THE BATTLES

OF

TRENTON AND PRINCETON

BY

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PREFACE

In my youth I spent many pleasant hours in listening to the residents of Trenton as they related the brave deeds of their fathers in the old war, and told the story of the trials and sufferings of the heroic men and women of the Revolutionary period, which they had heard directly from the lips of those who had taken a part in the struggle for independence In my early manhood I began to take notes from the conversations of my mother and her aged friends, as they described the personal appearance and peculiarities of the rich merchant who had lived here in 1776 and for forty-five years thereafter, of the country miller who had entered the village as an American spy, of the beloved physician who had commanded the local military force; of her grandfather who had been one of the guides of the American army to the surprise at Trenton After some years had elapsed I published a little pamphlet for private distribution, entitled "Trenton, One Hundred Years Ago," which gave a brief description of the citizens and their homes in the village as it appeared in 1776 and 1777. As I continued to study the past of this historic town, and found myself surrounded in official life by the manuscript records of those brave soldiers who fought for liberty in the hour that tried men's souls, I compiled all the authentic military rolls which I could obtain, and published my "Official Register of the Officers and Men of New Jersey in the Revolutionary War." In the preparation of this work I became possessed of a large amount of

new facts and unpublished documents relating to the battles of Trenton, Princeton, and Monmouth In 1877 I crossed the ocean to examine the official records at Cassel, Germany, and in 1892 I caused a most exhaustive search to be made in the State Archives at Marburg, Germany, by competent men, and secured copies of all documents filed there (some eleven hundred pages of manuscript, certified under seal as correct) which bear directly on the conduct of the Hessian force in New Jersey This new material has never before been thoroughly examined by an American Every history, every letter, every diary, every document that came to my notice has been carefully studied for facts which bear in any way on this important crisis in our country's history Many of these documents are published in full in this volume. In the light of all the new material to which I have referred this work has been prepared, and I trust it will be found a complete history of the wonderful winter campaign of 1776 and 1777 in New Jersey

For facts, advice, or careful revision I acknowledge myself greatly indebted to General T F Rodenbough, U S Army, Colonel Asa Bird Gardiner, U S Army, Professor Henry P Johnston of the College of the City of New York; Rev Dr. Henry C Cameron of Princeton University; General Henry B Carrington, U S Army, Dr Austin Scott, president of Rutgers College, the late Frederick D Stone, librarian of the Pennsylvania Historical Society, William Nelson, corresponding secretary of the New Jersey Historical Society, Dr William H Egle, librarian of the State Library of Pennsylvania, Hon John B Linn of Bellefonte, Pennsylvania, General William W H Davis of Doylestown, Pennsylvania, Colonel E M Woodward of Ellisdale, Monmouth County, New Jersey, Joseph H West of Hamilton Square, Mercer

County, New Jersey, Hon. Garret D W Vroom, Captain Charles B. Dahlgren, Hon William S Yard, all of Trenton; Friederich Hirschfeld of Hamburg, Germany, the late Hon. Edmund D Halsey of Dover, New Jersey, the late Dr Friederich Kapp of Berlin, Germany, the late Dr Benson J Lossing and the late Dr. George H. Moore, and to the men living and dead whose books appear in the list at the close of this volume, as authorities cited in the work

W S. S.

TRENTON, NEW JERSEY, December 26, 1897

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THE BATTLES OF TRENTON AND PRINCETON

PART I

I

NOWHERE in the annals of warfare can be found a counterpart of the winter campaign of Washington and his army in 1776–77 — that army which left the vicinity of New York a ragged, starved, defeated, demoralized band, which passed through the Jerseys and over the river, then dashed upon the Hessian advance, punished the flank of the British line, doubled on its own bloody tracks through the village of Princeton, and at last marched into quarters an army of victors. In just one month and a half the patriot troops of America had been forced to surrender the forts of the Hudson and beat an inglorious retreat, then they struck such blows at the royal army that it was thought prudent to allow them to reorganize, undisturbed, among the mountains of Morris County.

On the 27th day of August, 1776, the disastrous battle of Long Island was fought. At that time the American army had never met the enemy in the open, and it was with great solicitude that General Washington contemplated a conflict between his small unskilled force and the trained troops of England and Hesse The battle was also unequal in that the foreign soldiery outnumbered our own fully one half And although the patriots fought bravely, — the Continental battalions of Pennsylvania, Maryland and Delaware, with the militia levies of New York and New Jersey, inflicting

great damage on the enemy, — they were overwhelmed and thoroughly routed. About 600 men were killed and over 1000 taken prisoners, among whom were the general officers Sullivan, Woodhull and Lord Stirling

The effect of this disaster upon the commander-in-chief and his troops was absolutely distressing Almost in despair they abandoned the soil they had defended so bravely, and during the night of August 29, and in the fog of the early morning of the following day, they quietly passed over the East River into New York

In October the affairs at Harlem Heights and White Plains took place, but without any decided results On November 16, after a severe assault and a loss to the British army of about 800 men slain, Fort Washington, with its garrison of 2000 soldiers of the Continental line and 600 of the militia, was surrendered to General Howe. This garrison marched out between the Hessian regiments of Rall and von Lossberg and laid down its arms Colonel Rall was mentioned in orders for his gallantry on this occasion

Not a week later General Greene was compelled to abandon Fort Lee, on the west bank of the Hudson River, when he found that Lieutenant-General Cornwallis, who had landed with a force of some 4000 men at old Closter Dock in the early morning of November 20, and ascended the steep and rocky roadway to the top of the ridge of the Palisades, was rapidly gaining a position which would soon make the fort utterly untenable In making a hasty retreat to the main army at Hackensack, New Jersey, General Greene's division had time to carry only their firearms and ammunition The want of wagons and the necessity for a rapid withdrawal of the garrison compelled them to abandon a large quantity of commissary stores, camp equipage and baggage, thirty mounted guns and two brass mortars

The American army had lost in prisoners 329 officers and 4101 enlisted men, in all 4430 soldiers, during the past twelve weeks

The remnant of the army was posted on the west bank

of the Hackensack River, under the immediate command of General Washington, who occupied the house of Peter Zabriskie in the village of Hackensack. Official reports made at that time show scarcely 4000 men fit for duty, and even this force was being constantly diminished. The division of troops under General Greene was entirely without tents, and in great need of shoes, stockings and blankets.



LORD CORNWALLIS'S PATH ON OLD CLOSTER DOCK ROAD (NOW ALPINE, BERGEN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY), AS IT APPEARED SEPTEMBER, 1897

The chilling frosts and cold winds which swept down the Highland range through the valley of the Hackensack already betokened the early approach of winter. Under the circumstances it did not appear possible for General Washington to fortify himself there and give battle. A sufficient quantity of shovels and axes could not be procured for the purpose of intrenching the position. The river was fordable in many places, and not all the people of that section of the State could be counted on as thoroughly true to the cause of independence. An appearance of preparation for resistance was for some time assumed, but the idea of contesting

the British advance was not for a moment seriously entertained

The future of the states never wore a more gloomy aspect than at this period Desertions increased daily, hardly a recruit joined the army, and the militia remaining could not be depended on for any active duty. There was imminent danger that the force might be hemmed in between the Passaic and Hackensack rivers and be unable to extricate itself For the patriot army to give battle was but to invite defeat and the early surrender of "the lives, fortunes and sacred honor" which its representatives in the Continental Congress had just solemnly pledged A retreat across the State was the only alternative, and this must be made by a demoralized band, closely followed by the trained troops of Britain. It was, indeed, a hazardous expedient

By the direction of Congress, General Washington ordered General Philip Schuyler, who, with the Continental line of New Jersey and Pennsylvania, was then at Ticonderoga, on Lake Champlain, to send aid to him without delay These troops, however, had nearly completed their terms of service, and were reluctant to re-enlist for the war Brigadier-General Hugh Mercer, with his flying camp which had been stationed at Bergen Neck for some months, was ordered to report to the commander-in-chief, although his troops, having scarcely a week longer to serve, were rapidly absenting themselves without leave Major-General Charles Lee, who had commanded the rear-guard of the army during the occupancy of New York, and who was still stationed at White Plains, on the east side of the Hudson River, under orders from General Washington, dated November 10, 1776,[1] had been instructed to cross the river and join the main army General Lee's command, like the rest, was suffering from desertions Having completed all the preparations which could be made, General Washington began the retreat through the Jerseys with only twenty-eight regiments of infantry, three

[1] *The Lee Papers*, vol. ii p. 267, New York Historical Society Collections.

companies of artillery and a detachment of dragoons, — say, 5500 officers and men [1]

As already stated, General Washington feared that his army might soon be hemmed in between the Hackensack and Passaic rivers, therefore, on the 21st day of November he began his march southward by crossing the Acquackanonk bridge over the Passaic River to its westerly bank, and, during the evening of the 22d and early on the morning of the 23d, posted his force at Newark The British advance column under Major-General the Hon John Vaughan, colonel of the Forty-sixth regiment of foot, soon after appeared on the east bank of the Hackensack River, ready to commence the march into New Jersey which General Washington had predicted in his letter to Congress, November 6, 1776 The rear-guard of the American army, which had remained near the village of Hackensack, quickly burned the bridge over the river, and hastened to join their retreating comrades

Amid all these discouraging circumstances, General Washington was still planning some movement which might bring success The Rev William Gordon, D. D., in his "History of the American Revolution," gives us this account of a conversation which is said to have occurred about this time between the American chief and his adjutant-general: "Should we retreat to the back parts of Pennsylvania, will the Pennsylvanians support us?" Colonel Reed answered, "If the lower counties are subdued and give up, the back counties will do the same" The general passed his hand over his throat, and remarked: "My neck does not feel as though it was made for a halter. We must retire to Augusta County in Virginia Numbers will be obliged to repair to us for safety; and we must try what we can do in carrying on a predatory war, and if overpowered we must cross the Alleghany Mountains" It is quite apparent that he had no intention of abandoning the sacred cause to which he had devoted his life

[1] For details see Part II. No 1

Even at this early stage of the war we can clearly trace in the character of Washington qualities all important to a successful commanding general — a brave heart, unwearied vigilance, great strength of will and boundless resources. His profession in early life made him a close observer of the topography of the country through which he passed, and prepared him to utilize his knowledge when the time for action arrived. Defeat seldom depressed him for any length of time, and in the hour of victory he preserved a calm demeanor. His patience under the ofttimes slow and unwise action of Congress is a marvel to the historians of to-day. His dignified bearing attracted the attention of everyone, and the grandeur of his character and life compelled all to honor, respect and trust him. Far above the petty intrigues of military life, he was so strong in his patriotism, so profound in his conviction of ultimate success, that all cabals ended in finding him stronger alike with the soldiery and the people.

At Newark General Washington halted his entire force, sent his sick to Morristown, and made every exertion to reorganize his shattered command. Desertions were of hourly occurrence. The New Jersey brigade had about completed its tour of duty, and all the influence of its leaders was required to prevent the dissolution of the army.

At this juncture one more effort was made by the commander-in-chief to procure reinforcements. His adjutant-general, Colonel Joseph Reed, a Jerseyman by birth, was dispatched to Governor William Livingston on November 23, with the urgent request that he and the legislature of New Jersey, then sitting at Burlington, would urge forward recruits for the army. General Washington wrote, "The critical situation of our affairs and the movements of the enemy make some further and immediate exertions absolutely necessary."

No man was more freely admitted to the confidence and counsel of General Washington than his friend Reed, and to no man did he more frequently refer for advice. To him

Washington always wrote with a familiarity and frankness which he never used toward any other officer. Colonel Reed was always energetic and brave, a model staff officer, a "wonderfully quick, penetrating genius," and an accomplished



ADJUTANT-GENERAL JOSEPH REED, STAFF OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

gentleman. Who has not heard the indignant answer which he made to George Johnstone, the British diplomatist, who had tried to bribe him to return to the support of the English crown, — "I am not worth purchasing, but, such as I am, the King of Great Britain is not rich enough to do it."

As a result of Adjutant-General Reed's efforts an act was passed by the Council and General Assembly of New Jersey to organize four battalions of state troops by embodying, as occasion required, a certain quota of volunteers from the militia of the different counties. Great efforts were made to put this force into the field, but it does not appear

that they took any part in the brilliant events which followed

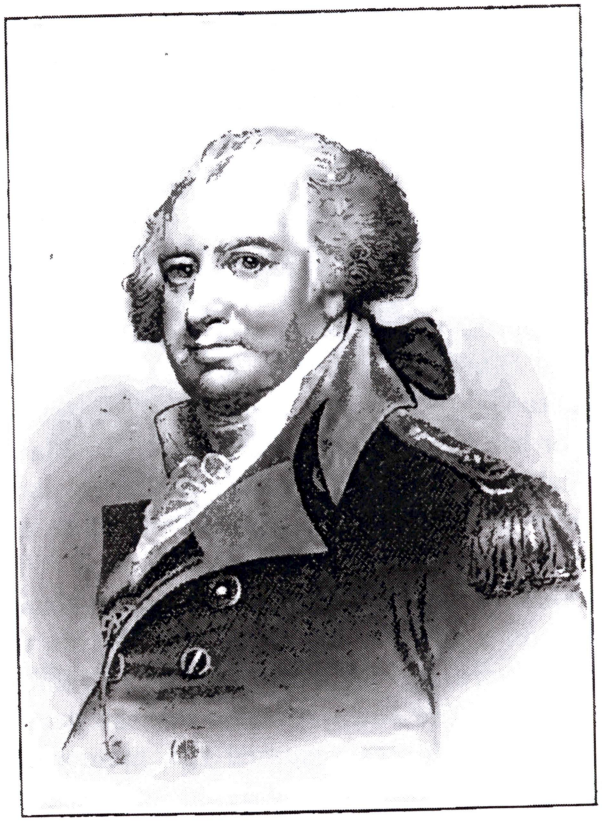
Brigadier-General Thomas Mifflin, at the request of the other general officers, was sent to Congress, then in session at Philadelphia, and to the adjacent counties, to arouse the patriotism of the people and urge them, in view of the impending fate of their principal city, to encourage enlistments and hurry forward troops He was well received by Congress, he "spoke animatedly pleasing, which gave great satisfaction," and a committee was appointed to advise with him and aid him His success in dispatching reinforcements will appear more fully hereafter.[1]

To add to his discouragement, Washington was compelled, on November 24, to send Colonel David Forman and his battalion from General Nathaniel Heard's brigade to Monmouth County to suppress an outbreak among the loyalists of that section of the State, with orders to "apprehend all persons who appear to be concerned in any plot or design against the liberty or safety of the United States." "Black David," as he was called, full of energy and merciless severity, was the very man to suppress an intestine conflict around his own home. This he did quickly and well.

On November 26 the American force at Newark made a demonstration against the English, but it was ineffectual On Thursday morning, the 28th day of November, Washington abandoned the town, after a rest of nearly a week, and with his broken forces resumed the memorable retreat through the Jerseys Again and again he hoped to receive

[1] General Mifflin was well suited for this work He was born in Philadelphia in the year 1744 and although of Quaker parentage he early displayed all the great qualifications of the soldier When General Washington took command of the army, Mifflin was placed on his staff as colonel and quartermaster-general He was made a brigadier-general, May 16, 1776, and October 1 of the same year Congress requested him to resume the office of quartermaster-general Soon after the battle of Princeton he received the commission of major-general He was a man of pleasing manners, singularly attractive presence, and in speech he was truly eloquent

aid from the militia of New Jersey and the neighboring States, so that he might make a temporary stand, inflict some damage on the foe, and then retire to the Delaware River. But no large body of recruits joined him until he reached Trenton, and all the while the remnant of his ragged army was compelled to fall back before the British force,



BRIGADIER-GENERAL THOMAS MIFFLIN

12,000 strong, confidently advancing. The enemy's advance guard entered Newark, November 28, as the American army left that city.

It is difficult to understand how the patriot army sustained itself and concealed its weakness in the face of such a powerful enemy. A very small detachment of the Second regiment of light dragoons, Continental army, commanded by

Colonel Elisha Sheldon of Connecticut, appears to have been the only cavalry for protecting the flanks of the American army and impeding the British advance [1]

When the Americans left Newark, one column marched by way of Elizabeth Town and Woodbridge, and the other by Springfield, Scotch Plains, and Quibbletown, now New Market, Middlesex County, reaching Brunswick at noon on Friday, the 29th day of November They formed a junction there with a small body of troops under Brigadier-General Lord Stirling, which had been sent in advance to guard the river at Brunswick and the coast at Amboy against any unexpected incursion of the British

Shortly before this period Lieutenant-General Sir William Howe had succeeded General Gage in the command of all the forces of Great Britain in America, and had established his headquarters in New York This command he continued to hold until the spring of 1778, when he was succeeded by Sir Henry Clinton General Howe was a poor commander for an army whose business it was to crush out rebellion He was fond of taking his own ease, and given to postponing decisive action The fascinations of gaming and the blandishments of beauty had more charms for him than the rough path of duty in a soldier's life General Lee said of him, "He was the most indolent of mortals, and never took pains to examine the merits or demerits of the cause in which he was engaged"

It has always seemed strange that General Howe did not

[1] We find the members of this detachment described in Captain Graydon's *Memoirs* as "old-fashioned men, apparently beyond the meridian of life They were truly irregulars; and whether their cloathing, equipments or caparisons were regarded, it would have been difficult to have discovered any circumstance of uniformity Instead of carbines and sabres, they generally carried fowling pieces; some of them very long, and such as are used for shooting ducks Their order of march corresponded with their other irregularities It spindled into longitude immense One of them, on being captured, told the British officers, who made themselves very merry at his expense and obliged him to amble about for their entertainment, that his duty in the army 'was to flank a little and carry tidings."

intercept General Washington's retreat before he reached the Raritan River. A force sent from New York on the vessels of his brother, Lord Richard Howe, admiral of the British fleet, could have landed at South Amboy, marched along the Raritan River, and cut off the retreating army, which would have been crushed between the two British



GENERAL SIR WILLIAM HOWE

columns. That this was suggested in English war councils is evident, as Sir Henry Clinton insisted that the expedition destined for Rhode Island should be "landed at Amboy to have co-operated with Lord Cornwallis or should be embarked on board Lord Howe's fleet and landed on the Delaware and taken possession of Philadelphia." General Washington's rapid movement from Newark to Brunswick certainly implied that he feared he might have an enemy in front as well as in the rear.[1]

[1] Major Stephen Kemble, deputy adjutant-general of General Howe,

At Brunswick, in the very face of the enemy, then at Woodbridge and near to Amboy, the militia of the flying camps of Maryland and New Jersey, which had been enlisted only until the 1st of December by virtue of an order to "reinforce the army at New York," and whose terms of service had now expired, demanded their discharge, notwithstanding the patriotic appeals of General Mercer, and almost to a man left for their homes. Desertions still continued, and to such a degree that it was found necessary to request Governor Livingston to post proper guards on the roads south of Trenton and at all the ferries across the Delaware River, to arrest all the soldiers without a regular discharge or pass, so that the Pennsylvania militia, which still had one month to serve, might not also escape over the river.

As General Greene informed Governor Cooke of Rhode Island, the American army, at this time, did not number 3000 efficient men.

General Washington once more made an attempt to procure reinforcements, "because," he said, "of the broken state of our troops, and that the enemy had changed their plan, and were rapidly advancing on the Delaware." He sent another messenger to Governor Livingston to urge the necessity for troops to drive out the invaders.[1]

makes this "Observation on the Conduct of Commanders in Chief—of Armies," etc., in his journal. "After Fort Washington was taken why not send a detachment of the Army to Brunswick to cut off Mr Washington's Retreat, while Lord Cornwallis was pursuing him to Newark etc.? General Clinton's Troops would have answered that purpose Effectually." He also adds in the same strain. "Why not pursue Washington from Brunswick with more Spirit? His Cannon and Baggage must have fallen into our hands. Provisions might have been sent to Brunswick for all these services by Water and no delay in the proceedings of the Troops."—*N. Y. Hist. Soc. Collections*, 1883, p. 104.

[1] William Livingston was the first governor of New Jersey under the Constitution, having been elected August 13, 1776. He was born in 1723, and educated at Yale College. He was a lawyer by profession and also a writer of considerable talent. No one was more zealous than he in urging the colonies to separate from the mother country, and after the separation no one was more faithful in defending the

It was impossible, however, for even so patriotic a governor to do much to aid the retreating army. The legislature, on the first knowledge of the movements of the enemy, left Princeton for Trenton, and then removed to Burlington. Even there they did not remain long, but soon dispersed to their homes.

To all these discouragements was added the fact that the Tories, of whom there were many in the State through which the army was retreating, spoke out openly in favor of the



GOVERNOR WILLIAM LIVINGSTON

royal cause, and the Quakers, always friendly to peace, if not loyalists, were doing nothing to aid the cause of independence.

Again General Lee was urged to hasten his column to the support of the commander-in-chief. Washington wrote him

rights of New Jersey against all opposers. He was re-elected governor, annually, fourteen times, and died in office, July 25, 1790.

from Brunswick, December 1: "The force I have with me is infinitely inferior in numbers, and such as cannot give or promise the least successful opposition I must entreat you to hasten your march as much as possible, or your arrival may be too late to answer any valuable purpose"[1]

[1] Ford's *Writings of George Washington* vol v p 62.

II

As soon as Washington arrived at Brunswick he directed Colonel Richard Humpton, commanding the Eleventh Pennsylvania regiment, Continental line, then organizing in that State, to collect all the boats on the Delaware River, and secure them on the west bank opposite Trenton [1]

He sent General William Maxwell to the Delaware River on the same mission He also directed General Putnam to have rafts made from timber to be found at the ferry landing in that village

A semblance of preparation for resistance was made at Brunswick to deceive the enemy's pickets, and thus gain time But on Sunday afternoon, December 1, on the approach of the British column to the bridge across the Raritan River and the banks along its fordable parts, the little army of Americans partially destroyed the bridge, and retired toward Princeton under cover of a brisk fire from Captain Alexander Hamilton's battery [2]

Washington entered Princeton between eight and nine o'clock on the morning of December 2, wrote a letter to the President of Congress, and, tradition says, partook of breakfast at the residence of Quartermaster Robert Stockton, still standing, on Constitution Hill, and with the main body of the army pushed on immediately to Trenton, which he reached before noon [3] In Trenton he learned that Lord

[1] Part II No 2.

[2] It is said of Hamilton's battery that "it was a model of discipline, its captain a mere boy, with small, slender, and delicate frame, who with cocked hat pulled down over his eyes, and apparently lost in thought, marched beside a cannon patting it every now and then as if it were a favorite horse or pet plaything"

[3] Ford's *Writings of George Washington*, vol v. p 63

Cornwallis had halted his column near Brunswick. It appears that orders had been received from General Howe to go no farther than Brunswick; but Cornwallis, thinking that he could virtually annihilate the fragment of an army in



CAPTAIN ALEXANDER HAMILTON, NEW YORK PROVINCIAL COMPANY OF ARTILLERY

front of him by a sharp pursuit, sent a message to Howe for permission to attack the Americans before they could cross the river. Howe's inertness undoubtedly saved the patriot army, for his answer to Cornwallis was that he "would join him immediately;" but he did not do so before December 6. He brought with him the fourth brigade, Major-General James Grant commanding. In this brigade was a strong contingent of Hessians, commanded by Colonel Rall. Evidently Howe's plan was to obtain a foothold in the State, place a large body of troops in winter quarters, with a fine

opportunity of procuring provisions for his men and for his horses, and then await the opening of the following spring for active operations.

As soon as he found the British army had halted, Washington ordered two brigades, consisting of five regiments from Virginia and the Delaware regiment, in all about 1400 men, under command of Brigadier-General Lord Stirling, senior officer, and Brigadier-General Adam Stephen, to remain near Princeton, observe the enemy's movements, and cover the passage of stores and baggage over the Delaware River.

On December 6 Major-General Greene returned to Princeton with an additional force of 1200 men, and assumed command there; soon after, the entire American army was concentrated at Trenton.

The king's troops, with General Howe in supreme com-



QUARTERMASTER ROBERT STOCKTON'S HOUSE

mand, left Brunswick at four o'clock on the morning of December 7 in two columns, one corps commanded by Lord Cornwallis and the other by Colonel von Donop. The advance guard of the left column entered Princeton the same

afternoon, but the right column did not reach there until some hours after dark Lord Cornwallis took immediate possession of the college buildings and the Presbyterian church The British army held the village of Princeton for nearly a month, during which time they pillaged the houses of the principal patriots "Tusculum," the residence of the Rev Dr John Witherspoon, president of the college, was stripped, and "Morven," the home of the Hon Richard Stockton, who, as well as Dr Witherspoon, had signed the Declaration of Independence, was denuded of its library and furniture The residence of Jonathan Dickinson Sergeant, now the Miller property, was burned by the soldiery.

General Washington finished his masterly retreat through New Jersey with scarcely the loss of a single life, and reached the banks of the Delaware River with his barefooted and almost naked army. It was a march of hardly one hundred miles, and yet Washington had prolonged to a journey of nearly three weeks what might have been accomplished in four days, had Lord Cornwallis pressed him closely As Washington said, "Nothing but the infatuation of the enemy" saved them [1]

During the retreat but few recruits joined the American army, though at Trenton a small detachment of the New Jersey militia, belonging to the First regiment, Hunterdon brigade, Colonel Isaac Smith, and part of the Second regiment, Middlesex brigade, Colonel John Neilson, volunteered to assist the forlorn cause [2]

[1] Thomas Paine, who was with the army on this march, says. 'With a handful of men we sustained an orderly retreat for nearly a hundred miles, brought off our ammunition, all our fieldpieces, the greatest part of our stores, and had four rivers to pass None can say that our retreat was precipitate, for we were three weeks in performing it, that the country might have time to come Twice we marched back to meet the enemy and remained out until dark."

[2] Captain Johann Ewald of the German yagers refers to these troops in his notes on the war in this language "The irregular militia of this province were brave during the whole war, they performed all the service that could be expected of them on every occasion, and although



TUSCULUM, REV. DR. JOHN WITHERSPOON'S HOUSE

The Continental Congress sent to Trenton a German battalion, raised in Pennsylvania and Maryland, and commanded by Colonel Nicholas Hausseger. As a first response to the appeals of General Mifflin, Philadelphia sent three battalions of "Associators" under Colonel John Cadwalader, Captain Samuel Morris's troop of light horse, and Captain Thomas Forrest's battery of artillery — in all about one thousand men.[1]

General Washington determined to remain in Trenton as

often greatly assisted by the regular troops, they were willing to sacrifice themselves at their own hearthstones."

[1] The militia of the city of Philadelphia and liberties enrolled as Associates — for they had associated together to "defend with arms, their property, liberty and lives" — were called out for review November 26, when General Mifflin addressed them in an eloquent manner, asserting that Howe's army contemplated the invasion of their State. He appealed to them to march out in defense of their commonwealth and the cause of freedom. Congress also requested them to march into New Jersey. Another review took place November 28, and soon after, by detachments and companies, the city battalions proceeded to Trenton, as stated. They agreed to remain in service six weeks, unless sooner discharged. On December 12 the Assembly offered a bounty

long as possible Boats were still being gathered, military stores were being transported to the west of the Delaware River, and the sick and disabled men sent to Philadelphia. The Durham boats, much used at that time for carrying fresh provisions to different points on the river, and which held what was then a full regiment of men, were now put into immediate use

Strange indeed does it appear that Cornwallis, with his large and well-equipped force, did not crush out with one blow this apology of an army, composed, as it was, of men despondent, and many of them eager to seek safety in flight. The debates in the English Parliament show us that Lord Cornwallis was once interrogated as to the reason the pursuit was not made with greater rapidity. To save the reputation of General Howe, perhaps, he could only give this rather evasive reply: "We wanted reinforcements in order to leave troops for the communication between Brunswick and Amboy. It was likewise necessary to pay some attention to a considerable body then passing the North River under General Lee"

In his examination Lord Cornwallis further said, as an excuse for his own slow movements "I am free to say that I could not have pursued the enemy from Brunswick with any prospect of material advantage or without distressing the troops under my command We arrived at Brunswick the night of the 1st of December We had marched that day twenty miles, through exceeding bad roads We subsisted only on the flour we found in the country, and as the troops had been constantly marching ever since their first entrance into the Jerseys, they had no time to bake their flour, the artillery horses and baggage horses of the army were quite tired; that sufficiently proves that we were not in a good condition to undertake a long march The bridge over the Raritan was broken, which caused a necessary delay

of ten dollars to all volunteers who should join General Washington on or before the 20th of the month, and seven dollars and five dollars, respectively, for all joining before the 25th or 30th of the month.

of one day. If the enemy could not have passed at Trenton, they might have marched down the east side of the Delaware." [1]

The condition of the State of New Jersey during the passage of these hostile armies across its territory was most deplorable. Situated between two large and powerful States,



LIEUTENANT-GENERAL CHARLES CORNWALLIS

close to two great cities, one under British rule and the other the objective point of the march of the English army,

[1] Lieutenant-General Charles Cornwallis was the son of the first Earl Cornwallis. He commenced military studies early in life, was made colonel of the Thirty-third foot August 2, 1765, major-general September 29. 1775, and January 1, 1776, received the local rank in America of lieutenant-general. He was considered the most able and reliable of all the English commanders during the war, but his reputation was greatly stained by the many cruelties afterward inflicted in the Southern Department by his express orders.

the people living on the highway between these centres of interest had to undergo all the sufferings which follow in the track of war Their farms were devastated, their houses ransacked, their barns consumed, their money and valuables stolen, their cattle and horses, their forage, crops and merchandise carried off, their bridges and their churches damaged and despoiled Society was thoroughly disorganized, quarrels were engendered, families were subject to every indignity or else were obliged to flee for their lives. The wanton destruction of private property by Howe's army fully accounts for its slow movements across the State[1] An old Quaker who had been thoroughly robbed by the foreign soldiery expressed his opinion of them in emphatic language when he said: "Well, God made these men, though I am sure the devil governs them"

The State was virtually in the possession of the enemy, and nothing was wanting but freezing weather to bridge the Delaware River, so that the foe might pass direct to the city where the Continental Congress was in session. The national treasury was known to be well-nigh bankrupt, and all the power of Congress could not keep up the credit of the government and provide for the relief and strengthening of the army. Symptoms of general distrust in the power of Congress and the efficiency of the army seemed widespread and increasing.

As soon as the British army entered the State, General Howe and his brother, Admiral Howe, by instruction of their government, issued a proclamation, dated November 30, directing all men in arms against his majesty's authority to return to their homes At the same time they tendered a free and general pardon, and a secure enjoyment of their liberties and properties, to all who would, within sixty days, renounce the cause of independence, claim the benefits of this offer, and declare their full loyalty to the crown, and their obedience to the laws, by subscribing a declaration of

[1] This delay of Howe's army is more fully explained in the *History of Paterson, New Jersey*, by William Nelson vol i pp 415, 416.

this submission to the constitutional authority and supremacy of Great Britain.[1] This document was scattered broadcast over the State, and increased, if possible, the fears of the patriots. There were many who thought this an easy



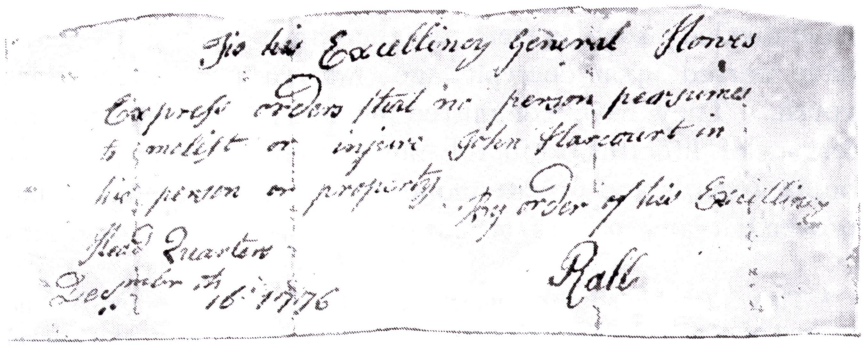
ADMIRAL RICHARD HOWE

method of saving themselves and securing their property from molestation, and these flocked in great numbers to make their submission. It is said that twenty-seven hundred citizens of New Jersey took protection in this way. Lord Cornwallis stated that "three or four hundred came in every day for ten days to take protection." When asked to aid in

[1] Part ii. No. 3.

driving out the foe they said, "General Howe promises peace, liberty and safety — more than this we could not desire." But the Reverend James Caldwell (afterward the patriot martyr) wrote to General Washington: "General Howe gives sixty days of grace and pardons from the Congress down to the committee. No one man in the Continent is to be denied his mercy. The Lord deliver us from his mercy."

The timid, the distrustful, the sycophantic, in this dark hour quietly entered the British lines and craved protection. They apologized to their more patriotic neighbors and the reproof of their own consciences by saying they did not believe in war; that they opposed rebellion; that all wrongs should be constitutionally righted, and that acts of Congress,


To his Excellency General Howes
Express orders that no person presume
to molest or injure John Slaycourt in
his person or property. By order of his Excellency
Head Quarters
December 16th 1776
Rall

PROTECTION PAPER SIGNED BY COLONEL RALL IN TRENTON
Original in possession of Author

recently adopted, especially that of the Declaration of Independence from the mother country, were too hastily drawn and voted on before the delegates properly understood the views of their constituents. They thought the army thoroughly routed, the cause virtually abandoned, and that their clear duty was to insure the protection and safety of those dependent upon them.

However, the Hessian soldiery had little regard for these protection papers, which they would not read and did not care to understand. They looked upon everything in an enemy's country as free for them to enjoy. The British soldiers, too,

thought the plundering of the people a fair game, and they did not relish the idea of the German troops taking all the spoils. Therefore both acted regardless of "safeguards," and shamefully violated the pledged faith, attacking friend and foe, irrespective of age or sex. Their brutal passions, uncontrolled by any order of their superior officers, urged them to commit acts of rapine that were both distressing and disgusting.[1]

In reference to the brutal conduct of the British troops and the Hessian mercenaries, Governor Livingston, in his message to the Council and General Assembly of New Jersey, February 25, 1777, made the following forcible statement: "The rapacity of the enemy was boundless, their rapine indiscriminate, and their barbarity unparalleled. They have plundered friends and foes. Effects capable of division they have divided; such as were not they have destroyed. They have warred upon decrepit age, warred upon defenseless youth. They have committed hostilities against the professors of literature and the ministers of religion, against public records and private monuments, against books of improvement and papers of curiosity, and against the arts

[1] This is frankly admitted under date of November 24, 1776, in the journal of Major Stephen Kemble, deputy adjutant-general of General Howe, wherein he says: "His lordship will not be able to restrain the troops from plundering the country, their excess in that respect is carried to a most unjustifiable length." Dunlap, in his *History of the American Theatre*, thus describes the conduct of the British soldiery at Piscataway in the march through New Jersey: "I saw the soldiers plundering the houses, the women of the village trembling and weeping or flying with their children; the men had retired to await the day of retribution. In many houses helpless old men or widowed females anxiously awaited the soldiers of monarchy. A scene of promiscuous pillage was in full operation. Here a soldier was seen issuing from a house armed with a frying-pan and gridiron, and hastening to deposit them with the stove over which his helpmate kept watch. The women who had followed the army assisted their husbands in bringing the furniture from the houses, or stood sentinels to guard the pile of kitchen utensils or other articles already secured and claimed by right of war."

and sciences. They have butchered the wounded asking for quarter, mangled the dying weltering in their blood; refused the dead the rights of sepulchre, suffered prisoners to perish for want of sustenance, violated the chastity of women; disfigured private dwellings of taste and elegance, and in the rage of impiety and barbarism profaned edifices dedicated to Almighty God."

Sir Henry Clinton afterward severely criticised the course of the English army in plundering the people of New Jersey, many of whom, as is well known, were kindly disposed toward them, and some of whom had renewed their allegiance to the crown. These are his words "Unless we would refrain from plundering we had no business to take up winter quarters in a district we wished to preserve loyal. The Hessians introduced it"

III

To return to the little army at Trenton During the night of December 6, or early in the morning of December 7, General Washington set out with a small body of men on the road toward Maidenhead, now Lawrenceville, and Princeton He had not marched far before he came up with General Greene's command on the retreat to Trenton, the First Maryland regiment and the Delaware regiment covering the rear of the column The British army, after nearly twenty hours' rest in Princeton, commenced the march toward the river by different roads, hoping to intercept or get in the rear of the patriot lines, in some place, and so prevent any attempt to cross At Stony Brook the column was obliged to halt and repair the bridge over that stream, which had been broken down by the Americans in their retreat, and it was not until nine o'clock on the morning of December 8 that it was rendered fit for the passage of artillery

General Washington was privately censured, even by his own officers, for risking his army, by keeping them on the Jersey side of the river, and delaying the crossing until the royal forces threatened their entire capture by a single forced movement Colonel George Weedon of the Third Virginia Continental regiment, keenly alive to the danger of the situation, wrote a friend at Fredericksburg, Virginia, that "General Howe had a mortgage on the rebel army for some time, but had not yet foreclosed it"

Boats which had been used for conveying the military stores having been placed in readiness on the bank of the river near the village of Trenton, the passage of the troops commenced at Beatty's and Trenton ferries, just above and below the falls During the afternoon of December 7, and up to daylight of Sunday, December 8, the boats were

constantly passing back and forth. Lieutenant-Colonel David Henley, acting as deputy adjutant-general on General Washington's staff, superintended the transfer of the troops to the Pennsylvania side of the river, and was with the rear-guard as the army passed over.

Scarcely had the last of the Americans crossed in safety when the British fourth brigade, two battalions of light infantry, three battalions of Hessian grenadiers, and the reserves, the advance of the royal army, entered Trenton with music and much display. The Hessian battalions, under command of Colonel von Donop, came into the town about eleven o'clock in the morning of December 8, and as they marched down to the river bank they were greeted with a shower of grapeshot from the western shore

Having tarried in Princeton for nearly an entire day, the British army had then taken fully twice the necessary time to reach Trenton. Their action, in this respect, was a source of considerable satisfaction to General Washington

Another division of the corps of Lord Cornwallis, and under his immediate command, halted for the night at Maidenhead, about six miles from Trenton, preferring to wait until morning before entering the town But at one o'clock in the morning of December 9 he was ordered to take a strong detachment, consisting of two battalions of British grenadiers, three battalions of British light infantry, the Forty-second British regiment, and two battalions of British foot, and cross the river about two miles south of Coryell's Ferry, or twelve miles above Trenton, capture the boats there collected, and then attempt to carry over the whole army. He failed, however, to find the means to get his detachment over the river, and like the Hessians at Trenton, was greeted with shot from the opposite bank Every boat which could be pressed into service had been brought to the Pennsylvania shore and fastened, and to secure their further safety, General Lord Stirling had placed a strong guard over them Even a large Durham boat, which had been sunk in the river a few days before, had fortunately been raised

and taken away. After reconnoitring the shore for a long time, and finding no possible means of crossing, the British returned to their posts, halting, however, by order, at the village of Pennington. General Howe's adjutant, Captain Frederick Ernst von Münchhausen, of the regiment Landgraff, had been very zealous in his search for boats and in his desire to place his Hessian brethren across the river.

In this manner General Howe's pursuit of the Americans was suddenly checked on the river bank. The game had been almost within his grasp, yet it had eluded him. Stedman, the historian, says of the movements of the British army at this time, that it looked as though "Howe had calculated with the greatest accuracy the exact time necessary for his enemy to make his escape."

A detachment of the British was also ordered down the



WASHINGTON'S HEADQUARTERS AT TRENTON LANDING

river to Bordentown, and this movement gave the American spies the impression that Howe's intention was to cross in two columns, above and below Trenton, and so surround the patriot army. But this party also was baffled, and nothing could now be done by the British but wait the forming of ice

strong enough to admit of their passing over the Delaware River, the procuring of boats from the Raritan River, or the building of flat-bottomed boats at Trenton.

On the morning of December 9 the remnant of the American army was divided into parties of observation, guards and patrols, to prevent as far as possible any attempt at crossing the river. Small earthworks were thrown up where a passage might be attempted, opposite the ferries known as Sherwood's, Coryell's, McKonkey's, Yardley's, Howell's, Kirkbride's, Beatty's, and Trenton. From Coryell's Ferry to Yardley's Ferry four brigades of Continental troops were stationed. These brigades were commanded by Generals Stirling, Stephen, Mercer and De Fermoy. The Pennsylvania militia belonging to the flying camp, with a small body of New Jersey militia, protected the shore from Yardley's Ferry to the ferry opposite Bordentown. At first the Philadelphia battalions of Associators were also stationed just below Trenton Ferry, and there they began to build themselves rude huts for shelter from the inclement weather. These were nearly completed, when, on December 11, the third battalion was ordered to Dunk's Ferry, below Bristol, and the next day it was joined by the entire brigade.[1]

The commissary and quartermaster's departments of the army were established at Newtown, in Bucks County. This village, about eight miles from the river, was a central point for supplies for both wings of the army. After crossing the river on December 8, Washington spent the night at the summer residence of Thomas Barclay, about half a mile back from the shore at Trenton Ferry, now Morrisville.[2]

[1] For the orders in these cases see Part II. No. 2.

[2] Washington calls this house "Mr. Berkeley's." It is still called "Summer Seat," and is owned by the estate of John H. Osborne. (See sketch of Thomas Barclay, p. 61, Baker's *Itinerary of George Washington*.) The commander-in-chief probably remained there several days, dating all his letters at "Headquarters, Trenton Falls." He appears to have changed his quarters on December 14 to the farmhouse of William Keith, in Upper Makefield Township. This dwelling was at



COLONEL KNOX'S HEADQUARTERS

On the evening of the 10th day of December Commodore Thomas Seymour was directed by General Washington to place the galleys under his command on the river between Bordentown and Philadelphia, so that he could furnish immediate information of the appearance of the enemy on the New Jersey shore, or of any preparation they might make to effect a crossing. He had command of all the vessels, gondolas and row-galleys above the chevaux-de-frise at Billingsport. It was expected that a portion of this naval force would

Knowles's Creek, about a mile and a half from the mouth of the creek and about four miles north of Newtown. The stone house, which still stands, was built in 1763, and is on the road from Brownsburg to the Eagle Tavern, and on the south side of Jericho Hill. General Greene quartered in Samuel Merrick's house, General Sullivan in John Hayhurst's house; General Lord Stirling at Robert Thompson's, the miller, at Beaumonts, often called "Blue Mounts" in dispatches, near Brownsburg, and Colonel Knox in Dr. Chapman's house, now owned by Edward Johnson. All of these dwellings were near Jericho Hill, an excellent place to obtain a view of the surrounding country. General De Fermoy with his brigade was at Coryell's Ferry, at what is now called New Hope. General Lord Stirling's and General De Fermoy's brigades built themselves wooden sheds as barracks. — *History of Bucks County, Penn.*, by Gen. William W. H. Davis.

aid materially in preventing the British from crossing at Cooper's Creek, opposite Philadelphia, or even lower down on the Jersey shore The gondolas, armed with small ship-guns, cruised up as far as the "Falls" at Trenton, watching the enemy, and keeping in check the Tories, who were eager to obtain information for the English officers. These sailors and marines also kept strict control of the little village of Burlington, and often sent parties off from the galleys to search for those unfriendly to the cause of independence

Adjutant-General Reed, who had been trying to hasten reinforcements from New Jersey for the army, joined his chief at Trenton, and on December 8 again left the army with a letter for the Continental Congress. In this communication the commander-in-chief urgently stated that there was "not a moment's time to be lost in assembling such force as can be collected" In addition to this appeal, he made every effort in his power to strengthen the army Brigadier-General William Smallwood, who was unfit for field service on account of wounds received at the battle of White Plains, was sent in all haste to Maryland and Delaware to beg them to forward militia as rapidly as possible Brigadier-General John Armstrong, of Cumberland County, was also detached from his command, and sent into those counties of Pennsylvania where it was thought he could most effectually arouse the people.

The preservation of Philadelphia was now the desire of every patriot Washington bestowed much thought upon this subject, and, having placed Major-General Israel Putnam in command of the city, directed him to defend it at all hazards. Lines of defense were then planned from the river Schuylkill, covering the high ground around Germantown in an easterly direction to the Delaware River.[1]

General Mifflin, having returned from his mission, was then at the general headquarters, and was ordered back to

[1] On December 9 Washington suggested to Congress a French engineer of eminence, Colonel Thaddeus Kosciuszko, as the proper officer to take charge of this work.

Philadelphia to take charge of the supplies and camp equipage which had been collected there.

On the 10th of December Congress resolved to defend the federal capital with all the force which could be mustered. They commenced earnestly to work on a plan proposed by the commander-in-chief for the reorganization of the army. Up to this time the militia had been called out by classes, some for but one month, and state troops had been called for sixty days or four months. These short terms of service did much to impair the practical efficiency



THE KEITH HOUSE, WASHINGTON'S HEADQUARTERS

of the force. No sooner was a man well drilled as a soldier, than he was ready for discharge. Congress for the first time offered bounties to men who would enlist in the eighty battalions of Continental troops which it had directed to be raised, and agreed to borrow five million dollars for the purpose. About this time an appeal was made by Washington to Congress not to wait to fill up the old regiments, but to increase the number of new organizations enlisted for the

war. He thought that every new officer would draw around him an additional number of new men to be trained for the next campaign Although this method might involve considerable expense, and it seemed to some members of Congress a dangerous precedent, yet "desperate diseases require desperate remedies" [1]

Congress also gave power to Major-General Israel Putnam to assume absolute control of the city of Philadelphia This brave old officer, blunt and unpolished, was yet true to his country's cause Endowed with a cool, clear head and a determined will, he was the very man to govern the alarmed and almost disaffected city.

The state of affairs in Philadelphia at this time is best shown by Putnam's order, that all the inhabitants of the city who appeared in the streets after ten o'clock at night should be arrested and confined His order of December 13 well describes the confusion and alarm which reigned in that city during this dark hour of our country's history [2]

[1] To quote at length the picture which General Washington gives of the situation "The enemy are daily gathering strength from the disaffected This strength, like a snowball, by rolling will increase, unless some means can be devised to check effectually the progress of the enemy's arms Militia may possibly do it for a little while, but in a little while, also, the militia of those states which have been frequently called upon will not turn out at all, or, if they do, it will be with so much reluctance and sloth as to amount to the same thing — Instance, New Jersey — Witness, Pennsylvania! Could anything but the river Delaware have saved Philadelphia? Can anything (the exigency of the case indeed may justify it) be more destructive to the recruiting service, than giving ten dollars bounty for six weeks' service of the militia, who come in you cannot tell how, go you cannot tell when, consume your provisions, exhaust your stores, and leave you at last at a critical moment?" — Ford's *Writings of George Washington*, vol v p. 112.

[2] "The general has been informed that some weak or wicked men have maliciously reported that it is the design and wish of the officers and men in the Continental army to burn and destroy the city of Philadelphia To counteract such a false and scandalous report, he thinks it necessary to inform the inhabitants who propose to remain in the city, that he has received positive orders from the Honorable Continental

On December 11 Congress passed a resolution denouncing as false the rumor that they intended to leave Philadelphia, and asked General Washington to publish the same in orders to his army. This he declined to do, in a letter dated



MAJOR-GENERAL ISRAEL PUTNAM

the following day;[1] and on December 13, forgetful of their solemn and indignant resolve, they made the city gossip a

Congress and from his excellency General Washington, to secure and protect the city of Philadelphia against all invaders and enemies. The general will consider every attempt to burn the city of Philadelphia as a crime of the blackest dye, and will, without ceremony, punish capitally any incendiary who shall have the hardiness and cruelty to attempt it."

[1] Ford's *Writings of George Washington*, vol. v. p. 82.

reality. Under the advice of Generals Putnam and Mifflin, Congress fled to Baltimore, leaving Robert Morris, George Walton, and George Clymer, of their own body, to act for them in Philadelphia Oliver Wolcott, delegate in Congress for Connecticut, wrote "It was judged that the Council of America ought not to sit in a place liable to be interrupted by the rude disorder of arms" This unwise proceeding increased the alarm in the city, and it was only by the watchfulness of the resolute Putnam that he was able to keep the loyalists from making a serious outbreak. The effect was also felt in the camps on the Delaware. Captain Samuel C Morris of the Philadelphia Associators wrote to his friends "It has struck a damp on ye spirits of many."

IV

Let us now return to the king's troops, which we left vainly trying to cross the Delaware River on December 8 Every effort to procure boats had failed, and no attempt was made to build new ones. The capital city of the young republic was a prize worth a supreme effort, and the British soldiers were certainly competent to build bateaux and rafts. A hundred wooden houses in the village would have given them the material, if nothing else was at hand, and John Rickey's hardware store and the blacksmith shops of Joseph and Samuel Lanning, Joshua Newbold and Hezekiah Howell would have afforded them all the nails and iron necessary But the same lack of enterprise which General Howe exhibited when he allowed the escape from Long Island, and the halts at Brunswick and at Princeton, was repeated at Trenton, and gave the Americans the opportunity

Joseph Galloway, a Tory, who appears to have spent a few days about this time at the house of Major John Barnes, on Queen street, near the Assunpink Creek, in Trenton, said, when examined before the House of Commons by Lord Germain and others on June 18, 1779 "At Captain Montresor's request, I did inquire whether there were any materials in or about Trenton with which pontoons, boats, or rafts might be constructed; and I found 48,000 feet of boards, a quantity of wire, and there was timber enough about Trenton for that purpose No boats were brought from the Raritan River, as the Americans feared and anticipated. Nor does it appear that the work of building boats or rafts was ever begun "[1]

[1] The Abbé Raynal, in his *History of the Revolution of America*, truthfully remarks in reference to the proper conduct of the British at this time "Without losing a moment, the king's troops ought to have

But General Howe was proud of the manner in which he had driven the rebels out of the State

His dispatches show that it was no part of his plan in this campaign to cross the Delaware River He seems to have concluded that he had had enough glory for this year, and, "the weather having become too severe to keep the field," he had thought it better to spread a portion of the royal army over the State, and thus occupy the territory so easily conquered As citizens and soldiers he regarded the colonists with the utmost contempt, and by billeting his troops upon the people he thought to stop all efforts to obtain recruits in New Jersey for the new army of next year In this way, unless ice formed on the river, he proposed to remain in winter quarters until the opening of a new season, and then commence an active and final campaign.

General Howe ordered that a number of cantonments in New Jersey be formed immediately in the counties of Essex, Middlesex, Somerset, Hunterdon and Burlington General Cornwallis rashly arranged a thin line of military posts at Elizabeth Town, Brunswick, Princeton, Trenton and Bordentown, the last two composed principally of Hessian troops. These stations, however, were too far apart to support one another effectually in case of attack Howe says "My first intentions were to have made Brunswick the left and Elizabeth Town or Newark the right of these cantonments; and my reason for extending to Trenton was that a considerable number of inhabitants came in with their arms in obedience to the proclamation of commissioners on 30th of November"

The frontier posts, then in the very face of the American

passed the river in pursuit of the handful of fugitives, and have put them totally to the rout If the five thousand men, destined for the conquest of Rhode Island, had gone up the river in the transports they were aboard of, the junction of the two corps might have been effected without opposition even in Philadelphia itself, and the new republic had been stifled in that important and celebrated city which gave it birth"

army, were garrisoned by German officers and soldiers, who were ignorant of the character and language of the people, and who could not therefore judge rightly of any information brought them. It seems strange that a part of the Hessian contingent should have been given so important a position The only reason is that these troops were placed by order on the left of the column, and thus the duty fell to them to hold the left of the chain of cantonments To substitute other troops might, as General Howe said, "have created jealousies between the Hessian and British troops, which it was my duty carefully to prevent."

These Hessian soldiers, whose services had been purchased, who were fighting for hire, were uncouth in manners, low in morals, but well trained in military duties, and familiar with war and violence They cared little on which side their services were rendered

But to maintain her authority in the colonies, England had either to send new levies of her own soldiers, distasteful though the war might be to them, or purchase the brains and courage of some other nation She found a market among the petty princes of Germany, where the articles were obtainable for thirty crowns banco, equal to £7 4s 4½d for each soldier. Negotiations were commenced with Frederick II, Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel, Frederick, Prince of Waldeck, Charles I, Duke of Brunswick; William, Count of Hesse-Hanau, Frederick Augustus, Prince of Anhalt-Zerbst, and Charles Alexander, Margrave of Anspach-Beyreuth, and from these potentates England received nearly 30,000 men, with which she proposed to conquer Americans struggling for independence Before the troops were sent the agreement was confirmed with the minister of Brunswick that three wounded men should count as one dead man, and that every man killed must be paid for as one newly mustered. Lord Mahon, in his "History of England," says Frederick the Great was so disgusted with what he called "scandalous man-traffic," that, whenever the Hessians passed through his dominions, he claimed the

same toll per head as for cattle, for he contended they had been sold "as one sells cattle to be dragged to the shambles"[1]

Before the first division of these Hessians had reached the shores of America, the Continental Congress had promulgated this announcement concerning them in the Declaration of Independence: "He is, at this time, transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries to complete the works of death, desolation, and tyranny, already begun, with circumstances of cruelty and perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the head of a civilized nation"[2]

At Trenton were stationed three regiments of Hessian infantry, a detachment of artillery, fifty Hessian yagers, and twenty light dragoons of the Sixteenth British regiment, — in all about 1400 men in and around the town. This force

[1] Lord Camden said in the British House of Lords, March 15, 1776 'Is there one of your lordships who does not perceive most clearly that the whole is a mere mercenary bargain for the hire of troops on the one side and the sale of human blood on the other, and that the devoted wretches thus purchased for slaughter are mere mercenaries in the worst sense of the word?" To increase their coffers, filled now 'with blood and tears' and to enable them with more splendor to support the coarse luxuries of a sensual court, these petty princes kidnapped their poor subjects in the fields, in their shops, and even in their churches, and forced them into the conscription Yet the slaves of these despots are the men whom we find throughout the war fighting for the British crown, and dying as Colonel von Donop said he died, — "a victim of my ambition and the avarice of my sovereign.' — *Parliamentary History of England*, vol xviii., London, 1813.

[2] The dress of the Hessian soldier is carefully described in Dunlap's *History of the American Theatre* 'A towering brass-fronted cap, moustaches colored with the same material that colored his shoes, his hair plastered with tallow and flour, and tightly drawn into a long appendage reaching from the back of the head to his waist, his blue uniform almost covered by the broad belts sustaining his cartouch box, his brass-hilted sword, and his bayonet a yellow waistcoat with flaps, and yellow breeches were met at the knee by black gaiters and thus heavily equipped he stood an automaton, and received the command or cane of the officer who inspected him."



HESSIAN GRENADIER

was under the command of Colonel Johann Gottlieb Rall,[1] as senior officer of the brigade, who was given the command of the post in return for his gallant conduct at the battle of White Plains and at the assault on Fort Washington. The three regiments of infantry, one of them having six grenadier companies, the other consisting of five fusilier companies and one grenadier company each, were those designated Rall, von Knyphausen, and von Lossberg. The first two regiments came down with the main army and went into quarters at Trenton December 12; but the von Lossberg regiment was detained at Newark, then at Brunswick, where it was relieved by the Waldeck regiment, and again detained at Princeton, so it was unable to join the brigade at Trenton until the

[1] The name of Colonel Rall has been given by various historians in many different forms. General Washington always wrote it *Rohl.* John Marshall, in his *Life of Washington*, spells the name *Rawle.* Jared Sparks and Dr. David Ramsey give us *Rahl.* Sergeant R. Lamb, in his book of *Occurrences during the War*, and Mrs. Mercy Warren say *Rhal.* Captain Hall of the Forty-sixth regiment of British foot, in his *History of the Civil War in America*, writes *Raile;* and General Sir William Howe, *Raille;* the Rev. Dr. William Gordon speaks of him as *Roll;* Charles Botta refers to him as *Ralle;* and Charles Stedman, the British military writer, alludes to the Hessian soldier as *Rhalle.* His own autograph shows that he wrote his name *Rall.* See p. 24.

morning of December 14, when Colonel Rall established his headquarters in that village

It was General Howe's plan to make Trenton one of the military posts, and not to dignify it by the name of a "headquarters," or put so large a force in the village, but these men had been promised good winter quarters, and even Trenton did not satisfy them When Major von Hanstein came into Trenton with his tired men, in the scanty uniform of the von Lossberg regiment, he asked Colonel Rall if these were the "good quarters" which had been promised them Rall replied, ' No, but we will have them soon in Philadelphia" To increase the honors and influence of Colonel Rall, General Howe ordered him to open a headquarters in this important town

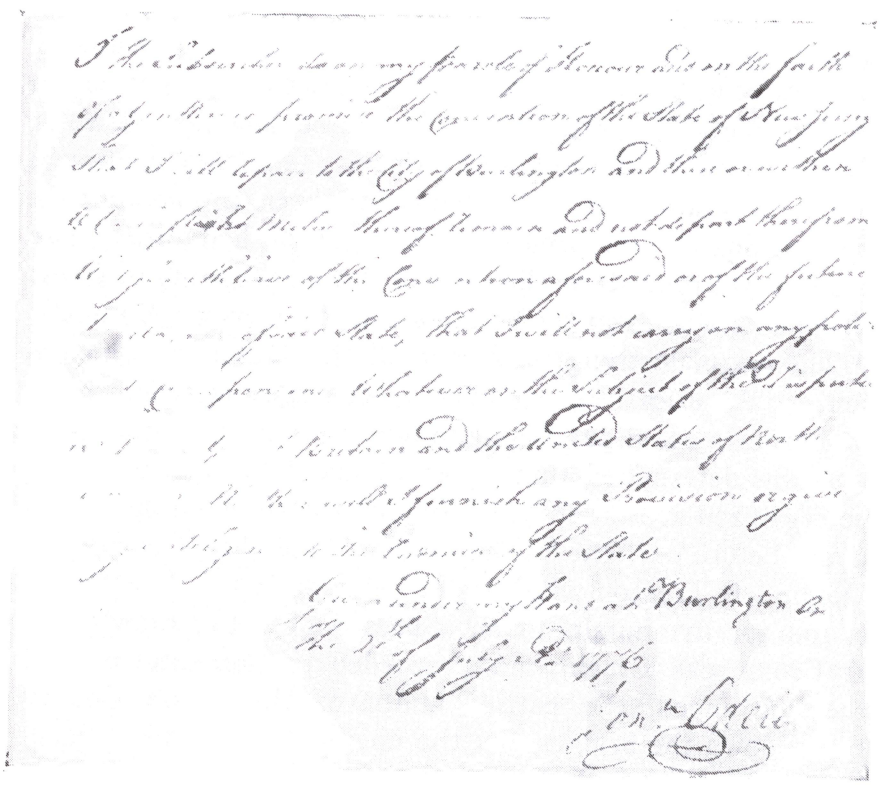
It may be noted, when referring to the names by which these regiments were called, that it was the custom, at that time, in the English and German armies, as well as among the troops of the Landgrave of Hesse, to call an organization of this character by the name of its commanding officer, or by the name of a general or a prince This they continued to do for years after the colonel had been promoted to a generalship, or the prince or the general had died The custom still prevails at the present day in the army of Great Britain, as well as in the battalions of the German Empire [1]

The original strength of each of the Hessian regiments sent to America was 21 officers, 60 sergeants, 5 surgeons, 22 musicians, and 525 rank and file.

It was determined that a post of about 1500 men should be organized at Bordentown, six miles below Trenton. Two hours before daylight on the 11th of December, Colonel von Donop left Trenton with several officers and a detachment of four or five hundred troops, passed over the drawbridge at Crosswicks Creek, and proceeded to Bordentown As they advanced, the patriot militia of Burlington County broke down the bridges, but the enemy succeeded in reaching Bordentown, and then proceeded to Bustleton Pursu-

[1] For names of field officers of these regiments see Part II No 4

ing a little party of American riflemen who had crossed the river below Bordentown for the purpose of scouting, they came, about two o'clock in the morning, to the York bridge over the Assiscunk Creek. The Americans eluded further pursuit by recrossing the river to Bristol. Hearing that Colonel von Donop and the Hessian troops were approaching, John Lawrence, the mayor of the town, with two or three other prominent citizens, went out on the old York road to meet them and to plead for the safety of the village and its inhabitants. John Lawrence was a man of some distinction in his time; and in after years his son, James Lawrence, captain in the United States navy, became famous as the hero of the Chesapeake, and his dying shout, "Don't give up the ship," has rendered his name the ideal of Amer-



PAROLE OF REVEREND JONATHAN ODELL, OF BURLINGTON, NEW JERSEY
Original in possession of Author

ican heroism It is not stated in history nor in that singular diary of Margaret Morris, the Quakeress, that John Lawrence was in any way charged, as she was with Toryism, but the rector of St Mary's Church at Burlington, the Rev Jonathan Odell, who was also a practicing physician, and who accompanied the mayor for the purpose of speaking French to Colonel von Donop, was a loyalist of extreme views, and so a suitable man for this embassy. On October 18, 1775, the Provincial Congress of New Jersey had discovered that Mr Odell had written two very un-American letters His case had been considered with great care, but at that time Congress had declined to pass public censure against him On the 20th of the next July, however, the county committee of Burlington was ordered to take his parole to confine himself on the east side of the river and within a radius of eight miles from his residence — because, as they said, he was "a person suspected of being inimical to American liberty" He accompanied Sir Henry Clinton, the British commander-in-chief, when he returned to England in November, 1783, at the close of the war[1] The Burlington County committee told Colonel von Donop that if he brought his force into Burlington, they probably would have to submit to a cannonade from the vessels of the American fleet lying in the Delaware River, near the town Colonel von Donop urged the deputation to see the commander of the fleet, and, leaving his troops near the bridge, he entered the town himself with some of his staff officers and a small guard It was agreed with the Burlington committee that these men should receive quarters and refreshments, and that no one in the village should conceal arms or ammunition, under threat of pillage by the Hessians. Then the officers went to the house of Mayor Lawrence, dined at his table, and waited there for Commodore Thomas Seymour's

[1] Hills's *History of the Church in Burlington*, p. 315. Force's *American Archives*, fourth series, vol vi. p 1651, Tyler's *Literary History of the American Revolution*, vol ii p 103, *Private Journal of Margaret Morris of Burlington*, p. 8.

answer to the delegation Being on shore at the time, Captain Thomas Moore, one of the officers of the armed boat Hancock, accompanied the party The wind was blowing very hard, and it was with great difficulty that the delegation reached the flagship, which was some distance down the river While they were on their way to this vessel, some of the men in the gondolas saw the Hessian guards pacing the streets of Burlington, and fire was opened instantly on the town Hearing this, the mayor and William Dillwyn, another prominent citizen of the place, went down the main street to the wharf, and waved their hats to the boats for the sailors to cease firing, but they, too, were fired upon. Then Colonel von Donop and his officers left the table, and went toward the river to make observations of the state of affairs, but they were seen, and the cannonade up Main, now High street, and along the river bank, now Delaware street, was continued all the afternoon Several houses of the citizens were struck, but no one was injured It is said many of the people hid in their cellars during the firing When Captain Moore and the delegation had reached the commodore's vessel, they found that he had already ordered four galleys up to the town with orders to fire on it if any Hessians were seen Seymour told the committee from Burlington that if the Hessian troops quartered themselves in that town, he would have no mercy on the place, but would immediately open on it with all his guns. The delegation promptly reported this threat to Colonel von Donop, and as he had no heavy guns with which to reply to the fleet, and had discovered that some of the residents were loyalists, he thought it prudent to withdraw from Burlington This he did, and marched his men back to Bustleton, where they spent the night On the next morning, December 12, some of the men from the gondolas came into Burlington, and told the people that they intended to burn the town, for they suspected that the Hessians were concealed there These men remained in the village until the night of December 17, when Captain Shippin, who was

afterward killed at the battle of Princeton, took all the men back to the vessels, and the town became quiet In the meantime Colonel von Donop had marched his men to Bordentown, and having placed there a detachment of yagers, under special orders to prevent the inhabitants from removing goods and provisions, and his own men from plundering the houses, he returned to Trenton.

On the 13th of December General Howe informed Colonel von Donop[1] that he would place him in command of the two Hessian brigades, — his own and that of Colonel Rall, with all the yagers, dragoons and artillerists attached He also assigned him winter quarters at Bordentown, and ordered a strong body of troops to report to him there The Forty-second British regiment (known as the Royal Highland regiment, and sometimes called the "Highland Watch"), one of the best organizations in the service, and under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas Sterling, a fine officer, was ordered to this cantonment There were also three battalions of Hessians, — the grenadier battalions von Linsingen, von Block and von Minnigerode Also attached to these organizations were the second company of Hessian yagers, Captain Johann Ewald in command, a detachment of Hessian artillery with six three-pounders, and one company of British artillery with two six-pounders and two three-pounders

The Hessian grenadier battalion von Koehler with four eighteen-pounders was ordered from New York to join Colonel von Donop at Bordentown, coming by vessel to Amboy, and then marching across the State, but it did not join him before he broke up his cantonment

Colonel von Donop also directed that Captain Georg Heinrich Pauli, an engineer officer, should remain with Colonel

[1] The commander of the grenadiers, Colonel Carl Emil Kurt von Donop, belonged to the second division of the Hessian troops Colonel von Donop was one of the bravest and most cultured officers of the Hessian soldiery He was mortally wounded, October 22 1777, at the battle of Red Bank on the Delaware River For copies of orders to Colonel von Donop, and to Colonel Rall, see Part II. Nos. 5 and 6.

Rall for a few days to point out where redoubts should be erected for the protection of the post of Trenton He then (December 14) marched to his winter post at Bordentown with the troops assigned him It was von Donop's intention to order the Forty-second regiment, British foot, and the grenadier battalion von Block to the post of Burlington, but finding that the town was under American guns, he thought it prudent to delay the occupation until the heavy artillery should come from Amboy with the battalion von Koehler. The two organizations referred to were temporarily ordered to Black Horse, Burlington County, a village now known as Columbus One company of yagers, consisting of one officer and thirty men, was ordered to post itself about two miles north of Bordentown, on the road to Trenton, and another detachment in a mill a short distance south of Bordentown, on the river.

On the day that these Hessian battalions took post at Bordentown, Captain Henry Miller, who belonged to Colonel Edward Hand's Pennsylvania riflemen, and who had been in New Jersey with a small scouting party, reported having met and received the fire of von Donop's advance. The soldiers were quartered in farmers' houses in Burlington County in squads of ten to fifteen, much to the annoyance of a community of Quakers peculiarly averse to war The vivacious Highlander in his kilt and tartan, his low checkered bonnet, and many colored stockings, was in strong contrast to the dull, phlegmatic German in his sombre uniform But the Germans were the first to commence a pillage upon the inhabitants, friend and foe alike. They took possession of every article they desired, under the spirit of the orders which von Donop had received from Howe

All the assignments which have just been stated were made by General Howe, who regarded the party around General Washington with utter contempt, and was confident of his ability to hold possession of these widely scattered posts. This arrangement of numerous unsupported cantonments reflected no credit upon his generalship

Major-General James Grant, baronet, of Ballendallock, and colonel of the Fifty-fifth regiment of British foot,[1] was placed in command of all the troops in New Jersey, and stationed with the strongest body of soldiers at Brunswick, whither all the supplies for the army were sent and from there distributed

General Howe, accompanied by General Cornwallis, left Trenton December 13, and returned to resume, for the winter, his life of ease at his headquarters in New York. They both thought that the capture of Philadelphia might occur at any time, and that, if it was deemed necessary, the city could be immediately taken, as the rebel army would soon be disbanded So impressed were they with this idea that Lord Cornwallis obtained a leave of absence to visit his home in England He then made every arrangement to sail at an early date, and had his baggage placed on the packet vessel, confidently expecting to give the king the cheering information of the final collapse of the feeble rebellion against his authority[2]

On December 15 Colonel von Donop ordered the grenadier battalion von Linsingen to take post half way between Black Horse and Bordentown, at a little place known as

[1] This is the same General Grant whom Lord Stirling of the American army heard declare, in the English House of Commons, February 2, 1775, 'that the Americans could not fight, and that he would undertake to march from one end of the continent to the other with five thousand men"

[2] At this time the following orders were issued 'Headquarters, December 14, 1776 The Campaign having closed with the Pursuit of the Enemies Army near ninety Miles by Lieut Gen. Cornwallis's Corps, much to the honor of his Lordship and the Officers and Soldiers under his Command, The Approach of Winter putting a Stop to any further Progress, the Troops will immediately march into Quarters and hold themselves in Readiness to assemble on the shortest Notice

'The Commander-in-Chief calls upon the Commanding Officers of Corps to exert themselves in preserving the greatest Regularity and strictest Discipline in their respective Quarters, particularly attending to the Protection of Inhabitants and their Property in their several Districts

Mansfield Square. A report had reached him at noon that General Putnam had come up from Philadelphia in the direction of Mount Holly with a force of 3000 rebels. He immediately sent out a detachment of 200 grenadiers and mounted yagers to ascertain the truth of the report. They



MAJOR-GENERAL JAMES GRANT

were unable to find the American column, and reported to that effect. During the day Major Nichols,[1] crossing the river from Bristol, came up from Burlington to Bordentown for the purpose of making an exchange of prisoners. Colonel von Donop's criticism of this officer in his report is very interesting.

The next day Colonel von Donop wrote to General Leslie at Princeton and to General Grant letters giving in detail the events of the preceding day.[2]

[1] Probably Major Francis Nichols, Ninth Pennsylvania Continental regiment. This officer is often alluded to in the documents connected with the "Reed Controversy."

[2] For these letters see Part ii. Nos. 7 and 8.

V

On December 17 the "express riders" between Bordentown and Brunswick must have been particularly active Very early that morning Colonel von Donop wrote as follows to General Grant at Brunswick:—

"In accordance with my communication of yesterday, I have the honour to advise you, my General, that the patrol has been sent out and has seen nothing of the enemy. They found near the bridge between Mount Holly and Moorestown a quantity of cannon-ball and shells which they threw into the water. According to the reports of the country people the enemy must be at Cooper's Creek with a force of 4000 men and General Putnam who commands them must be busy in collecting stores If I did not know that the heavy artillery were to arrive to-day or to-morrow I would be very desirous of marching with the three battalions and making a call on Mister General Putnam I will follow out your orders on this subject as soon as possible Yesterday evening a farmer came to say that General Washington had crossed the river at Vessels' Ferry with a large force on the right flank of Colonel Rall for the purpose of uniting with the corps of General Lee This man however has disappeared after telling his story to the Mayor of Burlington. If this news is true the troops which have crossed must be the corps of General Stirling, who has his quarters at Beaumonts about two miles above the ferry The six chasseurs who were lately driven from the house near the river at Trenton were again attacked yesterday morning by a detachment of the enemy which crossed in three boats under the protection of the eighteen pounders in their batteries We were not able to prevent them from landing and were obliged

to retire until Colonel Rall brought up a force to their assistance After this the rascals went off taking away as their only prize a pig which had just been killed by the chasseurs The two gondolas which came near me here and which I made mention of yesterday, I believe have gone down the river again to await me at Burlington I have the honour to send you two orders issued by General Putnam It is evident we will have to make a siege of it . . .

"At this moment I have just received the news that Colonel Rall sent yesterday evening a patrol of six dragoons to Pennington, which has not yet returned and one of these dragoons has been seen ten miles from Trenton mortally wounded"

This letter was received by General Grant the same day, and he immediately made this reply:—

"Brunswick 17th Dec 1776 I have just received your report of this Days date, that of yesterday has not reached me. The General set out this morning for New York Your fourth Battalion of Grenadiers is still at this place. You shall be informed when they march from South Amboy with the heavy artillery, but you need not expect them for some days, and you will have time enough before their arrival if you think proper to drive Putnam from Cooper's Creek and put a stop to his carrying off the Magazines for I am sure there is no Rebel force on this Side the Delaware, which will attempt to stand before hessian Grenadiers under your command

"I can hardly believe that Washington would venture at this season of the year to pass the Delaware at Vessels Ferry,[1] as the repassing it may on account of the ice become difficult. I should rather think that Lee's Corps has proceeded to Philadelphia, for we have heard nothing of them, since Lee was made Prisoner, and prior to that the Intention was to march to East-Town in order to cross the river

[1] The ferry which afterward became known as McKonkey's Ferry.

"Putnam's Hand Bills and Lee's account[1] differ exceedingly about the Intention of the Rebels with regard to Philadelphia For Lee declares that they are determined to burn the Town, if they cannot prevent its falling into our Hands General Matthew marched this morning to Plackhemin where he fell in with a small body of rebels, they fled on his Approach — he has taken a few prisoners — some Arms and stores, his Guide was wounded in the foot, that was all the Loss we sustained General Leslie marched this morning to Springfield and is to proceed from thence by Bound-Brook to Prince Town I have had no report from him, indeed cannot expect it till to-morrow

"Lieut Col Mawhood likewise marched this morning by Hillsborough towards Flemingtown, he is not yet returned When you send a Light Dragoon from Trenton, the Letter should be forwarded to me from Princetown, where your Dragoon should remain to carry back my answer from Princetown to Trenton, by that means the conveyance will be quicker and the Dragoons less fatigued I will write to General Leslie to observe this rule in future After you get the 18 pounders, the rebel Gondolas will not remain long at Burlington and if the Frost continues they will not wait even this Event"

It will be seen that the false report of the crossing of a large detachment of Washington's army at Vessels' Ferry had reached the Hessian commanding officers, and they were anxious to determine the truth of the statement. General Grant did not believe that there was any large force on the Jersey side of the river, and even if there were he was disposed to think lightly of any troops which the foe could bring against the trained battalions under his charge

Colonel Rall, too, was curious to know what was going on around him, and that same day (December 17) he seems to have specially exerted himself to obtain information[2]

[1] It would appear that General Lee was even in 1776 expressing his opinion and giving information to the enemy

[2] See letters, Rall and von Donop, Part II Nos 12 and 13

Early in the morning of December 16 a little scouting party of the Americans crossed the river at Trenton Ferry, as stated in Colonel Rall's letter of the following day[1] Having so successfully stirred up the post on the first occasion, the temptation to do it once more was irresistible.

Colonel Rall again wrote to Colonel von Donop, giving him the news at Trenton up to December 18,[2] reporting affairs between scouting parties, — a service conducted with great activity on the American side.

To return to the American army in camp on the Pennsylvania side of the Delaware River General Washington still wondered why General Charles Lee did not join him as directed. Requests by letter, written in the most pressing terms, and direct orders by messengers, seemed alike ineffectual to hasten his march All dispatches appeared to be unheeded, and although it was known that he had crossed the Hudson River even as late as December 4, and that he was now on the march, yet his progress seemed slow indeed to the commander-in-chief

On December 1 Washington wrote these urgent words to Lee from Brunswick [3] "The enemy are advancing and have got as far as Woodbridge and Amboy, and from information not to be doubted they mean to push for Philadelphia The force I have with me is infinitely inferior in numbers and such as cannot give or promise the least successful opposition . . I must entreat you to hasten your march as much as possible or your arrival may be too late to answer any valuable purpose"

On December 7 Washington had dispatched from Trenton Major Robert Hoops, brigade major on the staff of Brigadier-General Philemon Dickinson, to urge General Lee to hasten his march and to inform him that boats had been provided to transport his men across the river at what was then known as Tinicum Ferry And again (December 10) Wash-

[1] Part ii. No 12

[2] Part ii No 14.

[3] Ford's *Writings of George Washington*, vol v p 62

ington appealed to him.[1] "Do come on, your arrival may be happy, and, if it can be effected without delay, it may be the means of preserving a city, whose loss must prove of the most fatal consequence to the cause of America" Finally on the 11th he wrote "I shall only say that Philadelphia, beyond all question, is the object of the enemy's movements, and that nothing less than our utmost exertions will be sufficient to prevent General Howe from possessing it The force I have is weak and entirely incompetent to that end I must therefore entreat you to push on with every possible succour you can bring"[2] Neither of these letters ever reached General Lee.

It is clear that General Lee did not regard any of these dispatches as orders, but merely as letters of advice, and he evidently did not care to merge his own command with the main army He had had plans of his own, such as a dash on the city of New York, and even now preferred to follow laggardly somewhat in the rear of the British troops rather than place himself with his chief in their very front He had written to the president of the Council of Massachusetts that he "considered the resolves of Congress as of no weight," and had added this strange remark. "There are times when we must commit treason against the laws of the State, and the present crisis demands this brave, virtuous kind of treason" This was singular language for the second military commander in the new republic to use.

It is quite apparent that he considered himself as on detached service, and there appears to be no doubt that he had planned an important diversion by marching through Pluckemin to Princeton, and making an attack on the enemy's rear-guard, or striking a signal blow at the post at Brunswick, and then passing around to the British left, and taking the old York road to the ferry at Burlington General Washington had written General Lee that he would have no objection to his hanging on the enemy's rear if

[1] Ford's *Writings of George Washington*, vol v p 74

[2] *Ibid* vol v p 83

there was sufficient force to oppose an advance upon Philadelphia.

It appears that Lee was twenty-three days in moving his army from White Plains, on the Hudson River, to Morristown. But about eleven o'clock on the morning of Friday, December 13, he was surprised at White's Tavern, near Baskingridge, Somerset County, by a scouting party of



MAJOR-GENERAL CHARLES LEE

thirty dragoons. This tavern was fully twenty miles from the English lines, and at least four miles outside the pickets of his own division. This little body of troopers, which belonged to the Sixteenth regiment, also called Burgoyne's regiment, of Queen's light dragoons, at that time under the immediate command of Lieutenant-Colonel the Hon. William Harcourt, and which had been sent out from Pennington to watch the movements of Lee's division, captured the general himself with "infinite address and gallantry." [1]

[1] This detachment, as we are informed in De Fonblanque's *Life of General Burgoyne*, was part of that regiment which Lee, then a colonel in the British service, led across the Tagus on October 5, 1762,

General Lee was treated by the British at first as a deserter from their army rather than as a prisoner of war, because he had entered the American service before his resignation as a lieutenant-colonel on half pay had been accepted He had been made an ensign in the British army while yet a youth, and had taken part in the French and Indian war in America with such fierce energy that the savages had given him the name of "the spirit that never sleeps." He was also engaged in the Spanish war in Portugal, and had been a general officer in the army of Poland. After being held as a prisoner for many months, the English government, considering that the war was about to close, began to deal with him as a state prisoner [1]

under instructions from Burgoyne, and inflicted great damage on the enemy at Villa Velha British accounts and the notes on the war written by the Hessian officer Captain Ewald say that the troopers captured one of Lee's messengers, forced him to act as their guide, and so came upon the American officer suddenly, but Major William Bradford of Lee's staff, a Rhode Island officer, says that a Jersey loyalist (said to have been James Compton of Baskingridge) had informed Lieutenant-Colonel Harcourt that Lee was spending the night outside of his own lines, with but an insignificant guard Cornet Banistre Tarleton, First regiment dragoon guards (afterward so notorious in the South), was with this scouting party as a volunteer, and led the attacking force The troopers surrounded the tavern, fired a volley, and carried Lee off without his hat and in his slippers, an odd-looking prisoner, whom they took to 'Penny Town' (Pennington) In January however, he was in the jail at Brunswick, and later (January 22, 1777) he arrived in New York city. M de Gaiault, a French officer (sometimes given the title of lieutenant-colonel), who had just joined Lee as a volunteer aide-de-camp, was taken with him

It may be noted here that the little troop of the Sixteenth Queen's light dragoons, while returning to its post, made a diversion for the purpose of stirring up the patriotic people of the village of Flemington As they dashed up the old road to the town, a bullet from the flintlock of some Jersey farmer emptied the saddle of Cornet Francis Geary, entered in the British army lists as "killed December 14, 1776' In 1891 his grave by the roadside was opened, and the truth of the village tradition verified by the buttons of his coat, marked "16 Q. L. D," being found — *Proceedings N J Hist Soc* 2d series, xi 166

[1] General Washington, in a letter dated December 18, and written to

The capture of Lee had a bad effect upon the people and upon the army They had extolled him as a brilliant officer, full of decision of character and knowledge of war Too many believed that had Washington followed more closely Lee's advice the disasters which had fallen upon the cause would have been averted The British, too, thought that they had captured what they termed the "American Palladium" — the embodiment of the military genius of the rebellion, and they gloried greatly in the good fortune which had placed such a leader in their hands.

As we look upon it now, his conduct shows that his loss was really a gain to the service His military life was full of disobedience He tried in secret to defame the character of Washington, that he might supplant him in command His letters written at the very house of his capture show that he was treacherous One letter to General Gates, dated December 13 1776, which, when he was captured, he was about to give to Major James Wilkinson (Gates's aide-de-camp), and which Wilkinson hastily thrust into his pocket as he concealed himself, shows his bitter jealousy as well as it depicts the state of his command "Entre nous, a certain great man is most damnably deficient — He has thrown me into a situation where I have my choice of difficulties — if I stay in this Province I risk myself and Army and if I do not stay the Province is lost for ever — I have neither guides, Cavalry Medicines Money Shoes or Stockings — I must act with the greatest circumspection — Tories are in my front rear and on my flanks — the Mass of the People is strangely contaminated — in short unless something which I do not expect turns up We are lost — our Counsels have been weak to the last degree" [1]

his brother, John Augustine Washington, speaks of the capture of Lee in this way "It was by his own folly and imprudence (and without a view to answer any good) he was taken" General Greene spoke of his capture in unequivocal language, calling it a 'strange infatuation," and General Lord Stirling wrote that it was "one of Lee's eccentric movements and only remarkable from its direction"

[1] *New York Hist Soc Collections*, 1872, p 348

His overweening ambition, his bad judgment, his fickle will and his treacherous heart ever urged him to act independent of the commander-in-chief, both with his own troops and with those which, by diverting General Gates's command, he hoped soon to receive from the northern army With these troops he intended to attempt some brilliant feat which would enable him, as he wrote to General Heath, to "reconquer the Jerseys," and then to be called upon to assume the highest command in the army.[1] His conduct on the battlefield of Monmouth, now so fully and clearly explained in the late Dr George H Moore's "Treason of Charles Lee," proves him to have been a very traitor at heart While in captivity in New York, March 29, 1777, he endeavored to betray America into the hands of her enemies Of late years a document has been found in England in Lee's handwriting, bearing the date just given and indorsed "Mr Lee's plan," which was intended to show the British how they could most easily conquer America[2] Certain it is that had he lived longer in military office, like another American general he would have transferred his allegiance back to the British crown[3]

[1] In the Journal of Elias Boudinot, commissary-general of prisoners (afterward president of the Continental Congress), *Proceedings of Huguenot Society of America*, vol ii p 278, that distinguished patriot refers to language used by Lee to him in which he 'immediately began to urge the improbability of our troops, under such an ignorant commander-in-chief, ever withstanding British grenadiers and light infantry" And again, "that General Washington was not fit to command a sergeant's guard"

[2] General Lee was a witty, eccentric conceited soldier of fortune, eager to espouse the cause of independence, rather more, it is to be feared, because of its novelty and the opportunity it afforded for the display of his brilliant talents, wide experience and military skill than for the love which he pretended to have for American freedom He is described by Mrs Mercy Warren, the historian, as "a tall man, lank and thin, with a huge nose, a satirical mouth and restless eyes, who sat his horse as if he had often ridden at fox-hunts in England and wore a uniform with a cynical disregard of public opinion."

[3] *The Treason of Charles Lee, Major-General, Second in Command in the American Army of the Revolution*, by George H Moore, Librarian

Immediately after the capture of General Lee, the next officer in rank, Major-General John Sullivan (who had been exchanged after his capture at the battle of Long Island for General Prescott [1]), assumed command of Lee's division, and in order to show the troops that they had still a competent commander he rode along the lines and gave his orders in person to advance, hastening with his force to Germantown, from there to Pittstown, and then, to avoid the British troops at Pennington, took the road to Phillipsburg He crossed the Delaware River to Easton December 15, and thence marched to Bethlehem, reporting to General Washington, in a snowstorm, on the 20th, with about 2000 men "much out of sorts and much in want of everything" The next day the New England brigade, Colonel Daniel Hitchcock, was sent to Bristol to reinforce the brigade of Philadelphia militia stationed there under Colonel John Cadwalader.

The division of Major-General Horatio Gates, seven regi-

of the New York Historical Society, 1860, depicts him as "plain in his person to a degree of ugliness, careless even to impoliteness, his garb ordinary, his voice rough, his manners morose, yet sensible, learned, judicious and penetrating" In the *Memoirs of General Lee*, written by Edward Langworthy, he is said to have been "of a genteel make, and rather above the middle size his remarkable aquiline nose rendered his face somewhat disagreeable" Sir Hugh Bunbury writes: 'In person he was tall and extremely thin; his face ugly with an aquiline nose of enormous proportion"

In the *Journal of a British Officer*, Captain Thomas Harris (in after years Lord Harris), we find this remark in reference to the capture of this American general "Lee behaved as cowardly in this transaction as he had dishonorably in every other. After firing one or two shots from the house he came out and entreated our troops to spare his life Had he behaved with proper spirit I should have pitied him and wished that his energies had been exerted in a better cause I could hardly refrain from tears when I first saw him and thought of the miserable fate in which his obstinacy had involved him"

[1] Brigadier-General Richard Prescott had been captured November 17, 1775, and exchanged September 4, 1776, for General Sullivan General Prescott was again captured near Newport, Rhode Island, July 10, 1777, and exchanged April 21, 1778, for Major-General Charles Lee.

ments in all, under the direct command of Brigadier-General Benedict Arnold, arrived at Bethlehem the same day, December 20, having also crossed the river at Easton. Gates had left his command at Sussex Court House, and with his staff and escort had crossed the river a few miles above Easton. But when he reached Bethlehem, he found both his own and Sullivan's troops there. The force of General Gates consisted of but 500 effective men, and they had suffered greatly in a severe snowstorm which had detained them on the road through Sussex County, New Jersey, in the valley between the Walpack and the Kittatinny ridges. General Gates, after reporting himself at headquarters, was allowed to go to Philadelphia on "sick leave."



MAJOR-GENERAL JOHN SULLLIVAN

Three other regiments, under Brigadier-General Alexander McDougall, stopped at Morristown, and were united with about 700 New Jersey militia in charge of Colonel Jacob Ford, Jr., commanding the eastern battalion of Morris County. These regiments consisted in all of about 520 officers and men, — the Third Massachusetts or Twenty-fourth Continental infantry, Colonel John Greaton, 250 men; the Twenty-fifth Continental infantry, formerly commanded by Colonel William Bond (who had died of fever August 31, 1776), 100 men, and the Fourth Hampshire County (Massachusetts) regiment, Colonel Elisha Porter, 170 men. Brigadier-General William Maxwell, who had been in command of

the New Jersey Continental line at Ticonderoga (whose term of service had expired), was placed by General Washington (December 20) in charge of this corps at Morristown, with orders to harass the enemy, and, if possible, to prevent the people from taking protection from the British authorities. He reached Morristown December 22, and assumed command of all the Continental and militia forces there. These troops in the brigade of General McDougall, and the division which crossed the river under General Arnold, were all sent by General Schuyler from the Northern army, although they had but the month of December to serve in the army. The fiery Wayne was not permitted to accompany them, eager as he was to do so.

On Wednesday, December 11, the Continental Congress made a resolve calling for a day of fasting and humiliation, in view of the distressing condition of the American cause.

Herewith is the text of this action in Congress: —

"The committee appointed to prepare a resolution for appointing a day of fasting and humiliation brought in a report which was read and agreed to, as follows: —

"Whereas the war in which the United States are engaged with Great Britain has not only been prolonged, but is likely to be carried to the greatest extremity, and whereas it becomes all public bodies, as well as private persons, to reverence the providence of God, and look up to him as the supreme disposer of all events and the arbiter of the fate of nations; therefore

"*Resolved*, That it be recommended to all the United States as soon as possible to appoint a day of solemn fasting and humiliation, to implore of Almighty God the forgiveness of the many sins prevailing among all ranks, and to beg the countenance and assistance of his providence in the prosecution of the present just and necessary war.

"The Congress do also in the most earnest manner recommend to all the members of the United States, and particularly the officers civil and military under them, the

exercise of repentance and reformation ; and further, require of them the strict observation of the articles of war, and particularly that part of the said articles which forbids profane swearing and all immorality, of which all such officers are desired to take notice

"It is left to each State to issue out proclamations fixing the day that appears most proper within its bounds"

The following instructions were issued by General Washington to Brigadier-Generals Lord Stirling, Mercer, Stephen and De Fermoy : —

HEAD-QUARTERS, AT KEITH'S,
14 December, 1776

DEAR SIR, — Lest the enemy should in some degree avail themselves of the knowledge (for I do not doubt but they are well informed of everything we do), I did not care to be so particular in the general orders of this day, as I mean to be in this letter to you As much time, then, would be lost, should the enemy attempt crossing the river at any pass within your guard, in first sending you notice, and in the troops to wait for orders what to do, I would advise you to examine the whole river from the upper to the lower guard of your district ; and, after forming an opinion of the most probable crossing-places, let those be well watched, and direct the regiments or companies most convenient to repair, as they can be formed, immediately to the point of attack, and give the enemy all the opposition they possibly can. Everything in a manner depends upon the defence at the water's edge In like manner, one brigade is to support another, without loss of time, or waiting for orders from me I would also have you fix upon some central spot convenient to your brigade, but in the rear a little, and on some road leading into the back road to Philadelphia, for your unnecessary baggage, wagons, and stores , that, in case your opposition should prove ineffectual, these things may not fall (into the enemy's hands), but be got off, and proceed over Neshaminy Bridge towards Germantown, agreeably to the determination of the board of officers the other day.

Let me entreat you to find out some person, who can be engaged to cross the river as a spy, that we may, if possible, obtain some knowledge of the enemy's situation, movements, and intention. Particular inquiry should be made by the person sent, if any preparations are making to cross the river, whether any boats are building and where, whether they are coming over land from Brunswick, whether any great collection of horses is made, and for what purpose. Expense must not be spared in procuring such intelligence, and it will readily be paid by me We are in a neighbourhood of very disaffected people Equal care therefore should be taken, that one of these persons does not undertake the business in order to betray us

I am, dear Sir, yours, &c.

GO WASHINGTON[1]

[1] Ford's *Writings of George Washington*, vol v p 92

VI

Scarcely a week had passed since Washington had crossed the river, and so placed a barrier between his despondent army and the foe, before he began to think of making an aggressive movement. Major John Armstrong, the personal aide-de-camp of General Mercer, wrote a half century after this event: "Two or three days after we had crossed the Delaware there were several meetings between the adjutant-general and General Mercer, at which I was permitted to be present, the questions were discussed, whether the propriety and practicability did not exist of carrying the outposts of the enemy and ought not to be attempted. On this point no disagreement existed between the generals, and to remove objections in other quarters it was determined they should separately open the subject to the commander-in-chief and to such officers as would probably compose his council of war, if any should be called. I am sure the first of these meetings was at least ten days before the attack on Trenton was made."

We find the first notice of the future plans of the American chief in a letter to General Gates, dated December 14:[1] "If we can draw our forces together, I trust, under the smiles of Providence, we may yet effect an important stroke, or at least prevent General Howe from executing his plans."

And again on the same day he wrote to Governor Jonathan Trumbull, the patriotic executive of Connecticut, in reference to the troops of Gates: "By coming on they may, in conjunction with my present force, and that under General Lee, enable us to attempt a stroke upon the forces of the enemy, who lie a good deal scattered, and to all appearances in a state of security. A lucky blow in this quarter

[1] Ford's *Writings of George Washington*, vol. v. p. 91.

would be fatal to them, and would most certainly rouse the spirits of the people, which are quite sunk by our late misfortunes"[1]

He wrote also to Major-General William Heath on that day: "If we can collect our force speedily I should hope we may effect something of importance or at least give such a turn to our affairs as to make them assume a more pleasing aspect than they now have"

On the 21st day of December General Greene wrote the following to Governor Nicholas Cooke of Rhode Island:[2] "We are now on the west side of the Delaware, our force is small when collected together; but small as it is, I hope we shall give the enemy a stroke in a few days Should fortune favor the attack, perhaps it may put a stop to General Howe's progress"

Rumors of these plans, entirely unofficial, however, reached Philadelphia, but it is supposed that they were scarcely credited by those who had heard of the condition of the army In Christopher Marshall's "Remembrances," under date of December 18 we find this expression "News that our army intended to cross at Trenton into the Jerseys"[3]

It was imperative that something be at least attempted, or the union of the States would be pronounced a failure, the Declaration of Independence counted an idle boast, and the cause of liberty immediately abandoned. In Washington's letter to his brother (December 18) the situation is well described "If every nerve is not strained to recruit the new army with all possible expedition, I think the game is pretty nearly up, owing, in a great measure, to the insidious arts of the enemy and disaffection of the colonies before mentioned, but principally to the ruinous policy of short enlistments, and placing too great a dependence on the mili-

[1] Ford's *Writings of George Washington*, vol v. p 93

[2] Force's *American Archives*, 5th series, vol iii p. 1342

[3] Robert Morris also wrote to Washington, December 21. "I have been told to-day that you are preparing to cross into the Jerseys I hope it may be true"

tia, the evil consequences of which were foretold fifteen months ago, with a spirit almost prophetic . . . You can form no idea of the perplexity of my situation No man, I believe, ever had a greater choice of difficulties, and less means to extricate himself from them However, under a full persuasion of the justice of our cause, I cannot entertain an idea that it will finally sink, though it may remain for some time under a cloud "[1]

The historian Bancroft in his great work remarks, in reference to the troubles with which General Washington had to contend and the means at hand to relieve them: —

"The sharp tribulation which assayed his fortitude carried with it a divine and an animating virtue Hope and zeal illuminated his grief His emotions come to us across the century like strains from an eternity which repairs all losses and rights all wrongs, in his untold sorrows his trust in Providence kept up in his heart an under-song of wonderful sweetness The spirit of the Most High dwells among the afflicted, rather than the prosperous, and he who has never broken his bread in tears knows not the heavenly powers The trials of Washington are the dark, solemn ground on which the beautiful work of the country's salvation was embroidered"

The situation at this time from the British point of view is set forth in the report which General Howe made to Lord Germain, colonial secretary of state, December 20, 1776[2] It describes in detail the rather dignified pursuit of the enemy, who is represented as being at the last gasp, although it is admitted that the partial destruction of a bridge over the Raritan impedes the British progress, and that as the Americans had denuded the Delaware near Trenton of boats, it was deemed wise to await the freezing over of the river before attempting a movement into Pennsylvania

Glancing for a moment at the Hessian force in Burlington County, New Jersey, we find that (December 19) Colonel

[1] Ford's *Writings of George Washington*, vol. v p. 109

[2] Part II No 16.

von Donop, accompanied by Colonel von Block, Lieutenant-Colonel Sterling and a strong patrol, went as far as Mount Holly for the purpose of getting a correct military idea of the country On his return to Bordentown the next day, Colonel von Donop received a letter from Colonel Rall, giving him the incidents of the previous day at the post of Trenton,[1] complaining of the exposed nature of his right flank, and noting the activity of the American scouts.

On the following day General Grant wrote Colonel von Donop a letter[2] in English, and as Lieutenant-Colonel Sterling had not returned to Bordentown, Colonel von Donop must have had difficulty in reading it It gave routine news, referred to the scarcity of forage, and the large detachment which Colonel Rall sent to carry his letter to General Grant

Before von Donop received this letter, however, he had written General Grant a communication in French to the effect that a contemplated attack upon General Putnam at Cooper's Creek had been abandoned for reasons mentioned[3]

The same day, December 21, Colonel von Donop heard from Colonel von Block at Black Horse that the enemy had been seen that day in the village of Mount Holly He sent an express rider to inform Colonel Rall of this fact, so that if a simultaneous attack were designed by the American troops on both posts, he need not be surprised

Colonel von Donop did not leave Bordentown that day personally to investigate the report In the afternoon he received a letter[4] from Rall, which informed him of the singular fact that he had sent a force of one hundred men to take a single letter through to Princeton.[5]

Just before dark Colonel Rall sent another letter to his immediate commanding officer, in which he pleaded for the retention of one third of his command, and in this he succeeded.[6]

[1] Part II No 17
[2] Part II No. 18
[3] Part II. No 19.
[4] Part II No. 20
[5] It will be seen that Rall was criticised for this act by General Grant
[6] Part II No. 21.

Among the German documents at Marburg, Germany, there appears a letter written in French, but which has no indication of the writer, the recipient, or the place from which it was written. It is evident, however, from the style and the facts given, that it must have been written by Colonel von Donop, probably on the road to Mount Holly, to Major-General Grant, and that it should have been dated December 21 or 22.[1]

In the mean time General Grant's messenger was hurrying on to Trenton with a letter directly addressed, contrary to military usage, to Colonel Rall, in which he speaks slightingly of the American army, and depicts what he believes to be their desperate condition.[2]

That Saturday afternoon was a busy day at Bordentown as well as at Trenton. Lieutenant-Colonel Sterling sent Colonel von Donop two letters within three hours of each other.[3] The one gives Colonel von Donop some information, and the other the advice for which he had asked.

On Friday, Saturday and Sunday, December 20, 21 and 22, Colonel von Donop received much information from the loyalists of Burlington County as to the condition of the American army on the west bank of the Delaware River, and the movements of a party which they erroneously supposed was commanded by General Putnam and which was in the lower portion of Burlington and old Gloucester counties, New Jersey. Some of these statements as made by the Tories are still on file in the archives of Marburg in Germany. It is interesting to note the style of this intelligence and the combination of truth and error thus furnished.

Four of these documents have been copied and are given herein.[4]

Captain Friedrich Heinrich Loray, of the Hessian chasseurs, who had been stationed above Bordentown in close connection with Colonel Rall's picket at the drawbridge of Crosswicks Creek, reported that he had strengthened the

[1] Part II. No. 22.
[2] Part II. No. 23.
[3] Part II. No. 24.
[4] Part II. No. 25.

guard at the bridge and would look out for the rear of Rall's command.[1]

At four o'clock on Sunday morning, December 22, Colonel von Donop started for Black Horse When he reached that village he was informed that the enemy had withdrawn during the night and had left only a picket at the meeting house on the north side of Mount Holly This seems to have satisfied him, for soon after the noon hour he left Black Horse on his return to Bordentown It was two o'clock of the same afternoon, and he had just entered his headquarters there, when he was startled by the alarm given by the little three-pounder which he remembered stood in front of "The Sun" inn at Black Horse A few moments afterward he heard the signal gun fired at Mansfield Square by the von Linsingen battalion. Again, after sending an express rider to Colonel Rall, he mounted his horse for another ride to Black Horse. On arriving there he found all the troops under arms, and he was informed that soon after he had left the village in the morning some four or five hundred rebels had made an attack on the picket at Rancocas bridge and had driven away the sergeant and twelve men of the Forty-second British regiment who were stationed at a small house close to the bridge Two of the men of the regiment were badly wounded in this encounter On hearing of this attack Captain Ernst von Eschwege and his grenadier company of the von Linsingen battalion hastened to their rescue This company also had a soldier wounded, but they brought the affair to an end.

