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NINETY SIX

A HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE/SOUTH CAROLINA

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HISTORIC RESOURCE STUDY
AND
HISTORIC STRUCTURE REPORT
NINETY SIX: A HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

by
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
DENVER, COLORADO

PREFACE

Ninety Six National Historic Site embraces two significant historical themes. The community and village of Ninety Six were prominent in the political, economic, and social development of colonial backcountry South Carolina during the eighteenth century. Later the town played an important role in the American Revolution, first as a center of regional political dissension and later as a focal point of British hegemony in South Carolina resulting in the Siege of Ninety Six by General Nathanael Greene's command in May and June, 1781. The following combined Historic Resource Study and Historic Structure Report, discussing these themes, has been prepared in accordance with the governing task directive for Package No. 1, Ninety Six National Historic Site, South Carolina.

For the most part, this study presents an integration of diverse primary data with the large amount of technical information about Ninety Six that has surfaced within the past few years. Much historical and archeological research has been accomplished since the late 1960s, and the professional dissemination of the results of those studies has benefited this project. As a latecomer to the history of Ninety Six, I am grateful to several persons for their previous labors at the site: Stanley South, of the University of South Carolina Institute of Archeology and Anthropology, Columbia, who completed much basic historical research and archeologically located several important features at Ninety Six; Michael J. Rodeffer, former director of the Ninety Six Historic Site, and Stephanie L. Holschlag, who together conducted substantive archeological investigations at Ninety Six spanning several years; and Marvin L. Cann, of Lander College, Greenwood, South Carolina, whose historical research and writing on Ninety Six I found profitable.

I must thank Superintendent Robert S. Armstrong and Administrative Assistant Linda Parks, of Ninety Six National Historic Site, for their unremitting aid in locating various materials and answering my innumerable questions about the park. Miss Louise M. Watson, of Greenwood, South Carolina, was especially helpful in guiding me to elusive sources and loaning important documents from her own collection. I acknowledge the assistance, too, of Richard D. Faust, Chief, National Park Service Southeast Archeological Center, Tallahassee, Florida, and of Archeologist Ellen B. Ehrenhard of that office. My visit to the William L. Clements Library at the University of Michigan was extremely beneficial, and I appreciate the gracious assistance of Director John Dann, Manuscripts Curator Arlene Shy, and Curator of Maps Douglas W. Marshall. I must also thank John Tottenham, Department of History, University of Michigan, for generously sharing with me pertinent data on Ninety Six uncovered in the course of his own research. Other individuals who contributed to my endeavor were Richard K. Showman, Editor of the Nathanael Greene Papers, Rhode Island Historical Society, Providence;

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In addition, I wish to express my thanks to the staffs of the following institutions and organizations that aided this study: Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston; New York Public Library; New-York Historical Society; Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore; National Archives, Washington; Library of Congress, Washington; Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford; Rhode Island Historical Society, Providence; United States Military Academy Library, West Point, New York; Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia; American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia; The Huntington Library, San Marino, California; Princeton University Library, Princeton, New Jersey; Duke University Library, Durham, North Carolina; South Carolina Historical Society, Charleston; South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia; South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia; Morristown National Historical Park, New Jersey; University of Georgia Library, Athens; Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville; Greenwood Public Library, Greenwood, South Carolina; Star Fort Historical Commission, Greenwood, South Carolina; Greenwood County Historical Society, Greenwood, South Carolina; Star Fort Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, Greenwood, South Carolina; Denver Public Library, Denver, Colorado; and the University of Colorado Library, Boulder.

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Jerome A. Greene
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CHAPTER I: THE BEGINNINGS OF NINETY SIX

A. The Earliest Residents

Long before the arrival of white men, the South Carolina backcountry gave comfort and sustenance to a variety of aboriginal peoples. They trekked its open meadows and pine and hardwood forests seeking deer, bear, and other game, and partaking of the bountiful fish resources offered by its numerous clear streams. The area where the later community and village of Ninety Six evolved seems to have been favored by the Indians and groups of them occupied the vicinity over decades.¹ It was good land, gently rolling away into alternately open ground and dense woodlands, occasionally broken by rivers, springs, and tributary rivulets that provided a steady flow of water throughout the year.

1. Area Tribes

Several Indian tribes occupied the general region of Ninety Six, that area of northwestern South Carolina drained by the Saluda, Broad, and Congaree Rivers and their lesser streams. Early in the 1700s the neighborhood was hunted by the Congarees, the Waterees, and the Saludas. The Congarees, a very small Siouan tribe numbering less than a hundred people, occupied a village near present Columbia. After the Yamasse Indian War of 1715, in which the Congarees sided with other Indians against the whites, over half the tribe was forcibly sent into slavery in the West Indies, while refugees managed to reach the Catawbas in north central South Carolina. Similarly, the small tribe of Waterees, another probably Siouan group living along the Wateree River, found refuge among the Catawbas following the Yamasse War. The Saludas were probably Algonquian-speaking people related to the Shawnees whom they accompanied north early in the eighteenth century.² In any event, by the time white men entered the South Carolina backcountry these peoples had either removed entirely from the area or been absorbed by other, larger tribes.

2. The Cherokees

One tribe, the Cherokees, became predominant through northwestern South Carolina, as well as in western North Carolina, eastern Tennessee,

1. John H. Logan, A History of the Upper Country of South Carolina, from the Earliest Periods to the close of the War of Independence (Columbia: P.B. Glass, 1859. Reprint, Spartanburg: The Reprint Company, 1960), pp. 214-15.

2. John R. Swanton, The Indian Tribes of North America (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1971), pp. 93, 94-98, 101-02.

and northern Georgia. The Cherokees were Iroquoian speakers descended from the Siouan language stock so prevalent in the Southeast. Whites later recognized three distinct dialectical groupings that roughly corresponded to their general geographical distribution: the Upper (overhill) Settlements, situated highest in the Appalachian range in Tennessee and Georgia; the Middle Settlements, generally restricted to the western North Carolina area; and the Lower (Underhill) Settlements, located along the river headwaters in Georgia and South Carolina. The Indians who occasionally roamed the land about Ninety Six were usually Cherokees from the Lower Towns.³ The total population of the Cherokees was probably under 20,000.⁴ They were hunters who supplemented their meat diet by raising corn, a product serving an important ceremonial as well as subsistence function in Cherokee society. Great emphasis was placed on warfare as a motivation device for young men, and Cherokee warriors ranged far and wide in its pursuit. In Cherokee society, social constraints were imposed by custom and tradition; behavioral tenets were adhered to rigidly by all tribesmen.⁵

B. Keowee Town and the Trade

The Cherokees began to assume a major role in the Carolina trade between 1708 and 1714. Their Lower Settlements by the latter date numbered approximately twenty villages along the headwaters of the Savannah and Chattahoochee Rivers. Those tribesmen closest in proximity to Ninety Six resided along Keowee River in extreme northwestern South Carolina (present Oconee County). As the lowest principal Cherokee village, Keowee was the most accessible route inland to the other towns.⁶ Possibly the remains of a prehistoric Indian community reported near Ninety Six in the 1850s were of Cherokee origin.⁷

3. Ibid., p. 216; Frederick Webb Hodge (ed.), Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico (2 vols.; orig. pub. Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 30, 1907; Reprint, Totowa, New Jersey: Rowman and Littlefield, 1975), I, 245-49.

4. This is an arbitrary figure based on the average of Cherokee population estimates made in 1715, 1720, and 1729. Swanton, Indian Tribes of North America, p. 223.

5. David H. Corkran, The Carolina Indian Frontier (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1970), pp. 14-15.

6. Ibid., p. 13. Verner W. Crane describes the Lower Cherokees on the upper Savannah in 1715 as having eleven towns with 2,100 inhabitants. The Southern Frontier, 1670-1732 (Durham: Duke University Press, 1928), p. 130. This basically conforms with data given in Swanton, Indian Tribes of North America, pp. 216, 223.

7. "Deep in a forest, on lands attached to the old Colcock Place, now the property of Dr. H.W. Leland, and in sight nearly of the star-redoubt (continued)

1. The Cherokee Path

Doubtless the Indian occupancy of this country lasted several hundred years. After the founding of Charleston (Charles Town) on the coast during the late seventeenth century, and with the concomitant rise of commerce and trade in the colony of South Carolina, the area of Ninety Six assumed prominence as a stopping place along the Cherokee Path. There were several routes used by traders to reach the Indian frontier. One path followed the Savannah River to its headwaters and the nearby lower Cherokee towns. Many traders disdained this approach, however, especially after the Yamassee War impeded travel along the Savannah. They instead entered the Cherokee country via Congarees, a point on the Congaree River at Santee Swamp, near present Columbia. From Charleston the traders came the 145 miles to Congarees by river or by crude overland trails. There a track known as the Catawba Path diverged north and west, paralleling the Wateree River, to the Catawbas, Waxhaws, and related tribes. The prime route to the Cherokees was the Cherokee Path, an Indian trail widened after 1718 for the use of pack horses. The path left Congarees and proceeded west along the south side of the Saluda River, crossing numerous tributaries in its route. It passed through the Ninety Six neighborhood and presently reached the head of the Savannah near Keowee, more than 150 miles from Congarees. (See Map 1.) Near Ninety Six another trail branched south to the Savannah River, and it was at the junction of these paths that Ninety Six village eventually evolved.⁸

7. (continued) [built by the British in 1781] at Ninety Six, is a large mound, in which were deposited the bones of generations, perhaps, of the inhabitants of an Indian town, that evidently once existed in a waste field of the same plantation, lying a short distance north of the mound. The usual relics of a once populous Cherokee community are abundant everywhere in its vicinity, as they are also on the hills and valleys of the opposite bank of Ninety-six Creek, in lands owned at present [1859] by Captain James Creswell and others." Logan, History of the Upper Country of South Carolina, I, 214-15. For Cherokee prehistory, see Bennie C. Keel, Cherokee Archaeology: A Study of the Appalachian Summit (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1976); and Roy S. Dickens, Jr., Cherokee Prehistory: The Pisgah Phase of the Appalachian Summit Region (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1976). Both studies contain brief material on the archeology of the Keowee vicinity.

8. George Hunter, "So. Carolina 1751. This Map is exactly copied from one done by Capt. George Haig for his Excellency Governor Glen. . . ." British Public Record Office. Copy in Map Division, Library of Congress; William DeBrahm, "A Map of South Carolina and a Part of Georgia, containing the Whole Sea-Coast; all the Islands, Inlets, Rivers, Creeks, Parishes, Townships, Boroughs, Roads, and Bridges." London, undated; Robert L. Meriwether, The Expansion of South Carolina, 1729-1765 (Kingsport, Tennessee: Southern Publishers, Inc., 1940), pp. 117, 171-72; Crane, Southern Frontier, p. 129; Newton Mereness (ed.), "Introduction" to "Colonel Chicken's Journal to the Cherokees, 1725," in Travels in the American Colonies (New York: (continued)

2. Origins of "Ninety Six"

In fact, the geographical designation of "Ninety Six" derived from its estimated distance in miles from Keowee in the upper country. The earliest known reference to Ninety Six as a distinct locality appeared on George Hunter's map of "The Chareeke Nation . . .," prepared in 1731. (Illustration 1.) Hunter was Surveyor-General of the province and his map evidently reflects an accepted reckoning of the distance down the Cherokee Path from Keowee.⁹ Other explanations for the name exist, but none are creditable. An Indian legend describes the travail of a Cherokee maiden named Cateechee who journeyed by horseback to warn her white lover of an impending Indian attack. As she traveled she named the streams she passed according to the distance she had gone. Ninety Six was thus tabulated.¹⁰ Another erroneous explanation considers the fertility of the soil at the place; accordingly, the name, Ninety Six, "derived from a fanciful allusion to the uniform excellence of its soil. The two numbers which compose its name, viewed on any side, will express the same quantity."¹¹ Some renditions of the correct explanation have resulted from distortion; instead of ninety-six miles from Keowee, it became ninety-six miles from Fort Prince George, although that post was not erected near Keowee until 1753.¹² Nor did Ninety Six represent the median point between Keowee and Charleston as some early chroniclers

8. (continued) The Macmillan Company, 1916), pp. 95-96. Details of a portion of the Cherokee Path lying between Keowee and Ninety Six are represented in "A Map of the Lands Ceded by the Cherokee Indians to the State of South Carolina at a Congress held in May A.D. 1777." Map Division, Library of Congress. Another map, untitled, but evidently of eighteenth century origin, indicates the "old trade Road to Ninety Six." Pen and ink map of the area of the modern counties of Oconee, Pickens, and Anderson. Date unknown. Map Division, Library of Congress.

9. A.S. Salley, Jr., George Hunter's Map of the Cherokee Country and the Path thereunto in 1730. Bulletin of the Historical Commission of South Carolina, No. 4. (Columbia: The State Company, 1917), pp. 3-4.

10. Ibid.; David Duncan Wallace, The History of South Carolina (4 vols.; New York: The American Historical Society, Inc., 1934), II, 27n. A variation of this legend is in J.B.O. Landrum, Colonial and Revolutionary History of Upper South Carolina (Greenville: Shannon and Company, 1897), p. 325.

11. William Johnson, Sketches of the Life and Correspondence of Nathanael Greene, Major General of the Armies of the United States, in the War of the Revolution (2 vols.; Charleston: A.E. Miller, 1822), II, 138.

12. Landrum, Colonial and Revolutionary History, p. 325; Louise M. Watson, Old Ninety Six, Star Fort and Cambridge (Greenwood, South Carolina: Greenwood County Historical Society, 1960), p. 8.

contended.¹³ It did represent a prominent location by 1730-31 to traders, hunters, and other white men who ventured into the hinterland. On maps of the period the streams of the backcountry were numbered in ascending order from Keowee down to Ninety Six, and in the same manner from Congarees up to Ninety Six.¹⁴

3. Early Whites in the Upcountry

More than any other enterprise, it was the Indian trade that opened the South Carolina backcountry to permanent settlement. The wilderness about Ninety Six and beyond the Blue Ridge Mountains abounded in fur resources that beckoned hunters, trappers, and traders inland. There were wolves, cougars, bobcats, bears, deer, and beavers to be hunted or trapped for skins. Even bison roamed the country; an account of Captain George Chicken of the provincial militia described how "we killd a boflow" on lands approximating those of Ninety Six in February, 1716.¹⁵ Skins not obtained by hunting and trapping were gotten through barter with the Indians, and packhorses loaded with pelts thus acquired journeyed down the footworn trails to Charleston. As agent for urban commercial interests, the principal trader was the harbinger of white civilization in the Carolina mountains. In many respects he introduced the products of white material culture among the Indians and served as a broker between Indian and non-Indian societies. In later years the trader often grew sedentary and settled permanently on the frontier, thereby providing a base around which later communities might evolve.¹⁶

By 1730, when the earliest known reference to Ninety Six was recorded, the area already was familiar to hunters and traders, some of whom had routinely traversed it for decades.¹⁷ Late in 1727 provincial Commissioner

13. Landrum, Colonial and Revolutionary History, p. 325.

14. Salley, George Hunter's Map, p. 4; Yates Snowden (ed.) History of South Carolina (5 vols.; Chicago and New York: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1920), I, 211.

15. George Chicken, "Journal of the March of the Carolinians into the Cherokee Mountains, in the Yemassee Indian War. 1715-16." Annotated by Langdon Cheves. Year Book 1894. City of Charleston, So. Ca. (Charleston: Walker, Evans and Cogswell Co., Printers, 1894), p. 350.

16. Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, pp. 15, 162; John A. Chapman, History of Edgefield County From the Earliest Settlements to 1897 (Newberry, South Carolina: Elbert H. Aull, Publisher and Printer, 1897), p. 5.

17. Chapman, History of Edgefield County, p. 6. Colonel George Chicken and his party, passing through the region in 1725, "came to a Fort built at a place called Coronacio Sanelo . . .," evidently close to where the Ninety Six community later grew up. "Colonel Chicken's Journal to the Cherokees, 1725," p. 100.

of Indian Affairs John Herbert journeyed into the interior as far as Keowee checking traders' licenses and invoices for trade goods.¹⁸ Within a decade of Herbert's visit there existed an establishment at Ninety Six, for on March 11, 1737, Indian agent John Lacey purchased "3 Gals of Rum and 3 lbs of Sugar at a place called the Ninety Six."¹⁹ But the first substantive allusions to on-going enterprise at Ninety Six came much later.

C. Land Development at Ninety Six

1. Thomas Brown et al

Even before the gathering of traders near this point, the land of the vicinity, though largely unknown by whites, had figured importantly in their various legal transactions. Upon the founding of South Carolina the Ninety Six area formed part of Colleton County, one of three counties originally established in the colony. The first recorded landholder at Ninety Six was Thomas Brown, a trader at Congarees, who registered a claim in 1738. Deputy Surveyor George Haig certified having laid out for Brown "a tract of land containing two hundred acres, situate . . . at a place commonly called and known by the name of Ninety Six (on the Cherokee Path)."²⁰ Brown received an additional grant for 200 acres in the same area late in 1744, but he evidently never developed his property before his death in 1747. This second tract was described as being located "96 miles from the Charokee Nation. . . ."²¹ Brown obviously had speculative reasons for laying claim to the fertile land about the strategic junction of the Cherokee Path and the Savannah trail at Ninety Six.²² Early in 1746 some Virginians petitioned South Carolina Governor James Glen, requesting that the lands around Ninety Six be purchased from the Indians and opened to settlement by farmers from western Virginia and Pennsylvania. When the House urged them to select lands closer to the settled areas of the province, the Virginians protested that only the Ninety Six country was "so healthy in its situation [,] so good in its kind [,] or sufficient enough to support such a number of . . . [people] as may be sufficient to make themselves secure against the attempts of

18. John Herbert, Journal of Colonel John Herbert, Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the Province of South Carolina, October 17, 1727, to March 19, 1727/8. Ed. by A.S. Salley (Columbia: Historical Commission of South Carolina, 1936), p. 10.

19. J.H. Easterby (ed.), The Colonial Records of South Carolina. The Journal of the Commons House of Assembly, November 10, 1726-June 7, 1739 (Columbia: Historical Commission of South Carolina, 1951), p. 566.

20. Salley, George Hunter's Map, pp. 3-4n.

21. Ibid., p. 4n; Watson, Old Ninety Six, p. 12; Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, p. 118.

22. Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, p. 118.

Indians or other Enemies."²³ But this colonization plan never developed the way its advocates had intended.²⁴

2. The Glen Visit and the Hamilton Survey

Provincial interest in the backcountry was registered in Governor Glen's visit to Ninety Six in June, 1746, where he negotiated with a chief called The Emperor and sixty other Cherokees for their continued loyalty in the growing territorial dispute between Great Britain and France. The following year the tribesmen ceded their rights of occupancy to the land lying between Long Cane Creek and Ninety Six in return for £189 worth of ammunition. This cession provided the impetus for the later movement of settlers into the Ninety Six country.²⁵ In 1749 the royal government granted four 50,000-acre tracts to one William Livingston of London and his associates. Livingston shortly conveyed these to John Hamilton, who desired to colonize the land. Hamilton's vast holdings encompassed part of the area of Ninety Six, and in 1751 he commissioned Surveyor General George Hunter to survey his tracts. The plot measured about eighteen miles to a side and ran from the Saluda River north to Long Cane Creek. The southern line of "Hamilton's Great Survey of 1751" ran northeast-southwest at an orientation of 45° and intersected the Cherokee Path at Ninety Six, near the point where the trail diverged to the Savannah. But Hamilton's plans for colonizing his property were never fulfilled and most of the "Great Survey" tract was subdivided and sold to others.²⁶

3. Emigration in the 1750s

The land in the immediate area of Ninety Six on Saluda River was purchased for £8000 by William Simpson and Dr. John Murray in 1755.

23. Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 124. This sentiment for security in numbers was echoed by one Stephen Crell, of Saxegotha, near Congarees, who in 1751 after an Indian raid on this property advised the governor that the fertile lands about Ninety Six were conducive to the close settling of emigrants. Crell to Governor Glen, May 2, 1751, in McDowell, Indian Affairs, 1750-1754, p. 46.

24. Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, p. 124. See also Wallace, History of South Carolina, II, 42.

25. Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, pp. 119, 124-25, 194.

26. Watson, Old Ninety Six, p. 14; Michael J. Rodeffer, "Land Conveyances Pertaining to the Ninety Six Historic Site: A Partial and Preliminary Survey" (unpublished manuscript dated 1975 in the files of Ninety Six National Historic Site), p. 5; Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, p. 126. Hamilton's initial application was seemingly instigated by London Jews who were seeking a refuge in America for their poor. Henry Laurens, The Papers of Henry Laurens. Ed. by George C. Rogers, Jr., et al. (continued)

Joseph Salvador, a London Jew, at this time bought two adjacent tracts that also bordered the Saluda. Three years later the Simpson-Murray land was divided and Murray, of Charleston, obtained the part adjoining Saluda River. He presently built a plantation on Hard Labor Creek, about six miles west of Ninety Six. Dr. Murray appears to have negotiated the sale of Hamilton's other holdings.²⁷ Throughout the 1750s the tide of emigration into the backcountry gradually accelerated. Scarcely more than twenty years after its first documented appearance as a geographical entity Ninety Six had become the locus for an important frontier community on the Cherokee Path. Between 1752 and 1759 some 30,000 acres--140 tracts--had been surveyed along the Saluda River, over half of them on the south side of the stream along its tributaries, and notably along Ninety Six Creek.²⁸ Many of the emigrants were Scotch-Irish farmers from the backcountry of the northern provinces, although later a large number came directly from Ireland.

4. The Backcountry Settlers

While the Saluda watershed was settled rapidly because of the popular trade route paralleling that stream, other parts of the piedmont were populated more slowly. Above the Saluda, in the fork formed by the confluence of that stream with Broad River, the region's relative inaccessibility and the dearth of trading posts retarded settlement. Eventually a German community developed in the fork which loosely united the entire region.²⁹ Most backcountry settlers lived in strongly constructed log cabins built near streams, especially small creeks which were not so apt to flood but which furnished a reliable water supply. Furthermore, the bottom lands were particularly suitable for farming and such crops as corn, wheat, indigo, and flax were readily grown, along with the standard garden vegetables composing a subsistence economy. Domestic livestock comprised cattle and hogs, and husbandmen frequently augmented their diets by hunting wild animals, the skins of which were used for trade.³⁰

26. (continued) (4 vols.; Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1974), IV, 334n.

27. Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, pp. 126-27; Watson, Old Ninety Six, p. 14; Laurens, Papers, IV, 334n.

28. Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, pp. 117, 130.

29. Wallace, History of South Carolina, II, 44; Thomas H. Pope, The History of Newberry County, South Carolina, 1749-1860 (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1973), p. 506; Richard Maxwell Brown, The South Carolina Regulators (Cambridge: The Belknap Press, 1963), p. 2.

30. Pope, History of Newberry County, p. 5.

D. Ninety Six Settlement

1. The Community

Despite references to "Ninety Six settlement" during the early 1750s, the term actually signified a loose aggregation of homes scattered for several miles around the junction of the Cherokee Path and the Savannah trail.³¹ Approximately forty families from Virginia and elsewhere had settled between Stevens Creek, to the south, and Ninety Six, and more lands were available.³² The area had taken on the character of a definable community, if not a village.³³ One of the residents of the Ninety Six "settlement" was James Francis, who commanded the local militia and served as an officer of the provincial rangers.³⁴ Francis was also justice of the peace for the Ninety Six neighborhood and like many residents traded with the Cherokee towns to the west. Another trader, James Adair, resided with Francis in 1750 and 1751, while John Vann operated an establishment on the banks of Ninety Six Creek which was served by a mulatto, a mixed-blood Indian, and three blacks.³⁵ A cowpen was located in the vicinity, evidently built on the Murray property, and one of Murray's drovers was Andrew Williamson, who later played a prominent role in the history of Ninety Six.³⁶ By the mid-1750s other settlers had established flour mills and blacksmith shops in the area, industries which contributed to community growth and cohesiveness.³⁷

2. Robert Gouedy

The principal settler at Ninety Six and the most influential community resident over several decades was Robert Gouedy. For several years

31. See, for example, Adair, History of the American Indians, p. 372.

32. Wallace, History of South Carolina, II, 42-43.

33. Stephanie L. Holschlag and Michael J. Rodeffer, Ninety Six: Exploratory Excavations in the Village (Ninety Six, South Carolina: Ninety Six Historic Site, 1977), pp. 10-11.

34. Larry E. Ivers, Colonial Forts of South Carolina, 1670-1775 (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1970), p. 64.

35. Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, pp. 121-22; Logan, History of the Upper Country of South Carolina, I, 363.

36. Marvin L. Cann, Old Ninety Six and the South Carolina Back-country, 1700-1755 (Greenwood: Lander College, 1970), p. 5.

37. Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, pp. 131, 172.

Gouedy had been a trader to the Cherokees, but early in 1750 hostile warriors had raided his packtrain, causing him much financial loss. Although he returned to the Cherokees the next winter, Gouedy determined that it would be his last visit, and in May 1751, he led his packtrain down to Ninety Six loaded with skins and guarded by sixty-eight Cherokee warriors. At about this time Gouedy took up permanent abode at Ninety Six.³⁸ By 1753 he was importing rum from the coast for his store, where a major portion of the Cherokee trade was by then being transacted.³⁹ Apparently Gouedy bought his land from Thomas Nightengale, who owned property bounded on the north by Hamilton's Great Survey line.⁴⁰ Gouedy's initial tract enclosed 250 acres, straddled the Cherokee Path, and bordered the southern boundary of the Great Survey, but he also acquired two adjacent tracts that made his total land holdings substantial. Topographically, the land Gouedy claimed spread over several broad ridges that were drained by diverse creeks and small springs. At Ninety Six Gouedy became a merchant and farmer as well as a trader. In all, he eventually owned over 1,500 acres of land around Ninety Six and operated several plantations on which he raised wheat, corn, hemp, indigo, tobacco, and peaches. He ran cattle, horses, and sheep, and owned thirty-four slaves to assist these enterprises. An adept frontier entrepreneur, Gouedy loaned money at interest while operating his trading establishment, which purveyed cloth, beads, needles, thread, tools, gunpowder, lead, and rum, besides many other articles. Once, when a trader defaulted, Gouedy took two constables and six assistants into the wilderness and confiscated four slaves from the offender.⁴¹ At his death in 1775, he had nearly 500 persons financially indebted to him and had parlayed his

38. Cann, Ninety Six, p. 4. Gouedy's name appears in the literature variously spelled as Goudy, Gowdey, Gaudey, Gaudy, Gowdy, Goudee, Goude, Gandy, Gandey, and Gawdin. Marvin Cann determined the accepted spelling from a signature on Gouedy's will. A document in the William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan, purportedly signed by Robert Gouedy has the spelling as such. See James Francis et al to Governor William Henry Lyttelton, February 6, 1760. Lyttelton Papers.

39. Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, pp. 63, 132; Watson, Old Ninety Six, p. 15.

40. Rodeffer, "Land Conveyances," pp. 3-4; Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, p. 118.

41. Details of this incident appear in Captain Paul Demere to Governor William Henry Lyttelton, December 30, 1757, in William L. McDowell, Jr. (ed.), The Colonial Records of South Carolina. Documents relating to Indian Affairs, 1754-1765 (Columbia: South Carolina Department of Archives and History, 1970), pp. 426-27. See also Cornelius Dougharty to Demere, December 4, 1757, in ibid., p. 432.

property into one of the major commercial centers on the South Carolina frontier. His wife, son, and daughter survived him, as did three mixed-blood Indian children.⁴²

E. Indian Occupancy

1. Provincial Policy

Large-scale settlement of the backcountry awaited resolution of the matter of Indian occupancy of the land, as recognized by the provincial government. The maintenance of good Indian relations was important, not only for the orderly settlement of the colony, but for promoting the very substantial and lucrative Indian trade that existed. Early in the eighteenth century the government had established a factor, or trade agent, among the Cherokees at Keowee, and there occasionally occurred exchanges of emissaries between that place and Charleston.⁴³ Another factor was located by the government at Congarees, where the Catawba and Cherokee Paths converged from the upcountry. A fort erected there in 1718 was abandoned four years later because of burdensome maintenance costs.⁴⁴ So in order to protect the trade the provincial government sought to curry favor with the different tribes and to prevent Indian antagonisms from arising and possibly disrupting the trade economy.⁴⁵

Basically the same policy lasted throughout the settlement period. The government endeavored to keep the tribes peaceful in order to insure continuance of the trade, to offset French and Spanish intrigues, and also to encourage expansion into western South Carolina. Fears among the settlers, however, were such that they petitioned the Governor and

42. Cann, Ninety Six, p. 4; Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, p. 132.

43. See, for example, William L. McDowell (ed.), The Colonial Records of South Carolina. Journals of the Commissioners of the Indian Trade, September 20, 1710-August 29, 1718 (Columbia: South Carolina Archives Department, 1955), pp. 188, 221.

44. Logan, History of the Upper Country of South Carolina, I, 320; A.S. Salley, Jr., The History of Orangeburg County, South Carolina, from its First Settlement to the Close of the Revolutionary War (Orangeburg: R. Lewis Berry, Printer, 1898), p. 20; Crane, Southern Frontier, p. 188. A useful map showing the location of Indian towns in upper South Carolina was prepared in 1725 by Commissioner of Indian Affairs John Herbert. See "A New Mapp of His Majesty's Flourishing Province of South Carolina Shewing Settlements of Y' English, French and Indian Nation." Map Division, Library of Congress.

45. See McDowell, Journals, 1710-1718, p. 221.

the assembly for forts to be built in the different settlements. Following Glen's successful diplomacy with the Cherokees at Ninety Six, however, these demands were dropped in favor of those for improved roads on the frontier.⁴⁶

2. Increasing Indian Contention

Despite its outward successes, Governor Glen's trip also occasioned certain ill results. It caused strained relations among the Cherokee towns, some of which were on good terms with the French, and produced antagonisms directed towards many of the white traders.⁴⁷ Yet the threat of Indian hostilities was something most settlers around Ninety Six learned to live with. During the spring of 1748 the backcountry residents recruited two companies of rangers, each with fourteen men, to traverse the land between Congarees and the Catawbias and to capture or kill any Frenchmen or French-allied Indians they encountered. These rangers were shortly replaced by British troops who were inexperienced in frontier fighting and whose achievements in the interior consequently were few. As further precaution, a stockade fort was erected at Congarees. Soon French-inspired warriors began raiding the settlers.⁴⁸ Intertribal conflicts also occurred. One in 1750 involved strife between the Yuchi and another tribe, erroneously designated the Monongahela Indians. After an attack on the Yuchis failed, the offenders fled towards Ninety Six, discarding guns, blankets and plunder in their haste to flee the pursuing Yuchis. The Indians avoided Ninety Six but undoubtedly instilled momentary fears among the settlers in the area.⁴⁹

F. The Outbreak of 1751

1. The Cherokees Resist

Early residents of the Ninety Six area thus had to contend with the constant threat of Indian trouble. Besides Gouedy's, several traders'

46. Roger Gibson to Glen, May 9, 1751, in William L. McDowell (ed.), The Colonial Records of South Carolina. Documents relating to Indian Affairs, May 21, 1750-August 7, 1754 (Columbia: South Carolina Archives Department, 1958), p. 52.

47. Corkran, Carolina Indian Frontier, p. 40.

48. W. Roy Smith, South Carolina as a Royal Province, 1719-1776 (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1903), p. 184.

49. Chapman, History of Edgefield County, p. 6; Adair, History of the American Indians, pp. 372-73. According to Swanton and Hodge, there was no tribe known as the Monongahela Indians.

storehouses stood at Ninety Six during this period,⁵⁰ and when Indian attacks began in the spring of 1751 Ninety Six became a principal concentration point for traders fleeing the Cherokee country. This particular outbreak was brought on by a host of problems, chief among them the ongoing conflict between the Cherokees and Creeks, both of which tribes were important buffers against the French. Indian outrages had previously occurred at various points around the province, including the outlying areas of Charleston. Governor Glen responded by ordering a halt to all trade with the Cherokees and the withdrawal of all traders from their towns.⁵¹ Yet Indian disturbances mounted in the backcountry, locally instigated in retaliation for the theft, by whites, of some Cherokee deerskins near Savannah River. When Justice of the Peace Francis at Ninety Six refused to acknowledge the Indians' complaints they reacted by forcibly expelling numerous traders and killing several of them.⁵² Many settlers from the Ninety Six area fled down to Congarees. A participant, James Maxwell, related an account of the exodus:

At a Place, called Little River, one James Portershell and William Veal came to us and told us they had made their Escape from Kewohee; and that they believed all or the most part of the white men in those towns were killed the same Night. John Vann, who had fled, with his Wife and Family from Ninety Six, told Us that one John Watt's [sic] and others were come that Way and said they narrowly escaped with Life. And that one Hugh Morphy going to the Cherokees was shot at Coronacre [near Ninety Six] through the Arm but had got clear of the Villians that shot him. And also that that Neighborhood had fled and left their Habitations.⁵³

2. Movements Around Ninety Six

By the first part of May a great many Ninety Six area residents had abandoned their homes for Congarees and Governor Glen was apprised of

50. Ivers, Colonial Forts, p. 64.

51. Wallace, History of South Carolina, II, 2.

52. Stephen Crell to Governor Glen, April 7, 1751, in McDowell, Indian Affairs, 1750-1754, p. 8. See also, "Affidavit of Robert Gandy [Gouedy]," June 5, 1751, in ibid., p. 72. For Francis's defense of his action, see "Deposition of James Francis," in ibid., pp. 24-25.

53. Deposition, May 5, 1751, in Olsberg, Journal of the Commons House of Assembly, 1750-1751, pp. 443-44. Also, with slight variation, in McDowell, Indian Affairs, 1750-1754, pp. 117-18.

their circumstances.⁵⁴ In April the Assembly had decided to reestablish local ranger units in the backcountry and provided for the equipping of four troops, each of two officers and twenty men, plus Indian guides.⁵⁵ And in June, 1751, the provincial legislature allocated £4000 for the posting of "two hundred Men under proper Officers at Ninety Six, where they may prevent the Incursions of the Indians. . . ." ⁵⁶ The Governor directed Captain Roger Gibson, who commanded a company of rangers at Wateree, and Captain Francis of Ninety Six, each to move, respectively, between Congarees and Ninety Six and between Ninety Six and the Catawba Nation. Gibson and Francis would likely meet at Ninety Six, whereupon they were instructed "to visit some of the Settlements in those Parts, and to assure the Settlers that Nothing shall be omitted by this Government, that may tend to their Security."⁵⁷ Learning of a large assembly of Indians near the forks of the Saluda, Gibson took reinforcements with him on his march to Ninety Six.⁵⁸

Gibson camped a mile above Ninety Six. With a small detachment he journeyed to nearby Coronaca, seeking Indians who had killed cattle, destroyed corn crops, and committed "other Acts of Violence" there.⁵⁹ Meantime, James Francis had experienced similar loss at the hands of Cherokees who visited his home in his absence, helped themselves to the corn, killed some calves nearby, and were generally "insolent in their

54. Logan, History of the Upper Country of South Carolina, I, 443. On May 9, Captain Roger Gibson wrote Glen that "the Inhabitants of 96, Seludy and upper Inhabitations of Congree River, are fled to the Congree Fort for Safety because of the Cherokee and Norward Indians who have killed several white People." McDowell, Indian Affairs, 1750-1754, p. 50.

55. Smith, South Carolina as a Royal Province, p. 185.

56. R. Nicholas Olsberg (ed.), The Colonial Records of South Carolina. The Journal of the Commons House of Assembly, 23 April 1750-31 August 1751 (Columbia: South Carolina Department of Archives and History, 1974), p. 519.

57. McDowell, Indian Affairs, 1750-1754, p. 42. For Glen's instructions to Captains Gibson, Minnick, and Fairchild, see ibid., pp. 168, 169.

58. Olsberg, Journal of the Commons House of Assembly, 1750-1751, p. 489.

59. Gibson to Glen, July 22, 1751, in McDowell, Indian Affairs, 1750-1754, p. 32.

Demands."⁶⁰ He urged Governor Glen to secure the backcountry with a strong outpost:

To such lengths have matters now gone on the frontiers, that peace and quietness can no more be expected, unless a fort is built here on some commanding spot, and a company of rangers sent up, of sufficient force to drive these . . . Indians from molesting and destroying our effects, which are our livelihood.⁶¹

"It is the Desire of these upper Inhabitants," Roger Gibson informed the Governor, "that we should go no further up, but build a Fort near 96, that they may have Recourse to us for Safety in Case of Danger. . . ." ⁶² Therefore, in August Captain John Fairchild reported to Glen that he had erected, near Ninety Six, "a small Fort with Puncheons" as "a Place of Retreat."⁶³ This stockade post, covering about an acre, actually stood on a hill fourteen miles northwest of Ninety Six on John's Creek, overlooking the Cherokee Path. It was apparently constructed of split logs embedded vertically in an embankment of soil, and had a covered way running to a nearby stream from which water could be obtained.⁶⁴

3. End of the Conflict

Despite the anxious preparations of the backcountry settlers, no major Indian attacks occurred. The Indian war for them amounted to a number of isolated, sporadic incidents more harmful to their livelihoods than to their lives. In December, 1751, a war party entered the fork area of the Saluda and Broad Rivers killing cattle, stealing horses,

60. Francis to Glen, July 24, 1751, in ibid., p. 29.

61. Francis to Glen, July, 1751, in Logan, History of the Upper Country of South Carolina, p. 446. See also Francis to Glen, July 24, 1751, in McDowell, Indian Affairs, 1750-1754, p. 31.

62. Gibson to Glen, July 22, 1751, in McDowell, Indian Affairs, 1750-1754, p. 33.

63. McDowell, Indian Affairs, 1750-1754, p. 122.

64. Logan, History of the Upper Country of South Carolina, I, 440-41, 442. John Logan located the tentative site of this post prior to 1859 when his book was published. At that time the remains of the covered way could still be traced. The site was on property owned in 1859 by Mr. P.D. Klugh. Ibid., p. 440, 441. See also, Chapman, History of Edgefield County, p. 7; Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, p. 201n.

and creating fear and general havoc until they departed.⁶⁵ An uneasy peace settled over the backcountry in 1752 after Governor Glen managed to influence an end to the conflict between the Cherokees and the Creeks.⁶⁶ For the moment, settlement could resume in the environs of Ninety Six.

65. Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, p. 201.

66. Wallace, History of South Carolina, II, 4.

CHAPTER II: THE FORT AT GOUEDY'S

A. British Interior Policy

Throughout the expansion into the backcountry after 1750 the South Carolina provincial government attempted to ease Cherokee sensitivities over the loss of their land while striving to solidify territorial gains, a dual objective aided by the establishment of military posts at key locations on the frontier. Late in 1753, acceding to requests by the Cherokees of the lower towns, Governor Glen led an expedition to Keowee and selected the site where Fort Prince George was erected. This post was supposed to protect the Cherokees from the French, but in reality the British built the fort to insure their own security against either potential adversary, as well as to stem intertribal squabbles detrimental to white settlement.¹ Approximately fifty men from the Ninety Six area were hired to aid in construction of the fort.²

1. The Cherokee Cession of 1755

A major treaty with Cherokee leaders was concluded in November, 1755, by which the Indians ceded a huge tract of 8,635 square miles running from the Waterge to the Savannah River in the central and western parts of the province.³ The cession encompassed the lands about Ninety Six, although sections of the ground had been transacted for earlier with the headmen of the lower Cherokee towns.⁴ This treaty was meant to further offset French influence which threatened to jeopardize British-Indian relations in the west. Also, the government desired full restoration of trade with the Cherokees, sporadically disrupted in the mid-1740s by the Anglo-French rivalry and thereafter by the warfare of 1751. By treating with the tribesmen in 1755, Governor Glen hoped to forestall chances of an alliance

1. Wallace, History of South Carolina, II, 4; Corkran, Carolina Indian Frontier, p. 45. The building of a post among the Cherokees had been considered as early as 1729 by the assembly. Ivers, Colonial Forts, p. 70.

2. Camm, Ninety Six, pp. 5-6.

3. Charles C. Royce, "The Cherokee Nation of Indians," Fifth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology, 1883-84 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1887), p. 378. The previous major cession had been in 1721 when the Indians surrendered occupancy of 2,623 square miles lying below present Columbia. Ibid.

4. See Pope, History of Newberry County, p. 2.

between them and the French.⁵

2. Deteriorating Relations with the French

Relations between the two colonial powers had continued to worsen in the early 1750s and in 1754 the French and Indian War erupted, pitting the British and their aboriginal allies against the French and theirs. The conflict lasted into the next decade, with the principal fighting confined to the major waterways from the St. Lawrence through the Ohio and Mississippi Valleys. In the southern regions the warfare commonly took the form of Indian atrocity, reflecting the weighty influence over certain tribes wielded by French traders along the Mississippi.⁶

3. Fort Prince George

The erection of Fort Prince George in 1753 marked the beginning of Britain's attempt to hold western South Carolina from inroads by the French and their Indians. The post was also to instill among the Cherokees confidence in continued British trade interest in the upcountry. Like most western outposts, Fort Prince George was a montage of European ideal and frontier expediency. Expenses in design, construction, and maintenance determined that the post be adequate, but not much more.⁷ Most such forts, Fort Prince George included, consisted of a stockade arranged in the shape of a square and buttressed by an earthen epaulement six feet in height. Fort Prince George had a surrounding ditch and glacis, and a bastion at each corner, each occupied by four cannon. Inside was a barracks capable of housing 100 soldiers.⁸

The average life of one of these hastily contrived frontier posts was three years. By then the logs, subjected to the alternating ravages of

5. M. Eugene Sirmans, Colonial South Carolina: A Political History, 1663-1763 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1966), pp. 266-67; Royce, "The Cherokee Nation," p. 145.

6. For details of the Anglo-French rivalry contributing to the Indian war in South Carolina, see P.M. Hammer, Fort Loudoun on the Little Tennessee. South Carolina Pamphlets, XLIII (Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton Printing Company, n.d.).

7. Douglas W. Marshall, "The British Military Engineers, 1741-1783: A Study of Organization, Social Origin, and Cartography" (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Michigan, 1976), pp. 20-24.

8. Alexander Hewatt, An Historical Account of the Rise and Progress of the Colonies of South Carolina and Georgia (2 vols.; London: Printed for Alexander Donaldson, 1779), II, 204-05.

heat, cold, rain, and dry spells, usually began to deteriorate.⁹ Such was the fate of Fort Prince George, which by 1756, three years after its construction, was rapidly falling into decay. Palisades had collapsed, breaches were present in the walls, and the ditches were filling in. In July of that year repairs to the post were begun.¹⁰ The condition of Fort Prince George three years after it was built typically illustrates what occurred to other British-built posts in the backcountry.

B. Events Around Ninety Six

1. Gouedy's Illicit Trade

The presence of Fort Prince George accelerated the flow of traffic through the Ninety Six community and the trail junction became a popular way-station enroute to the post at Keowee.¹¹ Glen's 1753 visit also prompted more settlers to take up tracts around Ninety Six and the adjacent countryside. While Glen was at Ninety Six he listened as sixteen men claimed headrights to land in the area.¹² Robert Gouedy's store started to become a commercial nucleus at this time. Gouedy had probably built his home and store on high ground slightly more than a mile southwest of the meeting point of the Cherokee and Savannah trails.¹³ While his operation became highly successful, provincial officials grew alarmed that he was providing rum to the Indians. In 1753 the Council of Indian Affairs registered concern over his having "carried up two Hogsheads of Rum" apparently "for his Store at Ninety Six."¹⁴ Three years later Gouedy was still in business, evidently supplying the liquor to traders to take among the Indians.¹⁵

9. Marshall, "British Military Engineers," p. 26.

10. Logan, History of the Upper Country of South Carolina, I, 511-12. Archeological investigation of the site of Fort Prince George took place in 1966-68. Today the site lies beneath Keowee Lake. Ivers, Colonial Forts, p. 72.

11. Cann, Ninety Six, pp. 5-6. See, for example, J. Ralph Randolph, British Travelers Among the Southern Indians, 1660-1763 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1973), p. 133.

12. Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, p. 130.

13. This was on a tract of land lately owned by Dorothy N. Clark. Rodeffer, "Land Conveyances," p. 3.

14. McDowell, Indian Affairs, 1750-1754, p. 170.

15. Captain Raymond Demere to Governor Lyttelton, July 25, 1756, in McDowell, Indian Affairs, 1754-1765, p. 149.

An army officer at Fort Prince George protested Gouedy's actions to the Governor:

I . . . recommend to your Excellency's Consideration the most pernicious Consequence that attends bringing Rum into this [Cherokee] Nation and hope that proper Measures will be immediately taken to put a Stop to such destructive Proceedings. Robert Goudy I am informed stil [sic] continues to furnish Pack Horsemen and other idle strowling Fellows with Rum and he always has a Number of Keggs by him for that Purpose.¹⁶

2. Glen Returns

In 1754 the backcountry experienced another Indian scare. Ninety Six again became an assembly place for settlers fleeing their homes and it is possible that some temporary fortifications were built there at this time.¹⁷ Conditions remained uneasy, aggravated by a sharp curtailment of the Indian trade by the government. Governor Glen returned to Ninety Six in May, 1756, in conjunction with the proposed construction of yet another military station on the frontier. This post, to be erected on the Tennessee River in the land of the Overhill Cherokees, was to be called Fort Loudoun and was intended to promote good relations with the Indians while preventing them from tilting towards the French.¹⁸ Because of fears of an Indian attack, Glen's retinue this time included a complement of provincial militia, besides a work party scheduled to begin building the post. Enroute from Charleston, the Governor visited Saluda Old Town, a back-country settlement located above Congaree near the Saluda River. Then he moved with his wagon train to Ninety Six, where, as a precautionary gesture, Glen ordered several militia companies to remain in case the Indians threatened to strike.¹⁹ Before Glen could resume his journey a courier overtook him with a message from the newly-appointed governor, William Henry Lyttleton, ordering his recall.²⁰ At

16. Demere to Governor Lyttleton, August 8, 1756, in *ibid.*, p. 160. On the other hand, Glen embraced the practice of supplying rum to prominent Cherokee leaders for diplomatic and political reasons. See John Elliott to Glen, September 25, 1755, in *ibid.*, p. 79.

17. Salley, *History of Orangeburg County*, p. 235.

18. Corkran, *Carolina Indian Frontier*, p. 50; Edward McCrady, *The History of South Carolina under the Royal Government, 1719-1756* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1899), p. 323.

19. Logan, *History of the Upper Country of South Carolina*, I, 513.

20. Adair, *History of the American Indians*, p. 259.

Ninety Six part of the expedition was formally disbanded and Glen prepared to return to Charleston.²¹ Captain Raymond Demere wrote Lyttleton that "I thought it necessary not to leave this place until I saw Mr. Glen into his coach for his return . . . , the people here not being of the best sort."²² On June 9 a man named Benjamin Singleton reached Ninety Six driving before him 100 "fatt Steers pursuant to contract with Governor Glen. . . ." Singleton had brought some of the animals 200 miles and Glen, having been replaced as chief provincial executive, now refused to accept them. Singleton set out for Keowee with his beeves where he remained while the matter awaited resolution by Governor Lyttelton.²³ Meanwhile, Lyttelton had sent dispatches for delivery by Robert Gouedy to "the headmen of the Cherrockees," presumably announcing the change in provincial leadership.²⁴ After Glen's departure, Demere and his diminished command pushed on to Fort Prince George, to determine for the new governor the condition of that post and to embark troops to erect Fort Loudoun.²⁵

3. Establishment of Fort Loudoun

Fort Loudoun was built about ninety miles northwest of Fort Prince George. Engineer John G.W. DeBrahm laid out the fort, and while enroute to the site in August, 1756, he tarried at Ninety Six, where he lost two horses, strayed or stolen.²⁶ Erected by provincial troops from South Carolina and Virginia,²⁷ Fort Loudoun consisted of the usual bastioned wooden stockade with a ditch and glacis. Like other forts on the frontier, it was subjected to climatic extremes contributing to its steady deterioration. In 1759, within three years of Fort Loudoun's construction, an

21. Logan, History of the Upper Country of South Carolina, I, 514; Corkran, Carolina Indian Frontier, p. 50.

22. Quoted in John P. Brown, Old Frontiers: The Story of the Cherokee Indians from Earliest Times to the Date of Their Removal to the West, 1838 (Kingsport, Tennessee: Southern Publishers, Inc., 1938), p. 62.

23. Demere to Lyttelton, June 10, 1756, in McDowell, Indian Affairs, 1754-1765, p. 120.

24. Ibid., pp. 119-20.

25. Demere to Lyttleton, June 9, 1756, in ibid., p. 118, McCrady, South Carolina under the Royal Government, p. 324; Snowden, History of South Carolina, I, 265.

26. Brown, Old Frontiers, p. 62; Louis DeVorse, Jr. (ed.) DeBrahm's Report of the General Survey in the Southern District of North America (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1971), p. 25.

27. Brown, Old Frontiers, p. 62; McCrady, South Carolina under the Royal Government, p. 323.

observer reported to Lyttelton that "there is two Large Logg houses in the fort which is of Little or no Service, & as they are not Bark'd [they] are daily rotting. . . ."28

C. Construction of Fort Ninety Six

1. Tensions Mount

With the increasing population of the backcountry around Ninety Six it was inevitable that a fort would eventually be erected there. What finally prompted construction of a formal military post were steadily worsening relations between whites and the Cherokee Indians during the late 1750s. Problems began when white settlers around Long Cane Creek started trespassing upon traditional tribal hunting grounds. Then in the winter of 1757-58 a party of Cherokee hunters was murdered near Edisto River. The tribesmen suspected white settlers of committing the deed and tempers flared on both sides. Hoping to stem Indian frustration, Governor Lyttelton clumsily tried to ascribe the incident to other Indians.²⁹

In the spring of 1758, to calm Cherokee feelings, a large number of supplies was sent from Gouedy's trading post to the headman known as the Great Warrior and his followers. The articles included tons of cloth, powder and lead, knives, trade muskets, blankets, axes, and rum. But all this was to no avail, for soon a group of Virginians entered the region and began indiscriminately killing Cherokees to collect the bounty offered by their province for scalps of enemy Indians.³⁰ Thirty Indians were thus murdered during the summer of 1758. The Cherokee headmen demanded revenge, and their continued support for Britain over France in the interior now seemed questionable. Moving to mend the rift in Cherokee-British relations, Governor Lyttelton asked the headmen to send runners to head off war parties already enroute to fall on the offending Virginians. Hoping for a resumption in trade, the headmen relented, but on another front Cherokee assistance to the British army withered with wholesale desertions of the tribesmen.³¹ Meantime, the French and their Indian allies worked to promote discord further west, and in the spring of 1759 a group of Overhills, chided by a dissident Creek, went off to avenge the earlier losses. They killed nineteen

28. Paul Demere to Lyttelton, February 27, 1759. Lyttelton Papers.

29. Corkran, Carolina Indian Frontier, p. 52.

30. McDowell, Indian Affairs, 1754-1765, pp. 456-57.

31. Wallace, History of South Carolina, II, 24, 24; Corkran, Carolina Indian Frontier, p. 53.

whites in North Carolina and defiantly brought their scalps into Keowee near Fort Prince George. In response, Lyttelton requested that a like number of offenders be brought before him at Charleston.³² Simultaneously, rumors swept the backcountry that the French were conspiring with Creek Indians to enlist the Lower Cherokees in a war against the British colonists,³³ and by late summer the rangers were again vigorously patrolling the country around Ninety Six.³⁴ It was clear that the independently organized Cherokee towns were by no means under rigid British control, and as pro-British unity among the tribesmen crumbled, frontier settlers were thrown into turmoil. Traders and missionaries remained in the Indian lands at the risk of their lives.³⁵

2. Lyttelton Comes to Ninety Six

Governor Lyttelton determined to take strong measures to guard against French-incited Indian attacks in South Carolina. Earlier he had ordered a halt in the delivery of arms and ammunition to the Cherokees. In October, 1759, he conferred with certain of the Cherokee chiefs at Charleston and enumerated a list of grievances against the tribesmen. He further told them that he was about to start with an army on a journey to their country to demand their good behavior. The following month Lyttelton gathered together a sizable militia force and headed for Fort Prince George and the Lower Cherokee towns. On the way he passed through Ninety Six. In December, Lyttelton signed a non-aggression treaty with the Lower Cherokees at Fort Prince George, and to assure peaceful compliance twenty-two tribesmen were placed under guard at the post. Lyttelton then returned to Charleston.³⁶

The first formal military outpost at Ninety Six dates from the time of Governor Lyttelton's visit on his way to Fort Prince George. The post was needed for obvious reasons--as a supply station for the rangers and militiamen, as a refuge for settlers, and as a garrisoned magazine at a strategic spot on the road between Fort Prince George and Congarees.

32. Corkran, Carolina Indian Frontier, p. 54; Grace Steele Woodward, The Cherokees (Norman; University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), p. 73.

33. Wallace, History of South Carolina, II, 25.

34. See Samuel Hunt to Lyttelton, September 20, 1759. Lyttelton Papers.

35. See Randolph, British Travelers Among the Southern Indians, p. 135.

36. Snowden, History of South Carolina, I, 266; Wallace, History of South Carolina, II, 25-26; Iyers, Colonial Forts, p. 17; Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, pp. 218-19.

Lyttelton reached Ninety Six at 2 p.m., November 21,³⁷ where he found the existing structures consisting of Robert Gouedy's house, barn, and several outbuildings. The next day Lyttelton's party reconnoitered the ground "for a proper Place to build a Magazine and Stockade-Fort to secure Ammunition and Provision, and a Retreat if necessary: to save Time, Expense and Trouble, Mr. Gouedy's Barn was fixed on for a Storehouse, and it was resolved to stockade it in."³⁸ Captain Richard Dudgeon, an engineer, proceeded to construct a stockade around Gouedy's barn.³⁹

3. Building the Post

Fort Ninety Six was built in a week's time. Following most of the usual precepts of frontier fort construction, it consisted of a simple stockade of upright logs arranged tightly together along a perimeter and set firmly into an earthen embankment.⁴⁰ A trench for the stockade was prepared by militia workmen and local volunteers well plied with rum and assisted by neighborhood slaves.⁴¹ The fort went up quickly, and within a few days the stockade was completed with two bastions at diagonally opposite corners, a banquette or firing step, and a gate. It was square-shaped, with each side measuring ninety feet in length.⁴² There was no ditch surrounding the stockade, a slight deviation from theoretical maxim. Inside was Gouedy's barn, now a military storehouse, and along one side of the storehouse were erected sheds to serve as crude barracks for the troops posted there.⁴³ On November 29, Lyttelton's army departed for Fort Prince George, which place they reached December 9. A temporary

37. South Carolina Gazette, December 8, 1759; Ivers, Colonial Forts, p. 64.

38. South Carolina Gazette, December 8, 1759.

39. South Carolina Gazette, December 15, 1759; Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, p. 219.

40. Ivers, Colonial Forts, pp. 26, 28. Lyttelton wrote: "I Constructed a good Stockade at a place called Ninety Six to secure a Magazine of Provision." Quoted in Stanley South, Historical Perspective at Ninety Six with a Summary of Exporatory Excavations at Holmes' Fort and the Town Blockhouse (Columbia: University of South Carolina Institute of Archeology and Anthropology. Research Manuscript Series, No. 9, May, 1971), p. 14.

41. South Carolina Gazette, December 15, 1759; Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, p. 176.

42. James Francis to Commissioner, March 6, 1760, Lyttelton Papers; South Carolina Gazette, December 15, 1759; Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, p. 210.

43. South Carolina Gazette, December 15, 1759.

garrison, partly composed of soldiers afflicted with measles and diarrhea, was left to occupy the fort at Ninety Six.⁴⁴

4. Description of Fort Ninety Six

The new post seems to have been universally known as Fort Ninety Six and was the most substantial stronghold in the vicinity. Though smaller and weaker than forts like Prince George and Loudoun, it was stronger than most of the private enclosures commonly built of plank around the residences of inhabitants in the backcountry.⁴⁵ Some time after he had laid out the fort at Ninety Six, Captain Dudgeon described it in correspondence to General Jeffrey Amherst, British Commander-in-Chief in America:

This Fort is of the Star kind with four angles, the Exterior side Ninety feet, a simple stockade without a Ditch Erected. . . to secure a large Convenient Barn ready Built, which was Converted into a Store House to Lodge Provisions [sic] & in, . . . But from its Construction & Situation has neither the Strength nor advantages Requisite [sic] for a Post of Consequence.⁴⁶

Unfortunately, Dudgeon could not furnish Amherst with detailed plans, for, as he lamented, "the Accidentally breaking of my Theodolite [,] the only Instrument I had for the purpose [,] rendred me Incapable of Executing this part of my duty."⁴⁷

Nevertheless, a fairly complete description of the appearance of Fort Ninety Six can be attained. It was square, "of the Star kind," as Dudgeon reported, probably suggesting the most basic design of star fort. Each side was composed of a log stockade ninety feet long. According to one authority,

the stockades or picket-works usually employed against Indians

44. Ibid.; South Carolina Gazette, December 29, 1759; Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, p. 219.

45. Ivers, Colonial Forts, p. 64; Wallace, History of South Carolina, II, 32; Pope, History of Newberry County, p. 21.

46. Dudgeon to Amherst, August 16, 1760. Jeffrey Amherst Papers. British Public Record Office (BPRO) 294 WO 34/82. Microfilm. Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress.

47. Ibid. Archeological examination of this area in the 1960s located one of the palisade ditches. The trace measured eighty feet on an east-west line. Stanley South, Exploratory Archeology at Ninety Six (38GN1-38GN5) (Columbia: University of South Carolina Institute of Archeology and Anthropology. Research Manuscript Series, No. 6, September, 1970), pp. 5-6.

are composed of rough trunks of young trees cut into lengths of 12 or 14 feet, and averaging 10 or 12 inches in diameter. They should be firmly planted close together. A banquette or step will generally be required, and the loop-holes so arranged that they cannot be used from the outside.⁴⁸

Logs for the stockade were probably left with bark to retard rotting of the wood. Two corners of the fort were bastioned so that defenders positioned at each of these diagonally opposite angles might have unobstructed fields of fire along two sides.⁴⁹ Inside, along the base of the stockade, an earthen or wooden banquette was built sufficiently high for the defenders firing through the loopholes--intervally spaced apertures in the stockade walls--to repel an attacking force.⁵⁰ Presumably during the years it endured, the post was maintained and kept in repairs by Robert Gouedy, around whose barn it was built and whose goods it helped to protect.⁵¹ Thus stood Fort Ninety Six amid worsening conditions between the English and their former Cherokee allies. For the people within its immediate reach, the post would be their salvation.

48. Thomas Wilhelm, A Military Dictionary and Gazetteer (Philadelphia: L.R. Hamersley and Company, 1881), p. 555.

49. That Fort Ninety Six had only two bastions instead of four is inferred from the description of an observer in 1761 who reported it as having "a kind of a Flank at two opposite Angles, where a sentry can Stand. . . ." Alexander Moneypenny, "Journal of Alexander Moneypenny." South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia. Microfilm, p. 25.

50. Wilhelm, Military Dictionary and Gazetteer, pp. 44, 289.

51. South, Historical Perspective at Ninety Six, p. 32.

CHAPTER III: NINETY SIX IN THE CHEROKEE WAR

A. Lyttelton and the Indians

By the time Governor Lyttelton reached Fort Prince George in December, 1759, the South Carolina frontier was like an incendiary torch seeking ignition. British settlers and traders already lay dead in the backcountry, killed by Cherokee warriors angered by Lyttelton's imposed arms embargo and by the deaths of their tribesmen at the hands of the Virginians. Fort Loudoun was in a state of siege, literally cut off from relief by the presence of the Overhill bands. Scores of traders had fled the Indian country to Fort Prince George and safety.¹

In his meetings with the Cherokee headmen Lyttelton demanded hostages to insure that the culprits who murdered whites be caught and punished. To this the chiefs grudgingly assented. Little Carpenter, a principal headman, negotiated a treaty with Lyttelton which was to restore peace on the frontier once the Cherokees turned over the offenders. For its part, the provincial government would then reopen the trade and free the captives in Fort Prince George. Lyttelton hurriedly returned to Charleston before an outbreak of smallpox at the fort could cause large scale desertions in his command.²

B. The Long Canes Massacre

But permanent peace with the Cherokees was illusory. Lyttelton had no sooner arrived back in Charleston when the frontier became inflamed as warriors pressured frightened traders still in their country and drove many settlers to the safety of their rude residential forts. Fort Prince George was surrounded by Indians who sought release of the twenty-two hostages held within.³ Their efforts fruitless, the enraged warriors turned with fury on the settlements. The first concerted attack came February 1 against the settlers of Long Canes, and its result was devastating. Eight days later the massacre was described in the South

1. Wallace, History of South Carolina, II, 25.

2. Ibid., p. 26; Snowden, History of South Carolina, I, 267-68; Corkran, Carolina Indian Frontier, pp. 56, 57.

3. Corkran, Carolina Indian Frontier, p. 57; John Richard Alden, John Stuart and the Southern Colonial Frontier (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1944), p. 103.

Carolina Gazette by an emissary arrived from Ninety Six:

Yesterday se'nnight the whol of the Long-Cane Settlers, to the Number of 150 Souls, moved off with most of their Effects in Waggons; to go towards Augusta in Georgia, and in a few Hours after their setting off, were surprized and attacked by about 100 Cherokees on Horseback, while they were getting their Waggons out of a boggy Place: They had amongst them 40 Gunmen, who might have made a very good Defence, but unfortunately their Guns were in the Waggons; the few that recovered theirs, fought the Indians Half an Hour, and were at last obliged to fly: In the action they lost 7 Waggons, and 40 of their People killed or taken (including Women and Children) the Rest got safe to Augusta. . . .⁴

A few days after the Long Canes Massacre searchers found nine or more children who had survived the attack, some being scalped and left for dead. The Indians also attacked settlers along Stevens Creek and on February 3 they struck the newly stockaded post at Ninety Six. After two hours the tribesmen withdrew with two of their number dead.⁵ In the forks of the Broad and Saluda some 200 war-painted Cherokees surprised and killed forty more settlers.⁶

C. Warfare on the Frontier

1. Assault on Fort Prince George

On February 16 an incident occurred that fired passions on both sides. A Cherokee headman lured Ensign Coytmore, commandant of Fort Prince George, outside the gates. He walked into an ambush. Coytmore fell mortally wounded but a companion, though injured, managed to reach the gate of the fort with the wounded officer. Ensign Alexander Miln assumed command and ordered the twenty-two Cherokee hostages in the post placed in irons. The Indians resisted and in the resulting affray one soldier was killed and others injured. Furious at this development, the garrison proceeded

4. The account appeared February 9, 1760. Quoted in A.S. Salley, Jr., "The Calhoun Family of South Carolina," South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine, VII (January, 1906), p. 85.

5. Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, p. 222; Pope, History of Newberry County, pp. 21-22; Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, History of the Indian Tribes of the United States (Philadelphia; J.B. Lippincott and Company, 1857), p. 239.

6. Corkran, Carolina Indian Frontier, p. 239.

to kill every one of the Cherokees. Shortly thereafter Coytmore died.⁷ The Indians were swift to retaliate and in the following weeks large numbers swept through the Carolina backcountry from Virginia to Georgia killing, burning, and looting. Cherokee snipers invested Fort Prince George while over the mountains Fort Loudoun was cut off from all communication from the east. By killing the hostages the garrison had unwittingly enlarged the war, for the incident touched many Indian families causing the Lower, Middle, and Upper towns to unite to avenge the losses. French attacks multiplied in the backcountry, too, and all the white settlers above Congarees scampered to safety wherever they could find it.⁸

When the attacks began many of the settlers quickly raised crude forts around their homes. By April, 1760, more than a score of these tiny, sturdy barriers stood along creeks and rivers of the region around Ninety Six.⁹ Fashioned of stout planks, these home stockades stood about twelve feet in height and some probably had a ditch encircling them.¹⁰ During the winter of 1760-61 an estimated 1500 people occupied some thirty of these plank forts in the upcountry.¹¹

2. Preparations at Ninety Six

As a primary refuge center for settlers in the Saluda Country, Fort Ninety Six became a favorite target for Indian activity during the early months of 1760. Some Cherokee warriors started for the post late in January, but the garrison was forewarned of the advance by two Indian women who carried word of the impending attack from Fort Prince George. Their alarm was received January 30, and the same day two traders arrived

7. Alden, John Stuart, pp. 103-04; Snowden, History of South Carolina, I, 268; Corkran, Carolina Indian Frontier, p. 58; Schoolcraft, Indian Tribes of the United States, pp. 239-40; See Alexander Miln to Lyttelton, February 24, 1760, in McDowell, Indian Affairs, 1754-1765, p. 497.

