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THE FIRST SEA-FIGHT OF THE REVOLUTION

THE CAPTURE OF THE MARGARETTA

THE battle of Lexington had been fought, and the news of it, swiftly penetrating to the remotest corners of the North American colonies, reached in due season the little village of Machias, which, situated on the sea coast of Massachusetts, in a sparsely settled district bordering on the loyal province of New Brunswick, and at no great distance from Halifax, Nova Scotia, the rendezvous of the British fleet, was peculiarly exposed, in case of a rupture with the mother country, to invasion from within and bombardment from without; yet, true to the doctrines imbibed with their mothers' milk, the people here, as in the rest of New England, allowed no ignoble thought of danger to deaden their mental and moral perceptions where a great principle was involved. Massachusetts believed that "resistance to oppression was service to God," and little Machias, with her eighty able-bodied men, was resolved to stand by Massachusetts.

So a liberty-pole was erected on the village common, around which, each afternoon, as the labors of the day ended, were to be seen all the elders of the place—male and female—eagerly discussing "the situation." Outside of this charmed circle, and at a respectful distance from it—for Young America had not then come to the front—clustered the young men and maidens; and a little apart was a troop of boys, ready to throw up their hats and fill the air with their noisy hurrahs, whenever the uplifted *baton* of Deacon Libbee, standing near the liberty pole, gave the welcome signal that *hurrahing* was admissible.

It was on a warm sunshiny day of June that, just as the people were crowding as usual to the Common, two sloops, well known in Machias, the *Unity* and the *Polly*, hove in view, convoyed by the armed schooner *Margaretta*, carrying four light guns and fourteen swivels, a crew of forty men, and commanded by a youngster named Moore, a mid-

MASSACRE AT FALLING CREEK, VIRGINIA

MARCH 22, 1621-22

In the year 1618 the treasury of the London Company was, in the language of its presiding officer "utterly exhaust," and a number of merchants and gentlemen were encouraged to send out colonists at their own expense. Among the first settlements made by private enterprise was Martin's Hundred, seven miles above Jamestown, on the north side of the river, and Southampton Hundred, extending from the mouth of the Chickahominy to Wayonoke,¹ within the county of Charles City.

In 1619 Sir William Throckmorton,² whose sister was the wife of Sir Thomas Dale,³ late Governor of Virginia, Richard Berkeley, George Thorpe of Wanswell, John Smith of Nibley, all of Gloucestershire, and Captain John Woodliffe⁴ formed a partnership to establish a plantation in Virginia. The interest of Throckmorton was soon assigned to William Tracy, and Captain Woodliffe was made Agent, who was succeeded by Thorpe and Tracy.

It is worthy of note, that on February 2d, 1619-20, O. S., at a meeting of the London Company at the mansion of Sir Edwin Sandys, near Aldersgate, that gentleman alluded to four patents that had been granted to private adventurers, "and now lying all engrossed before them."

The third was to William Tracy, Esquire, and his associates, for the transportation of five hundred people, and the fourth to John Peirce⁵ and his associates, their heirs and assigns. It was under the Peirce patent

¹ Governor Yeardley in November, 1618, received the grant of Weynoak, and a parcel of land adjoining called Kouwan, part upon a creek called Mapcock, and from the head thereof, to the head of Queen's Creek, within the territory of Charles City.

² Sir William Throckmorton on May 11th, 1620, at a meeting of the London Company stated that one of the Indian maids Sir Thomas Dale brought from Virginia, and who had lived as a servant girl with a mercer in Cheapside, was now at the house of the Puritan divine, Mr. Gouge, of Black Friars', sick with consumption. The Company agreed to give twenty shillings a week for two months towards her support, and Throckmorton promised to give forty shillings out of his own purse. The Rev. Mr. Gouge was the cousin of the Rev. Alexander Whitaker, the Virginia missionary.

³ Fanny was the name of Dale's second wife, and she was the cousin of his first wife.

⁴ Woodliffe received a patent for 600 acres with the territory of Wayonoke.

⁵ The "May Flower" returned to England in May, 1621, and on the first of June, Peirce took out a new patent from the Northern Company. At a meeting of the Virginia Company of London, on the sixteenth of July, "it was moved, seeing that Mr. John Peirce had taken a patent of Sir Ferdinando Gorges, and therefore seated his company, within the limits of the Northern Plantations, as by some was supposed, whereby he seemed to relinquish the benefit of the patent he took of this Company, that therefore the said patent might be called in, unless it might appear he would begin to plant within the limits of the Southern Colony."

that William Brewster and the Leyden colonists sailed, although they eventually landed at Plymouth Rock, beyond the limits of the Southern Colony of the Virginia Company.

The Tracy Company hired a ship of a Mr. Williams, of Bristol, which sailed in March, 1620, with Tobias Felgate in charge as pilot, who had several times made a voyage as master or mate to Virginia. Among the passengers was George Thorpe, who had been a gentleman of the King's Privy Chamber, and for years an active member of the Virginia Company of London, as well as the Somers Island Company.

