

STATE: South Carolina	
COUNTY: Greenwood	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER 69-12-41-8010	DATE 12/3/69

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
Old Ninety Six and Star Fort

AND/OR HISTORIC:

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Between State Highways 248 and 27, 2 mi. south of red light in present

CITY OR TOWN:  
Ninety Six. Ninety Six Township

STATE: South Carolina      CODE: 41      COUNTY: Greenwood      CODE: 24

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/>	Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Occupied <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>
Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/>	Private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/>	Restricted <input type="checkbox"/>
Object <input type="checkbox"/>	Both <input type="checkbox"/>	Preservation work in progress <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)		No: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/>	Government <input type="checkbox"/>	Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Transportation <input type="checkbox"/>
Commercial <input type="checkbox"/>	Industrial <input type="checkbox"/>	Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/>
Educational <input type="checkbox"/>	Military <input type="checkbox"/>	Religious <input type="checkbox"/>	Comments <input type="checkbox"/>
Entertainment <input type="checkbox"/>	Museum <input type="checkbox"/>	Scientific <input type="checkbox"/>	

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNERS NAME:  
Multiple Ownership

STREET AND NUMBER:  
see letter 1.23.78

CITY OR TOWN:      STATE:      CODE:

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Clerk of Court

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Greenwood County Courthouse

CITY OR TOWN: Greenwood      STATE: South Carolina      CODE: 41

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 748 acres

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
Sarles & Shedd, Vol. VI: The National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings (COLONIALS AND PATRIOTS) pp.227-228

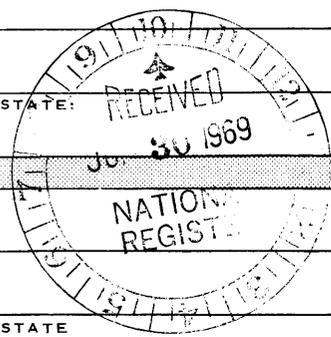
DATE OF SURVEY: 1964      Federal       State       County       Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
United States Department of the Interior-National Park Service

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Interior Building

CITY OR TOWN: Washington      STATE: D.C.      CODE: 09

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



STATE:      COUNTY:      ENTRY NUMBER      DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/>	Ruins <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unexposed <input type="checkbox"/>
INTEGRITY	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	Altered <input type="checkbox"/>	Unaltered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Moved <input type="checkbox"/>	Original Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

In Greenwood county is the site of the once-flourishing Colonial village of Ninety Six, renamed Cambridge after the Revolution (see enclosed plan "A"). Even before 1730, the fork lying 96 miles south of the Cherokee Indian town of Keowee was an important place on the Cherokee Trail. Later the site of a frontier trading post and of Indian and Revolutionary War fortifications, Ninety Six was also a busy courthouse town, its gaol and courthouse described as brick buildings. It has also been described as a "snug little village of 15 or 20 houses and stores." As many as 17 stores were noted at one point...and the population included "4 merchants, as many lawyers, hotel keepers, tailor, blacksmith, carriage and harness shops, and three physicians...there was also belonging to the place a large and well-selected library, and a flourishing academy...there was a church there..."

In the early 1750s, Indian trader Robert Gouedy settled at Ninety Six, his land grant lying astride the Cherokee Path, which later ran through the center of town. Gouedy's store was supposedly the largest above the fall line. Extant from this period is the grave of Gouedy's son James, in a wooded area south of Star Fort and perhaps near the site of the original Gouedy homeplace.

Gov. William Henry Lyttleton's 1759 expedition built a fort around Gouedy's barn, and this stockade, described as 90' square, provided protection of settlers from a wide surrounding area.

First of the town's Revolutionary fortifications was built in November 1775 at Colonel Savage's plantation, or Savage's Old Field. Separated from Ninety Six courthouse and gaol by a ravine and spring, this was a "temporary stockade fort of fence rails, straws, beeves' hides and other such materials... a square of about 185 yards...the curtains of defense extended from a barn and store to some outhouses; and at a distance of 250 yards from the gaol."

When the British occupied Ninety Six in 1780, they added fortifications to the existing stockade. Major defensive feature was a redoubt on the southeast tip of the village. This was Star Fort and it was surrounded by a ditch. Three cannon on wheels strengthened the earthwork fort from within. The entire village was surrounded by a stockade, and the gaol was fortified. Further strengthening was added by an embankment of earth surrounding the village and by abatis, a type of defense using felled trees with the branched ends sticking outward. Within the village, blockhouses were erected and covered ways built for safe communication. On the north side of the village a small stream supplied the garrison with water. A stockade fort with two blockhouses was built to defend the stream on the side opposite the village palisade. A covered way led to the stream between these two strong points (See enclosed sketch "B" and survey "C"). Added to the military engineering of the British was that of the besieging American forces: three parallels, two trenches, a mine reaching almost to the Star Fort ditch, two log towers for firing into the fort.