Colonel von Donop spent the night of December 22 at the tavern at Black Horse, and the next morning he started for Mount Holly. He also ordered the Forty-second British regiment and the battalions von Block and von Linsingen to accompany him On nearing the church on the road to the village of Mount Holly, he descried a detachment of American militia, and he directed a few shots to be fired at them from the three-pounders Colonel von Donop states

[1] Part II No 26

that three of the enemy were either wounded or killed by this firing, but he lost none of his men. The militia retreated in the direction of Moorestown He then stationed the Forty-second regiment and the von Block battalion in Mount Holly for the purpose of gathering forage and stores.

Glancing again at Colonel Rall at Trenton, we find that (December 22) General Leslie ordered a part of his command, the First light infantry battalion, to patrol as far as Trenton [1]

Colonel Rall immediately reported this movement to Colonel von Donop. It seems that Rall could not resist the temptation to indulge in a little sarcasm at the expense of his British superior officer —

SIR

General Leslie sent to-day the First Battalion of Light Infantry to Trenton. He thought that a battalion of my command had marched from here As there were no more attacks on this post I have sent the battalion back A letter from General Grant is enclosed He has also written me and what makes me pleased is that he knows the strength of the enemy thirty miles off, better than we do here He writes me the enemy are naked, hungry and very weak and that it is not necessary to place troops at Maiden head. RALL

TRENTON 22nd of December 1776.

General Grant wrote an interesting letter to Colonel von Donop, December 23 It is doubtful if the beer which he promised was ever issued to the men.

BRUNSWICK 23rd Dec 1776

SIR

The heavy Artillery is at Amboy with your fourth Battalion Grenadiers Sir Wm Erskine is gone to put them in motion, he is to acquaint me when every thing is ready and

[1] Part II No 27

you shall be informed what Day they march that you may make a move to cover them.

We are all in a great Favour at home. His Majesty has ordered Spruce Beer to be issued to the Troops without any stoppage, if we cannot get spruce, we must contrive to make small Beer, a Brewer here has undertaken to serve



BRIGADIER-GENERAL ALEXANDER LESLIE

the Troops, at Ten shilling Currency for a Quarter Cask, containing thirty four Gallons, that will amount nearly to a penny Currency for a Quart to each man a Day, will you be kind enough to inform me if you can get any Body to undertake it upon the same terms.

I am anxious to get the Waggons I mentioned to you. We cannot depend upon the navigation of the river rariton and without Waggons from your District I shall not be able to keep you and Gen. Leslie's Corps supplied.

Be so good as to leave as much of the Country upon your right as you can to Gen. Leslie as I have directed him not to take any Forage in the country from Princeton to this place

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most obedt, h'ble servant

JAMES GRANT.

VII

LEAVING New Jersey and the cantonments of the Hessian soldiery, and looking again at the American army in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, it is well to give in full the text of what is known as the "Pomroy letter."[1] Colonel Joseph Reed, the adjutant-general of the Continental army, having been sent to Bristol by General Washington on special service, urged upon his chief the importance of an immediate crossing of the river. By this time Washington had left the house of William Keith, and had come down to the river bank that he might procure earlier intelligence and quickly consult with his subordinate officers. He dated his letters of December 20 and the three days following, "At Camp above Trenton Falls," and by this he evidently meant the camp of General Lord Stirling at Beaumonts near McKonkey's Ferry, and about ten miles above Trenton Ferry He did not return to Keith's house until Christmas

As soon as Washington received the "Pomroy" letter he sent for Reed to come to his headquarters, when the intended movement on the Hessian outposts was fully explained On his return to Bristol Colonel Reed held a consultation with Colonel Cadwalader, after which he crossed the river at night with Lieutenant-Colonel John Cox of the Philadelphia Associators to see Colonel Samuel Griffin They found him quite ill. His expedition had been only partially successful, as will hereafter appear On Reed's return to Bristol he received a letter[2] from General Washington (probably written at Lord Stirling's quarters at Beaumonts) giving full details of the proposed movement on Trenton.

The plan stated in Colonel Reed's letter, and casually

[1] Part II No 28

[2] Part II No. 29

alluded to in the first line of General Washington's communication, of an attack by Colonel Cadwalader and 700 of his men on the Hessian troops near Mount Holly was not carried out During the third week in December Major-General Putnam sent Colonel Samuel Griffin with a small command of about 600 militia and volunteers, including two companies of Virginia troops, to make a movement against the Hessian advance through the county of Gloucester and into Burlington County, New Jersey. Colonel Griffin was a deputy adjutant-general of the flying camp, and he had been announced in general orders, December 14, 1776, as adjutant-general to the troops in and about Philadelphia He made his headquarters at Haddonfield, and then began some slight demonstration on the outposts near Moorestown, a few miles from Mount Holly, and applied to the American force at Bristol for two or three hundred volunteers and two pieces of artillery About this time he was unfortunately taken sick, and so inefficient was his command that the expedition proved almost fruitless. However, as we have already seen, it took Colonel von Donop and two of his regiments away from his headquarters at Bordentown, and for four days fixed his attention upon the little force in front of him, thus diverting it from Trenton, where the real attack was to be made

From Joseph Galloway's "Letters to a Nobleman on the Conduct of the War in the Middle Colonies," we quote the following —

"In order to draw Colonel de Donop from his post at Bordentown, and to prevent his supporting Colonel Rahl at the time of the assault, he sent a corps of 450 militia, many of whom were boys picked up in Philadelphia and the counties of Gloucester and Salem, to Mount Holly, with orders not to fight, but fly as soon as the effect of the manœuvre had taken place The plan succeeded Colonel de Donop marched against this insignificant part of the rebel force with his whole corps of 2000 men (eighty left at Bordentown excepted), down to Mount Holly, twelve miles from his post

and eighteen from Trenton, the post he ought to have been at hand to support The rebel corps immediately fled, and dispersed on his approach; and yet, instead of immediately returning to Bordentown to support Colonel Raile, he remained loitering two days in the neighbourhood of Burlington, without having a single enemy to oppose"

An interesting incident may not inappropriately be referred to at this point in the history of the campaign. The adjutant-general of the Continental army, by direction of General Washington, made an effort to prevent the destruction of the town of Burlington, New Jersey, which if occupied by the Hessian troops was in danger of suffering from a bombardment by the American fleet

On the 20th day of December, Colonel Joseph Reed addressed a letter to Colonel von Donop from the quarters of Colonel Cadwalader, the post commander in Bristol.

This letter, found among the German archives at Marburg, Germany, and never before published, fully exonerates Colonel Reed from the charge made by the historian Bancroft and others, of carrying on an illicit correspondence with the enemy Surely if Washington had been induced to "make some propositions on the subject," it was right, it was the duty of his chief staff officer to attempt to execute his instructions. The letter is as follows. —

BRISTOL Dec. 20, 1776

SIR·

The peculiar situation of the Town of Burlington exposed to hostilities from both parties has induced General Washington to make you some propositions on this subject. For this Purpose I will tomorrow do myself the honour of waiting on you at the time and Place you will please to appoint

I have the honour to be with the greatest respect Sir

Your most obedient and very h'le servant

JOS· REED

Adj General of the Continental Army.

Colonel von Donop immediately replied that his situation

was such that it would not admit of his leaving his post at present for the purpose of the interview. The truth is that the heavy artillery not having arrived, the question did not press itself strongly upon Colonel von Donop, but on the Tuesday following, thinking an interview with Colonel Reed advisable, he wrote him this letter —

MOUNT HOLLY Dec 24th 1776

SIR

In consequence of my Letter to you in answer to yours of 20th Inst relative to the peculiar situation of the Town of Burlington at present I am to inform you, if it is agreeable, that I shall meet you at John Antrims about half way betwixt this place and Burlington to hear any proposition you may have to make with regard to that place at 12 o'clock tomorrow forenoon, two of my Chasseurs shall be ready to attend you as a safe Guard at Burlington to the place appointed. —

I am Sir —

Your most obed. & most humble serv.

CARL DE DONOP

Colonel

TO JOS REED, ESQ.

P. S. — To prevent any Doubt on your part of your safety an Officer will accompany the two Chasseurs with a Flag to your house in the City and you may bring any Officer with you, you please —

Colonel Reed was in Philadelphia on Christmas day, and an express rider was sent for him. Colonel Cadwalader thought it advisable to reply to the communication himself, which he did in the following letter —

BRISTOL, 25th Dec 1776 —

SIR.

As Col Reed is not at this Post at present, I opened the Letter sent here with a Flag, directed to him There is no other person here so fully acquainted with the Business he

proposed mentioning to you at the Interview he requested I expect he will return to-morrow morning to this Post, and he will then request you to name an other Time and Place which may be convenient to you —

I am, Sir, with great respect
Your obed't humble servant
JOHN CADWALADER
Colonel. —

P S — I did not receive the
Flag today till half past
ten A M —

Colonel Reed, although he returned to Bristol on Christmas afternoon, did not resume the correspondence. He was then too busy in aiding the attempt to cross the Delaware River and stir up the cantonments of Colonel von Donop. In the diary of the loyalist Margaret Morris of Burlington, we find under date of December 26 a reference to this subject. "Very stormy: we fear Gen Reed will not meet the Count today"

This correspondence, although by direction of Washington — and therefore the subordinate officer is altogether free from military criticism — has been made the occasion by several writers of strongly expressed doubts of Reed's loyalty to the American cause. The first attack was made by Dr. Benjamin Rush of Philadelphia, under the signature of "Brutus," in the "Independent Gazetteer," September 3, 1782. General Reed thought that his former comrade, General Cadwalader, was the author, and charged him with it in a communication dated November 1, 1782 General Cadwalader replied early in the year 1783, as we find from a singular letter [1] most adroitly written to him by a friend of both parties, Colonel George Morgan, and dated April 17, 1783 [2]

[1] Never published, but now in possession of the Hon Garret D W Vroom of Trenton, New Jersey.

[2] General Cadwalader expected General Reed to challenge him, but

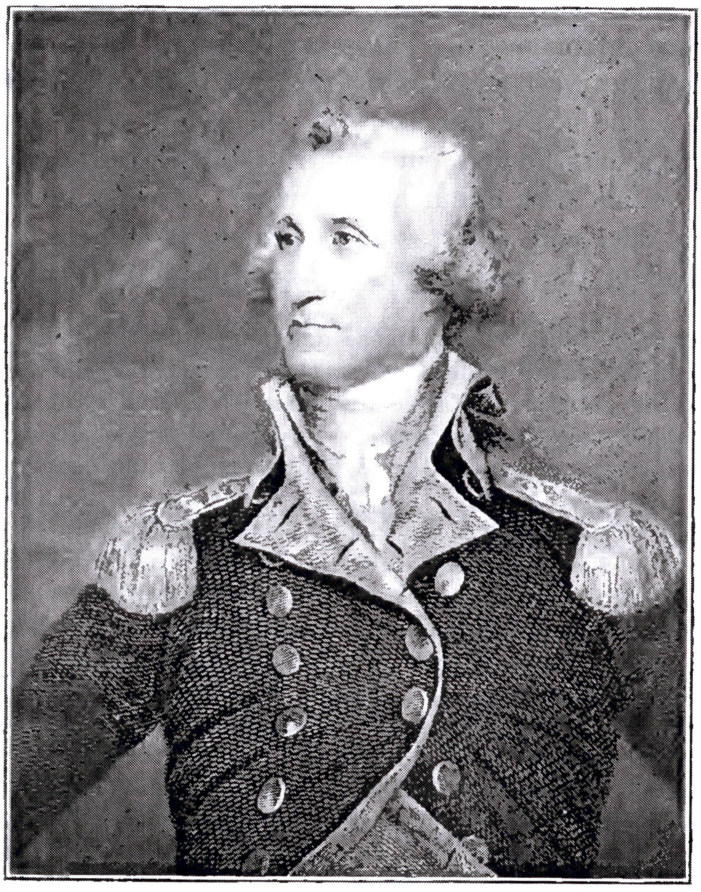
On the day before Christmas, Acting Quartermaster-General Gamble of the British army issued a circular to the inhabitants of Hunterdon and Burlington counties The stores and forage which were so much needed for the British troops in the cantons of Trenton and Bordentown, as well as for General Grant's forces at Brunswick, do not seem to have been forthcoming The price list annexed to the circular is of interest as showing the cost of food and forage at that period in the war [1]

It was a dark hour in our country's history, a crisis which had to be met with unflinching courage The situation was a grave one, and unless some decisive blow were struck, regardless of the consequences of possible defeat, the cause

Reed, conscious of his own innocence determined that this should come, if at all, from General Cadwalader In the year 1842 the *Valley Forge Letters* were published, followed in 1847 by a carefully prepared biography of General Reed, written by his grandson, William B Reed The controversy was renewed in 1856 in a pamphlet entitled *Nuts for Future Historians to Crack* In 1866 the Hon George Bancroft published the ninth volume of his history of the United States, in which he distinctly charged General Reed with being untrue to the cause of national independence In 1867 in a monograph entitled *Joseph Reed, a Historical Essay* Mr Bancroft asserted his belief that Reed had accepted protection, under the proclamation of the brothers Howe, from Colonel von Donop Mr William B Reed replied to this severe attack in an able argument Mr Bancrott followed with a lengthy paper on the subject, and Mr Reed closed the controversy with a strong refutation of each point in the attack Mr Bancroft attempted to sustain his opinion by quoting from the diary of Colonel von Donop of December 21 1776, wherein the Hessian commander refers to "Colonel Reed, who lately received a Protection," etc etc In the year 1876 it was discovered beyond the slightest doubt that the Colonel Reed who did take "protection" from Colonel von Donop was Colonel Charles Read of the Burlington County (New Jersey) militia and not Colonel Joseph Reed, Washington's adjutant-general. Mr Bancroft acknowledged the mistake he had made, and an account of this discovery was published by the author of this work in a monograph entitled *The Reed Controversy — Further Facts with Reference to the Character of Joseph Reed, Adjutant-General on the Staff of George Washington.* Printed for private distribution, 2d edition, Trenton, 1885.

[1] Part ii No. 30

of national freedom would be irretrievably lost. The overwhelming adversity, the desperate straits which confronted the young nation on every hand, were quite enough to dishearten the boldest patriot. A general depression hung over



GEORGE WASHINGTON

the country like a dark and foreboding cloud. Yet between liberty and defeat stood a little army of desperate men devoted to their chief, soldiers who still stood by him, who still hoped that his master mind would devise some plan by which he might snatch victory from the jaws of defeat. It was to Washington that all hearts turned in this hour of misfortune and disaster, and he fully merited their trust and

confidence. Not for a moment did he entertain any idea of abandoning the sacred cause. With calm dignity of manner and an undaunted spirit he moved among his men encouraging them in their sufferings, and cheering them by the hope of a favorable change in the near future. It is doubtful if anywhere in history can be cited such an example of the head of a dispirited force, of a chieftain deserted by a Congress which was preparing to throw on him the entire responsibility of the war, but who turned toward his troops a cheerful countenance, and looked forward with confidence to a brighter day.

During this period of depression General Washington was busily engaged in procuring reinforcements for his little army, and in this respect he was in a degree successful The men who had already joined him and those who were marching from different parts of Pennsylvania, Delaware and Maryland toward his camp were true men, thoroughly impressed with the idea of patriotic duty, and clearly understanding the value of victory won in that critical hour, and the price which must be paid for defeat [1]

Thomas Paine, the author of the tract called "Common Sense," and who is thought to have been temporarily attached to the staff of Major-General Greene as a volunteer aide-de-camp during this campaign, wrote, while in the American camp, that number of "The American Crisis" which made it famous. In this stirring appeal, which was published in the "Pennsylvania Journal," December 19, 1776, he expressed the feeling then uppermost in every patriotic heart: "These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and

[1] Elkanah Watson, writing at this time at Plymouth, Massachusetts, refers to this period of the struggle in these words: "We looked upon the contest as near its close, and considered ourselves a vanquished people The young men present determined to emigrate and seek some spot where liberty dwelt and where the arm of British tyranny could not reach us Major Thomas animated our desponding spirits with the assurance that Washington was not dismayed, but evinced the same serenity and confidence as ever. Upon him rested all our hopes" — *Men and Times of the Revolution, or Memoirs of Elkanah Watson*, p 24.

the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of his country; but he that stands it now, deserves the thanks of man and woman." This address was ordered to be read at the head of each regiment, and the effect of its strong, patriotic sentences was apparent upon the spirits of the army.

The commander-in-chief had divided his force into three separate corps, one stationed at Bristol, another at Trenton Ferry, and the third and largest, which included all the remaining troops in Pennsylvania, he posted for several miles on the Delaware River north of Yardley's Ferry.



COLONEL JOHN CADWALADER

Colonel John Cadwalader, as the senior colonel of the Philadelphia battalions of Associators, acting as a general officer, commanded the division from the Bordentown Ferry to Dunk's Ferry, with headquarters at Bristol.[1] Colonel Cadwalader's division consisted of about 1800 men.[2]

[1] He was a native of Philadelphia, and formerly had been the captain of the "Greens" or "The Silk Stocking Company," which was composed of young men of high social position in that city. He was an officer of polished manners and a bold, brave soldier. Twice he was appointed a brigadier-general of the Continental army, — February 21, 1777, and September 10, 1778, — but he declined both commissions. He was made a brigadier-general of the Pennsylvania militia April 5, 1777, and so continued until the close of the war. Washington characterized him as "a man of ability, a good disciplinarian, firm in his principles, and of intrepid bravery." He distinguished himself on the Germantown and Monmouth battlefields.

[2] Part ii. No. 31.

General James Ewing commanded the division of Pennsylvania and New Jersey militia[1] which was posted along the river from Yardley's Ferry to Bond's Ferry and the ferry to Bordentown. His headquarters was at Colvin's



PATRICK COLVIN'S FERRY HOUSE

Ferry House, which still stands opposite to what was then called the Trenton Landing.[2]

Brigadier-General Philemon Dickinson, commanding the New Jersey militia, was with General Ewing in command of

[1] Part ii. No. 32.

[2] General Ewing was born at Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and entered military life under General Braddock in 1755. On the 4th of July 1776, he was made a brigadier-general of Pennsylvania militia, and in this campaign was in command of the Pennsylvania troops of the flying camp. The identity of this officer has been strangely confused in history. General Wilkinson, in his *Memoirs*, calls him Irvin. Dr. Gordon refers to him as Erwing. Botta spells his name Irwin; and Marshall writes it Irvine.

a small body of the soldiers of that State. They were all posted at Yardley's Ferry and along the river bank for one mile south of that place.[1]

General Washington took special command of the remaining corps, selecting therefrom a body of about 2400 men for the proposed expedition. The remainder he left to



BRIGADIER-GENERAL PHILEMON DICKINSON

guard the camp equipage at the several stations already mentioned[2]

[1] General Dickinson was one of the truest patriots of the Revolution. Possessed of an ample fortune, he devoted his wealth, his time, and his talents to the glorious struggle. He distinguished himself in many engagements, and especially at the battle of Monmouth. He was made a major-general June 6, 1777. He was chosen a member of Congress from the State of Delaware February 2, 1782, and died in Trenton, New Jersey, February 4, 1809.

[2] General Washington's staff consisted of: Joseph Reed, colonel and adjutant-general; Thomas Mifflin, brigadier-general and quartermaster-general; Henry Knox, colonel and chief of artillery; Joseph Trumbull, colonel and commissary-general; William Palfrey, lieutenant-colonel and paymaster-general; George Baylor, lieutenant-colonel and aide-de-

Washington called his general officers[1] together in council at his headquarters at William Keith's house, on Knowles's Creek, a few miles from Newtown. The following officers were present: Major-Generals John Sullivan and Nathanael Greene; Brigadier-Generals Lord Stirling, Roche de Fermoy,

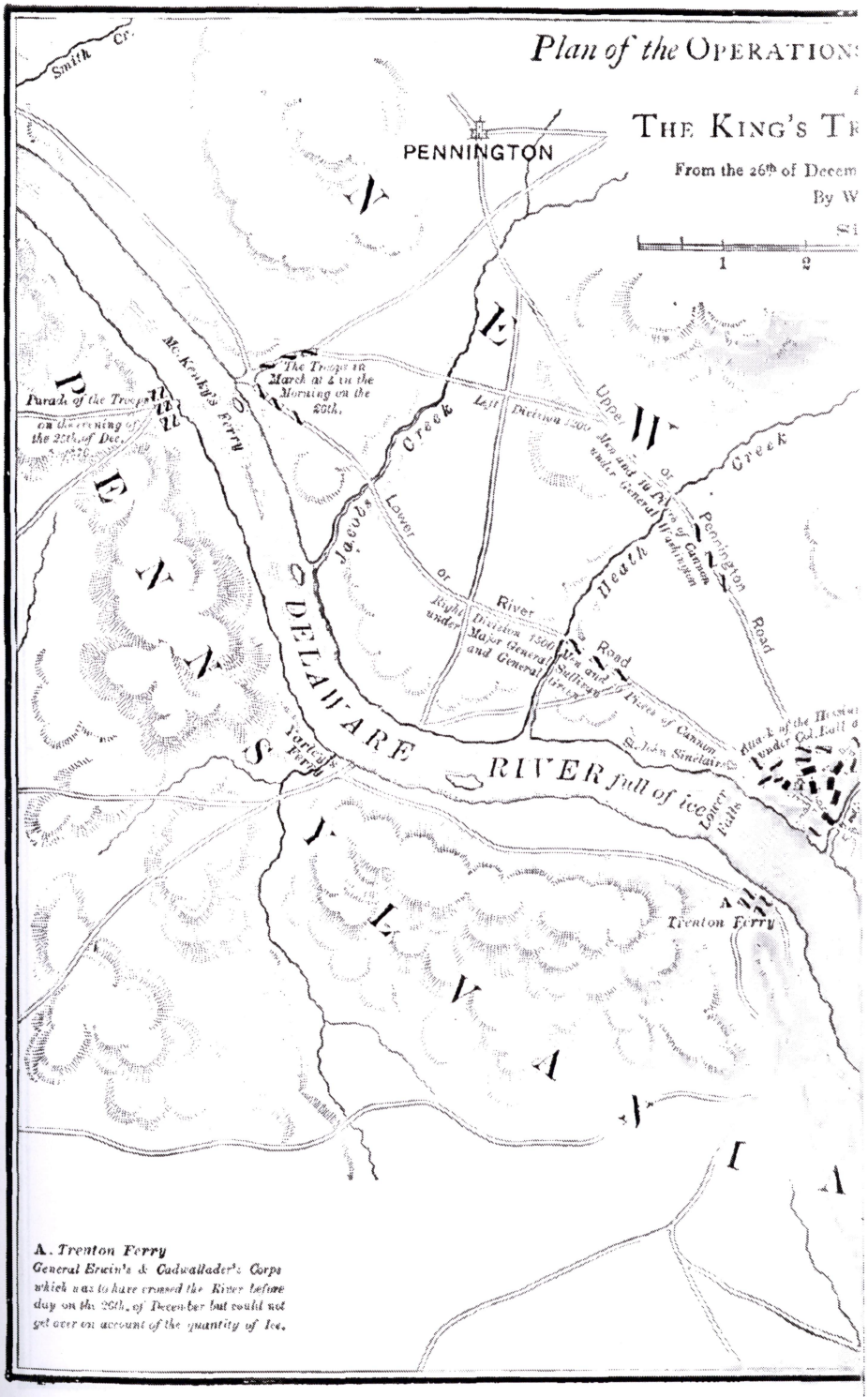


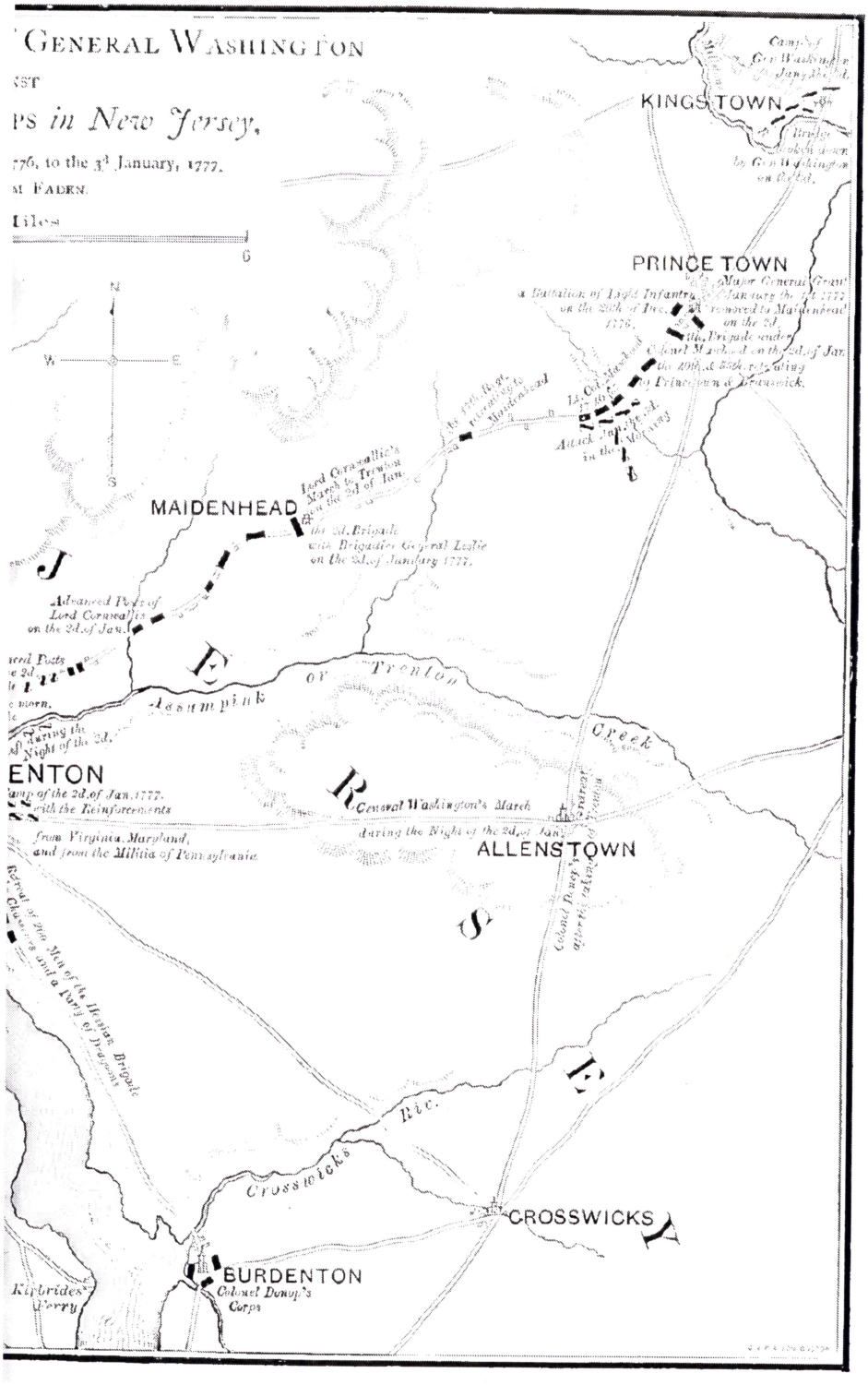
LIEUTENANT-COLONEL SAMUEL B. WEBB

Hugh Mercer, Adam Stephen and Arthur St. Clair; Colonels Paul D. Sargent, John Stark, John Glover and Henry Knox.

camp; William Grayson, lieutenant-colonel and aide-de-camp; Samuel B. Webb, lieutenant-colonel and aide-de-camp; Richard Carey, lieutenant-colonel and aide-de-camp; John Fitzgerald, lieutenant-colonel and aide-de-camp (he was in commission as captain Third Virginia Continental regiment, February 8, 1776, and must have been announced as lieutenant-colonel and aide-de-camp in November, 1776); Robert H. Harrison, lieutenant-colonel and military secretary; Tench Tilghman, captain Pennsylvania battalion of the flying camp, and acting as assistant secretary and volunteer aide-de-camp; David Henly, lieutenant-colonel of the Fifth Massachusetts regiment, assigned to temporary duty with this staff.

[1] For biographical sketches of these officers see Part ii. No. 33.


Plan of the OPERATIONS
THE KING'S TR
From the 26th of Decem
By W
1
2
PENNINGTON
Smith Cr.
N E W
Mc Kenky's Ferry
The Troops in March at 4 in the Morning on the 26th.
Parade of the Troops on the evening of the 25th of Dec.
Left Division 1500 Men and 10 Pieces of Cannon under General Washington
Upper or Pennington Road
Jacobs Creek
Lower or River Road
Heath Creek
Right Division 1500 Men and 10 Pieces of Cannon under Major General Sullivan and General Greene
DELAWARE RIVER full of ice
Yarley's Ferry
St. John Sinclair
Lower Falls
Trenton Ferry
P E N N S Y L V A N I A
A. Trenton Ferry
General Erwin's & Cadwallader's Corps which was to have crossed the River before day on the 26th. of December but could not get over on account of the quantity of Ice.


GENERAL WASHINGTON
PS in New Jersey,
KINGSTOWN
PRINCE TOWN
MAIDENHEAD
Lord Cornwallis's March to Trenton on the 2d of Jan.
the 2d. Brigade with Brigadier General Leslie on the 2d of January 1777.
Advanced Posts of Lord Cornwallis on the 2d of Jan.
Trenton
Assumpink
Creek
ENTON
General Washington's March during the Night of the 2d of Jan.
from Virginia, Maryland, and from the Militia of Pennsylvania
ALLENSTOWN
Rte.
CROSSWICKS
BURDENTON
Colonel Donop's Corps

The Reverend Dr Alexander Macwhorter, the patriotic pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Newark, New Jersey, who had followed the army on the retreat through that State, was also present, and took part in the deliberations of the council of war At this meeting the plan of recrossing the Delaware and making an attack upon the enemy's post was discussed, and finally agreed upon. The crossing of the river seemed to be the greatest difficulty, but Colonel Glover told General Washington not to be troubled about that, as his boys would manage it. It is said that at one of these meetings Colonel Stark, who, although not a brigade commander, was an officer of great experience, gave his opinion of the past conduct of the army and their present situation in these pertinent words "Your men have too long been accustomed to place their dependence for safety upon spades and pickaxes If you ever expect to establish the independence of these States you must teach them to place dependence upon their firearms and courage"

The inspection of the army, December 22, 1776, shows on the rolls 679 officers and 10,804 enlisted men From this return 5319, not quite one half the force, must be taken for men sick, wounded, on extra duty, or on furlough, which leaves 6164 men present for duty Add to these the four regiments from the Northern army, which came with Major-General Gates, estimated strength 500 men, and who were then brigaded under General St. Clair, but who evidently, and without apparent reason, were not included in this inspection; 1000 men belonging to the battalions of the Philadelphia Associators, and perhaps 400 of the New Jersey militia, and a detachment of the Pennsylvania militia which joined the army on Monday, December 23, and the result is a force of 8000 soldiers, with say 6000 effective men, — the number stated by Lord Stirling to the Hessian officers in his custody after the battle of Trenton. A careful examination of the return as printed in Force's "American Archives," 5th series, vol iii p 1401, shows it to have been incorrectly added in several instances, and we think the result is more

accurate as just stated [1] These troops were scattered along thirty miles on the Pennsylvania side of the Delaware River, and prepared for a dash upon the enemy's outposts

The New England brigade at Bristol was poorly provided with camp equipage and blankets, and had meagre stores of any kind. The Philadelphia battalions, so near their homes, were in good condition for a winter campaign. The detachments of militia at Trenton Ferry were not furnished with the necessities for encamping, marching, or fighting in an inclement season, but it is generally understood that they were expected to serve only for a short period The Continental regiments on the river above the ferry were greatly in want of clothing and supplies Many of the men were barefooted, as the commander of the First Pennsylvania rifle regiment said his organization certainly was, and General Washington was obliged to send men about the country to beg and buy old clothing and blankets for his freezing soldiers

The prospects were gloomy indeed for the little army which rallied around the standard of freedom The righteous cause for which they had taken up arms seemed in this decisive moment of the war about to suffer defeat, and visions of new levies of taxes began to appear to the men, while certain ardent officers caught fleeting glimpses of sequestered lands and the hangman's rope

[1] A note in Sparks's *Writings of Washington*, vol ii p 244, repeated in a note in Ford's *The Writings of George Washington*, vol v p 130, says that the return does not include Sullivan's division; but surely the brigades of Colonels Hitchcock Glover and Sargent were part of General Lee's force, and composed the division which General Sullivan brought to General Washington's army The four regiments from the Northern army are given as 1200 men but General Gates, under orders left part of his force at Morristown, under Brigadier-General McDougall, transferred afterward to the command of Brigadier-General Maxwell, and he had but 500 effective men when he reached the main army. The Pennsylvania militia under Colonel Cadwalader at Bristol is numbered at 1800 men, but they were only 1000 men, the remaining 800 were the veteran troops of Colonel Hitchcock's brigade, and are enumerated in the return.

About this time Captain Ephraim Anderson, who belonged to Colonel Israel Shreve's Second battalion, New Jersey Continental line, with a small party of recruits for that battalion, was doing himself and his men much credit by constant scouting tours through Hunterdon County, New Jersey.

Dr William Gordon, in his "History of the American War," speaks of a spy, apparently a rather simple youth, who was employed to go about among the soldiers in the village of Trenton, where he soon learned the strength and position of the Hessian forces. General de Fermoy received the report of the spy at his post on the river bank, and he dispatched a staff officer to communicate the facts to General Washington On receiving this information the general remarked, "Now is our time to clip their wings while they are so spread"

By the aid of trusted officers of the militia of New Jersey, and by intelligence obtained from the patriot farmers of Hunterdon and Burlington counties, General Washington soon became familiar with the position, size and condition of the royal army.

But it is a well-established tradition that the most reliable account of Colonel Rall's post at Trenton was given by Washington's spy, John Honeyman of Griggstown, Somerset County This man was of Scotch-Irish descent, and was a soldier in the body-guard of General Wolfe when that officer fell at the storming of the Heights of Abraham His neighbors called Honeyman the "Tory traitor," yet he was the trusted spy of the American chieftain General Washington had met John Honeyman when in camp on the Hackensack River in November, and the man had then agreed to serve his country, within the British lines if necessary, by acting the part of a Tory, and by talking in favor of the British cause As a butcher and a dealer in cattle, he began his trade with the English army, and at the same time observed their position, numbers, and probable movements No one knew his real character but the commander-in-chief whom he was serving His wife was shielded from the

insult and injury which would otherwise have been offered by those patriots who thought her husband a traitor, by a letter which Washington had sent her. This letter was written in the "American Camp, November 1776," and addressed "To the good people of New Jersey and all others whom it may concern." It was ordered that "the wife and children of John Honeyman of Griggstown, the notorious Tory now within the British lines and probably acting the part of a spy," should be "protected from all harm and annoyance" But this order was to furnish "no protection to Honeyman himself." During the third week in December, John Honeyman was in and around Trenton trying to procure cattle from the farmers, and taking them into the village for slaughter. Having thoroughly informed himself as to the condition of the Hessian soldiery, he walked out, on the afternoon of December 22, on the River road, carrying his whip and a piece of rope in his hand, as if to hunt for cattle. About three miles from Trenton, while trying to lead off a cow he was seen by two American scouts, whom he had previously observed, and whose attention had been attracted to him by the sharp crack of his cart whip. They captured him after a struggle, and, binding him with his own rope to one of their horses, went a few miles up the river, ferried him over, and delivered their prize at the headquarters of the army. He was taken to General Washington, who, after asking all the officers to withdraw, directed the guard around his quarters to shoot the prisoner if he tried to escape A half hour's conversation then took place between the patriot spy and the American chief, after which Honeyman was placed in a log-house prison, and a court-martial was ordered for the morning During the night, undoubtedly by some plan of General Washington, the spy escaped, eluded pursuit, recrossed the river to Trenton, and it is said told Colonel Rall of his capture and escape, giving him a doleful account of the condition of the American army. He then left Trenton, and wandered off to Brunswick, so that he might not be present at the capture of the village, lest he should be

upbraided by the Hessians and lose his power of being useful to the American cause There appears to be no doubt that the information given by him that winter night was the direct cause of the movement on Trenton three days afterward He lived to be ninety-three years of age [1]

We find by the minutes of the Council of Safety of New Jersey, December 5, 1777,[2] that John Honeyman was ordered on that day to be committed to the "Trenton Gaol for High Treason," and that on December 20, 1777, although thought guilty of so heinous a crime he was allowed to enter into recognizance to appear at the next general quarter sessions, when he was released. His surety in this case was Jacob Hyer, a patriot soldier then on duty in the quartermaster's department of the Hunterdon County militia John Honeyman evidently had a difficult rôle to play in serving his country, for in June, 1778, he was again in trouble [3]

In a letter of General Washington to Governor Livingston, dated Valley Forge, January 20, 1778, in reference to three other Jersey spies who had been apprehended upon a supposition that they were carrying on an illegal correspondence with the enemy, he remarked. "You must be well convinced that it is indispensably necessary to bear the suspicion of being thought inimical; and it is not in their power to assert their innocence, because that would get abroad and destroy the confidence which the enemy puts in them."

The foolishly planned chain of cantonments and the weakly guarded posts of the enemy gave the American

[1] See article by the late Justice John Van Dyke of the New Jersey Supreme Court, entitled 'An Unwritten Account of a Spy of Washington," in *Our Home*, a monthly magazine published at Somerville, New Jersey, October, 1873 Also copy of letter of Justice Van Dyke to A. V D Honeyman, publisher of said magazine, dated January 6, 1874, on file in the adjutant-general's office at Trenton. This letter gives the authorities for the article just referred to

[2] *Minutes of the Council of Safety of New Jersey*, Jersey City, 1872, pp 169, 176

[3] Part ii No 35

army the looked-for opportunity at least to attempt the retrieval of its ill fortunes and the rescue of the State now lost to the authority of the people General Washington was full of anxiety for the fate of the cause, which, as he afterwards said, "nothing but the infatuation of the enemy could have saved" He hoped now in some way to compel them to assume a less formidable shape, so as no longer to overawe the entire State and threaten the city of Philadelphia [1]

At this time Trenton was a small village, and it derived its principal importance from the fact that it was at the head of sloop navigation at the falls of the Delaware River, and from its being on the main postal and transportation highway between New York and Philadelphia. Most of the stage travel in those days was across one or the other of the ferries at Trenton Lieutenant Jacob Piel, the brigade adjutant of Colonel Rall, says the village contained about one hundred houses, and there appear to have been about seventy houses north of the Assunpink Creek, and scarcely thirty houses below the creek. At the time of the battle, quite a number of these houses had been deserted by their owners, and of course were quickly taken possession of by the Hessians Most of the houses in the town were situated on the two main streets, then called King and Queen, but now known as Warren and Broad streets. These two streets, running nearly parallel, and almost north and south, united at a point north of the village, and from this junction diverged to Pennington and to Maidenhead, now Lawrenceville Between these two roads leading out from the

[1] Lord Mahon in his *History of England* says that General Washington received a visit from General Benedict Arnold about this time, and that Arnold suggested the surprise of the post of Trenton This statement is certainly incorrect, as Arnold did not reach Washington's camp until December 20, and an attack on the enemy had been considered and written about by General Washington a week previous Moreover, General Washington sent General Arnold the day after his arrival, to command troops being raised in New England, which he would hardly have done if the "surprise" had been of Arnold's suggestion.

same point was the lane to the Beakes estate, and this is now called Princeton avenue King street did not cross the Assunpink Creek, but with a curve to the east at Front street led into Queen street There were two other important streets in Trenton at that time. One, Front street, began at Queen street, passed the lower end of King street, and thence turned northward near the barracks into the River road at what is now Willow street The other, then called Second, but now State street, and running parallel to Front street, began at what is now the corner of State and Willow streets, crossed both King and Queen streets, and after passing the Presbyterian Church dwindled into a country road leading through an apple orchard to Samuel Henry's iron foundry and steel works on the creek. The Assunpink Creek, doubtless much larger then than now, was fordable at several places along the easterly side of the town, and it emptied into the Delaware River just below the falls At the foot of Queen street a stone bridge spanned the creek, and from there led to the Trenton Ferry, to Crosswicks and Bordentown, to Allentown and Sandtown and the Quaker bridge On either side of the creek there was rising ground, and on the south side considerable woods The road leading from the bridge to the ferry was on the edge of what was then called the Bloomsbury Farm, formerly the residence of Chief Justice William Trent, the house being then temporarily occupied by Dr William Bryant, a practicing physician, and afterward by Colonel John Cox of Philadelphia This house is always referred to in German records as the "Doctor House" As we have stated, the town above the creek may be considered as bounded by what we call to-day the Creek, Montgomery street, Perry street and Willow street. All outside of these bounds was then in the suburbs of the village There was a tavern on the Maidenhead road and there were several houses on the Pennington road, a few houses on King street north of the English Church, now St. Michael's Episcopal Church, and a few fine residences on the River

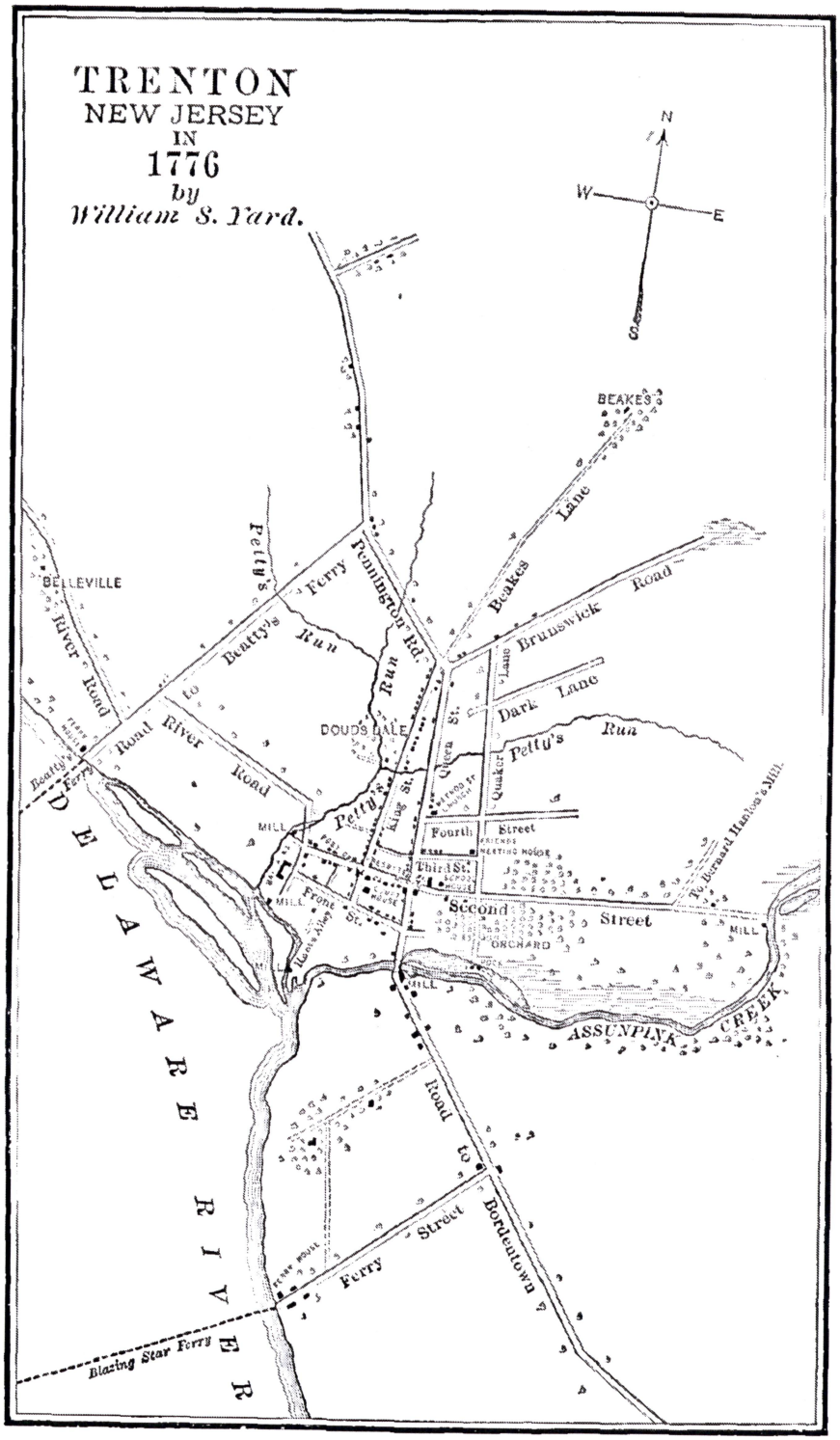


RALL'S HEADQUARTERS

road, yet all these were then considered as on the outskirts of the town. In the village were two or three prominent taverns, a stone barracks built by the province of New Jersey in the time of the French and Indian war, two frame churches, — the Presbyterian and the Methodist, — the English Church, of brick, the Friends' Meeting House, of brick, and the stone jail, now a part of the Trenton Bank. The entire village was considered a very open one, for the houses were greatly scattered.[1]

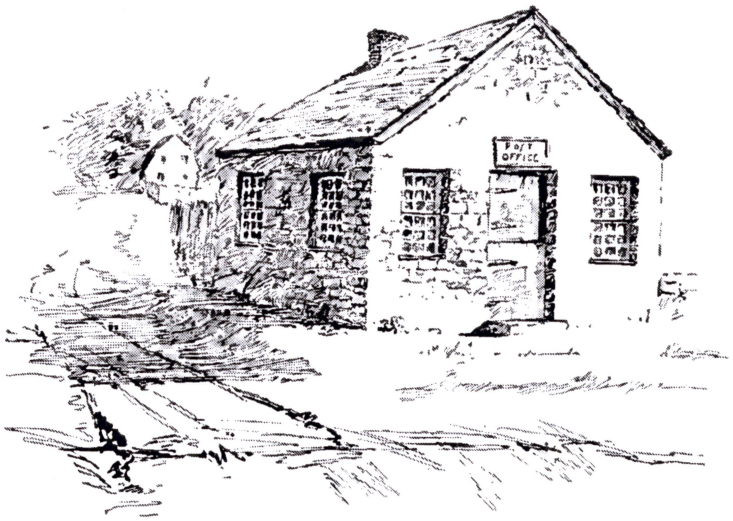
As has been stated, Colonel Rall had opened his headquarters in Trenton on the 14th day of December. His own quarters were in a large frame house on the west side of King street, nearly opposite the English Church. It was then occupied by Stacy Potts, a wealthy gentleman, who owned a large tannery near by, and a steel works on Petty's Run, near the river. This house was opposite to what is now Perry street, and the rectory of the Roman Catholic Bishop of Trenton was subsequently erected on its site. Colonel Rall was greatly pleased to be assigned the command

[1] For more minute description of the village, the houses and the residents, see a pamphlet entitled *Trenton One Hundred Years Ago*, by the author of this work.


TRENTON
NEW JERSEY
IN
1776
by
William S. Yard.
N
W
E
S
BEAKES
Beakes Lane
Brunswick Road
Dark Lane
Petty's Run
Quaker Lane
Queen St.
King St.
Fourth Street
Third St.
Second Street
ORCHARD
MILL
Front St.
Hanks Alley
To Bernard Hanlon's Mill
ASSUNPINK CREEK
Road to Bordentown
Ferry Street
Blazing Star Ferry
DELAWARE RIVER
BELLEVILLE
River Road
Beatty's Ferry
Road to Beatty's Ferry
Pennington Rd.
Petty's Run
DOUDS DALE

of this important post so close to the enemy. He thought that there he might gain new and still greater glory. When the subject of making a cantonment at Trenton was first considered, it was thought that to place a heavy picket there would be the wisest course; but Colonel Rall claimed that his services around New York city entitled him to the command of a brigade, and General Howe yielded to him and gave him verbal as well as written orders through Colonel von Donop to assume command of the post. Even at this time it was Colonel Rall's intention to wait until the river froze and then to cross it and by a forced march attack and capture the city of Philadelphia.

The Rall grenadier regiment was quartered near the corner of King and Second, now Warren and State streets.



POST-OFFICE, CORNER SECOND AND KING STREETS

They occupied the jail, now the Trenton Bank, the post-office on the corner above, Francis Witt's City Tavern on the southwest corner, Henry Drake's Bull Head Tavern on Second street, the houses of William Pidgeon and Abraham G. Claypoole on King street, and many other dwelling-houses in the same locality. This regiment wore a dark blue uniform.

The von Lossberg fusilier regiment, which had been detained a few days at Elizabeth Town, reached Trenton on the morning of December 14, but the Rall and the von Knyphausen regiments had arrived there December 12. The von Lossberg regiment immediately went into quarters on King street, the same street in which the Rall regiment



CITY TAVERN, CORNER SECOND AND KING STREETS

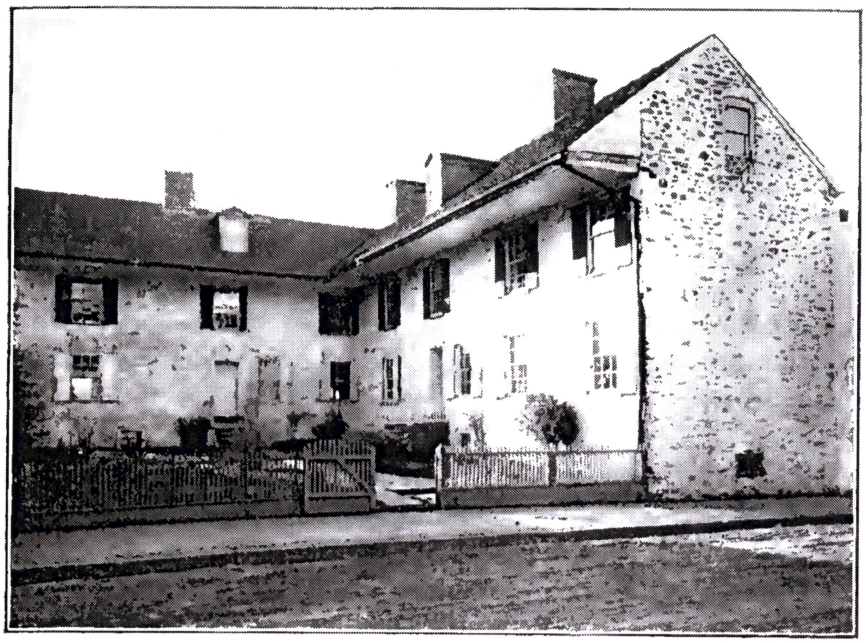
was stationed, and there held the right wing of the cantonment. Some of the companies, however, were much scattered. The main portion, consisting of the body, the von Loos and the Scheffer companies, was lodged in the English Church and in the houses of Micajah How, on the east side, of Colonel Isaac Smith, Thomas Barnes and Miss Rebecca Coxe, on the west side of the street, and other smaller buildings adjacent. One of the companies, commanded by Captain von Altenbockum, was at Alexander Calhoun's house and in his store on the Pennington road, just at the head of the road to Beatty's Ferry, now Calhoun street. Another, the von Hanstein company, was at Jonathan Richmond's inn, just below the Assunpink bridge. Altogether this regiment had the use of sixteen buildings. The men wore bright red coats, resembling somewhat the British foot.

The von Knyphausen regiment was stationed at the corner of Queen and Second streets and the vicinity It occupied the Presbyterian Church on Second street, the village school adjacent, the houses of William and Ellet Tucker and Joseph Milnor on the corners of Queen and Second streets, and the houses of Thomas Tindall, John Bellerjeau, Thomas Ryall and Joshua Newbold, one square north and one square south of the present City Hall. The men of this regiment were dressed in a plain black uniform, and presented a very sombre appearance, as contrasted with the other soldiers of Rall's brigade

Each of the five companies in every Hessian regiment had five or six houses assigned to it, so it is easily seen that had it not been for the public buildings every private house in the village would have been occupied by the Hessian troops

The twenty British dragoons, members of the Sixteenth regiment, Queen's light dragoons, a detachment of which, as we have already seen, had captured Major-General Charles Lee of the American army, used as their quarters the Friends' Meeting House on Third street, now Hanover This building, which still stands, had been used July 5, 1776, as the place of meeting of the provincial convention of New Jersey, and soldiers stationed in the village, or passing through Trenton from Pennsylvania to the army at Woodbridge and Amboy, had repeatedly taken possession of the house as barracks. Both of these acts being inconsistent with the religious principles of the Society of Friends, and "wars and fightings" or conventions which led thereto being their special abhorrence, they protested in the Chesterfield monthly meeting against such abuse of their rights and privileges But the Hessians did not ask their permission, and their wishes in the matter were not consulted.

The quarters of the fifty yagers, who dressed in green with lapels of crimson, were in a small part of the barracks which had been built during the French and Indian war, and which were situated where the River road entered Front street. Their duty was to protect the canton from the



"OLD BARRACKS," PRESENT APPEARANCE

direction of the River road. A large number of the yagers were always out at the picket post at General Philemon Dickinson's country seat, about a half mile from the village, and just before the battle fifty yagers were placed on duty there, where they occupied the house, the servants' quarters and the barns. A part of this house still stands and is now the homestead of the Atterbury estate within the city limits. The barracks referred to are also standing, although a portion of them has been taken down for the purpose of extending Front street. In addition to the yagers, who occupied them for a short time, these barracks furnished accommodation to the families of refugee Tories from Burlington and Monmouth counties, which were seeking the protection of the Hessian arms.

The detachments of artillery were quartered in the Methodist Church on Queen street, nearly opposite Church alley, and in the English Church on King street. Each of the three regiments had two brass three-pounder guns, and during the

first three or four days' occupancy of Trenton these six pieces were parked in the graveyard back of the English Church They were afterward placed in front of the guard-house, which still stands. This guard-house, then owned by Pontius Delaie Stille, was the next house north of the church and a few steps from Rall's headquarters On account of the narrowness of the street the guns were placed one behind the other in the middle of King street, and there they stood when the attack on the town commenced All the artillery-men wore blue coats with crimson lapels and white border

The brigade hospital was opened in the parsonage of the Presbyterian Church, of which the Reverend Dr. Elihu Spencer was pastor. This house was on the north side of Third street, now Hanover, and was about one hundred feet east of Queen street. During the few days of their stay at the parsonage the Hessians did considerable damage to the library, furniture and sermons of the pastor The stable connected with the parsonage, and the fences around the parsonage lot and the burying-ground surrounding the church were used for firewood [1]

[1] Hall s *History of the Presbyterian Church in Trenton New Jersey*, p 266

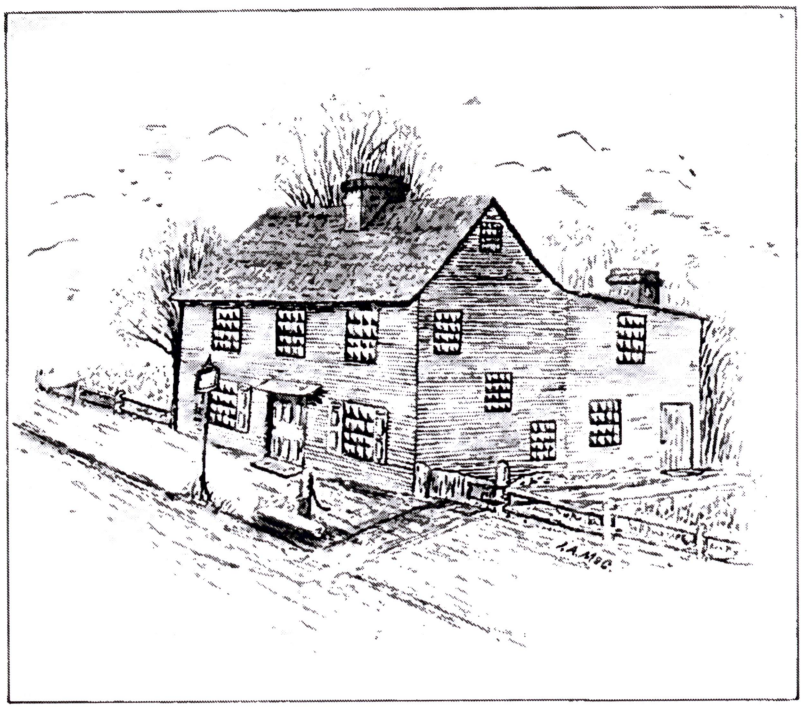
VIII

About this time Lieutenant-Colonel Scheffer and Major von Dechow asked Colonel Rall to send to New York for more clothing for their regiments, for they both considered that the men in their commands had not sufficient underwear to withstand the rigors of the approaching winter. But Colonel Rall made light of this request, and remarked that he would soon run barefoot over the ice on the river and take the city of Philadelphia Turning to Major von Dechow, who had again urged the necessity for more clothing, he told him that if he did not care to share in the honors which awaited them, he might immediately retire from the post. But Scheffer and von Dechow were much depressed over the result of this interview and the careless manner of his reply to their request

The next day Captain Reinhard Jacob Martin of the Hessian engineers stopped at Trenton on his way to Bordentown, and called during the day on Lieutenant-Colonel Scheffer In the course of this visit Major von Hanstein and Major von Dechow came to Scheffer's quarters, and joined with him in representing the unsafe condition of Rall's brigade. They all predicted to Captain Martin the ruin of these three regiments unless some change were made, and they expressed the desire to be relieved from the responsibility of such a calamity Lieutenant-Colonel Scheffer complained that many of his men were without good shoes, and that their clothing was not suitable for a severe winter Before leaving these officers, Captain Martin promised that as soon as he had completed the business which called him to Bordentown, he would see them again in Trenton on his way to New York, and take a letter which they would join in writing to Lieutenant-General Philip von Heister, the

commander of all the Hessian troops in America. This letter was accordingly written, and a copy kept by Lieutenant-Colonel Scheffer, which document finally fell into the hands of the Americans. When Captain Martin came back to Trenton he took the letter, and promised to inform General von Heister personally of all the particulars of the situation as it appeared to him He remained two days in Trenton, because he feared to go forward on the road to Princeton without an escort However, he arrived in New York on the afternoon of December 24, and sent the letter to the old general that evening On Christmas day he called at the headquarters of General von Heister, and gave him such impressions of the situation as he had obtained But although the general, who had received General Howe's promise to relieve the regiments by the middle of January, was disposed carefully to look after the preservation of the troops under his command, it was then too late for him to avert the impending disaster.

The duties of the Hessians in Trenton were varied and severe While it would have been proper and eminently wise to have guarded all the crossings on the river, there were not men enough in the command to be spared for this duty. Many of the companies (Captain von Altenbockum's company is mentioned in this connection in German records) were under arms three successive nights and then off duty for one night. For over a week no man in the brigade passed two consecutive nights without a call for some special service For some time it was a daily custom to call for extra details of one hundred men from each regiment. During the early occupation of the town it was ordered that at four o'clock in the afternoon all the companies of each regiment should turn out at the houses where their respective commandants were quartered, stack their arms, place a sentinel over them, and that each man should then go to his quarters under orders to remain dressed, with belts never loosened and only leggings removed, until daylight. The men could not stand this duty long, and they soon began to sicken



FOX CHASE TAVERN

and were taken one by one to the hospital. All the horses belonging to the artillery had to be always in readiness to be hitched to the light guns, and the harness was never removed from them day or night while they were in Trenton. Toward the last days of the Hessian occupation of the village the duties were changed, and at evening parade a regiment was put on duty for a night and a day. In this way the von Lossberg regiment performed the duty on December 23, the von Knyphausen on December 24, the Rall regiment on December 25, and of course the Rall regiment was still the regiment "of the day," and was under arms when the surprise occurred.

The picket stations of the Rall brigade were six in number, — on the Maidenhead, Pennington, and River roads, at the Assunpink Creek bridge, on the road to Trenton Ferry, and at the drawbridge over Crosswicks Creek.

The principal picket of the Trenton cantonment was at

the Fox Chase Tavern, kept by Mrs Joseph Bond, on the Maidenhead road, now Brunswick avenue, and nearly opposite to what is at the present time the head of Montgomery street It consisted of one commissioned officer, three under officers, and about seventy men This picket did sentinel and watch duty in the town A captain was always at this post, on duty as inspector

The Pennington road picket, comprising one corporal and fifteen men, was posted at the house of Richard and Arthur Howell, who were coopers by trade This post was relieved from time to time from the Maidenhead road picket

The picket on the River road was at the country seat of Brigadier-General Philemon Dickinson of the New Jersey militia, and was about half a mile from the barracks and from the village. General Dickinson, as we have stated, was on the opposite side of the river with some of his militia, and it was no doubt interesting for him to notice through his field-glass the movements of his country's enemies as they took possession of his hospitable mansion and its lovely surroundings It is said that on one occasion General Dickinson saw the Hessians despoiling his wine vault, and the temptation to send a shot among them was great; but a sergeant suggested to the general that they might retaliate by burning his house It may be remarked that this place was purchased July 30, 1776 This investment was therefore made between the dates of the Declaration of Independence and the battle of Trenton, and it shows the confidence of General Dickinson in the final result of the war when he placed funds in a property which lay so near the track of contending armies, and on the highway between two great cities which were the objective points for British attack The picket occupied the homestead, the servants' quarters and the barns, and the horse of one of the British dragoons, which was fastened in one of the rooms, left there the imprint of his shoe, still to be seen on its walls This picket was under the direct control of the yagers, and was considered fully equipped with a commissioned officer and fifty

men. The orders at this post were to withdraw if the rebels fired across the river with cannon, and if the Americans attempted to cross they should try to prevent them, and immediately report the fact to Colonel Rall's headquarters. They were required constantly to keep a sharp lookout on the river, and to send patrols up the stream from time to time. The picket was distributed in different places about the grounds, — one post in the house, one in the greenhouse, one in the vegetable garden down by the river, one in a hut behind the barn, not a great way from the house, and the fifth some little distance up the road. This picket consisted of a sergeant and fifteen men. A daily report was made from the picket post to Colonel Rall direct, and patrols were sent out every night. Each morning three or four British dragoons came to the post and examined the river above as far as Yardley's Ferry.

A sergeant and eighteen men constituted the picket at the Assunpink Creek bridge. They had no special duties except to observe who passed and repassed the bridge, and to send a patrol to the "Doctor House" on the river every half hour during each night. They kept a sentinel at Major von Dechow's quarters, a square up Queen street from the bridge, another on the north side of the bridge, and a third at George Bright's bakery on the south end of the bridge.

The picket at the old tavern on the Ferry road, formerly kept by Rensselaer Williams, was composed of one commissioned officer, five non-commissioned officers and twenty-two men. This post maintained a guard at Dr. William Bryant's residence (the "Doctor House") and at the Trenton Ferry, or what might better be called the boat-landing belonging to Patrick Colvin.[1] The guards posted quite near to the river bank were forbidden to show themselves in the daytime, as whenever they did so in any numbers, the Americans fired at them from a battery erected

[1] For advertisements in reference to this ferry, see *Archives of State of New Jersey* 2d series, vol. i. pp. 96, 138, 154.

just opposite on the Pennsylvania side of the river These guards were always relieved after dark.

But the service at the drawbridge over Crosswicks Creek, four miles below Trenton, was the most unpleasant, because the post was so far from the headquarters of the command It was established for the purpose of keeping open the communication with Colonel von Donop, but it appears to have protected Colonel von Donop rather more than Colonel Rall, from whose command it was taken It seems as though the troops at Bordentown, two miles below, should have taken charge of this picket post, but it fell to the lot of Rall's brigade It was made up of three commissioned officers and one hundred men This body of troops was subdivided into four stations, — an officer and twenty-four men posted a short distance from the drawbridge on the road to Allentown, another officer and thirty men about midway between Trenton and the drawbridge, one officer and twenty-four men one mile north of the bridge, and the rest of the force at the drawbridge itself The senior officer had orders to retire to Bordentown in case of attack. This picket was relieved from Trenton about ten o'clock in the morning every other day On December 14 Colonel Rall sent Captain Schimmelpfennig with the von Biesenrodt company, and Captain Baum with the body company of the von Knyphausen regiment, to the drawbridge with all their baggage, ordering them to quarter themselves in the houses there, and to keep as close together as possible, as this was a section of the country where the feeling toward them was not fully known They had been there but a short time when Colonel von Donop sent a yager to warn them to be on the lookout, as a force of 700 rebels were reported to be ranging around quite near Colonel Rall did not relieve this post until December 17, when they returned to Trenton The houses near the drawbridge were quite far apart and surrounded with thick woods, which concealed them from view. This frequently left the rear and the flanks of the picket very unsafe.

The orders at the cantonment of Trenton were to relieve the guards and sentinels at nine o'clock in the morning, and the pickets at four o'clock in the afternoon Lieutenant Piel, the brigade adjutant, says that the parade took place in the morning at eleven o'clock, and that the parole and countersign were given out at four o'clock in the afternoon.

It was not the custom of Colonel Rall to visit these picket stations All the officers unite in saying that while they had command he did not come near them at any time

One of the most important and seemingly singular yet picturesque displays made in Trenton during this period was the march of a heavy patrol about half an hour before daylight on December 19, under command of the staff officer of the day, from the Fox Chase Tavern on the Maidenhead road This patrol went down Queen street to Church alley, where it was joined by a detachment of artillery with two cannon, and so marched over the Assunpink Creek bridge to the "Doctor House" and Trenton Ferry This party was called the watch-guard, and the commanding officer had orders not to attempt the capture of an American detachment unless it appeared to be one hundred strong, and then to do so without fail It appears that the Americans had alarmed the picket before daylight, December 18, and had effected a landing with forty men under the protection of the guns of the American battery opposite, and that they had plundered and burned a house below the landing, so that this early morning demonstration was deemed the proper military movement Colonel Rall told Captain Martin, who has been previously alluded to as having been detained in Trenton for two days, that he did not desire to interfere very much with these excursions of the rebels, as it might occur that at some time Washington, whom he would take great pleasure in capturing, would be among them Lieutenant-Colonel Scheffer thought these trips across Trenton Ferry were part of a general plan of Washington to divert Colonel Rall's attention from the upper ferries He considered that too much care was given to

Trenton Ferry, while Howell's Ferry and Johnson's Ferry, although equally important, were neglected

Before he left Trenton for Bordentown, December 14, Colonel von Donop instructed Colonel Rall to put up fortifications on the Pennington road and at the Trenton Ferry, and he left Captain Georg Heinrich Pauli, his engineer officer, and Cornet Carl Levin von Heister, of the Hesse-Cassel body dragoon regiment, to select the place

The next day, in company with Colonel Rall, Lieutenant-Colonel Scheffer and other officers, Captain Pauli went up to the high ground where King and Queen streets join with the Pennington and Maidenhead roads, and indicated the place where a redoubt with flanking angles for cannon should be placed [1] The party then rode down to the Trenton Ferry, and selected for another small fortification an elevated spot near the bridge over a little stream which flowed by Dr. Bryant's house It was thought that this would be an excellent place to which to retreat, and which they might hold for a time in case of a vigorous attack by a party of Americans from the Pennsylvania side of the river The records show that Colonel Rall gave his approval of both localities, and was especially pleased with the one at the head of King and Queen streets At that time he must have really intended erecting these redoubts, for he directed Lieutenant Engelhardt, of Lieutenant-Colonel Eitel's Hessian artillery regiment, to see that some fascines were made for the purpose This was done, but they were never used When Captain Pauli left that afternoon for his station at Bordentown, he told Colonel Rall that if he would send him word as soon as he was ready to begin the work on the intrenchments, he would come again to Trenton and superintend their erection Captain Pauli reported what he had said and done to Colonel von Donop, but Colonel Rall never sent for him When Captain Martin passed through Trenton a second time on his way to New York, he bore a message from Colonel von Donop to Colonel Rall, urging upon him the necessity

[1] The spot on which the Battle Monument now stands

of immediately fortifying his position with intrenchments Colonel Rall told Captain Martin that he did not think it at all necessary, as the rebels were such a miserable lot Indeed, every remark of the officer was turned into ridicule It is to be supposed that Captain Martin repeated this conversation to Lieutenant-Colonel Scheffer and Major von Dechow when he went to their quarters for the letter which he had promised to take to General von Heister The next day, in company with Lieutenant Wiederhold of the von Knyphausen regiment, Major von Dechow went to Rall's headquarters on King street, and in the presence of Lieutenant Piel, Rall's brigade adjutant, and Lieutenant Zoll, the adjutant of the von Lossberg regiment, made another appeal to have the redoubts erected Lieutenant Wiederhold, on his own behalf and that of Lieutenant Fischer of the artillery detachment, offered to do the work at the Trenton Ferry Rall exclaimed, when thus appealed to, "Lasst sie nur kommen! Keine Schanzen! Mit dem Bajonet wollen wir an sie!" ("Let them come! We want no trenches! We 'll at them with the bayonet!") The major did not allow himself to be content with this reply, but remonstrated "Herr Oberst, es kostet ja nichts, hilft es nicht, so schadet es auch nichts!" ("Colonel, it costs nothing, if it does not help, it can do no harm!") His desire was, however, never gratified, and the lives of both Rall and von Dechow paid the penalty of this neglect

It is very singular that while it appears that Colonel von Donop was always anxious to receive intelligence, and had men paid to procure it for him, Colonel Rall, who was much nearer the main body of the American force, had absolutely no reliable information concerning their movements Lieutenant Piel, his brigade adjutant, distinctly states under oath that he never employed any spies to go into the American camp In this the Hessian commander was surely blamable.

Colonel Rall had a very poor opinion of the strength and military skill of his foe, and said that they were "nothing but a lot of farmers," of no account whatever, and that it

was of no possible use to make preparations for any attack in force by them So stubborn was he in this respect that he would not listen to advice with any grace, but preferred to do what seemed best to himself, acting on the impulse of the moment, rather than judge which was the best of all the different plans laid before him

About this time he desired to have more troops in Trenton, probably not that he feared an attack, but that he wished to increase the importance of his command and make a greater display in the village On his applying to Major-General Grant, his superior officer, at Brunswick, for additional troops, or even for some men at Maidenhead to keep open the communication with Princeton and Brunswick, his opinion as to his safety was fully confirmed by that officer's reply "Tell the colonel he is safe, I will undertake to keep the peace in New Jersey with a corporal's guard" It is thought that this answer went far to make Rall careless in the matter of fortifications or any other preparations for the enemy, for he considered that if they were not disturbed, they would be only too happy to remain quiet

As late as Christmas day Major von Dechow called Colonel Rall's attention to the baggage and the supplies of the brigade, and urged that they be placed in some safe position against any sudden attack. But the colonel somewhat indignantly exclaimed: "The rebels will not come, but if they do and can take me, they can have all the stores and the baggage to my very last wagon If they come, all they can hope for is a good retreat." Lieutenant-Colonel Scheffer of the von Lossberg regiment also was filled with the greatest anxiety, and worried himself sick over his commander's reckless conduct.

For more than a week preceding Christmas the American militia were hovering in little detachments around the posts at Trenton and Princeton. Indeed, the road between the two villages was at no time a secure march for British troops.

It may be mentioned here that on the 21st day of December, in expectation of a winter's sojourn in South Jersey, six

quartermasters of the brigades of von Donop and Rall were sent to New York, under the protection of a force of eighty Hessian soldiers, for the purpose of bringing on the balance of the camp equipage and baggage of the two commands These officers were Quartermaster Heusser of the von Lossberg regiment, Quartermaster Muller of the von Knyphausen regiment, Quartermaster Unger of the von Minnigerode regiment, Quartermaster Broste of the von Linsingen regiment, Quartermaster Fitz of the Rall regiment, and Quartermaster Wiederhold of the Hessian artillery. They went to Brunswick, and then, avoiding the direct route to Perth Amboy, they passed over the Raritan River to Staten Island and so to New York

On December 24 Colonel Rall ordered a heavy patrol to go to Pennington, a little village eight miles distant from Trenton. One detachment started in the morning under Major Johann Jost Matthaus of Rall's own regiment, taking the direct road to Pennington The other, under Captain Adam Christoph Steding of the von Lossberg regiment, went by the River Road, and so up to Johnson's Ferry and across to Pennington Each column consisted of one hundred men Lieutenant von Grothausen and his fifty yagers formed one half of Captain Steding's detachment Colonel Rall himself, with the twenty British dragoons, followed after Major Matthaus on the Pennington road. The major did not find any of the enemy on the road or at the village Lieutenant von Grothausen and his yagers marched in the advance of Captain Steding's force, and came across some thirty Americans at Johnson's Ferry, who, as soon as they saw the yagers come out of the woods, entered their boats, and rowed out into the stream The yagers fired, and they heard afterward that one officer and two men had been wounded The American artillery fired four shots at the yagers from the Pennsylvania shore. After this affair Captain Steding's men passed on to Pennington, where Colonel Rall and Major Matthaus had been waiting for them for two hours. The entire party then returned to Trenton On his way back Major Matthaus

rode by the side of Colonel Rall, and talked freely to him about his situation at Trenton He proposed to Rall to put a detachment at Pennington, and send daily patrols to Johnson's Ferry to prevent surprise But Colonel Rall rejected the plan, asking him if he wanted to lose a detachment. "Do you wish to go there yourself?" he asked, and Major Matthaus replied, "If I am ordered to go there, I will go and do my duty"

During the week commencing December 22 there was much gossip in Trenton concerning the movements of the American army One day a resident of Bucks County, whose name the German records give as Mahl, told Colonel Rall, in the presence of Lieutenant Piel, that he would certainly be attacked at an early day. Rall answered, "Let them come" The next day two deserters from the American army confirmed this intelligence to Colonel Rall, Major Matthaus and Lieutenant Piel being present, and told him that the Pennsylvania militia were gathering, and that the army had orders to prepare four days' rations Colonel Rall did not believe it

After the battle of Trenton, Major Matthaus confidently asserted that he had reason to think that Colonel Rall had issued letters of protection to people whom he had supposed to be wealthy and influential in and about Trenton, and that they had dined at his table, and he strongly suspected that many of these people were American officers in disguise, who had come to Rall only to get information as to his position and condition

On Monday morning, December 23, at eleven o'clock, Lieutenant Ernst Christian Schwabe of the von Lossberg regiment met on King street Dr William Bryant, the physician, who lived on the Bloomsbury Farm, and who was seeking Colonel Rall But Rall could not be found that morning, and Dr Bryant left Lieutenant Schwabe with the promise that he would return later in the day He did so, and then told Colonel Rall that he had just heard from a negro who had crossed the river that the rebels had drawn

rations for several days, and were about to attack Trenton. "This is all idle! it is old woman's talk," impatiently answered Colonel Rall. But the doctor, who was afraid of being



DR. WILLIAM BRYANT

robbed and having his house burned, took the matter more seriously.[1]

[1] Dr. Bryant was the son of Captain William Bryant of Perth Amboy, New Jersey, on whose tombstone it is stated that he made fifty-five voyages across the Atlantic Ocean. His daughter Mary, who was noted for her great piety, married the Hon. William Peartree Smith of Elizabeth Town, an earnest patriot, a member of the Council of Safety, and a distinguished scholar. It is evident that the brothers-in-law Smith and Bryant took very different sides in the great struggle for American independence. — Rev. Dr. John Hall's *History of the Presbyterian Church in Trenton, New Jersey*, p. 235.

IX

At this time Washington was making active preparations for a simultaneous attack upon all the king's troops on the Jersey side of the river. With his skeleton bands of faithful and true soldiers, mere fragments of his own army and those of Lee and Gates, reinforced by some militia who had yet to face an enemy, he proposed as a desperate resort to throw this frail body of men on the drilled soldiers of Hesse.

The gondolas and row-galleys which were under the command of Commodore Thomas Seymour, and which, during the night of December 19, had been ordered down the Delaware River, were directed to move up as far as Bordentown, which they did in the midst of a fierce snowstorm on Monday, December 23, and were then stationed along the river between Bordentown and Burlington.

On the evening of December 24 Washington rode over to the headquarters of Major-General Greene, at Samuel Merrick's house, and took supper with him At Greene's request the family left the house in his charge that night, and there appears to be no doubt that the final council of war was held that evening and in that dwelling. Generals Sullivan, Mercer, Lord Stirling, Colonel Knox and other officers, with the Reverend Dr Macwhorter of Newark, New Jersey, were at the table

During the course of the meal Lieutenant-Colonel Harrison and his brother (both military secretaries to the commander-in-chief) were busily engaged in transferring the business of the headquarters of the army from Mr Keith's house to Newtown It is presumed that General Washington did not take possession of these new headquarters in person on Christmas day

The plan adopted at the council of war was substantially

the same which had been discussed for some days past. This scheme was to cross in three different places, that Cadwalader's division attack the cantonments at Mount Holly, Black Horse and Bordentown; that Ewing's division cross at Trenton Ferry, take position on the south side of the Assunpink Creek, and, if possible, close all avenues of escape for Rall's troops, and prevent any reinforcement from von Donop, and that General Washington with a large detachment of the main army, about 2400 strong, make the direct attack upon the garrison at Trenton The style of the campaign was to be changed from defensive to offensive, and if any advantage was gained by this movement Washington proposed to follow it up by an active and aggressive attack upon all the outposts of the enemy With his own immediate command and that of Ewing in possession of Trenton, while Putnam and Cadwalader forced von Donop out of his cantonments, the entire army would then rapidly push on for the military stations at Princeton and Brunswick

The night of Christmas was chosen for the crossing of the Delaware River All were familiar with the much honored observance of the Christmas festival by the Germans, and they relied greatly on the expectation that a too free use of intoxicants on that day might to some extent disable the effective force of the enemy and make the watch dull

Early on Christmas morning Washington issued his order for the march to Trenton in the following words:—

"Each brigade to be furnished with two good guides General Stephen's brigade to form the advance party, and to have with them a detachment of the artillery without cannon, provided with spikes and hammers to spike up the enemies' cannon in case of necessity, or to bring them off if it can be effected, the party to be provided with drag-ropes for the purpose of dragging off the cannon General Stephen is to attack and force the enemy's guards and seize such posts as may prevent them from forming in the streets, and in case they are annoyed from the houses to set them on fire The brigades of Mercer and Lord Stirling, under the

command of Major-General Greene, to support General Stephen This is the 2d division or left wing of the army and to march by the way of the Pennington road

"St Clair's, Glover's, and Sargent's brigades, under Major-General Sullivan, to march by the River Road. This is the first division of the army, and to form the right wing Lord Stirling's brigade to form the reserve of the left wing, and General St. Clair's brigade the reserve of the right wing These reserves to form a second line in conjunction, or a second line to each division, as circumstances may require Each brigadier to make the colonels acquainted with the posts of their respective regiments in the brigade, and the major-generals will inform them of the posts of the brigades in the line Four pieces of artillery to march at the head of each column, three pieces at the head of the second brigade of each division, and two pieces with each of the reserves The troops to be assembled one mile back of McKonkey's Ferry, and as soon as it begins to grow dark the troops to be marched to McKonkey's Ferry, and embark on board the boats in following order under the direction of Colonel Knox

"General Stephen's brigade, with the detachment of artillerymen, to embark first, General Mercer's next; Lord Stirling's next, General Fermoy's next, who will march into the rear of the second division and file off from the Pennington to the Princeton road in such direction that he can with the greatest ease and safety secure the passes between Princeton and Trenton The guides will be the best judges of this He is to take two pieces of artillery with him St Clair's, Glover's, and Sargent's brigades to embark in order Immediately upon their debarkation, the whole to form and march in subdivisions from the right The commanding officers of regiments to observe that the divisions be equal and that proper officers be appointed to each A profound silence to be enjoined, and no man to quit his ranks on the pain of death. Each brigadier to appoint flanking parties, the reserve brigades to appoint the rear-guards of the col-

umns, the heads of the columns to be appointed to arrive at Trenton at five o'clock

"Captain Washington and Captain Flahaven, with a party of forty men each, to march before the divisions and post themselves on the road about three miles from Trenton, and make prisoners of all going in or coming out of town

"General Stephen will appoint a guard to form a chain of sentries round the landing-place at a sufficient distance from the river to permit the troops to form, this guard not to suffer any person to go in or come out, but to detain all persons who attempt either. This guard to join their brigade when the troops are all over."

Immediately upon receipt of this order by the brigade commanders, they began to make preparations to carry out its provisions. Instructions were then given as to the position in line and the part each organization was to take in the demonstration on Trenton. A specimen of these details is the order to the commanding officer of the Fourth Connecticut Continental regiment [1]

The last of the correspondence between General Grant, Colonel Rall, and Colonel von Donop, which appears among the Hessian archives, prior to the surprise at Trenton, is an interesting letter from Grant to von Donop —

BRUNSWICK 24th Dec. 1776
past eleven at night

SIR

I have been favoured with your letter of the 21st which I have transmitted to General Howe, your Intelligence from the Country People was very circumstantial but be assured there are no rebel Troops in the Jerseys, they send over small parties from twenty to thirty men at a time and Colonel Chambers [2] of Hunterdon has the command of seventy or eighty near Howell's Ferry The rebel army in Pennsylvania consisted of 8000 men the 22nd instant which

[1] Part II No 36.

[2] Colonel David Chambers, Third regiment, Hunterdon County, New Jersey militia

was posted at Philadelphia, Bristol, opposite to Trenton and as far as Sherad's Ferry, their greatest force between Trenton and Coryell's Ferry, the day I mention which was Sunday last, Sullivan, Gates, Arnold and Sterling were with Washington at his Quarters Mifflin was then in the back part of Pennsylvania endeavouring to force the militia. Washington has been informed that our Troops have marched into Winter quarters and have been told that we are weak at Trenton and princetown and Lord Stirling expressed a wish to make an attack upon these two places I don't believe he will attempt it, but be assured that my information is undoubtedly true, so I need not advise you to be upon your guard against an unexpected attack at Trenton I think I have got into a good line of intelligence which will be of use to us all and I have the honour to be

Sir, your most obed't and most h'ble servant

JAMES GRANT.

General Leslie sent word to Colonel Rall on December 23 that General Howe had refused to place a detachment at Maidenhead, as Rall desired, but that he would send a patrol of twenty-five or thirty men to Trenton twice a week if Colonel Rall would do the same to Princeton This plan seems to have been agreed upon, as General Leslie sent the patrol to Trenton the next day. They also brought word that they believed an attack on either Trenton or Princeton was imminent.

In their statements concerning the affair at Trenton, made after the battle, the Hessian officers unite in severely blaming Colonel Rall for not designating any alarm places, where each regiment should muster in case of an attack Lieutenant-Colonel Scheffer, however, had designated a place by the English Church for that purpose, and as the Rall regiment was the regiment "of the day," and so under arms at the time of the surprise, it does not seem pertinent that so much stress should be laid on this minor delinquency of the commandant. Lieutenant-Colonel Scheffer blames

him for not designating a road by which they might retreat if attacked by a superior force, but Colonel Rall was an officer who, although well fitted for making an assault, was by nature ill-suited to defense, and retreat and defeat were matters to which he refused to give a thought, even though the hostile party might be numerically overwhelming

As the American officers had anticipated, the Hessian troops at Trenton, carelessly confident in their own military strength, entered eagerly into the Christmas revelry as they did at home, and all day and far into the night they continued their merrymaking, with some feasting and much drinking with the people of the town

On Christmas morning it is said General Grant sent a messenger to Colonel Rall, stating, although erroneously, that a small detachment under General Lord Stirling was hovering near him, and might make a demonstration on the village at any time during the day. This admonition, which would have put a more careful commander on strict watch for a surprise, had little effect The colonel rode around the outskirts of the town, visiting some of the guards, and returned quite late in the afternoon to his headquarters on King street, the house of Stacy Potts. Here he started a little game of checkers with his genial host He was still playing when a sound of firing was heard from the northwest portion of the town It was scarcely more than a single volley, then a few scattering shots, and all was still; but it raised a great alarm in the village. This was between seven and eight o'clock The picket on the Pennington road had been attacked by a party of Americans, which, they said, consisted of forty or fifty men They came out "in front of the woods" on the road which led to Pennington on the side toward Birmingham, and retired thence to Johnson's Ferry As has already been stated, the picket consisted of a corporal and fifteen men. The non-commissioned officer in charge was Corporal William Hartung of the body company of the von Lossberg regiment (who was born in Elbingerod, on the

Hartz Mountains in Hanover He was twenty-six years of age, and had spent one year in the Hanover cavalry and three years in the von Lossberg regiment He was accounted a good and reliable soldier. Seeing that the numbers of the enemy were strong, and six of his men being wounded, though none killed, Corporal Hartung and the nine men remaining fell back, leading and carrying their wounded comrades, to Captain von Altenbockum's company, which was quartered about a gunshot from the picket post [1]

As soon as Captain von Altenbockum heard the firing he assembled his company in front of his quarters, and sent one half of them toward the picket station, under command of Lieutenant Georg Christian Kimm Shortly afterward the captain himself followed with the rest of his company Meeting Corporal Hartung, he gave him eight of his own men and sent him hastily back to search the woods for a short distance about the picket post. When Hartung reached the post he was joined by six yagers, who had hastened across the fields from the Dickinson house on the River road to find out what had happened These twenty-four men made a careful patrol around the picket station, but the enemy were not to be found About this time Lieutenant-Colonel Brethauer, the inspector of the guard, hurriedly came up to the picket with a party of Hessian infantry in charge of Ensign Friedrich Franz Grabe of the von Lossberg regiment, probably from the principal picket at the Fox Chase Tavern on the Maidenhead road After a brief consultation with Captain von Altenbockum, he sent out Ensign Johann Georg Schroeder of the Rall regiment with thirty men to go still farther on the road and endeavor to find the hostile party

In the meantime the town was in an uproar The von Lossberg regiment had gathered at their company quarters under arms Lieutenant-Colonel Scheffer being ill, his com-

[1] The names of two of the wounded men were Fusilier Ciriacus Wagner, von Borch company, and fusilier Wetter, body company, both von Knyphausen regiment

mand did not muster at this time as a regiment The Rall regiment formed in front of the English Church, and with Colonel Rall at its head marched up to the high ground at the junction of the Pennington and Maidenhead roads, where it awaited further orders The von Knyphausen regiment on the lower part of Queen street, and the von Hanstein company of the von Lossberg regiment, on the south side of the bridge, also gathered at their quarters Major von Hanstein and Major von Dechow left their regiments in charge of the next in rank, and hastened up King street after the Rall regiment to find out the cause of the firing When they came up to Colonel Rall, Major von Hanstein remained with him, but Major von Dechow urged his horse to the Pennington road picket There he met Lieutenant-Colonel Brethauer and his men and Captain von Altenbockum and his company An order had already been sent out by the lieutenant-colonel to recall Ensign Schroeder, who soon appeared with his patrol and told the officers that he had been about two miles up the road, but that the search had been unsuccessful Lieutenant Andreas Wiederhold of the von Knyphausen regiment with ten men reinforced the picket post at Howell's house, increasing its strength to one commissioned officer, one non-commissioned officer, and nineteen men. The records give the names of five of this reinforcing party as fusiliers Bicker, Rupp, Schmelz, Steinbrecker and Zugreis, all of the von Knyphausen regiment

Captain von Altenbockum and Lieutenant Kimm and their company then returned to their quarters, where the guns were stacked, the men staying together all night in the two houses near the captain's quarters belonging to John Chambers and Warrell Cottnam Leaving Lieutenant Kimm in charge of his men, Captain von Altenbockum walked down the Pennington road with Lieutenant-Colonel Brethauer and Major von Dechow until they met Colonel Rall and his regiment at the head of King street Here he related the story of the attack on the picket Lieutenant Johannes Engelhardt of the artillery was near Colonel

Rall when Captain von Altenbockum gave his report, and he afterward stated that the former acknowledged that General Grant had warned him that a party was wandering near his cantonment, he also said he thought that they were only a few farmers collected for the purpose of annoying him, and that he was confident he could whip them all with his regiment alone Major von Dechow, however, was deeply concerned about the matter, and, according to the statement of Lieutenant Carl Ludwig von Geyso of the von Knyphausen regiment, who was with him at the time, urged upon Colonel Rall the propriety of immediately sending out a heavy patrol to all the ferries and up the roads But he was answered that it would be time enough in the morning. When he left Colonel Rall, Major von Dechow gave free vent to his feelings to the young lieutenant, and said he feared the colonel would get them all in trouble Major von Dechow put sentinels in front of every house which his regiment occupied, and ordered all his men to remain therein that night ready for an alarm The other regiments also were dismissed to their quarters.

Glad to be once more indoors and sheltered from the storm, the men gathered around their fires and returned to their drunken revels. No preparation was made for another attack, and no baggage of any kind was collected Lieutenant Jacob Piel, Colonel Rall's adjutant, who saw him at ten o'clock in the evening, says he issued no special orders for the night Lieutenant Wiederhold, who was then in command of the picket on the Pennington road, states the situation clearly "A vigilant officer would have given orders to reconnoitre all the roads up the river, and the ferries, either to find all quiet or to find the enemy, and not to come back until the fact was thoroughly established"

The manœuvre of this little scouting party, a demonstration which might have proved disastrous to General Washington's plans for the next day, would certainly have made a prudent officer very careful to keep his own head clear and his troops well in hand, especially as he knew that the foe

was always in sight just over the river; yet this very movement seems to have removed all further apprehension from Colonel Rall's mind.

The attacking party consisted of about thirty men of Stephen's brigade. History differs as to who had command



LIEUTENANT-COLONEL ABRAHAM HUNT

of this little force. In some cases it is given to Captain William Washington, but he was not in Stephen's brigade. There is more reason to believe that it was the company commanded by Captain Richard Clough Anderson of Colonel Charles Scott's regiment, Fifth Virginia Continental line. The subaltern officers of this company were John Anderson, first lieutenant; William Bentley, second lieutenant;

Robert Tompkins, ensign It seems that the party was scouting through Hunterdon County, without General Washington's permission, and as a mere adventure drove in the picket, wounded six men, seized their firelocks and ammunition, and hastened away to join their regiment, which to their surprise was then crossing the river into the Jerseys [1]

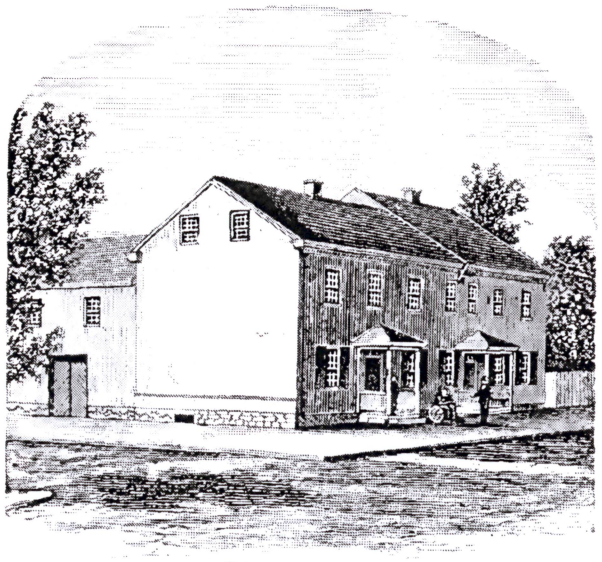
It is said that General Stephen was censured by General Washington for allowing this roving party to be in New Jersey at that time, but afterward, when the commander-in-chief found that, so far from injuring his project, the little affair had given Colonel Rall the impression that the attack which General Grant had predicted had been made, and had failed, his reproof was changed to praise for the brave exploit

After this incident was over, and his troops dismissed, Colonel Rall did not return to his own quarters and his unfinished game with Friend Potts, but dropped in, flushed with his fancied success, on a more convivial party, whiling away the hours of Christmas night in Abraham Hunt's parlor, on the northwest corner of King and Second streets [2]

[1] Part II No 49

[2] Abraham Hunt was the rich merchant of the village, and its postmaster He has been called a non-committal man Patriots it is said, feared that he was not altogether true to the cause, for they knew that their country's enemies ofttimes partook of his bounty He has frequently been spoken of in history as a Tory, but it is never asserted that he took any active part against his country On the contrary at this very time he held the commission of lieutenant-colonel of Colonel Isaac Smith's First regiment, Hunterdon County militia, and the state records do not show any stain upon his honor as an officer and a soldier It has never been stated that he ever claimed protection from the British His property does not appear to have been confiscated which would have been done if he had been a Tory and he certainly was in the full enjoyment of it to the date of his death, long after the close of the war. He also retained his office as postmaster of the village under the national government for many years His home was a place of good cheer for every guest and in after years he married that most patriotic lady Miss Mary Dagworthy who was so busy during the war in aiding the sick and wounded soldiers of the American army, and who strewed flowers in Washington's pathway at the Assunpink bridge, as

The supper party at Abraham Hunt's house, no matter what the host's sentiments, had an important effect upon the ensuing events. Can it have been after all that he was not averse to seeing the Hessian commander utterly unable to perform his military duties? Certain it is that he was a



ABRAHAM HUNT'S HOUSE

most active though perhaps unconscious agent in bringing disaster and defeat to the British arms. Tradition says that he journeyed toward New York to assume the duties of president of the United States. The Hon. William S. Yard of Trenton, New Jersey, a descendant of Benjamin Yard, who was an iron-worker and gunsmith in Trenton in 1776, has in his possession the following receipt: "Received, Trenton, July 4th, 1776, of Abram Hunt, one of the Commissioners for the county of Hunterdon, fifty-one pounds for twelve muskets; August 19th received fifty-five pounds thirteen shillings and sixpence for fourteen muskets; 21 Aug. received twenty-four pounds seven shillings and sixpence for thirteen muskets, and July 15th, 1777, received one pound and fourteen shillings for seventeen scabbards delivered last Summer. Benjamin Yard." If Abraham Hunt as one of the commissioners disbursed government funds for the repair of arms July 4, 1776, would he also have been allowed to remain in the same office and do the same work July 15, 1777, if he had shown himself a loyalist in December, 1776?

LIEUTENANT PIEL'S MAP

Plan of an engagement between six thousand Americans, with fourteen cannon and two howitzers, under command of General Washington, and a brigade of Hessians under command of Colonel Rall at Trenton on the 26th day of December, 1776.

EXPLANATION

A. Trenton

B Picket of 1 officer and 24 men

C. The 7 picket posts placed on each side of it, of which No 1 was the right wing, and had connection with the left wing of the captain's picket, the one marked No 7 was the left wing, and had connection with the yager picket

D Route made by the patrol of the officers' picket, and which always turned to the left to the yager picket, and thence uptown to the captain's post, and from there back through the chain of sentinels

E. The left wing post of the captain's picket

F. The right wing post of the yager picket.

G. Captain von Altenbockum's company of the von Lossberg regiment, which formed in front of the captain's quarters while the pickets were engaged with the enemy, and which, when they fell back, moved towards the right wing, and joined with that in the charge

H Picket of 1 captain, 1 non-commissioned officer and 75 men

I Picket of 1 officer and 50 yagers who retreated at once across the bridge

K Command of 1 officer and 30 men who fell back upon von Donop's corps

L Place where the regiments formed and received their orders

M. Place where the regiments tried to rally after they had left the city, and where Colonel Rall with his own and the von Lossberg regiment made an attack upon the abandoned city, in order to save the baggage, but was repulsed and driven back to N ; and there were made prisoners of war The regiment von Knyphausen, which was to have covered the flanks, had likewise to fall back, and tried to gain the bridge. This, however, they could not reach because of the loss of time occasioned in trying to recover the von Lossberg guns that had become stuck in the swamp, and during this time the enemy pressed forward, and captured the regiment at O.

P. Von Lossberg cannon in the swamp

Q Von Knyphausen cannon which did not reach the regiment during the battle

R Rall cannon that were dismounted at the beginning of the engagement

S Attack of the provincials from the woods

T Junction and formation of provincials in line of battle before the city

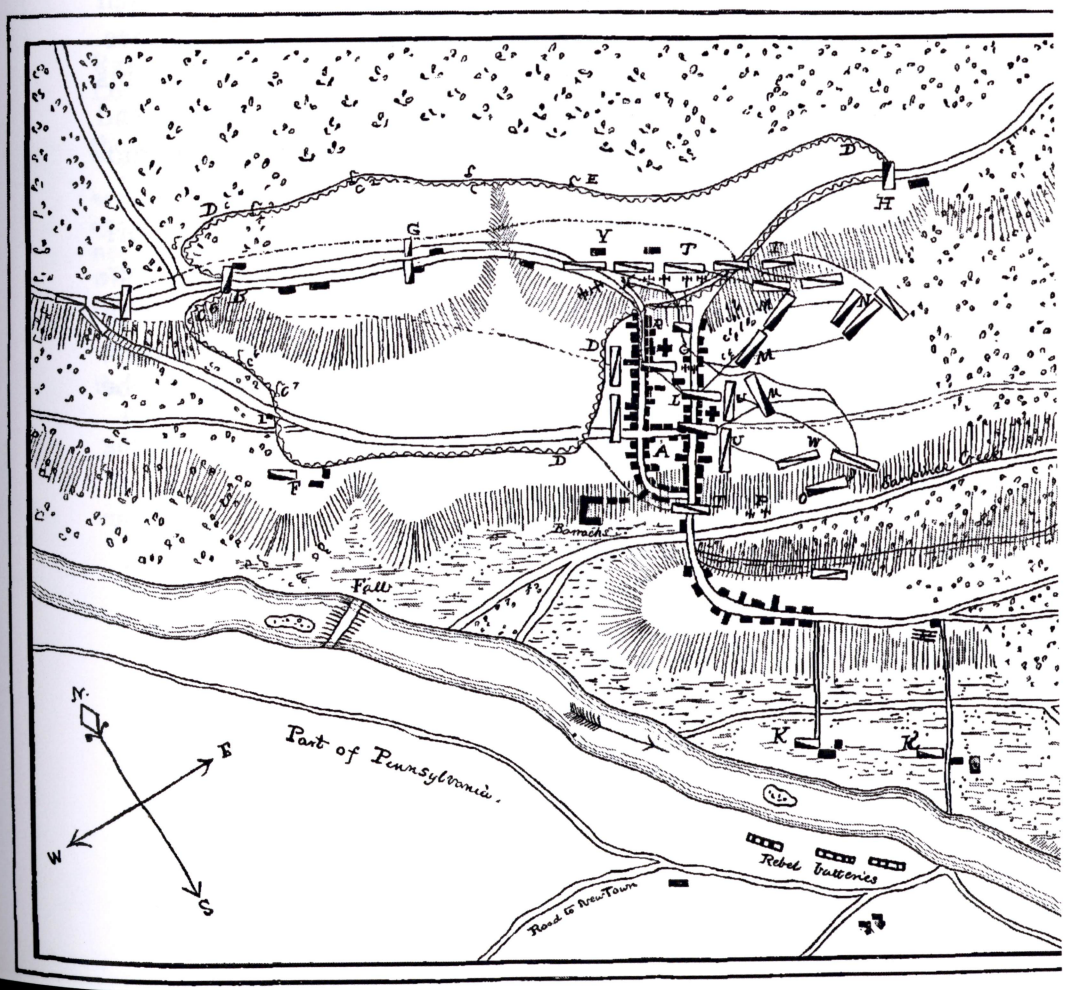
U Stirling's brigade, which pursued the von Knyphausen regiment. [St Clair's, not Stirling's, brigade pursued the von Knyphausen regiment]

W. Last movement of the Americans

X American guns and howitzers

Y Place where General Washington took position at the beginning of the fight in order to direct the battle.