He was appointed before sailing Deputy Governor of the College lands of the London Company, with a grant of 300 acres perpetually belonging to that place, and ten tenants to be placed upon the lands, and on the 20th of May, 1620, he and William Tracy were designated as members of the Council in Virginia.

Tracy did not, however, leave England until the eighteenth of the following September, when he sailed in a ship commanded by Captain Ewans. There is a letter preserved, written to John Smith of Nibley, dated December 19, 1620, from Southampton Hundred, in which Thorpe writes, "that the country is very healthy and that they have found a way to make a good drink from Indian corn, which he prefers to good English beer." Among those who settled with Thorpe and Tracy in the valley of the James River was Rev. Robert Pawlett, who came out in the threefold capacity of pastor, physician and surgeon, and was made one of the Councillors of the Colony.

Thorpe, Richard Berkeley, and Smith of Nibley had been acquainted with the iron works of Gloucestershire. The same year that the patent for Southampton Hundred was taken, one was granted to a Mr. Barkley or Berkeley, who probably gave the name to Berkeley Hundred, above Westover. The London Company in 1621 determined to establish iron works at Falling Creek, now Richmond, and in the ship *George*, which arrived in October, 1621, at Jamestown, with Governor Wyatt and family, also arrived John Berkeley of Beverston Castle, Gloucestershire, a man of an honorable family. The London Company in a letter to the Virginia authorities, wrote: "The advancement of the iron works we esteem to be most necessary, by perfecting whereof we esteem the plantation is gainer, we therefore require all possible assistance to be

¹ Thorpe, also, on May 17th, 1621, wrote to the London Company: "No man can justly say that this country is not capable of all those good things that you in your wisdom, with great charge, have projected both for her wealth and honor, and also all other good things, that the most opulent parts of Christendom so afford, neither are we hopeless that this country may also yield things of better value, than any of these."

given to Mr. Barkley now sent, and all furtherance to his ship, especially good entertainment at their landing, that they may be well lodged and cherished."

In the same letter, there is an allusion to George Thorpe's efforts to civilize the Indians in these words: "We exceedingly approve the course in taking in of Indian families, as being a great means to reduce that nation to civility, and to the embracing of our Christian religion, the blessed end we have proposed to ourselves in this plantation, and we doubt not of your vigilancy that you be not thus entrapped, nor that the savage have by this means to surprise you. And to you, Mr. Thorpe, we will freely confess that both your letters and endeavors are most acceptable to us."

Upon Governor Wyatt's arrival at Jamestown, with the advice and consent of the council, Capt. Thorpe was sent, with a message and present, to the Indian chief Apochankano, who agreed to continue his league with the English, and to send a guide to convey explorers to certain mines beyond the falls of the James river. He also willingly acknowledged that the religion of his tribe was not the right way, "desiring to be instructed in ours, and confessed that God loved us better, and that he thought the cause of his anger against them was their custom of making their children black-boys."

As often since, these professions and confessions were a prelude to treachery and massacre. Berkeley, as overseer of the Iron Works at Falling Creek, was busy during the winter of 1621-2 in the erection of a furnace, and hoped to smelt iron early in the next summer. George Sandys the Poet, then Treasurer of Virginia, declared that Falling Creek was so fitted for iron manufacture "as if nature had applied herself to the wish and direction of the workmen; where also were great stones, hardly seen elsewhere in Virginia, lying on the place as though they had been brought thither to advance the erection of these works."

An awful Providence soon ended the labors of Berkeley and Thorpe for the welfare of Virginia. On Friday morning, March 22, 1621-22, O. S., the Indians, by arrangement, came unarmed to the houses of the colonists, and sate at the breakfast table with some, and then suddenly arose, and with such axes and tools as they could seize, barbarously murdered about three hundred and fifty of the population, sparing neither age nor sex; and besides Master George Thorpe, writes a Secretary of the London Company, "Master John Berkeley, Captain Nathaniel Powel (and his wife, daughter of Master William Tracy and great with child), and Cap-

tain Maycock,¹ all gentlemen of birth, virtue and industry, and of the Council there, suffered under this cruelty and treason."

The Iron Works at Falling Creek, after the massacre was known at London, were entrusted to Maurice Berkeley by the Company, but in a few months he abandoned them, and early in 1623 returned to England. The Treasurer of the Colony, George Sandys, was charged with the care of the tenants on the College lands, and the Company in their directions write: "As for the brick-makers, we desire that they may be held to their contract made with Mr. Thorpe, to the intent, that when opportunity shall be for the erecting of the fabric of the college, the materials be not wanting."

The inventory of the goods and estate in value amounted to 1323 $\frac{3}{4}$ pounds tobacco weight. There is a letter extant dated August 14, 1634, from William, son and heir of Captain Thorpe, relative to some lands in Berkeley Town, probably Berkeley Hundred, known in the days of the Civil war as Harrison's Landing. In 1672 there was living at Wanswell, Berkeley Hundred, Gloucestershire, a William Thorpe, gentleman, who was without doubt the son of George Thorpe, formerly of the same parish.

EDWARD D. NEILL

¹ Maycock was a Cambridge scholar, and in March, 1618, Governor Argall requested that he might be ordained as a clergyman.