

*Extract of a Letter from an Officer of Distinction in the American Southern Army, dated "Camp, Speedwell-Furnace, March 17, 1781."*

"General Greene, for various important Reasons, was induced to bring on a general Action, which was commenced at Guildford Court-House, where the two Armies met, on the 15th Instant, about Noon. The Advance of the Enemy was received and repulsed by the Partizan Legion, and a Body of Riflemen under Colonel Campbell. About an Hour afterwards, a severe Cannonade commenced, which continued about twenty Minutes, without giving our Lines the least Disturbance. — — — — —

The Virginia Brigades of Militia, commanded by Generals Stevens and Lawson, gave the Enemy so warm a Reception, and continued their Opposition with such Firmness, while our Light Troops kept up a lively Fire upon each Flank, that the Fate of the Day was dubious for a long Time—At length their Discipline prevailed, and the Regular Troops of Virginia and Maryland had an Opportunity of coming to Action; but most of these being undisciplined New-Lovies, and every Corps being exceedingly deficient in Number of Officers, they were incapable of governing the Fate of the Day. The Contest continued for near two Hours with great Obstinacy, during which Time the Roaring of Musquetry, and the Cracking of Rifles were almost perpetual, and as heavy as any I ever heard. The Cavalry under Lieutenant-Colonel Washington, and the Riflemen under Colonel Lynch, Captain Kirkwood's Company of Delaware, and Lieutenant Hoffernan's of Virginia, upon the Right, and Lee's Legion, and Colonel Campbell's Riflemen upon the Left, did great Execution. — — — — —

The First Maryland Regiment being ordered to charge the Enemy, most cheerfully embraced the Opportunity, and being seconded by Washington's Cavalry, they bayoneted and cut to Pieces a great Number of the British Guards who had taken our Field-Pieces. About this Time our left Wing had given Way, and the Artillery-Horses being shot, we were obliged to leave Four Six-Pounders on the Field, which was almost our only considerable Loss. The General ordered our Troops to retire, which was executed with such good Order and Regularity, that the Enemy did not presume to press our Rear with any Spirit. They followed only three Miles, where the Regular Troops halted, and a great many of the Militia formed.—Our Baggage was previously ordered to this Place, thirteen Miles from the Place of Action, where our Army encamped the same Evening. Our Loss in Regular Troops is between Two and Three Hundred killed and wounded; One Hundred, most of the latter, are brought off. Major Anderson, and Ensign Nelson, are amongst the former; both were brave, and both are justly lamented. Anderson was an excellent Officer; but I regret his Loss equally as a Friend, for he was possessed of the most endearing social Virtues. We have several Officers wounded.

"I cannot ascertain our Loss in Militia, — — — — —

General Stevens received a Ball through his Thigh, and several more Officers of that State are wounded; very few killed.

"The Enemy lay at the Court-House this Morning; Flags have passed, and several of our People escaped from them Yesterday.—By every Account, the Enemy's Loss, in killed and wounded, is between Six and Eight Hundred; and if General Greene had not much greater Difficulties to encounter than those occasioned by the Loss of the Day, I have no Doubt but the Enemy won it at so great an Expence of Blood, that the Consequences would prove to him equal to a Defeat. *I am not without my Hopes that the next Day will be ours.*

"I must add a Line to give you the Pleasure of hearing, that the great Capacity of General Greene, manifested in almost every Circumstance of the present Campaign, has deservedly gained him the entire Confidence of his Officers; and his Firmness and Intrepidity in Action, have secured him the Esteem and Applause of the Army."

The United States in Congress assembled, (by their Proclamation of the 26th Ult.) do earnestly recommend to the People of these States, That *Thursday the Third of May* next, may be observed as a Day of HUMILIATION, FASTING, and PRAYER.—