8. Chapman J. Milling, Red Carolinians (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1940), p. 301; Brown, Old Frontiers, p. 95; Corkran, Carolina Indian Frontier, p. 58.

9. Alden, John Stuart, p. 103; Ivers, Colonial Forts of South Carolina, p. 18.

10. A description of this "residential" type of fort is contained in Captain Gayin Cochrane to General Thomas Gage, November 27, 1764. Gage Papers, American Series, Volume XXVII. William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

11. Brown, South Carolina Regulators, p. 9.

at the post with an identical warning.¹² Only the day before a patrol from the post had apprehended two Cherokee warriors, a clue that trouble lay ahead.¹³ Now the garrison swelled as more and more refugees from outlying areas entered the fort.¹⁴ During the night of February 2 Andrew Williamson's family reached Fort Ninety Six chased by Indians. Williamson, who had been in the post earlier, had the gate thrown open to receive them when a Cherokee bullet passed through his coat sleeve. His family got in safely, but "two Negroe fellows who were well mounted" rode off pursued by warriors.¹⁵

In preparation for an all-out attack, Captain James Francis and his defenders tore down all Gouedy's buildings except his house and one other lying beyond the stockade before the Indians' approach forced them into the enclosure.¹⁶ When the Cherokees finally assailed the place February 3 it was defended by forty-five men, twelve of whom were Negro slaves probably from the Murray plantation.¹⁷ The attacking force seems to have been led by a Cherokee called the Young Warrior.¹⁸ Most of the shooting by the Indians occurred at a distance, although they approached near enough to burn Gouedy's home and remaining outbuilding to the ground.¹⁹ The attackers numbered only around thirty, and the assault lasted but two hours before the Cherokees, finding the fort unyielding, withdrew with two dead.²⁰ One man of the Fort Ninety Six garrison had a shot graze

12. James Francis et al to Lyttelton, February 6, 1760. Lyttelton Papers. Traditional accounts of this episode relate that a single Indian "wench" brought the news of the coming attack. A detailed account of the incident, together with its evolution into an important piece of Ninety Six folklore, appears in Watson, Old Ninety Six, pp. 8-9.

13. Francis et al to Lyttelton, February 6, 1760. Lyttelton Papers.

14. Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, p. 222; Watson, Old Ninety Six, p. 16.

15. Francis et al to Lyttelton, February 6, 1760. Lyttelton Papers.

16. Ibid.

17. South Carolina Gazette, February 9, 1760; Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, p. 127.

18. Alexander Miln to Lyttelton, February 24, 1760, in McDowell, Indian Affairs, 1754-1765, p. 499.

19. Francis et al to Lyttelton, February 6, 1760. Lyttelton Papers; Ivers, Colonial Forts, p. 65.

20. Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, p. 222.

his temple while another was shot through the ear, but these were the only casualties.²¹ "Providence has hither to help'd Us," wrote Francis to Governor Lyttelton of the attack, "and We trust [it] will further help Us."²²

In the wake of the February 3 attack on Fort Ninety Six, many settlers conveyed their fears to Governor Lyttelton, along with graphic descriptions of what was happening. One wrote about

the Deplorable State of our Back Inhabitants they being Cheifly Kill'd Taken Prisoners and drove into Small forts. . . . [At Ninety Six] they have burnt All Goudys House Except the little fort you built Round his Barn where he and Capt Frances and Some few more are penn'd up [.] They have likewise Endeavored A fort A[t] William Turners where they have had A Smart Ingagement and as I here they Kill'd Some of the Indians. . . . They [the Cherokees] have burnt & Distroy'd all up the bush River I am Inform'd they have Kill'd 27 persons on Raborn's Creek and out of 200 persons that were Settled on the Long Cains and Stevens Creek not above 40 or 50 to be found so. . . .²³

3. Attack of March 3, 1760

An item in the South Carolina Gazette indicated that Fort Ninety Six was well-provisioned with supplies and ammunition to withstand expected assaults by the Cherokees, and that a well was being dug inside the stockade.²⁴ Presumably the well was prepared by the time of the February 3 attack. But the garrison also suffered from a smallpox outbreak that

21. Francis et al to Lyttelton, February 6, 1760. Lyttelton Papers.

22. Ibid.

23. John Pearson to Lyttelton, February 8, 1760. Lyttelton Papers. Also reproduced in McDowell, Indian Affairs, 1754-1765, pp. 495-96. See, too, the letter of James Francis et al to Lyttelton, February 6, 1760. Lyttelton Papers. Archeological investigation revealed what is believed to be the stone-lined cellar of Gouedy's burned home, or one he rebuilt there, at a location south of the fort. South, "Exploratory Archeology at Ninety Six," pp. 6-7.

24. February 9, 1760.

did more harm than the Indians, and by February 22 two-thirds of the male occupants were down with the disease. Fourteen people subsequently died from the epidemic at Ninety Six.²⁵ Health conditions inside the stockade could not have been ideal when, on Monday, March 3, the Cherokees launched another, stronger attack on the post. Again, the garrison was warned in advance by two traders from Fort Prince George who reckoned the hostile force at "perhaps 300 by the Number of their fires."²⁶ "As We had no reason to doubt their veracity," wrote Captain Francis, "We put Our Selves in the best Order We were able for their reception."²⁷

The attack came at dawn. Over 200 Cherokee warriors surrounded the fort and maintained a steady fire all that day and night and into the succeeding day for a total of thirty-six hours. Again Francis and his militiamen held firm and the Cherokees, apprised of an approaching relief force, reluctantly withdrew once more, burning all the houses and killing all the cattle within a two-mile radius of the fort. By March 6 the defenders felt themselves ready to venture outside the fort where they found six dead Indians. Their own casualties amounted to a few superficial wounds.²⁸ "We beg leave to acquaint yr Excellency," Francis informed the Governor, "that we had the Pleasure, During the Engagem^t to see several of Our Enemy Drop, and We have now the Pleasure, Sr, to fatten Our Dogs wth their Carkases, & to Display their Scalps, neatly Orna-mented on the Top of Our Bastions."²⁹

Francis's obvious satisfaction in the encounter was echoed by the South Carolina Gazette, which gave particulars of the fighting in its March 15, 1760 issue:

On Monday the third Instant about 240 or 250 Indians attacked the Fort. . . , and fired upon it for 36 Hours, without scarce any Intermission, even during the whole Night, but never came within 60 yards of the Stockade, except one Fellow, who was killed and scalped, and whose Body was given to the Dogs, and his Scalp hoisted along-side of the Colours, to provoke the

25. South Carolina Gazette, March 15, 1760; Watson, Old Ninety Six, pp. 16-17.

26. Francis to Lyttelton, March 6, 1760. Lyttelton Papers. Also Reproduced in McDowell, Indian Affairs, 1754-1765, pp. 504-05.

27. Ibid.

28. South Carolina Gazette, March 15, 1760; Alden, John Stuart, p. 104; Milling, Red Carolinians, p. 301; Cann, Ninety Six, p. 6.

29. Francis to Lyttelton, March 6, 1760. Lyttelton Papers.

Enemy to come nearer. On Tuesday Morning the 4th, Major Lloyd, with 11 men got into the Fort as a Reinforcement, during a hard Shower of Rain, while the Indians were sheltering themselves, and raised the Spirits of the Garrison a good deal. In the Action six Cherokees were killed on the Spot, but 5 of their Bodies [were] carried off as they fell, and many were wounded. In the Fort, one Man was shot thro' the Shoulder, and another in the Mouth; the Ball lodging in the Back of his Neck; but they were both likely to recover. The Morning that Fort Ninety Six was attacked, Capt. Grinnan with 28 of his Rangers was going thither, but discovering so numerous a Body of Indians, when he got within a Mile and a Half of it, and his People being afraid of the Small-Pox, he thought it most advisable to return and protect the People at Mr. Turner's Fort. . . . In the afternoon of the 4th, the Enemy withdrew from before Fort Ninety Six. . . . When the Indians filed off, above 100 of them were perceived to separate from the Rest, and go down Saludy-River with their Packs and Blankets, it was supposed to lay waste the Country downwards; and this Supposition was soon Verified, for they have since burnt all the Houses within two Miles of Mr. Turner's Fort and Fort Ninety-Six, and likewise all the Grain and Fodder they could meet with, and killed all the Cattle near.

4. Further Indian Trouble

Three days after the attack on Fort Ninety Six the enraged Cherokees ambushed a party of six men near Turner's fort, killing two of them. Then on March 10 they fell on and murdered twenty-five more people near the head of Congaree Creek.³⁰ In response to urgent appeals from back-country residents, Governor Lyttelton sought reinforcements of British regular troops from New York.³¹ In the meantime, thirty-five soldiers were immediately ordered to Fort Ninety Six to support the garrison there, while storage facilities for munitions and weapons were designated for Monck's Corner above Charleston, for Congarees, and for Fort Ninety Six.³² Militia patrols were likewise increased and while there occurred no further attempts on Fort Ninety Six the havoc caused by the Cherokees continued. On the night of April 4 several of the Indians surprised a

30. Brown, South Carolina Regulators, p. 7.

31. Wallace, History of South Carolina, II, 27.

32. South Carolina Gazette, March 15, 1760; Pope, History of Newberry County, p. 23; John Chevilletto to Lyttelton, March 3, 1760. Lyttelton Papers. Reproduced in McDowell, Indian Affairs, 1754-1765, p. 503.

scouting party from the post hunting turkeys. The warriors killed one man and took a boy prisoner. He later escaped and made his way back to Fort Ninety Six where he informed the garrison that his captors had with them eight scalps, three of them from Negroes.³³ The torrent of killings went on. On May 3, two men, Richard Ratcliff and Matthew Abenshine, enroute from Ninety Six to the Murray plantation, were shot dead by seventeen Cherokees near Wilson's Creek.³⁴ Five days later the Indians stole Robert Gouedy's son. Gouedy's regional influence with the tribesmen paid off, however, and the boy was released unharmed after one week.³⁵

D. The Government Responds

1. Local Measures

Meantime, relief for the backcountry was being organized in Charleston. In April, Lieutenant Governor William Bull replaced Lyttelton, who was assigned governor of Jamaica. Of particular concern to the government were conditions at Fort Prince George, where the Indians were still determined to avenge the deaths of the hostages as well as to retrieve deposits of ammunition and presents left there by Lyttelton.³⁶ Regular troops from New York having been summoned, the government tried to recruit more militia to serve in the backcountry. Scalp money was increased as an inducement for settlers and rangers to kill Indians. Fifty soldiers with four swivel guns were sent to man Fort Ninety Six, while companies of rangers started patrolling the country around the post. Two units canvassed the area between the Broad and Catawba Rivers, one the vicinity of the Congaree, two others between the Broad River and Ninety Six, and two more ranged from Ninety Six over to Savannah River.³⁷

Captain Francis retained command of the garrison at Fort Ninety Six, to be eventually succeeded by Captain Thomas Bell, who had received a 200-acre land grant along Wilson's Creek in March, 1760. Bell commanded the fort until April, 1761.³⁸ Most of the militiamen who served in the area of the post were frontiersmen, as unskilled in techniques of military

33. Brown, South Carolina Regulators, p. 8.

34. Ibid.

35. Corkran, Carolina Indian Frontier, p. 203.

36. Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, p. 233.

37. Ibid., pp. 227-28; Wallace, History of South Carolina, II, 27; Ivers, Colonial Forts, p. 21.

38. Laurens, Papers, IV, 71n; Ivers, Colonial Forts, p. 65.

science as they were undisciplined in conduct. Some of them caused much discord in the ranks which proved troublesome to their commanders.³⁹ Each militia private earned £15 per month, an amount usually slow in forthcoming from the provincial government.⁴⁰

2. Troops at Fort Ninety Six

Late in April eighty wagons loaded with flour were sent to Fort Ninety Six under escort of British light infantrymen of the Twenty-second Regiment. The convoy left Congarees April 24 and reached Fort Ninety Six six days later.⁴¹ Christopher French, a young officer with the escort, noted in his journal, "Here stands a small fort of Picquitts of no consequence, the Country about it as far as clear'd pleasant enough. . . ."42 The soldiers camped near the fort and a week later French witnessed an Indian ceremony by some Chickasaw scouts with the party:

Eight of the Chikasas having gone a little way from our Camp, came painted, & in every respect in the same manner as when they engage [in battle], their Chief carrying a Bloody, or War Tomahak & danc'd the War Dance, & one of them observ'g that Silver Heels . . . a Senika Indian who came with us from N. York was alooker on, desir'd he would Dance He did.⁴³

French also observed that "while we remain'd in this camp [at Ninety Six] a large Wolf got into the Bullock Pen & frightened them so that many broke out, & had to have been lost."⁴⁴

3. The Montgomery Expedition

On May 6, French and another officer received instructions to repair

40. See, for example, the Statement of James Francis, datelined Fort Ninety Six, May 28, 1760, requesting payment to one Roger Hindes for services rendered. 2466 Ms. Manuscript Division, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia.

41. Christopher French, "Journal of an Expedition to South Carolina, Dec. 22, 1760." (in "Journals of Christopher French a British Army officer who served under George I, II, and III, dated Oct. 21, 1756 to Mar. 20, 1764; and Sept. 15, 1776 to Nov. 21, 1778." 3 vols. Manuscript Division, Library of Congress), p. 83. See also the reference to 22,050 pounds of flour left at Ninety Six as supplies for the Cherokee expedition. Assembly No. 22, 1760 Calendar. Laurens, Papers, III, 561.

42. French, "Journal," p. 83.

43. Ibid.

44. Ibid.

to meet the British troops bound for the backcountry and to "conduct the Army to its Ground at Ninety Six."⁴⁵ These troops belonged to the command of Colonel James Grant, which reached Ninety Six on May 11 and bivouacked in a square "about half a mile from the Fort in the Wood."⁴⁶ Other units came into the camp on succeeding days.⁴⁷ On Saturday, May 16, the troops were treated to another Indian dance by an assortment of Chickasaw, Catawba, Mohawk, and Mohican guides.⁴⁸ Grant's command was part of that belonging to Colonel Archibald Montgomery who had brought troops from New York on orders of General Jeffrey Amherst, British Commander-in-Chief in North America. The command, numbering approximately 1,200 soldiers, consisted of the entire 77th Highlander Regiment and the First Royal Regiment of Foot. They were augmented by all the local forces the province could muster. Montgomery was to end the Cherokee War and on April 23 he marched for Congarees where he united with several hundred militia troops. From there he headed for Fort Prince George, via Fort Ninety Six, reaching the latter place May 24.⁴⁹ At Ninety Six, recorded an observer, there "is a stockade, and a great number of miserable people, chiefly women and children, cooped up in it."⁵⁰ The troops remained but a few days, during which £337 worth of provisions were purchased from Robert Gouedy.⁵¹

On May 28 Montgomery left Fort Ninety Six for Fort Prince George. Four days later his troops destroyed a tiny Cherokee village near Keowee, but the inhabitants of his main objective, the town called Eastatoe, managed to escape beyond the mountains. Montgomery nevertheless burned several small villages, destroyed cornfields and other food stores, killed sixty of the Indians, and captured forty more. He reached Fort

45. Ibid., pp. 87-88.

46. Ibid., pp. 88, 89.

47. Ibid., p. 89.

48. Ibid.

49. South Carolina Gazette, April 7, 1760; Woodward, The Cherokees, p. 74; Schoolcraft, History of the Indian Tribes of the United States, p. 240; Corkran, Carolina Indian Frontier, p. 58; Brown, Old Frontiers, p. 96; Wallace, History of South Carolina, II, 30.

50. Some Observations on the Two Campaigns against the Cherokee Indians, in 1760 and 1761. In a Second Letter from Philopatrios (Charles-town: Peter Timothy, 1762), p. 76.

51. "March 1760 & Undated" File. Lyttelton Papers.

Prince George on June 2.⁵² News having arrived of the desperate conditions at Fort Loudoun, Montgomery sent word to the Middle Cherokees that he would soon march on them unless they appealed for peace. After three weeks without an answer from the tribesmen, Montgomery moved into the Appalachian highlands. He encountered little resistance until he reached the town of Tassantee, near Etchoe, on the Little Tennessee River. There, hundreds of Cherokees suddenly came down on his troops in such force that Montgomery, while winning the field, had to retire with loss.⁵³

4. The Campaign Fails

Withdrawing from the Cherokee country, Colonel Montgomery returned to Fort Prince George July 1, where he left some of his provisions. Next day the expedition marched for Fort Ninety Six, arriving there in time to forestall a mutiny by the garrison. Montgomery left twenty-six regulars to strengthen the garrison then pushed on to Congarees, where he posted 300 more before returning to Charleston and returning north.⁵⁴

Montgomery's retreat sealed the fate of the garrison at Fort Loudoun on the Tennessee River. On August 7 its occupants, unable to hold out any longer, surrendered the post to the Cherokees who agreed to allow them safe passage down to Fort Prince George. But as soon as the garrison retired from the stockade the Indians attacked them furiously, killing nearly thirty and capturing the rest. With the fall of Fort Loudoun, the Cherokees could again turn their attention to Fort Prince George.⁵⁵ After Montgomery's departure the South Carolina frontier came to depend for protection on a combination of British regulars left in the province, the militia, and the rangers. The backcountry above Congarees was rigorously patrolled and Fort Ninety Six became the vital station between there and Keowee. In October a contingent of British

52 Woodward, The Cherokees, p. 74; Milling, Red Carolinians, p. 302; Brown, Old Frontiers, p. 96; Wallace, History of South Carolina, II, 30; Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, p. 229; Schoolcraft, History of the Indian Tribes of the United States, p. 240.

53. Milling, Red Carolinians, p. 302; Ivers, Colonial Forts, p. 20; Woodward, The Cherokees, pp. 74-75; Corkran, Carolina Indian Frontier, p. 59.

54. Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, p. 232.

55. Corkran, Carolina Indian Frontier, p. 59; Ivers, Colonial Forts, pp. 20-21; Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, p. 233.

regulars camped near Fort Ninety Six, remaining there for four days.⁵⁶

5. Grant's Campaign

As the Indian hostilities continued, and in the aftermath of the disgraceful and humiliating defeat of Fort Loudoun, General Amherst determined to subjugate the Cherokees once and for all. In January, 1761, Colonel James Grant, Montgomery's subordinate of the previous summer, arrived in Charleston with 1,300 men. Grant reached Congarees late in March; increased his force with the troops left there by Montgomery, and began planning the logistics of his forthcoming expedition against the Indians.⁵⁷ Early in April Grant dispatched Major William Moultrie and 220 soldiers of Colonel Thomas Middleton's regiment to Fort Ninety Six to establish a supply base there for the entire army.⁵⁸ Moultrie's command, escorting 50 wagons loaded with flour, arrived at Ninety Six a few days later and proceeded to make major structural modifications to the fort there.⁵⁹

6. Changes to Fort Ninety Six

Moultrie's first task was to erect a new stockade near Fort Ninety Six for the immediate use of Grant's army. Then the soldiers began enlarging the old post, an alteration accomplished by tearing down one side and extending it outward by ten yards, so it could accommodate at least two new storehouses for provisions for Grant's command.⁶⁰ The exact location of Moultrie's new stockade is unknown, but archeological examination of the site of Fort Ninety Six conducted in the 1960s suggests it was built adjacent to the old one. Archeological research also disclosed the presence of a small cellar hole which could have been dug beneath one of the magazines during Moultrie's visit.⁶¹ Apparently the new stockade enclosure was called Fort Middleton, after the regimental commander of the militia troops accompanying Major Moultrie.⁶²

56. French, "Journal," p. 167.

57. Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, p. 237; Woodward, The Cherokees, p. 77.

58. South Carolina Gazette, April 11, 1761.

59. Ibid.

60. South Carolina Gazette, May 2, 1761; Moneypenny, "Journal," pp. 25-26.

61. South, Exploratory Archeology at Ninety Six, pp. 5-6.

62. Ivers, Colonial Forts, pp. 64,65; Wallace, History of South Carolina, II, 32.

The name does not appear to have lasted, and presumably the entire complex was generally known as Fort Ninety Six.

7. End of the War

Colonel Grant's army arrived on May 14. On the 16th the troops were reviewed.⁶³ The expedition, including the men who had served Montgomery the year before, numbered close to 3,000 regulars, militia, rangers, Indian guides, wagoners, and black prisoners. Four days after their arrival the soldiers began their trek towards Fort Prince George. Captain Daniel and fifty men stayed behind to guard Fort Ninety Six.⁶⁴ Reaching Fort Prince George, Grant demanded to negotiate with the headmen of the Middle and Overhill towns. When they refused, the Colonel led his expedition into Cherokee country, resolved to punish the tribesmen as severely as he could. On June 10, near the location of Montgomery's late battle, the warriors attacked, but this time Grant's army stood its ground and forced the Indians to retire. Over the next month Grant proceeded to wreak havoc throughout the Indian lands, burning their villages and crops and stored provisions, and killing tribesmen wherever they could be found. Most of the Indians fled into the mountains.⁶⁵ Grant returned to Fort Prince George, where in September the chiefs of the Overhill towns, their people near starvation, agreed to meet him and discuss terms for peace.⁶⁶ In December the Cherokees signed a treaty by which they agreed to surrender all British property in their hands, together with captive whites and slaves, in return for a resumption of trade. Among other things, the British obtained permission to erect forts wherever they wished. Henceforth, no Indian would be permitted to travel more than forty miles below Keowee without permission or unless accompanied by a white man.⁶⁷ The Lower towns also surrendered their

63. Colonel Thomas Middleton to Grant, July 10, 1761, transcribed in "A letter signed Philotethes," March 2, 1763. Laurens, Papers, III, 311.

64. South Carolina Gazette, April 17, 1761; May 23, 1761; May 30, 1761. See also, South, Historical Perspective at Ninety Six, p. 31. The breakdown included 1,400 regulars, 689 provincial militia (commanded by Middleton), 401 rangers, and 57 Indians. Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, p. 237.

65. Wallace, History of South Carolina, II, 33; Woodward, The Cherokees, p. 77; Ivers, Colonial Forts, p. 21.

66. Woodward, The Cherokees, p. 78; Corkran, Carolina Indian Frontier, p. 61.

67. Wallace, History of South Carolina, II, 34; Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, p. 32; Ivers, Colonial Forts, p. 21.

hunting privileges to the lands northwest of Ninety Six and Long Cane Creek.⁶⁸

At Fort Ninety Six, the final note to the Cherokee War occurred in the summer of 1762. On June 20 several white prisoners lately held by the Indians were ushered to Ninety Six by Cherokee guards accompanied by troops from Fort Prince George. Relatives and friends greeted them at the post and cared for them until the middle of July, when Indian prisoners arrived from Charleston to complete the exchange.⁶⁹ Soon the Cherokees departed with their kinsmen, thereby terminating for over a decade their tribe's direct association with the Ninety Six community.

68. Corkran, Carolina Indian Frontier, p. 61. Henceforth, "the boundaries between the Indians and the settlements were declared to be the sources of the great rivers flowing into the Atlantic Ocean." Royce, "The Cherokee Nation," p. 146.

69. South Carolina Gazette, July 3, 1762; July 10, 1762.

CHAPTER IV: COMMUNITY AND VILLAGE

A. New Settlement

The conclusion of peace with the Cherokee Indians in 1761 marked the beginning of an upsurge in the settlement of the South Carolina backcountry and the probable start of an identifiable village complex at Ninety Six. The location there of Fort Ninety Six during the late conflict certainly brought notice to that area. What happened to the fort itself is unknown, but presumably it was maintained locally for some time after peace came to the country. Perhaps Robert Gouedy continued to use the structure as protection for the numerous provisions he purveyed to the growing populace. In any event, virtually all documentary mention of the stockaded fort at Ninety Six ceases after 1761.¹

1. The Postwar Populace

Many of the newcomers who penetrated the South Carolina frontier were from the northern provinces, were of Scotch-Irish descent, and numbered, by the mid-1700s, over 30,000 people. For the most part, they operated small subsistence farms with diversified crops. Occasionally, groups of settlers would congregate in particular places, forming the nucleus of towns and hamlets such as at Waxhaws, Long Canes, and Congarees. By 1765 there were approximately 185 land warrants for some 35,000 acres along Saluda River. Fully one-sixth of the warrants represented claims on Ninety Six Creek for both old residents and new.²

2. Land at Ninety Six

The most significant land transaction of the 1760s, so far as it concerned the development of Ninety Six, was the sale by Dr. John Murray in 1767 of a 400-acre tract to John Savage. The property lay just north of the "Great Survey" line, straddled the Cherokee Path and a confluent

1. South, Historical Perspective at Ninety Six, p. 32. Reference to the former location of Fort Ninety Six in legislation of 1770 indicates that the structure no longer existed by that date. See Thomas Cooper (ed.), The Statutes at Large of South Carolina, (4 vols.; Columbia: A.S. Johnson, 1838), IV, 325.

2. Robert M. Weir, A Most Important Epoch: The Coming of the Revolution in South Carolina (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1970), p. 29; Brown, South Carolina Regulators, p. 18; Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, p. 259.

known as the Trail to Hard Labor Creek. Savage's tract lay directly across the survey line from the Ninety Six holdings of Robert Gouedy, called at the time, "Ninety Six Plantation."³ It was on the property acquired by Savage in 1767 that most of the Ninety Six village was built. Ten acres of Savage's tract were eventually sold for town lots, streets, and land for public buildings. The remainder he sold in 1776 to Tacitus and Isaac Gaillard, who in turn conveyed it to James Holmes the following year.⁴ In 1774 Robert Gouedy began subdividing and selling his property near the survey line.⁵ Clearly, during the 1760s and 1770s, the fertile lands about Ninety Six made the locale an attractive place for settlement, and men of wealth paid them heed. Besides Dr. Murray's holdings at Hard Labor, other Charleston inhabitants took opportunities to own property in the region. Early in the 1760s Henry Laurens and John Lewis Gervais became landholding partners, acquiring 13,200 acres in the backcountry near Ninety Six.⁶ Laurens, a prominent mercantile businessman and future statesman, wrote Andrew Williamson in November, 1764, of his property acquisition:

This may be a first step toward being a farmer at Ninety Six, . . . but should you not think of another name for the whole district, and reflect upon the necessity for having places to perform divine worship and also for establishing a School or Schools?⁷

That sentiment reflected a generally acknowledged fact that Ninety Six had become a bona fide backcountry community with a promising future. Eighteenth century maps of the area provide some names of inhabitants around Ninety Six. Other than Gouedy, who owned several parcels of land in the region besides his Ninety Six holdings, contemporary maps show the residences of such families as the Maysons, the Cunninghams, the McKinneys, and the McMahons, scattered 15-20 miles from Ninety Six towards the Saluda. The north bank of the Saluda immediately east of

3. Rodeffer, "Land Conveyances," p. 3.

4. Ibid., pp. 5-6; Holschlag and Rodeffer, Village, p. 15.

5. Holschlag and Rodeffer, Village, p. 16. One of Gouedy's transactions involved the sale of some of his property to Robert Waring who in turn conveyed it to Julius Nichols, William Moore, and Davis Moore. And in 1785 a 1 1/2-acre lot formerly belonging to Gouedy and complete with buildings, was sold by John Weitzel to William Shaw. Rodeffer, "Land Conveyances," p. 6.

6. Brown, South Carolina Regulators, pp. 16-17. See Laurens's correspondence relating to his interest in the Ninety Six lands, in Papers, IV, 334-35, 337-38, 346, 347, 463.

7. Laurens, Papers, IV, 496.

Ninety Six seems to have readily attracted settlers, and one map suggests no fewer than nine homesteads there, including two for "Gowdey," one for Cunningham, and one for White.⁸ There were certainly others.

Ninety Six village grew up near the junction of the chief land routes through the area prior to the Revolutionary War: the old Cherokee Path (Keowee-Whitehall Road), the Island Ford Road, and the Charleston Road. The future village site extended for perhaps 500 yards along the broad ridge north of Robert Gouedy's home and trading post and the old fort. Just west of the ridgetop the land dropped off radically to meet Spring Branch, a southerly flowing tributary of Ninety Six Creek, nearly three-quarters of a mile to the south.⁹ Contemporary references to only Gouedy's place during the Cherokee War suggest that no clustered settlement existed at Ninety Six before the late 1760s.¹⁰ Knowledge of the land transactions of that period, in addition to the 1769 designation of Ninety Six as the location of a circuit court, tend to support the likelihood that the village complex began to materialize quite late in the decade or after.

B. Frontier Grievances

1. Taxation, Religion, and Education

With the increase in population around Ninety Six came a sense of community which as early as 1762 began to manifest itself in desires registered at the seat of the provincial government. Most immediately apparent in the backcountry was the inequitable system of the government in taxing land on the frontier at the same rate as the more valuable property along the coast and in the lower inland regions. Residents expressed their disdain with the tax policies in 1762, 1766, and 1769,

8. See, "A Map of South Carolina. With all the Islands, Marshes, Swamps, Bays, . . . [etc.]; From an Actual Survey." London, 1771. Copy in the Map Division, Library of Congress. The other maps are: James Cook, "A Map of the Province of South Carolina with all the Rivers, Creeks, Bays, Inletts . . . Towns, Townships, County Parish District and Provincial Lines." London, 1773. Map Division, Library of Congress; Henry Mouzon, "An Accurate Map of North and South Carolina with their Indian Frontiers. . . ." Paris, 1777. Map Division, Library of Congress; William Faden, "A Map of South Carolina and Georgia." London, 1780. Map Division, Library of Congress.

9. Holschlag and Rodeffer, Village, pp. 3, 6.

10. Ibid., p. 10; South, "Exploratory Archeology at Ninety Six," p. 21.

noting "that this very unequal and grievous taxation" was disheartening.¹¹

The taxation issue was only one of several grievances held by occupants of the interior, including those about Ninety Six, against the government. Not only were taxes unequal between coastal area and up-country, but the quality of services rendered the frontiersmen was inadequate to their needs compared to those provided residents of Charleston and the lowcountry. Virtually no schools existed. Dissenting churches were few in the wilderness, while government-supported Anglican ones located around Charleston were too remote for attendance by back-country folk. With no representation in government, there developed a pervasive feeling among upcountry inhabitants that they were left to fend for themselves, a sensitivity that contributed to a growing schism between the regions which later affected allegiances when the Revolution came.¹²

Although an education bill was prepared in 1770 to create schools at several locations, including Ninety Six, it died aborning when a constitutional dispute arose and deadlocked most provincial legislation for the next five years.¹³ Thus Ninety Six got no school. Churches were not quite so rare, and while none existed at Ninety Six, so far as is known, there was in the 1760s and 1770s a Presbyterian minister, the Reverend James Creswell, who lived near Island Ford, across the Saluda River eight miles distant. Creswell preached in several area communities and was known as the "minister of Ninety Six." Most early settlers were Presbyterian, Anglican, and Lutheran, and probably the few churches scattered in the backcountry were of those denominations.¹⁴ There were few Baptists in the area until later, although one Baptist minister from the area north of the Saluda was supposedly incarcerated at Ninety Six jail during the Revolutionary War.¹⁵ Early maps of the backcountry

11. Brown, South Carolina Regulators, p. 139.

12. Weir, "A Most Important Epoque," pp. 29-30; Brown, South Carolina Regulators, p. 18.

13. Brown, South Carolina Regulators, p. 139.

14. George Howe, History of the Presbyterian Church in South Carolina (2 vols.; Columbia: Duffie and Chapman, 1870), I, 428-29. Pope, History of Newberry County, p. 80; Watson, Greenwood County Sketches, p. 19.

15. Pope, History of Newberry County, p. 86.

show a "chapel" situated roughly eighteen miles east of Ninety Six at the junction of the Cherokee Path with Halfway Swamp.¹⁶ Yet the dearth of established places of worship in the Ninety Six region continued to be a major complaint through most of the pre-Revolutionary War period.¹⁷

2. A Need for Roads Around Ninety Six

Another area of concern for residents in the upcountry were roads conducive to easier transportation through the wooded and hilly country. By 1760 four routes of travel met at Ninety Six--the road to Charleston, that to Island Ford on the Saluda, the road to Savannah River and Augusta (called Martin Town Road), and a road going west towards Hard Labor and Long Canes. The oldest routes were those to Charleston and Augusta, both evolved from earlier Indian Trails. The Charleston Road followed the Cherokee Path, was the earliest trail used by hunters and traders, and later on served Governors Glen and Lyttelton in their visits to the backcountry. In 1760 the route was described as "a tollerable [sic] good Waggon Road in the Summer . . . , but in winter [it is] in some places almost impassable."¹⁸ It later became the principal route for produce going down to Congaree and Charleston.¹⁹ On April 7, 1770, the provincial legislature enacted a law providing "for declaring the road from Robert Gouedy's at Ninety Six, to the ridge . . . a public road."²⁰ Previous laws stipulated that upkeep on public roads would be the responsibility of males between 16 and 60 years of age residing within six miles of any so-designated thoroughfare.²¹ In 1770 Gouedy,

16. Mouzon, "An Accurate Map of North and South Carolina;" Faden, "A Map of South Carolina and Georgia."

17. A complaint of the first grand jury to meet at Ninety Six, in November, 1772, was addressed to the lack of churches thereabouts. Pope, History of Newberry County, p. 77.

18. Captain Richard Dudgeon to General Jeffrey Amherst, August 16, 1860. Amherst Papers, January-August, 1760. Microfilm. BPRO 294 WO 34/82.

19. Watson, Greenwood County Sketches, p. 35.

20. Cooper, Statutes at Large of South Carolina, IV, 318. During the early 1770s the naturalist William Bartram described the Charleston Road to the Cherokee country as "the great trading path by Ninety Six" which crossed "over a high, dry, sandy and gravelly ridge. . ." Travels of William Bartram. Ed. by Mark Van Doren (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1955), p. 260.

21. Watson, Greenwood County Sketches, p. 35.

John Savage, John Dooley, Colbert Anderson, and Benjamin Tutt were appointed to serve as commissioners for the Charleston Road leading south from Ninety Six.²² The horseback journey from Charleston to Ninety Six, via this route, took about six days. Wagons hauled by draught animals took four to five times as long to make the same trip.²³

The Martin Town Road to Augusta diverged from the Charleston Road near Ninety Six Creek and headed southwesterly towards the Savannah River, enroute passing through the community of Martin Town, named for a local settler.²⁴ A possible extension to this road was the Island Ford Road, which ran from the shallow crossing of the Saluda south to Ninety Six. A ferry was established at Island Ford at least as early as 1775 and probably earlier. In 1778 the legislature authorized a public ferry at Island Ford.²⁵ The road from there led directly into the village of Ninety Six. One more road, authorized by the legislature in 1778, was to run from the courthouse at Ninety Six west to Long Cane Creek. Opening of this road was deferred until 1785.²⁶

3. Coastal-Interior Antagonisms

Of course, these and other niceties of civilization were common to the lowcountry, a fact that bred increasing dissatisfaction in the population areas of western South Carolina. There existed other grievances, too, that stemmed from the growing economic dichotomy of the two regions. The lowcountry below the Congarees to and including Charleston was by and large the domain of the slave-owning planters, while the upcountry was primarily composed of small farmers with few or no slaves. While the white population of the middle and western parts of the province gradually approached that in the coastal areas, there occurred no proportionate increase in wealth, culture, or political power.²⁷

As awareness of this disparity grew it turned into pronounced sectionalism; a veiled hostility developed between upcountry and lowcountry.

22. Ibid.

23. Brown, South Carolina Regulators, p. 181.

24. Watson, Greenwood County Sketches, p. 38.

25. Ibid., pp. 41-42.

26. Ibid., p. 55; Cooper, Statutes at Large of South Carolina, IV, 403.

27. Wallace, History of South Carolina, II, 47-48.

But the presence of a huge slave population in the lowlands tended to prevent these sectional antagonisms from erupting into open conflict. Whereas planters agonized over prospects of a black insurrection, they viewed whites in the backcountry as a potential counterbalance to such a revolt.²⁸ Nevertheless, the feeling of neglect and resentment towards the Charleston government became more direct as the Revolution approached. While the lowcountry commercial interests tended to take offense at the excesses of royal control, backcountry folk who relished some type of organization often identified more closely with the King than with the province,²⁹ a factor that later helps to explain the fairly constant division of the populace into Tory and Whig factions when the war came.

C. The Regulators

1. Lack of Law Enforcement

Backcountry residents were not reluctant to voice their grievances to the provincial government, and they were usually at least acknowledged if not acted upon. When Governor James Glen visited Ninety Six in October, 1753, the inhabitants of the surrounding country expressed to him their difficulties in obtaining land warrants and, particularly, their disturbance at having to travel 200-300 miles to Charleston to attend court for even the most negligible offense.³⁰ Quarrels over land ownership often arose that could not be settled amicably. Immorality became a major concern, too.

2. Organization of the Regulators

The remoteness of the judiciary, coupled with the lack of any local government to provide law enforcement on the frontier, promoted an increase in rampant lawlessness for which there was little redress, and this became one of the prime complaints registered in Charleston.³¹ By the mid-1760s conditions had become alarming. Numerous outlaws, many from adjacent provinces, ranged freely through the backcountry robbing, looting, burning, and even murdering people. In lieu of formal retaliatory measures local vigilante groups assembled in defiance

28. Brown, South Carolina Regulators, pp. 17-18.

29. Weir, "A Most Important Epoch," p. 64.

30. Wallace, History of South Carolina, II, 48-49.

31. Brown, South Carolina Regulators, pp. 18, 189.

of the Governor to deal with perpetrators of violence. Their organization, however, was moblike, lacked direction, and consequently took little effect. In the autumn of 1767 leaders of the vigilantes assembled and proceeded to reorganize and modify their movement. One thousand men were selected "to execute the Laws against all Villains and Harbourers of Villains. . . ." Known as the Regulators, these individuals swore support for each other in their extralegal enterprise, no matter the result.³²

Possibly as many as 4,000 men became Regulators by November, 1767, when the Regulator remonstrance was prepared for submission to the assembly at Charleston.³³ Very little seems to have been beyond their self-imposed realm of responsibility, including the conduct of family life. Besides running down criminals, the Regulators punished immoral women by ducking them and lax family providers by whipping them. Idlers and vagrants also drew their scorn and incorrigibles were often flogged and expelled from the region.³⁴

3. James Mayson and Ninety Six

Ninety Six became the headquarters for the Regulator Movement in the country between the Broad and Savannah Rivers. Principal leader of the Regulators in the environs of Ninety Six was James Mayson, who owned property along the Saluda and near Ninety Six. Mayson was a Scot, had served with the military in the Cherokee War, and had been a Justice of the Peace until the Regulation started. As a Regulator, Mayson was vigorous in his prosecution of wrongdoing, and he later helped develop the circuit court system after the movement had declined. His ardor as a pro-Regulator enforcer was perhaps sharpened after his own abduction, insult, and release at the hands of outlaws. In later years Mayson continued to play a prominent role in the affairs of the community.³⁵

Much of the Regulators' time was spent trying to gain official sanction for their actions and recognition of the unsettled conditions in the backcountry. An assembly of Regulators at the Congarees in

32. Ibid., pp. 39, 113.

33. Ibid., p. 113.

34. Ibid., p. 50.

35. Ibid., p. 39, 41, 132.

June 1768 mulled over their grievances and prepared formal articles to present to the government. And late in September a large body met at Ninety Six for the purpose of organizing to descend en masse on the lowcountry and vote on the election of representatives to the provincial legislature.³⁶

D. Redress of Grievances

1. End of the Regulation

The anticipated march did not occur for various reasons, although backcountry men of the Ninety Six area did succeed in electing representatives to the assembly in 1768 and 1769.³⁷ But the Regulators nonetheless succeeded in gaining the attention of Governor Charles Montagu and his Council, albeit in a negative way. Early in 1769 a new movement was afoot known as the Moderators whose objective was to neutralize the illegal Regulators and restore a semblance of harmony in the province. At Ninety Six James Mayson and others lost their commissions as officers of militia and justices of the peace.³⁸ There occurred some localized clashes between Regulators and Moderators, but soon the Regulation movement withered away because of the government's efforts to rectify many of the problems on the frontier.

2. The Circuit Court Act of 1769

Principally, the Assembly at last dealt with the matter of courts in the backcountry. In April, 1768, Governor Montagu signed a law providing for the establishment of circuit courts, but the legislation was vetoed by King George III. Over a year later, on July 29, 1769, the bill was redrawn minus its objectionable features and in November won the King's assent.³⁹ The Circuit Court Act of 1769 divided South Carolina into seven judicial districts, four of them located in the interior. The Charleston, Beaufort, and Georgetown Districts were located on the coast,

36. Ibid., pp. 39, 41, 132.

37. The representative chosen from the Ninety Six vicinity in 1769 was Patrick Calhoun of Long Canes. Watson, Old Ninety Six, p. 18.

38. Brown, South Carolina Regulators, pp. 90-91; 102.

39. Wallace, History of South Carolina, II, 61; Brown, South Carolina Regulators, p. 76; Pope, History of Newberry County, p. 31; Smith, South Carolina as a Royal Province, pp. 134-35.

while Orangeburg, Camden, Cheraws, and Ninety Six Districts were located in the upcountry.⁴⁰ Ninety Six District encompassed a wide area that stretched from a point called Silver Bluff on the Savannah River north to the confluence of Rocky Creek with Saluda River. In modern reference, the district embraced today's Edgefield, Saluda, Abbeville, McCormick, Greenwood, Laurens, Union, Newberry, and Spartanburg Counties, and portions of Aiken and Cherokee Counties.⁴¹

Court sessions in the Charleston District would be held three times a year, while those in the other districts would occur semi-annually and would be staggered to enable the circuit-riding judges to preside over them. Eventually, two judges were appointed to rotate their sessions through the Orangeburg, Beaufort, and Ninety Six Districts.⁴² In addition, the act provided for a sheriff in each district to serve a two-year term. Three candidates for the position of sheriff were to be nominated by the District Court of Common Pleas, with the Governor making the final selection.⁴³ Henceforth persons in the backcountry would abide by provincial law, and if charged with a crime, would be tried by juries of their peers. No more would they have to undertake the arduous journey to Charleston to answer for the smallest infraction or because of debt. The backcountry now had its own judicial apparatus.⁴⁴

3. A Courthouse and Jail at Ninety Six

According to its provisions, the Circuit Court Act of 1769 would not be implemented until after construction of appropriate courthouses and jails in each of the districts. In Ninety Six District seven persons were appointed to oversee the erection of the public buildings: John Savage, Robert Gouedy, James Mayson, Thomas Bell, Patrick Calhoun, Andrew Williamson, and John Lewis Gervais.⁴⁵ The courthouse and jail,

40. Brown, South Carolina Regulators, p. 99; Pope, History of Newberry County, p. 32. One of the prime backers of the court bill was Henry Laurens, who apparently thought that a court located at Ninety Six would significantly enhance the value of his property in that area. Brown, South Carolina Regulators, p. 75.

41. Pope, History of Newberry County, p. 32.

42. Brown, South Carolina Regulators, p. 99.

43. Ibid.

44. Ibid., p. 102.

45. Ibid., p. 132; Watson, Old Ninety Six, p. 18; Cann, Ninety Six, p. 7.

as specified in an amendment, were to be built "within one mile of where Ninety Six fort formerly stood. . . ."46 The period of construction of these buildings probably marks the beginning of the nucleus of settlement at Ninety Six.

4. Description of the Jail

In actuality, the courthouse and jail were constructed about one-half mile north of the location of Robert Gouedy's barn at the junction of the Charleston Road and the trail to Hard Labor.⁴⁷ Erected by Leroy Hammond and Company, both structures were completed by November, 1772, when the first court sessions took place.⁴⁸ The most detailed available contemporary description of the jail is that given by David Fanning, a Loyalist who was imprisoned in it no less than four times during the late 1770s. During the summer of 1778, Fanning was captured by American "rebels" who introduced him for the second time to Ninety Six jail. Confined for seventeen days, Fanning became acquainted with a fellow Loyalist who resided at Ninety Six "by talking to him through the grates; he furnished me with two files and a knife, by which means I cut through the iron bars and escaped."⁴⁹

Fanning was soon recaptured and readmitted to the jail, where, he reported,

I was stripped entirely naked, thrown into irons and chained to the floor. I remained in that situation until the 20th of December [1778] . . . , when I again made shift, for to get my irons off, and having sawed one of the grates some time before, I again escaped by means of a fellow prisoner, who supplied me with some old clothes, of which I made a rope to let me down; I received a fall in getting down, but luckily did not hurt myself. The Goaler [sic] heard me fall, and presented a musket at me, out of a window; but I avoided him. He alarmed the guard and they persued [sic] me; but however I got clear off."⁵⁰

46. Cooper, Statutes at Large of South Carolina, IV, 323-26.

47. Rodeffer, "Land Conveyances," p. 5.

48. Holschlag and Rodeffer, Village, p. 21. The jail and courthouse were evidently completed by May 19, 1772, for a proclamation of that date announced that these public buildings in all the districts had been finished. Smith, South Carolina as a Royal Province, p. 141.

49. David Fanning, The Narrative of Colonel David Fanning (New York: Reprinted for Joseph Sabin, 1865. Reprint, Spartanburg, S.C.: The Reprint Company, 1973), p. 8.

50. Ibid., p. 9.

Shortly thereafter, Fanning began his last incarceration at Ninety Six jail. His account provides additional details of the building:

I was chained and ironed as before, in the centre of a room 30 feet square; forty-five from the ground, the snow beating in, through the roof, with 4 grates open night and day. I remained in this state eleven days; I got my chains off in the night of the 12th; the Goaler did not chain me down again; but had still part of them remaining on one of my legs, which weighed seven pounds and three quarters. I continued loose in Goal [sic] until the 13th of February 1779, when I took a bar out of the window, in the night, and prised one of the planks out of the floor of the room, and from thence went down stairs. I found the door fast, secured; but I went to a breach, I had formerly made in the back of the chimney, and got out. One of my fellow prisoners escaped with me. . . .⁵¹

Fanning's account of his imprisonment provides useful knowledge of the construction of the jail. Documentary materials, archeological examinations, and vestiges at the site all indicate that it was built of brick, perhaps locally manufactured, and that it contained a dungeon.⁵² From Fanning it is learned that the jail had two stories, the top floor being about forty-five feet from the ground. The top floor appears to have comprised one large room, about thirty feet square, where the prisoners were held. The flooring, at least on the upper level, consisted of planking. Fanning's relation of his escape by prying up a plank and going downstairs suggests that the entrance to the cell block consisted of a stairway and trapdoor, a logical construction under the circumstances. According to Fanning, the top floor had four grates, or barred windows, that remained open at all times, causing considerable discomfort to occupants during the winter months.⁵³ Most likely there were windows on the first level, too, for Fanning described how the jailer pointed a musket at him through a window during one of his escapes. Probably the

51. Ibid.

52. John Drayton, Memoirs of the American Revolution as Relating to the State of South Carolina (2 vols.; Charleston: A.E. Miller, 1821. Reprint, New York: The New York Times and Arno Press, 1969), p. 387; William Henry Drayton to the Council of Safety, September 11, 1775, in R.W. Gibbes (comp.), Documentary History of the American Revolution (3 vols.; New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1855), I, 174; Holschlag and Rodeffer, Village, p. 39; South, "Exploratory Archeology at Ninety Six," p. 26.

53. John Drayton also reported that the jail had four windows, evidently one on each side and located on the top floor. Memoirs of the American Revolution, p. 387.

first level had four rooms. A fireplace and chimney were evidently situated there, while the roof of the jail was shingled.⁵⁴

Less information is known about the courthouse at Ninety Six. It seems to have been a wooden frame structure, probably lacking a cellar.⁵⁵ Historical diagrams of the townsite place the courthouse in the southwestern part of the town. However, exploratory archeology in the village area suggests that it might have stood on a lot bounded north and east by the intersection of the Charleston Road and the road to Keowee. Composition of the interior of the building remains unknown, except for the likelihood that it eventually contained a number of rooms with fireplaces. The courthouse reportedly was large enough to house 200 troops.⁵⁶

5. The First Court Sessions

Even as the edifices of justice were building at Ninety Six, some forms of outlawry went on. In May, 1770, Lieutenant Governor Bull visited Ninety Six and found that many neighborhood militiamen refused to attend review for fear of leaving their dwellings and livestock exposed to renegades. At least a dozen housebreakings had occurred in the Ninety Six-Long Canes region in less than three months.⁵⁷ The Ninety Six Courthouse was completed in time for the first court session which began on November 16, 1772. From then on, sessions were to occur twice a year, in April and November. The first sheriff named to Ninety Six District was Robert Stark.⁵⁸ The court clerk appointed by the Governor was James Pritchard, and the deputy clerk was John Caldwell.⁵⁹ The first

54. Ibid. William Henry Drayton, who commanded a Whig force at Ninety Six in 1775, described guarding the jail from loyalist incursions with four swivel guns. "I fortified the prison by mounting a gun in each room below, in each of which I placed a small guard." (Italics added.) Drayton to Council of Safety, September 11, 1775, in Gibbes, Documentary History, I, 174. This statement suggests the existence of four rooms on the lower floor.

55. Drayton stated that the courthouse "was not musket proof," indicating a frame structure rather than one of logs. Ibid.

56. Holschlag and Rodeffer, Village, pp. 36, 105; South, Historical Perspective at Ninety Six, pp. 54, 57.

57. Brown, South Carolina Regulators, pp. 102-03; Wallace, History of South Carolina, II, 59.

58. Pope, History of Newberry County, p. 32; Watson, Old Ninety Six, p. 18.

59. Pope, History of Newberry County, pp. 32, 33.

grand jury for Ninety Six District consisted of the following individuals: Patrick Calhoun, John Caldwell, Moses Kirkland, Andrew Williamson, James Mayson, LeRoy Hammond, John Purves, Robert Dillon, W. Waters, John Cameron, Benjamin Tutt, Benjamin Bell, Andrew Neil, Michael Watson and Mark Lott. Five other appointed grand jurors failed to appear at court. They were Alexander Cameron, John Smith, James Crawford, John Lewis Gervais, and Robert Gouedy.⁶⁰

During the first session the grand jury registered standard complaints about the absence of churches and schools, and criticized the inadequate, uncodified provincial laws that condoned unregulated drinking establishments in the community. Sixteen indictments for trial were returned and three men were convicted for horse thievery. Each was sentenced to thirty-nine lashes and the loss of his right ear. Another man, accused of counterfeiting £20 bills, failed to appear for trial.⁶¹

The next court session began on April 15, 1773, and the grand jury presented grievances similar to those expressed in the first session, adding complaints of the lack of laws to regulate area grist mills and to abet the killing of "wolves and other destructive animals" in the district. The lack of good roads in the district was likewise noted.⁶² By 1777, several grand jurors having either died or moved, it became necessary to select new members to be "impanelled, summoned and obliged to serve on all grand juries at the circuit courts to be holden hereafter for the district of Ninety-Six."⁶³ Sessions continued in the courthouse at the twice-yearly schedule until 1779, when increased warfare in the South Carolina backcountry forced a temporary end to judicial proceedings there.⁶⁴

In the period from 1772 to 1780 a great many persons were brought before the court at Ninety Six, many of whom spent time in the brick jail for various offenses. One individual held there in 1774 was Thomas Fee, who stood accused of killing a prominent Cherokee chieftain. Fee escaped legal retribution, however, being forcibly released one night by his followers.⁶⁵ Others were political prisoners, incarcerated after 1775 for their expressed beliefs promoting or opposing the monarchy.

60. Ibid., p. 33n, citing South Carolina Gazette, December 17, 1772.

61. Pope, History of Newberry County, pp. 32-33; Cann, Ninety Six, p. 7.

62. Pope, History of Newberry County, p. 33.

63. Cooper, Statutes at Large of South Carolina, IV, 397.

64. Holschlag and Rodeffer, Village, p. 21.

65. Hugh McCall, The History of Georgia (Savannah, 1816. Reprint, Atlanta: Cherokee Publishing Company, 1969), p. 264.

E. The Town of Ninety Six

Development of Ninety Six village after the passage of the circuit court act brought a shift in the focus of activity from Robert Gouedy's enterprise to the burgeoning town itself.⁶⁶ Distribution of land parcels, together with the size of the town lots in Ninety Six, is not entirely known. Tentatively, the lots measured 100 feet to 200 feet on the sides, embracing either a quarter acre or a half acre.⁶⁷ Some were larger.⁶⁸ Archeological research to date has revealed evidence of but one residential unit and one business. Inferences based on these features suggest that the one residence thus far located fronted on the Charleston Road and probably included several outbuildings, one or more trash pits, and a well positioned at the back of the lot.⁶⁹ The business was that of a blacksmith shop or possibly a later built military forge, identified by the presence of slag and clinkers. It was located southeast of where the jail was built.⁷⁰

Before the Revolution the village contained approximately twelve houses, presumably besides the public buildings and business establishments.⁷¹ Known residents of the town were Robert Gouedy, John Savage, William Moore, and William Hagood.⁷² Gouedy, for one, held numerous slaves on his different properties, including those at Ninety Six, who performed work as carpenters, wagoners, coopers, and field

66. Holschlag and Rodeffer, Village, p. 10.

67. Ibid., p. 104.

68. See Rodeffer, "Land Conveyances," p. 6.

69. Holschlag and Rodeffer, Village, p. 105.

70. Ibid.

71. This based on information provided by a British officer who visited Ninety Six in 1780. Anthony Allaire, Diary of Lieutenant Anthony Allaire (New York: New York Times and Arno Press, 1968), pp. 19-20.

72. Watson, Greenwood County Sketches, p. 13. In 1769, John Savage married Ann Gaillard at Ninety Six. "Records Kept by Colonel Isaac Hayne," South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine, XI (January, 1910), p. 22. Gouedy's wife was named Mary, by whom he had two children, James and Sarah. His mixed-blood Indian children were Peggy, Nancy, and Kiunague. Gouedy's will, July 2, 1775, abstracted in Willie Pauline Young (comp.), Abstracts of Old Ninety-Six and Abbeville District Wills and Bonds as on file in Abbeville, South Carolina Courthouse (Greenville: Greenville Printing Company, 1950), p. 124.

hands.⁷³ The exact population of Ninety Six village by the early 1770s is unknown and probably unrecorded. The village, however, became the center of the Ninety Six community and by 1776 at least seventy-nine males, all doubtless representing households, were living "near Ninety Six Court House."⁷⁴

73. "Some Notes on Black History at Ninety Six, 1750-1781" (unpublished, undated manuscript in the files of Ninety Six National Historic Site).

74. Pope, History of Newberry County, p. 294; Holschlag and Rodeffer, Village, pp. 10-11.

CHAPTER V: THE BATTLE OF NINETY SIX

A. Dissension in the Backcountry

1. Polarization

All the while the people of South Carolina interior struggled to improve their social lot, events transpiring elsewhere were soon to engulf them in a bloody conflict of major proportion. Residents of the lowcountry about Charleston had been chiefly affected by the stringent regulation and excessive taxation on imports imposed by the British Crown during previous years. Interior folk were not as directly concerned as the coastal merchants, and the agitation that characterized the increasing dismay at British rule elsewhere in the American colonies was not necessarily shared by them.

Many backcountry inhabitants had received land grants from the royal government and thus felt obliged to the monarch at its head. Many of them were immigrants, too, now experimenting freedom yet unknown in their homelands, and to these people the notion of revolution was repugnant. At the same time, as in the other colonies, many inhabitants of middle and western South Carolina had come to rely upon the Crown as a source of authority and for protection, if needed, against Indians. Moreover, in South Carolina British authority was viewed by frontier settlers as a means to offset the growing political power of the lowcountry districts with their proportionately larger representation in the provincial assembly. Because coastal planters gave support to the growing revolutionary movement, backcountry residents tended to distrust the movement as a potential enhancement of coastal political strength to their own detriment. Thus, the greater population of the backcountry, and notably that in Ninety Six District, comprised persons who remained loyal to the Crown in the growing rift.¹

1. John Richard Alden, The South in the Revolution, 1763-1789 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1957), pp. 199-200; Russell F. Weigley, The Partisan War: The South Carolina Campaign of 1780-1782 (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1970), p. 11; Marvin L. Cann, "Prelude to War: The First Battle of Ninety Six, November 19-21, 1775," The South Carolina Historical Magazine, LXXI (October, 1975), pp. 200-201; Pope, History of Newberry County, p. 34. For good insights into loyalist thinking both in, and in regard to, the South, see Catherine S. Crary (ed.), The Price of Loyalty; Tory Writings from the Revolutionary Era (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1973), Chapter 9, "The Southern Theater."

2. The Provincial Congress and the Council of Safety

The revolutionary, or Whig, element nevertheless did win some back-country converts to its cause. In January, 1775, a general provincial committee in opposition to the royal government met in Charleston. Composed of 185 members, ten of whom came from Ninety Six District, the committee took the title "Provincial Congress" and aligned itself with the pro-American policies lately promulgated by the Continental Congress in Philadelphia.² Delegates to the Congress from Ninety Six District were James Mayson, Andrew Williamson, LeRoy Hammond, Patrick Calhoun, John Lewis Gervais, Richard Rapley, and Francis Salvador.³ In June, the Provincial Congress, having learned of the battles at Lexington and Concord in Massachusetts, circulated an oath by which subscribers vowed to uphold the patriot cause by force of arms, if required. A Council of Safety, consisting of thirteen coastal Whig leaders, was created to direct affairs when the Congress was not in session.⁴ At the same time, the Congress ordered supplies forwarded to specified inland points for use by patriots in those localities. Two hundred barrels of flour were to be placed in storage at Ninety Six.⁵

3. The Whig Militia

One area of concern to the Congress was the raising of patriot militia units. At that time, South Carolina's militia consisted of 12,000 men subject to the authority of the royal governor. Officers of the Ninety Six Military District were Colonel John Savage, Lieutenant Colonel James Mayson, and Major Andrew Williamson, all residents of the Ninety Six community.⁶ But the established militia represented diverse political views. The Provincial Congress therefore decided to raise three regiments of patriot militia; two from the coast and one, of mounted infantry, from the backcountry. The latter unit, known as the Third Regiment of Rangers, was to be headed by Lieutenant Colonel William Thomson and Major James Mayson, while company captains, according to rank, were Samuel Wise, Ezekiel Polk, John Caldwell, Ely Kershaw, Robert Goodwyn, Moses Kirkland, Edward Richardson, Thomas Woodward, and John Purves.⁷

2. Pope, History of Newberry County, pp. 34-35.

3. Ibid;, p. 36; Watson, Old Ninety Six, p.23.

4. Pope, History of Newberry County, pp. 35-36.

5. William Edwin Hemphill (ed.), The State Records of South Carolina. Extracts from the Journals of the Provincial Congresses of South Carolina, 1775-1776 (Columbia: South Carolina Archives Department, 1960), p. 42.

6. Watson, Old Ninety Six, pp. 21-22.

7. Pope, History of Newberry County, p. 36; Cann, "Prelude to War," pp. 197-198.

B. Confrontation Begins

1. The Raid on Ninety Six

On July 12th, in accordance with directions from the Council of Safety, Major Mayson led his rangers in seizing from the British Fort Charlotte on the Savannah River. Mayson's action constituted the first act of war of the Revolution to occur in South Carolina. Leaving Captain Caldwell and his troops to garrison the post, Mayson started for Ninety Six with 500 pounds of lead and 250 pounds of gunpowder, confiscated from the British.⁸ On the way one of his captains, Moses Kirkland, defected with his entire company and encouraged the loyalist militia in the vicinity under Colonel Thomas Fletchall, to come in to Ninety Six and retake the ammunition stores. On July 17th, nearly 200 armed loyalists led by Major Joseph Robinson with Robert and Patrick Cunningham, arrived at Ninety Six where they surrounded the courthouse and demanded the surrender of the lead and powder. Major Mayson, seized and placed in jail, was released that evening on bail after the loyalists had taken back all the Fort Charlotte ordnance except two field pieces.⁹

The Robinson-Cunningham raid on the Whigs at Ninety Six pointed up the increasing volatility of conditions in the interior. Kirkland's defection with his troops and the later return of some of them to the patriot side showed the vacillation of commitment among backcountry people over which side to support.¹⁰ In July, 1775, the Council of Safety circulated a letter in the Ninety Six area describing the actions at Lexington and Concord and noting that "America has been abused, and Britain has disgraced herself. . . . The King's troops have at length commenced hostilities against this continent."¹¹ The Council also tried

8. Weir, "A Most Important Epocha," pp. 64-65; Watson, Old Ninety Six, p. 22; Drayton, Memoirs of the American Revolution, I, 318. For details of the capture of Fort Charlotte, see Nora Marshall Davis, Fort Charlotte on Savannah River and Its Significance in the American Revolution (Greenwood, South Carolina: Star Fort Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, 1949), pp. 13-14.

9. Drayton, Memoirs of the American Revolution, I, 321, 322; Weir, "A Most Important Epocha," pp. 64-65; Cann, "Prelude to War," p. 198; E. Alfred Jones (ed.), "The Journal of Alexander Chesney, a South Carolina Loyalist in the Revolution and After," The Ohio State University Bulletin, XXVI (October 30, 1921), p. 67.

10. See Jones, "Journal of Alexander Chesney," p. 67.

11. Quoted in Alice Noble Waring, The Fighting Elder: Andrew Pickens (1739-1817) (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1962), p. 8.

to win the allegiance of the royal deputy superintendent of Indian affairs, Alexander Cameron. His refusal to join the patriots made them fear he might somehow incite the Cherokees into attacking the backcountry settlements and further retard their cause in that area.¹² The general fear of an Indian uprising on the frontier played directly into the hands of the royal government since the King's soldiers could be relied upon for defense and protection.

2. The Drayton-Tennent Journey

Hoping to bolster support for the revolutionary movement as well as to educate and perhaps appeal to loyalists, the Council of Safety in late July decided to send two ardent Whig champions into the upcountry to address the people and to explain to them the reasons for the current dissension between Great Britain and the colonies. William Henry Drayton was a zealous, thirty-three-year old Charleston orator, soon to be chosen President of the Second Provincial Congress.¹³ His colleague on the journey was the Reverend William Tennent, also of Charleston. The men alternately traveled apart and together through the country. In the fork area between the Broad and Saluda Rivers they found most of the militia officers were earnest Tories, notably Colonel Thomas Fletchall, Lieutenant Colonel Moses Kirkland, and their subordinates, Majors Joseph Robinson and Jeremiah Terry and Captains Robert and Patrick Cunningham.¹⁴ Late in August the pair visited Enoree where they confronted Kirkland and his followers. Tennent described the proceedings:

The gang of leaders were there, all double armed with pistols. Mr. Drayton began to harrangue [sic] them and was answered in a most scurrillous [sic] manner by Kirkland, when Mr. Drayton interrupted him and a terrible riot seemed on the point of happening. This seems to have been preconcerted, but the disgust against Kirkland appearing so universal and people pressing on, the matter was quashed.¹⁵

12. Cann, "Prelude to War," p. 201.

13. For a biographical treatment of Drayton, see William Dabney and Marion Dargan, William Henry Drayton and the American Revolution (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1962).

14. Pope, History of Newberry County, p. 44. Alden, The South in the Revolution, p. 200.

15. "Fragment of a Journal kept by the Rev. William Tennent Describing his Journey, in 1775, to Upper South Carolina at the request of the Council of Safety To induce the Tories to sign an Association to support the cause of the Colonists," Year Book, 1894. City of Charleston, So. Ca. (Charleston: Walker, Evans and Cogswell Company, Printers, 1894), p. 301.

