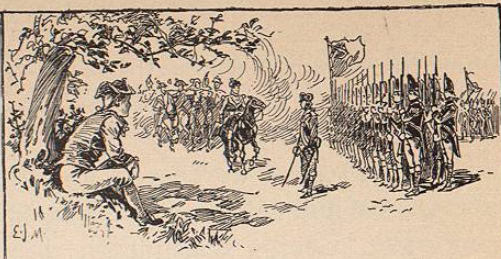




GENERAL GREENE



CHAPTER XIX

Nathaniel Greene

1742-1786

GENERAL GREENE was a Rhode Islander. His father was a Quaker preacher. He had a strong and vigorous constitution, and in his boyhood was foremost in every rural sport and game. He had a marked passion for books, but his only schooling was at his father's house under the direction of a private tutor for the half-dozen boys in the family.

It is said that "one of the happiest days of his life was that which first saw him the owner of a Euclid."

On one occasion when he visited Providence and had finished the business for which he had come, he hastened to a bookstore, stepped up to the counter, and said: "I want to buy a book."

"What book?" asked the bookseller. To this young Greene was unable to reply, and he stood silent and blushing, not knowing what to say. Dr. Stiles, a clergyman from Newport, afterward the president of Yale College, was present and saw the boy's perplexity.

"So, my boy," said he, "you want to buy a book and don't know what book you want?" "I guess so," said Greene. "Well," said the clergyman, "is it a story book or a school

book that you want?" "I want a book," said Greene, "that will make me know more." "Well," said the clergyman, "there are many such books, for I suppose there are a good many things which you do not know yet." "I do not know much of anything," said the boy, "but I want to know more."

So the minister gave him good advice as to what were the best books to read and what to study, and became one of his lifelong friends. Through the advice of Dr. Stiles he began to study Watt's "Logic," and "Locke on the Understanding."

Greene helped to organize a military company called the Kentish Guards, and, arms being scarce, he went to Boston to purchase a musket (1774). While in Boston he witnessed the drilling of the British troops, and was greatly impressed with the imposing appearance of the regulars at their morning and evening parades.

Little did the British officers, in the pride of their gallant array, dream who was looking upon them from under the broad-brimmed hat of the Quaker, or how fatally for them the lessons would be applied.

Hiding his musket under the straw in the wagon, he started for Rhode Island. He took with him a British deserter whom he had engaged as drill-master for the Kentish Guards.



"I WANT A BOOK THAT WILL MAKE ME KNOW MORE."

Rhode Island voted to raise an army of sixteen hundred men, and appointed Greene to command them, with the rank of major-general. See this young man, at the age of thirty-three, marching his regiment to join the Continental army at Cambridge. He is appointed a brigadier-general in the Continental service, and enters upon those military duties which are to engage his whole attention till the close of the war.

He was one of the earliest to recommend a Declaration of Independence. More than a year before the Declaration was passed, he wrote to a member of Congress as follows:

"Permit me to recommend, from the sincerity of a heart at all times ready to bleed for my country's cause, a Declaration of Independence; and call upon the world and the great God who governs it, to witness the necessity, propriety, and rectitude thereof."

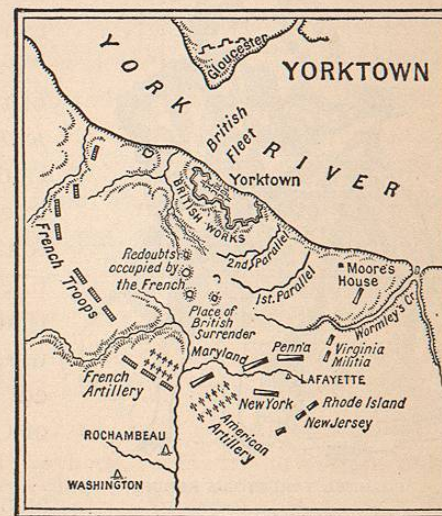
He rapidly won the confidence and esteem of Washington, and through the whole war was regarded as the second general in the army, next in command to Washington. He marched his brigade from Boston to New York, and took a prominent part in the skirmishes and battles around that city.