The 1964 National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings (COLONIALS AND PATRIOTS) describes Star Fort as "an earthwork with eight salients and eight reentrant angles, enclosing about one-half acre northeast of the village."

This same authority reports that "The Star Fort outlines are still readily discernible as earthwork embankments 4 or 5 feet high. Scattered brick fragments mark the location of the town, which was burned by the British, later rebuilt but lost its court in 1800 and declined in importance. Some identifiable remains include the knoll on which the 1775 siege occurred and on which stood the British stockade fort of 1781, the ravine in which flowed the stream supplying water to the garrison, the jail site, the old Charleston road, and some distance from the village site, the 1759 fortification."

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**8. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Pre-Columbian       16th Century       18th Century       20th Century   
 15th Century       17th Century       19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)      1750-1820

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Aboriginal	Education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Political	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Urban Planning	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prehistoric	Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/>	Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Historic	Industry	<input type="checkbox"/>	Science	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	
Agriculture	Invention	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sculpture	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	
Art	Landscape	<input type="checkbox"/>	Social/Humanitarian	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	
Commerce	Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/>	Theater	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	
Communications	Literature	<input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	_____	
Conservation	Military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			_____	
	Music	<input type="checkbox"/>			_____	

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Include Personages, Dates, Events, Etc.)

One of the oldest English place names in upper South Carolina, one that is significant in total South Carolina history and that has a bearing on U.S. history, Ninety Six was of prime importance in upcountry development of the state. Its early history reflects the activity, color, and romance of the typical frontier community of the Colonial era.

The importance of Ninety Six has three distinct phases:

(1) As a trading and meeting junction in Colonial years, reflecting South Carolina's Indian and frontier period. On George Hunter's 1730 map of South Carolina's northwest frontier, "96" appears as a special designation on the Cherokee Path, well-traveled pack trail to and from Charleston before 1700. (The original of this map is in the Library of Congress). Its importance as a trading post is indicated in the 1738 Journal of the House of Assembly. And Gov. James Glen recognized its strategic location by choosing it for his 1746 Indian conference. (This colorful meeting was attended by the S.C. emperor of the Cherokees and 60 of his headmen; accompanying the governor were 4 companies of troops and 200 additional gentlemen).

(2) As the northwestern area's farthest English settlement from the coast, a thriving Colonial village from as early as 1740 and a busy courthouse town for huge Ninety Six District from 1768 until shortly after 1800. After the 1768 Commons House of Assembly Bill establishing courts, building jails, appointing sheriffs, etc., the development of Ninety Six as a seat of government and justice was part of a significant South Carolina development - the growing importance of the state overall. Reflected here is the back country struggle for recognition and representation that led to such significant milestones as the establishment of a new capital city in mid-state, beginning in 1786.

During the Colonial period, Ninety Six was a key location in a number of historic expeditions:

- (a) Col. George Chicken's 1715 journey inland during the Yemassee War, his journal possibly representing the first English account of a Carolina back country traveler and including the only mention of buffalo hereabouts ("we kill'd a boflow this day").
- (b) Gov. Glen's 1746 expedition to confer with the Cherokee.
- (c) Gov. Lyttleton's 1759 expedition which built, en route, a stockade at Ninety Six that protected area settlers during the 1759-61 Cherokee War. (In March 1760, the garrison withstood a 36-hour Cherokee attack). Ninety Six also served as a supply center and base of operations for ranger and militia companies and from this time until the Revolution had numerous links with Fort Charlotte, built 1766 on the Savannah River.