Drayton and Tennent proceeded next to Ninety Six via Island Ford on the Saluda. There, observed Tennent, "Mr. Drayton harranged them and was followed by me. The Audience appeared fully conyvinced. . . ."¹⁶

Early in September both men visited Augusta amid rumors that Kirkland, the Cunninghams, and Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Brown, the ousted commandant of Fort Charlotte, were leading Tory militia to attack that post and Augusta.¹⁷ To check the expected assault, Drayton ordered 300 Whig militia under Major Andrew Williamson to reinforce Fort Charlotte immediately. The Scottish-born Williamson, veteran of the Cherokee War, held land on Hard Labor Creek six miles west of Ninety Six; his home was known as Whitehall.¹⁸ Williamson's militia reached the Savannah River thirty miles above Augusta, a move that evidently dissuaded the loyalists and no attack by them occurred.¹⁹ Tennent meantime returned to Charleston to report to the Council of Safety.²⁰

3. Drayton Occupies Ninety Six

If anything, the journey of Drayton and Tennent further polarized the backcountry by firmly aligning the people into opposing camps. Drayton now concluded to arrest the chief loyalists and on September 6 he repaired to Ninety Six with 120 militia and four swivel guns, hoping to surprise the leaders. Two days later he reached the courthouse village and dispatched rangers to seize Robert Cunningham at his home, but the Tory

16. Ibid., p. 303.

17. Ibid., pp. 307-308; Waring, The Fighting Elder, p. 9; Alden, The South in the Revolution, p. 200.

18. Waring, The Fighting Elder, pp. 9-10; Hurley E. Badders, Broken Path: The Cherokee Campaign of 1776 (South Carolina; Pendleton District Historical and Recreational Commission, 1976), p. 21. Lorenzo Sabine, Biographical Sketches of Loyalists of the American Revolution (2 vols.; Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1864), II, 437, includes the following about Williamson: "In 1775 he was in commission as a Major, and received the thanks of the Provincial Congress for his services in causing Robert Cunningham to be apprehended and sent to Charleston, and for embodying the militia, and opposing the insurrection of Patrick Cunningham and his accomplices. In 1780, after the fall of Charleston, he submitted to the British officer who commanded in the District of Ninety-Six, and became as active on the side of the Crown, as, previous to that event, he had been on the side of the Whigs. So odious was the change indeed that he was called the 'Arnold of Carolina.'" "[After the war] the estate of Williamson was confiscated."

19. Waring, The Fighting Elder, p. 10.

20. Tennent, "Journal," p. 309.

managed to elude them.²¹ On Sunday, September 10, Drayton learned that a large number of loyalists under Colonel Fletchall were preparing to strike Ninety Six before dawn next morning. With but 225 militia troops and Georgia volunteers at his disposal, Drayton's chances to ward off an assault by the numerous Tories appeared slim. After consulting with his leading officers, he decided to march and surprise the enemy before they reached Ninety Six, leaving an adequate force to guard the courthouse and jail.²²

Accordingly, Drayton ordered the four swivel guns placed one each in the windows of the first floor rooms of the jail, thereby covering approaches from all directions. In each room he placed a guard of several men with adequate water and ammunition to withstand an assault, and the remaining gunpowder was stored in the dungeon. "Nothing but setting the prison on fire could force it," wrote Drayton.²³ Next he posted 100 men in ambush at Island Ford, and the 100 remaining midway between the crossing and Ninety Six. By 10 p.m. Drayton's force was ready to meet the Tories. But the alarm proved false; the Tories did not come.²⁴ On Tuesday, Drayton learned that the loyalists were congregating ten miles north of the Saluda under Fletchall and the Cunninghams. Drayton's own force increased on succeeding days with the arrival of more Whig supporters and he bivouacked his troops three quarters of a mile north of the courthouse so he might intercept any loyalist force approaching from the Saluda. "I caused the most exact order to be observed," wrote Drayton, "even in an army composed of militia. . . ." The troops, "now about 1,100 strong, obey punctually, keep good order in camp, are cheerful and content even although we have had constant rains. . . ."²⁵ Soon Fletchall moved with his own troops to within four miles north of the Island Ford.²⁶ (See Illustration 6 and Map 2.)

21. Drayton, Memoirs of the American Revolution, I, 386; Weir, "A Most Important Epoch," pp. 65-66.

22. Drayton to Council of Safety, September 11, 1775, in Gibbes, Documentary History, I, 173-74; Drayton, Memoirs of the American Revolution, I, 386-87.

23. Drayton to Council of Safety, September 11, 1775, in Gibbes Documentary History, I, 174.

24. Ibid.; Drayton, Memoirs of the American Revolution, I, 387-88.

25. Drayton to Council of Safety, September 17, 1775, in Gibbes, Documentary History, I, 187-188.

26. Drayton, Memoirs of the American Revolution, I, 389.

On September 13th, Drayton ordered printed and distributed throughout the Ninety Six Country a declaration enunciating the Whig position and calling for the allegiance of those yet undecided over which side to support. Citing treacherous and cruel violations to "the liberties of America" by Great Britain as justification for the confederation of the thirteen colonies, Drayton recounted his and Tennent's recent visit, wherein "thousands heard and believed us . . . [and] expressed their concern, that they had been misled. . . ." Having exhausted all means of patience and friendly persuasion in explaining his argument to the people, he told them, Drayton announced his intention to "march and attack, as public enemies, all and every person in arms, or to be in arms, in this part of the Colony, in opposition to the measures of [the Provincial] Congress. . . ." "I . . . shall . . . prosecute military measures with the utmost rigor. . . ."27

4. A Fleeting Peace Attained

The declaration was read to 127 of Fletchall's loyalist followers on Thursday, the 14th.²⁸ Meantime, Drayton's force was enlarged by the arrival of more militia so that the two commands were approximately equal in size.²⁹ Despite the bravado expressed in the declaration, apparently neither side was seeking a showdown and mutual negotiations followed. Over the strenuous objections of the Cunninghams, Fletchall and some of his captains on September 16th agreed to sign a convention of neutrality. By the Treaty of Ninety Six, negotiated and drawn up in Drayton's camp north of the village, an uncertain peace was restored to the backcountry. The document cited the several "misunderstandings . . . [which] too often precipitate men and friends into quarrels and bloodshed. . . ." Thereafter, no person would be punished because of his political beliefs, no Whig troops would be quartered among the Tories, and Fort Charlotte would be returned to Tory control. Furthermore, the loyalists agreed to surrender to the provisional government any of their number refusing to

27. "Declaration. South Carolina--Ninety-Six District," in Gibbes, Documentary History, I, 180-183; also in Elmer D. Johnson and Kathleen Lewis Sloan (comps., eds.), South Carolina: A Documentary Profile of the Palmetto State (Columbia; University of South Carolina Press, 1971), pp. 173-175. For the complete text of Drayton's declaration of September 13, 1775, see Appendix A.

28. Drayton to Council of Safety, September 17, 1775, in Gibbes, Documentary History, I, 188.

29. Drayton, Memoirs of the American Revolution, I, 389.

abide by the terms of the accord.³⁰

Drayton, for one, was deluded by the Treaty of Ninety Six into thinking he had succeeded in halting dissension in the upcountry. The next day he wrote the Council of Safety requesting that no gunpowder be distributed in the fork area.³¹ He soon left Ninety Six for Charleston. Confident in his success, Drayton stopped at Congarees on his way to the coast. There he met with some Cherokee chiefs to whom he promised that the provincial government would send trade goods.³² On his return to Charleston, Drayton was elected President of the Second Provincial Congress November 1st.

Actually, the peace brought by the Ninety Six Treaty was tenuous. A split occurred in the loyalist ranks and the Cunningham brothers rose as leaders of the faction opposing the treaty. On October 5th, Robert Cunningham responded to a query from Drayton asking if he intended to respect the accord. "I do not hold with that peace," wrote Cunningham. "At the same time [I am] as fond of peace as any man--but upon honorable terms. But according to my principles, that peace is false and disgraceful from beginning to ending. It appears to me, sir, you had all the bargain [sic] making to yourself. . . ."33

5. The Cunningham Imbroglia

By his own admission Cunningham remained a threat to the peace in the upcountry. Therefore, late in October the Council of Safety reissued the call for his arrest. On October 23rd, Captain John Caldwell filed an affidavit at Ninety Six Courthouse charging Cunningham with making seditious remarks. Cunningham was apprehended a few days later by Major Williamson's troops and consigned to Charleston where he was placed in jail. In a hearing before the Provincial Congress, Cunningham acknowledged his opposition to the terms of the Ninety Six Treaty but disputed reports that he was inciting rebellion on the frontier. Charged with "high crimes and misdemeanours against the Liberties of this colony," Cunningham was remanded

30. Drayton to Council of Safety, September 17, 1775, in Gibbes, Documentary History, I, 188; Drayton, Memoirs of the American Revolution, I, 399-403; Alden, The South in the Revolution, p. 200; Cann, "Prelude to War," p. 205; Pope, History of Newberry County, pp. 44-45; Weir, "A Most Important Epoque," p. 66. The text of the Treaty of Ninety Six, September 16, 1775, appears in Gibbes, Documentary History, I, 184-186, and is reproduced in Appendix B.

31. Drayton to Council of Safety, September 17, 1775, in Gibbes, Documentary History, I, 187.

32. Weir, "A Most Important Epoque," p. 66; Alden, The South in the Revolution, p. 200.

33. Cunningham to Drayton, October 5, 1775, in Gibbes, Documentary History, I, 200.

to jail for an indefinite sentence, an action that gravely offended back-country residents and had the effect of hardening their support for the Crown. Increasingly, the Provincial Congress, with Drayton at its head, was viewed as a combative body threatening open rebellion with the mother country.³⁴

6. The Gunpowder Incident

The arrest and imprisonment of Robert Cunningham marked a quickening of tempo in the division between loyalists and patriots in the interior. It touched off a series of moves and countermoves that ultimately erupted in violence. In his late September meeting with the Cherokee headmen, Drayton had sought to win their neutrality, if not allegiance, by promising to send them provisions, notably lead and gunpowder. On October 4th, the Council of Safety agreed to furnish the Cherokees with 1,000 pounds of powder and 2,000 pounds of lead. This development coincided with Patrick Cunningham's agitation over the arrest of his brother and his resolution to obtain vengeance. Enroute to Charleston, Cunningham and 150 followers encountered the ammunition-laden wagon bound for the Cherokees about eighteen miles below Ninety Six. The wagon was guided by twenty-three rangers. At noon, November 3rd, Cunningham's party stopped the wagon, removed the powder kegs, and chopped the lead bars into pieces, all on the pretense of forestalling an attack upon the loyalists by Whig-supplied Indians.³⁵

As soon as Cunningham and his men departed, Moses Cotter, the wagon driver, rode to Ninety Six to report the attack and robbery. On succeeding days, Cunningham spread the word that the gunpowder confiscated was to be used by the Indians against loyalist settlers on the frontier, a contention intentionally fostered by Royal Governor William Campbell. Such incendiary gossip contributed to the King's cause as more men openly

34. Pope, History of Newberry County, pp. 37, 45. Cann, "Prelude to War," p. 206; Hemphill, Journals of the Provincial Congresses, pp. 82-83. The sheriff's warrant for assuming custody of Robert Cunningham, issued by the Congress November 1, 1775, is in Ibid., p. 83.

35. Drayton, Memoirs of the American Revolution, II, 64, 65; Affidavit of Moses Cotter, November 3, 1775, quoted in Salley, History of Orangeburg County, p. 305; Waring, The Fighting Elder, p. 10; Cann, "Prelude to War," pp. 206, 207. The fear of an all-out assault by the Cherokees on the frontier settlements was already widespread in the interior region. In July, Robert Gouedy at Ninety Six had reported to Mayson and Caldwell that the old trader John Vann was inciting the tribesmen to "fall upon the White people on This Side Savannah [*sic*] River and kill them. . . ." Affidavit of Robert Gouedy, July 10, 1775, in "Historical Notes," South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine, VII (January 1906), p. 49.

aligned themselves with Cunningham and his followers. Conversely, the Whig militia under Williamson attracted few converts.³⁶ "These wicked men," lamented the Provincial Congress in a written declaration, "to the astonishment of common sense, have made their deluded followers believe, that this ammunition was sent to the Indians, with orders for them to fall upon the frontiers and to massacre the non-associators."³⁷ The Congress then ordered the arrest of Patrick Cunningham and others of "the King's mad people concerned in this daring act. . . ."38

Aged Colonel Richard Richardson was directed to assemble a contingent of rangers and militia and carry out the edict. Nearly 2,500 troops, many of them North Carolina militia, eventually moved out to capture Cunningham and his cohorts. The peace of Ninety Six had been broken and Richardson was to subdue its violators.³⁹

C. Fighting at Ninety Six

1. Mustering of Troops

Clearly, events in the backcountry were headed towards crisis. Upon learning of the gunpowder incident Major Andrew Williamson mustered his militia with the intention of locating the offenders and regaining the ammunition. On November 6th, three days after the incident, Williamson

36. Affidavit of Moses Cotter, quoted in Salley, History of Orangeburg County, p. 307; Edward McCrady, The History of South Carolina in the Revolution, 1775-1780 (New York, 1901. Reprint; New York: Paladin Press, 1969), p. 89; Pope, History of Newberry County, pp. 37-38.

37. Hemphill, Journals of the Provincial Congresses, pp. 137-138.

38. Ibid., p. 107.

39. Drayton, Memoirs of the American Revolution, II, 65, 68; Salley, History of Orangeburg County, p. 312; McCrady, South Carolina in the Revolution, p. 88; Cann, "Prelude to War," p. 212; Weir, "A Most Important Epoch," p. 67; Alden, The South in the Revolution, p. 200. Richardson's orders from the Second Provincial Congress, November 8, 1775: "On the 3d day of this instant November, Patrick Cunningham, Henry O'Neal, Hugh Brown, David Reese, Nathaniel Howard, Henry Green, and sundry other armed persons unknown, did, in Ninety-six district, cause and raise a dangerous insurrection and commotion, and did, near Mine-creek, in the said district, feloniously take a quantity of ammunition, the property of the public, and in contempt of the public authority: Therefore, you are hereby instructed and ordered . . . to march . . . to seize and to apprehend . . . The bodies of Patrick Cunningham [et al] . . . [and] cause to be . . . conveyed to Charles-Town You are to do all such things as in your opinion shall be necessary, effectually to suppress the present insurrection, and to intimidate all persons from attempting any insurrection in future." Hemphill, Journals of the Provincial Congresses, pp. 103-104.

wrote from Long Canes that he had "embodied part of this regiment, and this moment intend to march to Ninety Six to join those that are there. . . ."40 For two weeks Williamson bivouacked near Ninety Six, waiting for various groups of militia and rangers to show up, then began organizing them preparatory to taking the field against Cunningham's loyalists. He requested assistance from the Georgia Whigs, and seventy of them joined his force. Gradually, Williamson's command grew until it contained 562 officers and men.⁴¹ Likewise, Tory numbers swelled until they reached about 1,900, but Williamson believed that Cunningham and Major Robinson would not initiate an attack. On November 18th, however, alarming word reached Williamson that the loyalists were coming in force, and were, in fact, already fording the Saluda River. Major James Mayson soon arrived with three dozen Whig rangers, and Williamson urged an attack on the closing Tories. But in a council of war Williamson was overruled, his principal officers favoring a defensive rather than offensive action, and Williamson was obliged to quickly withdraw his vastly outnumbered command back towards Ninety Six.⁴²

2. Williamson's Defenses

Williamson's army arrived at Ninety Six near daybreak on Sunday, November 19. (Map 2.) The command occupied a ridge on the property of John Savage approximately 300 yards west of the center of the town and separated from the nearest building, the jail, by a ravine and the rivulet called Spring Branch. The site was chosen because the high ground around Savage's few farm buildings was relatively open, affording a clear field of fire in all directions. Furthermore, the site offered a suitable rallying point for other militia and rangers who were expected to join Williamson. On arrival, the command set to work fortifying the ground

40. Williamson to Edward Wilkinson, November 6, 1775, in Gibbes, Documentary History, I, pp. 209-210.

41. McCrady, South Carolina in the Revolution, p. 89; Salley, History of Orangeburg County, p. 308; Cann, "Prelude to War," p. 208; Drayton, Memoirs of the American Revolution, II, 119, 150. A tabular strength return for Williamson's Command at Ninety Six appears in Appendix C. Probably the most complete listing of individuals--both Tory and Whig--who were at Ninety Six during the confrontation of November 19-21, 1775, is contained in Mrs. Boyce M. Grier (comp.), "Men Who Served at Ninety Six, S.C., 1775-1781." Notebook in the files of the Greenwood County Historical Society, Greenwood, South Carolina.

42. Drayton, Memoirs of the American Revolution, II, 117; McCrady, South Carolina in the Revolution, pp. 89-90; Weir, "A Most Important Epoch," p. 66.

in a square roughly 185 yards in perimeter. "Williamson's Fort," as it came to be called, was really a loosely constructed breastwork fashioned of fence rails, beef hides, and baled straw, all arranged to connect Savage's barn and outbuildings together enclosing the area within.⁴³ A contemporary account of the proceedings described the erection of "a slight, square Breastwork of old Fence Rails, joined to a Barn on a Spot of cleared Ground, on which, in proper places, they fixed a few Swivel Guns."⁴⁴

3. Archeology of Williamson's Fort

Archeological examination of the site of Williamson's Fort has been complicated by superimposition there of another defensive structure built in 1781. A palisade trench was revealed, however, evidently belonging to Williamson's Fort, that suggests that the barricade was not as weak as the documentation allows. Perhaps the fence rails utilized in the structure were implanted vertically in the ground rather than simply laid horizontally. The trenches, approximately one foot wide and two feet deep, indicated the enclosure of a space measuring 85 by 150 feet. Three of Savage's buildings were represented by the presence of several sets of footing holes. Archeological evidence indicated that the southernmost structure measured 15 by 30 feet, that to the west was 19 by 21 feet, and that located to the north measured 21 by 32 feet. All of these buildings were tied together by a curtain of stockade. Moreover, archeology disclosed the presence of another ditch about 10 feet wide located slightly north and northwest of the main fortification. This ditch, perhaps meant to support the side of the fortification where an attack most likely would occur, extended west for 140 feet before abruptly turning south for another 45 feet.⁴⁵

43. Williamson to Drayton, November 25, 1775, in Gibbes, Documentary History, I, 217-18; Mayson to Colonel Thomson, November 24, 1775, in ibid., pp. 215-16; Drayton, Memoirs of the American Revolution, II, 117-18.

44. South Carolina and American General Gazette, December 8, 1775, quoted in South, Historical Perspective at Ninety Six, p. 71.

45. Stanley South, Archeological Excavation of the Site of Williamson's Fort of 1775, Holmes' Fort of 1780, and the Town of Cambridge of 1783-1850's (Columbia: University of South Carolina Institute of Archeology and Anthropology. Research Manuscript Series, No. 18, April, 1972), p. 24-26, 28. The excavations also revealed two burial pits, one of them empty, that likely had no connection with the Tory-Whig clash of 1775, although the dirt from one of the pits might have been removed at that time for use in the erection of the works. Ibid., p. 30.

One defensive feature possibly associated with the confrontation of November, 1775, was located in the spring of 1975 during exploratory archeology around the British star fort of 1781 at Ninety Six. During
(continued)

4. The Battle Erupts

Near 11 o'clock only three hours after Williamson began work on the fortifications and before they were ready to withstand assault, the loyalist troops of Major Joseph Robinson and Patrick Cunningham approached, beating drums and waving banners. Slowly, the Tory force invested Williamson's meager defenses, occupying the village and taking control of the courthouse and the brick jail. Williamson dispatched an officer under flag to learn Robinson's intent, but the Tories refused to meet the emissary, demanding to confer only with the Whig commanders. Soon Major Mayson and Captain John Bowie advanced to a point midway between the opposing armies where they consulted for fifteen minutes with Robinson, Cunningham, and Evan McLaurin. Mayson and Bowie returned to Williamson and relayed the Tories terms: immediate surrender of all arms and dispersal of the patriot militia.⁴⁶ Admonishing the Whig commander to keep his men well within the confines of the fortification if he regarded their safety, the Tories suddenly dramatized their seriousness by approaching and seizing two of Williamson's men standing outside the barricade. At this, Williamson ordered troops to their rescue, but a general shooting erupted from the fort, causing the Tories to seek cover

45. (continued) subsurface testing along the west side of the star archeologists discovered a circular feature measuring about 97 feet in diameter with an opening 20 feet wide on the southwest side. The sides of the structure averaged 9.3 feet wide, suggesting parapet thickness and thus possibly a circular redoubt. While direct documentary evidence for such a structure in the environs of Ninety Six is lacking, a possible identification is provided by John Drayton's somewhat distorted map of the area as it appeared in 1775, accompanying his Memoirs of the American Revolution, I, opposite page 394, and reproduced herein. This map shows a square redoubt-like structure at the position identified as "W.H. Drayton's Camp" along the Island Ford Road one and one-half miles northeast of Ninety Six (Drayton stated the distance was three-quarters of a mile). Stephanie L. Holschlag and Michael J. Rodeffer, Ninety Six: Siegeworks Opposite Star Redoubt (Ninety Six: Ninety Six Historic Site, 1976), pp. 90-94. Such a guard redoubt would indeed have been erected in the area of an armed encampment, and while that structure symbolically depicted on Drayton's map appears to be some distance from the site of the archeologically determined circular one, the location of each northeast of Ninety Six village and immediately to the right, and adjacent to, Island Ford Road, is perhaps of significance in identifying the circular structure. Nor should the positioning of the circular structure on such a commanding eminence be discounted; in 1781 the British chose almost the exact location for their strategically important star redoubt, thereby securing the approaches leading into Ninety Six from the north.

46. Williamson to Drayton, November 25, 1775, in Gibbes, Documentary History, I, 217; Drayton, Memoirs of the American Revolution, II, 118; Waring, The Fighting Elder, pp. 11-12.

and tighten their line.⁴⁷

For two and a half hours--until approximately 5:30 p.m.--the shooting never slackened. The patriots, sheltered in their rude stockade barrier, fired their muskets and swivel guns almost continuously while the loyalists returned the compliment from shelter behind buildings, fences, trees, and stumps. Only as darkness fell over Ninety Six did the day's battle diminish. During the night the Whigs maintained desultory firing to discourage assaults on the fort.⁴⁸

Next morning, the shooting resumed full force with the Tories largely staying beyond musket range of the fort, except for those stationed in the jail who kept a steady fire directed towards Williamson's command. Casualties on both sides remained light. The Tories this day attempted to burn the Whigs out, some of them trying to ignite the field and fence rails about the fort and thus raise a smokescreen behind which Robinson's force might advance. Failing in this endeavor, some of Robinson's men fashioned a large mantelet of sticks and branches and tried to approach the fort to set it afire. But this plan also failed, the loyalists accidentally igniting their shield as they moved ahead.⁴⁹

5. Negotiation

The fighting continued at long range through Monday, tapered that night and recommenced Tuesday morning, the 21st. By then, Williamson's command had been without water for two days, unable to reach the spring because of Tory marksmen posted in the jail. Late that afternoon the thirsty men began digging a well inside the barricade. After going forty feet "through a very tenacious clay soil" they struck water. Their food

47. Williamson to Drayton, November 25, 1775, in Gibbes, Documentary History, I, 217; Drayton, Memoirs of the American Revolution, II, 118. Drayton states that the Whigs initiated the firing. Ibid. Perhaps this was done at Williamson's direction. If so, he is nebulous in his accounting as to which side fired first, stating only that "a warm engagement ensued." Williamson to Drayton, November 25, 1775, in Gibbes, Documentary History, I, 217.

48. Drayton, Memoirs of the American Revolution, II, 118-119; Salley, History of Orangeburg County, p. 309.

49. Drayton mentions the construction of more than one mantelet, "but not being able to advance them so as to cover their approaches, they were destroyed." Memoirs of the American Revolution, II, 119. However, a contemporary account of the action described only one mantelet being used, "a kind of rolling Battery." South Carolina and American General Gazette, November 24-December 3, 1775, quoted in Cann, "Prelude to War," p. 210. A mantelet was "a large osier buckler [shield]." Wilhelm, Military Dictionary and Gazetteer, p. 301.

resources during the fighting consisted of four beef cattle and thirty-eight barrels of flour.⁵⁰ Aware of his growing predicament, Williamson decided to undertake a sortie into the Tory line at about midnight. The assault was planned to strike the loyalists simultaneously at several places, the attackers then withdrawing quickly back to the fort. But the bold maneuver never happened, for at dusk, Robinson's men waved a white flag from the jail signifying their desire for a parley. After dark they sent a courier with lighted candle to Mayson, once more calling upon the garrison to capitulate, a request formally refused. Captain Bowie carried Mayson's and Williamson's reply to Robinson and Cunningham that the patriots were determined "never to resign their arms." Two hours later Bowie returned to the fort with Patrick Cunningham. Late that night Cunningham obtained an agreement from Williamson and Mayson that a conference would convene at 8:00 a.m. to discuss the situation.⁵¹

It is unknown exactly why the loyalists arranged to negotiate, but most likely they had learned of the approaching militia under command of Colonel Richardson. Nor would the Whigs have acceded to the request had not their supply of gunpowder been rapidly dwindling, a fact Williamson tried to conceal from his men.⁵² As he later recalled, "we had not above thirty pounds of powder, except what little the men had in their horns."⁵³

At any rate, on Wednesday morning Williamson, Mayson, Bowie, and Captain Andrew Pickens left the fort and went to a dwelling in Ninety Six where they met with Robinson, Cunningham, McLaurin, and Captain Richard Pearis and arranged a general cease-fire.⁵⁴ The agreement, as

50. Drayton, Memoirs of the American Revolution, II, 122; Waring, The Fighting Elder, p. 12.

51. Williamson to Drayton, November 25, 1775, in Gibbes, Documentary History, I, 218; Drayton, Memoirs of the American Revolution, II, 119-120; McCrady, South Carolina in the Revolution, pp. 91-92; Cann, "Prelude to War," pp. 210-211; Waring, The Fighting Elder, p. 12. It is doubtful that the midnight sally would have succeeded because a deserter from the fort informed the Tories of the contemplated assault. Cann, "Prelude to War," p. 212.

52. Drayton, Memoirs of the American Revolution, II, 122; South Carolina and American General Gazette, December 8, 1775, quoted in South, Historical Perspective at Ninety Six, p. 74; Cann, "Prelude to War," p. 212.

53. Williamson to Drayton, November 25, 1775, in Gibbes, Documentary History, I, 218.

54. Ibid.; Drayton, Memoirs of the American Revolution, II, 120; Cann, "Prelude to War," p. 211.

prepared and ratified by the principals, announced "that hostilities shall immediately cease on both sides," that existing disputes would be settled arbitrarily by the royal governor and the Council of Safety, that the loyalist force would retire beyond the Saluda, remaining there until hearing from the governor, and that all prisoners held by either side would be immediately freed. Williamson's fort, in which the Major and his patriots withstood the three-day Tory attack, was to be "destroyed flat without damaging the houses therein, . . . and the well filled up."⁵⁵ A minor commotion ensued over the failure to include an article in the terms providing for the surrender of Williamson's swivel guns. As Major Williamson related the incident,

after the articles were agreed on and were ready for signing, their people to the number of between three and four hundred surrounded the house where we were and swore if the swivels were not given up they would abide by no articles, on which the gentlemen of the opposite party [secretly] declared upon their honor that if we would suffer it to be so inserted in the agreement they would return them. . . .⁵⁶

The swivels were surrendered as stipulated and the crowd appeased. Three days later the guns were returned and Williamson sent them on to Fort Charlotte.⁵⁷

6. A Temporary Peace

Thus ended the Battle of Ninety Six, the first bloodletting encounter of the Revolutionary War to occur in the South. Losses among Williamson's command totaled one dead and twelve wounded. The lone fatality was

55. "Agreement for a Cessation of arms. . . ," November 22, 1775, in Gibbes, Documentary History, I, 214-215; Drayton, Memoirs of the American Revolution, II, 120, 148-149. Complete text of the accord is reproduced in Appendix D.

56. Williamson to Drayton, November 25, 1775, in Gibbes, Documentary History, I, 218.

57. Ibid.; Mayson to Colonel Thomson, November 24, 1775, in Ibid. Throughout the engagement and its aftermath there seems to have existed a strained relationship between Mayson and Williamson. Mayson complained to the Council of Safety on December 7: "Though I was Lieutenant-Colonel of the same regiment of militia in which Major Williamson held his commission, and also a Major in your Regular Troops, to my surprize [sic] Major Williamson disputed the command with me--but, rather than hurt the cause, I yielded some points to him. . . . Although on account of the public good I suffered his name to be inserted in the Truce before mine, yet the means of our defence was planned by me; and the whole negotiation with the disaffected party, was addressed to me." Quoted in Salley, History of Orangeburg County, pp. 319-320.

James Birmingham, today hailed as the first South Carolinian to die for independence in the Revolution. Casualties among Robinson's Tory ranks numbered one killed (a captain named Luper) and fifty-two wounded.⁵⁸ Robinson and several of his Tory followers, including Moses Kirkland and Evan McLaurin, presently fled the backcountry and sought refuge with the British in East Florida.⁵⁹ The conflict at Ninety Six climaxed a festering political rivalry in the South Carolina interior. Immediately brought on by Tory fears of a Whig-inspired Cherokee attack, the encounter had its roots deep in the longstanding sectional disputes that characterized much of the colonial history of South Carolina. "This engagement was the first we have had . . . since these disturbances began," wrote a Savannah resident November 29 to an acquaintance in England. "Indeed it is the only one of consequence we have heard of, on this side of Boston. I am much afraid, however, it is only a prelude to more bloodshed in this corner. . . ."60

D. The Snow Campaign

In the wake of the Battle of Ninety Six the expedition of Colonel Richard Richardson occurred, designed to wipe out loyalist opposition in the middle and western parts of South Carolina as well as to destroy support for the King in the backcountry. Complying with the resolution of the Council of Safety, Richardson set out from Charleston in early November, recruiting patriot militia as he proceeded. By November 26th he had reached Congarees enroute to Ninety Six where he hoped to relieve Williamson's besieged force. "But they had concluded articles too soon, for a possibility of my reaching them," he wrote Drayton and the Council.⁶¹

58. Howard H. Peckham, The Toll of Independence: Engagements & Battle Casualties of the American Revolution (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), p. 10; Drayton, Memoirs of the American Revolution, II, 122; Cann, "Prelude to War," p. 212. Birmingham's family later received a pension annuity voted by the First General Assembly for South Carolina. Compensation was also awarded to several of the patriots wounded at Ninety Six. Watson, Old Ninety Six, p. 26.

59. Cann, "Prelude to War," p. 214.

60. Farley's Bristol Journal, February 24, 1776, quoted in Margaret Wheeler Willard (ed.), Letters on the American Revolution, 1774-1776 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1925), p. 226.

61. Richardson to Drayton, November 27, 1775, in Salley, History of Orangeburg County, p. 312.

Richardson's army arrived at Ninety Six soon after, and the Colonel in a stinging indictment accused the loyalists of violating the "solemn treaty" of September 18th. Despite the recent truce arranged by Williamson and the loyalists, Richardson on December 8th solemnly announced that,

I am now come into these parts, in the name and behalf of the Colonies to demand of the inhabitants, the delivery up of the bodies of the principal offenders herein, together with the Said ammunition and full restitution for the ravages committed, and also the arms and ammunition of all the aiders and abettors of those robbers, murderers, and disturbers of the peace and good order as aforesaid. . . .⁶²

With a command of upwards of 2,500 men, Richardson ranged out of Ninety Six in pursuit of Cunningham and the Tories, some of whom fled further up-country and fruitlessly tried to enlist the Cherokees to fight Richardson. On December 21st, Richardson struck the loyalists' camp at Great Cane Brake along the Reedy River, killing an undetermined number and taking 130 prisoners. Patrick Cunningham eluded capture, but Colonel Thomas Fletchall was allegedly found hiding in a hollow tree. The prisoners were conducted to Charleston and were later freed by the Council of Safety. On the day following Richardson's attack a heavy winter storm blanketed his camp with over fifteen inches of snow. His objective attained, Richardson turned his army about and trudged back to Congarees.⁶³ Of the march he reported;

[For] Eight days we never set foot on the earth or had a place to lie down, till we had spaded or grabbed away the snow, from which circumstance, many are frost bitten, some very badly; and on the third day a heavy cold rain fell, together with sleet; and melted the snow and filled every creek and river with a deluge of water; but with all these difficulties we reached this place yesterday with the prisoners. . . .⁶⁴

62. Gibbes, Documentary History, I, 225; Drayton, Memoirs of the American Revolution, II, 127.

63. Joseph Johnson, Traditions and Reminiscences, Chiefly of the American Revolution in the South (Charleston: Walker and James, 1851), pp. 145-146; Cann, "Prelude to War," p. 213; Pope, History of Newberry County, pp. 45-46; Weir, "A Most Important Epoch," p. 67.

64. Richardson to Henry Laurens, January 2, 1776, in Gibbes, Documentary History, I, 247.

The "snow campaign," as it came to be called, effectively ended serious loyalist resistance in the backcountry over the next several years. Only the British capture of Charleston in 1780 and the subsequent occupation of the interior by British troops revitalized the King's cause among dwellers around Ninety Six.

CHAPTER VI: BRITISH OCCUPATION

A. Revolution in South Carolina

At the beginning of 1776 South Carolina was becoming one of the more openly militant of Great Britain's colonies. As if the patriot-inspired provincial congresses were not troublesome enough for the King's representatives in Charleston to contend with, on March 26 the Congress adopted a republican constitution, the second colony after New Hampshire to take this significant step. Officers chosen to lead the insurgent government included John Rutledge as president, Henry Laurens as vice president, and William Henry Drayton as chief justice. Ninety Six District, now composed of three administrative sections, continued to be the principal governmental division of the interior and was represented in the newly decreed Legislative Council by LeRoy Hammond, who had erected the courthouse and jail in Ninety Six village. Two years later another constitution would be adopted in which a senate with membership chosen by the people superseded the Legislative Council. At this time the executive title of president was replaced by that of governor.¹

1. A New Cherokee War

In the upcountry above Congarees, 1776 brought new conflict in a form that had not been seen for the past sixteen years. During the interim since the Cherokee War the tribesmen had been pressured from north and east and had witnessed encroachment by white settlers into the hinterland and the Indians' hunting territory. Throughout the southern Appalachian range the Cherokees and their leaders grew more angry at their loss until by July, 1776, they could endure no more.²

2. Defenses at Ninety Six

On the first day of the month, hundreds of painted warriors swept out of the mountains killing all whites in their path. Several entire families were massacred as the tribesmen rampaged through eastern Tennessee into Georgia and the Carolinas. Near Ninety Six a youth appeared at the house of Francis Salvador and reported that his whole family at Little River had been murdered by the Indians. Two of the

1. Pope, History of Newberry County, p. 39.

2. Alden, John Stuart, p. 427.

boy's fingers had been torn off by bullets. Making no distinction as to age, sex, color, or allegiance, the warriors butchered blacks, whites, Tories, Whigs, men, women, and children in their purge. Frightened survivors posted themselves in small wooden stockades hastily erected around many of the settlers' homes.³ Others found protection at Ninety Six. Archeology there has disclosed the presence of a simple stockade completed around the village in about 1776--a feature that was later incorporated into defensive works built by the British at the town a few years later. Apparently built in response to the Cherokee threat of that summer, or perhaps as a safeguard following the Tory-Whig encounter of the previous autumn, the stockade had two bastions situated at diagonally opposite corners.⁴

Residents along the Saluda River found refuge in a structure called Lyndley's Fort where, at 1 a.m. on July 15, they were attacked by a large body of Indians, some of whom were disguised Tories. But the occupants had been strengthened the night before with some militia and the well-directed musketry from the fort sent the enemy into retreat by daylight. Several Indians were killed, and the pursuing militia caught thirteen whites dressed as warriors, all of whom were incarcerated in the Ninety Six jail.⁵

On July 20 another engagement took place in eastern Tennessee when 170 frontiersmen scored a victory over more than 300 Indians led by Chief Dragging Canoe, who was wounded in the affray. The fort at Watauga was repeatedly besieged by the tribesmen, but without success.⁶ For several weeks warfare raged unabated in the backcountry until by late July the whole of Ninety Six District stood in a state of disorganization: "Ninety Six is now a frontier," wrote the Reverend Creswell to Drayton.

Plantations lie desolate, and hopeful crops are going to ruin. In short, dear sir, unless we get some relief, famine will overspread our beautiful country. As our army is now over the line, the dread of savages, and the disaffected, will deter the lovers of their country from looking after their

3. Alden, The South in the Revolution, pp. 271-72; Drayton, Memoirs of the American Revolution, II, 339-40; Fanning, Narrative, p. 4.

4. South, Williamson's Fort, pp. 91-92, 96-97; Holschlag and Rodeffer, "Ninety Six: Exploratory Excavations in the Village," p. 104

5. Drayton, Memoirs of the American Revolution, II, 342; Milling, Red Carolinians, p. 315. A slightly variant account of this attack is in Creswell to Drayton, July 27, 1776, in Gibbes, Documentary History, II, 31.

6. Alden, The South in the Revolution, p. 272.

affairs at home. Fences are thrown down, and many have already suffered great loss. Such of us as are in forts have neither suitable guns nor ammunition, for the defence of our wives and little ones, as we were obliged to furnish our army with our own best arms.⁷

3. Williamson Prosecutes the Indians

The army was Major Williamson's militia, which surprised by the suddenness of the Indian assaults was slow to respond. On July 3, two days after the first strike occurred, only forty men were available to offer organized resistance. Despite their inferior numbers the troops started towards the Cherokee Nation. Williamson camped near the Cherokee land until July 16 when his force, now numbering about 450 effectives, proceeded into the Indian country. On August 1, Williamson's army, swelled to over 1,000 men, was attacked by the Cherokees, Francis Salvador was among those killed. The troops responded by marching into the easternmost Cherokee towns, destroying them and their outlying cornfields.⁸ Promoted to Colonel, Williamson pursued the Indians all through north-western South Carolina and into North Carolina before returning and disbanding his militia.⁹ As Williamson's troops drove into the Cherokee lands, militia from Georgia, Virginia, and North Carolina did likewise. Organized backwoodsmen from Tennessee joined in the counterattack and many of the Cherokees were exterminated outright, notably captured warriors. Finally, in October, Oconostata, headman of the largest group of the Indians, surrendered. The war was over. On May 20, 1777, the Cherokees reluctantly ceded more than a million additional acres of their South Carolina lands.¹⁰

7. July 27, 1776, in Gibbes, Documentary History, II, 31.

8. Drayton, Memoirs of the American Revolution, II, 341; Alden, John Stuart, p. 427; Alden, The South in the Revolution, p. 272; Watson, Greenwood County Sketches, p. 16; Milling, Red Carolinians, p. 315; Lynn Montross, Rag, Tag and Bobtail: The Story of the Continental Army, 1775-1783 (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1952), p. 117.

9. See E.F. Rockwell (ed.), "Parallel and Combined Expeditions Against the Cherokee Indians in South and in North Carolina, in 1776," Historical Magazine (October, 1867), pp. 212-20.

10. Alden, The South in the Revolution, p. 272; Montross, Rag, Tag and Bobtail, pp. 116-17; Royce, "The Cherokee Nation," p. 378.

4. Whig Control at Ninety Six

With the submission of the Indians, the backcountry settled into an awkward peace. Agitation continued between patriots and loyalists, and as a prominent interior judicial center Ninety Six reflected the pronounced Whig bias of the rebel government in Charleston. Controlled solidly by the patriots, the courthouse and jail at Ninety Six were used to try and to imprison those charged and found guilty of seditious actions. As chief justice of South Carolina, William Henry Drayton again visited Ninety Six and held court there in the spring of 1777.¹¹ Many of those charged and convicted were sentenced to death and were escorted from Ninety Six jail for execution in Charleston.¹² The jail contained so many Tory prisoners at various times during the early part of the war that numbers of troops were required to guard it. In August, 1777, more than fifty militia soldiers were sent to Ninety Six from Congarees "to Guard the Goal [sic]," with the stipulation that the troops leave early enough in the morning so "that their March may be over before the heat of the Day."¹³ And in the following month one hundred troops ("50 horse men & 50 foot men") were sent to guard the jail against Tory sympathizers who lurked in the vicinity of Ninety Six.¹⁴

5. Whig Partisans Counter the Tories

So large was the number of loyalists in upper South Carolina that in the spring of 1778 several hundred of them were organized near Ninety Six to participate in a plundering expedition across the Savannah River and into East Florida.¹⁵ To counter such coordinated efforts by the Tories, the patriot government reorganized the state militia in March, 1778, creating three brigades of troops, one of them commanded by Brigadier General Andrew Williamson.¹⁶ Often undisciplined, rude in military bearing, and unable to leave their houses and farms to assemble immediately when needed, the militia nonetheless performed as efficiently

11. Badders, Broken Path, p. 51.

12. See Williamson to Drayton, April 13, 1777, in ibid., p. 52; and Williamson to Drayton, April 25, 1777, in Gibbes, Documentary History, II, 88.

13. Orders to Captain Brown, August 17, 1777, in Salley, History of Orangeburg County, p. 454.

14. Orders to Lieutenant Colonel Mayson, September 15, 1777, in ibid., p. 455.

15. Brown, South Carolina Regulators, p. 205.

16. Salley, History of Orangeburg County, p. 469.

as it could, rendering substantive service to the state throughout the war years.

Early in 1779 part of the South Carolina militia under command of Colonel Andrew Pickens joined with Georgia troops in attacking more than 500 Tories enroute to the British post of Augusta. In the Battle of Kettle Creek, Georgia, fought February 14, the American force lost twenty-nine killed and wounded while British casualties amounted to seventy-five killed and a like number captured.¹⁷ These prisoners, conducted to the jail at Ninety Six, were soon joined by 211 more taken March 3 at the Battle of Briar Creek, Georgia.¹⁸ In fact, the number of prisoners seems to have exceeded by far the space available for them in the brick jail at Ninety Six, suggesting the likelihood that the militia erected some kind of compound to accommodate part of them. Possibly for this reason Colonel Pickens sent militia to Ninety Six under orders "to guard the prisoners while on trial."¹⁹ At the circuit court the captives were tried in a session beginning March 22, 1779.²⁰ Approximately seventy were condemned to death by hanging, although only five, charged both with civil as well as military atrocities, were actually hanged. The others were either pardoned or retained in the jail. One of the latter was a loyalist officer, Captain Zacharias Gibbs, who was captured at Kettle Creek and sentenced to hang. Instead, Gibbs was imprisoned at Ninety Six jail in full sight of the gallows for more than a year. He was finally released in April, 1780.²¹ The defeat in battle of the Tories and the hangings at Ninety Six in 1779 brought temporary quietude to the region. But in the long run they served to incite the Tories and provoked longstanding bitterness on both sides.²²

17. Peckham, Toll of Independence, pp. 57-58.

18. John Graham, "Journal of John Graham, South Carolina Militia 1779." Ed. by C.F.W. Coker. The Military Collector & Historian, XIX (Summer, 1967), p. 38. The pension abstract of a soldier who helped escort prisoners to Ninety Six following Briar Creek is in Annie Walker Burns (comp.), "South Carolina Pension Abstracts of the Revolutionary War, War of 1812 and Indian Wars." V (mimeographed, Washington, D.C., n.d.), p. 35.

19. Pickens to Captain John Irvine, March 12, 1779, in Gibbes, Documentary History, II, 109.

20. Graham, "Journal," p. 39.

21. Jones, "Journal of Alexander Chesney," p. 80.

22. Waring, Fighting Elder, p. 27; Watson, Old Ninety Six, pp. 26-27.

B. Britain Supreme

1. The Fall of Charleston

Beginning in the spring of 1780 political sentiment in the South turned to favor loyalism, or at most neutrality, after General Henry Clinton, supreme British commander in America, implemented a vigorous strategy for reducing that region. On May 12 the city of Charleston capitulated after a month-long siege, enabling Clinton to gain a sure foothold on the province. Hoping to destroy whatever Whig influence lingered in the interior, Clinton directed his armies inland to occupy the country and to quell whatever incentive for rebellion still remained there. On May 29 British cavalry under Lieutenant Colonel Banastre Tarleton struck the command of Colonel Abraham Buford at the Waxhaws, needlessly slaughtering many patriots and destroying the last organized American unit in the province.

With the fall of Charleston the insurgent government of South Carolina ceased to exist. Governor John Rutledge and many subordinates, including leading militia officers, fled into North Carolina while most others were paroled by the British. On Clinton's authority, Lieutenant General Charles Cornwallis proceeded to subjugate the South Carolina backcountry. He sent 2,500 British troops to occupy Camden while two battalions patrolled the land between that post and Georgetown, on the coast, which was garrisoned by a strong force of Tories. More troops were posted at Rocky Mount, to oversee the country between Camden and Ninety Six.²³ Seeing resistance futile, General Andrew Williamson of Ninety Six District surrendered peaceably and swore allegiance to the Crown, leaving the provincial troops leaderless, with hundreds going over to the British.²⁴ At Ninety Six, British light infantry and royal provincial troops took station under command of Lieutenant Colonel Nisbet Balfour, while more royal soldiers were posted to Augusta. The remaining British commands occupied the coastal stations of Charleston, Beaufort, and Savannah.²⁵

2. Occupation of Ninety Six

As the British outpost situated furthest inland, Ninety Six took on

23. Snowden, History of South Carolina, I, 381; J.W. Fortescue, A History of the British Army (13 vols.; London: Macmillan and Company, Ltd., 1911), III, 316; Pope, History of Newberry County, p. 47; Christopher Ward, The War of the Revolution (2 vols.; New York: The Macmillan Co., 1952), II, 704.

24. Waring, Fighting Elder, p. 36-37; Don Higginbotham, The War of American Independence: Military Attitudes, Policies, and Practice, 1763-1789 (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1971), p. 357.

25. Ward, War of the Revolution, II, 704-05.

strategic importance. Not only could troops posted there protect the Tories while holding backcountry Whigs in check, but they could maintain steady communication with Britain's Cherokee allies to the west. The village soon became the center for an upcountry recruiting program directed at raising loyalist militia. Further, the British station was perceived as a vital supply center for forage gathered from area Tories, as well as a potential source of military support for the King's posts at Augusta and Camden.²⁶ Like residents of Charleston, those inhabitants of Ninety Six District who had been active in the patriot cause were considered prisoners of war on parole. With the takeover and consolidation of loyalist strength at Ninety Six, General Clinton deemed the backcountry securely in British hands. As he stated, "The submission of General Williamson at Ninety-six . . . put an end to all resistance in every district of South Carolina."²⁷

3. Tory-Whig Strife

But Clinton unwittingly weakened his position in the backcountry by announcing the revocation of his liberal parole system in favor of a system calling upon South Carolinians to declare themselves for or against the King, with full restoration of rights for loyalists and punishment for those who resisted. Whereas the old policy allowed for adoption of a semblance neutrality by the patriots, the new one did not. Lord Cornwallis was charged with implementing repressive measures against all who refused to swear fealty to the royal government. In July, Lieutenant Colonel Balfour issued a proclamation at Ninety Six that threatened execution of those persons not complying with the stringent code. Civil warfare erupted anew in the interior, and a raging, bloody, sporadic conflict ensued as bands of partisan guerrillas terrorized each other.²⁸ In an attempt to halt

26. Johnson, Life and Correspondence of Nathanael Greene, II, 139; Landrum, Colonial and Revolutionary History of Upper South Carolina, pp. 325-26; William Gilmore Simms, The History of South Carolina, from Its First European Discovery to Its Erection into a Republic (Charleston: S. Babcock and Company, 1842), p. 230; McCrady, South Carolina in the Revolution 1775-1780, p. 279; Ward, War of the Revolution, II, 816.

27. Henry Clinton, The American Rebellion. Ed. by William B. Willcox (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954), p. 176.

28. Weigley, The Partisan War, p. 12; Pope, History of Newberry County, p. 47; Wallace, History of South Carolina II, 225; Montross, Rag, Tag and Bobtail, p. 438. Balfour's Ninety Six proclamation is in National Archives Microfilm. Papers of the Continental Congress. Roll 85, Item 71, Vol. I, p. 452.

conflicts in the area of the Saluda River, Cornwallis in June, 1780, sent a command of volunteer loyalists under Major Patrick Ferguson to occupy that country. Ferguson bivouacked along the Little River, where he proceeded to attract hundreds of South Carolina Tories to his banner. With a command of 4,000 divided into seven regiments, Ferguson, appointed by Cornwallis to be Inspector of Tory Militia, held the backcountry around Ninety Six in virtual subjection.²⁹

4. Ninety Six in 1780

While much of the history of Ninety Six village consists of data gleaned from occasional and all-too-often brief references contained in government correspondence, the period of the months under British domination after 1780 is comparatively well documented. One of the young officers with Ferguson was Lieutenant Anthony Allaire, who kept a diary of his part in the British occupation of Ninety Six District in the summer and fall of 1780. Allaire recorded a vivid impression of the village as he first encountered it:

[Ninety Six] is a village or country town--contains about twelve dwelling houses, a court-house and a jail, in which are confined about forty Rebels, brought in prisoners by the friends of Government, who have just got the opportunity, and gladly embrace it, many of them having been obliged before this to hide in swamps to keep from prison themselves. Ninety Six is situated on an eminence, the land cleared for a mile around it, in a flourishing part of the country, supplied with very good water, enjoys a free, open air, and is esteemed a healthy place.³⁰

On June 23 Allaire reported an encounter on Catawba River, seventy miles away, between Tory militia and a party of Whigs, and Ferguson took forty volunteers and went in pursuit.³¹ Next day Allaire moved his camp

29. Ward, War of the Revolution, II, 739; Higginbotham, War of American Independence, p. 357; Snowden, History of South Carolina, I, 385.

30. Diary of Anthony Allaire, pp. 19-20. Compare Allaire's diary entries with the purported "Diary of a Loyalist Surgeon [1780]." Thorne Collection. Manuscripts Division, Princeton University Library. The content of this document is almost identical to that in Allaire, which was originally published in Lyman C. Draper, King's Mountain and Its Heroes (Cincinnati: Peter G. Thompson, 1881).

31. Diary of Anthony Allaire, p. 20.

from the field around Ninety Six into the town, where he

took quarters . . . opposite the jail, where I have the constant view of the Rebels peeping through the grates, which affords some satisfaction to see them suffer for their folly. Some of them are magistrates; one the executioner of the five that were hanged here some time in April, 1779.³²

Much of the time was spent performing routine matters such as cleaning and parade.³³ Evidently, the toops erected barracks, or perhaps converted some of the dwelling houses, vacated by Whigs, for military use.³⁴ There were a great many supplies on hand, surrendered by the patriots on British possession of the town. Weapons included one two-pounder cannon, twenty blunderbusses, twenty-one swivel guns, and over 600 muskets and other arms, along with various amounts of gunpowder, cartridges, bullets, flints, and lead. There were also tools like saws, pickaxes, and shovels that could be used in fortifying the position.³⁵ But Balfour's men grew ill rapidly from the debilitating heat of the summer, and he urgently sent off to Cornwallis for medicines, reporting that "we are turning sickly, fast, and our Surgeon [is] very ill. . . ."36

5. A Jail Break

Another area of concern for Balfour and for his successor, Lieutenant Colonel John Harris Cruger, were the prisoners in Ninety Six jail. In July there occurred so much disorder and dissension among the inmates that Balfour found it necessary to send to Charleston "the worst of the prisoners I found in jail here, their characters are so bad. . . ."37 Little more

32. Ibid.

33. Ibid.

34. See Balfour to Cornwallis, July 12, 1780. Cornwallis Papers. British Public Records Office, 30/11/1. Microfilm. Library of Congress (hereafter cited as BPRO).

35. "An acco^t of Arms, Ammunition & Stores taken from the Rebels, & now in the Possession [sic] of the Commisary [sic] at Ninety Six 19th June 1780" BPRO 30/11/2 (1). Complete list appears in Appendix E.

36. Balfour to Cornwallis, July 17, 1780. Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/2 (2).

37. Balfour to Cornwallis, July 4, 1780. Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/2 (2).

than a month later Cruger reported a jailbreak:

The prisoners here broke Gaol and then made their escape, none of consequence except a Colo. Thomas and his son. They had procured tools to open the doors and did it so quietly as to knock down the Sentry at the foot of the Stairs before he was apprized of their business.³⁸

Most of the inmates were recaptured within a few days.³⁹

6. Cruger Takes Command

The tense atmosphere surrounding Balfour's tenure at Ninety Six ended by early August, 1780, after the moderate Lieutenant Colonel Cruger assumed command of the post and Balfour took over in Charleston. A native of New York, Cruger commanded the First Battalion of DeLancey's Brigade of New York Loyalists, a unit raised by his father-in-law, Oliver DeLancey. At Ninety Six, Cruger's command additionally encompassed the Second Battalion, New Jersey Volunteers, besides a large number of South Carolina Tory militia.⁴⁰

7. A Policy of Repression

Throughout the middle summer of 1780 while Balfour and later Cruger garrisoned Ninety Six, Patrick Ferguson and his Tories fought numerous brief encounters with the patriots in the backcountry. The loyalist militia gained an advantage with the post at Ninety Six in close proximity to their operations and with an established communications link to the British command post at Charleston. Ferguson's soldiers went everywhere pillaging farms and homes and confiscating forage and supplies in the King's name. By late July, however, the American patriots were beginning to organize an effective arm to counter the Tories.⁴¹ This momentum was

38. Cruger to Cornwallis, August 11, 1780. Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/63.

39. Cruger to Cornwallis, undated (August, 1780). Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/63.

40. Jones, "Journal of Alexander Chesny," p. 89; Johnson, Life and Correspondence of Nathanael Greene, II, 139; McCrady, South Carolina in the Revolution, 1775-1780, pp. 279-80; Wallace, History of South Carolina, II, 245. There is some evidence that Cruger was born in London and came to America at the outbreak of the war. See Watson, Old Ninety Six, p. 28.

41. Snowden, History of South Carolina, I, 386; Jones, "Journal of Alexander Chesny," p. 10.

briefly interrupted on August 16 with Cornwallis's victory at Camden over an American army of superior numbers under General Horatio Gates.⁴² In the aftermath of Camden, Cornwallis sought to quell the insurrection in South Carolina. He ordered men taken from jail and hanged, and such lynchings occurred in Camden and Augusta. He outlined his repressive policy in a letter to Cruger at Ninety Six, stating his intention to severely punish the rebels and to seize their property. Moreover, he wrote, "I have ordered in the most positive manner, that every militiaman, who has borne arms with us, and afterwards joined the enemy, shall be immediately hanged."⁴³

8. Defeat and Victory

Another setback for the Americans occurred in September. Colonel Elijah Clark and an American force laid siege to the British post of Augusta, again under command of Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Brown. As the assault began, Brown dispatched messengers to Ninety Six requesting help and Cruger went forward with 500 troops to relieve the beleaguered garrison. At Cruger's approach Clark withdrew, ending the shortlived siege without success.⁴⁴ But the patriot cause was soon rejuvenated in the backcountry. Early in October, Patrick Ferguson, complying with instructions from Cornwallis, was completing a peregrination in an area near the North Carolina-South Carolina border. Pursued by Whig forces, Ferguson feinted towards Ninety Six, then moved northeast. At King's Mountain, October 7, Ferguson's command was surprised and thoroughly routed by an army composed of Whig backwoodsmen. Several hundred Tory militia were killed, including Ferguson himself, and several hundred more were captured by the sharpshooting troops of Colonel William Campbell.⁴⁵ The prisoners were ushered away, but not before ten of their number were hanged on the spot in retaliation for the Tory lynchings of patriots at

42. Ward, War of the Revolution, II, 722; David Ramsay, The History of the Revolution in South-Carolina, From a British Province to an Independent State (2 vols.; Trenton: Isaac Collins, 1785), II, 157-58.

43. Ramsay, Revolution in South Carolina, II, 156-57.

44. Allaire, Diary of Lieut. Anthony Allaire, p. 29; William Moultrie, Memoirs of the American Revolution, so far as it related to the States of North and South Carolina, and Georgia (2 vols.; New York: David Longworth, 1802). Reprint, New York: The New York Times and Arno Press, 1968), II, 282; McCall, History of Georgia, p. 485.

45. Ward, War of the Revolution, II, 741; Wallace, History of South Carolina, II, 236-37; Alden, John Stuart, p. 458.

Camden, Augusta, and Ninety Six, and for Tarleton's massacre of American troops at Waxhaws.⁴⁶ The win at King's Mountain re-inspired the Whigs and partially compensated them for earlier reversals. Stunned by the American victory, Cornwallis halted his offensive and withdrew to Winnsborough, located between Camden and Ninety Six but closer to Camden, where he might support either post as needed.⁴⁷ As news of the victory spread through the countryside more dissidents congregated around the militia banners of Colonels Francis Marion and Thomas Sumter, commissioned by Governor Rutledge to rally the patriot brigades so disrupted by the fall of Charleston. Cornwallis now grew concerned over the rapidly building American forces and began to fear for the security of British-held upper South Carolina.⁴⁸

C. Cruger Starts His Defenses

1. Balfour's Advice

Ever since the British invasion of the province began in the spring of 1780 the occupying forces realized the necessity of securing their outposts with fortifications. At Ninety Six Cruger found the rude stockade surrounding the village, erected years earlier to help ward off Indian attacks, hardly capable of withstanding a serious assault by enemy artillery.⁴⁹ In addition, there was probably a palisaded compound built to house the British provincial troops of Major Ferguson located just north of the jail. Evidence of such a compound, measuring approximately 110 yards east-west by 42 yards north-south, was revealed by archeological examination of the area in the 1960s.⁵⁰ Yet this structure was not considered to be of a defensive character. Lieutenant Colonel Balfour had addressed the matter of fortifications for Ninety Six in a letter to Cornwallis dated June 24, 1780:

As to this post, it is so situated, that three small redoubts, well Abbattis^d, I think, can easily defend it, the court house

46. Moultrie, Memoirs, II, 244-45; Ward, War of the Revolution, II, 744.

47. Piers Mackesy, The War for America, 1775-1783 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965), p. 345.

48. Ward, War of the Revolution, II, 745; Salley, History of Orangeburg County, p. 470.

49. Johnson, Life and Correspondence of Nathanael Greene, pp. 138-39; South, "Williamson's Fort," pp. 91, 96-97.

50. South, Historical Perspective at Ninety Six, p. 93.

is an excellent Barrack in the centre of the village sufficient for two hundred men, and a guard in each of the redoubts, will, I am certain keep every thing quiet, prevent surprises &c.⁵¹

Balfour urged the use of blacks in the neighborhood for erecting the works, adding that "we have carpenters enough, and ammunition." He further suggested arming the redoubts with the swivel guns confiscated at Ninety Six or with small cannon brought from another outpost. "I dare say," concluded Balfour, "but without these small works, I think, the post with the Carolinians in garrison, a little ticklish."⁵²

2. Patrick Ferguson's System

Balfour's colleague at Ninety Six, Patrick Ferguson, had earlier proposed to Clinton and Cornwallis an extensive defense system for the entire province.⁵³ Moreover, Ferguson had devised in great detail his concept for an improved blockhouse redoubt conducive to backcountry conditions. Basically, Ferguson's design called for construction of a two-tiered casemate capable of quartering troops, surrounded by a modified fraized rampart and palisaded ditch. This in turn was encompassed by an abatis and two lesser ditches filled with bushes and other obstructions. The blockhouse, fashioned from oak timbers and protected by the parapet of the work, would be covered against virtually every kind of artillery fire that could be brought against it. "These Block houses should have five sides Bastion Fashion. The Timbers both of the walls & roof of Oak Eighteen Inches square, & dove tailed at the corners, so as to resist ricochet shot & shells." Ferguson urged erection of such blockhouses at the corners of stockaded forts. Not only would such procedure be inexpensive, but an enemy would be mad "to assault a Citadel with blockhouse Bastions."⁵⁴

51. Balfour to Cornwallis, June 24, 1780. Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/2 (1).

52. Ibid.

53. Ferguson's defensive plan, as submitted in May following the capitulation of Charleston, called for "the Establishment of 4 or 5 Blockhouse redoubts, to command at once all the Principle [sic] avenues & means of transportation by Land & water where they cross each other; so as to check in their infancy all combinations of the Disaffected, & prevent their assembling in any degree, much less to collect Provisions [,] transport Cannon ammunition &c. & make all the necessary previous preparations for a dangerous Insurrection." Ferguson recommended works of this type be erected at several locations, including one on the Santee River overlooking "the roads to Cambden [sic], Congaree & 96. . . ." Each work could be built by slaves for occupancy by sixty troops and two cannon. Patrick Ferguson, "Plan for Securing the Province of So. Carolina, &c," May 16, 1780. Henry Clinton Papers. William L. Clements Library.

54. Patrick Ferguson, Savannah, February, 1780. Clinton Papers.

Ferguson must have seen perfect circumstances existing at Ninety Six for completion of the blockhouse redoubts he proposed. But Cornwallis earlier had disapproved the building of any costly works at Ninety Six. On July 11 Ferguson wrote him:

I am just informd [sic] by Colonel Balfour, that your Lordship has determined against everything here but feild [sic] Works, on account of the Expençe: how far the work that I had the honor to propose may come within that description I know not; but lest your Lordship should conceive that my Calculations were made in a hurry, I again beg leave after thorough consideration to say that I will be proud to engage . . . to erect such a work, under penalty if it is not out of reach of assault in three weeks & in a thorough State of Defence in Six, or if it should cost £100 beyond the £500 supposed, to pay the whole Expençe myself. And with regard to repairs, the Parapet having a broad base [,] little height & a natural slope, & the Logs at least of 50 years duration, a few shingles & oak rails would ten years hence renew the whole.⁵⁵

Probably at least one blockhouse of the design encouraged by Ferguson was built at Ninety Six. Early in September Cruger told Cornwallis that "we have thrown up two Redoubts, & are building a Block House, but having only a Dozⁿ Axes to work with, we go on exceeding slow. The Ideas of an Engineer would not injure us."⁵⁶ Evidence of a blockhouse approximating the Ferguson pattern has been discovered in the northwest quadrant of the village site where archeology has revealed a cellar hole, a burned firing wall trench, and a large ditch, all apparently situated so as to guard that corner of the town. One of the two redoubts mentioned was probably that located on the downslope just west of, and below, the jail, archeologically determined to have been a V-shaped redan structure measuring some eighty feet across the rear and complete with a ditch containing a palisade trench. The other was probably the palisaded structure erected further west, across Spring Branch, on the property of James Holmes.⁵⁷

3. Further Town Defenses

It is conjectured that another of Ferguson's blockhouse redoubts was

55. Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/2 (2).

56. Cruger to Cornwallis, September 3, 1780. Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/64.

57. South, Williamson's Fort, pp. 90, 95; South, Historical Perspective at Ninety Six, pp. 95-96, 99-100, 101.

built at the southeast corner of the stockade erected by Cruger in September and October. Thus the blockhouses would have flanked the town at diagonally opposite corner, serving as bastions to counter enemy assaults from all directions. During the first part of October Cruger had reason to apprehend such an attack and he quickened work on his defenses. He penned word to Cornwallis of his preparations: "I have palisaded the Court house & the principal houses in, about one hundred yards square, with Block House flankers. I have provided & got in a quantity of Indⁿ Corn, w^h in Case of Siege must be our principle support. . . ."58 Similarly, Major James Wemyss, of Cornwallis's command, who visited Ninety Six towards the end of the month reported to the General by coded message that "Colonel Cruger has enclosed the Court House & some other Houses that joined it within a square stockade flanked by Blockhouses. He is now making a ditch which when finished will make him very strong. This Work with the Jail & a small Blockhouse [on Holmes's land?] holds all his P[eople?]."59

By the middle of October, therefore, Cruger had finished a new and stronger stockade, superimposed on the older one, around a good part of the village. Apparently the jail was situated outside the 100 square yard area so stockaded. By the end of the month Cruger was concentrating his defensive effort on digging a ditch around the stockade, piling the dirt against the wall to further bolster it. Archeological investigation has located parts of palisade trenches and a fortification ditch in a position approximating the northeast corner of the town site. Evidence of the location of a stockade has been revealed for several hundred feet along the east and west sides of the site, signifying an enclosure that actually measured about 73 yards by 133 yards when standing. Signs of a small bastion located at the northeast corner were found, raising the possibility that a similar one was located at the southwest corner. Probable palisade ditches were also found along the west side, south of the jail.⁶⁰

Most of the labor used to erect the fortifications around Ninety Six was provided by some 200 blacks taken by the British from outlying plantations.⁶¹ Because Cruger yet feared he would be assailed by a force of Whig militia, he wanted to insure the security of the post at

58. Cruger to Cornwallis, October 13, 1780. Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/2 (3).

59. Wemyss to Cornwallis, October 29, 1780. Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/2 (3).

60. South, Historical Perspective at Ninety Six, pp. 56, 91-93, 101-02.

61. See Balfour to Cornwallis, June 24, 1780. Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/2 (1); Isaac Allen to Lieutenant Henry Haldane, December 25, 1780, in ibid.