W


Barracks
Fall
Part of Pennsylvania.
Rebel batteries
Road to New-Town
N.
E
W
S

the merriment continued all the night, and when it was nearly dawn poor Rall was still busy with his cards and wine

During the night a Tory farmer from Bucks County, Pennsylvania, whose name the German records give as Wall, possibly the same loyalist called Mahl, who had visited Colonel Rall a few days before, came into the town in great haste, and, not finding Rall at his own headquarters, rapped at Abraham Hunt's door, and asked for the Hessian colonel The negro waiter was unwilling to have the jolly party disturbed even at that hour, and he refused to admit him. Hurriedly writing a few lines, giving Colonel Rall the movements of the American army, the farmer sent it in by the servant, and left the door with a clear conscience, feeling that he had done his duty as a loyal subject to the English king. But Rall, who was in no condition to trouble himself with the contents of a note perhaps addressed quite carelessly, put it into his vest pocket without a thought that his life must pay the penalty for this apparently trivial act And the shuffling of the cards went on, dealing out golden moments of his life.[1]

On examining the map herein inserted, a copy of the original on file in the king's state archives at Marburg, Germany, and which was prepared by Lieutenant Jacob Piel of the von Lossberg regiment, brigade adjutant to Colonel Rall, the picket posts of the Hessian force about Trenton can be

[1] Frank Forester has given us a vivid pen picture of this roistering party —

"Soldiers, spread the Christmas feast,
Soldiers, fill the bumper fair,
Pass the bottle pile the hearth,
Cutting cold the wintry air!
Let the toast our country be,
From whatever country we!
Sons of German Fatherland,
Britons ever bond and free.
Comrades, troll the jolly stave,
Pass the bottle, fear no wrong!
For the rebel hosts are weak,
And the wintry river strong!"

LIEUTENANT WIEDERHOLD'S MAP

The affair at Trenton which occurred December 26, 1776, between one corps of rebels of six thousand men under command of General Washington and one brigade of Hessians under command of Colonel Rall

EXPLANATION

A Trenton

B Picket of 1 officer and 24 men

C Captain von Altenbockum's company of the von Lossberg regiment, which was quartered in this neighborhood, and which was charged by the enemy while doing picket duty

D Picket of 1 captain, 1 non-commissioned officer and 75 men.

E 1 officer and 50 yagers who retreated over the bridge at once

F Command of 1 officer and 30 men who retired to von Donop's corps.

G Place of original formation of the regiments

H Place where the regiments stood after leaving the city, and where Rall intended to make an attack on the city with his own and the von Lossberg regiments, but failed to do it

I Place of repulse and capture of the regiments. In the meantime the von Knyphausen regiment was to have covered the flank

K Where the von Knyphausen regiment, which sought to hold possession of the bridge, had the misfortune to have the von Lossberg cannon, which were with them, stick in the morass, and in the work necessary to get them out, lost the opportunity of taking the bridge, which was now too strongly guarded, and they were compelled to surrender

L Von Lossberg cannon

M Von Knyphausen cannon which during the affair did not reach their regiment.

N Rall cannon which were silenced at the beginning of the fight

O Attack of the rebels from the woods

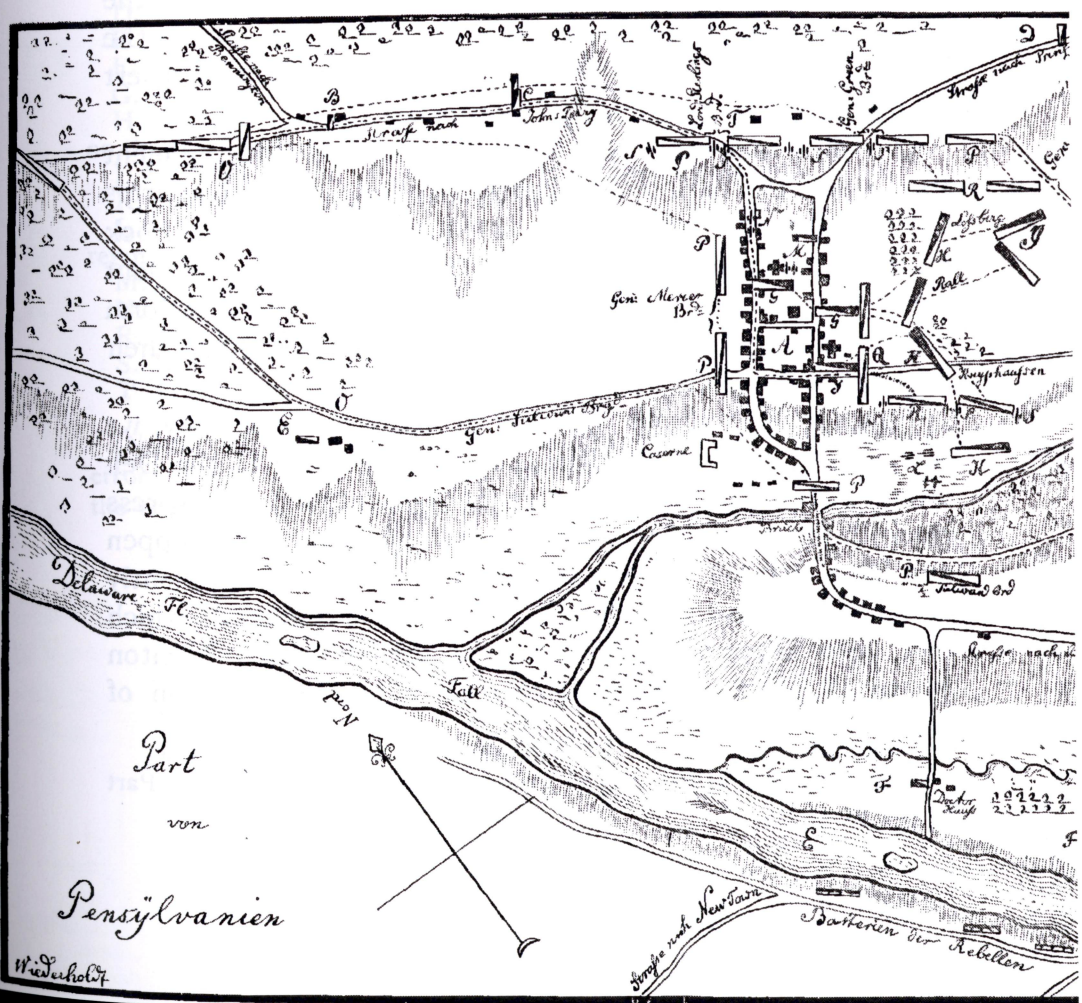
P Advance and surrounding of the city by the same force

Q Two battalions of the same force which pressed on toward the von Knyphausen regiment.

R Last manœuvre and attack of the same force

S Rebel cannon

T Place where General Washington stood and gave his orders


Part
von
Pensylvanien
Delaware Fl.
Fall
N
Wiederholdt

readily traced [1] Another map of the same general character was prepared by Lieutenant Andreas Wiederhold [2] of the von Knyphausen regiment, the officer who commanded the Pennington road picket on Christmas night; and a third, differing slightly from the other two, was made by Lieutenant Friedrich Fischer [3] of the Hessian artillery All of these maps will be of interest to those who are familiar with the streets of Trenton as they are to-day, and their authenticity is proven by the fairly accurate position of the English Church, the Presbyterian Church, the barracks, and the Assunpink Creek [4]

Still another map of the same general character may be found in the "Collections of the New York Historical Society" for the year 1882, facing page 200 This map was "copied in the month of January, 1781, in North America and on York Island," by Lieutenant Carl von Kraft of the Hessian regiment von Bose As this officer was not at the battle of Trenton, it has been thought unnecessary to insert herein a copy of his map

On Christmas night the Rall regiment was the regiment "*du jour*," the regiment to remain on duty and under arms for twenty-four hours or until the parade at eleven o'clock on the morning of December 26. The men of this regiment were not allowed to take off any portion of their uniform clothing at night, and were only permitted to unbutton their leggings and lay aside their cartouches

Again looking across the river at the American army, we refer to the last hours before the actual crossing of the Delaware River. General Washington dispatched an express rider to the hospital at Bethlehem to summon Dr. Shippen and his assistants to join the army at once He evidently anticipated a severe conflict Some of the regiments which had been assigned to take part in the attack on Trenton began to march at about two o'clock in the afternoon of

[1] See p 124 [2] See p. 126. [3] See p 128

[4] For personnel of outposts of Trenton, December 24, 1776, see Part II No 55

LIEUTENANT FISCHER'S MAP

Battle of Trenton, December 26, 1776, between American Provincial troops under the command of General Washington, and three regiments of Hessians under the command of Colonel Rall, where a part of the latter force was compelled to surrender as prisoners of war.

EXPLANATION.

A. Advance of the provincial troops from John's [the American force did not cross at Johnson's, but at McKonkey's] Ferry in two columns.

B. Advance on picket a and Captain von Altenbockum's company b

C. Attack on Trenton after the retreat of the picket and Captain von Altenbockum's company, and also the captain s picket c, to Trenton.

D. March of the provincial troops in battalion formation

E. March of the Hessian regiments after leaving Trenton

F. Attack of the von Lossberg and Rall regiments on Trenton.

G. Provincial troops guarding the bridge

H Retreat of the von Knyphausen regiment at the time of the attack on the von Lossberg and Rall regiments

J Surrender of the von Lossberg and Rall regiments

K. Attack on J by the provincial troops

L Attack on H after the surrender of the von Lossberg and Rall regiments

M. Provincial artillery

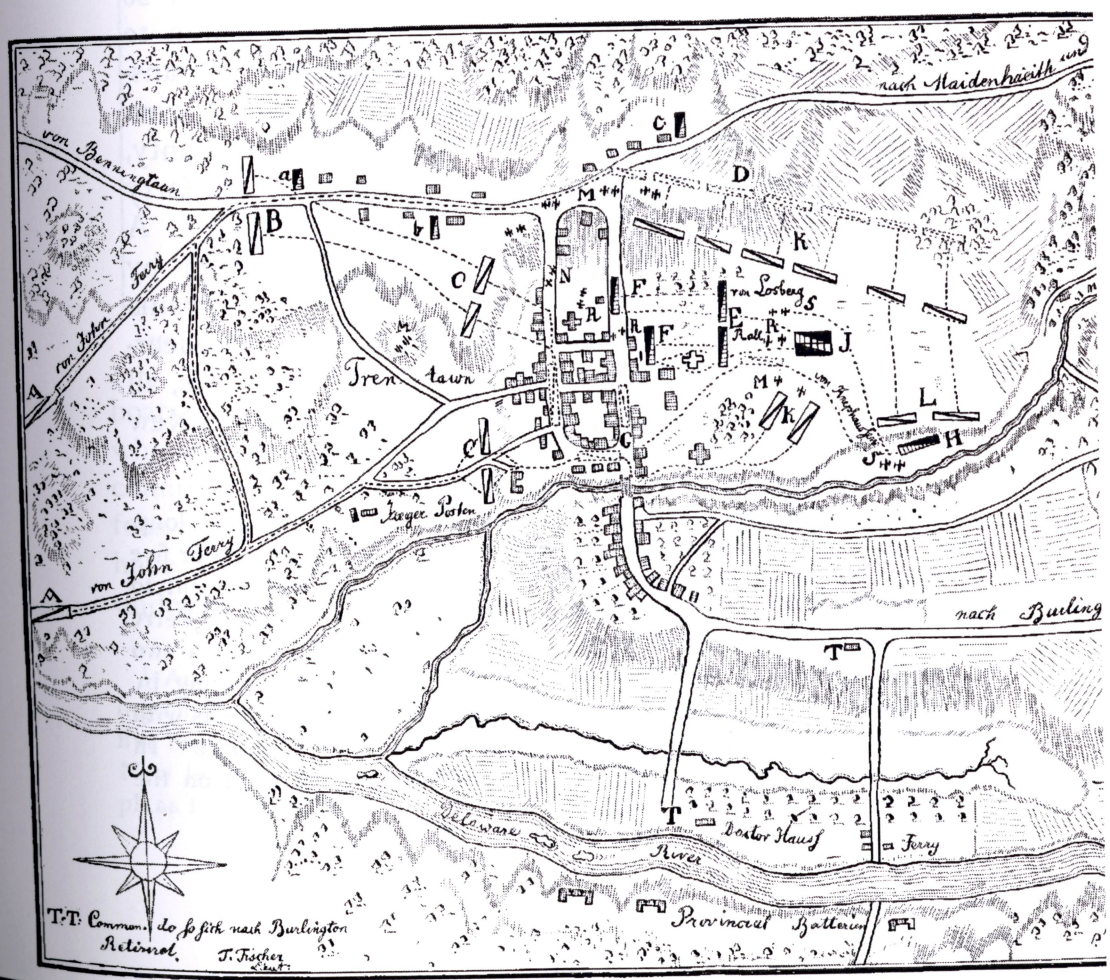
N. Rall cannon which were at once silenced

R. Von Knyphausen cannon

S. Von Lossberg cannon.

T Commands which retreated to Burlington

(NOTE This map, in some particulars the best of the series, has one error There was no church near the creek, in the line of march of the von Knyphausen regiment, near K.)


nach Maidenhaeith und
von Benningtaun
von John Ferry
Trentawn
von Losberg
Rall
von Knyphausen
Jaeger Posten
von John Ferry
nach Burling
Delaware River
Doctor Hauss
Ferry
Provincial Batterien
T.T. Commen. do so sich nach Burlington
Retirirt.
T. Fischer
Lieut.

Christmas day, and by three o'clock all of the troops ordered on this expedition were in motion toward the river General Washington gave orders that the watch of every officer should be set by his own. Speaking of his men on that day, he said, "Many of our poor soldiers are quite barefoot and ill-clad," and Major Wilkinson tells us in his "Memoirs"[1] that their "route was easily traced, as there was a little snow on the ground, which was tinged here and there with blood from the feet of the men who wore broken shoes" Each man was provided with three days' cooked rations and forty rounds of ammunition, and the troops were therefore ready to push on and follow up any advantage that they might gain, if such a course were deemed prudent

It was confidently expected that all the infantry, and a few companies of cavalry and artillery, with eighteen cannon and howitzers, might be ferried over by midnight, and so have the five hours until daybreak in which to march to Trenton The Durham boat was the ordinary means of transporting merchandise on the Delaware River, and of even sending iron ore from Oxford Furnace, in old Sussex County, New Jersey, to the market at Philadelphia during the forty years before and after the beginning of this century[2] A number of these boats had been carefully collected by men employed by Colonel Humpton of the Pennsylvania Continental line For the last ten days Captain Jacob Gearhart, Captain Daniel Bray and Captain Thomas Jones, all officers of the Second regiment, Hunterdon County, New

[1] Vol. i p 127

[2] These boats were like large canoes, some thirty or forty feet long, usually painted black pointed at each end, and manned by four or five boatmen A steering oar adjustable at either end gave employment to one man on the down stream trip, which was from Robeson's Ferry wharf near the Furnace to the city of Philadelphia This was a two days' journey, but it took at least five days of hard pole pushing by four men to get it back again to the ferry wharf, loaded as it was with provisions for men living near the upper waters of the Delaware In revolutionary days there were about forty of this kind of craft on the river

Jersey militia, had been busily employed in gathering all the boats of every kind on the upper waters of the Delaware and Lehigh rivers, and hiding them, with those previously collected, behind the thick woods on Malta Island, close to the west bank and at the mouth of Knowles's Creek, where they were entirely hidden from the Jersey shore. These boats had been kept under careful guard, and were now brought down some two miles to McKonkey's Ferry, the selected place for the crossing.[1]

All day Monday and Tuesday the Delaware River was clear of ice, but before noon on Wednesday, the 25th, it was full of floating cakes of ice, not very thick, however, from some of its upper branches, which had been frozen by the intense cold of December 20. The current was swift and dangerous, and the weather cheerless and cold.



MAJOR-GENERAL HORATIO GATES

As soon as it became dark, the troops came down to the river bank, ready to pass over. General Washington, who was on horseback, eagerly watched the boats, as they pushed off one by one freighted with men who were to strike a desperate blow for the liberty of their country, or receive a crushing defeat from their hireling foes. Some deep, all-pervading spirit of patriotism must have burned in the breasts of these men to have made them undergo the sufferings of that awful night. Their devotion

[1] An affidavit of John Clifford on file in the War Department, Washington, D. C., states that he assisted Captain Bray in gathering twenty-five boats, and that the party met at Baptisttown, Hunterdon County, New Jersey, about three miles from the Delaware River, to make their plans for that object.

in that hour to an almost hopeless cause appears now to the student of history as sublime. It was with some impatience that Washington read a few lines from General Gates, who had reported himself sick, but, as his aide, Major Wilkinson, confessed, was even then on his way to Congress at Baltimore to intrigue in his own favor and against his chief, instead of having assumed the command at Bristol. General Washington had entreated him to take charge of this post, saying, "if you could only stay there two or three days, I



MONUMENT AT TAYLORSVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA[1]

should be glad," but the entreaty was of no avail. General Gates had evidently lost some of his faith in the cause, and was willing to absent himself from the post of duty, of danger, and of honor.

[1] This monument bears the following inscription: "Near this spot Washington crossed the Delaware on Christmas night, 1776, the eve of the battle of Trenton."

Before crossing the river, General Washington wrote to Colonel Cadwalader at Bristol: —

McKonkey's Ferry 25th Decemr 1776
Six o'clock P. M.

Dear Sir:

Notwithstanding the discouraging Accounts I have received from Col. Reed of what might be expected from the Operations below, I am determined, as the Night is favour-



COLONEL JOHN GLOVER

able, to cross the River and make the attack upon Trenton in the Morning, If you can do nothing real, at least create as great a diversion as possible.

I am Sir
Yr. most obt Servt
Go Washington.

Col. Cadwalader[1]

[1] From original in possession of Charles E. Cadwalader of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.



JOHN RUSSELL, PRIVATE IN COLONEL GLOVER'S REGIMENT

The jagged ice floated swiftly by, and struck the boats so severely that they could be handled only with the greatest difficulty. About eleven o'clock a severe storm of mingled snow and hail set in, and with the high wind rendered it a dark, cold and dismal night. Thomas Rodney writes: "It was as severe a night as I ever saw. The frost was sharp, the current difficult to stem, the ice increasing, the wind high, and at eleven it began to snow. It was only with the greatest care and labor that the horses and the artillery could be ferried over the river." Had not Colonel John

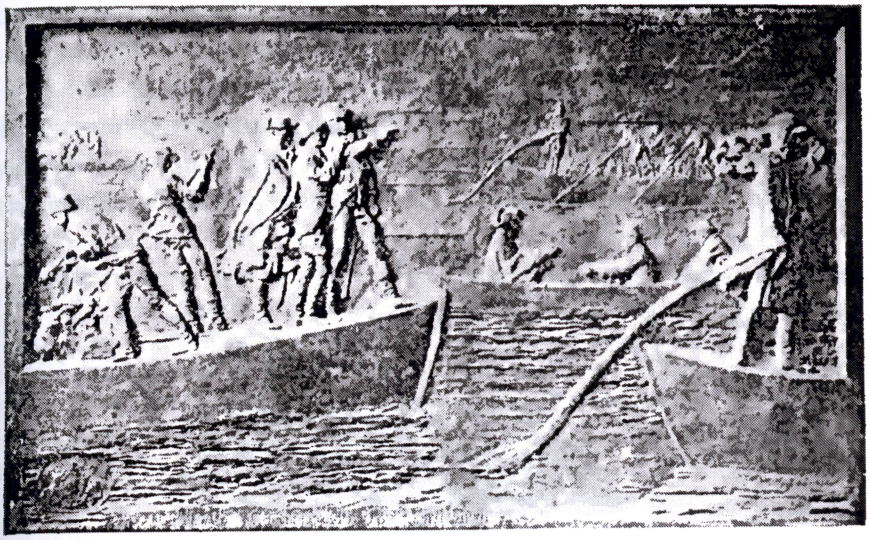
Glover's splendid regiment of seafaring men from Marblehead, Massachusetts, lent a willing and skillful hand, as he had promised they would, the expedition would no doubt have failed These sailors and fishermen, armed with rifles, clad in blue round-jackets and trousers with large leather buttons attached, were then, as they had been in New York harbor early in the morning of August 30, when the retreat was made from Long Island, the men on whom all relied to see the army safely landed.[1]

Soon after Stephen's brigade had reached the left bank of the river, and had formed a chain of sentries around the landing-place, Washington dismounted, and with his lieutenants around him crossed to the Jersey shore This scene has been immortalized by the famous picture of Emanuel Leutze, so full of vigor and animation, but so faulty, so very inaccurate in detail. Captain John Blunt of Portsmouth, who had sailed in and out of all the harbors on the coast between

[1] From Lorenzo Sabine's report on the fisheries we take the following extract of a speech made by General Knox in the legislature of Massachusetts and in which the conduct of these men is faithfully depicted 'Sir! I wish the members of this body knew the people of Marblehead as well as I do I could wish they had stood on the banks of the Delaware river in 1776 in that bitter night when the Commander-in-Chief had drawn up his little army to cross it, and had seen the powerful current bearing onward the floating masses of ice, which threatened destruction to whosoever should venture upon its bosom I wish that when this occurrence threatened to defeat the enterprise they could have heard that distinguished warriour demand, 'Who will lead us on?' and seen the men of Marblehead and Marblehead alone, stand forward to lead the army along the perilous path to unfading glories and honours in the achievements of Trenton There, Sir went the fishermen of Marblehead alike at home upon land or water, alike ardent patriotic and unflinching whenever they unfurled the flag of the country" Alexander Graydon, in his *Memoirs*, refers to this regiment in the following words 'There was an appearance of discipline in this corps the officers seemed to have mixed with the world and to understand what belonged to their stations Though deficient, perhaps in polish, it possessed an apparent aptitude for the purpose of its institution and gave a confidence that myriads of its meek and lowly brethren were incompetent to inspire"



WASHINGTON CROSSING THE DELAWARE



THE CONTINENTAL ARMY CROSSING THE DELAWARE

Bronze Tablet on the Trenton Battle Monument

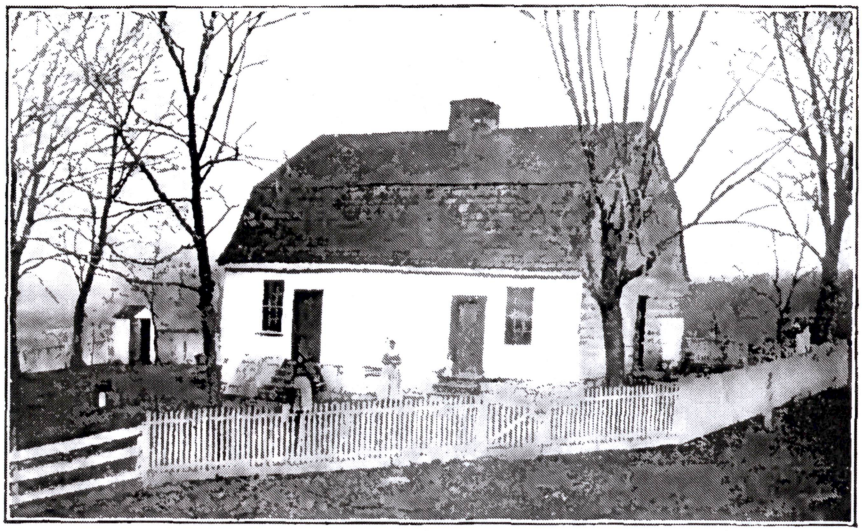
Portsmouth and Philadelphia, and who was familiar with the navigation of the Delaware River, was very active and conspicuous in guiding the boats so preciously freighted. Lieutenant Cuthbert of Captain Moulder's battery of Philadelphia also ably assisted him.[1]

Colonel Knox, the artillerist, stood on the river bank, repeating General Washington's orders as long as they remained on the Pennsylvania shore, and amid all the storm and darkness his powerful voice rang out, directing the move-

[1] Captain Blunt was a shipmaster, born in New Castle, New Hampshire; and in April, 1775, when about forty years of age, he commanded the schooner Cornucopia, which sailed from Portsmouth, New Hampshire, for Alexandria, Virginia, and continued to trade during the rest of that year with other ports in Virginia and on the Delaware River. After the return of his vessel to Portsmouth in the spring of 1776 it is thought that he attached himself to Colonel Glover's marine regiment, about the time when the colonel was the agent for the Continental armed vessels, of which Portsmouth, Marblehead and New Castle furnished a considerable number. He came from the same section of New Hampshire as General Sullivan, and no doubt that officer knew the value of his services at this critical hour.

ments of the boats. It is difficult to estimate the important service which he thus gave toward the success of the enterprise.[1]

All the officers with General Washington were gloomy and despondent, as they crossed the river, but he for once indulged in a little pleasantry at the expense of Colonel Knox,



HOUSE AT WASHINGTON'S CROSSING

which greatly amused that officer, and put the rest of the officers in the best of humor when the story was told them.

After crossing the river, and before his horse had reached him, General Washington, seated on a box once used as a beehive, was silent, undisturbed, his mind filled with anxious thought, with high resolve, with desperate earnestness, and,

[1] We find that Samuel Breck, in his *Recollections*, uses these words, when speaking of Colonel Knox: "His voice was a deep bass and resounded through the camp, when exercising the artillery of which he was general, in tones of audible command. When on the left bank of the Delaware, as represented in Sully's historical picture of the passage of that river on Christmas day, preparatory to the attack on Trenton, his stentorian voice was heard above the crash of ice which filled the river with floating cakes and very much embarrassed the boats that were conveying the army."

it has been said, with a clear determination to win a victory or die in the attempt [1]

It was expected that before midnight the force would be over the river, not a thousand feet wide at that place, but for nine weary hours they toiled and struggled resolutely with the floating ice cakes, and it was after three o'clock before the last man reached the shore of New Jersey [2]

[1] In a work entitled *The History of the British Empire from the Year 1765 to the End of 1783*, edited by a society of Gentlemen, Philadelphia 1798, we find the doubtful statement that before the attack General Washington animated his men by this speech "My friends, it is not only the liberty of America that depends on your valour and firmness, but what ought to be much more dear to you than your lives, your honour! Think of the infamy which will attend you through life, not only here, but through the whole world, if the campaign closes without some instance that the courage with which you stand to your arms is equal to the justice of the cause which ought to animate your bosoms For my own part I will not survive a defeat if that defeat arises from any inattention to your safety Wipe out the stains which have been thrown upon your reputations by seeking an honourable death and give credit to me, that it will be the only means of meeting victory, life and honour"

[2] Tradition gives us the names of some of the prominent men of Hopewell Township, Hunterdon County New Jersey who did good service on that eventful night. Among these were Major Joseph Phillips, a detachment of whose First regiment, Hunterdon County militia under command of Colonel Isaac Smith, had joined the army when they passed through Trenton the adjutant of the regiment Elias Phillips John Phillips afterward a captain in the regiment, Captain John Mott, formerly of the same organization but then recruiting for the New Jersey Continental line Philip Phillips, who afterward became a captain and then major of the regiment. John Muirheid, John Guild Henry Simmons and William Green, of Captain Henry Phillips's company. Amos Scudder, afterward an ensign Ephraim Woolsey, Stephen Burroughs, Edon Burroughs, Joseph Inslee, Uriah Slack and David Lanning, of Captain John Mott's old company of the First regiment of Hunterdon County militia, and James Slack of Makefield Township, Bucks County Pennsylvania who was a boatman on the river.

Some of these men helped at the crossing, and all marched with the army to Trenton some as guides and others, in plain farmers' clothes as scouts going well in advance to spy out the state of the picket-guard One of these patriots David Lanning, a miller, had but a few days

It was almost four o'clock on Thursday morning when the army was formed for its march from the Eight Mile or McKonkey's Ferry to Trenton; but at last, when the chain of sentries placed by General Stephen around the landing-place had been called in, the order was given to "shoulder your firelocks," the weary tramp in cold and sleet commenced, and

> "Our gallant troops, with bayonets fix'd,
> To Trenton marched away."

Instructions had been given to the men to march quietly, keep in good order in the ranks, give prompt obedience to their officers, and to bear in mind the emphatic password, "Victory or Death."



AMOS SCUDDER

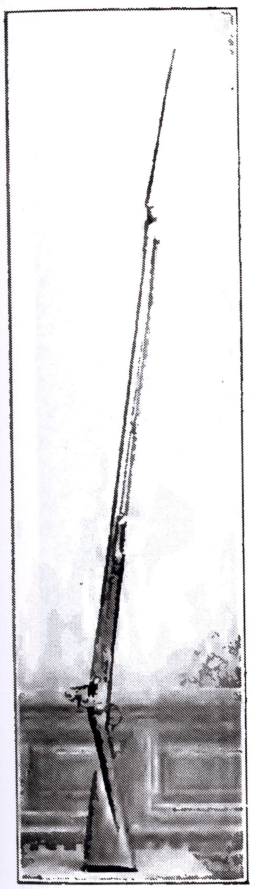
Although still dark, it was feared that the loyalists in the vicinity would betray them. We have seen that these fears were well founded, but the officious labors of the Tory farmer were of no avail.

It was a cold and cheerless morning. The ground was still covered with snow, and at times a storm of hail annoyed them; the wind was east-northeast, and this made the storm

before been taken prisoner by a Hessian party and confined in Trenton at the house on Tucker's corner, the southwest corner of Queen and Second streets; but he had escaped, and on Christmas morning, after being concealed in the very house which Colonel Rall had made his headquarters, he had assumed the character of an old woodman, with an axe on his shoulder, and had passed from the house beyond the guards and so up the river to give efficient aid to the patriot cause.

beat, at least during a part of the march, rather more on the backs than in the faces of the men. The slippery condition of the road retarded their progress very much, and the want of proper clothing made their condition pitiable indeed.

The army marched in column from the river to the Bear Tavern, a distance of about a mile, and then, moving silently past the quiet farmhouses and through forests of hickory and black oak on the River road, they came to Birmingham, somewhat more than three miles from the tavern. The general officers frequently spoke to their men, and urged them to retrieve the disasters on Long Island and at Forts Washington and Lee, and the sorrowful retreat through New Jersey.



GUN CARRIED BY AMOS SCUDDER

Before they reached Birmingham, Captain John Mott, a gallant officer, who had come from the Northern army with Maxwell and St. Clair to recruit men for the new establishment of the New Jersey Continental line, but who had volunteered to guide the troops on a road on which he himself lived, being armed with a fusee, and walking in advance of the line, found that his priming powder was damp, although he had covered it with his handkerchief. He mentioned the fact to General Sullivan, who, finding that all the arms were in more or less the same condition, called out, "Well, boys, we must fight them with the bayonet!"

When this mishap was announced to General Washington, he sent a similar reply by his aide-de-camp, Lieutenant-Colonel Samuel B. Webb, "Then tell the general to use the bayonet and penetrate into the town; for the town must be taken and I am resolved to take it." The spirited and em-



MONUMENT AT WASHINGTON'S CROSSING, NEW JERSEY

phatic nature of these instructions gave new courage to the troops; they fixed their bayonets without an order, and pressed eagerly on in the march.

At Birmingham, without dismounting from the chestnut sorrel horse which he rode that day, General Washington stopped for a moment, and partook of the hospitality of Benjamin Moore, while the column was halted, and the men made a hasty meal. When the order was given to march,

a large number of the soldiers were found asleep by the roadside, and it was with difficulty that they could be aroused.

The column was then broken into two divisions, which marched toward Trenton in different directions. Major-General Sullivan's first division, the right wing of the army, consisted of the brigades of Brigadier-General St. Clair, Colonel Glover and Colonel Sargent, with the batteries of Captains Neil, Hugg, Moulder and Sargent. This force went by the lower or River road. Major-General Greene's second

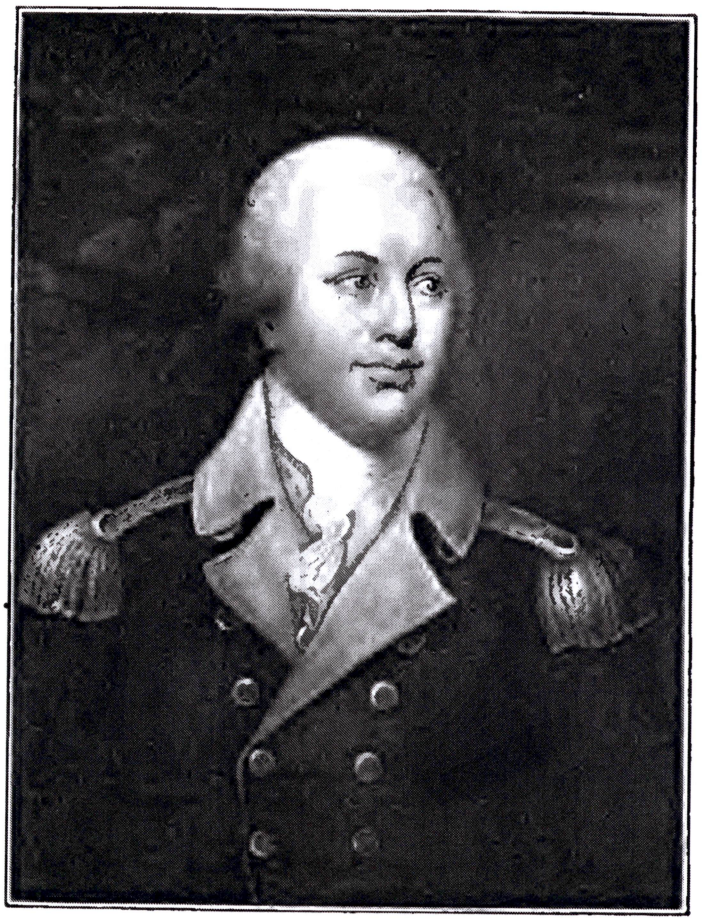


BEAR TAVERN, JACOB'S CREEK, MERCER COUNTY

division, the left wing of the army, consisted of the brigades of Brigadier-Generals Stephen, Mercer, Lord Stirling and de Fermoy, with Captain Morris's Philadelphia troop of light horse, and the batteries of Captains Forrest, Bauman and Hamilton. General Washington accompanied this division, which took the Scotch road, leading into the old road from the village of Pennington to Trenton.

The distance from Birmingham to Trenton by either route was nearly equal, being between four and five miles, with perhaps a little advantage for General Sullivan's division on the River road.

When each column had proceeded about one half of the required distance, the first signs of daylight began to appear,



MAJOR-GENERAL NATHANAEL GREENE

and the plan of a surprise in the darkness was necessarily abandoned. To retreat at this late hour was to draw upon them the Hessian force in strength; but General Washington, as he rode along, seemed wrapped in thought, and ever and anon called to his men, "Press on, press on, boys!"

On the Scotch road General Greene's division was joined by Captain Washington's company, which had been engaged in picking up men approaching or coming from the village, and the column then entered the Pennington road about a mile beyond the village As soon as the town was descried, it is said that General Washington waved his sword, and exclaimed, "There, my brave fellows, are the enemies of your country Remember now what you are about to fight for" In his heart each man responded to the appeal of his chieftain, and at this critical moment the cause of liberty nerved his arm, and inspired him with firmness and courage as he grasped his firelock [1]

[1] In his *Surprise of Trenton* Frank Forester, from whose works we have already quoted, has graphically described the situation —

"Yet his fate was on the cast —
Life and fame and country all
Sterner game was never played
Death or Freedom — win or fall!
Fall he — and his country's hope
Sets, a sun no more to rise!
Win he — and her dawning light
Yet may fill the untathomed skies!
Fall he — and his name must wane,
Rebel chief of rebel band,
Win he — it shall live forever
Father of his native land!"

X

We will now glance for a moment at Trenton just before the attack At four o'clock in the morning, December 26, Lieutenant Fischer of the artillery, as was his custom, ordered the horses to be attached to two of the brass guns in front of the quarters of the watch-guard on King street, and directed bombardiers Geschwine and Schwindder to report to Colonel Rall that they were ready to make the early morning patrol to the "Doctor House," near the Trenton landing Colonel Rall was asleep, but his adjutant, Lieutenant Piel, told them to go to Major von Dechow's quarters and get his orders, as he was the field officer on duty This they did, but presently returned to Lieutenant Fischer with Major von Dechow's reply that the duty would be omitted for that morning The horses were then unhitched and placed in stables Lieutenant-Colonel Scheffer afterward testified that he was uncertain whether Major von Dechow acted by Colonel Rall's orders or not Had the artillery detachment made this early morning parade, they might have noticed the excitement incident to the attempt of General Ewing's force to cross the river, and it might have created an alarm in Trenton's village

It had been the custom of the yagers at the Dickinson house to make early morning patrols with twenty or thirty men, and usually a few English light horse, as far as Johnson's Ferry, about four miles above Trenton. Only a few days previous Lieutenant von Grothausen had made this march and had encountered, as he said, one hundred and fifty Americans, had killed one of their horses and captured one of the men The only semblance of a patrol on December 26 was made about five o'clock in the morning by three yagers, who went as far up the river as the house of Captain



RICHARD HOWELL'S COOPER-SHOP

John Mott of the New Jersey Continental line, — the "rebel captain's house," as the German records call it, now on ground owned by the New Jersey Hospital for the Insane, on the west bank of the water power. They returned with the report that they had not seen any of the enemy. An hour later and a march a mile farther would probably have changed the condition of affairs in Trenton at eight o'clock, and Washington would have found a foe ready to receive him. Every night this picket at the Dickinson house was reinforced by six or nine additional guards, but these men were always withdrawn at six o'clock. In case of an alarm the entire picket was directed to fall back to Colonel Rall's quarters in the village and await further orders.

At about a quarter of eight o'clock the advance party of the Americans came in sight of the Hessian picket post on the Pennington road. This post was at the house of Richard Howell and his son Arthur, both coopers by trade. The Germans called it an alarm-house, and when the guard occupied the building it was their custom to stack their arms at the door and leave a few sentinels in charge of them.

It will be remembered that on the previous night Lieutenant Wiederhold had strengthened this picket with nine men, and that on his arrival his rank had placed him in command of the party. From his diary it appears that he had posted seven sentinels in the best possible positions against surprise, and during the night had sent out patrol after patrol to guard himself against an attack. His night posts had evidently been withdrawn, and he says that his day patrol had reported all quiet. Just at this moment he stepped out of the house, and through the edge of the woods saw the enemy approaching. His men, as he subsequently acknowledged, had not been sufficiently alert, but he made instant preparation for what he at first thought to be a stray party of the Americans. It seemed to him there were about sixty men in sight, most of them being about two hundred yards away. Lieutenant Wiederhold's sentinels challenged the American party, and David Lanning, the miller, before mentioned, being in the advance, answered the challenge, and unequivocally declared himself a friend to Washington. The guards then came running from the house, shouting "Der Feind! Der Feind! heraus! heraus!" ("The enemy! The enemy! Turn out! Turn out!")

The Americans fired three times at the picket; but Lieutenant Wiederhold, thinking that they were still too far away, waited until they approached nearer, and then gave them a volley. The picket then began immediately to retire on their left, not by the roadway, but more across the fields toward Colonel Rall's quarters. They had not retreated far in this direction before they observed an American battalion and then three regiments coming in on their right, and cutting them off. This was General Mercer's brigade of Continentals. Seeing this unexpected force, the picket hastily ran toward Captain Ernst Eber von Altenbockum's quarters, the house of Alexander Calhoun, at the head of the street now called by his name. Captain von Altenbockum's company was by this time under arms and on the road, and Lieutenant Wiederhold and his men placed themselves immediately on

von Altenbockum's right wing, and prepared to make a stand against the approaching foe. They had barely time to fire a volley; they were nearly surrounded, and were obliged to retreat very hurriedly.

Then some of the main picket on the Maidenhead road, commanded by Ensign Gräbe of the von Lossberg regiment, Captain Brubach of the Rall regiment also accompanying them, hurried across the open meadows toward Captain von Altenbockum's quarters for the purpose of giving efficient aid in this emergency; but they were still five hundred paces from Alexander Calhoun's house when they found



ALEXANDER CALHOUN'S HOUSE

that both the picket and the company were falling back on them in much haste. According to instructions previously given, the brigade of General Stephen had charged with great spirit upon the retreating outpost, determined to push so rapidly into the village as to leave the Hessians, if possible, no time to form.



BLAIR MCCLENACHAN, PRIVATE PHILADELPHIA TROOP OF LIGHT HORSE

In the retreat down the Pennington road Captain von Altenbockum lost his lieutenant and one of his company, both killed before they had gone fifty paces from their quarters. A sergeant and several enlisted men were severely wounded before they reached the junction of the roads, just north of the village. Lieutenant Georg Christian Kimm of the von Lossberg regiment, who fell thus early in the engagement, was a fine officer but eighteen years of age. The rush of the Americans placed them in possession of the dying man, who lay by the wayside. The kindly heart of

the honest soldier, Captain Samuel Morris, commander of the Philadelphia troop of light horse, was touched at his sad fate, and he would fain have attempted to relieve in some way the sufferings of his fallen foe. But this was no time



CAPTAIN SAMUEL MORRIS

for sympathy. The sharp order of General Greene recalled him to his duty, and the American column pushed on.

It was nearly eight o'clock when General Greene's division forced the upper picket station, and three minutes later General Sullivan's troops, which had previously made a brief halt at the cross-road leading to Howell's Ferry for the purpose of allowing the division on the upper road to gain time, struck the yager picket, consisting of one officer and fifty men, at "The Hermitage," the residence of General Philemon Dickinson, on the River road, just on the outskirts of Trenton.

Marching in advance of General Sullivan's column, Captain John Flahaven, a gallant and ambitious officer of the

First battalion, New Jersey Continental line, with a detachment of forty recruits for the new establishment, first came upon this picket station, and drove it in, Colonel Glover's brigade following up in pursuit of the retreating guards.

As soon as Lieutenant Friedrich Wilhelm von Grothausen of the Hessian yagers heard the firing on the Pennington road, and even before he saw the Americans coming out of the woods on the west side of Colonel Lambert Cadwalader's plantation, he called Sergeant Georg Wilhelm Hassell and twelve of the guard to arms, and began to run toward the Pennington road alarm-house. Corporal Franz Bauer, the other non-commissioned officer, and the rest of the party in great haste posted themselves behind trees and fences to await developments. At the same time ten cannon-shots



"THE HERMITAGE," GENERAL PHILEMON DICKINSON'S HOUSE

were fired at them from General Dickinson's forces on the west bank of the Delaware, but without doing them any harm.

Lieutenant von Grothausen and his detachment had not proceeded a thousand feet across the fields toward the assaulted post on the Pennington road before they heard firing

on their left, and saw another column of troops hastening in a direct line for their own alarm-house at the Dickinson homestead It was apparent to the lieutenant that he must instantly retrace his steps and look after his yagers. This he did, bearing, however, toward the town and the river. In this way he was soon joined by Corporal Bauer and the rest of the command, who had left their knapsacks in the house, and were now hurriedly going toward the barracks By this time, as they said, "the Americans were thick in their front" Coming near the old French and Indian war barracks on Front street, and receiving a few reinforcements, they opened fire on the Continentals One volley was all they could give, for the foe was on them, and as the guns of the yagers had no bayonets, the detachment retreated precipitately through Front street toward the Queen street bridge over the Assunpink Creek Even at this moment they saw the American forces in the town, and knew that in a few minutes more they would be cut off from all communication with Colonel Rall's headquarters They tried to ford the creek at King street, and some succeeded, but most of them ran on toward the bridge, which was still open In the meantime they had received no orders from Colonel Rall In this race one yager was captured, though none were killed or wounded, and the rest of the picket escaped

Both of the Hessian picket parties exerted themselves as much as was possible under the circumstances, but of course they could do but little against such an overwhelming force As they fell back into the town, they fired from every point where the slightest shelter could be found, but were quickly driven "pell-mell," as Colonel Knox said, by the rapid push of the Americans, who seemed to vie with each other in their efforts to be in the advance There appears to be no doubt that the pickets on both roads at first supposed that these attacks were made by the little scouting party of the previous day, and that they had simply returned to make another demonstration on the Hessian post.

We left Captain von Altenbockum and his company, Lieu-

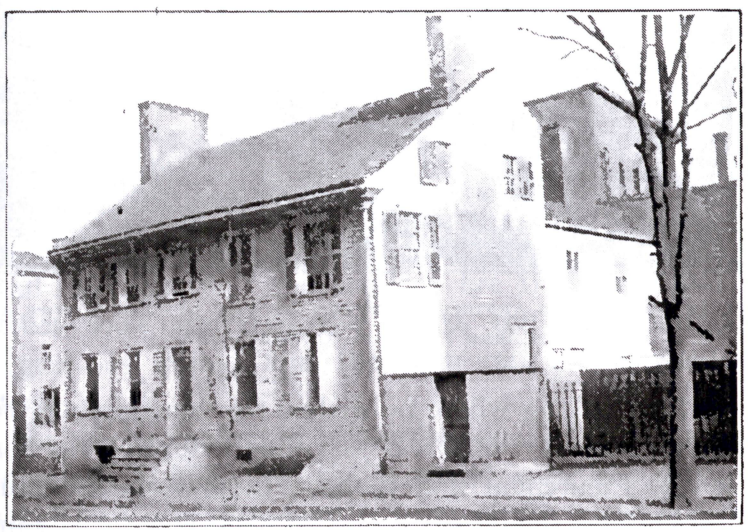


THE BARRACKS, AT THE TIME OF THE BATTLE OF TRENTON

tenant Wiederhold and his picket, and Captain Brubach and Ensign Gräbe and their men of the main guard on the lower part of the Pennington road near King street, still trying to elude the eager pursuit of the American forces. When they reached the head of King and Queen streets, Captain von Altenbockum and his men retired by Queen street; but the rest of the soldiers with Wiederhold and Brubach passed down King street in the direction of Colonel Rall's quarters. In this way the latter party was forced to go into the gardens between the two streets just north of Church alley, and so into Queen street, to escape the direct fire which opened upon them on the roadway.

It has been stated that Lieutenant Jacob Piel of the von Lossberg regiment, Colonel Rall's brigade adjutant, had been awakened soon after five o'clock, and had directed the artillerymen of the grand patrol of the "Doctor House" to go to Major von Dechow for orders. It seems that he did not go to sleep again, for he was the first officer in the village to hear the firing on the Pennington road. His quarters were in the house of Miss Rebecca Coxe, the next house south of Colonel Rall's quarters on King street. Before six o'clock in the morning he was in Rall's room, but found him sleep-

ing heavily. He called again about seven o'clock, but his commander was still asleep. When the firing was heard, he ran across the street to the headquarters watch-guard house, and started Lieutenant Johann Heinrich Sternickel, who was on duty there with thirty men of the guard, and ten others who had come out of their quarters on King street to learn what was the matter, up King street to aid, if possible, the picket post which was attacked. Then Lieutenant Piel knocked loudly at Colonel Rall's door, and soon Rall looked out from an upper window in his night-clothes, and called out to Piel, "What is the matter?" Lieutenant Piel asked him if he had not heard the firing. Without answering this question Colonel Rall said, "I will be out in a minute," and in truth it did not take him long to reach the street. Before



HEADQUARTERS GUARD-HOUSE, CORNER WARREN AND PERRY STREETS

he had stepped out into the roadway, the American shot and shell were being fired down the street.

Lieutenant Piel called also to his comrade, Lieutenant Hermann Zoll, adjutant of his own regiment, who quartered with him in the Coxe house, and Zoll was soon across the street and in the English Church, hurrying into the street

the artillerymen and the Scheffer company of his own regiment, and bringing out the five regimental colors which were kept in the church. Lieutenant-Colonel Scheffer, although he had been quite ill for five days, "got out of a sick bed to fight," and was soon on duty. He sent Lieutenant Zoll to



THE PLACE WHERE THE ARTILLERY OPENED ON THE HESSIAN TROOPS, AS IT APPEARED IN REVOLUTIONARY DAYS

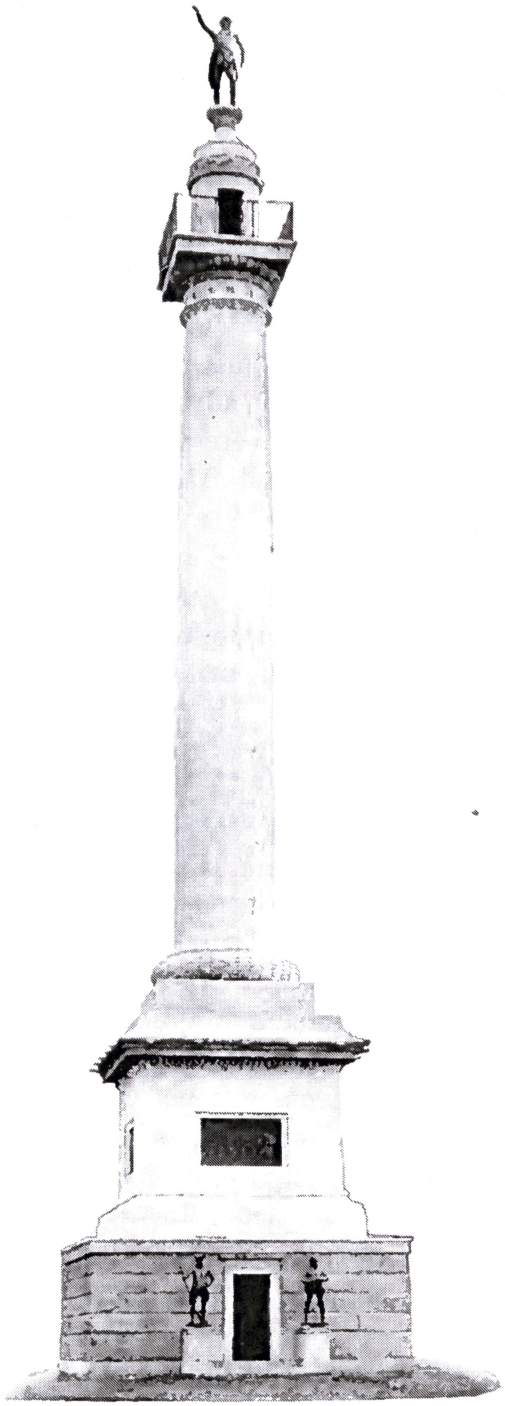
Colonel Rall, asking where he wished the von Lossberg regiment to be formed. Rall was just then mounting his horse, and he told Lieutenant Zoll to have them form on Church alley back of the poplar-trees, and with his hand he pointed to the place in the graveyard behind the English Church. They formed there, facing toward the north and the approaching enemy. Colonel Rall then turned to ride a short distance down King street to where the Rall regiment had been quartered, and was now effecting a formation.

This regiment, as will be remembered, was the regiment "of the day," and so, as was to be expected, at least one half of the command was instantly under arms without any

direct orders from Colonel Rall At that time Lieutenant-Colonel Balthasar Brethauer was in command of the regiment. They formed on King street, facing east, with centre in front of Pinkerton's alley, now East Hanover street. As soon as one of the battalions of the regiment was completed they immediately started up King street, and were soon joined by Colonel Rall, who was riding down to meet them Already the shot from the American batteries was flying down the street and breaking into their ranks They had just taken their flags from Colonel Rall's quarters and had advanced but a few steps beyond the house when they were greeted by a strong fire on their left flank from General Mercer's brigade, coming in from the rear of Potts's tannery, and some sharp musketry fire from the rear of William Tindall's and William Smith's property on Queen street Here Lieutenant-Colonel Brethauer's horse was shot from under him, and he went back to his quarters to get another one, leaving Major Johann Jost Matthaus in command Brethauer had been quite ill for several days and was too weak to walk It does not appear that he took any further part in the fight Lieutenant Sternickel's watch-guard could be seen just ahead of the Rall regiment, but the artillery fire from the head of the street soon scattered the guard, the lieutenant received a grievous wound, and the men ran over toward Queen street.

At this moment Major Matthaus called out to Lieutenant Johannes Engelhardt to go ahead with the two cannon which had been stationed in front of the watch-guard house The horses were already hitched, and Colonel Rall cried out in German to the commander of this section of the battery: "My God, Lieutenant Engelhardt, the picket is already coming in! Push your cannon ahead!" And the drivers shouted as the horses plunged forward. But they did not go far, not over one hundred and fifty feet, on the north side of the bridge over the little stream now called Petty's Run, when the destructive fire of the artillery at the

head of the street reached them, and they were greatly annoyed by marksmen behind the fences which encircled Potts's tanyard. When he left the church Lieutenant Engelhardt had with him his bombardier, Westerburg, and seventeen men, but even in this short time he lost several valuable soldiers. He took charge of one of the Rall guns, and Westerburg of the other. They immediately fired six shots from each cannon, but before this had been accomplished eight of the detachment were killed or wounded, leaving only six effective men with one gun and four with the other. Artillerist Poland and artillerist Rieman were very badly wounded. Artillerist Heutzemann was also wounded, and he afterward died of his wounds a pris-



TRENTON BATTLE MONUMENT

oner of war Two men who had been detached from the Rall regiment for duty with the artillery and two men from the von Lossberg regiment received dangerous wounds Three of the horses on one gun and two on the other had fallen with fatal injuries With the force then available the guns could not be taken off the street Lieutenant Engelhardt sent back to Colonel Rall for protection, and called out to Major Matthaus that he must be sustained or he would lose his guns Matthaus promised that he would furnish support Then Engelhardt ordered Westerburg to put grapeshot in his gun, and the thirteenth shot was fired at the enemy on the other side of the tanyard

In the mean time Colonel Rall had sent down to hurry the rest of the Rall regiment on the advance while he rode to the corner of Church alley and King street to look after the von Lossberg regiment. Many soldiers of the Rall regiment had already gone down King street and through Front street to escape at the bridge. At this moment word was brought him that the von Knyphausen regiment was fully formed on the lower part of Queen street and awaited orders

As soon as the American column reached the place where King and Queen streets intersect, at the north portion of the town, their artillery was placed in position to rake the two principal streets of the village. Colonel Knox, under General Washington's orders, brought up four pieces of the six-gun battery of Captain Thomas Forrest, with the second company of the Pennsylvania State artillery battalion, and gave them the range down Queen street Captain Alexander Hamilton's[1] New York State company of artillery,

[1] The gallant Hamilton not yet of age with his young company formerly known as the Provincial Company of Artillery of New York, was a model of discipline, and promptly answered the order to prepare for action The personal appearance of the young artillerist at this time is fully described in the account given by Mrs Catherine V R Cochrane, his sister-in-law, the youngest daughter of General Schuyler

"A small, lithe figure, instinct with life, erect and steady in gait, a military presence without the intolerable accuracy of a martinet, and

then with the reserve, was also ordered up with its two guns to this, the highest point in the town, and from here they opened fire down King street [1]

Surrounded by his staff and by his escort, the Philadelphia troop of light horse, General Washington took his position on the high ground on what is now Princeton avenue, opposite Fountain avenue, formerly on the road leading to Nathan Beakes's plantation This spot is now the northwest corner of a lot belonging to John S Chambers, Esq From this advantageous position he was able to overlook the town and direct the movements of his troops The few scattered dwellings were but little hindrance to his quick perception of his own position and his keen observation of the movements

his general address was graceful and nervous, indicating the beauty, energy and activity of his mind A bright, ruddy complexion, light-colored hair; a mouth infinite in expression, its sweet smile being most observable and most spoken of, eyes lustrous with deep meaning and reflection, or glancing with quick canny pleasantry and the whole countenance decidedly Scottish in form and expression."

[1] The Trenton Battle Monument Association has erected in Trenton, New Jersey, a great memorial column to commemorate the victory gained by the Continental troops over the army of Great Britain in the war for independence. It stands at the junction of five streets, and on the exact spot where the American artillery opened on the Hessian foe. The monument is from a design prepared by John H Duncan of New York city, and the style of the column is that known as Roman-Doric The shaft is of white granite from the granite works at Hallowell, Maine. The entire structure is one hundred and fifty feet in height, and is surmounted by a bronze statue of General Washington, by William R O'Donovan of New York city On the base of the monument are three tablets, sculptured by Thomas Eakins of Philadelphia and Karl H Niehaus of New York city, depicting the Continental army crossing the Delaware River, the opening of the fight, and the surrender of the Hessians. The fourth side of the base contains the memorial inscription At the doorway of the monument are two bronze statues, one of private John Russell of Colonel John Glover's Continental regiment from Marblehead Massachusetts, and the other of private Blair McClenachan of the Philadelphia troop of light horse. This monument the outcome of many years of effort by the association, will be found worthy alike of the event it commemorates and of the progress the country has made in the arts

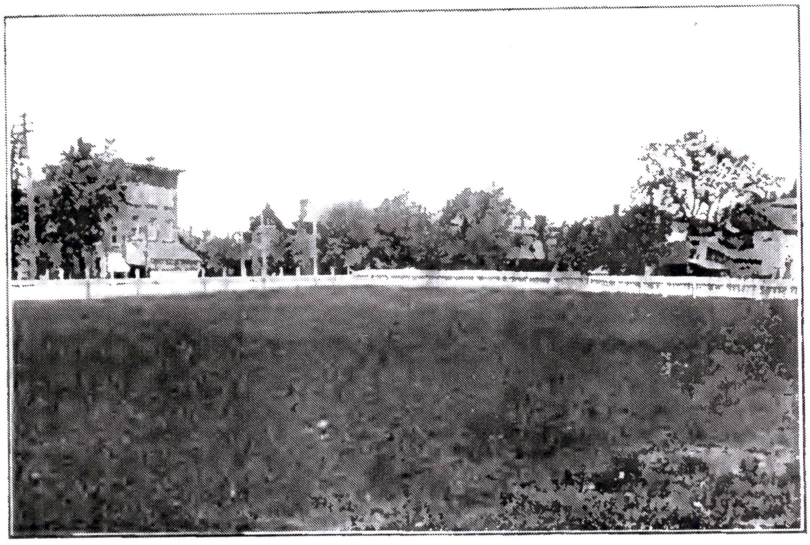
and subsequent consternation of the Hessian foe. There is a tradition in Trenton, which cannot now be verified, that at this spot a bullet struck the chestnut sorrel horse on which General Washington rode that day, and so disabled the animal that another had to be procured for the general, the wounded horse being left in the village for treatment.

It has been stated that the von Lossberg regiment formed



BRONZE STATUE OF GENERAL WASHINGTON ON TOP OF TRENTON BATTLE MONUMENT

in the graveyard back of the English Church. The von Hanstein company of that regiment, which had been quartered on the south side of the Assunpink Creek, having received orders from Captain Friedrich Wilhelm von Benning, came up on a run to the alley near King street, where they took position on the left wing, next to the von Loos



HIGH GROUND WHERE WASHINGTON REMAINED DURING THE BATTLE

company of their own regiment. Just at this moment Lieutenant-Colonel Scheffer, who had received instructions from Colonel Rall, ordered them out of the alley and up King street. They had not made forty steps before the body company on the right wing received a heavy fire of shell from Hamilton's battery at the head of the street. Falling back to escape the fire, they faced the northeast and the woods on the outskirts of the town. Several of the men of the regiment were badly wounded at this time.

The battalion of the Rall regiment which had advanced up King street as far as the little bridge where the Hessian cannon were being fired, delivered two volleys at the Americans and then fell back in much disorder, throwing the left wing of the von Lossberg regiment into great confusion. The flags of the Rall regiment came into the possession and protection of the von Hanstein company of the von Lossberg regiment. The picket of Lieutenant Wiederhold, two of whom had been wounded, though none were killed or captured, also fell back on the von Lossberg regiment. Lieutenant Wiederhold was here accosted by Colonel Rall, whom he told not to underrate the enemy, "for they are

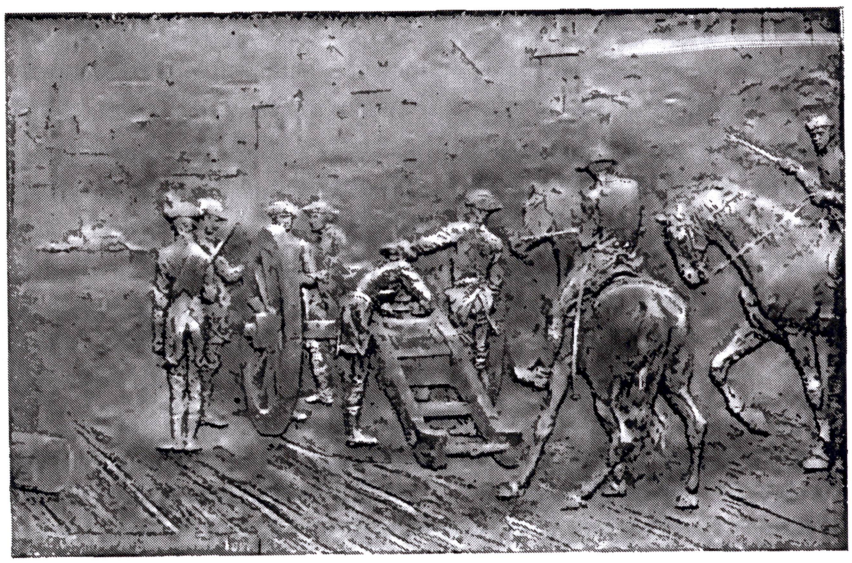
very strong." Wiederhold and his men continued their retreat down Queen street, and eventually joined the von Knyphausen regiment before it left Second street for the creek.

Lieutenant-Colonel Scheffer instantly ordered his von Lossberg regiment to wheel on the right, thus bringing their front obliquely toward the woods, and their back toward the town. Captain Adam Christoph Steding, with the Scheffer company, one half of the von Hanstein company, and part of the body company, then attempted to dislodge some Americans who had come down in the advance on Queen street, taken shelter behind some board fences, and through the apertures were doing great damage as sharpshooters. This effort, however, was ineffectual.

As soon as the Rall battalion gave way, Lieutenant Engelhardt and his artillerists who were still uninjured dropped their rammers, sponges and handspikes and took flight across the gardens toward the corner of Church alley and Queen street. They were powerless and panic-struck. They had gone but forty steps from the "broken-down house," as German records call it, of Richard Norris, a staymaker, on the west side of King street, when the Americans had possession of the two Rall cannon. Lieutenant Engelhardt reported to Colonel Rall, whom he found near the corner referred to, still mounted, sword in hand, and with his men gathered around him in much confusion. He called out, "Colonel Rall, there is yet time to save the cannon." Receiving no answer, he again shouted out the same statement. The colonel seemed greatly bewildered, for by this time he heard the sharp reports of the rifles of General Sullivan's men on his left, and he only said in German, "Lord, Lord, what is it, what is it?" Lieutenant Gregorius Salzmann, who was standing near Colonel Rall, repeated Engelhardt's remark. The colonel replied, "Never mind, we will soon have them back," and shouted, "Forward, men, forward!" but the men did not obey. Then Lieutenant Engelhardt, bombardier Westerburg, bombardier

Ide and the rest of the detachment about them, went through the rear of the houses on King and Queen streets, and beat their way toward the creek. A considerable number of the Rall regiment also ran away down Queen street. Passing across Second street, the lieutenant told Major von Dechow of the von Knyphausen regiment of the loss of the cannon, and as he pushed on, heard the reply, "For God's sake, I understand!" Receiving some shots from an advance party of Colonel Glover's men behind a red board fence between the creek and the house of the loyalist Major John Barnes on the west side of Queen street, they escaped over the stone bridge and thence to Bordentown.

Glancing again at the Americans, we note that as soon as



OPENING OF THE FIGHT

Bronze Tablet on the Trenton Battle Monument

Stephen's brigade, the advance of Greene's division, came to the head of King street, it was dispatched up the Brunswick road to prevent the escape of the Hessians toward Maidenhead. General de Fermoy's brigade followed that of General Stephen under orders to the same effect, and the two brigades formed a strong double line, with their left

on the Assunpink Creek, and thus effectually prevented any flight northward. Lord Stirling's brigade, heretofore the reserve, was now about at the head of King street, and the demoralizing effect of the guns of the American bat-



CAPTAIN WILLIAM WASHINGTON

teries being noticed, an instant charge was ordered. Colonel Weedon's regiment of Stirling's brigade was in the advance, and Captain William Washington of that regiment, with his lieutenant, James Monroe, leading their men, made a quick dash down the street, and, as we have already stated, took the two brass three-pounder guns of the Rall regiment. Both officers were wounded in this exploit, the captain being injured in both hands, and Monroe hit in the shoulder by a ball, which cut an artery. During the war these officers continued to add new lustre to their names.[1]

[1] Captain Washington, afterwards promoted colonel of a cavalry regiment on the Continental establishment, was a soldier of great personal strength and commanding presence, although modest in demeanor. At the battle of Cowpens he distinguished himself "by a brilliant speci-

As Captain von Altenbockum's company retired down Queen street, the shots from Captain Forrest's battery followed fast after them. Hitherto the Hessian captain had given his orders with much presence of mind, and by a proper defense had, as he thought, kept the American column in check to some extent. At this instant he received a severe wound in the head, fell to the ground, and was for a time unconscious. Sergeant Christian Eyssell and fusiliers Heinrich Baude and Heinrich Spier of his company were killed by the same volley. Although Captain Brubach was



LIEUTENANT JAMES MONROE

retiring with this company, Ensign Gräbe, being the second officer of von Altenbockum's company, took immediate command. At last the company came in line on the left wing

men of innate valor," as we are informed by the inscription which Congress ordered placed on a medal presented to him. Lieutenant Monroe, like his great chief, exchanged the duties of a soldier for those of the President of a free republic.

and merged itself into the ranks of its own von Lossberg regiment as this organization was moving away from the village in a northeasterly direction toward the low ground east of Queen street and the head of Dark lane This movement was by Colonel Rall's orders, and he accompanied it for some distance with such of the Rall regiment as had not already escaped On the march an officer of the von Knyphausen regiment saluted Colonel Rall and received orders from him to direct Major von Dechow and his regiment to fall back, if hard pressed, toward the orchard

Lieutenant Friedrich Fischer of the artillery, accompanied by bombardier Conrad Volprecht and about fourteen matrosses, took two of the guns of the von Knyphausen regiment a short distance up Queen street, near the south line of James Linn's property, for the purpose of opposing a charge down Queen street, if one should be made Volprecht was able to fire five shots at the foe, and Lieutenant Fischer discharged the other gun three times One cannon-shot from Captain Forrest's Pennsylvania battery, before General Mercer's charge was made, killed three of the horses of the German artillery detachment. Then one of the guns failed to go off, became useless, and the most reliable gunner in the party was killed This took scarcely ten minutes, and the entire section, guns and men, came very near being surrounded Lieutenant Fischer fired one grapeshot from the other gun, and then, his own horse having been shot from under him, he hurried off with the cannon to join the Rall and von Lossberg regiments, at that moment returning to attack the town Bombardier Volprecht, however, ran down Queen street with some of the matrosses, and joined the artillerymen with the von Lossberg guns, which were attached to the von Knyphausen regiment

The whole town was now in an uproar The Americans were pressing in on every side, deadly shots were being fired from houses and cellars and from behind fences and trees, and it was hard to bring the confused Hessian battalions up to the work. General Sullivan's division was rapidly taking

possession of the southern part of the town. It is said that at this time the soldiers cried, "These are the times that try men's souls," as they pursued the Hessian foe. If this is correct, the stirring words of Thomas Paine were no doubt instrumental in bringing triumph to the American arms.



CAPTAIN THOMAS FORREST

Colonel John Stark's first New Hampshire regiment led the right of St. Clair's brigade, and with Captain Moulder's battery wheeled rapidly at Alexander Chambers's store, on the corner of Second street and the River road, now the corner of Willow and State streets, and as quickly pushed eastward through Second street in the direction of the von Knyphausen regiment, then marching toward them in front of the Bull Head Tavern. "The dauntless Stark," says

Major Wilkinson, in his "Memoirs," "dealt death wherever he found resistance, and broke down all opposition before him" Captain Ebenezer Frye, a very corpulent officer of Stark's regiment, Sergeant Ephraim Stevens and sixteen men of his Derryfield company kept constantly at the front, and, it is said, with his little ragged squad captured sixty Hessians, who were first astonished at the sudden onset, and then still more astounded that they had allowed themselves to be taken by such an insignificant party

The rest of the first division — Colonel Sargent's brigade with Neil's battery, and Glover's brigade with Sargent's Massachusetts battery attached, Major-General Sullivan in person leading this column — marched to Front street, sent a force to take possession of the barracks, and then, in the quickest manner possible ran through Front street to Queen street, hoping to cut off all escape at the bridge over the Assunpink Creek In this they were only partially successful Colonel Glover's brigade, having crossed the bridge, immediately turned to the left and took position on the high ground south of the creek

We left the Rall and the von Lossberg regiments withdrawing from the village on a low, level plot of ground which we can locate without doubt as between what is now Montgomery and Stockton streets, north of Perry street, and commonly known as "The Swamp" The fragment of the Rall regiment had by this time been reduced to some kind of order by the exertions of Ensign Carl Wilhelm Kleinschmidt, the adjutant of the regiment. He secured the flags, which he again posted with the proper company in charge of them Major von Hanstein here asked Colonel Rall what was the next thing to be done. At first it seemed as though the colonel could not come to a decision Von Hanstein said again to Rall, "If you will not let us press forward up this street, then we must retreat to the bridge, otherwise the whole affair will end disastrously." To this Colonel Rall assented

Then the two regiments, by direct command of Lieu-

tenant-Colonel Scheffer, probably in accordance with Colonel Rall's orders, wheeled about and faced the town, the von Lossberg regiment being on the right of the line. From his horse Colonel Rall made every effort to place these two



GENERAL JOHN STARK
In the Capitol at Washington

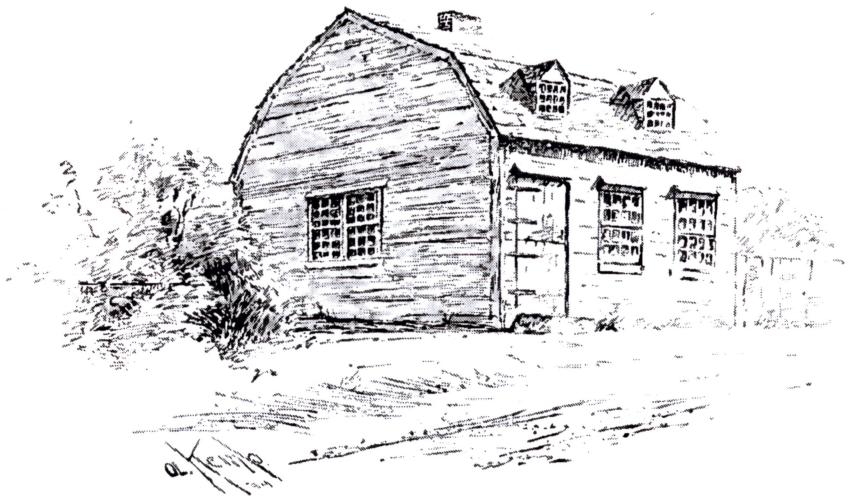
organizations in readiness for a determined attempt to regain the lost ground by making a direct attack on the village. "Forward march!" he cried, "and attack them with the bayonet." As they started again in "good order," so we are told in the German records, the Rall regiment once more fell into confusion from the effects of the sharp firing from the adjacent houses and from Captain Forrest's battery. The

men were now continually falling with grievous wounds and dying in the street, and the officers strenuously striving to preserve intact the formation of these organizations The band of the brigade began to play for the encouragement of the men, and in this way the two regiments at last came back to Queen street below Church alley They found, however, that the houses at this point were full of the enemy, who were shooting them down at every moment About this time Colonel Rall received a slight wound, which annoyed him very much, and he said weakened him, but it did not in any way disable him, nor did he cease urging his soldiers to continue the attack He told Major von Hanstein that he was wounded, but that he did not think it would amount to much Yet he was apparently getting weaker from the loss of blood The von Lossberg regiment had still 199 men in line, and retained some semblance of a fighting organization

The von Knyphausen regiment was all this time struggling on Second street with St Clair's Continental brigade The regiment had formed on Queen street above and below Second street, the flags had been taken out of Major von Dechow's quarters, and then for fifteen minutes they had stood inactive waiting for orders In the mean time Major von Dechow had galloped down to the Assunpink Creek bridge, and had directed Sergeant Johannes Mueller, who was in charge of the guard, to hold out as long as possible, if attacked, and if driven off to report to him At last orders came to the major from Colonel Rall, and the von Dechow company, Lieutenant Nicholas Vaupell and Lieutenant Carl Ludwig von Geyso in charge, was ordered to remain where it was for the purpose of keeping open the passage to the bridge One half of the company faced north, and the other half toward the west The other four companies of the regiment, Captain Ludwig Wilhelm von Lowenstein and his company on the right, then marched along Second street as far as the intersection of King street Here they received a severe fire from the Americans in front of Mr Davies's

house, a building afterwards known as the "General Zebulon Pike house," and they could see the American force coming down King street, even then near Colonel Rall's headquarters. They now retired back to Queen street, where they were thrown into some confusion by the fugitives and stragglers from the Rall regiment, who had escaped through Pinkerton's alley from King street or had run down with Engelhardt's artillerymen from Church alley, and were seeking to escape from the fight by way of the Queen street bridge over the creek.

Some of the men of the Rall and von Lossberg regiments were doing all that the members of such a demoralized force could do to drive back the Americans who were pushing through from King street into Queen street. The smoke of



MR. DAVIES'S HOUSE, SECOND STREET

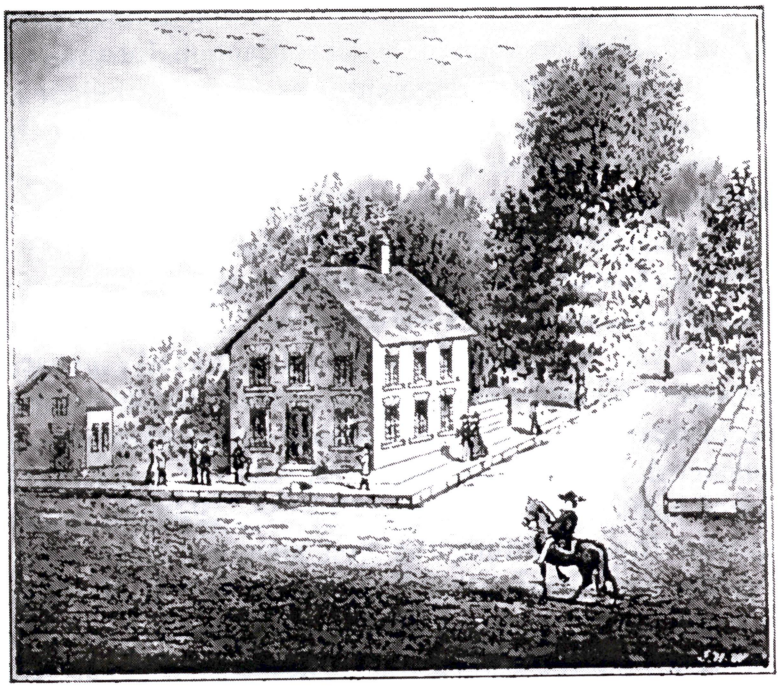
the battle was now enveloping the streets, and, with the storm of sleet, rendered it difficult to discern friend from foe. The Americans were before them, on their right flank, and coming in behind them, and all this time but few of their firelocks would go off. Captain Steding told his company to chip their flints a little, but this had no effect, as the powder in the pan was wet. As they again reached the place where Church alley runs into Queen street, the firing became

more severe, and fourteen men of the von Lossberg regiment were killed or wounded. Here Captain Johann Friedrich von Riess of this regiment was instantly killed He was a brave and gallant officer, and had been exerting himself in the most praiseworthy manner to urge his company to make an effective resistance Lieutenant Georg Christian Kimm was also killed by the side of Captain von Riess

A moment later Lieutenant Ernst Christian Schwabe of the same regiment received a severe wound through the thigh; and as he was being carried behind Isaac Yard's house, he called out to Ensign Friedrich von Zengen to take command of his company, and exhorted the men to fight bravely

Colonel Rall was still on horseback, and his force was gathered around him. Captain Friedrich Wilhelm von Benning, who from the time the first shot had been fired on the picket had been striving most gallantly to do his duty in the von Lossberg regiment, was now instantly killed, and his body lay in the street where he fell Captain Adam Christoph Steding, Lieutenant Wilhelm Christian Muller, Ensign Christian August von Hobe and some of the bravest men of both regiments made a little stand, and fired at the Americans in and through Church alley, desiring to delay and, if possible, to prevent a retreat The two regiments were again much mixed up, although the men were apparently fighting as hard as they could Ensign von Hobe received a spent ball in his leg, and he hobbled off to the frame meeting house of the Methodists, on the corner of Queen and Fourth streets, for protection from further injury Lieutenant Georg Hermann Zoll, the von Lossberg regimental adjutant, also received a severe wound in his spine from a bullet fired from a house by a keen-eyed rifleman, and he lay in the street weltering in his blood. After the battle he was paroled, but he remained in Trenton several months So the stand made by Captain Steding and his men, while it had no effect on the Americans, had caused a loss of fifteen men killed and wounded of his own little party.

Adjutant Jacob Piel here told Colonel Rall that he thought



METHODIST CHURCH, CORNER QUEEN AND FOURTH STREETS

they should retreat to the Assunpink Creek bridge, and Rall sent him to see if they could get through. He went down nearly to Major von Dechow's quarters, not far from the corner of Queen and Second streets, and found that the enemy had full possession of the bridge. As he approached the American force, he mistook them in the storm for the men of the von Knyphausen regiment, and he was within thirty paces of them before he discovered his mistake. He reported to Colonel Rall that it was then too late, and therefore no orders were issued by Rall to escape by this bridge. The Hessian colonel was then shouting to his soldiers, "Alles was meine Grenadiere sind, vorwärts!" ("All who are my grenadiers, forward!") But in vain he urged them to advance. He was then apparently uncertain just what to do, and as the valuable moments flew by, the Americans pressed closer and closer on him. The galling fire of the patriot army was doing great damage among the Hessian

troops The bayonet, on which Rall had boastingly relied, did not now prove effective, while the deadly lead was every moment disposing of his fighting men By this time two cannon of Captain Joseph Moulder's second company of artillery of Philadelphia Associators, attached to General Sullivan's division, had opened up on Queen street from the corner of Second street

According to the statement of Ensign Grabe, an order was then issued by Colonel Rall to retreat out Third and Fourth streets toward the apple orchard. The command had hardly been given before the colonel fell from his horse with two fearful wounds in his side This was directly in front of the house of Isaac Yard, on the west side of Queen street, about two hundred feet north of Pinkerton's alley, now East Hanover street Colonel Rall lay on the ground for a few minutes, and then, leaning on two soldiers, he walked with much pain out of the street and into the Methodist Church, on Queen and Fourth streets [1]

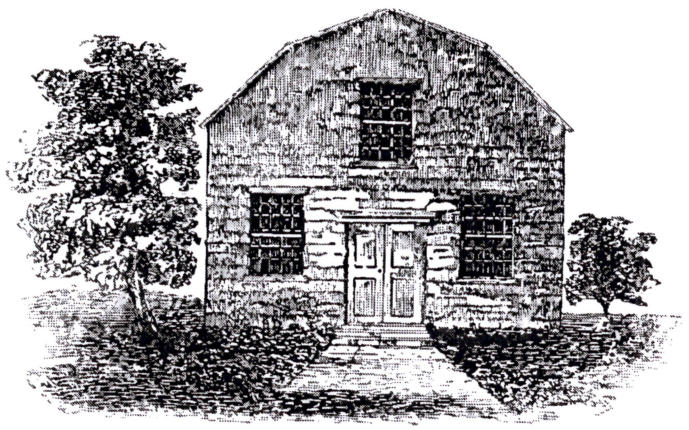
As he was painfully making his way toward the church, Colonel Rall saw Lieutenant Zoll lying near a house, severely wounded, and he asked him if he was injured On receiving an affirmative reply, Rall said, "I pity you" Zoll, however, recovered, but Rall died

The retreat through the two short streets eastward had begun in much confusion, as Major Matthaus of the Rall regiment, hurrying up to Lieutenant-Colonel Scheffer, at the other end of the column, informed him that Colonel Rall was badly wounded Lieutenant-Colonel Scheffer said that the best thing to do now was to break through anywhere and escape Captain Steding and his men were still making

[1] Some histories say that Major Frederick Frelinghuysen of the New Jersey militia fired the shot which injured Colonel Rall It is exceedingly doubtful if such an act could have been verified even at the time, and Major Frelinghuysen, who was an officer on the staff of General Philemon Dickinson, commanding officer of the New Jersey militia, is supposed to have been where his duty required him that day — on the Pennsylvania side of the Delaware River, endeavoring to cross with the division of General Ewing

some futile efforts to keep the Americans in check, and the retreat eastward had begun before he was aware of it. Lieutenant Müller called out to him, "The enemy are on us!" and it was with great difficulty that Captain Steding reached the retreating regiments.

By this time Captain von Altenbockum, who had somewhat recovered from the shock of the bullet which had struck his head, having mounted Colonel Rall's horse, rode after his regiment toward the orchard. He was soon overtaken, however, by an American officer, who carried him to



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, SECOND STREET

what proved to be Lieutenant-Colonel Brethauer's quarters. Here that officer was found quite ill and being bled by a Hessian surgeon.

As the two retreating regiments came near the orchard, Lieutenant-Colonel Scheffer and Majors von Hanstein and Matthaus, the three remaining field officers, held a brief council of war as to what was now to be done. They all agreed that they must immediately make one desperate effort, and if possible break through in the direction of the Brunswick road, or cross one of the upper fords of the Assunpink Creek, and try to reach Princeton. When they came to the place in the orchard where this must be done, if at all, they saw the brigades of General Stephen and General

de Fermoy, with two well-formed fronts and a number of cannon, ready to receive them Instantly these guns began to play on the flanks of the two bewildered regiments They wavered, and fell back fifty paces within the orchard

While all these events were taking place, quite a demoralized party of stragglers from the Rall, von Lossberg and von Knyphausen regiments tried to reach the Queen street bridge, but were caught between the commands of General St Clair and Colonel Sargent, and were taken prisoners on Queen street between Second and Front streets They surrendered in front of what is now Taylor Opera House, and hence this is often erroneously called the place of surrender of the Hessian troops

As Sullivan's division, still pursuing the main body of the von Knyphausen regiment, came near the Presbyterian Church on Second street, a vigorous resistance was made for a few moments by the German troops Here Major Friedrich Ludwig von Dechow, the commander of the regiment, was severely wounded in the left hip, and his horse also being wounded, he was obliged to dismount Then, although suffering greatly, he took his adjutant's horse, and Lieutenant Christian Sobbe having assisted him to mount, the major continued with his regiment down the field and on the edge of the apple orchard, bearing rather more toward the creek than keeping to the road which led through the orchard to Samuel Henry's iron-works. He was soon compelled to dismount again, however, as riding made his wound more painful Another fine officer was wounded near the church, Lieutenant Carl Ludwig von Geyso , his wound was only in the hand, but it caused him much pain The lieutenant also kept on with his company All this time not one gun in twenty would go off on account of the wet weather

The rush of the American brigade on Second street, with the gallant Colonel Stark still leading the light infantry and shouting as he drove the foe, made considerable uproar and kept up the confusion in the town The rally and stand of

the Hessians was soon over, and they were hurried into a field on the edge of the orchard east of what is now Montgomery street and just north of the Assunpink Creek

As the von Knyphausen regiment was retreating to the low ground of the creek, Captain Bernhard von Biesenrodt came up to Major von Dechow and asked him if they should not make an effort to reach the stone bridge They were then receiving some fire from Second street and some from the vicinity of the bridge, but they were unaware of the strength of the force at the latter place

XI

Without having given any definite reply or new orders to Captain von Biesenrodt, Major von Dechow, who had been growing weaker and weaker, gave up the command to him, as next senior officer, on the low ground near the creek. Captain von Biesenrodt immediately formed the regiment with front toward the town, and gave orders for them to march by the left to the bridge, for he was determined to take it and effect an escape at any cost. He soon found, however, that the narrow bridge was strongly guarded and that the Americans had their artillery in position to command it from the heights beyond He then halted the von Knyphausen regiment, wheeled them to the right, took a path along the creek, and again sought the outskirts of the orchard, with the intention of trying to ford the creek somewhere They soon found themselves in a bad position, on low, swampy ground, with a thickly wooded elevation in front of them and a deep and broad creek in their rear The von Borck company was now on the right and the von Dechow company on the left wings of the regiment

The two von Lossberg cannon, which that day were with the von Knyphausen regiment, here became stuck in the marshy ground. Much valuable time was lost in trying to extricate them from this morass, but all efforts were ineffectual, and at last the cannon were abandoned While the Hessians were struggling to recover the guns, the enemy began to fire at them with shot and shell from Captain-Lieutenant Winthrop Sargent's Massachusetts battery across the creek on the high ground to the south

Major von Dechow, who had been leaning against a fence while these movements were taking place, now descried Captain Ludwig Wilhelm von Lowenstein some fifteen

paces away and called to him When that officer came up, von Dechow told him to say to Captain von Biesenrodt that he would better surrender, as it was quite evident to him that the Rall and von Lossberg regiments were about to do so Captain von Lowenstein declared that he would not as long as there were still two ways of escape open "I know," he continued, "that a few steps from where we are it is shallow water in the creek, and we can ford it" Major von Dechow replied: "I order you to tell Captain von Biesenrodt what I have said to you." Then von Lowenstein walked over to Captain von Biesenrodt, gave him the message, to which he received no response, and returned to Major von Dechow That officer was still leaning against the fence when Captain von Lowenstein came to him and reported Captain von Biesenrodt's indifference to his commands Major von Dechow then repeated them, and with the aid of Corporal Kustner he hobbled along Sunderland's alley, now East Front street, toward Queen street The corporal tied a white handkerchief on a spontoon, which he held up as they went together in the direction of Joshua Newbold's house, to give themselves up as prisoners The men of the von Knyphausen regiment were afterward much aggrieved at this action of their commander, because, as they said, by this he gave to the enemy the knowledge of their position, which must have been much hidden by the intervening woods at the time. The corner of Queen and Front streets was then held by Colonel Sargent's brigade, Major-General Sullivan being with them Major von Dechow must have surrendered and given up his sword to General Sullivan as soon as he reached Queen street A strange incident is found in the German records at Marburg, — that General Sullivan took from a Hessian officer the knot of his sword and fastened it to his own If this really happened, this was the time and place of the occurrence, and Major von Dechow was the Hessian whose sword-knot was fastened to the sword of the gallant Sullivan

Captain von Biesenrodt then sent Captain von Lowen-

stein, Staff-Captain Jacob Baum, Lieutenant Nicholas Vaupell, Corporal Heeland of the von Minnigerode company and some few soldiers up the bank of the creek to find a place where a crossing would be feasible They worked through the thick underbrush for some distance until they heard a friendly voice call from the other side of the stream that they were now at the best place for fording. Several battalions of the Americans, the men of Colonel John Glover's brigade, could then be seen on the heights lower down the creek Both Captain von Lowenstein and Lieutenant Vaupell went down into the ice-cold water, sounding its depth with their spontoons, and they soon determined that the passage could be effected Captain Barthold Helfrich von Schimmelpfennig, Lieutenant von Geyso and a number of the men with them soon joined the first party and told them that their regiment was really surrounded and must soon surrender, and that they had determined to take the risk of fording the creek, although the men then trying it were up to their necks in the water and said that the bottom was muddy

All the servants and women attached to the several regiments, with the exception of the few who had escaped over the bridge at the first alarm, had gathered down by the creek with some of the musicians, and a lot of the baggage of the Hessian brigade These men and women made a great noise, attracted much attention and increased the panic and disorder in the von Knyphausen regiment

We left the Rall and von Lossberg regiments within the orchard just east of the Friends' Meeting House on Third, now East Hanover street They could easily see the cordon of excited American soldiers which had encircled them, confident of victory, and the line of guns which had formed a semicircle before them Captain Forrest's six-gun battery had come down from the head of Queen street, and was now ready to fire upon them Behind these guns regiment after regiment stood ready to execute the last order, which certainly would have exterminated them The American

officers then called out to them to throw down their arms and surrender or they would be shot down. Ensign Carl Wilhelm Kleinschmidt, the adjutant of the Rall regiment, had become slightly familiar with the English language, and he interpreted this forcible expression to his comrades. The American line was now within sixty feet of the two German regiments. Lieutenant-Colonel Scheffer called out



FRIENDS' MEETING HOUSE, THIRD STREET

to an American officer who was mounted in front of him, that he believed they would have to surrender. An officer, apparently an aide to a general officer, so the German records read, but more likely Lieutenant-Colonel George Baylor, one of General Washington's aides-de-camp, rode up to the Hessian line, where he was met by Lieutenant-Colonel Scheffer and Major von Hanstein, and after a few moments' conversation they separated, and the two regiments surrendered. Then the ten standards were lowered, the arms

grounded, and the officers placed their hats on the points of their swords and held them up in token of submission Some of the soldiers, however, inwardly raging at this indignity, broke the stocks of their guns against the ground, others cut the straps of their cartridge pouches, and still others, instead of placing their guns in front of them on the ground as they should have done, according to the custom of war, threw them as far as they could into the woods. General Lord Stirling, as the senior officer in the advance, rode forward and received the swords of the officers who had thus surrendered, and placed them in the custody of Colonel Clement Biddle, deputy quartermaster-general

Lieutenant-Colonel Baylor was at this time riding back up Queen street as fast as his horse could carry him, to take the good news to General Washington

While these ceremonies were being performed, the von Knyphausen regiment under Captain von Biesenrodt's orders had sent out Lieutenant Werner von Ferry with a detachment of skirmishers to the high ground in the direction of the rear of William Roscoe's house and the Presbyterian Church, to see if the enemy were approaching, and if possible to cover the regiment while a determined effort was made to cross the creek Then Captain von Biesenrodt, again saying that he would not surrender, gave the order for the regiment to go down to where Captain von Schimmelpfennig and Captain Baum could be seen trying to wade across the creek By this time they could hear the shouting of the Americans, and they knew full well that the other two regiments had surrendered Soon the Continental troops pressed upon the Hessian skirmishers, and they were obliged to retreat, as three cannon were turned upon them

In the mean time Lieutenant Vaupell was well across the creek He had lost his footing several times, but had caught a root of a tree with his spontoon, and so with much difficulty and danger was now nearing the opposite shore He was followed by Captain von Schimmelpfennig and Captain Baum and quite a number of their men, who had all selected

different places at which to ford the stream. Fusileer Conrad Muhling of the von Borck company came near drowning, and was rescued with the greatest difficulty. Lieutenant von Geyso, the wounded officer, left the von Knyphausen regiment when he saw that its capture was inevitable, and made his way across the creek. Three of his soldiers who accompanied him were carried away by the current, and drowned. Some few men who started to go through the chilling waters of the stream, and found it very deep, turned about and rejoined their regiment.

While this attempt was being made, St. Clair's brigade



SURRENDER OF THE HESSIANS

Bronze Tablet on the Trenton Battle Monument

(the records in Germany erroneously refer to it as Stirling's brigade) with Captain Moulder's two cannon were pressing on toward the creek, and soon they faced the right flank of the von Knyphausen regiment. Halting about forty paces distant, they fired a volley at the regiment, but they aimed too high for execution. An American officer, probably Major James Wilkinson (afterward General Wilkinson), who was General St. Clair's aide-de-camp that day, came forward and tried to attract the attention of Captain von Biesenrodt.

The captain shouted to him to stop, or he would shoot him. Lieutenant Wiederhold, the officer who commanded the Pennington road picket, was then sent out to talk with the American officer On his return to the regiment, Wiederhold told Captain von Biesenrodt that the officer had said, in behalf of General St Clair, that they must surrender, as the other two regiments had done Firing was still heard while this interview was taking place, presumably in an attempt to disable the men who were trying to escape over the creek. Lieutenant Wiederhold returned to the American officer, and reported that Captain von Biesenrodt declined to surrender his command The lieutenant was then taken to General St Clair, who insisted that there was nothing further to do, the bridge, the fords, the roads and the passes were all in their hands, and further sacrifice of life was useless "Tell your commanding officer," he added, "that if you do not surrender immediately, I will blow you to pieces Go and bring your commandant here," continued General St Clair, and after a brief interval Captain von Biesenrodt approached, Lieutenant Wiederhold accompanying him as interpreter General St Clair repeated his severe and peremptory threat. Then Captain von Biesenrodt, by this time clearly seeing the perilous situation of his regiment, asked that his officers might keep their swords and baggage, and the under-officers their swords and knapsacks. This was granted, and General St Clair and Captain von Biesenrodt shook hands over the agreement Lieutenant Wiederhold, evidently in a doubting mood, asked if this promise would be carried out strictly, and again General St Clair stated it emphatically The order was then given by Captain von Biesenrodt to march up on the high ground to the right, and there to surrender. For an hour the promise given by General St Clair was kept, but after that the officers were compelled to give up their swords, and the sergeants their swords and knapsacks The next day, however, all the officers were given back their swords by General Washington's order. As the Hessian regiment threw down

their firelocks, the patriot troops tossed their hats in the air, and a great shout resounded through the village, as the surrender was made, and the battle of Trenton closed.

General St. Clair immediately sent Major Wilkinson to report the capture of the von Knyphausen regiment to General Sullivan, and that officer directed him to inform the commander-in-chief. He came up to General Washington as the latter was riding down King street, and Colonel Rall was being carried into his quarters. With some natural elation General Washington pressed the hand of the boyish soldier, and said, "This is a glorious day for our country, Major Wilkinson." And truly it was a glorious day. The first step toward retrieving the ill-fortune had been made, in a few moments a series of disasters had been changed to a glorious victory, and the declaration of independence had been shown to be a reality by the most brilliant action of the war.



MAJOR JAMES WILKINSON

General Sullivan and General Lord Stirling, who but a few months before had become the prisoners of these same Hessian troops, now had the satisfaction of capturing the very soldiers who had taken them at the battle of Long Island.

All this time the snow and rain was beating on the two armies, but especially in the faces of the Hessians. During their march from McKonkey's Ferry the Americans had covered the firing-pans of their guns with some part of their clothing, or kept them dry under their blankets. They were therefore enabled to do effective work, whereas the Hessian guns could not be discharged. Many of the Americans

were expert riflemen, and they had concealed themselves in the houses, where their firearms were preserved from the wet weather; and thus, somewhat screened from the fire of the Hessians, they had from the windows been able to inflict considerable damage on the enemy.

So many Hessian officers had been killed or wounded that the organizations had become greatly disarranged, and it was hard for those who remained to keep the men in the ranks in any kind of military order or discipline.