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

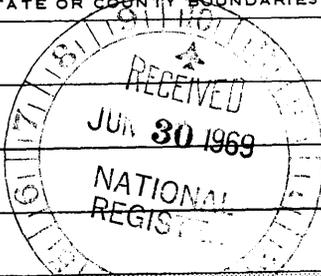
Louise M. Watson, Old Ninety Six, Star Fort, And Cambridge. (Greenwood: Connie Maxwell Press Dept., 1960). Greenwood County Historical Society Writers' Program of the WPA, South Carolina: A Guide to the Palmetto State. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1941).  
 Christopher Ward, The War of the Revolution, Vol. 2. (New York: Macmillan, 1952).  
 Edward McCrady, South Carolina in the Revolution, Vol. 1 & 2. (New York: Macmillan, 1902).  
 Ramsay, Ramsay's History of South Carolina, Vol. 1 & 2. (Newberry: W.J. Duffie, 1858).  
 Gibbes, Documentary History of the American Revolution...1764-1776. (New York: D. Appleton & Co. 1855).  
 Wm. Johnson, Sketches of the Life of Nathanael Greene, 2 vols. 1822.  
 B. J. Loessing, Pictorial Field of the Revolution, 2 vols., 1860.

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN ONE ACRE		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	34 ° 09 ' 17 "	82 ° 01 ' 31 "		0	0	
NE	34 ° 09 ' 17 "	82 ° 00 ' 18 "				
SE	34 ° 08 ' 07 "	82 ° 00 ' 18 "				
SW	34 ° 08 ' 07 "	82 ° 01 ' 31 "				

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE: Janson L. Cox, Chief Curator of Historical Interpretation & Museums  
 Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism  
 ORGANIZATION: P.O. Box 1358  
 and  
 STREET AND NUMBER: Mrs. James W. Fant, S.C. Dept. of Archives & History  
 Box 11188, Capitol Station, 1430 Senate St.  
 CITY OR TOWN: Columbia, South Carolina  
 STATE: South Carolina  
 CODE: 41

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name: Charles S. Long  
 Title: Director, S.C. Dept. of Archives & History  
 Date: Proposed, Oct. 27, 1969

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Arrest Allen Gennally  
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

DEC 3 1969

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:  
William J. [Signature]  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: NOV 26 1969

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

STATE	
South Carolina	
COUNTY	
Greenwood	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
69-1241-1010	12/3/69

SIGNIFICANCE

(Continuation Sheet)

(Number all entries) -2-

- (d) The 1775 mission to the back country by William Henry Drayton and the Rev. William Tennent, sent from Charleston by the Council of Safety to explain the American-British disputes and to enlist patriot aid.
- (3) As a Revolutionary War stronghold and also as a focal point of violent Patriot-Tory strife.

Pre-Revolutionary activity included the raising of a Ranger troop in the Ninety Six area (June 1775) which made the first overt act of the Revolution in South Carolina - the July 1775 seizure of Fort Charlotte from the British. Ranger commander was James Mayson, who lived near Ninety Six village. In August 1775, Ninety Six District sent nine representatives to the Second Provincial Congress. One of these was Commander Mayson.

The Revolution's first land battle south of New England took place at Ninety Six, Nov. 19-21, 1775. Patriot forces, besieged inconclusively, finally defeated and dispersed the Tories in December. In this battle, James Birmingham was the first South Carolina patriot to give up his life in the Revolution. Andrew Pickens, who later became one of South Carolina's three famous partisan generals, was a company commander in this action.

Old Ninety Six reached the peak of its fame in 1780-81 when it was a British garrison and scene of the siege of Star Fort, one of the most interesting and spectacular operations of the Revolution's closing months.

In 1779, the British returned to their earlier plan of trying to roll up the states from south to north, and after the 1780 capture of Charlestown, ordered three expeditions to the interior to gain control of the state.

Ninety Six became important as the most advanced British post, supporting the other two posts, at Augusta and Camden, also covering loyalist settlements and serving as a recruiting depot for Tory fighters.