Ninety Six at all costs. He still desired that Cornwallis send an engineer to survey his construction and to make further recommendations. Finally acceding to Cruger's requests, Cornwallis in late November decided to send his aide and chief engineer, Lieutenant Henry Haldane, who had lately been preparing fortification plans for the British post at Camden.⁶²

D. New Life for the Americans

1. Appointment of Greene

Meanwhile, in the North administrative changes had occurred in the American army that were to cause real concern for Lord Cornwallis. In October, the American Commander-in-Chief, General George Washington, replaced Gates, defeated at Camden, with thirty-eight-year-old Major General Nathanael Greene, lately Quartermaster General of the Continental Army. A native of Rhode Island, Greene lacked much formal education but at an early age acquired a proclivity for army life by studying law and military tactics. Born a Quaker, he was disowned by the Friends for his military pursuits. He served in the Rhode Island legislature before and during the war and became a member of the provincial militia. In June, 1775, Greene was commissioned brigadier general in the Continental Army, and in August, 1776, won promotion to major general. Possessed of a quick mind, Greene was still a methodical strategist, a quality that endeared him to Washington. He served at numerous engagements, including Brandywine, Germantown, and Springfield, and proved his worth to his chief time and again, a factor contributing to his selection to head the southern army, fragmented and demoralized after Gates's defeat.

2. The British and Lord Rawdon

Greene did not arrive to assume active command of his army until December. By then South Carolina and Georgia were under shaky British control. The main posts were at Charleston and Savannah, along the coast. Elsewhere, the chain of posts established by Cornwallis's troops to hold the provinces comprised Georgetown, Fort Watson, Fort Motte, Orangeburg, Fort Granby, Augusta, Camden, Winnsborough, and Ninety Six. Approximately 8,000 British troops, including loyalist militia and volunteers, occupied the two provinces. Greene's chief adversary in South Carolina would not be Cornwallis but his efficient subordinate, the tall, dark-complexioned Lieutenant Colonel Francis Rawdon, whose

62. Cornwallis to Lieutenant Colonel Francis Rawdon, November 23, 1780. Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/82; Roderick Mackenzie, Strictures on Lt. Col. Tarleton's History of the Campaigns of 1780 and 1781, in the Southern Provinces of North America (London: Printed for the Author, 1787), p. 143.

service in the American conflict went back beyond Bunker Hill. Rawdon was a young man, only twenty-six, but highly capable and universally esteemed by his superiors and subordinates alike.⁶³

To counter the British, Greene had an army of disparate Continentals and Whig militia. He could rely, also, on the so-called "partisan" troops--those patriot militia units headed by Sumter and Marion operating in the swamps and forests of South Carolina. Greene's objective was to utilize these fighters and to win back the majority of the interior outposts from British control.

3. American Gains, British Worries

Already sentiment in the interior was turning back to the Whigs, for British oppression and violations of the supposed rights of the paroled were causing turnabout to occur. Some of this was happening because of the efforts of Sumter and Marion. Concerned over the safety of Ninety Six, late in October Cornwallis sent Major James Wemyss and the Sixty-third Foot from Camden to range over the area between Ninety Six and Broad River.⁶⁴ On November 9 Wemyss's troops attacked Sumter at Fishdam Ford on Broad River, but the assault failed after Wemyss was wounded.⁶⁵ Cornwallis then ordered Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton to check Sumter. "I am under the greatest anxiety for Ninety Six," he wrote, "and trust you will lose no time in returning to me."⁶⁶ Tarleton with his legion and the Sixty-third Foot converged on Sumter at a point fifteen miles from Ninety Six. But Sumter learned of the imminent attack in time to organize an effective counterattack that caused Tarleton to withdraw.⁶⁷ With their small victories and close escapes, the partisans drew increasing numbers of Whigs to their support. On December 3, Cornwallis warned Clinton of these worsening conditions, and stated that "there was scarce an inhabitant between the Santee and Peedee that was not in arms against us. . . ."⁶⁸ "The constant incursions of refugees, North Carolinians and back mountainmen," he lamented, "and the perpetual risings in the different parts of the province,

63. Ward, War of the Revolution, II, 798-99; Theodore Thayer, Nathanael Greene, Strategist of the American Revolution (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1960), p. 342.

64. Rawdon to Balfour, October 21, 1780. Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/2 (3). Rawdon to Cruger, October 31, 1780. Ibid.

65. Banastre Tarleton, History of the Campaigns of 1780 and 1781, in the Southern Provinces of North America (London: T. Cadell, 1787), pp. 173, 174.

66. Quoted in ibid., p. 200.

67. Ibid., p. 175; Ward, War of the Revolution, II, 746.

68. Quoted in Wallace, History of South Carolina, II, 246.

the invariable successes of all these parties against our militia, keep the whole country in continual alarms, and render the assistance of regular troops everywhere necessary."⁶⁹ Cornwallis's forces were thinly spread over the state, both guarding the strategic outposts and the roads leading between them.⁷⁰

4. Armies Maneuvering

The three outposts at Camden, Winnsborough, and Ninety Six protected British gains in the upcountry while guarding the land approaches into Charleston. With Cornwallis at Winnsborough, Greene decided upon a bold maneuver calculated to threaten both of his flanks simultaneously. He ordered Brigadier General Daniel Morgan to move towards Ninety Six while Greene, with the bulk of the army, would move on Camden. Cornwallis would thus be unable to reinforce either beleaguered post without exposing the other to American assault. Moreover, should he move towards Morgan, Greene conceivably might attack Charleston.⁷¹ Cornwallis responded by dividing his own force three ways. He sent Tarleton in pursuit of General Morgan while Brigadier General Alexander Leslie was sent to reinforce Camden. Cornwallis and the remainder of his command began a sinuous march towards North Carolina where he expected to meet and demolish the remnant of Morgan's force after Tarleton was through beating it. Thereafter Cornwallis planned to push on to Virginia and unite with General Benedict Arnold in subjugating that province.⁷²

5. Cruger Readies His Garrison

The presence first of Sumter, then of Morgan, in the vicinity of Ninety Six caused Lieutenant Colonel Cruger no small discomfort. Increasingly disgusted with the whimsical and often non-compliant Tory militia, Cruger complained to Cornwallis, "I think I shall never again look to the Militia for the least support, & I am convinced that it is the Kings Troops only that can hold this country."⁷³ The soldiers at

69. Ibid.

70. Ibid.; Snowden, History of South Carolina, I, 401.

71. Ward, War of the Revolution, II, 751; Montross, Rag, Tag and Bobtail, p. 404.

72. Ward, War of the Revolution, II, 753-54; M.F. Treacy, Prelude to Yorktown: The Southern Campaign of Nathanael Greene, 1780-81 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1963), p. 85.

73. Cruger to Cornwallis, November 23, 1780. Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/4 (2).

Ninety Six continued working on the town defenses while accumulating large stockpiles of grain, flour, and forage.⁷⁴ Early in December the garrison received a shipment of clothing, arms, and ammunition from Charleston that fortunately was not confiscated enroute by the rebels.⁷⁵ Sickness continued to bother Cruger's soldiers, and he notified Cornwallis that many of his troops were "convalescents, & are still plagued with the fever & ague. . . ." ⁷⁶ With the increased threat to his security in November and December, Cruger became concerned over the artillery available for his use at Ninety Six. He had two 3-pounder cannon on hand; he wanted more, citing that "the name only of guns, Cannon, is terrible to the ear of a Cracker; we are now said to be fortify'd, with Field pieces."⁷⁷ Cornwallis sent two iron 6-pounders to Ninety Six, but they were taken by Whig militiamen before they reached the post.⁷⁸

Despite the dangers posed by the presence of American militia hovering around Ninety Six in December 1780, Cruger did venture troops out of his works on occasion. On the 6th he sent forth Lieutenant Hatton with four wagons under a flag of truce to recover those sick and injured of Ferguson's old command still lingering near King's Mountain.⁷⁹ Then five days later Cruger dispatched Lieutenant Colonel Allen and 450 soldiers to intercept and surprise a command of Georgia and Carolina patriots under Colonel Benjamin Few near Long Canes. The action was brief but hard-fought, and ended with several Americans dead, their principal leaders wounded, and the British force withdrawing posthaste.⁸⁰ Allen and his force returned to Ninety Six.

74. Rawdon to Cruger, October 28, 1780. Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/2 (3); Cruger to Cornwallis, November 23, 1780. Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/4 (2).

75. The shipment was originally intended for militia raised in the Forks area and comprised "150 Blankets, 200 Jackets, 200 Over-alls, 200 Hats, 200 pr Shoes, 191 french Musquets, 2 Cask Cartridges, 1 of flints, & 83 Bushells of Salt. . . ." Cruger to Cornwallis, December 3, 1780. Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/4 (2).

76. Cruger to Cornwallis, November 28, 1780. Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/4 (2).

77. Cruger to Cornwallis, November 27, 1780. Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/4 (2).

78. Lieutenant Henry Haldane to Isaac Allen, January 4, 1781. Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/4.

79. Cruger to Cornwallis, December 5, 1780. Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/4 (2).

80. McCall, History of Georgia, p. 502; Snowden, History of the South Carolina, I, 401; Peckham, Toll of Independence, p. 78.

6. Pickens Joins the Rebels

Meantime, General Daniel Morgan began executing Greene's strategy. Demanding action, Morgan detached his cavalry under Colonel William Washington and directed it towards Ninety Six. On December 30, Washington's 300 ambushed a loyalist force near Hammond's Storehouse and destroyed it, killing and wounding 150 of the enemy and capturing 40. Washington did not incur a single loss. He sent a party on to Fort Williams, a residential stockade post located fifteen miles above Ninety Six. Finding the place deserted, Washington's horsemen burned it to the ground.⁸¹ Such events had the effect of rejuvenating patriotic fervor in the region. One of those affected by the Whig successes of December and by the Tory inclination to plunder and pillage was the capable Andrew Pickens. Pickens had been imprisoned at Ninety Six jail after the British had gained hegemony in the backcountry. Released on parole, he felt bound by honor to respect the conditions of his release. Now that the British had seemingly adopted a policy of violence, one that resulted in the plunder of his own property at that, Pickens could tolerate no more. He again took up arms, accepted a commission of colonel of militia, and proceeded to wreak destruction among the Tory settlements around Ninety Six.⁸²

7. Cowpens and After

The Whig successes were drawing many others to the patriot ranks, too, a fact that disturbed Cornwallis immensely. On January 2 he ordered Tarleton, then at Ninety Six, to strike Morgan quickly--"to push him to the utmost."⁸³ Tarleton responded that he intended to "either destroy Morgan's corps or push it before me over Broad river towards King's Mountain."⁸⁴ Acutely aware of Tarleton's presence, Colonel Washington turned back, rejoining Morgan at a camp west of Pacolet River. Tarleton pursued with a thousand men while Cornwallis maneuvered his own force

81. Thayer, Nathanael Greene, p. 299; Higginbotham, War of American Independence, p. 124; Pope, History of Newberry County, p. 48.

82. Waring, Fighting Elder, pp. 37, 39, 68-69; Edward McCrady, History of South Carolina in the Revolution, 1780-1783 (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1902), pp. 22-23; McCall, History of Georgia, p. 504; Higginbotham, War of American Independence, pp. 124-25.

83. Quoted in Ward, War of the Revolution, II, 754.

84. Ibid.; McCrady, South Carolina in the Revolution, 1780-1783, p. 27.

between Greene and Morgan. On January 17, 1781, Tarleton attacked Morgan at a place called Cowpens near the upper Broad River. Feigning retreat, Morgan deftly counterattacked and, despite inferior numbers, thoroughly routed the British. Washington's cavalry chased Tarleton's disorganized legion for twenty miles. At Cowpens the British lost over 300 killed and wounded and nearly 500 as prisoners of war.

Greene was elated by news of the victory. He had intended driving his army on to Ninety Six as a diversion for Cornwallis, but now, fearing for Morgan's safety, he ordered a contingent of Virginia militia forward to join him. To further thwart Cornwallis, Greene decided he must push ahead and unite his own troops with those of Morgan in North Carolina.⁸⁵ Greene's numbers had been bolstered with the arrival of Lieutenant Colonel Henry ("Light Horse Harry") Lee's green-coated cavalry, perhaps the most effective mounted command in the entire Continental Army. Greene sent Lee to assist Francis Marion in attacking the British post of Georgetown. He also forwarded requests to Sumter to reactivate his militia and reinforce Morgan, but Sumter was indisposed and could not immediately respond.⁸⁶ Greene himself then proceeded north, planning to join with Morgan, a union that Cornwallis was resolved to prevent. All in all, American fortunes in the South finally appeared to be on the upswing.

85. Thayer, Nathanael Greene, p. 302; Mackesy, War for America, p. 405; Higginbotham, War of American Independence, pp. 146, 149; Hugh F. Rankin, The North Carolina Continentals (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1971), pp. 272-73.

86. Thayer, Nathanael Greene, p. 303; Ward, War of the Revolution, II, 752-53.

CHAPTER VII: BUILDING DEFENSES

A. Field Fortifications

The defensive works erected at Ninety Six in the autumn of 1780 represented British adherence to the art of fortification, a branch of military science that gained preeminence during the eighteenth century. There were two kinds of fortification: permanent and field. While the former was concerned with the construction of large enduring works suitable for the defense of cities, the latter dealt with the erection of more temporary earthen structures in the field for the defense of key military positions. Field fortification embraced the building of such transient works as redans, redoubts, artillery batteries, and blockhouses.¹ Lieutenant Colonel Cruger's efforts to protect his position at Ninety Six involved the preparation of extensive field fortifications about the town.

Prior to December, Cruger's defense system involved the renovation of an existing stockade around the village, as well as the erection of a new one to include blockhouses and bastions. A redoubt, or at least a preliminary guard unit, was apparently constructed on the first ridgetop west of the town on the site of Williamson's Fort of 1775. This work, along with the redan near the jail, served to protect the water supply of Spring Branch, located between the two. But Cruger thought that such works as he had completed were insufficient should a strong enemy armed with artillery approach his position. He wanted engineering advice, and on December 6 he received it in the form of Lieutenant Henry Haldane, Cornwallis's aide. "I . . . found the Works in a much better state than I expected," Haldane penned Cornwallis, "tho' they are not so entirely conformable to Rule, yet they may answer the present purpose as well as the best executed work."²

1. Lieutenant Haldane's Advice

During his visit, Haldane made recommendations concerning the existing defenses and suggested the raising of others to make the post of Ninety Six even more secure. He asked Cornwallis to consider sending two

1. Epaphras E. Hoyt, Practical Instructions for Military Officers (Greenfield, Mass.: John Denio, 1811, Reprint; Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1971), p. 32.

2. Haldane to Cornwallis, December 9, 1780. Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/4(2).

6-pounders rather than the 3-pounders he planned sending to Cruger. "If six Pounders could be spared they would be of more service, as they would command much better a Hill that is opposite to this Post."³ Apparently, Haldane wanted to place these guns near the jail, perhaps in the earthwork built near it, to guard the approaches west of the town and to better protect the garrison's access to Spring Branch. Indeed, preservation of the town's water supply seems to have been a matter of crucial importance; in a partially ciphered message of December 19 Cornwallis was informed that at Ninety Six "the Works are extensive but in want of Water"⁴

2. Strengthening the Stockade

Haldane did not remain long at Ninety Six. Lieutenant Colonel Allen was left to carry out the lieutenant's recommendations, one of which was the placement of abatis around the Ninety Six stockade, thirty yards beyond the ditch.⁵ Abatis was composed of fallen trees arranged so that their sharpened branches protruded in the direction of the enemy. The trunks of the trees were usually sunk four to five feet into the ground and staked to prevent their easy removal by assaulting troops.⁶ On December 29 Allen informed Haldane that "I . . . have orderd [sic] the Abattiss [sic] cut, but Kings work like Church work goes on slow. The Poor naked Blacks can do but little this cold weather." Recent archeological examination has failed to disclose the trenches associated with the preparation of abatis, suggesting that at Ninety Six the barrier that ringed the town and defensive works was not necessarily anchored according to the theoretical manuals. At a minimum, it would seem that the abatis was firmly staked to the ground.⁸ Haldane evidently also urged the deepening of the ditch surrounding the stockade, with the excavated dirt being piled against the stockade until it reached "near the height of a common parapet,"

3. Ibid.

4. Lieutenant Colonel Isaac Allen to Cornwallis, December 19, 1780. Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/4(2).

5. Allen to Haldane, December 25, 1780. Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/4(2). See also Mackenzie, Strictures, p. 142.

6. Lewis Lochee, Elements of Field Fortification (London: T. Cadell, 1783), pp. 28-29.

7. Allen to Haldane, December 29, 1780. Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/4(2).

8. Stephanie L. Holschlag and Michael J. Rodeffer, Ninety Six: The Stockade Fort on the Right (Ninety Six: Ninety Six Historic Site, 1976), p. 81.

or approximately six feet.⁹ As determined archeologically, the ditch on the west and south measured approximately eight to ten feet in width and the parapet ten to twelve feet. The parapet was thus capable of withstanding 12-pounder shot. Evidence suggests that at least three buildings in the village were incorporated into the stockade wall erected by Cruger.¹⁰ Besides abatis, ditch, and earthen parapet ringing the stockade, there were several marshy areas which would further impede an assaulting force.¹¹ As added protection for at least the north side of the town, near where, on Haldane's recommendation, a large, earthen star-shaped redoubt was being erected, the soldiers and blacks began work on a ditch and embankment. Its left bordered on the Spring Branch ravine to the west. From there the ditch jutted forward to a point about 150 yards north of the stockade, then turned back, its right terminating at the rear of the star redoubt.¹² Those houses and buildings lying outside the stockade, excepting the brick jail, were evidently burned or destroyed to afford Cruger's artillery a clear field of fire to the west,¹³ a measure probably urged by Haldane. A firing step, or banquette, traced the interior of the stockade wall, while at least two traverses, or earthen embankments, provided protection for personnel stationed in the south and west sectors of the village to man the light artillery posted there. Possibly embrasures, openings for cannon, were also located in the parapet at these locations.¹⁴

B. The Star Redoubt

With the town thus stockaded and protected with blockhouses and bastions, and the jail fortified to secure the west flank, work went on

9. Major General Nathanael Greene to President of Congress, June 20, 1781. Washington Papers. Manuscript Division, Library of Congress; M. le Chevalier de Clairac, The Field Engineer of M. le Chevalier de Clairac. Trans. by John Muller (London, 1760), p. 266. See also Charles Stedman, The History of the Origin, Progress, and Termination of the American War (2 vols.; London: Printed for the Author, 1794), II, 365-366.

10. See Holschlag and Rodeffer, Village, Figure 8. For parapet thickness correlated to cannon calibre, see J.G. Tielke, The Field Engineer; or Instructions Upon Every Branch of Field Fortification. Trans. by Edwin Hewgill (2 vols.; London: J. Walter, 1789), II, 1-2.

11. Greene mentioned the existence of "several little slushes in different parts of the Town," doubtless referring to areas lying beyond the stockade and around the village. Greene to President of Congress, June 20, 1781. Washington Papers.

12. A different interpretation of the purpose of this feature is in South, Exploratory Archeology at Ninety Six, p. 28.

13. Holschlag and Rodeffer, Village, p. 103.

14. Ibid.; Johnson, Life and Correspondence of Nathanael Greene, II, 140.

to build a defense to guard the northern approaches to Ninety Six--perhaps the most vulnerable avenue of attack by an enemy. During his visit to the town in December, 1780, Haldane recommended the construction of a large, earthen, star-shaped redoubt capable of holding a large number of troops, besides artillery, to impede an enemy advancing along the Island Ford Road. Haldane outlined the work on an acre of ground about 200 yards northeast of the stockaded village. The earthen structure was raised from a heavy soil of reddish sandy clay that must have posed difficulties for the blacks and soldiers laboring on it. When completed early in 1781, the star fort, or star, as it was called, comprised the only regular, or symmetrical, feature in the British defense system at Ninety Six, with the possible exception of the jail redan.¹⁵ Construction of the star closely followed the precepts advanced by the European theorists on the practice of military fortification.

1. Theoretical Models

Perhaps the most controversial form of redoubt among eighteenth century military thinkers, the star found limited use by the British during the American war because of the design's inherent weaknesses. Complaints against the favoring of this style redoubt over square, circular, or even triangular ones held that stars were difficult to build and, moreover, when finished they could, by the nature and number of their angles, hold fewer occupants than could those built according to more conventional patterns.¹⁶ As one theorist put it,

Star forts are the very worst description of fortification; they cannot have flanks, and the re-entering angles take so much from the interior space, that it is impossible to place troops and artillery in them sufficient for their defence: they are especially exposed to be enfiladed from one end to the other, which precludes the possibility of their making a long defence.¹⁷

Dispute among theorists also arose over the number of points in a star fort. (Illustration 8.) The eminent military intellect Chevalier de Clairac disagreed with those who advocated fewer points, believing that "the star of 6 points is preferable to that which has less, and that of 8 points preferable to that of 6."¹⁸ Despite these problems of design, the circumstances

15. Mackenzie, Strictures, p. 143; Stedman, The American War, II, 364; Johnson, Life and Correspondence of Nathanael Greene, II, 140; Holschlag and Rodeffer, Siegeworks, pp. 6, 9.

16. Lochee, Elements of Field Fortification, pp. 55, 60-61.

17. Antoine Henri Jomini, quoted in Hector Straith, Treatise on Fortification and Artillery (2 vols.; London: William H. Allen and Company, 1852), I, 109.

18. Field Engineer, p. 16.

of Ninety Six probably justified use of the star in Haldane's mind. For one thing, the radiating salient angles of the design seemed appropriate to guard the approaches over a wide area, specifically, that between Spring Branch ravine on the west and the marshy area to the southeast.¹⁹

2. Tracing the Work

Most star forts had four to eight points.²⁰ As with all earthworks, their outline was traced on the ground by the designing engineer before actual construction began. At Ninety Six, presumably, this important function was completed by Lieutenant Haldane during his visit. For an eight-pointed structure he traced a large square, then bisected each side perpendicularly, and then traced lines from the corners of the square to the inner point formed where the bisecting lines crossed. Each of the eight lines represented a point in the star. Next the engineer measured off the appropriate width of the component parts of the fortification--the ditch, berm, parapet, and banquette, all of which dimensions were correlated to the projected points of the star.²¹ Engineering maxims stipulated that the salient angles of a star fort be no less than 60°. ²² Those angles outlined by Haldane for the Ninety Six star redoubt averaged approximately 92°, with the widest angle, 110°, being located at the northernmost point of the star.

3. Nomenclature (Illustration 9.)

Once the outline of the redoubt had been plotted and traced upon the ground, the interior and exterior edges of the parapet were marked with lines of fascines--branches 6 feet long arranged in bundles 6-8 inches in diameter and tied with withes. The result of this operation looked like two concentric stars laid out on the terrain. The fascines were firmly staked down so they could not be moved and the outline thus lost. Workmen could now begin digging the ditch, also called the fosse, and tossing the excavated dirt onto the zone designated for the parapet.²³ Technically,

19. Similarly, the British erected a star redoubt along a main road leading into Yorktown in September, 1781.

20. Clairac, Field Engineer, p. 25.

21. Hoyt, Practical Instructions, p. 43. See also Clairac, Field Engineer, pp. 16, 25.

22. Tielke, The Field Engineer, I, 241; Thomas C. Anderson, "Plan of the Old Star Fort, Or Fort Ninety-Six, Ninety-Six, S.C." c. 1924. Copy furnished by Louise M. Watson, Greenwood, South Carolina.

23. Hoyt, Practical Instructions, pp. 37-38.

the side of the ditch bordering the parapet proper was called the scarp. That opposite was called the counterscarp. Beyond the counterscarp was the glacis, the most external part of the fortification. The glacis, also formed of excavated dirt, gently tapered away from the earthwork ditch to join the surrounding terrain giving added security to the parapet, especially against cannon fire.²⁴

The ditch of Haldane's star fort varied greatly in width, anywhere from 12 feet on the west side to 30 and even 45 feet on the north and east, probably because these latter points were not otherwise secured.²⁵ Indications are that the ditch was broad on top but tapered to a narrow base, probably 5 feet or so below ground level.²⁶ "Almost every engineer has a particular depth and breadth for ditches," wrote one theorist. "Some are for narrow ones and deep, others for broad ones and shallow; and it is most certain that ditches should be regulated according to the situation."²⁷ Directly above the scarp of the ditch, and at the toe of the exterior parapet slope, was a narrow level space known as the berm. The berm served to keep dirt from the parapet from sliding into the ditch.²⁸ Sometimes the outer slope of the parapet was lined with fascines, a revetment it was called, to prevent the earth from slipping. Because of the possibility of an enemy gaining a foothold on the berm, the feature

24. Lochee, Elements of Field Fortification, pp. 17, 20; John Muller, A Treatise Containing the Elementary Part of Fortification, Regular and Irregular (London: J. Nourse, 1746. Reprint, Ottawa: Museum Restoration Service, 1968), p. 215; George Smith, An Universal Military Dictionary: A Copious Explanation of the Technical Terms etc. Used in the Equipment, Machinery, Movements, and Military Operations of an Army (London: J. Millan, 1779), p. 102.

25. South, Williamson's Fort, Figure 19. Not much archeology has been accomplished on the star fort at Ninety Six. Considerable erosion has occurred over the past two centuries, so that the measurements offered here cannot be precise. They can, however, be used comparatively in conjunction with theoretical data.

26. Holschlag and Rodeffer, Siegeworks, p. 89. General Greene stated that "the parapet of this Works is near 12 feet high [sic]," probably referring to the height of the structure from the bottom of the ditch. Greene to President of Congress, June 20, 1781. Washington Papers. Furthermore, John Muller wrote that "the height of a wall is estimated from the bottom of the ditch, and not from the beginning of its foundation." Treatise, p. 48. It seems likely that the ditch ran about 5 feet below grade level and the parapet stood 6 or 7 feet above. See also Holschlag and Rodeffer, Siegeworks, p. 6.

27. Smith, An Universal Military Dictionary, p. 101.

28. Ibid., p. 99; Lochee, Elements of Field Fortification, p. 16.

was usually kept narrow if it was not abandoned altogether by military engineers late in the eighteenth century. The exterior slope of the parapet generally was computed to be $1/3$ of the height, or 2 feet for a parapet standing 6 feet high above the ditch.²⁹

The parapet formed the ultimate defensive bulwark of the earthwork. Built from dirt thrown out of the ditch and the interior floor of the structure, the parapet varied in thickness more than in height. Recommended height was 6 or 7 feet above the ditch, while thickness depended much on the type of anticipated attack. Whereas a parapet 2 feet thick at the top would suffice to stop musket balls, a fort under assault by enemy artillery would require a thicker parapet. For example, balls fired from a 6-pounder close at hand would be expected to penetrate 5 to 6 feet, necessitating a parapet 8 to 9 feet thick at top. The heavier the weight of the ball, the thicker the parapet must be.³⁰ Exact thickness of the star fort parapet at Ninety Six is unknown; today, through erosion, it measures approximately 25 feet at its base.³¹ A reasonable estimate would be that the parapet in 1781 was between 10 and 15 feet thick,³² based on the size of American cannon that Cruger and Haldane might have expected to be brought against them.

The top of the parapet, or superior talus, sloped slightly downward, away from the interior, permitting soldiers armed with muskets inside to have a clear field of fire across the ditch to the glacis. The interior slope of the parapet had to be less than that on the scarp, or exterior slope, in order to permit the soldiers inside to stand erect and fire their muskets with comfort. Theorists recommended only about $1\ 1/2$ feet of slope for the entire height of the parapet interior, a task more easily accomplished by lining it with fascines firmly staked in place. At the base of the interior slope workmen raised an earthen banquette, at least 3 feet high, 3 feet wide, and always $4\ 1/2$ feet below the top of the parapet. Some theorists advised a banquette $4\ 1/2$ feet in width so that two ranks of soldiers might stand on it when firing.³³ In the

29. Ibid.; Muller, Treatise, p. 229; Lochee, Elements of Field Fortification, p. 15.

30. Muller, Treatise, p. 227; Lochee, Elements of Field Fortification, pp. 9-10; Clairac, Field Engineer, pp. 261, 264, 266; H. Lallemand, A Treatise on Artillery (2 vols.; New York: C.S. Van Winkle, 1820), II, 36.

31. Holschlag and Rodeffer, Siegeworks, p. 6.

32. Lallemand, Treatise on Artillery, II, 36.

33. Lochee, Elements of Field Fortification, pp. 10-11, 15-16; Muller, Treatise, pp. 48, 211; Smith, An Universal Military Dictionary, p. 99.

forward file each man occupied 1 yard of space along the parapet; 4 or 5 yards were allowed for each field piece employed in the redoubt.³⁴

The erection of the star fort at Ninety Six entailed the use of several component articles necessary in the construction of field fortifications. Besides fascines, there were gabions, saucissons, hurdles, and sandbags. Gabions were cylindrical wicker basket-like devices, about 3 feet high and 2 1/2 in diameter, used to stabilize slopes in the same manner as fascines.³⁵ Saucissons were extra long fascines, particularly useful in the raising and revetment of artillery batteries.³⁶ Similarly, hurdles consisted of webbed mats measuring 6 feet by 3-5 feet, made of interwoven branches. When staked into position on a parapet, hurdles gave added stabilization to the earthen structure.³⁷ Sandbags, too, could be used to revet earthen slopes. They varied in size, but 27 to 30 inches in length and 13 to 16 inches in diameter seems to have been typical.³⁸ "Sandbags are sometimes used for raising parapets and covering the men," wrote one theorist.³⁹

For added defense, the star fort was fixed with fraises along the outside of the parapet.⁴⁰ Fraises were palisades, or sharpened stakes about 4 inches in diameter and 9 feet long, sunk 4 feet deep in the parapet at the point where the berm joined the exterior slope. Placed 6-8 inches apart, and usually joined at the base ends by rafters to further secure them, the fraises had to be laid into the parapet as it was being built. Points of the fraising sometimes angled slightly downward, towards the ditch, both to impede a physical assault on the fort and to cause enemy grenades striking the parapet to roll into the ditch.⁴¹

34. Lochee, Elements of Field Fortification, pp. 11-12; Tielke, Field Engineer, I, 288-89.

35. Lallemand, Treatise on Artillery, I, pp. 260-62.

36. Ibid., pp. 258-60; Muller, Treatise, p. 231; Louis de Tousard, American Artillerist's Companion, or Elements of Artillery (2 vols.; Philadelphia: C. and A. Conrad and Company, 1809. Reprint, New York: Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1969), I, 21.

37. Lallemand, Treatise on Artillery, I, 262.

38. Ibid., p. 263; Hoyt, Practical Instructions, p. 39.

39. Hoyt, Practical Instructions, p. 39.

40. Mackenzie, Strictures, p. 143.

41. Lochee, Elements of Field Fortification, pp. 24-25; Muller, Treatise, p. 221; Tielke, Field Engineer, I, 265-66.

Apparently there were no palisades placed directly in the ditch of the star redoubt, for documents describing later action there do not mention them. Quite possibly, however, palisades were placed some distance away on the glacis, for there is a reference to "pickets" existing at such a location.⁴² Palisades were "stakes made of strong split wood of about 9 feet long, fixed 3 feet deep in the ground in rows about 6 inches asunder."⁴³ Beyond the glacis and around the whole of the star fort was laid a ring of abatis, evidently secured with stakes.⁴⁴

4. Battery Construction (Illustrations 10 and 11.)

When completed sometime early in 1781, Cruger's star redoubt measured approximately 85 yards across, allowing for variation between salient and reentrant angles. The structure seems to have followed the theoretical maxims governing earthwork construction with possibly one exception--the entrance, or gorge, located in the rear of the star. Theoretically, it was recommended that the gorge be placed in a reentrant angle;⁴⁵ at Ninety Six the gorge seemingly occupied one entire side of a salient, although erosion possibly has contributed to making this feature difficult to define precisely.

After the star fort had been largely completed, it was decided to install a gun battery in the northernmost salient. Perhaps the angle of this salient had purposefully been made greater than the others to facilitate installation of cannon to fire en barbet, i.e., over the parapet rather than through embrasures cut into it. Creation of the barbet unit entailed the raising of an earthen floor sufficiently high to enable a cannon and wheel carriage mounted on it to fire across the superior talus of the parapet.⁴⁶ Beneath the cannon was laid a platform, usually

42. Mackenzie, Strictures, p. 158. "Picket. To fortify with pickets or pointed stakes." Wilhelm, Military Dictionary, p. 429.

43. Muller, Treatise, p. 227. See also Tielke, Field Engineer, I, 221-22; 268-69.

44. Lochee, Elements of Field Fortification, pp. 28-29; Holschlag and Rodeffer, Siegeworks, p. 89.

45. This figure is computed from data contained in Holschlag and Rodeffer, Siegeworks, p. 6. Henry Yule, Fortification for Officers of the Army and Students of Military History (London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1851), p. 38.

46. Tousard, American Artillerist's Companion, I, 4; Lochee, Elements of Field Fortification, p. 15; Muller, Treatise, p. 210; Lallemand, Treatise on Artillery, I, 254; Tielke, Field Engineer, I, 307-08.

made of oak or elm planks 2 1/2 inches thick. Each plank was 1 foot wide and 8 to 15 feet long, and it took a dozen or more to build a platform. The platform rested on several long beams, 4-7 inches square, called sleepers. They were firmly implanted in the ground with one side flush with the surface. The platform was usually pegged to the sleepers. The rear of the cannon platform inclined slightly away from the parapet to control recoil of the piece upon firing.⁴⁷ At Ninety Six the cannon platforms in the star redoubt were not finished until late in May, 1781.⁴⁸ One other defensive feature built in the star sometime after its construction was a traverse, erected after the redoubt came under siege in the late spring of 1781. Traverses were detached lengths of parapet erected inside a work to further secure the occupants from enemy shot and shells and "to screen the interior of the defences from a commanding eminence."⁴⁸ (Illustration 12.) The star fort traverse was built close behind the northernmost salient containing the gun battery. It ran 100 feet east to west, and had a shallow ditch approximately 10 feet wide and a parapet probably about 15 feet wide at the base.⁵⁰

C. The Stockade Fort

1. Guarding the Western Flank

While the British star fort guarded the approaches to Ninety Six from the north, the western flank was secured with construction of a stockade redoubt apparently built on Cruger's orders in the autumn of 1780 and refined late that year according to the recommendations of Lieutenant Haldane. An example of irregular fortification, the redoubt was later described by General Greene as "a strong stockade fort with two block Houses in it."⁵¹ This structure, located on the exact site of Major Williamson's fort of 1775, occupied the ridge west of Spring Branch ravine 200 yards from the fortified jail, together with which structure it secured the British garrison's water supply.⁵²

47. Smith, An Universal Military Dictionary, p. 206.

48. Mackenzie, Strictures, p. 146.

49. Yule, Fortification, p. 37.

50. Holschlag and Rodeffer, Siegeworks, p. 8. The traverse and ditch have been subjected to erosion for almost 200 years. Today the ditch is about 15 feet wide and the parapet about 20 feet thick at the base. Ibid.

51. Greene to President of Congress, June 20, 1781. Washington Papers.

52. Mackenzie, Strictures, pp. 142-43; Marvin L. Cann, "War in the Backcountry: The Siege of Ninety Six, May 22-June 19, 1781," The South Carolina Historical Magazine, LXXII (January, 1971), p. 4.

2. Archeological Evidence

Documentary evidence of the construction and appearance of the so-called "stockade fort" is nearly nonexistent, necessitating almost total reliance upon archeology completed on the site during the early 1970s. The fort was erected on the property of James Holmes and occupied a space running approximately 100 feet by 200 feet.⁵³ Its configuration was similar to that of an obtuse triangle, with the top salient leaning in a northwesterly direction. The principal features of this earthwork, as determined mainly from archeology and partially from conjecture, consisted of a ditch, a stockaded parapet, and a banquette. The ditch ran along the south, west, and northeast sides of the redoubt, and measured, roughly, 8-10 feet wide and 3-4 feet deep. Its counterscarp appears to have had a sharper slope than the scarp, or inner wall. Evidence of a berm was not found, although one likely existed to keep dirt from the parapet from sliding into the ditch. Apparently the ditch lacked palisades mounted in the bottom.⁵⁴ The thickness of the parapet of the fort was about 12 feet, a measurement determined by the location of a banquette trench which ran along the interior. Dirt removed from the ditch composed the parapet. It is conjectured that the stockade was built into the parapet as it was being raised, thereby leaving no archeological trace of its presence.⁵⁵ This stockade served to extend the height of the parapet's exterior slope, and the palisades might, in fact, have actually angled obliquely outward, more in the manner of fraises, to offer a still greater impediment to physical assault by an enemy.

The interior wall of the parapet was seemingly formed by a lesser stockade that served as a retaining wall for, and protruded above, the dirt of the parapet. Archeologists have found evidence of a burned line of comparatively thin palisades adjoining the area of the banquette.⁵⁶ Such a feature, while unusual, permitted soldiers manning the walls of the fort a definite ease in firing over the parapet. Actual height of the parapet is unknown, but it probably came close to the 6 or 7 feet recommended by the theorists.⁵⁷

53. South, Historical Perspective at Ninety Six, p. 86.

54. Holschlag and Rodeffer, Stockade Fort, p. 16-17, 73, 74. Much of the early archeology on this site was performed by Stanley South of the Institute of Archeology and Anthropology, University of South Carolina.

55. South, Historical Perspective at Ninety Six, p. 86; South, Williamson's Fort, pp. 38, 39, 53.

56. South, Williamson's Fort, pp. 50-51; South, Historical Perspective at Ninety Six, p. 86.

57. See Holschlag and Rodeffer, Stockade Fort, pp. 73-74.

Inside the fortification were four buildings of varying sizes which were incorporated into the work, their walls forming part of the parapet that surrounded the whole. Earth was packed against them in the same manner as it was against the palisade retaining wall. Evidently two of these structures comprised the "block houses" reported by Greene and which had been modified into such by Cruger's men. The main blockhouse was located at the northwest point of the triangle and simultaneously formed a large bastion of the fort. Musketry directed from the second story of this building might effectively cover the entire parapet face. Probably the structure was a barn; it measured about 32 feet by 21 feet, according to the positioning of stone footings revealed during excavation of the site.⁵⁸ The other principal building, located at the southwest corner of the triangle, measured 30 feet by 15 feet, with its southern side adjoining the parapet. Immediately west of this structure jutted a V-shaped bastion in which a swivel gun was mounted, effectively covering the western and southern parapet and ditch, as well as the broad approaches to the southeast, south, southwest, and west.⁵⁹ What appears to have been a traverse was situated diagonally across the back of this structure. Complete with ditch, palisade, and probably a banquette, this feature was apparently designed to secure the bastion against attack from the rear, possibly from the entrance.⁶⁰ The two other buildings incorporated in the redoubt were located north and south of the entrance at the eastern corner. The northeastern structure, measuring about 15 to 20 feet, comprised the second blockhouse. It afforded firepower protection along the northeastern ditch and parapet and to the area of the covered way leading towards Ninety Six. South of this blockhouse and beyond the gorge was a smaller building probably no larger than 10 feet square. This structure is purely inferential, however, its presence postulated on the interruption of the palisade retaining wall line at this point.⁶¹

Along the east side of the fort, between the last two mentioned buildings, a length of palisade and banquette sufficed for defense; there was no ditch or parapet erected. At the north end of this length a gate probably covered the gorge.⁶² About 5 yards east of the entrance archeology

58. South, Williamson's Fort, p. 36; Holschlag and Rodeffer, Stockade Fort, p. 75.

59. South, Williamson's Fort, pp. 35-36; Holschlag and Rodeffer, Stockade Fort, pp. 76, 78.

60. South, Historical Perspective at Ninety Six, p. 87; Holschlag and Rodeffer, Stockade Fort, pp. 18, 75.

61. Holschlag and Rodeffer, Stockade Fort, pp. 77-78.

62. Ibid., pp. 78, 79.

revealed two slight trenches that might have contained palisades planted obliquely to retard an approach by enemy soldiers, although the exact interpretation of this feature is unknown.⁶³ Probably the entire earthwork was surrounded with abatis to further protect it. The extreme irregularity of many of the features of the stockade fort suggests that its basic design was the work of Lieutenant Colonel Cruger or one of his subordinates. Perhaps Lieutenant Haldane recommended changes to bring the whole more into conformity with recognized tenets of field fortification.

D. The Jail Redan

East of Spring Branch ravine, about 100 yards from the rivulet, stood the brick jail which could act in concert with the stockade fort in protecting the garrison's water source.⁶⁴ Evidently fortification of the jail began shortly after Cruger arrived at Ninety Six in the summer of 1780, and probably the redan around the west side of the building was erected at that time. The redan, or fleche, consisted of two lengths of parapet joined to create a salient angle with two faces towards the enemy. Typically, redans were used as advanced posts to cover approaches along avenues and streams, and the use of such a structure above the spring ravine at Ninety Six conforms well with its stated purpose.⁶⁵ Archeological examination of the site of the jail redan has disclosed a ditch about 11 feet wide and a palisade line and banquette approximately 20 feet away towards the jail, indicating the presence of a parapet of that width at the base.⁶⁶ The palisade line would indicate that the parapet was constructed in much the same fashion as the stockade fort across the ravine. This V-shaped redan extended from a point south of the jail northwest, then northeast, for a total length of 70 feet.⁶⁷ Apparently the unit was further strengthened late in 1780 on Haldane's advice.⁶⁸

63. Ibid., pp. 50, 79. It is this interpretation that has been embodied in the recent reconstruction of the stockade redoubt and it is likely correct. According to Tielke, palisades were appropriate "for the purpose of barricading gorges or debouches. . . ." Field Engineer, I, 266. See also Lochee, Elements of Field Fortification, pp. 21-22, 23.

64. Mackenzie, Structures, pp. 142-43.

65. See Smith, An Universal Military Dictionary, pp. 99, 102, 103; Straith, Treatise on Fortification and Artillery, I, 102-03; Yule, Fortification, p. 41; Hoyt, Practical Instructions, p. 44; Tielke, Field Engineer, I, 287.

66. South, Williamson's Fort, p. 91; Holschlag and Rodeffer, Village, p. 104.

67. South, Williamson's Fort, p. 91.

68. See Jones, "Journal of Alexander Chesney," p. 21.

E. The Communications Trenches

Occupants of the town and the stockade fort had access to the spring at the bottom of the ravine by means of long communications trenches, or covered ways.⁶⁹ One trench led out of a deep depression or gully just north of the jail and ran directly west to Spring Branch, about 100 yards away. Similarly, the trench running approximately 100 yards east to Spring Branch from the stockade redoubt provided troops posted there easy approach to the stream. The mouths of the two trenches joining on Spring Branch were not directly opposite each other but rather some distance apart. Perhaps this construction was inadvertent, or perhaps it was intended to break up an otherwise straight line between the stockade fort and the jail. Thus, an enemy gaining control of the stockade redoubt would be forced to direct gunfire along two retreat routes instead of one. Moreover, the stretch of embankment along the spring between the two trench openings might serve marksmen posted there to cover a retreat of the stockade fort garrison. The trenches running east and west of Spring Branch measured between 2 and 3 feet wide and 2 and 3 feet deep. Dirt removed from the ditch was heaped on either side in rude parapet fashion to provide a greater shield against musket fire.⁷⁰

A similar communications trench ran from the gorge of the star redoubt about 135 yards southwest to join the northeast corner of the town stockade, affording the soldiers easy movement between these features of the defense system. As excavated archeologically, the trench measured 3 1/2 feet deep and 3-5 feet wide at the top. The sides tapered inwardly so that the bottom was only 2 feet wide. The southwest end of this communications trench intruded upon the palisade line placed by Cruger, necessitating some modification in the construction at this point.⁷¹ Other communications trenches connected the different parts of the British defenses.⁷²

69. Greene to President of Congress, June 20, 1781. Washington Papers.

70. Holschlag and Rodeffer, Stockade, pp. 58, 63-64, 78-79. These trenches are sometimes called caponiers, a term that has undergone profound changes in meaning since the early eighteenth century. The use of the term as in Mackenzie's Strictures, p. 143, citing Muller's 1746 work, is today misleading, for modern translations of caponier define it as "a covered passage across the ditch of a fortified place, for the purpose either of sheltering communication with outworks or of affording a flanking fire to the ditch in which it stands." Wilhelm, Military Dictionary and Gazetteer, p. 87. See also John Quick, Dictionary of Weapons and Military Terms (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1973), p. 91. The features at Ninety Six are more accurately described as communications trenches or covered ways.

71. South, Exploratory Archeology at Ninety Six, pp. 30, 32-33; South, Historical Perspective at Ninety Six, pp. 93-94.

72. Mackenzie, Strictures, p. 143; Greene to President of Congress, June 20, 1781. Washington Papers.

While these have not been delineated with certainty, exploratory archeology has located what might be covered ways in the vicinity of the jail.⁷³ Thus, the fortifications erected by the British encompassed a variety of regular and irregular works consisting of the town stockade with its bastions and blockhouses, the earthen star fort to the north, the stockade fort to the west, and the jail redan on the west flank of the village, all of which were joined by a network of ditches and trenches, themselves ringed with palisades and abatis.

F. Cruger's Garrison

Most of these defenses were finished by the spring of 1781. At that time the garrison under Lieutenant Colonel Cruger was composed solely of battle-hardened Tory troops--150 members of the First Battalion of DeLancey's brigade of New York loyalists, 200 members of the Second Battalion, New Jersey Volunteers, plus 200 loyalist militia from South Carolina. Augmenting this command were a large number of Tory civilians and Negro slaves from the country around Ninety Six who found refuge with Cruger. His total military force numbered about 550, but the number under his tacit command probably exceeded 700.⁷⁴ There were also some Whig prisoners in the jail.⁷⁵

Since early in the year Cruger's wife, Anne, had resided in the vicinity, having been conducted to Ninety Six from Charleston by her husband. She was the daughter of Brigadier General Oliver DeLancey of New York, and while at Ninety Six she lived at the home of the Whig James Mayson several miles east of the village. Mayson had some adolescent daughters there, and for several months the young loyalist officers of the garrison habitually visited the residence on the pretext of paying their respects to the commandant's wife.⁷⁶

During the late winter and early spring of 1781 Cruger took measures to increase the food provisions and weapons in the Ninety Six garrison. Some supplies were confiscated from neighborhood Whigs as loyalist militia

73. Holschlag and Rodeffer, Village, Figure 8.

74. Mackenzie, Strictures, p. 144; Stedman, The American War, II, 366; Thomas Jones, History of New York During the Revolutionary War (2 vols.; New York: New York Historical Society, 1879), II, 187; Cann, "War in the Backcountry," p. 6; Weigley, The Partisan War, p. 58.

75. Burns, "South Carolina Pension Abstracts," V, 5-6.

76. Wallace, History of South Carolina, II, 276; Johnson, Traditions and Reminiscences, p. 471; Cann, "War in the Backcountry," p. 3.

scoured the countryside for corn and grain. Cattle and hogs were butchered and the flesh salted for preservation. With the arrival of spring and warm weather, however, much of the meat turned putrid.⁷⁷ To defend his position, Cruger had but three pieces of artillery, all 3-pounders mounted on wheel carriages. One had been furnished by Cornwallis.⁷⁸ In addition, only one man in the entire garrison was formally trained in the duties of matross, the gunner's assistant responsible for helping to sponge, load and fire the piece. Others in the garrison had gained some experience in that function, so that the deficiency might be remedied. Of more concern to Cruger was the supply of available ammunition should he be required to undergo a lengthy siege.⁷⁹ Yet despite such shortcomings, by early May, 1781, the Ninety Six garrison had mustered its resources and was geared to meet any exigencies that might arise. For Cruger the test was not long in coming.

77. Johnson, Life and Correspondence of Nathanael Greene, p. 141; Mackenzie, Strictures, p. 162.

78. Mackenzie, Strictures, p. 145; Balfour to Cornwallis, December 29, 1780. Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/4; Haldane to Allen, January 4, 1781. Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/84. At least one 2-pounder was seized by the British at Ninety Six in June, 1780, along with 20 blunderbusses, 21 swivel guns, several hundred muskets, and a large number of ammunition components. See "An account of Arms, Ammunition & Stores taken from the Rebels. . . ." Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/2(1). (Reproduced in Appendix F.) One suspicious account stated that the garrison contained one 6-pounder and two 4-pounders. Francis Vinton Greene, General Greene (orig. pub. 1893. Reprint, Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970), pp. 252-53.

79. Mackenzie, Strictures, p. 146; Stedman, The American War, II, 366.

CHAPTER VIII: NATHANAEEL GREENE'S CAMPAIGN

A. Cornwallis Moves North

During the early part of 1781, as Cruger labored to improve his defensive position at Ninety Six, the main American Army of General Greene was heading in the opposite direction. From the end of January to the middle of February Greene enticed Cornwallis's army northward through North Carolina and into Virginia. Then he turned sharply about, returned to North Carolina and, reinforced with Virginia militia, stopped and engaged Cornwallis March 15 at Guilford Court House. Cornwallis won a narrow and costly victory; almost one-fourth of his army of 13,000 was lost before Greene withdrew, allowing the crippled British force to proceed to Wilmington on the coast to recover. There Cornwallis's strategy turned from the Carolinas to Virginia. The troops remaining in South Carolina under Lord Francis Rawdon, he believed, would suffice to hold that province against further provocation from Greene.¹

B. The Partisans Make Gains

In Greene's absence, however, the scattered soldiers of Rawdon were set upon by the partisan forces of Pickens, Sumter, and Marion, whose guerrilla-style maneuvers in the backcountry confounded the British command.² Their tactics of disrupting communication lines among the

1. Maurice Matloff (ed.), American Military History Washington: Office of the Chief of Military History, 1969), p. 93. Cornwallis's decision elicited a great deal of controversy. General Clinton, his superior, disagreed with it entirely. "I found he had come to the fatal resolution" he later wrote, "of abandoning both Carolinas to their fate and flying into Virginia And this at a moment when His Lordship could not be ignorant, . . . that the state of South Carolina was most distressing, that the enemy's parties were everywhere, that the communication by land with Savannah no longer existed, that Colonel Brown was invested at Augusta, that Colonel Cruger was in the most critical situation at Ninety-six--in short, that the defection of the province was so universal that the officers to whom His Lordship had entrusted it declared they did not know any mode short of depopulation to retain it." Clinton, The American Rebellion, p. 284. For criticism and analysis of Cornwallis's Virginia strategy versus Clinton's own, see William B. Willcox, Portrait of a General: Sir Henry Clinton in the War of Independence (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1964), passim.

2. Matloff, American Military History, p. 87.

different British outposts played directly into the strategy being devised by Greene to end British dominion in that region. He hoped to couple the work of the partisans with that of his own Continental force in expelling Rawdon's command from the upcountry, and perhaps even from the British stations at Charleston and Savannah. If all went well he would again turn north and confront Cornwallis in Virginia. To this end, Greene sent dispatches ordering Sumter to meet him at Camden, the strongest British position besides Charleston in South Carolina. Pickens was ordered to hover around Ninety Six and harass Cruger's foraging parties, while Marion would join Lieutenant Colonel Henry Lee in assailing Fort Watson, midway between Camden and Charleston.³

The first to see action under the new operation was Pickens. Enroute to the Ninety Six area he was joined by Colonel Elijah Clarke and together they learned of a foraging party from Cruger's post consisting of seventy-five British dragoons commanded by a Major Dunlop. On Pickens's order, Clarke rode forward with a force to intercept the British, and on March 21 the Americans struck the enemy at Beatties' Mill on Little River. Thirty-four British soldiers were killed or wounded before Dunlop surrendered, and the major himself died of injuries sustained in the American attack.⁴ Later, on March 31, Cruger marched some soldiers out of Ninety Six to a place called Harrison's Store with a plan of establishing a small British station there. Hearing of this, Pickens pressed forward, but Cruger withdrew to Williams' Fort, fifteen miles above Ninety Six, and, despite reinforcements sent Pickens from Sumter, succeeded in returning his troops to the garrison at Ninety Six. Pickens received orders to post his command near Fishdam Ford on the Broad and to gather supplies in preparation for the arrival in the region of General Greene's army.⁵

C. Rawdon's Problems Mount

1. Withdrawal of the British Garrisons

With Greene's imminent approach, Rawdon found his own position steadily worsening. His command, though numerous, was thinly spread throughout South Carolina and Georgia in ten separate garrisons: Charleston, Savannah, Georgetown, Camden, Ninety Six, Augusta, Orangeburg, Fort Granby, Fort

3. Waring, The Fighting Elder, p. 69; Alden, The South in the Revolution, p. 261; Thayer, Nathanael Greene, p. 350; Weigley, The Partisan War, p. 47.

4. McCall, History of Georgia, p. 510.

5. Waring, The Fighting Elder, pp. 69-70.

Watson, and Fort Motte. Plans to consolidate some of these diverse garrisons had proved futile because of the presence of the unpredictable partisans who could mount assaults quickly and in large numbers.⁶ So when Greene approached Rawdon's headquarters position at Camden in the middle of April Rawdon was compelled to meet him with what troops he then had available. In the Battle of Hobkirk's Hill, fought April 25 outside Camden, the British surprised Greene's command and forced it to retreat with more than 250 casualties.⁷ But the victory caused Rawdon to reevaluate his position. Without major reinforcements he could not counter Greene's thrust into the backcountry. Yet because of Greene's presence and that of the Whig partisans, he could get no substantial reinforcements from the various British posts. Rawdon more than once tried to reengage Greene, but the American commander adroitly resisted the temptation to meet his adversary and continued to plan for the reduction of Rawdon's scattered command instead of his immediate one. Frustrated, Rawdon decided to abandon Camden, Ninety Six, and Fort Granby (near present Columbia), and march for the low country where he might regroup his force into a large, potent field command more capable of dealing with Greene.⁸

2. Interception of the Crucial Order

Rawdon's decision to order the withdrawal of the Ninety Six garrison was anticipated by General Greene. On the morning of May 10, as the British pulled out of Camden leaving part of the town in ruins, Greene's aide wrote Francis Marion: "The General is of opinion that the same motives which have induced Lord Rawdon to take this step will also induce the evacuation of all the outposts, which the enemy have at Ninety Six, Augusta and on the Congaree."⁹ In fact, two days before leaving Camden Rawdon ordered Cruger's garrison to retire to the post at Augusta upon razing the defensive fortifications at Ninety Six. To insure Cruger's receipt of the instructions, he sent one dispatch directly overland and another via Charleston and Savannah. Neither message reached Ninety Six;

6. Alden, The South in the Revolution, p. 261; Weigley, The Partisan War, pp. 47-48.

7. Weigley, The Partisan War, pp. 50-51, 52.

8. Weigley, The Partisan War, p. 42; Alden, The South in the Revolution, p. 263; Higginbotham, War of American Independence, p. 373; Fortescue, History of the British Army, III, 389. Rawdon explained his departure thusly: "Intelligence was given to me very early . . . that General Greene expected the cooperation of a Foreign Force upon the Coast. It was this consideration which principally induced me to decline at that time the attempt of further opposition to General Greene in the Back Country." Rawdon to Cornwallis, June 5, 1781. Clinton Papers.

9. Major Pendleton to Marion, May 10, 1781, in Gibbes, Documentary History, III, 69.

both were intercepted by the militia of Andrew Pickens.¹⁰ Pickens's soldiers were ranging over the country between Augusta and Ninety Six, and word of Rawdon's withdrawal from Camden alerted them to the likelihood of similar activity at Ninety Six.¹¹ "Should Lt. Col. Cruger not have received this order," Rawdon addressed Cornwallis, "I fear his situation will be dangerous. I did not think it practicable to assist him, without running hazards. . . . Besides, I had no deposit of provisions left on the frontier."¹²

D. Greene's Strategy Begins to Work

1. The Fall of Fort Watson

Greene's army took possession of Camden as soon as Rawdon's force evacuated the town. The circumstances of the American occupation nettled Greene, for he believed that with the promised aid of the Virginia Militia, whose course to join him had been diverted by its commander, "the garrison must have fallen into our hands, as we should then have been able to invest the town on all sides. . . ."¹³ Nevertheless, Rawdon's abandonment of the key British post cleared the way for Greene to prosecute his design on the others. Already the combined assault of Lee and Marion against Fort Watson on the Santee River had been successful. Two days before Hobkirk's Hill the post had fallen, thus removing a vital British communications link between Rawdon and the coast. The feat was accomplished with the aid of the innovative Major Hezekiah Maham's so-called "Maham Tower," a hastily erected prefabricated log contrivance that permitted American marksmen to shoot with ease over the stockade and into the garrison of the post. So effective was the fire from the tower that the entire

10. Rawdon to Cornwallis, May 24, 1781. Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/6; Mackenzie, Strictures, p. 141; Tarleton, History of the Campaigns of 1780 and 1781, p. 485; George W. Greene, Life of Nathanael Greene, Major-General in the Army of the Revolution (Boston: Charles C. Little and James Brown, 1846), p. 258; Landrum, Colonial and Revolutionary History of Upper South Carolina, p. 326; McCrady, South Carolina in the Revolution, 1780-1783, p. 280; Ward, War of the Revolution, II, 810-11; Thayer, Nathanael Greene, p. 350.

11. McCrady, South Carolina in the Revolution, 1780-1783, p. 263; Waring, The Fighting Elder, pp. 70-71.

12. Rawdon to Cornwallis, May 24, 1781. Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/6. (Also in Rawdon to Clinton, May 24, 1781. Clinton Papers.)

13. Greene to Samuel Huntington, May 14, 1781, in Gibbes, Documentary History, III, 71. See Brigadier General Robert Lawson's explanation for the delay of the Virginia Troops, in Lawson to Greene, April 20, 1781. Manuscript Division, Princeton University Library.

garrison of 120 British regulars and Tories capitulated April 23.¹⁴

2. Other Posts Capitulate

The successes at Fort Watson and Camden were speedily followed up by others at the hands of the partisans. On May 11 General Sumter with over a thousand men captured the post of Orangeburg and its eighty defenders.¹⁵ Meantime, the combined force of Marion and Lee had gone on to Fort Motte at the confluence of the Congaree and Wateree. Retiring from Camden, Lord Rawdon hoped to relieve the Fort Motte garrison before it fell, but he arrived too late. The Americans, who had initiated formal siege parallels against the post, were forced by Rawdon's advance to quicken their activity. They used flaming arrows to ignite a house inside the fort, then bombarded its 150 defenders with artillery fire until, on May 12, Fort Motte surrendered.¹⁶

Next day Lee and his infantry and cavalry set out for Fort Granby, arriving on the 15th and easily securing its capitulation and sending its garrison under guard to Charleston.¹⁷ Immediately Lee, on Greene's orders, led his troops off to cooperate with Pickens against the British at Augusta. Marion, meantime, turned east towards Georgetown, arriving there May 28. He would shortly force the King's troops to abandon the place and flee to Charleston.¹⁸

3. Greene Drives for Ninety Six

Greene's uppermost fear now was that Cruger's garrison at Ninety Six would somehow get through to Augusta and counter Pickens's South Carolinians and Colonel Clarke's Georgians who had invested that post. As Lee hurried southwestward he surprised and overwhelmed the weak garrison of Fort Dreadnought, the stockaded home of the British deputy superintendent of Indian Affairs a dozen miles from Augusta, and retrieved substantial stores of ammunition, muskets, blankets, and

14. Marion to Greene, April 23, 1781, in Gibbes, Documentary History, III, 57; Weigley, The Partisan War, pp. 46, 48-49; Alden, The South in the Revolution, p. 263.

15. Weigley, The Partisan War, p. 53; Alden, The South in the Revolution, p. 263.

16. Weigley, The Partisan War, pp. 52-53; Alden, The South in the Revolution, p. 263.

17. Weigley, The Partisan War, pp. 53-54; Alden, The South in the Revolution, p. 263.

18. Weigley, The Partisan War, p. 55.

clothing originally destined for the western tribesmen.¹⁹ Then he went on, joined Pickens and Clarke, and began approaches against Augusta, a garrison of about 330 Tory militia and 300 Creek Indians commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Brown.²⁰ The investment of Augusta left only one other British outpost in the backcountry to be dealt with--Ninety Six.

On May 17 Greene began moving his army up the north bank of the Saluda River towards Ninety Six. He dispatched Sumter's command to interpose itself between Rawdon's army on the coast and his own, and directed Sumter to be alert for Rawdon's return, at which time he was to rejoin Greene at Ninety Six. Sumter was further instructed to level the earthworks at the British posts of Camden, Fort Motte, Fort Granby, and Orangeburg.²¹ As of now, Greene planned to reduce Ninety Six quickly then press on to assist Lee and Pickens in driving the British from Augusta.²² On May 18, his command forded the lower Broad River and next day marched twenty-five miles. Several deserters captured among the Tories in the recent encounters were executed along the way.²³

E. The Americans Before Ninety Six

1. The Command

Greene's total force approaching Ninety Six numbered less than a thousand men. There were two regiments of Continentals from Maryland and Delaware totaling 427 men, the Virginia brigade of 431, a battalion of 66 North Carolinians, and a company of 60 infantrymen under Captain Robert Kirkwood of Delaware, in all 984 men. His artillery complement consisted of only three brass 6-pounders manned by Virginia and Maryland

19. Greene to Samuel Huntington, May 14, 1781, in Gibbes, Documentary History, III, 71-72; Weigley, The Partisan War, p. 56.

20. Weigley, The Partisan War, p. 56.

21. Greene to Sumter, May 17, 1781, in McCrady, South Carolina in the Revolution, 1780-1783, p. 278.

22. On May 16 Greene wrote Lee: "You will march immediately for Augusta, as the advance of the army, which will move by the way of Ninety Six. . . ." Henry Lee, Jr., The Campaign of 1781 in the Carolinas; with Remarks Historical and Critical on Johnson's Life of Greene (Philadelphia: E. Littell, 1824. Reprint, Spartenburg: The Reprint Company, 1975), p. 385.

23. William Seymour, A Journal of the Southern Expedition, 1780-1783. Papers of the Historical Society of Delaware, IV (Wilmington: The Historical Society of Delaware, 1896), p. 27.

troops.²⁴ Greene still hoped for militia reinforcements to give his command respectability in size, but nothing materialized. The Virginia militia still did not show up. "Maryland has neglected us altogether," he complained to Congress. "Delaware has not answered my letters. . . . North Carolina has got next to no men in the field and few militia and those the worst in the world."²⁵ "I am in distress and our affairs are in the most critical situation. . . ," he wrote Washington.²⁶ But he continued to cling to hope that support would arrive and he pursued his strategy diligently despite his perceived numerical weakness.

On May 20 Greene's army marched seventeen miles. Next day the troops traveled sixteen miles. Enroute, the advance parties roused and captured about a dozen Tories who were put to death.²⁷ Greene penned a note to Colonel Lee: "We shall be within ten miles of Ninety Six to Night; and am in hopes if the Garrison is not gone it will fall into our hands."²⁸ In the morning the soldiers were off again and this day marched nine miles, crossing the Saluda and drawing near the village of Ninety Six along the Island Ford Road. At a point within sight of the British garrison, Greene's advance encountered a party of Tories, some of whom were captured and executed.²⁹ The American troops then divided in order to surround Ninety Six; the units were posted in the

24. Ward, War of the Revolution, II, 817; Cann, "War in the Back-country," p. 6; Benson J. Lossing, The Pictorial Field-Book of the Revolution (2 vols.; New York: Harper and Brothers, 1860), II, 485. Cruger wrote Rawdon, May 31, 1781, that Greene approaching Ninety Six had with him three 6-pounders. Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/7(1). These were probably three of the four 6-pounders Greene had at Guilford Courthouse March 15, two of which had been taken from the British at Cowpens in January. Charles E. Hatch, Jr., The Battle of Guilford Courthouse (Washington: National Park Service, 1971), p. 313. A British participant at the Siege of Ninety Six reported that the Americans at one point "opened four batteries" simultaneously, suggesting the presence of at least four guns. Mackenzie, Strictures, p. 151.

