriots and the loyalists. The region around Ninety Six was fertile, populous, and, perhaps, it may be said, the most wealthy section of the up-country previous to the revolution. It had been the abode of wild Indians, who made their homes in the agreeable neighbors of the Europeans residing in the interior of the State. A special effort was made to induce white settlers to take possession of this region of country. Grants of one and two hundred acres of land were made to the most favorable, were made to any one who would occupy them. The region was represented as one of fabulous fertility. The result was that both the old and the new country were attracted to the new country. From various quarters, hordes of the vilest sort and bands of lazy freemen flocked into the region. The frequent outbreaks of the Indians added to the gloom and gloom of the region, and the prospect for making a comfortable property of their industrious neighbors. Hauling and horse and cattle stealing became common occurrences. The region was a lawless one, and every one who was not a member of the lawless society was looked upon as a prey to be devoured. To meet the exigencies of the case, the patriots of the community organized themselves for protection. Without the ordinary forms of law, these organized bands proceeded to inflict summary punishment upon all who came into their hands. That which was a crime against the design of promoting the public good, was soon abused. Individuals undertook, under cloak of correcting a public wrong, to punish private injuries. The lawless society forgot in its punishing individual wrongs, the rights of the community. The result was that those who had no connection with the lawless raiders who infested the region were often seized and punished to appease the hatred of some private individual. The lawless society turned to cherish toward each other bitter animosities, and the whole country was thrown into a state of anarchy and confusion. In 1768 Governor Montague and the Council sent a man by the name of Scoville to adjust the difficulties which existed between the settlers. Scoville proved to be an unprincipled villain, and, instead of establishing peace, came very near bringing on a civil war. In 1769 a court of justice was established at Ninety Six. The seeds of hatred and strife had, however, been sown and had germinated, and were not to be eradicated. The court was to be checked by the forms of law, but the lawless society continued until 1776, when the former was exchanged for that of Whig, and the latter for that of Tory.

On the 22nd of May—the day after the surrender of Fort Mifflin—General Greene arrived in the immediate vicinity of the latter, troops in winter quarters in South Carolina, in the interior of the State. By the prudence, skill and indomitable courage of the subaltern officers and troops, the British stragglers and provisions brought in, and the morning clouds, Ninety Six was abandoned had not all communication between it and the other British posts been so completely cut off by Gen. Greene could not but feel intensely anxious with regard to the success of his undertaking. His individual success hereafter in the South had depended rather in baffling the undertakings and in returning and forcing the enemy than in positive victory, yet a British officer had been forced to surrender to him in person. At Guilford Court House and Hobkirk's Hill his success in depriving his enemy of a grand triumph. It may be said, however, that from the moment of his arrival at Ninety Six, Gen. Greene was very sanguine of success. He found the place in a good condition both to resist and to receive an assault. Col. Cruger had not been idle. He had ordered to place himself in front of Rawdon. Gen. Sumter was ordered to collect the militia of the county, and to join the river and Ninety Six. Gen. Pickens, together with all the cavalry under Colonel Washington, were sent to join Sumter. Although the plan of first beating Rawdon was not carried out, it was discovered that it could not be put into execution. The concentration of the forces under Sumter was necessarily slow, and the movements of Rawdon too rapid to put into execution such a plan. It was determined, therefore, to raise the siege and lead his forces into some safe retreat. To this both the officers and the men objected. Some were anxious to wipe out old stains; others were determined to fight to the last, their skill and prowess; whilst some rendered reckless by credulity and suffering inflicted by the enemy, were longing for an opportunity to satiate their vengeance. Such was the state of mind of the American encampments that the enemy, as well as the spring from which they received supplies of water, were entirely encircled. The brave Kosciuszko, the celebrated Polish engineer, who had been the chief of his engineers. On the evening of the 22d of May, ground was broken a short distance north of the star redoubt. Col. Cruger was not slow in discovering the design of the enemy, and he immediately sent a prompt and energetic reply, which showed that he was a superior officer, he began to make preparations to repel the approach of the Americans. He possessed a mounted company of artillery, which he placed on the platform constructed for the purpose. His parapets were manned with infantry, whose accuracy with their deadly rifles, under the command of Major Cruger, was a salient feature of the defence. Under the command of Major Cruger, a salient party, under Lieut. Brown, supported by Major Green, rushed out to the enemy's ditches upon the besiegers. In a moment the guards were broken, and the enemy driven away; the latter began work on the ditches, and the gallant Roney was mortally wounded. This was all that the enemy sustained. So vigorous was the defence, that the American party set, although Gen. Greene sent a reinforcement to succor Kosciuszko, the work was completed before the detachment arrived. Under the direction of the artillery, the work was again prosecuted on the night of the 23d. This time the besiegers commenced operations at a point more distant and under cover of a ravine. The grave mistake seems to have been made the very outset of the campaign. This was guarded by a stockade fort and the fortified jail. It would seem that the first effort should have been to deprive the enemy of the water supply. The water supply was cut off by the destruction of the dam, and the water supply was cut off by the destruction of the dam, and the water supply was cut off by the destruction of the dam.

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THE VILLAGE OF CAMBRIDGE WAS SITUATED IN THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF THE PRESENT COUNTY OF ABBEVILLE.

ON THE 22ND OF MAY—THE DAY AFTER THE SURRENDER OF FORT MIFFLIN—GENERAL GREENE ARRIVED IN THE IMMEDIATE VICINITY OF THE LATTER, TROOPS IN WINTER QUARTERS IN SOUTH CAROLINA, IN THE INTERIOR OF THE STATE.

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