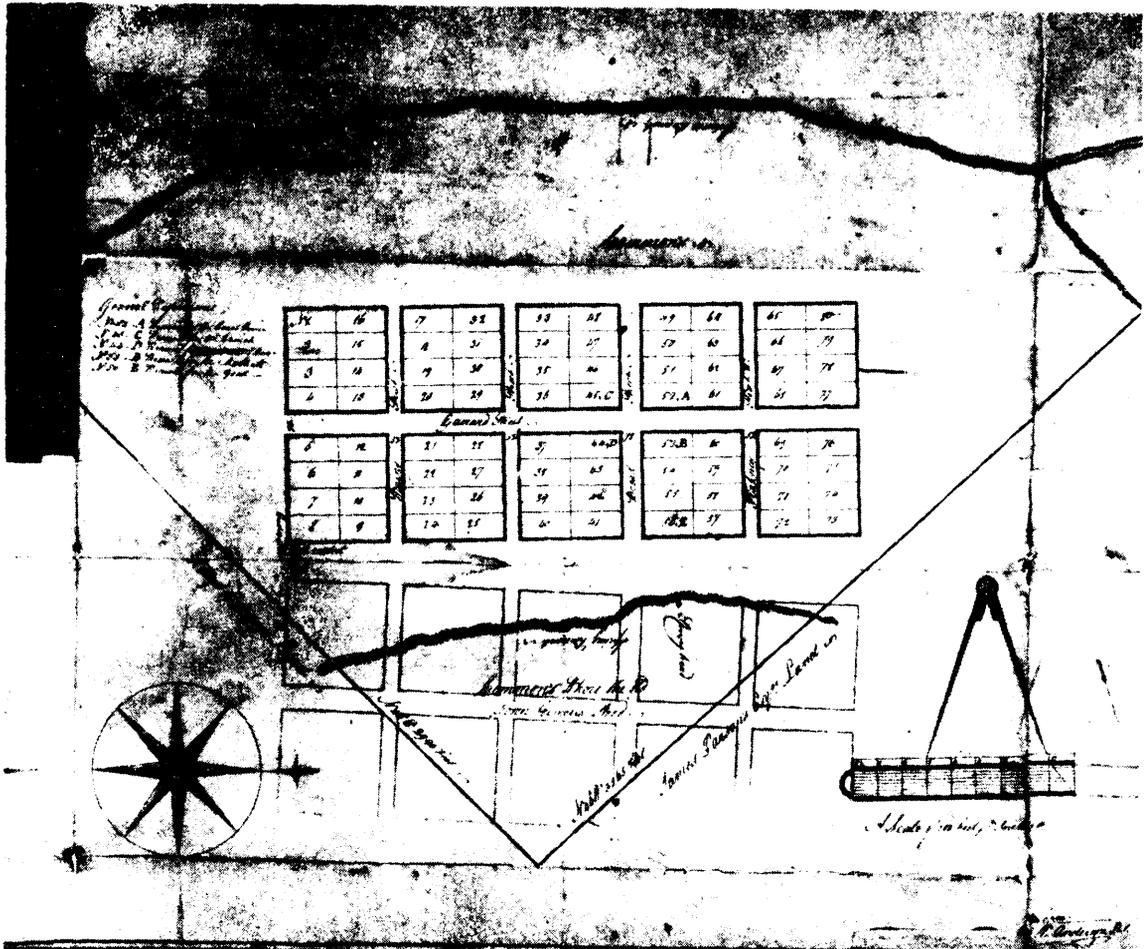
The Star Fort, built at this time, continued as a British outpost, manned by regulars and Tories, until May-June 1781, when Gen. Nathanael Greene's American force invested and assaulted the fort. The siege was unsuccessful since the fort's star form gave the enemy complete command and exposed the attackers to close cross-fire. Advancing British reinforcements spurred American withdrawal. The British, however, evacuated the fort at the end of the 27-day siege. This relinquishment of the inland South Carolina foothold helped weaken the south-to-north British offensive and was a contributing factor to the war's outcome.

Associated with Old Ninety Six are such historically significant names as Patrick Calhoun (father of John C.), Andrew Pickens, and Sen. John Lewis Gervais, who was instrumental in changing the state capital from Charleston.

In post-Revolutionary years, Ninety Six achieved some importance as a college town. Site of one of three colleges authorized by the S.C. General Assembly in March 1785, the town changed its name to Cambridge in 1787 in honor of the college. The institution enjoyed no lasting success, however, and by the mid-1820s, the once-flourishing town had almost ceased to exist.

The importance of Ninety Six and Star Fort in South Carolina and American history is indicated by the great amount of written material on the subject. An example is the enclosed bibliography (see enclosure "D") which was used in the 1960 sketch published by the Greenwood County Historical Society. The Society is currently negotiating for the property and laying plans for developing the site, a project which has considerable private and governmental support.





An ambitious town plan providing ten blocks of eight lots each was laid out for Cambridge, the post-Revolutionary name of the village that had originally been called Ninety Six. The indication of squares or blocks in the area designated as "Common's Where the old Town Formerly Stood" is an illusion—the old map was folded over and some of the ink from the blocks of the new town was transferred to the old town area.—From collection of the South Carolina Archives Commission.