25. Greene to the President of Congress, May 5, 1781, quoted in Ward, War of the Revolution, II, 810.

26. Greene to Washington, May 16, 1781. Greene Papers. Manuscript Division, Princeton University Library.

27. Seymour, Journal of the Southern Expedition, p. 27.

28. Greene to Lee, May 21, 1781. Nathanael Greene Papers. Manuscript Division. Duke University Library, Durham, North Carolina.

29. Seymour, Journal of the Southern Expedition, pp. 27-28; Thomas Anderson, "Journal of Thomas Anderson's 1st Delaware regiment [[May 6, 1780-April 7, 1782]." Peter Force Transcripts, Series 7E. Manuscript Division, Library of Congress. A virtually identical journal to that of Anderson's is in Robert Kirkwood, "Orderly Book and Journal Kept by Capt. Robert Kirkwood of the Delaware Regiment, 1777-1782." Peter Force Transcripts, Series 7E. Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

woods "within cannon shot" of, and around, the British fortified garrison.³⁰

2. Reconnoitering the Post

By investing the place Greene completed the first operation of conducting a siege. The British at Ninety Six were encircled; nothing could enter or leave the stockaded village.³¹ Accompanied by his aide-de-camp, Captain Nathaniel Pendleton, and chief engineer, Colonel Thaddeus Kosciuszko, Greene proceeded to reconnoiter the enemy's position. From all appearances, the garrison was strong and would have to be dealt with according to the tenets of siege warfare, a process that entailed approaching close enough to breach the works through a network of systematically constructed parallels, or earthen entrenchments. For the besieging army, prosecution of a successful siege involved the accurate determination of the enemy's most vulnerable point as well as the accelerated marshalling of all resources necessary to reduce the place quickly. For the besieged force, survival very much coincided with the availability of provisions to support prolonged resistance and the resolution to hold out against capitulation. Often the prospect of relief by an outside force was sufficient to revitalize the wills of the besieged to resist. Upon the leader of the assailed garrison fell the difficult responsibility of inspiring confidence in his command under the most adverse circumstances.³²

3. Cruger Readies His Garrison

As leader of the garrison at Ninety Six, Colonel Cruger had made his preparations well. Despite the Americans' interception of Rawdon's dispatch ordering evacuation of the British outpost, Cruger had learned of Rawdon's withdrawal from Camden from a captured American officer and had anticipated Greene's arrival.³³ Although his soldiers were still laboring to complete artillery platforms for use in the star

30. Mackenzie, Strictures, p. 146; Stedman, The American War, II, 366-67; Ward, War of the Revolution, II, 817.

31. Muller, Treatise, p. 224; Lallemand, A Treatise on Artillery, II, 137.

32. Eversley Belfield, Defy and Endure: Great Sieges of Modern History (New York: Crowell-Collier Press, 1967), pp. 5-6. "Siege, is when an army approaches a fortified place, and surrounds it on all sides, endeavoring to oblige the garison [sic] to surrender, either by destroying the works of the fortification, or those which defend them." Muller, Treatise, p. 230.

33. Mackenzie, Strictures, pp. 141-42; Jones, New York During the Revolutionary War, II, 376.

redoubt when the van of Greene's army appeared May 22,³⁴ Cruger already had assigned 200 soldiers under Major Green, of DeLancey's Brigade, to the star. In addition, he had posted a party of militia in the stockade fort west of Spring Branch, detailed a subaltern's guard to man the jail, and assigned troops to occupy the blockhouses within the town stockade. Cruger himself took charge of the remaining troops in the town.³⁵ According to one account, he offered to release the loyalist militia commanded by Colonel King. But that officer demurred and his men set their horses loose into the forest, so they remained.³⁶

During Greene's reconnaissance of May 21 he learned of the presence in the area of Mrs. Cruger, who had been residing at the Mayson home some distance from Ninety Six. He took deliberate measures to calm her and sent emissaries to inquire whether she desired to stay or be escorted from the vicinity. Mrs. Cruger replied that she wanted to remain where she was, and Greene assigned a twelve-man detail to guard the Mayson place for the duration of his operations.³⁷ The ensuing weeks were to provide an experience that Mrs. Cruger would not soon forget.

34. Mackenzie, Strictures, pp. 146, 147.

35. Ibid., p. 145.

36. Ibid., pp. 144-45.

37. Henry Lee, Memoirs of the War in the Southern Department of the United States (Washington: Peter Force, 1822; orig. pub. 1812), p. 257n; Johnson, Traditions and Reminiscences, p. 472; Lossing, Pictorial Field-Book, p. 488; Jones, New York During the Revolutionary War, II, 385. A witness stated that on Greene's approach Mrs. Cruger sewed her guineas in her girdles and belts in order to conceal them on her person. Johnson, Traditions and Reminiscences, p. 471.

CHAPTER IX: THE SIEGE OF NINETY SIX, AB INITIO

A. Investment

1. Greene's Headquarters Camp

By nightfall May 22 General Greene's entire force had arrived before Ninety Six and had been assigned to bivouac less than a half mile distant from, and roughly opposite to, the four corners of the stockade enclosing the village.¹ The precise location, size, and number of the American camps remains unknown, although presumably the main concentration of soldiers was posted some 500 yards north of the star redoubt. Because of the necessity of maintaining a large labor force in close proximity to the contemplated approaches against the star, it is likely that a camp in this locale would be formally organized according to rules governing the procedure of castrametation, or camp layout, contained in Baron Von Steuben's Regulations, adopted by the Continental Army in 1779.² This encampment area might accurately be designated General Greene's headquarters camp because it was from this position that the course of the siege was directed.³

2. Guards Around the Village

At the same time, it appears logical that Greene would have stationed guard units around Ninety Six to deny Cruger's garrison access to communications and supplies from outside.⁴ In fact, Henry Lee mentioned the

1. Moultrie, Memoirs, II, 285; Stedman, The American War, II, 366-67.

2. Baron Friedrich Wilhelm Ludolf Gerhard Augustin Von Steuben, Regulations for the Order and Discipline of the Troops of the United States (Philadelphia: Styner and Cist, 1779).

3. Preliminary archeological testing in this area has failed to disclose evidence of military occupations. See Memorandum, "Preliminary Statement, Greene's Camp, Ninety Six National Historic Site." National Park Service, Southeast Archeological Center, 1978, Ellen B. Ehrenhard, The Utilization of Inorganic Phosphate Analysis for the Location of General Nathanael Greene's Revolutionary War Camp (Tallahassee: Southeast Archeological Center, 1978).

4. The earliest reference to four camps opposite the corners of the town stockade is in H. S. Tanner's map, "View of Ninety Six," prepared to accompany Johnson's Life and Correspondence of Nathanael Greene in 1822. (continued)

existence, south of the town near Charleston Road, of "some batteries [redoubts?] thrown up for the protection of the guards."⁵ Besides being necessary to complete the investment of the enemy,⁶ the assignment of permanently stationed camps with roving patrols along the Charleston Road and other trails in the vicinity would have been so eminently practical that Greene would have seemed derelict if it were not done. These camp units, composed of Continentals, would probably likewise have followed Steuben's procedures on bivouac arrangement so far as was practicable given the terrain and number of soldiers. But probably the elements of the South Carolina and Georgia militia that later joined Greene were governed by less structured precepts.

3. Kosciuszko's Design

In the rainy darkness Greene and Kosciuszko continued their reconnaissance, at one point being fired upon by the British troops inside the star fort.⁷ The fortifications impressed Greene, so much so that his hopes for an easy conquest enroute to Augusta were completely dashed. "We . . . find this place much better fortified and garrison much stronger . . . than was expected," he wrote to Henry Lee.⁸

After lengthy deliberation Greene accepted Kosciuszko's recommendation to begin approaches against what appeared to be the strongest part of the British defenses, the star. The decision later touched off considerable debate, for there were those who believed that action should have been taken immediately to cut off Cruger's water supply via the stockade fort instead of attacking what appeared to be his most impenetrable point.⁹ As Kosciuszko later wrote, however, it was thought at the time that the British had wells in each of their works, so that being deprived of the water of the Spring Branch would not have affected them adversely.¹⁰

4. (continued) (Illustration 7.) While this map is imprecise and sometimes inaccurate, it nevertheless shows the largest encampment to have been that immediately north of the star, the second largest that located southeast of the village, and the two smallest situated roughly northwest and southwest of the town.

5. Memoirs, p. 254.

6. See Muller, Treatise, p. 230.

7. Johnson, Life and Correspondence of Nathanael Greene, II, 143.

8. Greene to Lee, May 22, 1781. Nathanael Greene Papers. Manuscript Division. University of Georgia Library, Athens.

9. Thayer, Nathanael Greene, p. 356.

10. Miecislauś Haiṃan, Kosciuszko in the American Revolution
(continued)

Moreover, theoretically, the star fort commanded the other fortified components of Ninety Six, and by gaining control of it Greene would have easy access to the whole of the British position.¹¹ In any event, and despite the later controversy, Greene accepted the advice of his chief engineer and, disregarding the formality of calling for Cruger's surrender, directed that siege operations commence against the star.¹²

B. Approaches Begin

1. The First Batteries

Already well known for his engineering talents, the thirty-five-year-old Polish-born Kosciuszko had served in America since 1776. He had fortified Gates's camp at Saratoga in 1777 and was responsible for erecting the defensive works at West Point on the Hudson. Educated in the military sciences at Warsaw and Paris, Kosciuszko brought his knowledge of siege warfare to the fore at Ninety Six. His assistant engineer was Captain Joseph de Delezeume of France, serving with Greene's command.¹³ Accordingly, and with some degree of brazenness, Kosciuszko inexplicably directed the erection in the darkness of a three-gun artillery battery only about 70 yards north of the star. An infantry covering party advanced in front of the fatigue detail to protect its members from the star. The work proceeded slowly, partly because of disruptive musketry from the British,

10. (continued) (Boston: Gregg Press, 1972. Orig. pub. New York: Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America, 1943), p. 115.

11. Johnson, Life and Correspondence of Nathanael Greene, II, 141, 142; Haiman, Kosciuszko, pp. 111-12.

12. Mackenzie, Strictures, p. 147. While the advice was Kosciuszko's, the decision belonged to Greene. His earliest biographer, William Johnson, wrote that "the project of cutting off water had been well weighed and considered, and rejected on mature deliberation. There was not a doubt entertained of the practicability of obtaining water by digging in almost any part of the enemy's works. . . . And it was historically known, that when Colonel [Major] Williamson was besieged here in the year 1775, and the besieged were almost destitute of the necessary implements, they had yet succeeded in getting water by digging." Ibid. See also, McCrady, South Carolina in the Revolution, 1780-1783, pp. 281-82; Weigley, The Partisan War, pp. 58-59.

13. Francis B. Heitman (comp.), Historical Register of Officers of the Continental Army during the War of the Revolution, April, 1775, to December, 1783 (Washington: The Rare Book Shop Publishing Company, Inc., 1914), p. 193. Greene's orders of June 20, 1781, mention the presence of "Captain Delzien [sic], the assistant Engineer." Greene Papers. Rhode Island Historical Society (original in the Western Reserve Historical Society Library, Cleveland, Ohio).

but mostly because the soldiers began work very late.¹⁴

2. Retaliation

By daylight, May 23, the troops had raised an earthen battery flanked by two small redans, but it was incomplete and could not receive cannon. The covering party of Delaware troops was relieved by Lieutenant Colonel Richard Campbell's Virginians. When Cruger saw what had been done in the night so close to his defenses he ordered an assault on the work party that took the Americans by surprise and sent them scrambling from the battery. Under cover of musketry and artillery fire from hastily-readied cannon in the star redoubt, a company of thirty British under Lieutenant Roney surged beyond the abatis with bayonets poised and captured the intrenching tools along with several Negro laborers abandoned by the Americans. A detail of Tory militia quickly destroyed the unfinished battery. Roney's party succeeded in killing some of Greene's soldiers before withdrawing back into the star, and the Americans were unable to effectively counter the sally. The sole British fatality was Lieutenant Roney, who was mortally wounded during the encounter.¹⁵

3. The Second Beginning

The immediate effect of the swift British strike was to further convince Greene of the enemy's strength and determination. "We have laid Siege to this place," he related in a letter this day, "but the fortifications are so strong and the garrison so large and so well furnished that our success is very doubtful."¹⁶ Nevertheless, he warned his soldiers to keep together and not wander from their units and that night began operations anew, this time at a more respectful distance from the star.¹⁷ Under Kosciuszko's supervision, the men erected two

14. Haiman, Kosciuszko, p. 111; Anderson, "Journal." Johnson stated that Kosciuszko planned to begin digging a mine gallery from this point and that the batteries were erected to cover that activity. Life and Correspondence of Nathanael Greene, II, 142.

15. Mackenzie, Strictures, pp. 146-47; Haiman, Kosciuszko, p. 112; Anderson, "Journal"; Stedman, The American War, II, 367; Ward, War of the Revolution, II, 818.

16. Greene to Major General Lafayette, May 23, 1781. Greene Papers, Library of Congress.

17. "General Orders Commencing 1st April 1781 and Ending 25th July 1781 Inclusive." The Huntington Library, San Marino, California. Microfilm. (Hereafter cited as Greene Orderly Book.) A list of field officers of the day for the duration of the siege is presented in Appendix F. For camp security Greene implemented a system of passwords for the use of his troops. See Appendix G.

earthen batteries some 350 yards to the north on the other side of a broad ravine.¹⁸ (Map 4.) By this means Kosciuszko hoped to familiarize the men with the type of work at hand. At the same time he commenced building two saps, the zigzag approach trenches by which means the besieging army advanced on the enemy position. (Illustration 13.) Out in front of this activity, in the darkness and on the damp ground, American covering parties were posted through the night.¹⁹

4. The First Guns

On Thursday morning, May 24, Greene's 6-pounder cannon began a light bombardment against both the star redoubt and the stockaded village from the two new batteries.²⁰ The shot took "great effect," recalled Kosciuszko, and "Alarmed the Enemy prodigious[ly]."²¹ From all indications, these batteries thrown up overnight by Kosciuszko's fatigue parties were hasty affairs designed to get some of Greene's cannon into action quickly. Each consisted of a component ditch and parapet, the latter probably measuring 8-10 feet at the base and complete with embrasure or embrasures. Inside the soldiers laid platforms of heavy planking on which the cannon rested. The platforms were tipped slightly forward to help retard recoil of the pieces.²² Given the terrain intervening between Greene's position and the star, Kosciuszko's earliest batteries must have been of the cavalier type, that is, raised to a height commensurate with that of the proposed artillery target. This would be necessary, as well, to cover the work

18. Kosciuszko stated that the distance from the star was 300 yards. Haiman, Kosciuszko, p. 112. Greene's adjutant, Lieutenant Colonel Otho Holland Williams, put it at 350 yards. "Notes and remarks on the History of the War in South Carolina." Otho Holland Williams Papers. Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore. Lieutenant Hatton of the New Jersey Volunteers, in the star at the time, reported that the Americans broke ground "at the distance of four hundred paces from the Star. . . ." Mackenzie, Strictures, p. 148. Another occupant of the star put the distance at 300 yards. Letter signed "A FRIEND to MERIT," Royal Gazette (Charleston, South Carolina), August 25-29, 1781.

19. Mackenzie, Strictures, pp. 148-49; Haiman, Kosciuszko, p. 112; Seymour, Journal of the Southern Expedition, p. 28; Stedman, The American War, II, 367; Ramsay, History of the American Revolution, II, 250.

20. Haiman, Kosciuszko, p. 112; Seymour, Journal of the Southern Expedition, p. 28; Anderson, "Journal."

21. "Notes by my friend Colo. Kosciuszko relative to the siege of 96." Williams Papers. These notes, apparently written in 1783 or 1784, originally consisted of seven pages. The first five of these, now missing, are faithfully reproduced in Haiman, Kosciuszko, which will be cited here.

22. Smith, An Universal Military Dictionary, p. 22; Lochee, Elements of Field Fortification, p. 14.

of the sappers who would otherwise be at the mercy of the enemy guns.²³ Probably, too, these batteries were built to afford direct firing rather than crossfire at the British works. Cross batteries could be more efficiently employed once a closer position had been established.²⁴

5. Work Behind the Lines

While these two batteries kept up a lively, sporadic, shooting through the day, the rest of Greene's soldiers prepared to advance their approaches once night fell. Scores of men combed through the woodlands gathering sticks and brush to be used in fashioning fascines, gabions, saucissons, and other siege matériel. Probably a deposit was located in the draw east of the Island Ford Road where such articles could be stored until needed. Other troops were dispatched to scour the countryside for forage, food, and any other necessity to sustain Greene's army. Slaves not earlier recruited by the British were pressed into service and brought to Ninety Six to aid the fatigue parties.²⁵ Foragers were instructed to "pass receipts to the inhabitants for the quantities [of supplies] impressed."²⁶

Work continued through the night without startling development. On the 25th word arrived of Colonel Lee's success in taking two key British positions at Augusta with numerous prisoners and large amounts of provisions.²⁷ Greene hoped that Lee would soon be able to help at Ninety Six, and he still yearned for the militia support that Sumter told him he might expect.²⁸ Worried lest Cruger learn of his uncertainties

23. Tousard, American Artillerist's Companion, I, 69-70.

24. Ibid., p. 3.

25. See James Mayson to Greene, May 29, 1781. Greene Papers, Clements Library.

26. Colonel Lewis Morris to Lieutenant Mayson (?), conveying Greene's orders, May 24, 1781. Nathanael Greene Papers. Rhode Island Historical Society (quoting item in a Cohasco, Inc., autograph catalog).

27. Seymour, Journal of the Southern Expedition, p. 28; Anderson, "Journal."

28. Sumter to Greene, May 22, 1781, in "Letters of Brig.-Gen. Thomas Sumter, 1780-'83; Letters of Maj.-Gen. Nathaniel [sic] Greene, 1780-'83," Year Book 1899, City of Charleston, So. Ca. (Charleston: Lucas and Richardson Company, 1899), p. 23; Greene's orders, May 25, 1781. Nathanael Greene Papers. Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland, Ohio.

and perhaps get word through to Rawdon, Greene on May 26 ordered that

Officers of all Ranks are to take particular notice of Strangers coming into Camp, and to send all suspicious persons to Head Quarters. The Guards in particular should be extremely circumspect & to prevent if possible, spies entering the Camp. Lieutenant Mortons [sic] conduct yesterday in suffering a Man to pass his guard from the Enemys Garrison is unpardonable.²⁹

C. Building the First Parallel

1. Digging in "Soft Stone"

The following day was Greene's thirty-ninth birthday. The commander directed that "all the intrenching tools, Hatchets &c. are to be carefully collected and deposited at Sun Down in the rear of the new Battery."³⁰ This structure, closer at 220 yards from the star, was doubtless more substantial and consequently took longer to erect. It was finished during the night of May 27. This battery must have been situated on comparatively low terrain as it was raised on cavaliers to a height of twenty feet, according to firsthand sources.³¹ At the same time the soldiers continued pushing their approaches some thirty yards ahead of this battery, working under enemy fire all night long. "As the Nature of the Ground was very hard and approached [sic] very much to Soft Stone the Approches [sic] Could not be so fast advanced," wrote Kosciuszko.³²

The approaches were advanced enough, however, for Greene's men to begin digging the first parallel during the night of May 28. What they produced before the star at Ninety Six during the next three weeks was a rudimentary siegework system, doubtless partly due to the unfamiliarity of the soldiers with siege warfare, but also because of the hardness of the ground, too few soldiers to do all the tasks involved, and, towards the end, too little time. While most of the works erected before Ninety Six hardly dignified the criteria imposed by the theoretical manuals, they nevertheless accomplished for Greene what they were intended to accomplish, so far as they went. With so few soldiers to undertake such a grandiose design, without reinforcements, and with an engineering cadre grossly limited in number, Greene contended at

29. Greene Orderly Book.

30. Ibid.

31. Haiman, Kosciuszko, p. 112; Williams, "Notes and remarks." Greene wrote that this battery was raised "within one hundred and forty yards of the star fort to command the Works. . . ." Greene to President of Congress, June 20, 1781. Washington Papers.

32. Haiman, Kosciuszko, p. 112.

best with circumstances. The result was hardly a classic siege encounter, but one that highlighted American military determination in the late stages of the war.

2. Purpose of the Parallels

Construction of the first parallel took several days. According to contemporary authority, "Parallels, or places of arms, are a part of the trenches, which surround the whole front attacked, and serve to hold the soldiers, who are to protect and support the workmen [raising batteries, digging approaches, etc.]"³³ Once the first parallel had been established and filled with men, guns, and equipment, the workmen constructed saps, those trenches that zigzagged towards the enemy so as not to be in direct line with his fire.³⁴ Then the second parallel was built, the guns brought forward, and the process repeated, ideally, a third time, until the enemy's glacis was reached. Once that was accomplished, breach batteries would be erected to batter the defenses if the garrison still refused to capitulate.

3. The Need for More Men

On May 28, as Kosciuszko's workmen labored to break the resistant red clay 160-170 yards from the star, General Greene sent word to Sumter that "our approaches are going on slowly, owing to the want of men. . . ." ³⁵ He also told Sumter that he had ordered certain militia regiments to join and remain with him at Ninety Six, somewhat to the partisan commander's chagrin.³⁶ This day Greene gave permission for one of the Virginia officers, officially retired since February, to go home.³⁷ On Tuesday he wrote Lee citing his need for more fatigue men and summoning him to Ninety Six once Augusta was firmly reduced.³⁸ Greene also received assurances from Mrs. Cruger and the other ladies at the Mayson home that "thay [sic] are very Easy under

33. Smith, An Universal Military Dictionary, p. 233.

34. For details of the sapping procedure, see Muller, Treatise, p. 230; Tousard, American Artillerist's Companion, I, 510, 512; Straith, Treatise on Fortification and Artillery, I, 137, 138.

35. Greene to Sumter, May 28, 1781, in "Letters," p. 104.

36. Sumter to Greene, June 7, 1781, in ibid., p. 23.

37. Greene Orderly Book; Haiman, Historical Register, p. 467.

38. Greene to Lee, May 29, 1781. "Transcripts of Letters of N. Greene to Col. Lee." Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

your care and highly sencable [sic] of your Politeness and attention,"³⁹ along with a request from James Mayson that Greene arrange a "proper passport" to get his sister-in-law out of Ninety Six.⁴⁰ On the 29th Greene issued orders specifying that the fatigue parties be assigned from the line and that their work in the trenches be supervised by the field officer of the day under Kosciuszko's direction.⁴¹

4. The First Parallel Completed

Completion of the first parallel was impeded May 30 by another British sortie against the American works. "Three or four men of both sides were killed," reported Kosciuszko.⁴² On subsequent nights there occurred more sallies which caused sharp, though minor, exchanges between the British and the American advance covering parties. They nonetheless disrupted Greene's progress.⁴³ By Wednesday the trench was half finished,⁴⁴ and by late Friday, June 1, the first parallel was complete.

Archeological examination of the siegeworks opposite the star redoubt took place in 1974 and 1975. Excavation of the first parallel disclosed that the feature measured about 60 yards long east to west, with the western end terminating at its junction with Island Ford Road. Width of the first parallel varied between 4 and 7 feet. The trench was but 2 feet deep, indicating that it barely afforded sufficient cover for the workmen who built it. The eastern end of the parallel made an angle to the northeast to protect the left flank. Similarly, soldiers were probably posted along the Island Ford Road to guard the right. The road gradually circled around, diagonally intersecting the American position, and most certainly provided easy access for troops and supplies moving into the parallel. Likewise, the ravine immediately behind the parallel would have served to cover auxiliary troops and supplies.⁴⁵

39. Mayson to Greene, May 29, 1781. Greene Papers, Clements Library.

40. Ibid.

41. Greene Orderly Book.

42. Haiman, Kosciuszko, p. 112.

43. Johnson, Life and Correspondence of Nathanael Greene, II, 143.

44. Haiman, Kosciuszko, p. 112.

45. For archeological evaluation of the first parallel, see Holschlag and Rodeffer, Siegeworks, pp. 28, 30, 31, 37, 73.

D. The Siege Continues

1. Whig Militia Lends a Hand

In order not to encourage the British to reenact their initial sortie against Kosciuszko's works, Greene directed officers commanding the fatigue details to take particular care of the entrenching tools "and have such as are not in immediate use secured by a small Guard."⁴⁶ He also directed that each of his officers be provided with a quart of rum.⁴⁷ The General became somewhat heartened as more Whig militia appeared daily to augment his force. Some of these were horsemen who ranged through the countryside gathering supplies and watching for Tories. These men impressed thousands of bushels of corn, peas, tobacco, and fodder, as well as a large number of cattle and sheep, for the use of Greene's army.⁴⁸ Supplies thus obtained required heavy guards to get them to the American encampments past lurking Tories, large numbers of whom occupied the forests and swamps around Ninety Six and lost few opportunities to randomly kill members of Greene's command whenever such occasions arose. Through the efforts of Sumter, William Washington, and others, however, these forces were unable to organize effectively enough to disrupt the siege operations.⁴⁹

2. Routine Matters

On Saturday, Greene dealt primarily with routine matters. He received a note from a man named John Jones, a Whig militiaman, who had been wounded:

Worth S^r--this is to inform you that I am Lying at y^e
house of Mr. Edwards Dangerously wounded and am void of

46. Greene Orderly book.

47. Ibid.

48. Haiman, Kosciuszko, p. 112; Annie Walker Burns (comp.), "South Carolina Pension Abstracts of the Revolutionary War, War of 1812 and Indian Wars" (Washington, D.C. Mimeographed, n.d.), I, 78; Revolutionary Audited Account of Richard A. Rapley. AA6249. South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia. Items delivered to Greene's army at Ninety Six included 11 hogsheads of rum, 2 barrels of brown sugar, 13 barrels of flour, 2 1/2 barrels of pork, 40 watch-coats, 130 blankets, and 100 hatchets. "Mem^d of Articles, sent to Genl. Green [sic] at Ninety Six, for the use of the Army 28th of May 1781." Captain Benjamin Tutt to Greene, May 28, 1781. Greene Papers, Clements Library.

49. Thayer, Nathanael Greene, p. 357. One of the most notorious of the Tories around Ninety Six was William Cunningham, whose followers (continued)

anyone that is skill,d at towards my Cure. Hope your Honour will take my Distress into Consideration and permit me to Goe to some Doctor that may perform my Cure and if I should Recover I shall forthwith Return to your lines.⁵⁰

Another letter recounted an incident involving some of Greene's wagoners enroute with supplies from Augusta. Reported the officer in charge:

On the 30th of May five Waggons arrived here from Augusta with Commissaries Stores, and Amongst other Articles, I found two Naked female Negro's [sic], aged from appearance, one Eight, & the other six, being Sisters. Upon Enquiry, none of the men who draw the Waggons would acknowledge a right in them, or could render any account how the Negro's came in their possession, which Induced Me to take them into Custody.--On Examining the Children next Morning, they told me their Masters name was Johnston & that the said Waggoners came to their Mr's [Master's] House (the Master being absent) & brought them off.--They don't know where they Lived.⁵¹

3. A Fleche, or Second Parallel

The pace quickened June 3. By that day Kosciuszko's workmen had succeeded in pushing their zigzag approaches forward about 70 yards and had extended and deepened the trench so that it formed what Greene apparently accepted as a second parallel but what Kosciuszko termed a "fleche," or redan. The feature measured about 25 yards in length running roughly east to west.⁵² Perhaps it might be more accurately designated as a place of arms, or a demiplace of arms, where Greene might concentrate men and equipment.⁵³ The workmen had also raised another

49. (continued) "hovered around the American Camp like vultures, and picked off the patriots in detail." Lossing, Pictorial Field-Book, II, 486n.

50. Jones to Greene, June 2, 1781. Greene Papers, Clements Library.

51. A. Jamison to Greene, June 2, 1781. Greene Papers, Clements Library.

52. Mackenzie, Strictures, p. 149; Lee, Memoirs, p. 252; Stedman, The American War, II, 367; Johnson, Life and Correspondence of Nathanael Greene, II, 143; Haiman, Kosciuszko, p. 113; Holschlag and Rodeffer, Siegeworks, pp. 43-44.

53. See Wilhelm, Military Dictionary and Gazetteer, p. 433.

battery approximately midway between the first parallel and Kosciuszko's fleche, and probably located to the left and adjoining the second leg of the zigzag sap. A 6-pounder positioned in this unit commenced firing in the morning.⁵⁴

E. Greene Summons a Surrender

1. A Note to Cruger

His position consolidated to directly threaten the star, Greene now made the customary request for the British to surrender. With American drummers beating a chamade, Adjutant Williams advanced waving a flag of truce.⁵⁵ He was met near the star by Lieutenant Stelle, who accepted the written request for Cruger to capitulate:

Sir,

The very distant situation of the British Army commanded by Lord Cornwallis--Lord Rawdons retreat--The reduction of all the British posts upon Wateree, Congaree and Santee rivers: and your present circumstances (which are not more truly known to yourself than to your adversary) Leave you no hope but in the generosity of the American Army. The Honorable Major G1 Greene has therefore commanded me to demand an immediate Surrender of your Garrison. A moral certainty of success, without which the previous measures wo^d not have been taken, induces the General to expect a compliance with this Summons, which I am authorized to assure you, most Seriously will not be

54. Haiman, Kosciuszko, p. 113; Holschlag and Rodeffer, Siegeworks, pp. 57-59. Cruger stated that this battery was made of logs. Cruger to Rawdon, June 3, 1781. Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/7(1). On June 3 Cruger notified Rawdon that the Americans "were busy building a Cavalier to overlook the Star Redoubt." Rawdon to Cornwallis, June 9, 1781. Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/7(1).

55. The "chamade" was a drum beat used to indicate the desire of one adversary to communicate with the other. More formally, it was used "when a town besieged wants to capitulate, or to make some proposals to the besiegers." Smith, An Universal Military Dictionary, p. 232.

repeated. You will therefore consider yourself answerable for the consequences of a vain resistance or destruction of Stores.

I have the Honor to be

Sir

Your most Obed^t

Hble Servant

O. H. Williams⁵⁶

The American army tensed in anticipation as Williams returned to the lines to await Cruger's reply. Greene ordered that "the Troops are to be furnish'd with a jill of Rum per man and the army held in readiness for action."⁵⁷

2. Cruger Declines

Actually, Cruger's situation was not nearly so bad as to warrant his surrender. His casualties thus far had been light and, unknown to Greene, he had succeeded in exchanging correspondence with Rawdon despite the American cordon around Ninety Six. He had informed Rawdon of Greene's presence and of the Americans' labors before the star. "They appear to be advancing by regular approaches, working very industriously, as if your Lordship was at hand," Cruger had addressed his chief on May 31. "We begin tomorrow on our Salt Provisions, which will last a month with good Management. . . . We are all in full confidence of your Lordship. . . ."58 Cruger therefore responded appropriately to the summons delivered by Williams:

I am honor'd with your Letter of this Day, intimating Major General Greene's immediate Demand of the surrender of His Majesty's garrison at Ninety Six, a Compliance with which my Duty to my Sovereign renders inadmissable [sic] at present.⁵⁹

56. Williams to Cruger, June 3, 1781. Greene Papers, Clements Library.

57. Greene Orderly Book.

58. Cruger to Rawdon, May 31, 1781. Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/7(1). On June 5 Rawdon informed Cornwallis that "to my great satisfaction . . . I learn (by messages which I have found means to interchange with Lt. Colonel Cruger) that Ninety Six is in a very different state from what I supposed: The new works were completed before the Enemy's approach; the garrison is ample for the extent; & the fire of the Enemy had no effect: Lt. Colonel Cruger therefore only apprehends, that relief may not arrive before his provisions are expended." Cruger even sent Rawdon a report of his provisions on hand. Rawdon to Cornwallis, June 5, 1781. Clinton Papers.

59. Cruger to Williams, June 3, 1781. Nathanael Greene Papers.
(continued)

At this rejection, Greene immediately ordered three of his batteries, each containing one gun, to open on the star in a heavy cross fire so as to enfilade the British works.⁶⁰ That evening Cruger composed another message to Rawdon, informing him of the day's events and optimistically noting that the Americans' "great industry is a pleasing indication to us that Your Lordship is not far off." Still, he wrote, "we get no intelligence, No creature comes in to us."⁶¹

F. Optimism and Pessimism

1. Trying a New Tactic

Monday, June 4, saw Greene's soldiers adopt an unusual tactic to further harass the British garrison. Emulating Lee and Marion before Fort Motte, some of the besiegers fashioned large African-type arrows which they bound with flax and treated with pitch. The combustible devices were then lit and fired from muskets over the Ninety Six stockade for the purpose of igniting the shingled roofs of the buildings where Cruger's soldiers were quartered. Cruger reacted quickly; in the night he simply ordered the roofs removed from the houses.⁶² During the same night another British sally emanated from the star under the cover of British cannon fire and succeeded in destroying a mantelet erected as a protective device by Kosciuszko's workmen. The attack was vigorously answered by a barrage from the American batteries.⁶³

2. A British Officer Leaves the Garrison

Things quieted by morning. Greene issued orders instructing persons without business there to stay clear of the trenches to prevent their

59. (continued) Manuscript Division. The Huntington Library, San Marino, California. This message is reproduced in Johnson, Life and Correspondence of Nathanael Greene, II, 144. A witness's account of this exchange appears in Mackenzie, Strictures, pp. 149-50, 151. Henry Lee stated that Cruger's answer was verbally delivered by an aide. Memoirs, p. 252.

60. Cruger to Rawdon, June 3, 1781. Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/7(1); Mackenzie, Strictures, p. 151; Stedman, The American War, II, 368. A British witness stated that four batteries opened on the star, producing "a tremendous cannonading." Letter signed "A FRIEND to MERIT," Royal Gazette, August 25-29, 1781.

61. Cruger to Rawdon, June 3, 1781. Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/7(1).

62. Haiman, Kosciuszko, p. 113; Mackenzie, Strictures, pp. 151-52; Stedman, The American War, II, 368-69; Johnson, Life and Correspondence of Nathanael Greene, II, 147; Cann, "War in the Backcountry," p. 8.

63. Haiman, Kosciuszko, p. 113.

congestion, noting that "Great confusion may arise from the gratification of an idle curiosity."⁶⁴ The regimental commanders were directed to check their ammunition supplies and to insure that each soldier was allotted thirty cartridges for his musket.⁶⁵ Greene also received complaints of the wanton murder and plunder by Whig militia of inhabitants along the Saluda River. "It is impossible for me to express my abhorrence [sic] and detestation of such a practice," he wrote the people, "and they may be assured that no endeavour of mine shall be wanting to restrain and check such violence."⁶⁶

During the day Adjutant Williams received a request from Colonel Cruger that an ill officer, Lieutenant Chew, be allowed to leave the besieged garrison and proceed to Charleston. "Mr. Chew's unhappy situation will justify, upon every principle of humanity, the application," wrote Cruger.⁶⁷ Williams replied:

Mr. Chew is permitted to retire from the Garrison of Ninety Six with one Servant and such things as are essentially necessary to him in his present Situation. Mr. Chew will consider himself as an Officer on Parole, Subject to the fate of the Garrison.⁶⁸

Lieutenant Chew emerged from Ninety Six reclined on a litter borne by a black attendant and a British soldier "who are also to Share the fate of the Garrison according to Mr. Chews [sic] engagement upon Honor."⁶⁹ Two horses from the garrison went with them, and the party disappeared down the road to Charleston,⁷⁰ apparently without being searched by Greene's command.

3. News From Augusta

Kosciuszko reported this day that the gunners in his batteries had

64. Greene Orderly Book.

65. Ibid.

66. Greene "to the inhabitants on Saluda," June 5, 1781. Greene Papers, Duke University Library.

67. Cruger to Williams, June 5, 1781. Greene Papers, Clements Library. Cruger took advantage of the exchange of messages to enclose a letter for delivery to his wife. Ibid.

68. Williams to Cruger, June 5, 1781. Ibid.

69. Williams, "Memorandum." Ibid.

70. Ibid.

seriously damaged Cruger's artillery in the star, besides killing some of its occupants.⁷¹ News also arrived of Lee's final victory over the British at Augusta and of the capture of the entire garrison there.⁷² Greene formally acknowledged it next afternoon:

The General congratulates the army on the Reduction of the Enemy's [sic] post at Augusta-- The indefatigable and Gallant exertions of General Pickens and Lieut. Colonel Lee and their brave Officers and men engaged in the Siege merit the highest approbation, and must serve as a Stimulus to their fellow Soldiers now employ'd in the Blockade of Ninety Six.⁷³

4. Apprehension Sets In

Despite his outward optimism, Greene harbored increasing doubts about the American command's progress before the star. In a note to Sumter, Greene's aide reflected the misgivings and hopes of his chief:

This place is not yet reduced, nor is it easy to ascertain the time that it will be. We are carrying on our approaches and have closely invested the Town on all sides. This night we shall be within their Abattis, and perhaps by tomorrow Noon we shall be operating in their Ditch.⁷⁴

To facilitate these goals, Kosciuszko ordered the nearest battery raised to a height of 20 feet so it could more thoroughly dominate the star. The British responded to this threat by beginning construction of a traverse, or strip of parapet, inside the redoubt, to more effectively protect their personnel against shot fired from this battery.⁷⁵ Meantime, the approaches went forward slowly and the workmen widened and perhaps deepened Kosciuszko's fleche or short parallel.⁷⁶

71. Haiman, Kosciuszko, p. 113.

72. Anderson, "Journal."

73. Greene Orderly Book.

74. Captain William Pierce to Sumter, June 6, 1781, in "Letters of Brig.-Gen. Thomas Sumter," p. 105.

75. Kosciuszko stated that the heightening of the battery caused "the Enemy to intrench inside half way with the parapet of sixteen feet high [sic]." Haiman, Kosciuszko, p. 113.

76. Ibid.

5. The American Affront

June 7 passed quietly. General Greene wrote a letter giving permission for two itinerant Quaker preachers to visit his camp. "I am sensible your principles and professions are opposed [sic] to war," he said, "but I know you are fond of both political and religious liberty."⁷⁷ On Friday, Henry Lee and Andrew Pickens arrived from Augusta. That post had fallen quickly, the combined American force numbering more than 1500 men against some 330 Tory militia and 300 Indian defenders. With the aid of another log Maham tower the Americans had severely threatened the British and the enemy garrison surrendered June 4.⁷⁸ Through an error, the officer conducting the prisoners to Ninety Six took a route which passed close by and in full sight of Cruger's garrison. Naturally, these soldiers interpreted the impropriety as a purposeful indignity towards them on Lee's part.⁷⁹ As a witness, Lieutenant Hatton, recalled the incident,

The garrison had the mortification to see that of Augusta marched by them prisoners of war. . . . Colonel Lee, by whom they were taken, enjoyed the gratification of a little mind in exhibiting them before Ninety Six, with a British standard reversed, drums beating and fifes playing, to ridicule their situation. This pitiful recourse had an effect quite contrary to that which it was intended to produce. The soldiers were easily convinced by their officers, that death was preferable to captivity with such an enemy.⁸⁰

G. A Quickening Tempo

1. Lee Begins Approaches on the West

Immediately on Lee's arrival he surveyed the American situation at Ninety Six and advised Greene that he should begin approaches on the west,

77. Greene to Abel Thomas and Thomas Winslow, June 7, 1781, in untitled catalog of autograph letters. Folder, "Greene, Nathanael, 1742-1786." Manuscript Collections, New York Public Library.

78. Weigley, The Partisan War, p. 56.

79. According to one account, Cruger directed his guns against the prisoners being conducted, in response to the supposed insult by their captors. "Luckily no injury was sustained; but the officer [in charge] was very severely reprimanded by lieutenant colonel Lee, for the danger to which his inadvertance had exposed the corps." Lee, Memoirs, p. 251. See also, Lee, Jr., Campaign of 1781, pp. 391-92; Stedman, The American War, II, 369.

80. Mackenzie, Strictures, p. 153.

opposite the British stockade redoubt.⁸¹ Greene agreed and directed Lee's soldiers to undertake that project the same day.⁸² Under the direction of Pickens, the soldiers pushed a zigzag sap forward, probably from a distance of about 250 yards west of the stockade redoubt. Next day they were near enough to raise an earthen battery and mount a 6-pounder cannon to fire at the British while they advanced yet closer.⁸³

2. Kosciuszko's Mine and a British Sortie

Since the 3rd, digging had accelerated before the star with Kosciuszko's workmen pushing their sap ahead to a point some 40 yards from the enemy's ditch. Kosciuszko now began work on a feature he had planned from the beginning of the siege: a mine gallery advanced underground beneath the parapet of the star. When stocked with gunpowder and ignited at the proper moment, the resulting explosion would breach the British fort and Greene's soldiers would storm the place. As early as June 1 creation of a mine had been viewed as necessary for success against the star and Greene, lacking much extra powder for such an enterprise, had sent off to Pickens for some of that recently taken from Fort Dreadnought.⁸⁴ After dark on the 9th,

81. This according to Alexander Garden, an ensign in Lee's dragoons and an aide to Greene in 1781: "On his arrival at the post, . . . Lee, with the eye of a soldier, at once perceived that the plan of operations, and point of attack, adopted and pursued by General Greene, had not been advantageously chosen. . . . He immediately satisfied the Commander in Chief, that the place would be easily carried, by obtaining possession of the western redoubt, a slight fortification at a distance from the enemy's main work, but of great importance, since it completely commanded the only fountain [at Spring Branch] from which the garrison could procure water. . . ." Alexander Garden, Anecdotes of the Revolutionary War in America (Charleston: A. E. Miller, 1822), p. 65.

82. Lee's infantrymen apparently did not encamp to the west for several days. On June 12 Greene directed that "Lieut. Colonel Lee with the Infantry of the Legion is to Encamp on the West Quarter of Ninety Six, and to assist in prosecuting the operations in that Quarter." Greene Orderly Book.

83. Waring, Fighting Elder, pp. 82-83; Haiman, Kosciuszko, p. 113; Lee, Memoirs, p. 252. This gun battery was commanded by Lieutenant John Finn of South Carolina who was to die in action at Eutaw Springs in September, 1781. Ibid.; Heitman, Historical Register, p. 227.

84. Waring, Fighting Elder, p. 81; Thayer, Nathanael Greene, p. 357. "We are in immediate want of a few barrels of powder to compleat the reduction of this place. . . . The powder is wanting to blow up the works." Greene to Pickens, June 1, 1781. Greene Papers, Clements Library.

Cruger's soldiers, alerted to renewed American industry in the parallel, mounted another sortie. Two parties of the British advanced. One rushed into the trench and discovered the opening of the mine. They also found another battery, this one reportedly containing four cannon, perhaps for use as a breach battery.⁸⁵ The other group engaged an American covering party and allegedly bayoneted several of Greene's soldiers while capturing their officer before withdrawing. During the affray in the trench, Kosciuszko himself was wounded in the buttocks with a bayonet while endeavoring to flee.⁸⁶ Wrote a British observer satirically of the event: "Never did luckless wight receive a more inglorious wound, upon any occasion, than Count Kozinsco [sic] did on this--it was in that part which Hudibras has constituted the seat of honour, and was given just as this engineer was examining the mine which he had projected."⁸⁷

The mine contemplated by Kosciuszko was to have two galleries, or branches, diverging from the mine shaft once a suitable depth had been reached. The underground galleries proceeded towards the star redoubt in a gentle curving fashion. After they had reached a place beneath the enemy parapet a chamber would be excavated in the floor of each gallery to receive a charge of gunpowder proportionate in weight to its depth below ground surface. Then a cloth tube filled with powder--the fuse--was attached to the charge and run back to the shaft. Each chamber and gallery was then tightly sealed with beams and wedges. When the charge was detonated the explosion from each chamber would burst upward and outward, destroying all in its path and leaving a depression that approximated the shape of an inverted cone.⁸⁸

85. It seems doubtful that Greene would place all of his artillery in one battery, unless, of course, he had received additional cannon from Lee, who had captured some at Augusta. In any event, the British soldiers, unequipped with hammers and spikes on this sortie, were unable to spike whatever pieces they found. Mackenzie, Strictures, p. 154.

86. Ibid., pp. 154-55; Stedman, The American War, II, 369. A British account of the sortie stated that Cruger's soldiers "discovered a subterraneous passage in which . . . miners were at work, every man of whom was put to death, and their tools brought into the garrison." Letter signed "A FRIEND to MERIT," Royal Gazette, August 25-29, 1781.

87. Mackenzie, Strictures, pp. 154-55. Ironically, a bayonet blade was excavated near the site of the engagement in which Kosciuszko was injured. Holschlag and Rodeffer, Siegeworks, p. 67. Other artifacts recovered during examination of the siegeworks consisted mainly of musket balls and shot. Ibid., p. 65.

88. Sebastien Le Prestre de Vauban, A Manual of Siegecraft and Fortification. Trans. by George A. Rothrock (orig. pub. London, 1740. New edition, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1968), pp. 107, 109, 110, 112.

3. An Early Description of the Mine

But Kosciuszko's mine never saw completion before Greene was forced to lift the siege. It remained unfinished. Early in the nineteenth century a visitor to Ninety Six gave a detailed description of the feature:

The shaft of the American mine . . . was choked up. I had the clay dug away, and went down with lighted torches and my compass to trace its course. First it ran S. 20, E. eight yards, then divided, the right S. 45 W. and S. 30 E.; then S. 50 E.; in all thirty-four yards. This branch I traced above ground, and found that it just reached the ditch of the redoubt. The left hand branch ran S. 34, E. nineteen yards, in all twenty-seven yards. I think it evident that the Americans worked without a compass in their mine. . . .⁸⁹

Archeological examination of the mine galleries in the 1970s revealed that most tunnels were still open and clear, although 35 feet of the right gallery and shaft had collapsed and the area near the entrance had been stabilized with bricks during the 1920s.⁹⁰

4. The Third Parallel

The British sortie after dark June 9 failed to deter Kosciuszko from continuing labor on his mine "to blow the Ennemys [sic] Work up."⁹¹ His superficial wound treated by Dr. William Read, he remained on duty to supervise the mine construction.⁹² So important did the mine figure in the reduction of the British fort that Greene appointed two junior officers to "Superintend the Fatigue Parties in the Mines till further orders."⁹³ Throughout June 10 the soldiers worked to complete their final parallel some 40 yards from the star.⁹⁴ In the night four or five

89. Robert Mills, Statistics of South Carolina (Charleston: Hurlbut and Lloyd, 1826), p. 350.

90. South, Exploratory Archeology at Ninety Six, pp. 18-19; Holschlag and Rodeffer, Siegeworks, pp. 8, 28, 60.

91. Haiman, Kosciuszko, p. 114.

92. Ibid.

93. Greene Orderly Book.

94. Haiman, Kosciuszko, pp. 113-14.

more of Greene's men died when Cruger's soldiers staged yet another sortie⁹⁵ The parallel, when completed, measured about 280 feet in length, while the ditch ranged between 7 and 12 feet wide and was approximately 3 feet deep. From the perspective of Greene's command, the parallel took the configuration of a large, sprawling "M", the two legs of which comprised flanking trenches.⁹⁶

H. Men and Equipment

1. The Unreliable Militia

While all of this represented progress, Greene was troubled that much more had not been done in the time he had been before Ninety Six. Particularly discouraging was the fact that the Virginia militia reinforcements Greene had asked for in March had so far failed to arrive. Moreover, word from the coast indicated the appearance of a British fleet, and Greene grew apprehensive at the possibility of Rawdon's command being reinforced and marching to Ninety Six before he achieved Cruger's capitulation.⁹⁷ On June 9 he penned an angry letter to Congress in which his frustration was barely concealed:

The Virginia Militia who I have been so long expecting have been countermanded . . . by Governor Jefferson. This is a matter that I could wish Congress would come to an explanation with the States upon. If it is the prerogative of a Governor to order the Militia when engaged upon a continental plan I will never calculate upon them in any future plan of operations.⁹⁸

The effect of the loss of the Virginia troops was the total exhaustion of Greene's Continentals:

We have been prosecuting the Seige [sic] at this place with all possible diligence with our little force, but for want of more assistance the approaches have gone on exceeding[ly] slow, and our poor Fellows are worne out

95. Ibid., p. 114.

96. Holschlag and Rodeffer, Siegeworks, pp. 39, 43.

97. Greene to President of Congress, June 9, 1781. Papers of the Continental Congress, 1774-1789. National Archives Microfilm M247. See also, Johnson, Life and Correspondence of Nathanael Greene, II, 144-45.

98. Ibid.

with fatigue, being constantly on duty every other Day and sometimes every Day. The [British] Works are strong and extensive. The position [is] difficult to approach and the Ground extremely hard.⁹⁹

So great was the need for additional labor that Greene assembled whatever scattered militia he could locate in the vicinity for his work, even countermanding the orders of troops passing through on their way to join other commanders. This action was criticized by Sumter for it likely encouraged those roving Tory marauders under William Cunningham who played continual havoc with the American foraging parties.¹⁰⁰ Definitely, the arrival of Henry Lee and Andrew Pickens and their commands was a happy event and must have buoyed Greene's hopes. Besides men, Greene desperately needed military equipment, for maintaining adequate supply lines to the north became impossible. As an example, the General sent out requests that the artificers of district militia units undertake the rapid production of leather cartouche, or cartridge, boxes. "Our prospects are so bad with respect to this article that it is absolutely necessary [that] every exertion should be made to forward the business."¹⁰¹

2. A Mahan Tower Takes Shape

On June 12 Adjutant Williams wrote his brother optimistically of the war in the South, and of his "great hopes that the reduction of 96 will put an end to it by uniting the people in a confidence in the power of the United States."¹⁰² All this day Kosciuszko's men sweated in the new parallel as they began pushing zigzag approaches forward from near each end, beyond the abatis and ever closer to the glacis and ditch of the British star.¹⁰³ At the same time work started on a Mahan tower of logs for the use of American sharpshooters. Kosciuszko stated that this structure was erected "in side of" the parallel, suggesting its placement somewhere near the mine shafts and thus about 30 yards from the star's ditch.¹⁰⁴ As work progressed nearer to the enemy, British marksmanship began to pose a real threat to the laborers, who found their

99. Ibid.

100. McCrady, South Carolina in the Revolution, 1780-1783, pp. 285-86; Waring, Fighting Elder, p. 82.

101. Greene to Mr. Gamble, June 12, 1781, in untitled catalog of autographed letters. Greene folder, New York Public Library.

102. Williams to "My D^r Brother," June 12, 1781. Williams Papers.

103. Haiman, Kosciuszko, p. 114.

104. Ibid.

project repeatedly interrupted by musketry. As Kosciuszko put it, "no finger would be held up half second without been Cut of."¹⁰⁵ This was why the Maham tower, successful at Fort Watson and Augusta, was again to be employed.

I. Action to the West--Lee's Attempt on the Stockade Fort

Meantime, while work before the star took a precautionary turn, that under Colonel Lee's direction west of the British stockade fort had quickened since June 8. By the 12th Lee's soldiers had brought their approaches forward sufficiently to severely threaten the British troops posted in the stockade structure. Preliminary archeological examination of the area west of the redoubt disclosed the location of one of Lee's closest trenches. The feature began at a point about 37 yards west of the structure and continue at a slight northerly inclination for some 53 yards until it intercepted the bed of the road to Hard Labor Creek. Excavated portions of the trench measured 2.3 feet wide and 3 feet deep.¹⁰⁶ Whether Lee had advanced so close after less than four days' work is unknown, but if so his soldiers would have effectively commanded from the roadbed the route by which the British in the stockade fort obtained water from Spring Branch.¹⁰⁷

At all events, Lee was close enough by June 12 to take direct, offensive action against his immediate objective. Presumably his artillery battery had contributed to the weakening of the British redoubt, and, at 11 a.m. under cover of a violent though rainless storm, Lee sent a party consisting of several men and a sergeant forward with torches to ignite the abatis ringing the fort. Simultaneously, a diversionary fire was opened against the star fort by Greene's batteries. A witness described the futile attempt:

Sergeant Whaling . . . with twelve privates, were sent forward in open day, and over level ground that afforded no cover to facilitate their approaches, to accomplish this hazardous enterprise. . . . With his musket swung over his shoulder, and a bundle of blazing pine torches in his hand, Whaling sprung forward for the object of his attack. His alacrity inspired the little band with courage. They followed him closely up to the building

105. Ibid. Greene wrote to Congress that "not a Man could shew [sic] his head but he was immediately shot down. . . ." June 20, 1781. Washington Papers, National Archiyes.

106. South, Williamson's Fort, p. 42.

107. Ibid.

around which the Stockade was erected, before the troops within fired a shot. Their aim was deliberate and deadly. But one individual escaped with life. Whaling fell deeply lamented by every Officer and Soldier of the Legion.¹⁰⁸

Somewhat less romantic was Lee's own accounting of the episode:

The sergeant conducted his gallant band in the best manner; concealing it whenever the ground permitted, and when exposed to view crawling along upon the belly. At length he reached the ditch with three others; the whole close behind. Here unluckily he was discovered, while in the act of applying his fire. Himself and five were killed; the remaining four escaped unhurt. . . .¹⁰⁹

Following this fiasco Lee sought and received a truce from the British in order to retrieve his casualties.¹¹⁰ The dead were evidently buried somewhere in the vicinity, most likely back of Lee's camp. Over the next few days Lee worked to raise at least two additional batteries in which he mounted other cannon taken at Augusta and only lately arrived. Then he opened a terrific discharge upon the stockade redoubt, pounding the structure incessantly with a triangular fire that had telling effect and placed the British occupants in jeopardy.¹¹¹

J. The Final Approaches

1. The Maham Tower Succeeds

On Thursday, June 14, the Maham tower in front of the star fort was completed and the zigzag approaches from the parallel were advancing rapidly. According to Kosciuszko, the tower stood 30 feet tall, so as

108. Garden, Anecdotes, pp. 149-50. The number of soldiers with Whaling differs with accounts. While Garden, quoted here, stated twelve as the number, Lee, who should have known, said that there were ten. Memoirs, p. 253. Lieutenant Hatton of the British said there were six. Mackenzie, Strictures, p. 155. Furthermore, the number of casualties likewise differs. While Garden stated that all but one died, Lee said that "four escaped unhurt, although many muskets were discharged at them running through the field. . . ." Memoirs, p. 253. Hatton said that all were killed in the forlorn attempt. Mackenzie, Strictures, p. 155.

109. Memoirs, p. 253.

110. Mackenzie, Strictures, p. 155; Stedman, The American War, II, 369.

111. Mackenzie, Strictures, pp. 155-56; Stedman, The American War, II, 369.

to overlook the interior of the star.¹¹² Made of interlocking logs arranged horizontally with the ground, the tower was quadrangular in shape and had a log parapet at the top, behind which expert riflemen were posted to level fusillades at the besieged. The structure was apparently prefabricated and most of the work of erecting it was done after dark, so as not to give the British artillerists the chance to demolish it.¹¹³ To counter the effect of the riflemen atop the tower, Major Green, commanding in the star, ordered the parapet fronting the earthwork raised three feet higher with sandbags, leaving apertures for his own marksmen to shoot through.¹¹⁴ By this time, too, the British soldiers and Negro workmen had completed the thick traverse over 30 yards long inside the star to further protect the occupants against American artillery. But General Greene's soldiers stationed on the tower nonetheless succeeded in driving the British artillerymen away from their guns at least during the day. At night the ordnance was shifted around to confuse the Americans and it fired with some effect through embrasures made by interally removing sandbags on the epaulement.¹¹⁵ One attempt was made to destroy the Maham tower with hot shot, but the effort failed; the cannon balls could not be sufficiently heated without special furnaces, and the timbers of the tower were made from wood too green to readily ignite.¹¹⁶ With little British success in retarding Greene's progress, the Americans by June 16 found their preparations nearly at the optimum. The mine gallery was reckoned by Kosciuszko to be almost four feet from the ditch, while the approach trenches emanating from the parallel were but six feet away.¹¹⁷ If all went well, the mine soon would be ready to blow up the parapet of the star, following which Greene's Continentals would rush through the approaches and into the breach.

112. Haiman, Kosciuszko, p. 114.

113. See Lossing, Pictorial Field-Book, p. 501. A British officer stated that the tower was built of fascines and gabions, which seems doubtful. Mackenzie, Strictures, p. 151.

114. Lee, Memoirs, p. 254; Mackenzie, Strictures, p. 151; Stedman, The American War, II, 368.

115. Mackenzie, Strictures, p. 152; Johnson, Life and Correspondence of Nathanael Greene, II, 148; Greene, General Greene, p. 257; Stedman, The American War, II, 368.

116. Stedman, The American War, II, 368; Johnson, Life and Correspondence of Nathanael Greene, II, 147; Ward, War of the Revolution, II, 818.

117. Haiman, Kosciuszko, p. 114.

2. Cruger Digs for Water

West of Ninety Six the stockade fort continued to draw barrage after barrage from Lee's artillery, until finally the garrison could stand no more. In the night of June 17 the British evacuated the redoubt and withdrew across Spring Branch to the town stockade, thereby denying themselves unobstructed access to that prime water source.¹¹⁸ Determined to keep Cruger's garrison from obtaining any water whatever from the rivulet, parties of marksmen were positioned to fire on all those of the enemy who tried to reach it. Cruger was forced to pull his guard units away from the stream and, in the intense humid summer heat, workmen at the star began digging a well inside the easternmost salient. They found no water.¹¹⁹ Finally the British resorted to their Negro workmen; after dark the black men, stripped of their clothing, filed silently down to Spring Branch with buckets and managed to obtain some water for the garrison.¹²⁰

But that was all. British apprehensions must have increased as each day passed without relief. Now, with their water source blocked, the American siege appeared on the verge of success. Yet despite Greene's progressive achievements against Ninety Six, an air of uneasiness pervaded the American camp by late afternoon, June 17. Adding to the expectant atmosphere was Greene's abrupt order for all the North Carolina troops serving with Lee's infantry to join the soldiers in front of the star redoubt.¹²¹ Something important seemed about to happen.

118. Mackenzie, Strictures, p. 156; Stedman, The American War, II, 369.

119. Lee, Memoirs, p. 254; Mackenzie, Strictures, p. 156; Stedman, The American War, II, 370.

120. Weigley, The Partisan War, p. 60. Lieutenant Hatton said that the blacks' naked bodies were indistinguishable "in the night from the fallen trees, with which the place abounded." Mackenzie, Strictures, p. 156. One account stated that the Americans permitted women in the enemy garrison to retrieve water until it was discovered that many of them were, in fact, disguised British soldiers. Waring, The Fighting Elder, p. 85.

121. Greene Orderly Book.

CHAPTER X: THE SIEGE OF NINETY SIX, FINIS

A. The British Reinforcements

1. Arrival at Charleston

With June came the hot days and wet nights that characterized the season in South Carolina. At Ninety Six the air was heavily charged with humidity and both besieged and besiegers suffered from the discomfort it brought. But June would offer more for Colonel Cruger than it would for General Greene, for on the 2nd of the month a fleet of seventeen British transports bearing soldiers appeared off Charleston. Cornwallis had sent dispatches directing these troops north to assist him in Virginia, but the orders had been intercepted by an American privateer.¹

2. Rawdon's Relief Force

The transports contained over 3,000 British soldiers under Colonel Paston Gould enroute from Cork, Ireland, and consisting of the Third, Nineteenth, the Thirtieth Regiments of Foot, besides a detachment of guards and more than 700 recruits.² Immediately on their arrival Lord Rawdon and Colonel Balfour prevailed upon Gould for use of part of the command for the relief of Cruger at Ninety Six.³ Realizing that Cornwallis's authority had devolved upon Rawdon in the South, Gould assented, and Rawdon took with him the flank companies of the three regiments.⁴ In addition, Rawdon converted a unit of South Carolina

1. Johnson, Life and Correspondence of Nathanael Greene, II, 146; Greene, General Greene, p. 254; McCrady, South Carolina in the Revolution, 1780-1783, p. 284.

2. "State of the Troops Embarked under the Command of Colo. Gould. Cove of Cork, 18th March 1781." Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/64; "State of the British Regts arrived from Corke under the Command of Col. Paston Gould. Charles Town, June 6th 1781." Clinton Papers.

3. Rawdon to Cornwallis, June 5, 1781, in Gibbes, Documentary History, III, 90.

4. Ibid.; Gould to Cornwallis, June 7, 1781. Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/63. "Flank companies" were composed of light infantry and grenadiers that were usually drawn up on the right and left of their battalions. Wilhelm, Military Dictionary and Gazetteer, p. 164.

loyalists into a cavalry corps of 150 men.⁵ In all, his assembled force in Charleston numbered over 1,800. Furthermore, his own force, withdrawn from Camden, awaited him outside Charleston, and with that body his relief command would number around 2,000 men, nearly twice that of Greene's army then before Ninety Six.⁶

On Tuesday, June 5, Rawdon informed Cornwallis of his intentions: "I shall march on the 7th towards Ninety-Six, having been reinforced by the Flank Companies of the three new Regiments. If I am in time to save that Post, it will be a very fortunate circumstance."⁷ Later he told Cornwallis that "if Greene retires, I shall instantly send back the Flank Companies."⁸ By Thursday evening he was off, bound for Ninety Six with "great hopes of saving Cruger."⁹ Three days later, the 10th, Rawdon was joined by Colonel Doyle and the rest of his army from Monk's Corner, and the enlarged command proceeded northwest via the road along Little Saluda River, a somewhat indirect route, but one that Rawdon supposed would "prevent the enemy's detachments on Great Saluda and Congaree from joining Greene before I should arrive at Ninety-Six."¹⁰ (See Map 3.) The heat of the march was devastating,¹¹ especially for the troops newly arrived and without the experience of campaigning in the southern climate. "It is not to be doubted," wrote a contemporary, "that numbers of them must have been left behind at the end of every day's march."¹²

5. Snowden, History of South Carolina, I, 416. The disposition of the regiments was as follows: the Third was posted at Monk's Corner, the Nineteenth at Dorchester, and the Thirtieth at Charleston, all awaiting Cornwallis's instructions. The guards were sent to join Cornwallis at Portsmouth while the recruits were sent to New York. Gould to Cornwallis, June 7, 1781. Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/63.

6. Rawdon to Cornwallis, August 2, 1781. Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/6; Snowden, History of South Carolina, I, 416-17.

7. Rawdon to Cornwallis, June 5, 1781. Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/6. Also in Clinton Papers.

8. Rawdon to Cornwallis, June 7, 1781. Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/6.

9. Ibid.

10. Rawdon to Cornwallis, August 2, 1781, in The Remembrancer; or, Impartial Repository of Public Events. For the Year 1783. XV (London: J. Debrett, 1783), p. 9.

11. Ibid.

12. Moultrie, Memoirs, II, 286.

But the command pressed onward. Meantime, in Charleston Balfour sent forth a spate of messages to Cruger. "I have sent every person I could procure, he wrote Cornwallis, "and offerd [sic] large sums to get intelligence to 96 of the relief coming, and I have the greatest hopes, that some of them will get in--God grant they may and all will still be well."¹³

3. Greene Receives the News

Greene had long been wary about reinforcements for Rawdon's army. On May 26, only four days after he arrived at Ninety Six, he reacted to a rumor by writing General Sumter: "A fleet is said to have arrived off Charles Town bar. Make the strictest enquiry who, or what they are."¹⁴ Perhaps Greene thought these ships were French, for he understood that the second division of the French fleet would be operating in the Atlantic off Charleston at about this time.¹⁵ But the news of the arrival June 2 of the British transport ships reached him on June 6 and the next day he wrote Lafayette of the details he had received:

The . . . fleet with . . . reinforcements arrived on the 2d of this Instant at Charles Town. It is said they amount to upwards of 2000 men. It is reported also that they are advancing this way. If so I expect they will raise the siege. This will be mortifying after the incredible fatigue we have gone through in carrying on our approaches, and the losses we have sustained in the Siege. . . .¹⁶

13. Balfour to Cornwallis, June 10, 1781. Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/6.

14. Greene to Sumter, May 26, 1781, in "Letters," p. 103.

15. Greene to Sumter, June 12, 1781, in "Letters," p. 109.

16. Greene to Lafayette, June 7, 1781. Greene Papers, Library of Congress, VI. It seems that Greene learned of the development through the June 2 edition of a Charleston paper, The Royal Gazette, which carried an account of the fleet's arrival that day. In any event, he did not learn of it from his most likely source, Francis Marion, for Marion did not find out himself until the 6th, when he forwarded the data on to Greene, Johnson, Life and Correspondence of Nathanael Greene, II, 146; McCrady, South Carolina in the Revolution, 1780-1783, pp. 287, 89; Marion to Greene, June 6, 1781. Greene Papers, Clements Library. See also, George W. Kyte, "Francis Marion as an Intelligence Officer," South Carolina Historical Magazine, LXXVII (October, 1976), p. 220. Somehow, word of the reinforcements bypassed Sumter, and he seems to have been informed of the facts by Greene's note of June 10: "By a Charles Town paper of the 2d, I find a Fleet has lately arrived at that place; and it is said with a (continued)

Two days later Greene forwarded the news to Congress:

After the reduction of Augusta I collected all the force at this place having got intelligence that the Enemy had got a large reinforcement on the 2d of this month by the arrival of the Cork Fleet. Doubtless the Enemy will attempt to raise the Siege of this place, and we are altogether unsupported. If they attempt it they must succeed.¹⁷

4. Orders to Stall Rawdon

The week that followed saw a flurry of correspondence among Greene and his subordinates, for the American commander now found himself in a predicament of dangerous proportions. On the 10th Marion's message of the 6th arrived. Greene responded, "I had information of the arrival of a reinforcement . . . before your letter came to hand. . . ." He ordered Marion to immediately join forces with Sumter if and when the British left Charleston. "Give the enemy all the opposition you can, until we form a junction with our collective force, it being my intention to fight them, and I wish them to be crippled as much as possible before we have a general action."¹⁸ He penned a like message to Sumter, telling him to "inform me constantly of their motions and be always in a situation to form a junction with us. . . ."¹⁹ Next day Greene got confirmation of Rawdon's advance. He detached his cavalry and sent Pickens to join Sumter, who was now physically ailing, instructing the latter to collect whatever force he could muster "and keep in their front, and by every means in his power to retard their march."²⁰ Despite the reality of

16. (continued) large reinforcement. As you do not mention anything of it in your last Letter, I imagine you had not received an account of it. Please to make particular inquiry into the matter." Greene to Sumter, June 10, 1781, in "Letters," p. 108.