It would seem that the Americans exaggerated their force



BRIGADIER-GENERAL LORD STIRLING

when they stated its numbers. Lieutenant-Colonel Schefer testified that they told him that General Washington had with him six general officers and 8000 men, with fourteen six-pounders and two howitzers. This was correct if the statement was meant to include his whole army on both sides of the Delaware River, but of course it is well

known that he did not bring 8000 men with him in the attack which he made on Trenton

Opinions differ as to the length of time taken for this battle In examining the German accounts of the surprise, we find that Captain Steding and Lieutenant Schwabe both thought that the attack had lasted one and a half hours, Ensign Hendorff estimated the time as one and three quarter hours, and Lieutenant-Colonel Scheffer, Major von Hanstein, Captain von Altenbockum and Ensign von Hobe were of the opinion that it lasted two hours Captain von Altenbockum and Ensign Hendorff added to this statement that the actual battle was from one half to three quarters of an hour We must then infer that from the time when the picket on the Pennington road was attacked to the time of the ceremony incident to the surrender of the von Knyphausen regiment was between one and a half and two hours Lieutenant Piel, who, it will be remembered, had been awake since five o'clock, said that it was shortly after half past seven when the picket was fired on Lieutenant Muller stated that it was between seven and eight o'clock, and the opinion of Lieutenant Sobbe was that it was eight o'clock We must also infer that the actual fighting, from the time the batteries opened at the head of King and Queen streets, until General St Clair's men had fired their last shots at the Hessian skirmishers, was only from thirty to forty-five minutes

The Hessian soldiers did all that surprised and bewildered men could do. Their irregular defense was entirely futile, when opposed by the irresistible dash and impetuosity of the patriot columns General Washington says, "They did not make any regular stand," and it is owing to the feeble show of resistance and to the desperate charge of the Americans that so few lives were lost in the engagement

On account of the inability of Brigadier-General Ewing's division to cross the river at Trenton Ferry, a number of the soldiers of Rall's brigade escaped and either joined Colonel von Donop's command at Bordentown, or passed to the east

of the village of Trenton, and took the Quaker road, finally reporting to General Leslie at Princeton.[1]

After one of the battalions of the Rall regiment had become demoralized, many of the men had sought safety in flight down Queen street, while some ran down King street and through Pinkerton's alley to Queen street, and some of the other battalion of the Rall regiment pushed down King street and through Front street ahead of the American column, and escaped over the Assunpink bridge A few, a very few, regaining courage, joined the von Knyphausen regiment. Ensign Ludwig Kinen of the Rall regiment, a brother of Lieutenant Kinen of the same organization, arrived in Trenton with his company December 12, but had been too sick to go on daily duty A few days before the battle Colonel Rall had sent him to Bordentown with some baggage, so he was not made a prisoner, and may fairly be numbered among those who were not captured[2]

In reference to the von Knyphausen regiment, it may be noted that Captain Baum, Captain von Schimmelpfennig and Lieutenant Vaupell, with about fifty of the men of their regiment, marched toward the drawbridge at Crosswicks Creek as soon as they had forded the Assunpink Creek, but hearing the yagers firing off their guns to see if they were in order, and fearing that it was the Americans pursuing them, they turned into the woods on the east, and for some time were unable to find their way. At last, however, they

[1] Mr Bancroft, in his *History of the United States*, says that the number was one hundred and sixty-two (162) men Von Eelking, in his *German Auxiliaries in the American War for Independence, 1776 to 1783*, makes the number three hundred and ninety-eight (398) men, and Quartermaster Heusser of the von Lossberg regiment writes that it was five (5) officers and one hundred and fifty (150) privates The result of my researches indicates that the number was thirteen (13) officers and three hundred and ninety-nine (399) enlisted men, in all four hundred and twelve (412) soldiers This number includes, of course, all the men of Rall's brigade who were on duty at the two detachments on picket duty south of the Assunpink Creek, whereas two of the estimates above quoted undoubtedly do not include these outlying picket posts

[2] For names of those who escaped capture see Part II No 56

struck the Quaker road, and reached Princeton at about eight o'clock at night When he arrived there, Captain Schimmelpfennig was very ill and was taken to the hospital. The weary fugitives told General Leslie the story of the fight, which was the first news he had received of this blow to the British cause The enlisted men were retained there, but General Leslie sent Captain Baum with two dragoons to General Grant at Brunswick to inform him of the details of the disaster, and General Grant passed him on to General Erskine at Amboy, from which place he was dispatched with the news of the surrender to General Howe at New York city In the early part of the fight Field Preacher Wilhelm Bauer of the von Knyphausen regiment carefully and with great prudence passed over the bridge and hurried down the old road to Bordentown. Lieutenant von Geyso of the von Knyphausen regiment, who had forded the creek, safely reached Bordentown, and reported the facts of the surprise to Lieutenant-Colonel von Minnigerode

At the yager picket post of one officer and fifty men at General Dickinson's house on the River road, all escaped save one, who was captured Lieutenant Friedrich Wilhelm von Grothausen was severely censured for running away without making much of a fight, but only a week later he met his fate not far from the bridge over which he and his men had escaped during the surprise at Trenton

The twenty British dragoons, a detachment of the Sixteenth regiment of the Queen's light dragoons, did not tarry in the town long after the engagement opened In no published history of the fight and in no manuscript records can the slightest mention be found of any effort of these men to repel the hostile army

The guard at the Assunpink bridge, nineteen soldiers, after doing their duty for a short time, though without firing a shot, left their post and joined the fugitives One soldier, however, who was posted in front of Major von Dechow's quarters was killed Sergeant Mueller says that before they left, the light horse, the artillerymen, the yagers, whom the

sergeant upbraided for running too fast, some of the musicians, the surgeons, and some of the women had passed over the bridge in the order named Then, he says, he retired

The picket at Trenton Landing — one officer, and twenty-seven men — after enduring a vigorous shelling from the Pennsylvania shore, one of their number being wounded, and having learned also of the capture of their comrades in the town, moved off on the main road to Bordentown just as twelve boat-loads, so the German records say, of American soldiers reached the Jersey shore at the landing, and began to form back of the "Doctor House" This picket reported at the drawbridge to Captain Boking of the Rall regiment

The picket at the drawbridge over Crosswicks Creek of course took no part in the engagement, and escaped capture They were accordingly not counted by Mr Bancroft in his statement, nor were they included in that of Quartermaster Heusser, but belonging as they did to the Rall brigade, they should be added to the number of those who were not taken prisoners of war As already stated, the picket was composed of four officers and eighty-two men Lieutenant von Romrodt and his men, who were stationed half way between Trenton and the drawbridge over Crosswicks Creek, heard the firing incident to the battle The firing of the cannon could not, however, be heard at the drawbridge, as Lieutenant Hille of the von Lossberg regiment averred, because of the wind being in the opposite direction They received the news about ten o'clock from fugitives who came there, some with arms, but most of them without their guns As soon as the report of the disaster reached him, the commandant at this picket post sent the news to Lieutenant-Colonel von Minnigerode, who commanded at Bordentown. He instantly dispatched to the aid of the picket a grenadier company, commanded by Captain Wilmowsky, and in a few minutes the whole of the von Minnigerode battalion followed. They remained at the drawbridge about two hours, and then the entire force received orders from Colonel von Donop to march to Bordentown for the night

Some historians, referring to this time, make the statement that after the attack had commenced an attempt was made by some of the German soldiers to harness up horses for the purpose of carrying off their ill-gotten spoils. There is no doubt that the Hessian soldiery at Trenton, foremost in rapine and plunder as they had been on their march through New Jersey, were well supplied with articles which they did not care to leave in the hands of the Americans. However, they did not go over the bridge with any loaded wagons, if we are to believe the German records, which give with great precision the kind and condition of men who



WASHINGTON AND GREENE CALLING ON COLONEL RALL

escaped. In 1780 Joseph Galloway, the loyalist, in his "Letters Written to a Nobleman on the Conduct of the War in the Middle Colonies," says: "It is a fact, that Colonel Raille, although he had sufficient notice of the enemy's approach, could not form his men, who, more attentive to the safety of their plunder than their duty, and engaged in putting horses

to and loading their waggons, became deaf to all orders In this state they were surrounded and taken."

The Hessian commander was grievously wounded Poor Rall, the brave and dashing colonel, given to military display, fond of the parade, proud of his well-drilled and disciplined soldiers as they marched daily on the streets of Trenton, — this courageous officer had now to die Death alone could rid him of the heavy responsibility and the measure of disgrace which rested on him Soon after the surrender he was placed on a bench in the Methodist Church on Queen street, and carried through Church alley to his own headquarters on King street The house of Stacy Potts had been in the thickest of the battle, and showed the effects of shell and of bullet. A pane of glass through which a bullet passed remains to this day a relic of the fight In disrobing the wounded commander, the note of Wall, the Bucks County Tory, came to light, and Rall, when he understood its contents, simply remarked, "Hatte ich dies zu Herrn Hunt gelesen, so ware ich jezt nicht hier" ("If I had read this at Mr Hunt's I would not be here")

During the morning General Washington and General Greene called at the house of Mr Potts, and with the aid of an interpreter held a brief conversation with Colonel Rall, and took his parole of honor[1] Rall begged General Washington for kind treatment to his men, and his petition was readily granted. General Washington also spoke a few words of consolation to the dying soldier Colonel Rall lingered in pain during the night, and died on the evening of December 27 The German documents say that he was buried in the Presbyterian churchyard on Second street (now State street), but his is now an unknown grave. It must have been in ground since covered by the present church edifice When, in 1838, the excavation was made for the foundation of the church, a large number of buttons from

[1] A large painting of this scene was executed many years ago, and is now in possession of one of the descendants of Stacy Potts, Joseph P Lloyd, Esq, of Orange, New Jersey

Hessian uniforms were found. Lieutenant Kinen of Rall's regiment wrote this epitaph, which was never placed above him: "Hier liegt der Oberst Rall, mit ihm ist alles all!" ("Here lies Colonel Rall, with him all is over!")

XII

THE loss of the American army in this affair was very small, being, as General Washington reported, two officers and two privates wounded The officers referred to were Captain William Washington and Lieutenant James Monroe, who were injured in the charge on the enemy's guns on King street, and one of the privates wounded was young Robert James Livingston, of the Hunterdon County militia, afterward an ensign in the Fifth Virginia regiment, and who had matriculated at Princeton College and joined the force as a volunteer. On being wounded, he was cared for by Miss Rebecca Coxe, who lived opposite the English Church on King street. Some histories tell us that, in addition to these four wounded soldiers, two officers were killed and two frozen to death This statement cannot now be officially confirmed

It will always seem strange to the student of this battle that no greater damage was inflicted on the Americans by these German veterans, while the Hessian troops suffered so severely in proportion to their numbers and the short duration of the fight As we look at the facts to-day, it seems remarkable; but the German records give us the Hessian loss, and General Washington reported the casualties of his patriot band We can only attempt to account for it by the fact that the Germans made no real stand, that a number of their guns failed, and that the surprise was so sudden and the onset so persistently followed up that they could not make their fire effective Even with this endeavor to explain the situation, we still wonder at the difference between the casualty lists.

The Rall regiment had on duty with the brigade 11 officers and 512 men Eighty-seven of these men were either

on guard or on picket that day. Those actually in the fight during the few moments before the surrender were Major Matthaus, Captain Brubach, Lieutenant Salzmann, Ensign Fleck and Ensign Schroeder, — 5 officers and 425 enlisted men

The von Lossberg regiment had 16 officers and 467 enlisted men in service at the beginning of the fight

The von Knyphausen regiment began the battle with 12 officers and 429 men on duty with the command

Counting Colonel Rall as killed, the Rall regiment had 1 officer and 12 men killed, and 1 officer and 10 men wounded; the von Lossberg regiment had 3 officers and 4 men killed, and 4 officers and 55 men wounded, the von Knyphausen regiment, counting Major von Dechow as killed, had 1 officer and 1 man killed, 1 officer and 13 men wounded The artillery detachment had 8 men wounded, but as these were assigned for duty with the artillery detachments and really belonged to the infantry regiments, they are included in the losses previously given

The casualties in the brigade were therefore 5 officers killed and 6 officers wounded, 17 men killed and 78 men wounded, a total of 106 killed and wounded, as appears by the official records Twenty-four of these soldiers — and some of the severely wounded must, of course, have died very soon — were all buried, so tradition tells us, in one place in the Presbyterian churchyard If this is correct, their common grave must have been in ground now covered by the First Presbyterian Church

In reference to the number of prisoners taken at Trenton by the American army, the return of Sir George Osborn, muster-master-general of the British army, states that the loss was 700 This number is manifestly incorrect

General Howe made a return to the British government of the loss at Trenton, including killed, wounded and prisoners, as 1 colonel, 2 lieutenant-colonels, 3 majors, 4 captains, 8 lieutenants, 12 ensigns, 2 surgeons, 92 sergeants, 20 drummers, 9 musicians, 25 officers' servants, 740 rank and file Total, 918

General Washington made a return to the Continental Congress, and appended it to his report of the battle, written December 27, 1776. There is no doubt that General Howe copied the statement of casualties in his report to the king from that of General Washington,[1] as the figures exactly correspond

The official list of prisoners as made out by the commanding officers of the three Hessian regiments and the lieutenant of artillery on the 5th day of January, 1777, while the officers were still in Philadelphia, shows a total force of 868 officers and men [2]

Taking the total number of officers and men killed, wounded and captured to have been 918 soldiers, as it was given by General Washington and appropriated by General Howe, and comparing this statement with the number of prisoners which the Hessian officers themselves acknowledged had been captured, that is 868 soldiers, we find that 22 were killed, 28 of the wounded were left on parole in Trenton, and that of the 868 prisoners of war who were taken over the Delaware River on December 26, 56 had in some way been wounded [3]

We are given a fair idea of the kind of men in the rank and file of the prisoners by their several trades We find among them 82 weavers, 49 tailors, 38 shoemakers, 16 smiths, 15 carpenters, 15 wagon-makers, 12 masons, 10 joiners, 9 butchers, 7 plasterers, 7 stocking-weavers, 6 bakers, 6 millers, etc. This list was prepared in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, January 10, 1777, and contains the occupations of 315 of the 830 soldiers in that city at that date

Colonel Johann Gottlieb Rall was born in June, 1725, and when quite a young man entered on the study of a military life During the Seven Years' War he gained considerable experience in his profession under the Duke of Brunswick,

[1] For Washington's return see Part II No 57

[2] For these statements see Part II No 58

[3] For roster of officers of Rall's brigade, with biographical sketches, see Part II. No 59

and he served for glory as a volunteer under Orloff against the Turks. In 1764 he is recorded in the Hessian State and Court Calendar as lieutenant-colonel in the garrison regiment Stein. In the following year, and until the year 1771, he held the same position in the garrison regiment Heldring. In 1772 the name of the grenadier regiment Muller was changed to the grenadier regiment Rall, and he was



COLONEL JOHANN GOTTLIEB RALL

appointed its colonel and commandant. As such he landed in America, at New Utrecht, Long Island, August 25, 1776, with Lieutenant-General de Heister's first division of Hessian troops. Two days afterward he took part in the battle of Long Island. He fought well at Fort Washington November 16, 1776, and was then placed in charge of

the brigade which was afterward assigned to the post at Trenton.

The character of Colonel Rall has been variously and often erroneously described by historical writers Preferring the delineations of his traits made by German critics, and especially by the late Dr Friedrich Kapp, the learned and accomplished biographer of General De Kalb and General Steuben, we must speak of the Hessian colonel as liberal, hospitable and generous As commander of a battalion he displayed undoubted courage, and he performed acts of great bravery at Long Island, White Plains and Fort Washington As a soldier he was terribly in earnest, and few officers displayed greater military skill in battle He always personally sought the most perilous post in the moment of attack His British comrades admired him greatly and called him the "Hessian lion" To the Americans he was terror personified Yet with all these commendable characteristics he lacked a cool temper, sound judgment and a habit of quick resolve His deficiency in these respects, while it might not deter him from properly executing orders given him, certainly rendered him unfit for holding a general officer's command Always successful heretofore in every trust confided to him, despising as he did the American force and underestimating its valor, he neglected the simplest precautions to prevent surprise

Captain Friedrich Ernst von Munchhausen, General Howe's adjutant, says of Colonel Rall that if he had not lost his life in this battle he would certainly have lost his head

Lieutenant Andreas Wiederhold, a rather self-sufficient officer who had commanded the Pennington road picket on that eventful morning, gives in his journal a severe and perhaps unjust and prejudiced account of the man —

"He (Rall himself) believed the name of Rall more perfect and redoubtable than all the works of Vauban and Cohorn, and that no rebel would dare to encounter it A fit man truly to command a corps! and still more to defend a place lying so near an enemy having a hundred times his

advantages Everything with him was done heedlessly and without forecast" "There was more bustle than business at the post The men were harassed with watches, detachments and pickets without purpose and without end The cannon must be drawn forth every day from their proper places and paraded about the town seemingly only to make a stir and uproar" "Whether his men when off duty were well or ill clad, whether they kept their muskets clean and bright and their ammunition in good order was of little moment to the colonel, he never inquired about it, but the music! that was the thing! the hautboys — he never could have enough of them The watch-guard was at no great distance from his quarters and the music could not linger there long enough. There was a church close by surrounded with a picket fence and a gate in front! The officer on guard must march round and round it, with his men and musicians, looking like a Roman Catholic procession, wanting only the cross and the banner and chanting choristers to lead He followed the parade every time on releasing the guards in order to hear the music The guards were released at two o'clock and the pickets at four o'clock. All officers and non-commissioned officers had to be on duty at that time so as to make a grand headquarters The cannon instead of being out at the head of the streets where they could be of use, were in front of his quarters and two of them had to be paraded to the lower part of the town every morning and back again so as to make all the display possible He gave himself all the pleasure he could up to a late hour at night, and then going to bed slept until nine o'clock in the morning When we came at ten o'clock for parade to his quarters we had many times to wait a half hour, because he had not finished his usual bath"

In his interesting journal Quartermaster Heusser of the von Lossberg regiment makes these remarks on the character of Colonel Rall and his conduct in the fight —

"Our commander was too proud to retreat a step before such an enemy as the Americans. He did not suppose the

rebels would wager a battle with him If General Howe had judged him accurately he would never have trusted him with such an important post He was a born soldier but never a commanding general Although he had deservedly won the greatest honor at Fort Washington, where he followed the orders of a great general, he lost all his praise and all his glory at Trenton, where he was in command himself He had the necessary courage to attempt the most daring acts, but he lacked the cool presence of mind absolutely essential in the event of a surprise He was full of activity and very lively in his nature, one thought quickly crowded out another and he did not come to any fixed resolve He was to be esteemed as a generous and a hospitable man, polite to every one, kind to his subordinates and to his servants Devotedly fond of music, he was agreeable in all social gatherings"

In a statement dated at Homberg, in Hesse, September 16, 1787, General von Heister's son, Cornet Carl Levin von Heister, attached to the Hesse-Cassel body dragoon regiment, and at the time of the battle acting as adjutant to Colonel von Donop, speaks of Colonel Rall as "A very brave man, who had shown his spirit and courage on every occasion where he had been directed to attack an enemy His experiences in German wars, his life in Turkey, where he went as a volunteer in the Russian army, did not fit him in any way to defend a post. His success at White Plains and at Fort Knyphausen made him proud, and he thought his name and the name of his brigade would serve as a strong protection of the post at Trenton He never thought the rebels would dare to attack him, and this made him careless in preparations for defense"

The only Hessian writer who fails to blame Colonel Rall is Captain Johann Ewald of the corps of yagers. He throws the responsibility on his own chief, Colonel von Donop: "He was not able to tell a sham attack from a real one and foolishly took his force out of supporting distance of Rall's command. As Colonel Rall lost his life in the

fight, and was therefore unable to defend himself in person, the blame will forever rest on him His memory has been cursed by German and English soldiers, many of whom were not fit to carry his sword" Captain Ewald concedes that perhaps Colonel Rall did wrong in allowing the enemy to get so near to him, and that the officers at the picket post should have been alert enough to have discovered the Americans in time "If," he continues, "Colonel Rall had not been wounded, his three regiments of brave men would have disputed every foot of the land, but when he was shot there was not an officer who had the courage to take up the half-lost battle"

At the time of the surrender many of the Hessians hid in the houses of their Tory friends, but most of them were finally secured and carried off as prisoners of war In this way the number of men captured was increased On December 29 General Washington reported a few more prisoners, among them a lieutenant-colonel and a deputy adjutant-general, — no doubt included in the lists heretofore given, — and he stated that the prisoners now numbered about 1000

In addition to capturing some of the best troops of the Hessian mercenaries, the American troops took six double fortified brass three-pounders, three ammunition wagons, four wagons full of baggage, 40 horses, about 1000 arms and accoutrements, 12 drums and 15 army colors Two of these cannon were used by the Americans at the battle of Brandywine, September 11, 1777, where they were captured by the British forces

On page 28 of the second volume of Max von Eelking's work, "The German Allies in the American Revolutionary War," Hanover, 1863, the statement is made, referring to the battle of Stono Ferry, South Carolina, June 20, 1779, that "the guns and flags taken from the Hessians at Trenton were recovered at that place." This is given on the authority of a manuscript diary of non-commissioned officer Reuber of the Rall regiment In a footnote von Eelking

says that Reuber twice mentions this fact, and he adds that the guns were immediately turned over to the regiment von Trumbach, but the flags were retained until the Hessian troops returned to Cassel Von Eelking also adds that there is no explanation as to how the guns were placed on the vessel, probably meaning the Rattlesnake, an American man-of-war which had been disabled by the guns attached to the regiment von Wissenback and the fire of the Sixteenth regiment of British grenadiers He speaks of this action as a "rare capture"

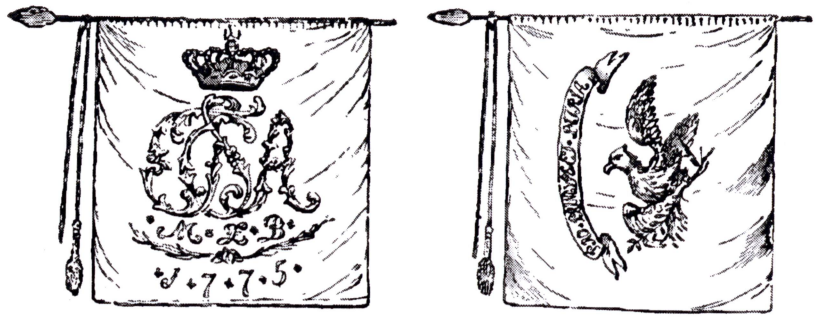
The accuracy of this statement is somewhat doubtful As has been noted, two of the cannon were retaken at Brandywine, and there is only a possibility that the remaining four may have been placed on the man-of-war captured in the South Carolina waters It is not to be supposed for one moment that the Hessian standards also were taken to South Carolina, for what object would have been gained by such a disposition of them? One standard, if not all, certainly passed into the possession of the Continental Congress, and that one was burned in the fire in the museum at Alexandria, Virginia

In the letter of William Ellery, delegate in Congress from Rhode Island, dated Baltimore, December 31, 1776, and written to Governor Nicholas Cooke of that State, we find a description of one of the Hessian silken standards which had just been hung in the room where Congress was in session [1]

[1] "In the centre of a green field of about four or five feet is a decorated gilded circle which incloses a lion rampant, with a dagger in his right paw and this motto in the upper part of it, *Nescit Pericula*, the crest is a crown, with a globe and cross upon it, in the corner are gilded decorated circles and globes and crosses on their tops and in the middle F S in cyphers. a broad blaze extends from the corners to the piece in the centre and three small blazes are placed in the field, one in the middle of the side next the staff, one in the opposite side and one in the middle on the lower side or bottom"

The motto here given, *Nescit Pericula*, a contempt of danger. was certainly ill-suited to the retreating and vanquished Hessians. and it

It may be of interest to add an extract from the history of the fusilier regiment von Lossberg, as taken from the records of Hesse-Cassel, which refers to the capture of Trenton. As Lieutenant Piel, the brigade adjutant, uses similar language in his diary now on file in the same office of records, it is quite probable that he wrote the report of the



THE VON LOSSBERG REGIMENTAL FLAG

fight for Lieutenant-Colonel Scheffer, the senior officer surviving. It is scarcely necessary to draw special attention to its greatly exaggerated statement of General Washing-

brought forth this amusing doggerel in one of the papers of the day, the *Freeman's Journal* of February 11, 1777: —

> "The man who submits without striking a blow,
> May be said, in a sense, no danger to know,
> I pray then what harm, by the humble submission
> At Trenton was done to the standard of Hessian?"

Another of the standards taken was the beautiful flag of the von Lossberg regiment. It was of white silk and about four feet square, the embroidery and letters being worked in gold silk. On one side was a crown, a monogram E C T S A and the letters M L B 1775, and on the other side an eagle with an olive branch, and the motto, scarcely less inappropriate than the other, *Pro principe et patria* — for prince and country.

It will be noticed that some of the returns report three colors as captured, others four standards, and still others fifteen colors. It is difficult to reconcile these statements. We can only infer that in the first-named return mention is made simply of the three regimental flags, in the second the artillery flag is added, and in the third report the little company guidons are also included in the number.

ton's force All Hessian accounts seem to make the American attacking party at least 7000 men This is the number stated in the German biography of General von Ochs

"On December 24, 1776, Rall's brigade occupied the town of Trenton on the Delaware River The enemy was on the other side of this river and as he had boats and we had not, they could cross and disturb us at every hour On the evening of the 25th, at dark, they attacked our outposts, but retired at once having wounded six of our men. On the morning of the 26th between seven and eight o'clock, we were regularly attacked by a corps of six to seven thousand men under General Washington. Our outposts were soon forced to retire, and we had scarcely time to take up arms, while we lost many men in consequence of the fire of small arms and cannon in the town We were surrounded from all sides, but we defended ourselves for fully two hours until the regiment von Knyphausen was cut off from us Our muskets could not fire any more on account of the rain and snow, and the rebels fired on us from within the houses. Nothing therefore was left to us but to surrender as prisoners of war. The regiment von Lossberg lost in this affair seventy men killed and wounded Among the first were Captains von Riess and von Benning and Lieutenant Kimm, while Captain von Altenbockum and Lieutenants Schwabe and Zoll were among the wounded Our whole disaster was entirely due to Colonel Rall He did not think it possible that the rebels would ever dare to attack us, and thus he neglected all preparations against any attack. I must confess that we thought too slightly of the rebels, who thus far had never been able to resist us Our Brigadier was too proud to withdraw one inch before such an enemy, otherwise we would have had no other remedy left to us but a retreat. Colonel Rall was mortally wounded and died the next evening, happy that he was not bound to survive his honor If General Howe had judged this officer correctly he would hardly have trusted him with so important a post as that of Trenton Colonel Rall was a good soldier but a bad Gen-

eral. This officer, who at the capture of Fort Washington had won the highest honor because he fought under a good General, lost all his reputation at Trenton where he himself was general. He had great courage and undertook the most daring enterprises but he lacked the cool presence of mind



COLONEL HENRY KNOX

which on such occasions as the attack at Trenton are wanted. His vivacity was too great. One idea supplanted another in his mind and therefore he was unable to arrive at a fixed determination. As a private gentleman he deserves the highest respect. He was generous, liberal and hospitable towards all, dignified with his superiors, but kind to his inferiors. To his servants he was more a friend than a

master. He was exceedingly fond of music and a very agreeable companion."

It may be mentioned here in reference to the conduct of the American troops in the battle, as stated in a letter written by Captain William Hull of the Seventh Connecticut Continental regiment, that "General Washington highly congratulated the men the next day in General Orders, & with pleasure observed that he had been in many actions before, but always perceived some misbehaviour in some individuals, but in that action he saw none"

As the British were in strength at Princeton and at Bordentown, it was deemed prudent that the Americans should return to their former posts on the west bank of the Delaware River. This course was agreed upon at a council of officers, though General Greene and Colonel Knox dissented and urged a following up the surprise by a rapid pursuit of the foe. It was thought, however, that the prisoners, artillery, horses, stores, arms and ammunition which had been captured would be much safer on the other side of the river and the officers generally did not care to risk the possession of the trophies of their victory

In a fragmentary narrative of the movements of the American army at this time, Colonel Joseph Reed, General Washington's adjutant-general, notes the following as the reasons assigned by some of the general officers as to why they should and why they should not recross the Delaware River with the fruits of their successful expedition

"1 That the Enemy was in force both above & below, viz at Princeton & Bordentown — for at that Time it was not known, that a great Part of the Enemy's Force was gone down to Mount Hollow 25 Miles below Trenton

"2 There were great Quantities of Spirituous Liquours at Trenton of which the Soldiers drank too freely to admit of Discipline or Defence in Case of Attack

"3 The Stroke being brilliant & successful it was not prudent or politick even to risque the Chance of losing the Advantages to be derived from it.

"On the other Hand it was argued that Successes & brilliant strokes ought to be pursued — that History shewed how much depended upon improving such Advantages — & that a Pannick being once given no one could ascertain the beneficial Consequences which might be derived from it if it was push'd to all its Consequences However the former Opinion prevailed"

Accordingly after paroling all the wounded Hessians, whom they were obliged to leave in the village, and having rested and refreshed themselves, the victorious army took up their line of march soon after midday and journeyed for nine miles back over the old River road to the place where their boats still remained under guard A few of the officers and men were carried over the Trenton Ferry, Beatty's Ferry and Johnson's Ferry, but most of the army returned to Pennsylvania by McKonkey's Ferry

General Lord Stirling was ordered with his brigade to guard the prisoners and secure their safety. The disagreeable weather of the previous night still continued, but few complaints were heard from the victors, who had borne the beating storm of hail and rain for fully twenty-four hours Far worse were the feelings of the sad and dismayed Hessians as they commenced their weary march from the pleasant village and its holiday revels, going as captives on their cheerless journey along the slippery roadway

When the column arrived at the ferry landing, the prisoners were taken over first, with only a sufficient guard, and on the Pennsylvania shore they awaited the arrival of the American army The crossing was difficult and dangerous It is noted that one boat filled with German officers came near being swamped by the icy current, and after drifting down the stream for nearly two miles, the officers at last jumped into the river and waded about two hundred feet through the angry waters, and so reached the shore

Tradition says that three soldiers were frozen during this passage over the river, a fact not surprising when we remem-

ber the scanty condition of their clothing Captain Morris's troop of Philadelphia light horse remained on the New Jersey side, patrolling the roads until after dark, when they crossed the river, and at daylight on the next morning reported at headquarters The whole detachment of infantry and artillery, many of them having marched fully thirty miles, had now returned to their former camps, barracks and quarters It is said that the next day more than 1000 men were reported unfit for duty

Captain William Hull, at the time of the battle acting as a field officer of Colonel Webb's Seventh Connecticut Continental regiment, says in his account of his revolutionary services that on returning to his quarters he had a large dish of hasty pudding prepared for him, and that while eating it he fell from the chair with weariness, and awoke in the morning with the spoon still in his hand

The headquarters of the army was now established in John Harris's old yellow house, west of Neshaminy Creek, near Newtown. This village was five miles west of the Delaware River and five miles southwest of McKonkey's Ferry, now Taylorsville Lieutenant-Colonel Robert H Harrison, General Washington's military secretary, had remained at Newtown in charge of the records and papers of the commander-in-chief "The old secretary," as he was called, was greatly trusted by his chief, and it is said of him that he was "one in whom every man had confidence and by whom no man was deceived"

On the night of December 26 the Hessian officers were confined in the ferry house at the landing at Johnson's Ferry, but the enlisted men were immediately marched to Newtown The officers said they spent the night "very miserably without anything to eat or drink," and the next day they were taken to the Brick Tavern at Newtown They found then that their men had been confined in the Presbyterian Church and the Bucks County jail in that village.

On December 28 General Lord Stirling took Lieutenant-

Colonels Scheffer and Brethauer, Majors Matthaus and von Hanstein, Lieutenant Wiederhold and a few other officers, to call on General Washington. The commander-in-chief received them kindly and desired the four field officers to



FLAG OF THE PHILADELPHIA TROOP OF LIGHT HORSE

dine with him, which they did. The rest of the party dined at General Lord Stirling's quarters. It appears that Lord Stirling treated all the captured officers with cordiality, as a return for courtesies shown him by German officers, and especially by General von Heister, when he was a prisoner of war after the battle of Long Island.

While these officers were in General Lord Stirling's quarters a singular incident occurred, which is graphically described in Adjutant Piel's journal. It seems that a tall,

sour-visaged man, whom they supposed to be the German Lutheran pastor of the village, entered the room where they were, and, addressing the Hessian officers in their own language, urged upon them the justice of the war from the American point of view He told them that he was a native of Hanover, abused the Elector thereof, and denounced George III At last, disgusted, as they said, with his tittle-tattle, they told him that they had not been sent to America to find out which party was right, but to fight for the king Lord Stirling soon saw that this discourse was not pleasant to the captured officers, and he abruptly interfered and stopped the controversy

Lieutenant Andreas Wiederhold of the von Knyphausen regiment gives us a rather amusing account of his interview with General Washington The presumption of this subaltern officer is decidedly refreshing He speaks of the American chief as a fine, polite man, very reserved, with limited conversational powers, of medium size, good figure and cunning features He also said that General Washington somewhat resembled one of their own officers, Captain Bernhard von Biesenrodt of the von Knyphausen regiment, then a prisoner of war It appears from the young lieutenant's statement that General Washington praised his conduct at the alarm-house, saying that he was glad to meet such a brave officer, and took note of his name and rank, listening to his criticisms of wherein the Hessian officers had acted wisely and wherein they had not, and commenting favorably upon Wiederhold's plan as to the way he would have fought the battle It seems highly improbable that this conversation, of so personal a character, should have taken place in the presence of such experienced officers as Lieutenant-Colonel Scheffer and Lieutenant-Colonel Bethauer. During this interview Lieutenant Wiederhold asked General Washington's permission to return to Trenton and procure some of his uniform and underclothing This was granted, and he gave his parole of honor to return, went to Trenton on the afternoon of December 29, and returned the

next day to Newtown He was successful in regaining his trunk, which was in Major von Dechow's quarters, the house in which the major had died Wiederhold says that the good lady of the house had carefully taken care of his clothing [1]

As though he were a veteran of European wars, he sums up his opinion with the sage reflection that "experience has sufficiently demonstrated that where a surprise has really taken place the commander must first recover his own equanimity before he can get his men out of a panic, and that after this is done and the soldiers have seen that the danger is not as great as it seemed at first, they can soon be used as effectively as ever." He concludes with the statement that "Colonel Rall's action at the time was more foolhardy than brave, and that in such a case confusion ends in weakness in the moment of surprise For this reason the three battalions were captured, and the soldierly reputation of many good names was dishonored"

The Hessian prisoners at Newtown signed a parole of honor, which was in the following words —

[1] The criticisms of this young soldier on the battle of Trenton, and probably the very points which, if we are to believe his statement, he presumed to discuss with General Washington, were —

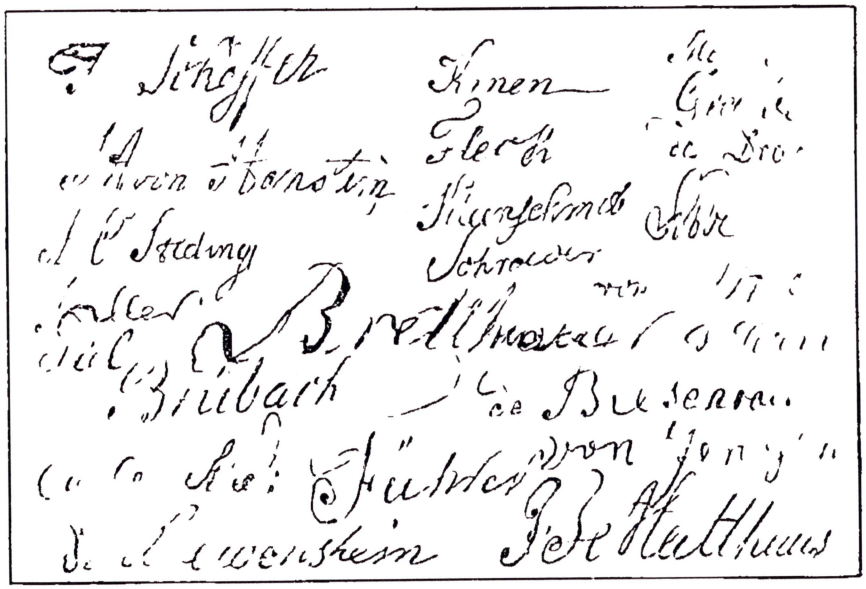
"1 That Colonel Rall cannot be excused for allowing the enemy to cross the river so near to his post, in such force, with a river so nearly frozen that it took sixteen hours to effect a passage and then to be attacked in garrison and this without his certain knowledge, although he had been warned several times

"2 That Colonel Rall is further inexcusable in that the attack of the night before on the picket-guard was notice enough, that he did not then send out strong patrols to all the ferries and into all the woods to search for the enemy, and that he failed to have the supplies and baggage of the army in condition to relieve himself quickly of these impediments if necessary

"3 That he did not have his men all called in and stationed above the bridge over the creek in good position to await the movement of the enemy

"4. That even though he had neglected all these precautions he did not concentrate his entire force when the surprise was really made and push across the bridge while such a movement was yet possible"

"We, the Subscribers, Hessian Officers, made Prisoners of War by the American Army under command of his Excellency, General Washington, at Trenton, on the 26th inst, being allowed Our Liberty, under such Restrictions as to place as may be from time to time appointed, do give Our Parole of Honour, that we will remain at the place and within the limits appointed for us by his Excellency, the General, the Honourable Congress, Council of Safety, or Commissary of Prisoners of War, Peaceably behaving ourselves and by no way Send or give Intelligence to the British or Hessian Army or speak or do anything disrespectful or Injurious to the American States while we remain Prisoners of War. We will also restrain our Servants and Attendants who are allowed to remain with us, as far as in our power, to the same conditions Newtown, December 30th 1776."



SIGNATURES OF HESSIAN OFFICERS ON THE PAROLE

General Washington very kindly allowed the prisoners to retain all of their personal baggage without examination. This undoubtedly produced a good effect

Immediately after the parole was given by the Hessian

officers, they started for Philadelphia in five canvas-covered wagons driven by Pennsylvania farmers, and reached that city soon after eleven o'clock in the morning They were all taken to the inn known as the "Indian Queen," and in the evening were furnished with "a grand supper, with plenty of wine and punch at the expense of Congress" The enlisted men also marched from Newtown at an early hour on December 30, under a heavy guard commanded by Colonel George Weedon of the Third Virginia Continental regiment He had with him as guard his own regiment, a detachment of the First Pennsylvania rifle battalion commanded by Captain Lewis Farmer, and another detachment commanded by Captain John Murray The men spent the night of December 30 at the village of Four Lands End, now called Attleborough. The next morning they passed through Frankfort and Kensington, and reached Philadelphia just before evening

The prisoners, followed by the captured arms and banners, were all paraded through the streets of Philadelphia, where the whole populace was out to see them This exhibition of triumph was no doubt for the purpose of encouraging the people and showing them that the dreaded Hessian could be captured by the undisciplined force of America

In Watson's "Annals of Philadelphia," an "elderly gentleman" gives an account of this display —

"I well remember seeing the Hessian prisoners which had been taken at Trenton. I stood on the porch of Pemberton's house in Chestnut above Third street They marched up the street past the State House, where Congress sat They made a long line — all fine, hearty looking men and well clad, with large knapsacks, spatterdashes on legs, their looks were *satisfied* On each side, in a single file, were their guards, mostly in light summer dress, and some without shoes, but stepping light and cheerful"

In his diary one of the Hessian soldiers also describes the scene —

"Large and small, old and young stood there seeing what

kind of people we were When we came before them they gazed very closely at us The old women screamed fearfully and wanted to choke us because we had come to America to deprive them of their liberty. Some however, notwithstanding the spite, brought us liquor and bread, but were not allowed to let us have them by these old women The American troops who guarded us had orders from Washington to march us all over the city, so that all should see us, but the people pressed on us so greatly as nearly to break the guard over us"

The effect of this triumphal display upon the citizens of Philadelphia was wonderful. Despondency was turned to joy, and the rejoicing of the patriots knew no bounds

The prisoners were confined in the city barracks, which had been prepared for them in compliance with a characteristic order of General Putnam "You are immedatly to remove your men out of the Barrok to make room for the hashon Prisoners"

On New Year's day the German officers were taken in a body to call on General Putnam, who received them hospitably On the 6th day of January they left Philadelphia for Baltimore, where Congress was then in session All the captured commissioned officers of Rall's brigade were in this party, and about as many non-commissioned officers, in all about fifty soldiers, Captain Farmer being still in command of the guard On the evening of January 14 he quartered his prisoners in Baltimore, and the next morning turned them over to the custody of the Board of War. Congress ordered the officers to be taken to Dumfries in Prince William County, Virginia, some twenty-five miles below Alexandria, and four miles from the mouth of the Quantico River, on the lower Potomac River They left Baltimore January 18, under charge of Lieutenant John Lindenburger of the Pennsylvania state regiment of artillery, and on January 24 reached Dumfries, a wooden village of about forty houses There they remained until September 4, 1777, when they were sent to Winchester, Virginia, and during the same

month 300 of the enlisted men of the Hessian contingent arrived in the same village to be quartered there The officers were sent on December 13 to Fredericksburg, Virginia, and there, from their own account, they had a singularly pleasant time for prisoners of war In the spring of 1778 those who had been formally exchanged were sent to Philadelphia, then in the hands of the British, arriving there on April 20 Two officers, however, were not in the cartel of exchange. These were Ensign Carl Wilhelm Kleinschmidt of the Rall regiment and Ensign Carl Friedrich Fuhrer of the von Knyphausen regiment Both of these officers joined the American army, and the portrait of each one was fixed to a gallows as a deserter by the British troops in New York city, October 1, 1781[1] Ensign Kleinschmidt was the same officer who killed his comrade, Captain von der Sippe, in a duel on board the vessel which brought them to America.

The enlisted men were marched from Philadelphia, January 2, 1777, toward Lancaster, and were afterward scattered in different places in the western counties of Pennsylvania and in some parts of Virginia The band of nine musicians which had so charmed the dead Colonel Rall were kept in Philadelphia, and it is said that they took part in the fourth of July celebration in that city in the year 1777

From a sergeant's return of the prisoners at Lancaster, printed in the "Pennsylvania Archives," second series, vol i p 435, we find 39 men of the artillery, 266 men of the Rall regiment, 234 men of the von Lossberg regiment, 291 men of the von Knyphausen regiment, in all 830 men, and a few women and children

In March, 1777, a selection was made from these prisoners of thirty men, who were sent to Mount Hope, Morris County, New Jersey, and placed in the service of John Jacob Faesch, who owned the great forge and foundry at that place Mr Faesch was himself a native of Hesse-Cassel, and had come to America in the employ of the London Company in 1766

[1] See von Krafft's "Journal, *New York Historical Society Collections*, 1882, p 59

In 1776 he was engaged in making cannon and shot for the American army under contract with Congress The government furnished him with arms to guard his countrymen, then prisoners of war, and he made them useful in casting cannon-balls for the patriots

Some of these Hessian prisoners never again took up arms against the infant republic Not a few escaped from their captors and settled on the farm lands of Pennsylvania and Virginia These had to be paid for as "missing" by the English government Many of them, pleased with the new country, returned to Pennsylvania when the war was over, and joined the many large and flourishing settlements of Germans in that commonwealth

XIII

On the day after the battle of Trenton General Washington wrote his official report of the surprise at Trenton, and sent it to the Continental Congress at Baltimore —

HEAD QUARTERS, NEWTOWN
27 December 1776

SIR

I have the pleasure of congratulating you upon the success of an enterprise which I had formed against a detachment of the enemy lying in Trenton, and which was executed yesterday morning The evening of the 25th I ordered the troops intended for this service to parade back of McKonkey's Ferry, that they might begin to pass as soon as it grew dark, imagining we should be able to throw them all over, with the necessary artillery, by twelve o'clock, and that we might easily arrive at Trenton by five in the morning, the distance being about nine miles But the quantity of ice, made that night, impeded the passage of the boats so much, that it was three o'clock before the artillery could all be got over, and near four before the troops took up their line of march This made me despair of surprising the town, as I well knew we could not reach it before the day was fairly broke. But as I was certain there was no making a retreat without being discovered and harassed on repassing the river, I determined to push on at all events I formed my detachment into two divisions, one to march by the lower or river road the other by the upper or Pennington road As the divisions had nearly the same distance to march, I ordered each of them, immediately upon forcing the out-guards to push directly into the town, that they might charge the enemy before they had time to form

The upper division arrived at the enemy's advanced post

exactly at eight o'clock, and in three minutes after, I found, from the fire on the lower road, that the division had also got up The out-guards made but small opposition, though, for their numbers, they behaved very well, keeping up a constant retreating fire from behind houses We presently saw their main body formed; but, from their motions, they seemed undetermined how to act Being hard pressed by our troops, who had already got possession of their artillery, they attempted to file off by a road on their right, leading to Princeton But, perceiving their intention, I threw a body of troops in their way, which immediately checked them Finding from our disposition, that they were surrounded and that they must inevitably be cut to pieces if they made any further resistance, they agreed to lay down their arms The number that submitted in this manner was twenty-three officers and eight hundred and eighty-six men Colonel Rahl, the commanding officer and seven others, were found wounded in the town I do not exactly know how many were killed, but I fancy not above twenty or thirty, as they never made any regular stand Our loss is very trifling indeed, — only two officers and one or two privates wounded

I find that the detachment of the enemy consisted of the three Hessian regiments of Anspach, Knyphausen and Rahl, amounting to about fifteen hundred men, and a troop of British light-horse; but, immediately upon the beginning of the attack, all those, who were not killed or taken, pushed directly down the road towards Bordentown These would likewise have fallen into our hands, could my plan have been completely carried into execution General Ewing was to have crossed before day at Trenton Ferry, and taken possession of the bridge leading out of town, but the quantity of ice was so great, that, though he did every thing in his power to effect it, he could not get over. This difficulty also hindered General Cadwalader from crossing with the Pennsylvania militia from Bristol He got part of his foot over, but, finding it impossible to embark his artillery, he was obliged to desist I am fully confident, that, could the

troops under Generals Ewing and Cadwalader have passed the river, I should have been able with their assistance to drive the enemy from all their posts below Trenton. But the numbers I had with me being inferior to theirs below me and a strong battalion of light infantry being at Princeton above me, I thought it most prudent to return the same evening with the prisoners and the artillery we had taken We found no stores of any consequence in the town

In justice to the officers and men, I must add, that their behaviour upon this occasion reflects the highest honor upon them The difficulty of passing the river in a very severe night, and their march through a violent storm of snow and hail, did not in the least abate their ardor, but, when they came to the charge, each seemed to vie with the other in pressing forward and were I to give a preference to any particular corps, I should do great injustice to the others

Colonel Baylor, my first aide-de-camp, will have the honor of delivering this to you, and from him you may be made acquainted with many other particulars His spirited behaviour upon every occasion requires me to recommend him to your particular notice

I have the honor to be, &c

GO WASHINGTON

Brigadier-General Lord Stirling also wrote to his brother-in-law, Governor William Livingston of New Jersey [1]

General Howe informed Lord George Germain of the disaster at Trenton in a letter dated New York, December 29, 1776, and from which the following extract is taken —

MY LORD

On the 25th instant, in the evening, a party of the enemy attacked an out-guard from the post of Trenton, where Colonel Rall commanded with three battalions of Hessians, fifty chasseurs and twenty light dragoons, having with them six field-pieces, which party was beaten back

[1] Part II No 60.

On the succeeding morning at six o'clock the rebels appeared in force with cannon, evidently intending to attack the post Colonel Rall, having received intelligence of their design, had the troops under arms and detached his own regiment to support an advanced picket, this picket being forced, and falling back upon the regiment, threw it into some disorder, which occasioned them to retire upon the other battalions no advantage being taken of this, they recovered themselves and the whole formed in front of the village The rebels, without advancing, cannonaded them in this situation and Colonel Rall moved forward to attack them, with the regiments of Lossberg and Rall, in which attack Colonel Rall was wounded and the regiments were made prisoners The rebels then advanced to the regiment of Knyphausen and also made that corps prisoners Some few officers and about two hundred men of the brigade, retreated to Colonel Donop's corps at Bordentown, six miles distant Several officers were wounded and about forty men killed and wounded This misfortune seems to have proceeded from Colonel Rall's quitting his post and advancing to the attack, instead of defending the village The rebels recrossed the river Delaware immediately, with the prisoners and cannon they had taken

I have the honor to be, &c

W Howe

It will be noticed that General Howe, either because of his lack of reliable information or from his desire to divert the attention of his king from the primary cause of the disaster, his own foolish chain of cantonments, misrepresents Colonel Rall as quitting his post, forming in front of the village, and advancing to the attack The truth of the matter is that Colonel Rall left his bed to join his men in the town, and rallied them at his headquarters to resist the terrible onset of the American column

On the last day of the year the Council of Safety of Pennsylvania issued in Philadelphia an address to the people of

that State,[1] announcing the arrival of the Hessian prisoners, and commending them to the friendly care of the people

In reference to the affair at Trenton and the part which the Hessians took therein, a *jeu d'esprit*[2] appears in the "Correspondance secrète et médite," and is no doubt correctly attributed to Dr Benjamin Franklin The text given is from Bigelow's life of Franklin It is in the form of a letter from the Count de Schaumburg to the Baron Hohendorf, commanding the Hessian troops in America, and is dated at Rome, Italy, February 18, 1777 It is a neat satire on the traffic of these petty princes in the blood of their subjects[3]

Early on the morning of Friday, December 27, Washington dispatched Lieutenant-Colonel George Baylor of his staff to the President of the Continental Congress at Baltimore, with his letter of that date, already given, and the Hessian captured flags The news was received by Congress with joy, and by a vote on the morning of the New Year Lieutenant-Colonel Baylor was presented with a horse, properly caparisoned, in token of their appreciation of his service and of the cheering report which he had brought

General Washington also sent Colonel John Chester of Colonel Sargent's brigade, on December 27, to take the good news to General Heath, with instructions for him to forward the same to the New England governors Colonel Chester reported to General Heath at Peekskill, December 30, and the news which he brought gave great encouragement to the Northern army

This glorious victory, following close upon so many disheartening defeats, had a wonderful effect upon the American people Washington's manœuvre, executed in so spirited a manner and in such a desperate condition of affairs, commanded the admiration of all the people, reflected great

[1] Part II. No 61 [2] Part II No 62

[3] See note on the battle of Trenton in Rosengarten's translation of Von Eelking's work on the *German Allied Troops in the North American War of Independence*, p 274

credit on the undrilled soldiery, brought recruits to the army, gave new vigor to an almost hopeless cause, and strengthened the patriotism of Congress and the nation It encouraged the delegates in Congress to resolve that the cause must be maintained at all hazards, no matter what the sacrifice From that hour it seemed as though the people themselves determined to be as free as their representatives had before declared that they were "and of right ought to be." The British generals were no longer considered models of military science, the Hessian hirelings, with their unknown tongue, rough manners and pillaging propensities, could now be conquered, and were no longer so thoroughly dreaded The prestige which they had heretofore enjoyed was gone, and this to them was far worse than the actual loss of men

The astonishment of General Howe and Lord Cornwallis at this display of activity cannot be described They had felt confident that the war was about at an end, and they could with difficulty understand how a forlorn, ill-clad, poorly fed party of men, — a force, too, on the very eve of dissolution on account of the expiration of term of service, — a mob which for weeks had been running away from their invincible army, could so soon turn, and, with a valor unprecedented, accomplish such an enterprise upon the very flower of their army This stroke was so unexpected, so unaccountable, that they were badly disconcerted, and could only look about, as is usual, for some one else on whom to throw the blame. Poor Rall, powerless now to speak in his own defense, fell under the ban of their displeasure They blamed him because he had not fortified his position General Howe said: "If he had obeyed the orders I sent to him for the erecting of redoubts, I am confident his post would not have been taken"

The British soldiers, mortified at this terrible defeat, said the Hessians had acted like cowards, but they forgot their splendid fighting on the banks of the Hudson a few weeks previous, and they overlooked the fact that the British dra-

goons stationed in Trenton ran away at the beginning of the fight

Governor William Tryon of New York wrote to Lord George Germain, December 31, 1776 "The Rebels carrying off the Hessian Brigade under Colonel Rall at Trenton has given me more real chagrin than any other circumstance of this war! the moment was critical and I believe the Rebel Chiefs were conscious that if some stroke was not struck that would give life to their sinking cause, they should not raise another army"

The mortification of the rulers and the people of Great Britain was profound It was with difficulty that they could be persuaded that any portion of the British army could be captured by the undisciplined yeomanry of America The letter of General Howe to Lord Germain of January 20, 1777, did not relieve this deep despondency, but caused the colonial secretary to ask for the embodiment of 20,000 additional new troops [1]

The Tory Joseph Galloway, once speaker of the House of Assembly of Pennsylvania, when examined before the British House of Commons in 1779, testified that if General Sir William Howe had pursued General Washington across the Delaware, scattered the remains of his army, and taken up his quarters at Philadelphia, the Congress would not have been able to raise another army of any consequence, not 5000 men, so as to take the field at the usual time of opening the campaign, and that the success of the rebels in defeating and making prisoners of the Hessians at Trenton had a mischievous effect on the British service, removed that panic with which the new states of the middle colonies were struck, revived their spirits and the spirits of the disaffected and induced a number of the militia to turn out who otherwise would not have done so, and contributed in a great measure to the raising of the army which General Washington commanded in the next campaign

In alluding to this subject General Cornwallis remarked

[1] Part ii. No 118

"The misfortune at Trenton was owing entirely to the imprudence and negligence of the commanding officer. On all other occasions the troops ever have behaved and I dare say ever will behave with the greatest courage and intrepidity The behavior on the attack on Fort Washington of this very brigade of Colonel Rhall's was the admiration of the whole army"

It was useless, however, for Lord Cornwallis to censure his dead subordinate when the folly was in the first place clearly his own His succession of cantonments along the shore of the Delaware River was little less than a blunder as a military movement, for it allowed the very opportunity, invited the very demonstration of which General Washington so promptly took advantage

Lord Germain's remark has passed into history "All our hopes were blasted by that unhappy affair at Trenton"[1]

Sir Henry Clinton comments on the condition of affairs in New Jersey in this language —

"There were who thought (and who were not silent) that a chain a cross Jersey might be dangerous General Howe wrote to General Clinton thus a few days before the mistortune! I have been prevailed upon to run a chain a cross Jersey! the links are rather too far asunder! General Grant was principally to blame! he should have visited his posts, given his orders, and seen they had been obeyed I am clear it would have been better if Sir W Howe had not taken a chain across Jersey! but General Grant is answerable for every thing else"

In reference to the loss of the Hessians at Trenton, General Cornwallis, when he was being examined at the bar of the House of Commons, May 6, 1779, "declared that it had been necessary for the general to extend his chain of cantonments to that distance, that he had himself indeed advised it, and that the fatal accident that afterward happened was not in human prudence to foresee, and therefore not to be guarded against"

[1] Part II No 117

We have taken the following from the narrative of General Howe "Where could the Hessian troops have been better employed than in the defense of a post In the last war the Hessian troops were esteemed not unequal to any troops in King Ferdinand's army, two of these very battalions had served in Germany with great credit, and the whole brigade under Colonel Rall's command had given a recent proof of their bravery at the attack of Fort Knyphausen" Searching for a living man to censure, Howe selected Lieutenant-General Leopold Philipp von Heister, because he had urged the appointment of Colonel Rall to the command of that Hessian brigade General von Heister was recalled by the Landgrave of Hesse, evidently in disgrace, left America June 22, 1777, and died at Cassel, November 19, 1777, at the age of sixty-one years

The records at Marburg tell us that on the day after the surprise, General Grant wrote from Brunswick "I did not think that all the rebels in America would have taken that brigade prisoners"

Major Stephen Kemble, General Howe's deputy adjutant-general, uses this language in his "Observations" on the affair at Trenton, as found in his journal, and published in the New York Historical Society Collections, 1883, p 105 "Why Post so small Detachments as to be in danger of Insult, as happened in Rall's Affair, upon the Frontiers of your Line of Communication, or why put Hessians at the advanced Posts, particularly the Man at Trentown, who was Noisy but not sullen, unacquainted with the Language and a Drunkard?"

The day after the battle of Trenton Colonel von Donop wrote to his superior officer, Lieutenant-General von Knyphausen, giving him some idea of his movements prior to December 26, and such meagre information of the fight as had been received by him up to the hour of writing[1]

General Grant also wrote to Colonel von Donop,[2] and the letters of the two officers must have crossed one another, as

[1] Part II No 63 [2] Part II No 64

the express riders took the same road! They are interchanges of vain regrets over the disaster to the British arms

In the German archives we find a letter, written in French by Lord George Germain, colonial secretary of state of King George III, to General von Heister. The following is a good translation of this important document: —

WHITE HALL 3rd of March 1777

SIR.

I have the honour to receive your letter of January 5th, the news wherein I have given to the King His Majesty had already heard of the misfortune which happened to the brigade of troops of his most Serene Highness, but was ignorant of some of the particulars One of the circumstances of this Affair your letter gives him in detail The King regrets extremely the loss of the brave officers who have suffered on this occasion fighting in his service and His Majesty has learned with sorrow that the officer who commanded this force and to whom this misfortune is to be attributed has lost his life by his rashness It is to be hoped that the dangerous practice of underestimating the enemy may make a lasting impression on the rest of the army. As His Majesty has the greatest confidence in their courage and fidelity he does not doubt but that when the occasion presents itself they will try to wipe out this disgrace by their zeal and by their valor.

I have the honour to be, with great
esteem, distinguished Sir, your
very humble and very obedient
servant —

GEO. GERMAIN

There also appears in the records at Marburg, Germany, an official report of General von Heister to the Prince of Hesse, giving him the unwelcome news of the capture of Rall's brigade The writing of this report and its receipt must have caused sorrow and chagrin to both of these men[1]

[1] Part II No. 65

A letter from the Earl of Suffolk, secretary of state for foreign affairs, to General von Heister, written in French, is also in the archives of Germany, and is worth reading.[1]

Among the military papers on file in the state archives at Marburg are the letters received by the Hessian general officers in America. The following carefully translated extracts from letters of William, Count of Hesse-Hanau and son of Frederick II., Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel, will be found of interest —

To Lieutenant-General von Knyphausen

Cassel April 7 1777

I am accustomed to hold the honor of my troops so high that nothing worse could have happened to me than to receive the information that my three regiments had in an unlucky moment lost their well-earned reputation. Nothing but an utter disregard of all drill and discipline could have caused this disgrace. I find it necessary to have a personal interview with Lieutenant-General von Heister and as the climate of the country does not seem to agree with his health I therefore write him to come here for a time and to transfer the command of my troops in America to the lieutenant-general commanding; and I sincerely hope that he, feeling as I do the grievous shock at such disgraceful conduct, will see the indispensable necessity of expunging it and that he will not rest until my troops by a great series of brave acts obliterate the memory of this unlucky affair. The death of Colonel Rall has taken him away from my wrath which he so well deserved in allowing himself in so inexcusable a way to be surprised. They also are without excuse who after Colonel Rall had been mortally wounded consented to surrender themselves in such a shameful manner instead of making an effort to break through and fight their way out as is always expected of good soldiers when they cannot any longer hold the position. The number of men who succeeded in escaping plainly shows what the rest could have

[1] Part ii. No. 66.

done if the officers remaining had done their duty and not put aside the obligations they were under to me, to the honour of my troops and to their own reputation The full particulars of this shameful act are not known to me at present but nothing has as yet come to my knowledge which atones for this disgrace I therefore order the lieutenant-general to examine all the officers on their return and report to me the exact state of the affair I am compelled to make an example of the guilty party, and I will state in advance that these regiments will never receive any flags again, unless they capture from the enemy as many as they have lost in such a disgraceful manner

Greater than my joy at the honorable conduct of my troops on their arrival in America is now my surprise and indignation on reading the report of the unlucky affair at Trenton in the lieutenant-general's report of the 5th day of January The loss of such well-organized regiments, with their flags and their cannon is not only an everlasting reproach to my troops but I must believe according to the report of the affair which has come to my knowledge that these organizations did not regard their duty nor their own honour which up to that time they had guarded so well. I reserve still my decision until I am more fully informed of all the circumstances of this disgraceful affair, which could only have taken place by an utter disregard and neglect of all discipline and all existing orders Colonel Rall was not a senior in rank on the army list and the lieutenant-general should not have intrusted him with a brigade but have taken the oldest colonel, even if he had to take him from a regiment on Staten Island or on Long Island

Other letters from the Hessian prince are given elsewhere [1]

It appears that General Knyphausen entered on this investigation ordered by his sovereign and prosecuted it from time to time during the whole of the year 1777. At the

[1] Part II No 67

beginning of the next year he wrote a report and dispatched it to Cassel, but during the spring and summer following continued, as directed, the examination of the officers and men whenever they were released from captivity. In answer to General Knyphausen's opinion, Friedrick II, Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel, wrote him April 23, 1779[1]

As soon as the exchange of the captured officers began, in the spring of 1778, and the liberated prisoners returned to the British army in Philadelphia a court was instituted to examine into the cause of the surprise at Trenton and to determine who was to blame for the disaster Colonel Carl Uphraim von Gozen of the von Donop regiment, afterward of the regiment Prinz Carl, Major Ludwig Friedrich von Stamfurth of the regiment du Corps and Captain Ludwig Maive von Mallet of the von Linsingen battalion constituted the court. From time to time all the officers of the Rall brigade who were then living and who had not gone over to the American army testified before this court as to their knowledge of the affair

The first meeting of the court was held in Philadelphia April 13, 1778, and continued there April 14, 18, 21, 22, 28, May 1 and 2 Then Justin Heinrich Motz, upper auditor, prepared, May 4, 1778, a description of the surprise at Trenton "as far as I can understand it from the investigation documents" The court continued to convene May 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 19, 20, 21 and 22 After a march through the Jerseys and the battle of Monmouth, June 28, 1778, it reconvened at Horn's Hook, near Haarlem, New York, in the camp of the regiment von Donop, and continued August 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 12, 13 and 17 On August 18 it met at John's House, New York, on August 24 at Lieutenant-Colonel Scheffer's quarters, on August 29 again at Horn's Hook and at the Morris House on September 23, 1778 The result of all this investigation was attested by Justin Heinrich Motz, upper auditor, and sent to the Prince of Hesse, September 23, 1778, officially signed and with the Hessian auditorial seal affixed

[1] Part II No 68

On December 22, 1778, a Hessian official at Cassel, Wagerman by name, made a digest of all the reports, statements and conclusions for the benefit of the Prince of Hesse

The investigation dragged along during the years 1780 and 1781, and on December 13, 1781, Auditor Johann Jacob Lotheisen gave to the Landgrave of Hesse an estimate of the killed and wounded of the Rall brigade [1]

On January 5, 1782, a court-martial was again organized, and all the officers who took part in the affair at Trenton were again examined or had their former testimony read to them, they assenting to it

Lieutenant-Colonel Francis Scheffer of the von Lossberg regiment was unable to be present before this court, and he sent a letter to them, which communication is herewith given, as well as the proceedings of the court relative to their action in the matter [2]

This court was in session for a week, and at the end of that time, January 11, 1782, the officers of each of the different ranks represented were called upon for their opinions as to the cause of the disaster at Trenton. It is very interesting to read the different views of the matter, from those of the young ensigns, up through the different grades, each officer having had longer experience in the service, until we learn what the veteran colonels had to say of the cause of the defeat [3]

On the 15th day of April, 1782, a special commission which had been ordered by the Prince of Hesse to convene at Cassel to review all the minutes of the courts, the testimony there given and the opinions expressed, addressed to the prince a communication in which a final summing up of the whole case was attempted [4] The war being then virtually over, this was the last action taken in the matter During all these years the regiments of von Lossberg and von Knyphausen had not been allowed to carry new company and regimental colors In 1777 the name of the grenadier

[1] Part II No 69
[2] Part II No 70
[3] Part II. No. 71.
[4] Part II No 72

regiment Rall had been changed to the grenadier regiment Woellwarth, in 1778 to the regiment von Trumbach, and in 1779 to the regiment d'Angelelli

The "War Commission" confirmed the "verdict" of the court of inquiry, that "Colonel Rall and Major von Dechow in many respects acted culpably and laid the foundation for the bad fate of the brigade"

To many it has always been a matter of regret that the general plan of the surprise and attack could not have been fully carried out. General Ewing, as we have seen, found it impossible to get his troops across the river, on account of the drifting ice Yet to some this failure appears providential If he had crossed during the night, according to orders, he must have kept his men entirely concealed from daylight until eight o'clock, although within easy sight of the barracks on Front street and within twenty minutes' walk of the guard of the Hessian force at the Assunpink bridge and the quarters of the von Knyphausen regiment in the square beyond In addition to this there was a picket at Trenton Landing and an outpost at Dr Bryant's house, on the river, from both of which places the crossing of General Ewing's men would have been plainly visible If, however, he had succeeded in crossing, and had not been seen until eight o'clock, he certainly could have prevented the escape across the creek of many of the fugitives of Rall's brigade and have rendered important aid in the movements of the patriot army On the other hand, had he been seen crossing the river, had he failed to surprise the out-guard at the landing, or had a single man of his command exposed himself to view before eight o'clock in the morning Rall's veterans would have picked up the little party of militia before breakfast, the Hessian regiments would not have been so thoroughly surprised, and the American army must have fought a terrible battle with perhaps a different result

Although all history speaks of this intended crossing as at Trenton Ferry, it certainly appears reasonable that Bond's Ferry, two miles down the river, must have been the place

selected for the crossing, for at that place a sudden bend in the river, there less than 300 yards wide, and the high grounds, now the Riverview Cemetery, between Bond's Ferry and Trenton, would have somewhat concealed the passage of Ewing's division from all but the picket at Trenton Landing

With what varied emotions the detachments of Generals Ewing and Dickinson must have listened to the firing, seen the rush of the attacking party of General Sullivan, as they swept the yager outpost from General Dickinson's own mansion on the river bank, and watched the race of the victors through the lower streets of the village and they unable to aid their comrades or share in the glories of the first real conquest of the war!

Colonel Cadwalader also attempted to pass his division over the river, but was obliged to abandon the design The floating ice above Bristol prevented a crossing and he determined to try Dunk's Ferry, a few miles below the town Near this place the Third battalion of Philadelphia Associators had been encamped for thirteen days, and had erected some redoubts The battalion was now in command of Lieutenant-Colonel John Nixon, the same who on July 8 read and proclaimed the Declaration of Independence in Philadelphia for the first time Soon after dark five large bateaux and three scows were ready at the ferry, and all the troops in Bristol marched there about eight o'clock in the evening of December 25 These troops were supplied with two days' cooked rations, but the Continentals were suffering greatly from want of shoes, stockings and clothing On the march to the ferry the militia were on the right, and the New England brigade on the left of the column Colonel Timothy Matlock, in command of the Philadelphia rifle battalion, led the advance of the brigade of Pennsylvania militia The Kent County Delaware militia under Captain Thomas Rodney, and a battalion of four companies of militia from Philadelphia, Captain George Henry senior officer in command embarked first, that they might cover the landing of the two brigades

on the New Jersey shore Both of these organizations succeeded in crossing the river About nine o'clock the First Philadelphia battalion of Associators started over the ferry, closely followed by the Third battalion, and an attempt was made to land two six-pounder brass fieldpieces. But the tides, which they evidently had forgotten, affect the river below the falls of the Delaware at Trenton, and nearly 300 feet of thick ice which had just found a lodgment between the boats and the Jersey shore rendered their task futile The wind was blowing a gale, and the night was dark and very cold It was found impossible to transport the guns over the ice, and it was hazardous to proceed without them A single file of Colonel Glover's regiment of military mariners would have given them the proper time for crossing, and shown the way in which it could most easily be accomplished Just before morning, after an all-night task in which Major Jehu Eyre, the noted shipwright of Philadelphia, labored with great assiduity, and although 600 men had crossed, the troops all returned by order to the former post at Bristol, and Colonel Cadwalader was again in possession of his headquarters, at the tavern of Charles Bessonett, on the river bank Had this entire division succeeded in crossing, all of the British and Hessian troops would doubtless have been driven from their cantonments in Burlington County, and General Washington would have instantly secured for his army a firm hold upon a considerable portion of the State

Referring in his diary to the attempts of the divisions of General Ewing and Colonel Cadwalader[1] to cross the river into New Jersey, Captain Thomas Rodney says "I am inclined to think that General Washington meant these only as feints, for if our generals had been in earnest, we could have taken Burlington with the light troops alone"

Colonel Joseph Reed, Washington's adjutant-general, and Major Joseph Cowperthwaite of the First Philadelphia battalion of Associators, after crossing with the first detachment

[1] Part II No 73

of the army at Dunk's Ferry, remained on the New Jersey side of the Delaware River They concealed themselves in Dr Bowes Reed's residence in Burlington, and through his brother's agency Colonel Reed managed to send out some spies to Mount Holly during Christmas night to ascertain the condition of the Hessian advance guard They found the guard asleep in their quarters, not expecting attack and apparently regardless of it, indeed, in the same situation as their comrades at Trenton After obtaining this important information, the two officers returned unseen from Burlington, and at daylight landed at Bristol

As soon as he heard of the disaster at Trenton, Colonel von Donop, the hitherto cautious officer, who had just made the foolish and fruitless pursuit of Colonel Griffin's command, which had decoyed him to Mount Holly, went to Black Horse and thence to Allentown He deemed it important, as he said, to keep the way open to Princeton, and thought it best to retire before an enemy approached He then sent Captain Thomas Gamble, the acting quartermaster-general, to Princeton to inform General Leslie of the direful news he had received, and how he proposed to act He had then but nine cartridges for each of his cannon, and his ammunition for firelocks was very small

He also sent an order to Lieutenant-Colonel von Minnigerode, in command at Bordentown, to vacate that place and join him immediately. This order the lieutenant-colonel received at midnight, December 26 Early in the morning of December 27 his men despoiled the library of Francis Hopkinson, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, committed other injuries to the place and the people, and then left the village in great haste. In this way all the outposts in the advance toward Philadelphia were abandoned The Hessians left twenty sick and wounded men in Bordentown for the patriots to care for and some provisions and forage which they were unable to carry away for want of wagons All the fugitives of Rall's brigade, reported at this time as 292 men, including the picket force at Crosswicks bridge,

accompanied Lieutenant-Colonel von Minnigerode to Allentown

It may be mentioned here that Captain Heinrich Ludwig Boking, the ranking officer of the Rall regiment, was placed in charge of all the escaped men of this brigade until just before they arrived in Princeton, when he was superseded by Captain Alexander von Wilmowsky, formerly of the regiment von Bose, who commanded them until, marching by way of Amboy, they arrived in New York city

The following order issued by General Howe appears to have reference to the men who escaped to Bordentown and Princeton on December 26 —

HEAD QUARTERS NEW YORK Jan 1st 1777

The Remains of Col Rall's Brigade being under Orders for New York the Deputy Quarter Master General will provide Vessels to receive them, at Amboy, where they are to Embark, and the Barrack-Master of New York will prepare Barracks to receive them

During the afternoon of Friday, December 27, General Leslie, then in command at Princeton, wrote to Colonel von Donop, expressing his regrets for the disaster at Trenton [1] In this letter General Leslie desired Colonel von Donop to remain at Allentown, but subsequently he must have become alarmed at the situation of affairs, and have spent a wakeful night No doubt exaggerated accounts of the affair at Trenton and of the condition of Washington's army were hourly coming to his notice At all events it seems that at two o'clock he wrote to Colonel von Donop, and at daylight an express rider took another letter to the Hessian commander [2]

Colonel von Donop answered General Leslie's letters immediately His reply, singular to relate, is written in French instead of German : —

[1] Part ii No 74

[2] For these letters see Part ii No 75

SIR

I was fortunate in receiving your communication of this morning at eight o clock and I will set all in motion, although the news of yesterday from Trenton does not inform me about the 1400 men which according to your information have marched toward Pennington to join the Jersey Troops at Rocky Hill

DONOP
Colonel

ALLENTOWN 28th Dec 1776

Will you have the kindness to advise me whether I ought in marching to join you with all my force or whether I ought to stop some on the way or post some of them here

General Grant, the British commanding officer at Brunswick, sent an express to General Howe at New York, desiring instructions as to where he should place Colonel von Donop's force, but in the mean time he wrote to von Donop, giving him orders as to what he should do until plans for the future should be settled [1]

At eight o'clock on the morning of December 28 a report reached Colonel von Donop that 1400 rebels had landed in Trenton, marched to Pennington and thence to Rocky Hill, where they had united with a large body of New Jersey militia for the purpose of making an attack on Princeton Colonel von Donop sent his baggage to Cranberry under a guard of 100 grenadiers commanded by Captain Johann Friedrich von Stein, whom he instructed to wait there for orders, and then, taking the direct road, he marched with all his force toward Princeton Scarcely was his column in motion when he received General Grant's letter, ordering him to go into garrison at Princeton Two hours afterward he received another letter from General Grant, brought by Lieutenant Patrick Henry, adjutant of Lieutenant-Colonel Elisha Lawrence's First battalion of New Jersey volunteers, loyalists, of Brigadier-General Courtlandt Skinner's command [2]

[1] Part II No 76

[2] Part II No 77.

General Leslie was ordered to send toward Trenton a patrol and guard of light infantry to obtain news and to cover somewhat the march of von Donop's force to Princeton. He was also directed that on the arrival of this column he should place some of the British troops at Kingston and at Six Mile Run, and station the second brigade of the British line and the Forty-second regiment of foot at Rocky Hill, and let them throw out pickets towards Pluckemin.

As soon as von Donop arrived at Princeton, he reported the fact to his superior officer, General Grant, at Brunswick, and touched upon the condition of matters there.[1]

[1] Part II. No. 78.

XIV

Colonel von Donop's force arrived in Princeton at two o'clock in the afternoon of December 28, and immediately went into quarters to take the place of Leslie's brigade of the British line. The von Minnigerode battalion succeeded in finding houses for their occupancy in the town, the Forty-second regiment quartered toward Stony Brook on the road to Maidenhead, the yagers in houses north of Princeton on the road to Kingston, and the von Linsingen and Block battalions, with the men of the Rall brigade, remained in Kingston. Even then there were not sufficient houses in which to quarter von Donop's entire command, and the first night some 400 men were obliged to camp out in the open fields. An order was sent to Captain von Stein at Cranberry to bring the baggage on to Princeton. He reported in Princeton on the night of December 29.

General Leslie did not relish the idea of leaving his pleasant quarters in Princeton, and he tried in every way to delay his own departure, hoping that some change might be made in the orders and he be allowed to retain the chief command in the town.

During the night of December 28 additional reports reached Princeton of the movements of American troops in New Jersey. The Forty-second regiment was then sent towards Maidenhead, where the light infantry was stationed, and the von Linsingen regiment took its place at Stony Brook and toward Eight Mile Run. At the slightest alarm Colonel Block at Kingston was to march his men to the high ground around the college at Princeton. The yagers were directed to form a rear-guard. The baggage of von Donop's division was kept packed that it might be quickly sent on to Brunswick if necessary.

Colonel von Donop then ordered two small redoubts to be erected on the south side of Princeton village, and made other preparations for the anticipated attack on his post On the 29th of December another rumor reached him of the approach of General Washington's army. The next day strong patrols were sent out from Maidenhead toward Pennington, but they could not discover any traces of the Americans About nine o clock in the morning the Hessians captured an officer of the "rebel army" who evidently was trying to discover the position and condition of the British forces

Referring again to the movements of the American army, we remark that Colonel Cadwalader had heard the firing at Trenton early in the morning of December 26, but had supposed it was from guns on the west bank of the river He did not think Washington's column could have succeeded in crossing the river with their cannon when he had been unable to do so About eleven o'clock, however, he received from General Ewing the intelligence of the crossing of General Washington's army and of the suprise of the Hessians which General Ewing's force had just witnessed He immediately gave orders that the troops should rest that day and be ready to cross early on the morning of December 27. During the day supplies of clothing reached Bristol from Philadelphia, and the New England brigade, which was "in want of shoes, stockings and breeches," was soon in a better condition About ten o'clock on Friday, leaving their camp equipage behind with a small party under command of Lieutenant-Colonel William Coates of the First battalion Philadelphia Associators, the division began to cross the river at Minnick's Ferry, about a mile above Bristol[1] As on Christmas night, the light troops covered the landing, and the crossing was completed just before three o'clock in the afternoon It was then that Colonel Cadwalader first learned

[1] This ferry was called after its owner, Christian Minnick In the year 1795 it was changed to Bloomsdale Ferry The ferry landing in Pennsylvania is now on property owned by D Landreth & Sons

of the retreat of Colonel von Donop's force from Bordentown and Mount Holly The full account of the victory at Trenton was also communicated to him, with the perplexing statement that the army had returned to its former encampment in Pennsylvania He was now greatly embarrassed to know how to proceed, ignorant as he was of the future plans of the commander-in-chief A council of his officers was held, and while some urged a return to Pennsylvania, others thought that the new troops should be immediately allowed to face the enemy, as they desired, and to share if possible in the results of the victory won by their comrades It was at last determined to repair to Burlington This plan was carried out with great caution and much delay caused by a circuitous march of some miles to avoid the Assiscunk Creek, a navigable stream Later it was discovered that it would have been quite as easy to have gone to Bordentown as to Burlington, which latter movement might almost be called a retreat before a flying foe.

The march from the ferry landing to Burlington was made with the rifle battalion in single file on the right and then the light infantry in double rank The artillery followed, and behind them came the main body of the troops in platoons In this way Burlington was reached about nine o'clock in the evening No enemy was found in the village, and all in the immediate vicinity were in great consternation

Early on the morning of December 27, General Washington wrote an account of the surprise at Trenton and sent it to Colonel Cadwalader, who received it that evening [1]

From Burlington Colonel Cadwalader wrote the following letter to General Washington It was commenced in the morning, but not finished until the afternoon, when he received the commander-in-chief's letter —

[1] Part II. No 79

BURLINGTON 27th December 1776
10 o'clock

SIR

As I did not hear from you this morning and being prepared to embark, I concluded you was still on this side and therefore embarked and landed about 1500 men about two miles above Bristol After a considerable number were landed, I had information from the paymaster of Colonel Hitchcock's Brigade, that you had crossed over from Trenton This defeated the scheme of joining your army We were much embarrassed which way to proceed I thought it most prudent to retreat, but Colonel Reed was of opinion that we might safely proceed to Burlington and recommended it warmly, lest it should have a bad effect on the militia, who were twice disappointed The landing in open daylight must have alarmed the enemy and we might have been cut off by all his force collected to this place We had intelligence immediately afterwards that the enemy had left the Black Horse and Mount Holly ! upon this we determined to proceed to Burlington Colonel Reed and two other officers went on from one post to another, 'till they came to Bordentown, where they found the coast clear. Colonel Reed and Colonel Coxe are now there and we shall march at four to-morrow morning for that place

This information has induced me to proceed, though not quite conformable to your orders which I received on the march this afternoon If you should think proper to cross over, it may be easily effected at the place where we passed, a pursuit would keep up the panic. They went off with great precipitation and pressed all the wagons in their reach. I am told many of them are gone to South Amboy. If we can drive them from West Jersey, the success will raise an army next spring and establish the credit of the Continental money to support it I shall write to you to-morrow, I hope from Trenton

I am, SIR, your most obedient, very humble servant

JOHN CADWALADER.

P S — I have two six-pounders, brass and two three-pounders, iron.

Colonel Cadwalader immediately sent out scouts and adopted such a course as the information gained might warrant Adjutant-General Joseph Reed, with Lieutenant-Colonel John Cox and Major Joseph Cowperthwaite, went toward Bordentown in search of the Hessian pickets, but of course found their posts deserted Passing through Bordentown, where the Hessians had left their stores and their sick and wounded, Colonel Reed rode on to Trenton, which he entered long before daylight on Saturday, December 28 He found that village deserted by both armies, and the inhabitants in a state of fearful anxiety, not knowing what new movement was about to be made on the town. The condition of affairs there was immediately communicated to General Washington by Colonel Reed, who respectfully urged him to come over to the Jerseys and follow up his success

Colonel Cadwalader's entire command, joined by the marines from the armed boats on the Delaware River commanded by Major Samuel Nicholas, Captains Isaac Craig, Thomas Read, William Shippin and William Brown, left Burlington about nine o'clock, the light troops having left just after daylight, and they all reached Bordentown at two o'clock on the afternoon of December 29, having marched on the River road by way of Crooked Billet and White Hill The whole country had been pillaged, no grain nor hay nor live stock was to be found in all the day's march

The American advance troops entered the village of Bordentown with great caution. It was known that the main body of the British army had deserted the town, but it was understood that their light horse were near and ready to make an attack at any moment However, the town was gradually surrounded, pickets were thrown out on all the roads, and after an hour had elapsed the Americans took possession of the village A small hospital, very dirty, and

containing a few sick and wounded Hessians, was the only evidence of the former occupation by the German troops.

Soon after the arrival of the Americans in Bordentown, a party of 100 riflemen, 100 light infantry and 100 active young men, picked from the militia, was sent toward Crosswicks and on the Old York road to harass the rear of Colonel von Donop's column, which rumor said was moving slowly, being encumbered with much plunder and baggage

On December 29 the advance detachment were reinforced by another strong body of militia, and they pressed on through Allentown as far as Cranberry They did not succeed in reaching the main body of Colonel von Donop's corps, but overtook only the straggling parties At Cranberry they received orders to return, and that same night marched back as far as Allentown A few prisoners were made by these detachments on reconnoissance, a German officer was killed and a standard of the Bernberg company of one of the Hessian regiments was captured This standard is still preserved.

Glancing for a moment at Congress, then in session at Baltimore, we find that on December 27 they resolved to invest the commander-in-chief with extraordinary powers, and, as it was asserted at the time, with the office of "Dictator" of the United States This was done before the tidings of the victory at Trenton reached them, on account of the urgent state of public affairs, their distance from the theatre of war, and the immediate necessity for a vigorous reinforcement of the army The text of their proceedings is as follows —

"This Congress, having maturely considered the present crisis, and having perfect reliance on the wisdom, vigour and uprightness of general Washington, do hereby

"Resolve, That general Washington shall be and he is hereby vested with full, ample and complete powers to raise and collect together, in the most speedy and effectual manner, from any or all of these United States, sixteen battalions of infantry in addition to those voted by Congress, to

appoint officers for the said battalions of infantry, to raise, officer and equip 3000 light horse, three regiments of artillery and a corps of engineers and to establish their pay, to apply to any of the states for such aid of the militia as he shall judge necessary, to form such magazines of provisions and in such places as he shall think proper, to displace and appoint all officers under the rank of brigadier-general and to fill up all vacancies in every other department in the American armies; to take, wherever he may be, whatever he may want for the use of the army, if the inhabitants will not sell it, allowing a reasonable price for the same, to arrest and confine persons who refuse to take the Continental Currency or are otherwise disaffected to the American cause, and return to the States, of which they are citizens, their names, and the nature of their offences, together with the witnesses to prove them That the foregoing powers be vested in general Washington, for and during the term of six months from the date hereof, unless sooner determined by Congress"

In the letter transmitting the resolve of Congress to General Washington, this passage occurs: "Happy it is for this country, that the General of their forces can safely be entrusted with the most unlimited power, and neither personal security, liberty nor property be in the least degree endangered thereby"

General Washington wrote to the president of Congress in reference to this mark of the confidence reposed in him. —

"I beg leave to assure them, that all my faculties shall be employed to direct properly the powers they have been pleased to vest me with, and to advance those objects, and only those, which gave rise to this honourable mark of distinction If my exertions should not be attended with the desired success, I trust the failure will be imputed to the true cause, the peculiarly distressed situation of our affairs and the difficulties I have to combat, rather than to a want of zeal for my country, and the closest attention to her interest, to promote which has ever been my study"[1]

[1] Ford's *Writings of George Washington*, vol v. p 139

The same day, January 1, 1777, he wrote to the Committee of Congress, Messrs Clymer, Morris and Walton, who had transmitted the resolve of Congress to him "I find they have done me the honour to intrust me with powers, in my military capacity of the highest nature and almost unlimited in extent Instead of thinking myself freed from all civil obligations, by this mark of confidence, I shall constantly bear in mind, that as the sword was the last resort for the preservation of our liberties, so it ought to be the first thing laid aside, when those liberties are firmly established"[1]

These resolutions gave General Washington all the authority necessary to recruit and reorganize his command in his own way, and then to sustain it in the field It also gave him the power, so much needed before, to organize engineer regiments and recruit the cavalry and artillery arms to an efficient standard It gave him the opportunity to enlist men for a long term of service instead of for a few weeks or months, as heretofore, to embody troops into a permanent force instead of enlisting them in a temporary army, to reform the two weak points of the American army — short enlistments and the depending on the rallying of an undisciplined militia in the moment of peril

In reference to the condition of the American army at this time, Burke remarks in his "History of Virginia" "Like other arts, the art of war requires an apprenticeship and the protracted duration of most contests between modern governments necessitates symmetry and continuity of warlike measures, persevering and patient constancy, mechanical rather than impulsive courage, all which are scarcely compatible with short enlistments"

As soon as Washington received the letter of his adjutant-general from Trenton, having obtained some reinforcements to that part of the army under his immediate command, he resolved to return to New Jersey, and General Greene immediately crossed the river at Trenton Ferry with 300

[1] Ford's *Writings of George Washington*, vol v p. 143

men, and took possession of the village of Trenton Before moving, the commander-in-chief sent a report to Congress.[1]

On Monday morning, December 30, General Washington crossed the river at McKonkey's Ferry, in advance of the main body of his troops, and hurried on to Trenton During the day the army made the passage of the Delaware River at Johnson's Ferry, Howell's Ferry, Beatty's Ferry and Trenton Ferry, the boats having been brought down from Malta Island To secure the ferries and guard the surrounding country against any surprise by strolling parties of British, General Washington left in Pennsylvania a small command, with headquarters at Newtown, under General Lord Stirling, who had been afflicted with rheumatism since the affair at Trenton All that day and the most of the day following, the army was engaged in transporting baggage, provisions and artillery, including the six captured cannon, across the Delaware River Captain Forrest's artillery company were unable to move "for want of shoes and watch-coats" The floating ice was still a constant and annoying hindrance The weather, however, was rather mild, and this, with the remains of the snow and hail storm of the previous week, rendered the roads exceedingly muddy

On arriving at Trenton, the general established his headquarters at the house of Major John Barnes, a loyalist, who was at that time a field officer of the First battalion, New Jersey volunteers, of General Courtlandt Skinner's Tory brigade. This house was on Queen street, near the Assunpink Creek bridge, and Washington remained there until the morning of the 2d of January, when he had his baggage moved to Jonathan Richmond's tavern, on the south side of the bridge

To return to the British army and its movements We have seen that a detachment of General Leslie's command made a reconnoissance toward Pennington On their way there they passed out of the Scotch road, and endeavored to procure some intelligence of the whereabouts of General

[1] Part II No 80

Washington and his army from the inmates of Benjamin Clarke's house at Birmingham. Failing to find any trace of the American army, they at last became convinced that all the rumors of movements to Pennington and Rocky Hill were false.

General Cornwallis, who was at this time in New York, packing his military chest for a trip to England, and filling his notebook for the ear of the king with memoranda of the



MAJOR JOHN BARNES'S HOUSE

triumph of his army in the Jerseys, was suddenly aroused from his self-complacency by the news of the terrible disaster at Trenton. General Howe immediately ordered him back to his command, and directed that all his troops should be massed for an immediate advance.

The commander of the British post at Brunswick, Major-General Grant, marched with his force to Princeton on the first day of January, leaving only about 600 men to guard the stores in Brunswick. These were in charge of Brigadier-General Edward Mathew. General Grant reached Princeton at noon that same day.

General Cornwallis joined General Grant on the evening of January 1 with a considerable body of well-disciplined soldiers, — the flower of the army in America That night Lord Cornwallis took possession, as his headquarters, of "Morven," the residence of Richard Stockton, a signer of the Declaration of Independence The outposts of the British were then at Eight Mile Run, about three and one half miles south of Princeton [1]

On Thursday morning, January 2, Cornwallis, now in full command of an army of nearly 8000 men, having sent all his baggage back to Brunswick, started on his march to Trenton Slow and wearisome was the tramp and difficult the task of hauling the guns over the muddy roadway

The Fourth brigade of the British line, — Grant's brigade, but now under command of its senior officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Mawhood, Seventeenth foot, — with three regiments and three troops of light dragoons, in all about 1200 men, with two pieces of artillery, was left in Princeton as a rear-guard, but was ordered to march to Trenton on the morning of January 3 In addition to this brigade there were some soldiers who had been on extra duty in and around New York, and who came to Princeton during the day, under orders to rejoin their respective organizations.

The second brigade, under command of General Leslie (formerly colonel Sixty-fourth foot, and an aide-de-camp to the king, but now acting as a brigadier-general in America), was ordered by Cornwallis to remain at Maidenhead, now Lawrenceville At least 5500 men continued on the march to take part in the anticipated fight in Trenton The royal artillery had with them at this time four light twelve-pounders, fourteen six-pounders, eight three-pounders and two five and a half inch howitzers [2]

[1] For composition of British forces in New Jersey at this time, see Part II No 81

[2] The following is the roster of the officers of the regiments left at Princeton —

The Seventeenth regiment had for its colonel Lieutenant-General the



MORVEN, HONORABLE RICHARD STOCKTON'S HOUSE

While he was gathering together his troops for the conflict which appeared so certain and so near at hand, General Washington tried in every way to ascertain the strength and disposition of the forces of the enemy. His brave adjutant-general, Colonel Joseph Reed, again did the cause good service. On December 30, accompanied by two officers, Second Lieutenant James Budden and Cornet John Dunlap, Sergeant

Hon. Robert Monckton, its commanding officer; lieutenant-colonel, Charles Mawhood; and its major, Turner von Straubenzee. The captains of companies were Francis Tew, William John Darby, Perkins Magra, Robert Clayton, William Brereton, George Philip Hooke, William Scott, John McPherson, Hon. William Leslie and Thomas Welch.

The Fortieth regiment had for its honorary colonel Major-General Sir Robert Hamilton, baronet, its lieutenant-colonel Thomas Musgrave, and its major Samuel Bradstreet. Its captains were James Duffe, James Wemyss, William Montgomery, John Graves Simcoe, Williams Wolfe, William Bamford, Edward Eyre, John E. Adlam, and Robert Mostyn.

The Fifty-fifth regiment was General James Grant's own regiment, and was commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel William Meadows, and its major was Cornelius Cuyler. The captains were John Luke, John Gillan, Garrett Fisher, Henry Downing, John Taylor Trevor, John McLachlan, Decimus Reynolds, William Sutherland and Michael Hamerton.

Thomas Leiper, Corporals William Pollard and James Hunter, and Privates Samuel Caldwell, George Campbell, John Donaldson, Samuel Howell, Jr., John Lardner, Thomas Peters, Benjamin Randolph, all of Captain Samuel Morris's Philadelphia troop of light horse, Colonel Reed endeavored to reconnoitre the position of the enemy General Washington was anxious to know the strength of the British force and the probable direction of their intended attack The party of thirteen rode within three miles of Princeton, but on account of the guards were unable to get nearer to the village They then attempted to go around it and get in at the rear of the army, but in this also they found some difficulty. Having obtained all the information possible, they started to return to Trenton As they were riding along the Quaker road, they observed some soldiers, apparently unarmed, passing between a barn and a dwelling-house This house the light horse party surrounded, and they secured twelve British dragoons, who had been engaged in foraging, and had left their loaded arms within the house The sergeant of the troop alone escaped, and he reported that he had fought his way through fifty horsemen Besides the British soldiers taken prisoners, a commissary was also captured, with his entire wagon train From these prisoners they obtained a good account of the numbers and condition of the British army, and the rumor that they were about to move upon the American force at Trenton was confirmed A part of the dwelling-house referred to as the scene of this little exploit is still standing, and is now occupied by Mr John Tindall Flock It is in the township of West Windsor, Mercer County, about three miles from Princeton and a half mile southeast of the village of Clarksville.

As soon as Washington was advised of the movements of the British troops, he took position on the high ridge which runs along the south bank of the Assunpink Creek. In the mean time orders had been sent to Cadwalader (who on December 25, 1776, had been made a general officer of the

Pennsylvania militia [1] by the Council of Safety, and was then at Crosswicks, about eight miles distant from Trenton) to join the main army with his full command In the councils of the commander-in-chief, General Washington and his officers had discussed the advisability of ordering Cadwalader to make a rapid détour by the road to Cranberry and attack the small garrison at Brunswick, recapture Major-General Charles Lee, and carry off all the military and commissary stores which General Mathews's force were guarding there

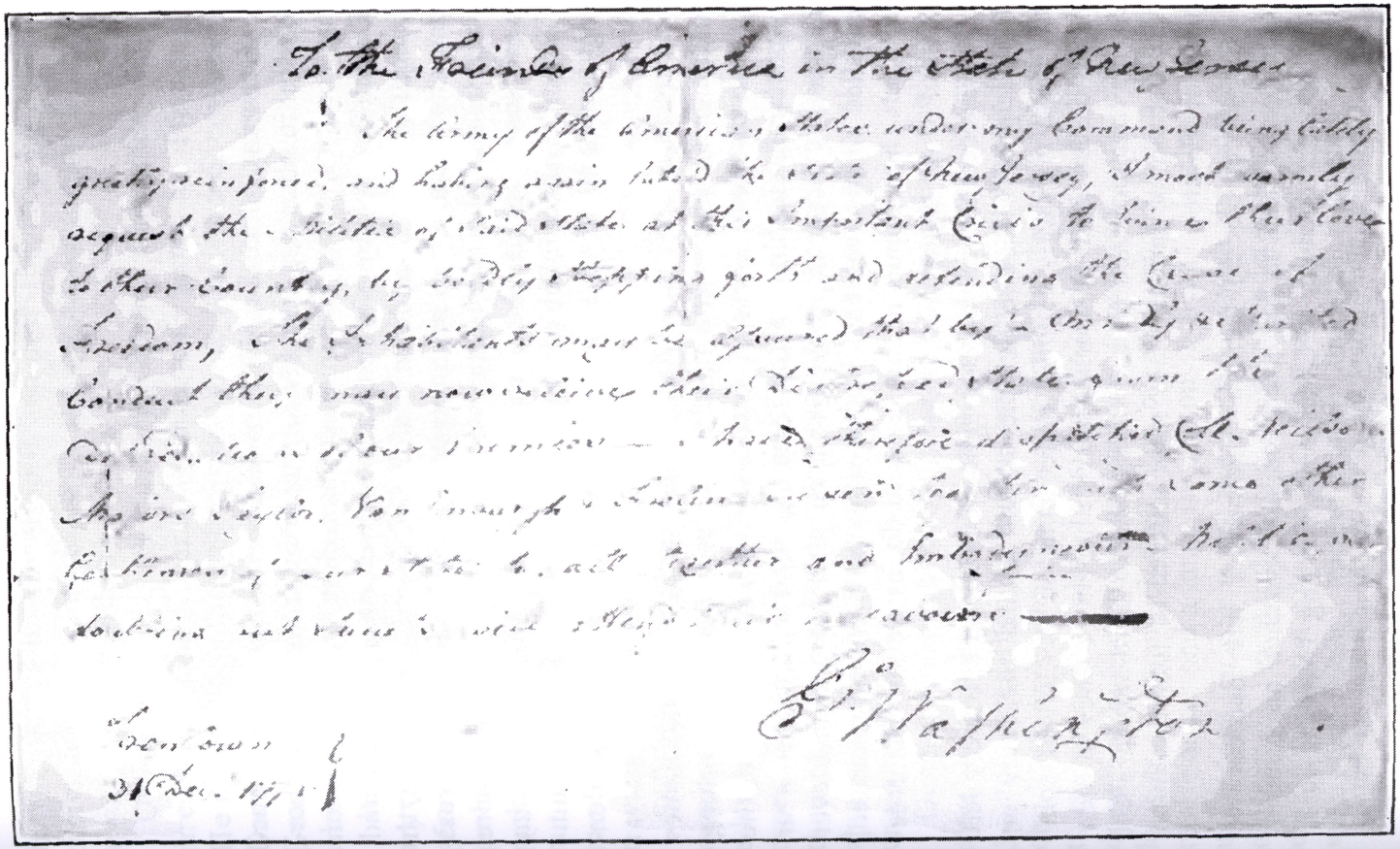
On the night of December 30 General Cadwalader received information that Brunswick had but a guard of 250 men, and a body of light troops started out to attack them should the report be true On the next day they made a forced march to Cranberry, and then began to gather horses to enable them to execute the affair quickly In the mean time spies who had been in Brunswick reported that the guard there had been reinforced by 1500 men, and this of necessity rendered the design impracticable Accordingly, in the darkness and through deep mud the troops wearily plodded back to Allentown

In this critical time General Washington made another appeal to the New Jersey militia He sent out a body of influential men to gather in the state forces This committee consisted of Colonel John Neilson, Second regiment of Middlesex County, Major John Taylor, Fourth regiment of Hunterdon County; Major John Van Emburgh, Second regiment of Middlesex County, and Major Frederick Frelinghuysen, brigade major, staff of General Dickinson

General Washington also issued the following "call to arms" [2]

[1] General Washington addressed him as Colonel Cadwalader on December 23 1776 and expressed a wish that he should be made a brigadier. and in a letter to the President of the Continental Congress December 27 he refers to him as General Cadwalader. But he seems from the Pennsylvania Archives not to have been commissioned as such until April 5. 1777 as heretofore stated

[2] Original in possession of William R Weeks of Newark. New Jersey.



XV

General Thomas Mifflin had been wonderfully successful in obtaining recruits for the army from the neighboring counties, under the instructions to him by Congress on December 10, "by all the means in his power to rouse and bring them in to the defense of Philadelphia" On the 27th day of December he sent 500 men from Philadelphia across the Bristol ferry to Burlington. The next day 300 more were sent over at the same place, and on December 29 General Mifflin followed in person with 800 soldiers, assuming command of these troops, with headquarters at Bordentown [1]

This force was chiefly composed of farmers, mechanics and men in mercantile pursuits, — men who knew nothing of war, of the dangers of battle, the weary march, and the exposure in sleeping on the frozen ground without tents or blankets Yet it is probable that no stancher patriots ever enrolled themselves than those who are here enumerated, who left their homes in this crisis to do battle for the freedom of their country.

On December 28 Captain Thomas Procter's battery left Philadelphia with two fieldpieces, and joined the army on the following day Colonel James Penrose was left in command of the post at Burlington The entire body of new troops then marched up the River road to Bordentown On the first day of January they were ordered to join the main army at Trenton

On December 29 General Cadwalader left Bordentown about two o'clock in the afternoon, and marched his column, now about 2100 men, to Crosswicks, arriving there at dusk

[1] For General Mifflin's orders and return of these troops see Part II. No 82

Having posted his command in and near the meeting house there, he communicated with the commander-in-chief, and awaited further orders[1]

On the first day of January General Cadwalader was directed to join General Washington's army at Trenton He marched his force along the White Horse road, crossing Doctor's Creek and the Sand Hills, and, being joined by General Mifflin s division at the White Horse Tavern, the whole column moved on to Trenton

It was not until eleven o'clock on the morning of January 2, however, that the whole of the additional force, about 3600 men, could be concentrated on the banks of the Assunpink Creek Some time had been required to gather in the picket-guards and the scouting parties which had been sent out toward Allentown, Cranberry and Princeton It had rained during the night, and the roads were muddy and travel greatly hindered

Still more embarrassing than the apparent paucity of numbers and the inexperience of recruits was the fact that a large number of the old soldiers of the Continental army, especially those from the Eastern States, had completed their term of service on the last day of the year, and were about to march homeward, almost "to the music of the enemy's cannon"

General Knox, whom Congress had promoted on the day after the attack on Trenton, addressed the troops December 31, and urged them to remain for a few days longer General Thomas Mifflin also came up from Bordentown to speak to the soldiers John Howard of Colonel Lippitt's regiment describes him on this occasion as "mounted on a noble-looking horse and clothed in an overcoat made up of a large rose blanket and a large fur cap on his head" In this rather unmilitary garb he urged the old troops with the most patriotic appeals to stand by the cause of independence General Washington told the men that so far they had served with great fidelity, and he frankly admitted that they had a

[1] Part II. No 83.



FRIENDS' MEETING HOUSE AT CROSSWICKS

right to their discharge, but begged them to look at the position in which they would place the cause of liberty if they now left for their homes. He alluded to the victory they had achieved a few days previous, and showed them how all this would be naught if they did not attempt to check the advance of the foe.