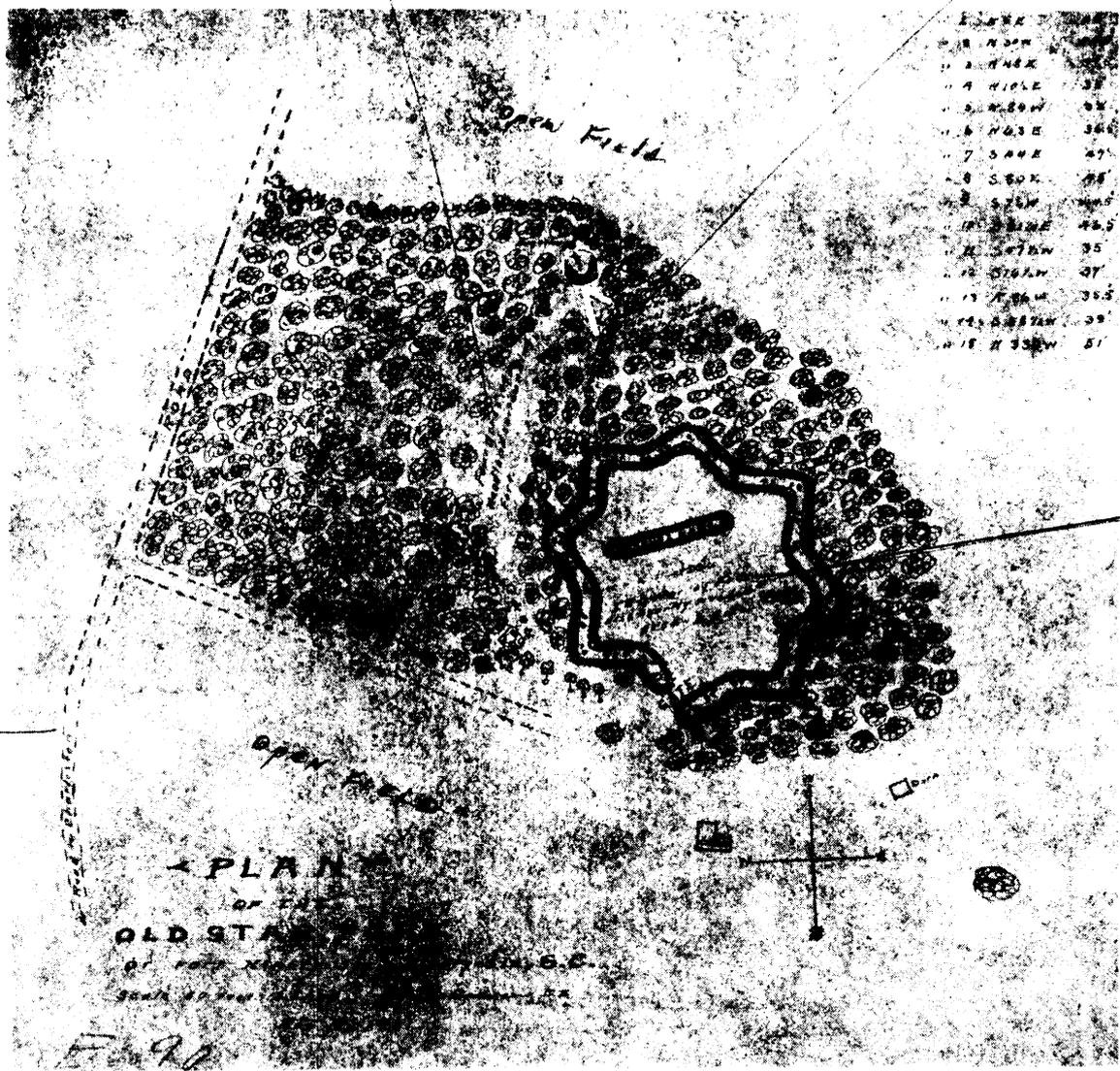
village—so much so that a surveyor was employed to lay out the town. The road leading from Cambridge creek to Ninety Six was designated as Broad street, with cross streets running at right angles. The writer has in his possession a map of the then village of Cambridge. The British having burnt down the town



Four acres of woodlands  
Surrounding Fort.

Tunnel

(1)



Road to Charleston

Interior of  
fort  
is a  
heavily wooded  
area 1/2 acre.

Accurate details of Star Fort at old Ninety Six are shown in this plan of the fort as surveyed Nov. 15, 1921 by Thomas C. Anderson, civil engineer. It is still surrounded by several acres of woodland. (Contrary to the caption on the surveyor's plat, Star Fort was not called "Fort Ninety Six".)