17. Greene to President of Congress, June 9, 1781. Greene Letters, Papers of the Continental Congress. National Archives.

18. Greene to Marion, June 10, 1781, in Gibbes, Documentary History, III, 94. See also Sumter to Marion, June 13, 1781, in ibid., p. 95.

19. Greene to Sumter, June 10, 1781, in "Letters," p. 106. See also Greene to Sumter, June 10, 1781, in ibid., p. 108.

20. Greene to President of Congress, June 20, 1781. Washington Papers, Library of Congress; Greene, General Greene, p. 255. Sumter wrote Greene: "My Indisposition in Creases so fast as Not to have any hopes . . . to be able to Remain with the Troops Many days longer--I shall endeavor to hold out until you are so Disengaged as to take Measures in consequence (continued)

Rawdon's movement, Greene still harbored hopes that it was only a feint, a ruse to force him to raise the siege. "I can hardly persuade myself yet," he penned Sumter, "that they will venture out thus far into the Country, at a time when the second Division of the French Fleet is certainly on the coast, and probably near Charles Town."²¹

5. Word Reaches Cruger

But the truth of the situation was becoming more and more apparent. On either the 12th, 13th, or 14th of June, depending on the source, Cruger's garrison got word of Rawdon's advance.²² The delivery of the information was accomplished by an American loyalist who late in the afternoon came riding casually along Greene's lines south of Ninety Six. Reaching the Charleston Road which led directly into town, the man spurred his horse and raced towards the stockade with a letter in hand, avoiding the scattered shots of American sentinels posted nearby. The British soldiers quickly opened the gate and cheered his arrival. His message announced that Rawdon had departed Orangeburg and was "in full march" to relieve Cruger's command.²³

20. (continued) of my withdrawing." Sumter to Greene, June 11, 1781, in "Letters," p. 27. Sumter was recovering from wounds received the previous November at Fishdam Ford and Blackstock.

21. Greene to Sumter, June 12, 1781, in "Letters," p. 109.

22. Johnson stated that "this important communication is said to have been made to them on the 12th--it was probably two days later." Life and Correspondence of Nathanael Greene, II, 148. Francis Vinton Greene accepted June 12 as the date. General Greene, p. 256. Alice Noble Waring, in her biography of Andrew Pickens, stated that Cruger got the news on June 13. The Fighting Elder, p. 84.

23. This account is taken largely from Lee, Memoirs, p. 254, which is more specific in its details than others. British accounts said that the message from Rawdon to Cruger was delivered verbally. See Mackenzie, Strictures, p. 157, and Stedman, The American War, II, 371. There are other events, perhaps apocryphal, associated with this incident that has given it the stature of local legend. A neighborhood girl, Kate Fowler, of Whig background, was said to have loved, even married, one of Cruger's officers named Reagan. Kate supposedly conspired with the Tory who took the message into Ninety Six and later, when the British evacuated the town, accompanied her officer to Charleston. He sailed away to New York, leaving Kate and her baby to return to Ninety Six where after a few years she died. See Watson, Old Ninety Six, p. 30; Johnson, Life and Correspondence of Nathanael Greene, II, 148. Ramsey, in History of the Revolution in South-Carolina, II, 244, stated that "An American lady, who had married an officer then in the British garrison of Ninety-Six, (continued)

B. The Plan to Meet Rawdon

1. Greene Calms His Men

Encouraged by the news, Colonel Cruger urged his troops not to give up, but to continue their resistance to the utmost for the duration. The Americans, he maintained, though close to the ditch of the star, would never attain it before Rawdon arrived.²⁴ Exhibiting similar confidence, Greene urged his tired workers ahead, hoping to capture Ninety Six before Rawdon could prevent it. To console his men before wild rumor could affect them and possibly disrupt their labor, he issued on June 13 the following statement:

The General takes occasion to inform the Army that the Enemy are encouraged by a small reinforcement to take the Field again. Should their Temerity lead them this way, he hopes by the firmness of his Troops, and by the Gallant Militia and State troops under Genls Sumpter [sic], Marion and Pickens, not only to complete the Reduction of this place, but to drive them into Town again.²⁵

On Thursday, June 14, Greene learned that Rawdon had passed through Orangeburg. He sent an urgent message to Lieutenant Colonel William Washington, urging him to assemble his cavalry with that of Lee's Legion

23. (continued) had been bribed by a large sum of money to convey a letter to lieutenant-colonel Cruger with the welcome news. . . ." One of the more ridiculous versions involving this woman was given by Moultrie, Memoirs, II, 287: "As she was well known to all the American officers, she rode about their camp, unsuspected of any ill design, and her servant with her, conversing with one and then with another, until she found an opportunity; gave a signal to the fort, it is said, by holding up a letter, upon which a man was sent out from the fort upon horseback, who got the letter, and galloped back into the fort with it: he had several shot fired at him, but without effect." A stream designated Kate Fowler Branch passes near the site of old Ninety Six today, perpetuating the legend surrounding this aspect of the siege of 1781. Watson, Old Ninety Six, p. 30.

24. Mackenzie, Strictures, p. 156.

25. Greene's Orders, June 13, 1781. Greene Papers. Western Reserve Historical Society. The entry appears under date of June 14 in the Greene Orderly Book.

on the road leading from Orangeburg and, in concert with Sumter's command, to harass the British "and impede their march as much as possible." "The importance of your being between this post and the enemy I am persuaded will induce you to make every exertion."²⁶

2. Faulty Intelligence

In fact, Rawdon's progress since leaving Charleston had gone largely unmolested by the Americans. A party of Whig cavalry and mounted militia had briefly pestered the British rearguard, but the slight attacks had by no means stopped Rawdon.²⁷ At Orangeburg, guarding against "any sinister event," he dispatched an order to Balfour for a "strong Corps" of Colonel Gould's command to take post there.²⁸ Meantime, Sumter experienced difficulty getting his own disparate command in motion. And there was momentary confusion in Sumter's intelligence reports, too, for as late as June 14 he advised Francis Marion to halt his march towards Ninety Six, because "I have this morning received accounts that the enemy are not moving upwards." Another day passed before Sumter realized the error of this report and directed Marion to proceed.²⁹ On the 16th he wrote Greene that Rawdon had with him about 1,500 troops. "They have a Considerable number of Cavalry--said four hundred, & eight field pieces--there is scarce a doubt but 96 is the place of their destination." "I have Great hope your business will be completed before they arive [sic]."³⁰

3. A Call for Militia

Now anticipating a fight with Rawdon before the siege of Ninety Six should succeed, Greene bent every effort to draw the diverse militia organization to his side. "It is my wish to meet him," he addressed Lieutenant Colonel Clarke of the Georgia troops,

and I doubt not of victory if the victorious Militia collect
and fight with their usual gallantry. Come on then my good

26. Greene to Washington, June 14, 1781. Greene Papers, Clements Library. See also Greene to Captain Michael Rudolph, June 14, 1781, in ibid.

27. Rawdon to Cornwallis, August 2, 1781, in The Remembrancer, p. 9.

28. Ibid.

29. Sumter to Marion, June 14, 1781, in Gibbes, Documentary History, III, 95; Sumter to Marion, June 15, 1781, in ibid., p. 96.

30. Sumter to Greene, June 16, 1781, in "Letters," p. 30.

friend and bring Lt. Col. [James] Jackson with you, with all the good troops you have collected. Let us have a field day; and I doubt not it will be glorious.³¹

But the militia did not come through. Instead, those with Sumter began to desert in droves, while those of Andrew Pickens never arrived. William Washington arrived too late to impede the British, and Sumter's own cavalry endured a costly exchange on the 18th with Rawdon's dragoons that forced the American leader to withdraw to Fort Granby, near Congarees, and await Rawdon's approach. But by taking an alternate route, Rawdon avoided Granby altogether and left Sumter embarrassed and now helpless to prevent his marching for Ninety Six.³²

4. Greene's Predicament

Greene now faced a dilemma, for the siege had not progressed as quickly as he had hoped. "It will be impossible to reduce this place for several days to come," he complained to Sumter on the 17th. "There appears therefore no chance of effecting it's [sic] reduction unless we can first beat the enemy [Rawdon's force]."³³ But Greene had no command sufficient in number with which to engage the approaching British and if he did not get vital support to occupy the siegeworks while he should go to meet Rawdon, he would have to abandon almost four weeks' work before Ninety Six. His only recourse appeared to be in a premature assault against Cruger's position. Only by this means could he hope to salvage a victory before Rawdon closed and forced him to lift the siege. Worst of all possibilities was that Rawdon might arrive before Greene had taken any action whatever and he would be trapped between Rawdon's army and the besieged force of Colonel Cruger.³⁴ For Greene, the hour of decision had come.

31. Greene to Clarke, June 17, 1781. Greene Papers, Clements Library.

32. Sumter to Greene, near Congarees, date missing, in "Letters," p. 25; Sumter to Greene, June 13, 1781, in *ibid.*; Greene, General Greene, p. 255; Thayer, Nathanael Greene, p. 359; Weigley, The Partisan War, p. 60. The American cavalrymen in the encounter of the 18th were South Carolina militia headed by Lieutenant Colonel Hugh Middleton. Casualties are unknown. Peckham, Toll of Independence, p. 87.

33. Greene to Sumter, June 17, 1781, in "Letters," p. 113.

34. Lee, Memoirs, pp. 254-55; Johnson, Life and Correspondence of Nathanael Greene, II, 147; Ward, War of the Revolution, II, 821; Weigley, Partisan War, p. 61.

C. The Assault of June 18

1. The Decision

Probably the easiest and most practicable alternative would have been for Greene to give up the siege and retire, for, as subsequent events showed, the British would have evacuated their troops from Ninety Six--Rawdon's very plan from the beginning. Contemporary accounts of the siege suggest that instead Greene did a questionable thing--he allowed his soldiers to make his decision. According to Lee,

Greene . . . would probably have decided on the safe course [of retiring], had not his soldiers, with one voice, intreated to be led against the [star] fort. The American army . . . could not brook the idea of abandoning the siege without one bold attempt to force a surrender. They recollected, with pain and remorse, that . . . at the battle of Guilford, and . . . at Hobkirk's hill, their beloved general had been deprived of his merited laurels; and they supplicated their officers to intreat their commander to give them now an opportunity of obliterating their former disgrace. This generous ardour could not be resisted by Greene.³⁵

In his report to Congress dated June 20, Greene neither rationalized nor attempted in any way to explain his decision to storm the enemy works. Rather, he seems to have based his judgement on a desire to win at least something before he was compelled to pull away. He was so close. "We had pushed our approaches very near to the Enemy's works. Our third parallel was formed round their Abattis, a mine and two approaches [saps] were within a few feet of their Ditch." He theorized that, because of the strength and extent of the British defenses, a successful assault en masse would have to depend upon "the success of a partial attempt to make a lodgment on one of the curtains of the Star Redoubt, and a vigorous push to carry the right hand Work."³⁶ Therefore,

35. Memoirs, p. 255; Greene, Life of Nathanael Greene, p. 269.

36. Greene to President of Congress, June 20, 1781. Washington Papers, Library of Congress. Johnson called the plan "an experiment on the practicability of seizing and holding the curtains of one or two of the enemy's angles, as indispensable to a general assault." Life and Correspondence of Nathanael Greene, II, 151. A curtain, in fortification, is defined as "that part of the rampart or wall between two bastions or two gates." Wilhelm, Military Dictionary and Gazetteer, p. 124. Here the term is applied to that part of the parapet lying between two of the star's salients.

the preliminary assault was to be accomplished by a select number of men whose task must be completed before a general storming could occur.³⁷

2. Preparations

On Monday, June 18, General Greene readied his command. The attack on the left, before the star redoubt, would be commanded by Lieutenant Colonel William Campbell of the First Virginia Militia with a detachment of Virginia and Maryland troops. That on the right, against the stockade fort west of Ninety Six, was to be commanded by Colonel Lee and would involve Lee's infantrymen and a detachment of Delaware Continentals under Captain Robert Kirkwood. Against the star fort Campbell would send a forlorn hope to try and gain a foothold on the British parapet before the general strike would ensue. This party was assigned to Lieutenants Isaac Duval of Maryland and Samuel Selden of Virginia. Specifically, these men, armed with axes, were to remove the fraises along the side of one of the salients in order to allow soldiers following with long hooks to pull down the sandbags lining the top of the parapet. These would then be piled up along with fascines so that Campbell's force could then move in, mount the stacked sandbags, and gain the epaulement. At 11 a.m. Greene's troops filed into the parallel before the star. For almost an hour the command waited while final preparations were made. Kosciuszko's mine, yet unfinished, was forgotten and would play no part in the action. Near twelve o'clock a cannon boomed forth a signal and Campbell's soldiers poised themselves. The atmosphere within the star tensed as the minutes passed, for Cruger's troops realized that today was do or die. Inside the parallel the soldiers of Duvall and Selden waited for the signal to begin.

3. The Attack on the Star

At twelve noon a single artillery piece fired and the assault was on. Instantly, the forlorn hope surged ahead, their movement briefly covered by the smoke of a tremendous discharge of American ordnance. The men tore quickly through the two zigzag approaches, turned the abatis, and leaped into the ditch of the star. The bottom of the ditch tapered so drastically that it was impossible to stand, but this problem was somewhat remedied by troops following with fascines to throw in the ditch. Simultaneous with the assault, the American artillery and sharpshooters posted on the Maham tower unleashed a heavy barrage of shot and musketry that forced Major Green's British soldiers to keep low. But they shortly recovered, and as the American hookmen tried fruitlessly to pull down the heavy sandbags poised atop the parapet, the British marksmen poured into them a furious fire through the loopholes. Soldiers stationed in the salient angles of the star opened a dreadful

37. Greene, Life of Nathanael Greene, pp. 269-70.

crossfire into the Americans now trapped in the ditch and unable, even, to get past the fraizing of the British earthwork. Besides their muskets, Major Green's men used bayonets and crudely fashioned spears to repel the assault, while Cruger's cannon kept up a steady bombardment in front, possibly preventing Campbell's other soldiers from advancing.³⁸ These troops were resigned to deliver rifle fire support from their positions in the parallel.

In the end, the American attack on the star failed. Unable to gain the enemy parapet, the soldiers of Duval and Selden became easy targets for the British marksmen and there was undoubtedly much scrambling for safety beneath the fraizing. Casualties were high. Both officers received wounds and Captain George Armstrong, of Maryland, was among the killed.³⁹ Finally, Major Green ordered out two units of thirty men each, well armed with bayonets, to meet the Americans in the ditch. One was under Captain Campbell of the New Jersey loyalists, the other under Captain French of DeLancey's Brigade. Exiting from the rear of the star, the soldiers went right and left through the ditch around the structure to surprise the desperate Americans by the flanks. "It was an exertion of officers leading troops," recalled the British Lieutenant Hatton, "ardent in the cause of their sovereign, and steeled with the remembrance of injuries which they and their connections had so often received from the subverters of law and good government."⁴⁰ A hand to hand clash followed in which many of the Americans not already

38. Lieutenant Hatton said that "the right flank of the enemy [Campbell's men in the American parallel] was exposed to the fire of a three-pounder, as well as to that of the [British] block houses in the village. . . ." Mackenzie, Strictures, p. 158. Lee wrote: "Cruger had prepared an intermediate battery with his three pieces, which he occasionally applied to right and left. At first it was directed against Lee's left, but very soon every piece was applied upon Campbell's right which was very injurious to his column." Memoirs, p. 256.

39. Selden lost his right arm by amputation because of his wound. See O.H. Williams to "My Dear Brother," June 23, 1781. Williams Papers. Alexander Garden wrote about Selden's injury: "While his right arm was raised with the intention of drawing down a sand-bag . . . , a ball entering his wrist, shattered the bone of the limb nearly to the shoulder. For so severe a wound, the only remedy was amputation. It is well known, that on such occasions, the operating Surgeon requires the assistance of several persons to hold the patient's limb, and to support him. To this regulation Seldon [sic] would not submit. It was his right arm he was about to lose. He sustained it with his left during the operation, his eyes fixed steadily on it; nor uttered a word, till the saw reached the marrow, when in a composed tone and manner, he said, 'I pray you, Doctor, be quick.'" Anecdotes, p. 408.

40. Mackenzie, Strictures, p. 160.

injured were killed or wounded by British bayonets. Those who managed to elude the British struggled for their lives in getting out of the ditch and back to their own lines. Besides Armstrong, thirty Americans soldiers died in the futile enterprise.⁴¹

4. Lee on the Flank

Meanwhile, Lee enjoyed more success in his effort against the stockade fort. At the initial gun his own attack commenced, led by Captain Michael Rudolph and a forlorn hope. These troops quickly reached the ditch of the stockade without opposition and stormed into the fort, only to find it vacated by the British. Although Lee later claimed that "the enemy, giving their last fire, precipitately retreated" on Rudolph's approach, it is more likely that the structure had been abandoned in the night, as acknowledged by Lieutenant Hatton.⁴² In any event, the fort was quickly occupied by Lee's infantry and the Colonel made ready to drive his command across Spring Branch and assault the fortified brick jail, thereby diverting some of Cruger's strength away from the star redoubt. He would thus compel Cruger to fight for the town or withdraw his entire garrison within the star, "a situation not long to be held, crowded as he must have been, and destitute of water."⁴³

41. This description of the assault on the star fort June 18 is drawn from data contained in the following sources: Greene to President of Congress, June 20, 1781. Washington Papers (the draft of this document is in the Greene Papers, Clements Library); New Jersey Journal, August 1, 1781, in Frank Moore (ed.), Diary of the American Revolution (New York: Charles Scribner, 1860), p. 441; O.H. Williams to "My Dear Brother," June 23, 1781. Williams Papers; Mackenzie, Strictures, pp. 158-60; Lee, Memoirs, pp. 255-56; Stedman, The American War, II, 372; Johnson, Life and Correspondence of Nathanael Greene, II, 149-50; Greene, Life of Nathanael Greene, pp. 257-58. American fatalities in the assault are taken from Kosciuszko, in Haiman, Kosciuszko, p. 114. Greene said that "we had upwards of 40 men killed and wounded, . . . principally at the Star Fort." Greene to President of Congress, June 20, 1781. Washington Papers. See also, Greene to Sumter, June 20, 1781, "Letters," p. 114.

42. Lee, Memoirs, p. 256; Mackenzie, Strictures, p. 156.

43. Lee, Memoirs, p. 256. For sources on Lee's attack, see ibid.; Greene to President of Congress, June 20, 1781. Washington Papers; New Jersey Journal, Aug. 1, 1781, in Moore, Diary of the American Revolution, p. 441; Stedman, The American War, II, 372; Haiman, Kosciuszko, p. 114; Anderson, "Journal"; Seymour, Journal of the Southern Expedition, p. 28; Greene, General Greene, p. 258; McCrady, South Carolina in the Revolution, 1780-1783, p. 300; Ward, War of the Revolution, II, 821-22.

5. The Assault Ends

But those plans never materialized, for only an hour or so after the attack began, General Greene, seeing the tragic failure of the attempt to carry the star, called the operation to a halt. Rather than risk a general assault of all his soldiers, the Commander decided--probably wisely--to draw away from Ninety Six with a force sufficient to enable him to stay in the field. Shortly after one o'clock he ordered Campbell to withdraw his troops and Lee to occupy the stockade fort but not to advance.⁴⁴ Already, Greene had taken steps to rapidly pull his command away from Ninety Six should events justify it. Rawdon was coming closer and, whatever the outcome of the day's activity, Greene realized he must not be encumbered in his movements. Earlier he had dispatched his sick and wounded and heavy baggage across the Saluda with the idea of overtaking it later.⁴⁵

D. The Americans Withdraw

1. Communication with Cruger

Greene proposed no truce, for he did not want to convey to Cruger his true condition--that his army was weakened, exhausted, and, because of Rawdon's proximity, forced to move on.⁴⁶ However, Cruger sent forth a flag, offering to negotiate a prisoner exchange. The gesture generated a series of communications over the next day between the British and the Americans. On the afternoon of the 18th Greene sent the following proposal to Colonel Cruger:

The flag officer of yours today represented that our prisoners in your possession are in the greatest distress for want of water. I persuade my self [that] you can not

44. Lee, Memoirs, p. 256; Greene, General Greene, p. 258. Greene wrote Congress: "Finding the Enemy defended their works with great obstinacy, and seeing but little prospect of succeeding without a heavy loss, and the issue doubtful, I ordered the attack to be pushed no further." June 20, 1781. Washington Papers.

45. Greene to President of Congress, June 20, 1781. Washington Papers. Johnson, Life and Correspondence of Nathanael Greene, II, 152; Lee, Memoirs, p. 257.

46. Johnson, Life and Correspondence of Nathanael Greene, II, 152. Lee said that Greene indeed proposed a truce which was refused by Cruger. Memoirs, p. 256.

wish to torture human Nature where it cannot contribute to the safety of your garrison. I have to propose therefore that you permit our prisoners to come out of the garrison, their exchange dependent upon the fate of it. I mean this to include the Militia taken in arms as well as the regular troops. I will account for the prisoners either in the general exchange or send in an equal number as soon as they can be collected. I flatter my self [that] a proposal so reasonable and so consonant to the principles of humanity will meet with a ready compliance. None of the prisoners [transferred] shall appear in arms until legally exchanged.⁴⁷

Next morning Cruger responded:

By Captⁿ Bentley I proposed to send out immediately all the prisoners of yours in our hands, upon having an equal number of British soldiers with you sent to us. Those reasonable terms I am ready at this hour to accede to. Your prisoners upon my honor Sir have met with every mark of attention of humanity: I visited them myself this morning, & order'd them water, which & what else we have for the Comfort of unfortunate Men they shall not want.⁴⁸

2. The General Thanks His Men

While preparations proceeded for an exchange of prisoners, which evidently occurred before Greene left Ninety Six, the General and his command tried to surmount feelings of frustration and futility in the

47. Greene to Cruger, June 18, 1781. Greene Papers, Clements Library.

48. Cruger to Greene, June 19, 1781. Greene Papers, Clements Library. Benson J. Lossing, in Pictorial Field-Book, p. 487n, related the following story, perhaps apocryphal, about Cruger and an American prisoner: "Among the prisoners . . . was one named Benjamin Eddins. Lieutenant-colonel Cruger frequently visited him, and often importuned him to eschew Republicanism and join the British army. Eddins at length became tired of these importunities, and one day said to Cruger, 'Sir, I am a prisoner in your power; you may cut out my heart (baring his bosom), or you may drag my limbs and body asunder with ropes and horses; all this will I endure rather than desert my country's flag.' Charmed by his boldness and patriotism, Colonel Cruger replied, 'Sir, you are too true a rebel to remain here; you are liberated from this moment.'"

wake of their abortive effort to carry the enemy defenses. In the evening of the 18th Greene issued a statement designed to solace his troops:

The General takes great pleasure in acknowledging the high opinion he has of the gallantry of the troops engaged in the attack of the Enemy's Redoubts. The judicious and alert behaviour of the Light Infantry of the Legion, and those commanded by Captain Kirkwood, directed by Lieut. Colonel Lee met with deserved Success,--And there is great reason to believe that this attack on the Star Battery, directed by Lieutenant Colonel Campbell, would have been equally fortunate if the brave Lieutenants Duvall and Selldon [sic], who most valiantly led on the advanced Parties, had not been unluckily wounded. Their conduct merits the highest Encomiums and must insure them perpetual Honor. The loss of the amiable Captⁿ Armstrong and the Dangerous wound received by the intrepid Captain Benson are to be regretted. Their names cannot be forgotten while acts of the Officers and Men who served the Artillery at the Several Batteries merited attention. The consummate bravery of all the Troops engaged, and the animated dispositions of those who were ready to engage[,] gain them the applause of their Friends and the respect of their Enemies.

The General presents his thanks, most cordially, to both Officers and Soldiers: and hopes to give them an early opportunity of reaping the fruits of their superior spirit by an attack, in the open Field, upon the Troops now led on by Lord Rawdon.⁴⁹

Then came the formal admission of Greene's failure: "The Army will be ordered to change Camp tomorrow morning by Sun rise."⁵⁰

3. Preparations to Leave

Through the night the Americans prepared to leave. The detachment of Lee's command silently withdrew from the stockade fort.⁵¹ Many of the

49. Greene Orderly Book.

50. Ibid.

51. Lee, Memoirs, p. 256.

soldiers were despondent,⁵² a persistent feeling that must have been compounded by the knowledge that Greene's killed and wounded still lay in the ditch before the star where they had fallen. A British soldier recalled that "the groans . . . of their wounded assailed their ears, and called aloud for that relief which ought to have been much earlier administered."⁵³ But it was morning before Greene acted and Adjutant Williams sent a note to Cruger:

Major General Greene proposes that parties may be mutually admitted to bury the Dead of both armies that fell Yesterday between the Lines and within the Trenches. The Genl relies upon the promises of Lt. Colo. Cruger for Humanity & attention to such wounded American soldiers as may have fallen into his hands.⁵⁴

Cruger responded:

Major General Greene may wth the fullest Confidence rely on every attention (which humanity can dictate) being paid to those men of the American Army whom the fortune of War has thrown in our hands.

The kill'd of your Army of yesterday within our Abattis shall be immediately sent out to you to be buried.⁵⁵

4. American Casualties

In the afternoon the Americans began tallying their casualties. Greene directed his unit officers to supply lists of the dead and wounded in the siege together with the dates such losses were incurred.⁵⁶ Through

52. "During the . . . night, gloom and silence pervaded the American camp: every one disappointed--everyone mortified." Ibid., p. 257.

53. Mackenzie, Strictures, p. 160.

54. Williams to Cruger, June 19, 1781. Greene Papers, Clements Library.

55. Cruger to Williams, June 19, 1781. Ibid. The exact location where the burial of Greene's soldiers occurred is unknown, although it is likely the dead were interred in the area of the main American camp north of the star redoubt, perhaps some distance beyond the center of the camp, and on private land today.

56. Greene Orderly Book.

the 18th, the siege had lasted twenty-eight days from the time of Greene's initial investment May 22. American losses during that period totaled 58 killed, 76 wounded, and 20 missing. Broken down by unit, the casualties were as follows:

	<u>Killed</u>	<u>Wounded</u>	<u>Missing</u>
Headquarters and staff		1	
Virginia Brigade	41	36	16
Maryland Brigade	13	26	3
Light Infantry	1	9	1
Legion Infantry	2	2	
Virginia Militia	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u> </u>
Total	58	76	20

Officer casualties, included above, were Captain George Armstrong (Maryland) killed, and Captain Perry Benson (Maryland), Lieutenant Isaac Duvall (Maryland), Lieutenant Samuel Selden (Virginia), Lieutenant Peter (?) Evans (Virginia), Lieutenant Thomas (?) Miller, and Colonel Kosciuszko (Headquarters) wounded. Captain William (?) Bentley of Virginia was taken prisoner by the British.⁵⁷ These figures do not, however, include casualties among the various South Carolina and Georgia militia units that came to Ninety Six and participated in the siege operations. Henry Lee stated that the total American losses amounted to 185 killed and wounded, a figure that probably includes casualties of militia troops other than those of Virginia.⁵⁸ Subtracting the 134 formally accounted Americans killed and wounded from Lee's figure leaves 51 as a possible indicator of casualties among the local Whig militia. Nor do any of these figures, so far as is known, consider the number of wounded who subsequently died of their injuries. Doubtless the number of fatalities increased during succeeding days and weeks after the siege.

5. British Casualties

British casualties are easier to determine since Cruger's force was unified and concentrated in one place. The best source is Lieutenant

57. Casualty figures presented here are derived from "Return of the Kill'd, Wounded, & Missing during the Siege of Ninety Six in So. Carolina," prepared by O.H. Williams. Greene Letters. Papers of the Continental Congress. The first names of several of Greene's officers wounded or captured are surmised from information contained in Heitman, Historical Register, passim. Howard Peckham, in The Toll of Independence, p. 87, gives American losses as 59 killed, 72 wounded, 1 captured, and 20 missing.

58. Lee, Memoirs, p. 256. As usual, the opposing force inflated the numbers of American casualties. Rawdon estimated that the Enemy's loss in this Siege cannot have been less than Three Hundred Men." Rawdon to Cornwallis, August 2, 1781, in The Remembrancer, p. 9.

Hatton, who wrote that "Lieutenant Roney, of Delancey's, with three serjeants, and twenty-three rank and file, were killed. Captains French and Smith of Delancey's, Captain Barbarie and Lieut. Hatton, of the New Jersey Volunteers, with five serjeants and forty-nine rank and file, were wounded."⁵⁹ In summation, the British under Cruger lost 27 killed and 58 wounded, a total of 85 casualties compared to the Americans' total losses of approximately 185.

6. Greene Leaves Ninety Six

Still concealing his intentions from Colonel Cruger for as long as he possibly could, Greene remained in position before Ninety Six until darkness fell the 19th. Early in the morning of June 20, long before dawn, the American army began moving down the Island Ford Road to Saluda Crossing. Reportedly, Rawdon was now less than twenty-five miles away, and Greene wanted to use to the limit whatever time and distance advantage he yet held. He had earlier advised Sumter of his circumstances and instructed the militia commander to meet him along the route of his withdrawal from Ninety Six. Greene left behind a small guard unit at the Mayson residence to protect Mrs. Cruger until her husband should learn of the retreat and allow the guards to rejoin Greene. General Pickens received directions to use his influence with the local inhabitants and reassure them that Greene was not abandoning the region to the British. Many of the backcountry families grew concerned at the precipitate American withdrawal and some began following the army. Pickens was to dissuade them from this practice and to try and restore confidence among the people in the ability of the United States forces to retain the upcountry.⁶⁰

59. Mackenzie, Strictures, p. 164. A British account published shortly after the siege reported that Cruger lost 16 killed (1 officer, 2 sergeants, 13 rank and file) and 46 wounded (4 officers, 3 sergeants, and 39 rank and file), for a total of 62 casualties. Letter signed "A FRIEND to MERIT," Royal Gazette, August 25-29, 1781.

60. Anderson, "Journal"; Captain William Pierce (aide-de-camp to Greene) to Sumter, June 19, 1781, in "Letters," p. 114; Lee, Memoirs, p. 257; Johnson, Life and Correspondence of Nathanael Greene, II, 154; Waring, Fighting Elder, pp. 86-87. Lee described an incident that revealed Mrs. Cruger's graciousness in response to her treatment by the Americans: "Some hours after Greene had withdrawn [and the guard unit had departed], one of our light parties, absent some days, returned, and passing by the farm-house, was going directly to our late camp before Ninety-Six, when Mrs. Cruger sending for the officer, communicated what had happened, and instructed him to overtake the retiring general." Memoirs, p. 257n.

The retreating column traveled about fourteen miles after leaving Ninety Six.⁶¹ Late that day, as the command prepared to bivouac along Little River, General Greene issued a statement of gratitude to his men, citing their "patience and fortitude . . . , so uniformly manifested. . . ." He thanked Colonel Kosciuszko "for his assiduity, preseverance [sic] and indefatigable exertions in planing [sic] and prosecuting the approaches which he [Greene] is persuaded were judiciously design'd and would have infallable [sic] gained success if time had admitted of their being completed."⁶² Greene also drafted a formal account of his operations for delivery to Congress. "It is mortifying to be obliged to leave a Garrison so near reduced, and I have nothing to console me but a consciousness that nothing was left unattemped that could facilitate its reduction."⁶³ On the 21st the command traveled only eight miles.⁶⁴ Greene's cavalry maneuvered towards Ninety Six, seeking intelligence of Rawdon's exact whereabouts, while Greene penned earnest requests for additional militia to join him.⁶⁵

E. Aftermath

1. Rawdon Arrives

Lord Rawdon's relief column reached Ninety Six on Thursday morning, the 21st. He had traveled northwest after leaving Orangeburg, skirted Fort Granby by bearing slightly north, and while Sumter patrolled the Congaree and Saluda Rivers, Rawdon crossed the Little Saluda and positioned himself squarely between Sumter and Ninety Six.⁶⁶ Approaching Cruger's beleaguered garrison from the southeast, via the Charleston Road,⁶⁷ Rawdon reached a point approximately four miles from Ninety Six by sundown, June 20. To notify Cruger of his approach, he caused his cannon

61. Seymour, Journal of the Southern Expedition, p. 28.

62. Greene Orderly Book.

63. Greene to President of Congress, June 20, 1781. Washington Papers.

64. Seymour, Journal of the Southern Expedition, p. 28.

65. Greene to Major John Armstrong (North Carolina), June 21, 1781. Greene Papers, Princeton University.

66. Mackenzie, Strictures, p. 160; Stedman, The American War, II, 371; McCrady, South Carolina in the Revolution, 1780-1783, p. 297. Johnson said that Rawdon's army arrived at 2 p.m. Life and Correspondence of Nathanael Greene, II, 155.

67. Watson, Greenwood County Sketches, p. 35.

to fire a volley.⁶⁸ Then in the morning the troops completed their advance. Officers and men of Cruger's command cheered the relief and exchanged congratulations. Their ordeal was over; the Americans' siege had failed.

2. A Short Pursuit

Lord Rawdon believed that Greene was too far away by now to justify pursuit. But on June 22 he learned that the American army had not advanced very far, was in fact reported to be only sixteen miles away and, moreover, was encumbered with wagons and heavy baggage. Quickly Rawdon determined to go after Greene. "I resolved to try once more to bring him to action," he later told Cornwallis.⁶⁹ Leaving knapsacks and extra gear behind, Rawdon's fatigued men, joined by some of Cruger's, again took the field. The chase lasted little more than a day. Greene moved rapidly from his camp near Bush River to avoid an encounter without reinforcements. Rawdon almost caught him, arriving at the ford of the Enoree River only two hours after the rearguard of the American force had crossed. But Rawdon was now moving further away from his supplies; his men were exhausted and the heat was unbearable. Instead of fording Enoree, Rawdon on the 24th turned back towards Ninety Six, the American cavalry of Henry Lee and William Washington tailing close behind his column. Greene kept on to the north, burning some wagons enroute, and finally crossed his troops over the Tyger and Broad Rivers. Then he stopped, rested, and waited.⁷⁰

68. Pension abstract of Giles Kelly, South Carolina Militia, in Annie Walker Burns (comp.), "Abstract of Pensions of South Carolina Soldiers of the Revolutionary War, War of 1812 and Indian Wars." Vol. 4. Mimeographed (Washington, D.C., n.d.), p. 87.

69. Rawdon to Cornwallis, August 2, 1781, in The Remembrancer, p. 10.

70. Ibid.; Lee, Memoirs, pp. 257-58; Greene to President of Congress, July 17, 1781. Greene Letters. Papers of the Continental Congress; Tarleton, Campaigns, p. 498; Stedman, The American War, II, 373; Johnson, Life and Correspondence of Nathanael Greene, II, 155-56; "South-Carolina and Parts Adjacent; Shewing The Movements of the American and British Armies" (undated manuscript map in the Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston). Local legend holds that during his retreat Greene sent a dispatch to Sumter by a young girl, eighteen-year-old Emily Geiger, because his own couriers refused to embark on the perilous trip. The story first appeared in published form in Lambert Lilly, The Story of the American Revolution (Boston, 1833), and later in Mrs. E.F. Ellet, Women of the Revolution (New York, 1848). While it is possible that the tale is somehow based in fact, and that Miss Geiger did indeed, perform some heroic service, it is doubtful that it involved Greene's army in 1781. Wallace, History of South Carolina, II, 278n.

3. Another Call for Help

Through his cavalry, Greene observed Rawdon's every movement. He yet hoped to regroup his own command and engage the British at some propitious opportunity and force them back to the coast. But he still needed additional militia. "I beg you," he implored Colonel Isaac Shelby of Virginia, "to march to our assistance a thousand good riflemen well armed and equiped [sic] fit for action."⁷¹ On the 23d he wrote Pickens, urging him to join him immediately. "I am anxious to collect our force that we may operate more effectually against his Lordship."⁷² Greene's lack of success with the militia at critical junctures left him baffled and disappointed. As he confidentially complained to Colonel Lee,

It is next to imposible [sic] to draw the Militia of this Country from the different parts of this Country to which they belong. Marion is below. Pickens I can get no account of, and Sumter wants to make a tour to Monks corner; and all I can say to either is insufficient to induce them to join us. I have again written to pickens [sic] and Sumter; and hope they may bring forward their force. Every body seems engaged in moving their families, which is attended with great inconvenience at this time.⁷³

Instead of rallying to Greene's aid, many of the backcountry Whigs were deserting to protect their families, and the roads in Ninety Six District became filled with residents trying to flee the country and the British.⁷⁴ With Greene's failure before Ninety Six came a massive loss of confidence among Whig residents of the interior.

4. The Evacuation of Ninety Six

Returning to Ninety Six, Lord Rawdon prepared to implement his original plan--to abandon the post and concentrate Cruger's command with the rest of the army in the lowcountry. "The Post was almost entirely

71. Folder, "Greene, Nathanael, 1742-1786." Greene to Shelby, June 22, 1781. Untitled catalog of autograph letters. Manuscript Collections, New York Public Library.

72. Greene to Pickens, June 23, 1781. Greene Papers, Clements Library.

73. Greene to Lee, June 24, 1781. "Transcripts of Letters of N. Greene to Col. Lee." Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

74. Thayer, Nathanael Greene, p. 362.

destitute of Stores & Provisions," he wrote Cornwallis. "Under the present circumstances of the Country, & at this Season, I conceived it impossible to furnish it with the necessary supplies. I therefore resolved to withdraw the garrison."⁷⁵ Congarees would henceforth become the westernmost British outpost, and backcountry loyalists were urged to voluntarily move their families into designated, constricted zones nearer the coast. Rawdon then planned the evacuation of Ninety Six. Leaving about 1,400 of his own command with Cruger, he marched June 29 for Congaree with over 850 men and four cannons, having sent instructions for a British regiment from Charleston to join him at Fort Granby.⁷⁶ So great was the heat on this march that fifty of Rawdon's soldiers reportedly collapsed and died from sunstroke.⁷⁷

To Cruger's command was left the responsibility of destroying the defensive and offensive siegeworks at Ninety Six before evacuation could occur. The town was a shambles, with houses and buildings knocked down or damaged by either Greene's artillery or Cruger's soldiers. A captured Whig named Benjamin Dominique took part in the demolition of the earthworks, and noted that the British wilfully destroyed their own swivel guns.⁷⁸ Another captive watched as the workmen ruined the star fort and "covered in the trenches iron [swivel guns?] & other articles which could not be transported."⁷⁹ Additionally, Kosciuszko's parallels were probably filled in at this time.⁸⁰ Before he left Ninety Six, Cruger ordered the village burned, perhaps to finalize destruction of his wooden fortifications. For several weeks thereafter the town smoldered; some South Carolina militiamen with Pickens later remembered going to Ninety Six long after Cruger had departed and seeing the blackened ruins still smoking.⁸¹

Early in July Cruger's command, numbering in excess of 1300 men, started for Orangeburg to join Lord Rawdon. Following the soldiers as they moved down the Charleston Road were a large number of loyalists and

75. Rawdon to Cornwallis, August 2, 1781, in The Remembrancer, p. 10.

76. Greene to President of Congress, July 17, 1781. Greene Letters, Papers of the Continental Congress; Lee, Memoirs, p. 258; Rawdon to Cornwallis, June 5, 1781. Cornwallis Papers. BPRO 30/11/65; Rawdon to Cornwallis, August 2, 1781, in The Remembrancer, p. 10; Greene, General Greene, p. 260.

77. Fortescue, History of the British Army, III, 389.

78. Williams to Greene, July 5, 1781. Greene Papers, Clements Library.

79. Williams to Greene, July 8, 1781. Greene Papers, Clements Library.

80. Archeological testing disclosed no signs of erosion in the ditches. Holschlag and Rodeffer, Siegeworks, pp. 77-78.

81. See pension abstract of Andrew Logan, in Burns, "South Carolina (continued)

their families, many of whom undoubtedly had resided at Ninety Six, but who now found themselves refugees of the war. Along the way, South Carolina militia troops annoyed Cruger's rearguard, captured some of his baggage, and took a few prisoners.⁸² For a time Greene did not know whether Cruger was to stay at Ninety Six or abandon the post. As late as July 3 he wrote Sumter that "it appears they intend to hold 96, and re-establish themselves at Augusta and the Congaree."⁸³ By the 7th he believed "that 96 is or will be evacuated."⁸⁴

5. Subsequent Campaigning

Greene realized that he must somehow regain the momentum lost at Ninety Six. During the first of July he finally managed to assemble the diverse elements of Sumter, Marion, Lee, and Washington and, leaving Pickens to watch over the Ninety Six country, tried to head off Rawdon's retiring army. But Rawdon reached Congarees two days before Greene and withdrew to Orangeburg. Greene followed, hoping to confront the British there, but Rawdon refused to engage him. Worried lest more British reinforcements arrive, notably Cruger's large force from Ninety Six, General Greene withdrew on July 13, moving his entire infantry command across Santee River to the bluffs known as the High Hills of Santee. There he remained well into August.⁸⁵ By spurning combat at Orangeburg, Rawdon surrendered his last chance to meet Greene in battle. Seriously ailing from the strenuous pace of the summer, he soon sailed for England. He apologized for his departure, stating that "the total failure of my health obliges me now with great regret to make use of the leave of absence which the Commander in Chief had the goodness to grant me at the beginning of the year."⁸⁶

81. (continued) Pension Abstracts," I, 81; pension abstract of William Buchanan, in *ibid.*, p. 62; and pension abstract of William Beard, in Burns, "Abstract of Pensions of South Carolina," Vol. 4, 22.

82. Rawdon to Cornwallis, August 2, 1781, in *The Remembrancer*, p. 12; Chapman, *History of Edgefield County*, p. 132.

83. Greene to Sumter, July 3, 1781, in "Letters," p. 118. Greene had earlier believed that the Tory militia would be left to garrison Ninety Six. "By this mode, the enemy will oblige the people to hang together and to provide ways and means for the support of the garrison. The regular [British] troops will keep the field in collected force." Greene to Lee, June 24, 1781. "Transcripts of Letters of N. Greene to Col. Lee." Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

84. Greene to Sumter, July 7, 1781, in "Letters," p. 120.

85. Greene to President of Congress, July 17, 1781. Greene Letters, Papers of the Continental Congress; Wallace, *History of South Carolina*, II, 280-81.

86. Rawdon to Cornwallis, August 2, 1781, in *The Remembrancer*, p. 12.

Rawdon's departure in the aftermath of the siege of Ninety Six marked the end of any large scale British strategy for recouping their losses in the South Carolina interior. Late in August Greene, at last reinforced with North Carolina troops, took the field again. He forded the Santee, looking to attack the British at Orangeburg, but Rawdon's replacement, Colonel Alexander Stuart, withdrew his command forty miles east to a place called Eutaw Springs. On the morning of September 8 Greene's combined army attacked the British and drove them from the field. But Stuart's soldiers rallied and struck back in a pitched battle that resulted indecisively. If nothing else, Eutaw Springs forced the British back to the seacoast. They never regained the interior, for soon after, on October 19, 1781, Lord Cornwallis capitulated with his entire army at Yorktown, Virginia, effectively ending, for all practical purposes, British military operations in North America. Charleston, the last British stronghold in South Carolina, was evacuated December 14, 1782, and Greene's army occupied the city.

F. Assessment

1. Cruger's Success

In assessing the siege of Ninety Six it is easier to evaluate the British position than it is the American. Cruger found himself besieged in a stationary position extrication from which depended upon outside help. Obviously, he met the test by holding out and sustaining his command on limited resources for nearly a month. On the other hand, Greene's siege effort was fraught with difficulty from the beginning. Probably his greatest obstacles were his inability to obtain reinforcements of militia and the unresponsiveness at critical moments of the South Carolina troops under Sumter, Pickens, and Marion.

2. Failure of the American Militia

There is little doubt that Greene was frustrated and angry at the delays caused by the nonarrival of anticipated reinforcements. Governor Thomas Jefferson's countermanding of the Virginia units enroute to him was particularly vexing, and almost every communication of Greene's to the outside intimates his fury at Jefferson. To Congress he complained: "Had the Virginia Militia joined us agreeable to order our success would have been compleat."⁸⁷ And privately, to Lafayette, Greene wrote: "Had the Virginia Militia come on . . . we would have compleated the business before the Seige [sic] could have been raised. But our poor fellows were all wore out being on duty almost night and day for upwards of twenty

87. Greene to President of Congress, June 20, 1781. Copy enclosed in Greene to Washington, June 22, 1781. Washington Papers.

days."⁸⁸ So certain was Greene in his conviction that he proclaimed his grievance directly to Jefferson, in fact nearly accusing the Governor outright for the American failure at Ninety Six:

The tardiness and finally the countermanding [of] the militia ordered to join this army has been attended with the most mortifying and disagreeable consequences. Had they taken the field in time and in force we should have compleated the reduction of all the enemies['] outposts in this Country and for want of which we have been obliged to raise the siege of 96 after having the town closely besieged for upwards of 20 days, and when four more would have compleated its reduction. For want of the Militia the approaches went on slow and the siege rendered bloody and tedious.⁸⁹

Added to this was the failure of the South Carolina militia, notably that under Sumter, to slow down Rawdon's advance. Publicly, Greene said it resulted "either from bad intelligence or from the difficulty of [Sumter in] collecting his force. . . ."⁹⁰ But he apparently thought differently in private. Andrew Pickens, who was with Greene much of the time of the siege, thought that Sumter's troops were derelict--and he hinted that Greene probably felt the same way. "I believe not the least attempt was made by them [Sumter and Marion]," he recalled. "The night the siege was raised at Ninety Six, I asked General Greene if he knew the reason of their not harassing the enemy or their not joining the army. He was much irritated, and expressed himself in a manner I had not heard from him before or since."⁹¹ Moreover, Sumter's ailing health probably contributed to his lethargic behavior and must account, at least partially, for the inactivity of his command in delaying Lord Rawdon. Indeed, far from thwarting Rawdon, part of Sumter's command itself met defeat at the hands of British cavalrymen. Above all this, however, Greene grew distraught at the seeming laxity among the militia to harmonize their efforts with those of the Continental Army for a common purpose. "Being left alone," he wrote Marion, "I was obliged to retire. I am surprised the

88. Greene to Lafayette, June 23, 1781. Greene Papers, Library of Congress.

89. Greene to Jefferson, June 27, 1781. Greene Papers, Clements Library.

90. Greene to President of Congress, June 20, 1781. Washington Papers.

91. Pickens to Lee, August 28, 1811, quoted in Waring, The Fighting Elder, p. 87.

people should be so averse to joining in some general plan of operations."⁹²
"As to flying parties here and there," he philosophized, "they are of no consequence in the great events of war."⁹³

3. A Matter of Judgement

Greene seems to have considered the overall dearth of militia support for his operations the principal factor necessitating his withdrawal from Ninety Six. Perhaps his delay in opening approaches west of the town until after Lee's arrival can likewise be attributed to inferior numbers. Years later, questions surfaced concerning the conduct of the siege, questions that largely concerned the judgement of Greene's chief engineer, Colonel Thaddeus Kosciuszko, in prosecuting designs against the star redoubt--the strongest link in the British defenses--instead of the comparatively weak stockade fort west of the town, and thereby immediately depriving Cruger's garrison of their main water supply.⁹⁴ Kosciuszko's most vocal critic was Henry Lee, who, in fact, implemented such tactics on his arrival before Ninety Six from Augusta. Said Lee of Kosciuszko: "His blunders lost us Ninety Six."⁹⁵ Kosciuszko's tactical shortcomings quite naturally were shared by his immediate superior, Greene himself. According to Lee, "General Greene, much as he was beloved and respected, did not escape criticism, for permitting his engineer to direct the manner of approach." While Greene must have listened to his subordinate's counsel, he "never ought to have permitted the pursuit of error. . . ."⁹⁶ Some of Lee's soldiers echoed their chief's sentiments regarding what they perceived as a misdirected effort at Ninety Six. Speaking of Henry Lee, Alexander Garden wrote: "Had he directed the operations of the besiegers at Ninety-Six, instead of Kosciuszko [sic], different indeed would have been the result."⁹⁷

92. Greene to Marion, June 25, 1781, in Gibbes, Documentary History, III, 100. "It is almost impossible to draw the Militia out of one district into another." Greene to President of Congress, June 20, 1781. Washington Papers.

93. Greene to Marion, June 25, 1781, in Gibbes, Documentary History, III, 100.

94. Wrote William Johnson: "It cannot be doubted, that if Greene could have commanded a sufficient force, the two operations would have been carried on concurrently. . . . But, . . . after detaching the necessary convoys, and posting the parties necessary to invest the town, there were scarcely men enough left to guard the parties labouring in the ditches." Life and Correspondence of Nathanael Greene, II, 142.

95. Lee, Memoirs, p. 252n.

96. Ibid. See Haiman, Kosciuszko, pp. 115, 117.

97. Anecdotes, p. 65.

Certainly, from the ease with which Lee's soldiers gained access to the western quarter, it appears that Greene and Kosciuszko might have enjoyed more success had the siege been prosecuted somewhat differently. Furthermore, General Greene warrants some censure for even considering, much less permitting, the assault on the star June 18 that resulted in the loss of so many of his men. Frustrated at his overall progress by that point, he abandoned his customary conservative policy to allow his men to indulge themselves in one last bold but rash attempt to breach Cruger's defenses. It was a moment of desperation. Fortunately, Greene recovered soon enough to recognize his error and pulled his men back, unwilling to risk further unnecessary bloodshed.

4. The Ironies Involved

In the final analysis, the siege of Ninety Six, while unavoidable for Greene, knowing (or not knowing) what he did in the spring of 1781, was still a needless enterprise. Despite the month-long encounter, British policy remained unchanged--the station was vacated as originally intended and Greene rationalized the withdrawal to his own satisfaction. "We have obliged the enemy to evacuate their post at Ninety-six . . . ," he wrote with pleasure and but slight truth.⁹⁸ Ironically, the evacuation would have occurred earlier had the Americans not intercepted Rawdon's order of withdrawal to Cruger. Stranger still, Rawdon would have lacked sufficient force to attempt relieving Cruger had a British dispatch directing the new troops north not been intercepted at sea by the Americans.

Thus, the siege of Ninety Six had only a minimal impact upon British strategy in the South. The once extensive British military predominance in South Carolina was dashed by Greene's persistent campaigning until by the end of 1781 the sphere of their active influence was contracted to the coast. If anything, it might be said that Greene's operations at Ninety Six managed to occupy Rawdon's army at a time when critical maneuvering was going on to the north that would ultimately lead to Yorktown. Perhaps in that respect the siege of Ninety Six was of utmost importance.

98. Greene to wife, July 18, 1781. Manuscript Division, Princeton University Library.

CHAPTER XI: CAMBRIDGE AND AFTER

A. Changes Following the War

Less than a year after the siege of Ninety Six, on February 26, 1782, the South Carolina Assembly authorized the purchase of an estate to be given Major General Greene as "a suitable testimony of approbation and gratitude for the eminent services which he has rendered to this State."¹ Eventually a tract of land was awarded Greene, although he never moved to South Carolina. The State of Georgia, likewise indebted to him, gave him a plantation near Savannah, where he settled in 1785 and died the following year.²

1. Administrative Revision

South Carolina's gesture of appreciation to Greene might be seen as a symbolic conclusion to the war in the South, even though the British retained an interest there until December, 1782. Almost immediately thereafter, work began to restore the province to a semblance of its stability lost when Clinton's army had seized control of Charleston over two years earlier. One important administrative measure adopted soon after the war was to reduce the unwieldy district divisions into more manageable entities, and as early as 1783 efforts began to subdivide Ninety Six District.³ This process was completed two years later, on March 12, 1785, with passage of legislation creating six counties within the judicial district: Edgefield, Abbeville, Laurens, Spartanburg, Union, and Newberry.⁴ (Illustration 22.)

Under the new arrangement, the former circuit court town of Ninety Six was to continue in that capacity, while each of the counties would contain a county court. The redistricting did not physically affect Ninety Six, for the village was not rebuilt in the same location after the British burned and abandoned it. The dividing line between Abbeville and Edgefield Counties coincided with Hamilton's Great Survey Line of 1751,

1. "An act to empower Thomas Ferguson, Morton Wilkinson, and John Ward, Esqs. to purchase an Estate of the value of 10,000 guineas, in trust, and for the use of the honorable Major General Greene," in Cooper, Statutes at Large of South Carolina, IV, 515.

2. Harpers Encyclopedia of United States History, IV, 170.

3. See Cooper, Statutes at Large of South Carolina, IV, 561; Landrum, Colonial and Revolutionary History of Upper South Carolina, p. 45n.

4. Cooper, Statutes at Large of South Carolina, IV, 661-62; Chapman, History of Edgefield County, p. 5; Pope, History of Newberry County, pp. 54, 61.

thereby running east of the star fort and diagonally intersecting the old town site.⁵

2. A New Ninety Six

Old Ninety Six never survived its destruction by Cruger's soldiers in July, 1781,⁶ even though the South Carolina Assembly did compensate those whose homes and property had been lost as a result of the British occupation and siege. In 1782 the legislature passed statutes authorizing confiscation of estates of prominent Tories who had been expelled from the state, including those of Robert Cunningham and Moses Kirkland who had openly sided with the King's army.⁷ At Ninety Six the land holdings of James Holmes were confiscated by an act of the Assembly dated August 13, 1783. Holmes's property comprised 400 acres located west of Spring Branch on which the British stockade fort formerly stood. Trustees were appointed to supervise the sale of lots of the Holmes tract, with the proceeds from such sales going for the "purposes of erecting and supporting a public school or seminary of learning at the town of Ninety-Six, and for laying out a common for the use of the said town."⁸ Significantly, the law stipulated "that such persons that held town lots in the

5. "County and Judicial District Map of 1785 [of South Carolina]." Map Division, Library of Congress; Robert Mills, Atlas State of South Carolina, Made under Authority of the Legislature (Baltimore: John D. Toy, 1825); Watson, Old Ninety Six, p. 20. Further administrative changes occurred in 1791 when the size of Ninety Six Judicial District was reduced, and in 1800 when the district was altogether discontinued. Each county then became a district, until 1868, when the term "county" was restored. Watson, Greenwood County Sketches, p. 10; Wallace, History of South Carolina, II, 336.

6. It is evident, however, that some interim measures were adopted so that the village could continue to function in its legal capacity as a circuit court town. Probably some former residents of Ninety Six continued to live in the destroyed village. Furthermore, the fact that regular court sessions took place at Ninety Six in 1784, and that the jail was in use then, indicates that these structures were not entirely demolished by the British during their evacuation.

7. Pope, History of Newberry County, p. 51.

8. Cooper, Statutes at Large of South Carolina, IV, 574-75. The trustees were the Reverend John Harris, John Ewing Calhoun, Andrew Pickens, Robert Anderson, Patrick Calhoun, John Bowie, and William Moore "and the survivors and survivor of them." Ibid., p. 575. Holmes's holdings west of Ninety Six were extensive. Four hundred acres of Holmes's property was surveyed on orders of the Commissioners of Confiscated Estates in July, 1783. See "Confiscated Estates," Plats Nos. 1 (181 acres), 2 (130 acres), and 3 (89 acres). South Carolina Archives and History Department, Columbia.

old town of Ninety Six, shall be entitled to a lot of equal quantity of land in the town to be laid out in pursuance of this Act. . . ."⁹

Exactly why the new town of Ninety Six was to be plotted a quarter of a mile from the site of the old one is unclear, although it is possible the change was made to avoid future legal conflicts over lands previously relinquished by loyalists.¹⁰ To accompany the act of 1783, South Carolina Deputy Surveyor William Anderson prepared a plat showing the location of the new town of Ninety Six above and west of Spring Branch on the recovered Holmes estate. As envisioned, the village area would consist of ten blocks arranged in two rows of five, with each block composing eight 1/2 acre land parcels each measuring 104 feet by 208 feet. There was to be one main street running lengthwise north to south and called Guerard Street (actually the old Martin Town Road), while four others would run east to west, dividing the five pairs of blocks. The northernmost of these was named Pinkney Street, followed by Broad Street, Ewing Street, and Waring Street. The 1/2 acre lots were all numbered 1 through 80, and designated parcels were reserved for the erection of a courthouse, a church, a meeting house, a market, and a jail. The new village site measured 2,300 feet north-south by 900 feet east-west.¹¹ (Map 5.) Actual property sales at new Ninety Six apparently did not begin until 1784, and it is unknown exactly how many of the lots were sold over the next few years.¹² Moreover, some past residents of old Ninety Six were reluctant to exchange their property for new lots and continued to maintain their former tracts.¹³ In the course of preparing the townsite whatever earthworks remained from the stockade fort were most certainly leveled.¹⁴ One of the first to purchase land was

9. Cooper, Statutes at Large of South Carolina, IV, 575.

10. Holschlag and Rodeffer, Village, p. 11.

11. "Plat of Ninety-six, accompanying Act. No. 1194." South Carolina Archives and History Department, Columbia; Indenture granted John Ewing Calhoun, November 25, 1784. South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina.

12. The land records for this and subsequent periods of Ninety Six-Cambridge history have almost all been destroyed. Rodeffer, "Land Conveyances," p. 2. Auctions of former Tory holdings took place at Ninety Six in July and December, 1783. Pope, History of Newberry County, p. 51.

13. Rodeffer, "Land Conveyances," p. 7.

14. South, Williamson's Fort, p. 41.

John Ewing Calhoun, a Charleston attorney. According to an indenture granted him on November 25, 1784, Calhoun paid £31 10s and received

All those two Parcels or Town Lots of Land, situate, laying and being in the Town of Ninety Six, and known in the general Plat of said Town by the Numbers . . . Thirty Nine and Forty, containing in the whole together one Acre. . . .¹⁵

Other land parcels were distributed under similar conditions. Early maps of the community that attempt to delineate buildings (notably William Johnson's map of 1822 accompanying his Life and Correspondence of Nathanael Greene) suggest that most persons who bought or exchanged land at new Ninety Six selected lots bordering Guerard Street, the main thoroughfare through town. Along that course most structures seem to have been built.¹⁶

B. Cambridge College and Cambridge

With the development of the new settlement, plans for the erection of the school went forward. On March 19, 1785, the state assembly passed the College Act, allowing for the construction of several schools in the backcountry and elsewhere in South Carolina. As earlier contemplated, one was to be built "at or near the town of Ninety-Six, which shall be called and known by the name of the 'College of Cambridge.'"¹⁷ The "college," in fact, never became more than an academy with an illustrious name, hardly equal to the expectations of area residents. Evidently the brick structure was built on a slight hill towards the north end of the town.¹⁸ The first rector of the college was the Reverend John Springer, who was elected to the position in 1787 either at or after the opening of the school. Springer left two years later, moving to Georgia. His immediate successors are not identified, although in 1806 Edward Hooker was serving as rector. In 1809 Dr. Benjamin Ray Montgomery had assumed the position, and in the following year the Reverend John Wheeler was rector.¹⁹ Fiscal adversity set upon the school shortly after its completion, perhaps accounting for the relatively brief tenures of its rectors. So great became the financial burden on Cambridge College that in 1792, less than eight years after its founding, the state assembly authorized

15. South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia.

16. South, Williamson's Fort, p. 47.

17. Cooper, Statutes at Large of South Carolina, IV, 674-75.

18. Watson, Greenwood County Sketches, p. 23; John Wilson, "A Map of South Carolina, Constructed and Drawn from the District Surveys. . . ." Philadelphia, 1822. Map Division, Library of Congress.

19. Watson, Greenwood County Sketches, p. 23; Watson, Old Ninety Six, p. 38.

the school's trustees to hold a lottery in order to raise funds.²⁰ And in 1803 the assembly empowered the trustees finally to sell the school property so that past debts could be paid, but this was not immediately done.²¹

Cambridge College, one of the few state sponsored institutions in the backcountry, quickly became a source of prestige to the residents of Ninety Six, something that set their new community apart from others in western South Carolina. Probably that is the reason that the village name was formally changed about 1787, over the strenuous objections of some older townspeople, from Ninety Six to Cambridge.²² Besides the college, the town boasted a new courthouse and jail, apparently completed around 1790. These buildings were erected in compliance with a March, 1783, act of the South Carolina General Assembly to "repair and rebuild court houses and gaols in the several districts of the state."²³ In 1790 £ 1200 was appropriated to build a jail and surrounding wall at Cambridge.²⁴ The work for both structures was completed by Mr. Gabriel Smithers.²⁵ Evidently both were made of brick and were seemingly erected in the same relative locations as their counterparts in the old village.²⁶ As shown in the "Plat of Ninety-six" (1783), the courthouse fronted on the main thoroughfare, while the jail was relegated to the easternmost edge of the town.

1. The Legal Function Continues

Legal business continued to be an important function at Ninety Six. During the period immediately following the conclusion of peace with Great Britain anti-Tory sentiment remained high in the South Carolina interior. Evidence of this persistent feeling surfaced in the aftermath

20. Watson, Old Ninety Six, pp. 41-42.

21. Ibid., p. 42.

22. Ibid.; Watson, Greenwood County Sketches, p. 23.

23. Quoted in Watson, Old Ninety Six, p. 19.

24. Ibid.

25. James Mayson to William Hart, February 19, 1795. 2744 ALS. Manuscript Division, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina.

26. Holschlag and Rodeffer, Village, p. 16.

of the trial of Matthew Love, a lieutenant of William "Bloody Bill" Cunningham, whose atrocities against backcountry patriots during the war had become legendary. Love was captured near Ninety Six and brought to trial there in December, 1784, evidently in the old courthouse building. But as the recent peace treaty stipulated against punishment for wartime crimes, Love was released, whereupon a number of incensed citizens familiar with his past outrages promptly seized and hanged him. The judge for the fall term of the court was Aedanus Burke. While saddened by the mob action, he explained that "the people of Ninety Six appear very desirous to forget the injuries of the war, . . . provided those do not return among them who have committed wanton acts of barbarity."²⁷ Aside from the extralegal execution of Matthew Love, five other persons were sentenced to death by Burke's court--four convicted for horse thievery and one for counterfeiting. They were hanged on Christmas Day, 1784.²⁸

2. Life in Cambridge

Cambridge acquired a post office on March 10, 1793. The first postmaster was James Wilson, appointed to the position by President George Washington.²⁹ Several businesses were established at Cambridge during the town's early years, eventually including four taverns, or hotels, a blacksmith shop, a shoemaker's shop, a tailor shop, and more than a dozen stores. In 1811, a weekly newspaper opened there, first titled The Anti-Monarchist, and later The Cambridge Republican. In addition, numerous doctors and attorneys took up residence in Cambridge and by the early 1800s the village numbered as many as 200 people and perhaps more.³⁰

27. Burke to Governor Benjamin Guerard, December 14, 1784. Manuscript Division, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina. See also Watson, Greenwood County Sketches, pp. 20-22.