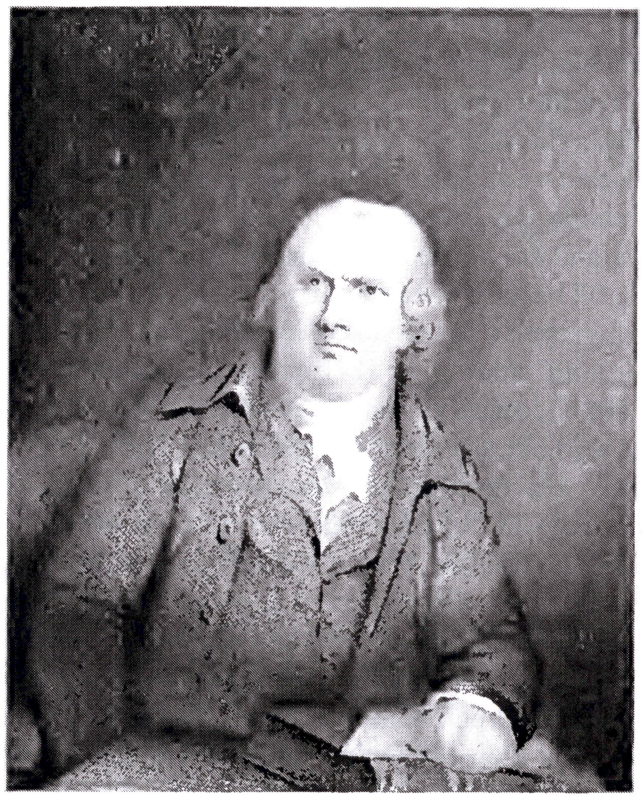
General Mifflin also had been to Crosswicks, and in company with General Cadwalader he made an appeal to Colonel Hitchcock's New England brigade to uphold the cause of national freedom until the campaign was over. Lieutenant-Colonel William Henshaw said to his Massachusetts men: "At present this is our business, let us not forsake it. It is you and I, brave boys, who are banded together in one common cause. We scorn the thought of flying from it." They consented. The time of the First and Second Rhode Island regiments expired with the year, but the Third regiment had still eighteen days to serve. The appeals to their patriotism and sense of right prevailed, and they, too, remained.

In these addresses General Mifflin made some promises with reference to captured property that were never fulfilled. Whether or not these pledges really affected them, it is difficult to say, but the request for at least six weeks more of service and an offer of a bounty of ten dollars, the same which Pennsylvania had already given her militia, caused some 1400 of the old Continental troops to poise their firelocks as a sign that they consented to the agreement. On the first day of January the eminent financier Robert Morris of Philadelphia sent "His Excellency General Washington" $50,000 which he had collected from his friends in Philadelphia on his own credit or had taken from his private purse. This amount was in addition to the sum of hard money, "four hundred and ten Spanish dollars, two crowns, ten shillings and sixpence in English coin and a French half crown," which he had forwarded to General Washington a few days previous. The last installment was sent with a characteristic letter congratulating General Washington on the affair at Trenton, and adding, "If further occasional supplies of money are necessary, you may depend on my exertions either in a public or private capacity. The year seventeen seventy-six is over and I am heartily glad of it and hope you nor America will be plagued with such another." In this way when the military chest was empty and the emergency was pressing, this noble patriot exerted himself, and always with success, to contribute to the support of the army.

The new and old troops which gathered on the bank of the Assunpink Creek may be stated as about 5000 effective men, although a large proportion of them were almost without discipline and had yet to learn the first duty of the soldier. The old troops were but relics of many regiments depleted by long marches and much suffering. The splendid Delaware regiment of Colonel Haslet, which had entered the service 800 strong, was now reduced to about 100 men. General Smallwood's Maryland troops, which had left the State with over 1000 rifles, numbered but 150 men fit for duty. This gallant organization, which had commanded the

admiration of Philadelphians, when in July, 1776, they had passed through that city, a splendid body of soldiers, had lost 250 men at the battle of Long Island, and was now but a mere fragment of a regiment. Nevertheless General Knox says that even at this time they were "in high spirits," but he qualifies the remark with "but in want of rum and clothing."

It does not appear that up to this time any more cavalry



ROBERT MORRIS

had joined the army, but the artillery was increased by the six guns which had been captured from Colonel Rall's brigade and another battery of two guns organized in Philadelphia.[1]

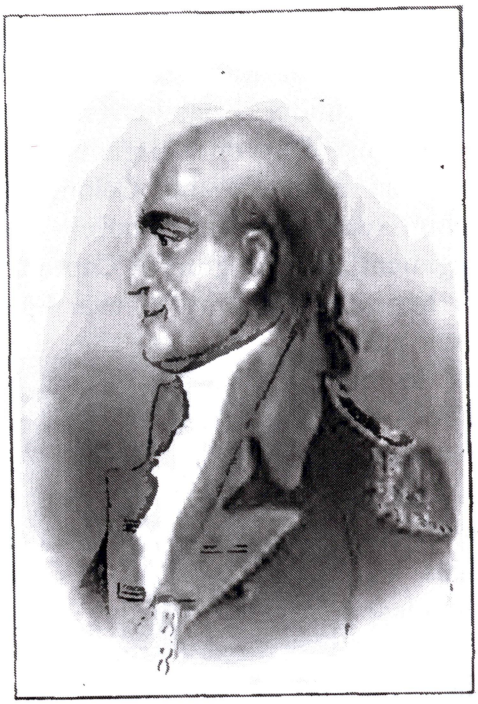
[1] This company of Pennsylvania artillery was accompanied by Major Thomas Procter, First Lieutenant Hercules Courtney commanding,

As soon as General Washington had procured definite information of the strength and position of the enemy, he sent out, under Brigadier-General de Fermoy, a detachment consisting of his own brigade, Colonel Edward Hand's Pennsylvania riflemen and Colonel Hausegger's German battalion, with Colonel Charles Scott's Virginia Continental regiment and two guns of Captain Thomas Forrest's battery, to harass the enemy in every possible way, and to dispute their advance as much as they were able, that the impending battle might be postponed for at least twenty-four hours. The Americans posted themselves at Five Mile Run, a short distance south of the village of Maidenhead, with pickets up to the town. The British outpost, as we have stated, was at Eight Mile Run, about a mile north of Maidenhead. This was the state of affairs on the old Princeton road at the close of New Year's day.[1]

During the night it rained heavily, and in the morning the roads were in a dreadful condition. According to orders the British army, having been divided into three columns, commenced the advance from Princeton before daylight on the morning of Thursday, January 2, with a detachment of British light infantry and Hessian yagers at their head. One of these yagers was killed by the American pickets while he was attempting to capture Elias Hunt, a farmer in that neighborhood. This Hessian was buried in the woods on the farm of Colonel Joseph Phillips, opposite the Presbyterian Church. Local tradition avers that for many years the ghost of the dead man was seen in that wood, and the negroes of the neighborhood carefully avoided the place after dark.

First Lieutenant Worsley Eames, Second Lieutenant Charles Turnbull, — four officers and forty-eight enlisted men present. First Lieutenant Courtney had been detached from Captain Forrest's company, in which First Lieutenant Eames took his place. Lieutenant Courtney was soon after made captain, and Major Procter was commissioned colonel of the Pennsylvania artillery regiment.

[1] For Washington's letter to Congress see Part II. No. 84.



COLONEL EDWARD HAND

About this time the commandants of regiments on the advance lines of the American army, finding that General de Fermoy had returned to Trenton in a very questionable manner, determined to resist the advance of the king's troops without further orders. About ten o'clock the first alarm gun was fired by the American videttes. Colonel Hand, with his splendid regiment of riflemen, Captain Henry Miller of his command being in charge of the skirmish line, conducted the retreat to Trenton. Every place which would even for a few moments give shelter from which to take a steady aim was taken advantage of, and every part of the road was disputed in all possible ways. On one occasion so stubborn a stand was made by the Americans that a check was produced on the British advance. They actually fell back and the patriots carefully pressed toward them. At last, however, the American detachment was driven to the woods running along the south bank of the Shabbakonk Creek, and here a severe skirmish commenced about one o'clock, and a deadly fire was made upon the British forces, throwing them into considerable confusion.

For a long time this conflict was maintained with great vigor, and the battalions of von Linsingen and Block, a part of Colonel von Donop's original command, were actually drawn up in order of battle, expecting then and there to

enter upon the general engagement which they anticipated. For fully three hours the gallant little American force, somewhat protected by the dense woods, harassed the redcoats and continually thinned their ranks with musketry and artillery. Right well did they carry out the plan of General Washington to consume the entire day, if possible, in skirmishing, and so retard the enemy's advance toward Trenton. The weather was very mild, the roads were in wretched con-



CAPTAIN HENRY MILLER

dition, and it was difficult for the British troops, except those in light marching order, to make much progress through the heavy mud.

At the northern part of the town some little earthworks had been hastily thrown up at a ravine which led down to the Assunpink Creek, and behind them four guns had been placed. Here again the retreating Americans made another post of resistance, and the Virginia troops distinguished

themselves, as the Pennsylvania riflemen had done for several hours previous It was now nearly four o'clock in the afternoon, and General Washington rode up with General Knox to encourage the troops to make as vigorous a defense as possible General Greene also came up with a reinforcement, and he immediately assumed command of the entire force at this point Captain William Hull of the Seventh Connecticut Continental regiment was now in charge of the skirmishers

General Washington was well pleased with the all-day running fight, and begged the little party not to yield until compelled to A battery of British artillery was soon after brought into position and made every effort to dislodge the American advance force Nearly an hour was consumed before the patriot band, unable any longer to sustain themselves, began again to yield the ground and retreat down the Brunswick road into the village, having captured some twenty-five or thirty men during the day

In this way the last determined stand beyond the town was taken, and as the Americans began to retreat, the advance party of the British, about 1500 men, again commenced their march in strong column, the main army being still a considerable distance in the rear The advance entered Trenton at the head of King and Queen streets, at the same place where the guns of Captains Forrest and Hamilton had opened fire on Rall's brigade on the previous Thursday. On their way down Queen street the fire from behind houses was continuous and galling When they reached Tucker's corner, where Queen street is crossed by Second street, they first began to receive the shots from the batteries of the main American army posted on the high ground on the south side of the Assunpink Creek

General Washington had drawn up his army in line of battle for nearly three miles along the bank of this stream, which he called Mill Creek, with the left on the Delaware River, and had thrown up a series of small earthworks on the ridge and across the road below the Queen street bridge



GENERAL WASHINGTON AT THE BRIDGE OVER THE ASSUNPINK CREEK I

Back of this line of battle he placed a second line consisting of his reserve troops

General Mercer and his brigade were at Phillips Ford, fully two miles above the bridge at Trenton and on the extreme right of the army Below him was General Cadwalader's command, stationed in an open field opposite Samuel Henry's mill, somewhat over a mile from the bridge, while General St Clair's brigade, with the battery of Captain-Lieutenant Sargent, was posted on the high bank just east of the bridge across the creek

The advance guard of Cornwallis's army pressed on down Queen street, still driving the Americans slowly before them, and killing some, until they arrived at the narrow stone bridge which spanned with but one arch the Assunpink Creek This was the same bridge over which a part of Rall's brigade had escaped the previous week

The commanding officer of the German battalion of General de Fermoy's brigade, Colonel Nicholas Hausegger, was taken prisoner on Queen street before the Americans came to the bridge The capture was made in so suspicious a manner that Colonel Hausegger's devotion to the cause of liberty has ever since been doubted In his "Memoirs," Captain Alexander Graydon of Colonel John Shee's bat-

[1] Colonel Trumbull painted this picture in Philadelphia in 1792, and it is now in the art gallery of Yale University. The artist says of this painting I undertook it *con amore* (as the commission was unlimited), meaning to give his military character in the most sublime moment of its exertion, the evening previous to the battle of Princeton when, viewing the vast superiority of his approaching enemy and the impossibility of again crossing the Delaware or retreating down the river, he conceives the plan of returning by a night march into the country from which he had just been driven, thus cutting off the enemy's communication and destroying his depot of stores and provisions at Brunswick I told the President my object he entered into it warmly, and, as the work advanced, we talked of the scene its dangers, its almost desperation He looked the scene again and I happily transferred to the canvas the lofty expression of his animated countenance, the high resolve to conquer or to perish. The result was, in my own opinion eminently successful and the general was satisfied"

talion of Pennsylvania militia, who was a prisoner in New York city, thus refers to this man —

"He was a German, or rather a man of no country or any country, a citizen of the world, a soldier of fortune, and a true mercenary Thinking that our cause was going down rapidly, he saw no reason for adhering any longer to it; but came over to the enemy in the season of our extreme adversity, though he did not reach us until after the affairs at Trenton and Princeton Not liking the name of a deserter, he called himself a prisoner, but certainly, if he was one, he had much better terms than we had"

Besides the column of British troops on Queen street, a body of men marched down King street in great haste, expecting to prevent the passage over the bridge They opened fire along Front street, but failed to prevent the Americans crossing the creek Here the detachment of skirmishers which all day long had hovered before and around the enemy, hastily, although with difficulty, crowded through the passage at the bridge, scarce sixteen feet wide Colonel Hitchcock's New England brigade protected these weary men as they filed across the bridge and took their places with the main army General Washington himself was on horseback at one end of the bridge, overlooking the scene, and by his personal exposure inspired his men with courage and confidence

It was then after five o'clock and rapidly growing dark. The British line, however, pressed on to the bridge, while for about ten minutes the two guns of Captain Moulder's battery, of Captain Forrest's four-pounders, and of the naval guns in charge of Captain Read, with the musketry of some of the infantry ranged on rising ground on either side of the bridge, kept rattling into their ranks with uncertain aim By the light made by the firing it could be seen that the advance of the king's troops, entirely unaware of the force now before them, had pressed on until they were within range of the American guns They made three fruitless efforts to reach and cross the bridge but found further pursuit checked, and were unable to endure the concentrated fire The effect of

this fire upon them is extremely uncertain and doubtless will never be correctly ascertained, as no mention of loss is made in any British official reports. It can hardly have been very destructive to life, although several statements of eye-witnesses made the carnage severe, when we take into account how small a number of men marching in single column could have occupied the space at this point, that this was the advance party only, and that the darkness certainly made the firing very inaccurate.

In his interesting work on "The Hessians and the other German Auxiliaries of Great Britain in the Revolutionary War," Edward J. Lowell gives the Hessian loss during the fighting of January 2 as four killed and eleven wounded, principally men of Colonel von Donop's brigade. One of the soldiers mortally wounded had been the commanding officer of the yager picket post on the River road on the morning after Christmas, and had escaped early in that fight In one of the phases of the skirmish on the Shabbakonk Creek six American riflemen of Hand's regiment jumped out from behind a bush, with guns in one hand, and motioned and called to the Hessian soldiers, as though about to desert to them Lieutenant Friedrich Wilhelm von Grothausen, with some others, although cautioned by Captain Ewald, ran out about fifty steps to receive the surrender, when he was deliberately shot in the breast. He died a few days afterward in Princeton

The loss of the American army was small. No return seems to have been made of the casualties A brief list has been compiled [1]

[1] Private John Goebel, Captain John D. Woelpper's company, German battalion, killed. Private Jacob Bottamer, Captain Peter Boyer's company, German battalion, badly wounded Private George Filsin Captain William Wilson's company, First Pennsylvania Continental regiment, severely wounded in left leg Private Wender Fortney, German battalion, wounded. There is a tradition among the descendants of Captain Richard Clough Anderson, Fifth Virginia Continental regiment, the officer who made the little attack on the Pennington road picket at Trenton on Christmas night (p 121, *ante*), that he was also

By some writers this affair is called "The second battle of Trenton," by others "The battle of the Assunpink," while students of the revolutionary period sometimes allude to it as "the cannonade at Trenton"

General Washington, in his official report, the text of which is hereafter given, uses the following language in reference to the action of the enemy in the village "After some skirmishing the head of their column reached Trenton about four o'clock, whilst their rear was as far back as Maidenhead. They attempted to pass Sampink Creek, which runs through Trenton, at different places, but, finding the fords guarded, they halted and kindled their fires. We were drawn up on the other side of the creek In this situation we remained till dark, cannonading the enemy, and receiving the fire of their fieldpieces, which did us little damage." [1]

While this was taking place, Colonel Hitchcock, with his Continental brigade of Cadwalader's division, had taken position in a field on the Bloomsbury farm between the bridge and the river, and had thrown up a temporary breastwork It was in time, fortunately, for a determined party, principally of Hessians, attempted to cross the creek at a good fording-place, probably near where the Warren street bridge now is, but the brave New England Continentals sent a rain of lead on the attacking party, and they quickly abandoned the project

At this place on the bank of the creek a clergyman was cruelly murdered The Rev John Rosbrugh, pastor of

wounded in this fight Captain William Moseley Seventh Virginia Continental regiment, wounded. Lieutenant-Colonel Samuel B Webb, aide-de-camp to General Washington, wounded

[1] General Knox wrote to his wife 'The enemy pushed our small party through the town with vigour though not with much loss Their retreat over the bridge was thoroughly secured by the artillery After they had retired over the bridge, they advanced within reach of our cannon, who saluted them with great vociferation and some execution" Captain Thomas Rodney of Delaware says "We kept possession of the bridge altho' the enemy attempted several times to carry it but were repulsed each time with great slaughter"



THE BEAKES HOUSE, STILL STANDING

the Allen's Township Presbyterian Church, Northampton County, Pennsylvania, and chaplain of the Third battalion of Northampton County militia, had been taking an early supper at the Blazing Star Tavern kept by Francis Witt on the corner opposite to Abraham Hunt's store, when the British ran quickly down King street. The patriot chaplain, who was of Scotch-Irish parentage, and sixty-three years of age, rushed from the inn on hearing the alarm, but found that his horse had already been stolen. He then endeavored to reach the American lines at the bridge. Failing in this, he next tried the ford, to which we have just alluded, where he was caught by a party of Hessians. Here, while praying for his captors, he was bayoneted seventeen times and cut on the head with many sabre slashes. His body was stripped of its clothing, robbed of watch and gold. The British officer in command of the party boasted of the deed in the tavern a few hours later. General Courtlandt Skinner, who commanded the New Jersey volunteers in the royal army, highly applauded the perpetrator of the act.

It was now nearly six o'clock and quite dark, and further attempts to cross the creek were abandoned until the main

body should arrive in the village or until morning should enable them to see the force they were expected to vanquish

The American artillery, however, still kept up a determined fire, throwing shot into the town from the high ground on the south side of the creek, which commanded the village. This was returned by the British light batteries, although without effect It is said that balls struck the building on Ellet Tucker's corner, and that other cannon-shots tore away part of the wall of the jail, now the Trenton Bank. This cannonade was kept up at intervals during the early part of the evening As General Knox writes, "a few shells we now and then chucked into the town to prevent them enjoying their new quarters securely" Most of the British, however, had withdrawn to the high ground on the Beakes farm, at the upper part of the village, out of the range of these missiles, although during the evening the streets were thronged with crowds of redcoats

It will always appear singular that the invaders did not attempt to cross the creek at some of the many fording-places on the east of the town, such as at Henry's Mill or Phillips Ford, the one a mile, the other two miles above the mill-dam at the bridge It was impossible for General Washington to protect the whole stream, and had the British forced the American right and driven them toward Trenton Ferry and the river, nothing could have saved the entire army. A determined advance along the line and a half hour's fight would have decided the battle The American army would have been well-nigh annihilated, and with it the fate of America and the hopes of freemen

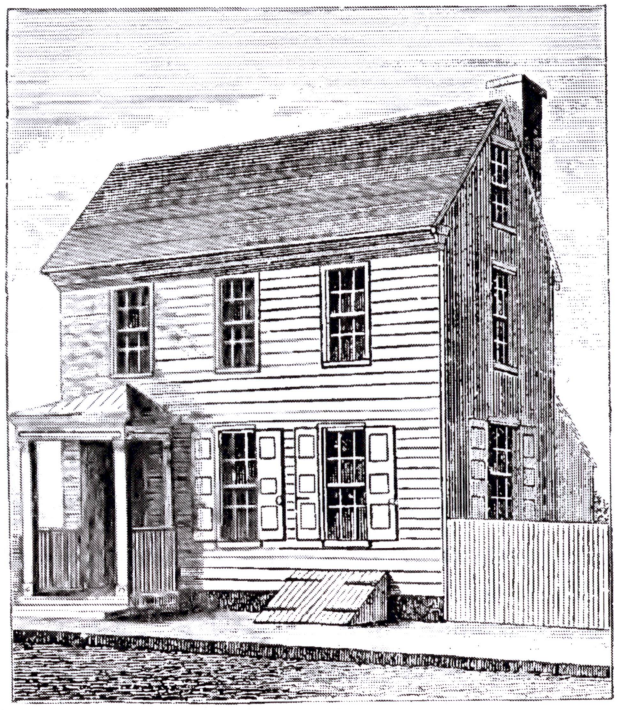
When General Cornwallis reached the town, he held a brief consultation with his general officers, and Sir William Erskine, Baronet, colonel and aide-de-camp to the king, but acting as the quartermaster-general of the army in New Jersey, suggested that perhaps the "old fox" might escape in the night. "If Washington is the general I take him to be, his army will not be found there in the morning" Major-General Grant agreed with Cornwallis that the Amer-

icans were without means of retreat They thought they had General Washington's army safe enough; their troops were very weary, and they could without difficulty "bag him" on the morrow and capture his whole army The British forces then built their fires, and settled themselves for a quiet night, with the expectation of a fight at an early hour on the next day

Orders were immediately sent out to call the troops at Princeton and Maidenhead to join the army at Trenton as early as possible on the next morning General Cornwallis failed, however, to send out strong scouting parties that night, as he should have done, to ascertain the exact position of the foe, and to establish proper picket lines on his exposed flank It was said by Colonel von Donop that he advised the commanding general to send a party across the creek into the woods on the American right wing to prevent an attack being made on the British left flank Fortunate, indeed, for General Washington's subsequent plans that Cornwallis did not follow the advice of von Donop

Another of those fearful crises in the fate of America had arrived, a time similar to the day when the troops of the flying camp had abandoned the army at Brunswick, or to those moments of suspense as the night was passing away and the day was near at hand while the army was still crossing the river for the surprise at Trenton, or that critical time but forty-eight hours previous, when the term of service of a large part of the Continental line had expired It was now almost impossible to retreat across the river with so large and disciplined an army close upon them To leave the bluff of the Assunpink Creek and fall back to Bordentown, and so southward toward Philadelphia, would be certain annihilation, to attack the enemy on the morrow and to risk the fortune of a battle was but to court defeat from troops superior in numbers and better skilled in the art of war; to remain in their earthworks until morning was to invite destruction or an early surrender. The American army was apparently in a *cul-de-sac*.

This was the situation when General Washington called a council of war at Alexander Douglass's house,[1] at that time Brigadier-General St. Clair's headquarters. Washington had been obliged to abandon his own quarters, at the tavern of Jonathan Richmond, much nearer to the bridge, because it was within the range of the enemy's cannon. At quartermaster Douglass's house all his brigade commanders gathered, and freely discussed the alternative of attack or retreat: whether to fight their troops, many of whom were raw and

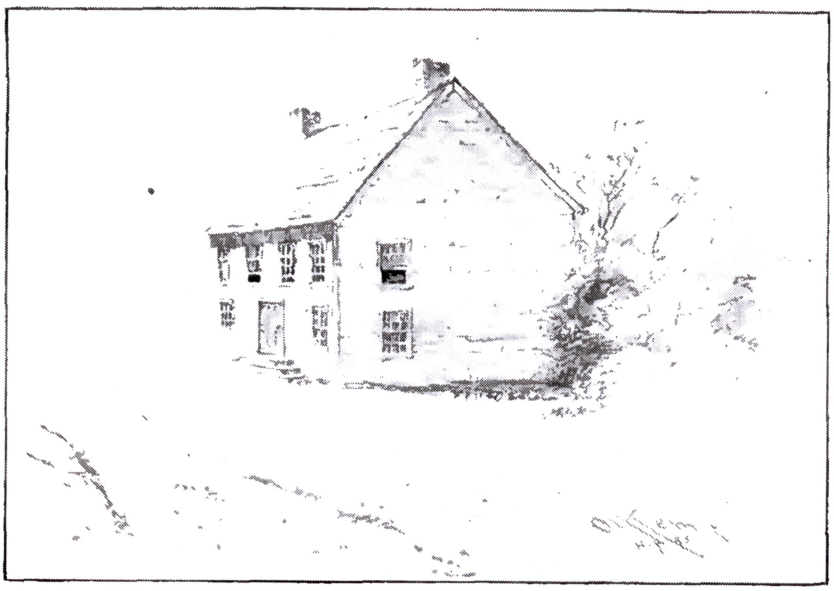


THE DOUGLASS HOUSE

inexperienced, against the powerful column so near them, or to fall rapidly down the Delaware River, and take the chances of crossing into Pennsylvania. At last a plan less hazardous than flight or battle was suggested: to draw off

[1] On ground now occupied by the German Lutheran Church on Greene street. The Douglass house has been removed, and is now No. 478 Centre street, Trenton.

the army at midnight, and by a rapid march around the left flank of the enemy, avoiding the post at Maidenhead held by General Leslie, strike the British rear-guard at Princeton, some twelve miles from the grand army of the enemy, and, if possible, attack the post and capture the stores at Brunswick. This movement, it was thought, would avoid the



JONATHAN RICHMOND'S TAVERN

appearance of retreat, and would not injuriously affect the spirits of the troops.

This flank movement of the American army was a brilliant conception of the commander-in-chief. It is stated in some histories that it was suggested by General Mercer, while other writers have placed it to the credit of General St. Clair. Because the council was held in St. Clair's quarters is no reason for his biographer appropriating the result of these deliberations as the fruit of his great forethought and military genius. Neither General Mercer nor General St. Clair was, it is to be supposed, especially familiar with this roundabout route. It is much more reasonable to attribute the suggestion to General Dickinson, who was a resident of

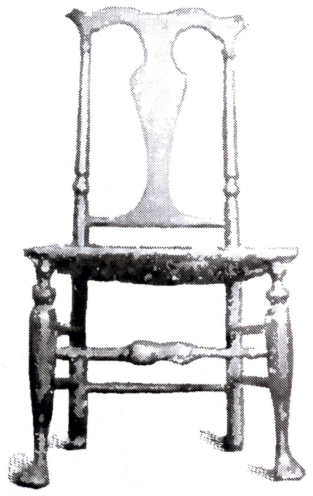


BRIGADIER-GENERAL ARTHUR ST. CLAIR

Trenton, or to Colonel Joseph Reed, who was a graduate of Princeton College and whose birthplace was Trenton. Colonel Reed, as we have seen, had just performed a brave little exploit near Princeton, with some men of the Philadelphia troop of light horse, and in going and returning he must of necessity have passed over some portion of this very road. His report to the commander-in-chief, on whose staff he served, must have given General Washington all the necessary information as to this circuitous route to Princeton. It is certain that the great chieftain knew what he was about, and did not deliberately put himself in a trap that day, and

then despairingly ask his general officers to get him out of it. Nor can it be supposed that General Washington left it until eleven o'clock at night before he at least thought of what orders he must give six hours thereafter.[1]

While the council of war, which he had called at the Douglass house, was still in session, there occurred, as Washington said, "a providential change of weather." The mildness which had so retarded the march of Lord Cornwallis's force that day was suddenly succeeded by a cold northwest wind which froze the ground in a few hours. Here, then, was an opportunity to march an army over hard roads and move the forty guns, which could hardly have been accomplished over a muddy route.



CHAIR USED BY WASHINGTON AT THE COUNCIL OF WAR

It is said that during the evening Patrick Lamb, who lived near the Quaker bridge over the Assunpink Creek, and possibly kept the tavern there, Ezekiel Anderson, who lived in a direct line somewhat more than a mile northeast of the bridge (the house is now occupied by William S. Morris), and Elias Phillips of Maidenhead were called into the council room, where, being well acquainted

[1] This subject I have discussed at some length in a paper entitled "The Princeton Surprise," published in *The Magazine of American History*, August, 1882. The opinion there expressed is fully confirmed by a letter written by private John Lardner of the Philadelphia troop of light horse to Captain John R. C. Smith, then commandant of the troop. This letter is dated July 31, 1824, and is now on file in the archives of that organization. It is elsewhere given in full. If privates John Lardner, George Campbell and James Caldwell were posted on this road near the Quaker bridge on the evening of January 1, 1777, to give notice of the movements of the British forces, of course Colonel Reed, as adjutant-general of the army, was aware of the fact, and knew the direction of the road, as did General Washington. (For letter see Part ii. No. 89.)

with the road which General Washington desired to take, they were intrusted with the duty of guiding the army

As soon as the plan of operations was decided, the order was issued, and in the darkness the troops began quietly to make ready for the flank movement. On the high ground by the creek a number of camp-fires were burning, and these were carefully replenished with cedar rails, the neighboring fences furnishing the fuel A strong fatigue party was directed to throw up additional earthworks by the old mill and to strengthen those at the lower ford, in order, if possible, to keep the enemy under the delusion that the men were still there preparing for the battle in the morning The noise of the tools, the voices of the fatigue parties, the axe-blows, and the throwing up of the frozen earth could be distinctly heard by the British pickets only one hundred and fifty yards distant The lines of camp-fires could also be seen burning fiercely, the very flame concealing everything beyond, and the guards at the bridge and the upper fords, being greatly strengthened, kept pacing to and fro until near morning

Soon after midnight three of the heaviest pieces of ordnance and all the baggage and stores of the army not specially needed were sent to Burlington by way of Bordentown, under a strong guard commanded by General Stephen They reached Burlington about noon on January 3. On January 8 this wagon-train was ordered to proceed to Morristown, and the following day it passed through Trenton, reaching Morristown January 12, guarded by detachments of the militia of Cumberland and Chester counties, Pennsylvania, and of New Castle, Delaware The Philadelphia battalions of Associators, under a very injudicious order, had packed their blankets with their baggage, which for ten days caused them much unnecessary suffering Instructions were also sent to General Putnam to co-operate [1]

At the last moment Washington gave orders to keep up the fires until morning, when the fatigue party left in charge

[1] Part II No 86.

of them, with those at work or on guard at the bridge and the fords above and below it, in all about 400 men, should push on as quickly as possible to join their marching regiments

Some of the American officers, who had retired to farmhouses somewhat to the rear, to enjoy a much needed rest, knew nothing of this movement, and the next day had some difficulty in reaching their commands after the battle of Princeton

An advance party, under command of Major Isaac Sherman of Connecticut, of the Twenty-sixth regiment, Continental foot, a Massachusetts regiment, led the American column, and Brigadier-General Hugh Mercer and his brigade followed closely behind them The main army started for Princeton about one o'clock in the morning of January 3 by way of the Sand Town road. General St. Clair's brigade, with two six-pounders, followed Mercer's command, and General Washington and his staff accompanied them

With the greatest care and with death-like silence, the army moved back by small detachments from the warm fires on the banks of the creek The orders were given in a low tone. The rims of the wheels of the gun carriages were wrapped in old cloths, that no sound might betray their night movement to the British guards The army passed on the left flank of the British, marching by way of the Sand Town road, or very near what is now called Hamilton avenue, leading out of Trenton as far as Pond Run. From this point the route led toward the little village of four or five log houses, then called Sand Town Most accounts of this flank movement tell us that the column passed through this little village, the cross-road by which the village was avoided having long since been closed up, it is quite natural that historians were led into this error A short distance west of what is now known as the residence of the late Charles V Meade, General Washington's army left the Sand Town road, and marched over to the crossing on Miry or Muddy Run, leaving Sand Town several hundred yards to



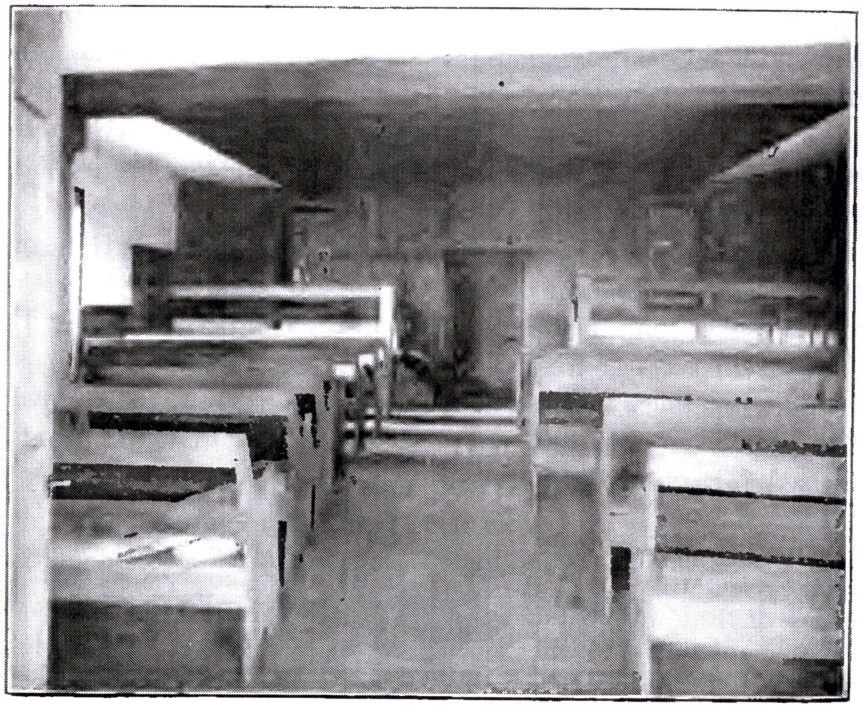
QUAKER MEETING HOUSE, STONY BROOK

the right. For nearly forty years after this cross-road was used by the American army, it was in daily use; but since then, like many other old roads not formally surveyed and deeded to the use of the public, it has been closed up by the owners of the land.[1]

The road led through heavy woods; but here and there the trees had been cut, and the stumps interfered with travel. As John Howland, one of the soldiers of Captain David Dexter's company of Colonel Christopher Lippitt's Rhode Island State regiment, in his "Spirit of 1776," says, "these trees stopped the movement of some of the guns, and caused many a fall and severe bruise to some of the over-

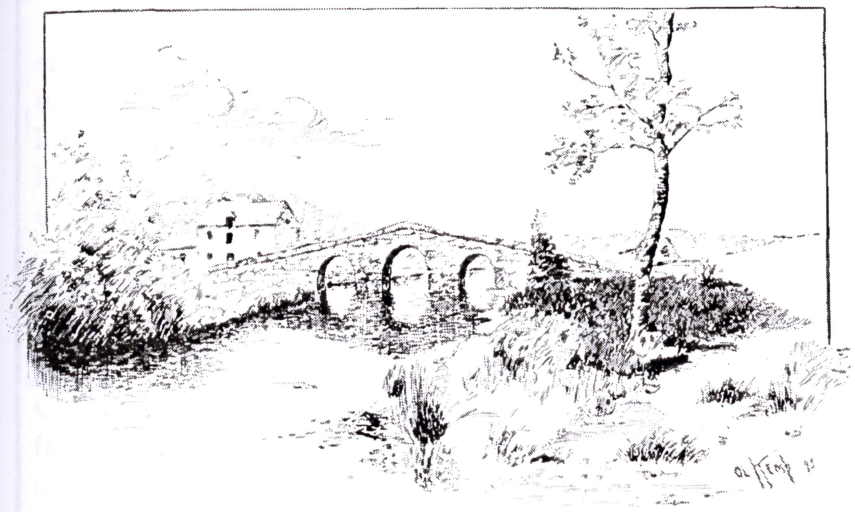
[1] Mrs. Elizabeth Hughes, now deceased, who lived on the Quaker bridge road, Mr. William H. West and Mr. William C. Vannest, aged people of the township, fully verify the existence of this road and certify to the tradition, common among the people when they were young, that this cross-road was used by Washington and his army on their midnight march to Princeton.

weary, sleepy soldiers." This road came to an end near what is now the mill-pond, and the army then marched on in the road leading north from Sand Town to the Quaker bridge. The Muddy Run was crossed just west of the mill that now stands on the bank of this stream, and the march of the army continued through a large tract of land then called "The Barrens," covered with oaks of stunted growth. Much of this land is to-day in an excellent state of cultivation. The "Bear Swamp" lay just to the west of "The Barrens," and its soil is now very much what its name implies. After passing through the wood tract, the road merged into the Quaker road, a highway used by the Friends in traveling between Crosswicks and Stony Brook Meeting House. A short distance beyond the junction of the two roads, the army crossed Quaker bridge at the same place where that bridge now crosses the upper waters of the Assunpink Creek. Beyond this bridge the road was much



INTERIOR OF QUAKER MEETING HOUSE, STONY BROOK

as it is to-day, though perhaps not so straight, and over it the patriot army marched toward Stony Brook. When they at last reached this place, some two miles from the village of Princeton, it was about daylight, and General Mercer's brigade, at that time marching in files, without flankers, passed along a strip of woods near the old Quaker Meeting House, still standing, and thence along the upper bank of



BRIDGE OVER STONY BROOK

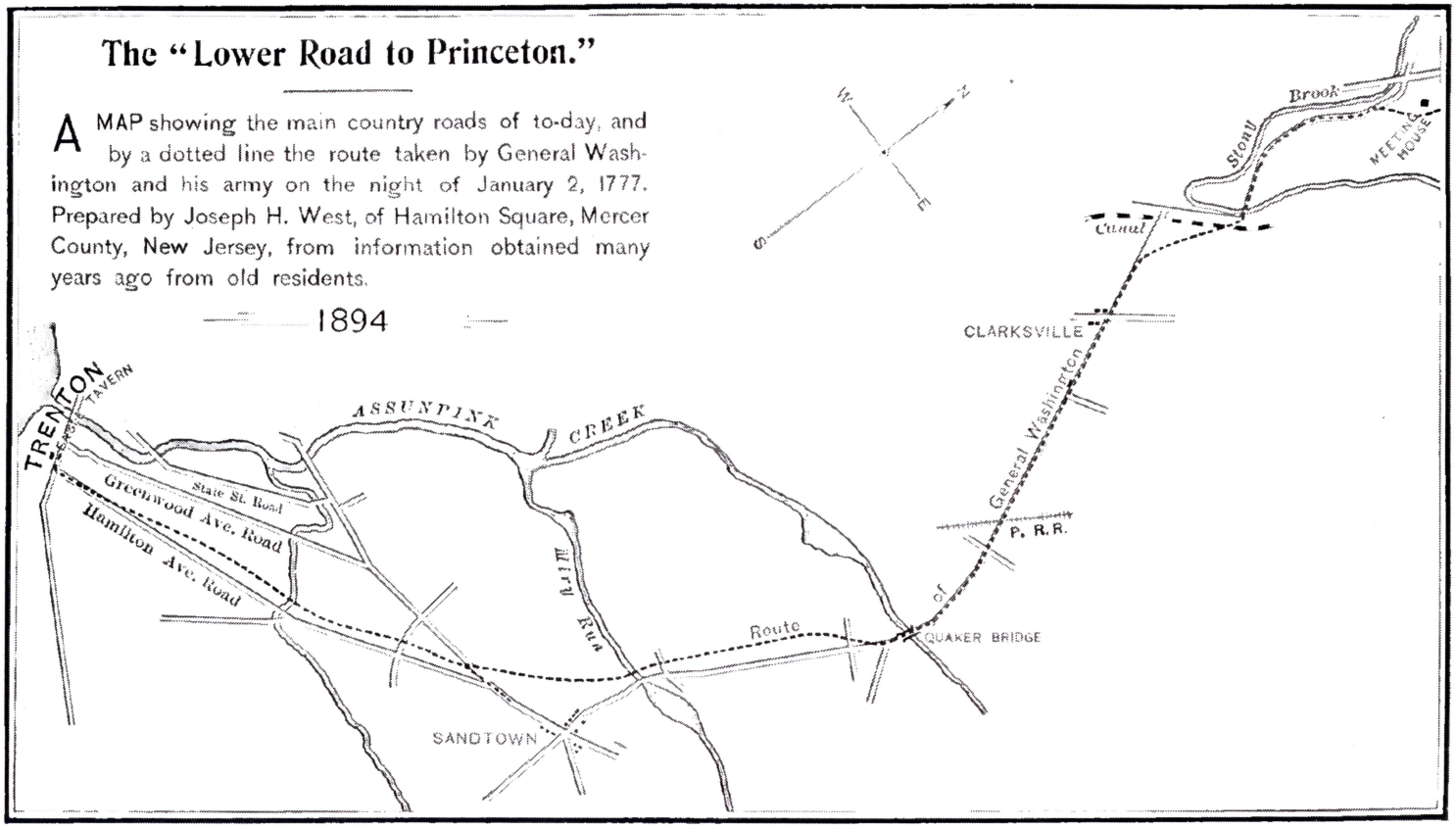
the creek toward the Stony Brook bridge. It was General Mercer's intention immediately to secure this stone bridge at Worth's (now Bruere's) mill, so that if Lord Cornwallis pursued them he might be detained there for some time. General Sullivan with three brigades was ordered to take a road somewhat to the right and southeast of the woods, that they might enter Princeton on the east side of the village, by a path or wood road at that time little used and very different from the road of to-day.

Before dawn on this cold, frosty morning of January 3, 1777, two regiments of the Fourth brigade, the Seventeenth and the Fifty-fifth regiments of the British line, refreshed by the slumber of the night and the morning meal, left Princeton, according to orders given the previous night, to

The "Lower Road to Princeton."

A MAP showing the main country roads of to-day, and by a dotted line the route taken by General Washington and his army on the night of January 2, 1777. Prepared by Joseph H. West, of Hamilton Square, Mercer County, New Jersey, from information obtained many years ago from old residents.

1894



unite with General Leslie at Maidenhead, and then push on to the main army of Lord Cornwallis. The Fortieth regiment of this brigade had been ordered to remain in Princeton to guard the stores The Seventeenth regiment and a part of the Fifty-fifth regiment had crossed the Stony Brook bridge, and were passing over Millett's Hill, having taken the old road to Trenton The remainder of the Fifty-fifth regiment was following only a short distance behind

General Mercer's troops this day consisted virtually of the same regiments he had commanded in the streets of Trenton the week previous, with some of the men of Lord Stirling's brigade added thereto His force was about 350 cold, hungry and weary men, and it was followed by General Cadwalader's brigade of Philadelphia Associators As they came out of the woods and marched quickly toward the bridge, they were seen from the hill near Cochran's house by Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Mawhood of his majesty's Seventeenth regiment of foot, the acting brigade commander Colonel Mawhood rode that day a small brown pony, and two favorite spaniels bounded about in front of him Without any idea of the army so near him, after sending out two mounted officers to reconnoitre he faced about his own regiment, somewhat more than 300 men, and, joined by a small party of the Fifty-fifth regiment, under Captain John Taylor Trevor, and a troop of the Sixteenth regiment of light dragoons, commanded by Captain Thomas Trewren, quickly ran down the hill, recrossed the bridge, and made a bold dash for an orchard on a piece of rising ground and the protection which would be afforded by a hedge fence and some farm buildings east of the present turnpike and near William Clark's house

Seeing this movement, the American advance party under General Mercer, who was mounted on horseback, with Colonel Haslet on foot and his Delaware men on the right, tried the same thing They rushed through a gate into a thick orchard, reached the coveted position first, and, finding the enemy, in about equal numbers, forming in line of battle with

two cannon in an open field just outside the orchard, instantly discharged a volley at them. The firing was quickly returned by the British, who were only about one hundred and twenty feet distant, and without a moment's delay they pushed rapidly forward on a charge. Captain Daniel Neil of New Jer-



BRIGADIER-GENERAL HUGH MERCER

sey, commanding the eastern company of artillery, brought two of his guns into position, and threw some shot into the ranks of the enemy's right wing, where it did great execution. Still the bayonets of the British and their terrible charge could not be withstood by the Americans, who had only their old rifles and muskets, few of which had the bayonet. It was difficult, indeed, for these men to stand their

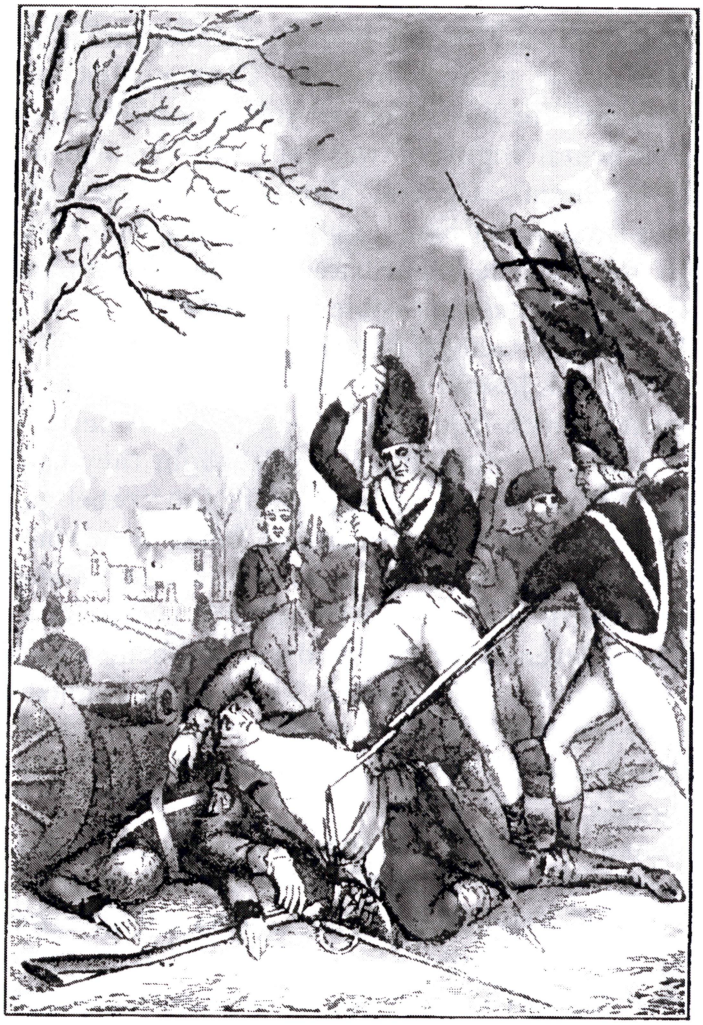
ground against British foot armed with the weapon for close quarters, and knowing well how to use it After firing three volleys within five minutes, — and Major Wilkinson says the smoke from these discharges rose "in one beautiful cloud," — the line of General Mercer's brigade abandoned its position, broke and ran in utter confusion Captain Neil here lost his battery and his life Colonel John Haslet of the Delaware Continental regiment was mortally wounded, a bullet entering his brain General Mercer had his splendid gray horse shot from under him, a bullet injuring its foreleg, but although on foot, he immediately endeavored to rally his men This he found impossible to accomplish

At this moment General Mercer, standing about fifty yards from the barn of Joseph Clark, was struck with the breech of a musket, which injured him severely A surtout overcoat concealing his rank, the British thought they had taken General Washington, and called out for the "rebel general" to surrender With reckless courage, being somewhat indignant at being called a rebel, he tried to strike his assailants with his sword, but was overwhelmed, beaten down and pierced with seven bayonet wounds in his body, in addition to the two wounds on his head. Then, as he feigned death, the British left him He fell at the moment of defeat, but five minutes later he heard the welcome shout of his victorious comrades

Lieutenant-Colonel Mawhood and his men pursued the disorganized brigade to the top of a ridge near William Clark's house Here he espied General Washington, who had heard the firing, hurrying up on the left to the aid of Mercer's men, with Hitchcock's New England brigade and Cadwalader's Philadelphia battalions of Associators, which were the troops nearest to the scene of action

Just beyond a strip of woods General Washington, who up to this time had remained with General St Clair's brigade of Sullivan's division, noticed the disorderly rout of Mercer's brigade and the eager pursuit by the enemy to the crest of the hill Without a moment's hesitation he exposed

himself to a terrible fire in the very front of his men, and urged them to hold their ground steadily. It was a difficult task for the new troops, but the New England Continentals

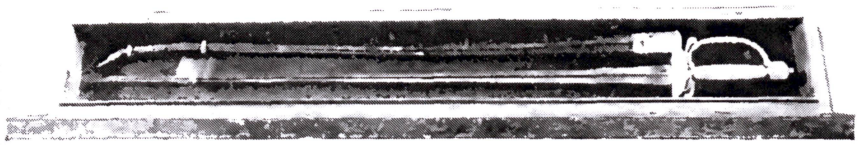


WOUNDING OF GENERAL MERCER

maintained their position well, and the brave but feeble Colonel Hitchcock spoke cheering words to the Pennsylvania men near him. The commander-in-chief then tried to rally Mercer's shattered force once more, and this he effected in a measure. The division of General Mifflin now came into

position on the right of Cadwalader's troops, and an advance was ordered along the line. Colonel Hand's regiment of riflemen also made a demonstration against Mawhood's left, and being followed quickly by the brigade of General St. Clair, they succeeded in driving back the Fifty-fifth regiment, which was endeavoring to join the small portion of that regiment fighting with the Seventeenth foot.

Captain Joseph Moulder's battery, stationed at the right of Thomas Clark's house, now the residence of Henry E. Hale, again did good service. For some reason the British artillery was badly served, failing to get the range of this new opposing force, and every time firing over their heads.



GENERAL MERCER'S SWORD

Captain Moulder's youthful gunners, however, made every shot tell as they mowed down the ranks of the redcoats.

The king's troops stopped for a moment in their hot chase of the fugitives as they noticed the column near them, and Colonel Mawhood quickly reformed his men, took post by a fence near the farm buildings, and then made a dash for Moulder's battery, Captain William Scott of the Seventeenth regiment of foot leading the assault. Captain John Fleming, commanding the First Virginia regiment, called out, as he tried to get his men into position, "Gentlemen, dress the line before you make ready," and the British troops replied, with curses, "We will dress you." Although Captain Fleming received his death wound, the attempt failed, and, staggered by the shower of grapeshot, the British were themselves driven back with much slaughter. The courage shown by the British compelled General Washington's admiration, as he noticed how they fought. The fire of the Americans was so sharp that a general officer, writing from Trenton, Janu-

ary 9, says that "the British screamed as if so many devils had got hold of them" With a shout the Americans pushed rapidly forward in order of battle It was now Colonel Mawhood's turn to retreat. He quickly turned his column, found his brigade broken, and fell back, abandoning his guns to the patriots, as the troop of the Queen's light horse endeavored to cover his retreat

XVI

THE Continental army pursued and routed the enemy completely, killing large numbers, taking many prisoners, and collecting a large amount of baggage which had been dropped in their flight The greater part of the Seventeenth regiment, chased by the Philadelphia troop of light horse, fled toward Maidenhead, or went up the brook and across the fields in the direction of Pennington, while the Fifty-fifth regiment ran back toward Princeton, where the Fortieth regiment was stationed In this fine "fox chase," as Washington called it, some fifty English soldiers were captured and later carried into Pennsylvania, where they were placed in charge of General Lord Stirling The battle was really over; a fight of scarcely fifteen minutes, but terribly severe in its results

The sight of the great chieftain placing himself in such peril between the two armies at the turning point of the conflict lent new courage to the weary troops, and they promptly came up to the work This voluntary exposure seemed dreadful to Washington's gallant aide, Lieutenant-Colonel John Fitzgerald, who, expecting every moment to see a bullet pierce the heart of his commander, endeavored to avoid the appalling sight A moment later the shout which greeted Washington's brave act, the heavy firing and the eager advance of the men startled the worried aide-de-camp, and he looked up but to see the general coming forth uninjured from the smoke of battle and to hear himself calmly addressed in an order, "Bring up the troops, Colonel Fitzgerald, the day is our own!"

An officer of the Continental line, writing from Morristown a few days after this gallant but hazardous exploit, used these words, "Our army love the general very much, but they have



THOMAS OLDEN'S HOUSE

one thing against him, which is the little care he takes of himself in any action." [1]

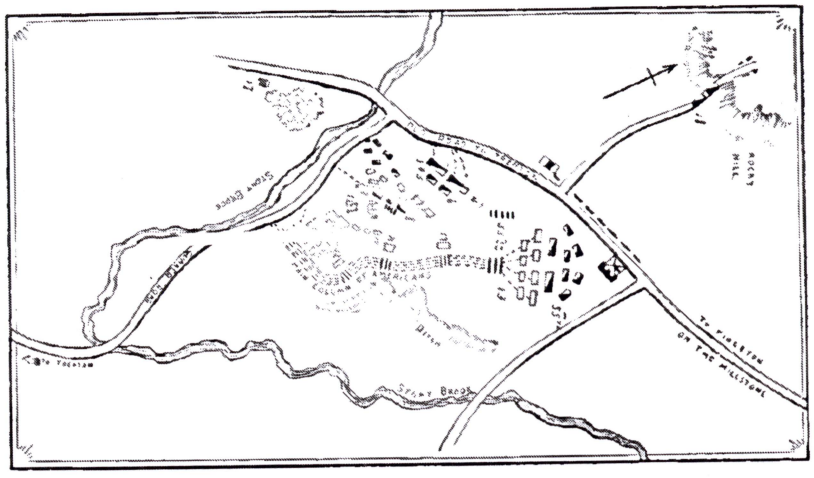
Immediately after the fight General Washington dispatched a strong detachment, under Major John Kelly of Colonel James Potter's battalion of Northumberland County, Pennsylvania, militia, to break down the Stony Brook bridge, in order to delay the advance of the British army.

In the fog of the early morning of January 3 Lord Cornwallis was suddenly aroused to receive the unpleasant information that the entire American army had stolen away from the bank of the Assunpink Creek. Bitterly did he lament the way in which he had been so completely outgeneraled by the American chieftain, and he was over-

[1] The diary (now in my possession) of Thomas Olden, who lived in the house now the lodge of Drumthwacket, states that General Washington, riding up to his door, directed several of the wounded British regulars to be cared for by his family. The diary also says that twenty wounded men were carried into William Clark's house, and several more, with the gallant Mercer, to Thomas Clark's house. At least sixty wounded soldiers were placed in wagons and taken into the village of Princeton.

whelmed with mortification at the loss of what appeared to him an opportunity of destroying the rebel horde.

The camp-fires were still smouldering, but the foe had disappeared by the very mode suggested at the council of war the night before. Lord Cornwallis thought of the seventy thousand pounds in the money-chest and the great amount



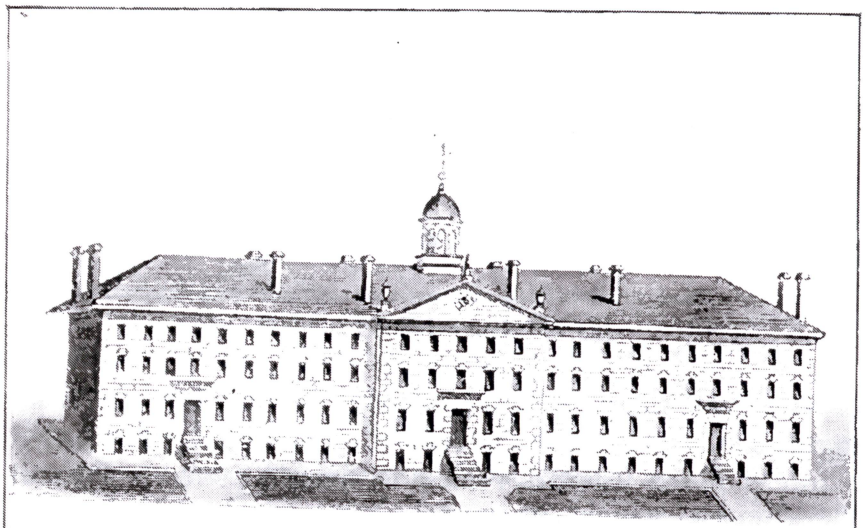
MAP OF PRINCETON BATTLEFIELD

of stores at Brunswick, and he quickly divined General Washington's intention. Hastily forming his troops, he commenced a forced march toward Princeton, hurrying on, as General Knox writes, "in a most infernal sweat — running, puffing and blowing and swearing at being so outwitted." About eight o'clock he heard the booming of the guns before him, and General Sir William Erskine quickly interpreted the meaning of those reports of distant artillery, as they reached his ear on that sharp winter morning.

It was the advance guard of this army, that part of the rear-guard of the previous day, under General Leslie's command, which, looking down from a hill a short distance to the south, saw the Americans under Major Kelly demolishing the Stony Brook bridge. Already they had made such progress that it would have been impossible for the army to have crossed over it. The redcoats were ordered to ford

the stream, which they quickly did, and with icy clothes pressed on toward Princeton. The gallant major, who had tarried too long in destroying the bridge, fell from a broken log into the stream, but, although covered with wet and frozen clothing, he yet secured an armed scout of the British army, and brought him safely into the American lines.

While these events were taking place, the Fifty-fifth regiment, joining the Fortieth regiment, which had mustered on the college grounds, endeavored to hold a position on the



AULA NASSOVICA 1760.

NASSAU HALL AT THE TIME OF THE BATTLE

north side of a ravine just on the outskirts of the village, on what was then Richard Stockton's farm. Up to this time the Fortieth regiment had taken no part in the engagement, as they were not included in the marching order for Trenton, although they had been apprised of the conflict at the Stony Brook bridge by a messenger from Colonel Mawhood. Before

these two regiments had fully arranged themselves in order of battle, the right wing of the Americans, General Sullivan in command, with the brigade of Colonel Sargent in the advance, dashed fiercely upon them, and soon scattered them A part of the Fortieth regiment still remained in their stone barracks within the walls of Nassau Hall. Captain Hamilton's light battery was then run up on the campus, and a warning six-pound shot was sent into the building Tradition says the ball entered the front of the chapel, now the Geological Museum, and singular to relate passed through the head of the portrait of King George the Second The frame of this picture is still in the college museum, and now contains a portrait of Washington, painted by the elder Peale, by order of the authorities of the college. The battery must have fired a second time, as Major James Wilkinson says in his "Memoirs" that a ball struck the college building, and rebounding nearly killed the horse on which he was riding The impression made by this shot is still to be seen on the walls of Old Nassau

A party of Americans commanded by Captain James Moore of the First regiment, Middlesex County, New Jersey, militia, then entered the college, which by this time was surrounded with troops, and the British therein, 194 in number, including several wounded dragoons, quickly gave themselves up prisoners of war

The remainder of the Fifty-fifth and Fortieth regiments, about 200 in number, finding that they were beaten at every point and that further resistance was useless, as the Americans were closely pursuing them, abandoning two six-pounders, all the horses thereto being killed, and the axle broken of one of the carriages, retreated northward by the king's highway, or, as General Howe reported, "retired by way of Hillsborough to Brunswick," and there joined the Forty-sixth British regiment in quarters. On the way thither about fifty more of the British were captured by the victorious Americans

The vanguard of Lord Cornwallis's army was pressing

into one end of the village about noon as the left of General Washington's column passed northward out of sight of Princeton. The redcoats were destined to have still another check to their eager march. An iron thirty-two-pounder had



ENSIGN ANTHONY MORRIS

been mounted on the arrow-head-shaped earthworks, which Colonel von Donop's men had thrown up, on ground lately owned by the Reverend Dr. John Miller. This gun General Washington could not carry away for want of horses; and as the British column approached, some straggling soldier fired it off. This halted the advance for some time until they could throw out their skirmishers and ascertain the number and disposition of the opposing force. A full hour was lost by this movement, and when after reconnoitring they reached the earthworks, they found the place deserted. By that time General Washington was far away with the trophies of his second victory.

The loss of the American army in this battle was about forty killed and wounded, including several valuable officers Besides the mortal wounds received by Brigadier-General Hugh Mercer and the deaths on the battlefield of Colonel John Haslet,[1] Captain John Fleming and Captain Daniel Neil, we may add the names of Captain William Shippin, Lieutenant Bartholomew Yeates and Ensign Anthony Morris, Jr, — seven officers killed Second Lieutenant John Read, Fourth regiment, Virginia Continental line, was severely wounded, and died January 25, 1777[2]

The British loss in the battle of Princeton was about 400 killed, wounded and prisoners, one fourth of whom were left dead upon the field Fourteen officers and 216 men in arms, with some dismounted troopers and stragglers from various regiments, fell into the hands of the Americans. Among the officers captured was Lieutenant Ernst Friedrich Wilhelm von Donop of the Hessian yagers, adjutant of Colonel von Donop's corps He was found sick in Princeton Captain Robert Mostyn and Lieutenant Frederick Desagu-

[1] For biographical sketches of these officers see Part II No 97

[2] But few records can be given of the casualties among the enlisted men of the American army This much is known Sergeant George Boyer, First Pennsylvania regiment, wounded in the shoulder Sergeant Michael Welsh, of Captain Harman Stout's company Tenth Pennsylvania regiment severely wounded in the left knee Private Anthony Dache, Philadelphia battalion of Associators, wounded in the thigh. Private Benjamin Schlaugh First Pennsylvania regiment, badly wounded and leg amputated Private John Downs, Philadelphia battalion of Associators, wounded in the leg Private Patrick Lusk of Captain John Murray's company Colonel Samuel Miles, Pennsylvania rifle regiment wounded, in the right wrist Private Isaiah Beaumont, Twentieth regiment, Continental foot, Colonel John Durkee, wounded in arm

Major John Armstrong, aide-de-camp to General Mercer, wounded; Major William Smith Livingston, aide-de-camp to General Greene, wounded Major Lewis Morris Jr, aide-de-camp to General Sullivan, wounded Second Lieutenant John Read Fourth Virginia Continental regiment, wounded and died January 25, 1777 First Lieutenant Dudley Tyler Sixth Massachusetts Continental regiment, wounded

liers were killed and Captain John McPherson and Captain the Hon. William Leslie fatally wounded.[1]

General Howe sent the following report of the battle to Lord George Germain, colonial secretary of state:[2]—

NEW YORK January 5 1777

MY LORD:

In consequence of the advantage gained by the enemy at Trenton on the 26th of last month and the necessity of an



CAPTAIN LESLIE'S GRAVE

alteration in the cantonments, Lord Cornwallis deferring his going to England by this opportunity, went from thence to Jersey on the 1st inst. and reached Prince Town that night, to which place General Grant had advanced with a body of troops from Brunswick and Hillsborough, upon

[1] For biographical sketches of these officers see Part ii. No. 98.

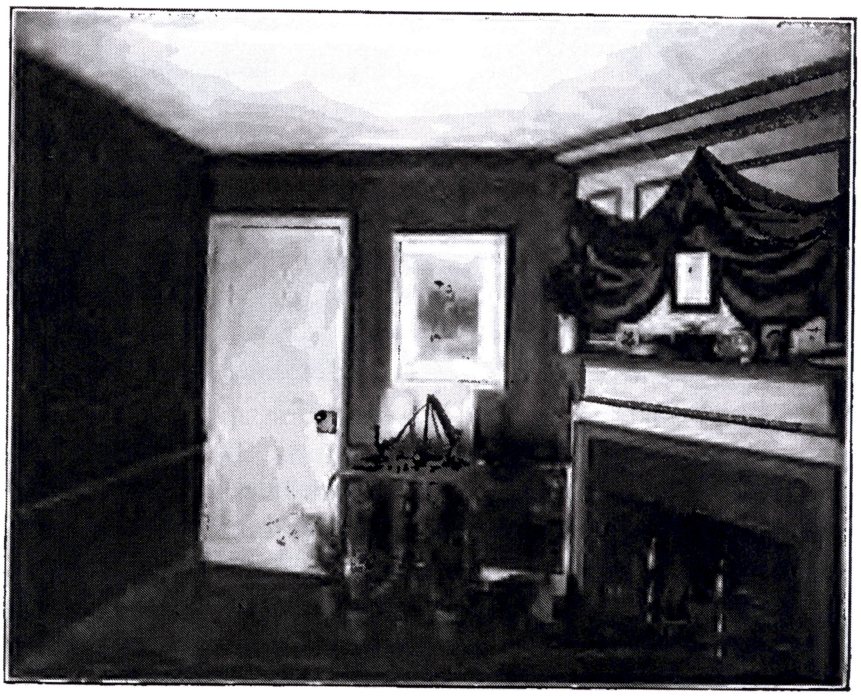
[2] For return of casualties see Part ii. No. 99.



HOUSE IN WHICH GENERAL MERCER DIED

gaining intelligence that the enemy on receiving reinforcements from Virginia, Maryland and from the Militia of Pennsylvania had repassed the Delaware into Jersey. On the 2d Lord Cornwallis having received accounts of the rebel army being posted at Trenton, advanced thither, leaving the 4th brigade under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Mawhood at Prince Town and the 2d brigade with Brigadier-General Leslie at Maidenhead. On the approach of the British troops the enemy's forward posts were drawn back upon their army, which was formed in a strong position, behind a creek running through Trenton. During the night of the 2d the enemy quitted this situation and marching up by Allen's Town and from thence to Prince Town fell in on the morning of the 3d with the 17th and 55th Regiments on their march to join Brigadier-General Leslie at Maidenhead. Lieutenant-Colonel Mawhood not being apprehensive of the enemy's strength, attacked and beat back the troops that first presented themselves to him, but finding them at length

very superior to him in numbers he pushed forward with the 17th Regiment and joined Brigadier-General Leslie. The 55th Regiment retired by the way of Hillsborough to Brunswick and the enemy proceeding immediately to Prince Town, the 40th Regulars also retired to Brunswick. The loss on this occasion to his Majesty's troops is seventeen killed and nearly two hundred wounded and missing. Captain Leslie of the 17th was among the few killed and for further particulars I beg leave to refer your Lordship to the enclosed return. Captain Phillips of the 35th Grenadiers, returning from hence to join his Company was on this day beset, between Brunswick and Prince Town by some lurking villains who murdered him in a most barbarous manner, which is a mode of war the enemy seem, from several late instances to have adopted with a degree of barbarity that savages could not exceed. It has not yet come to my knowledge how much the enemy has suffered, but it is certain there were



ROOM IN WHICH GENERAL MERCER DIED

many killed and wounded and among the former a General Mercer from Virginia The bravery and conduct of Lieutenant-Colonel Mawhood and the behaviour of the regiments under his command, particularly the 17th are highly commended by Lord Cornwallis His Lordship finding the enemy had made this movement and having heard the fire made by Colonel Mawhood's attack, returned immediately from Trenton, but the enemy being some hours march in front, and keeping this advantage by an immediate departure from Prince Town, retreated by King's Town, breaking down the bridge behind them and crossed the Millstone River at a bridge under Rocky Hill, to throw themselves into a strong country Lord Cornwallis seeing it would not answer any purpose to continue his pursuit, returned with his whole force to Brunswick and the troops upon the right being assembled at Elizabeth Town. Major General Vaughn held that command

I have the honour to be &c

W Howe

General Howe also issued a general order commending Lieutenant-Colonel Mawhood and his command [1]

General Mercer, suffering intensely with the cold and his terrible wounds, was carried off the field of battle by his aide, Major John Armstrong, formerly attached to the staff of Major-General Gates He was taken to Thomas Clark's house, which is still standing, and the Quakeress Sarah Clark, her sister Hannah Clark and a faithful negro woman carefully attended to poor General Mercer Dr Moses Scott, at this time surgeon of the Second regiment, Middlesex County, New Jersey, militia, afterward hospital physician and surgeon Continental army, had examined General Mercer s wounds as he lay upon the field After being conveyed to the house referred to, the noise of the British as they crossed at Stony Brook reached his ears, and he peremptorily ordered the reluctant Armstrong, the son of his old commander

[1] Part II No 100

in the Indian campaigns, to leave him and follow the patriot army, which needed the services of every man When the British came into the house, they gave Mercer his parole and left him Soon after two good neighbors, Thomas Olden and Samuel Worth, came in to assist the Quaker family in taking care of the wounded general On the 4th of January General Washington, hearing that he was still alive, and not killed as reported, sent under flag of truce Dr Rush and Captain George Lewis, who commanded a detachment of light horse at his own headquarters, with a communication to Lord Cornwallis asking permission for them to remain and attend to Mercer It was granted, and January 7 the doctor reported him much better, saying that he expected his speedy recovery A surgeon on Lord Cornwallis's staff agreed that he did not think the wounds dangerous, but General Mercer, who was by profession a physician, called the attention of Captain Lewis to a bayonet wound, the smallest one, under his right arm, which he said would surely cause his death And so it resulted His wounds must have bled profusely, for the blood passed through the bed and stained the floor, where the marks can be seen even to this day. He lingered on in much pain until the morning of Sunday, January 12, and then expired in the arms of his devoted companion, Captain Lewis His remains were taken to Philadelphia and buried in Christ Churchyard January 16, 1777. The funeral was attended by "The Council of Safety, Members of Assembly, Gentlemen of the Army and a number of the most respectable inhabitants of the City" On November 26, 1840, he was reinterred in Laurel Hill Cemetery, Philadelphia, with military honors [1]

As General Washington passed out of Princeton, he expressed his gratification to Colonel Daniel Hitchcock at the noble conduct of himself and his brigade Colonel Hitchcock had behaved most gallantly in this his last effort for the cause of his country Educated at Yale College, graduating in the Class of 1761, receiving his degree of Master

[1] For notes on General Mercer, see Part II No. 101

of Arts from both Yale College and Brown University in 1771, he was "an accomplished gentleman" and a "fine officer," as his soldiers said, as well as a true born son of liberty. He went into the army with the first Rhode Island contingent, called "the army of observation," at the beginning of the war, and at this time was acting as a brigadier-general of what was familiarly known as the New England brigade Speaking of the affair at the Assunpink bridge at Trenton and the battle of Princeton, the celebrated Dr Benjamin Rush wrote to Richard Henry Lee, the Virginia statesman, January 6, 1777: "Much credit is due to a brigade of New England men commanded by Col. Hitchcock in both actions, they sustained a heavy fire from musketry and artillery for a long time without moving; they are entitled to a great share of the honour acquired by our arms at Princetown" The good sword of Colonel Hitchcock won him great honor, and his disposition made him beloved by his soldiers, and admired by all who knew him. He was a fine scholar, of refined taste and elegant manners, in fact, a finished gentleman Consumption was even then rapidly bringing his life to a close, and when he reached Morristown he was called upon to die On January 10, 1777, he made a brief nuncupative will, the full text of which is given in Cowell's "Spirit of 1776 in Rhode Island." He died January 13, and was buried with military honors on the afternoon of the 14th of January in the churchyard of the Presbyterian Church, Reverend Dr Timothy Johnes, at Morristown, — ground which became the last resting-place of many patriots.

In addition to the prisoners taken by the American army at the battle of Princeton, they also secured two brass six-pounders, a large amount of ammunition, a quantity of military stores, and some clothing and camp equipage loaded in wagons A large amount of forage which had been gathered there by the British army was destroyed because the victors could not transport it General Mifflin also recaptured some seven wagon-loads of stores which the British had plundered from the citizens of Princeton and were endeavoring to carry off with them

After remaining in Princeton about two hours and doing full justice to the breakfast prepared for the officers of the Fortieth regiment, at their headquarters, Tusculum, the residence of President Witherspoon, and after paroling fifty-six



DR. BENJAMIN RUSH

wounded and sick British soldiers whom he was obliged to leave there, General Washington followed after the two regiments of flying redcoats until they passed the village of Kingston, Captain Moulder's battery covering the rear of the patriot army. Captain Moulder was instructed to fire at the advance guard of the British army, if necessary, until the last moment, then spike his guns and run rapidly to join the main

army His men obeyed the first part of the order, but when the critical moment arrived, instead of leaving the cannon which had done such good service that day, they pulled them away with them with the aid of ropes A troop of British cavalry followed them some distance, but were checked in their pursuit by seeing Captain Morris's Philadelphia troop of light horse forming on the road to cover the retreat of the gunners and to sustain the expected attack. The British thereupon faced about and returned to Lord Cornwallis's army

General Washington ordered the destruction of the bridge over the Millstone Creek, which was immediately accomplished Without dismounting he then held a council of war with his general officers as to their future movements Some advised marching toward Coryell's Ferry, and recrossing the Delaware River It was soon very prudently decided, however, that they should abandon the prize at Brunswick, and, turning short to the left by Rocky Hill, march by Somerset Court House and Pluckemin toward Morristown

For two nights and a day they had had no sleep, and many of them had carried their arms without intermission for nearly forty hours on the march and in battle To forego, then, the capture of Brunswick was unfortunate, but when they reflected that Lord Cornwallis had troops which had enjoyed rest at Maidenhead and Trenton the previous night, while many of the Americans were constantly falling asleep by the roadside, regardless of the proximity of the enemy or of the intense cold, and that the longed-for military chest was full eighteen miles away, they concluded that it was dangerous to venture the loss of their prisoners and trophies by attempting a task in which they might possibly fail General Washington declared that if he had had but 800 fresh troops, he could have made a forced march, destroyed their stores and magazines, taken their money-chest, and possibly have put an end to the war.[1]

About eleven o'clock in the evening the last of the army

[1] For Washington's Official Report to Congress see Part II No 102



JOHN VAN DOREN'S HOUSE

arrived at Somerset Court House, now Millstone, Somerset County, placed their prisoners in the county jail, and quickly disposed themselves for the night, some of the men actually sleeping on the frozen ground, without a blanket, in the field on which the manse of the Reformed Church of Millstone now stands. General Washington and his staff were quartered at the house of John Van Doren, some little distance south of the town. This house is still standing.

The British general was too anxious as to the fate of Brunswick and the line of communication with New York to follow General Washington and his army far into the hill country; and not knowing whether the American general had sent a force to capture his stores, he pushed rapidly forward on the king's highway, paying no attention to the weary American army.

In this condition of affairs a striking event occurred between a number of British soldiers and a cavalry detachment of the New Jersey State troops. The affair, as related in

a recent work,[1] a book full of stirring revolutionary facts, is historically correct

"Another interesting incident was the arrival in camp of the gallant Captain John Stryker's troop of Somerset horse, laden with spoils from the enemy Cornwallis in his hurried march toward New Brunswick was so unfortunate as to disable a number of his baggage-wagons. He left them at the side of the road in charge of a quartermaster with a guard of two hundred men Captain Stryker, though having with him but twenty troopers, resolved upon the capture of these stores. In the darkness of night he distributed his small force in a circle, completely surrounding the camp The guard were suddenly astounded by a volley of musket-shots and the whistling of bullets, while from under the black arches of the bordering trees came loud and repeated shouts as if from a countless host Demoralized by recent defeats the men incontinently fled, thinking that they had been attacked by a large force of the Americans. Their fright was not so much caused by the roar of musketry as by the unearthly yells of the lusty troopers which so suddenly broke the stillness of the night Captain Stryker was not long in so repairing the wagons that they could be hauled to a place of safety, he lost no time in making his way to Washington's camp with his treasures The joy of the troops was unbounded when it was discovered that the wagons contained woolen clothing, of which the men stood in sore need"

The patriotic bard of the revolutionary period, Philip Freneau, said of this hasty march of the British army with its Hessian allies —

> "From dire Cesaræ! forced, these slaves of Kings
> Quick, let them take their way on eagle's wings,
> To thy strong posts, Manhattan's isle, repair,
> To meet the vengeance that awaits them there!"

[1] *The Story of an Old Farm, or Life in New Jersey in the Eighteenth Century*, by Andrew D Mellick, Jr., Somerville, New Jersey 1889, p 387

XVII

LORD CORNWALLIS reached Brunswick about six o'clock in the morning of January 4, and found the post commandant, Brigadier-General Edward Mathew, greatly excited General Mathew had with him the First and Second battalions of the British guards, and the Forty-sixth regiment of British foot, which had reached him only the previous day. During the night of January 3, soldiers had come in with exaggerated reports of the fight, a sick captain of the Forty-ninth regiment having been the first to communicate the unwelcome intelligence. The captive American General Charles Lee had been already dispatched across the Raritan River, and General Mathew had gathered up his supplies in readiness for a retreat, preparing to make only such a defense as would enable him to escape with the army treasure.

General Washington and his army left Somerset Court House on January 4, and, marching over the hills, halted for two days at Pluckemin,[1] in order to rest his men and to allow nearly 1000 weary stragglers to overtake them On January 6 he left Pluckemin and marched into the highlands of Morris County He established the headquarters of the army, January 7, 1777, at Morristown, in the old Freeman Tavern on the northwest side of the public square, then kept by Captain Jacob Arnold The troops, after a few days spent in tents on the slopes of the Lowantica valley, built substantial huts for their use during the rest of the winter about a quarter of a mile south of what is now Madison, then called Bottle Hill, on the main road to Morristown. Securely protected in this cantonment, the recruiting and reorganizing of the army for the spring campaign began, under the powers which had been conferred upon General

[1] See Washington to Putnam, Part II No. 103.

Washington by the Continental Congress The army remained there until May 28, 1777

Horace Walpole wrote to Sir Horace Mann concerning this march from Trenton to Morristown "Washington the dictator has shown himself both a Fabius and a Camillus His march through our lines is allowed to have been a prodigy of generalship"

This closed the winter campaign of 1776–1777 Philadelphia had been saved the ravages of the Hessian hordes, and the Hessians themselves had been compelled to march as captives through its streets, the British had been driven out of the State, except at the posts of Brunswick and Amboy, and an army complete in all its appointments had been compelled to assume the defensive In the most gloomy period of the war the great commander by "two lucky strokes" had saved the cause of the Revolution This was the "Good news from the Jerseys" which animated every patriot in the land

Let us seek a solution to the question how soon Colonels Rall and von Donop would have placed their troops on the west bank of the Delaware River had General Washington abandoned the project of crossing the river on Christmas night As has been said, the weather changed on the night of January 2, 1777, and became intensely cold This cold continued, for we are told that the men marching toward Morristown on January 4 and 5 suffered greatly from it We quote the following from the diary of Margaret Morris of Burlington. "January 9th, weather very cold, the river filled with ice and we expect it will be strong enough to walk over in a day or two" "January 11th weather very cold and the river quite shut." "January 15th the hearse with General Mercer's body was conveyed over the river on the ice" It is clear, then, that if General Washington had postponed crossing over the river in boats for just seventeen days, the Hessian troops would have walked over on the "bridge of ice," for which they had waited, and a few hours thereafter the city of Philadelphia would have been in the

possession and subject to the pillage of the German mercenary troops A delay of less than three weeks by General Washington, in order to reanimate his demoralized force, would have endangered the fate of the union of the States

The effect upon the people of New Jersey and indeed upon the entire nation can hardly be described. To have taken a demoralized, retreating and well-nigh disbanded army and to have crossed and recrossed a large river four times in wintry weather, performed such brilliant and daring exploits and inflicted a succession of such effective blows upon a splendid army seemed well-nigh incredible The entire winter campaign had exhibited great generalship in the commander-in-chief and had proved that he possessed such a knowledge of military science that he was able promptly to foresee the exact moment when the stroke must fall, and to risk everything in the stern exigency The friends of the young republic in and out of Congress took new heart and made vigorous efforts to strengthen the power of the great commander. The New Jersey militia, which for three months had been to some extent subdued by the presence and power of the king's troops, now seemed imbued with new vigor, and began rapidly to enroll and fit themselves for the soldier's life and duties For the rest of the winter the militia collected information and tracked out foraging detachments of British and captured them The cruelty and violence of the Hessian hirelings aroused a desire for revenge, and few opportunities were lost when the foe left their well-guarded stations The tide of war, formerly so strongly against the patriot cause, now began to turn, and with the ebb carried away from New Jersey soil the defeated royal army of Great Britain The people, heretofore panic-stricken, were now convinced that the dreaded Hessians and the British redcoats could be vanquished by their own untrained but determined soldiers They believed a final victory was near at hand, and that these successes were the dawn of a bright morning for the young republic. They were persuaded the great generals whose military genius and

experience had been highly lauded could be outgeneraled by their Washington and could be beaten in detail by the division of the young New Hampshire attorney, the battalions of the Rhode Island blacksmith, or the guns directed by the bookseller of Boston

Never was Washington more popular than at this moment of victory The confidence of the officers who gathered around him, and whom he had learned to appreciate as companions in a common danger, was strengthened The whole country looked to him as the sure champion of a free government He felt strong enough to demand that those "who had accepted the British protection should withdraw within the enemy's lines or take the oath of allegiance to the United States of America" [1]

Washington's own opinion of his success can be best described in the vigorous order sent Major-General Benjamin Lincoln, at Peekskill on the Hudson, and dated January 7, 1777: "Move down your troops towards New York, draw the attention of the enemy to that quarter, and if they do not throw a considerable body back again, you may in all probability carry the city, or at least blockade them in it I have only to beg of you to be as expeditious as possible in moving forward, for the sooner a panic-struck enemy is followed the better If we can oblige them to evacuate Jersey we must drive them to the utmost distress" [2]

The late Dr Benson J Lossing, in his sketch of Washington's mother, says. "When the cheering news of the victories of Trenton and Princeton reached Fredericksburg, several of her friends congratulated her upon the brilliant achievements of her son. She simply replied, 'George seems to have deserved well of his country,' and when some of them read paragraphs of letters they had received, in which the skill and bravery of Washington were applauded, she said, 'Gentlemen, here is too much flattery, still, George

[1] Part II No 113.

[2] For other comments on the battle of Princeton see Part II Nos 104, 105, 106 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 114 115 116

will not forget the lessons I have taught him — he will not forget himself, though he is an object of so much praise'"

True it is that that period of trial, those long days of disaster and retreat, those hours of acute suffering as the forlorn, dejected troops fled from the great harbor on the seaboard to the bank of the icy river, were but lessons given to the despondent patriots by Him who was so soon to nerve their hearts to noble exploits, to steady their eye along the old firelocks, and strengthen the arm that held the bayonet, that in the end they might give utterance to the shouts of well-earned victory

Surely nowhere in the life struggle of any nation can be shown such a rapid contrast from almost total defeat to brilliant victory as appears in this simple compilation of facts which has come down to us bearing the unmistakable marks of truth through the century of our existence as a nation — the retreat through the Jerseys, and the battles of Trenton and Princeton, or what has been well called, "those wonderful days in New Jersey"

PART II

No. 1 American Army in the Campaign, 1776–1777.

Brigadier-General Lord Stirling's Brigade (*1000 officers and men*).

Colonel George Weedon's Third regiment, Virginia Continental infantry.

Colonel John Haslet's Delaware regiment, Continental infantry.

Colonel Isaac Reade's First regiment, Virginia Continental infantry.

Major Ennion Williams's First Pennsylvania rifle regiment

Brigadier-General Adam Stephen's Brigade (*600 officers and men*)

Colonel Thomas Elliott's Fourth regiment, Virginia Continental infantry

Colonel Charles Scott's Fifth regiment, Virginia Continental infantry.

Colonel Mordecai Buckner's Sixth regiment, Virginia Continental infantry.

Colonel Edward Hand's Brigade (*600 officers and men*)

Colonel Edward Hand's First regiment, Continental foot — Pennsylvania rifle regiment

Colonel Henry Haller's Berks County militia, Pennsylvania flying camp.

Colonel James Cunningham's Lancaster County militia, Pennsylvania flying camp.

Brigadier-General James Ewing's Brigade (*600 officers and men*).

Colonel William Montgomery's regiment, Pennsylvania militia, flying camp.

Colonel Frederick Watts's regiment, Pennsylvania militia, flying camp

Colonel Richard McAllister's regiment, Pennsylvania militia, flying camp

Colonel Jacob Klotz s regiment, Pennsylvania militia, flying camp.
Colonel James Moore s regiment, Pennsylvania militia, flying camp

Brigadier-General Nathaniel Heard s Brigade (800 officers and men)

Colonel Philip Van Cortland s regiment New Jersey militia
Colonel David Forman's regiment, New Jersey militia
Colonel Ephraim Martin s regiment New Jersey militia
Colonel Joseph Phillips s regiment, New Jersey militia
Colonel Silas Newcomb s regiment, New Jersey militia

Brigadier-General Rezin Beall s Brigade (1200 officers and men)

Colonel Charles G Griffith s First battalion, Maryland militia, flying camp
Colonel Josiah C Hall s Second battalion, Maryland militia, flying camp.
Colonel Thomas Ewing's Third battalion, Maryland militia flying camp
Colonel William Richardson's Fourth battalion Maryland militia, flying camp
Captain Sebastian Bauman s New York company of Continental artillery
Captain-Lieutenant Winthrop Sargent's Massachusetts company of Continental artillery
Captain Alexander Hamilton s New York State company of artillery
Detachment of Colonel Elisha Sheldon s Second regiment light dragoons.

Brigadier-General Hugh Mercer s Brigade (700 officers and men) [1]

Colonel John Durkee's Twentieth regiment Continental foot — Connecticut.
Colonel Philip Burr Bradley s battalion, Connecticut State troops
Colonel Israel Hutchinson s Twenty-seventh regiment, Continental foot — Massachusetts
Lieutenant-Colonel Francis Ware's First Maryland regiment, Continental infantry.
Lieutenant-Colonel Commandant Moses Rawlins. Maryland rifle battalion volunteers.

[1] On the march he was also joined, as has been said by this brigade.

No 2 Washington's Orders

TO COLONEL HUMPTON

Brunswic, December 1st, 1776

Sir —

You are to proceed to the two ferries near Trenton and to see all the boats there put in the best order, with a sufficiency of oars and poles and at the same time to collect all the additional boats you can from both above and below and have them brought to these Ferries and secured for the purpose of camping over the Troops and Baggage in the most expeditious manner, and for this purpose you will get every assistance in the power of the Quarter Master General and any person in his department. You will particularly attend to the Durham Boats which are very proper for this purpose The Baggage of the army should be got over the river as soon as possible and put in some convenient place a little back of it

I am, Sir, Y'r most ob't serv't

Go Washington.

TO COLONEL CADWALADER

Headquarters, Falls of Delaware, 11th December 1776

Sir —

From the movements of the enemy downwards I think it highly necessary that the Post at Dunk's Ferry should be guarded I therefore desire that one of the Battalions of your Brigade may immediately march and take post at that place If it is agreeable to you, I would choose the 3d Battalion under the command of Lt-Colonel Nixon The other two Battalions should be under orders to march at a moments warning. I expect the pleasure of your company at dinner, but if you cannot come, as soon after as convenient

I am Sir, Yo most Obt. Svt

Go Washington

Col Cadwaladir

Endorsed thereon was the following instruction "The Battalion that goes down should be provided with two field pieces, with artillerymen and ammunition in proportion"

TO COLONEL CADWALADER

You are to post your Brigade at and near Bristol Colonel Nixon's Regiment to continue where it is at Dunk's Ferry — but if you find from reconnoitering the ground, or from any movements of the enemy, that any other disposition is necessary, you'll make it accordingly without waiting to hear from me, but to acquaint me with the alterations and the reasons for it as soon as possible You'll establish the necessary guards and throw up some little Redoubts at Dunk's Ferry and the different passes in the Neshamine

Pay particular attention to Dunk's Ferry as its' not improbable something may be attempted there Spare no pains or expense to get intelligence of the enemy's motions and intentions Any promises made, or sums advanced, shall be fully complied with and discharged Keep proper Patrols going from guard to guard Every piece of intelligence you obtain worthy notice, send it forward by express If the enemy attempt a landing on this side, you'll give them all the opposition in your power. Should they land between Trenton Falls and Bordentown Ferry or any where above Bristol, and you find your force quite unequal to their force give them what opposition you can at Neshamine ferry and fords In a word you are to give them all the opposition you can without hazzarding the loss of your Brigade Keep a good guard over such boats as are not scuttled or rendered unfit for use Keep a good lookout for spies and endeavor to magnify your number as much as possible Let the troops always have three days' provisions cookt before hand. Indeavor to keep your Troops as much together as possible, night and day, that they may be ever in readiness to march upon the shortest notice You'll consult with the Commodore of the Gallies, and indeavor to form such an arrangement as will most effectually guard the river To your discretion and prudence I submit any further regulations and recommend the greatest degree of vigilence

If you should find yourself unable to defend the passes of the Neshamine, or the enemy should rout you from your post, you are to repair to the strong ground, near Germantown, unless you have orders from me or some other general officer to the contrary.

Be particularly attentive to the roads and vessels and suffer no person to pass over to the Jerseys without a permit.

Given at Head Quarters, Trenton Falls the 12th day of December, 1776.

Go Washington.

TO COLONEL EWING

Sir —

Your brigade is to guard the river Delaware from the ferry opposite to Bordentown till you come within two miles or thereabouts of Yardley's Mill to which General Dickinson's command will extend

About one hundred or a hundred and fifty men will, I should think be sufficient at the post opposite to Borden Town. The principal part of your force should be as convenient as possible to the fort above Hoop's Mill in order that if a passage should be attempted at that place you may give the earliest and most spirited opposition; the success of which depending upon good intelligence and the vigilance of your guards and sentries will induce you to use every means in your power to procure the first and every endeavor to enforce and encourage the latter

Between Borden Town and the mill and from the mill to the extent of your line above you are to have intermediate guards and sentries who are to be as attentive as possible in discovering and informing you of every movement of the enemy, constant patrols are also to pass. In a word so much depends upon watchfulness that you cannot possibly be too much upon your guard

As the fort from the Jersey shore leads on to the upper end of the island adjoining the mill you are to throw up a breast-work for musketry near the landing-place and secure your communication with it Besides this work another on the height on this side for a field piece or two should be erected. Be particularly careful of your field-pieces and do not suffer them to be left if their is a possibility of avoiding it

You are, as I before said to give every possible opposition to the enemy particularly at crossing the river, but if you should be overpowered and obliged to retreat join that part of the troops under my immediate command, or the other under Colonel Cadwalader, in the latter case the best stand possible is to be made at Neshamine Ferry bridge and fords, but if you are unable to hold these then seize the strong grounds in the neighborhood of

German Town unless you receive orders to the contrary from me or some other your superior officer

Spare no pains nor cost to gain information of the enemy's movements and designs Whatever sums you pay to obtain this end I will cheerfully refund. Every piece of information worthy of communication transmit to me without loss of time A part of Colonel Hart s battalion I have ordered to join your brigade. Keep your troops always supplied with three day's provisions and prevent them from straggling that they may be ready at a moment's warning to oppose the enemy in their passage of the river. Be particularly attentive to the boats and other vessels and suffer no person to pass over to the Jersey shore without a permit.

Given at Head Quarters at Trenton Falls this 12th day of December 1776

Go. WASHINGTON.

TO GENERAL DICKINSON

SIR:—

You will post your troops at Yardley's Ferry or somewhere near it. Find out the fording place there and have a redoubt thrown up immediately. You and General Ewing must divide the ground between Trenton Falls and your post, and establish the proper guards and patroles to watch the enemy's motions You will spare no pains or expense to obtain intelligence All promises made or moneys advanced shall be fully complied with and discharged Every piece of intelligence worthy notice you obtain forward it to me by express. See the troops always have three days' provisions cooked beforehand and keep them together as much as possible night and day that they may be in readiness in the shortest notice to make head against the enemy. Should they attempt to land on this side you will give them all the opposition in your power Should you be routed from your post you are to repair to the strong grounds at German-Town unless you can possibly join the upper or lower division of the Army which if practicable you are to do. Be particularly attentive to the boats and other vessels and suffer no person to pass over to the Jersey shore without a permit.

Given at Head-Quarters at Trenton Falls this 12th day of December 1776.

Go WASHINGTON.

No 3 Proclamation of the Howes

By Richard Howe of the Kingdom of Ireland and William Howe, Esq, General of his Majesty's Forces in America, the King's Commissioners for restoring peace to his Majesty's Colonies and Plantations in North America, &c

Proclamation

Whereas, by our Declarations of the 14th of July and 19th of September last, in pursuance of his Majesty's most gracious intentions towards his subjects in the Colonies or Provinces of New Hampshire, Massachusetts-Bay, Rhode-Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, the three lower counties on Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina South Carolina and Georgia, all persons speedily returning to their just allegiance were promised a free and general pardon and were invited to accept not only the blessings of peace, but a secure enjoyment of their liberties and properties, upon the true principles of the Constitution: And, whereas, notwithstanding the said declaration, and the example of many who have availed themselves of the assurances therein made, several bodies of armed men, in open contempt of his Majesty's proffered clemency, do still continue their opposition to the establishment of legal government and peace and divers other ill-disposed persons pursuing their own ambitious purposes in the exercise of a lawless influence and power, are using fresh endeavours, by various arts and misrepresentations, to alienate the confidence and affection of his Majesty's subjects: to defeat every plan of reconciliation, and to prolong the unnatural war between Great Britain and her Colonies Now, in order to the more effectual accomplishment of his Majesty's most gracious intentions, and the speedy restoration of the publick tranquillity and duly considering the expediency of limiting the time within which such pardon as aforesaid shall be granted, and of specifying the terms upon which only the same shall and may be obtained We do, in his Majesty's name, and by virtue of the powers committed to us, hereby charge and command all persons whatsoever, who are assembled together in arms against his Majesty's government, to disband themselves and return to their dwellings, there to remain in a

peaceable and quiet manner and we also charge and command all such other persons as are assembled together under the name of General or Provincial Congresses, Committees, Conventions, or other associations, by whatever name or names known and distinguished, or who, under the colour of any authority from any such Congress, Committee, Convention and other association, take upon themselves to issue or execute any orders for levying money, raising troops, fitting out armed ships and vessels, imprisoning, or otherwise molesting his Majesty's subjects, to desist and cease from all such treasonable actings and doings, and to relinquish all such usurped power and authority, so that peace may be restored, a speedy remission of past offences quiet the apprehensions of the guilty, and all the inhabitants of the said Colonies be enabled to reap the benefit of his Majesty's paternal goodness in the preservation of their property, the restoration of their commerce and the security of their most valuable rights, under the just and moderate authority of the Crown and Parliament of Great Britain And we do hereby declare, and make known to all men, that every person who within sixty days from the day of the date hereof, shall appear before the Governour, or Lieutenant Governour, or Commander-in-Chief, in any of his Majesty's Colonies or Provinces aforesaid, or before the General or Commanding Officer of his Majesty's forces in America or any other officer in his Majesty's service having the command of any detachment or parties of his Majesty's forces there, or before the Admiral or Commander-in-Chief of his Majesty's fleets, or any other officer commanding any of his Majesty's ships of war, or any armed vessel in his Majesty's service, within any of the ports, havens, creeks, or upon the coasts of America, and shall claim the benefit of this Proclamation, and at the same time testify his obedience to the laws, by subscribing a declaration in the words following "I, A B. do promise and declare, that I will remain in a peaceable obedience to his Majesty, and will not take up arms, nor encourage others to take up arms, in opposition to his authority" shall and may obtain a full and free pardon of all treasons and misprisions of treasons, by him heretofore committed or done, and of all forfeitures, attainders, and penalties for the same and upon producing to us, or to either of us, a certificate of such his appearance and declaration shall and may have and

receive such pardon made and passed to him in due form Given at New York, this thirtieth day of November, 1776.

HOWE
W HOWE

By command of their Excellencies:

HENRY STRACHEY.

No. 4. HESSIAN FIELD OFFICERS

Grenadier Regiment Rall

Colonel, Johann Gottlieb Rall.
Lieutenant-Colonel, Balthasar Brethauer.
Major Johann Jost Matthaus

Fusilier Regiment von Lossberg

(sometimes called Alt von Lossberg, called after Lieutenant-General Baron Friedrich Wilhelm von Lossberg).

Lieutenant-Colonel, Francis Scheffer
Major, Ludwig August von Hanstein

Fusilier Regiment von Knyphausen

(called after Lieutenant-General Wilhelm von Knyphausen, commander of the Second division of the Landgraflich Hessischen corps in America)

Major, Friedrich Ludwig von Dechow
Lieutenant Friedrich Fischer commanded the six-gun battery of artillery, two guns being assigned to each regiment, and
Lieutenant Friedrich Wilhelm von Grothausen commanded the detachment of Hessian yagers

No 5 GENERAL HOWE TO COLONEL VON DONOP.

HEAD QUARTERS TRENTON 13th Dec 1776

SIR —

You are to command the troops to be cantoned at Trenton, Bordentown and Burlington to report and receive Orders from Major-General Grant at Brunswick and to communicate with Brigadier-General Leslie at Princetown.

The Brigade of Railee, fifty yagers and twenty Dragoons to be stationed at Trenton with six hessian three pounders. The Dragoons to be relieved once a week from Princetown.

Three Battalions of hessian Grenadiers and a Detachment of Yagers, with six hessian three pounders and if you please two British eighteen pounders, to take post at Bordentown.

A Bat of hess Gren and 42d Regt with two hessian three pounders and four british eighteen pounders, with two six and two three pounders, to form the Garrison of Burlington, you will fix such other posts as shall appear to be necessary to secure the communication of your cantonment.

Order the Farmers to give the exact Lists of their Cattle, Grain and forage, out of which you will please to form magazines for subsisting the Troops, for which Capt Gamble Assistant De. Qr master General will give receipts, who is to remain under your orders during the winter and whatever is expended will be paid by the Commissary-General, who will of course take care that the Issues do not exceed the Rations allowed to the Troops The Troops to supply themselves with Firewood and candles for which they will receive an allowance from the Barrackmaster General, who will in like manner make an allowance for Barrack-Utensils if they are not delivered, Axes, Wedges and Cross Cut Saws shal be sent from Brunswick

Any quantity of Salt provision or flour, exceeding what may be thought necessary for the use of a private family is to be considered as a Rebel Store, be seized for the Crown and issued to the Troops as a saving to the public

Rum and salt shall be sent immediately for the Troops under your command, but if a quantity of both or of either can be found in your Neighborhood, acquaint Major-General Grant of it immediately to save the trouble and expense of Carriage.

Be so good as to reduce the Number of your officers horses as much as you can, and dismiss as many of the Waggons, belonging to the different Regiments as possible

You can secure Waggons in the country in case of a March and can hire them occasionally when you have use for them by giving receipts for the number of days they are employed for which the farmer will be paid by the Quartermaster General

W. Howe

No 6 Colonel von Donop to Colonel Rall

Trenton, 14th day of December 1776

Sir: —

As I have the honour to receive my brother's brigade under my orders in going into winterquarters I send you herewith the orders received from the commanding general with the request that you publish them to your brigade and cause them to be obeyed

I. Good order must prevail at all the quarters Fire and lights must be carefully looked after, because all consequences resultant therefrom would be of great loss to the force.

II. Immediately after going into quarters an exact list must be sent me at Bordentown, where my quarters will be during the winter, what amount of rations each regiment needs every day, also what the artillery needs and how long the present supply will last My brother should know that the Commanding-General desires all officers to dispense with all horses not absolutely needed and that passes must be furnished to all owners or their servants who supply waggons for baggage

III The Commanding-General requires of me a report every fourteen days of everything in my command, so my brother will see that I have a report from him of all his officers according to the usual form every fourteen days The rest of the military plans so far as relate to the safety of the post I leave to my brother's own judgment. I will come here in a few days and look at the position and make arrangements according to our views of the subject. Meanwhile I beg my brother to guard the two bridges over the creeks on the left bank of his position one called the Creek bridge and the other the Crosswicks draw bridge by which our communications with each other will be kept up

Donop.

No. 7. Colonel von Donop to General Leslie.

Bordentown 16th day December 1776

Sir —

In accordance with the orders of His Excellency, the General-in-Chief I am instructed to communicate with you from time to time You know without doubt already that I have been assigned to Trenton, Bordentown and Burlington for winter quarters, with

that of Colonel Rall and the 42d British Regiment. On the 14th inst I commenced the march to this place leaving the brigade of Rall with twenty dragoons and fifty yagers at Trenton. I made a post at Bordentown with the two batteries of von Linsingen and von Minnigerode, pushing the 42d Regiment with the battalion of von Block on to Black Horse. I am waiting with impatience the arrival of the Grenadier Battalion Koehler which will bring with them six eighteen pounders, after which I will take possession of Burlington, where there are according to reports eight or ten gondolas We will see what resistance they will make to our heavy artillery. Two boats had anchored on the river two miles above me I have taken the two six pounders of the 42d regiment and I was constructing two batteries to place them in when the boats hastily left their anchorage last evening Some one informed me yesterday that a party of rebels were behind me pillaging the loyalists and not being able to pass Black Horse they marched to Mount Holly and Moorestown to join General Putnam, who must be between Hoppin's and Cooper's Creek with 3000 men I sent out a detachment of 100 men who will push on to Mount Holly to find out the truth of all reports and to reconnoitre the country on that side. The bearer of this letter is one of my Quarter Masters whom I send to New York with some wagons and to get money and clothing for my men I beg you, Sir, to furnish an escort to New Brunswick

I have the honor to be, Sir, Yours etc.