He was with Washington through the long winter at Valley Forge. From there he wrote to a friend: "I have no hopes of coming home this winter; the general will not grant me permission. Mrs. Greene is coming to camp; we are all going into log huts—a sweet life after a most fatiguing campaign." After this, we find him at the battle of Monmouth, where his services were of the highest order.

The British General Clinton, determined to transfer the war to the South, sent a force against Savannah, and took the city. The British, emboldened by their success, captured

Charleston after a long siege, and General Lincoln was obliged to surrender his army. Then General Gates was placed in command in the South, and lost the battle of Camden. This battle clearly showed that Gates was not the man for the place.

But we must not forget that notable battle at Kings Mountain. Colonel Tarleton was a British officer, who, unlike most officers of the British army, was notorious for his extreme barbarity and inhuman butchery of prisoners. At Kings Mountain he was attacked by an impromptu band of volunteers, who, under the command of Col. Isaac Shelby and Col. John Sevier, determined to rid the country of Tarleton's corps. The Americans were completely victorious.



Finally General Greene was appointed to succeed Gates in command of the Southern army. Washington had intended that Greene should have the command before, but Congress had given the position to Gates. Greene's campaign was carried on under many disadvantages, but was managed with great skill. The Americans were entirely victorious at the battle of Cowpens. They lost but twelve men killed and sixty wounded, while the British lost one hundred and twenty-nine killed and wounded and six hundred prisoners. The

Americans captured one hundred horses with many wagon-loads of stores.

Tarleton barely escaped with his life. He was wounded by a blow from the sword of Col. William A. Washington. Some time afterward, in a company of Southern ladies, Colonel Tarleton said: "I have



COLONEL TARLETON'S REBUFF.

been told that Colonel Washington is very illiterate and can scarcely write his name." "But, colonel," replied one of the ladies, "he can at least *make his mark!*" Tarleton said: "I would very much like to see Colonel Washington." The lady instantly replied: "You might have had that opportunity and pleasure, colonel, if you had looked behind you at the Battle of Cowpens."

Greene now increased his army by new recruits. Then

came the battles of Guilford Courthouse and Hobkirk Hill. Cornwallis was in command of the British army in the South, and he marched northward into Virginia, hoping to draw Greene after him; but on the contrary Greene moved South and began to win back the Southern States. Sumter and Marion captured Orangeburgh, Fort Mott, Granby, Fort Cornwallis, Georgetown, and Augusta. In September, 1781, Greene fought the last battle of the war in the far South at Eutaw Springs. He had reconquered the entire South.

Now all the armies are drawn together in Virginia. Corn-

wallis is there and Washington sends Lafayette thither. The French fleet under Count de Grasse sails up the Chesapeake Bay and the York River. About the first of September, Count de Saint Simon joins Lafayette with over three thousand troops. Washington rapidly moves his main army through New Jersey and on to Virginia. Cornwallis had fortified Yorktown. The combined American forces surround the town and his retreat by water is blocked by De Grasse. A hundred cannon are turned upon the British forts and dismount every one of their guns. The British General cannot break through the lines, he cannot retreat, he cannot stay where he is.

So Cornwallis surrendered to Washington, on the 19th of October, 1781, and the British fleet to De Grasse. This practically ended the war, although the treaty of peace was not made till more than a year afterward and the definitive treaty a year after that (1783). The news of the surrender of Cornwallis was received with great joy by the people all over the country. December 13th was observed as a day of national thanksgiving.

Give an account of Greene's boyhood; of his trip to Boston; of his joining the army; of his life at Valley Forge.

Describe the war in the South; the battle of Kings Mountain.

Tell the story of Greene's Southern campaign; of the siege of Yorktown; of the surrender and the treaty of peace.

What is a "Euclid"? How did Greene's trip to Boston aid him? What were the "regulars"? Was life at Valley Forge a "sweet life"? How long did the Revolutionary War last? What nations made the treaty of peace?