28. Watson, Old Ninety Six, p. 20.

29. Watson, Greenwood County Sketches, p. 23. Succeeding postmasters were James McCracken, appointed July 1, 1801; John McKellar, October 1, 1810; John McBryde, April 1, 1817; and John McLennon, March, 1825. Watson, Old Ninety Six, p. 42.

30. The most complete accounting of Cambridge residents from 1788 through 1853 is in Peter Blake and DeLane Caldwell, "A Partial Listing of the Residents of Cambridge, S.C." (unpublished manuscript dated April, 1973, in the files of the Greenwood County Historical Society, Greenwood, South Carolina).

One resident of Cambridge who left an account of the village was Edward Hooker, the schoolmaster, who stayed but a short time before moving to Columbia. Already the community seemed to be in trouble. On February 27, 1806, Hooker described Cambridge as

nothing more than a snug little village of 15 or 20 houses and stores on the top of a small hill called Cambridge Hill. There is an area in the center of it, where stands an old brick Court House. At a little distance down the hill is the jail,--both in a neglected state. . . . The Village has seven stores and three taverns. Its appearance is not at all flourishing; and it is said to have been decaying, ever since the new judiciary arrangement, by which the courts were removed to Abbeville.³¹

Hooker entered a description of Cambridge College that portrayed an institution on the verge of collapse:

Just out of the village in a pleasant plain, quite retired from noise, is a two story brick building, which was erected for the President's House of the college; but which is now designed by the Trustees for the Academy building itself. As for the other college buildings, they were never any thing more than mere log-studies, temporarily thrown up, till better ones could be erected--and they are now in ruins. The Rev. Mr. Springer from Princeton College was at the head of it; and under his direction the institution flourished. He was a presbyterian divine of great merit. . . . After him several persons had the charge of the Seminary, but it flourished less, and finally became quite neglected--in which state it has been for several years past. Though called a College in the Statute Book, yet no regular system of College education was ever established and no degrees were ever confirmed.³²

Later, Hooker examined the college archives and learned that "the institution . . . began to decline about [17]89 or 90 and to have fallen into almost total neglect about 1795 or 6. Great sums were subscribed

31. "Diary of Edward Hooker, 1805-1808," in Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the Year 1896 (2 vols.; Washington: Government Printing Office, 1897), I, 884.

32. Ibid.

which were never paid."³³ In the course of his stay, Hooker participated fully in the community life, and his observations, faithfully recorded in his diary, offer a revealing glimpse of Cambridge. He described a July 4 celebration where roast beef and pork were served to 200 people by Negro slaves. "What an incongruity!" he remarked. "An Independence dinner for freemen, and slaves to wait upon them. I couldn't keep the thought out of my mind the whole time I was there feasting."³⁴ Hooker described having pleasant conversations with "Capt. Gowdy"--James Gouedy, the son of the early Ninety Six entrepreneur, Robert Gouedy:

He is an old inhabitant here and almost the only native citizen in the village or its neighborhood. He speaks highly of Col. Cruger the British Commander here while the [star] fort was in the possession of the enemy. Says he was a finished gentleman in all his conduct and treated the inhabitants with much civility, punishing his men for abuses committed and restoring to the owners plundered property.³⁵

Already, Hooker noted, the residents of Cambridge recognized the uniqueness and allure of their community's past, and were especially proficient in recounting with considerable accuracy its role in the Revolution:

The siege of Ninety Six is a favorite topic with the people in this vicinity. It is a pleasure to witness the animation that sparkles in their countenances, when in compliance with my request, they narrate the minute incidents of those trying times. Some of the striking particulars are these--the blockading of the British troops in the fort--the extension of a mine under the British works--the sallying out of a British force which in spite of a desperate resistance drove the Carolinians from the mine and surprised unawares the heroic fellows that were almost ready, under ground, to blow the whole garrison to destruction--the marching up of a pick'd company of valiants to

33. Ibid., p. 892.

34. Ibid., p. 890.

35. Ibid., p. 891. James Gouedy died in 1815 and was buried in the Gouedy cemetery, near the site of his father's old trading complex and Fort Ninety Six.

haul down with hooks the bags of sand which lay on the top of the entrenchment, while muskets were incessantly blazing from behind them--the act of a courageous tory who notwithstanding the surrounding crowd of besiegers, galloped through and gained admittance at the gate, [with] advices of an approaching reinforcement.³⁶

The tone of Hooker's entry, with its allusion to Tory heroism, indicates that by 1806, twenty-five years after the event, passions had at last been tempered.

3. The Post-1800 Decline

Despite the community's troubles after 1800, when the judicial apparatus was shifted to nearby Abbeville, there occurred spurts of resurgence. There existed occasional trade with people who lived further upland, in the mountains of Tennessee and western South Carolina. They arrived in wagons with produce consisting of tobacco, venison, chestnuts, cabbage, and corn whiskey to trade in Cambridge. But this irregular exchange with the mountaineers halted in 1815 with an influenza outbreak that struck Cambridge. Thereafter the mountain folk bypassed the town and took their trade elsewhere.³⁷

By the 1820s Cambridge had clearly peaked and was in decline as a viable business center. One who lived there in 1824 saw only "the relics of a pleasant little village." Only fifteen families remained, along with only four merchants, four attorneys, three doctors, and a church with no preacher.³⁸ Another former Cambridge resident recalled that cockfights and horse races were popular leisure activities and that at least one of the community's physicians raised gamecocks and thoroughbred horses.³⁹ Cambridge's prominent male citizens also formed a literary association which about 1820 acquired the then-defunct courthouse. The second floor of the structure was used as a library and clubroom, while the first floor was used as a store and post office.⁴⁰

36. Ibid.

37. Watson, Greenwood County Sketches, p. 31.

38. Account of Dr. Ephraim R. Calhoun, published in The Ninety Six Guardian (1879). Cited in Watson, Old Ninety Six, pp. 43-44.

39. Account of Dr. R.C. Griffin, published in The Ninety Six Guardian (1879). Cited in Watson, Greenwood County Sketches, p. 28.

40. Watson, Old Ninety Six, p. 19.

Gradually, more and more of Cambridge's families moved away. One prominent lawyer, John C. McGehee, who owned and resided on the star fort tract, in the mid-1820s began spending summers at his "Green Wood" estate, about ten miles northwest of Cambridge. In 1828 McGehee sold Green Wood and moved to Florida. His estate was subdivided and resold, some of the lots being acquired by Cambridge residents who began moving to the new community.⁴¹ Cambridge College, unhealthy for years, failed altogether in 1825 and went out of existence. In 1832 the state allowed the property to be sold with the proceeds going to establish a new school at Greenwood.⁴² The college building was sold to Major William Eddins, an area resident. Eddins also purchased the church and in 1835 it was dismantled and reassembled in the nearby locality of Siloam.⁴³

4. The End of Cambridge

Stagecoach service to and from Cambridge was terminated in 1845, and by 1852, when the railroad arrived two miles to the north, there was very little left of the former village.⁴⁴ In 1856 the courthouse was razed and its structural material sold.⁴⁵ Finally, the post office closed in 1860.⁴⁶

C. A Place in History

1. Local Interest in the Site

Yet the Cambridge area did not become devoid of population, for many residents continued to live and farm in the outlying vicinity. The plain south and east of the old village on the former Holmes tract was intensively cultivated during the latter nineteenth century.⁴⁷ The

41. Watson, Greenwood County Sketches, p. 31.

42. Watson, Old Ninety Six, p. 42.

43. Ibid., p. 45.

44. Ibid. The modern community of Ninety Six evolved around this railroad stop along the Greenville and Columbia route. See Pope, History of Newberry County, p. 144.

45. Watson, Old Ninety Six, p. 45. Some bricks and timbers from the courthouse were sold to Dr. W.L. Anderson, who used them in building a new home in the Lebanon area. The home is still standing. Ibid.

46. Ibid., p. 42.

47. Holschlag and Rodeffer, Stockade Fort, pp. 8, 10.

former village of Cambridge gradually disappeared, the buildings either sold, burned, or collapsed through deterioration. In 1898 a new post office, called Cambridge, opened a few miles southwest of the old village site, but it had no connection with the past except in name, and it, too, succumbed after ten years.⁴⁸

But the people who lived in the area of Cambridge continued to maintain a lively interest in the history of old Ninety Six. The British star fort earthwork still endured after decades, along with vestiges of the nearby jail redan, the only tangible remnants of 1781, and by the middle of the nineteenth century the star fort stood as a prominent local landmark. James McCracken, Jr., an area resident, wrote that "The trees and shrubbery on the battle-ground are considered by the inhabitants too sacred to be molested. The land [of star redoubt] is now (1849) owned by John C. McGehee of Madison county Florida. . . ."⁴⁹ John McGehee sold his star fort tract of 15 acres in 1877 to M.B. Lipscomb, who in 1883 conveyed it to E.S. Addison. In 1907 Joseph Warren Tolbert acquired the land and it remained in the Tolbert family until the 1970s.⁵⁰

2. Old Star Fort, a Continuing Attraction

Throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century star fort served as a popular gathering place for picnics and assemblies. The heavy shapes of the old salients of the star, though greatly eroded, still commanded attention and became a source of community pride. A traveler in 1857 mentioned passing by "a place called Ninety Six where the old Fort used to stand, signs of which still remain to be seen."⁵¹ On June 18, 1878, a celebration was held at Star Fort to honor the

48. Watson, Greenwood County Sketches, p. 32; Watson, Old Ninety Six, p. 43.

49. Quoted in Lossing, Pictorial Field-Book, II, 485n.

50. Rodeffer, "Land Conveyances," p. 1, 7-8. In 1847 the land incorporating the site of Ninety Six village was held in several tracts by three people, Dr. Richard C. Griffin, James Wesley Childs, and a Mrs. Bolling (who held part of the former Robert Gouedy property). Land plats "Old Star Fort, 1847 and 1853." Manuscript Division, South Carolina Department of Archives and History. Later land holders of the Ninety Six tracts included George Tolbert and Dorothy Clark. For further specifics of the various land transactions, see Rodeffer, "Land Conveyances."

51. The visitor was Micajah Adolphus Clark, quoted in Thomas D. Clark (ed.), South Carolina: The Grand Tour, 1780-1865 (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1973), p. 290.

ninety-seventh anniversary of the siege. It was a gala affair, attended by notables from throughout South Carolina, including Governor Wade Hampton, the ex-Confederate leader. Military bands came from surrounding towns and there were an estimated 4,000-5,000 people at the fete. Underlying the festivities, and explaining why they were not held on the more appropriate ninety-sixth or one hundredth anniversaries, was a political attempt to promote the formation of a new county with the new village of Ninety Six, located two miles to the north, as county seat. But the movement subsequently lost in the state legislature. Greenwood, which vied with Ninety Six for the distinction of being a county seat, eventually won the contest when in 1897 Greenwood County was created.⁵²

3. Archeology at Cambridge

Today there is little evidence of what once was Cambridge in the area of Old Ninety Six. Archeological examination of the site has been minimal. Exploratory archeology revealed the existence of a large number of square and round post holes, evidently from posts used in former times to mark property boundaries or from interally-spaced stakes for picket fences that likely once fronted the town lots of Cambridge. Several cellars were also located, one of which was slightly north of the site of the stockade fort. This cellar was intensively examined and was determined to be, in all probability, the remnant of a very early Cambridge dwelling.⁵³ Still more work involved the excavation of a drainage ditch, a dump site, and a privy.⁵⁴ Another feature associated with the history of Cambridge is the old Dozier Cemetery located 100 feet northwest of the star fort. This cemetery probably dates from early in the nineteenth century. Covered by periwinkle, the graveyard lies within an earthen embankment 75 feet square, and contains at least two burials.⁵⁵

4. National Interest in the Site

The star fort at Ninety Six and Cambridge endured as a local and

52. Watson, Greenwood County Sketches, p. 32; Watson, Old Ninety Six, p. 45.

53. South, Williamson's Fort, p. 44. See Steven Baker, A House on Cambridge Hill (38GN2): An Excavation Report (Columbia: University of South Carolina Institute of Archeology and Anthropology. Research Manuscript Series, No. 27, March, 1972).

54. South, Williamson's Fort, p. 45.

55. Holschlag and Rodeffer, Siegeworks, pp. 9, 101, 104.

regional attraction into the twentieth century. (Illustration 25 and Map 6.) During the 1920s an effort was made by the federal government to locate and mark for commemorative purposes various battlefields in the United States. "Star Fort, South Carolina," as it was termed, was determined to be a Class IIB battlefield in overall significance, a designation requiring only a marker to sufficiently memorialize the siege of 1781. Other aspects of the history of Ninety Six were ignored, subordinated to the national significance of the Revolutionary War and General Nathanael Greene's southern campaign.⁵⁶ Yet little was done to formally promote the site until 1963, when the South Carolina General Assembly authorized creation of the Star Fort Historical Commission. Active administration of the site began in 1968, and two years later the Commission began a successful campaign to acquire the land tracts embracing the site and environs of old Ninety Six. The Ninety Six Historic Site was administered by the Greenwood County Council after 1973, and in 1974 it was afforded the status of National Historic Landmark by the Secretary of the Interior.⁵⁷ Efforts by various groups and individuals to promote the candidacy of the site as a full-fledged unit of the National Park Service culminated August 19, 1976, when Congress enacted Public Law 94-393, authorizing the creation of Ninety Six National Historic Site, South Carolina. The act acknowledged the site's broad and unique historical attributes "associated with the settlement and development of the English colonies in America and with the southern campaign of the American Revolutionary War. . . ."⁵⁸ Accordingly, October 1, 1977, Ninety Six National Historic Site was formally dedicated as part of the National Park Service.

56. U.S. House of Representatives. Inspection of the Battle Field of Star Fort, S.C. Report No. 2326, 70 Cong., 2 Sess., 1928, p. 1; U.S. Senate. Study of Battlefields in the United States for Commemorative Purposes. Communication from the President of the United States transmitting Report by the Secretary of War. . . . Doc. No. 187, 70 Cong., 2 Sess., 1928, pp. 1-2, 4. The act of Congress was approved June 11, 1926. Ibid., p. 1.

57. "Ninety Six: A Synopsis" (unpublished manuscript in the files of Ninety Six National Historical Site).

58. Public Law 94-393, 94th Congress, S.2642. August 19, 1976. "To provide for the establishment of the Ninety Six National Historic Site in the State of South Carolina, and for other purposes."

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IDENTIFIED SITES AND STRUCTURES,

NINETY SIX NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE, SOUTH CAROLINA

Most of the identified historic resources of Ninety Six National Historic Site are sites consisting of subsurface remains and remnants of earthwork fortifications of the colonial and Revolutionary War eras. (See Map 7.) Considerable archeological investigation has occurred at some of these sites which, while extremely useful in the acquisition of information about the resources, is nonetheless detrimental to their preservation. It is recommended that future archeological reconnaissance of the resources at Ninety Six be limited to remote sensing and subsurface testing procedures. Erosion, too, poses a constant threat to some of the earthen resources, especially those, like star fort, with above-ground remains. It is recommended that management be vigilant to the potential of erosional damage and take all precautions to guard against its occurrence. Where erosion does occur, stabilization measures should be taken immediately to prevent it from irreparably harming the resources.

Preservation is urged for each of the following named resources:

1. Site of Robert Gouedy's trading post and home (1750s-1760s) and site of Fort Ninety Six (1759-1761), a stockade post erected around Gouedy's barn. Some exploratory archeology has been accomplished here.
2. Site of the Cherokee Path, which ran from Keowee to Congarees (near present Columbia), and trace of the later superimposed Charleston Road that formed the main street of the village of Ninety Six.
3. Site of the village of Ninety Six (1760s-1781). The site has undergone some archeological excavation. In its heyday Ninety Six boasted a courthouse, jail, various commercial enterprises, and numerous residential units.
4. Depressed trace of the Island Ford Road leading to the Saluda River. The vestige averages about forty feet in width along its course.
5. Foundation of the Ninety Six brick jail (c. 1772-1781), one of the main public buildings in Ninety Six village. Archeological excavation has occurred at this site.
6. Site of Williamson's Fort (1775) and of the stockade fort of 1781 (presently reconstructed on site). Archeological examination has occurred at the site. If the reconstruction is to be retained, it is recommended that the palisades, presently pointed by use of a band saw, be re-pointed using an ax to more accurately depict hand-hewn palisade construction of the period the feature is meant to depict.

7. The somewhat eroded earthen star fort or redoubt built by the British in 1780-81, occupying approximately one-half acre. This structure, one of the few surviving Revolutionary War earthworks in the country, consists of a parapet and ditch arranged in the shape of an eight-pointed star measuring about fifty yards in diameter. It was designed by a British army engineer and constructed by British soldiers and black slaves. Inside are the remains of a traverse, or detached length of parapet, and a well shaft, both built by the British during the siege of 1781. Since its construction numerous deciduous trees have grown up on the star redoubt.

8. The system of parallels designed by Major General Greene's chief engineer, Colonel Thaddeus Kosciuszko, and executed by American troops against the star redoubt in 1781. Much of the siegeworks has been archeologically excavated and partially restored to their original appearance.

9. The subterranean mine galleries designed by Kosciuszko, and dug by American soldiers. This feature, now unexposed, is largely intact, although some stabilization work was accomplished in the 1920s. Kosciuszko planned to extend the mine beneath the curtain of the star redoubt, then explode it and breach the British defenses. The siege was raised before this could happen. Kosciuszko's mine is probably the sole surviving example of this facet of siege warfare from the Revolutionary War.

10. Approximate site of Major General Greene's army encampment of May-June, 1781.

11. Site of Lieutenant Colonel Henry Lee's encampment and approaches against the stockade fort in June, 1781.

12. The rivulet called Spring Branch, the town's principal water source, which figured prominently in the siege of 1781.

13. Sites of the communications trenches which ran between the village and the star redoubt, and between the village and the stockade fort, during the siege of 1781.

14. The marsh northeast of Ninety Six village site, of significance during the siege of 1781. The marsh today covers an area of approximately twenty acres.

15. Site of a new village of Ninety Six (1783), later renamed Cambridge (1787), which flourished briefly then declined in the mid-nineteenth century.

16. Dozier Cemetery, a family plot dating from the early 1800s and associated with early Cambridge. The cemetery is presently overgrown with periwinkle.

17. The Gouedy Cemetery, a family plot associated with the old town of Ninety Six and the later village of Cambridge.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

William Henry Drayton's Address to the Tories, near Ninety Six, September 13, 1775. (From R.W. Gibbes [comp.], Documentary History of the American Revolution. 3 vols. New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1855, I, 180-83.)

Camp, near Ninety-Six, September 13th, 1775. By the Honorable William Henry Drayton, Esq.; A Declaration.

Whereas, the liberties of America being treacherously and cruelly violated, by an abandoned administration in Great Britain, surrounding the throne, and deceiving Majesty, for their own corrupt purposes, thirteen American Colonies, including New Hampshire to the North, and Georgia to the South, virtuously, gloriously, thanks to the Lord of Hosts! successfully are confederated, at the hazard of their lives and fortunes, to wrest from the hands of traitors those invaluable which they had ravished from them, and which the Americans have endeavored to recover by every peaceable mode of application.

And, whereas, the tools of administration have encouraged certain inhabitants of this Colony to attempt, by every practicable measure, to oppose and to counteract the virtuous efforts of America, these inhabitants, men of low degree among us, though of eminence in this new country; men totally illiterate, though of common natural parts; men endeavoring, at this calamitous time, to rise in the world by misleading their honest neighbors; men who are, by his Excellency the Governor, promised to be amply rewarded for such an infamous conduct. These men, knowingly deceiving their neighbors, and wickedly selling their country, have practised every art, fraud, and misrepresentation, to raise in this Province an opposition to the voice of America. To oppose this hellish plan, and Honorable the Council of Safety for this Colony, commissioned the Reverend William Tennent, and myself, to make a progress through the disturbed parts of this Colony, "to explain to the people at large the nature of the unhappy disputes between Great Britain and the American Colonies." Thousands heard and believed us; they owned their full conviction; they expressed their concern, that they had been misled; and they most sincerely acceded to the Association formed by the authority of our late Congress. Such a proceeding did not accord with the designs of these men, betrayers of their country, or the wishes of his Excellency the Governor, who, by letters, instigated them to strengthen their party. To prevent a farther detection, the leaders of the party resolved, by the din of arms, to drown the voice of reason. For such an infernal purpose, by the instigation of Moses Kirkland, on or about the 29th of August last, men did actually assemble in arms, and with hostile intentions. My immediately assembling, and marching with a part of the militia, caused these men to disperse; but now other leaders, of the same malignant party, correspondents of his Excellency the Governor, have assembled men in arms, on the north side of Saluda river, who are now

actually encamped at a charge and expense which his Excellency the Governor has promised to repay; and these men threaten to attack the troops under my orders. Wherefore, to prevent the effusion of civil bloodshed, I think it my duty to issue this declaration, in order that I may leave no moderate step untried to recover a few of our unhappy countrymen from these delusions, by which they have been drawn on to lift their arms against their injured country, gloriously struggling to enjoy the rights of mankind.

And, whereas, his Excellency the Governor has issued private directions, that all magistrates and militia officers be required to take the oath of allegiance, under penalty of dismissal from their several stations, I do hereby declare, that, in point of law, his Excellency has no authority to make such requisition from persons who have already sworn according to law, when they were invested in offices civil or military; and, that it is not only highly unbecoming in his Majesty's representative to threaten his Majesty's loyal subjects, in order to induce them to do things not warranted in law, but such a conduct is of a most destructive tendency to the good of the King's real service, inasmuch as it tends to convince the people that his Majesty's servants in high trust, in America, as well as in Britain, equally conspire to act without authority in law, to the destruction of their just rights and privileges.

And, whereas, the leaders of our unhappy and deceived country, now assembled in arms against the liberties of America, have drawn them into this dangerous and disgraceful situation, by filling their minds with fears and apprehensions that their lives and properties are in danger, from the designs of the Congress, the Honorable the Council of Safety, the General Committee, and the troops under my orders, because they, our said countrymen, have not acceded to our Association: Wherefore, to remove all such ill-founded apprehensions, in the name of, and by the authority vested in me by the Honorable the Council of Safety, I solemnly declare, that all such apprehensions are actually groundless; and I also declare, in the name of the Council of Safety, that our said unhappy and deceived countrymen may, in perfect safety of their lives, persons, and property, repair to, and continue to dwell and abide at home, so long as they shall choose to behave peaceably. We shudder even at the idea of distressing them in any shape. We abhor the idea of compelling any person to associate with us. We only with sorrow declare, that any person who will not associate with, and aid and comfort us, in this arduous struggle for our liberties, cannot, by us, be considered as friendly to us; and, therefore, that we cannot aid and comfort such person, by holding that intercourse and communication with such person as is usually held between friends.

And thus, having, in the name of this Colony, declared the terms upon which peace and safety may be had and enjoyed by our unfortunate countrymen as aforesaid, it is my duty also to declare, that I shall march and attack, as public enemies, all and every person in arms, or to be in arms, in this part of the Colony, in opposition to the measures of Congress; and, having, with the utmost patience and industry, gently

endeavored to persuade men to a peaceable conduct, I now shall, with equal patience and industry, prosecute military measures with the utmost rigor; and I make no doubt but that, with the assistance of the Almighty--witness of our endeavors to avert the calamities of war--we shall speedily obtain--the wish of every virtuous American--peace, safety, and security to our rights.

Given under my hand, this 13th day of September, 1775, at camp, near Ninety-Six.

WILLIAM HENRY DRAYTON

APPENDIX B

The Treaty of Ninety Six, September 16, 1775. (From R.W. Gibbes [comp.], Documentary History of the American Revolution. 3 vols. New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1855, I, 184-86.)

SOUTH CAROLINA--NINETY-SIX DISTRICT

Whereas, misunderstandings but too often precipitate men and friends into quarrels and bloodshed, which, but for such misunderstandings, never could have happened: And whereas the present unhappy disputes between Great Britain and North America, have unhappily occasioned uneasiness between a part of the people living between Broad and Saluda rivers and other adjacent parts, and the other inhabitants of the Colony aforesaid, from misunderstandings as aforesaid, inasmuch as the said part of the people as aforesaid, having tender consciences, declined to accede to the Association signed in Congress on the 4th of June last; and the said other inhabitants thereby thinking that the said declining to accede, proceeded from principles and designs, in them the said part of the people, inimical to the proceedings and designs of the said other inhabitants; and that they, the said part of the people, did mean to aid, assist and join the British troops if any should arrive in the Colony aforesaid, during the present unhappy disputes as aforesaid: And whereas these are all misunderstandings, and it being the sincere wish and desire of all parts of the Colony to live in peace and friendship with each other: Wherefore, for the clearing up of the said misunderstandings, and for the manifestation of the wish and desire aforesaid, Colonel Thomas Fletchall, Captain John Ford, Captain Thomas Greer, Captain Evan McLaurin, the Reverend Philip Mulkey, Mr. Robert Merrick and Captain Benjamin Wofford, deputies for, and sent by the part of the people aforesaid, have repaired to the camp of the Honorable William Henry Drayton, Esquire, acting under the authority of the Council of Safety for this Colony; and, for the purposes aforesaid, it is hereby contracted, agreed, and declared by the Honorable William Henry Drayton, in pursuance of powers vested in him by the Honorable the Council of Safety as aforesaid on the one part, and the deputies aforesaid, in pursuance of powers vested in them by the said part of the people on the other part:

1st. That the said declining of the part of the people aforesaid, to accede as aforesaid, did not proceed from any ill or even unfriendly principle or design, in them the said part of the people, to or against the principles or designs of the Congress of this Colony, or authorities derived from that body, but proceeded only from a desire to abide in their usual peace and tranquility.

2d. That the said part of the people, never did mean to aid, assist or join the British troops as aforesaid; and hereby it is declared, that if at any time during the present unhappy disputes between Great Britain and North America, any British troops shall or may arrive in this Colony, the deputies aforesaid, for themselves and the part of the people aforesaid, by whom they, the said deputies, are authorized, and whom

they do represent, declare that if any British troops as aforesaid, shall arrive as aforesaid, they, the said deputies, on the part of the people aforesaid, shall not, and will not give, yield, or afford, directly or indirectly to, or for the use, advantage or comfort of the said British troops, or any part of them, any aid or assistance whatsoever, or hold with them the said troops, or any part of them, any communication or correspondence.

3rd. That if at any time during the unhappy disputes as aforesaid, any person or persons of the part of the people aforesaid, shall, by discourse or word, reflect upon, censure or condemn, or by any conduct oppose the proceedings of the Congress of this Colony, or authorities derived from them, the said Congress, the Council of Safety, or General Committee, as the case may be, shall, without being deemed to give any umbrage to the part of the people aforesaid, send to any of the deputies aforesaid to make requisition, that any and every such person or persons as aforesaid, offending in any of the premises aforesaid, against the proceedings of the Congress or authorities aforesaid, may, and shall be delivered up to the authority of the Congress, or the tribunals under that authority, to be questioned and tried and proceeded against, according to the mode of proceedings by authority of Congress; and if such person or persons as aforesaid, be not delivered up as aforesaid, within fourteen days after requisition as aforesaid; then, in such case, the Congress or Council of Safety, or General Committee, may, and shall be at liberty to use every means, to apprehend any, and every such person or persons as last aforesaid; and question, try and proceed against as aforesaid, every such person or persons as aforesaid.

4th. That if any person or persons who has, or have signed, or shall sign the Association aforesaid, shall, without authority of Congress, molest any person or persons of the part of the people aforesaid, in such case, application shall be made to the said Congress, or Council of Safety, or General Committee, in order that such person or persons so molesting, be punished for, and restrained from molesting as aforesaid.

And it is hereby declared, that all and every person of the part of the people as aforesaid, not offending in or against any of the premises aforesaid, shall, and may continue to dwell and remain at home as usual, safe in their lives, persons, and property. Such being nothing more, than what has been, and is the aim, intention and inclination of the Congress of this Colony, and the authorities under that body.

All persons who shall not consider themselves as bound by this treaty must abide by the consequences.

Done at the camp, near Ninety-Six, this 16th day of September, 1775.

WM. HY. DRAYTON,
THO. FLETCHALL,
JOHN FORD,
THO. GREER,
EVAN McLAURIN,
BENJ. WOFFORD.

Witness,

WM. THOMSON,
ELI KERSHAW,
FRANCIS SALVADOR.

APPENDIX C

"A Return of the Militia and Volunteers on duty in the fortified Camp, at Ninety-Six on Sunday the 19th November 1775, under the command of Major Andrew Williamson. By order of the hon. the Provincial Congress." (From John Drayton, Memoirs of the American Revolution as Relating to the State of South Carolina. 2 vols. Charleston: A.E. Miller, 1821, II, 150.)

Number of Companies	Commanding Officers' Names of the several Companies.	Number of Officers	Number of Sergeants	Number of Privates	Total	Total of all ranks in the Camp.
1	George Reed,	1	2	22	25	
2	Andrew Pickens,	2	3	35	40	
3	Aaron Smith,	3	2	12	17	
4	Benjamin Tutt,	3	2	29	34	
5	Andrew Hamilton,	3	2	18	23	
6	Thomas Langdon,	2	1	9	12	
7	Adam Crane Jones,	2	2	22	26	
8	Matthers Beraud,	3	0	10	13	
9	Charles Williams,	1	2	8	11	
10	Francis Logan,	2	1	15	18	
11	Alexander Noble,	2	0	2	4	
12	John Anderson,	2	1	8	11	
13	James Williams,	2	2	24	28	
14	Robert M'Creary,	3	2	25	30	
15	John Rodgers,	3	2	15	20	
16	Jacob Colson,*	2	1	15	18	
17	Hugh Middleton,	1	0	2	3	
18	Francis Sinquefield,	2	0	15	17	
19	James M'Call,	3	3	48	54	
20	David Hunter,	2	2	15	19	
21	John Erwin,	3	2	21	26	
22	Robert Anderson,	2	1	15	18	
23	Nathaniel Abney,	3	2	18	23	
24	William Wilson,	2	1	13	16	
25	Joseph Hamilton's Artillery,	1	0	16	17	
		55	36	432	523	
	Major Williamson,				1	
	Major Mayson,				1	
	" " Rangers,				37	
	Grand Total					562

*Captain Colson's Company were Volunteers, from Georgia.

APPENDIX D

"AGREEMENT FOR A CESSATION OF ARMS BETWEEN MAJ. JOSEPH ROBINSON, COMMANDER OF A BODY OF HIS MAJESTY'S MILITIA NOW UNDER ARMS FOR HIMSELF AND THE TROOPS UNDER HIS COMMAND, OF THE ONE PART; AND MAJOR ANDREW WILLIAMSON AND MAJOR JAMES MAYSON, COMMANDERS OF THE FORT AT NINETY-SIX FOR THEMSELVES AND THE TROOPS THEREIN UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE PROVINCIAL CONGRESS." (From R.W. Gibbes [comp.], Documentary History of the American Revolution. 3 vols. New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1855, I, 214-15.)

- 1st. That hostilities shall immediately cease on both sides.
- 2nd. That Major Williamson and Major Mayson shall march their men out of the Fort and deliver up their swivels.
- 3d. That the Fort shall be destroyed flat without damaging the houses therein, under the inspection of Capt. Patrick Cunningham and John Bowie, Esq., and the well filled up.
- 4th. That the differences between the people of this District and others disagreeing about the present public measures shall be submitted to his Excellency, our Governor, and the Council of Safety, and for that purpose that each party shall send dispatches to their superiors--that the dispatches shall be sent unsealed and the messenger of each party shall pass unmolested.
- 5th. That Major Robinson shall withdraw his men over Saluda, and there keep them embodied or disperse them as he pleaseth until his Excellency's orders be known.
- 6th. That no person of either party shall in the meantime be molested by the other party either in going home or otherwise.
- 7th. Should any reinforcements arrive to Major Williamson or Major Mayson, they also shall be bound by this cessation.
- 8th. That twenty days be allowed for the return of the messengers.
- 9th. That all prisoners taken by either party since the second day of this instant shall be immediately set at liberty.

In witness whereof the parties to these articles have set their hands and seals at Ninety-six this twenty-second day of November, one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five, and in the sixteenth year of his Majesty's reign.

Joseph Robinson.
A. Wm. Son.
James Mayson.

Present,
Patrick Cunningham.
Richard Pearis.
Andrew Pickens.
John Bowie.

APPENDIX E

"An acco^t of Arms, Ammunition & Stores taken from the Rebels, & now in the Posession [sic] of the Commisary [sic] at Ninety Six 19th June 1780" (From BPRO 30/11 Vol. 2(1).)

1	two Pounder
20	Blunderbusses
21	Swivells
638	Stand of Arms, fit & unfit for Service
15	Barrels of Powder
4	Boxes of Cartridges
1	Barrel of ditto
1	Box of ditto
1	Keg of ditto & part of 1 Keg d ^o
1	Barrel of Spikes
2	Boxes of Bullets
3	Kegs of d ^o not full
14	Large bars of Lead, each bar computed to weigh 180 ¹ / _b
12	Small Bars of ditto
2	Small Kegs of Shott
1/3	Barrel of --- ditto
8	Bags of --- ditto
2 1/2	Kegs of Cannister
1/2	Barrel of Flints
--	quantity of Gun Locks
215	Cartridge Boxes
63	Shot Bags
1	Pair Bullet Molds
578	Bayonetts
11	Shovels
2	Spades
2	Cross Cutt Saws
1	Whip ditto
1	Keg of small Hinges
25	Pair of door Hunges
	Small quantity of Nails
3	Drums
1	Gouge
6	Pickaxes
8	Pair Hand Cuffs
5	Iron Potts

John Cunningham
Com^d PStores

APPENDIX F

Field Officers of the Day, Major General Greene's command, during the Siege of Ninety Six, May 22-June 19, 1781. (From "General Orders Commencing 1st April 1781 and Ending 25th July 1781 Inclusive [Nathanael Greene Orderly Book]." Microfilm. The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Officers</u>
May 23	Col. Cambly, Adjut Selden
May 24	Lieut. Col. Hawes, Adjut. Boyd
May 25	Major Ridley, Adjut. Perkins
May 26	Major Hardman, Adjut Duvall
May 27	Major Hill, Adjut. Sellden
May 28	Col. Gunby, Adjut. Boyd
May 29	Lt. Col. Campbell, Adjut. Perkins
May 30	Lt. Col. Howard, Adjut Duvall
May 31	Major Hardman, Adjut. Sellden
June 1	Major Snead, Adjut. Boyd
June 2	Major Hill, Adjut Perkins
June 3	Colonel Gunby, Adjut Duvall
June 4	Lt. Col. Campbell, Adjut Sellden
June 5	Lt. Col. Howard, Adjut Boyd
June 6	Major Hardman, Adjut Perkins
June 7	Major Snead, Adjut Duvall
June 8	Major Hill, Adjut Sellden
June 9	Col. Gunby, Adjut Boyd
June 10	Lt. Col. Campbell, Adjut Perkins
June 11	Lt. Col. Howard, Adjut Duvall
June 12	Major Hardman, Adjut Sellden
June 13	Major Snead, Adjut Boyd
June 14	Major Hill, Adjut Perkins
June 15	Lt. Col. Campbell, Adjut Duvall
June 16	Lt. Col. Howard, Adjut Selden
June 17	Major Hardman, Adjut Boyd
June 18	Major Snead, Adjut Perkins
June 19	Major Hill, Adjut [blank]*
June 20	Lt. Col. Campbell, Adjut [blank]*

* Both Lieutenants Duval and Selden were wounded in the assault on Star Redoubt June 18.

APPENDIX G

Passwords and Countersigns of the American command before Ninety Six, during the siege, May 22-June 19, 1781. (From "General Orders Commencing 1st April 1781 and Ending 25th July Inclusive [Nathanael Greene Orderly Book]." Microfilm. The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Parole (Password)</u>	<u>Sign (Counter)</u>
May 23	Chowan	Dan. Dee
May 24	Dorchester	Esop. Elias
May 25	Echo	Flora. Fornax
May 26	Fortune	Glory. Honor
May 27	Industry	Integrity. Interest
May 28	Impartial	Luck. Laurelis
May 29	Leonidas	Mars. Mattin
May 30	Marquis	Neptune. Order
May 31	Oxford	Pope. Pickens
June 1	Quintius	Regulus. Romulers
June 2	Salisbury	Saluda. Savannah
June 3	Truimph	Union. Universe
June 4	Washington	War. Wildfire
June 5	Xenophon	Youngster. Zealot
June 6	Augustine	Pensacola. Mobile
June 7	Brilliant	Barrell. Bottle
June 8	Brandy	Clarett. Cash
June 9	Burgundy	Cicero. Cesar
June 10	Clio	Duty. Detail
June 11	Democracy	Exercise. Exploit
June 12	Exhibition	France. Florence
June 13	Flourish	Fortitude. Fortune
June 14	Government	Gallantry. Glory
June 15	Harlequin	Hay. Harvest
June 16	Juvenile	Ida. Iuno
June 17	Kennebec	Kent. Key
June 18	Lacedamon	Lip. Laurells
June 19	Locke	Milton. Newton
June 20	Manhatten	Ninety-Off
June 21	Onandaga	Pupil. Pastime

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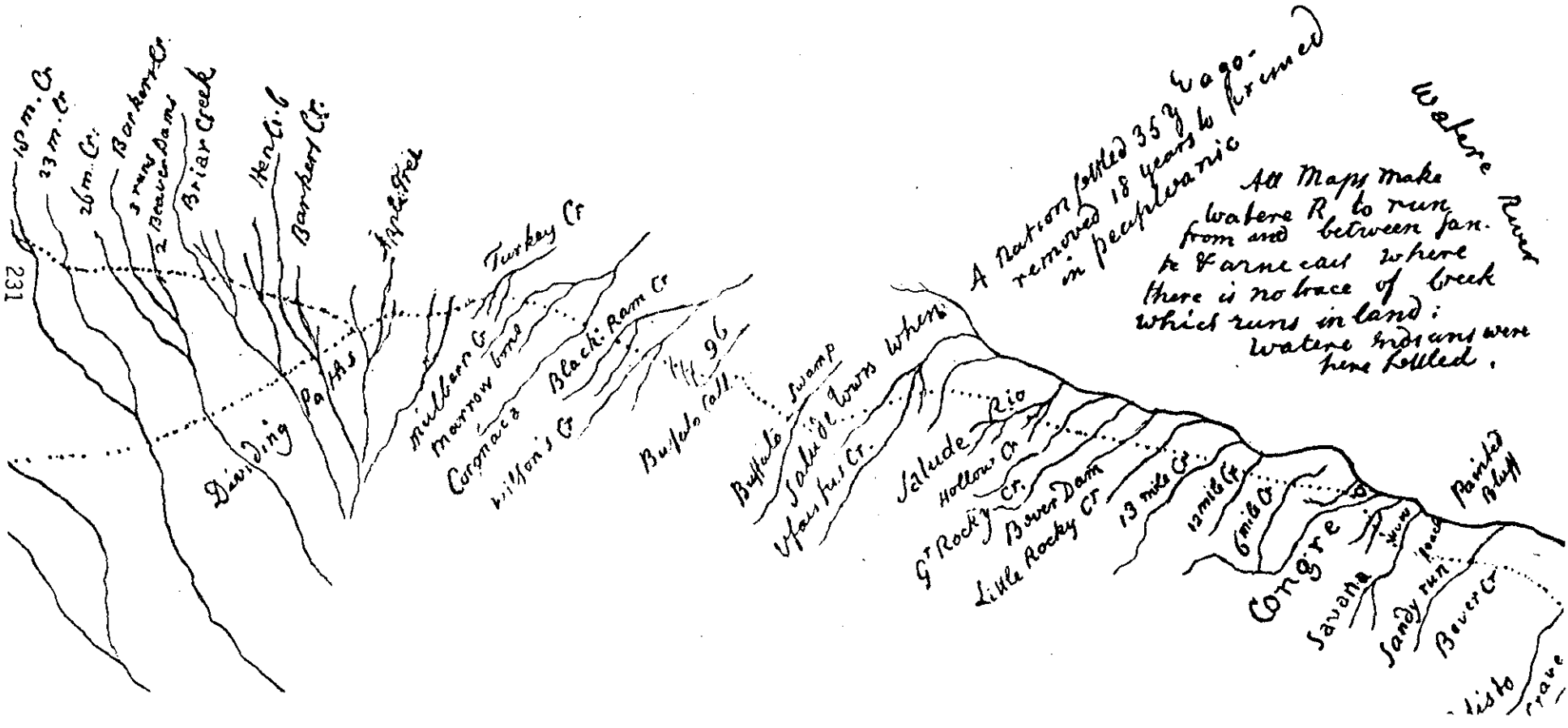
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ILLUSTRATIONS

Illustration 1.

A section of George Hunter's map, 1730, showing part of the route of the Cherokee Path and stream names up to "96."

From Alexander S. Salley, Jr., George Hunter's Map of the Cherokee Country and the Path thereunto in 1730. Columbia, 1917.



A Nation settled 35 y ago.
removed 18 years to present
in peeplesonic

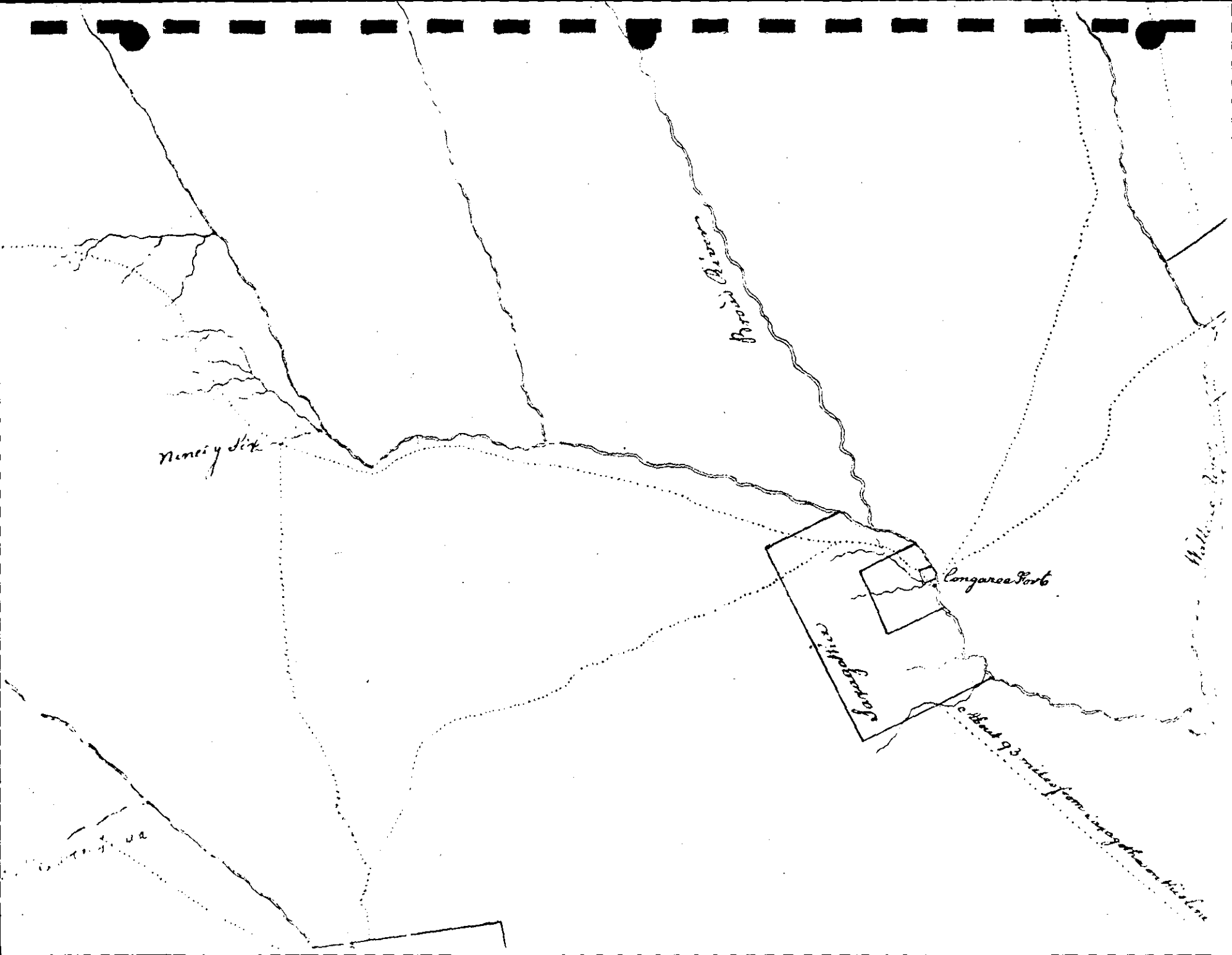
All Maps make
waters R. to run
from and between fan-
te & Arne cat where
there is no trace of creek
which runs in land;
waters Indians were
here settled.

Water River

Illustration 2.

The area of Ninety Six and Congaree, showing
the route of the Cherokee Path.

Excerpt from George Haig's map of the colony
of South Carolina, 1751. British Public Record
Office. Copy in the Map Division, Library of
Congress.



Broad River

Nancy St.

Longarea Fort

Longarea Fort

c. about 93 miles from Longarea Fort to the station

Middle River

Illustration 3.

Governor James Glen of South Carolina.

Courtesy of the South Carolina Historical
Society.



Illustration 4.

Ninety Six and the courthouse as it
appeared on a 1773 map entitled
"A Map of the Province of South
Carolina. . . ."

Map Division, Library of Congress.

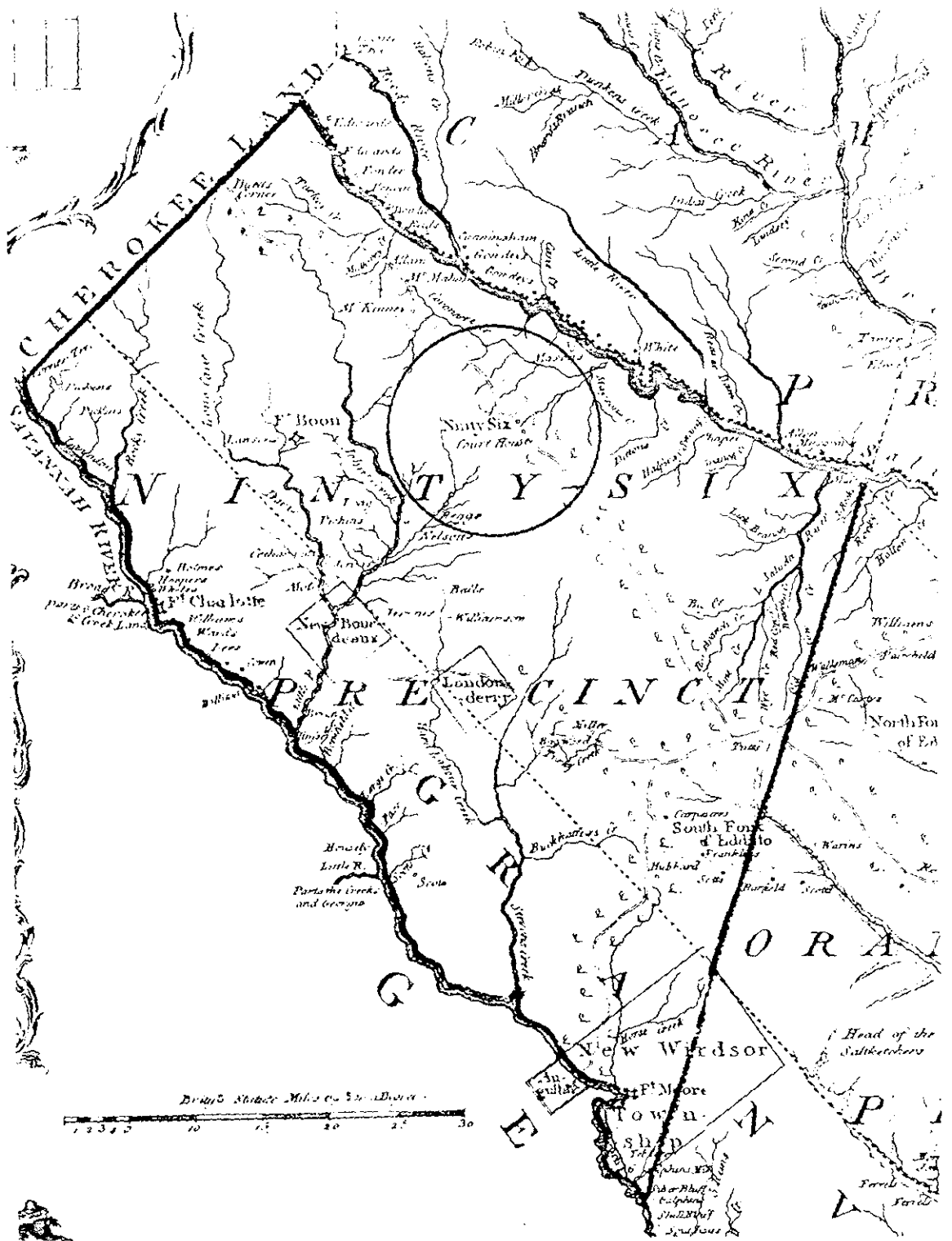


Illustration 5.

William Henry Drayton.

Courtesy of the South Carolina
Historical Society.

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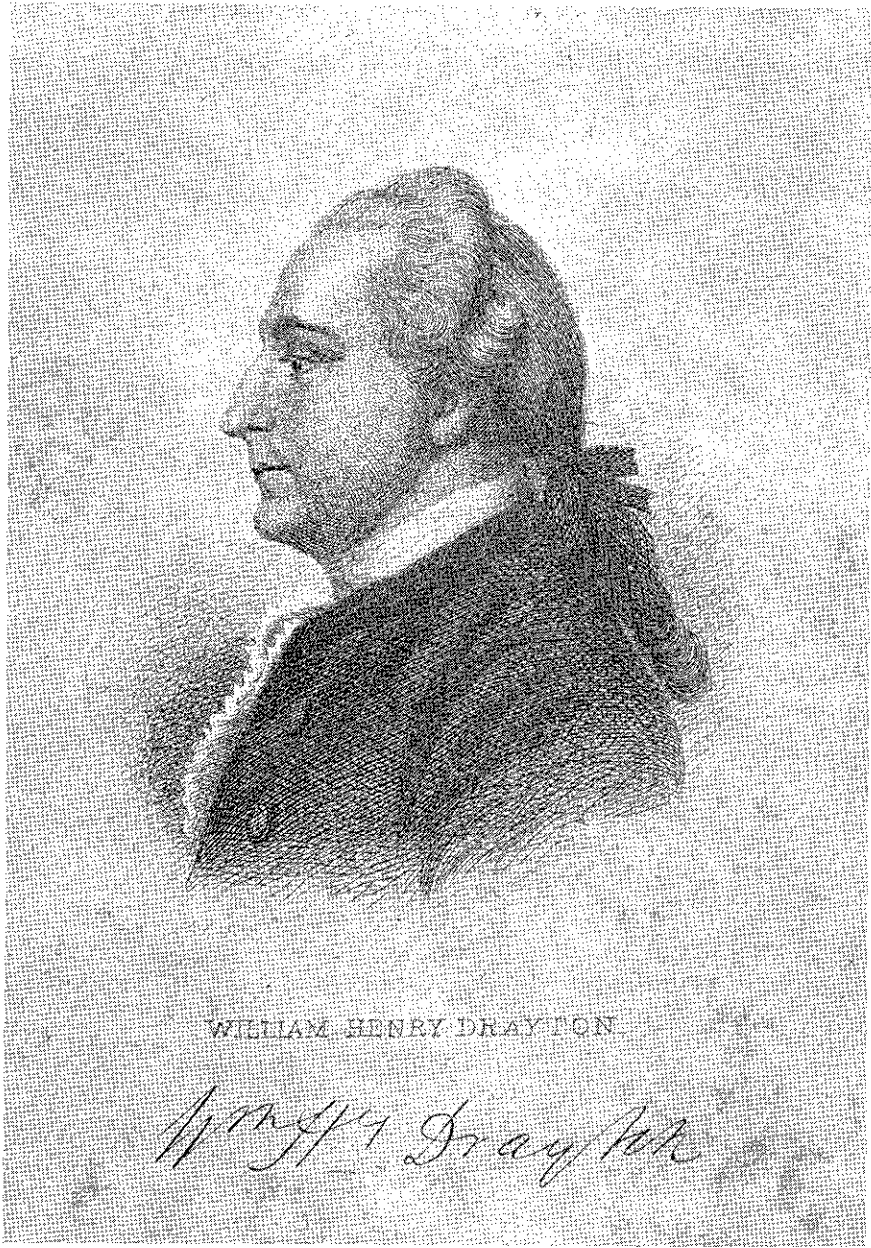


Illustration 6.

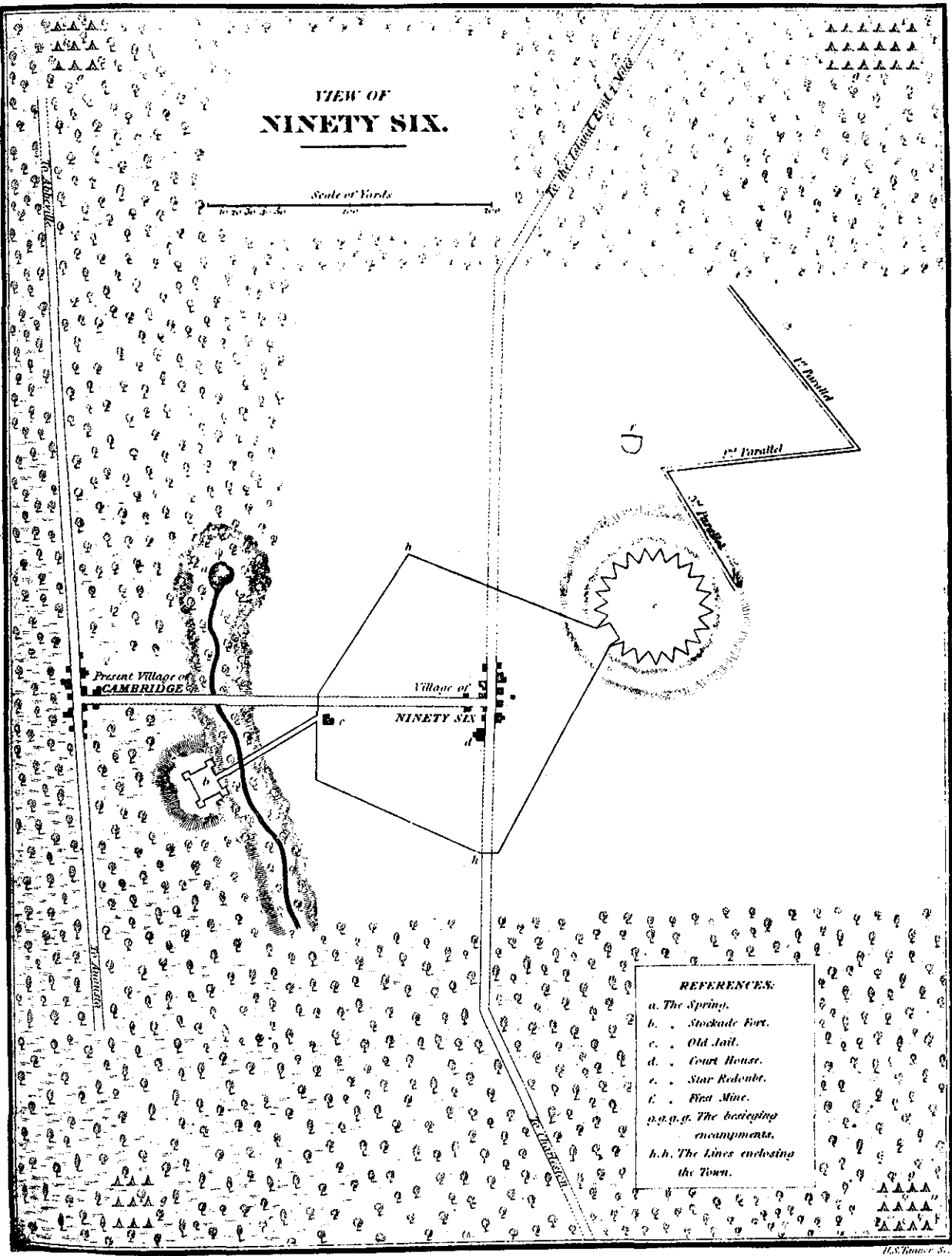
The environs of Ninety Six,
September-November, 1775.

From John Drayton, Memoirs of the
American Revolution. Charleston, 1821.

Illustration 7.

Earliest known map of the Siege
of Ninety Six, prepared to accompany
William Johnson's Sketches of the
Life and Correspondence of Nathanael
Greene. Charleston, 1822.

VIEW OF NINETY SIX.



REFERENCES:

- a. The Spring.
- b. Stockade Fort.
- c. Old Jail.
- d. Court House.
- e. Star Redoubt.
- f. Fire Mine.
- g.g.g. The bestowing encampments.
- h.h. The Lines enclosing the Town.

H.S. Turner S.

Illustration 8.

Varieties of star redoubts with eight salients.

From The Field Engineer of M. le Chevalier de Clairac. London, 1773.

STAR FORTS

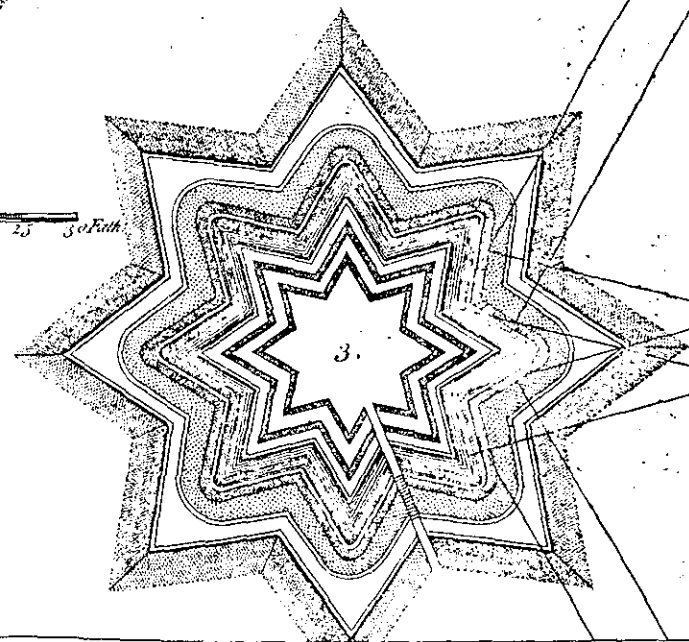
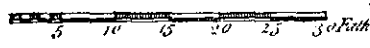
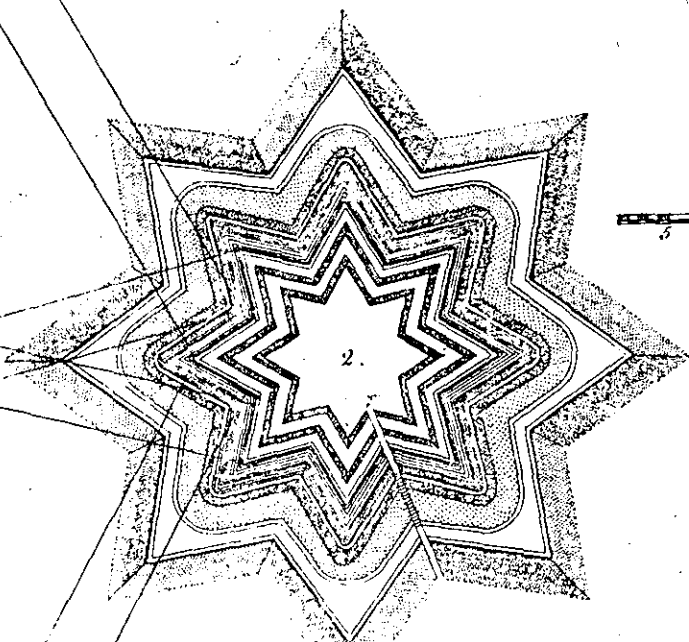
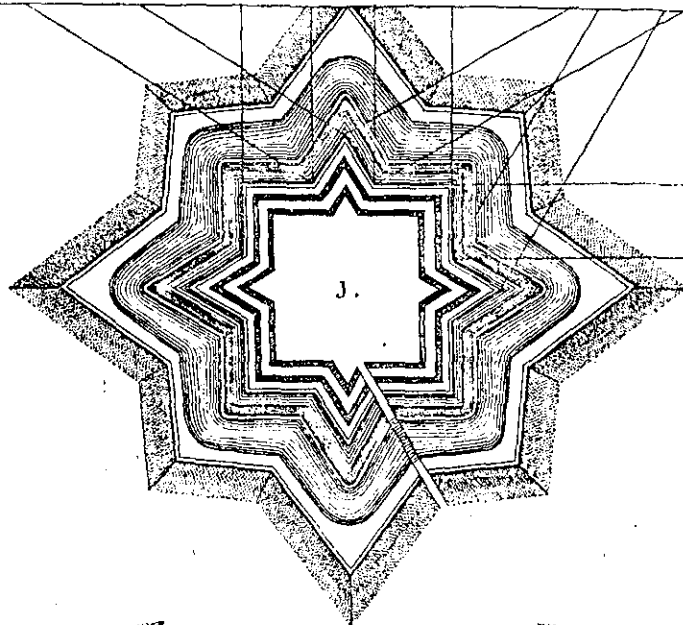
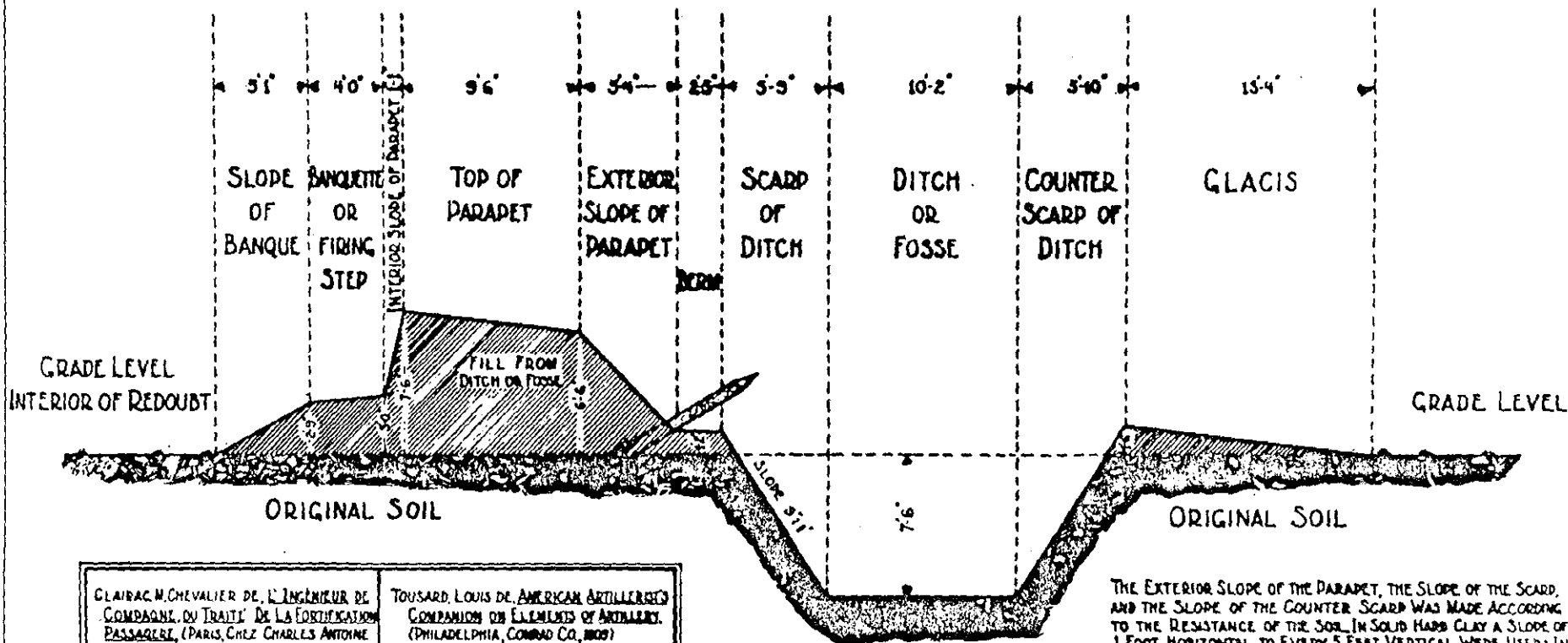


Illustration 9.