DONOP.

To GENERAL LESLIE Princeton

P S The patrol above mentioned has just returned not having seen anything of the enemy Near the bridge between Mount Holly and Moorestown they found a quantity of cannon ball, iron etc., which they threw into the water According to the opinion of the inhabitants, General Putnam must be at Cooper's Creek with 4000 men and must be busy in transporting stores You know better than I if the news is true that Washington has crossed the Delaware at Vessel's Ferry with a large corps to join the corps of Lee

No 8. Colonel von Donop to General Grant.

Bordentown, 16th of Dec 1776

Sir

Hearing that the heavy artillery is coming I have posted myself here with the battalions von Linsingen and von Minnigerode, having ordered the 42d Regiment and the von Block Battalion to Black Horse and its neighborhood. From there the chasseurs will make a patrol to Mount Holly and Burlington. It will soon appear what resistance these marauders will make when the six heavy pieces of artillery are discharged at them, for they will destroy all before them For this purpose I have had the regiment of Colonel Sterling and the battalion von Block to make eight hundred fascines and I will send them along with the artillery so that I can construct a battery in one night. Two vessels have gone up above me and have anchored a little less than two miles above here I am now engaged in making two batteries here from which to attack them. For this work I have taken the two six pounders of Lieutenant Colonel Sterling's regiment until two eighteen pounders arrive to take their place. People have warned me that there is a rebel party of 300 mounted men wandering around here and pillaging the tories and, because they cannot pass Black Horse, they will return by Mount Holly and Moorestown, passing between Hoppin's and Cooper's Creeks where General Putnam is said to have placed an effective force of 3000 men I will detach today to oppose them 200 men with a few horse which will push toward Mount Holly and get the exact truth of this report They will reconnoitre the country on this side. I am not very well and but for that I would go myself. Yesterday Major Nichols of the enemy brought here two English officers to exchange for those Captain Sims had taken to Bristol The Major will be led back today to Burlington by an officer and a mounted man. He is a good looking man, and very enthusiastic for their cause He pleased me very much in what he said about the arrival of our other Hessian troops and he appeared greatly disturbed and curious concerning our operations this winter. He seemed more desirous for permanent public good than for immediate peace. Colonel Rall according to his report has made some changes in his post, which in my opinion are wise

and I will go tomorrow to see his plans Mr Kemble [1] seems to be a well bred man and takes all possible trouble to carry out the orders of the General-in-Chief and I hope that all others who are under my command will do the same for me. I pray you to commend me to his good graces

And to believe me, with much esteem, Sir,

Your most humble and most ob't serv't,

C Donop.

P. S As the houses here are built very poorly and as the greater part of the inhabitants have carried away their beds it will be necessary for the men to lie on straw beds upon the ground, otherwise they will perish with the cold.

No 9 Extract from a Letter to a Gentleman in Connecticut

(Dated Headquarters Trenton Falls, December 12, 1776)

My last to you was by Captain ——, of the 5th instant from Trenton I was then in hopes my next would have acquainted you we were advancing on the enemy My reason for presuming this was a speedy arrival of General Lee with his division of the Army. Our enemy knowing how far he was in the rear, and our weak situation, made a forced march to come up with us, and were within two miles of Princetown, when Lord Stirling began his retreat with two brigades Boats from every quarter were collected, and our stores, together with the troops remaining at Trenton, were immediately conveyed over the Delaware On Sunday morning having everything over we crossed the Delaware and took our quarters about half a mile from the river. About eleven o'clock the enemy came marching down with all the pomp of war, in great expectation of getting boats and immediately pursuing, but of this we took proper care by destroying every boat, shallop &c we could lay our hands on They made forced marches up and down the river in pursuit of boats but in vain This is Thursday, the enemy are much scattered, some in Trenton directly opposite from that on their left to Bordentown and Burlington on the river banks The enemy are at least twelve thousand strong determined for Philadelphia for which

[1] Major Samuel Kemble, deputy adjutant-general of General Howe

purpose they are transporting flat-bottom boats from Brunswick to Trenton by land.

No 10. Colonel Joseph Reed to General Washington.

December 12, 1776.

Dear Sir —

The gentlemen of the Light Horse who went into the Jerseys have returned safe. They proceeded into the country 'till they met an intelligent person directly from Trenton, who informed them that General Howe was then with the main body of his army that the flying army, consisting of the Light Infantry and grenadiers, under Lord Cornwallis, still lay at Pennytown and there was no appearance of a movement, That they are certainly waiting for boats from Brunswick that he believed they would attempt a landing in more places than one, that their artillery park has thirty pieces of cannon — all field pieces They are collecting horses from all parts of the country Some movement was intended yesterday morning but laid aside; but what it was and why they did not proceed he does not know. I sent off a person to Trenton yesterday morning with directions to return by Pennytown. I told him to go to . and get what intelligence he could from him He is not yet returned. I expect him every moment. I charged him to let know that, if he would watch their motions and could inform us of the time and place of their proposed landing, he should receive a large reward for which I would be answerable I cannot but think their landing will be between this and Trenton, for three reasons

1st. That Lord Cornwallis with that part of the army which he will lead keeps at Pennytown within four miles of the river.

2nd. They will by that means avoid the ferry at Shamony, and the fords which, at this season of the year, must be disagreeable to the troops

3rd They will derive much more assistance from the country which is but too favourable to them

4th They know our principal artillery is near Trenton and the passage through the woods to Bristol must be unfavourable to them. On the road above they will find all clear and the distance nearly the same

The river is not and I believe cannot be sufficiently guarded.

We must depend upon intelligence of their motions; to obtain which no expense must be spared If it were possible to fix signals answering to their different movements that would be most speedy and effectual The militia are crossing over in parties. I fear they do not mean to return I do not know by whose orders, but if their Colonels have power to give permission in a little time there will be none left I do not like the condition of things at and above Coryell's Ferry, the officers are quite new and seem to have little sense of the necessity of vigilance I shall wait a little to see my man return and then unless your Excellency think my stay here of service, I will return to Headquarters I enclose you a proclamation which I got from the other side I suppose it is one of the same kind General Dickinson saw Mr Moylan desires me to mention to your Excellency the propriety of his meeting General Lee to inform him of the state of things and wishes to know your plan by the return of the Light Horse.

I am in haste, most respectfully Dear Sir,

Your obedient humble servant,

Jos Reed.

No. 11 Colonel Cadwalader to Council of Safety, 1776.

Headquarters, Trenton Ferry, Bucks County
8th Decr 1776

Gentn

His Excely General Washington desires me to request that you will immediately dispatch a Party of men from Philada to cut down & destroy the two Bridges on the Burlington Road, one on Pensawkin & the other on Cooper's Creek — as he is apprehensive the Enemy intend to pass to Philada by that Rout. Let me beg of you in my own name that you will alarm the whole Country, South and West, nothing but their assistance can save us!

I am Gent, with great respect Your most obt h ble Servt

John Cadwalader

No 12 Colonel Rall to Colonel von Donop.

Sir

I send this patrol in order to see what is going on in the neighborhood of Bordentown, and I will send another patrol to Maidenhead The firing of yesterday was intended by the enemy to

cover the landing of about thirty rebels who were bold enough to venture to a landing near a house where I had a sergeant and six men. These they forced to withdraw I cannot understand the object of the enemy in making this crossing but I sent a command of thirty men there and they had gone I reinforced the picket with six men and placed them under the protection of an officer and thirty men who will remain. A sergeant and six men who have charge of cattle I sent this morning with forty oxen to Bordentown My regimental quarter masters are ready to go to New York and are waiting for those of my brother's brigade. There arrived yesterday an officer with twenty horses for the Dragoon Regiment Burgoyne A patrol of them consisting of six men was sent to Pennytown but have not returned I have information that a dragoon mortally wounded lies at a place ten miles from here and I have sent a surgeon to him

RALL

Trenton the 17th December 1776
10 o'clock in the morning

No. 13. Colonel von Donop to General Grant

BORDENTOWN, December 18, 1776

SIR

I have this moment received your letter of the 17th instant. Since I had the honour to advise you that there were 4000 of the enemy at Cooper's Creek the best report I can obtain reduces the number to 500. I do not care to take the trouble to march with all my force for these gentlemen will not wait for me. I believe however that it would be a good thing to establish a post at Mount Holly and to push on from there, and place a guard at the bridge between that place and Moorestown From thence we could send out patrols to Rancocas Creek and then with troops around Busseltown. I could send patrols to Burlington You will see by the map which I send you that I will then be able to get information of the enemy on both my flanks and at the same time deprive them of the plan of making a descent from Rancocas Creek There is another report concerning the rebels which I get from Mr Smith, and a messenger just from the General-in-Chief reports the same thing from Philadelphia This man informs me that they are hard at work fortifying the city but a man residing there has assured me that from the way they

are doing it the work will not be finished in two years. Yesterday he passed Cooper's Creek where there are two battalions, one of which was marching toward Haddonfield and the other stationed there had destroyed the bridge over the creek At this place on the 16th instant Captain Loray[1] of my chasseurs claims to have thrown into the water a quantity of cannon balls There is more news from Colonel Sterling which reached me yesterday. I have also the honor to send you a letter which I took from Captain Henry[2] a rebel officer Lieutenant Delahunty[3] is quartered in a house in the country two miles from here because his wife is sick I cannot tell you then, my General, what he has been able to find out but as he will pass here to-morrow I will find out everything. I have just sent back the above mentioned rebel officer, he assuring me that he will leave the army as soon as we get in possession of Philadelphia and not serve again with the troops of Pennsylvania I believe you have judged correctly of the movements of the enemy at Vessel's Ferry, but the six dragoons, of whom five have returned met 100 rebels, who while retreating fired rapidly on them. killed a horse, and wounded a dragoon Colonel Rall expects to make a search for them today with a detachment of yagers and dragoons. You will oblige me, my General, to give me from time to time some of the information you receive

I have the honor to be, Sir, Your obt ser't.

DONOP

N B The messenger who brought me the news from Philadelphia, which I had the honor to send you has told me that he was sent by order of General Howe to take a letter to a resident of Philadelphia. This resident had requested him to receive his reply by word of mouth, that he would do everything in his power to organize a fleet of war vessels in the Delaware river The messenger also states that he had been promised a gratuitous gift of a commission I desire to know from you how much

[1] Captain Friedrich Heinrich von Loray of Lieutenant-Colonel von Wurmb's battalion of Hessian chasseurs

[2] Probably Captain John Henry of the Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, militia

[3] Lieutenant Laurence DeLahunty of the Hessian garrison regiment

ought to be given him Also, you will oblige me, General, to let me know if I may send some men into the country to give me the news of the enemy and if I will be repaid the money which I will be obliged to give them There are two of them on their way to Cooper's Creek and Gloucester from whom I expect news today or tomorrow

No 14 Colonel Rall to Colonel von Donop.

Trenton, the 18th of December 1776

Sir

This morning at daybreak another party of rebels made a landing at the same place as they did the day before yesterday The yagers fired upon the boats and after a cannonade from the enemy on the other side of the river they withdrew I sent several detachments there but they had gone I received information just now that a party of rebels had crossed four miles above here at Howell's ferry. I have sent a patrol of twelve yagers and two dragoons there to ascertain the facts My light dragoons which I thought lost, returned yesterday, having left one man behind mortally wounded They reported that they came across a party of rebels about one hundred strong, who opened on them a terrific fire I have sent this morning a patrol with a wagon to Pennington to bring in the wounded man if possible

Rall

No 15 General Washington to Major-General Lee

The following intercepted letter from General Washington to Major-General Lee was found among the German records at Marburg Germany —

Brunswick 30th of November, 1776

My Dear General

The movements of the enemy are, since I wrote you from Newark of such a nature as things stand at present, sincerely to be wished for I have feared that they would take Newark, Elizabeth Town and Amboy for their winter quarters in order to undertake from these places early in the spring an attack on Philadelphia and at the same time having a favourable season ahead that they would make a diversion on the Delaware river with their fleet The advantages they have gained over us in the past have made

them so proud and sure of success that they are determined to go to Philadelphia this winter I have positive information that this is a fact and because the term of service of the light troops of Jersey and Maryland are ended they anticipate the weakness of our army Should they now really risk this undertaking then there is a great probability that they will pay dearly for it for I shall continue to retreat before them so as to lull them into security.

I am with the greatest respect, my dear General,
your obedient servant

GO WASHINGTON.

No 16 General Howe to Lord Germain.

Extract of a letter from General Sir William Howe to Lord George Germain, dated New York, December 20, 1776 —

In Jersey, upon the approach of the van of Lord Cornwallis's corps to Brunswick by a forced march, on the 1st instant, the enemy went off most precipitately to Princetown, and had they not prevented the passage of the Raritan, by breaking a part of Brunswick bridge, so great was the confusion among them, that their army must have inevitably been cut to pieces

My first design extending no further than to get and keep possession of East-Jersey, Lord Cornwallis had orders not to advance beyond Brunswick, which occasioned him to discontinue his pursuit, but finding the advantages that might be gained by pushing on to the Delaware, and the possibility of getting to Philadelphia, the communication leading to Brunswick was reinforced, and on the 6th I joined his Lordship with the 4th brigade of British under the command of Major-general Grant On the 7th Lord Cornwallis's corps, the guards excepted, who were left at Brunswick, marched to Princetown, which the enemy had quitted on the same day This corps marched in two divisions on the 8th, the first advancing to Trenton reached the Delaware soon after the enemy's rear guard had crossed Their main army having passed the preceding day and night, took post on the other side of the river

Lord Cornwallis, with the rear division, halted at Maidenhead, six miles from Trenton, and marched next morning at one o'clock to Corriel's Ferry, thirteen miles higher up the Delaware, in some expectation of finding boats there, and in the neighborhood, suf-

ficient to pass the river, but in this he was disappointed, the enemy having taken the precaution to destroy or to secure on the south side, all the boats that could possibly be employed for this purpose

The passage of the Delaware being thus rendered impracticable, his Lordship took post at Pennington, in which place and Trenton the two divisions remained until the 14th, when the weather having become too severe to keep the field and the winter cantonments being arranged, the troops marched from both places to their respective stations The chain, I own, is rather too extensive, but I was induced to occupy Burlington to cover the county of Monmouth, in which there are many loyal inhabitants, and trusting to the almost general submission of the country to the southward of this chain, and to the strength of the corps placed in the advance posts, I conclude the troops will be in perfect security Lord Cornwallis having desired to return to Britain, the command in Jersey is given to Major-general Grant, in whose approved good conduct I place the greatest confidence

I cannot too much commend Lord Cornwallis's good services during this campaign, and particularly the ability and conduct he displayed in the pursuit of the enemy from Fort Lee to Trenton, a distance exceeding eighty miles, in which he was well supported by the ardour of his corps, who chearfully quitted their tents and heavy baggage, as impediments to their march.

By pressing the rebels so close, they had not time to destroy the country, as they intended, or to remove their stores, by which a large quantity of provisions and plenty of forage have been secured.

During Lord Cornwallis's stay at Pennington, a patrole of thirty dragoons from the 16th regiment, was sent out to gain intelligence of a corps under the command of General Lee reported to be in Morris county on their way to cross the Delaware at Alexandria Lieutenant-colonel Harcourt desired the direction of this detachment, and learning, as he proceeded, the situation of this corps, consisting of two thousand men and of General Lee's headquarters, he contrived by infinite address and gallantry, to get to his house undiscovered by the guard, surrounded it, and overcame all their resistance, and made the General prisoner

The time of service for which most of the enemy's troops were engaged being expired, their present strength, from a review of

the latest intelligence received, is about 8000 on the south side of the Delaware, and in Philadelphia, 500 militia embodied in Morris county, New-Jersey, and about 3000 at Peek's Kill, North Castle, and the smaller posts in this province.

No 17 Colonel Rall to Colonel von Donop

Trenton, 20th of December 1776

Sir

Yesterday the rebels captured three men of the von Lossberg regiment who went out to procure forage two miles from here and not far from the road to Maidenhead I have written to General Leslie at Princeton and asked him to post some troops at Maidenhead in order to keep open the communication with Princeton In fact my right wing is too much exposed Near Pennington stands a strong corps of rebels At Howell's ferry on the other side of the Delaware four miles from here is the left wing of General Stirling's command and at Upper Makefield on my right wing is the corps which General Lee commanded The constant alarms and troubles I have here prevents me going to Bordentown today as I had hoped This morning a grenadier called and stated that he alone had charge of the baggage that has been here already for four days and he wished that his Battalion would get a wagon and send for this baggage He belongs to the von Linsingen battalion

Rall

This minute Lieutenant von Grothausen who made a patrol this morning with twenty yagers and four dragoons up the Delaware river for four miles has reported He met a party of rebels one hundred and fifty strong, and as soon as they saw him they retreated but not until they had killed one of the horses of the dragoons. The patrol brought a prisoner with them whom I have in the guard house.

No 18 General Grant to Colonel von Donop

Brunswick Dec 21st 1776

Sir

I have received your Letter of the 16th by Captain Campbell and since then that of the 18th When you send People for Intelligence, if you find that they serve you faithfully be so good

as to give them certificates and refer them to Mr Skinner [1] for payment, which is the method I am directed to follow as Skinner is best acquainted with the people of the Country and of course best Judge of what will satisfy them in the money way.

Colonel Rall has lost another Dragoon I have received three letters of yesterday's Date from him I send you enclosed my answer and refer you to it for Information I have lately had about the Enemy, which I believe is to be depended upon

I understand the Meaning of Monthly . . . les and have waved it Colonel Rall sent a Detachment of 100 men and a cannon to Princetown I don't touch much upon that, but surely it was not necessary, it was making more of the rebels than they deserve.

Be so good as to communicate with General Leslie and fix with him what Days your Patrols should meet upon the road from Trenton to Princetown, you will of Course vary the Force and Time of sending them. I likewise write to him upon this subject.

We are in great Want of Carriages and Hay I should be much obliged to you if you could send me a hundred Waggons loaded with Hay The Farmers shall receive eleven Shillings a day for each Waggon with two horses and fifteen shillings a day for Waggons with four horses, the money to be paid weekly by Commissary Christie in Gold or dollars If you cannot get a hundred Waggons send fifty or as many as can be found in the country, you will be kind enough to send an Escort with them to Princetown. Gen Leslie will forward them from thence to this place

I have not heard from the General so can say nothing about your 18 pounders which I am as anxious about as you can be. Colonel Sterling not less so, in order to get into Quarters [2]

The rebels gave way at Pluckhimin, the Guards had a man and a Guide wounded At Springfield General Leslie had three men wounded the rebels had three killed one of their most violent Captains and several men wounded, they fled as usual into the mountains. I have some thoughts of quartering two regiments

[1] Cortlandt Skinner, attorney-general of the Province of New Jersey under the crown, and afterward brigadier-general commanding a brigade of New Jersey volunteers — loyalists

[2] It was thought necessary to have these cannon in Burlington before the post was occupied

there to bring the People to their senses, if the General does not think the Post too far advanced

I am told Rhode Island surrendered without firing a shot. Lord Cornwallis has not sailed and you will still be in time to send Letters for Europe which I shall forward by Express Your Quarter masters passed and your Baggage shall be sent forward when they return.

I have the honour to be with much esteem, Sir,

Your most obed't & most h'ble servant

JAMES GRANT

No 19 COLONEL VON DONOP TO GENERAL GRANT

BORDENTOWN, 21st of December 1776

SIR

Following my report of the 18t instant I have the honour to announce to you that although I had resolved to pay a visit to Mr. Putnam at Cooper's Creek, I have now changed my mind after having gone out day before yesterday with Colonels von Block and Sterling and a patrol to Mount Holly I learned there that there was a large quantity of provisions on this side of the Delaware river. I concluded that at present it would not be worth while to weary the troops so much by making this march The bridges have all been destroyed and the troops would have to make a long detour and march over marshy roads

DONOP

No 20 COLONEL RALL TO COLONEL VON DONOP

TRENTON, 21st of December 1776

SIR:

Yesterday I sent two dragoons to Princeton with letters They were not gone over an hour when one of them came back and reported that the other soldier had been killed and his own horse had been shot by a concealed enemy He took the letters from his dead comrade and mounting his horse because his own had been wounded he returned here I sent immediately one Captain with one hundred men and one piece of artillery to Princeton and asked again of General Leslie to place some troops at Maidenhead, if only two hundred men This would keep up communication between Princeton and Trenton if strong patrols were sent out from both places The party that is making it so unsafe on

this side of the river is estimated by some as one hundred and fifty men, others say there are not over forty men strong

RALL

Major Dunbar asks for an escort for his baggage from Bordentown to Trenton, which can be relieved as it passes on from post to post

NO 21. COLONEL RALL TO COLONEL VON DONOP

TRENTON 21st of December 1776

SIR

It is impossible, my brother, to spare a battalion of my brigade as I am liable to be attacked at any moment. I have the enemy before me, behind me and at my right flank The road from here to Princeton is very unsafe so that I have to send your letters by an escort of fifty men. The corps of General Lee is at my right flank and the enemy are very bold in front of me at the landings. But this I will stop by troops under cover I will attack them as soon as they come near enough to enable me to do it Be kind enough to send the baggage to the draw-bridge and it will be taken in charge by my command I fully understand my situation and three battalions are few enough to defend myself here as you can readily judge for yourself I beg therefore to be relieved of this request and not be placed in certain danger. I have not made any redoubts or any kind of fortifications because I have the enemy in all directions It is then, my brother, absolutely impossible I intended this morning to ask you to relieve me from posting guard at the draw-bridge because I cannot furnish men enough for other duties. If however this is utterly impossible, if it has still to be done, I am ready to obey my brother according to his first order I send this by one of my mounted men, who can, in case you still insist, bring the order back immediately and the battalion can march to you instantly But I will then be compelled to move out with the two battalions and camp outside the city.

RALL

He left here one quarter to ten o'clock

No 22 Colonel von Donop to General Grant

I await with impatience the arrival of the Koehler battalion with the heavy artillery, because I am not able to take possession of Burlington before they arrive, and as long as the galleys are in the neighbourhood I had intended to post a battalion at Mount Holly but since I have myself seen the situation I have changed my mind not finding it proper to do so for the reason that dense woods are adjacent and there is high ground on the side of Moorestown and Haddonfield But as soon as the Koehler battalion arrives I will post a considerable detachment there with some horse so that my left flank will be properly guarded There is a great scarcity of houses to accommodate the troops in order that they may not be exposed to annoyance by the enemy It would however be easy for the brigades to be quartered in the country behind me Colonel Rall has reported to me that he had sent a patrol of twenty men and four dragoons along the river above Trenton and the enemy as they were retiring killed a horse of our dragoons and in return we captured a prisoner from them Also Colonel Rall tells me three soldiers from the von Lossberg regiment who were foraging near Maidenhead were killed by the enemy The plans of our troops have evidently not been announced although it was intended that the 2nd British Battalion should have been posted at Maidenhead Accordingly Colonel Rall has written to General Leslie that there should certainly be some troops there to keep open the communication between Trenton and Princeton Even now the Rall brigade is exposed on the rear to the attacks of the enemy and it will weary it too much if it is called upon to perform also this service. The General will notice the exchange of the English officer since my last report by examining the list and the letter of Colonel Cadwalader hereto annexed At the same time I have the honor to send you the documents No 1, 2 & 3 received from Colonel Sterling and you will see by No. 4 that the situation is changed again today. If the enemy approaches still nearer it will be of advantage to me I will go as I had intended yesterday morning and attack them on the road, between Black Horse and Slabtown,[1] which is half way between Black Horse and Mount Holly He cannot march by our right flank without encountering another

[1] Now Jacksonville, Burlington County

body of men on the road from New Mill to Trenton. In this case if it is attempted I would be obliged to use the troops of Sterling, von Block and von Linsingen and keep open the communication with Rall and hold the drawbridge at Crosswicks Creek. Therefore I send you, my General, such directions as you may think proper to give to Lieutenant-Colonel Koehler in case he is marching with the heavy artillery on the road from South Amboy to Moorestown, for on this road he runs the risk of falling into the hands of the enemy. There is another statement which I have the honor to send you, with a copy of the letter and my reply. I judge from this letter that they are desirous to keep Mount Holly and to declare Burlington to be neutral ground. It is possible for the troops at Bristol to fire on the town of Burlington with six pounders but they cannot so control Mount Holly. In closing my letter I just received a report from Colonel Rall which informs me that in sending two dragoons yesterday with a letter to Princeton and scarcely an hour after they started one returned saying that the other dragoon had been killed by a body of rebels who were in ambush on the road. He brought back to Colonel Rall the horse and the letter from the dragoon who had been killed. Colonel Rall immediately detached one hundred men with one cannon to take the letter to General Leslie at Princeton. He asked him to place two hundred men at least at Maidenhead immediately, which by frequent patrols would assure the communication being kept open between Trenton and Princeton. Colonel Rall also said that the party of the enemy which disturbed the highway according to one report consisted of about 150 men and from other reports not more than 40 men.

(This letter was unsigned.)

No. 23. General Grant to Colonel Rall.

Brunswick, Dec. 21st 1776.

Sir:

I have this moment received your three Letters of yesterday's Date. I am sorry to hear your Brigade has been fatigued or alarmed. You may be assured that the rebel army in Pennsylvania which has been joined by Lee's Corps, Gates and Arnolds does not exceed eight thousand men who have neither shoes nor stockings, are in fact almost naked, dying of cold, without blan-

kets and very ill supplied with Provisions On this Side the Delaware they have not three hundred men. These stroll about in small parties, under the command of subaltern officers none of them above the rank of Captain, and their principal object is to pick up some of our Light Dragoons.

With regard to the communication to Burdentown if the duty falls heavy upon your Brigade, you will be so good as to apply to Colonel Donop, who will give whatever Directions are necessary and when you send Letters to Princetown you may either send a small Detachment of Foot, or when despatch is necessary a Corporal and four Dragoons For as General Howe does not approve of Maidenhead for a Post, I can not send Troops there, but I have desired Brig. Gen. Leslie to send Patrols frequently from Princetown to meet the patrols from Trenton and to fix with Colonel Donop and you, when these Patrols are to be sent. Ammunition shall be sent for the Artillery & Powder & Balls to make Cartridges which your men can do themselves at their Leisure

Officers are to give the parole and countresign in their respective cantonments, which can be attended with no inconvenience to the service, any Body stop'd by your Out posts who has not your Parole and Countresign will be stop'd of course and brought before you, if you find he is a Friend you will of course release him or confine him if he is a suspected Person

I have the honour to be, Sir, Your most obed't & most h'ble servant

JAMES GRANT

To COL RALL

No 24 LIEUTENANT COLONEL STERLING TO COLONEL VON DONOP.

I.

SIR·

A gentleman of Credit is just come who informs me that 1000 of the rebels were certainly at Mountholly and they were to be at one o'Clock at Slabtown and that 2000 more were in the rear to support them which he heard came in to Mountholly this morning He likewise heard that Washington proposed to send over 1000 or 1500 men at Donks Ferry, which is 3 miles from Burlington on this Side of Rancocas Creek, to make a conjunction

with the above. Col. Block has ordered out 3 Companys that are at Hancock's bridge and Busseltown

I have the honour to be, Sir, Your most obed't servant

THOS STERLING.

2 oclock Saturday

II.

SIR

Colonel Block has just now communicated your Letter to me, wherein you do me the honour to know my opinion, the Rebels without Doubt mean to beat up our Quarters and drive us from hence from their approaching so near us I am therefore of opinion, if it is necessary to keep their country for the winter that we should not wait to be attacked but so soon as we are certain, that a Body of them is at Slabtown, which I believe is now the Case, that you Sir with the Troops at Burdentown should come here and attack them before they have time to extend themselves so as to surround us or to form a Plan to drive us from hence. I am confident we are a Match for them were their numbers as strong as we hear (3000 men) I suppose Colonel Raille will send a Battalion to occupy Burdentown in your absense

I have the honour to be Sir, Your most obed't h'ble servant

THOS. STERLING.

BLACKHORSE

½ past 4 o'Clock Saturday 21st Dec 1776

No 25 MEMORANDA

I

(*Intelligence by Mr. Hovenden, who left Bucks County 20th Dec 1776*)

That the Main Body of the rebel army lies at Beaumonts between Telits and Bakers Ferry about 11 miles above Trenton Ferry commanded by General Washington and Lord Stirling That a party of about 3000 men under Gen Sulivan had joined Gen. Washington and it was said they were immediately to march and make their Quarters at Newtown That of this number near 200 sick and [illegible] were arrived at the hospital at Newtown. A party 200 or 300 men are stationed at Robinsons Ferry about 7 miles above Beaumonts, Don't know of any other party higher up

the river. That General Washington had with him 6 eight pounders but were removed from thence. know not where There are opposite to Slacks Island about 5 miles below Beaumonts 4 eight pounders. That below Slack's Island and at Yardley's are about 600 men, commanded by Gen Dickinson with two pieces of cannon Gen Mercer was there but often shifts his Quarters. That upon the most diligent Inquiry and best intelligence he could procure General Washington's whole Army did not consist of more than 8000 men That General Sulivan went to Philadelphia on the 15th inst from Washington's Quarters That General Gates had not passed the river on Thursday last, but was informed, he was coming forward with about 500 men.

II.

(*Intelligence by Mr Haines, a Burlington County loyalist*)

Bazilla Haines sent out to procure Intelligence on the 21st of Dec 1776 arrived at Mount holly in the night and lodged in the Rebel camp there Was informed they had only two Field pieces, which he thinks were three pounders as he perceived them at the church. That all the Troops were drawn up in his view, that he walked round them and thinks there were not above eight hundred. near one half Boys and all of them militia, a very few Pennsylvanians excepted. That he knew a great many of them, who came from Gloucester, Egg Harbour, Penns Neck and Cohansey They were commanded by Col Griffin

III

(*Intelligence by Samuel Brown, who left Bucks County on the 22d Dec. 1776*)

That the Troops opposite to Trenton and Bordentown are in number about 600 men commanded by General Ewing Of these men there is a Guard of 25 men opposite Mr Field's, about 50 at Mr. Riche's opposite to Bordenton, about half a mile nearer Trenton about thirty, the rest lay above between Riche's and Trenton and over against Trenton there are two pieces of cannon. That Gen Washingtons whole Army does not consist of more than 8000 men, about 5000 of them Troops formerly enlisted, partly brought from Jersey by Washington and partly by Sulivan, the rest are new raised Militia. That the time of Enlist-

ment of Ewing's Brigade of 600 men all expire the first of Jan next and that the officers and men and Gen. Ewing himself has declared they will serve no longer That the New England Troops who came with General Washington it is generally believed from their Declaration that they will not serve longer than the Term of their Enlistment, which expires also the first of Jan'y next, that these Troops compose the main Part of Washington's Army. Mr Hovenden further says that there are four regiments or rather the remains of them, whose time expires the 1st of Jan'y and that he was informed by their principal officers that they would serve no longer out of their own Province

IV

(*Intelligence by Capt Losbiniere who left Bristol the 22nd Dec 1776.*)

That there were two Companys at Neshaminy Ferry with some Boats. At Bristol not more than 800 or 900 at most commanded by Col. Cadwalader No Entrenchments or other works but 5 Cannon, three iron 4 pounders, two brass 6 pounders, and 7 flat-bottom boats which may carry about 50 men each and two ferry Boats, which may carry the like number That they often send in the night a party of about 50 men over the river who land above Burlington, stay 24 Hours and return At Minirks about 3 miles above Bristol are two companys, one Company at the Old house on Penns-bury.

At Mr Thos Richee's opposite to Bordentown, between 4 and 500 men, and at Trenton Ferry about the same number, and that the whole number commanded by General Washington on Pennsylvania side, supposing the Corps commanded by Gen Lee to have formed their junction, which is confidently reported, are about 8000 men That since their retreat from New Jersey a great number of sick are constantly sending to Philadelphia That he knew not where Gen Putnam is, but understood that Colonel Griffin is on the Jersey side of the River. That General Mifflin set out from Philadelphia last week to raise a number of men in Westmoreland County and other frontier Parts of Pennsylvania.

No 26. Captain Loray to Colonel Rall

Crosswicks December 21st 1776

Sir

I have placed a guard at the large bridge, also have guarded all the road in the rear of your command. You may therefore feel that if the enemy does not attack you in front nothing can hurt you My patrols went as far as Springfield and I heard that there are seven hundred men at Mount Holly, but it is not likely that they will undertake anything I really believe that the whole party is nothing but a rebel patrol To-morrow however I will report fully the particulars.

Loray.

No 27 General Leslie to Colonel Rall

Princeton one o'Clock morning

Sir.

I am honoured with your Letter at 12 o Clock last night. I 've ordered the first L Infantry to be at Trenton tomorrow at 10 o'clock and I take the 2nd Lt Inf. and 300 men of the 2nd Brigade to Maidenhead to be in the Way if wanted

I wish you success and am Sir your most obed't and h'ble servant

A Leslie

Today. I 've mentioned the movement to General Grant

No 28 Colonel Reed to General Washington

Bristol 22d December 1776

Dear Sir

Pomroy, whom I sent by your order to go to Amboy and so through the Jerseys and round by Princeton to you, returned to Burlington yesterday He went to South Amboy, but was not able to get over, upon which he came to Brunswic, passed on to Princeton, and was prevented from going to Pennington, upon which he returned to Burlington by way of Cranbury

His intelligence is, that he saw no troops, baggage wagons, or artillery going to New York, except about eight wagons, which he understood had the baggage of some of the light horse, who had been relieved and were going into quarters At Cranbury

he saw sixteen wagons going down to South Amboy for the baggage of about five hundred men, who were to quarter about Cranbury, being enlisted forces commanded by one Laurence At Brunswic he saw four pieces of cannon, the number of men he could not learn, but they did not exceed six or eight hundred. Princeton, he says, was called head-quarters, and there he saw a very considerable body of troops coming out of the College, meeting-house and other places where they quartered He understood they were settled in their winter quarters, and had given over further operations till the spring. In Burlington County he found them scattered through all the farmer's houses, eight, ten, twelve and fifteen in a house, and rambling over the whole country.

Colonel Griffin has advanced up the Jerseys with six hundred men as far as Mount Holly, within seven miles of their head-quarters at the Black Horse He has written over here for two pieces of artillery and two or three hundred volunteers, as he expected an attack very soon The spirits of the militia here are very high, they are all for supporting him Colonel Cadwalader and the gentlemen here all agree, that they should be indulged We can either give him a strong reinforcement, or make a separate attack, the latter bids fairest for producing the greatest and best efforts It is therefore determined, to make all possible preparation today, and, no event happening to change our measures, the main body here will cross the river tomorrow morning and attack their post between this and the Black Horse, proceeding from thence either to the Black Horse or the Square, where about two hundred men are posted, as things shall turn out with Griffin If they should not attack Griffin as he expects, it is probable both our parties may advance to the Black Horse, should success attend the intermediate attempt. If they should collect their force and march against Griffin, our attack will have the best efforts in preventing their sending troops on that errand, or breaking up their quarters and coming in upon their rear which we must endeavour to do in order to free Griffin.

We are all of opinion, my dear General, that something must be attempted to revive our expiring credit, give our cause some degree of reputation, and prevent a total depreciation of the Continental money, which is coming on very fast; that even a failure cannot be more fatal, than to remain in our present situation; in short, some enterprise must be undertaken in our present

circumstances, or we must give up the cause In a little time the Continental army will be dissolved The militia must be taken before their spirits and patience are exhausted, and the scattered, divided state of the enemy affords us a fair opportunity of trying what our men will do, when called to an offensive attack Will it not be possible, my dear General, for your troops, or such part of them as can act with advantage, to make a diversion, or something more, at or about Trenton? The greater the alarm, the more likely the success will attend the attacks If we could possess ourselves again of New Jersey, or any considerable part of it, the effects would be greater than if we had never left it

Allow me to hope that you will consult your own good judgment and spirit, and not let the goodness of your heart subject you to the influence of opinions from men in every respect your inferiors Something must be attempted before the sixty days expire which the commissioners have allowed, for, however many affect to despise it, it is evident that a very serious attention is paid to it, and I am confident that unless some more favourable appearance attends our arms and cause before that time, a very large number of the militia officers here will follow the example of those of Jersey and take benefit from it I will not disguise my own sentiments, that our cause is desperate and hopeless, if we do not take the opportunity of the collection of troops at present, to strike some stroke Our affairs are hastening fast to ruin if we do not retrieve them by some happy event. Delay with us is now equal to a total defeat. Be not deceived, my dear General, with small, flattering appearances, we must not suffer ourselves to be lulled into security and inaction, because the enemy does not cross the river It is but a reprieve, the execution is the more certain, for I am very clear that they can and will cross the river, in spite of any opposition we can give them

Pardon the freedom I have used. The love of my country, a wife and four children in the enemy's hands, the respect and attachment I have to you, the ruin and poverty that must attend me, and thousands of others will plead my excuse for so much freedom I am with the greatest respect and regard, dear sir

Your obedient and affectionate humble servant

JOSEPH REED

No 29 General Washington to Colonel Reed

23 December 1776

Dear Sir

The bearer is sent down to know whether your plan was attempted last night and if not to inform you, that Christmas-day at night, one hour before day is the time fixed upon for our attempt on Trenton For Heaven's sake keep this to yourself, as the discovery of it may prove fatal to us our numbers, sorry am I to say, being less than I had any conception of but necessity, dire necessity, will, nay must, justify an attempt Prepare, and, in concert with Griffin, attack as many of them posts as you possibly can with a prospect of success the more we can attack at the same instant, the more confusion we shall spread and greater good will result from it If I had not been fully convinced before of the enemy's designs, I have now ample testimony of their intentions to attack Philadelphia, so soon as the ice will afford the means of conveyance

As the Colonels of the Continental Regiments might kick up some dust about command, unless Cadwalader is considered by them in the light of a brigadier, which I wish him to be, I desired General Gates, who is unwell, and applied for leave to go to Philadelphia, to endeavour, if his health would permit him, to call and stay two or three days at Bristol in his way I shall not be particular: we could not ripen matters for our attack before the time mentioned in the first part of this letter so much out of sorts and so much in want of everything are the troops under Sullivan &c Let me know by a careful express the plan you are to pursue The letter herewith sent, forward on to Philadelphia I could wish it to be in time for the Southern post's departure, which will be I believe by eleven o'clock tomorrow

I am, dear Sir, Your most obedient servant

Go Washington

P S — I have ordered our men to be provided with three days' provisions ready cooked, with which and their blankets they are to march for if we are successful, which Heaven grant and the circumstances favor, we may push on I shall direct every ferry and ford to be well guarded, and not a soul suffered

to pass without an officer's going down with the permit Do the same with you

To Joseph Reed, Esq, — or in his absence to Jno Cadwalader, Esq, only, at Bristol

No 30 Quartermaster Gamble's Circulars

I

Burdentown December 24th 1776

The General commanding in Chief his Majesteys Forces in New Jersey, in order to encourage the Inhabitants to supply the Troops with necessaries has thought proper to establish the following prices to be paid in Gold and Silver for the Articles hereafter mentioned and from the generous prices fixed it is to be hoped that the Inhabitants will cheerfully furnish the supplies in order to prevent the disagreeable alternative of having them seized by foraging Parties. The Inhabitants living in the neighbourhood of Trenton are to deliver their Produce to Mr Palmer Commissary at that Place and those living near Bordentown are to deliver their Produce to Mr MacCulloch Commissary, and those in the neighbourhood of Burlington to Mr Johnstone Commissary in that place.

PRICES

Hay taken from the Farmer	60/	¢	Ton
do delivered by the Farmer	80/	¢	do
Oats delivered by the Farmer	3/	¢	bushel
do taken from the Farmer's house	2/6	¢	do
Indian Corn delivered by the Farmer	3/6	¢	do
do taken from the house	3/	¢	do
Wheat delivered by the Farmer	6/	¢	do
do taken from the house	5/6	¢	do
Flour New York inspection delivered	15/	¢	Ct wt
do taken from the mill	14/3	¢	do
Bran delivered	1/	¢	do
do taken from the mill	9 1/2	¢	
Pork	25/	¢	hundred
Beef	25 or 30/	4 ¢	do

Thos Gamble[1]
A Q M General

[1] (Captain Gamble (47th Foot) sent a copy of this circular with the following letter to Colonel von Donop, who was then at Mount Holly.)

BURDENTOWN, Dec 24th 1776

SIR

I do myself the honour to inclose you some intelligence received from the other side of the River, I believe from very good authority. I also inclose the prices fixed by General Grant for the different articles furnished the Troops by the Inhabitants of this province copies of which I shall take care to have dispersed throughout the District under your command. The Inhabitants begin to bring in supplies and our Magazine fills, so that I hope we shall not be reduced to the dissagreeable necessity of sending out Forage parties The Commander in chief has issued orders for paying the Troops 165 Day's Batt and Forage money, as a douceur for their service during the campaign. You will therefore, Sir, be pleased to give the commanding Officers of Corps orders to have their returns in readiness for that purpose

I did myself the honour to write you a short note the night before last, inclosing you some intelligence and begging to know if you had any Commands for me. I was in hopes you would have allowed me to have attended you to Mountholly

Mr. Donop has brought directions for Mr Laurence [1] to come to you he sets out early tomorrow morning for that purpose and if you think Mr Galloway [2] can be of any service he will with great pleasure attend you

I have the honour to be with great respect Your most obed't h'lle serv't

THOS GAMBLE

No. 31. COLONEL JOHN CADWALADER'S DIVISION

Colonel Daniel Hitchcock's Brigade

Eleventh regiment. Continental foot (formerly Second Rhode Island regiment) Colonel, Daniel Hitchcock (comdg brig), Lieutenant-Colonel, Ezekiel Cornell (detached D. A G Cont Army), Major Israel Angell (comdg regt) 18 commissioned officers and 129 enlisted men present

Fourth regiment, Continental foot — Massachusetts regiment

[1] Probably Lieutenant Moritz von Donop of the Hessian jagers and Dr. John Lawrence of Monmouth County, New Jersey, an ardent tory

[2] Joseph Galloway, the distinguished Philadelphia loyalist

Colonel, ——, Lieutenant-Colonel, Thomas Nixon, Major, Andrew Colburn The lieutenant-colonel in command, although about this time he was commissioned colonel of the regiment, to rank August 9, 1776, the former colonel, John Nixon, having been made a brigadier-general August 9, 1776. The major was absent, having been wounded at Harlem Heights, October 12, 1776. He had been commissioned lieutenant-colonel of the Third New Hampshire regiment, but was still borne on the rolls of this regiment (He was mortally wounded at the battle of Stillwater, September 19, 1777.) 17 commissioned officers and 184 enlisted men present

Ninth regiment, Continental foot — Rhode Island regiment. Colonel, ——, Lieutenant-Colonel, Archibald Crary, Major, Christopher Smith The lieutenant-colonel in command, major absent, and Colonel James M Varnum also absent, having been promoted brigadier-general of the Rhode Island State troops, December 10, 1776 Christopher Greene, the first lieutenant-colonel of this regiment, had been taken prisoner in Canada, December 31, 1775, and was not yet exchanged The office of colonel was left vacant to be filled by him 16 commissioned officers and 148 enlisted men present

Twelfth regiment, Continental foot — Massachusetts regiment Colonel, Moses Little, Lieutenant-Colonel, William Henshaw, Major, James Collins. The lieutenant-colonel in command, major absent, and colonel in charge of a detachment of sick at Peekskill, New York 18 commissioned officers and 134 enlisted men present.

Rhode Island regiment State troops Colonel, Christopher Lippitt, Lieutenant-Colonel, ——, Major, James Tew. The colonel in command, and major absent Lieutenant-Colonel Comstock, originally of this regiment, had been transferred to the First Rhode Island regiment, October 28, 1776, and the vacancy in the office of lieutenant-colonel had not been filled 28 commissioned officers and 193 enlisted men present

The total effective strength of this brigade was 89 officers and 788 men

Philadelphia Battalions of Associators

First battalion Colonel, Jacob Morgan, Jr, Lieutenant-Colonel, William Coates, Major, Joseph Cowperthwaite.

Second battalion. Colonel, John Bayard, Lieutenant-Colonel, John Cox, Major, William Bradford

Third battalion Colonel, John Cadwalader, Lieutenant-Colonel, John Nixon, First Major, Samuel Meredith, Second Major, Robert Knox

First company of artillery. Captain, Wingate Newman, Captain-Lieutenant, William Baxter; Second Lieutenant, Nathaniel Wallace Second Lieutenant, John Sober

Second company of artillery Captain, Jehu Eyre, First Lieutenant, William Brown; Second Lieutenant, John Brown, Second Lieutenant, Samuel Williams

All the field and company officers above mentioned were present for duty

Also attached to Colonel Cadwalader's division were: —

Detachment of Philadelphia rifle battalion Colonel Timothy Matlack, commanding

Four companies Philadelphia city militia Captain George Henry, senior officer, commanding

Kent County, Delaware, militia company Captain Thomas Rodney, commanding

The total effective force of the three battalions of Associators, the companies of artillery, the rifle battalion, and the militia of Philadelphia and of Kent County, Delaware, was about 1000 men

No 32. Brigadier-General James Ewing's Division

Brigade of Pennsylvania Militia of the Flying Camp

Cumberland County regiment Colonel, Frederick Watts commanding, Lieutenant-Colonel, Samuel Culbertson present, Major, —— 27 commissioned officers and 162 enlisted men present, 114 men absent, sick or on extra duty.

Lancaster County regiment Colonel, Jacob Klotz, Lieutenant-Colonel, Thomas Murray, Major, John Boyd. The colonel in command, major present and lieutenant-colonel absent. 18 commissioned officers and 151 enlisted men present, 33 men absent, sick or on extra duty

Cumberland County regiment Colonel, William Montgomery; Lieutenant-Colonel, ——, Major, —— The colonel in command, no other field officers in commission 15 commissioned

officers and 139 enlisted men present, 149 men absent, sick, on extra duty or on furlough

York County regiment. Colonel, Richard McAllister, Lieutenant-Colonel, ——, Major, John Clark, Jr The colonel in command, and major detached for duty as aide-de-camp to Major-General Greene, no lieutenant-colonel in commission 15 commissioned officers and 97 enlisted men present, 77 men absent, sick, on extra duty or on furlough

Chester County regiment. Colonel, James Moore, Lieutenant-Colonel, George Smith, Major, Solomon Bush. The major in command, colonel and lieutenant-colonel absent 17 commissioned officers and 84 enlisted men present; 75 men absent, sick, on extra duty or on furlough.

The total strength of this brigade was 92 officers and 633 men, with 277 soldiers fit for duty

To this force must be added a small body of from 300 to 500 men of the Pennsylvania and New Jersey militia

Pennsylvania militia — Detachment Bucks County regiment Colonel, Joseph Hart

New Jersey militia Brigadier-General Philemon Dickinson, commanding, Brigade Major, Roberts Hoops, Captain and Aid-de-camp, Frederick Frelinghuysen.

Detachment First regiment, Hunterdon County. Colonel, Isaac Smith, Major, Joseph Phillips

Detachment Second regiment, Middlesex County Colonel, John Neilson, Lieutenant-Colonel, Richard Lott, First Major, John Taylor, Second Major, John Van Emburgh

No. 33. General Officers of the American Revolution

Major-General John Sullivan, who was of Irish parentage, was born February 17, 1740, in Berwick, in what is now the State of Maine He studied law, and when the war broke out was settled in New Hampshire On June 22, 1775, he was made a brigadier-general in the Continental army, and on August 9, 1776, was promoted to the rank of major-general During the war we find him ever doing his duty fearlessly. He was a popular officer, of gentlemanly manners, and a soldier of great daring and determination, prompt and precise in carrying out implicitly all instructions given him His staff at this time consisted of Major William Stephens Smith, aide-de-camp and acting adju-

tant-general, Major Nicholas Van Cortland, aide-de-camp; Major Lewis Morris, Jr, aide-de-camp; Major Edward Sherburne, aide-de-camp; Major John White, aide-de-camp. (Both Major Sherburne and Major White were afterward killed at the battle of Germantown, October 4, 1777.)

Major-General Nathanael Greene was of Quaker descent, and was born in the town of Warwick, Rhode Island, June 6, 1742. Although at this time but thirty-four years of age, he held a responsible commission in the Continental army. He had entered the army in the first days of the war, and was made a major-general by Congress August 9, 1776. He distinguished himself in the battles of Trenton and Princeton, as well as at Brandywine, Germantown and Monmouth, and was then placed in full command of the Southern Department. He was without doubt one of the ablest and truest of the men who surrounded the commanding general. He had a clear and fertile brain, and was ever ready and willing to do what he could for the cause of liberty. In all the miserable cabals which afterward disgraced the American arms, no taint of connection with any intrigue ever clung to the noble Greene. The glory which his good sword won still remains with unfading lustre around his name, although his body sleeps in what is now an unknown grave. It has been truthfully said of him that "he carried in his native genius all the resources of war and the balance of every extreme of fortune." Even Lord Cornwallis gave this encomium to his practical generalship: 'Greene is as dangerous as Washington. He is vigilant, enterprising and full of resources. With but little hope of gaining any advantage over him I never feel secure when encamped in his neighbourhood." The aides-de-camp on his staff were Major William Blodget, Major William Livingston, Major John Clark, Jr.

Brigadier-General Lord Stirling, whose correct name was William Alexander, but who claimed a title from the English crown, and immense tracts in Nova Scotia, was yet a soldier whose every impulse was directed by his devotion to his country's freedom. He was a native of New York, was born in 1726, and had seen service in the French and Indian War on the staff of General Shirley, but his home was near Basking Ridge in Somerset County, New Jersey. His wife was a sister of Governor Livingston of that State. He was colonel of the First battalion, Somer-

set militia, at the breaking out of the war, was appointed colonel of the First battalion, New Jersey Continental line, November 7, 1775, brigadier-general by Congress, March 11, 1776, and major-general nearly a year later. As before mentioned, he had been captured at the battle of Long Island, but was exchanged within a month, and immediately rejoined his command. He was personally a brave soldier, fearless in duty, strong in principles, and a well-educated and honorable man. The aide-de-camp of General Lord Stirling was Lieutenant John Brent of the Third Virginia regiment.

Brigadier-General Matthias Alexis Roche de Fermoy was for many years an officer of engineers in the army of France, where he enjoyed a considerable reputation. With the restless ambition of a soldier of fortune he came to America, and was made a brigadier-general by Congress, November 5, 1776. He took part in the battle of Saratoga, and acted, as at Trenton, in a very questionable manner. He made a request of the Continental Congress, December 30, 1777, for promotion to the rank of major-general, but it was refused.

Brigadier-General Adam Stephen was an officer from Virginia who had acquired an excellent reputation as lieutenant-colonel of Colonel Washington's regiment in the French and Indian war, that great preparatory school for officers of the Continental army, and who had been made a brigadier-general by Congress, September 4, 1776. He fought well at Trenton, was made a major-general of the Continental army, February 19, 1777, and took part in the battle of Brandywine, but it is said that his intemperate habits brought him under a cloud at the battle of Germantown, he was dismissed November 20, 1777, and thereafter his name is not mentioned in military history.

Brigadier-General Arthur St. Clair was born in Edinburgh, Scotland in the year 1734. He held a subaltern's commission in the army under General Wolfe, but in January, 1776, he was made a colonel of the Second Pennsylvania battalion, Continental line, and in the following August a brigadier-general of the Continental army. Soon after the battle of Princeton Congress conferred on him the rank of major-general, after which he commanded a division of Pennsylvania troops. His subsequent history was full of trouble. He was tried by court-martial for cowardice and treachery, but was fully acquitted, and lived for some years in great

poverty, his proud spirit overwhelmed with unmerited disgrace General St Clair's aide-de-camp in this campaign was Major James Wilkinson, formerly aide-de-camp to Major-General Gates.

Colonel Paul Dudley Sargent was born in Salem, Massachusetts, in 1745 He entered early into the struggle for independence, and commanded a regiment at the siege of Boston. He was wounded at the battle of Bunker Hill, and after the battle of White Plains commanded a brigade of Continental troops Colonel Sargent was considered a brave and skillful officer. He died in Sullivan, Maine, September 15, 1828

Colonel John Stark was born August 28, 1728, in Londonderry, New Hampshire He fought bravely at Bunker Hill After the battles of Trenton and Princeton he resigned, but in a few months led the New Hampshire troops at Bennington, and then as a brigadier-general of the Continental army joined General Gates with a strong force He was gallant and courageous, always ready and eager for action, and with difficulty brooked restraint when once he caught sight of the enemies of his country In appearance he resembled an Indian, with his tall figure, large nose and high cheek bones He died in Manchester, New Hampshire, May 8, 1822

Colonel John Glover of Marblehead, Massachusetts, owned a number of vessels, and before the war was extensively engaged in the fishing trade His regiment was recruited from the hardy class of men whom he was accustomed to employ in his business life His command was always efficient, and had more than the usual discipline Colonel Glover was small in stature, and as Major-General the Chevalier de Chastellux writes, was 'an active and a good soldier"

Colonel Henry Knox was a Boston bookseller, and only twenty-six years of age at the date of the battles of Trenton and Princeton He was a volunteer at the battle of Bunker Hill, and was afterward made colonel of a regiment of Continental artillery He is always spoken of as the soul of honor, sincere, open-hearted, benevolent and brave It is greatly to his credit that General Washington held him in the highest esteem, not only as a soldier but as Secretary of War and Navy, in his cabinet

No 34 Field Officers of Troops under Washington's Immediate Command

Brigadier-General Lord Stirling's Brigade

First regiment, Virginia Continental infantry Colonel, James Read, Lieutenant-Colonel, ——, Major, John Green Captain John Fleming, senior officer, in command All the field officers absent, Lieutenant-Colonel Francis Eppes having been killed at the battle of Long Island, August 27, 1776, and the major suffering from wounds received at the battle of White Plains, October 28, 1776 31 commissioned officers and 154 enlisted men present, 329 men absent, sick, on extra duty or on furlough.

Delaware regiment, Continental infantry. Colonel, John Haslet, Lieutenant-Colonel, Gunning Bedford, Major, Thomas McDonough The colonel in command, lieutenant-colonel and major absent, the latter on account of wounds received at the battle of Long Island, August 27, 1776. 10 commissioned officers and 98 enlisted men present, 32 men absent, sick

Third regiment, Virginia Continental infantry. Colonel, George Weedon, Lieutenant-Colonel, Thomas Marshall; Major, William Taliaferro The colonel in command, major present, lieutenant-colonel absent 21 commissioned officers and 160 enlisted men present, 452 men absent, sick, on extra duty or on furlough.

First Pennsylvania rifle regiment volunteers Colonel, ——, Lieutenant-Colonel, ——, Major, Ennion Williams The major in command The last colonel, Samuel Miles, and lieutenant-colonel, James Piper, prisoners of war, had been captured at the battle of Long Island, August 27, 1776, and Lieutenant-Colonel Piper had died September, 1776, in captivity 19 commissioned officers and 180 enlisted men present, 305 men absent, sick, wounded, on extra duty or on furlough. This regiment and the Pennsylvania regiment of musketry commanded by Colonel Samuel J Atlee were nearly destroyed at the battle of Long Island The remnant of Colonel Atlee's command was then assigned to duty with this command

The total effective strength of this brigade was 81 officers and 592 men

Brigadier-General Roche de Fermoy's Brigade.

First regiment, Continental foot — Pennsylvania rifle regiment. Colonel, Edward Hand, Lieutenant-Colonel, James Chambers; Major, James Ross. The colonel in command, major present; lieutenant-colonel absent 28 commissioned officers and 236 enlisted men present, 326 men absent, sick, on extra duty or on furlough.

German regiment Continental infantry This organization was raised in Maryland and Pennsylvania. Colonel, Nicholas Haussegger, Lieutenant-Colonel, George Stricker; Major, Ludowick Weltner. All field officers present 40 commissioned officers and 334 enlisted men present, 75 men absent, sick, on extra duty or on furlough.

The total effective strength of this brigade was 68 officers and 570 men.

Brigadier-General Hugh Mercer's Brigade

Twentieth regiment, Continental foot — Connecticut regiment Colonel, John Durkee, Lieutenant-Colonel, ——, Major, Thomas Dyer The colonel in command, major present The lieutenant-colonel had been, as General Washington wrote, "the gallant and brave Colonel Knowlton, who would have been an honour to any country," who was mortally wounded at Harlem Heights, September 16, 1776 30 commissioned officers and 283 enlisted men present; 217 men absent, sick, on extra duty or on furlough

First Maryland regiment, Continental infantry. Colonel, Francis Ware Lieutenant-Colonel, John H. Stone, Major, Patrick Sim The colonel and major absent The last colonel of this regiment William Smallwood, had been made a brigadier-general, October 23, 1776, wounded five days afterward at the battle of White Plains, and at this time sent to Maryland to arouse the people The lieutenant-colonel was in command of the regiment. In after years he was the governor of Maryland. 5 commissioned officers and 158 enlisted men present, 10 men absent, sick or on furlough.

Twenty-seventh regiment, Continental foot — Massachusetts regiment Colonel, Israel Hutchinson, Lieutenant-Colonel, Benjamin Holden, Major, Ezra Putnam. The major in com-

mand colonel and lieutenant-colonel absent. 17 commissioned officers and 98 enlisted men present, 292 men absent, sick or on duty

Colonel Bradley's battalion, Connecticut state troops. Colonel, Philip Burr Bradley, Lieutenant-Colonel, Thomas Hobby, Major, David Dimon All field officers absent, colonel sick at home, lieutenant-colonel a prisoner of war, and suffering from wounds received at Fort Washington, November 16, 1776, and major on duty at Albany, New York Captain Benjamin Mills, senior officer, in command 18 commissioned officers and 124 enlisted men present, 231 men absent, sick, on extra duty, on furlough or prisoners of war

Maryland rifle battalion volunteers Lieutenant-Colonel Commandant, Moses Rawlings. The lieutenant-colonel absent, suffering from wounds received at Fort Washington, November 16, 1776 Captain David Harris, senior officer, in command 3 commissioned officers and 102 enlisted men present, 19 men absent, sick

The total effective strength of this brigade was 73 officers and 765 men

Brigadier-General Adam Stephen's Brigade

Fourth regiment, Virginia Continental infantry Colonel, Thomas Elliott, Lieutenant-Colonel, Robert Lawson, Major, John Sayres The lieutenant-colonel in command, colonel and major absent (The major was killed at the battle of Germantown, October 4, 1777) 31 commissioned officers and 198 enlisted men present, 33 men absent sick or on extra duty

Fifth regiment, Virginia Continental infantry Colonel, Charles Scott, Lieutenant-Colonel, Josiah Parker, Major, George Johnston All field officers present 14 commissioned officers and 115 enlisted men present, 25 men absent, sick or on extra duty

Sixth regiment, Virginia Continental infantry Colonel, Mordecai Buckner, Lieutenant-Colonel, James Hendricks Major, Richard Parker The colonel in command, lieutenant-colonel present, major absent 25 commissioned officers and 166 enlisted men present, 58 men absent, sick or on extra duty.

The total effective strength of the brigade was 70 officers and 479 men

Brigadier-General Arthur St Clair's Brigade

Fifth regiment Continental foot — formerly First New Hampshire regiment Colonel, John Stark; Lieutenant-Colonel, Thomas Poor, Major, John Moore. The colonel in command About 110 men fit for duty

Eighth regiment, Continental foot — formerly Second New Hampshire regiment Colonel, Enoch Poor, Lieutenant-Colonel, John McDuffie; Major, Joseph Cilley 90 effective men in this regiment

Second regiment, Continental foot — formerly Third New Hampshire regiment Colonel, ——, Lieutenant-Colonel, Israel Gilman, Major, Nathan Hale The lieutenant-colonel in command The last colonel, James Reed, had been commissioned a brigadier-general, August 9, 1776, and was absent with a detachment of convalescents "lame and ragged," at Peekskill, New York About this time, he was "struck with blindness," and was obliged to leave the service About 135 men on duty

Fifteenth regiment, Continental foot — Massachusetts regiment. Colonel, John Paterson, Lieutenant-Colonel, Seth Read, Major, Henry Sherburne (of Rhode Island). The colonel in command, lieutenant-colonel and major absent The lieutenant-colonel had become insane 170 men present for service.

The total effective strength of the brigade was about 500 men

Colonel Paul D Sargent's Brigade.

Sixteenth regiment, Continental foot — Massachusetts regiment. Colonel, Paul Dudley Sargent, Lieutenant-Colonel, Michael Jackson, Major, ——. The colonel in command of the brigade, lieutenant-colonel absent, wounded at Montressor's Island September 24, 1776 The regiment had no major, as Major Jonathan W Austin had been cashiered November 13, 1776 Captain James Perry, senior officer, in command. 17 commissioned officers and 135 enlisted men present, 313 men absent, sick or on extra duty

Colonel Ward's regiment, Connecticut Continental infantry. Colonel, Andrew Ward, Lieutenant-Colonel, Obadiah Johnson,[1]

[1] The return of December 22, 1776, in Force's *Archives*, says the lieutenant-colonel of Colonel Ward's regiment was "present It appears by *Correspondence and Journals of Colonel Samuel B Webb*,

Major, Thaddeus Cook. The colonel and major present. 13 commissioned officers and 144 enlisted men present, 292 men absent, sick, on extra duty or on furlough

Sixth battalion, Connecticut State troops Colonel, John Chester, Lieutenant-Colonel, Solomon Wills, Major, John Ripley. All field officers present 19 commissioned officers and 241 enlisted men present. This battalion, although belonging to Sargent's brigade, did not cross the river on Christmas night, but remained on the Pennsylvania side of the Delaware.

Thirteenth regiment, Continental foot — Massachusetts regiment Colonel, Joseph Read; Lieutenant-Colonel, Ebenezer Clap, Major, Calvin Smith The lieutenant-colonel in command, major present, colonel absent 16 commissioned officers and 106 enlisted men present, 337 men absent, sick, on extra duty or on furlough

First regiment, New York Continental infantry. Colonel, ——, Lieutenant-Colonel, ——, Major, —— This regiment is generally known as Colonel Alexander McDougall's regiment, although he had been promoted brigadier-general of the Continental army, August 9, 1776, and was stationed at Morristown, New Jersey Lieutenant-Colonel Herman Zedwitz had been cashiered and sent to prison, November 22, 1776, and Major Barnabas Tuthill had resigned, September 4, 1776 Captain John Johnson was senior officer in command of the regiment 11 commissioned officers and 45 enlisted men present, 9 men absent, sick

Third regiment, New York Continental infantry Colonel, Peter Gansevoort, Lieutenant-Colonel, Baron Friedrich von Weisenfels, Major, Robert Cochran. The lieutenant-colonel in command, colonel and major absent 15 commissioned officers and 65 enlisted men present, 16 men absent, sick

The total effective strength of the brigade was 91 officers and 736 men.

Colonel John Glover's Brigade.

Fourteenth regiment, Continental foot — Massachusetts regiment, commonly called the "Marblehead Regiment." Colonel,

vol. II p 137, that Lieutenant-Colonel Obadiah Johnson of this regiment obtained a furlough to go home, much to General Washington's disgust It is difficult to say whether or not he was present at Trenton, probably he was not

John Glover, Lieutenant-Colonel Gabriel Johonnot, Major, William R Lee The major in command, colonel present in command of the brigade, lieutenant-colonel absent. 30 commissioned officers and 147 enlisted men present; 219 men absent, sick or on extra duty.

Third regiment Continental foot — Massachusetts regiment. Colonel, William Shepard, Lieutenant-Colonel, —— Major, Ebenezer Sprout The colonel in command and major present. 22 commissioned officers and 195 enlisted men present, 318 men absent, sick, on extra duty or on furlough

Nineteenth regiment Continental foot — Connecticut regiment. Colonel, Charles Webb, Lieutenant-Colonel, Street Hall, Major, John Brooks The colonel in command, major present; lieutenant-colonel absent Major Brooks, afterwards governor of Massachusetts, in the march to the surprise at Trenton was overcome with fatigue, and was reluctantly obliged to return to the encampment Captain William Hull performed his duties. 22 commissioned officers and 190 enlisted men present, 342 men absent, sick, on extra duty or on furlough

Twenty-third regiment, Continental foot — Massachusetts regiment Colonel, John Bailey, lieutenant-colonel, John Jacobs, Major Josiah Hayden The colonel in command; lieutenant-colonel present, major absent 17 commissioned officers and 129 enlisted men present, 353 men absent, sick or on extra duty

Twenty-sixth regiment, Continental foot — Massachusetts regiment Colonel, Loammi Baldwin, Lieutenant-Colonel, James Wesson Major, Isaac Sherman (of Connecticut). All field officers present. 24 commissioned officers and 197 enlisted men present, 268 men absent, sick or on extra duty. The return of December 29, 1776, which is on file in the adjutant-general's office at Trenton, differs somewhat from the inspection before the fight, dated December 22, 1776. The former gives 23 officers and 190 men in this regiment in the expedition

The total effective strength of the brigade was 115 officers and 858 men

Knox's Regiment Continental Artillery and State Batteries assigned to this Command

Colonel Henry Knox Lieutenant-Colonel, David Mason, Major, John Crane, Major, John Lamb First Lieutenant, Sam-

uel Shaw, Adjutant, First Lieutenant Samuel Treat, Quartermaster. All present except Major Crane, who had been wounded at Corlaer's Hook, September 14, 1776

New York company of Continental artillery Captain, Sebastian Bauman; Captain-Lieutenant, Joseph Crane, First Lieutenant, George Fleming Second Lieutenant, Jacob Reed, Second Lieutenant, Cornelius Swartwout This company had about 80 men and three small cannon.

Massachusetts company of Continental artillery Captain, Thomas Pierce, Captain-Lieutenant, Winthrop Sargent, First Lieutenant, Isaac Packard, Second Lieutenant, David Preston, Second Lieutenant, Joseph Blake The captain-lieutenant in command, Captain Pierce being absent, wounded, and Lieutenant Blake, a prisoner of war, captured at Fort Washington, November 16 1776. This battery had two guns

New York State company of artillery — late provincial company. Captain, Alexander Hamilton, Captain-Lieutenant, James Moore First Lieutenant, ——, Second Lieutenant, Thomas Deane, Second Lieutenant, Thomas Thompson The captain in command The captain-lieutenant was sick with camp fever at the house of Robert Thompson, Upper Makefield Township, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, and died there December 26, 1776. He was buried near the mouth of Pidcock's Creek First Lieutenant James Gilliland had resigned in December, 1776 4 commissioned officers and 32 enlisted men present. This company had two guns

Eastern company, New Jersey State artillery Captain, Daniel Neil, Captain-Lieutenant, John Doughty, First Lieutenant, Thomas Clark Second Lieutenant John Vandyke, Third Lieutenant Aaron Clark The captain in command The captain-lieutenant was on special duty 4 officers and 59 enlisted men present The company had two guns

Western company, New Jersey State artillery Captain, Samuel Hugg, Captain-Lieutenant Thomas Newark, First Lieutenant, John Westcott, Second Lieutenant, Joseph Dayton This battery had two guns

Second company of Pennsylvania State artillery battalion. Captain, Thomas Forrest, First Lieutenant, Hercules Courtney, Second Lieutenant, Francis Procter, Third Lieutenant, Patrick Duffy. The captain and third lieutenant and 50 enlisted men

present The first and second lieutenants absent on detached duty Lieutenant Courtney remained in Philadelphia with Major Procter's detachment, and was made captain of a company. First Lieutenant Worsley Eames of said detachment was on duty with Captain Forrest s company This company was equipped with two brass-mounted six-pounders [1]

Second company of artillery of Philadelphia Associators. Captain, Joseph Moulder, First Lieutenant, William Linnard. Second Lieutenant, Anthony Cuthbert 3 officers and 82 enlisted men present This company had three guns.

Philadelphia troop of light horse Captain, Samuel Morris, Second Lieutenant, James Budden, Cornet, John Dunlap. 3 officers and 22 enlisted men present

No 35 John Honeyman

The following document is found among the Revolutionary papers filed in the adjutant-general s office at Trenton It does not appear by the county records that any punishment was meted out to the defendant by reason of these charges

State of New Jersey }
Somerset County }

To wit An Inquisition taken and Made in the Hilborough Township of the said County of Somerset the Ninth day of June in the year of our Lord One Thousand Seven Hundred and Seventy Eight, By the oaths of, Henderick Probasco, Henderick Stryker, Thomas Skillman, Reyneir Veghte, Peter Stryker, Jn° Stryker, Cornelius Lott, Frederick VanLew, Laurance VanCleef, William Baird, Samuel Geulick. Uriah VanCleef, Gerardes Beekman, Jn° Voorheese, Abraham Voorhees, Abraham Ditmass, Abraham Beekman, Christopher Beekman, Nathan Allen, Joest Kershow, Garret Voorheese, Joseph Hageman, Garret Terhune Jr Martin Nevious Good and Lawful men of the Said County, Before Edward Bunn Esqr one of the Justices of the Peace of the said County, Who upon their Oath aforesaid say that John Honeyman of the Eastern Precinct in the County aforesaid did since the fifth day of October one thousand Seven Hundred and Seventy Six and

[1] *The Pennsylvania Magazine*, No 4, vol iv p 470, shows an "Indent of Stores for two Six pounders sent under the Command of Cap. Thomas Forrest To Join the Grand Army at Trentown December 4th 1776 "

Before the fifth day of June One Thousand Seven Hundred and Seventy Seven did aid and comfort the Enemies within this State against the form of the allegiance to the State the Government and Dignity of the Same

We whose names are hereunto Set and Seals affixed being the Juries above Named do upon the Evidence to us produced find the Inquisition aforesaid True

Hendrack Probasco	(seal)	Joseph Hageman	(seal)
Hendrick Stryker	(seal)	Jurias VanCleef	(seal)
Thomas Skillman	(seal)	Gerardus Beekman	(seal)
Reynier Veghte	(seal)	John Voorhees	(seal)
Peter Stryker	(seal)	Abraham Voorhees	(seal)
John Stryker	(seal)	Abraham Ditmars	(seal)
Corns Lott	(seal)	Abraham Beekman	(seal)
Frederick VanLieu	(seal)	Christopher Beekman	(seal)
Laurance V Cleef	(seal)	Nathan Allin	(seal)
William Bard	(seal)	Jost Kesciu	(seal)
Samuel Gulick	(seal)	Garrit Voorhees	(seal)
Garret Terhune Junr	(seal)	Martinis Nevius	(seal)

I Do Hereby Certify that the within Inquisition by the Juries therein Named this Ninth day of June One thousand Seven Hundred and Seventy Eight before me

(Signed) Edward Bunn

The Defe appeared and the Inquisition being read, &C pleaded Not Guilty &c and put himself upon his Country, &c. &c, &c

(signed) Wm Paterson
Atty Generl

No 36 General Mercer to Colonel Durkee

25 Dec. 1776

Sir: You are to see that your men have three days' provisions ready cooked before 12 o'clock this forenoon — the whole fit for duty except a Serjeant and six men to be left with the baggage, and to parade precisely at four in the afternoon with their arms, accoutrements & ammunition in the best order, with their provisions and blankets — you will have them told off in divisions in which order they are to march — eight men abreast, with the

officers fixed to their divisions from which they are on no account to separate — no man is to quit his division on pain of instant punishment — each officer is to provide himself with a piece of white paper stuck in his hat for a field mark. You will order your men to assemble and parade them in the valley immediately over the hill on the back of McConkey's Ferry, to remain there for farther orders — a profound silence is to be observed, both by officers and men, and a strict and ready attention paid to whatever orders may be given — in forming the Brigade Co Durkee takes the right, Co Stone left, Co. Bradley on the left of Co Durkee & Co Rawlings on the Right of Co Stone — the Line to form & march from the Right — Co Hutchinson to form by themselves —

Your obt S'v't
H MERCER.

No 37 FROM DIARY OF AN OFFICER ON WASHINGTON'S STAFF

NEW TOWN, PA, Dec 22, 1776

Things have been going against us since last August, when we were forced to give up Long Island, losing 3000 men and a great amount of supplies In October we were forced to evacuate New York and cross the Hudson into New Jersey. We reached Trenton Dec. 2 It was prudent forethought on the part of General Washington to send General Maxwell ahead to secure all the boats on the Delaware River and have them at Trenton upon our arrival If it had not been done we should have been in a bad fix with Cornwallis at our heels As it was the Hessians under Count Donop and Colonel Rall arrived in that village in season to fire a few shots at the last boat According to last accounts General Howe and General Cornwallis have gone to New York leaving General Grant with a few hundred English troops at Princeton Colonel Rall with 1500 Hessians at Trenton and Count Donop with 2000 at Bordentown, ten miles down the river from Trenton

Washington's headquarters are here in this little village of New Town, back from the river northwest of Trenton General Greene and General Sullivan, with their divisions, numbering 2500 men and sixteen cannon, are ten miles up stream at McConkey's Ferry A portion of the boats are there General Ewing, with 2000 men, is on this side of the river a little below Trenton,

and General Cadwallader and General Putnam are at Bristol, ten miles further down, with as many more

I rode along the river yesterday morning and could see the Hessians in Trenton. It is a pretty village, containing about 130 houses and a Presbyterian meeting-house A stone bridge spans the Assinpink creek on the road leading south to Bordentown There are apple orchards and gardens Rall has his own regiment and Knyphausen a few dragoons and fifty riflemen The Hessians call them Yagers He has six cannon. Knyphausen has two of them two stand in front of Rall's headquarters, and two up by the Pennington road A scout just in says that General Howe has issued a proclamation, offering pardon to everybody in New Jersey who will lay down their arms and take the oath of allegiance He says that Howe and Cornwallis are well satisfied with what they have accomplished. Cornwallis is going to England to tell the King that the rebellion is about over Howe is going to have a good time in New York attending dinner parties. From what I see I am quite certain Washington intends to make some movement soon He keeps his own counsel, but is very much determined

Dec 23 — Orders have been issued to cook rations for three days Washington has just given the counter sign, "Victory or Death" He has written a letter to General Cadwallader at Bristol, which he has intrusted to me to copy. He intends to cross the river, make a ten-mile march to Trenton, and attack Rall just before daybreak Ewing is to cross and seize the bridge crossing the Assanpink. Putnam and Cadwallader are to cross and make a feint of attacking Donop so that he can not hasten to Rall's assistance

Dec 24 — A scout just in says that the Hessians have a picket on the Pennington road half a mile out from Trenton, and another at Dickenson's house, on the river road.

Dec 25 — Christmas morning They make a great deal of Christmas in Germany, and no doubt the Hessians will drink a great deal of beer and have a dance to-night. They will be sleepy to-morrow morning Washington will set the tune for them about daybreak. The rations are cooked New flints and ammunition have been distributed Colonel Glover's fishermen from Marblehead, Mass, are to manage the boats just as they did in the retreat from Long Island

Christmas, 6 p m — The regiments have had their evening parade, but instead of returning to their quarters are marching toward the ferry. It is fearfully cold and raw and a snow-storm setting in. The wind is northeast and beats in the faces of the men It will be a terrible night for the soldiers who have no shoes Some of them have tied old rags around their feet, others are barefoot, but I have not heard a man complain. They are ready to suffer any hardship and die rather than give up their liberty. I have just copied the order for marching Both divisions are to go from the ferry to Bear Tavern, two miles. They will separate there, Washington will accompany Greene's division with a part of the artillery down the Pennington Road, Sullivan and the rest of the artillery will take the river road

Dec 26, 3 a m — I am writing in the ferry house. The troops are all over, and the boats have gone back for the artillery. We are three hours behind the set time Glover's men have had a hard time to force the boats through the floating ice with the snow drifting in their faces. I never have seen Washington so determined as he is now He stands on the bank of the river, wrapped in his cloak, superintending the landing of his troops He is calm and collected, but very determined. The storm is changing to sleet, and cuts like a knife The last cannon is being landed, and we are ready to mount our horses

Dec. 26, Noon — It was nearly 4 o clock when we started. The two divisions divided at Bear Tavern

At Birmingham, three and a half miles south of the tavern, a man came with a message from General Sullivan that the storm was wetting the muskets and rendering them unfit for service "Tell General Sullivan," said Washington, "to use the bayonet. I am resolved to take Trenton."

It was broad daylight when we came to a house where a man was chopping wood. He was very much surprised when he saw us. "Can you tell me where the Hessian picket is?" Washington asked The man hesitated, but I said, "You need not be frightened, it is General Washington who asks the question" His face brightened and he pointed toward the house of Mr Howell

It was just 8 o'clock Looking down the road I saw a Hessian running out from the house He yelled in Dutch and swung his arms. Three or four others came out with their guns. Two of them fired at us, but the bullets whistled over our heads Some

of General Stephen's men rushed forward and captured two The others took to their heels, running toward Mr Calhoun's house, where the picket guard was stationed, about twenty men under Captain Altenbrockum They came running out of the house The Captain flourished his sword and tried to form his men Some of them fired at us, others ran toward the village. The next moment we heard drums beat and a bugle sound, and then from the west came the boom of a cannon. General Washington's face lighted up instantly, for he knew that it was one of Sullivan's guns We could see a great commotion down toward the meeting-house, men running here and there officers swinging their swords, artillerymen harnessing their horses Captain Forrest unlimbered his guns Washington gave the order to advance, and we rushed on to the junction of King and Queen streets. Forrest wheeled six of his cannon into position to sweep both streets The riflemen under Colonel Hand and Scott's and Lawson's battalions went upon the run through the fields on the left to gain possession of the Princeton road The Hessians were just ready to open fire with two of their cannon when Captain Washington and Lieutenant Monroe with their men rushed forward and captured them We saw Rall come riding up the street from his headquarters, which were at Stacy Potts' house We could hear him shouting in Dutch, "My brave soldiers, advance" His men were frightened and confused, for our men were firing upon them from fences and houses and they were falling fast Instead of advancing they ran into an apple orchard The officers tried to rally them, but our men kept advancing and picking off the officers It was not long before Rall tumbled from his horse and his soldiers threw down their guns and gave themselves up as prisoners

While this was taking place on the Pennington road Colonel John Stark, from New Hampshire, in the advance on the river road was driving Knyphausen's men pell mell through the town Sullivan sent a portion of his troops under St Clair to seize the bridge and cut off the retreat of the Hessians toward Bordentown. Sullivan's men shot the artillery horses and captured two cannon attached to Knyphausen's regiment

Dec. 26, 3 p m — I have been talking with Rall's Adjutant, Lieutenant Piel. He says that Rall sat down to a grand dinner at the Trenton Tavern Christmas Day, that he drank a great deal

of wine and sat up nearly all night playing cards He had been in bed but a short time when the battle began and was sound asleep Piel shook him, but found it hard work to wake him up Supposing he was wide awake Piel went out to help rally the men, but Rall not appearing, he went back and found him in his night shirt "What 's the matter?" Rall asked. Piel informed him that a battle was going on That seemed to bring him to his senses. He dressed himself, rushed out and mounted his horse to be mortally wounded a few minutes later.

We have taken nearly 1000 prisoners, six cannon, more than 1000 muskets, twelve drums, and four colors About forty Hessians were killed or wounded Our loss is only two killed and three wounded Two of the latter are Captain Washington and Lieutenant Monroe, who rushed forward very bravely to seize the cannon

I have just been with General Washington and Greene to see Rall He will not live through the night. He asked that his men might be kindly treated Washington promised that he would see they were well cared for

Dec 27, 1776 — Here we are back in our camp with the prisoners and trophies Washington is keeping his promise, the soldiers are in the New Town Meeting-house and other buildings. He has just given directions for to-morrow's dinner All the captured Hessian officers are to dine with him He bears the Hessians no malice, but says they have been sold by their Grand Duke to King George and sent to America, when if they could have their own way they would be peaceably living in their own country

It is a glorious victory It will rejoice the hearts of our friends everywhere and give new life to our hitherto waning fortunes. Washington has baffled the enemy in his retreat from New York He has pounced upon the Hessians like an eagle upon a hen and is safe once more on this side the river If he does nothing more he will live in history as a great military commander

No 38. Colonel Cadwalader to ——

Bristol 26th Decr 1776

Gentlemen —

There was a general attack to be made last night The river was impassable here & we made the attempt at Dunks Ferry but

found it impracticable to get over our Cannon, we returned this morn g to Bristol about four I this moment have an account by Mr McLane (a man of veracity) that he was at Trenton Ferry this morning & heard a very heavy firing on the River & Penny Town Roads that lead to Trenton — the heavy firing lasted about ¼ an Hour & continued to moderate for about three Quarters The Light Horse & Hessians were seen flying in great confusion towards Bordentown, but without Cannon or Waggons, so that the Enemy must have lost the whole, a party of our men intercepted about a Dozen Hessians in sight of our people on this side & brought them to the Ferry & huzza'd. I have ordered the boats from Dunk's and shall pass as soon as possible — we can muster here about 1800 men if the Expedition last night in the storm does not thin our Ranks Has General Putnam crossed and with what Numbers — Pray let me know, Every thing of this kind gives Confidence to the Troops I have no doubt of the report, a heavy firing was heard at this place — an attempt was made to pass at or a little below Trenton Ferry, but could not get over, that would have made the Victory still more compleat

Yours &

JOHN CADWALADER

No 39 COLONEL CADWALADER TO ——

BRISTOL, 26th Decr

GENTLEMEN

I wrote this morning to Gen Washington directed to Gen Ewing at Trenton Ferry who informs me that he cannot yet ascertain the particulars of this morning s action — one Waggon loaded with Arms was brought down to the Ferry (Hessian arms) and safe landed on this shore & six Hessians we have taken 14 or 16 ps of Cannon, a considerable of Stores & Cloathing The number of killed, wounded & prisoners is very considerable

Yours &c

JOHN CADWALADER

No 40 COLONEL CLEMENT BIDDLE TO ——.

Dated 29th Decr 1776

We have returned with much honour from our Trenton expedition having brought off about 750 Hessians 1 Lt Col 2 Majors, 4 Captains, 15 Subalterns, 3 Standards, 6 Brass field Pieces and near 1000 Stand of Arms

We came on them by surprize at about 7 o clock — their guard at the end of the town and their parties in town gave smart resistance for a while and they passed up the Creek back of the Meeting House where they formed and thought we should have had a smart engagement but they were by that time near surrounded & so push'd at all points that they surrendered with all their arms &c

Our officers and men behaved with most remarkable bravery, and by their activity and zeal they soon put a most honourable end to this very important affair. Indeed I never could conceive that one spirit should so universally animate both officers and men to rush forward into action.

No 41 Tench Tilghman to James Tilghman, Esq

Head Quarters Newtown 27th Decemr 1776

Hon^{D} Sir

I have the pleasure to inform you that I am safe and well after a most successful Enterprise against three Regiments of Hessians consisting of about 1500 Men lying in Trenton, which was planned and executed under his Excellency's immediate command Our party amounted to 2400 Men, we crossed the River at McKonkeys Ferry 9 Miles above Trenton the Night was excessively severe, both cold and snowey, which the Men bore without the least murmur We were so much delayed in crossing the River, that we did not reach Trenton till eight OClock, when the division which the General headed in person, attacked the Enemy's out post. The other Division which marched the lower Road attacked the advanced post at Phil Dickenson's, within a few minutes after we began ours Both parties pushed on with so much rapidity, that the Enemy had scarce time to form, our people advanced up to the Mouths of their Field pieces, shot down their Horses, and brought off the Cannon. About 600 run off upon the Bordenton Road the moment the Attack began, the remainder finding themselves surrounded laid down their Arms We have taken 30 officers and 886 privates among the former Col^{o} Rahls the Commandant who is wounded The General left him and the other wounded Officers upon their parole, under their own Surgeons, and gave all the privates their Baggage. Our loss is only Capt Washington and his Lieutenant slightly wounded and two privates killed and two wounded. If the Ice had not

prevented Gen[l] Ewing from crossing at Trenton Ferry, and Col[o] Cadwalader from doing the same at Bristol, we should have followed the Blow and drove every post below Trenton. The Hessians have laid all waste since the British Troops went away, the Inhabitants had all left the Town and their Houses were stripped and torn to pieces. The Inhabitants about the Country told us, that the British protections would not pass among the Hessians. I am informed that many people have of choice kept their Effects in Philad[a], supposing if Gen[l] Howe got possession that they would be safe, so they may be, if he only carries British Troops with him, but you may depend it is not in his power, neither does he pretend to restrain the Foreigners I have just snatched time to scrawl these few lines by Col[o] Baylor, who is going to Congress —

I am your most dutiful and affect— Son

TENCH TILGHMAN

No. 42 EXTRACT OF LETTER FROM AN OFFICER OF DISTINCTION

(Generally believed to be Brigadier-General Lord Stirling, at Newtown, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, dated December 27, 1776)

This letter was published by the Council of Safety, and a copy was sent to the Congress of the United States —

It was determined, some days ago, that our army should pass over to Jersey, in three different places, and attack the men, and twenty brass field-pieces, with his Excellency Gen Washington at their head, and Majors Gens Sullivan and Greene in command of two divisions, passed over on the night of Christmas, and about three o'clock, A. M were on their march, by two routs, towards Trenton. The night was sleety, and the roads so slippery that it was day break when we were two miles from Trenton But happily the enemy were not apprised of our design, and our advanced party were on their guards at half a mile from the town, when Gen Sullivan's and Gen Greene's divisions soon came into the same road. Their guard gave our advanced party several smart fires, as we drove them, but we soon got two field-pieces at play, and several others in a short time, and one of our Colonels pushing down on the right while the others advanced on the left, into the town. The enemy, consisting of

about fifteen hundred Hessians, under Col Rohl, formed and made some smart fires from the musketry and six field-pieces, but our people pressed from every quarter, and drove them from their cannon They retreated towards a field behind a piece of wood up the creek, from Trenton and formed in two bodies, which I expected would have brought on a smart engagement from the troops, who had formed very near them, but at that instant, as I came in full view of them from the back of the wood, with his Excellency General Washington, an officer informed him that the party had grounded their arms and surrendered prisoners

The others soon followed their example except a part which had gone off in the hazy weather, towards Princeton, and a party of their light horse which made off on our first appearance Too much praise cannot be given to the officers of every regiment By their active and spirited behaviour, they soon put an honorable issue to this glorious day

I was immediately sent off with the prisoners to M Conkey's ferry, and have got about seven hundred and fifty safe in town and a few miles from here, on this side of the ferry, viz. one Lieutenant Colonel, two Majors, four Captains, Seven Lieutenants, and eight Ensigns We left Colonel Rohl, the commandant wounded, on his parole, and several other officers and wounded men at Trenton We lost but two of our men, that I can hear of, a few wounded, and one brave officer, Capt. Washington, who assisted in securing their artillery, shot in both hands. Indeed every officer and private behaved well, and it was a most fortunate day for our arms, which I the more rejoice at, having an active part in it The success of this day will greatly animate our friends, and add fresh courage to our new army, which, when formed, will be sufficient to secure us from the depredations or insults of our enemy

Gen Ewing's division could not pass at Trenton for the ice, which also impeded Gen Cadwallader passing over with all his cannon and the militia though part of his troops were over, and if the whole could have passed we should have swept the coast to Philadelphia. We took three standards, six fine brass cannon, and about one thousand stands of arms.

Published by order of Council of Safety

G BICKHAM, *Sec pro tem*

No. 43. The Pennsylvania Evening Post,

(December 31, 1776, also published the foregoing document and added this statement)

By an authentic account received this morning, the following is a list of prisoners taken, viz One Col two Lieut Cols three Majors, four Captains, eight Lieuts, twelve Ensigns, two Surgeon Mates, ninety nine sergeants, twenty five drummers, nine musicians, twenty five servants, and seven hundred and forty privates.

Philadelphia, Dec 31. By the last advices from the Jersies, we learn the enemy are every where flying before our army, who frequently take small parties of them. Since the affair at Trenton, it is said, we have taken four hundred, amongst whom are several officers

Yesterday morning upwards of nine hundred Hessians, who were taken at Trenton, were brought to this city The wretched condition of these unhappy men, most of whom, if not all, were dragged from their wives and families by a despotic and avaricious prince, must sensibly affect every generous mind with the dreadful effects of arbitrary power

Last Monday seven of the lighthorse belonging to this city, took nine lighthorsemen from the enemy, near Princeton, without firing a gun

Last Thursday afternoon Col Rohl died, at Trenton, of the wounds he received that morning

No 44 Colonel Clement Biddle to Committee of Safety.

Head Quarters Newtown 28 Decem'r 1776

Sir

His Excellency, General Washington has commanded me to send forward the Prisoners taken at Trenton, to pass through Philadelphia to Lancaster and I have sent them with a Guard under the conduct of Capt Murray (an officer of this State lately released from New York) with directions to furnish them Provisions and Quarters on the Road

I have the pleasure to inform you that the Prisoners amount to near one thousand, that their Arms, six brass field pieces, Eight Standards or Colours and a number of Swords, Cartouch Boxes taken in this happy Expedition, are safely arrived at and near this place If your Honourable Committee could by any means

furnish Shoes & Stockings for our Troops it will be a great relief .

I am with great Respect your and the Councils most obedient and very Humble serv't

CLEMENT BIDDLE,
D. Qu r M r Gen'l

I am not alone in assuring you that the Inhabitants of Jersey of whom we had an opportunity of enquiring of the Behaviour of the Hessian Troops declare that their Officers & Soldiers treated them in general with more Lenity than those of the British Troops w'ch Justice to our Prisoners, calls for an acknowledgement of, as false reports had been spread to the contrary

Y'r mo ob & h s

C. B.

Directed

On Public Service to the Hon ble Thomas Wharton, Esq President of the Committee of Safety of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia

No 45. LIEUTENANT PATRICK DUFFY TO COLONEL THOMAS PROCTER.

M^cCONKEY'S FERRY 28th Dec'r 1776

SIR —

I have the pleasure of informing you that I have yesterday arrived from Trenton, after a very fataguing (though successfull) engagement in which can assure you the Artillery got applause I had the Honour of being detach d up the Main Street in front of the Savages, without any other piece, and sustained the fire of Several gunns from the Houses on each side without the least loss must attribute my protection to the hand of Providence We made Prisoners of about 900, together with the number killed which I cannot exactly ascertain, but we took 6 brass field pieces and a number of small arms. all which has been safely carried off

Yr Very obedient Servant,

PAT DUFFY

P S Comp'ts to Capt. Courtney & Mr Turnbull am glad to hear of y'r Promotion to Colonell

Directed To Collonell Thomas Procter, of Artillery. Philadelphia

No 46. Colonel Knox to his Wife

Delaware River, near Trenton
Dec 28, 1776 near 12 o'clock

My Dearly Beloved Friend, —

You will before this have heard of our success on the morning of the 26th instant. The enemy, by their superior marching, had obliged us to retire on the Pennsylvania side of the Delaware, by which means we were obliged to evacuate or give up nearly all the Jerseys. Soon after retiring over the river, the preservation of Philadelphia was a matter exceedingly precarious — the force of the enemy three or four times as large as ours. However, they seemed content with their success for the present, and quartered their troops in different and distant places in the Jerseys. Of these cantonments Trenton was the most considerable. Trenton is an open town, situated nearly on the banks of the Delaware, accessible on all sides. Our army was scattered along the river for nearly twenty-five miles. Our intelligence agreed that the force of the enemy in Trenton was from two to three thousand, with about six field cannon, and that they were pretty secure in their situation, and that they were Hessians — no British troops. A hardy design was formed of attacking the town by storm. Accordingly a part of the army, consisting of about 2500 or 3000 passed the river on Christmas night, with almost infinite difficulty, with eighteen field pieces. The floating ice in the river made the labor almost incredible. However, perseverance accomplished what at first seemed impossible. About two o'clock the troops were all on the Jersey side; we then were about nine miles from the object. The night was cold and stormy, it hailed with great violence, the troops marched with the most profound silence and good order. They arrived by two routes at the same time, about half an hour after daylight, within one mile of the town. The storm continued with great violence, but was in our backs, and consequently in the faces of our enemy. About half a mile from the town was an advanced guard on each road, consisting of a captain's guard. These we forced, and entered the town with them pell-mell, and here succeeded a scene of war of which I had often conceived, but never saw before. The hurry, fright, and confusion of the enemy was (not) unlike that which will be when the last trump shall sound. They endeavoured to

form in streets, the heads of which we had previously the possession of with cannon and howitzers, these, in the twinkling of an eye, cleared the streets The backs of the houses were resorted to for shelter These proved ineffectual · the musketry soon dislodged them Finally they were driven through the town into an open plain beyond Here they formed in an instant During the contest in the streets measures were taken for putting an entire stop to their retreat by posting troops and cannon in such passes and roads as it was possible for them to get away by. The poor fellows after they were formed on the plain saw themselves completely surrounded, the only resource left was to force their way through numbers unknown to them The Hessians lost part of their cannon in the town, they did not relish the project of forcing, and were obliged to surrender upon the spot, with all their artillery, six brass pieces, army colors, &c A Colonel Rawle commanded, who was wounded The number of prisoners was above 1200, including officers — all Hessians There were few killed or wounded on either side. After having marched off the prisoners and secured the cannon, stores, &c we returned to the place, nine miles distant, where we had embarked Providence seemed to have smiled upon every part of this enterprise. Great advantages may be gained from it if we take the proper steps. At another post we have pushed over the river 2000 men, today another body, and tomorrow the whole army will follow. It must give a sensible pleasure to every friend of the rights of man to think with how much intrepidity our people pushed the enemy, and prevented their forming in the town. His Excellency the General has done me the unmerited great honour of thanking me in public orders in terms strong and polite This I would blush to mention to any other than to you, my dear Lucy, and I am fearful that even my Lucy may think her Harry possesses a species of little vanity in doing (it) at all

No 47 Captain Thomas Forrest to Colonel Thomas Procter

McConkey's Ferry, 29th Dec'r 1776

Sir —

Am happy in acquainting you that we have return'd from Trenton after defeating the Brass Caps and Crous coups and am now under marching orders on an other Expedition over the river,

hope it may prove as Successfull as the last, we have taken, exclusive of what were not able to march off, with a Compleat band of Musick, the number kill'd uncertain The men are not able to move for want of Shoes and Watch Coats which I expect you 'll forward p bearer immediately, with Gunn Screws, and the Regimental Coats for such as has been before mentioned. . .

Yr Ob t Servant

THOMAS FORREST

Comp^ts of Brother Officers to Mr Courtney and Turnbull —
Directed To Collonel Procter, of Artillery, Philadelphia —

No. 48 GOVERNOR TRYON TO LORD GERMAIN

NEW YORK 31 Decemb'r 1776

MY LORD —

. . . . . .

The Rebels carrying off the Hessian Brigade under Coll· Rall at Trenton, has given me more real chagrin, than any other circumstance this war the moment was critical, and I believe the Rebel Chiefs were conscious, if some stroke was not struck that would give life to their sinking cause, they should not raise another army Unlucky as was this loss, I have received great comfort by the assurances Heister and Gen'l Kniphausen have given me (who are most sincerely and deeply mortified at the event) that the Rebels will not with all their arts be able to seduce the Hessian Prisoners from their allegiance to their Prince and duty to His Maj'ty. I trust, this tarnish to the Campaign, will in due season be wiped away by some brilliant enterprize of the King's forces who entertain the keenest sense of the insult.

I am with all possible respect My Lord
Your 's Lord'p's most obed't and very humble servant

W^M TRYON.

No. 49 MEMORANDUM IN GENERAL ROBERT ANDERSON'S LETTER BOOK

(In reference to his father, Captain Richard Clough Anderson, Fifth regiment, Continental infantry)

He was ordered on Christmas eve, 1776 to proceed to . and if he did not find any of the enemy's forces there, then to . , and if he did not find them at either of the places named

he was to go to Trenton where he would find them. His orders were to reconnoitre, to see where the enemy's outpost were, to get such information as he could about them, but to be very careful and not to bring on an engagement

Having gone to the places designated without finding the enemy, he advanced upon Trenton. The party came close upon the Hessian sentinel, who was marching on his post, bending his head down as he met the storm, which beat heavily in a driving snow in the faces of the patrol He saw them about the same time that he was seen, and as he brought his gun to a charge and challenged, he was shot down My father having now accomplished the object of his mission, and knowing that the enemy's forces would be promptly turned out, and that an engagement which he had been ordered to avoid would ensue, ordered his company to countermarch, and marched them back towards his camp He had not gone far before he saw, very much to his surprise, Washington's Army advancing toward him As he was then in a narrow lane he ordered his company to withdraw one side into an adjoining field The advance guard seeing a body of soldiers ahead, and supposing that they were the advance guard of the British forces, halted, and very soon an officer approached near enough to recognize them as American troops General Washington approached and asked who was in command and where he had been. I have frequently heard my father remark that he never saw Genl Washington exhibit so much anger as he did when he told him where he had been and what he had done He turned to Genl S(tephen) and asked how he dared to send a patrol from camp without his authority, remarking "You sir, may have ruined all my plans. by having put them on their guard" He then addressed my father in a very calm and considerate manner and told him that as he and his men must be very much fatigued after such hard service, he should march in the van guard, when he would be less harrassed by the fatigue of the march.

