

E 241

. P 9 C 2

E 241
.P9 C2
Copy 1

A PLEA

FOR

THE PRINCETON BATTLE MONUMENT

BY

HENRY CLAY CAMERON

VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE ASSOCIATION

THE PRINCETON BATTLE MONUMENT.

Dr. H. C. Cameron, the Vice-President of the Princeton Battle Monument Association, who founded the Association and who has been connected with every movement to promote its success, has informed the PRESS that his correspondence from Washington and elsewhere encourages the hope that the Bill now before the House of Representatives appropriating \$30,000 for the erection of the Monument will be passed at this session of Congress.

At his request Assemblyman Gulick presented the Bill to the New Jersey Legislature and Senator Hutchinson attended to it in the Senate. Governor Murphy and President Francis favored the Bill and Dr. Cameron repeatedly visited the Legislature, and suggested that it would reflect great credit upon the State and impress Congress favorably if the Bill could be passed unanimously by the Senate. This was accordingly done and \$15,000 were appropriated by the State.

The Hon. John J. Gardner, our Representative in Congress, has repeatedly presented the Bill asking for \$30,000 from the National Government for the Monument. It has in like manner been presented by one of the New Jersey Senators, in the last instance by Senator Kean, and has always been passed unanimously by the Senate.

The following extract from Mr. Gardner's letter to Dr. Cameron shows the precise status of the Bill :

"Near the close of the last session the House Committee on Library reported my Princeton Battle Monument Bill ; on the same day the Senate passed identically the same Bill ; when it came to the House, I had it held on the Speaker's table. Technically this means only that the matter can be taken up and acted upon without going to a Committee." Other formalities are required, but Mr. Gardner, while not absolutely sure, entertains the hope of success. In view of the present condition of the matter Dr. Cameron suggests that every alumnus of Princeton request his Representative in Congress to vote for this Bill.

The amount desired for the monument is \$60,000, contributed as follows, \$30,000 by the National Government, \$15,000 by the State of New Jersey, and \$15,000 to be raised by the Association. Of this last amount about one half has been subscribed or promised. There will be no difficulty in raising this amount when Congress passes the Bill, as it is necessary to secure the appropriations.

THE PRINCETON BATTLE MONUMENT—ITS SITE AND ITS CHARACTER.

As I suggested the formation of the Princeton Battle Monument Association, made and paid the first subscription, prepared the bills and had them presented to the Legislature of New Jersey and to Congress, I trust I shall be pardoned for publishing my views as to the site and kind of monument which were not only contemplated but actually formed at the inception of the enterprise. One evening I met Mr. John F. Hageman, Sr., on Mercer street and pointing to the corner formed by Nassau and Mercer streets, I said "there is the place for the Princeton Battle Monument." After some conversation we agreed to call a meeting of the citizens of Princeton to consider the matter. As I had proposed the matter he wished me to be chairman if a meeting was called. I declined, however, and insisted that as the older citizen he was the proper person to preside, but agreed to present the matter at the meeting, which was called through the Princeton Press, of which I think he was then an editor.

A large meeting was held in the Nassau Hotel; upon my nomination Mr. John F. Hageman, Sr., was elected to preside, and at his request I presented the subject to the meeting. The proposition was received with great favor. The Association was organized on the 110th Anniversary of the Battle of Princeton, Jan. 3, 1887, and subsequently in-

corporated, when the following officers were elected: Governor Robert S. Green, President; Henry C. Cameron, Vice-president; Bayard Stockton, Secretary, and Crowell Marsh, Treasurer. Subscriptions were obtained and had these been made payable (as I advocated) when five thousand dollars (\$5,000) were subscribed there would have been no difficulty or hesitation in reference to the site.

History and Providence point out the Site, near the spot where the last shot was fired from the large cannon which is now planted in the University Campus, in rear of Nassau Hall. None knows its history previous to the battle of Princeton; its subsequent history has been very fully written by myself from information received from witnesses whose testimony ran back for nearly a century.

The kind of monument originally contemplated was a tall circular shaft resting upon a square base and terminating with a square cap; the material to be of granite of a light color.

The shaft was to be surmounted by a bronze statue of Washington in Continental uniform, his right hand grasping a sword pointing to the battle field. It was to face Nassau street, with the head turned slightly to the right as if looking toward Nassau Hall, where Washington met the Continental Congress, and whence was

issued the Proclamation of Peace with Great Britain.

In completion of the plan of the monument I suggest the following bas-reliefs for the four sides of the base :

1. General Mercer's refusal to surrender.
2. General Washington turning defeat into victory.
3. Nassau Hall (where the battle ended) and the President's House. These should be represented as they were, not with the changes since made.
4. Thomas Clark's (now Mr. Hale's) House and the Quaker Meeting House.

These reliefs, would admirably represent the Battle, the stirring events, places and buildings.

At the base it was intended to have three other bronze statues on granite bases representing :

1. President John Witherspoon, D.D., signer of the Declaration of Independence and minister of the Gospel, wearing the Geneva gown and bands. This statue was to face Nassau street as if looking toward the President's house and Nassau Hall.
2. Richard Stockton, lawyer and signer of the Declaration of Independence, wearing the revolutionary costume and looking down Stockton street toward Morven, his residence.
3. General Hugh Mercer in Continental uniform and looking down Mercer street toward the battle field and the house in which he died.