Cross-sectional view of a redoubt.

From Thor Borresen, "Drawings Illustrating
Field Fortifications of Revolutionary War Period"
(Unpublished manuscript dated 1942 in the library
of Colonial National Historical Park).

TYPICAL CROSS SECTION OF A REDOUBT



CLAIRAC, M. CHEVALIER DE, L'INGENIEUR DE COMPAGNE, DU TRAITÉ DE LA FORTIFICATION PASSAGERE, (PARIS, CHEZ CHARLES ANTOINE JOMBERT, 1762), SECOND EDITION

TOUSARD, LOUIS DE, AMERICAN ARTILLERIES COMPANION OR ELEMENTS OF ARTILLERY, (PHILADELPHIA, CONRAD CO., 1809) 2 VOLUMES WITH ATLAS.

LOCHÉ, LOUIS, ELEMENTS OF FIELD FORTIFICATION, (PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR SOLD BY T. CADELL, LONDON, 1783)

LALLEMAND, H., A TREATISE OF ARTILLERY, (NEW YORK, 1820) 2 VOLUMES

THE EXTERIOR SLOPE OF THE PARAPET, THE SLOPE OF THE SCARP, AND THE SLOPE OF THE COUNTER SCARP WAS MADE ACCORDING TO THE RESISTANCE OF THE SOIL. IN SOLID HARD CLAY A SLOPE OF 1 FOOT HORIZONTAL TO EVERY 5 FEET VERTICAL WERE USED; IN SANDY SOIL 1 FOOT HORIZONTAL TO EVERY 1 FOOT VERTICAL WERE USED; IN PERMANENT OR SEMI-PERMANENT FORTIFICATIONS A SLOPE OF 3/4 TO 1 OR 1 TO 1 COVERED WITH A LAYER OF SOB WERE USED.

THE ABOVE NAMED BOOKS CONTAIN DATA PERTAINING TO REDOUBT CONSTRUCTION

SEE ABOVE REFERENCES

Illustration 10.

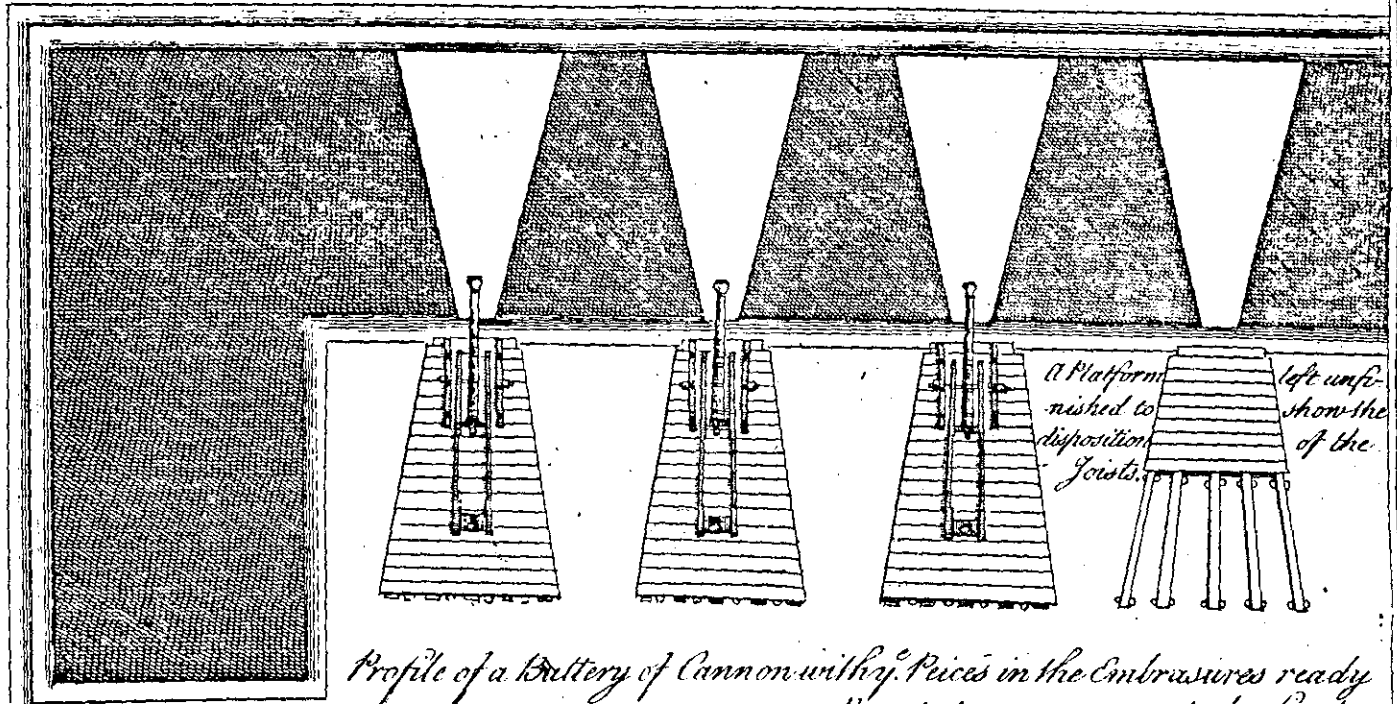
Cannon battery.

From Guillaume Le Blond, A Treatise of
Artillery. London, 1746.

Plan of a Battery of Cannon.

Fig. 1.

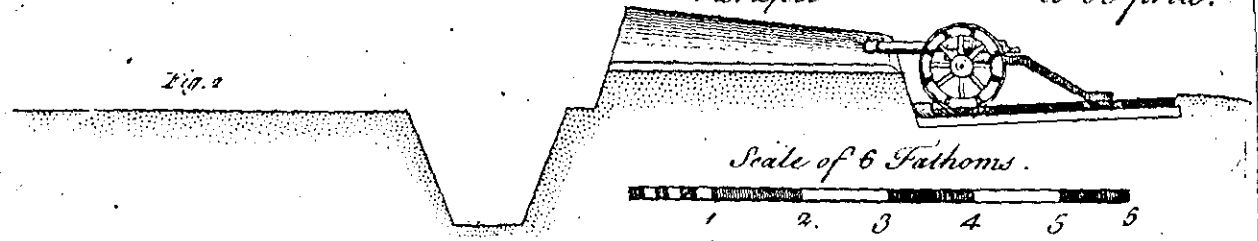
Fosse or Ditch.



A Platform left unfinished to show the disposition of the Joists.

Profile of a Battery of Cannon with 4 Pieces in the Embrasures ready to be fired.

Fig. 2



Scale of 6 Fathoms.

1 2 3 4 5 6

Illustration 11.

Details for placing cannon platforms.

From Thor Borresen, "Drawings Illustrating
Field Fortifications of Revolutionary War Period"
(unpublished manuscript dated 1942 in the library
of Colonial National Historical Park).

FIG. 1

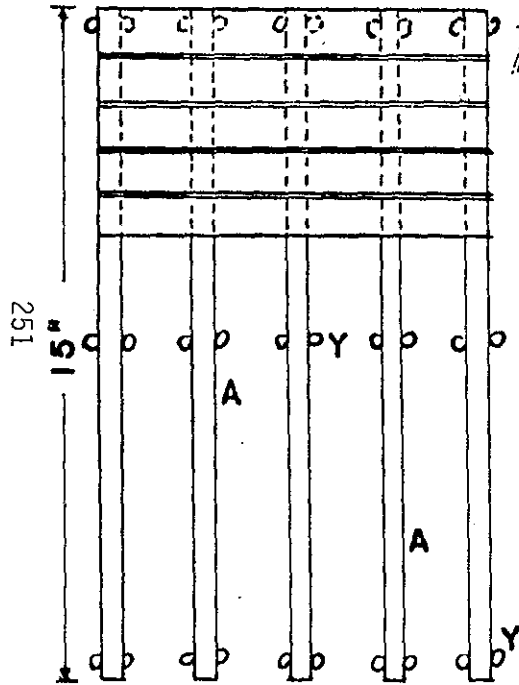
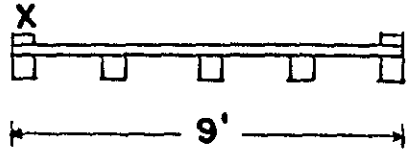


FIG. 2

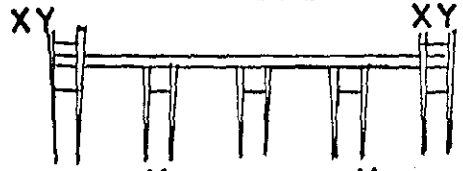
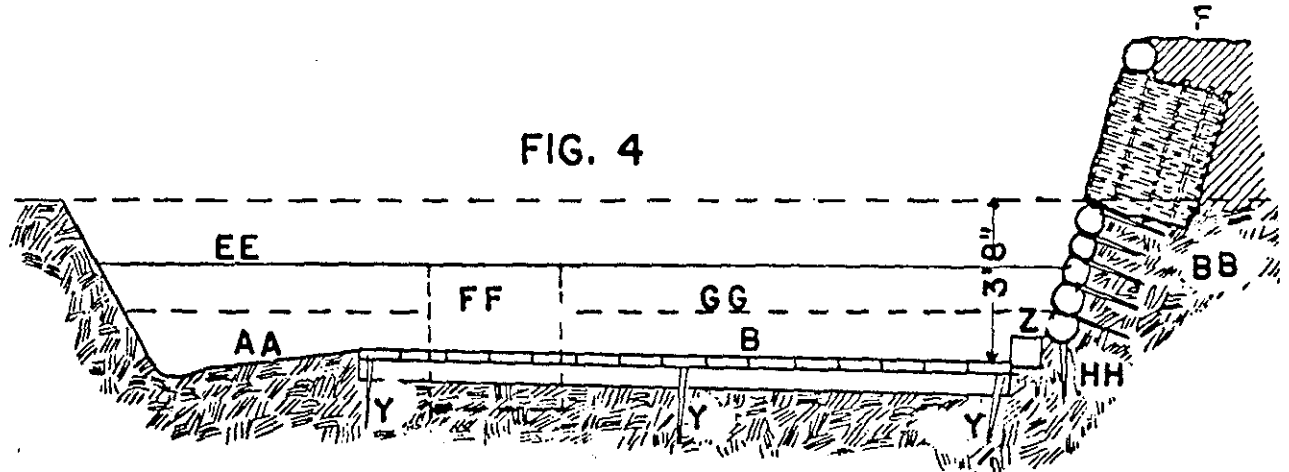


FIG. 3

FIG. 4



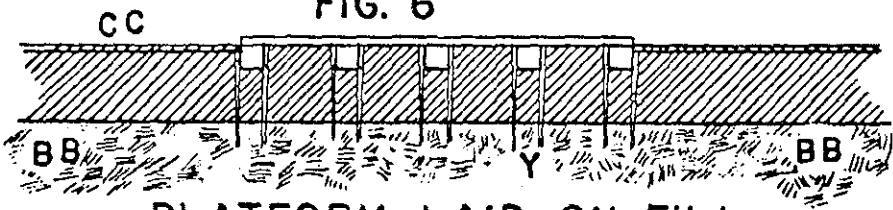
PLATFORM FOR CANNON

FIG. 5



CROSS SECTION OF PLATFORM

FIG. 6



PLATFORM LAID ON FILL

Illustration 12.

Construction of a traverse revetted
with sod, saucissons, or gabions.

From Thor Borresen, "Drawings Illustrating Field
Fortifications of Revolutionary War Period"
(unpublished manuscript dated 1942 in the library
of Colonial National Historical Park.)

TRAVERSE

FIG. 1

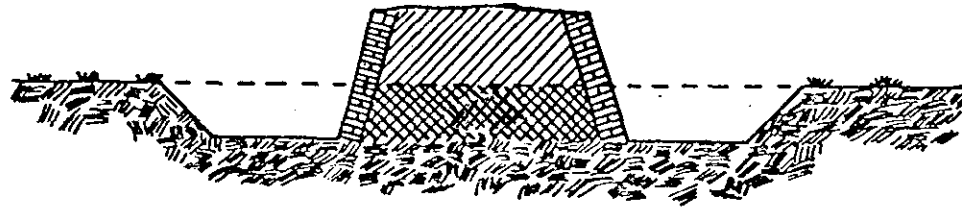


FIG. 2

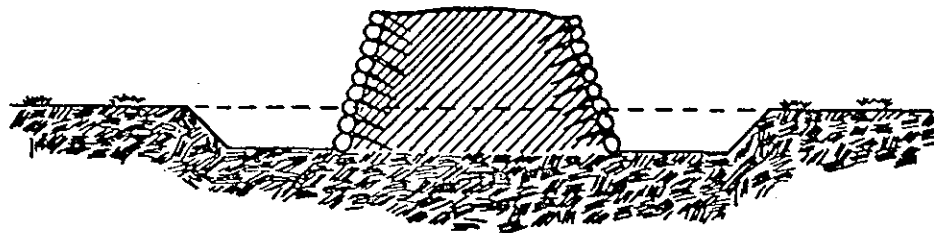


FIG. 3

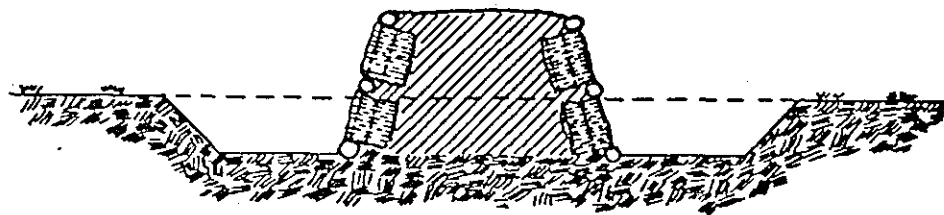


Illustration 13.

Construction of saps.

From Louis de Tousard, American
Artillerist's Companion. Philadelphia,
1809.

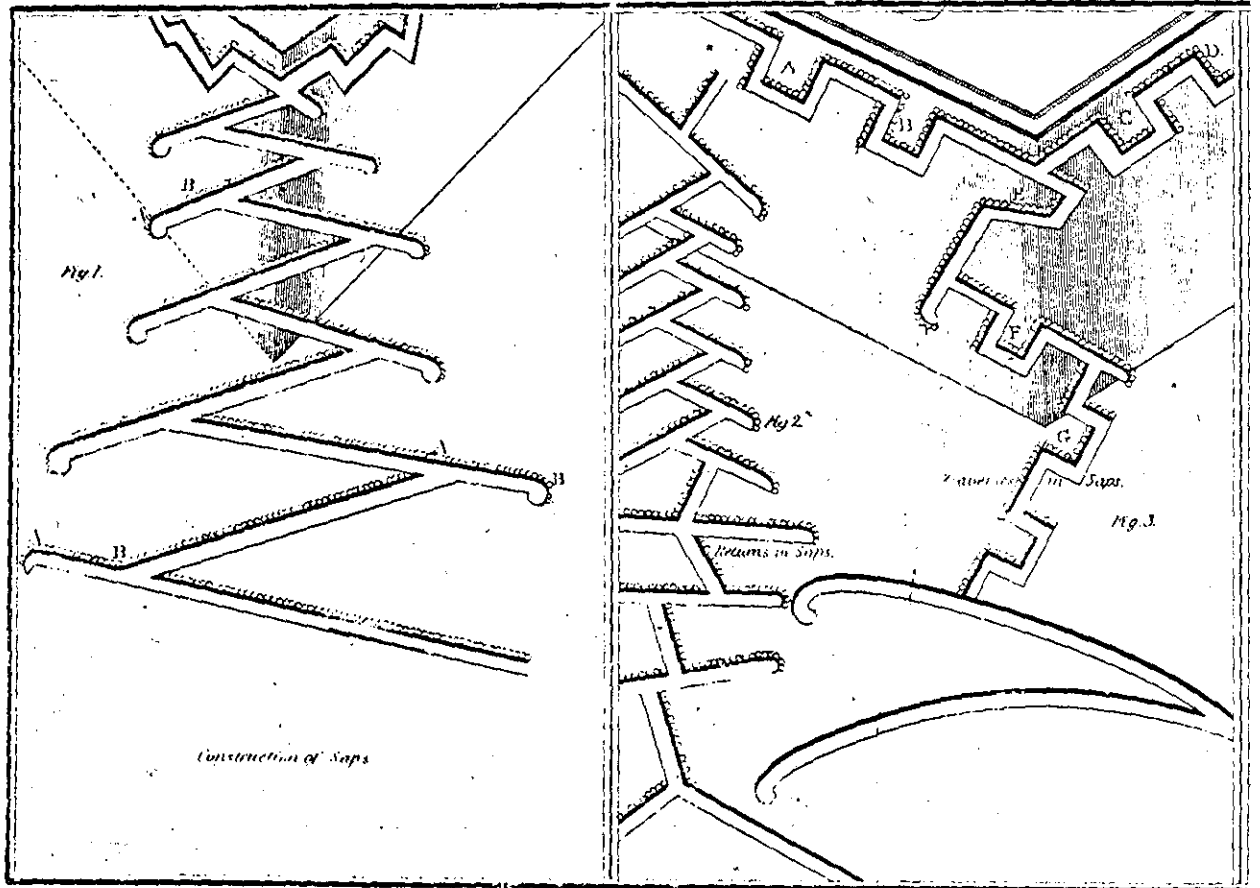


Illustration 14.

Major General Nathanael Greene.

Courtesy of the Rhode Island
Historical Society.

LIBRARY



Illustration 15.

Lieutenant Colonel Lord
Francis Rawdon.

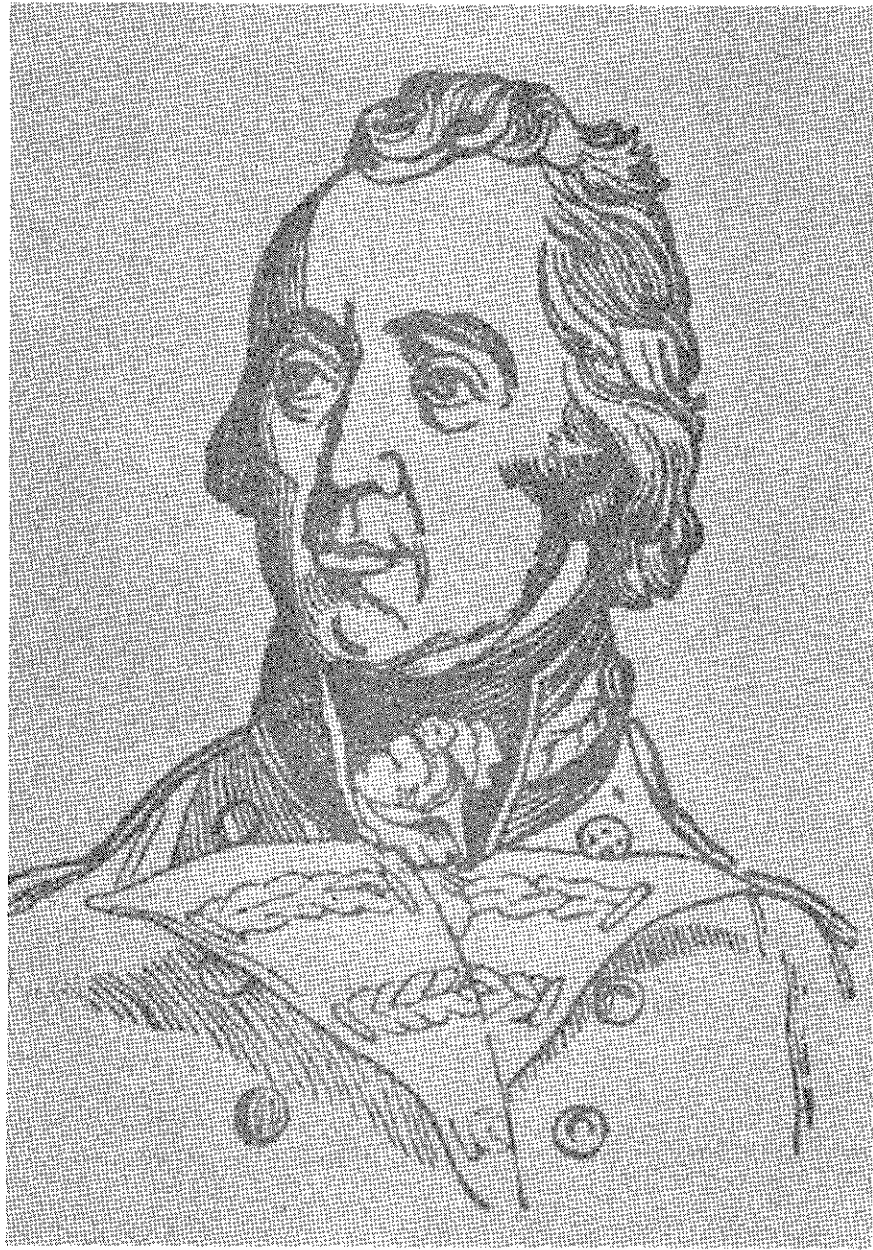


Illustration 16.

Colonel Thaddeus Kosciuszko.



Illustration 17.

Lieutenant Colonel Henry Lee.



Illustration 18.

Colonel Otho Holland Williams,
Adjutant to General Greene.



Illustration 19.

Brigadier General Thomas Sumter.

Courtesy of the South Carolina
Historical Society.



Illustration 20.

Brigadier General Andrew Pickens.

L
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Illustration 21.

Brigadier General Francis Marion.

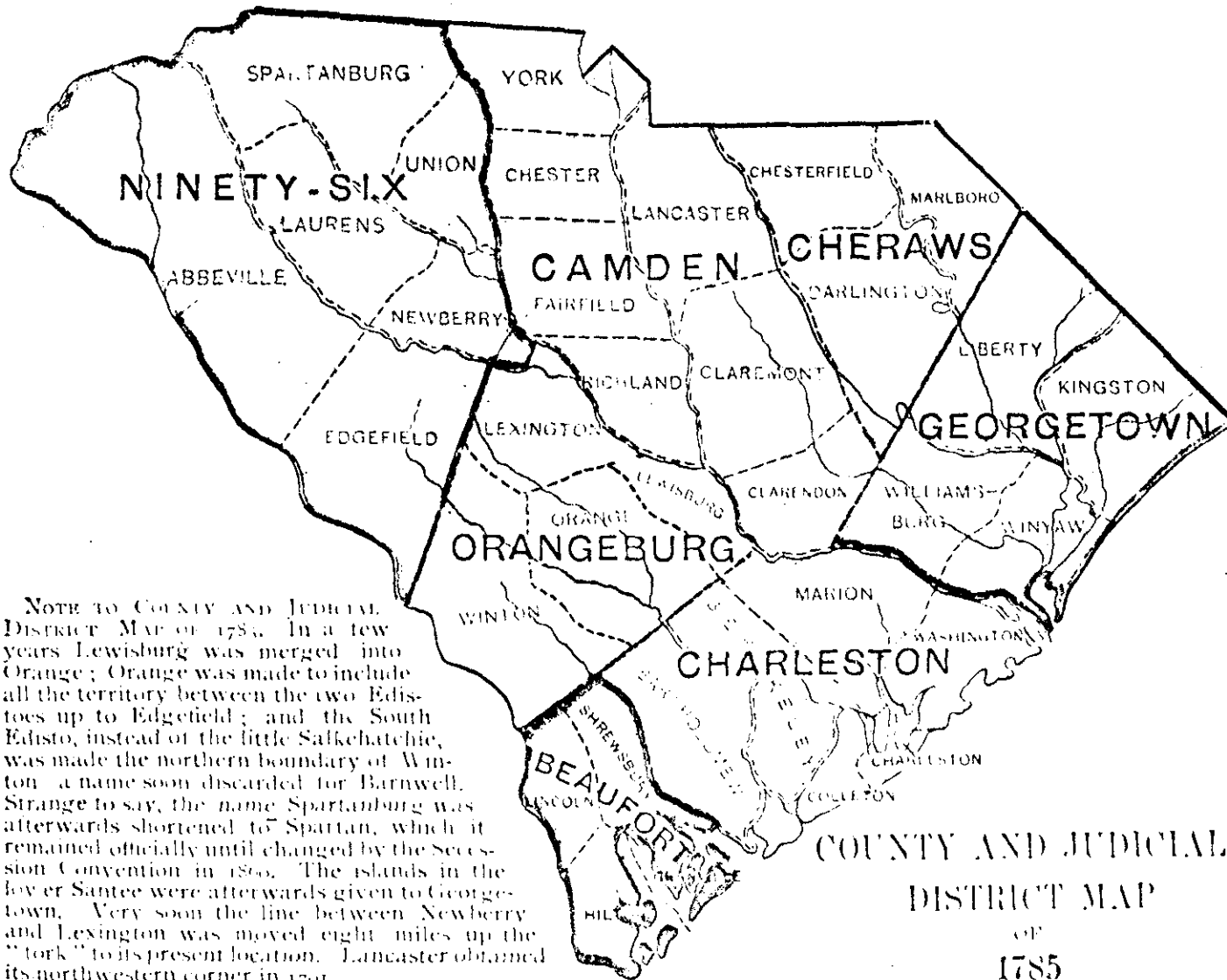
Courtesy of the South Carolina
Historical Society.



Illustration 22.

Map showing Ninety Six Judicial
District, 1785.

Map Division, Library of Congress.



NOTE TO COUNTY AND JUDICIAL DISTRICT MAP OF 1785. In a few years Lewisburg was merged into Orange; Orange was made to include all the territory between the two Edisto's up to Edgetfield; and the South Edisto, instead of the little Salkehatchie, was made the northern boundary of Winton—a name soon discarded for Barnwell. Strange to say, the name Spartanburg was afterwards shortened to Spartan, which it remained officially until changed by the Secession Convention in 1862. The islands in the lower Santee were afterwards given to Georgetown. Very soon the line between Newberry and Lexington was moved eight miles up the "fork" to its present location. Lancaster obtained its northwestern corner in 1701.

COUNTY AND JUDICIAL
DISTRICT MAP
OF
1785

Illustration 23.

Map showing "Ninety Six or Cambridge
C.H." Excerpt from "The State of
South Carolina from the best Authorities,
1796."

Map Division, Library of Congress.

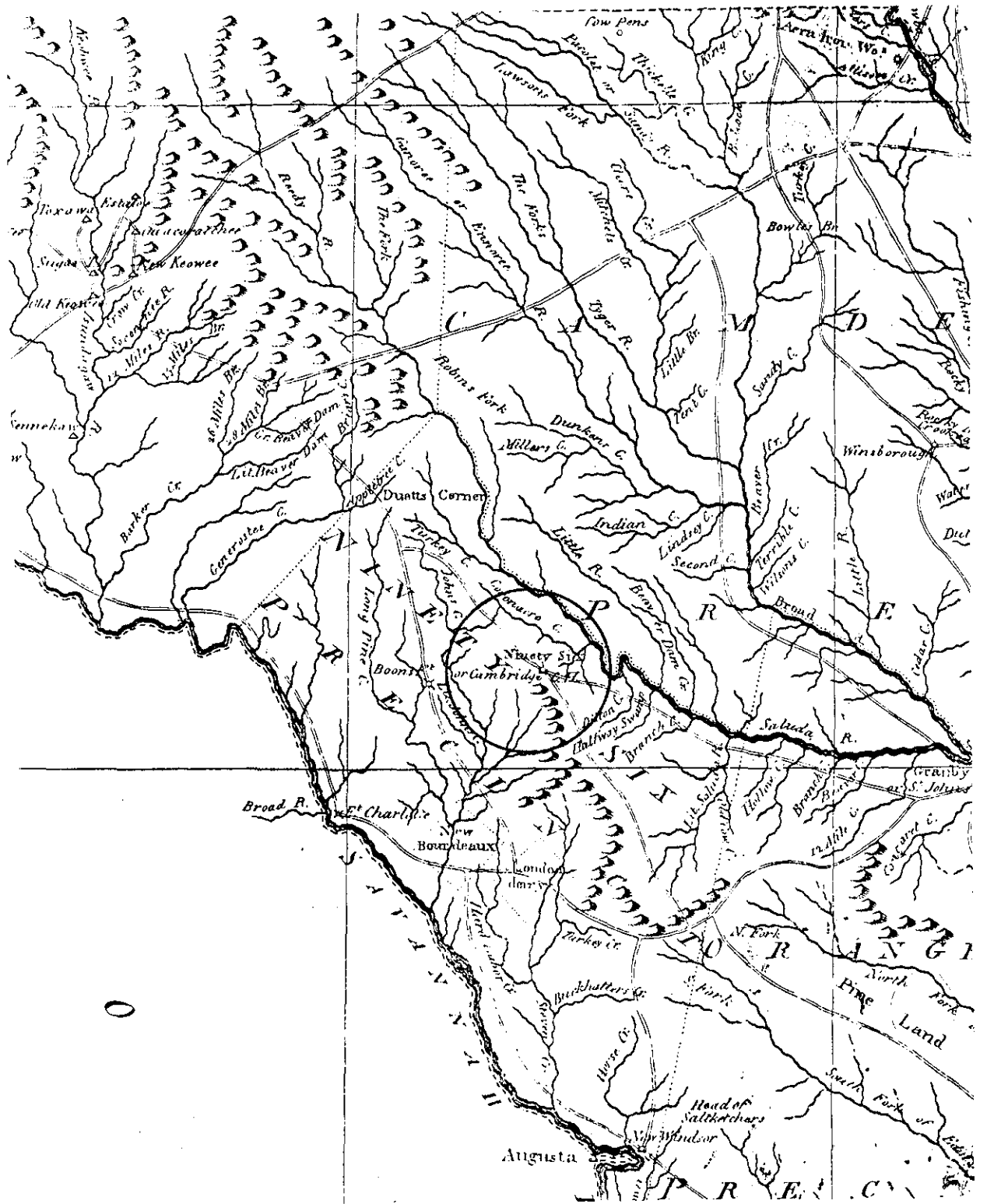


Illustration 24.

Map view of Cambridge with its "Academy"
and location of the "Old British Fort."
Excerpt from "A Map of South Carolina,"
drawn by John Wilson, 1822.

Map Division, Library of Congress.

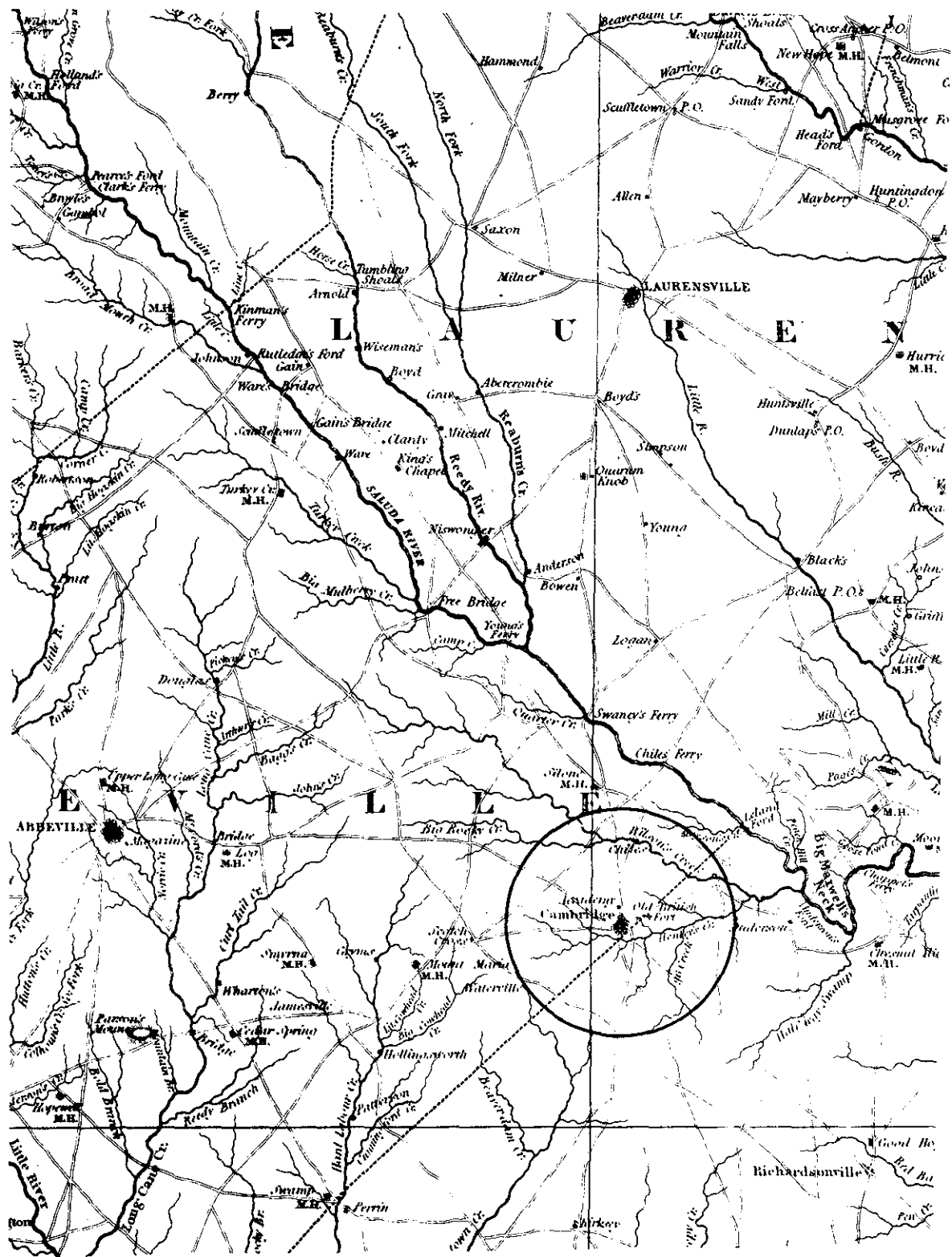
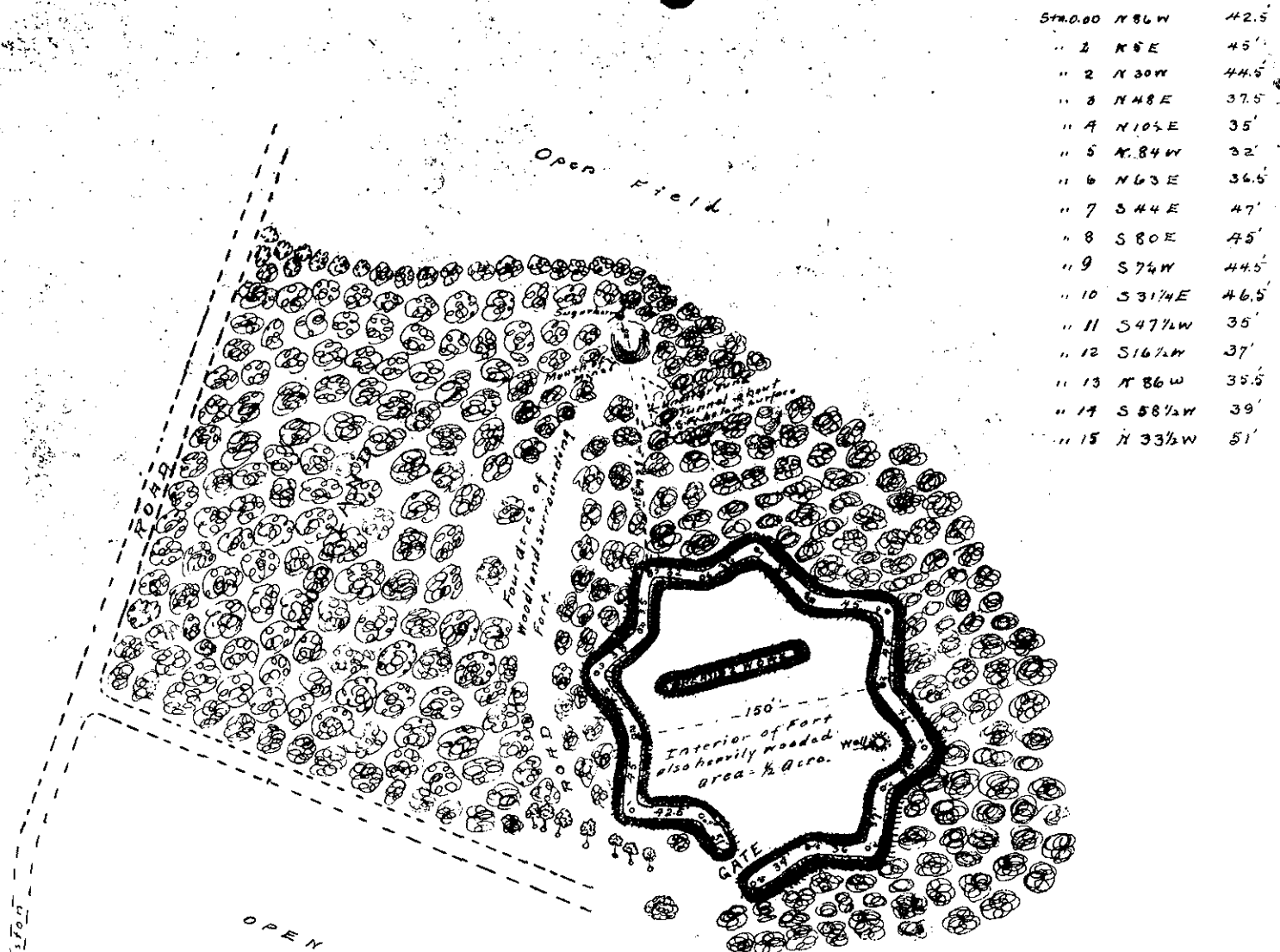


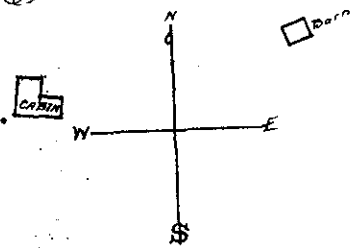
Illustration 25.

The star fort as it appeared about 1921.
The structure was often locally designated
"Fort Ninety Six."

Plat by Thomas C. Anderson. Courtesy of
Louise Watson.



< PLAN >
 OF THE
OLD STAR FORT.
 or Fort Ninety-Six, Ninety-Six, S.C.
 Scale 80 Feet = 1 Inch *Thos. C. Anderson C.E.*



Map No. 1.

The Country above Ninety Six, circa 1750-1780,
showing the route of the Cherokee Path and Major
Cognate Trails.

Compiled by Jerome A. Greene.

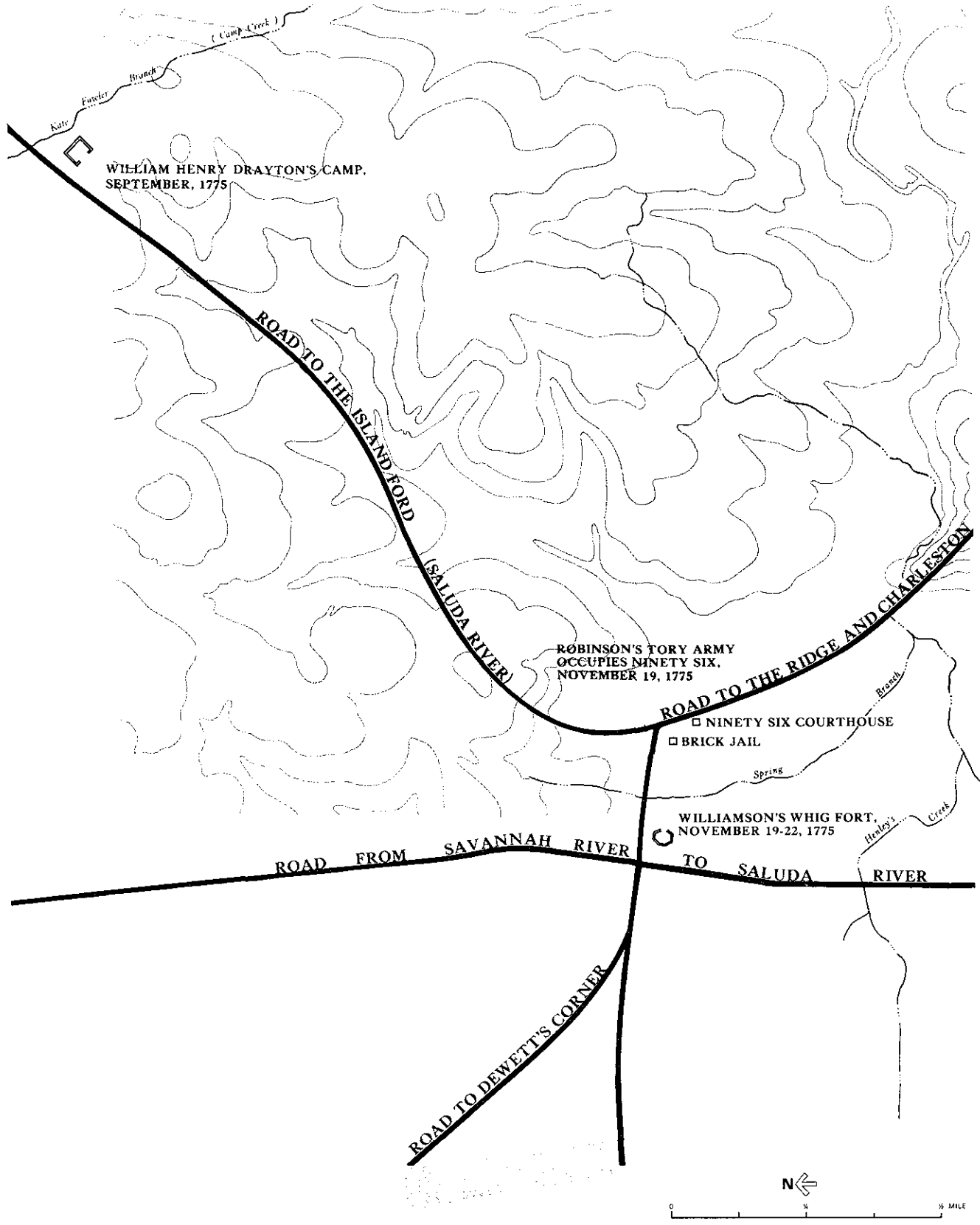
Drawn by Robert H. Todd.

Map No. 2.

Tories versus Whigs around Ninety Six, September-
November, 1775.

Compiled by Jerome A. Greene.

Drawn by Robert H. Todd.



**TORIES VERSUS WHIGS AROUND
NINETY SIX, SEPTEMBER-NOVEMBER, 1775**
 ADAPTED FROM JOHN DRAYTON, MEMOIRS OF THE
 AMERICAN REVOLUTION, 1821. Vol. 1, Opposite page 394
 NINETY SIX NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE, SOUTH CAROLINA

Map No. 3.

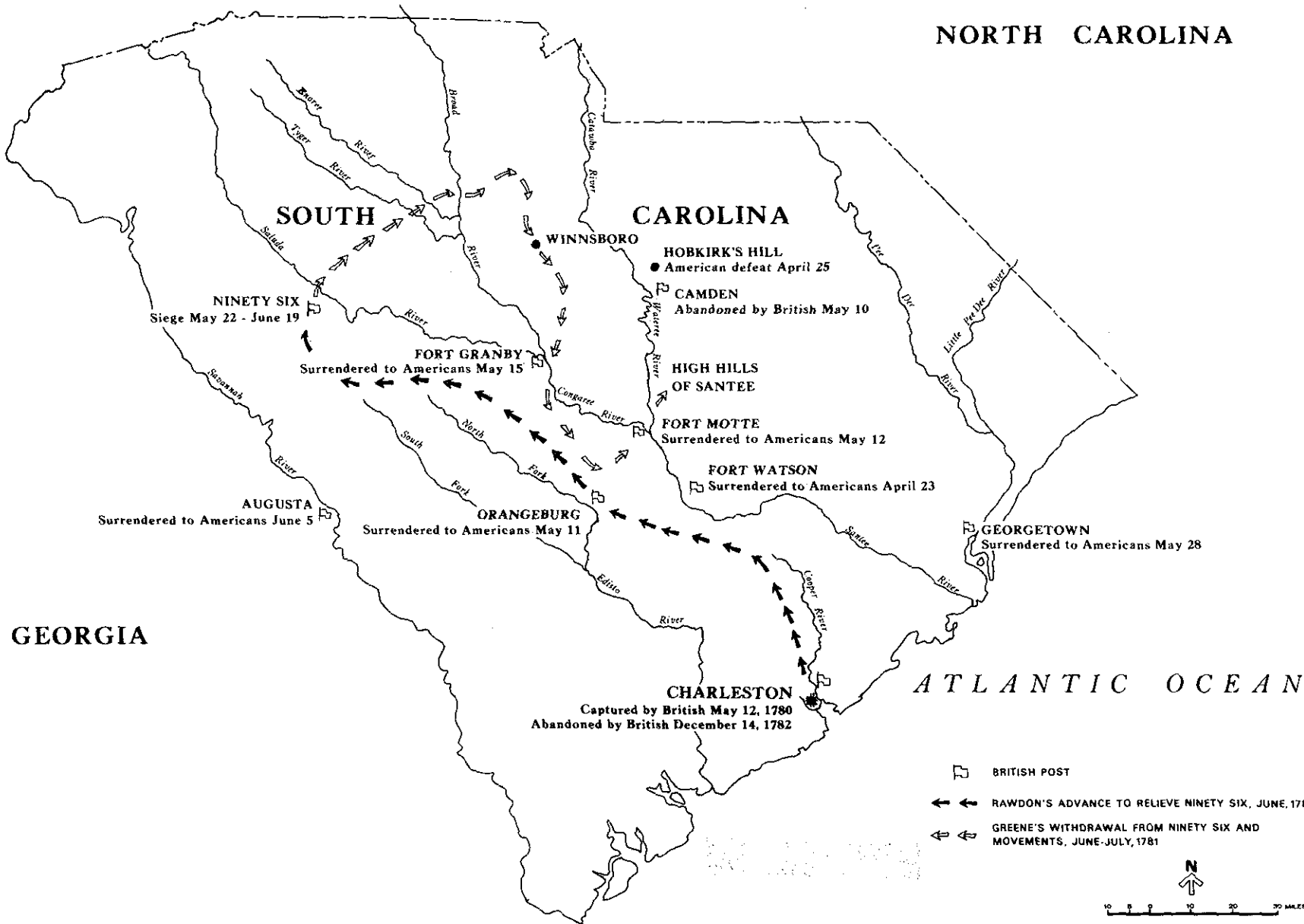
Movement of the British and American
Armies, June-July, 1781.

Compiled by Jerome A. Greene.

Drawn by Robert H. Todd.



NORTH CAROLINA



MOVEMENT OF THE BRITISH AND AMERICAN ARMIES, JUNE-JULY, 1781

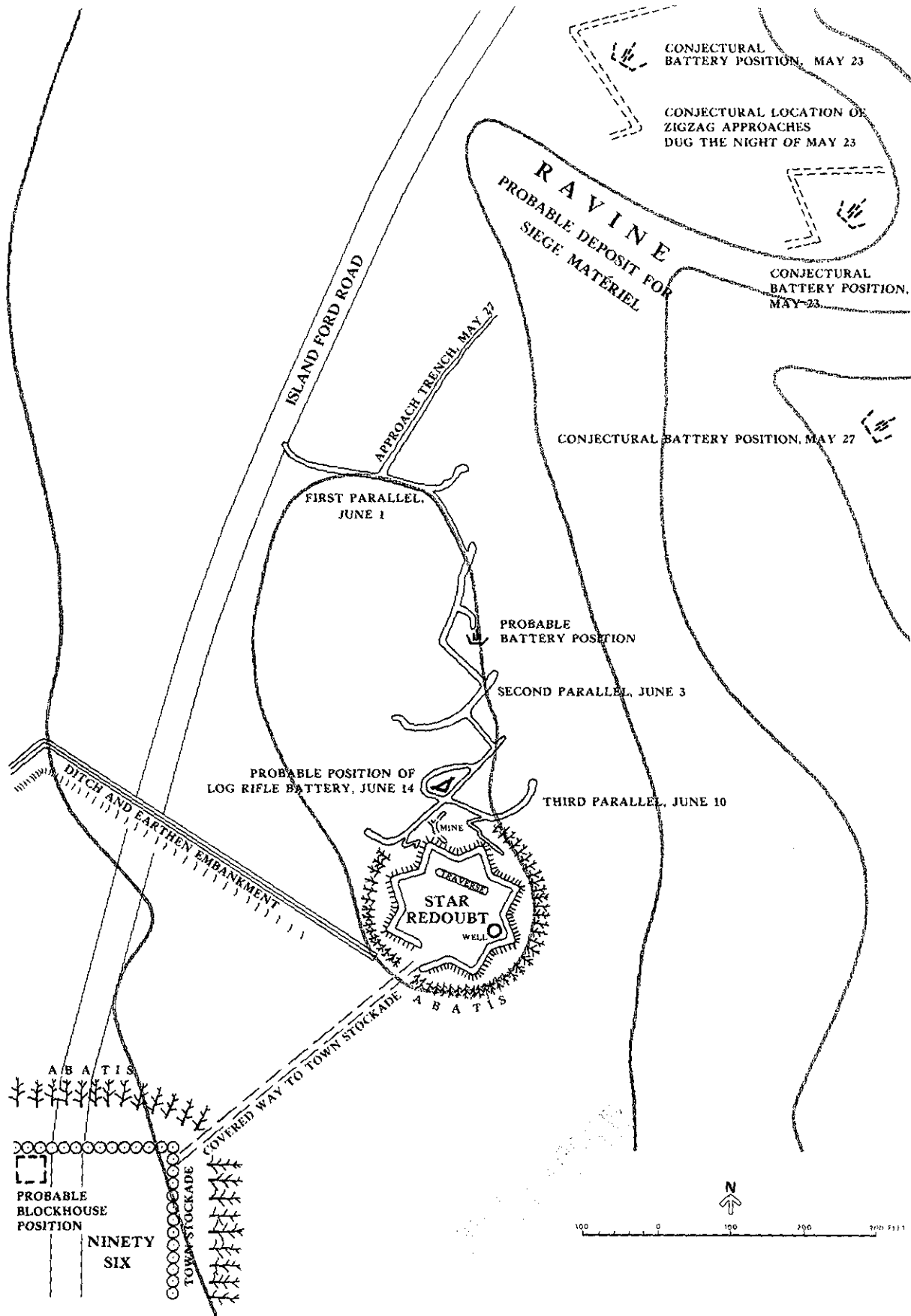
NINETY SIX NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE, SOUTH CAROLINA

Map No. 4.

The Attack on Star Redoubt. The Siege of
Ninety Six, May-June, 1781.

Compiled by Jerome A. Greene.

Drawn by Robert H. Todd.



THE ATTACK ON STAR REDOUBT, THE SIEGE OF NINETY SIX, MAY-JUNE, 1781

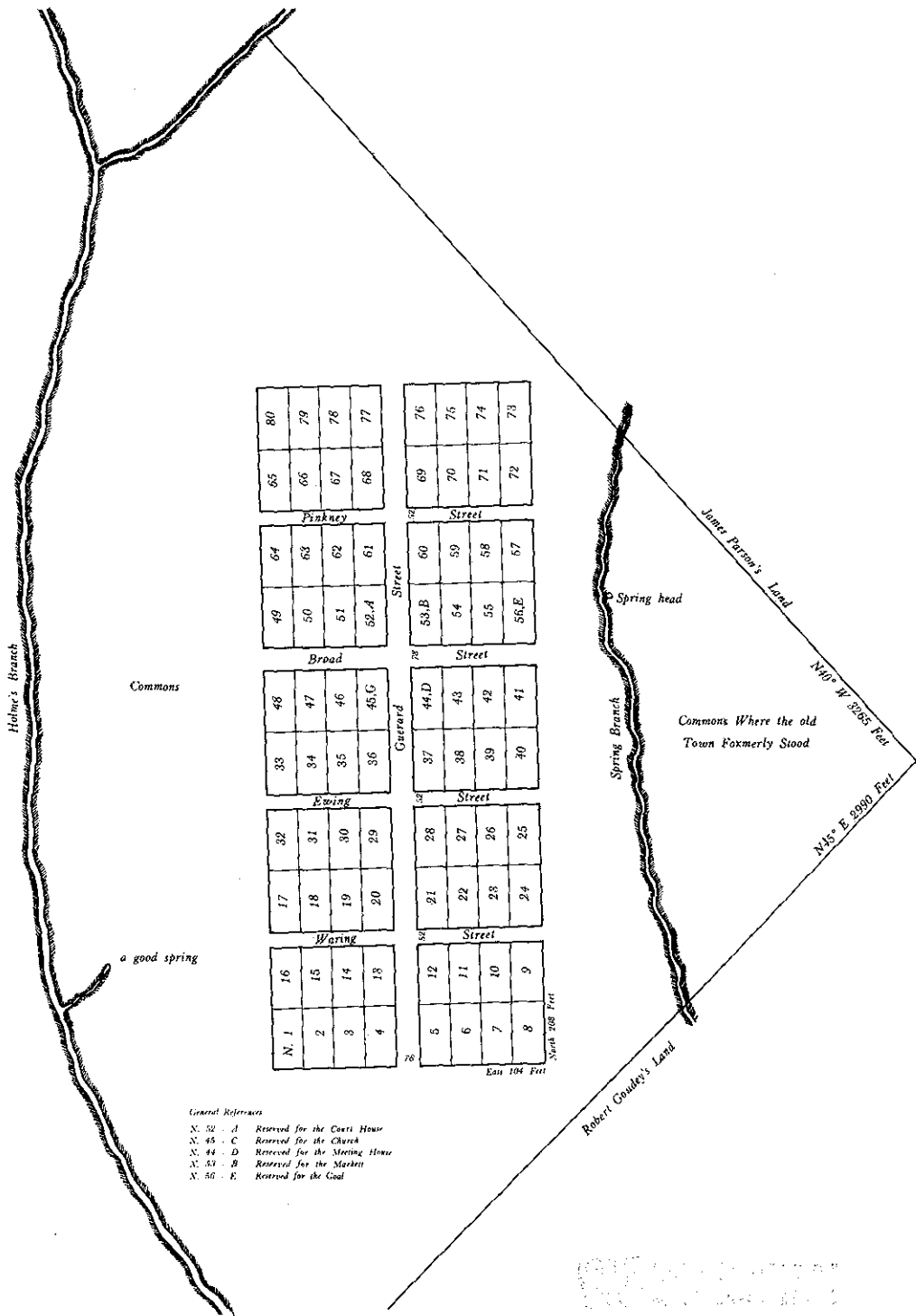
NINETY SIX NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE, SOUTH CAROLINA

Map No. 5.

Plat of New Ninety Six Village, 1783.
Renamed Cambridge in 1787.

Compiled by Jerome A. Greene.

Drawn by Robert H. Todd.

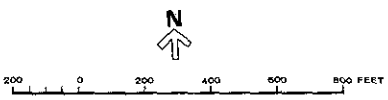


- General References
- N. 52 - A Reserved for the Court House
 - N. 45 - C Reserved for the Church
 - N. 44 - D Reserved for the Meeting House
 - N. 53 - B Reserved for the Market
 - N. 50 - E Reserved for the God

**PLAT OF NEW NINETY SIX VILLAGE, 1783.
RENAMED CAMBRIDGE IN 1787.**

**BASED ON PLAT ACCOMPANYING ACT NO.1195,
SOUTH CAROLINA STATUTES.**

NINETY SIX NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE, SOUTH CAROLINA



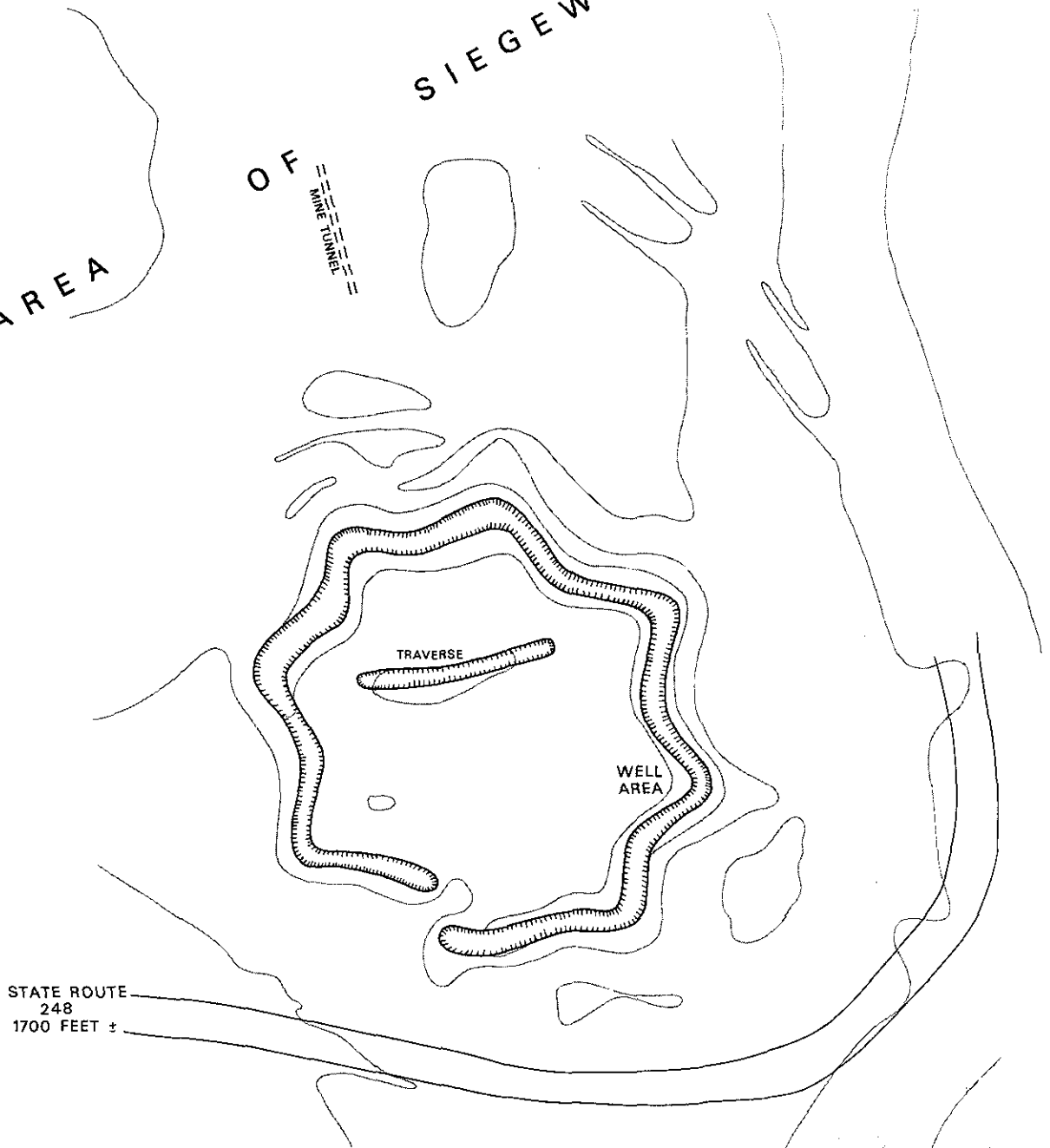
Map No. 6.

Old Star Fort Today.

Compiled by Jerome A. Greene.

Drawn by Robert H. Todd.

AREA OF SIEGEWORKS



STATE ROUTE
248
1700 FEET ±



OLD STAR FORT TODAY

NINETY SIX NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE SOUTH CAROLINA

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR / NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

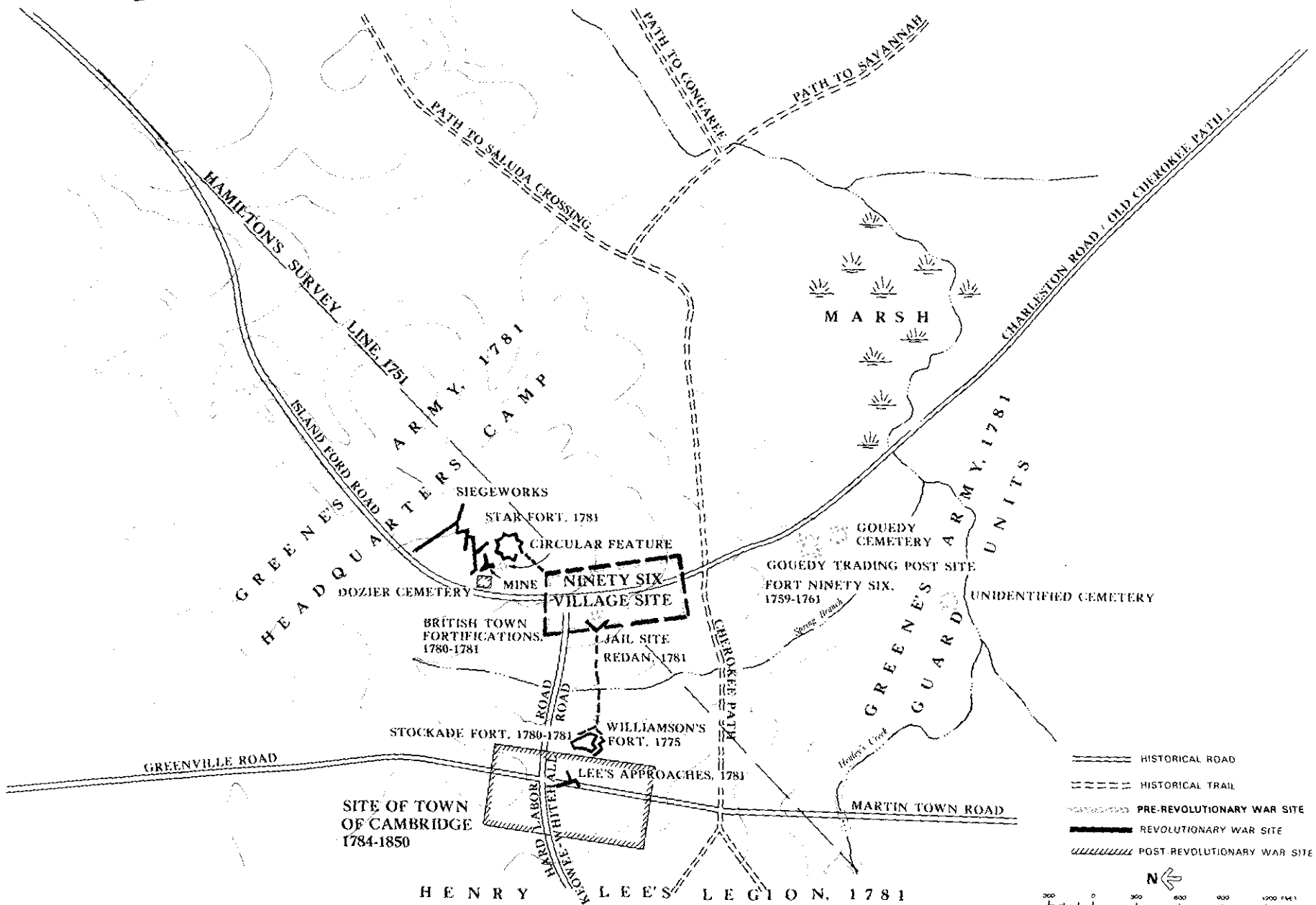
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Map No. 7.

Historical Base Map, Ninety Six
National Historic Site.

Compiled by Jerome A. Greene.

Drawn by Robert H. Todd.



== HISTORICAL ROAD
 - - - HISTORICAL TRAIL
 [Symbol] PRE-REVOLUTIONARY WAR SITE
 [Symbol] REVOLUTIONARY WAR SITE
 [Symbol] POST-REVOLUTIONARY WAR SITE

N

0 300 600 900 1200 FEET

HISTORICAL BASE MAP

NINETY SIX NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE, SOUTH CAROLINA

As the nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has basic responsibilities to protect and conserve our land and water, energy and minerals, fish and wildlife, and parks and recreation areas, and to ensure the wise use of all these resources. The department also has major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U.S. administration.

Publication services were provided by the graphics staff of the Denver Service Center. NPS 1504