No 50. Proclamation

The following advertisement was put up in the most public parts of the Jerseys —

His Excellency General Washington strictly forbids all the officers and soldiers of the Continental army, of the militia and all recruiting parties, plundering any person whatsoever, whether

Tories or others The effects of such persons will be applied to public uses in a regular manner, and it is expected that humanity and tenderness to women and children will distinguish brave Americans, contending for liberty, from infamous mercenary ravagers, whether British or Hessians

GO WASHINGTON

TRENTON, January 1, 1777

NO 51 CAPTAIN WILLIAM HULL, SEVENTH CONNECTICUT REGIMENT, TO ANDREW ADAMS

TRENTON, Jany 1st 1777

DEAR SIR

Have but a moment which shall embrace with Pleasure to inform you of the present State of our Army and our late Success. After we had recruited a few days of a fatiguing March of more than 250 Miles (thro' all our Windings) Genl Washington gave orders for us to be every way equiped for Action On the Evening of the 25th Ult we were ordered to March to a ferry (McConkey's) about twelve Miles from Trenton, where was stationed near two Thousand Hessians. As violent a Storm ensued of Hail & Snow as I ever felt The Artillery and Infantry all were across the Ferry about twelve O'clock, consisting of only twenty one hundred principally New England Troops. In this Violent Storm we marched on for Trenton Before Light in the Morning we gained all the Roads leading from Trenton The Genl gave orders that every Officer's Watch should be set by his, and the Moment of Attack was fixed Just after Light, we came to their out Guard, which fired upon us and retreated The first Sound of the Musquetry and Retreat of the Guards animated the Men and they pushed on with Resolution and Firmness Happily the fire begun on every Side at the same instant, their Main body had just Time to form when there ensued a heavy Cannonade from our Field Pieces and a fine brisk and lively fire from our Infantry. This continued but a Short Time before the Enemy finding themselves flanked on every Side laid down their Arms The Resolution and Bravery of our Men, their Order and Regularity, gave me the highest Sensation of Pleasure Genl Washington highly congratulated the Men on next day in Genl Orders, and with Pleasure observed, that he had been in Many Actions before, but always perceived some Misbehaviour in some

individuals, but in that Action he saw none Pennsylvania itself is obliged to acknowledge the Bravery of New Eng'd Troops. I have a List from Head Quarters of the Killed and taken, which was taken the day after the Action, since which many more have been brought in, 1 Col wounded since dead, 2 Lieut. Col^{s} taken, 3 Majors, 4 Capts, 8 Lieuts, 12 Ens'ns, 92 Serg'ts, 9 Musicians, 12 Drums, 25 Servants, 842 Privates, 2 Capt's killed, 2 Lieut's killed, 50 privates, Six Brass Field Pieces, One Mortar and about 1500 Stand of Arms A large Number of Horses and a vast Quantity of Plunder of every kind And this, Sir, I will assure you with only the Loss of six or seven on our side, this is no Exaggeration but simple fact, 'tis impossible to describe the scene to you as it appeared We immediately retreated across the River and did not get to our Tents till next Morning — two Nights and one day in as violent a Storm as I ever felt What can't Men do when engaged in so noble a Cause Our Men's Time Expired Yesterday, they have generally engaged to tarry six weeks longer My company almost to a man. Orders have now come for us to march for Princetown. We have a Rumor that it was burned last night by the Enemy, who we suppose are about retreating Compliments to Miss Adams & Children Adieu and believe me to be sincerely yours,

WM HULL

TO ANDREW ADAMS, Litchfield, Conn

NO 52. COLONEL JOHN HASLET TO CÆSAR RODNEY

(The last letter he wrote In possession of Mr Cæsar A Rodney, of Wilmington, Delaware)

ALLENTOWN January 2d 1777

This morning we were called up at 2 o'clock under a pretended alarm that we were to be attacked by the enemy but at daylight we were ordered to march for Trenton, and when we reached Crosswicks found that the brigade had gone We reached Trenton about 11 o'clock and found all the troops from our different posts in Jersey, collected and collecting there under General Washington himself, and the regular troops were already properly disposed to receive the enemy, whose main body was then within a few miles and determined to dispossess us. Trenton stands upon the River Delaware, with a creek called Assunpink passing through the town across which there is a bridge. The enemy

came down on the upper side of this creek, through the town, and a number of our troops were posted with Riflemen and artillery to oppose their approach The main body of our army was drawn up on a plain below or on the lower side of the Assunpink, near the bridge, and the main force of our Artillery was posted on the banks and high grounds along the creek in front of them. Gen Mercer's brigade was posted about 2 miles up the creek, and the troops under Gen Cadwalader were stationed in a field on the right about a mile from the town, on the main road, to prevent the enemy from flanking We had five pieces of Artillery with our Division and about 20 more in the field, near, and at the town. Our numbers were about five thousand, and the enemy s about seven thousand. The attack began about 2 o clock and a heavy fire upon both sides, chiefly from the artillery, continued untill dark At this time the enemy were left in possession of the upper part of the town, but we kept possession of the bridge, altho' the enemy attempted several times to carry it but were repulsed each time with great slaughter After sunset this afternoon the enemy came down in a very heavy column to force the bridge The fire was very heavy and the Light troops were ordered to fly to the support of that important post, and as we drew near, I stepped out of the front to order my men to close up, at this time Martinas Sipple was about 10 sets behind the man next in front of him I at once drew my sword and threatened to cut his head off if he did not keep close, he then sprang forward and I returned to the front The enemy were soon defeated and retired and the American army also retired to the woods, where they encamped and built up fires. I then had the roll called to see if any of our men were missing and Martinas[1] was not to be found. but Lieut. Mark McCall informed me that immediately upon my returning to the head of the column, after making him close up, he fled out of the field We lost but few men, the enemy considerably more It is thought Gen. Washington did not intend to hold the upper part of the town.

[1] This man appears again as a soldier in the 7th company, Captain John Rhodes, of Colonel David Hall's Delaware regiment (See Whiteley's *Revolutionary Soldiers of Delaware*, p. 30)

No 53. Commissioned Officers of Rall's Brigade, Dec 1776.

Rall Regiment.

Colonel, Johann Gottlieb Rall, Lieutenant-Colonel, Balthasar Brethauer, Major, Johann Jost Matthaus Captains, Johann Heinrich Braubach and Heinrich Ludwig Boking, Lieutenants, Johann Heinrich Sternickel, Carl Andreas Kinen, Gregorius Salzmann and Johannes Stroebel, Ensigns, Ludwig Kinen, Jacob Lebrecht Fleck, Carl Wilhelm Kleinschmidt and Johann Georg Schroeder

Von Lossberg Regiment

Lieutenant-Colonel, Francis Scheffer, Major, Ludwig August von Hanstein, Captains, Johann Friedrich von Riess, Friedrich Wilhelm von Benning, Ernst Eberhard von Altenbockum and Adam Christoph Steding, Lieutenants, Heinrich Reinhard Hille, Georg Christian Kimm Ernst Christian Schwabe, Georg Hermann Zoll, Ludwig Wilhelm Keller, Wilhelm Christian Muller and Jacob Piel, Ensigns, Christian August von Hobe, Friedrich Franz Grabe, Friedrich von Zengen and Friedrich Christoph Hendorff.

Von Knyphausen Regiment

Major, Friedrich Ludwig von Dechow, Captains, Bernhard von Biesenrodt, Ludwig Wilhelm von Lowenstein, Barthold Helfrich von Schimmelpfennig and Jacob Baum, Lieutenants, Carl Ludwig von Geyso, Christian Sobbe, Andreas Wiederhold, Nicholas Vaupell, Werner von Ferry, Wilhelm Ludwig von Romrodt Ensigns, Carl Friedrich Fuhrer, Wilhelm von Drach and Heinrich Zimmermann

Yagers

Lieutenant Friedrich Wilhelm von Grothausen

Artillery

Lieutenants, Friedrich Fischer and Johannes Engelhardt
Judge Advocate, Friedrich Moeller

[The spelling of the German names printed on this and following pages is often obviously inaccurate, but is given as in the records]

No 54 General Mercer to Colonel Durkee

Sir 25 Dcr 1776

You are to see that your men have three days provisions ready cooked before 12 o'clock this forenoon — the whole fit for duty except a Serjeant and six men to be left with the baggage, and to parade precisely at four in the afternoon with their arms, accoutrements & ammunition in the best order, with their provisions and blankets — you will have them told off in divisions in which order they are to march — eight men a breast, with the officers fixed to their divisions from which they are on no account to separate — no man is to quit his division on pain of instant punishment — each officer is to provide himself with a piece of white paper stuck in his hat for a field mark You will order your men to assemble and parade them in the valley immediately over the hill on the back of McConkey s Ferry, to remain there for farther orders — a profound silence is to be observed, both by officers and men, and a strict and ready attention paid to whatever orders may be given — in forming the Brigade Co Durkee takes the right, Co Stone left, Co Bradley on the left of Co Durkee & Co Rawlings on the Right of Co Stone — the Line to form & march from the Right — Co Hutchinson to form by themselves,

Your obt s'v't

H Mercer

No 55 Hessian Outposts of Trenton

(The initials K denote regt von Knyphausen, L, von Lossberg; R, Rall)

Referring particularly to Lieutenant Piel's map, page 124 *ante*, B marks the spot on the Pennington road where the picket was stationed on Christmas night. The personnel, as far as shown by the records, has been already given

F is the post on the River road It was the residence of General Dickinson then and now known as "The Hermitage," being to-day a part of the homestead of the Atterbury estate This picket was called the Yager post and was in charge of Lieutenant Friedrich Wilhelm von Grothausen with two non-commissioned officers, Sergeant Georg Wilhelm Hassell and Corporal Franz Bauer, and fifty yagers

H is the post at the Fox Chase Tavern kept by Mrs Joseph Bond on the Maidenhead or Brunswick Road. This was a strong picket, the principal one of the cantonment, and from this point the patrols started out on the route D toward the left wing E of the same picket and the various stations of guards C^1, C^2, C^8, etc to post B, thence to post F and back again through the chain of sentries to the tavern above mentioned As we have said, this picket post consisted of one commissioned officer, one non-commissioned officer and about seventy-five men, and was at this critical time in charge of Ensign Franz Friedrich Grabe of the von Lossberg regiment Captain Johann Heinrich Brubach of the Rall regiment was also there on Christmas night as inspector of the guards, Lieutenant-Colonel Brethauer having been relieved The rest of the men so far as the records give their names were Sergeant Reinhard (K), Drummer Christian Schlieder and Fusilier Curt Anhagen (L), Grenadier Casper Brede (R), Fusilier Christoph Bucker (L), Fusiliers Direll, Doer and Fenner (K), Grenadier Johannes Gerhardt (R), Fusilier Heinrich Goebell (K), Fusilier Johannes Goebell (L), Fusilier Werner Hahn (K), Fusilier Friedrich Hohbein (L), Grenadier Jacob Koch (R), Fusiliers Diedrich Kruger, Philipp Matthias and Johannes Heinrich Mohme (L), Fusilier Reinhard (K), Grenadier Heinrich Rosb (R), Fusilier Anton Schenck (L), Grenadiers Philip Wernick and Nicholas Wicke (R)

At the post K, the tavern formerly owned by Rensselaer Williams, there were one commissioned officer, five non-commissioned officers and twenty-two men on Christmas night. This force was then commanded by Ensign Heinrich Zimmermann of the von Borch company of the von Knyphausen regiment There was a guard composed of Sergeant Dietzell and nine men in a barn below the Ferry road, and a guard of Sergeant Diemer and nine more men at the 'Doctor House" A patrol from the tavern visited these small posts every hour during the night. The following is a list of Ensign Zimmermann's command on Christmas night. Sergeant Christian Diemer (L), Sergeant Jacob Dietzell (R), Sergeant Hamell (K), Corporal Johannes Wagener (L), Corporal Johannes Wolfskeil (R), Drummer Bechtell (K), Fusiliers Carl Baake and Heinrich Brath (L), Fusiliers Diebell, Ditter and Doering (K), Grenadiers Caspar Fey, Johannes Foerster and Martin Fuhrmann (R), Fusilier Hattendorf (K), Fusilier

Hendrick Holste (L), Grenadier Jost Koehler (R), Fusilier Knieriem (K), Grenadiers Dietrich Koch, Christoph Loersch and Christopher Scheffer (R), Fusiliers Schreiber and Schroder (K), Fusiliers Wilhelm Schweibe, Heinrich Seehaussen and Friedrich Tegetmeyer (L), Grenadier Heinrich Ulrich (R)

At the bridge over the Assunpink Creek there was a guard of one non-commissioned officer and eighteen men From this bridge a small patrol was compelled to go to Doctor Bryant's residence every half hour during the night. The guard was at the flour mill on the south side of the bridge In 1680 Mahlon Stacy had built on this site a mill of hewn logs one and one-half stories high In 1714 Judge William Trent had purchased this property and had built a two-story stone mill This was used by the Hessians as a commissary storehouse The men in charge of this guard were all from the von Knyphausen regiment, Sergeant Johannes Mueller of the von Borck company being the ranking non-commissioned officer. In the middle of the stone bridge over the Assunpink creek was a hut in which a sentinel stood and another sentinel was stationed just outside of the mill

Besides the sergeant just referred to, the following men were at the mill on Christmas night Fusiliers Caspar Bambeg, Georg Berg, Engeland, Kurtz and Schultz (K)

Next to the mill was George Bright's two-story stone bakery, and just beyond that Jonathan Richmond's tavern In the wall of the bakery was embedded a rough sandstone block with the inscription "G B 1756 ' This has been seen in position by many now living In the bakery were stationed Fusiliers Henninghausen, Mueller, Schmerer and Stroehler (K)

The headquarters guard-house was at the residence of Pontius Delare Stille, then on the corner of Church alley and King street, and now still standing on the southeast corner of Warren and Perry streets It was nearly opposite Colonel Rall's quarters, and on Christmas night the guard was commanded by Lieutenant Johann Heinrich Sternickel (R) The German records give us the names of only four of the watchguard: Corporal Friedrich Eberth (L), Grenadier Johannes Lindermann (R), Fusilier Heinrich Rohrkoster (L), Fusilier Daniel Schmidt (K)

In addition to these picket stations there was a strong post midway between Trenton and Bordentown at the drawbridge over the Crosswicks Creek. The main station of this outpost was at

the drawbridge, and at the time of the battle it was commanded by Lieutenant Johannes Stroebel (R), who had with him twenty-four men Lieutenant Heinrich Reinhard Hille (L) was stationed a short distance from the drawbridge on the road to Allentown in charge of twenty soldiers On the road to Trenton and about a quarter of a mile north from the drawbridge Captain Heinrich Ludwig Boking (R), with one non-commissioned officer and twenty men, occupied three farmhouses, and a mile nearer Trenton Lieutenant Wilhelm Ludwig von Romrodt of the von Borck company of the von Knyphausen regiment had a small detachment of two non-commissioned officers and fifteen men The entire number of soldiers at the post of the drawbridge was four commissioned officers and eighty-two men These men had left Trenton about noon on December 24 for a forty-eight hours' tour of duty at the drawbridge, and of course the surprise at Trenton on December 26 found them still at their posts It appears from one statement that Colonel Rall and his Adjutant, Lieutenant Piel, visited this picket on two occasions during the occupancy of Trenton, but other accounts deny that he visited any picket posts.

The detachment of Lieutenant Stroebel consisted of Sergeant Helmerich, Corporals Ahlhaursen and Heidmuller Drummer Christoph Hattendorff and Fusilier Wilhelm Barthels (L), Grenadier Heinrich Baumbach (R); Fusiliers Christian Grundmeyer, Curth Herding, Friedrich Holsti, Heinrich Holste, Carl Laesche, Friedrich Lehmkuhe, Friedrich Lucke, Herman Matthias, Otto Mayer, Conrad Raabe Conrad Rohmer, Christoph Schmoe, Siemon Schultz, Otto Schwacke and Julius Seemele (L), Grenadier Heinrich Sirbert (R), Fusiliers Carl Warsmith and Balthaser Weber (L)

The detachment of Lieutenant Heinrich Reinhard Hille of the drawbridge picket was Drummer Mueller, Fusiliers Beetz, Joachim Bichard, Biesse, Wilhelm Conrad Curth Eisenach, Wiegand, Goebell Jackell and Heinrich Krengell (K), Grenadier Nicholas Landgrebe (R); Fusiliers Heinrich Melchior, Ochse, Ruhl, Schreiber Schrenck, Seitz, Stock Wilke and Zeiss (K)

The detachment of Captain Heinrich Ludwig Boking, the senior officer of the drawbridge picket, was as follows Sergeant Wilhelm Kreiss, Drummer Heinrich Briell, Grenadiers Conrad Arnd, Georg Draube, Andreas Fuhrmann, Conrad Geith, Michael Giese, Caspar Gundlach, Assmath Heiter, Philip Himmelreich,

Christoph Jordan, Urban Mueller, Johannes Nultejo, Johannes Pfliging, Johannes Reinbold, Heinrich Reitz, Heinrich Rierchhart, Adam Ritter, Henricus Scheffer, Herman Wagner and Johannes Wissmann (R).

The picket commanded by Lieutenant Wilhelm Ludwig von Romrodt, and stationed on the road leading from the drawbridge to Trenton, was composed of Corporals Nicholas Fenner and Schmidt (K), Grenadiers Wilhelm Andress and Adam Backhauss (R), Fusiliers Heinrich Bodensieg and Heinrich Buddle (L), Fusiliers Heinrich Geisell, Gottschalk, Homberger, Koehler and Johannes Muench (K), Grenadier Heinrich Nadler (R), Fusilier Peter (K), Grenadiers Conrad Biessler, Johannes Reather (R), Fusilier Conrad Steinhard (K), Grenadier Georg Zange (R)

No. 56. Hessians who escaped Capture.

Rall Regiment.

List of the men of the Rall regiment in the affair at Trenton who were not captured the initials denote their companies, as Matthaus (M), Boking (B), Body (By), Kohler (K) —

Ensign Ludwig Kinen (M), Sergeants Martin Appell (B), Nicholas Gundlack (K), Georg Keuthe (By), Johannes H Rueppell (B), Andreas Schneider (By), Corporals Matthaus (M), Ludwig Hordes (B), Heinrich Koch (M), Wilhelm Roese (K), Heinrich Schotte (M) and Siemon Weltner (K), Drummers Nicholas Bindernagell (B), Martin Fiant (B) and Christian Franke (B), Forager Heinrich Giesselmann (B), Forager Georg Schilling (By), Surgeon Kuhlmann (M), Grenadiers Johannes Amelung (By), Engelhard Bartell (By), Henricus Bartscher (By), Johannes Behnert (K), Johannes Beinhardy (B), Rudolph Bettenhausen (M), Justus Biermann (B), Johannes Bolte (B), Georg Bretthauer (By), Jacob Bruckman (By), Peter Deisserath (B), Christoph Diegemann (M), Conrad Doring (By), Georg Dornemann (M), Heinrich Emloth (K), Heinrich Engell (By), Johannes Erchelenz (B), Paul Ernest (M), Johannes Etzell (K), Georg Ewald (B), Ludwig Ewald (By), Johannes Giese (M) Georg Goebell (By), Heinrich Goertell (By), Jacob Gross (By), Peter Gundlach (By), Christoph Guthe (By), Adam Haensell (B), Georg Hausler (K), Caspar Hechenthal (B), Conrad Herboldt (B), Conrad Heitzog (By), Churt Hilgenberg (By), Georg Homburg (M), Heinrich Horstmann (B), Martin

Kahrsbach (B), Samuel Kilmer (By), Georg Kothe (K), Joseph Kothe (K), Johannes Knopfel (K), Wilhelm Kreutzberg (M), Friedrich Loemer (B), Christoph Ludolph (By), Sylas May (B), Heinrich Meyard (B), Conrad Meybert (By), Diedrich Mueller (B), Johannes Mueller (K), Heinrich Neumeyer (B), Georg Neurath (B), Caspar Noll (By), Georg Nolte (M), Johannes Nolte, Sen. (B), Friedrich Orth (K), Alexander Paul (By), Christian Poepler (B), Heinrich Rang (M), Ernst Riel (M), Daniel Riemann (B), David Rietze (B), Jost Roeddijer (M), Ludwig Roeddijer (K), Johannes Rose (M), Heinrich Schacht (B), Heinrich Scheffer (By), Ludwig Scheffer (By), Conrad Schehlhaase (B), Johannes Scherpf (B), Johannes Schultze (By), Georg Schwartz (M), Caspar Schweitzer (By) Johannes Seeger (M), Wilhelm Siemon (K), Johannes Signer (K), Christian Ulrich (M), Georg Umbach (By), Georg Vocheurath (K), Conrad Vogeler (K), Christoph Vogeler (K), Arnold Wassmath (M), Caspar Wenert (M) and Christoph Wiegand (B)

This list (of 1 officer and 99 men) was prepared in Philadelphia, April 6, 1778. All of these men went to Bordentown except Drummer Bindernagell and Grenadier Loemer (B), who in some way joined Captain Baum of the von Knyphausen regiment, and wandered off with him to Princeton

(There is no statement in the documents in Germany as to the number of men of the von Lossberg regiment who made good their escape, although Corporal Wilhelm Hardung of the body company testified that he succeeded in eluding capture)

Von Knyphausen Regiment

Roster of the men of the von Knyphausen regiment (50 officers and 75 men) at Trenton. Initials denote Minnigerode (M), Body (By), Boick (Bk), Biesenrodt (Bt), Dechow (D) —

Field Preacher Wilhelm Bauer, Captains Jacob Baum and Barthold Helfrich von Schimmelpfennig, Lieutenants Nicholas Vaupell and Carl Ludwig von Geyso, Sergeants Eckhard (M) and Heinrich Prinz (Bt), Corporals Heeland (M), Homann (By), Leymann (Bk), Ruhl (D), Schwalm (By), Spertzell (Bt), Stumpf (D), von Dalwigk (Bt) and Yager (D); Drummers Justus Aune (Bt), Ashmann (By) Frochlich (D), Abraham May (Bt), Farriers Crausse (Bk), Wiegand (M), Fusiliers Abrecht (By), Johannes Arnth (Bt), Bastsen (By), Friedrich Becker (Bk), Heinrich Becker

(Bt), Werner Blith (Bt), Johannes Berg (Bk), Boeth (D), Heinrich Bonn (Bk), Johannes Claus (Bt) Corell (D), Heinrich Dipp (Bk), Dochnhard (D), Dorst (D), Heinrich Eisenach (Bk), Engeland, Sen (D), Ernst (By), Adam Eueller (D), Helwig Fenner (By), Heinrich Grass (Bk), Johannes Hamell (Bt), Andreas Hass (Bt), Georg Haust (Bt), Hech (By), Conrad Heiderich (Bk), Heinemann (D), Kitz (D), Johannes Klippert (Bt), Kochsen (By), Knaaf (D), Kreuther (M), Caspar Loos (Bt), Luckhard (By), Muench (D), Conrad Muhling (Bk), May (M), Menges (D), Johannes Rhein (Bt), Johannes Riebeling (Bt), Johannes Roeth (Bk), Rudwig (By), Georg Ruppert (Bk), Schmeiss (M), Georg Schmidt (D), Schreiber (M), Johannes Schwalm (By), Johannes Schwalm (Bk), Heinrich Seyl (Bt), Stauffenberg (D), Conrad Stein (Bt), Viehmann (D), Vogell (D), Heinrich Volker (Bt), Ciriacus Wagner (Bk), Jacob Wagner (Bt), Georg Weckesser (Bt), Yaeger (D) and Zulanf (M)

Regiment of Artillery

April 10, 1778, Lieutenant-Colonel Hans Heinrich Eitel, commanding officer of the Hessian regiment of artillery, and at that time on duty in Philadelphia, prepared a list of his men (1 officer and 16 men) who had escaped capture in the surprise at Trenton.

Lieutenant Johannes Engelhardt, Bombardiers Heinrich Ide and Johannes Humberties Westerburg, Artillerists Bautzer, Dilforth Geisse, Heckert, Korn, Christian Kuhn,[1] Kulm, Loelekes, Muench, Rasch, Ruhl, Schmeermund, Zahn, Zaun

A small guard of ten men who went to Princeton with baggage on Christmas day, of course took no part in the fight They may be said to have escaped. Their names were —

Corporal Heinrich Grebe (M), Grenadiers Johannes Brawn (M), Bernard Loose (By), Georg Hesse (K) and Wilhelm Wimmelmann (M), all of Rall regiment, Fusiliers Koch, Jr. (By),

[1] Christian Kuhn, a soldier of gigantic stature, after escaping from the Trenton battle appears to have deserted the Hessian Corps, for later on in the war he joined Captain Zebulon M Pike's company of Colonel Stephen Moylan's Fourth regiment, Continental dragoons, and subsequently was discharged therefrom on account of a sabre cut on his arm Under Act of Congress, August 11, 1790, he was placed on the New Jersey Invalid Pension Roll as Christian Koon, spelled also Khun Kuhn and Coon, and died January 23, 1823, at Montgomery, Orange County, New York

Nicholas Luckhard (D), Ochse (M), Jacob Schmidt (M) and Schumacher (D), all of von Knyphausen regiment

No 57 Return of Prisoners taken at Trenton

December 26, 1776, by the Army under the Command of General Washington

Regiments	Colonels	Lieut-Colonels	Majors	Captains	Lieutenants	Ensigns	Surgeon's Mates	Sergeants	Drummers	Musicians	Officers' Servants	Rank and File	Total
Landspatch		1	1	1	3	4		38	6	5	9	206	274
Knyphausen			1	2	2	3		25	6		6	258	303
Rohl	1	1	1	1	2	5	2	25	8	4	9	244	303
Artillery					1			4			1	32	38
	1	2	3	4	8	12	2	92	20	9	25	740	918

6 dble fortifyed Brass three pounds with carreages compleat

3 ammunition Waggons, As many Muskets, Bayonets, Cartouch Boxes and Swords as there are prisoners 12 Drums

4 Colours

No 58 Hessian Prisoners of War

List of the Commissioned and Non-Commissioned Officers, Drummers and Privates of the Grenadier Regiment of Rall, now Prisoners of War

No	Companies' Names	Commissioned Officers	Non Commissioned Officers	Surgeons	Drummers	Privates	Amount
1	Body Company	3	7	1	3	45	59
2	Lieutenant Colonel Kohler		6		3	47	56
3	Lieutenant Colonel Brethauer		2		2	47	51
4	Major Matthaus		4		2	56	62
5	Captain Boking	2	6	1	2	58	69
	Total	5	25	2	12	253	297

Middle and under Staff,

1 Adjutant 4 Hautboys.

D Brethauer, *Lieutenant-Colonel*

LIST OF THE COMMISSIONED AND NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS, DRUMMERS AND PRIVATES OF THE REGIMENT OF VON LOSSBERG, NOW PRISONERS OF WAR

No	Companies' Names	Commissioned Officers	Non-Commissioned Officers	Surgeons	Drummers	Privates	Amount
1	Body Company	1	7		3	46	57
2	Lieutenant Colonel Scheffer	1	7	1	1	38	48
3	Captain von Altenbockum	1	5	1	1	29	37
4	Major von Hanstein	3	6			39	48
5	Colonels — vacant	3	6		1	47	57
	Total	9	31	2	6	199	247

Middle and under Staff,

1 Adjutant 1 Drum Major 5 Hautboys

F SCHEFFER, *Lieutenant-Colonel.*

LIST OF THE COMMISSIONED AND NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS, DRUMMERS AND PRIVATES OF THE REGIMENT VON KNYPHAUSEN, NOW PRISONERS OF WAR

No	Companies' Names	Commissioned Officers	Non-Commissioned Officers	Surgeons	Drummers	Privates	Amount
1	Body Company	1	5			48	54
2	Colonel von Borck	1	3		2	49	55
3	Lieutenant-Colonel von Minnigerode	2	5		2	62	71
4	Major von Dechow		3		1	46	52
5	Captain von Biesenrodt	2	7		1	52	62
	Total	6	25		6	257	294

Middle and under Staff

1 Adjutant 1 Judge 1 Hautboy

VON BIESENRODT, *Captain.*

LIST OF THE SEVERAL DETACHMENTS OF ARTILLERY BELONGING TO THE REGIMENTS OF VON LOSSBERG, VON KNYPHAUSEN AND RALL, TAKEN IN THE ACTION AT TRENTON, THE 26TH OF DECEMBER, 1776, AND NOW REMAINING PRISONERS OF WAR

No	Names of the Detachments	Commissioned Officers	Non-Commissioned Officers	Surgeons	Drummers	Gunners	Matross	Total
1	Of the Regiment von Lossberg .		2			13	3	18
2	Of the Regiment von Knyphausen	1	2			14	2	19
3	Of the Regiment Rall					2	1	3
	Total	1	4			29	6	40

NOTE — That exclusive of the above-mentioned prisoners, there are 3 Gunners wounded, and 2 Gunners sick, who remained as Prisoners at Trenton

F FISCHER, *Lieut of Artillery*

PHILADELPHIA the 5th January 1777

POSTSCRIPT. We cannot answer for the exactness of these Lists, because the Night before the Troops have marched to Lancaster, some Privates have joined them Our request to remain with the Subalterns and Privates and to march along with them to Lancaster, having been denied. We are going this day towards Baltimore

F SCHEFFER

PHILADELPHIA 6th January 1777

No 59 ROSTER OF OFFICERS OF RALL'S BRIGADE

The roster of officers of Rall's brigade and their condition at the close of the Trenton battle may be stated thus —

Rall Regiment

Colonel Johann Gottlieb Rall, severely wounded, paroled, and died in Trenton, December 27, 1776 Lieutenant-Colonel Balthasar Brethauer, prisoner and died while a prisoner of war, Major Johann Jost Matthaus, prisoner, Captain Johann Heinrich Brubach, prisoner and died while a prisoner of war, Captain Heinrich Ludwig Boking, escaped, Lieutenant Johann Heinrich

Sternickel, wounded, paroled and died while a paroled prisoner of war in Trenton, Lieutenant Carl Andreas Kinen, prisoner (he was also suffering from a wound received at Fort Washington), Lieutenant Gregorius Salzmann, paroled in Trenton and remained there sick for many months, Lieutenant Johannes Stroebel, escaped, Ensign Ludwig Kinen, in Bordentown at the time of the fight; Ensign Jacob Lebrecht Fleck, prisoner, Ensign Carl Wilhelm Kleinschmidt, acting as adjutant of the regiment, prisoner, Ensign Johann Georg Schroeder, prisoner

Von Lossberg Regiment.

Lieutenant-Colonel Francis Scheffer, prisoner, Major Ludwig August von Hanstein, prisoner, Captain Johann Friedrich von Riess, killed, Captain Ernst Eberhard von Altenbockum, badly wounded, paroled in Trenton, but he soon rejoined his regiment, probably exchanged, and did not sign the parole of December 27th, Captain Adam Christoph Steding, prisoner, Captain Friedrich Wilhelm von Benning, killed, Lieutenant Heinrich Reinhard Hille, escaped, Lieutenant Georg Christian Kinm, killed; Lieutenant Ernst Christian Schwabe, wounded, paroled and left in Trenton, Lieutenant Ludwig Wilhelm Keller, prisoner, died at Dumfries, Virginia, October 6, 1777, prisoner of war, Lieutenant Georg Heimann Zoll, acting as adjutant of the regiment, wounded, paroled and left in Trenton, Lieutenant Wilhelm Christian Muller, prisoner, Lieutenant Jacob Piel, acting as adjutant of the brigade, prisoner, Ensign Christian August von Hobe, wounded and taken prisoner, Ensign Friedrich Franz Grabe, prisoner, Ensign Friedrich von Zengen, prisoner, Ensign Friedrich Christoph Hendorff, prisoner, but did not sign the parole of December 27th

Von Knyphausen Regiment.

Major Friedrich Ludwig von Dechow, badly wounded and died in Trenton December 27, 1776; Captain Bernhard von Biesenrodt, prisoner, Captain Ludwig Wilhelm von Lowenstein, prisoner, Captain Barthold Helfrich von Schimmelpfennig, escaped, Captain Jacob Baum, escaped, Lieutenant Christian Sobbe, acting as adjutant of the regiment, prisoner, Lieutenant Andreas Wiederhold, prisoner, but did not sign the parole of December 27th, Lieutenant Carl Ludwig von Geyso, wounded and escaped,

Lieutenant Nicholas Vaupell, escaped, Lieutenant Werner von Ferry, prisoner, but did not sign the parole of December 30th, because probably he signed one of a similar kind when he had permission to visit Trenton, Lieutenant Wilhelm Ludwig von Romrodt, escaped, Ensign Carl Friedrich Fuhrer, prisoner, but signed a separate parole from the rest of the officers It was said that he joined the American army, Ensign Heinrich Zimmermann, escaped, Ensign Wilhelm von Drach, prisoner.

Artillery

Lieutenant Friedrich Fischer, prisoner, Lieutenant Johannes Engelhardt, escaped

Yagers.

Lieutenant Friedrich Wilhelm von Grothausen, escaped, but mortally wounded in Trenton, January 2, 1777, and died soon afterward in Princeton. Judge Advocate Friedrich Moeller, prisoner

The German records at Marburg give us some personal history of a few of these officers, related by themselves under oath, and it will not be amiss to record it here. It shows many of them to have been veterans in war and to have entered military life at a very early age.

Rall Regiment

Major Johann Jost Matthaus, 58 years of age, was born at Schwarzenberg. At the age of 19 he served in the regiment Prinz Carl, then in the von Hugne regiment, and was finally commissioned in the Rall regiment He was married.

Captain Heinrich Ludwig Boking, 35 years old, was born in Cassel, and joined the army at 17 years of age He was married.

Lieutenant Carl Andreas Kinen, 19 years of age, was born at Dillenburg. He had been in service for three years, first in the regiment von Mirbach, and then in the Rall regiment. He had been wounded November 16, 1776, at the assault on Fort Washington, and had come to Trenton with his regiment, though he had done no duty with it on account of these wounds While trying to escape over the bridge in the fight, he had been captured with others on Queen street between Second and Front streets.

Lieutenant Johannes Stroebel, 43 years old, was born at Nie-

der Hessen, and had been in the Hessian service since the year 1753

Ensign Ludwig Kinen was born in the same village as his brother Lieutenant Kinen and was one year younger than that officer He had entered the army at 16 years of age.

Ensign Jacob Lebrecht Fleck, 23 years old, was born at Homburg, had joined the von Donop regiment when he was 17 years of age, spent a year therein, and was then transferred to the Rall regiment for duty

Ensign Johann Georg Schroeder, 22 years old, was born at Cassel This was his first year of service

Von Lossberg Regiment.

Lieutenant-Colonel Francis Scheffer, 54 years of age, was born at Hermsdorf, had been in service thirty-five years, and was a married man

Major Ludwig August von Hanstein was born at Obernhof, was married, and had been twenty-eight years in the army, first in the von Donop regiment, then in the Erbprinz, and finally in the von Lossberg regiment. His age at this time was 46 years.

Captain Ernst Eberhard von Altenbockum, 40 years of age, was the commander of the company which bore his name. He was born at Courland, was unmarried, and had spent twenty-two years in the Hessian service

Captain Adam Christoph Steding, 39 years of age, commanded the von Loos company in this regiment. He was born in Fischbeck and had entered military life at 16 years of age. He was unmarried

Captain Johann Friedrich von Riess was the son of Friedrich Jacob von Riess of Stallburg He was born in Frankfort-on-the-Main in the year 1745 His family came from Cassel, and were owners of the salt mines at Allendorf. He began his military life as a lieutenant in the Nassau Weilburg regiment, Upper Rhenanian, and then received his promotion to a captaincy in the von Lossberg regiment, only to meet his death as heretofore stated

Captain Friedrich Wilhelm von Benning of the von Lossberg regiment appears in the German records as a first lieutenant in the Leib regiment in the year 1766. He remained in this office until 1773, when the von Lossberg regiment was organized, and

then he was made a staff captain therein. In this commission he came to America, and received his death wound at the head of his company

Lieutenant Heinrich Reinhard Hille, 22 years old, was born in Rinteln, and for nearly two years had been in service in Lieutenant-Colonel Scheffer's company

Lieutenant Ernst Christian Schwabe was also born at Rinteln He had been in the body company of this regiment for sixteen years, and was 30 years old at the time of the battle

Lieutenant Georg Hermann Zoll was born in the same village as Lieutenant Schwabe and Lieutenant Hille He was 29 years of age, unmarried, and had been twelve years in service

Lieutenant Wilhelm Christian Muller, 27 years of age, was born in Ziegenhain. He had been in Major von Hanstein's company for nearly eleven years and had previously served for two years in the regiment Prinz Carl

Lieutenant Jacob Piel, 34 years old, was born in Bremen, and had been in service in Major von Hanstein's company for fourteen years He was not married

Lieutenant Georg Christian Kimm appears as an ensign in the Hessian regiment von Barthold in 1766. When the von Lossberg regiment was formed in 1773, Kimm was made a second lieutenant in that organization In 1776 he was promoted to be a first lieutenant, which rank he held when he fell mortally wounded in the streets of Trenton. He died on the evening of the battle

Lieutenant Christian August von Hobe was born in Mecklenburg, had been in the Colonel von Loos company for six years, and was 22 years old

Ensign Friedrich Franz Grabe was born in Rinteln, was 17 years of age, and had been four years in the German army

Ensign Friedrich von Zengen was born in Bonenburg, was 19 years old, and had been in service in the body company for four years

Ensign Friedrich Christoph Hendorff, 30 years of age, was born at Rhinefels, and had been in service for eight years, first in the Hessian Hussar corps, and since February, 1776, in Major von Hanstein's company of this regiment

Von Knyphausen Regiment

Major Friedrich Ludwig von Dechow was the son of Hans C von Dechow of Ratzeburg, Mecklenburg-Strelitz, in which place the Hessian soldier was born He was a captain in the Prussian army under Frederick the Great. When the Hesse-Cassel regiment named after General von Knyphausen was sent to America, he became its major, and was for some months its commanding officer He was wounded quite severely at Fort Washington, but soon recovered He was an experienced officer, and in his command enjoyed a reputation for great personal bravery The wound which he received at the Trenton battle was in the left hip, and like Colonel Rall he died the next day

Captain Bernhard von Biesenrodt, 40 years of age, was born in Ober Kaufungen, and had been in the army since 1755 He was commander of a company named after himself.

Captain Ludwig Wilhelm von Lowenstein, commander of the von Borck company, was born at Ronnenburg He was 47 years of age, and had been twenty-seven years in the Hessian military service

Captain Barthold Helfrich von Schimmelpfennig, 37 years of age, was born in Hersfeld, and had been for twenty-four years in the von Knyphausen regiment At this time he was staff captain in the von Biesenrodt company.

Captain Jacob Baum was 44 years old, and twenty-six of those years had been spent in service. He was a staff captain in the body company.

Lieutenant Christian Sobbe was born at Freystadt, was 33 years old, unmarried, and had been in this regiment for nineteen years

Lieutenant Carl Ludwig von Geyso was born at Marbach, and was nearly 20 years old. He was first in the regiment Prinz Carl, then in the battalion of the guard, and then in Major von Dechow's company of this regiment He had entered the army in 1774

Lieutenant Nicholas Vaupell was born at Muden He belonged to the body company, but on the day of the battle was on duty with the von Dechow company He was a married man

Lieutenant Werner von Ferry, 23 years of age, was born in

Munster, and had served seven years in the body company of this regiment

Lieutenant Wilhelm Ludwig von Romrodt 28 years of age, was born near Ziegenhain. He had served in the von Borck company for six years

Lieutenant Andreas Wiederhold was 24 years of age and a bright and active officer. He died at Cassel in 1803, then major and inspector of the arsenal.

Ensign Heinrich Zimmermann, 21 years old, was born at Cassel, and had joined the von Borck company in February, 1776

Ensign Wilhelm von Drach was born at Ellrichshausen. At the time of the battle he was 18 years old and was serving in the von Minnigerode company.

Artillery

Lieutenant Friedrich Fischer, 38 years old, was born in Niedernhausen and had been twenty years in service

Lieutenant Johannes Engelhardt was born in Cassel. He was 23 years of age, and had been in the army but one year

No. 60 LORD STIRLING TO GOVERNOR LIVINGSTON

NEW TOWN, December 28th 1776

MY DEAR SIR

I dare say you have heard of our little expedition to Trentown, on the night of the 25th, the result was, that we made a most complete surprise on them, and have taken and killed at least one thousand two hundred of the best of Hessian troops, with their artillery and stores. The effect is amazing; the enemy have deserted Borden Town, Black Horse, Burlington, Mount Holly and are fled to South Amboy, we are now in possession of all those places, and the spirit of that part of the country is roused

. . .

I write this at the request of General Washington, with a lame hand, but I hope it will be well enough to give them another drubbing soon. I had the honour to make two regiments of them surrender prisoners of war and to treat them in such a style as will make the rest of them more willing to surrender than to fight

God bless you, be active and make the State of New Jersey what it ought to be

Most affectionately yours

STIRLING.

No. 61 PROCLAMATION BY THE PENNSYLVANIA COUNCIL OF SAFETY

IN COUNCIL OF SAFETY December 31 1776

TO THE PUBLIC

There arrived yesterday in this City near one thousand Hessian prisoners taken by his Excellency Gen'l Washington in his late fortunate and successful Expedition to New Jersey The General has recommended to this Council to provide suitable Quarters for them and it is his earnest wish that they may be well treated and have such principles instilled into them, whilst they remain prisoners, that when they return on being exchanged they may fully open the Eyes of their Countrymen in the service of the King of Great Britain who at present are not a little jealous of their English fellow soldiers.

These miserable creatures now justly excite our Compassion. They have no Enmity with us According to the arbitrary customs of the tyrannical German Princes, they were dragg d from their native Country, and sold to a foreign Monark, without either consulting their inclinations or informing them of the place they were destined for, or the Enemy they were to contend with Their pay a mere pittance, they were necessitated and encouraged to plunder. It is therefore nothing strange that they have been guilty of great irregularities, tho' inferior to the brutal behaviour of the British Troops. But from the moment they are rescued from the authority of the British Officers, we ought no longer to regard them as our Enemies, at least whilst their Conduct will Justifie our favourable opinion. 'T is Britain alone that is our Enemy, all the rest of Europe is from the strongest motives interested in our favour. 'T is the Officers and Troops of Britain only that are heartily engaged in this unjust war against us from rancour, pride and ambition and notwithstanding the pains they have taken to prejudice the Germans against us, we hope they will find it impossible to prevail on them much longer to imbrue their hands in the blood of the Americans, many of whom are their Countrymen The most favourable opportunity now offers

to weaken the force of our Enemies by making their Auxillaries our friends, and we earnestly entreat you to embrace it by suppressing any resentment that might naturally arise on recollecting their late hostility and treating the much injured and deceived Hessians now in our power in the most friendly manner, as a people we would wish to unite with ourselves in improving the fertile forrests of America, extending its manufacture & Commerce and maintaining its Liberty and independency against all attacks of foreign & Arbitrary Power

No 62 Count de Schaumburg to Baron Hohendorf.[1]

Monsieur le Baron

On my return from Naples, I received at Rome your letter of the 27th December of last year I have learned with unspeakable pleasure the courage our troops exhibited at Trenton, and you cannot imagine my joy on being told that of the 1950 Hessians engaged in the fight, but 345 escaped There were just 1605 men killed and I cannot sufficiently commend your prudence in sending an exact list of the dead to my minister in London. This precaution was the more necessary, as the report sent to the English ministry does not give but 1455 dead This would make 483,450 florins instead of the 643,500 which I am intitled to demand under our convention You will comprehend the prejudice which such an error would work in my finances, and I do not doubt you will take the necessary pains to prove that Lord North's list is false and yours correct

The court of London objects that there were a hundred wounded who ought not to be included in the list, nor paid for as dead ; but I trust you will not overlook my instructions to you on quitting Cassel and that you will not have tried by human succor to recall to life the unfortunates whose days could not be lengthened but by the loss of a leg or arm. That would be making them a pernicious present and I am sure they would rather die than live in a condition no longer fit for my service I do not mean by this that you should assassinate them we should be humane, my dear Baron, but you may insinuate to the surgeons with entire propriety that a crippled man is a reproach to

[1] Dr Benjamin Franklin is generally believed to have been the author of this satirical letter Tyler's *Literary History of the American Revolution*, vol. ii p 380 Bigelow's *Life of Benjamin Franklin* vol ii p 395

their profession and that there is no wiser course than to let every one of them die when he ceases to be fit to fight

I am about to send you some new recruits Don't economize them Glory is true wealth There is nothing degrades a soldier like the love of money. He must care only for honour and reputation, but this reputation must be acquired in the midst of dangers. A battle gained without costing the conqueror any blood is an inglorious success, while the conquered cover themselves with glory by perishing with their arms in their hands Do you remember that of the 300 Lacedemonians who defended the defile at Thermopylae, not one returned? How happy should I be could I say the same of my brave Hessians!

It is true that their King Leonidas perished with them! but things have changed, and it is no longer the custom for Princes of the Empire to go and fight in America for a cause with which they have no concern. And besides, to whom should they pay the 30 guineas per man if I did not stay in Europe to receive them? Then it is necessary also that I be ready to send recruits to replace the men you lose For this purpose I must return to Hesse It is true grown men are becoming scarce there but I will send the boys Besides the scarcer the commodity the higher the price I am assured that the women and little girls have begun to till our lands, and they get on not badly You did right to send back to Europe that Doctor Crumerus who was so successful in curing dysentery Don't bother with a man who is subject to looseness of the bowels That disease makes bad soldiers One coward will do more mischief in an engagement than ten brave men will do good Better that they burst in their barracks than fly in a battle and tarnish the glory of our arms Besides, you know that they pay me as killed for all who die from disease and I don't get a farthing for runaways My trip to Italy, which has cost me enormously, makes it desirable that there should be a great mortality among them You will therefore promise promotion to all who expose themselves, you will exhort them to seek glory in the midst of dangers, you will say to Major Maundorf that I am not at all content with his saving the 345 men who escaped the massacre at Trenton Through the whole campaign he has not had ten men killed in consequence of his orders Finally, let it be your principal object to prolong the war and avoid a decisive engagement on

either side, for I have made arrangements for a grand Italian opera and I do not wish to be obliged to give it up Meantime I pray God, my dear Baron de Hohendorf, to have you in his holy and gracious keeping

No 63. Colonel von Donop to General Knyphausen

Quarters at Allentown December 27th 1776

Sir

Perhaps your excellency has been already informed of the unpleasant affair which happened to the Rall brigade, but I think it my duty to report to you. On the 21st instant I received word from Colonel Block at Black Horse, where his battalion was posted with the 42nd Regiment, that a party of rebels had marched into Mount Holly, and that as yet he had been unable to ascertain its real strength, some reporting it two and some four thousand strong I informed Colonel Rall immediately and advised him to be on his guard because while I believed the enemy would attack me, they might also make a demonstration against him. I arranged my plans so that I felt safe in case of a surprise and the next morning went myself to Black Horse I found the enemy had all except a few patrols moved out no farther than the meeting house this side of Mount Holly Immediately on my return to Bordentown the alarm guns which I had ordered, were discharged at three o'clock in the afternoon by the two battalions at the Black Horse and by the battalion von Linsingen lying between Black Horse and Bordentown. I informed Colonel Rall immediately and returned instantly to Black Horse I found my men all under arms because as soon as I had left four or five hundred rebels had attacked the picket at Rancocas bridge, but effected nothing but the withdrawal of the twelve Scotish soldiers and their sergeant Captain von Eshwege who was quartered with his company in a house near came to their assistance and a picket of grenadiers that was stationed just beyond him and the rebels did not move a step further.

In order to rid myself of these unpleasant guests I went next morning with the 42nd Regiment, the two battalions Block and von Linsengen directly to Mount Holly I met a few hundred men at the meeting house but after firing a few shots they ran away and the whole party took the road to Moorestown. They were about a thousand men strong and under the command of

Colonel Griffin. It was the fault of one of my patrols that I did not get on them as I wished, for the patrol went against my direction too far in advance. I had no wounded or dead men, but the rebels had three caused by my artillery fire although but a few shots were fired. At the attack on Rancocas bridge Captain von Eshwege's company had two and the guard of Scotsmen two slightly wounded men. The battalion von Linsengen then marched back again to their former quarters, Mansfield Square, in order to be near Bordentown, and the other two battalions remained at Mount Holly to gather food and forage for the stores at Bordentown. There was nothing in Colonel Rall's reports, and more especially in the communications from General Grant to fear at Trenton. The following morning I regret to say proved the contrary. Lieutenant Colonel von Minnigerode reported to me that he had heard by a messenger that the rebels had surprised the Rall brigade this morning at Trenton between eight and nine o'clock and that they were ten to twelve thousand strong. Soon after this Lieutenant Colonel von Minnigerode sent an officer to me saying the report of the surprise at Trenton had been confirmed by many who had escaped from there. I went immediately back to Black Horse, reinforced the command at the Crosswicks bridge so as to keep open the way to Princeton. According to all the reports of the men who escaped from Trenton and the statements of patrols I had sent in that direction the whole Rall brigade has been lost and many thousand rebels are in their quarters. I did not think it advisable for me to remain any longer in so dangerous a situation, surrounded on all sides by the enemy and cut off from all communication with Princeton. I was also assured that a large part of the rebels had turned to Princeton and I had not the slightest word from General Leslie. My ammunition had run low, only about nine cartridges to a cannon and very little indeed for the fire-locks. Even if I had thought proper to face all attacks from the enemy in my dangerous position, to remain in Bordentown and wait for a doubtful success I would not dare to do it on account of the shortage of ammunition. Therefore after due consideration I withdrew to Allentown which is twelve English miles from Princeton and informed General Leslie of this fact. This place is so situated that I can push through from here or in one day if necessary resume my former position. I have brought all my baggage

along, but I am sorry I am compelled to leave about twenty sick and wounded at Bordentown, with a stock of provisions and forage Some of the men were not able to be carried and the wagons were too scarce to carry the rations, which will therefore I fear fall into the hands of the rebels. I have organized all the escaped men from the Rall brigade and made up a force of two hundred and ninety-two men, including the command at the drawbridge of one Captain, three officers and one hundred men. Lieutenant von Grothausen with fifty yagers who had his command at Trenton, with a detachment of light infantry and dragoons, except one yager who was killed and one sick soldier, escaped from the fight Colonel Rall it is said is mortally wounded and so is Major von Dechow Lieutenant Colonel Bretthauer and many of the officers have been wounded, some of them killed I could not find anything more definite than this All the cannon and flags of the brigade are lost and the prisoners taken amount to seven hundred men

I am Your Excellency's ser t &c DONOP.

Whether this affair was an accident or whether a mistake had been made could not be determined from the stories told by the fugitives All agree, however, that if Colonel Rall with his brigade had retreated over the bridge and then destroyed it he could have saved his command instead of fighting for an hour against such heavy odds Nevertheless it certainly proves his splendid courage and that of his regiments, and this at least is greatly to their honour Even the two regiments, the von Lossberg and his own, could have been saved The death of Colonel Rall has therefore avoided a painful investigation for he would have had to answer for this grave responsibility

No. 64 GENERAL GRANT TO COLONEL VON DONOP

BRUNSWICK 27th Dec 1776

SIR

Colonel Rall's Defeat is a most unfortunate business I did not think that all the Rebels in America would have taken that Brigade Prisoners — one must not judge rashly of People who have been unfortunate but if you had been there and had found yourself overpowered by numbers, if I am not mistaken you would have contrived to retreat across the bridge to Bordenton —

the Light Dragoons, Light Infantry and it appears from your letter to General Leslie that 200 Hessians did so. After all that has happened if I was with you, your Grenadiers and Yagers I should not be afraid of an attack from Washington's Army, which is almost naked and does not exceed 8000 men including Lee's, Gates's and Arnold's Corps I have sent an express to General Howe and till I receive his commands about the future Arrangement of our cantonments, I must beg of you to remain at Allentown, or if that should not be practicable, for I don't know the place, you must crowd into Princetown, Maidenhead, Cranbury and Kingston.

I have the honour to be, Sir, Your most obed't h'lle servant

JAMES GRANT.

No 65. GENERAL VON HEISTER TO THE PRINCE OF HESSE.

To HIS HIGHNESS THE PRINCE OF HESSE

Merciful Father of the Country!

Your Highness has I trust seen my letter of the 23rd of December The fate of war which I had such good reason to praise in my last letter and which I humbly hope pleased your Highness has given us a sad example of its inconstancy — which is hard indeed for every true Hessian The pain the first report gave me it is unnecessary to describe and I feel it anew when I am compelled to repeat it to you who must feel the loss of even a single subject The three regiments of von Lossberg, von Knyphausen and Rall which were quartered at Trenton in New Jersey were on the 26th of December surprised and attacked by a superior force of the rebels an account of which you may read in the enclosed journal written up to the 27th of December After a defense of nearly an hour and a half the entire body of officers and a large part of the men had been killed or wounded, the rest were surrounded and made prisoners The fifteen flags and the six cannon were also lost A small balance of 292 men as near as I can ascertain saved themselves and joined Colonel von Donop's force They will be according to my request sent to General Howe's quarters and I therefore expect them daily. After they have rested and recruited themselves, if in fit condition, I will form them into a separate battalion which can be assigned to Colonel von Donop's command and a Staff officer can be placed in charge of them On the 3rd inst. I sent Quarter Master Muller

of the von Knyphausen regiment with twelve men of the brigade with permission of the General in Chief to Philadelphia to assist the prisoners there with money and underclothing until their release for which I am working very hard If Colonel Rall has made a mistake and caused this mishap nothing positive can be said until the imprisoned officers can be examined. According to the story of the men who escaped through his hot-headedness he was not willing to retreat and sacrificed his men because rather than use the bridge behind him which he could have held possession of with advantage His death does away with many investigations and many complications I have always judged him stronger in the attack than in the defense The former he gallantly displayed at Fort Knyphausen Just now I receive the report that an English brigade has shared the same fate as the Rall brigade, but I am not able to say how true this is The English regiments have no flags and cannon with them and so they are saved the misfortune of losing them The farther events your Highness will see in the Continental journales. I lay these facts before you and I am yours humbly

VON HEISTER

NEW YORK 5th of January 1777.

No 66 EARL OF SUFFOLK TO GENERAL VON HEISTER

ST JAMES 3rd March 1777

SIR

The Baron de Kuzleben has sent me the letter which you honored me with of date January 28th, but that of December 23rd never reached me. It was with great sorrow that we heard of the disaster which happened to the Hessian brigade, by which this most brilliant campaign was closed by the loss of so many brave men In deploring the death of Colonel Rall we are not able at the same time to avoid the fact that his great rashness interfered with him as the commander of a post where he should have tried to preserve the lives of his men We will always continue to hope that the occasion will present itself that the troops of his Serene Highness may be able to give essential proof of their valour in the service of His Majesty, and that you will have to send us great accounts of their brave conduct

I have the honour to be With great esteem, Sir.

Your very humble & very obt servant

SUFFOLK

No. 67. Princl of Hesse to Lieutenant-General von Knyphausen.

Cassel, 16th of June 1777

I

I expected to receive the particulars of the fatal affair at Trenton on the return of Quarter Master Mueller from Lieutenant General von Heister This has not been done and I therefore expect and demand of the Lieutenant General all the information necessary to give light on this unlucky business, and enable me to judge of the proper sentence The general description has not yet been received and all the minor points are still wanting. Quarter Master Mueller's diary does not mention a word of it. My sensitive feelings are not quieted and the painful shock not lessened by keeping from me the details of this affair I therefore repeat the demand on the Lieutenant General for a thorough investigation of the whole matter. Lieutenant Colonel Scheffer particularly and the commanding officers of the other two regiments must on their return from imprisonment be subject to the severest investigation The former must especially be questioned why he did not take command immediately after Colonel Rall was wounded and why he did not try to remedy the disaster when he knew that Colonel Rall was disabled from further command ?

II

Court Geismar, August 3, 1777

As soon as the three captured regiments are exchanged, the Lieutenant General is requested, as he has been already ordered to establish a court martial in which a Major General shall preside and all these questions must be answered

1 — At what time in the day were the regiments attacked and captured ?

2 — How strong was the force of the enemy ?

3 — What plans had Colonel Rall made in case his regiments were attacked ?

4 — Were the quarters of the regiments separated or near together ? What precautions were taken and were there any patrols sent out to obtain information as to the near approach of the enemy ?

5 — How did the regiments defend themselves and how long

did this defense continue? How heavy was the loss of wounded and dead on our side and how great on the side of the enemy?

6 — Why did not Lieutenant Colonel Scheffer take command after Colonel Rall had been disabled, as it was his duty as senior officer, and why did he not retreat over the little bridge across the stream in their rear, after finding the enemy so strong?

7 — From whom did Colonel Rall receive his orders? Did he not receive proper instructions? Did Colonel Rall visit his posts often? Did Lieutenant Colonel Scheffer give no orders when Colonel Rall found himself unable to save his men?

8 — Why did not Colonel von Donop march to their assistance and was there no communication existing between Bordentown and Trenton?

The greatest responsibility after the death of Colonel Rall rests on Lieutenant Colonel Scheffer and after him on the two officers who commanded the von Knyphausen and the von Woellworth[1] regiments and these officers are to be held to account for their conduct

No 68 FRIEDRICH L I. HESSEN TO GENERAL KNYPHAUSEN.

MY DEAR LIEUTENANT GENERAL VON KNYPHAUSEN.

In regard to the report of that fatal affair at Trenton I would inform you that the importance of the matter has not permitted an earlier conclusion. It has been found that many facts need verification, that the behaviour of every one implicated should be clearly understood so that the conduct of each one should be judged properly and beyond question I would respectfully ask the Lieutenant General to convene a just and impartial court according to the rules, that this unpleasant affair may end and every officer implicated, irrespective of previous statements and testimony, be resworn in so important a matter. A Major General should preside and there must be three officers ordered on the court of each rank You may order such courts-martial to carefully investigate all the circumstances of this affair and after due consideration pass judgment thereon If any are found guilty according to law you should pass sentence on each one according as your conscience may dictate and send the verdict to me

In the investigation it is shown

[1] Formerly the Rall regiment

1. — That the danger to which the regiments in Trenton were daily exposed should have made it apparent to Colonel Rall that he ought to have designated an alarm place for the brigade, that he should have made the necessary arrangements for defence, that he should have erected fortifications and breast-works and should have sent out frequent patrols to those places where the enemy was supposed to be, especially at Pennington, to Howell's and to Johnson's ferries As the whole force of the enemy crossed over the Delaware river on the 25th of December 1776 and this crossing took sixteen hours it is apparent that the sending out of patrols had been neglected If it had been done the regiments would have had timely warning and could have made preparations for resistance

2 — An investigation is yet to be made by the court-martial as to what orders Lieutenant Colonel Scheffer gave after Colonel Rall had been wounded in the attack on the town which he made with the von Lossberg and his own regiment and after Major von Hanstein had informed Lieutenant Colonel Scheffer of the wounding of Colonel Rall and he according to his own statement had assumed charge of the command

3 — As Major von Hanstein states that after the fruitless attack upon the town and during the retreat to the woods he, Lieutenant Colonel Scheffer and Major Matthaus had all agreed to break through the line of the enemy, a thorough investigation must be made why this resolution was not carried out The protocol of former investigations should be presented to this court-martial for its action

4. — Lieutenant Colonel Scheffer is to be questioned as to why in the retreat not the least effort was made to break through and join the English troops at Princeton, when the troops had not even fired and by his own testimony an officer of the enemy was called out and made by him to understand that they were forced to surrender Captain Steding said in his testimony that Lieutenant Colonel Scheffer and Major von Hanstein joined an officer of the enemy who rode up to them at the time of the retreat and on their return both of the regiments surrendered. We may conclude from this as well as from Lieutenant Colonel Scheffer's testimony that no fire was opened upon the enemy in front of them. Although the enemy was much stronger numerically, they were in no way equal to the brigade of Colonel Rall and it

cannot be deemed that their troops were much scattered and stronger on the flanks than on the front of Trenton Therefore if the regiments intended to break through and were in order for so doing it ought not to have been a very hard task for these regiments unitedly at some one point to have effected an escape The militia was a mixed force, much dissatisfied from previous misfortunes and losses and they would not have stood at one certain point against an attack with the bayonet By this honorable way a disgraceful surrender and capture might have been avoided. If this however had been found to be impossible then the regiments should have tried to withdraw toward the creek and made an effort to cross it The testimony of Captain von Lowenstein shows plainly in the trial that two hundred steps to the right of the position of the von Knyphausen regiment, and so according to this statement behind the von Lossberg and the Rall regiments also, the water was only knee deep.

5 — The regiment von Knyphausen remained too long at the quarters of Major von Dechow waiting for orders, as it stood there when the attack and the firing had begun at the upper part of the town Because Colonel Rall had made no arrangements against a surprise the regiment could do nothing but guard the bridge over the creek at Trenton or aid the other two regiments already in conflict with the enemy. The signal to march should have been the cannon shots of the enemy

6 — An investigation should be made earnestly and with diligence as to the cause which made the von Knyphausen regiment withdraw when in the apple orchard back of Trenton, when the Rall and the von Lossberg regiments were about to make the attack on the town and why did they turn to the left and separate themselves instead of assisting those regiments

7 — Who gave the orders for this separation? Was the occupation of the bridge the motive for this movement? If so why did they not attack the enemy there with the bayonet? Was no attempt made to do this?

8 — How can Captain von Biesenrodt answer these questions? Why did his regiment not attack the enemy at the bridge? Why did his regiment march up and down the creek in an uncertain way and thereby separate itself from the other regiments then in action? Why did he intentionally put the regiment in low ground when an elevation was before him and why did he remain

there? Why did he send Lieutenant Wiederhold according to his own statement to an officer in advance of the enemy and soon after that walked up himself to General Lord Stirling an American General and there capitulate, and then returning to the regiment surrendered them without hesitation. This regiment that would have accepted every chance, for it had lately at the capture of Fort Knyphausen fought so bravely and acted so well, was surrendered without having made an attack and scarcely without having fired a shot? When his duty urged him to risk an escape by crossing the creek with the rest of his men where a part of his men had already crossed and where apparently there was no danger of drowning, instead of doing this he surrendered in a shameful way Besides these questions Captain von Biesenrodt should be also asked why he had not marched to the place already designated by Captain von Lowenstein where the water was shallow.

9 — It also seems that the Artillery officer Lieutenant Engelhardt is guilty of a criminal act in leaving his cannon in such haste instead of remaining with his command Even if he did lose a few artillerists and a few horses he certainly hurried over the bridge before the fate of his command had been decided He should be more carefully questioned on this subject than has heretofore been done.

As soon as all these points have been examined into as we have already stated the Lieutenant General having reconvened the Court-Martial, all those who are found guilty by the Court should be arrested and confined until my action in the matter shall be received in America. The kind of punishment will be indicated in the summing up of this unpleasant affair. Because of some facts worthy of consideration in the case of those officers now serving with the von Trumbach regiment in Georgia and who may be found guilty, their arrest will be deferred until my action in the matter is made known

Yours affectionately

FRIEDRICH L I HESSEN

WEISSENSTEIN 23rd of April 1779

No. 69. Return Casualties Rall's Brigade

New York, 13th of December 1781

On account of the various returns from different sources, and especially from the statements of the officers, it is very uncertain what the loss, in dead and wounded, was of each regiment at the affair at Trenton and the strength of each regiment when captured It has therefore become necessary in order to make a correct judgment in the case to have extracts from the Commissary's office upon his word of honor of the dead, wounded and captured at the surprise at Trenton. This is to be taken from the total lists received of the losses of the Rall brigade at Trenton in 1776. And with this information every effort possible has been made to get correct accounts of the losses on the side of the enemy, both from the papers here or the rebel papers there, that it might be ascertained what was the strength of the enemy at the surprise But it was all in vain no papers could be found to give the facts accurately Your obt servt

J. J Lotheisen.

Extract of the Return

sent under word of honour to the War Commissioner Lorentz, now deceased, examined by him and found correct, of the dead, wounded and prisoners taken at the surprise at Trenton on the 26th day of December 1776 of the regiments Alt von Lossberg, von Knyphausen and Rall

Regiments	Dead and Missing			Wounded			Captured		
	Non-Commissioned Officers	Drummers	Privates	Non-Commissioned Officers	Drummers	Privates	Non-Commissioned Officers	Drummers	Privates
Von Lossberg	1		3	1		54	32	8	228
Von Knyphausen			1	2		11	27	7	276
Rall			12			10	25	10	255
Total	1		16	3		75	84	25	759

The above extract of the return I have examined and find it correct I therefore according to my duty sign it with my own name

J J LOTHEISEN

NEW YORK 13th of December 1781

No 70 PROCEEDINGS OF HESSIAN COURT-MARTIAL

TO THE HONORABLE COURT MARTIAL. —

It is known to the honorable Court Martial that I have been for some time forced by sickness to remain in my quarters. The trouble which I have in my legs makes it impossible for me to wear shoes and I cannot therefore go out In fact I am too weak to engage in any reading of the extensive testimony or to be present at the reading

I hope that the truthful explanation will excuse me and I pray that the Honourable Court Martial will send my testimony to my quarters to be read to me. I have nothing to add in reference to the surprise at Trenton and I leave it to the action of the Court Martial

Very respectfully your obedient servant

SCHEFFER

NEW YORK 4th of January 1782

NEW YORK, 4th of January 1782

An excuse was received today from Lieutenant Colonel Scheffer that he could not be present at the meeting of the Court Martial because of sickness and he humbly asked to have a Committee sent to his quarters to read to him the statements which had been made

The Court Martial was also directed by His Excellency the Lieutenant General Knyphausen to order to be present at their meeting all officers who had been in the command of the three regiments at Trenton Also to request Lieutenant Hendorff who has since then been discharged to be present but to leave it entirely to his honour whether he will respond to the call or not

J. J. LOTHEISEN

NEW YORK, 5th of January 1782

The following Committee was sent to Lieutenant Colonel Scheffer of the von Lossberg regiment and to Captain Schimmelpfennig of the von Knyphausen regiment because of their inabil-

ity to be present at the meeting of the Court Martial, viz Colonel von Kochenhausen, Lieutenant Colonel Eitel and Major Hessenmuller to Lieutenant Colonel Scheffer, and Major Pfaff, Captain Wachs and myself as Auditor to Captain Schimmelpfennig The minutes and the testimony was read to both of the sick officers and they declared they had no changes to make, that they left the facts just as they were stated and that they had no objection to any member of the Court Martial

F. VON KOCHENHAUSEN — H H EITEL
VON HESSENMULLER — FRIEDRICH PFAFF
F. WACHS — J J. LOTHEISEN

The members of the Court were:

Major General Heinrich Jul von Kospoth, formerly Colonel of the von Wutgenau regiment, President of the court, Colonel Rudolph von Bunau of the garrison regiment von Bunau; Colonel Friedrich von Kochenhausen of the regiment Hereditary Prince Lieutenant Colonel Otto Christian Wilhelm von Linsingen of the grenadier battalion von Linsingen, Lieutenant Colonel Carl von Kietzell of the regiment von Wissenbach, Lieutenant Colonel Georg Emanuel von Lengercke, of the grenadier battalion von Lengercke, and afterward of the regiment Prinz Carl, Lieutenant Colonel Hans Heinrich Eitel of the Hessian Artillery, Major Friedrich Pfaff of the regiment Hereditary Prince, Major Friedrich von Eschwege of the grenadier battalion von Lengercke, Major Heinrich Christian von Hessenmuller of the grenadier battalion Graff, Captain Heinrich Friedrich Wachs of the regiment Hereditary Prince Captain Georg Hohenstein of the grenadier battalion Graff, Captain Ludwig Eberhard Murarius of the regiment Landgrave; Lieutenant Carl von Rabenau of the grenadier battalion Lowenstein, Lieutenant Reinhard Yunck formerly of the garrison regiment von Seitz now of the grenadier battalion Graff, Lieutenant Max Ludwig von Helmold of the grenadier battalion von Linsingen and afterward the regiment du Corps, Ensign Heinrich Georg de Nolde of the regiment Landgrave, Ensign August von Pappenheim of the regiment Landgrave, Ensign Friedrich Wilhelm Kuester of the garrison regiment von Bunau.

Johann Jacob Lotheisen was Auditor

An extract from the minutes of the Court shows who were ordered before it to give their testimony or to confirm that already given

NEW YORK, 5th of January 1782

Court Martial

Major General von Kospoth, presiding

The following officers of the regiments von Lossberg, von Knyphausen and Rall heard the reading of the minutes and the testimony and offered no objections —

1 — Lieutenant Zoll
2 — Lieutenant von Hobe (formerly Ensign)
3 — Lieutenant Hille — all of the regiment von Lossberg.
4 — Captain von Biesenrodt
5 — Captain Baum
6 — Captain Wiederhold (formerly Lieutenant)
7 — Captain Vaupell (formerly Lieutenant)
8 — Lieutenant Sobbe
9 — Lieutenant von Drach (formerly Ensign)
10. — Lieutenant von Romrodt
11 — Lieutenant Zimmermann (formerly Ensign) — all of the regiment von Knyphausen
12 — Major Boking (formerly Captain)
13 — Captain Salzmann (formerly Lieutenant) — all of the regiment Rall
14 — Corporal Frank Georg Bauer of the Yagers

No. 71. Finding of Hessian Court-Martial.

The President and the members of the Court were then sworn —

They gave their decision according to their respective rank after they had been cautioned to keep the same secret —

The Ensigns They agree that the disaster at Trenton was due to the neglect of Colonel Rall in not making the necessary preparations in case of retreat Also that he was to blame for attacking the town instead of retreating, thereby causing the confusion in the Rall and von Lossberg regiments They think that Lieutenant Colonel Scheffer in the situation in which he was when he took command of the regiments, against a superior force, would have found it impossible to have effected a retreat, that

he and all his officers did all in their power to encourage their men and preserve order and that the testimony shows no censure should be placed on them In the matter of the pickets there could be nothing said against them as they were too weak in number to resist so strong an enemy and they were not guilty of making a premature retreat Lieutenant Fischer according to the testimony remained with the von Lossberg regiment and Lieutenant Engelhardt could not save the cannon of the Rall regiment, therefore the Ensigns judge that no blame can be attached to the Artillery detachment of the brigade The minutes show in the case of the von Knyphausen regiment that the command marched into the low ground on a positive order, therefore the regiment could not be held responsible for it They also think that it was impossible for Captain von Biesenrodt, who took command when the von Knyphausen regiment already stood in the low ground, to force the bridge with his small regiment, and there was no way for him to make them cross the creek, and that he had taken the necessary steps in this matter, first to have the creek sounded, second to place an officer and forty men to protect the ford, and third to assume charge himself of the rear guard Captain von Loewenstein had not then shown him where the water was only knee-deep and therefore no lack of resolution or want of bravery can be charged to him That he finally surrendered himself and his men he could not be censured for, because first the other regiments were already captured, second the situation of the von Knyphausen regiment was already known to the enemy from Major von Dechow's movements, and third the enemy put its whole force now against the regiment von Knyphausen, and this regiment could not successfully resist after having the cannon stuck in the swamp and only numbering then but 276 men We also find that Captain Schimmelpfennig, Lieutenant now Captain Baum, Lieutenant now Captain Vaupell and Lieutenant von Geyso did not go through the creek until the whole regiment had orders from Captain von Biesenrodt, and took the men across according to the statement already made So the Ensigns believe Captain von Biesenrodt as well as the officers, the non-commissioned officers and the privates of the von Knyphausen regiment are free from blame and ought to be acquitted.

H. G D NOLDE
A VON PAPPENHEIM
F KUESTER

The Lieutenants The Lieutenants agree in the decision of the Ensigns in every particular, and for the same reasons they recommend that the three regiments von Lossberg, von Knyphausen and Rall be acquitted

C von Rabenau
R Yunck
M L von Helmold

The Captains The Captains believe, according to the facts set forth, that no faint-heartedness, premature retreat or any act of insubordination can be charged against the three regiments von Lossberg, von Knyphausen and Rall at the surprise at Trenton The commanding officers as well as the other officers, the several commands, the pickets, as well as Sergeant Mueller who had command at the bridge, and the detachment of artillery, all did their duty and ought to be acquitted All the men who were in service at the surprise at Trenton we include in this opinion and we desire it published in the newspapers here as well as at Cassel That his Serene Highness of Hesse may grant the regiments above named new flags we desire to state these facts in addition to what has already been said·

1 — That Captain von Lowenstein, if he were yet alive, would have the greatest necessity for explaining why he apparently deceived Captain von Biesenrodt in that he did not show him the place where the creek could be crossed after Major von Dechow was wounded

2 — It would appear that Captain Schimmelpfennig, Lieutenant Baum, Lieutenant Vaupell and Lieutenant von Geyso after crossing the creek should have halted on the bank and collected their men But owing to the general confusion and especially the fact that von Geyso was wounded, they ought to be excused

3 — It was perfectly right that Captain von Biesenrodt should form the rear guard and that he should take command of it and offer to be the last man to cross

4 — After Captain von Biesenrodt had given the order to cross the creek it was his duty to give special orders to his subaltern officers that they should cross and to see that the orders were carried out in the proper manner.

5 — It is known to us, especially to Captain Wachs and Captain Hohenstein by personal knowledge that Captain von Biesenrodt is a brave man. He has proven this so often in the face of

the enemy, and according to the opinion of others he did his duty at the surprise at Trenton, so that we are convinced that he had not then lost his usual courage

H. Wachs
G Hohenstein
Murarius.

The Majors. The examination shows nothing more to us than that Colonel Rall neglected to take the necessary precautions which it was his duty to do for the regiments he commanded and he left his officers without any orders in case of attack. Colonel Rall died without an examination which would probably have cleared up many things We are therefore of the opinion that neither faint-heartedness, premature flight or insubordination is to be charged against the men at the surprise at Trenton and that their commander Lieutenant Colonel Scheffer, Major Matthaus and the other officers of the regiments von Lossberg and Rall, also the pickets and guards as well as Sergeant Mueller who had the watch at the bridge, and the detachment of artillery have all done their duty and we recommend them for acquittal We think that all the officers still living, who served at the surprise at Trenton, should be fully exonerated from blame and that this should be published in the newspapers here and at Cassel As far as the regiment von Knyphausen is concerned we believe that they obeyed strictly the orders of their commanding officer Major von Dechow and after he retired wounded and Captain von Biesenrodt had taken command of the regiment they had already been placed in a bad position in low ground near the enemy. In this condition Captain von Biesenrodt did all that could be done under the circumstances. He gave orders for the regiment to retire through the creek ordered the rear guard of forty men and took charge of it himself The enemy pressed so violently and closed up on the regiment that no blame can be put on Captain von Biesenrodt and the rest of the officers of the von Knyphausen regiment. In order not to sacrifice the men uselessly they were compelled to surrender. It is to be hoped that His Highness the Count of Hesse will grant new flags to these three regiments, keep them in service and retain his good will toward them

Friedrich Pfaff
Friedrich von Eschwege
H. Hessenmuller

The Lieutenant Colonels. We observe from the testimony that the surprise at Trenton was carried out with great force and determination by the enemy This fact must be taken into consideration in rendering a decision. According to our opinion all the pickets and guards did their duty and did not leave their posts without proper defence and they then only retreated under continual fire, some of them to their regiments and some to Bordentown in order not to be captured The Yager company cannot be blamed because they had no bayonets and they all followed their commander Lieutenant von Grothausen now deceased, but how much he was blameworthy cannot now be decided because he cannot be examined, for he died of his wounds. The detachment of artillery did their duty and defended themselves as long as it was possible to do it. Artillery Lieutenant Engelhardt did wrong by not joining the von Lossberg and Rall regiments after he had lost his cannon, but as it is known to us that he has both before and since the surprise of Trenton conducted himself very bravely and being a young officer and having testified on a former examination at Charleston that he was already cut off, he should be acquitted. After a due consideration of all the different perplexing situations in which Lieutenant Colonel Scheffer was placed after the wounding of Colonel Rall, we can neither find a want of courage or irresolution on his part, but rather great bravery because —

1 — He formed his regiment in a large open ground under the direct fire of the enemy.

2 — While marching to attack the enemy, he obeyed according to his rank the order of Colonel Rall and began an attack on the enemy then in his rear in the town, and after the regiments had been beaten and Colonel Rall had been wounded he took command

3 — After agreeing with Majors von Hanstein and Matthaus to break through the woods he did march against the enemy a certain distance but he was compelled to stop, because his regiments were not in order after leaving the town and because he found himself surrounded on all sides by the enemy The regiments which can form in a great surprise and under fire of the enemy like the von Lossberg and Rall regiments and by an order of their commander attack the foe and defend themselves a considerable time, which the loss of the von Lossberg sufficiently

shows cannot be judged otherwise than that the officers, non-commissioned officers and privates fully did their duty. Captain von Biesenrodt showed no lack of determination or courage in the situation when he took command of the von Knyphausen regiment.

1 — He received the command of the regiment when it was posted in a bad position, a low swamp, and their cannon were already stuck in the marsh

2 — It was utterly impossible for a weak regiment, in much confusion and without cannon, to break through the enemy which had already placed a guard on all the high positions on the shore and at the bridge, and the bridge could not be forced

3. — He had fully considered the crossing of the creek as the only way to save the regiment and had its depth sounded before giving orders to cross the same.

4. — The crossing took considerable time on account of the steep shore on the other side, and it was a good move to order Lieutenant von Ferry with forty men to watch the enemy posted opposite on the heights

5. — We think that as a brave officer he did not want to be the first to go through the water but was determined to go with the rear guard and is not censurable but rather praiseworthy for this act, although Captain Schimmelpfennig found fault with this action

6 — The capitulation was not wrong because the crossing of the creek was impossible with the cannon and the howitzers of the enemy posted on the heights

7. — It is to be supposed that Captain von Biesenrodt's plan would have worked well were it not that Major von Dechow had gone toward the enemy previous to this and revealed the situation of the regiment by having a white pocket handkerchief tied to a staff This fact worked greatly toward the discouragement of the men

We are therefore in favour of acquitting the three regiments von Lossberg, von Knyphausen and Rall, now Angelelli, and the detachment of Artillery, all the guards and the pickets. The names of the surviving officers should be mentioned and the sentence when confirmed by His Highness should justify the conduct of these men and it should be published in the newspapers here and at Cassel

We humbly leave all this to the mercy of his Serene Highness, that he may acquit the three regiments and grant them new flags

W. von Linsingen
G E von Lengerke
H. H Eitel

The Colonels. It seems to us according to the testimony read to us that much is due to the bad conduct of Colonel Rall the commander at Trenton at the time of the surprise

1. — That he had not used prudence enough to put up some fortifications which had been suggested by Colonel von Donop and the plans prepared by Captain Pauli.

2. — Engineer Captain Martin was sent to Colonel Rall shortly before the surprise by Colonel von Donop to see Colonel Rall about the construction of a redoubt and he had disdainfully rejected the idea with the expression that the rebels were a miserable band and fortifications against such a party were unnecessary.

3. — Colonel Rall entirely omitted to designate alarm places for the brigade.

4. — When Major von Dechow made the proposition the day before the attack to send away the baggage as it was only an incumbrance in case of an attack Colonel Rall replied ridiculing and belittling the suggestion Colonel Rall having been mortally wounded and died of the wounds received at the attack on Trenton he cannot be held to answer these charges, and a decision cannot be justly rendered against him But no blame for want of courage, or because of an unnecessary retreat can be placed on the von Lossberg, von Knyphausen and Rall regiments at the affair at Trenton

The uncertainty as to why the regiment von Knyphausen remained so long at the place of rendezvous cannot be cleared up because of the death of Major von Dechow, but it is probable that he, as no alarm place had been designated by Colonel Rall, waited there for orders where to march his regiment Captain von Biesenrodt cannot be blamed for finding the regiment in a bad position and in disorder for it is well understood how difficult it is to bring out order where once there has been confusion The testimony shows further that Captain von Biesenrodt had ordered the crossing of the creek with all the care available but the strong opposing forces and the superiority of artillery made

the crossing impossible. The detached commands and the pickets, the guards at the bridge under Sergeant Mueller, and the detachment of artillery did their whole duty and should be acquitted. We also think that every surviving officer of the Rall brigade in the affair at Trenton should be acquitted and their names together with this verdict should be published in public orders and in the newspapers of the country In reference to the lost flags of those three regiments we would humbly ask and pray that new flags be granted them

R VON BUNAU
H W. VON KILZEL
F VON KOCHENHAUSEN

The President and the Auditor We agree with the opinion of the Lieutenant Colonels for the reasons given and we would also state that no blame should be attached to Captain Schimmelpfennig and the Lieutenants Baum, Vaupell and von Geyso because they crossed the creek before they were ordered by Captain von Biesenrodt who also ordered the whole von Knyphausen regiment to cross Captain Schimmelpfennig states in his testimony that he reassembled about fifty men and retreated with them to Princeton As the regiments have all been acquitted but are serving without flags according to the Articles of War this matter must be referred to and we would humbly submit to his Serene Highness to mercifully grant new flags to the Alt von Lossberg, the von Knyphausen and the Rall, now the d'Angelelli, regiments.

VON KOSPOTH
J J. LOTHEISEN

Verdict On the surprise at Trenton of the regiments von Lossberg, von Knyphausen and Rall, now d'Angelelli, and their capture

The Court Martial resolves after thoroughly examining all the testimony and all the facts that by a unanimous vote they judge that the regiments von Lossberg, von Knyphausen and Rall, now d'Angelelli, cannot be blamed for any want of courage, premature retreat or insubordination at the surprise at Trenton, and they believe that the commanders of the regiments, the other officers, the regiments themselves, the guards and pickets, the watch

at the bridge under Sergeant Mueller and the detachment of artillery all did their duty

The following is a list of the living officers as far as known —

Regiment von Lossberg 1 Lieutenant Colonel Scheffer, 2 Major von Hanstein, 3 Captain now Major von Altenbockum, 4. Captain Steding, 5 Lieutenant now Captain Piel, 6 Lieutenant Zoll, 7 Lieutenant von Hobe, 8 Lieutenant Muller, 9. Lieutenant Schwabe, 10. Lieutenant Hille, 11 Lieutenant Hendorff, 12 Lieutenant Grabe, 13 Ensign von Zengen and 14 Bombardier Volprecht.

Regiment von Knyphausen 1 Captain von Biesenrodt, 2 Captain Schimmelpfennig, 3 Lieutenant now Captain Baum; 4 Lieutenant now Captain Wiederhold, 5 Lieutenant now Captain Vaupell 6. Lieutenant von Romrodt. 7 Lieutenant von Sobbe, 8 Lieutenant von Ferry, 9. Lieutenant von Geyso; 10 Ensign now Lieutenant von Drach, 11. Ensign now Lieutenant Zimmermann 12. Sergeant Mueller.

Regiment Rall, now d'Angelelli 1 Captain now Major Boking, 2 Lieutenant now Captain Salzmann, 3 Ensign Fleck; 4 Artillery Lieutenant Engelhardt

Yager Corps Corporal Frank Georg Bauer.

We desire to acquit all these officers and if the verdict is confirmed we wish to have it announced in public orders and published in the newspapers here and in Cassel for the justification of the regiments. We also humbly pray that his Highness will grant these regiments new flags

NEW YORK, January 11th 1782

VON KOSPOTH
J J. LOTHEISEN

No. 72 REPORT OF HESSIAN WAR COMMISSION

TO HIS SERENE HIGHNESS, PRINCE OF HESSE,

Most gracious Prince and Lord

The War Commission humbly ask for a full pardon in the case of the surviving officers at the surprise at Trenton We agree with the court that the sentence should be published in the gazettes and that permission be granted to carry new colors. The Commission would also point out the notable defects in the lines of testimony and they would refer to the premature publica-

tion of the opinion of the court by Auditor Lotheisen, and before the full statement of facts had been given to him. According to the records, by order of the English General Grant several regiments were given to the command of Colonel von Donop and winter quarters were assigned them in and around Trenton on December 13, 1776 Thereupon Colonel von Donop occupied the posts as ordered and Colonel Rall took command at Trenton of the Alt-Lossberg, Knyphausen and his own regiment with the artillery belonging thereto, the yagers and twenty English dragoons. They made an effective force of about 1200 men, were all selected for services well performed, and they took possession of Trenton December 14, 1776. Colonel Rall neglected however to protect his position by redoubts, where the safety of the village required them Colonel von Donop instructed him, through Captains Pauli and Martin, to erect them, but he only posted a few detachments and picket-guards He required his men to sleep with their clothing on and with their arms, over night at their quarters, and later he changed this, taking a regiment at a time in turn to be prepared for attack On the 20th of December he made a request of Brigadier General Leslie at Princeton and Major General Grant at Brunswick, as Princeton was twelve miles from Trenton, to place a detachment of two hundred men at Maidenhead. as he feared the enemy would interrupt communication between the two places He received the reply that this was unnecessary because of the small number and wretched condition of the enemy. But Colonel Rall still thinking the condition of his post dangerous sent out strong patrols toward Princeton and then called them back to Trenton. In the meanwhile several American officers in disguise presented themselves to him, and under the pretext of soliciting protection, spied out all his preparations. On the 25th of December, the day before the surprise, the picket on the Pennington road was attacked and six men were wounded Major von Dechow then requested Colonel Rall to order the baggage packed and sent to the grenadiers. Colonel Rall replied "Fudge! these country clowns cannot whip us!" Nevertheless he reinforced the picket on the Pennington road by a detachment under Lieutenant Wiederhold and ordered his men to remain awake during the night at the alarm houses Major von Dechow, who on December 26th should have gone out with the patrol two hours before day-

light, with two cannon and the required men, notwithstanding the anxiety he had the day before expressed, neglected his duty and the patrol did not march. Colonel Rall, on that morning slept until half past seven o'clock and Lieutenant Wiederhold and the picket had already at that time exchanged shots with the enemy Lieutenant Piel of the von Lossberg regiment, Adjutant of the brigade, finding Colonel Rall asleep between five and six o'clock and again at half past seven o clock hesitated to wake him and report the attack of the enemy He went however to the watch guard quarters and sent out a few men to aid the pickets On returning he saw Colonel Rall standing at the window in his night clothes and to his question "What is the matter? What is the matter?" he replied "Do you not hear the firing?" Colonel Rall answered "I will be there immediately" In the meantime Lieutenant Wiederhold had withdrawn his men on the approach and constant firing of four battalions of the enemy, which was followed by their whole force amounting to from five to eight thousand men, and waited on the outskirts of the town until the regiments should come out. During this time the enemy gained the heights of the town with their cannon and howitzers Lieutenants Engelhardt and Fischer of the artillery fired their field pieces at the enemy several times but the loss of eight gunners and five horses prevented the use of the cannon and the officers were compelled to retire After the loss of the cannon Rall's regiment withdrew from their position in great confusion and in disorder rushed through both the other regiments Ensign Kleinschmidt, Adjutant of the regiment, tried as much as possible to restore order again Colonel Rall then with his own and the von Lossberg regiment attacked the town, already advantageously occupied by the enemy He directed Major von Dechow to protect their flank with the von Knyphausen regiment This regiment was therefore obliged to separate itself from the others, and to march with the Von Lossberg cannon to the bridge in order to hold it, but one piece however was sunk in the morass. So much time was lost in endeavoring to recover the cannon from the swamp that before the regiments reached the bridge it was occupied by the enemy. Colonel Rall was forced to give up the town because the force of the enemy was so great. And in the conflict he received a fatal wound and the command fell upon Lieutenant Colonel Scheffer. He was anxious to break through

the enemy and make his escape with the von Lossberg and the Rall regiments, numbering then 483 effective men, but because of the enemy's advantageous position their dispositions, their strong artillery fire, as well as the bad weather which apparently prevented the guns from going off and rendered them useless, they were compelled to surrender Major von Dechow then with the von Knyphausen regiment, numbering 276 men, wished to retreat through the stream But he received a severe wound and had to give over his command to Captain von Biesenrodt. He was then informed that the other two regiments had been taken prisoners and that he also with his regiment must surrender. Captain von Lowenstein, who brought this message to Captain von Biesenrodt, failed to mention that in that neighborhood there was a place in the creek where the water was only knee-deep. Captain von Biesenrodt had no intention of surrendering, as Major von Dechow advised, but resolved to retreat through the woods. He found however this plan was defeated by the occupation of the wood by the enemy, and he then had the creek sounded and directed his regiment to march through it He ordered an officer and 40 men to cover their retreat and placed himself with the rear guard But the accomplishment of this design was thwarted by the strong advance of Lord Stirling's brigade, their position having been discovered by the display of a white handkerchief on a spontoon by Major von Dechow, and he was forced then to capitulate. All this shows that Colonel Rall and Major von Dechow in many respects acted culpably, and laid the foundations for the ill fate of the brigade All the surviving officers should therefore be absolved from the penalty passed upon them by the court-martial. The War Commission finds these to be the facts in the case and agrees with it the more readily, because the members of the court, by their accurate knowledge of the localities and of the accompanying circumstances of the case, are in the best condition to judge of its merits But the War Commission is of the opinion that the reference to the publication of the sentence in the gazettes and the gracious permission to carry the flags does not properly belong to the penalty but rather belongs to the mercy of his Highness. They also think a reprimand should be given on account of the defects in the hearings, also that the Auditor should not have

allowed his own opinions to have been communicated to the court-martial before the sentence had been announced.

And we ever remain in deepest reverence,

Your Serene Highness' humble, most obedient and faithful servants

BARDELEBEN	SCHLIEFFEN
WAKENITZ	JUNGKENN
WANGERMANN	SCHRAMM

CASSEL 15 April 1782

No. 73 COLONEL CADWALADER TO GENERAL WASHINGTON

BRISTOL 26 December 1776

SIR

The river was so full of ice that it was impossible to pass above Bristol, where I intended, and therefore I concluded to make an attempt at Dunk's Ferry As soon as it was dark I sent down all the boats I could muster and marched down about eight o'clock I embarked a few men to line the river and prevent any person from escaping to give intelligence to the enemy and these were followed by a part of the first battalion of militia, then two field-pieces, with which I went over to see if it was practicable to land them, and upon examination I found it was impossible the ice being very thick. Upon reporting this to the field-officers, they were all of opinion, that it would not be proper to proceed without cannon. During this time the third battalion was landed We concluded to withdraw the troops that had passed, but could not effect it till near four o'clock this morning The whole then were ordered to march for Bristol. I imagine the badness of the night must have prevented you from passing over as you intended Our men turned out cheerfully We had about eighteen hundred rank and file, including artillery. It will be impossible for the enemy to pass the river till the ice will bear. Would it not be proper to attempt to cross below and join General Putnam, who was to go over from Philadelphia today, with five hundred men which number, added to the four hundred Jersey militia which Colonel Griffin left there would make a formidable body This would cause a diversion, that would favor any attempt you may design in future, and would expose their baggage and stores, if they attempt to cross It is impossible, in our present situation, to cooperate with General

Putnam The militia will be easier kept together by being in motion. We shall have some service from Colonel Hitchcock's brigade, whose term of enlistment will be up in a few days We have procured a considerable number of shoes, stockings and breeches for them They are in good spirits and enlist very fast I am Sir, with great respect,

Your most obedient, humble servant

JOHN CADWALADER.

No. 74. GENERAL LESLIE TO COLONEL VON DONOP

SIR

I am honoured with yours by Captain Gamble. I am exceedingly sorry for Colonel Rall and his Brigade

I have informed General Grant of your being at Allentown this day and told him that I had desired you would remain at Allentown, untill you heard further I have begged of him to let me know his pleasure in regard to your motions without loss of time We are told the Rebels crossed over the river and carried their Prisoners with them yesterday. I have about 50 Hessians of Rall's here and 3 officers

I am with Respect, Sir, Your most obed't h'lle servant

A LESLIE

P TOWN Dec 27th 1776 4 afternoon

No. 75 GENERAL LESLIE TO COLONEL VON DONOP

I

PRINCETOWN, Saturday morning 2 o clock

SIR.

About 1400 of the Rebels landed at Trenton yesterday and went to Pennington about 3 o'clock in the afternoon from thence they intended for Rockyhill there to be met by the Jersey Troops and they and another party were to attack the Troops here, in consequence of this I must beg of you to march the Troops under your command to this Place without Loss of time, which I shall inform General Grant of

I 've the honour to be Sir Your most obedt h'lle servant

A LESLIE.

TO COL DONOP

II

PRINCETOWN 5 o'clock Saturday morning

SIR

I sent off two Dragoons at 2 o clock this morning to inform you of two separate Bodies of the rebels intending to attack this Place in consequence of which I beg you will march the Troops under your command without Loss of Time to this Place I suppose you will order back the heavy Guns that are on the Road from South Amboy to Burlington

I have the honour to be, Sir, Your most obed't h'ble servant

ALEX LESLIE

No 76 GENERAL GRANT TO COLONEL VON DONOP

BRUNSWICK 28th Dec 1776

SIR

You will please to march the Troops under your command to Princetown where the General has ordered me to station the Hessian Grenadiers, Yagers and remains of Rall s Brigade

You will please to inform General Leslie when you intend to march and as nearly as you can judge about the hour you expect to arrive at Princetown I have desired him to send a Patrol of the two Battalions of Light Infantry towards Trenton, when you move as he is upon your arrival at Princetown to order a part of his Corps to march to Kingston or Six Mile Run, the 2nd Division to march the day after which Colonel Sterling is to follow with the 42nd Reg't

I have ordered Kohlers Bat of Hessian Grenadiers to march tomorrow from Amboy, if no accident prevents their complying with this order, they will be at Princetown the 30th

I have the honour to be, Sir, Your most obed't servant

JAMES GRANT

No 77 GENERAL GRANT TO COLONEL VON DONOP

BRUNSWICK 28th Dec 1776

SIR

You wished some time ago to be stationed at Princetown and it is to be hoped you will find it agreeable Winterquarters Your Grenadiers and Yagers have been much fatigued. I am sorry to hear you have so many sick and that my Friend Colonel Block is

of the number I flatter myself that under your care they will all recover soon and have no doubt if they should make an attempt on your cantonment that those Rebel Gentlemen would have reason to repent it

You will be kind enough to form Magazines for the subsistence of the Troops under your command agreeable to the General's Instruction at Trenton

I have wrote to the General for a supply of ammunition for your three pounders and the Troops Powder and Ball shall be sent and you will be so good as to order Cartridges to be made, when you are furnished with the materials, in the mean time I have desired General Leslie to let you have all he can spare before he leaves you

It is not in my Power to leave Colonel Sterling with you, but I have ordered him not to march till Kohler's Reg't arrives at Princetown, they are to disembark to-morrow morning at Amboy and are to join you as soon as possible.

You shall have a State of our new Cantonments as soon as fixed I had the honour to receive your Letter by Mr Henry, who sets out in the morning and I am Sir,

Your most obed't servant

JAMES GRANT

No 78 COLONEL VON DONOP TO GENERAL GRANT

PRINCETON 29th Dec. 1776

SIR

This morning at six o'clock Lieutenant Henry brought your reply to me of yesterday in which you seem to place much confidence in me. I am very much obliged, my General, and I hope that you will never be mistaken if the occasion presents itself This is what appears to be my actual situation and I confess to you that I am somewhat embarrassed, finding myself alone after the departure of Colonel Sterling. He was a reliable man and one able to interpret for me I am now obliged to guess the meaning of your letters by the sense of the paragraphs, not being able to understand your language fully Thus I am obliged to exercise much ingenuity in deciphering your orders. The same thing happens to me when the country people come to me to give me news of the movements of the army of Washington, who in my opinion ought to be driven immediately to the other side

of the Delaware river I do not believe at all that they have more than 500 of our men as prisoners which number cannot surely weaken our army I acknowledge however that the shame is none the less for our nation to have lost six cannon, with fifteen banners and three regiments at one attack and this in a section of the country greatly demoralized. Colonel Rall was to have been buried with his Lieutenant Colonel[1] yesterday I am very well satisfied because they would have been compelled to appear before a Court Martial, the former to explain his general conduct and the latter why he did not go out in the morning with Rall's patrol You order me to make a store house here but I do not find Captain Gamble who is I think with you, although I have not given him permission to go away from here I have however found one of the Commissary's who has told me that it was afterward arranged to have one of the Commissary's here. The two six pounders which belong to the 42nd Regiment please give orders whether or not they are to remain with me I desire very much that General Leslie should march as 400 men slept last night in the open air You can imagine what must happen to my men. All sick

I am, with the greatest consideration Sir, your most h'lle serv't

DONOP

No. 79. GENERAL WASHINGTON TO COLONEL CADWALADER

HEAD QUARTERS, NEWTOWN Decr 27th 1776

DEAR SIR I was just now favored with your two letters of the 25th and 26th instant, and regret much the cause that prevented your passing the river had it not been for this accident I am persuaded our plans would have been accomplished to our utmost wishes The same obstacle hindered Genl Ewing from giving his aid and co-operating in the attack on Trenton Could we have had his force to have secured the pass over the bridges, the whole of the enemy must have fallen into our hands, but availing themselves of this circumstance, all that could, retreated with the greatest precipitation without making the least opposition Those that remained, drew up, but in such confusion and disorder that they were incapable of making a successful resistance You have the number of officers &c below The damage we sustained was very inconsiderable, not more than a private or

[1] Major von Dechow

two killed, one or two wounded, and Captn. Washington of the Third Virginia Regiment I should have most certainly pursued those that retreated had it not been for the distressed situation of my Troops (about Three or four & twenty hundred in number) who had experienced the greatest fatigue in breaking a passage thro the ice, and all the severities of rain & storm This with the apprehension that we could receive no succours, and that the difficulty of passing & repassing the River might become greater, led us to conclude our return eligible The officers & men who were engaged in the enterprize behaved with great firmness, perseverance, and bravery and such as did them the highest honour

I shall be extremely ready, and it is my earnest wish to pursue every means that shall seem probable to distress the enemy and to promise success on our part If we could happily beat up the rest of their Quarters, bordering on and near the River, it would be attended with the most valuable consequences I have called a meeting of the General Officers to consult of what measures shall be next pursued & would recommend that you & Genl Putnam should defer your intended operations till you hear from me. Perhaps it may be judged prudent for us to pass here with the force we have, if it is practicable, or if it is not that I may come down to you & afford every assistance in my power We will try to concert a plan & upon such principles as shall appear to promise success. Please to give me frequent information of the state of the River, & whether it is to be passed in Boats or whether the Ice will admit of a passage

I am in haste, Dr Sir With much esteem Yr most obedt servt

GO. WASHINGTON

Prisoners

1 Col 2 Lieut Cols 3 Majors 4 Captains 8 Lieuts 12 Ensigns 2 Surgeon's Mates, 92 Sergeants 20 Drummers 9 Musicians 25 Servants 740 Rank & file

Total 919, about 25 or 30 killed, 6 pieces of Brass Artillery, from 900 to 1000 stand arms &c

To Col John Cadwalader

No. 80. General Washington to the Congress

Newtown, 29 December 1776

Sir

I am just setting out to attempt a second passage over the Delaware with the troops that were with me on the morning of the 26th I am determined to effect it if possible but know that it will be attended with much fatigue and difficulty on account of the ice, which will neither allow us to cross on foot, nor give us an easy passage with boats General Cadwalader crossed from Bristol on the 27th, and, by his letter of yesterday was at Bordentown with about eighteen hundred men In addition to these General Mifflin sent over five hundred from Philadelphia on Friday, three hundred yesterday evening from Burlington and will follow today with seven or eight hundred more I have taken every precaution in my power for subsisting the troops and shall, without loss of time, and as soon as circumstances will admit of it pursue the enemy in their retreat — try to beat up more of their quarters — and in a word adopt in every instance such measures as the exigency of our affairs requires, and our situation will justify

Had it not been for the unhappy failure of Generals Ewing and Cadwalader in their attempt to pass, on the night of the 25th, — and if the several concerted attacks could have been made — I have no doubt that our views would have succeeded to our warmest expectations What was done occasioned the enemy to leave their several posts on the Delaware with great precipitation The peculiar distresses to which the troops who were with me, were reduced by the severities of cold, rain snow and storm — the charge of the prisoners they had taken, and another reason that might be mentioned, and the little prospect of receiving succors on account of the season and situation of the river — would not authorize a further pursuit at that time Since transmitting the list of prisoners, a few more have been discovered and taken in Trenton — among 'em a lieutenant-colonel and a deputy adjutant general. — the whole amounting to about a thousand

. . .