The fourth or north side of the base was to be reserved for the door which was to give entrance to the monument, to the top of which winding stairs were to lead so that visitors might view from that point the Battle Field, Nassau Hall and Morven. This was the conception that I wished to see realized.

The monument and statue of Washington I thought would cost sixty thousand dollars (\$60,000), \$30,000 from the National government, \$15,000 from the State and \$15,000 from the individual subscriptions of citizens of New Jersey and Alumni of Princeton.

The money for the other three statues I thought could be raised in the following manner from members of the three learned professions who are graduates of the College (now University) and the Theological Seminary, or are residents of New Jersey.

1. Let all ministers contribute to the statue of Witherspoon, the minister.
2. Let all the lawyers and holders of public office (legislative or otherwise) contribute to the statue of Stockton, the lawyer.
3. Let all the physicians contribute to the statue of Mercer, who was a physician as well as a soldier.

With the exception of this last method of raising funds from special classes or professions for the three statues this article is a simple statement of the views which I have held and advocated from the beginning in reference to the Princeton Battle Monument, its Site and its Character.

NATIONAL AND STATE ACTION AS TO BATTLE MONUMENTS.

The Continental Congress, in response to "An address of the Governors and Masters of the College of [New Jersey] presented July 2, 1783,

Resolved, That the President inform the Governors and Masters of the College that Congress entertains a proper sense of their obliging offer, and accept the use of such parts of the College as may be necessary for their session, and for the officers attending them during their stay at Princeton.

Congress adjourned accordingly and met in Nassau Hall.

On Thursday, August 7, 1783, Congress took the following action :

On motion of Mr. A. Lee, seconded by Mr. Bland, Resolved (unanimously, ten states being present) that an equestrian statue of General Washington be erected at the place where the residence of Congress shall be established.

Mr. A. Lee, Mr. Elsworth and Mr. Mifflin, appointed to prepare a plan of an equestrian statue of the Commander-in-Chief.

Resolved, That the statue be bronze : The General to be represented in a Roman dress, holding a truncheon in his right hand, and his head encircled with a laurel wreath. The statue to be supported by a marble pedestal, on which are to be represented in basso-relievo, the following principal events of the war in which General Washington commanded in person, viz : The evacuation of Boston—the capture of Hessians at Trenton—the battle of Princeton—the action of Monmouth, and the surrender of York. On the upper part of

the front of the pedestal, to be engraved the following : The United States in Congress assembled, order this statue to be erected in the year of our Lord 1783, in honor of George Washington, the illustrious Commander-in-Chief of the armies of the United States of America, during the war which vindicated and secured their liberty, sovereignty and independence.

Resolved, That a statue conformable to the above plan, be executed by the best artist in Europe, under the superintendance of the Minister of the United States at the Court of Versailles; and that the money to defray the expense of the same, be furnished from the Treasury of the United States.

Resolved, That the Secretary of Congress transmit to the Minister of the United States at the Court of Versailles, the best resemblance of General Washington that can be procured, for the purpose of having the above statue erected; together with the fittest description of the events, which are to be the subject of the basso relievo.

This idea was never carried out. Subsequently Mr. Houdon, a distinguished French sculptor, was sent to the United States by Dr. Franklin and Mr. Jefferson. He spent two weeks at Mount Vernon and as the result of his studies produced for the Legislature of Virginia the beautiful statue of Washington now so carefully guarded in the State Capitol at Richmond.

Washington died before the admirable plan could be carried out at Washington where the permanent seat of Government was fixed.

Instead of a single monument Congress subsequently determined to erect or assist

in erecting a monument at the site of each important battle.

Boston had erected the Bunker Hill monument and did not ask for another.

The movement for the monument at Trenton began in 1843. The first charter for the Trenton Battle Monument Association was obtained in 1844, and a second one in 1884.

The Legislature of New Jersey appropriated \$15,000 in 1887, the Congress of the United States appropriated \$30,000 in 1898, and the citizens of New Jersey contributed \$15,000, completing the amount requested.

The corner stone was laid December 26th, 1891, the one hundred and fifteenth anniversary of the battle. The monument was dedicated October 19th, 1893.

General William S. Stryker deserves the great honor of having secured the erection of this beautiful monument.

The Monmouth Monument Association was formed in 1846. But it was not until 1877 that the association was thoroughly organized. It was incorporated in 1878, and the corner stone was laid June 28th, 1878. In 1881, the State appropriated

\$10,000, the Congress of the United States appropriated \$20,000, and the association raised \$10,000. To Gov. Joel Parker is due the credit of completing this fine monument. It was unveiled November 13, 1884.

Thus to each of these monuments the National Government contributed one-half of the expense.

The magnificent monument at Yorktown, Va., in commemoration of the surrender at York was erected wholly by the National Government at a cost of \$200,000.

From this sketch it will be seen that every great battle of the Revolution **except that of Princeton has been honored by the National Government.** This battle was the crisis of the Revolution. Had it been lost the cause of Liberty and Independence would have been lost. Hence this appeal to Congress for the appropriation of \$30,000, that the idea of the Continental Congress may be fully carried out.

The State of New Jersey has appropriated \$15,000, and the people of New Jersey and friends of Princeton will contribute the remaining \$15,000 of which a considerable portion has been subscribed.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 011 800 796 7



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 011 800 796 7



Permalife[®]
pH 8.5