I have the honor to be, with great respect sir your most obedient servant,

Go Washington

P. S. I am under great apprehension about obtaining proper supplies of provisions for the Troops I fear it will be extremely difficult, if not impracticable, as the Enemy, from every account has taken and collected every thing they could find

No. 81 British Forces in New Jersey

The British and Auxiliary Troops in New Jersey, stationed from Elizabeth Town to Maidenhead, may be given as follows — Queen's Rangers, First, Second, Third and Fourth Battalions Light Infantry, British, First and Second Battalions Grenadiers, British, First Regiment Waldeckers, Hessian, Battalion von Linsingen, Hessian, Battalion von Minnigerode, Hessian, Battalion von Block, Hessian, Hessian battalion — the escaped men of Rall's brigade, Detachment Chasseurs, British, Detachment Yagers, Hessian Detachment Royal Artillery, British — principally from First, Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth and Eighth Companies of Fourth Battalion, Sixteenth Regiment Light Dragoons, British, Lieutenant Colonel the Honorable William Harcourt, commanding, Seventeenth Regiment Light Dragoons, British, Lieutenant Colonel Samuel Birch, commanding

Also the following Brigades of British Foot —

First Brigade Major General Robertson's command, which in his absence was in charge of Lieutenant Colonel the Honorable Henry Monckton, as senior officer, Fourth Regiment, or "King's Own," Major James Ogelvie, commanding, Twenty-seventh Regiment or Inniskilling's, Major Henry Couran, commanding; Forty-fifth Regiment, Lieutenant Colonel the Honorable Henry Monckton, commanding

Second Brigade Brigadier General Alexander Leslie, commanding Fifth Regiment, Lieutenant Colonel William Walcott, commanding Twenty-eighth Regiment, Lieutenant Colonel Robert Prescott commanding; Thirty-fifth Regiment, Lieutenant Colonel James Cockburne, commanding, Forty-ninth Regiment, Major Thomas Dilkes commanding

Fourth Brigade Major General Grant's command, but in charge of Lieutenant Colonel Charles Mawhood, Seventeenth Regiment, Lieutenant Colonel Charles Mawhood, commanding, Fortieth Regiment, Major Samuel Bradstreet, commanding, in the absence of Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Musgrave; Fifty-fifth Regiment, Major Cornelius Cuyler, commanding

Sixth Brigade. Major General James Agnew commanding, Twenty-third Regiment, or Royal Welsh Fuzileers, Lieutenant Colonel Benjamin Bernard, commanding, Forty-sixth Regiment, Lieutenant Colonel Enoch Markham, commanding

Two other temporary brigades had been formed One under command of Lieutenant Colonel Sterling, as senior officer, was composed of·

Forty-second Regiment or Royal Highland Watch, Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Sterling, commanding, Seventy-first or Scotch Regiment, Lieutenant Colonel Archibald Campbell, commanding.

The other temporary brigade under command of Brigadier General Mathew consisted of

First Battalion of British Guards, Second Battalion of British Guards

No 82 General Mifflin's Orders

General Mifflin issued these orders on the last day of the year 1776, and the first day of the year following.—

BRIGADE ORDERS

Bordentown, December 31, 1776

The General returns his most hearty thanks to the brigade for the Alertness shown by them on the Alarm last Evening. Such Conduct does them Honour and gives their Commanding Officer the best expectations of success. He recommends to all officers of the Brigade to hold their respective Corps in complete order for Marching at a minute's warning for which purpose they must prevent their Men from strolling too far from their quarters. A party of 200 Men goes out this day to harrass the Enemy, commanded by Majors Mifflin[1] and Hubley[2] The commanding officer to call at Head Quarters in this town for orders Every Man in the brigade must always keep by him dressed Provisions for three Days This Order must not be neglected as the least Deviation from it may ruin the best concerted Plans

[1] Major John Mifflin of Colonel Magaw's Fifth Pennsylvania battalion He was evidently in this campaign acting as brigade-major to General Mifflin an office he held prior to September, 1776.

[2] Major Adam Hubley, Tenth Pennsylvania Continental regiment then being organized

BRIGADE ORDERS

BORDENTOWN, January 1st 1777

His Excellency Gen. Washington having last night, by Express, ordered the Brigade to be held in readiness to march in the Night, or early this morning, at a minute's notice The Commanding Officer, in obedience to orders, directed the Brigade to be paraded at two o clock, but was surprised to find very little Attention paid to the Drums Had the enemy advanced towards this Town at that time, the Army here might have been, to their eternal Disgrace and the Ruin of their Country, made Prisoners of War. In future when the Brigade is ordered to be assembled by Night or by Day, the long roll will be beat upon which signal every Officer and Soldier must turn out with the greatest alacrity and form on their proper Ground in the Street They are not to wait for the Drums beating to Arms. The long roll is the proper signal for turning out, and must be attended to, as much as beating to Arms

Gen Washington has detached a large Body of Men toward the Enemy at Princeton, which in all probability will bring on a General Action The Brigadier General, therefore, exhorts all his Officers and men, as they love their Country and wish to see her secure and happy, to hold themselves in complete order to march at a minute's warning The reputation of the Brigade depends on their Alacrity and Readiness to obey orders and to turn out to face their Enemy

Dr. Potts,[1] Surgeon General to the Brigade, requests the officers to make returns to him at Head Quarters in this Town of their sick and wounded without the least Delay, as the men frequently suffer much from the neglect of such returns A Brigade hospital will be established this Day to receive the sick &c

In future the Guards and Picket are to be paraded near Head Quarters at 10 o'clock in the Morning, that the Relief may take Place time enough for those who are to be relieved to have their Dinners at a seasonable hour

Major Holland[2] is sent by his Excell'y Gen. Washington to

[1] Jonathan Potts of Pennsylvania formerly surgeon for the troops on the Canadian Expedition

[2] Captain Thomas Holland of the Delaware Continental regiment died October 13 1777, of wounds received at the battle of Germantown October 4 1777

assist in forming and arranging the Brigade, which consists of many small Corps and of course requires a general Arrangement Unavoidable Difficulties and much Danger would arise from having them in their present state The officers and men are, therefore to pay great Attention to the Arrangement to know their Places, and to be able to form, when Occasion requires in an instant Good Order, Discipline and a Good Cause, are the Surest Steps to Victory and to Glory

The new force then gathered in Burlington County between Trenton and Bordentown consisted of

Detachments from regiments of the Pennsylvania Continental Line then organizing, Second Regiment, Colonel John Philip De Haas, Tenth Regiment, Colonel James Penrose, Eleventh Regiment, Colonel Richard Humpton, Twelfth Regiment, Colonel William Cooke and also from the Philadelphia Rifle Battalion, Colonel Timothy Matlock.

Detachments from the following organizations of Pennsylvania Associators

Lancaster County Battalions of Colonel Bartram Galbraith, Colonel James Crawford, Colonel Timothy Green, Colonel Thomas Porter Colonel James Burd and Colonel George Ross, Bedford County Battalion of Colonel John Piper Northumberland County Battalions of Colonel James Potter, a company of Colonel Philip Cole's battalion and Captain John Lee's company of Colonel Samuel Hunter's battalions, Bucks County Battalion of Colonel Arthur Erwin, Cumberland County Battalion of Colonel Joseph Armstrong, Northampton County Battalions of Colonel George Taylor Colonel Henry Geiger and Colonel Jacob Stroud, Detachment of New Castle County, Delaware Militia Major Thomas Duff, commanding, a company of Kent County Delaware Militia, Captain Thomas Rodney, commanding, Four companies of Philadelphia Militia, Captain George Henry, senior officer, commanding; a detachment of Marines from the armed boat Hancock, Captain William Shippen, commanding, a detachment of Marines from Ship Montgomery, Captain William Brown, commanding, a detachment of Marines under command of Major Samuel Nicholas, a detachment of Marines from the brigantine Andrew Doria, Captain Isaac Craig, commanding; a detachment of sailors used to firing guns, under command of Captain Thomas Read of the Continental Navy.

No 83 General Cadwalader to General Washington

Crosswicks, 31st December, 1776

Sir

A very intelligent young gentleman is returned just now from Princetown he left there yesterday morning and got in about 12 or 1 o'clock He would have returned last night, but General Lesley who commands and Colonel Abercrombie would not suffer him to go off He made his escape this morning early, and informs me that from the best information he could get, they were about five thousand men, consisting of Hessians and British troops — about the same number of each I have made a rough draft of the road from this place, the situation of the cannon and works begun and those intended this morning He thinks there are not so many as they report He conversed with some of the officers and lodged last night with them They inquired what were our numbers He mentioned about 16.000 from the best accounts. They did not believe we had more than five or six thousand That many were forced into the service, and that they were deserting in great numbers every day No sentries on the back or east end of the town They parade every morning an hour before day and some nights lie on their arms An attack has been expected for several nights past — the men are much fatigued and until last night in want of provisions, when a very considerable number of wagons arrived with provisions from Brunswick All the baggage is sent to Brunswick, where there are but few men This confirms the accounts I sent you last night. About fifty light horse at Princeton one half quartered at Scudder's mill, the other on the west of the town He inquired if there were any troops on the road They say there are more on this side Brunswick Some Hessians arrived yesterday (it is said) from Brunswick I suppose they were those that landed at South Amboy as I cannot hear anything of them in this neighbourhood. I received your last letter last night by express Our spy was near the party of chasseurs when they were taken and says an assistant quarter master general or commissary was with them The enemy had heard it Major Mifflin[1] is just setting oft with a party of two hundred from Cumberland. Major Nicholas of

[1] Major John Mifflin, acting on the staff of General Mifflin.

the Marines [1] informs me that Elisha Laurence,[2] late sheriff of Monmouth, is now collecting men at Monmouth Court House he has got together about seventy men. He has put twenty men into prison for refusing to bear arms The person who brings the intelligence fled. Major Nicholas is desirous of going after Laurence's party. I think it is not an object at this time, and have refused the application till I have your order

I am, Sir, your most obedient, very humble servant

JOHN CADWALADER.

No 84 GENERAL WASHINGTON TO THE CONGRESS

SIR TRENTON 1 January 1777

. . . .

On Monday morning I passed the Delaware myself the whole of our troops and artillery not till yesterday, owing to the ice, which rendered their passage extremely difficult and fatiguing. Since their arrival, we have been parading the regiments whose time of service is now expired, in order to know what force we should have to depend on and how to regulate our views accordingly After much persuasion, and the exertions of their officers, half or a greater proportion of those from the eastward have consented to stay six weeks on a bounty of ten dollars I feel the inconvenience of this advance, and I know the consequence which will result from it but what could be done? Pennsylvania had allowed the same to her militia. the troops felt their importance, and would have their price Indeed, as their aid is so essential and not to be dispensed with, it is to be wondered at, that they had not estimated it at a higher rate I perceive that Congress, apprehensive of this event, had made unlimited provision for it

General Mifflin is at Bordentown with about eighteen hundred men and General Cadwalader at Croswix's with about the same number We are now making our arrangements, and concerning a plan of operations, which I shall attempt to execute as soon as possible and which I hope will be attended with some success. As to the number and situation of the enemy, I cannot obtain certain intelligence, but from the accounts most to be relied on,

[1] Major Samuel Nicholas of Philadelphia

[2] Lieutenant-Colonel Elisha Laurence, First battalion, New Jersey volunteers loyalists

they have collected the principal part of their force from Brunswic and the neighbouring posts, at Princeton, where they are throwing up some works. The number there is reported to be from five to six thousand and it is confidently said they have sent the chief part of their baggage to Brunswic. It is added, that General Howe landed at Amboy a day or two ago with a thousand light troops, and is on his march from thence.

. . . . .

I have the honour to be, with due respect &c

GO WASHINGTON

P S I have not been able to procure returns of our force, owing to our situation I suppose that about two or three and twenty hundred passed with me, which number is now reduced to fifteen or sixteen hundred. No estimate of our force can be formed from the number of regiments · many of them, by reason of sickness, cannot turn out more than a hundred men.

No. 85. General Knox to his Wife.

TRENTON 2d Jan 1777

We are collecting our force at this place, and shall give battle to the enemy very soon Our people have exerted great fortitude, and stayed beyond the time of their enlistment, in high spirits, but want rum and clothing Will it give you satisfaction or pleasure in being informed that the Congress have created me a general officer — a brigadier — with the entire command of the artillery? If so, I shall be happy It was unsolicited on my part, though I cannot say unexpected People are more lavish in their praises of my poor endeavours than they deserve All the merit I can claim is industry I wish to render my devoted country every service in my power, and the only alloy I have in my exertions is, that it separates me from thee — the dearest object of all my earthly happiness May Heaven give us a speedy and happy meeting The attack of Trenton was a most horrid scene to the poor inhabitants War, my Lucy, is not a humane trade, and the man who follows (it) as such will meet with his proper demerits in another world

No 86. Colonel Reed to General Putnam

Last side of Trenton Creek January 2d 1777, twelve o'clock at night

Dear General Putnam

The enemy advanced upon us today. We came to the east side of the river or creek, which runs through Trenton, when it was resolved to make a forced march and attack the enemy in Princeton In order to do this with the greatest security our baggage is sent off to Burlington. His Excellency begs you will march immediately forward with all the force you can collect at Crosswicks where you will find a very advantageous post. your advanced party at Allentown You will also send a good guard for our baggage wherever it may be Let us hear from you as often as possible We shall do the same by you

Yours, J Reed.

To Major-General Putnam, Mount Holly

No 87 General Putnam to ——

11 o'Clock Philada 3rd Jany 1777

Gentlemen

I have the honor to inform you that I have this Morning by Captain Nicholson Advice of an Action yesterday at Trenton Genl Howe advanced with his whole Strength (supposed 7000) toward Trenton, & was met by Stirling's & Hand's Brigades a small Distance from that Place The action commenced at 1 oClock P. M. & continued till Sunsett. Our two Brigades (who opposed the British Army) retreated across a Bridge to the main Body which were posted on this Side a Rivulet which divides the Town. In this Situation my Author left the Armies last evening — no considerable Loss was sustained on either Side A Cannonade began about Sunrise this Morning & still continues I have ordered the Gallies & all the Boats which can be collected, to move up the River immediately — I am dispatching about 1000 Militia which have come in from different Parts of this State It is needless to insist on the Necessity of forwarding every Man that is inlisted You must be equally sensible with me that the fate of a Winter depends probably on the exertions of a few Days

I have the Honour to be Gentlemen with the greatest Esteem your most humbl Serv't

Israel Putnam.

No 88 From the Journal of Captain Thomas Rodney.

(Original journal belonging to Mr Cæsar A. Rodney of Wilmington, Delaware)

January 3d 1777

At two o'clock this morning, the ground having been frozen firm by a keen N. West wind, secret orders were issued to each department and the whole army was at once put in motion, but no one knew what the Gen. meant to do Some thought that we were going to attack the enemy in the rear, some that we were going to Princeton: the latter proved to be right We went by a bye road on the right hand which made it about 16 miles During this nocturnal march I with the Dover Company and the Red Feather Company of Philadelphia Light Infantry led the van of the army and Capt. Henry with the other three companies of Philadelphia Light Infantry brought up the rear. The van moved on all night in the most cool and determined order, but on the march great confusion happened in the rear There was a cry that they were surrounded by the Hessians and several corps of Militia broke and fled towards Bordentown, but the rest of the column remained firm and pursued their march without disorder, but those who were frightened and fled did not recover from their panic until they reached Burlington When we had proceeded to within a mile and a half of Princeton and the van had crossed Stony Brook, Gen Washington ordered our Infantry to file off to one side of the road and halt Gen Sullivan was ordered to wheel to the right and flank the town on that side, and two Brigades were ordered to wheel to the left, to make a circuit and surround the town on that side and as they went to break down the Bridge and post a party at the mill on the main road, to oppose the enemy's main army if they should pursue us from Trenton The third Division was composed of Gen Mercer's Brigade of Continental troops, about 300 men, and Cadwalader's brigade of Philadelphia Militia to which brigade the whole of our Light Infantry Regiment was again annexed. Mercer's brigade marched in front and another corps of infantry brought up the rear. My company flanked the whole brigade on the right in an Indian file so that my men were very much extended and distant from each other, I marched in front and was followed by Sarjeant McKnatt and next to him was Nehemiah Tilton Mercer's Brigade which was headed by Col Haslet

of Delaware on foot and Gen Mercer on horseback was to march straight on to Princeton without turning to the right or left It so happened that two Regiments of British troops that were on their march to Trenton to reinforce their army there, received intelligence of the movements of the American Army (for the sun rose as we passed over Stony Brook) and about a mile from Princeton they turned off from the main road and posted themselves behind a long string of buildings and an orchard on the straight road to Princeton The two first Divisions of our army therefore passed wide to the right and left, and leaving them undiscovered went in to Princeton Gen Mercer's Brigade, owing to some delay in arranging Cadwalader's men, had advanced several hundred yards ahead and never discovered the enemy until he was turning the buildings they were posted behind, and then they were not more than fifty yards off He immediately formed his men, with great courage, and poured a heavy fire in upon the enemy But they being greatly superior in number returned the fire and charged bayonets, and their onset was so fierce that Gen Mercer fell mortally wounded and many of his officers were killed, and the brigades being effectually broken up, began a disorderly flight Col Haslet retired some small distance behind the buildings and endeavored to rally them, but receiving a bullet through his head, dropt dead on the spot and the whole brigade fled in confusion At this instant Gen Cadwalader's Philadelphia Brigade came up and the enemy checked by their appearance took post behind a fence and a ditch in front of the buildings before mentioned, and so extended themselves that every man could load and fire incessantly, the fence stood on low ground between two hills, on the hill behind the British line they had eight pieces of artillery which played incessantly with round and grape shot on our brigade, and the fire was extremely hot Yet Gen Cadwalader led up the head of the column with the greatest bravery to within 50 yards of the enemy, but this was rashly done, for he was obliged to recoil, and leaving one piece of his artillery, he fell back about 40 yards and endeavoured to form the brigade, and some companies did form and gave a few vollies, but the fire of the enemy was so hot, that, at the sight of the Regular troops running to the rear, the militia gave way and the whole brigade broke and most of them retired to a woods about 150 yards in the rear But two pieces

of artillery stood their ground and were served with great skill and bravery. At this time a field officer was sent to order me to take post on the left of the artillery, until the brigade should form again, and, with the Philadelphia Infantry keep up a fire from some stacks and buildings, and to assist the artillery in preventing the enemy from advancing We now crossed the enemy's fire from right to Left and took position behind some stacks just on the left of the artillery, and about 30 of the Philadelphia Infantry were under cover of a house on our left and a little in the rear About 150 of my men came to this post, but I could not keep them all there, for the enemies fire was dreadful and three balls, for they were very thick, had grazed me one passed within my elbow nicking my great coat and carried away the breech of Sarjeant McKnatts gun, he being close behind me, another carried away the inside edge of one of my shoe soles, another had nicked my hat and indeed they seemed as thick as hail. From these stacks and buildings we, with the two pieces of Artillery kept up a continuous fire on the enemy, and in all probability it was this circumstance that prevented the enemy from advancing, for they could not tell the number we had posted behind these covers and were afraid to attempt passing them, but if they had known how few they were they might easily have advanced while the two brigades were in confusion and routed the whole body, for it was a long time before they could be reorganized again, and indeed many, that were panic struck, ran quite off Gen Washington having rallied both Gen Mercer's and Gen Cadwalader's brigade, they moved forward and when they came to where the Artillery stood began a very heavy platoon fire on the march This the enemy bore but a few minutes and then threw down their arms and ran We then pushed forwards towards the town spreading over the fields and through the woods to enclose the enemy and take prisoners The fields were covered with baggage, which the Gen ordered to be taken care of Our whole force met at the Court House and took there about 200 prisoners and about 200 others pushed off and were pursued by advanced parties who took about 50 more In this engagement we lost about 20 killed, the enemy about 100 men killed and lost the field This is a very pretty little town on the York road 12 miles from Trenton, the houses are built of brick and are very elegant especially the College which has 52 rooms in it, but the

whole town has been ravaged and ruined by the enemy As soon as the enemy's main army heard our cannon at Princeton (and not 'til then) they discovered our manouvre and pushed after us with all speed and we had not been above an hour in possession of the town before the enemy's light horse and advanced parties attacked our party at the bridge, but our people by a very heavy fire kept the pass until our army left the town Just as our army began our march through Princetown with all their prisoners and spoils the van of the British army we had left at Trenton came in sight, and entered the town about an hour after we left it, but made no stay and pushed on towards Brunswick for fear we should get there before him, which was indeed the course our General intended to pursue had he not been detained too long in collecting the Baggage and Artillery which the enemy had left behind him. Our army marched on to Kingston then wheeled to the left and went down the Millstone, keeping that River on our left, the main body of the British followed but kept on through Kingston to Brunswick but one division or a strong party of horse took the road on the left of the Millstone and arrived on the hill, at the bridge on that road just as the van of the American Army arrived on the opposite side I was again commanding the van of our army, and General Washington seeing the enemy, rode forward and ordered me to halt and take down a number of carpenters which he had ordered forward and break up the bridge, which was done and the enemy were obliged to return We then marched on to a little village called Stone Brook or Summerset Court House about 15 miles from Princeton where we arrived just at dusk About an hour before we arrived here 150 of the enemy from Princeton and 50 which were stationed in this town went off with 20 wagons laden with Clothing and Linen, and 400 of the Jersey militia who surrounded them were afraid to fire on them and let them go off unmolested and there were no troops in our army fresh enough to pursue them, or the whole might have been taken in a few hours Our army now was extremely fatigued not having had refreshment since yesterday morning, and our baggage had all been sent away the morning of the action at Trenton yet they are in good health and in high spirits

MORRISTOWN January 6th 1777

We left Pluckemin this morning and arrived at Morristown just before sunset. The order of march, was first a small advance guard, next the officers who were prisoners, next my Light Infantry Regiment, in columns of four deep, next the prisoners flanked by the riflemen, next the head of the main column, with the Artillery in front. Our whole Light Infantry are quartered in a very large house belonging to Col Ford having 4 Rooms on a floor and Two stories high. This town is situated among the mountains of Morris County, about 18 miles from Elizabethtown, 28 from Brunswick and 20 from Carroll's Ferry.

No 89 PRIVATE LARDNER TO CAPTAIN SMITH.

DEAR SIR

I thank you for the papers you sent me relating to the first Troop The journal of Col Reed Adjutant Gen[l] of the Army, I read with peculiar interest, it is a valuable state paper

A document coming from one so intimately acquainted with all the events of the day, will always be interesting, tho' but for the short period of 7 days I am forceably struck, however inaccuracies creep into history. Marshal in relating the account of the attack at Trenton & the retreat to Princeton, takes one fact on the credit of the British account, Viz, that the army "took a circuitous rout thro' Allentown to Princeton" This would have been impossible, being more than double the distance of that taken by Washington by Quaker bridge Instead of 6 or 7 hours it would have taken nearly the whole of the next day & exhausted the troops In the B. History of the War, published in London 1780 p 387 it says "They marched with such expedition towards Princeton, that tho' they took a circuit by Allentown, partly to avoid the Brigade which lay at Maidenhead' &c

On the evening of 1 Jany 1777 a party of the Troop George Campbell, James Caldwell, myself & I think another, were posted as a patrole on this very road We remained on it the whole night, occasionally going as high as Quaker bridge We found that the Enemy had no patroles there, and that apparently they had no knowledge of it. Along this road Washington led his army the following night, on the memorable retreat, & with which he must have been made acquainted or the patroles would not have been placed there

From my own knowledge I have the best reason to doubt Gen'l Wilkinson's statement, where he says Vol I. 140 — "Gen'l St Clair had been charged with the guard of the fords of the Assampink & in the course of the day (2d Janry) whilst examining the ground to the right, he had fallen on the Quaker bridge" I am a living witness it was familiar to others some time before But Wilkinson in another place observes, that the practicability of the rout was well understood by Colonel Reed the Adjutant Genl — Surely it was

I well remember the circumstance of the Council sitting near to where the Troop was station'd, on the evening of the 2d Janry, and to have heard it confidently mentioned the next day & repeatedly afterwards as the universal sentiment — that the thought of the movement that night originated entirely with Washington — solely his own manoeuvre.

I now give a list from my best recollection, of the gentlemen who served in that campaign Mr. Nesbitt was not then a member, tho' with the army as an officer in a City Corps, he joined us immediately upon our getting home. Mr Howell was not one of the first members — he came in about 1 Decem 1776 Mr. Peters was not an original member, we had all been of the Green light Infantry the year before

List according to (nearly) seniority of age or standing

1 Samuel Morris Captain
2 Levi Hollingsworth
3 George Campbell
4 Blair McClenachan
5 Samuel Caldwell
6 John Mease
7 William Pollard
8 James Caldwell
9 George Gruff (of Lancaster)
10 James Budden
11 William Tod
12 John Dunlap
13 James Hunter
14 Thomas Leiper
15 Thomas Leaming
16 William Hall
17 Jonathan Penrose
18 John Donaldson
19 Thomas Peters
20 John Lardner
21 Samuel Howell Jun

I am dear sir with much respect Your obedient Servant,

JOHN LARDNER

TACONY, Near Philada July 31, 1824

CAPTAIN SMITH

No 90 Congressional News

Congress has received the following intelligence from the army at Pluckemin, in the State of New-Jersey, January 5, 1777

On the second instant the enemy began to advance upon us at Trenton, and, after some skirmishing, the head of their column reached that place about four o'clock, whilst their rear was as far back as Maidenhead. They attempted to pass Sanpinck creek which runs through Trenton, at different places, but finding the fords guarded, they halted and kindled their fires We were drawn up on the south side of the creek. In this situation we remained till dark, cannonading the enemy, and receiving the fire of their field pieces, which did but little damage

At twelve o'clock, after renewing our fires and leaving guards at the bridge in Trenton, and other passes on the same stream above, we marched by a round about road to Princeton We found Princeton, about sunrise, with only three regiments, and three troops of lighthorse in it, two of which were on their march to Trenton — These three regiments, especially the two first made a gallant resistance, and in killed wounded, and prisoners, must have lost five hundred men Upwards of one hundred of them were left dead on the field, and with those carried on by the army, and such as were taken in the pursuit, and carried across the Delaware, there are near three hundred prisoners, fourteen of whom are officers — all British

Colonels Haselet and Potter, Capt. Neal of the artillery, Capt. Flemming, who commanded the first Virginia regiment and four or five other valuable officers, with about twenty-five or thirty privates, were slain in the field. Our whole loss cannot be ascertained as many who were in pursuit of the enemy, whom they chased three or four miles are not yet come in. We burnt the enemy's hay and destroyed such other things as the occasion would admit

From the best intelligence we have been able to get the enemy were so much alarmed at the apprehension of losing their stores, at Brunswick, that they marched immediately thither from Trenton, without halting, and got there before day

The militia of the Jersies are taking spirit and we hear coming in fast

No 91 Doctor Potts to Owen Biddle.

(Dr Jonathan Potts, a Surgeon in the American Army, to Owen Biddle of Philadelphia)

My D'r Friend

Tho' the Ac'ct I send is a melancholy one (in one respect) yet I have sent an Express, to give you the best Information I can collect. Our Mutual Friend, Anthony Morris, died here in three hours after he received his wounds on Friday morning. They were three in number — one on his chin, one on the knee, and the third and fatal one on the right temple, by a grape-shot Brave man! he fought and died nobly, deserving a much better fate Gen Mercer is dangerously ill, indeed, I have scarcely any hopes of him, the Villains have stab'd him in five different Places. The dead on our side of this Place amount to sixteen, that of the Enemy to twenty-three They have retreated to Brunswick with the greatest Precipitation, and from Accounts just come, the Hero, Washington, is not far from them! they have never been so shamefully Drub'd and outgeneraled in every Respect I hourly expect to hear of their whole Army being cut to pieces, or made Prisoners

It pains me to inform you that on the morning of the Action I was obliged to fly before the Rascals, or fall into their hands, and leave behind me my wounded Brethren, would you believe that the inhuman Monsters rob'd the General as he lay unable to resist on the Bed, even to the taking of his Cravat from his Neck, insulting him all the Time

The number of Prisoners we have taken I cannot yet find out, but they are numerous

Should be glad to hear from you by the bearer, is the Reinforcement march'd?

I am, in haste, your most obedient humble Serv't

Jon'n Potts

Dated at the Field of Action, near Princeton, Sunday Evening, Jan'y 5th

No 92 General Cadwalader to Council of Safety

Pluckimin 5th Jan'y 1777

Gentlemen —

Our Militia are in great Distress.

. . . . . .

I have not time to inform you of our Successes — 300 prisoners were taken at Princetown by the different Parties who pursued & those taken in the Town — The Enemy have all left Brunswic & I have no doubt will leave this State in a few days —

. .

I am Genl with great Respect Your most obt Servt

John Cadwalader

Brig Gen.

Directed To the Honble the Council of Safety Philada

No 93 Letter from an Officer of Distinction

(In General Washington's Army, dated Pluckemin January 5, 1777)

I have been so much engaged with marches and countermarches that I have not had a moment to write. We left Crosswicks the first inst about ten o'clock in the morning and arrived a little after sunset at Trenton, through the worst roads that were ever seen About eleven o'clock we were alarmed by the approach of the enemy. We only sent out a brigade to amuse them, while we took post on the lower side of the creek, and back in the woods There was a pretty smart cannonade till dark, when both sides ceased firing The men ordered to keep their posts and lie on their arms A council of war was held and it was determined to file off to the right, through the woods, and by bye roads leaving the enemy on the left and attack Princeton by daylight about five hundred men, and two pieces of war cannon were left to amuse the enemy

Our whole army with a great train of artillery, marched about one, and you may suppose that we must form a very long line of march We arrived one hour too late About seven hundred British troops were prepared to march, to join their main body, part of which lay at Maidenhead They saw our army about a mile and a half distance which made a very formidable appearance They returned to the town and made ready to receive us, one division of their troops formed in front of a house on the south side of the college and on the right hand of the road.

Gen. Mercer's brigade filed off to the right, and was attacked by the other division The brigade did not fire till they advanced within forty yards The enemy received this brigade with charged bayonets. Gen. Mercer was wounded (it is said by a ball fired) but it is a fact he was afterwards wounded in the belly by a bayonet Our brigade advanced through the skirts of a wood in front of the enemy, posted on an eminence with two field pieces Gen Greene ordered me to form as soon as we arrived on a hill about two or three hundred yards distance Our column was formed from the right by divisions. About fifty light infantry of the enemy posted themselves behind the fence, about an hundred yards distance, And, on our left flank, I despatched Captain Henry with a body of light infantry, about an hundred to flank that party. But the first discharge from our field pieces on the left, drove them up to the main body I immediately rode in front to the column, and ordered the second divisions to double up, to the right, the third to the left and so on alternately This was done in the face of the enemy and under a shower of grape shot About half the first battalion was formed when they broke, fell back upon the column, threw the whole into confusion I immediately rode round the left and formed a division, joined one man after the other to it: but the fire was so hot that they again broke Some of the officers behaved very bravely, and exerted themselves to the utmost. Gen Washington came down and exposed himself very much, but expostulated to no purpose. I just then saw a considerable party of horse moving off to our right, to take advantage of the confusion, but a discharge or two from the cannon immediately dispersed them I asked the General if it would not be proper to form about an hundred yards in the rear. He desired me to try, which succeeded beyond my expectation. I collected some of the brigade and some New England men, and advanced obliquely to the right, passed a fence, and marched up to the left of the enemy Two small parties were formed on the left, and advanced at the same time, and bravely pushed up in the face of a heavy fire. The enemy then left their station and inclined to the left, and gave us several heavy fires, in which two were killed and several wounded. I pressed my party forward, huzzaed, and cried out "They fly, the day is our own" and it passed from right to left

I fancy the enemy found it impossible to escape, as our troops

all began to rally and join in the pursuit They all dropped their packs and flew with the utmost precipitation, and we pursued with great eagerness The men were much fatigued for want of rest provisions, and with marching We followed about two miles and then gave over Many parties are yet out, and have taken several prisoners The town surrendered and about sixty, including fourteen officers surrendered We have taken in the whole about three hundred, about thirty killed and fifty wounded I have no doubt but others will be brought in. We lost about thirty killed and thirty wounded We took three pieces of brass artillery The troops that lay at Maidenhead returned about the same time we returned from the pursuit. Horses could not be secured to carry off the artillery Major Proctor made an exchange he left an iron three-pounder, and brought a brass six-pounder. The enemy proceeded towards Brunswick with the utmost expedition[1] the British arrived there at about day light and the Hessians at twelve yesterday. All was in the greatest confusion and the British troops left town last evening, and the whole this morning We marched immediately to Morristown, where we shall be ready to fall down on Elizabethtown, Newark or Amboy. Gen M Dougal is back of Newark, where three Continental regiments, and Jersey militia, altogether two thousand Gen. Heath has crossed the North River with three brigades General Putnam is to come up with all the troops he can muster

No 94 Colonel Lambert Cadwalader to Mrs Samuel Meredith

Philadelphia Jany 7, 1777 —

My dear Peggy —

Our victorious little army under General Washington, after having performed that signal service at Trenton, of which you have heard, returned to this side of the river, but having received intelligence of Johnny's[1] crossing near Bristol, the General returned again to Trenton He was there joined by Johnny's and Mifflin's Brigades Having heard that the enemy was making towards him from Princeton, he sent off about 700 men to meet and endeavor to drive them back — But the enemy proving too numerous, our division retired into Trenton, and over the

[1] General John Cadwalader

bridge to the Mill-hill where the General in the meantime had posted our main force The enemy took possession of Trenton. The General however kept up his camp fires and decamped suddenly in the night He took his march by a back road, got into the Bordentown road, and forced his march to that place. On his way thither he met with a body of British troops which soon gave way. He then advanced rapidly to Princeton and took quite a number of prisoners Our loss is General Mercer wounded, Col Haslitt and a Captain of Marines, with a few privates killed

After the encounter the General marched off for Somerset Court House which is eight miles out of the road to Brunswick, in order to join General Heath's Army from New England — There is a report that this has been effected and that our army has gone forward to Brunswick — General Howe cannot raise a large army anywhere to make headway against us, so we expect very great events in our favor Our Army in the Jerseys must amount altogether to nearly twelve thousand I forgot to tell you that we took five brass cannon in the late engagement. I am in great hopes that the enemy will be cleared from the Jerseys entirely

A son of Warwick Coates is in town who saw Johnny, Meredith, and Nixon, well at Princeton after the action. Adieu in haste

Your affectionate brother
LAMBERT CADWALADER

No 95 GENERAL KNOX TO HIS WIFE

MORRISTOWN, Jan 7, 1777

MY DEAREST LOVE —

I wrote to you from Trenton by a Mr Furness, which I hope you have received I then informed you that we soon expected another tussle I was not out in my conjecture About three o'clock on the 2d of January, a column of the enemy attacked a party of ours which was stationed about one mile above Trenton Our party was small, and did not make much resistance The enemy, who was Hessians, entered the town pell-mell, pretty much in the same manner that we had driven them a few days before. Nearly on the other side of Trenton, partly in the town, runs a brook (the Assunpink), which in most places is not ford-

able, and over which through Trenton is a bridge The ground on the other side is much higher than on this, and may be said to command Trenton completely Here it was our army drew up, with thirty or fourty pieces of artillery in front The enemy pushed our small party through the town with vigour, though not with much loss Their retreat over the bridge was thoroughly secured by the artillery After they had retired over the bridge, the enemy advanced within reach of our cannon, who saluted them with great vociferation and some execution. This continued till dark, when of course it ceased, except a few shells we now and then chucked into town to prevent their enjoying their new quarters securely As I before mentioned, the creek was in our front, our left on the Delaware, our right in a wood, parallel to the creek. The situation was strong, to be sure but hazardous on this account, that had our right wing been defeated, the defeat of the left would almost have been an inevitable consequence and the whole thrown into confusion or pushed into the Delaware, as it was impassable by boats From these circumstances the general thought it best to attack Princeton, twelve miles in the rear of the enemy s grand army, and where they had the 17th, 40th and 55th regiments, with a number of draughts, altogether perhaps twelve hundred men Accordingly, about one o'clock at night we began to march and make this most extra manœuvre Our troops marched with great silence and order, and arrived near Princeton a little after daybreak. We did not surprise them as at Trenton , for they were on their march down to Trenton, on a road about a quarter of a mile distant from the one in which we were You may judge of their surprise when they discovered such large columns marching up They could not possibly suppose it was our army, for that they took for granted was cooped up near Trenton They could not possibly suppose it was their own army returning by a back road , in short, I believe they were as much astonished as if an army had dropped perpendicularly upon them However they had not much time for consideration We pushed a party to attack them This they repulsed with great spirit, and advanced upon another column just then coming out of a wood, which they likewise put in some disorder , but fresh troops coming up, and the artillery beginning to play, they were after a smart resistance totally put to the rout The 17th regiment used their bayonets

with too much severity upon a party they put to flight, but they were paid for it in proportion, very few escaping Near sixty were killed on the spot, besides the wounded We have taken between three and four hundred prisoners, all British troops They must have lost in this affair nearly five hundred killed, wounded and prisoners We lost some gallant officers Brigadier General Mercer was wounded he had three separate stabs with a bayonet A Lieutenant-Colonel Fleming was killed, and Captain Neil of the artillery, an excellent officer Mercer will get better The enemy took his parole after we left Princeton. We took all their cannon, which consisted of two brass six-pounders, a considerable quantity of military stores, blankets, guns &c They lost, among a number of other officers, a Captain Leslie, a son of the Earl of Leven and nephew to General Leslie, him we brought off, and buried with the honours of war After we had been about two hours at Princeton, word was brought that the enemy were advancing from Trenton This they did, as we have since been informed, in a most infernal sweat, — running, puffing, and blowing, and swearing at being so outwitted. As we had other objects in view, to wit, breaking up their quarters, we pursued our march to Somerset Court House, where there were about thirteen hundred quartered, as we had been informed They, however had marched off and joined the army at Trenton We at first intended to have made a forced march to Brunswick, but our men having been without either rest, rum or provisions for two nights and days, were unequal to the task of marching seventeen miles farther If we could have secured one thousand fresh men at Princeton to have pushed for Brunswick, we should have struck one of the most brilliant strokes in all history However, the advantages are very great already they have collected the whole force, and drawn themselves to one point, to wit, Brunswick. The enemy were within nineteen miles of Philadelphia, they are now sixty miles. We have driven them from almost the whole of West Jersey. The panick is still kept up We had a battle two days ago with a party of ours and sixty Waldeckers, who were all killed or taken, in Monmouth County in the lower part of the Jerseys. It is not our interest to fight a general battle, nor can I think under all circumstances it is the enemy's They have sent their baggage to Staten Island from the Jerseys, and we are very well informed they are doing

the same from New York Heath will have orders to march there, and endeavour to storm it on that side "There is a tide in the affairs of men, which taken at the flood leads on to victory" For my part, my Lucy, I look up to heaven and most devoutly thank the great Governor of the Universe for producing this turn in our affairs and the sentiment I hope will so prevail in the hearts of the people as to induce them to be a people chosen of Heaven, not to give way to despair, but at all times and under all circumstances never to despair of the Commonwealth.

No 96 Lord Stirling to —— S—— 1777 —

New Town Jany 7 — 1777 —

Sir —

. . . . . .

I shall send off to Philadelphia about 70 British prisoners, tomorrow morning Genl Washington has upwards of 200 more with him some more I understand are gone by Burlington, I have just received a letter from Genl Washington's Secretary he says the loss of the Enemy at Princetown was at least 500 including killed & prisoners a number of them wounded are scattered in the farm houses so that very few of the three Regiments viz: the 17th, 40th & 55th & 60 dismounted light Horse made their Escape, It was the Generals design to have surprised Brunswick But the Enemy's main body pressed so close on his Rear that he was obliged to abandon that design & file off to the left at Kingston on the 5th he was at Pluckimin about 16 mile to the North West of Brunswick by possessing the Hills in that Country he will be able to make the scituation of the Enemy very uneasy in East Jersey I doubt not it will oblige them to abandon it

With much respect & Esteem I am your most Humble Servt

Stirling

No 97 American Officers Killed at Princeton

Colonel John Haslet, commanding the regiment of Delaware state troops, was an Irishman by birth. It appears that he was educated for the ministry of the Presbyterian church, but afterward studied physic and practiced it for several years at his home in Dover, Delaware He was a zealous patriot and one of the first men in the state in advocating independence On the

recommendation of the Council of Safety of the "Three lower Counties of Delaware" he was commissioned by the Continental Congress January 19, 1776, as colonel of the first organization raised in Delaware for the defense of the colonies He was quite tall, erect and athletic He was beloved by his men, whom it was his pride to have exceptionally well drilled and disciplined His regiment took a conspicuous part in the battles of Long Island and White Plains When Colonel Haslet was killed, an order was found in his pocket directing him to return home to recruit his regiment, which then numbered less than one hundred men This order he delayed complying with while the active campaign was in progress and so he met his death. As has been stated, he fell with a bullet in his head and died during the afternoon of the fight His remains were taken to Philadelphia and buried with military honors in the old Presbyterian burial-ground, January 25 1777 On July 3 1841, they were removed to the graveyard of the Presbyterian Church at Dover, Delaware The Legislature of the State of Delaware by resolution on February 22, 1841, 'remembering his virtues as a man his merit as a citizen and his services as a soldier caused a monumental stone in testimony of their respect to be placed over his grave'

Captain Daniel Neil was first appointed captain-lieutenant of the Eastern company of Artillery raised in the Colony of New Jersey by order of the Provincial Congress February 13, 1776 On the first of the following month Frederick Frelinghuysen of Somerset County was commissioned captain of the battery, but on May 9, 1776, Daniel Neil was promoted captain, and in December the company became attached to Knox's brigade of artillery on the Continental Establishment. He was personally very brave and greatly beloved by his men. General Greene, alluding in a letter to the efficiency and early death of this man and referring to the grief of his widow in the camp at Morristown, said it 'melts the hearts of all'

Captain William Shippin was born about 1750 For several years prior to the war he resided in Philadelphia and kept a grocer's store on the south side of Market Street wharf He owned two vessels engaged in the coasting trade, but both of them were captured by the enemy. In the Journal of the Continental Congress March 22, 1776, we find a notice of a petition from "Thorowgood Smith and others setting forth that they

have procured a vessel and raised money to fit her out as a privateer in order to cruise and guard the coast of Virginia and praying that a commission be granted to William Shippin to whom they propose to give the command of said vessel and it was resolved that a commission be granted to William Shippin as captain of the above named vessel" In May 1776, we find him in command of a company of marines on board the armed boat Hancock, Captain Thomas Moore, which vessel was attached to the Delaware fleet of Commodore Seymour in the December following On the 16th of December, 1776, Margaret Morris notes in her journal that "A Captain, a smart little fellow, named Shippen" had been hunting for tories in Burlington It is certain that when General Mifflin passed over the river with reinforcements for General Washington's army Captain Shippin, filled with patriotic ardor, joined him with a ship's party and some marines, and so took part and received his death wound when the Pennsylvania militia entered the fight at Princeton He was buried in the Friends' burial-ground on Stony Brook, but was afterward disinterred and carried over the Delaware River at Burlington at the same time as the body of General Mercer. The Pennsylvania Evening Post of Saturday, January 18, 1777, says "Yesterday the remains of Captain William Shippin who was killed at Princeton the third instant, gloriously fighting for the liberty of his country were interred at St Peters church-yard. His funeral was attended by the Council of Safety, the members of Assembly, officers of the Army, a troop of Virginia Light Horse, and a great number of inhabitants This brave and unfortunate man was in his twenty-seventh year and has left a widow and three young children to lament the death of an affectionate husband and tender parent, his servants a kind master and his neighbours a sincere and obliging friend" A half-pay pension was granted his children after his death In his will his name is spelled Shippin, not Shippen, as it is usually written, and he therefore could not have been of the family of William Shippen, Senior, Member of the Continental Congress, nor of Dr. William Shippen, Junior, Director General of the Hospitals of the Armies of the United States [1]

Captain John Fleming was a very gallant officer, a member of

[1] Letter of Dr William Shippen in *Pennsylvania Magazine*, January, 1898, p. 497

what has been for many years a distinguished family in Virginia The field officers of his regiment, the First regiment Virginia infantry, were not present for duty at the time of the battle, and the command devolved on him. Captain Fleming was only twenty-one years old, and was considered one of the bravest young men in the army The Pennsylvania Evening Post' of February 1 and the 'Journal" of February 5 contained elegies on his character "addressed to the Virginian youth"

Lieutenant Bartholomew Yeates belonged to the same regiment, and was but eighteen years of age. He was said to be possessed of great wealth His father was a clergyman of the Virginia church, the Rev Robert Yeates of Gloucester County, and his mother was Mary, daughter of Edward Randolph, the youngest of seven sons of William Randolph, the founder of the Virginia family of that name His name is usually spelled Yates, although in most Revolutionary papers another 'e' is inserted In the battle he was shot in the breast, after which he received thirteen bayonet wounds, besides being knocked on the head with a musket after he fell His dying affidavit of the brutal conduct of British soldiers, made on January 9 1777, was forwarded by General Washington to General Howe In the "Pennsylvania Journal" of February 19, 1777, we find this tribute to him, —

> 'But oh! again my mangled Yeates appears,
> Excites new vengeance and provokes fresh tears
> Behold my wounds! he says or seems to say
> Remember Princeton on some future day,
> View well this body, pierced in every part,
> And sure 't will fire the most unfeeling heart'

Ensign Anthony Morris, Jr., was an officer of the First battalion Philadelphia Associators He was born August 8 1738, and was by trade a brewer His great-grandfather of the same name was mayor of Philadelphia in 1704 Ensign Morris received three wounds, "one on the chin, one on the knee and the third and fatal one on the right temple by a grape shot"[1] He died in about three hours after he was wounded, and was first buried in the Friends' burial-ground at Stony Brook, as we find by an entry of January 14, 1777, in the diary of Margaret Morris of

[1] Letter of Surgeon Jonathan Potts to Owen Biddle, Pennsylvania Committee of Safety, from 'Field of Action,' January 5 — *Pennsylvania Magazine*, January, 1896, p. 537, and see p 445 *ante*

Burlington The diary of Christopher Marshall of Philadelphia states, under date of January 24, 1777 "Last evening came from the camp the light infantry of the First Battalion of City Militia Also were brought the remains of Ensign Anthony Morris, Jr who was killed at Princeton bravely supporting the Cause of Liberty and Freedom buried this afternoon in Friends burial ground in a very heavy shower of rain and without military honours it being the request of his relations to the General that he should be so interred."

Among the wounded officers we find Major William Bradford of the Second battalion of Philadelphia Associators, one of the publishers of the "Pennsylvania Journal" in Philadelphia, and the father of the Honorable William Bradford, the attorney-general of the United States during the presidency of Washington

General Washington reported Colonel Potter as among the killed, and from that time to the present nearly every historian has repeated the error Colonel James Potter of the Second regiment of Northumberland County militia, in his impetuous dash after Colonel Mawhood's men, was so unfortunate as to be slightly wounded and taken prisoner Being reported "missing," Washington thought he had been killed. On his being exchanged a few days after the battle, Colonel Potter engaged in a raid on the enemy at Brunswick, January 19, 1777 He was promoted brigadier-general of Pennsylvania militia April 5, 1777, a major-general May 23, 1782, and afterward attained a high position in the councils of that Commonwealth.

No 98 British Officers Killed at Princeton

Captain Robert Mostyn entered the British service in the Sixty-fifth regiment June 30, 1768, was made a lieutenant November 7, 1774, and a captain in the Fortieth regiment May 6, 1776 Judging from General Howe's return, hereafter referred to, Captain Mostyn must have been on duty that day with the Fifty-fifth regiment.

Captain John McPherson entered the army October 27, 1763, was made a lieutenant in the Seventeenth regiment July 14, 1769, and captain September 8, 1775. He was shot near the lungs by a musket ball, and was carried, still living, into the village of Princeton. Here he was found by the brave old General Putnam

when he took possession of that place several days after the fight Up to that time Captain McPherson, although suffering great pain, had received little attention from the surgeon, but the general provided medical attendance, and bestowed such kindness upon his wounded foe that a great friendship sprung up between the Scotchman and the American It is related that when Captain McPherson rallied somewhat from the effect of the wound, and asked that a British officer at Brunswick be allowed to see him, General Putnam permitted the visitor to come in at night, and manœuvred his insignificant force many times past the room where the wounded officer lay until he had succeeded in impressing his British guest with the idea that he had several thousand men in his command. Captain McPherson died in Princeton

Captain the Hon William Leslie of the Seventeenth regiment was a son of the Scotch Earl of Levin, and a nephew of General Alexander Leslie, who had been posted at Maidenhead He was a gallant officer, twenty-six years of age and greatly beloved by his men He entered the English army as an ensign of the Forty-second regiment May 3, 1770, was made a lieutenant of the Seventeenth regiment July 12, 1773, and captain, February 26, 1776. He was mortally wounded in the fight, and, when discovered by General Washington as the latter passed over the field after the battle, was properly cared for by Dr. Benjamin Rush of Philadelphia, who was with Washington that day Dr Rush attended to the wants of his wounded foe with more than ordinary interest, in return, as he told General Washington, for some obligation which he owed to Captain Leslie's father for many kindnesses received at his hands when a student at the university in Edinburgh Captain Leslie was carried off with the army on their march northward, and received every possible attention, but he died the next morning near Pluckemin, and on the following day, January 5, was interred with military honors in the village cemetery at Pluckemin General Leslie, when he heard of the respect shown his nephew by the American officers, was greatly affected, and, when the opportunity occurred, sent his acknowledgments to General Washington by Lieutenant-Colonel Fitzgerald of Washington's staff, who, some days after the battle of Princeton, entered the British lines under flag of truce. Dr Rush further showed his regard for the father of the young officer by erecting a monument to Captain Leslie's memory in

the old graveyard at Pluckemin. The following is the inscription thereon —

In Memory of the
Honble Captn Willm Leslie
of the 17th British Regiment
Son of the Earl of Leven
in Scotland
He fell Jany 3d 1777 Aged
26 Years at the battle of
Princeton
His friend Benjn Rush, M D. of
Philadelphia
hath caused this Stone
to be erected as a mark
of his esteem for his WORTH
and of his respect
for his noble family

No 99 British Casualties at Princeton.

General Howe's return of the killed, wounded and missing in this engagement was as follows —

Seventeenth Regiment — 1 Captain, 12 rank and file killed, 1 Captain, 1 Lieutenant, 1 Ensign, 4 Sergeants, 46 rank and file wounded. 1 Sergeant, 1 Drummer, 33 rank and file missing

Fortieth Regiment — 1 Lieutenant wounded, 1 Ensign, 3 Sergeants, 1 Drummer, 88 rank and file missing

Fifty-fifth Regiment — 1 Sergeant, 4 rank and file killed, 1 Ensign, 1 Sergeant, 2 rank and file wounded, 1 Captain, 1 Lieutenant, 1 Ensign, 1 Sergeant, 2 Drummers, 66 rank and file missing

Total 1 Captain, 1 Sergeant, 16 rank and file killed, 1 Captain, 2 Lieutenants, 2 Ensigns, 5 Sergeants, 48 rank and file wounded, 1 Captain, 1 Lieutenant, 2 Ensigns, 5 Sergeants. 4 Drummers, 187 rank and file missing — 276

This official return omits the name of Second Lieutenant Frederick Desaguliers, and nine enlisted men of the Royal regiment of artillery, killed

No 100 General Howe's Congratulations

Head Quarters, New York Jan 8th 1777

General Howe desires Lieut Col Mawhood will accept his thanks for his Gallantry and good Conduct in the Attack made upon the Enemy on the 3d Instant. He desires his thanks may

also be given to the Officers and Soldiers of the 17th Foot, to part of the 55th Regiment and other Detachments on their march who on that occasion supported the 17th Regiment and Charged the Enemy with Bayonets in the most Spirited manner.

The General desires his public Approbation may be signified to Capt Scott of the 17th Foot, for his remarkable good conduct in protecting and securing the Baggage of the 4th Brigade on the above Occasion

No 101 Note on General Mercer

The Continental Congress directed that his son should be educated at the expense of the Government and they also ordered a monument to be erected to his memory at Fredericksburg, Virginia, with this inscription:

SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF
HUGH MERCER
BRIGADIER GENERAL OF THE ARMY OF THE UNITED STATES
HE DIED ON THE 12TH OF JANUARY 1777
OF THE WOUNDS HE RECEIVED ON THE THIRD OF THE
SAME MONTH NEAR PRINCETON, IN NEW JERSEY
BRAVELY DEFENDING THE LIBERTIES
OF AMERICA.
THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES IN TESTIMONY
OF HIS VIRTUES AND THEIR GRATITUDE HAVE CAUSED
THIS MONUMENT TO BE ERECTED

At the time of his death General Mercer was about fifty-six years of age On his tombstone, erected by the Saint Andrew's Society, we find a record of his life He was a native of Aberdeen in Scotland, an assistant surgeon in a Highland regiment in Charles Edward's army on the disastrous battlefield of Culloden, April 16, 1746, recipient of a medal from the Corporation of Philadelphia for his courage in the assault against the Indian settlement of Kittanning, on the Allegheny River, where he was severely wounded, the companion of Washington in the Army of General Forbes at the reduction of Fort Duquesne, a physician of Fredericksburg, Virginia, a man distinguished for his skill and learning, his gentleness and decision, his refinement and humanity, his elevated honor and his devotion to the great cause of civil and religious liberty. General Mercer was a Minute Man in 1775, an organizer of Continental regiments in 1776 and

Congress promoted him June 5, 1776, from a colonel of the Third Virginia regiment to the rank of a general officer. A few months afterward "he poured out his blood for a Generous Principle His patriotism is fully evinced in his remark in the Virginia House of Burgesses when he offered his services for the war, — 'Hugh Mercer will serve his adopted country and the cause of liberty in any rank or station to which he may be appointed"

No 102 Washington's Report on Princeton.

(The following is General Washington's official report to Congress of the battle of Princeton)

Pluckemin, 5 January 1777

Sir:

I have the honor to inform you, that, since the date of my last from Trenton, I have removed with the army under my command to this place. The difficulty of crossing the Delaware, on account of the ice, made our passage over it tedious, and gave the enemy an opportunity of drawing in their several cantonments and assembling their whole force at Princeton Their large pickets advanced towards Trenton, — their great preparations and some intelligence I had received — added to their knowledge, that the 1st of January brought on a dissolution of the best part of our army — gave me the strongest reasons to conclude that an attack upon us was meditating Our situation was most critical, and our force small To remove immediately was again destroying every dawn of hope, which had begun to revive in the breasts of the Jersey militia and to bring those troops, who had first crossed the Delaware and were lying at Crosswicks under General Cadwalader and those under General Mifflin at Bordentown (amounting in the whole to about three thousand six hundred) to Trenton, was to bring them to an exposed place. One or the other, however, was unavoidable. The latter was preferred and they were ordered to join us at Trenton, which they did, by a night-march on the 1st instant On the 2d, according to my expectation, the enemy began to advance upon us, and after some skirmishing, the head of their column reached Trenton about four o'clock, whilst their rear was as far back as Maidenhead They attempted to pass Sanpink Creek, which runs through Trenton, at different places but,

finding the fords guarded, they halted and kindled their fires. We were drawn up on the other side of the creek In this situation we remained till dark, cannonading the enemy, and receiving the fire of their field-pieces which did us but little damage Having by this time discovered that the enemy were greatly superior in number, and that their design was to surround us, I ordered all our baggage to be removed silently to Burlington soon after dark, and at twelve o'clock after renewing our fires and leaving guards at the bridge in Trenton and other passes on the same stream above, marched by a roundabout road to Princeton, where I knew they could not have much force left, and might have stores One thing I was certain of, — that it would avoid the appearance of a retreat (which was of consequence, or to run the hazard of the whole army being cut off) whilst we might by a fortunate stroke withdraw General Howe from Trenton and give some reputation to our arms. Happily we succeeded We found Princeton about sunrise, with only three regiments and three troops of light-horse in it, two of which were on their march to Trenton. These three regiments, especially the two first, made a gallant resistance, and, in killed, wounded, and prisoners, must have lost five hundred men upwards of one hundred of them were left dead on the field, and, with what I have with me and what were taken in the pursuit and carried across the Delaware, there are near three hundred prisoners, fourteen of whom are officers, all British This piece of good fortune is counterbalanced by the loss of the brave and worthy General Mercer, Colonels Haslet and Potter, Captain Neil of the artillery, Captain Fleming who commanded the first Virginia regiment, and four or five other valuable officers, who, with about twenty-five or thirty privates were slain in the field Our whole loss cannot be ascertained, as many, who were in pursuit of the enemy (who were chased three or four miles) are not yet come in The rear of the enemy's army lying at Maidenhead, not more than five or six miles from Princeton, was up with us before our pursuit was over but as I had the precaution to destroy the bridge over Stony Brook, about half a mile from the field of action, they were so long retarded there, as to give us time to move off in good order for this place We took two brass field pieces but for want of horses, could not bring them away We also took some blankets, shoes, and a few other trifling articles,

burned the hay, and destroyed such other things, as the shortness of the time would admit of My original plan, when I set out from Trenton, was to have pushed on to Brunswic; but the harassed state of our troops, many of them having had no rest for two nights and a day, and the danger of losing the advantage we had gained by aiming at too much, induced me, by the advice of my officers, to relinquish the attempt But, in my judgment, six or eight hundred fresh troops upon a forced march would have destroyed all their stores and magazines, taken (as we have since learned) their military chest, containing seventy thousand pounds, and put an end to the war The enemy, from the best intelligence I have been able to get, were so much alarmed at the apprehension of this, that they marched immediately to Brunswic without halting, except at the bridges (for I also took up those on Millstone, on the different routes to Brunswic) and got there before day From the best information I have received, General Howe has left no men either at Trenton or Princeton The truth of this I am endeavouring to ascertain, that I may regulate my movements accordingly The militia are taking spirits, and, I am told, are coming in fast from this State, but I fear those from Philadelphia will scarcely submit to the hardships of a winter campaign much longer, especially as they very unluckily sent their blankets with their baggage to Burlington I must do them the justice however to add, that they have undergone more fatigue and hardship, than I expected militia, especially citizens, would have done at this inclement season I am just moving to Morristown, where I shall endeavor to put them under the best cover I can Hitherto we have been without any, and many of our poor soldiers are quite barefoot, and ill clad in other respects

I have the honor to be &c,

Go Washington.

No. 103. General Washington to General Putnam

Pluckemin 5 January 1777

Dear General

Fortune has favored us in an attack on Princeton General Howe advanced upon Trenton, which we evacuated in the evening of the 2d of this instant and drew up the troops on the south side of Mill Creek and continued in that position until dark, then

marched for Princeton, which we reached next morning by about nine o'clock There were three regiments quartered there of British troops which we attacked and routed. The number of the killed, wounded and taken prisoners amounts to about five or six hundred We lost several officers and about thirty privates. General Mercer is badly wounded, if not mortally After the action we immediately marched for this place. I shall remove from hence to Morristown there shall wait a few days and refresh the troops, during which time I shall keep a strict watch upon the enemy's motions. They appear to be panic-struck, and I am in some hopes of driving them out of the Jerseys It is thought advisable for you to march the troops under your command to Crosswicks and keep a strict watch upon the enemy in that quarter. If the enemy continue at Brunswic, you must act with great circumspection, lest you meet with a surprise. As we have made two successful attacks upon the enemy by way of surprise, they will be pointed with resentment and if there is any possibility of retaliating, they will attempt it You will give out your strength to be twice as great as it is Forward on all the baggage and scattered troops belonging to this division of the army, as soon as may be You will keep as many spies out as you will see proper. A number of horsemen, in the dress of the country, must be constantly kept going backwards and forwards for this purpose, and if you discover any motion of the enemy, which you can depend upon, and which you think of consequence, let me be informed thereof as soon as possible by express

I am, dear General, yours &c

GO. WASHINGTON.

No 104 Comments on the Battle of Princeton

Major-General Greene wrote to Thomas Paine with much enthusiasm and somewhat pardonable exaggeration "The two last actions at Trenton and Princeton have put a very different face upon affairs Within a fortnight past we have taken or killed of Howe's army between two and three thousand men Our loss is trifling" He also wrote to Governor Nicholas Cooke of Rhode Island "Ever since the Trenton affair we have had a continual train of success The Lord seems to have smote the enemy with a panic They are near three thousand weaker than they were a month ago."

Alexander Hamilton said of this change of fortune. "After escaping the grasp of a disciplined and victorious enemy, this little band of patriots were seen skillfully avoiding an engagement until they could contend with advantage and then by the masterly enterprises of Trenton and Princeton, cutting them up in detachments, rallying the scattered energies of the country, infusing terror into the breasts of their invaders and changing the whole tide and fortune of the war."

Sir Henry Clinton (incorrect as to the name of the creek and route of the army, as well as slightly derogatory to the generalship of his comrade) said: "The two very judicious and officer like movements of Lord Cornwallis against Tippoo in 1791 and 1792 proves what he himself thinks of his conduct in 1776 He had driven Washington over the Assumption and the Delaware was impassable the Assumption no where but at its bridge, that at Trenton His Lordship held that at Allens Town, they held the string too His Lordship thinking that Washington would wait for him till the next day, deceived by his fires &c into this belief, neglects to patrole to Allens Town — over which Washington s whole army and the last hope of America, escaped I am sure no Hessian Corporal would have been so imposed upon. 'T is a wonder Washington did not march to Brunswick."

Frederick the Great, referring to the events herein described, declared that "the achievements of Washington and his little band of compatriots between the 25th of December and the 4th of January, a space of ten days, were the most brilliant of any recorded in the annals of military achievements"

Lord Cornwallis himself, responding to a toast at the grand dinner given at the headquarters of General Washington to the officers of the British, French and American armies, the day after the surrender of Yorktown, said. "And when the illustrious part that your excellency has borne in this long and arduous contest becomes matter of history, fame will gather your brightest laurels rather from the banks of the Delaware than from those of the Chesapeake."

William Livingston, New Jersey's Revolutionary war governor, to the General Assembly, January 24, 1777, wrote in his forcible style: "So far from any essential benefit redounding to them from their irruption into this state or their having made the least advance toward subduing the continent of America, they are now

obliged to shut themselves up in a small corner of a colony, over which, but a few days ago they ridiculously arrogated universal empire As their blunders, if possible, are equal to their cruelty, I am persuaded that unless we are wanting to ourselves, we have no reason to be dispirited in our righteous contest with a prince and a people whom God Almighty, by thus infatuating seems determined to destroy."

John Adams, the great statesman, in a letter dated Baltimore, 17th February, 1777, wrote to his wife his view of the consequences of the British movements "Howe, as you know my opinion always was, will repent his mad march through the Jerseys. The people of that Commonwealth begin to raise their spirits exceedingly and to be firmer than ever. They are actuated by resentment now, and resentment coinciding with principle is a very powerful motive."

The sentiments of the American people were well expressed in the proceedings of the "Council of Safety of Pennsylvania," when they said: "When Washington turned on his pursuers at Trenton and Princeton they expressed a hope that it might be in his power to close the campaign with honour to himself and leave General Howe in a situation which should afford him little reason to boast."

In Botta's history we find this account of the situation of affairs "Thus by an army almost reduced to extremity, Philadelphia was saved, Pennsylvania protected, New Jersey nearly recovered and a victorious army laid under the necessity of quitting all thought of acting offensively in order to defend itself." . . . 'Achievements so astonishing acquired an immense glory for the captain-general of the United States All nations shared in the surprise of the Americans all equally admired and applauded the prudence, the constancy and the noble intrepidity of general Washington An unanimous voice pronounced him the saviour of his country! all extolled him as equal to the most celebrated commanders of antiquity All proclaimed him the Fabius of America His name was in the mouth of all! he was celebrated by the pens of the most distinguished writers The most illustrious personages of Europe lavished upon him their praises and their congratulations The American general, therefore, wanted neither a cause full of grandeur to defend, nor occa-

sion for the acquisition of glory, nor genius to avail himself of it, nor the renown due to his triumphs, nor an entire generation of men perfectly well disposed to render him homage.'

No 105 Letter from the American Army.

(Letter from a gentleman of great worth in the American army to the printer of the "Maryland Journal," dated near Princeton, January 7, 1777.)[1]

On the 2d instant, intelligence was received by express that the enemy's army was advancing from Princeton towards Trenton, where the main body of our forces was then stationed. Two brigades, under Gen Stephen and Fermoy, had been detached several hours before from the main body to Maidenhead, and were ordered to skirmish with the enemy during their march and retreat to Trenton, as occasion should require A body of men under command of Colonel Hand were also ordered to meet the enemy by which means their march was so much retarded as to give ample time for our forces to form and prepare to give them a warm reception upon their arrival Two field pieces, planted upon a hill at a small distance from the town, were managed with great advantage, and did considerable execution for some time, after which they were ordered to retire to the station occupied by our forces on the south side of the bridge, over the little river (the Assanpink) which divides the town into two parts, and opens at right angles into the Delaware In their way through the town, the enemy suffered much by an incessant fire of musketry from behind the houses and barns The army had now arrived at the northern side of the bridge, whilst our army was drawn up in order of battle on the southern side Our cannon played very briskly from this eminence, and were returned as briskly by the enemy. In a few minutes after the cannonade began, a very heavy discharge of musketry ensued, and continued for ten or fifteen minutes, during this action a party of men were detached from our right wing to secure a part of the river which it was imagined, from the motions of the enemy, they intended to ford This detachment arrived at the pass very opportunely, and effected their purpose. After this the enemy made a feeble and unsupported attempt to pass the bridge, but this likewise proved abortive It was now near six o'clock in the evening, and night coming on, closed the engagement

[1] Presumed to have been Dr Rush.

Our fires were built in due season, and were very numerous, and whilst the enemy were amused by these appearances, preparing for a general attack the next morning, our army marched at about one o'clock in the morning from Trenton, on the south side of the creek, to Princeton When they arrived near the hill, about one mile from Princeton, they found a body of the enemy formed upon it and ready to receive them, upon which a spirited attack was made upon them, both with field pieces and musketry, and after an obstinate resistance and loss of a considerable number of their men upon the field, those of them who could not make their escape, surrendered prisoners of war We immediately marched on to the centre of the town, and there took another party of the enemy near the College After tarrying a very short time in town, Gen Washington marched his army from thence towards Rocky Hill, and they are now near Morristown, in high spirits and in expectation of a junction with the rest of our forces, sufficiently seasonable to make a general attack upon the enemy and prevent at least a considerable part of them from reaching their asylum in New York.

It is difficult to precisely ascertain the loss we have sustained in the *two* engagements, but as near as I can judge I think we have lost about forty men killed, and had near double the number wounded In the list of the former are the brave Colonel Hazlett, Captain Shippen and Captain Neal, who fell in the engagement upon the hill near Princeton Among the latter was Brig. General Mercer, who received seven wounds in his body, and two on his head, and was much bruised by the breach of a musket. His life was yesterday almost despaired of, but this morning I found him much relieved, and some of the most dangerous complaints removed, so that I still have hopes of his recovery, and of his being again restored to the arms of his grateful country. He is now a prisoner upon parole

The loss sustained by the enemy was much greater than ours, as was easily discovered by viewing the dead upon the field after the action We have now one hundred of their wounded prisoners in the town which, together with those who surrendered and were taken in small parties endeavoring to make their escape, I think must amount to the number of 400, chiefly British troops Six brass cannon have fallen into our hands, a quantity of ammunition and several wagons of baggage. A Capt Leslie was

found among the dead of the enemy, and was this day buried with the honors of war A number of other officers were found on the field, but they were not known and were buried with the other dead. According to information from the inhabitants of Princeton, the number which marched out of it to attack our army amounted to 13,000 men, under command of Genl Cornwallis. This body, as soon as they discovered they were outgeneraled by the march of Gen Washington, being much chagrined at their disappointment (as it seems he intended to have cut our army to pieces, crossed the Delaware and marched without any further delay, to Philadelphia,) rushed with the greatest precipitation towards Princeton, where they arrived about an hour after Gen Washington had left, and imagining he would endeavor to take Brunswick in the same manner, proceeded briskly for that place Our soldiers were much fatigued, the greater part of them having been deprived of their rest the two preceding nights, otherwise we might perhaps have possessed ourselves of Brunswick. The enemy appear to be preparing to decamp and retire to New York, so they are much disgusted with their late treatment in New Jersey and have a great inclination to rest themselves a little in some secure winter-quarters

No 106 Major Samull Meredith to ——

Morris Town, Jany 9th, 1777

I have been so busy ever since I wrote you till this time, and, indeed, there has been no opportunity till this day or two, that it will plead my excuse As I have not heard any disagreeable news from Phila, I take it for granted that my dearest and little ones are well, and if so, I shall be happy

The Greatest stroke of Generalship that has been shown in this war was exhibited by General Washington in our march from Trenton to Prince Town. It entirely disconcerted the progress of the enemy, who knew nothing of our march till the firing happened at Prince Town between them and us, for we went a back road all the way. What was done there you have heard I don't doubt, with a good deal of exaggeration It was, however, a very capital stroke, for those who were not taken or killed retired with utmost precipitation Those from Trenton did so likewise They are now posted on this side of Brunswick, the landing Piscataway, Amboy, &c. They retired from Elizabeth Town yesterday. The

militia of this County fell upon their Rear & took 90 or 100 of them, (and killed some,) with a considerable quantity of Baggage Our Baggage, when we left Trenton, was all sent down to Burlington, so that we have had no shift of clothes at all. But it is expected in a few days The person this letter is to go by called just as I began so that I have not an opportunity of saying as much as I would. Do remember me to all the Family, & believe that I am, with the greatest Love to you and the little ones, your affectionate,

S. M

No 107. Letter from the British Army

"Relation of the Engagement at Trenton and Princetown on Thursday and Friday the 2nd & 3rd of Jan'ry 1777 by Mr Hood 3rd Battn"

About 12 oClock on Wednesday morning Orders came to them to march from Crosswicks to Trenton — they arrived at Trenton on Wednesday morning[1] ab't 9 oClock — in one hour after, the Alarm Gun fired and all thee Battalion got under arms immediately — they were ordered to march over the Bridge & form a Line with the whole Brigade Comman'd by Gen'l Cadwalader — in about 1 h'r after they perceived the Enemy advancing and firing their artillery, on which they were ordered to take possession of a wood up the Creek to prevent the Enemy from out flanking — at this time the Enemy & two of our Brigades were engaged beyond Trenton on the Princetown Road Our People retreated into Trenton They on this returned back to the Bridge & form'd in a line — with 3000 men & 2 field ps in the Main Street — and 2 field p's secreted behind Mr Waln s house opposite the Mill — & some Rifle men in the Mill, & artillery all along the Creek — after they were so station'd the Enemy advanced towards the Bridge While they were advancing, a Cannonade on both sides commenced, & the Enemy threw a number of Shells which did no execution and one Cannon Ball, passed through the 3d Battalion & killed 2 men. — the Enemy advanced ab't half way over the Bridge, when they were repulsed it is supposed with considerable loss as a heavy fire was kept up both in front and flank with the artillery and musquetry, for abt 12 minutes. the firing ceased in the dusk of the evening — they were then ordered to form a square round the Woods and to make up their fires &

[1] This should read Thursday morning, January 2

to lay on their Arms. — abt 12 oClock at Night they were ordered under Arms — they were then ordered to lay down their arms & return to their fires. — a little after One ordered to Arms again they united the several Brigades together & the Artillery advanced before them & the army followed, this was all done with greatest Silence — they continued their March round the head of the Mill Creek dam & pass'd a Bridge and so continued their rout to the Princetown Road & then cross'd it & pass d into a bye road & proceeded about 1 mile to the northward of Princetown — and continued this rout till day light when they saw Princetown — and came through the Woods & field on the Back of the town and perceived the Enemy ab^{t} 700 on the rise of a Hill ab^{t} $\frac{3}{4}$ of a Mile from the town, — a firing began by the Virginia Brigade, and then it was supported by Gen'l Cadwaladers brigade which was at first put in a little confusion, but rallied under the Hill immediately — in the meantime a New England Brigade advanced and the Rifle Men flanked the Enemy, and they broke & run immediately upon wch our people pursued them, advanced to the Town, they fired one Shot into the College, when a man waved his Hat, another Shot was fired & a flag was sent out & they surrendered, to the number of 86 — afterwards a number more was brought in to the ammo^{t} of 200 — in this action ab^{t} 100 of the Enemy was killed & ab't 14 of ours (We drove off 100 head of Cattle with the Army) Gen'l Mercer advanced at the Head of his Brigade between a Barn & a house near where the Engagement began — his horse was shot under him & fell, when the Gen was recovering from the fall the Enemy thrust a Bayonet in his head, it is said he died of his wounds, and Captain Shippen shot through the head — this party of the Enemy were entirely scattered & numbers of them were taken in small parties — at Princetown 5 Field p's taken one of w'^{ch} spiked up, several Baggage Waggons, and some ammunition & Stores — they then halted at Princetown ab^{t} 1 hour when they heard a platoon firing on the Princetown Road, they were order under arms & to form, — Gen'l Miflin came to them & told them the Enemy was a coming, to prepare for a Brush — they then march'd to Kingston took to the left went up Mill Stone Creek ab^{t} 3 Mile, the head of the Army halted there for the Rear — that the informant went to a farmers to get some refreshments, fell asleep and waked in the morning, the Army was gone — he heard

they were at Somerset Court house on Saturday morning and that he intended to proceed to join Gen'l Heath, that . .

No 108 From the New York Gazette and Weekly Mercury

(January 13, 1777)

New York, 13 January 1777

Several Skirmishes between the King's Troops, and the Rebels have lately happened in the Jersies. But the most distinguished Rencounter occurred on the 3d Instant, near Princetown The 17th Regiment, consisting of less than 300 Men fell in with the Rebel-Army of between 5 and 6000, whom they attacked with all the Ardor and Intrepidity of Britons They received the Fire of the Rebels from behind a Fence, over which they immediately leaped upon their Enemies, who presently turned to the right about with such Precipitation as to leave their very Cannon behind them The Soldiers instantly turned their Cannon, and fired at least 20 Rounds upon their Rear, and had they been assisted with another Regiment or two, the Rebels would have found it rather difficult to make good their Retreat. This has been one of the most splendid Actions of the whole Campaign, and has given a convincing Proof that British Valour has not declined from its antient Glory Of Col. Mawhood, their gallant Commander, and of his Conduct in the Affair, too many Encomiums cannot be said The Loss was about Twenty Killed and Eighty wounded of the Troops. Of the Rebels above 400 were killed and wounded Among their Slain were eleven Officers Mr. *Mercer*, (one of the wounded Rebel-Officers, since dead) when he was taken up by our People, asked how many the Numbers were who had thus attacked him, and upon being told, he cried out with astonishment, "My God, is it possible? I have often heard of British Courage, but never could have imagined to find such an Instance as this!"

Another Account says. That the 17th Regiment just before they charged the Rebels, deliberately pulled off their Knapsacks, and gave three Cheers, then broke through the Rebels, faced about, attacked, and broke through them a second Time. Col Mawhood then said, it would be prudent, as they were so few, to retire; upon which the Men one and all cried out, "No, No, Let us attack them again;" And it was with great Difficulty

their Colonel could induce them to retreat, which at length they performed in the utmost Order

To the Honor of this brave Regiment, both as Soldiers and as Men, not one of them has ever attempted to plunder, or encourage it in others

In the several Skirmishes, the Rebels have lost above 700 Men

By the nearest Calculation that can be formed, the Rebels, in the Course of the last year, did not lose by Sickness and Battle less than 25,000 Men An immense Draught in a Country, where the Price of Labor is so great, and the Hands so few

. . . . . .

It is said, that several of the Hessian officers, from a just Sense of Honor, and Conviction of the Meanness of suffering a soldier to plunder, are resolved to discourage it intirely Perhaps, the best Means of preventing it in future, would be to burn all that the Soldiers have collected before their faces, and to assure them they must expect the same Attention to real military Discipline hereafter.

No. 109 General Greene to ———

(Extract of a letter from Major-General G —— (Greene) to a gentleman in Philadelphia, dated Morristown, January 9)

Not a line have I received from you since you left us at Newtown — I am much obliged to you for the attention — Were I not fully persuaded that you are anxious to know the success of our late *manœuvres*, I would not have wrote you a syllable this fortnight. I almost think the author of the Crisis a prophet where he says the Tories will curse the day that Howe arrived upon the Delaware I verily believe the observation is coming true The two late actions at Trenton and Princeton have put a very different face upon affairs

Within a fortnight past we have taken and killed of Howe's army between two and three thousand men — Our loss is trifling — we are daily picking up their parties — yesterday we took seventy prisoners and thirty loads of baggage

Great credit is due to the Philadelphia militia, their behaviour at Trenton in the cannonade, and at Princeton was brave, firm and manly, they were broken at first in the action at Princeton, and soon formed in the face of grapeshot, and pushed on with a

spirit that would do honor to veterans, besides which they have borne a winter's campaign with a soldier like patience General Cadwallader is a brave and gallant officer

No 110 From the Freeman's Journal

(January 21, 1777)

General Washington, finding it absolutely necessary to rouse the spirits of the army, which have been sorely depressed by the long series of disasters which have attended us for almost the whole of the month, resolved to attempt surprising a considerable body of Hessians, quartered at Trenton, consisting of about nineteen hundred, and a detachment of British light horse. The plan was as spiritedly executed as it was judiciously concerted, and terminated in fully answering the warmest expectations of its projectors Yesterday morning, orders were given for a large part of the army to have three day's provisions ready cooked, and forty rounds a man, and to be ready to march by three o'clock in the afternoon, accordingly the farthest brigades marched by two o'clock About eleven o'clock at night it began snowing, and continued so until daybreak, when a most violent northeast storm came on, of snow, rain and hail together Early, the American army, which did not exceed twenty-four hundred men, crossed the Delaware with several companies of artillery and thirteen field-pieces, and formed in two divisions one commanded by General Greene, the other by General Sullivan, and the whole by General Washington The attack began about seven o'clock by the van-guard of Sullivan's division who attacked the Hessians' advanced guard, about a mile from the town. These they soon drove, when the whole pushed with the utmost vigor for the town, which they immediately entered General Greene's division attacked the town on the other side at the same time. The Hessians did as much as could be expected from people so surprised, but the impetuosity of our men was irresistible fifteen minutes decided the action, and the enemy threw down their arms and surrendered prisoners of war They consisted of three regiments of grenadiers and fusileers, and were equal to any troops the Prince of Hesse could boast of The troop of British dragoons, without waiting to be charged, scampered off with the utmost expedition Could the brigade under Colonel Ewing have landed below the town, as was intended, the

light horse must inevitably have been taken, as well as a considerable number of the Hessians who got off but the violence of the wind was such, and the quantity of the ice so great, that he found it impossible to cross Our success, though not complete, was great The men behaved with the utmost bravery. Finding that their guns did not generally go off, owing to their having been exposed to the snow and rain for six hours, they charged bayonets, and, with three cheers, rushed like bloodhounds upon the Hessians, who, astonished at their fury fled or threw down their arms and it was owing to the ardor of the attack that so little blood was shed. The army returned the same day, and, notwithstanding a continual pelting for twelve hours, of a most violent rain, hail, and snow-storm, we had only two men frozen to death. Luckily they found some hogsheads of rum at Trenton, large draughts of which alone preserved the lives of many. The soldiers behaved exceedingly well with respect to plundering, considering they were animated by revenge for past insults, exasperated by the injuries done their messmates taken at Fort Washington and animated by every incentive that could work upon the license of a successful army The general gave the Hessians all their baggage and they have since gone to the western counties of Pennsylvania, with their packs unsearched They were amazed at the generosity of the general, so opposite to their own conduct, and call him a very good rebel The enemy who lay at Bordentown soon had the alarm, which was communicated to all the parties along the river, who, after remaining under arms the whole day, in the evening marched off, leaving us to take possession of Bordentown, Mount Holly and Burlington

No III From the Pennsylvania Evening Post.

(January 21, 1777, signed "An American Whig" The part of the letter not herein published is certainly in the style of Governor Livingston)

The late success of General Washington, in the Jersies, must afford the most heart felt pleasure to every American Whig

It was but the other day that the British and foreign troops made a rapid progress through that state, little or no opposition having been made to them — scarce an enemy to be seen — the remains of our little army being obliged to retreat before them, and take shelter on this side the Delaware

General Howe, in all that careless security which uninterrupted

success usually creates, cantons his army up and down the country in parties Full of their own prowess, and entertaining a contempt for their enemies, they thought of nothing but getting rich in plunder, and are thrown entirely off their guard Gen. Washington, perceiving this favourable opportunity, on a sudden resolves to take advantage of it. In one of those dark and dismal nights, which the greatest masters in the art of war recommend for an enterprize of this kind, he passes over the Delaware with only twenty-four hundred men and quick as lightening falls on the astonished and surprised enemy He wins an almost bloodless victory, takes one thousand of the enemy prisoners, their baggage, cannon and colours — he afterwards returns — meanwhile a general panic seizes the whole. General Washington again lands on the other side, and, having been joined by some other troops, the enemy recollect themselves, and prepare for the attack He avoids it, and at midnight, decamping, marches round about, and leaving the enemy behind him at Trenton, comes upon a party by surprize at Princeton, routs them, takes three hundred prisoners, and three pieces of brass ordnance This unlooked for manœuvre perplexes and amazes those who were left behind They, hearing the battle, march on to Princeton to succour their brethren, but all is over there They proceed in all haste to Brunswick, whilst our army turns off to the left, to meet a reinforcement, which will enable them to fall upon the enemy, and force them out of all their territories in the Jersey state

They will now, I hope, be brought to confess that there is either some little courage left among our troops, or that they have lost their own.

No 112. From the Connecticut Journal

(January 22, 1777)

Immediately after the taking of the Hessians at Trenton, on the 26th ult, our army retreated over the Delaware and remained there for several days and then returned and took possession of Trenton, where they remained quiet until Thursday, the 2nd inst, at which time the enemy having collected a large force at Princeton, marched down in a body of 4,000, or 5,000 to attack our people at Trenton. Through Trenton there runs a small river over which there is a small bridge General Washington, aware

of the enemy's approach, drew his army, (about equal to the enemy) over that bridge, in order to have the advantage of the said river and of the higher ground on the farther side Not long before sunset, the enemy marched into Trenton and after reconnoitering our situation, drew up in solid column in order to force the aforesaid bridge, which they attempted to do with great vigor at three several times and were as often broken by our artillery and obliged to retreat and give over the attempt after suffering great loss, supposed at least one hundred and fifty killed By this time night came on and General Washington ordered fires to be kindled and every thing disposed of for the night. But after all was quiet he ordered a silent retreat, drew off his army to the right, marched all night in a round-about road and next morning arrived with his army at Princeton. All this was done without any knowledge of the enemy who in the morning were in the utmost confusion not knowing which way our army had gone until the firing at Princeton gave them information

No 113 Proclamation.

Proclamation by His Excellency George Washington, Esquire, General and Commander-in-Chief of all the forces of the United States of America

Whereas several persons, inhabitants of the United States of America influenced by inimical motives, intimidated by the threats of the enemy, or deluded by a Proclamation, issued the 30th of November last, by Lord and General Howe, styled the King's Commissioners for granting pardon &c (now at open war and invading these States) have been so lost to the interest and welfare of their country, as to repair to the enemy, sign a declaration of fidelity and in some instances, have been compelled to take oaths of allegiance and to engage not to take up arms or encourage others so to do against the king of Great Britain And whereas it has become necessary to distinguish between the friends of America and those of Great Britain, inhabitants of these States and that every man who receives a protection from and is a subject of any State (not being conscientiously scrupulous against bearing arms) should stand ready to defend the same against every hostile invasion I do therefore, in behalf of the United States, by virtue of the powers committed to me by Congress, hereby strictly command and require every person, having subscribed such declaration, taken such oaths accepted

protection and certificates from Lord and General Howe or any person acting under their authority for them to repair to Headquarters or to the quarters of the nearest General officer of the Continental Army or Militia (until further provision can be made by the Civil Authorities) and there deliver up such protections, certificates and passports and take the oath of allegiance to the United States of America; Nevertheless hereby granting full Liberty to all such as prefer the interest and protection of Great Britain to the freedom and happiness of their country, forthwith to withdraw themselves and families within the enemies lines; and I do hereby declare that all and every person who may neglect or refuse to comply with this order, within Thirty days from the date thereof will be deemed adherents to the King of Great Britain and tried as common enemies of the American States.

Given at Headquarters Morris Town January 25 1777

G^o^ WASHINGTON

By His Excellency's command
ROBERT H HARRISON
Secretary

No. 114 FROM GEORGE INMAN'S NARRATIVE OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

. . .

The beginning of Novr. was at the Reduction of Fort Washington soon after crossed the North River to Fort Lee was also reduced and proceeded through the Jerseys to Trenton, meeting with little or no opposition, the beginning of Decr. we left Trenton for our own Cantonments at Hillsborough and 2 Brigades of Hessian Troops under Col Rall, marched in to be Quartered there, we Enjoy'd our Winter Quarters but a few days, when Gen'l Washington having crossed the Delaware, came suddenly on Rall's Brigades at Trenton the 24th Decr, and Captured, Killed and dispersed the whole, the British Army was obliged to quit their Quarters and assembled at Prince Town the Americans still remaining at Trenton and daily receiving from their late success large reinforcements The Season of the Year being severe, snow on the ground and for Nights having no other bed than hard frozen Earth or Ice and no other covering than a cloak oftentimes induced me to Reflect on past times when I used to sleep in soft downy Beds and with every comfortable necessary

around me, amongst them friends whom I left, and wch perhaps if I had remained might still have enjoy'd

The advance of the Army having proceeded to Trenton we were ordered on the 3d January 1777 from Prince Town as an Escort to Stores and at sunrise a large Body of the Enemy were discovered on our left wch Col Mawhood immediately determined to attack we having the 55th and a party of convalescents with a few of the 17th Dragoons, the enemy proved too powerful for us, the 55th giving away and retired to Prince Town, where the 40th Reg't were posted and both Reg'ts quitted that Town, retiring before the Enemy to Brunswick, we attacked their Centre Column and drove them to their main body, but, they rallying we were obliged to retire, after making such an exertion as we were able to proceed to our Army then lying at Maidenhead. We suffered much out of 224 Rank and file that marked off the Parade at 5 o'Clock that Morning we sustained a Loss of 101 Rank and file, Killed and wounded and much the greater part of the first fire received, I being the only Officer in the Right wing of the Battalion that was not very much injured receiving only a Buck shot through my Cross Belt wch just entered the Pit of my Stomach and made me sick for the moment We had a very severe march that day and all the following night, passing over the field of Action abt 4 o'Clock that afternoon through Prince Town and with the whole Army to Brunswick where we got on the 4th abt Nine in the Morning After halting one day to refresh ourselves we proceeded to Amboy where we remained the Winter, but found it irksome and unpleasant Quarters, being out almost every day, wch harrass'd the Garrison much

. .

No. 115. Sergeant Joseph White's Narration.

(Extract from "An narrative of events in the Revolutionary War, with an account of the Battles of Trenton, Trenton Bridge and Princeton," by Joseph White, who was an orderly sergeant in the regiment of artillery)

On the afternoon of the 25th of December 1776, our whole army after marching several miles up the river Delaware, in a violent snow storm, crossed it, in order to attack a body of Hessians, posted at Trenton, under the command of Col Rhol, who was killed in battle At day light, their out guard, posted about three or four miles off from their main body, turned out and gave

us a fire Our advanced guard opened from right to left, we gave them four or five cannisters of shot, following them to their main body, and displayed our columns.

The 3d shot we fired broke the axletree of the piece — we stood there some time idle, they firing upon us Col Knox rode up and said, My brave lads, go up and take those two field pieces sword in hand There is a party going, you must go & join them Capt A said Sergeant W you heard what the Col said — you must take the whole of those that belonged to that piece, and join them This party was commanded by Capt Washington, and Lieut. Munroe, our late President of the U. States, both of which were wounded. The party inclined to the right. I hallowed as loud as I could scream, to the men to run for their lives right up to the pieces I was the first that reach them They had all left it, except one man tending vent — run you dog, cried I, holding my sword over his head, he looked up and saw it, then run We put in a cannister of shot (they had put in the cartridge before they left it) and fired The battle ceased

I took a walk over the field of battle, and my blood chill'd to see such horror and distress

. . .

After staying in Pennsylvania from 26th of December 1775 (1776) to January 2d, 1777 our whole army crossed over to Trenton again with about one half the number less than we had when we retreated over the river Delaware.

The night before a large body of malitia joined our army, and they were sent out to meet the enemy, and fight upon their retreat As soon as they had got over the bridge, we had all our cannon placed before it, consisting of 18 or 19 pieces The enemy came on in solid columns we let them come on some ways, then by a signal given, we all fired together The enemy retreated off the bridge and formed again, and we were ready for them Our whole artillery was again discharged at them. They retreated again and formed they came on a third time We loaded with cannister shot, and let them come nearer We fired all together again, and such destruction it made, you cannot conceive The bridge looked red as blood, with their killed and wounded and their red coats. The enemy beat a retreat, and it began to grow dark

We were dismissed for an hour or two, to pull down all the

fences we could find, to build fires with them — and get some refreshment The fires were made to deceive the enemy to make them suppose that we were there encamped.

About 9 or 10 o clock orders came by whispering, (not a loud word must be spoken) to form the line and march We took such a circuitous rout, we were all night marching from Trenton to Princeton

. . . . . .

A little before we got in sight of the enemy, our whole army halted

We marched on a short distance, we see them all formed in a line and ready to receive us We marched forward so did they I ordered the limbers off and to man the drag ropes They were to the north of us, the sun shone upon them and their arms glistened very bright, it seemed to strike an awe upon us . . . We then loaded with cannister shot, they made a terrible squeaking noise. Both armies kept on marching towards one another, until the infantry come to use the bayonets. Our company being on the extreme left, had to face the enemy's right, consisting of grenadiers, highlanders & their best troops.

Our left line gave way — but before I moved, saw the second come up, and Gen. Merser, who was killed, leading them I never saw men looked so furious as they did, when running by us with their bayonets charged. The British lines were broken, and our troops followed them so close, that they could not form again A party of them ran into the colleges, which is built of stone After firing some cannon they surrendered The prisoners we took were about 500 men besides killed and wounded.

I have seen in a book, a few years ago, printed in Philadelphia, said to be a return from the Adjutant General, that we lost 300 men killed and mortally wounded in the battle of Princeton

The British supposed to be about the same number in killed and wounded.

No 116 Extract from the Journal of Lieutenant Samuel Shaw of the Artillery

You have without doubt heard of our success at Trenton. Our army lay in the town two days On the 3d day about noon we were alarmed by the enemy advancing, and in about two hours they came up from Princeton and drove our advanced

guard into Trenton — Our people on this retreated from the thickest of the town over a bridge and waited for the enemy to approach; but night coming on put a stop to anything further being done at that time In the mean while the General came to a resolution of stealing a march upon the enemy and attacking their troops which were left behind at Princeton, about eleven miles by a back road We began our march about midnight which was performed with so much secrecy that the enemy knew nothing of it till the next morning discovered that we were gone, and the first news they had of us was our beating up their quarters at Princeton. We killed, wounded and took about five hundred of them at that place This with our taking of the Hessians has given our affairs quite a different turn so that the Militia are embodying in all parts of the Jerseys and appear determined to have satisfaction for the injuries they have sustained from the enemy. I had the pleasure of being in both actions and can truly say, I think it impossible for any troops to behave better than ours did, only at Princeton the militia who had never seen any action were a little skittish at first, but after that they behaved very well. We are under very little apprehension from the enemy at present, as they seem very much panic-struck, and in so great haste were they to get to a place of security that they did not stay long enough at Princeton to take care of their wounded

. . . .

The enemy have retired to Brunswick and Amboy where they are so narrowly watched by our people that they cannot get the least forrage without fighting for it

.

While we lay at Trenton after crossing the Delaware a second time when the enemy advanced from Princeton with a superior force nearly double of ours Our out-guards were repulsed and the enemy entered one part of the town while we remained in possession of the other There was now only a small branch of a River between us over which was a bridge, this though well secured would have been but of little advantage to us as the stream was fordable in every part Our army was drawn up in order of battle, and waited the approach of the enemy, but the day being far spent put a stop to their making the attack that night — Then my friend — was the most critical moment our bleeding country ever beheld — The fate of this extensive Conti-

nent seemed suspended by a single thread and the Independence of America hung on the issue of a general battle which seemed inevitable — But happy for us happy for unborn millions, that we had a General who knew how to take advantage and by a masterly manuvre frustrated the designs of the enemy — This step considered in its consequences proved the salvation of the country — The most sanguine among us could not flatter himself with any hopes of victory had we waited till morning and been reduced to the necessity of engaging a foe so vastly our superior both in numbers and discipline and who could never have a chance of fighting us on more advantageous terms —-

. .

No 117 From Almon's Parliamentary Register

(History of the Debates and Proceedings of the House of Commons, vol xii p 391)

In the course of the debate May 3, 1779 which reflected severely on Lord North and especially on Lord George Germain, the latter among other arguments for his own defense said:

If the general in the tide of success, which run so strongly in his favor, had followed his advantages properly up, by crossing the Delaware, and had possessed himself of the Province of Pennsylvania, which at that time would have been the consequence of the possession of Philadelphia, he thought both now and then, and he was well warranted and justified in assuring the House, that we had a fair prospect of a successful campaign, and of the happy termination of the war in the course of it But all our hopes were blasted by that unhappy affair at Trenton

No 118 General Howe to Lord Germain.

(Extract of a letter from Sir William Howe to Lord George Germain, dated New York, 20 January, 1777)

It is with much concern, that I am to inform your Lordship, the unfortunate and untimely defeat at Trenton, has thrown us further back than was at first apprehended, from the great encouragement it has given to the rebels

I do not now see a prospect of terminating the war, but by a general action, and I am aware of the difficulties in our way to obtain it, as the enemy moves with so much more celerity than we possibly can

No. 119 Lord Germain to H. M. Peace Commissioners

(Lord Germain to His Majesty's Commissioners for restoring Peace, 3 March, 1777.)

The affair at Trenton happened, it is true, subsequent to the date of your Letter I trust, however, that the unexpected success of the Rebels there will not so far elate them as to prevent them from seeing the real horrors of their situation, and tempt them to disdain to sue for pardon

No 120. Translation of a Hessian Diary

(Published in the Pennsylvania Evening Post, Saturday, July 26, 1777.)

December 13th, 1776

We marched to Trenton and joined our two regiments of Rall and Kniphausen, in order to take up a sort of winter quarters here, which are wretched enough This town consists of about one hundred houses, of which many are mean and little, and it is easy to conceive how ill it must accommodate three regiments The inhabitants, like those at Princeton, are almost all fled, so that we occupy bare walls The Delaware, which is here extremely rapid, and in general about two ells deep, separates us and the rebels We are obliged to be constantly on our guard, and do very severe duty, though our people begin to grow ragged, and our baggage is left at New-York. Notwithstanding we have marched across this extremely fine province of New-Jersey, which may justly be called the garden of America, yet it is by no means freed from the enemy, and we are insecure both in flank and rear. This brigade has incontestably suffered the most of any and we now lie at the advanced point, that as soon as the Delaware freezes we may march over and attack Philadelphia, which is about thirty miles distant My friend Sheffer and myself lodge in a fine house belonging to a merchant, and we have empty rooms enough Some of the servants of the inhabitants remain here, last evening I gave one a box on the ear for his sauciness, I bid him bring me a candle, and he replied, if I wanted candles, I should have brought them with me I was furnished with a candle, but nothing else Here is no wine, except Madeira at three shillings and sixpence sterling a bottle. On the third instant Capt Weitershausen, of the grenadiers, was shot at Brunswick bridge by a rebel, who had concealed himself under the

bridge. The Capt had wrote by the last packet to his wife, desiring her to follow him to America On the 13th General Lee, with two other officers, were taken prisoners by the English lighthorse, to the great damage of the rebels.

The 16th the rebels came over the river in boats, but effected nothing

The 18th seventy rebels came over the water, and we were obliged to turn out. But they only carried off a family who went willingly, with three cows and some furniture.

The 19th one of the English lighthorse was twice badly wounded by a troop of rebels near Maidenhead

The 21st a horseman was shot dead.

The 23rd Count Donop wrote to us from Bordentown, desiring us to be on our guard, for that he was certain of being attacked

The 24th the enemy actually attacked our grenadiers last night, but without success, two Highlanders and a grenadier were wounded We have not slept one night in peace since we came to this place The troops have lain on their arms every night, but they can endure it no longer We give ourselves more trouble and uneasiness than is necessary. That men who will not fight without some defense for them, who have neither coat, shoe nor stocking, nor scarce anything else to cover their bodies, and who for a long time past have not received one farthing of pay, should dare to attack regular troops in the open country, which they could not withstand when they were posted amongst rocks and in the strongest intrenchments, is not to be supposed.

No 121 From an English Book of Orders found at Trenton

His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief orders that all inhabitants that shall be found with arms, not having an officer with them shall be immediately taken and hung up

From another Book found at Princeton

Head-Quarters, Trenton, December 12th 1776

Small straggling parties not dressed like soldiers and without officers, not being admissible in war who presumes to molest or fire upon soldiers or peaceable inhabitants of the country, will be immediately hanged without trial as assassins

No 122 Contemporaneous Documents

Other contemporaneous documents and history which have a direct bearing upon the retreat through the Jerseys, the conduct of General Lee in this campaign, the surprise at Trenton, the affair at Assunpink bridge, the battle of Princeton and the march to Morristown may be found as follows —

Letters of General Washington in Ford's Writings of George Washington, vol. v pp. 60–177, and in Sparks' Writings of George Washington, vol. iv pp 197–287

Letters to General Washington in Sparks' Correspondence of the American Revolution, vol i pp. 309–323.

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